

WSDOT's Corridor Sketch Initiative is a collaborative planning process with agency partners to identify performance gaps and select high-level strategies to address them on the 304 corridors statewide. This Corridor Sketch Summary acts as an executive summary for one corridor. Please review the User Guide for Corridor Sketch Summaries prior to using information on this corridor:

SR 24: I-82 Jct (Yakima) to SR 243 Jct

This 44-mile east-west corridor is located in Yakima and Benton counties. The corridor runs between the Interstate 82 interchange in Yakima across the Vernita Bridge over the Columbia River and the State Route 243 junction. There are also junctions with SR 241 and SR 240, and a Yakima River crossing near I-82. East of the SR 240 junction, the corridor passes through portions of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation and the Hanford Reach National Monument. The majority of the corridor is rural in character with agriculture and open rangeland being the primary land uses. From Yakima through Moxee, the corridor is urban in character and experiencing significant residential and industrial growth. The agricultural lands include irrigated fields and major high-value hop fields intermixed with dry grass and shrub-steppe vegetation. The terrain along the corridor is generally flat from Yakima to the SR 241 junction passing through the Moxee and Black Rock Valleys. There are steep grades between SR 241 and SR 240, and from SR 240 to the Columbia River Plain.



Current Function

SR 24 is an east-west highway connecting Yakima to Othello within the Columbia Basin in south central Washington. The corridor is both an urban and a rural arterial, and is an important freight and farm-to-market route. It connects agricultural products grown in the Yakima Valley, Moxee Valley, and the Wahluke Slope (Mattawa area) within the Columbia Basin. The corridor is an important commuter route between Moxee and the Moxee Valley to the greater Yakima area, and between Yakima and U.S. Department of Energy Hanford site. Commuters use the corridor to access industrial facilities in Moxee, nearby agricultural and ranching lands, and employment in Yakima. This corridor provides one of only two east-west Yakima River crossings between Selah Gap and Union Gap, and a critical Columbia River crossing on the Vernita Bridge, one of only a limited number of crossings. Recreational traffic uses the corridor to access the Hanford Reach National Monument.

Future Function

Based on the projected population, land use, and economic trends, the future function of this corridor is expected to remain the same.

Highlights and Performance

This section of SR 24 is a two-lane, undivided highway. It has four lanes for a short distance at the I-82 interchange and across the Yakima River. The highway has several signalized intersections with turn lanes at major intersections. There are truck climbing lanes on the steep grade between SR 241 and SR 240. The annual average daily traffic on this corridor is highest at the I-82 junction in Yakima and lowest west of the SR 241 junction.

What's working well?

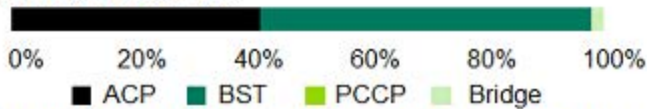
- All of the surveyed pavements on the corridor are in fair or better condition.
- The grading and curvature of the roadway are mostly gentle, enhancing driver safety.
- The new Yakima River Bridge has improved mobility on the corridor, as well as resiliency against flooding.
- The park and ride lots along the corridor are very well-utilized.

WSDOT monitors the state system in ongoing efforts to track asset performance. For this corridor, WSDOT finds:

High	Low	
22,223	1,000	Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)
43.2%	6.7%	Bus/Truck Percent
97.58		Number of Lane Miles
7		# of Signalized/Stop Controlled Intersections
\$63,006,000		Corridor Investments (2005-2016)

Preservation

Roadway Surface Type



Roadway Surface Condition (Percent of Surveyed Area)



Corridor Bridge Preservation Needs



1) 2015 data unless otherwise noted. 2) For more information see the User Guide for Corridor Sketch Summaries at <http://bit.ly/WSDOTcorridorsketch>

What we heard from our partners

WSDOT collected feedback from agency partners. Key themes included:

- Interest in expanding the portion of the corridor between the cities of Moxee and Yakima in order to promote mobility and economic vitality.
- Concern about the combined impact of a preexisting low level of service along the Moxee section of the corridor and seasonal agricultural freight.
- A desire to explore ways to overcome current and expected future habitat connectivity issues.
- Emphasis on reducing particulate matter emissions by managing levels of congestion and environmental controls on any forthcoming projects.
- Interest in creating a shared-use path between Yakima and Moxee to provide a non-motorized travel alternative between the two communities.

