



SR 99 NORTH CORRIDOR STUDY

**Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting #3
February 11, 2002
Draft - Meeting Summary**

Agenda

- I. Welcome
- II. Refocused Direction
- III. Work to Date
- IV. What We Have Heard
- V. Community Outreach
- VI. Next Steps
- VII. Adjourn

Next SAC Meeting – May 13, 2002
Phinney Neighborhood Center

Stakeholder Advisory Committee members present:

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Warren Aakervik, Jr.
Ballard Intermodal North
Manufacturing Industrial
Center (BINMIC) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paulette Gust , Citizen
and transit rider | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jerry Owens
Aurora – Licton Springs
Planning Group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carroll Boone
King County Traffic Safety
Coalition | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jim Hall
Broadview/Bitter
Lake/Haller Lake
Community Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Ron Sheck
Weaving Wallingford |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Susie Burke
Fremont Neighborhood
WORKS | <input type="checkbox"/> Clarice Keegan (Alt.)
Aurora Ave. Merchants
Assn. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marty Spiegel
Greenwood/Phinney
Community Council |
| <input type="checkbox"/> John Coney
Transportation Chair
Uptown/Queen Anne –
Uptown Alliance | <input type="checkbox"/> Ref Lindmark
Green Lake | <input type="checkbox"/> Jean Sundborg (Alt)
Uptown/Queen Anne –
Uptown Alliance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jo Dawson
Broadview/Bitter
Lake/Haller Lake
Community Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Sue Linnabary (Alt)
Haller Lake Land Use | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Barbara Van Defen
Bicycle Advisory Board |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mike Foley , Transportation
Chair
South Lake Union Planning
Committee | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chris MacKenzie
Weaving Wallingford | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Faye Garneau
Aurora Ave. Merchants
Assn. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Mueller
Vulcan NW | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tony Gomez (Alt)
King County Traffic Safety
Coalition | <input type="checkbox"/> Roy Nelson (Alt)
South Lake Union
Planning Committee | |

Staff, Observers and Interested Parties

Dori Costa, City of Seattle
Phil Fuji, City of Seattle
Beth Pflug, City of Seattle
Leah Weathersby, *Seattle Sun*

Project Management Team

Charlie Howard, WSDOT
Chris Picard, WSDOT
Nytasha Sowers, WSDOT
Karl Westby, Entranco
Fen Hsiao, PRR

Renee Zimmerman, WSDOT

The following summarizes presentations given, issues raised, actions undertaken or recommendations made. When possible, lengthy discussions have been summarized into themes or summary statements.

I. WELCOME

Nytasha Sowers, WSDOT, began the meeting at 7:05 p.m. She thanked the committee members for attending. She asked the attendees to introduce themselves.

Ms. Sowers introduced Renee Zimmerman, WSDOT, as the meeting facilitator.

Ms. Zimmerman said she is managing the project's public involvement program. Prior to the meeting, she was able to call most of the members and had the chance to chat with them. She asked the members to sign in on the sheet being passed around.

Ms. Zimmerman stated that the purpose of the meeting is to give a quick overview of the program. She indicated that staff will discuss the refocus of the program since the last SAC meeting. They will also share public feedback. The feedback has been condensed to fit into the two-hour timeframe of tonight's meeting and also for legibility. Staff will review the project schedule and prepare the groundwork for the next SAC meeting that will be a working session.

Ms. Zimmerman reviewed the meeting's ground rules.

Ms. Zimmerman asked if everyone had the chance to look at the last meeting's minutes. She asked if there were any huge issues that need to be addressed or changed. She requested that SAC members either e-mail minor changes or approach her after the meeting. There were no issues raised by the members.

Ms. Zimmerman returned the meeting to Ms. Sowers to discuss the program's refocused direction.

