

SR 162 Sumner to Orting Corridor Study

Stakeholder Committee Meeting #1

Thursday, June 30, 2016
9:00 a.m. to 12 noon
Orting Public Safety Building, 401 Washington Avenue

Attendees

Jason Sullivan, City of Bonney Lake
Mark Bethune, City of Orting
Nicola McDonald, City of Orting
Eric Mendenhall, City of Sumner
Rory Grindley, Pierce County
Jesse Hamashima, Pierce County
Jason Kennedy, Pierce Transit
Eric Chipps, Sound Transit
Scott Jones, Tehaleh by Newland Communities
Tom Uren, Tehaleh by Newland Communities
Shawn Bunney, Concerned Citizen

WSDOT

Dennis Engel, Olympic Region Planning
Nazmul Alam, Olympic Region Planning
T.J. Nedrow, Olympic Region Planning
Yvette Liufau, Olympic Region Planning
Joseph Perez, Olympic Region Traffic
Janarthanan, Natarajan, Headquarters TDGO
Ming-Bang Shyu, Headquarters TDGO
Kent Kalisch, Headquarters Design
Rachael Katz, Headquarters Multimodal Planning

Welcome/Introductions

WSDOT's Olympic Region Planning Manager, Dennis Engel gave a brief overview of the study. He commented that the last study conducted by WSDOT in this area was completed in 1997. Since that time, a lot of development has occurred and is still occurring along SR 162.

This study is currently funded as part of the Connecting Washington Projects package approved by the Legislature on June 28, 2015. A total of \$450,000 was allocated over the 2015-2017 and 2017-2019 biennium.

By way of the agency's Practical Design policies the study process will offer a ranked listing of improvement concepts. The concepts, or furthermore referred to as solutions can then become the identified list of opportunities suggesting funding the design and construction project solutions. The study solution limits will essentially be from the SR 410 interchange to the north Orting City limits. We are look to have the study completed in spring of 2017.

Agenda Review

WSDOT's Study Lead T.J. Nedrow reviewed the agenda with the group. He noted that today's meeting will give stakeholders a general overview of the study. T.J. expressed the importance of bringing the committee to agreement at key points throughout the study process.

Study Details

T.J. described the study limits as covering an 8.11 mile section of SR 162 from the SR 410 interchange in Sumner to Williams Boulevard in Orting. He also referenced the study's

stakeholders list. T.J. asked the group if WSDOT had captured all of the stakeholders. Are there any persons or groups missing?

The following stakeholders were invited to participate in the SR 162 study:

- City of Orting
- City of Sumner
- City of Bonney Lake
- Pierce County
- Pierce Transit
- Sound Transit
- Confederated Tribes & Bands of the Yakama Nation
- Nisqually Indian Tribe
- Puyallup Tribe of Indians
- Squaxin Island Tribe
- Muckleshoot Indian Tribe
- Puget Sound Regional Council
- Tehaleh/Newland Communities
- WSDOT

The group concurred that the appropriate stakeholders are at the table. T.J. is committed to following-up with those individuals not in attendance at each meeting. He also noted that staff will capture concerns and expectations from the following groups under a different venue:

- Foothills Trail
- Tacoma Wheelman
- Forever Green
- Public Safety
- Local School Districts

T.J. then presented the study goal, and objectives for the group's consideration. After a short discussion, the group settled on the following versions:

Goal

The study will identify ranked strategies that address corridor improvements which result in improved travel-time, predictability and the safe operation of the SR 162 corridor from Sumner to Orting.

Objectives

The study will engage partners, transportation service providers, and the communities to develop a plan that will:

- *Provide a safe and efficient transportation corridor that enhances the mobility and connectivity within the corridor;*
- *Provide an appropriate balance between the different users (through mobility and local access) along the corridor;*
- *Identify ranked near-term, mid-term and long-term improvement strategies for the corridor that include operational improvements and demand management strategies;*
- *Ensure strategies provide safe alternative modes of transportation;*
- *Ensure the strategies are compatible with existing land use and transportation plans*

Study Assumptions

T.J. commented that WSDOT will be looking at a variety of strategies to improve congestion in the SR 162 corridor. WSDOT will work with stakeholders on a ranked list of strategies.

For the study analysis, the 2015 Pierce County Model will be used. WSDOT is currently working with Pierce County modelers on additional assumptions and other aspects relating to the model. T.J. thanked Pierce County for offering the use of their model for the study.

