



# Corridor Program

## Summary

### I-405/SR 167 Executive Advisory Group Meeting

Thursday, Oct. 6, 2022

Zoom

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

#### Executive Advisory Group members and elected officials in attendance:

- Deputy Mayor Jay Arnold, City of Kirkland
- Mayor Nancy Backus, City of Auburn
- Commissioner Shiv Batra, Washington State Transportation Commission
- Mayor Angela Birney, City of Redmond
- Representative Jake Fey, Washington State House of Representatives
- Senator Phil Fortunato, Washington State Senate
- Kelly McGourty, Puget Sound Regional Council
- Councilmember Valerie O'Halloran, City of Renton
- Representative Bill Ramos, Washington State House of Representatives
- Representative Vandana Slatter, Washington State House of Representatives
- Representative Amy Walen, Washington State House of Representatives
- Senator Lisa Wellman, Washington State Senate
- Councilmember Janice Zahn, City of Bellevue

#### Interagency Working Group members and guests in attendance:

- Steve Breaux, WSDOT
- Rob Brown, City of Kent
- Andreana Campbell, City of Kirkland
- Dylan Counts, WSDOT
- Kelli Curtis, City of Kirkland
- Nguyen Dang, WSDOT
- Kevin Dayton, WSDOT
- Samantha DeMars-Hanson, I-405/SR 167 Program
- Stephen Dickson, Snohomish County
- Megan Filippello, Representative Slatter's Office
- Chris Foster, WSDOT
- Emily Glad, WSDOT
- Kamal Gounder, King County
- Conrad Guadagni, WSDOT
- Katie Kuciemba Halse, City of Bellevue
- Aaron Halbert, Washington State Transportation Commission
- Barrett Hanson, I-405/SR 167 Program
- Diana Hart, City of Woodinville
- Josh Hartley, City of Tukwila
- Peter Heffernan, King County Metro
- Caylin Jensen, Senator Gildon's Office, Washington State Senate
- Blake Jones, I-405/SR 167 Program
- Noelle Kappert, Representative Fey's Office, Washington State House of Representatives
- Tanya Lavoy, Senator Kuderer's Office, Washington State Senate
- Erin Leonhart, City of Bothell
- Doug Levy, City of Renton
- Kate Manley, WSDOT
- Ruslan Makhlof, WSDOT
- Daniel Masterson, Senate Transportation Committee, Washington State Senate
- Victoria Miller, I-405/SR 167 Program
- Sarah Ott, WSDOT
- Joel Pfundt, City of Kirkland
- Kristin Sandstrom, WSDOT



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- ☑ Jim Seitz, City of Renton
- ☑ Carl See, Washington State Transportation Commission
- ☑ Ariel Taylor, Sound Transit
- ☑ Wendy Taylor, I-405/SR 167 Program
- ☑ Jen Tetatzin, Pierce County
- ☑ Christine Thomas, Transportation Committee, Washington State House of Representatives
- ☑ Blake Trask, King County Council
- ☑ Doug Vaughn, WSDOT
- ☑ Curt Warber, King County Parks
- ☑ Karl Westby, I-405/SR 167 Program
- ☑ Ryan Wheaton, Pierce Transit
- ☑ Rob Woeck, I-405/SR 167 Program

## Presenters:

- ☑ Ed Barry, Toll Division Director, WSDOT
- ☑ April Delchamps, Corridor Planning Manager, Management of Mobility, WSDOT
- ☑ Lisa Hodgson, Program Administrator, I-405/SR 167 Program, WSDOT
- ☑ Colin McCann, I-405/SR 167 Communicator and Facilitator, WSDOT
- ☑ Julie Meredith, UMA and Megaprograms Assistant Secretary, WSDOT
- ☑ Jason Richter, Deputy Treasurer, Office of the State Treasurer
- ☑ Julie Timm, CEO, Sound Transit
- ☑ Bernard Van de Kamp, East Corridor Development Director, Sound Transit

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:

<https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/major-projects/i-405sr-167-corridor-program#Engagement>

## I. Introductions and agenda review

Julie Meredith, UMA and Megaprograms Assistant Secretary, welcomed the Interstate 405/State Route 167 Executive Advisory Group (EAG) members. She reviewed the agenda, starting with public comment and opening remarks, followed by a presentation from WSDOT leadership on project updates and the funding and tolling process. The agenda also included partnership updates from Sound Transit and the Office of the State Treasurer.

## II. Public comment

Colin McCann, I-405/SR 167 Communicator and Meeting Facilitator, noted there were no public comments or requests for verbal public comments received.