Key Items:

- **Renee Zimmerman, WSDOT, will now be managing the study's public involvement.**
- **No issues raised regarding last SAC meeting's summary**

II. REFOCUSED DIRECTION

Ms. Sowers said they have renamed the SR 99 North Multi-modal Corridor Study to the SR 99 North Safety Study. She reviewed the meeting objectives:

- Describe refocused direction of the SR 99 North Safety Study
- Present the approach for developing safety improvement options

Purpose of the Study:

The primary purpose of the study is to improve safety for all users.

Key Outcomes of Study:

- Detail out accident locations (High Accident Corridor, High Accident Locations, Pedestrian Accident Locations) and provide specific recommendations to improve safety
- Provide implementation recommendations for proposed safety improvements
- Provide a long-range roadway footprint
- Establish process for long-range operational decisions
- Create approach for matching up with the City of Shoreline's Aurora Corridor Plan

Ms. Sowers explained that the study will refocus on the significant safety issues along the corridor. She explained that the study will focus on high accident areas, rather than improvements for contiguous corridor segments. Now that the major issues are known, staff will look at phasing for implementation. The study will be developing a long-range roadway cross-section or footprint for safety improvements.

Partnering Agencies:

WSDOT is leading the SR 99 North Safety Study in partnership with the following agencies:

- City of Seattle
- King County Metro
- City of Shoreline

Scope and Schedule:

Ms. Sowers provided an update of the study's schedule.

7/01 -12/01	Identify Transportation Needs
1/02	Refocused Direction of Study
2/02 – 6/02	Development of Improvement Options
6/02 – 11/02	Improvement Proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create implementation recommendations for proposed safety improvements• Create long-range roadway footprint• Establish process for long-range operational decisions• Create approach for matching up with the City of Shoreline's Aurora Corridor Plan
11/02 – 1/03	Final Report & Memorandum of Understanding

Ms. Sowers explained that in January, WSDOT, the City of Seattle and King County Metro reviewed the results of the transportation needs analysis and issues raised by

communities along the corridor. WSDOT and the partnering agencies agreed that under the current circumstances, it was best to refocus the SR 99 study efforts on safety and postpone a further analysis and development of improvements addressing mobility and aesthetics at a later point in time.

The decision to refocus the study was based on several factors. The existing SR 99 study budget was determined to be insufficient to conduct the level and extent of transportation analysis requested.

In addition to budget constraints, the transportation leadership for the City of Seattle is also in transition—the City has a new mayor, several new council members, and a new head of the Transportation Department. The timing of proposing mobility improvements with the potential recommendations of the City's new leadership was off and potentially in conflict; therefore it was decided to postpone these discussions until a later date when the City's new leadership and transportation direction were well established.

Ms. Sowers explained that the remainder of the budget will be used to conduct a more in-depth analysis of accidents and potential safety improvements along the corridor.

Ms. Sowers noted that, with the study's refocus, the schedule might now be shorter.

Ms. Sowers reviewed and clarified the study's accident definitions and terms.

Accident Data Definitions:

Hazardous Accident Location (HAL): spot locations less than a mile long with a higher than average rate of severe accidents in the past 2 years.

High Accident Corridor (HAC): sections of state highway one of more miles long, with a higher than average number of severe accidents over a continuous period of time.

Pedestrian Accident Location (PAL): spot locations (0.10 mi or less) that have 4 accidents in a 6-year period.

Key Findings:

Accidents

- The Battery Street Tunnel to north of N. 50th Street is ranked as the third worst high accident corridor (HAC) in the state* - with a societal cost of \$47,475,000
 - Highest number of total accidents in central Puget Sound (505)
 - Highest number of disabling injuries in central Puget Sound
- Six High Accident Locations (HALs)
- 12 Pedestrian Accident Locations (PALs)

*based on ranked list of non-limited access highways

Tony Gomez, King County Traffic Safety Coalition, asked if these were annual findings. Ms. Sowers said they were recorded during a 3-year period from 1998-2000.

Ms. Sowers reviewed a Study Focus Area map that specified the number of HACs, HALs and PALs per area. She noted that before the study's refocus, the corridor was

broken up into seven segments. Now, the corridor has been broken into three areas encompassing three different types of accidents locations.

