



Summary

I-405/SR 167 Executive Advisory Group Meeting

Wednesday, April 12, 2017
Bellevue City Hall
2 – 4 p.m.

Executive Advisory Group members and elected officials in attendance:

- Shiv Batra, Washington Transportation Commission
- Councilmember Susan Boundy-Sanders, City of Woodinville
- Mayor Fred Butler, Sound Transit board
- Mayor Rich Crispo, City of Newcastle
- Deputy Mayor Davina Duerr, City of Bothell
- Linda Gehrke, Federal Transit Administration
- Councilmember Sam Low, Snohomish County
- Councilmember Dana Ralph, City of Kent, on behalf of Mayor Suzette Cooke
- Dan Mathis, Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration
- Mayor Bernie Talmas, City of Woodinville
- Peter Heffernan, on behalf of Harold Taniguchi, King County Department of Transportation
- Mayor Amy Walen, City of Kirkland
- Councilmember Kevin Wallace, City of Bellevue

Executive Advisory Group staff in attendance:

- Kevin Snyder, on behalf of Mayor Backus, City of Auburn
- Carol Thompson, on behalf of Emmett Heath, Community Transit
- Don Cairns, on behalf of Mayor John Marchione, City of Redmond
- Joel Pfundt, City of Kirkland
- Andrea Tull, Sound Transit
- Lacey Jane Wolfe, City of Kent

Presenters and WSDOT staff in attendance:

- Hannah Britt, I-405/SR 167 Project Team
- Anne Broache, I-405/SR 167 Project Team
- Jennifer Charlebois, WSDOT Toll Division
- Kim Henry, I-405/SR 167 Project Director
- Lisa Hodgson, I-405/SR 167 Project Team
- Secretary Roger Millar, Chair
- Erica Jacobs, King County
- Craig Smiley, I-405/SR 167 Project Team
- Wendy Taylor, I-405/SR 167 Project Team
- Bernard Van De Kamp, Sound Transit



Note: These meeting notes are intended to capture the discussion at the meeting, including questions and comments from the group. This is not intended to be a formal testimony or a complete transcript of the meeting. Meeting materials including the PowerPoint presentation are available on the web at: <http://wsdot.wa.gov/tolling/eastsidecorridor>

I. Introductions and Agenda Review

Secretary of Transportation Roger Millar welcomed the I-405/SR 167 Executive Advisory Group and provided an overview of the I-405 Corridor Master Plan, a multimodal, multiagency plan. He reviewed the progress made on building toward this plan, including adding new park and ride facilities, transit service, and bicycle-pedestrian facilities, and emphasized that there is a lot of additional work ahead during the next several years through funding from Connecting Washington and the passage of Sound Transit 3. He reminded the group that they meet quarterly, and this meeting will focus on the north end of I-405, the Renton to Bellevue Widening and Express Toll Lanes Project, King County's Eastside Rail Corridor regional trail, and next steps for ST3.

II. Sound Transit Update

Bernard Van De Kamp, High Capacity Transit East Corridor Development Director at Sound Transit, presented the next steps for implementing ST3 and Bus Rapid Transit on I-405. Sound Transit aims to implement BRT on I-405 by 2024 in coordination with WSDOT's projects, including installing 1300 park and ride stalls. Van De Kamp outlined where Sound Transit plans to have BRT along the I-405 corridor and noted that they look forward to express toll lanes for use by the BRT system. Sound Transit will coordinate with WSDOT on many projects throughout the corridor to implement ST3.

To implement next steps, Sound Transit is building their project staff and partnering along the corridor with other transit agencies, cities and WSDOT. By receiving input and addressing areas of concern early on, Sound Transit plans to work quickly to find preferred alternatives and work with local stakeholders to keep project timelines on track.

III. Sound Transit Executive Advisory Group Discussion

Linda Gehrke, Regional Administrator for the Federal Transit Administration, noted that many of ST's planned improvements are federally funded, and it is important that FTA is represented at the table when decisions are made.

Newcastle Mayor Rich Crispo expressed concerns about the number of parking stalls at park and rides. He asked how parking will be distributed along the corridor and commented that many voters on the Eastside voted against ST3 in part because of insufficient additional parking stalls. He noted that the current parking stalls in his area fill up early in the morning and suggested that Sound Transit should include more communities who are paying the bill into using the system.

Bernard Van De Kamp responded that Sound Transit will have an open and transparent process for building out ST3. He acknowledged that adding 1,300 parking stalls will not be enough, but that Sound Transit will take parking into consideration as it expands its services.