Study Documents

Stakeholders received a copy of the Study Management Plan for their review and reference. This document incorporates a multitude of items as a one stop shop format of guidance. This plan features a Communication Plan, Study Charter, Schedule, and the link to the SR 162 study webpage and its content. T.J. walked the group through the study schedule further emphasizing the spring 2017 completion period. Next he directed their attention to the study's webpage and the study information available. He then encouraged the stakeholders to take the Study Management Plan back to their respective agencies and share it.

Community Engagement Effort

T.J. described the variety of community engagement tools that would be utilized in the study process. WSDOT will engage the Stakeholder Committee through meetings and communications; local leaders, and elected officials will be regularly briefed on the study as it progresses so that there are no surprises; social media such as Facebook and Twitter will be utilized to get the word out and to encourage public input through online surveys; and citizens will be able to obtain study information by email, phone, public meetings, and via the study's webpage. As means to invite participation in an online survey, WSDOT will also send out by mail, a postcard to nearby residents along the SR 162 corridor. The group was made aware of the intended targeted mail routes within specific zip codes in the study area that will receive a postal customer mailer. Stakeholders will also be emailed an electronic link to the survey and postcard announcement to be forwarded on to interested participants.

Online surveys have proven successful in gathering input with past WSDOT projects. Dennis Engel expressed excitement to implement this communications tool for the study citing the great response and information gathered. The draft survey questions were distributed to the group for their review and reference. Pierce Transit expressed interest in expanding the survey to also collect the ridership and needs for the area. The survey will be available on the internet for a two-week period. T.J. requested that the group email comments and edits for consideration to him by July 8th. The survey will then be finalized and posted.

The Postal Customer Mailer will be sent to 11,025 community members along SR 162 in the following zip code areas:

98344 (Kapowsin) 1,707 P.O. Boxes

98360 (Orting) 3,798 Postal Customers

98372 (Edgewood/N. Puyallup) 789 Postal Customers

98374 (South Hill/Alderton) 1,740 Postal Customers

98390 (Sumner) 2,695 Postal Customers

98391 (Bonney Lake) 296 Postal Customers

T.J. will follow-up with the Bonney Lake representative who had several questions relating to the distribution of the survey.

WSDOT requested stakeholders' assistance with getting the word out. WSDOT will email a link to the electronic survey and postcard announcement. Stakeholders are asked to forward this link to your contacts and other interested parties. The survey link will also be available from the SR 162 study webpage.

WSDOT Corridor Sketch Initiative

Study Team member Nazmul Alam gave an overview of the Corridor Sketch Initiative. He relayed that The Corridor Sketch Initiative is one way the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is implementing Practical Solutions at the corridor level. It is also a new way for the WSDOT to work jointly with partners to capture and document consistent baseline information about each transportation corridor around the state in order to inform future investment decisions.

Nazmul also explained that the Corridor Sketch Initiative is being implemented in two phases. WSDOT has just completed the first phase in collaboration with our partners, i.e. cities, counties tribes, transit and planning organizations.

In Pierce County, WSDOT held two workshops on January 22 and 25 of this year to discuss and gather input on corridors within Pierce County. Many of you participated in those workshops. With your help, we have completed all of the corridors within the Olympic Region, and now have SR 162 Corridor Sketch to build on for this study.

He then demonstrated what WSDOT has done with the information you provided at these workshops. Nazmul showed examples of the SR 162 Corridor Sketch Field Report and the supporting data report to give members an idea of what kind of information is included in the database.

Nazmul relayed that we are building on the work that we have done together and the baseline information that we have. WSDOT has begun Phase II, the development of strategies for the corridor.

Existing Conditions

Ming-Bang Shyu, WSDOT's modeler presented existing traffic conditions along the SR 162 corridor. Pierce County's 2015 travel demand forecast model will be used in the study. The study years for the analysis are:

- 2015 base year,
- 2020 and 2025 interim years and
- 2035 horizon year.

The study periods are 6:00 to 9:00 in the AM peak period and 3:00 to 6:00 in the PM peak period.

Ming reviewed the methods and assumptions for validating the existing conditions with the group. Ming commented that once the validation is complete, the next step is to complete the demand modeling for future study years as well as traffic operation analysis and simulation. In conducting the traffic operations analysis, the study will use

Synchro and the study years will be 2015, 2020, 2025, and 2035. The study periods will be 6:00 to 7:00 for the AM peak hour and 4:00 to 5:00 for the PM peak hours.