Jim Hall, Broadview/Bitter Lake/Haller Lake, said the Accident Findings were actually collected over a 5-year time period. Karl Westby, Entranco, confirmed Mr. Hall's correction.

Barbara Van Defen, Bicycle Advisory Board, asked if the capacity issue was removed from the study's previous focus because of the limited scope or also because additional capacity is not available in the corridor. She asked if it is possible to add more capacity in the corridor for freight mobility.

Ms. Sowers said capacity is related to congestion and mobility and that staff will be working with the city to address these issues more accurately in a future study. She emphasized these issues have not been deleted. Issues raised related to congestion and mobility will be recorded by WSDOT and forwarded on to the City and King County Metro. Although these issues are not the focus of this study, none of them have been disregarded.

Ms. Zimmerman noted the Public Comments section of tonight's meeting also captures some of the mobility and capacity issues.

Charlie Howard, WSDOT, said the Department has limited options of what they can do to add capacity in the corridor due to its location in the middle of a city. He said the corridor is pretty constrained between properties and has a limited footprint. However, WSDOT will be exploring what can be done.

Warren Aakervik, Jr., Ballard Intermodal North Manufacturing Industrial Center (BINMIC), asked if they will divide the ped/bike accident findings from the accident total. Mr. Westby said the accident findings at each location will be broken down when they take a more detailed look.

Mr. Hall said the only input he's received from his organization's constituents relates to how the study will improve mobility. He said when he tells them WSDOT has refocused the study to only include safety, they will think WSDOT has copped out.

Mr. Aakervik said WSDOT will also be improving mobility by looking at safety in the corridor.

Ms. Sowers again emphasized that the non-safety related issues have not been lost.

Key Items:

- **The study has been renamed SR 99 North Safety Study with a focus on safety**
- **Non-safety related concerns will be addressed in a future WSDOT study w/the City of Seattle and King County Metro**
- **For study purposes, the corridor has been divided into 3 focus areas rather than the former 7 contiguous segments**

SAC Comments/Requests:

- **The accident key findings were collected over a 5-year period**
- **If possible, look at adding more capacity to the corridor for freight mobility**

- **Provide findings that specify pedestrian/bicycle accidents**
- **BINMIC has only heard mobility-related comments from their constituents who will be disappointed the study has refocused on safety**

III. WORK TO DATE

Mr. Westby reviewed the HAC, HAL and PAL maps. He noted the map's information is similar to what the committee saw in the last meeting. He said they now have pedestrian accident locations where as before they only had HACs and HALs. Mr. Westby said he would briefly touch on what's happening at the locations in general and then get into statistics as well as what the contributing factors are later.

He noted that in the vicinity of Denny Way, just north of Battery Street Tunnel, there are many side-swipe accidents.

He called attention to the southern study area, particularly in the areas where HALs and PALs overlap. There is also a PAL near Mercer Street. These accidents are in part caused by pedestrians trying to cross the roadway and median barrier.

Susie Burke, Fremont Neighborhood Council, noted there is a pedestrian underpass in this area.

Faye Garneau, Aurora Ave. Merchants Assn., said the underpass is not clearly marked.

Mr. Westby said these accidents predominantly involve pedestrians being struck by cars, and do not usually involve pedestrians hurting themselves, such as accidentally tripping and falling without any involvement of a vehicle.

Mr. Westby said just south of the Aurora Bridge, the access to and from Queen Anne (Raye and Halladay) have a high number of accidents. There is at least one semi-blind corner. From a pedestrian standpoint, the bridge itself has narrow sidewalks. Just north of the bridge there are weaving issues.

There are also concerns regarding freight accessibility to northbound SR 99. Mr. Westby said there are many accidents in this area, and the study will especially focus on this issue.

North of Green Lake, between N. 80th and N. 90th Streets, is a HAL and several PALS. Many of the accidents involving pedestrians and bikes occur when they are crossing SR 99. A significant amount of accidents involve drivers who can't see during congested hours and are turning at intersections while pedestrians have the walk signal.

