



MEMORANDUM

DATE: 30 August 2007

FROM: Maria Koengeter, Transportation Regional Projects, Senior Planner

TO: Transportation Commission

SUBJECT: WSDOT's I-90 Corridor Study

At the September 13th Transportation Commission meeting, WSDOT staff will provide a briefing on the I-90 Corridor Study and will seek input from Commission on potential improvements along the I-90 corridor from I-405 to North Bend.

The I-90 Corridor Study is a corridor-wide transportation assessment tied to a NEPA environmental process. The I-90 Corridor Study will provide the preliminary analysis necessary to identify short- and long-term projects that address safety and congestion issues for I-90 for the next 20 years. The State is currently identifying transportation-related problems along I-90 and potential improvements. Issues of concern include increased commute times with residential and commercial growth along I-90. The RDP will review existing freight, transit, non-motorized, weekend/recreational traffic, and intermodal connections. This fall, WSDOT will develop a draft project list for local agency and community review in order to prioritize a list of improvements by spring 2008. Using this prioritized list, the State Legislature and local agencies can identify projects for design and construction funding in future years.

Please see the attached flyer for additional information. Further information is also available at: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/planning/RDP/I90/EastgateTo465th.htm>



Current I-90 investments from Seattle to the pass



Although, WSDOT will spend more than \$40 million on current and future funded projects to enhance safety and congestion issues on I-90, we are federally required to conduct a study that would address the safety and mobility needs of this fast growing corridor.

I-90 Corridor Study Timeline

- Summer 2007**
- Conduct outreach at local fairs and festivals to get feedback on I-90 issues.
 - Analyze existing conditions and future needs.
 - Develop list of improvement options.
- Winter 2007**
- Local agency representatives review draft project list.
 - Draft project list available on our Web site and at community locations.
 - Seek public input on improvement options.
- Spring 2008**
- Prioritize list of improvement projects.
 - Final project list available on our Web site and at community locations.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information: Individuals requiring reasonable accommodation may request written materials in alternate formats, sign language interpreters, physical accessibility accommodations, or other reasonable accommodation by contacting Ben Brown at WSDOT, 206.440.4528, usually two weeks before the meeting date. Persons with hearing impairments may call Washington State Telecommunications Relay Service (TTY) at 1.800.833.6388, Tele-Braille at 1.800.833.6385, or Voice at 1.800.833.6384, and ask to be connected to 206.440.4528.

Title VI Notice to Public: It is the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) policy to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin or sex, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise discriminated against under any of its federally funded programs and activities. Any person who believes his/her Title VI protection has been violated, may file a complaint with WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO). For Title VI complaint forms and advice, please contact OEO's Title VI Coordinator at 360.705.7098.

Mark Your Calendars

Summer - Fall 2007
Visit us at these upcoming community fairs and festivals

| | |
|---------|--|
| Aug. 4 | Snoqualmie Railroad Days, Snoqualmie |
| Aug. 11 | Festival at Mount Si, North Bend |
| Aug. 23 | Bellevue Farmers Market, Bellevue |
| Sep. 15 | Community Safety and Volunteer Fair, Sammamish |
| Oct. 6 | Issaquah Salmon Days, Issaquah |

For More Information

Visit us online:
www.wsdot.wa.gov/planning/RDP/i90/EastgateTo465th.htm

E-mail: i90study@wsdot.wa.gov

Carol Hunter, WSDOT Project Manager
WSDOT Urban Planning Office
401 2nd Avenue South, Suite 300
Seattle, WA 98104
Phone: 206-464-1219



WSDOT is working with communities and drivers to address current and future needs on I-90

Puget Sound's strong economy, increasing population and employment are creating greater demands on several major routes.

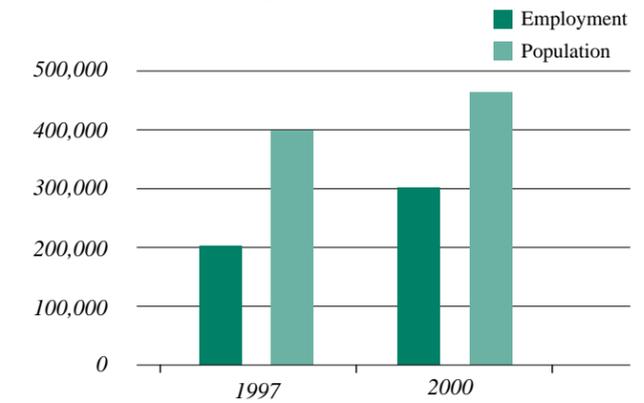
On I-90, users are experiencing more congestion and collisions. Between Bellevue and Issaquah daily traffic volumes have increased by more than 26 percent in the last ten years. Traffic demands on I-90 are even higher west of the Sunset interchange in Issaquah, where traffic has escalated by 95 percent over the last decade. Between 2003 and 2005, there were 1,121 collisions on I-90 between Bellevue and North Bend.