## III. Introductory remarks

Julie Meredith thanked EAG members for their continued guidance and support throughout the past two years and the financial challenges associated with them, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the concrete strike. She reflected on the passage of the historic \$16.8 billion Move Ahead Washington Package and discussed the package's \$450 million of investments into I-405/SR 167 Corridor. Those investments will help us to deliver multiple projects, including Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in Kirkland, North End Projects, and the SR 167 Corridor Improvements Project.

Julie discussed WSDOT's 2023-25 budgetary request, the first since the passage of the Move Ahead Washington Package. She emphasized WSDOT's focus on the agency's staffing needs and fiscal outlook. Without sustained



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investments, WSDOT will not be able to deliver on its mandates. For that reason, the agency is seeking funding to support continued operations, the implementation of legislative mandates, sustained grant programs, and the resiliency of the transportation system. She then discussed the challenges ahead, which include competitive labor markets, supply chain issues, staffing concerns, and challenges with the ferry fleet. To solve these challenges, WSDOT must work closely with its partners.

In closing, Julie Meredith once again thanked EAG members for their partnerships and introduced Julie Timm, the new Sound Transit CEO.

Julie Timm, Sound Transit CEO, introduced herself to her fellow EAG members. She stated that she is new to the role and is only in her second week on the job. She has worked on transportation issues for 25 years and has focused on planning and design. She has experience not just in transit, but in many other methods of transportation. She is new to the region but knows that WSDOT and Sound Transit have been working in the corridor together for 20 years. Julie expressed excitement for BRT from Lynnwood to Burien and looks forward to working with everyone on the call to move these projects forward.

#### **IV. I-405/SR 167 Corridor project updates**

Lisa Hodgson, I-405/SR 167 Program Administrator, thanked EAG members for their attendance and expressed her excitement with the team's important progress being made on critical projects throughout the corridor. Project updates were delivered starting in the south end of the corridor and moving north.

In the SR 167 region of the corridor, Lisa expressed WSDOT's excitement for the completion of the SR 167/SR 410 to SR 18 NB Congestion Management Project in August 2022, a project completed by WSDOT Olympic Region that provides a new, 9-mile northbound HOV lane on SR 167. The extension begins near SR 410 in Pierce County and ties into the existing HOT Lane near Auburn in King County, and it provides much-needed improvements for travelers in the south end. She then discussed two upcoming projects in the area: the SR 167/SR 410 to SR 18 Southbound Congestion Management Project, which will deliver over 6-miles of new managed lanes between Pacific and Puyallup, and the SR 167 Corridor Improvements Project, which will add strategic capacity on SB 167 and providing systemwide consistency for travelers. The projects discussed during this presentation total over \$200 million of active investment into the SR 167 corridor and will bring real benefits to travelers on SR 167. Following these updates, Lisa introduced April Delchamps, Corridor Planning Manager for WSDOT.

April Delchamps, Corridor Planning Manager, provided an update on the SR 167 Master Plan project and stated that the team is approaching the end of Phase 4, the most intense and long phase. As the Master Plan enters Phase 5, the team will hold meetings with its policy and advisory committees where they will share scenarios. She provided an update on the team's community engagement work, which included a month-long online open house, summer outreach at seven events, and 5 co-creation workshops.

Lisa Hodgson, I-405/SR 167 Program Administrator, continued project updates, moving north to the I-405 corridor. She began with the I-405/Renton to Bellevue Widening and Express Toll Lanes (ETLs) Project, where she provided progress updates for the Northeast 44th Street Interchange, the Main Street Bridge Replacement, and King County Eastrail. She thanked WSDOT's partners Sound Transit and the City of Bellevue for their partnership in recent months to reach these key milestones. Additionally, Lisa provided an overall update on progress. Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the regional concrete strike, the project is not as far along as WSDOT hoped it would be. Although the contractual milestone has not been moved, the monthly progress schedule currently shows the ETLs opening in 2025. WSDOT is actively monitoring and working with the contractor to mitigate these impacts.

Lisa provided an update on emergency repair work that took place between September 15 and September 18. In response to two sinkholes opening along the Lakehurst Stream crossing under I-405, WSDOT installed a new pipe under I-405 to restore existing functionality before the winter flows come this year. Crews worked to excavate



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and replace the damaged culvert near 112th Avenue Southeast interchange in Bellevue. In addition to this emergency work, as WSDOT worked through the permitting process and closely with WDFW, the crossing has been deemed a fish barrier. Although the stream was previously known, it had not been considered a fish barrier due to an upstream sediment pond that was considered a dam. The barrier correction is not currently funded and is not included in the I-405/SR 167 Financial Plan. WSDOT will share updates as soon as we better understand next steps.