Woodinville Councilmember Susan Boundy-Sanders referenced the figure that park and ride expansions are currently complete or funded at 138% of the I-405 Master Plan to add 5,000 new park and ride spaces along the corridor. She asked if those extra spaces can be placed in Woodinville. Secretary Millar clarified that the 138% figure includes the parking stalls proposed in the current ST3 package. Van De Kamp said Sound Transit noted her comment about Woodinville's desire for additional park and ride spaces.

Kirkland Mayor Amy Walen said she is looking forward to working together on improvements to NE 85th Street and asked how her city can remain updated about the process. Van De Kamp replied that the Sound Transit Board will hear a proposed system expansion implementation plan on Thursday, April 13. The intent of the plan is to lay out a more open process than what has been perceived in Sound Transit's past. This plan involves cities, counties, and metro. It is similar to the I-405 project office's advisory groups, with one technical advisory group with staff and an executive advisory group.

Washington State Transportation Commissioner Shiv Batra asked whether there are differences between Sound Transit's plan and WSDOT's I-405 Corridor Master plan. Van De Kamp responded that there are differences. Not all direct access ramps contained in the Master Plan are funded as part of the ST3 package, such as direct access ramps at the 112th Avenue SE interchange. He also noted that the transit service model is different from that contained in the Master Plan. Kim Henry added that this plan was funded by the Legislature and Sound Transit in a way that is consistent with the Master Plan. He characterized the Master Plan as a transportation strategy that can be adapted to respond to changing land uses and corridor conditions.

Bellevue Councilmember Kevin Wallace requested a breakdown of funding for the I-405 Renton to Bellevue Widening and Express Toll Lanes project that shows how state and Sound Transit funding will be used. He also noted that a consistent message at today's meeting is the desire for increased park and ride facilities. He said they should be mobility hubs for lower-density areas to access the transit services they are paying for. He would like to find a way to gather interested parties to discuss these topics that is more effective than existing forums, such as the Eastside Transportation Partnership.

Renton Councilmember Randy Corman noted that the City of Renton is also concerned about the small number of parking spaces available to residents of Renton and Newcastle. He would like park and ride designs that allow for multimodal transportation, such as an area that allows carpooling vehicles to circulate for pick up and drop off.

Woodinville Mayor Bernie Talmas suggested that Sound Transit coordinate with Snohomish County to explore options for parking facilities for residents who live outside of Sound Transit's taxation boundaries but still wish to access their transit routes. He expressed the need to capture residents commuting from outside of Woodinville closer to home to help with traffic on SR 522.

Bothell Deputy Mayor Davina Duerr said she appreciates the work the I-405 project team did on the peak-use shoulder lane project. She expressed concern about insufficient park and ride options for Bothell residents and voiced the need to encourage other ways to access park and ride facilities aside from driving, such as providing more bike lockers.

To summarize the discussion, Secretary Millar noted that the need for parking is an issue of importance for many cities along the corridor. Van De Kamp emphasized that he would like to work in partnership as Sound Transit recognizes the demands are greater than the budget allows in the current plan. He said he



hears the group's questions about the scope, and he hopes to bring back details this summer. Henry said he is pleased to work together with Van De Kamp again on the Master Plan.

IV. WSDOT I-405/SR 167 Update

Kim Henry, I-405/SR 167 Corridor Program Director, provided an update on current and future projects on the corridor, including the peak-use shoulder lane in the north end of the corridor, the I-405/SR 167 Direct Connector, and Renton to Bellevue Widening and Express Toll Lanes. Henry announced the peak-use shoulder lane will open to traffic on April 24, 2017. He noted that the Direct Connector is under construction, and the Renton to Bellevue project is in its preliminary engineering and environmental review phase. He noted that there are several challenges with the Renton to Bellevue project that could affect its ability to stay on schedule, including the need to obtain toll authorization from the Legislature in the 2018 session. He also presented data showing that HOV travel times have continued to worsen between Renton and Bellevue between 2011 and 2016.

Henry reminded the group that the I-405 project office facilitated a two-day interagency charrette in November 2016 to recommend priority improvements for the Master Plan for the area of I-405 between SR 522 in Bothell and I-5 in Lynnwood. Henry presented a potential four-phased approach based on recommendations from the charrette. He noted that the Governor's budget requested \$5 million to continue preliminary engineering, but that budget bill was still pending in the Legislature. Henry concluded with an overview of the schedule of upcoming projects, noting that WSDOT continues to work with Sound Transit to align the opening of new transit infrastructure at Northeast 85th Street in Kirkland and Northeast 44th Street in Renton with the planned 2024 opening of I-405 Bus Rapid Transit.

