# Appendix A:

Listening Sessions Feedback Summary

June 2023



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# Introduction

In spring of 2022, the Move Ahead Washington funding package directed the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to conduct listening sessions to inform next steps in developing an I-5 Master Plan, as follows:

The department shall conduct initial stakeholder listening sessions and submit an interim report on the Interstate 5 planning and environmental linkage study to the joint transportation committee by June 30, 2023.

The I-5 Study team conducted listening sessions with participants representing a wide range of transportation interests, both inside and outside the agency. This report summarizes **91 listening sessions** conducted from August 2022 through April 2023. Some sessions were conducted with more than one organization, and most sessions were virtual. Participants included over **350 individuals** representing over **137 different jurisdictions, tribes, agencies, WSDOT regions and divisions, businesses** and community-based organizations, including those representing vulnerable populations and overburdened communities.

The sessions began with an overview of the I-5 Study. Then participants were asked to provide information on current planning conversations, projects and the communities they serve. They also shared their perspectives on the I-5 transportation system, including challenges experienced now, those anticipated in the future and opportunities for improvement. Participants were also asked to help identify partners to engage as the planning process moves forward, including an emphasis on overburdened communities in their area. This feedback will directly inform the *Interim Report for the I-5 Master Plan*, submitted to the Legislature.

# **Common Themes**

Feedback from participants confirmed that a comprehensive planning process for I-5 is welcomed to set a modern vision for I-5, address existing and anticipated challenges, consider population and employment growth, and provide direction for prioritizing investments. Other common themes follow:





I-5 is vital to the movement of people and goods and is the backbone of our state economy.



Improved access across I-5 is needed to connect communities and provide safe routes for people who walk, bike and use public transit.



Congestion is experienced corridor-wide and impacts quality of life.



Underserved communities experience current I-5 challenges significantly, and an equity-centered planning process is vital.



A resilient I-5 system is needed to withstand seismic events and weather-related impacts exacerbated by climate change.



Improving operations and transit service versus adding capacity is generally preferred.



# Feedback Organized around Critical Needs — Current and Ongoing

This section summarizes feedback organized by critical needs raised by listening session participants.

# **A MODERN VISION FOR I-5**

Most participants saw benefits in developing an I-5 Master Plan that collaboratively creates a modern vision for the I-5 transportation system and includes a framework to prioritize investments. A regionally coordinated approach to project funding could help create transparency, bridge geographic transportation disparities along the corridor and ensure equitable benefits from investments. Participants felt that the I-5 Master Plan should center on the needs of communities and allow flexibility and the ability to adapt, accommodate and respond to changes such as:

- Growth and development
- Emerging technologies and trends
- Investments in other modes such as transit and high-speed rail
- New needs and opportunities

# EQUITY, INCLUSION, DIVERSITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Vulnerable populations and overburdened communities residing along or accessing the I-5 corridor currently experience significant challenges.

# Concerns shared by listening session participants include the following:

- Direct intercity transit service is a vital and currently unmet need that requires multiple bus transfers and long travel times.
- Residing outside economic centers due to the high cost of living creates reliance on I-5 to reach jobs. The workforce is being priced out of urban areas, causing additional disadvantages such as increased commute times, cost and traffic complications causing congestion farther from urban core areas.

- Safe, comfortable and efficient I-5 crossings are needed to serve those who walk, bike and access transit.
- If tolling is considered, its impact on lower-resourced people who rely on I-5 should be evaluated.

It is vital to center an I-5 Master Plan in equity, both in process and outcomes. This Plan should include a meaningful engagement process with broad perspectives and diverse representation at the decision-making level and employ strategies that connect with overburdened communities.

# **PRESERVATION INVESTMENTS**

While participants acknowledged planning for the future of I-5 is critical, many stressed the importance of preserving and maintaining the existing system. From aging infrastructure to safety needs for people walking, biking and driving, current challenges should be prioritized. As safety, maintenance and preservation projects occur, local jurisdictions and communities stressed the need for early engagement and frequent communications to stay informed about construction impacts.

# **CONNECTED COMMUNITIES AND ACCESSIBLE I-5 CROSSINGS**

I-5 often acts as a barrier bisecting communities and separating people, infrastructure, businesses, parks, health care facilities and schools with long distances between crossing opportunities for all modes. Further, I-5 crossings are often uncomfortable for people who walk, bike and use transit.

