



Corridor Program

Summary

I-405/SR 167 Executive Advisory Group Meeting

Monday, June 25, 2018
Kirkland Justice Center, Totem Lake Room
1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Executive Advisory Group members and elected officials in attendance:

- Secretary of Transportation Roger Millar, Chair
- Councilmember Susan Boundy-Sanders, City of Woodinville
- Rep. Judy Clibborn, Washington State House of Representatives
- Mayor Allen Dauterman, City of Newcastle
- June DeVoll, Community Transit
- Deputy Mayor Davina Duerr, City of Bothell
- Sen. Phil Fortunato, Washington State Senate
- Linda Gerkhe, Federal Transit Administration
- Rep. Mark Hargrove, Washington State House of Representatives
- Rep. Shelley Kloba, Washington State House of Representatives
- Dan Mathis, Federal Highway Administration
- Sen. Guy Palumbo, Washington State Senate
- Chris Arkills (on behalf of Harold Taniguchi), King County Metro
- Deputy Mayor Jay Arnold (on behalf of Mayor Amy Walen), City of Kirkland
- Councilmember Janice Zahn, City of Bellevue

Staff in attendance:

- Ed Barry, Director, WSDOT Toll Division
- Erica Bramlet, Washington State Senate Transportation Committee
- Jeff Brauns, City of Newcastle
- Hannah Britt, I-405/SR 167 Project Team
- Anne Broache, I-405/SR 167 Project Team
- April Delchamps, City of Kent
- Lisa Hodgson, I-405/SR 167 Project Team
- Hannah Howell (on behalf of Rep. Larry Springer), Washington State House of Representatives
- Eddie Low, City of Bothell
- Hannah McCarty, Senate Democratic Caucus
- Julie Meredith, WSDOT Deputy Assistant Secretary of Megaprojects
- Elizabeth Mountsier (on behalf of Mayor John Marchione), City of Redmond
- Joyce Nichols, City of Bellevue
- Deb Osborne, Community Transit
- Joel Pfundt, City of Kirkland
- Hari Ponnekanti, City of Tukwila
- Carl See, Washington State Transportation Commission
- Jim Seitz, City of Renton
- JoAnn Schoeler, WSDOT Olympic Region
- Wendy Taylor, Deputy Director, I-405/SR 167 Project Team
- Lacey Jane Wolfe, City of Bellevue

**Presenters:**

- Kim Henry, Program Administrator,
I-405/SR 167 Project Team
- Bernard Van De Kamp, East Corridor
Development Director, Sound Transit
- Doug Vaughn, Chief Financial Officer,
WSDOT
- Curt Warber, Project Manager, King
County Parks

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

Roger Millar, WSDOT's Secretary of Transportation, welcomed the I-405/SR 167 Executive Advisory Group, asked the EAG members to introduce themselves and provided an overview of the meeting topics. Secretary Millar reminded attendees that the group met in January and plans additional meetings in 2018. This meeting will include an update from King County Parks, Sound Transit, Washington State Department of Transportation and the Office of the State Treasurer. He gave an overview of future meeting topics.

Secretary Millar reminded the group about the I-405 Master Plan that guides the work along the corridor. He reiterated that it is a multimodal, multiagency partnership for transit, highway and bicycle/pedestrian improvements.

II. King County Parks update

Curt Warber, Eastside Rail Corridor Regional Trail project manager for King County Parks, provided an update on trail progress and schedule. He noted that two interim ERC trail segments are now open between Gene Coulon Park to Newcastle Beach Park and between the Cross Kirkland Corridor to 120th Ave NE; King County is in the design phase of other key segments.

King County and WSDOT are collaborating on the design-build request for proposals for the two ERC trail segments that WSDOT will build as part of the I-405 Renton to Bellevue Widening and Express Toll Lanes project. Warber also highlighted coordination with Sound Transit on the NE 8th Street crossing. Looking forward, Warber described opportunities for private funding of future ERC projects, and noted the ERC is considering rebranding to increase public awareness.

Discussion

- Sen. Phil Fortunato asked about funding sources for the ERC trail work in the Renton to Bellevue project. Warber, Millar, and I-405/SR 167 Program Administrator Kim Henry clarified that the portions of the ERC trail being built by WSDOT are intended as mitigation for impacts to the Lake Washington Loop Trail and are funded by Connecting Washington.
- Sen. Guy Palumbo asked for clarification on funding sources for the Snohomish County trail segments on a map in the King County presentation. Warber explained that everything north of King County is an active railway that is not yet banked and that options, including both rail and a trail, are being considered.