The HALs in the vicinity of N. 80th to N. 90th Streets predominantly involve rear-end accidents as drivers get caught in the intersection while turning. Most of the accidents are intersection-related.

Accidents around N. 115th Street are also predominantly intersection-related. From N. 115th Street North, the accidents are mostly angle accidents and driver related, involving a lot of turning movements. Because there are 5 or 6 lanes, there is a significant area to move across. Mr. Westby said staff will be taking a detailed look

at these accident locations and then developing safety solutions in the next part of the study.

Mr. Aakervik asked if accidents in the north sector mostly involve eastbound to southbound travel. Mr. Westby said yes, in addition to drivers in the center lane turning left across the roadway and drivers turning in and out of streets and driveways.

Ms. Garneau said several years ago WSDOT said the incidents between N. 115th and N. 145th Streets mostly occurred in the HOV lane. She asked if this has changed since the HOV lane has become buses-only. Mr. Westby said he didn't know. There are accidents happening in the HOV lane but there are just as many in other lanes. He noted that this area operates in a unique manner.

Ms. Garneau said she would like to see the figures for accidents in the HOV lane.

Ms. Burke commented that drivers don't know what to do in this area and that it is especially difficult for truck drivers. Mr. Westby said congestion makes the situation worse as drivers cut across traffic.

Mr. Hill asked if they will be given numbers on the percentage of accidents caused by drunk drivers. Mr. Westby said they do not currently have the numbers but will get into a detailed look later.

He said next steps include looking at what contributes to the accidents, such as alcohol, weather, and road design.

Jerry Owens, Aurora-Licton Springs Planning Group, asked if the accidents between N. 90th and N. 125th Streets are mostly pedestrian/bike accidents. Mr. Westby said yes, these are the primary accident types.

Mr. Owens said there is good sight distance here but a lot more pedestrian activity in the area.

Key Items:

- **Predominant causes of HACs, HALs and PALs reviewed.**

SAC Comments/Requests:

- **Provide the total number of accidents between N. 115th and N. 145th Streets that occur in the HOV lane**
- **Provide the percentage of accidents caused by drunk drivers**

WSDOT Action Items:

- **Per SAC request, provide total number of accidents caused by drunk drivers (next study phase)**

IV. WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Ms. Sowers said the second map handout gives an overview of corridor-wide public comments received, including those from community groups. She asked the SAC to advise if any issues are missing from the list.

Ms. Sowers reviewed the **Community Presentations/ Meetings** given thus far:

- King County Traffic Safety Coalition
- Aurora Ave. Merchant's Association
- Rep. Mary Lou Dickerson
- Magnolia/Queen Anne
- Rep. Carolyn Edmonds
- Susie Burke/Friends of Fremont
- North Queen Anne
- Vulcan Enterprises
- Haller Lake
- Seattle Chamber of Commerce
- Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board

She encouraged the attendees to contact her if they would like a presentation or more details on the study, even if their organization has already received a presentation.

Overview of Community Issues to be Considered:

- Traffic Operation Improvements
- Non-motorized safety (both along and across)
- Aurora Bridge vehicle and non-motorized safety
- Business access
- Need for additional signage (non-motorized safety)
- Excessive alcohol consumption
- Security Issues

Staff is looking at the feasibility of building a barrier on Aurora Bridge. They are also looking at potential safety improvements for SR 99 businesses. The proposed signage includes signs for drivers approaching the bridge as well as signs on the bridge for drivers and ped/bikes. The study will also be looking at safety issues related to the findings of excessive alcohol consumption among drivers in the corridor.

Mr. Gomez said he is part of the King County Traffic Safety Coalition that has organized a study on alcohol-related accidents along SR 99. The only corridor that exceeds SR 99 in the number of alcohol-related crashes is I-5. The coalition is helping to organize extra law enforcement in the corridor on specific holidays.

