

# VANCOUVER REGION SUMMARY

## 2019 MULTIMODAL MOBILITY HIGHLIGHTS

- Approximately 701.7 million person miles were traveled on the I-5, I-205 and SR 14 corridors in the Vancouver region in 2019, down 1% from 710.6 million person miles in 2018
- Vehicle delay on the I-5, I-205 and SR 14 corridors in the Vancouver region increased 19% from 187,000 hours in 2018 to 222,000 hours in 2019
- During the southbound morning commute in 2019, buses (0.5% of all vehicles) moved 7.7% of travelers on I-5 at the Interstate Bridge
- In 2019, both Oregon and Washington dedicated funding to restart work to replace the I-5 Interstate Bridge over the Columbia River
- WSDOT completed multiple Practical Solutions and Low Cost Enhancement projects in 2019 that impacted highway travel in the Vancouver region

In 2019, WSDOT's Southwest Region continued its commitment to providing safe, innovative, sustainable and inclusive transportation solutions. Here are some of the highlights.

### I-5 Interstate Bridge Replacement Program

Regional planning efforts have recognized the need to address issues associated with the existing Interstate Bridge over the Columbia River for decades. As the only continuous north-south Interstate on the West Coast between Mexico and Canada, I-5 is a vital trade route for regional, national and international economies. With the northbound span now over 100 years old, the current bridges are vulnerable to seismic activity, have significant safety concerns as a result of existing roadway design, are experiencing worsening congestion issues, contribute to impaired freight mobility, and have substandard bicycle and pedestrian facilities.



Demonstrating a clear recognition that addressing these issues is a critical transportation need for both states, in 2019 both Oregon and Washington dedicated funding to restart work to replace the Interstate Bridge. Leadership in both states directed the Oregon Department of Transportation and Washington State Department of Transportation to open a bi-state program office to lead these efforts. Early Interstate Bridge Replacement Program efforts focused on stakeholder reengagement, including bi-state legislative engagement and working with regional partner agencies to set the foundation for how to work together to develop a bridge solution that can build broad regional support, reflects community values, and successfully advances to construction.

WSDOT and ODOT are dedicated to leading a transparent, data-driven process that prioritizes equity and inclusion in all aspects of program work in collaboration with elected leaders, stakeholders and the public. As work progresses, the IBR program will strive to incorporate lessons learned from past efforts and utilize existing data as appropriate to ensure efficient and effective decision making that considers changes and reflects current conditions. Community engagement efforts will seek to provide extensive and ongoing opportunities for meaningful public involvement to help shape the process and identify a solution that can meet current and future needs.

## **Practical Solutions and Low Cost Enhancements**

### **SR 14 Wind River Road Intersection Improvements**

Installation of a new roundabout and hillside stabilization adjacent to State Route 14 near Wind River Road in the Columbia River Gorge improved safety and access between the town of Carson and the highway. Roundabouts are proven to help reduce the potential for severe crashes while improving travel times. This work also minimized environmental and residential impacts.

### **I-205 Ramp to SR 14 Zipper Merge Pilot Project**

To increase vehicle throughput, improve safety by reducing rear-end crashes, and decrease traffic

backups, WSDOT implemented a pilot project to install new informational signs along the shoulder of eastbound SR 14 in Vancouver. The signs encourage drivers to use the full length of the lane before merging during peak travel periods. Studies have shown that 'zipper' merging can cut congestion by up to 40 percent, while improving traffic flow, vehicle throughput, and safety (by reducing rear-end crashes).

### **SR 14 Access Improvements at 15th Street/Washougal River Rd and 32nd St in Washougal**

WSDOT constructed two roundabouts at the intersections of SR 14 at 15th and 32nd Streets in Washougal, helping to improve safety while improving connectivity for all users. The new roundabout at 32nd Street restored full access to the intersection from all directions, including from the nearby port and industrial facilities south of the highway, enhancing future economic development opportunities along the corridor.

### **I-205 Northbound Ramp Meters**

Two new ramp meters were installed on the westbound SR 500 and Fourth Plain Blvd on-ramps to northbound I-205, improving freeway traffic flow, while reducing the duration of congestion on the interstate and improving trip reliability during peak travel periods.

### **SR 500 at 42nd Ave and 54th Ave Safety Improvements**

Due to a history of frequent crashes, WSDOT removed the last two traffic signals along a six-mile stretch of SR 500 in central Vancouver and replaced them with right in/right out access. During the first year of installation, early traffic data shows a nearly 70% reduction in crashes at or near the two intersections from this low-cost highway modification, along with improved travel times.

### **Southwest Region Flashing Yellow Arrows**

Installed flashing yellow arrow signals at multiple intersections. The flashing yellow arrow replaces the green ball indicator for a yielding left turn. These new signal indicators improve safety by reducing left-turn crashes, increase efficiency and keep traffic moving by offering motorists more opportunities to make left turns, and are more intuitive to motorists.