To address these issues, WSDOT, King County, Puget Sound Regional Council, Sound Transit and the cities of Bellevue, Sammamish, North Bend, Issaquah, and Snoqualmie are working together to identify transportation-related problems and potential improvement projects for I-90 between Eastgate in Bellevue and 465th Ave. S.E. in North Bend. The result of this effort will be the I-90 corridor study – a plan that will include a list of short- and long-term projects (10 – 20 years) that address safety and mobility issues for this segment of the highway, as funding becomes available.



Members of the I-90 corridor working group meet regularly to identify needs for the highway and develop solutions. They also use comments from residents and I-90 users to learn more about problem areas on I-90.

Growth in East King County



Source: Puget Sound Regional Council (2002)
Increasing population and employment in East King County create greater demands on I-90.

What is the I-90 corridor study?
The I-90 corridor study will be a list of safety and mobility improvement projects with the help of local communities: Bellevue, Issaquah, Snoqualmie, North Bend and Sammamish.

Local Input is key
The I-90 corridor study will benefit from the involvement of communities along the corridor and all I-90 users. We are asking drivers and residents to help inform us about the issues and needed investments on I-90.

How are local agencies and government involved?
We established a corridor working group comprised of representatives from cities and towns along I-90, as well as King County, Sound Transit, Puget Sound Regional Council, Federal Highway Administration, and WSDOT. This group will advise us on the needs, priorities, and potential improvements for I-90.





Why is this study important?

WSDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) co-manage the interstate system in Washington State. Any changes to the interstate system, including I-90, requires FHWA's approval.

FHWA approved construction of the I-90 Sunset interchange in Issaquah with the requirement that WSDOT fund and conduct a corridor study that addresses the safety and mobility needs of this fast-growing corridor. To meet this requirement, the 2005 Washington State legislature funded \$2 million for a study of I-90 between Eastgate in Bellevue and 465th Ave. S.E. in North Bend.

What is the end result?

The study will provide a list of short- and long-term safety and mobility highway projects for the legislature and local agencies to consider funding over the next 20 years. Additional funding will be needed for project design and complete cost estimates that are required to build the improvements.

What issues will the study address?