The coalition will also be helping to instigate a community education program. They are thinking about a discussion with the Seattle Police Department in conjunction with this study, and said the police department and the DUI squad are doing a commendable job. He said they want to map out a plan to highlight safety issues on Aurora and hope to meet with the police department within the next month or two.

Ms. Garneau said the coalition's reports mainly focus on SR 99 in the south end of the city. She requested number breakouts for other areas of SR 99. Mr. Gomez said the coalition mainly focuses on the King County portion of SR 99. The greatest number of stops and arrests are coming out of the Seattle area. On a typical weekend, there will be 200-250 stops on SR 99 and 20-25 DUI arrests.

Ms. Garneau said she would like to see the alcohol-related accident statistics for the section of SR 99 included in the SR 99 North Safety Study.

Ms. Burke asked if the alcohol statistics include pedestrian-related accidents. Mr. Gomez said he hopes this will be part of a future study.

Ms. Garneau said there are security issues and a high crime rate between 85th and 90th streets. Ms. Sowers said there is a security concern for pedestrians catching the bus.

Ms. Garneau said they need to focus on security for bus stops. Ms. Sowers said security issues are not being ignored. Staff is working with the City and County on these issues.

Community Issues to Forward to the City of Seattle and King County Metro

Ms. Sowers provided an overview of the community issues raised during community outreach activities that will not be addressed by the safety study but will be forwarded on to the City of Seattle and King County Metro.

- Parking
- Aesthetic improvement recommendations
- Transit and traffic operation recommendations
- Vehicle speed and reliability recommendations

Leah Weathersby, *Seattle Sun*, asked when Seattle and King County will be looking at these issues. Dori Costa, City of Seattle, said the issues will be addressed when funding is available. She said lack of funding is the reason why the issues aren't being addressed in the SR 99 study anymore.

Ms. Sowers said the Corridor-wide Public Comments map includes a summary of public comments. The comments highlighted in yellow are comments they've heard from the SAC. She asked the members to let her know if any comments are missing from the list. These comments will be addressed in the next phase of the SR 99 North Safety Study.

Key Items:

- **Community Issues to be reviewed by the Safety study**
- **Community Issues to forward on to the City and King County Metro:**
 - Parking
 - Aesthetic improvement recommendations
 - Transit and traffic operation recommendations
 - Vehicle speed and reliability recommendations
- **The King County Traffic Safety Coalition has been coordinating a study on alcohol-related accidents within the SR 99 corridor. They are hoping to work with the Seattle Police Dept. to develop a safety program for the corridor, including community education.**

SAC Comments/Requests:

- **Provide the total number of alcohol-related accidents on SR 99 in the Seattle area**
- **Provide figures for the number of accidents caused by intoxicated pedestrians**

- **Security issues and a high crime rate between 85th and 90th streets**
- **Need to focus on safety at bus stops**

V. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Ms. Zimmerman reviewed the program's Community Outreach Activities:

- Speakers Bureau – ongoing
- Open House #1 – March 20, 2002
- Open House #2 – June 26, 2002

She asked if members are interested in having Ms. Sowers talk with their organizations about the study, please let her know. She said study contact information is on the study's website. She noted they are willing to give presentations at night and on weekends, too.

The study's first open house is March 20 and will highlight the project's refocus on safety. WSDOT will also inform the public on the study's objectives and provide the opportunity for public comments on safety issues that staff might not have heard. The June open house date could change. Staff will confirm the date next month. Both open houses will be at the Phinney Neighborhood Center from 6-9 p.m.

Mr. Aakervik said these dates are different from those on the original agenda. Ms. Sowers said yes, they are different.

Ms. Zimmerman said for Open House 2, staff will be going over corridor options and asking for public feedback. There could possibly be a third open house depending on budget, maybe in late summer or early fall. Staff will also try to distribute a study newsletter between the two open houses, as well as run display ads, depending on available budget.

Ms. Burke asked if they will try and get the open house announcements into local neighborhood papers. Ms. Zimmerman said yes.

Ms. Burke said neighborhood residents read neighborhood newspapers from cover to cover.

