

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Olympia, Washington
October 14, 2008

West Olympia Access Study Status Report

CITY MANAGER'S
RECOMMENDATION:

No action is requested by the City Council. This briefing is an opportunity for the City Council to hear what the project team has accomplished to date and to provide feedback for consideration prior to moving into the Interchange Justification Report phase of the Study.

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ORIGINATED BY:

Public Works Department

PRESENTERS AND
OTHERS NOTIFIED:

Presenter:

- Randy Wesselman

Others Notified:

- George Kovich, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Thera Black, Thurston Regional Planning Council

ATTACHMENTS:

In preparation for the West Olympia Access Study (WOAS), a synthesis of previous studies was compiled. Baseline characteristics were described in a series of background reports that serve as a study reference. Taken together, these reports provide relevant background on important considerations this study will address. Following is a link to the May 13, 2008 staff report on the West Olympia Access Study which contains these reports. The May 13 staff report also provides additional background information. [Link to May 13, 2008 staff report.](#)

As part of the West Olympia Access Study, a series of technical documents have been prepared to document technical work performed. These documents can be found on the WOAS website at <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/us101/westolympiaaccessstudy/>.

**BUDGET IMPACT/
SOURCE OF FUNDS:**

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) received funding in the amount of \$500,000 through the 2005 Transportation Partnership Package to participate with the City of Olympia in the WOAS.

The City of Olympia is funding the study using Transportation Impact Fees in the amount of \$460,410. These funds were appropriated as part of the 2006-2011 *Capital Facilities Plan* (CFP).

The total project budget is \$960,410.

**PRIOR COUNCIL/
COMMITTEE REVIEW:**

City Council Meeting, May 13, 2008 - briefing on status and next steps.

City Council Study Session, February 13, 2007 - briefing.

City Council Meeting, October 17, 2006 - approval of Contract/Interlocal Agreement with WSDOT regarding work to be completed by WSDOT and cost sharing.

BACKGROUND:

The May 13, 2008, staff report titled West Olympia Access Study and Next Steps provides background information on:

- The issue being addressed by the study;
- The purpose of the study;
- An overview of the study; and
- Scenario development and screening of those scenarios.

[Link to May 13, 2008 staff report.](#)

ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS:

Technical Documents

Since the City Council's last briefing in May 2008, a series of technical documents have been completed or are near complete to document processes and findings to date. They include:

- [West Olympia Access Study Traffic Analysis Assumptions Document](#). Documents the traffic model and analysis assumptions used for the West Olympia Access Study.

Endorsed by project participants, this document can be found at <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/us101/westolympiaaccessstudy/>.

- [Evaluation Methods and Screening \(Technical Memorandum #1\)](#). This document outlines the evaluation approach used for the West Olympia Access and Circulation Study. It addresses the process to develop and screen improvement options.

Endorsed by project participants, this document can be found at <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/us101/westolympiaaccessstudy/>.

- Existing 2007 and Year 2030 No-Build (Technical Memorandum #2). This documents the US 101, I-5 and local traffic analysis process and results for the West Olympia Access Study. This documentation includes a discussion on existing local and freeway road characteristics, data collection and methodology, micro-simulation model calibration and validation, and existing 2007 and future year 2030 No-build traffic conditions.

Endorsed by project participants, this document can be found at <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/us101/westolympiaaccessstudy/>.

- Traffic Analysis for Improved LOS and Traffic Operations in 2030 (Technical Memo #3). The project team met with WSDOT Headquarters and FHWA staff on September 29, 2008, to discuss findings of the traffic analysis on how modified access to US 101 could improve LOS and traffic operations. Results of this meeting were:
 - There is agreement that a "Local Only" scenario of improvements does not adequately address future LOS and mobility needs.
 - Concurrence was reached that there is a need for modified access to US 101.
 - It is recommended that both the Black Lake Interchange and Evergreen Interchange Scenarios be moved forward and evaluated as part of the Interchange Justification Report (IJR).

These documents serve as the basis for developing an Interchange Justification Report (IJR). Both Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and WSDOT policy require the formal submission of a request to add or modify limited access on limited access freeways like US 101. The IJR is used to document the planning process, the evaluation of the alternatives considered, the design of the preferred alternative, and the coordination that supports and justifies the request for an access revision to US 101.

Where Are We and What Have We Learned

- The project team has received concurrence from WSDOT Headquarters and FHWA staff that there is a need for modified access to US 101. This is a major milestone in that there has not been this acknowledgement in the past.
- The project team originally thought that one scenario would ultimately evolve as an obvious solution to address improved LOS and traffic operations. The project team determined, based on the analysis completed during the current "feasibility" phase of the study, there are two good viable scenarios and both can work. This is a fundamental shift from when the Study was scoped. There are strengths and weaknesses to both the Black Lake Interchange and Evergreen Interchange Scenarios. Therefore, both will be evaluated as part of the IJR process.

A weakness to evaluating two scenarios as part of the IJR process is that we will not be able to advance the IJR as far as was originally planned.

A strength to evaluating two scenarios is that through the environmental process which will eventually be completed as part of an IJR process will allow for meaningful public input when it happens.

The project team is currently evaluating and determining the next steps for completing those elements of the IJR that can be completed at this time and provide the greatest value for advancing future phase(s) of the IJR. It is unlikely that there are sufficient funds at this time to complete a full IJR for the project which includes environmental review.

Next Steps

This briefing is an opportunity for the City Council to hear what the project team has learned to date, and provides an opportunity to provide feedback for consideration prior to moving forward with the next IJR phase of the project.

Options:

No options are presented, as this is an informational item only.

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