

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:

I-705: SR 7/I-5 Jct to Schuster Parkway

This 1.5-mile long north-south corridor is located in the city of Tacoma. The corridor runs between the Interstate 5 junction and Schuster Parkway in downtown Tacoma. State Route 509 travels east-west and intersects I-705 becoming S 21st Street, connecting the corridor to the city. This corridor passes through a major urban, commercial, and industrial area of Tacoma. The character of the corridor is dense urban. West of the corridor are several commercial uses of which include the University of Washington - Tacoma. East of the corridor are heavy industrial uses and the Port of Tacoma and the Dock Street Marina. Outside of the immediate area surrounding the corridor are many residential units. Other attractions located near the corridor include, the Tacoma Dome, Tacoma Art Museum, Washington State History Museum, Museum of Glass, and Convention Center. The corridor traverses rolling terrain with a small amount of street trees present along the route.



Current Function

I-705 is a spur route off of I-5 located entirely within Tacoma and serves as the connector between I-5, downtown Tacoma's waterfront, North Tacoma, and the Tacoma Dome. The corridor carries freight traffic from I-5 to downtown Tacoma, the Port of Tacoma, and nearby businesses. Other corridor users include commuters traveling to work and school, and recreational users visiting the city and its museums. This corridor connects the city of Ruston and Point Defiance Park via Schuster Parkway and Ruston Way. Major traffic generators for this segment include the aforementioned employment centers, local hospitals, Pierce County Superior Court, and downtown businesses. Public transportation is available along this corridor. The Tacoma Dome Station serves as a transit center providing both bus, light rail, and heavy rail service along the corridor. Several rail lines also parallel the corridor. Intermodal facilities are located within the Port of Tacoma tideflats. Bicycling is prohibited on the corridor.

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 corridor is mainly a four-lane, divided highway that expands to eight lanes at two locations and seven lanes in one location, creating spaghetti bowl interchanges. The annual average daily traffic on this corridor is highest at the interweave of SR 7 to I-705 northbound and the Tacoma Dome exit and lowest near the I-705 entrance and the SR 509 exit.

What's working well?

- All surveyed pavements on the corridor are in fair or better conditions.
- There are no chronic environmental deficiencies.
- There are multiple freight facilities on the corridor.
- The corridor has a low climate change impact vulnerability rating.

What needs to change?

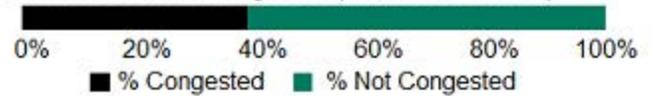
- Roughly 39% of this corridor experiences congestion.

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

High	Low	
73,304	23,074	Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)
3.8%	3.8%	Bus/Truck Percent
6.42		Number of Lane Miles
0		# of Signalized/Stop Controlled Intersections
\$94,518,000		Corridor Investments (2005-2016)

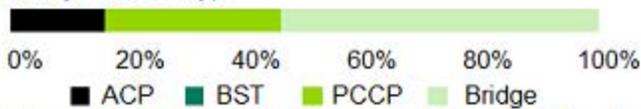
Mobility

Percent of Corridor Congested (Statewide Screen)

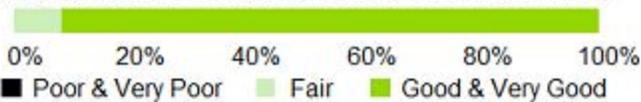


Preservation

Roadway Surface Type



Roadway Surface Condition (Percent of Surveyed Area)



Corridor Bridge Preservation Needs



Environment

	Protect	Restore/ Enhance/ Assess
Fish Barriers	None	0% to Do
Noise Walls	0% Built	0% Proposed
Chronic Environmental Deficiencies	0% Resolved	0% Unresolved
Wildlife Connectivity	0 Structures in Place	0 High Priority Miles
Stormwater Treatment	4 BMPs	Retrofit Prioritization in progress
Zero	% of Corridor with high potential for increased Climate Impacts	
None	Wetland Mitigation Locations	
1	Historical Bridges	

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:

- The city of Tacoma has expressed concerns over city street congestion and a tight weave which occurs heading northbound off to the Tacoma Dome (SR 7 to I-705 northbound).
- Pierce Transit has expressed concerns about the lack of adequate parking at the Tacoma Dome Station.
- Desire for Sound Transit "Tacoma Dome Station Improvements".
- Desire for Intelligent Transportation Systems on I-705 and SR 509.
- Interest in evaluating Tacoma Prairie Line Trail beneath I-705 from 15th Street along the Foss Waterway.