Mr. Owens said announcements should also be placed in community council newsletters.

Mr. Aakervik suggested neighborhood websites. He said staff could submit written articles on the study.

Ms. Zimmerman said the next SAC meeting will be May 13, same time and place. The next meeting will be a working session with the SAC divided into small groups to discuss safety alternatives for the corridor.

Key Items:

- **Upcoming Community Activities reviewed**
- **Next SAC meeting, May 13, will be a working session**

SAC Comments/Requests:

- **Place Open House announcements/study articles in neighborhood newspapers, community council newsletters and neighborhood websites**

VI. NEXT STEPS

Ms. Sowers gave an **Accident Analysis Review**:

Findings	Issues	Examples of Improvement Options Other Than No Action
Rear End Accidents	- 33% of all accidents along corridor are rear-end (consistent with congested traffic conditions, and sight distance limitations)	- Improve sight distance - Improve operating conditions
Angle Accidents	- 25% of all accidents along corridor involve vehicles at angle (turning, t-bone) - 40% from N. 86th to N. 105th Streets.	- Driveway limits/controls - Median treatment
Fixed Objects Accidents	- 15% of all accidents along corridor involve vehicles striking fixed objects - 39% from Battery St. tunnel to Raye St.	- Remove and/or relocate fixed objects - Remove and/or relocate select fixed objects
Driveway Accidents	- 7% of all accidents along corridor involve vehicles entering or exiting driveways - 22% from N. 115th to N. 145th Streets.	- Consolidate driveways - Limit turns to right in and right out
Ped/Bicycle Accidents	- 40 accidents along corridor involving peds; - 8 accidents involving bicycles	

Ms. Sowers said these are corridor-wide figures. Later, staff will be looking at the accident figures per area.

Mr. Hall said it doesn't do any good to show the number of accidents without knowing what percentage involve drunk drivers.

Mr. Gomez said about 90 percent of accidents in King County are alcohol-related. 40 percent of fatal collisions involve alcohol in the whole corridor within King County.

Mr. Owens said he's interested in the accident numbers involving drunken pedestrians. He said these numbers have a very significant impact.

Mr. Hall asked if the King County Traffic Safety Coalition works within the entire county. Mr. Gomez said yes. He noted that the Port of Seattle is involved. Altogether, about 12 agencies participate in the coordination.

Ms. Sowers said that although today's meeting was short, staff still wanted to meet to make sure they had all the community issues. She asked the members to let staff

know if anything is missing in terms of safety issues. Staff will be getting back to the SAC with an update on how the study is progressing.

Ms. Sowers also noted that they are having the open house before the next SAC meeting so that the public has an opportunity to learn about the study.

Mr. Aakervik asked if there is any indication regarding the cause of rear-end accidents within the Accident Analysis Review. He asked if they have anything to do with Metro transit. He said that in-lane stops tend to force rear-end accidents because buses haven't pulled off to the side.

Mr. Westby said staff could make general statements. He said details from accidents aren't always available, it depends on what questions the police ask at the time of the accident. Not all data are complete enough to know the exact cause. However, he said staff will make sure everyone knows there are outstanding questions regarding accident causes so people don't draw their own conclusions.

Ms. Garneau said a reason for the motorized accidents might be because there are no bus stops on N. 92nd Street. There needs to be a way for people to cross the street between 90th and 100th. She noted there is a bus stop at N. 95th Street.

Mr. Aakervik asked if traffic lights could be coordinated or synchronized to help pedestrians in this area. Ms. Sowers said she believes they can be.

Key Items:

- **Accident Analysis reviewed**

SAC Comments/Requests:

- **Provide the total number of accidents caused by drunk pedestrians**
- **Provide information on the cause of rear-end accidents**
- **Need for pedestrian crossing between N. 90th and N. 100th Streets**
- **Synchronize traffic lights between N. 90th and N. 100th Streets to aid pedestrian safety and crossing**

ADJOURN

Ms. Sowers adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.