

Update for June-October 2006

The Washington State Department of Transportation will provide frequent updates to the US 2 RDP Corridor Working Group (CWG). If you have questions, please feel free to contact Renee Zimmerman at 206.464.1273 or at zimmer@wsdot.wa.gov.

1st Round of Open Houses Reaches 122 People

The WSDOT US 2 Route Development Plan team hosted two public open houses on June 13th in Gold Bar and on June 14th in Monroe. In Gold Bar, 72 people attended the open house and 50 people attended the open house in Monroe. WSDOT presented collision, fatality, and traffic data, as well as roadway characteristic information to the public. The purpose of these open houses focused on asking the attendees to identify what they thought were the pressing transportation issues on the US 2 corridor and discuss the types of projects they would like to see considered during development of the RDP.

Many attendees were concerned about traffic congestion (especially during the weekends), and the safety issues related to the 33 fatalities and over 2,600 collisions that have occurred since 1999 within the study limits.

Many attendees commented that they want:

- A Monroe Bypass
- Increased law enforcement
- More turn lanes off of US 2
- More lanes added

Additionally, WSDODT invited and provided tables for five other groups or organizations to discuss with open house attendees US 2 issues and other road projects in the Snohomish County region:

- US 2 Safety Coalition
- Washington State Patrol
- The Stevens Pass Greenway
- City of Monroe
- SR 9 and SR 522 Project Office

The second round of open houses is planned for the first 2 weeks of December in Monroe and Gold Bar.

US 2 RDP Fair Booths Attract over 1,500

During July and August, the US 2 Study team reached 1,650 people by staffing fair booths and sharing information about the US 2 RDP. The team staffed a US 2 booth at the following fairs:

- ▶ Kla Ha Ya Days, Snohomish
- ▶ Monroe Summerfest, Monroe
- ▶ Evergreen State Fair, Monroe
- ▶ Sultan Shindig, Sultan
- ▶ 23rd Annual Night Out Against Crime, Gold Bar
- ▶ Art Train, Skykomish

Many of the comments from the public included: construct the Monroe bypass; widen the highway; widen and divide the highway.

Governor's Staff Tour US 2

On August 21st, Renee Zimmerman joined City of Sultan's Chief of Police Fred Walser and the City of Monroe's Mayor Donnetta Walser to give Lee Marchisio and Jennifer Ziegler from the Governor's Office a tour of US 2.

Issues reviewed:

- ▶ Options such as roundabouts as proposed at the charrette
- ▶ SR 522 completion and the first phase of the Monroe Bypass (SR 522 to Woods Creek in Monroe)
- ▶ Getting US 2 projects, such as the Monroe Bypass, on the RTID list
- ▶ The patch job between Monroe and Sultan: It has numerous complaints from the community
- ▶ Major developments occurring in Sultan and Monroe
- ▶ The importance of US 2 during the 2010 Olympics and that Steven's Pass is one of the designated training areas for skiers
- ▶ Lee and Jennifer were shown locations of many fatalities, including the most recent two fatalities near Skykomish

Four Segments Reviewed by CWG at Design Charrette

On August 14th and 16th, a two-day charrette was held in Sultan and was attended by approximately 25 people. The attendees included planning commissioners, mayors, city councilmembers and other representatives from the jurisdictions along the 47-mile study corridor. Participants reviewed each of the four segments of the study corridor, listed safety and mobility issues, and provided recommendations to address the issues. Aerial photographs with proposed schematic improvements of each segment were provided for the participants.

During the charrette, Brian Walsh gave a presentation on roundabouts. The presentation included how roundabouts operate, where in Washington State roundabouts are being utilized and WSDOT's experience with roundabouts.

Roundabouts are being considered as a potential recommendation for certain locations on the US 2 corridor.

At the end of the second day each group for each segment reported on their recommendations. Proposed recommendations vary from widening US 2, to building the Monroe Bypass, to synchronizing traffic lights and providing better pedestrian and non-motorized facilities.

The next steps include:

- ▶ The project team will take the options reviewed at the charette and develop them into recommendations
- ▶ Corridor Working Group will meet in November to prioritize these projects

US 2 RDP Briefings of Elected Officials Considered a Success

During the month of September, the US 2 Route Development Plan (RDP) team continued its extensive public outreach efforts by giving presentations to elected officials along the US 2 corridor, to the city and town councils of Snohomish, Monroe, Sultan, Gold Bar, Index, Skykomish, as well as Snohomish County and a briefing to King Council Councilmember Kathy Lambert.

The RDP team presented an overview of the two - day design charette held in August and the proposed recommendations that came from the charette. The RDP stressed that proposed recommendations would meet the following criteria developed by attendees of the charette. Those criteria are: safety first; no throw-away projects; and recommended improvements would meet the communities' 2030 vision of the corridor.

At each briefing the RDP team gave an overview of the study; summarized comments from over 1,650 people from six fairs where WSDOT hosted a booth; discussed the recommended improvements being analyzed for the entire study area; and focused on the particular area in which the briefing was being held.

Recurring questions and concerns raised by the elected officials were:

- **Roundabouts:** How effective are they? How will they help improve traffic flow and safety, especially for pedestrians? How are they better than traffic signals? Brian Walsh from the WSDOT's Traffic Office in Olympia responded to questions about roundabouts plus the RDP team showed an excellent video about roundabouts and how they function.
- **Monroe bypass:** Build it.
- **Traffic growth projections:** What are they based on?
- **Population forecasts:** What sources were used? The city councils were assured that the RDP team used both the PSRC's forecasts plus each city's comprehensive plans.

- **Maintaining business access:** Important to ensure residents can still access businesses along the corridor.

The elected officials and community members that attended the council meetings were pleased that the US 2 RDP Team was doing such an extensive outreach effort along the corridor.

Next Steps

- ▶ Final briefings to Congressman Rick Larsen and Community Transit on October 5, 2006
- ▶ The draft Existing Conditions Report has been delivered to WSDOT and is going through internal review. We will e-mail this to you once it has gone through this review.
- ▶ Release a summary of the *Origin Destination Study*
- ▶ The next CWG meeting is scheduled for November 6 from 9:30-12:30 in Monroe.
- ▶ Open Houses are scheduled for the first two weeks of December.

Need a Speaker?

If you want a presentation on the US 2 RDP or have an event that a WSDOT representative should attend, please contact Renee Zimmerman at 206.464.1273 or at zimmerr@wsdot.wa.gov.