Urban interchanges are becoming congested as they function as both transit hubs and freeway access points. As the population grows, some lessurbanized areas are experiencing congestion at their limited number of crossings, and there is interest in developing new crossings or interchanges. To create more connected communities and enhance safety and mobility, participants stressed the need for improvements at existing interchanges (such as widened sidewalks, bike and bus lanes and transit signal prioritizations). There also is some interest in building lids over I-5 to create more pedestrian- and bicyclist-focused crossings.

I-5 is also a barrier to wildlife; there are multiple areas along the corridor where the need for wildlife crossings is suggested.

# **CONGESTION RELIEF**

More people are experiencing traffic congestion as growth occurs in both major urban areas and rural communities along the I-5 corridor. Congestion presents higher costs and greater strain on commuters, commercial drivers and emergency services. Participants in the I-5 corridor's most populous counties—Snohomish, King and Pierce mentioned major back-ups on I-5 that have caused spillover traffic onto local streets. The increasing cost of living in urban areas, coupled with the ability to work remotely at least multiple days a week, has led to more people and businesses relocating to more rural areas along the corridor. These rural communities have experienced rapid residential and commercial growth around I-5, putting strain on their interchanges and local streets while increasing system demand.

# **FREIGHT MOBILITY EFFICIENCY**

I-5, which is the most significant freight corridor on the West Coast, serves many major ports and links to international markets. A 24/7 goods movement and just-in-time manufacturing supply chain requires a resilient, predictable and reliable transportation system, which does not describe I-5 today. Backups at the Canadian border that affect freight movement are an ongoing issue. Some challenges surrounding freight movement on I-5 include high traffic volumes, even during non-peak hours; outdated infrastructure that cannot support heavy freight vehicles; insufficient truck parking; and a lack of parallel routes in some areas that serve freight, leading to time-intensive detours.

# **IMPROVED MULTIMODAL OPERATIONS AND TRANSIT**

As communities experience operational challenges today and anticipate further challenges in the future, most participants generally prefer demandmanagement, transit and safety solutions instead of additional lanes. There is some support for increasing capacity where I-5 has never been widened, where two lanes merge into threelane sections and at challenging interchanges. Ramp metering and auxiliary lanes are specific suggestions to help improve operations.

There is support for using lane management to improve traffic flow. Suggestions for managed lanes included the following:

- Pricing strategies
- Expanding the high occupancy vehicle (HOV) system on I-5
- Exploring transit-only and through-traffic-only lanes
- Improving managed lane system integration across the Puget Sound region

Substantial transit investments in the Puget Sound region have provided the opportunity to better integrate transit operations into the future I-5 transportation system. Expanding high-capacity transit as well as direct intercity bus connections can encourage transit usage and reduce the reliance on cars.

# SEISMIC AND CLIMATE-RELATED RESILIENCY

Most listening session participants stressed the importance of I-5 becoming operational shortly after extreme weather, seismic events or other disasters. Communities throughout the corridor raised the resiliency concerns listed below:

- Increasing climate change and weather-related events such as flooding and landslides that close lanes or the entire freeway
- Seismic vulnerability of I-5 bridges and structures adjacent to I-5, such as levees and dams, and their performance after a major earthquake
- Few or nonexistent parallel routes that offer alternate north/south travel options, leading travelers to use adjacent local roads in residential areas or mountain roadways unintended for high-volume or freight traffic

# **ACKNOWLEDGING THE HISTORICAL IMPACTS OF I-5**

Listening sessions were held with organizations that represent vulnerable populations and overburdened communities to gather their perspectives on how I-5 functions, impacts and serves them now, as well as into the future. The input received is included throughout the Common Themes, Critical Needs and County Geography sections of this report. These conversations communicated many of the same transportation themes that were received throughout the listening sessions. However, they also provided unique perspectives from communities of color, including Black participants who generously shared their or their family's history with I-5 when it was originally constructed. Participants reminded the team that construction of the interstate system displaced and had negative impacts on communities of color. For example, when I-5 was originally built through the City of Seattle, it divided and displaced a vibrant commercial district that included social gathering places that served the city's communities of color. It is important to acknowledge and learn from the past as the I-5 Master Plan envisions an equitable and accessible transportation system that serves all people while preserving the rich, historic context and resources along the corridor.



# Feedback Organized by County

This section includes feedback received from listening session participating jurisdictions and organizations within each county along the I-5 corridor as well as from statewide organizations who provided countyspecific input. For each county, a county snapshot is presented, followed by summarized responses to a series of questions that were asked of the participants. Counties are presented in this report from north to south along the I-5 corridor.



CANADA

# NORTH

# Whatcom County

This section includes feedback received from participating jurisdictions and organizations within Whatcom County as well as from statewide organizations who provided county-specific input.