Jennifer Charlebois, Director of Toll Systems and Engineering for the WSDOT Toll Division, provided a performance update about the Bellevue to Lynnwood express toll lanes based on preliminary 15-month data. She said the express toll lanes are meeting the goals set at the beginning of the program, moving more vehicles at peak periods in most areas. The Toll Division conducted outreach at the *Good to Go!* service center in Bellevue and found drivers who appreciate the option to use the lanes. WSDOT is preparing a two-year report that is expected to be released in fall 2017.

V. WSDOT I-405/SR 167 Executive Advisory Group Discussion

Bothell Deputy Mayor Davina Duerr said she looks forward to the opening of the peak-use shoulder lane. She acknowledged the hard work of the participants in the north end projects charrette.

Bellevue Councilmember Kevin Wallace asked whether there was a change to the way the number of trips in the express toll lanes are measured. Jennifer Charlebois clarified that the latest data reflects that the hours of operations have changed for the express toll lanes, with no tolls assessed on nights and weekends. Wallace also asked what would happen with extra revenues from the express toll lanes. Kim Henry said WSDOT hopes to provide more information at the early summer meeting about potential funding options for I-405 north end projects using projected toll revenue.

Secretary Millar said WSDOT can be more nimble when using tolling revenue than with traditional funding sources. He noted that the chairs of the Transportation Committees are beginning to sort their next priorities for corridor work, and that the area of I-405 between SR 522 and SR 527 has attracted a lot of attention as an area in need of improvement.



Dan Mathis, Federal Highway Administration Division Administrator, asked whether restriping and other operational improvements for the express toll lanes were funded by toll revenue. Henry responded that the latest improvements to the express toll lanes were included with the peak-use shoulder lane project, which is funded by toll revenue. He said he expects the express toll lane access change on northbound I-405 between Northeast 195th Street and SR 527 to make a minor improvement to traffic flow in the area.

VI. Eastside Rail Corridor Update

Erica Jacobs, Project Manager at King County Parks, presented an update about the Eastside Rail Corridor. She focused on two key trail components that WSDOT will build as part of the I-405 Renton to Bellevue contract: a bicycle/pedestrian bridge across I-405 at the site of the former Wilburton rail tunnel, and a roughly three-mile section of trail south of I-90. She noted that interim gravel trail sections will open by late 2017 from 108th Avenue NE to Northup Way in the Bellevue/Kirkland area and from Gene Coulon Park to Newcastle Beach Park in the Renton/Bellevue area.

VII. Eastside Rail Corridor Executive Advisory Group Discussion

Newcastle Mayor Rich Crispo asked how safety will be incorporated into constructing the portion of the ERC atop the historic Wilburton trestle. Jacobs said the walking area will not be caged in, but it will have railing at an appropriate height for safety. She added that the decking will be 16 feet wide and maintain access for emergency vehicles. She also noted that structural engineers conducted a preliminary study on the structure in 2015. Mayor Crispo said he was pleased that the structure would not be caged in.

VIII. Public Comment

Becky Birch, a Bothell resident, said she used BART when living in San Francisco, which was successful because there was parking available. She said she was disappointed by the lack of mass transit after moving to Bothell. She said implementing ST3 with greater park and ride opportunities would help to increase system usability.

Bill Popp, a Bellevue resident, said he is excited to see Bernard Van De Kamp working on the I-405 Bus Rapid Transit system. He said the I-405 corridor needs more park and rides. He would like to see buses picking up passengers offline to maximize ridership and minimize transfers. He referenced a slide that showed HOV lane performance worsening between Tukwila and Bellevue, but he said this does not prove the general purpose lanes are worsening as well. He also suggested that the Bellevue to Lynnwood section of I-405 is performing better, not because of express toll lanes, but because of new roadway capacity.

IX. Wrap Up

Secretary Millar said WSDOT will continue to evaluate improvements in the north end of the corridor and move forward with preliminary engineering. He reminded the group that the peak-use shoulder lane will open to traffic on April 24. He said the next quarterly meeting will include a discussion on funding for north



end projects and an update on the peak-use shoulder lane performance as well as updates from partner agencies. Between now and 2024, there will be a lot of construction as improvements are implemented, and he looks forward to cutting the ribbon on the Renton to Bellevue Widening and Express Toll Lanes Project.

Adjourn