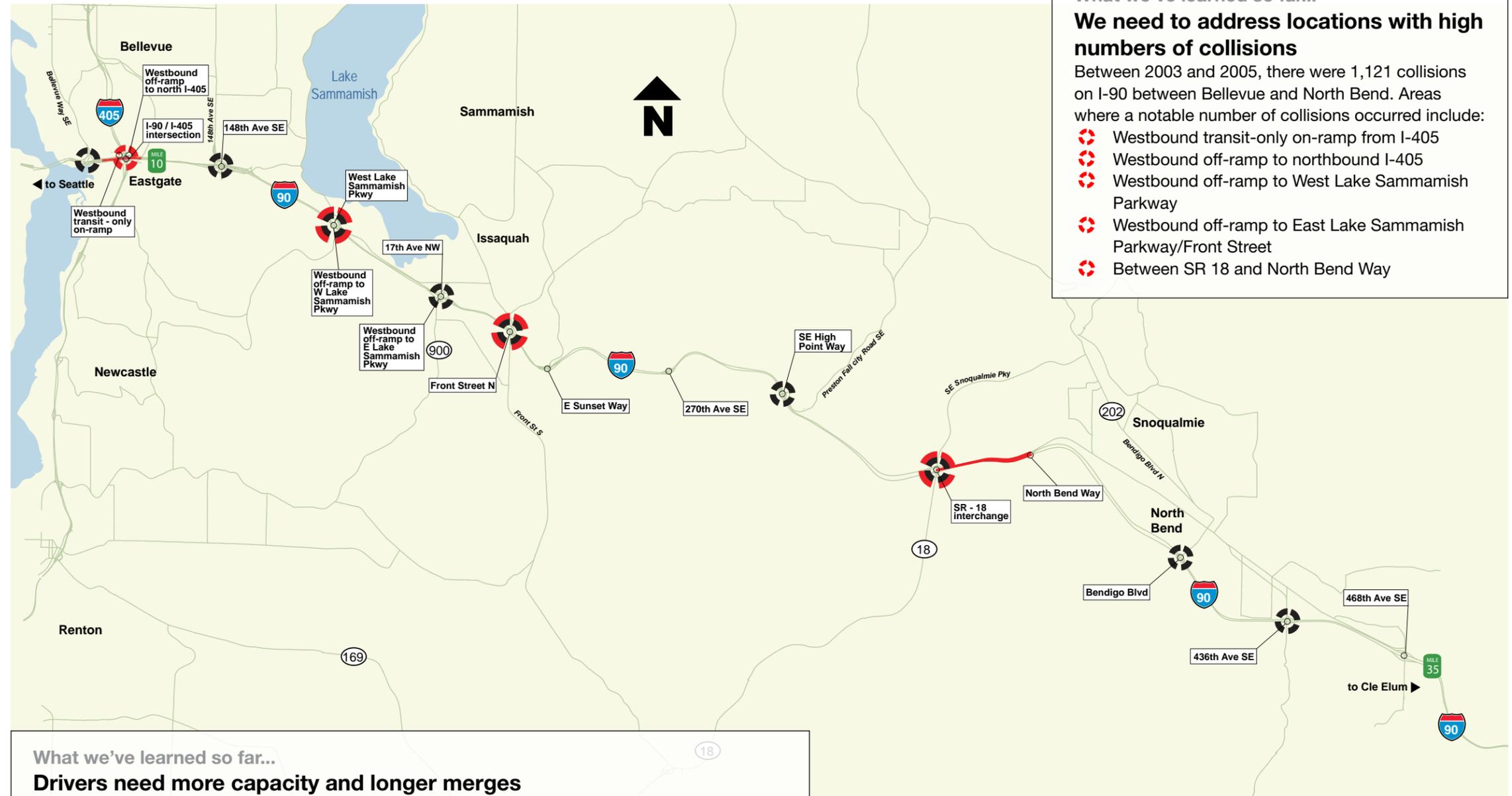
Safety

The corridor study will identify safety projects to help reduce the number and severity of collisions. Between 2003 and 2005, there were 1,121 collisions on I-90 between Bellevue and North Bend.

Congestion relief

We will identify projects to improve freeway chokepoints and bottlenecks. High traffic volumes and merge problems contribute to congestion and longer travel times along the corridor.

Where do we need to improve traffic and safety on I-90?



What we've learned so far...
We need to address locations with high numbers of collisions
Between 2003 and 2005, there were 1,121 collisions on I-90 between Bellevue and North Bend. Areas where a notable number of collisions occurred include:
• Westbound transit-only on-ramp from I-405
• Westbound off-ramp to northbound I-405
• Westbound off-ramp to West Lake Sammamish Parkway
• Westbound off-ramp to East Lake Sammamish Parkway/Front Street
• Between SR 18 and North Bend Way

What we've learned so far...
Drivers need more capacity and longer merges
High traffic volumes, merge problems and steep inclines contribute to congestion and increased travel times along the I-90 corridor.
• The eastbound Eastgate on-ramp and eastbound Bellevue Way off-ramp do not have enough capacity for drivers during evening commute times.
• Streets leading to congested freeways in the morning and evening include: Bellevue Way, 148th and 150th Avenues, Eastgate Way, West Lake Sammamish Parkway, SR 900 and 17th Avenue NW, Front Street, Preston-Fall City Road, Snoqualmie Parkway, Bendigo Boulevard, and 36th Avenue SE.
• An incomplete HOV system along I-90 contributes to problems drivers experience when trying to merge and change lanes.
• I-90 westbound congestion during the morning commute hours can be attributed to problems merging on to I-405.

- Legend**
- Congestion and capacity issues
 - Areas where a notable number of collisions occur
 - Highways & main roads

Did You Know?

- Drivers are finding it harder to merge, change lanes, and access on-ramps because there are more cars than available space.
- I-90 drivers face congestion spanning three hours during their morning commute and two hours during their evening commute.
- Near North Bend, traffic volumes on I-90 have grown by nearly 40 percent in the last ten years.