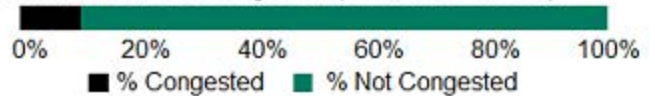
What needs to change?

- Roughly 10% of the corridor experiences congestion on a daily basis.
- The mobility of pedestrian and cyclist traffic is occasionally impeded along the corridor's urban areas.
- Eight miles of the corridor have a medium priority habitat connectivity issue.
- Increasing traffic volumes have led to congestion at most intersections on the western end of the corridor.

WSDOT monitors the state system in ongoing efforts to track asset performance. For this corridor, WSDOT finds:

Mobility

Percent of Corridor Congested (Statewide Screen)



Environment

	Protect	Restore/ Enhance/ Assess
Fish Barriers	100% Passable	0% to Do
Noise Walls	0% Built	0% Proposed
Chronic Environmental Deficiencies	0% Resolved	0% Unresolved
Wildlife Connectivity	0 Structures in Place	8 High Priority Miles
Stormwater Treatment	15 BMPs	Retrofit Prioritization in progress
99.7	% of Corridor with high potential for increased Climate Impacts	
1	Wetland Mitigation Locations	
None	Historical Bridges	

Strategies

WSDOT identified the following strategies and associated actions to keep the corridor working well and address performance gaps. Regional partners collaborated on high-level mobility strategies. The identified strategies are not meant to be all-inclusive, nor an established list of priorities. Further evaluation is needed before any strategy can be recommended as a solution to address performance. Project funding decisions will take place at the programming phase, and are subject to statewide prioritization. For more strategy information, visit the Corridor Sketch Summary User Guide.

Policy Goals / Strategies Description and Near-Term Actions

Economic Vitality

Under Development	<i>WSDOT will continue to work with partners in developing strategies to address economic vitality.</i>
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Environment

Protect and Maintain	<i>Protect and maintain existing assets that provide environmental function (these include WSDOT's mitigation sites, storm water systems, fish passable culverts).</i>
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Enhance or Restore	<i>Enhance or restore natural areas and environmental functions associated with the multimodal transportation system.</i>
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Fish Barrier Retrofit	<i>WSDOT has prioritized the removal of state-owned culverts that block habitat for salmon and steelhead. See interactive map of uncorrected fish barriers at http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/FishPassage/default.htm.</i>
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Mobility

Assessment	<i>Further information about the proposed strategies can be found attached at the end of this document.</i>
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Preservation

Maintenance	<i>Based on expenditure history, it is expected that the top three activities will continue to be maintenance on snow and ice control, pavement repair, and rest areas.</i>
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Pavement	<i>WSDOT has identified six Pavement actions in the next six years encompassing 69% of the corridor.</i>
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Other Facilities	<i>WSDOT has identified one Other Facilities action in the next six years at a single location on this corridor.</i>
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Stewardship

Planning	<i>Under Practical Solutions, the Corridor Sketch Initiative identifies corridor performance, and assesses alternative strategies to improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system.</i>
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The westbound SR 24 off-ramp to northbound I-82 are congested during afternoon peak times. The northbound I-82 off-ramp also experiences operational issues as it merges with eastbound SR 24 traffic and only has 300 feet before needing to merge due to the right-turn only lane.

The S 24th Street intersection experiences congestion during morning and afternoon peak times. Except for the north leg, all the legs have dedicated left-turn and right-turn lanes.

