

Corridor Working Group Meeting – Meeting Summary

June 20, 2006

1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

WSDOT Kent Maintenance Center
26620 68th Avenue South, Kent 98032**Attendees:****WSDOT**Ed Barry
Chad Bieren
Susan Everet
Carol Hunter
Ron Landon
Mike Sallis**City of Kent**Tim LaPorte
Cathy Mooney
Steve Mullen**City of Auburn**

Dennis Dowdy

PSRC

Mike Cummings

Pierce County

Cindy Bui

King CountyJudy Herring
Paul Takamine**City of Renton**Peter Hahn
Keith Woolley**Perteet**Tresia Bass
Michael Booth
Jeff Lundstrom
Michael Stringam**Envirolssues**

Kristine dos Remedios

Welcome and Introductions*Carol Hunter, WSDOT*

Carol Hunter, WSDOT, welcomed the group and thanked them for coming. She asked the members to introduce themselves and the organization or agency they were there to represent.

Approve May 16th Meeting Summary*Carol Hunter, WSDOT*

Copies of the May 16th meeting summary were sent to the partners via email before the meeting and a hard copy was provided at the meeting. Carol asked for comments on the summary. Keith Woolley noticed that his last name was misspelled on the attendee list and asked that it be corrected. There were no other comments and the summary was approved.

HOT Lanes Status Report*Jeff Lundstrom, Perteet*

Jeff Lundstrom provided a brief update on the HOT Lanes Pilot Project. The existing HOV lanes on SR 167, including the Stage 3 HOV extension project will be converted to HOT lanes when the system opens. There will be several ingress and egress points along SR 167 plus the entrances to the HOT lanes for

SR 167 Corridor Plan, Environmental Assessment, and HOT Lanes Pilot Project

southbound and northbound traffic. The team is still working on what the signage will look like.

The team is working hard to get the HOT lanes project out to bid. The project will be separated into two contracts: a civil contract to install all of the signing, fiber optics and striping and a tolling contract for the tolling software and system. The RFPs for both contracts will be finalized this summer and put out to bid in late fall or early winter.

Susan Everett noted that the team is pushing for a September 2007 opening date but the system may open as late as spring 2008. The main uncertainty with the timeline is based on the tolling software development schedule and the ability of the contractor to develop the system and test it in such a tight timeline.

Carol Hunter also updated the group on the status of the HOT Lanes informational video. A final copy of the video should be available within the next couple of weeks. The video was presented at the PSRC policy board and Mike Cummings noted that it was well received. Doug MacDonald has approved the video and asked for copies to distribute around the state. As soon as copies are available, the project team will work to distribute them to the partners so they can use it for briefings and to broadcast on government channels. Tim LaPorte asked WSDOT to send a copy to Steve Mullen when it is available. Dennis Dowdy also expressed interest in receiving a copy.

Discussion:

- Tim LaPorte, City of Kent, asked if the HOT Lanes were going to be extended onto I-405 as a part of the same HOT Lanes system. Carol said that this idea could be considered. If WSDOT gets positive results from the pilot project on SR 167 they will use any method possible to manage traffic in order to maximize the use of capacity on existing roads. If HOT Lanes are expanded onto I-405, it will be an addition to the pilot project, as solid results will not likely be back on the SR 167 project by the time HOT Lanes are implemented on I-405.
- Peter Hahn, City of Renton, wanted the group to know that he has a meeting scheduled with Doug MacDonald to discuss ways to find funding for the HOV or HOT flyover connection between I-405 and SR 167. There seems to be awareness and agreement among representatives from RTID and local electeds that this is an important regional connection. The flyover project is a part of the master plan for the I-405/SR 167 connection. The flyover itself has been recently estimated to be a \$450 million investment.
- Tim LaPorte said that he was recently at a FAST meeting where the idea of a Truck Only Toll (TOT) lane was discussed. The I-405/SR 167 corridor may be a good route to try such a concept. The idea is to get trucks off of city streets and onto state routes. Carol said the TOT concept was brought up at the Transportation Resource Board last year. Atlanta has looked at

SR 167 Corridor Plan, Environmental Assessment, and HOT Lanes Pilot Project

the performance of managed lanes including TOT lanes and TOT lanes were effective in moving larger vehicles out of general-purpose (GP) lanes and therefore improving GP lane performance. Carol said that she will make sure that the team finds an answer on the truck traffic threshold that is required for a TOT lane to work.

- Tim LaPorte said that he would like to have the TOT lane concept as a part of the ultimate vision for SR 167 when the corridor plan is taken to RTID, if the TOT lane is something that would work on SR 167.
- Susan Everett asked Tim to confirm that he would like to see three GP lanes and two managed lanes, one being a TOT and the other an HOV or HOT lane, as the ultimate vision for SR 167. Tim said that was correct if the TOT concept would work on SR 167. Susan said that the team will look into the TOT concept and report back if this will affect the corridor plan schedule at all.
- Paul Takamine, King County, noted that it is important for the SR 167 team to coordinate with the I-405 team, to make sure that the vision for SR 167 matches or is compatible with the vision for I-405. Carol noted that Patty Rubstello, the new HOT Lanes project manager, is also on the I-405 team, which has helped with this coordination.
- Ron Landon said that the Olympic region has not talked much about incorporating HOT Lanes into the SR 167 Extension project. The project will be built in two phases as funding becomes available. The first phase will be to build two GP lanes and the second phase will add on HOV lanes. When the HOV lanes are added, the region will consider coordinating the lanes with whatever managed lane system exists on SR 167 at the time. The extension project scope is quite dependant on how much funding is set aside for the project in RTID. When the funding is more definite, the project scope will have to adjust to match what is feasible to build with the available funding.