Moving north, Lisa provided an update on the I-405/NE 85th Street Interchange and Inline BRT Station Project in Kirkland. The project is funded predominately by Sound Transit, with the Design Build contract procurement process kicking off earlier this year and an award expected by the end of the year. Next, Lisa updated EAG members on the I-405/NE 132nd Street Interchange Project. Construction continues and crews are working to construct a new on-ramp to northbound I-405, a new off-ramp from southbound I-405, and roundabouts on the local road to manage traffic flow and additional multimodal enhancements. Finally, Lisa shared her excitement that the I-405/Brickyard to SR 527 Express Toll Lanes Improvement Project is moving forward. The project has made substantial progress in recent months, with procurement kicking off at the end of June and our Voluntary Submitters Meeting held on July 14. The contract is expected to be awarded in spring of 2023.

To conclude the project updates section, Lisa highlighted other important projects that are on the horizon. Specifically, she highlighted the Renton to Bellevue Project's Contract 3, SR 520/124th Avenue NE Interchange Project in Bellevue, I-405/North 8th Street Direct Access Project in Renton, and the SR 518/Tukwila International Boulevard Inline Station (TIBS) Project. She then introduced Bernard Van de Kamp, Sound Transit East Corridor Development Director.

Bernard Van de Kamp, Sound Transit East Corridor Development Director, presented an update on Sound Transit projects. Bernard's update was focused on the delivery of Stride BRT, which is expected to open in 2026-2027 and is comprised of three transit lines that make up about 45-miles of high-capacity transit service. He shared the benefits of BRT in the I-405 corridor, shared station design concepts, and provided an overview of the service map. Additionally, Bernard discussed Sound Transit's plan to use zero-emission buses as well as double-decker vehicles, and expressed he hoped that more information will be available about the vehicles at the next EAG meeting. For the remainder of his presentation, he shared updates on the environmental review and preliminary engineering processes, information on investment benefits of BRT, and highlighted the importance of continued partnership throughout the corridor. In closing, Bernard shared a look ahead for the corridor, stating they just hit 60% design on the SR 522 corridor.

### **Discussion:**

- Senator Phil Fortunato asked about the total budget for 85th Street BRT.
  - Bernard Van De Kamp shared that the budget is approximately \$270 million for BRT at 85th Street.
- Senator Phil Fortunato asked to go back to Slide 27. He requested clarification about travel times for the south line of BRT between Burien and Bellevue. Specifically, he asked if it's true that travel time will be reduced by one-third of the time it takes today and whether the system will use BRT ramps and ETLs.
  - Bernard Van De Kamp shared that BRT will use ETLs to bypass congestion. Additionally, Sound Transit and WSDOT are working together at 44th Street and in Tukwila to develop inline stations that will allow BRT to avoid city streets.
- Senator Phil Fortunato asked if there would be an advantage to only using ETLs and no BRT.
  - Bernard Van De Kamp responded that Sound Transit's representative project assumed the usage of ramps at 44th and ETLs.



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- Kirkland Deputy Mayor Jay Arnold asked what's the plan B in case the technology isn't there in 2027, given that we're talking about 2027 service and buses have a life of about 12 years?
  - Bernard Van De Kamp emphasized that the critical factor for BRT is reliability (speed). Because of this, Sound Transit is working to minimize the size of its fleet and has been working to decide what batteries will work best to build a reliable fleet. Sound Transit is currently analyzing potential charging locations for the fleet and other logistics to ensure BRT will meet the needs of the community.

## V. I-405/SR 167 Corridor traffic and revenue updates

Lisa Hodgson, I-405/SR 167 Program Administrator, kicked off the next segment of the EAG meeting regarding traffic and revenue updates. To start, she shared traffic heat maps in the south, central, and northern end of the corridor with pre-pandemic and current travel patterns. She shared observations and trends about each map but highlighted that WSDOT's traffic data shows that people are back out on the roads at levels nearly even with pre-pandemic levels.

Lisa transitioned to a discussion about the funding and tolling delivery process and explained that while the I-405/SR 167 Program works toward bonding, the team is building off its 2021 Financial Plan and continues to work with its partners to actively solidify a set of assumptions. She provided an overview of each partners' roles and responsibilities throughout the process, specifically the Office of the State Treasurer (OST) and the Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC). Lisa then introduced Ed Barry, Toll Division Director, and Jason Richter, Deputy Treasurer, to provide an overview of the program's scenario assumptions and analysis results from the OST.