Corridor Segment Characteristics

- This segment of SR 24 is on the National Highway System and is designated a Highway of Statewide Significance.
- The average daily traffic ranged from 21,000 to 23,000 in 2015.
- This segment of SR 24 is a Freight Economic Corridor with freight tonnage 5.8 million tons per year and accounted for 7% of the traffic in 2015.
- The speed limit is 35 mph.
- SR 24 is a limited access highway within the mobility corridor segment.
- The shoulder is available for bicycle and pedestrian use.
- No transit service is available.

Contributing Factors

- The growth of affordable housing and industrial uses in Moxee contributes to growing traffic volumes at the interchange.
- The short distance between the on-ramp to eastbound SR 24 from northbound I-82 and a right-turn only lane at S 24th Street results in weaving and slowdowns.

Mobility Strategies:

Operational Improvements

- Evaluate coordinating traffic signals on SR 24 and Nob Hill Boulevard to provide traffic flow continuity for eastbound and westbound traffic.

Demand Management

- Offer the Commute Trip Reduction program to employers in the congested corridor to reduce demand during peak times and improve mobility on the highway. Although outside the westbound ramps, it may reduce trips through the interchange.
- Expand the existing park and ride lots that are nearing capacity to increase the number of shared-ride users to reduce congestion. Although outside the westbound ramps, it may reduce trips through the interchange.

Local Network Improvements

- Consider constructing a separate bicycle and pedestrian path along the SR 24 corridor, extending the path from the existing Yakima Greenway to Moxee to improve facilities for non-motorized users. Although outside the westbound ramps, it may reduce trips through the interchange.

Further Study

- Evaluate options to increase throughput through the intersection which is currently signalized.

The segment from University Parkway to Faucher Road is congested during morning and afternoon peak times. Three of the park and ride lots are nearing capacity.

Corridor Segment Characteristics

- This segment of SR 24 is on the National Highway System and is designated a Highway of Statewide Significance.
- The traffic ranged from 19,000 vehicles at 24th Street to 6,400 vehicles at Faucher Road in 2015.
- This segment of SR 24 hauls 2.9 million annual tons of freight, and accounted for 13% of the traffic in 2015.
- The speed limit is 55 mph.
- SR 24 is a limited access highway within the mobility corridor segment.
- The shoulder is available for bicycle and pedestrian use.
- No transit service is available.

Contributing Factors

- The growth of affordable housing and industrial uses in Moxee contributes to growing traffic volumes.
- Trucks and other slow vehicles slow significantly climbing the Vernita grade from the Columbia River plain and there is no auxiliary lane to accommodate them.

Mobility Strategies:

Operational Improvements

- Construct a separate non-motorized path from Yakima to Moxee to reduce user conflicts and improve mobility.
- Restripe the existing pavement to provide a reversible lane or an additional lane in one direction, in order to reduce congestion and improve mobility.

Demand Management

- Offer the Commute Trip Reduction program to employers in the congested corridor to reduce demand during peak times and improve mobility on the highway.
- Expand the existing park and ride lots that are nearing capacity to increase the number of shared-ride users to reduce congestion.

Local Network Improvements

- Construct separate southbound right-turn and left-turn lanes at the SR 24/Birchfield Road intersection to reduce congestion.
- Consider constructing a separate bicycle and pedestrian path along the SR 24 corridor, extending the path from the existing Yakima Greenway to Moxee to improve facilities for non-motorized users.

Further Study

- Look into improvements between University Parkway and Faucher Road to reduce congestion and increase economic vitality.

For more information

To find out more information about this corridor or how to get involved, please contact:

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Washington State Department of Transportation's Corridor Sketch Initiative is a set of planning activities that engage our partners to define the context and performance information for all of the state's 304 highway corridors. The Corridor Sketch complements and supports regional planning processes in Washington. It is not intended to duplicate, substitute or compete with other planning efforts; nor is it intended to generate lists of projects.

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