Warber said that some key constraints for northern segments are creating a safe crossing at NE 145th Street and SR 202 in Woodinville and providing crossings over the Sammamish River.

- Bellevue Councilmember Janice Zahn said Bellevue residents are happy with the southern trail section near Newcastle Beach Park. She asked which sections of the trail are funded in Bellevue. Warber said the Wilburton Gap Bridge is fully funded; however, it will not have connectivity until the Wilburton Trestle is fully funded. He said that King County is considering a levy renewal after 2019, and they are optimistic that the trestle will be fully funded within the 2021 timeframe. He said the NE 8th Street Bridge needs to be built by 2022 to avoid conflicts with light rail construction; however, there is currently a funding gap at NE 8th Street.
- Kirkland Deputy Mayor Jay Arnold asked about the plan for private funding sources. Warber said there is an Eastside Rail Corridor funding commission that has been meeting regularly and is likely to have recommendations in the fall.

III. WSDOT update

Kim Henry, WSDOT I-405/SR 167 Corridor Program Administrator, reviewed the plan for a continuous 40-mile express toll lane system on I-405 and SR 167. Henry provided a brief overview of the scope and schedule of the I-405 Renton to Bellevue Widening and Express Toll Lanes project, which is currently in the environmental review process.

Henry explained that the Renton to Bellevue project will be one construction contract, but the environmental review process includes two separate Environmental Assessments. WSDOT published the I-405, Downtown Bellevue Vicinity Express Toll Lanes Environmental Assessment in April 2018, and I-405, Tukwila to I-90 Environmental Assessment will be available for public review in the summer. With this project, including express toll lanes, traffic is expected to improve across all lanes in most areas between Renton and Bellevue, compared to 2025 conditions without the project.

Henry provided an overview of the Renton to Bellevue project schedule and other funded projects along the I-405 corridor. He said WSDOT expects to release the Request for Proposals for the Renton to Bellevue project in November 2018. He noted the improvements at the NE 85th Street interchange and NE 132nd interchange may be combined into one construction contract for efficiency.

Henry presented an update on funded and unfunded priorities for the I-405/SR 167 corridor. Since the last EAG meeting, WSDOT has worked with the Office of the State Treasurer to look at bonding scenarios to fund priority projects. Rep. Clibborn requested the list of projects and the potential bonding capacity of both I-405 and SR 167.

Doug Vaughn, Chief Financial Officer from WSDOT, presented a preliminary bonding analysis from the Office of the State Treasurer, which shows how bonding off toll revenue could support the acceleration of projects in the I-405/SR 167 corridor. He explained two bonding scenarios:

1. Pledging only I-405 toll revenue, which would produce approximately \$575.5 million in triple-backed bond proceeds
2. Pledging both I-405 and SR 167 toll revenue, which would produce approximately \$710 million in bond proceeds



Vaughn explained that legislative actions would be needed, including bonding and toll authorization. He provided a list of priority projects with a cost totaling \$710 million that could potentially be funded with triple pledged bonds paid by tolls, according to the OST's preliminary results.