# Area snapshot

Whatcom County is located in northwest Washington, with the U.S.-Canada border to the north and Skagit County to the south. Thirty five miles of the I-5 corridor run through the county, which intersect with four state highways: State Route (SR) 548, SR 539, SR 542 and SR 11. SR 9 parallels I-5.

Whatcom County is the state's ninth most populous county, with more than 231,000 residents. It is also home to a major port in the city of Bellingham, the largest city in the county, just 21 miles south of the U.S.-Canada border. Whatcom County has a mix of rural and urban environments, with most of its major urban centers located along the I-5 corridor.

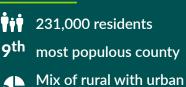
# What are the key planning conversations related to I-5 in your area?

Area planning topics raised by listening session participants primarily focused on improving the mobility of freight on I-5 and around the U.S.-Canada border as well as I-5 crossing and interchange capacity, as follows:

- Freight mobility is a transportation planning priority, particularly as it impacts the movement of goods across at the U.S.-Canada border and to the Port of Bellingham.
- **Population growth and development** are contributing to increased traffic on I-5.
- Ramp metering and traffic data collection are being looked at as possible ways to help combat congestion through the I-5 Operations and Demand Analysis Study.
- Those traveling in and around Whatcom County would benefit from improved transit access, including high-speed transit.
- Lack of adequate connections to cities on either side of I-5 contributes to accessibility issues throughout the I-5 corridor. The Lincoln-Lakeway Multimodal Transportation Study would connect crossings and interchanges along I-5 to increase functionality and accessibility.
- Cities along I-5 need better pedestrian and bicycle access to cross the freeway.



### POPULATION





centers along I-5

### **URBAN CENTERS NEAR I-5**



Blaine, Ferndale, Bellingham

#### **FEATURES**

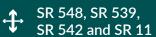


**Bellingham Airport** 

#### **LENGTH OF I-5 CORRIDOR**



#### **I-5 INTERSECTS**



#### **I-5 PARALLELS**

**SR 9** 

Active or imminent construction projects in Whatcom County revolve around improving bridges, interchanges and crossings adjacent to I-5, listed below:

- Multiple **interchange improvement** projects are underway in Whatcom County.
- The North Lake Samish Road Bridge Replacement Project is also underway in Bellingham.
- Border crossing improvement projects.

# What are your thoughts, ideas and/or concerns related to I-5?

Whatcom County listening session participants' key ideas and concerns included corridor maintenance and resiliency as it relates to flooding, landslides and lack of adequate detour routes during I-5 closures. Other issues and ideas raised included local growth, congestion and improving transit service. Themes are listed below:

- Maintenance and preservation of this section of I-5 is essential for the longevity of the corridor.
- The lack of parallel routes to I-5 is a concern, especially with climate change and the increase of events such as flooding and landslides.
- Improve freight mobility, especially considering the number of ports serving the trade and travel corridor between Vancouver, British Columbia and Seattle, is a transportation planning priority for Whatcom County jurisdictions.
- Transit access improvements such as revised routes, additional stops and more park and rides would improve connectivity and equitable access to jobs and healthcare.

- Improvements to existing interchanges and crossings, as well as additional southbound lanes on I-5 in the Bellingham area would increase capacity and functionality along the I-5 corridor. However, some jurisdictions recommend demand management strategies instead of adding travel lanes.
- Provide better pedestrian and bicycle access to and across I-5, including bike lanes, trails/paths and bridges.
- Demand management strategies, such as ramp metering and reduced vehicular speeds, would improve the safety of all travelers along I-5 and address capacity concerns.
- The international border crossing into Canada experiences congestion and a high volume of commercial vehicle traffic.

# Who else in your community should we engage moving forward, including underserved communities?

- City of Bellingham neighborhood associations
- Freight interests and organizations in the area, including cross-border freight industry interests
- Lummi Nation
- North Sound Transportation Alliance
- Whatcom Transportation Authority

# **Skagit County**

This section includes feedback received from participating jurisdictions and organizations within Skagit County as well as from statewide organizations who provided county-specific input.

### Area snapshot

Skagit County is located in northwest Washington between Whatcom County to the north and Snohomish County to the south. Twenty four miles of the I-5 corridor run through the county, which intersect with five state highways: SR 11, SR 20, SR 538, SR 536 and SR 534. SR 9 parallels I-5.

Skagit is the 11th most populous county in Washington, with more than 133,000 residents. The largest city in the county is Mount Vernon. Areas along the I-5 corridor in Skagit County are mostly rural.

# What are the key planning conversations related to I-5 in your area?

Area planning topics raised by participants, which are listed below, primarily focused on maintenance of the I-5 corridor, implementing ramp metering to improve congestion and project funding.