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>
Enhance or Restore	<i>Enhance or restore natural areas and environmental functions associated with the multimodal transportation system.</i>
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>

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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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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This segment of I-705 serves as a north-south commuter and freight corridor to downtown businesses and nearby Port of Tacoma. It begins at I-5 and heads north towards Schuster Parkway within the city of Tacoma. I-705 intersects with SR 509.

This segment includes high mainline traffic volumes with merging, diverging, and weaving movements between interchanges which reduce capacity for up to 10 hours daily.

Corridor Segment Characteristics

- The interstate is typically an urban four-lane divided facility with a posted speed of 60 mph in rolling terrain with connections to SR 509.
- The Freight and Goods Transportation designation was T-2 with 4,770,000 in annual tonnage and 1,800 daily trucks (3.8%) in 2017.
- The annual average daily traffic north of I-5 was 23,000 in 2015.
- The access management is full control limited access for the entire corridor.
- The interstate is typically an urban The I-705 is on the National Highway System and is designated a Highway of Statewide Significance.

Contributing Factors

- High traffic volumes on one-lane segments reduce capacity.
- The corridor is in close proximity to the University of Washington Tacoma, Port of Tacoma, Tacoma Dome, and downtown businesses.

Mobility Strategies: Operational Improvements

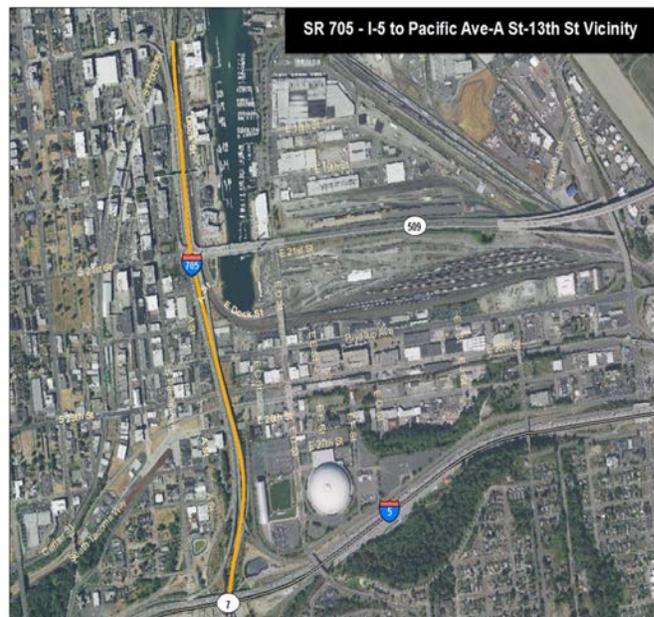
- Consider installing Intelligent Transportation System to improve efficiency.
- Consider signs heading northbound directing people to Stadium Way and Ruston Way to improve traffic flow.
- Study options for using hard shoulder during peak periods to reduce congestion and queuing back ups.

Demand Management

- Evaluate the usage of the city of Tacoma Prairie Line Trail beneath I-705 from 15th St along the Foss Waterway for bicyclists and pedestrians to encourage mode shift.
- Evaluate Freighthouse Square/Tacoma Station improvements east of I-705 to connect to the Amtrak Passenger Rail for multimodal transportation.
- Support Sound Transit “Tacoma Dome Station Access Improvements” to reduce congestion.
- Support Sound Transit “Tacoma Link Expansion” into Hilltop District to encourage mode shift.

Further Study

- Study I-705 after I-5 Tacoma HOV construction is complete to reduce Single Occupancy Vehicle trips.
- Study light rail between Ruston and downtown Tacoma along the waterfront to increase mode options.
- Support Pierce Transit Feasibility Study for Bus Rapid Transit on Pacific Ave (SR 7) to downtown Tacoma and Tacoma Dome Station to reduce congestion.
- Research if Sound Transit could provide future services to downtown Tacoma using I-705.



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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