Stage 4/5 HOV Environmental Assessment

Ed Barry, WSDOT

Ed Barry, WSDOT, gave a brief update on the Stage 4/5 HOV Environmental Assessment (EA) project. The discipline reports for the EA are at the 50% level. Most of the wetlands in the project area have been delineated. The team is putting together a project schedule based on the final design to see where the project ad date may fall.

The team has also been busy exploring alternatives for the Stage 4/5 HOV extension, to determine the best way to spend the \$80 million that was dedicated to the project in the 2005 Transportation Partnership Account (TPA). Approximately \$57 million of the \$80 million will be used for actual construction costs. Six different alternatives were considered including a reversible lane. Traditionally, WSDOT has built HOV lanes in parallel. The team has determined that using all of the funding to extend the southbound HOV lane will produce the

best benefit for the funding available. If you extend the northbound HOV lane, you will simply get more traffic to the I-405 bottleneck faster. Expanding the southbound HOV lane will get people home faster and through the SR 18 bottleneck that currently exists.

Ed Barry also noted that the team is looking into innovative ways to manage stormwater and water quality for the HOV extension. Again, the team is trying to determine the best way to spend environmental mitigation funds to produce the best results with the highest environmental benefit. A white paper on innovative ways to deal with water quality and stormwater issues along SR 167 is being developed and should be available within the next couple of weeks.

Mike Sallis said that he would like to get a group together to review the pending white paper and talk about stormwater and wetland mitigation issues within the next couple of weeks. If any of the partners are specifically interested in this effort, they are asked to contact Mike so he can send them a meeting notice.

Preliminary Results of Transportation Modeling

Michael Stringam and Tresia Bass, Perteet

Michael Stringam provided the partners with handouts of the boards and slides he presented during the discussion on the preliminary transportation modeling for the 180th and SR 18 interchanges. The team met with the cities with a major interest in the 180th and SR 18 interchanges to get an idea of the options they would prefer.

SR 18 Interchange

Michael discussed the results of the SR 18 interchange first. The first handout showed the current geometry of the SR 18 interchange with the 2020 PM peak traffic. The second handout showed the 2020 PM peak traffic volumes for the preferred option, based on the jurisdiction's feedback, which was the full cloverleaf option. Through the modeling exercise, the team found that the cloverleaf option started to break down because of the number of weaving movements that need to occur with this kind of interchange configuration.

The other interchange option that was acceptable to the jurisdictions was the high volume directional option. Directional ramps would take the place of the cloverleaf loops that cause the problematic weaving motions. This option will be simulated and presented at the next meeting.

Tresia Bass played the simulation for the full cloverleaf option to show where the breakdowns occur with the full cloverleaf alternative. She also noted that the project team is not entirely convinced that the single point urban interchange (SPUI) is required further south at 15th Street SW.

Discussion:

- Tim LaPorte asked if there were any advantages to modeling the AM peak. Michael said yes. When the preferred interchange option is selected, AM as well as PM peak should be modeled.
- Dennis Dowdy, City of Auburn, asked if the models assumed that by 2020 the SR 167 extension will be complete to the Port of Tacoma. Michael said yes, that the model assumes that there will be two lanes in each direction but the connection to I-5 will not be complete yet because of funding availability assumptions.

180th Street Interchange

Michael discussed the results of the 180th Street interchange simulations. The first handout showed the current geometry of the 180th Street interchange with the 2020 PM peak traffic. The second handout showed the 2020 PM peak traffic volumes for the preferred option, based on the jurisdiction's feedback, which was the SPUI option. The key to this option was to extend Linde Avenue SW all the way to the East Valley Highway and provide an underpass at 180th Street for the East Valley Highway. Through the modeling exercise, the team found that the SPUI option started to break down because of the number of left turn movements at the intersection of 180th and Linde.

The team will look into the idea of maintaining the 41st Street interchange, as well as redeveloping the 180th Street interchange, in order to relieve this bottleneck. This option will be simulated and presented at the next meeting. Tresia Bass played the simulation for the SPUI option to show where the breakdowns occur.

Discussion:

- Keith Woolley, City of Renton, asked what kind of volumes can double lefts handle at a SPUI interchange. Michael said that it depends because the balance of traffic at SPUIs are important because opposite traffic uses the same amount of green light time to cross the interchange.
- Paul Takamine noted that it is important to synchronize traffic signals along the corridor to make sure that each system functions at optimum levels and bottlenecks are not created by operational issues.
- Dennis Dowdy noted that it was very helpful to see the simulations to visualize where traffic breakdowns occur with each interchange option and understand why certain options will not work.

Next Meeting: 7/18/06, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.
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