Ed Barry, Toll Division Director, provided an overview of the funding and tolling delivery process as well as the three scenarios developed for OST's analysis. He explained that the three scenarios are a snapshot in time and represent conditions as we understand them today. The first scenario represents current law as detailed in the 2022 enacted budget. The second scenario represents a shift in project delivery, with an adjusted cashflow and a shift in project delivery for SR 522 to 527 and Renton to Bellevue. The last scenario uses the same cashflow and project delivery conditions as the second scenario, but assumes a higher toll rate cap. It is important to remember that WSDOT and its partners will continue to work to update and refine the set of assumptions represented in these scenarios. Ed then introduced Jason Richter, Deputy Treasurer, to discuss the findings of OST's analysis.

Jason Richter, Deputy Treasurer, provided a summary of OST's analysis for each of the scenarios and highlighted relevant trends. The goal of OST was to identify whether the scenarios provided could meet cashflow needs and deliver projects on time. With projected traffic, spending patterns, project needs, and the influx of cash provided by the Move Ahead Washington package, the I-405/SR 167 Program remains funded at this time. However, as interest rates continue to rise, OST will continue to monitor and update their model to account for this factor.

Lisa Hodgson, I-405/SR 167 Program Administrator, concluded the traffic and revenue updates portion of the agenda and encouraged EAG members to raise their hands to ask questions about the presentation.

### **Discussion:**

- Councilmember Janice Zahn said she had a few comments. First, she wanted to echo Deputy Mayor Jay Arnold's comment about I-405 and electrified buses. She was glad to hear they are looking at having electric vehicle charging. She would be open to having a conversation with them about making sure reliable buses are available in downtown Bellevue. Second, she asked how residents in Bellevue can get the same level of engagement on projects so they are not surprised when major construction activities occur, especially in neighborhoods where there is only one way in and one way out.



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- Lisa said WSDOT will coordinate with city staff to make sure they are conducting outreach to all the neighborhoods and identify any areas of improvement. Each I-405/SR 167 project has a robust communication plan that includes introductory briefings, regular community meetings, website updates, and newsletters, among other channels.
- Councilmember Janice Zahn said she was excited to see that Contract 3 is going to stay on schedule starting 2025. She was curious to know if the program team has a strategy to make sure the remaining projects in the I-405 Master Plan are able to be funded and completed so they don't lose sight of those other essential projects.
  - Lisa agreed and said they are just taking a breather, but they know future funding comes many years in advance. That is when WSDOT works with the EAG and other stakeholders about what those investments look like. They are on the same page that WSDOT has more to deliver in the Master Plan and there is much yet to come.
- Councilmember Valerie O'Halloran said she echoed Councilmember Zahn's concerns about communication for construction-related disruption along every city that is involved. It is critical to get the public's buy-in. She also asked if WSDOT could be specific about which projects are delayed under the previously mentioned scenarios?
  - Lisa answered that it was really a matter of months for each project. For the Brickyard to SR 527 Improvement Project, when WSDOT submitted for legislative session, they had an opening date of 2026, and by the time they received funding at the end of legislative session, it delayed the project by a few months. Although that project was pushed out, it is still in alignment with the delivery of Sound Transit BRT. With the Renton to Bellevue project, which is an active construction project aiming for a 2024 delivery, the hard piece of that work is striping and opening the express toll lanes because certain weather conditions have to be met to complete that work. Again, we are not talking about years, we are talking about months as it pushes you into the next season of weather.
- Commissioner Shiv Batra said he saw WSDOT's demonstration in terms of the traffic flow on I-405 and where they want to improve the timing by tolling in order to have a smooth flow of traffic. Currently, they have I-90 and SR 520, which are both state facilities and interact with I-405. He lives in the area of I-405 and sees on and off ramps that are jammed up all the time. What is the investment in order to solve that stop-and-go problem? He has not seen any investment or discussion about improving the on-ramps on I-405, SR 520, or at I-90, in addition to building the new interchanges. He asked what WSDOT's approach to this will be.
  - Lisa answered that they are currently building infrastructure that provides management of traffic, so when express toll lanes offer that opportunity, the general purpose lanes also get the benefit of that. So everyone gets the benefit of moving a little faster with those lanes, and you have to be able to have the open capacity to address the interchanges. When we have the open capacity and put in some additional ramp configurations, that project will have two lanes and will be more developed when going southbound to eastbound. Part of it is about what we can manage so we are being thoughtful about how we build it out, and the second piece is that the interchanges are expensive and we have to think about the next steps. WSDOT will work with the EAG members to think about where they should invest in the future.

## VI. Wrap up

Julie thanked the group for their continued partnership and participation. The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.