Discussion

- Sen. Palumbo asked whether the bonding scenarios would fund all of the projects on the green list on the handout and whether a supermajority is needed for bond authorization. Vaughn confirmed that the preliminary analysis showed sufficient funds for the projects on the list and that a supermajority would be needed for bond authorization.
- Mayor Allen Dauterman said he was excited about improved traffic flow after the Renton to Bellevue project, voiced concerns about traffic during construction and asked how WSDOT is handling that issue. Henry said managing traffic during construction is a top priority for WSDOT, and the design-build contract will dictate the hours that the contractor can close lanes and ramps. He noted that this approach worked well during the previous Bellevue to Lynnwood construction.
- Sen. Fortunato asked whether WSDOT has evaluated eliminating the existing high occupancy vehicle lanes between Renton and Bellevue and opening all lanes to general traffic. Henry said that because HOV lanes were funded by the Federal Highway Administration, removing the lanes is not an option. Therefore, WSDOT's analyses have not evaluated a scenario without HOV lanes. He noted that WSDOT's data shows that express toll lanes out-perform general purpose lanes, and previous experience has shown that adding general purpose capacity on I-405 has only temporary benefits. He noted that sections of I-405 with two express toll lanes and three general purpose lanes move up to 35% greater vehicle volumes than sections of I-5 with four general purpose and one HOV lane. Secretary Millar added that WSDOT presented scenarios of future traffic conditions without express toll lanes at a previous meeting, and the I-405 Program office can provide that information to Sen. Fortunato's office.
- Deputy Mayor Duerr asked about traffic projections in the north end once Bus Rapid Transit opens in 2024. Henry said the I-405 Program has not yet created traffic projection maps for the priority north end projects. Duerr asked for clarification on whether Phase 1A of the I-405/SR 522 to SR 527 improvements could be funded under the bonding scenario that used only I-405 revenue. Vaughn noted that the bonding analysis did not include any sort of project prioritization. Henry said the bonds backed by I-405 toll revenue would generate sufficient revenue to fund both Phase 1A and 1B of the north end improvements.
- Councilmember Zahn asked whether the Renton to Bellevue project construction schedule accounts for the fact that I-405 is already a highly congested corridor and that could constrain the contractor's ability to work quickly. Henry responded that the construction estimate accounts for the constraints to keep the corridor moving.
- Sen. Palumbo asked how long toll revenue collected between Bellevue and Lynnwood would be needed to fund the Renton to Bellevue project before money can be used to fund north end improvements if bonding is not authorized. Henry responded that earlier analysis included breaking Phase 1 into 1A (beginning in 2024) and 1B (beginning in 2031). Sen. Palumbo also asked how BRT will function in the north end. Secretary Millar responded that Bernard Van De Kamp's presentation will cover how BRT will function. He also noted that there are many remaining projects in the I-405 Master Plan and that additional funding will be needed to implement those projects.

IV. Sound Transit update

Bernard Van De Kamp, East Corridor Development Director for Sound Transit, provided an overview of future light rail and BRT connections in the region.



Van De Kamp presented the I-405 BRT service between Lynnwood and Burien and an overview of the schedule, including the start of BRT service by 2024. He said Sound Transit will completely rebuild the Lynnwood Transit Center and upgrade existing stops. He presented the conceptual design for the NE 85th Street interchange with an animated video. He explained Sound Transit's collaboration with partner agencies to develop the concept.

Van De Kamp described where Sound Transit buses will operate in the express toll lanes between Bellevue and Renton. He presented an animation of the concept for the NE 44th Street interchange flyer stop with direct access ramps to the express toll lanes. He explained there is a tentative agreement at the staff level for cost sharing at the interchange, and the funding agreement will go to the Sound Transit board before the end of the year.

Discussion

- Rep. Mark Hargrove asked how much of ST3 funding goes toward light rail and whether ST3 funding includes flyover ramps. Van De Kamp said he could follow up with details on the funding split between rail and buses. He said BRT investments total about \$1 billion, including \$860 million for I-405, \$300-350 million for the SR 522 BRT corridor and \$100-150 million for overall BRT service and operations.
- Deputy Mayor Arnold complimented WSDOT and Sound Transit on the NE 85th Street inline station design concept. He said it provides good solutions for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, has a smaller footprint than other concepts, and provides access to the express toll lanes, all at a lower cost than the original design concept.

V. Public comment

Vic Bishop, Chair of the Eastside Transportation Association, said today's presentation includes only part of the I-405 Master Plan. He said that if the state commits to using tolls to pay off bonds, WSDOT will not be able to build the rest of the I-405 Master Plan. He noted that BRT was part of the Master Plan, but the current funded construction projects only include about half of the seven direct access ramps, which are important for BRT operations.

David Hablewitz posed three questions to the EAG members. He asked about the rates of 2-person carpools since WSDOT implemented the express toll lanes between Bellevue and Lynnwood. He said that moving more cars in the express toll lanes does not necessarily mean that more people are moving through the corridor. He also asked what the plan is for removing the express toll lanes between Bellevue and Lynnwood because they are not meeting the federal or state requirements for speed performance. He also requested updated collision data since implementing the express toll lanes. He said the initial report on I-405 express toll lane performance showed an increase in collisions. He asked how WSDOT is working toward Vision Zero.

VI. Wrap up

Secretary Millar thanked the EAG members for attending and reviewed the next steps. He said the I-405 Program will reach out to EAG members later this summer regarding the next meeting.