



West Olympia Access Study

Issue 3 - December 2008

West Olympia Access Study Nears Wrap-Up

The West Olympia Access Study (WOAS) reached key milestones and is entering its wrap-up phase.

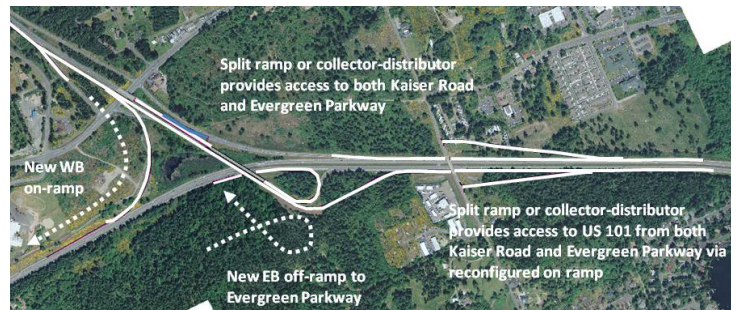
The study demonstrated that improving the local street system alone will not resolve future mobility problems on Olympia's west side; some change in access to US 101 is needed. Some modification to highway access is needed to prevent unacceptable interchange back-ups in the future that could cause conflicts with traffic on US 101.

The study identified two scenarios for improving west side mobility by modifying existing highway interchanges. Both interchange modification scenarios also include appropriate local street improvements, such as the addition of turn lanes at various intersections.

- **Yauger Way Extension:** this scenario would modify the Black Lake Boulevard interchange to provide additional access to and from the highway via an extension of Yauger Way.



- **Evergreen Parkway:** this scenario would modify the Evergreen Parkway interchange to provide connectivity between Kaiser Road and US 101. This alternative would also provide access between Evergreen Parkway and US 101 to and from the west.



Analysis to date demonstrates that both interchange scenarios have merit and meet the study's purpose and need. Therefore both are moving forward for further evaluation. Additional evaluation will consider highway geometry, environmental impacts, and potential costs to determine which scenario best meets local and state mobility needs.

A summary report of the technical analysis and study findings will be available in late winter. A strategy will also be developed for how to proceed with the formal follow-up work that is necessary to get approval for modifying a highway interchange.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information: Individuals requiring reasonable accommodations may request written materials in alternate formats, sign language interpreters, physical accessibility accommodations, or other reasonable accommodations by contacting Debbie Clemen, WSDOT, at (360) 704-3204, one week prior to the meeting date shown on this notice. Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may contact Debbie Clemen through the Washington Relay Service at 7-1-1.

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**MAKING EVERY
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Question for The WOAS Team

Why isn't cost a factor in narrowing this down to a single preferred scenario?

The West Olympia Access Study is a feasibility study; it did not produce sufficient detail to develop reasonable cost estimates. Subsequent work will produce more credible estimates. Rough "planning level" cost estimates suggest the range of costs is somewhere near \$50 million at the low end and over \$95 million at the high end.

Preliminary planning level estimates developed for feasibility studies do not include essential design or environmental information. Many factors can have a big influence on final costs later on. That is why feasibility study costs were not used as a factor in narrowing further the number scenarios that are moved forward.

If you have a question for the project team, email us at westolympia@wsdot.wa.gov. All questions will be answered and one will be featured in a future newsletter.

Did You Know ...?

...that 55% of all trips to and from the Capital Mall retail complex go through the Black Lake / Cooper Point intersection? 45% of all trips to and from the Capital Medical Center complex and southwest neighborhoods go through this intersection as do 30% of all trips to and from the residential areas north of Harrison Avenue.

Next Steps

The West Olympia Access Study is a feasibility study. It screened a number of possible options for improving west side mobility down to just two feasible scenarios. The next step is selection of a preferred scenario and development of an Interchange Justification Report, or IJR. An IJR is required in order to get state and federal approval to modify highway access. It includes detailed geometric analysis and probable construction cost estimates. Environmental review will be done in conjunction with the IJR.

Once granted, approval for modified highway access is valid for a limited time. Supporting data and analysis must be updated every five years until the entire project is complete in order to maintain that approval.

There are not sufficient funds at this time to complete a full IJR for the project. The study partners are currently evaluating potential next steps for those elements of the IJR that can be completed at this time and provide the greatest value for advancing future phases of the work. The IJR process, design, funding and construction processes are extensive. It may be 10-15 years or more before interchange modifications and local street projects are complete.

Findings Documented and Available

WOAS produced a number of documents that can be found at www.trpc.org/westolympia or at www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/us101/westolympiaaccessstudy. They include:

- A synopsis of previous plans and studies
- Background reports
- Public comments
- Technical memoranda that evaluate the various options considered by the WOAS. (*Memoranda were developed for an engineering team but are available for public review.*)

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