



# MEMORANDUM

---

DATE: 3 March, 2009

TO: Transportation Commission

FROM: Philip Harris, Senior Planner  
Bellevue Transportation Department  
425-452-7680, [psharris@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:psharris@bellevuewa.gov)

SUBJECT: I-90 Corridor Study update – WSDOT

## **Purpose**

In November, the Transportation Commission requested that staff and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) provide an update of the I-90 corridor study at a future meeting. In response to this request, City of Bellevue and WSDOT staff will brief Commissioners on the I-90 Corridor Study, review findings, discuss near-term and long-term approaches to corridor improvements, and discuss next steps. There will be no action required with this briefing.

## **Background**

The I-90 Corridor Study began in late 2006. It was started at the request of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) after approval of the I-90/Sunset interchange in Issaquah to ensure that there was a deliberate, comprehensive look at existing and future needs along the corridor. The 2005 Washington State legislature funded \$2 million for a study of I-90 between Eastgate in Bellevue and 465th Ave SE in North Bend to identify near- and long-term projects to address safety and mobility needs along the corridor. City of Bellevue staff has been involved with the study through the Corridor Working Group and have held additional meetings to discuss near-term congestion solutions in the Eastgate area and how to integrate the Mountains to Sound Greenway with I-90 improvements.

When the I-90 Corridor Study is complete in mid-2009, WSDOT and communities along the corridor will have a list of safety, congestion relief, and preservation improvements that support the safe and efficient travel for people and goods on I-90. This list of projects will be incorporated into the Puget Sound Regional Council's Transportation Plan (Destination 2030) and the Washington Transportation Plan. The projects could be implemented over the next 20 years if funding becomes available.

The Corridor Study work was put on hold during 2008 while potential tolling scenarios on I-90 (related to the SR 520 project) were analyzed. This modeling showed that there was a less than 1% change in traffic volumes east of I-405 on I-90 so the 2030 model assumptions used at the start of the corridor study are still relevant.

The presentation will provide an overview of the Corridor Study and its near- and long-term analysis results. This includes a review of 2030 forecasts and operations as well as regional baseline 2030 transportation improvements. It will also discuss the study's near-term (2015) and long-term (2030) approaches to corridor improvements. In the near-term, this includes Active Traffic Management (ATM) along the corridor and capacity improvements such as adding auxiliary lanes eastbound (Eastgate to Lakemont/West Lake Sammamish Parkway) and westbound (SR 900 to Eastgate). Long-term approaches include capacity improvement through managed lanes and potential interchange improvements at Eastgate and at West Lake Sammamish Pkwy.

As a result of this study process, city staff has been involved in two initiatives directly related to the I-90 Corridor Study.

1. City traffic engineering staff has been working with WSDOT staff to analyze solutions for the intersection congestion issues at I-90 Exit 11 (150<sup>th</sup> Ave SE) in the Eastgate area and how they impact the surrounding arterial streets. Potential improvements include additional paving and striping to increase storage capacity.
2. The Bellevue City Council recently approved major changes to the City's network of pedestrian and bicycle paths as part of its annual Comprehensive Plan. This action identified the Mountains to Sound Greenway project as a priority improvement in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Facility Plan. Additionally, the Comprehensive Plan also references this project in the Urban Design Element: "Integrate into the designs of the frontage roads along the I-90 freeway corridor the Mountains to Sound greenway concept. Give particular attention to multi-use trails, large scale landscaping, and pedestrian amenities." This project proposal has been submitted to the State Scenic Byways Grant Committee for funding.

City staff will continue to work with WSDOT and other agencies to move these projects forward.

### **Next Steps**

The Corridor Study is expected to be completed by the summer of this year. When complete, the study will list corridor improvements that address congestion, safety and mobility needs to be implemented over the next 20 years as funding becomes available.

Philip Harris, Bellevue Transportation Department, [psharris@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:psharris@bellevuewa.gov) or 425-452-7680

Carol Hunter, WSDOT, [hunterc@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:hunterc@wsdot.wa.gov) or 206-464-1286