The traffic operation analysis will focus on 11 intersections and look at the overall intersection level of service. Another performance measure that we will conduct is travel time. Ming also discussed the existing daily volumes on the corridor with the highest volumes being slightly above 1800 vehicles in both directions. The average travel time during the AM peak hour was:

AM Peak Hour Travel Time

- 10.1 minutes in the southbound direction from Meade McCumber Rd E to Lane Blvd NW.
- 11.9 minutes in the northbound direction from Lane Blvd NW to Meade McCumber Rd E

PM Peak Hour Travel Time

- 17.1 minutes average travel time southbound from Meade McCumber Rd E to Lane Blvd NW
- 11.5 minutes average travel time northbound from Lane Blvd NW to Meade McCumber Rd E

Crash History from Jan 2011 to Dec 2015

T.J. presented a high level look at the crash history in the corridor. Crash history from January 2011 to December 2015 entailed the following:

- 409 total crashed
- No fatalities
- 282 (73%) rear-end type crashes
- 4 serious injury type crashes
- Inattention, speeding and following too closely were the most common contributing factors.
- Most intersection related crashes occurred at Pioneer Way with vehicle heading northbound.

Crash Data Disclaimer

Under 23 U.S. Code § 409, safety data, reports, surveys, schedules, lists compiled or collected for the purpose of identifying, evaluating, or planning the safety enhancement of potential crash sites, hazardous roadway conditions, or railway highway crossings are not subject to discovery or admitted into evidence in a Federal or State court proceeding or considered for other purposes in any action for damages arising from any occurrence at a location mentioned or addressed in such reports, surveys, schedules, lists, or data.

What isn't working well in the SR 162 corridor?

T.J. facilitated a discussion asking the stakeholders to identify what is working and what is not working well in the SR 162 corridor.

What isn't working well in the SR 162 corridor?

- Turn lanes are insufficient.
- Non-existent shoulders in some areas.
- Intersection at 128th in the PM peak hour backs-up to the Puyallup River Bridge.
- SR 410/SR 162 Interchange isn't working well.
- SR 167 HOV doesn't extend south enough and affects SR 162.
- SR 167 back-ups are backing up onto SR 162.
- Single occupant drivers traveling to the train station in Sumner use SR 162.
- Travelers experience congestion to parking facilities/need park and ride facilities on SR 162.
- Timing of the 3 signals on SR 162 from Pioneer to SR 410 (Pioneer, River Grove and SR 410).
- Crashes shut down the highway north and south directions.
- Emergency management and lifeline for the area is SR 162.
- Transit opportunities on the corridor and how can we use it better.
- Existing traffic impacts on SR 162 extends to local City of Sumner streets.
- Trail connectivity doesn't extend far enough north or to Bonney Lake.
- Dependable travel time from Orting to Sumner in both directions.
- Seasonal and holiday congestion along SR 162. Parking on shoulders occurs in the area where the trail is present.
- Congestion affects farmers and access to their fields.
- Lack of access to transit. Corridor is outside of the Pierce Transit service area.
- School buses stopping on SR 162 to pick-up/drop-off kids.

What is working well in the SR 162 corridor?

- New bridge on SR 162 is working well.
- Foothills Trail allows for bicycles and pedestrian connections along the corridor.

Draft Purpose and Need Discussion

T.J. led the discussion on the draft purpose and need statements. The stakeholders recommended changes to both the purpose and need statements which were incorporated. The finalized purpose and need statements follow:

The purpose of the study is to identify ranked strategies that increase mobility by reducing delay for all users of the corridor, while maintaining or improving the safe operation of the highway.

The need exists to address current and future congestion on the corridor and at signalized intersections, most pronounced during the peak commute periods, imposing delays and inconvenience for motorized travelers that creates challenges, and may have a significant impact on reliability and mobility at certain times of day.

Corridor Vision Discussion

T.J. presented the draft corridor vision for review. After a brief discussion, the corridor vision was finalized as follows:

Corridor Vision

Actively preserve the essence and character of the Orting and Sumner Valley while managing corridor performance that supports the local communities and the traveling public.

Next Steps

T.J. outlined the next steps for the study. The group noted their gratefulness for the study because it puts the SR 162 roadway issues back in the spotlight. The stakeholders also relayed how excited they are about the opportunity for collaborating together to discuss corridor issues.

July will conclude the elected officials study introduction. The next Stakeholder Committee meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on July 27th in Sumner. The specific meeting location is yet to be determined. T.J. closed with a reminder that any comments regarding the Online Survey are due to staff by July 8th.