- Proper maintenance of existing bridges, crossings and interchanges plays a vital role in safety throughout the I-5 corridor and is a key transportation priority among participating jurisdictions.
- Flooding and landslides commonly cause I-5 closures. Skagit County is studying **traffic impacts** on I-5 detour routes.
- There is interest in **ramp metering** as a possible way to help reduce congestion.
- Future I-5 planning should identify what is **financially realistic** for WSDOT and local jurisdictions to fund.
- Skagit County is continuing to invest in **future transportation improvements.** The **Mount Vernon Library Commons Project** will include 76 charging stations for electric vehicles.
- There is a desire to **enhance transit**, **bike and pedestrian infrastructure** in the overall **safety and connectivity** of the I-5 corridor.



# POPULATION 133,000 residents **11<sup>th</sup>** most populous county Mostly rural **URBAN CENTERS NEAR I-5** Burlington. Mount Vernon **FEATURES** Port of Anacortes. ሐ **Anacortes Ferry Terminal LENGTH OF I-5 CORRIDOR** QS<sup>°</sup> 24 Miles **I-5 INTERSECTS** SR 11, SR 20, SR 538, SR 536 and SR 543

#### I-5 PARALLELS



Active or imminent construction projects in Skagit County, which are listed below, are focused around on- and off-ramp and interchange improvements.

- Multiple **on- and off-ramp improvement** projects are underway on state highways adjacent to I-5.
- Skagit County is **adding a new vehicular lane** to the George Hopper interchange east of I-5 in Burlington.

# What are your thoughts, ideas and/or concerns related to I-5?

Skagit County listening session participants' key ideas and concerns, listed below, included growth and congestion; corridor resiliency, especially around adequate detour routes during I-5 closures; better east-west connections; and the need for improved transit.

- **Population growth and development** are contributing to increased traffic on I-5. There is interest in using technology, such as ramp metering, to help **alleviate congestion**.
- County agencies and jurisdictions have concerns about system resiliency on I-5, particularly regarding the functionality and capacity of parallel routes, including SR 9, during flooding and landslides. They also want a better understanding of how long I-5 would be unusable following a seismic event.

- On- and off-ramps in Mount Vernon near the I-5 Skagit River bridge are a focus for improvements, given current safety and maintenance concerns. Short distances between exits lead to weaving.
- East-west connections to I-5 are limited throughout the county, creating bottlenecks that exacerbate congestion.
- Improved access to transit, including high-speed rail infrastructure, is a transportation planning priority for area agencies and jurisdictions.
- A third northbound lane on I-5 from Mount Vernon would increase capacity and functionality along the corridor.

# Who else in your community should we engage moving forward, including underserved communities?

- City of Burlington
- City of Sedro Wooley
- Samish Indian Nation
- Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe
- Skagit Valley Hospital
- Swinomish Indian Tribal Community
- Upper Skagit Indian Tribe

# **Snohomish County**

This section includes feedback received from participating jurisdictions and organizations within Snohomish County as well as from statewide organizations who provided county-specific input.

## Area snapshot

Snohomish County lies between Skagit County to the north and King County to the south. Snohomish County contains about 40 miles of the I-5 corridor, which intersects with six state highways, one U.S. highway and one interstate: SR 532, SR 530, SR 531, SR 526, SR 525, SR 104, U.S. Highway 2 (US 2) and I-405. SR 9 parallels I-5.

Snohomish is the state's third most populous county, with approximately 833,000 residents. I-5 passes through Everett, the county's largest metropolitan city which is home to one of the region's busiest ports and an airport. The southern half of the I-5 corridor in Snohomish County is surrounded by a mix of suburban and urban environments. The northernmost section of I-5 in the county runs through rural communities.

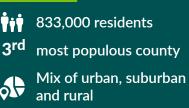
# What are the key planning conversations related to I-5 in your area?

Area planning topics raised by participants primarily focused on the Everett Link light rail extension and efforts to mitigate the effects of regional growth, including major I-5 interchange and east-west corridor improvement projects. These topics are listed below:

- Planning studies are underway around US 2 and its intersection with I-5 in Everett. The US 2 Westbound Trestle Study is examining transportation issues, environmental concerns and community needs around the US 2 corridor.
- Planning for the future of I-5 is important to prepare for expected increases in freight demand and population growth.
- Area jurisdictions are planning transit and infrastructure projects around the *Everett Link Extension*, which includes stations in Lynnwood and Everett. Area leaders advocate for prioritizing the Link light rail extension to Lynnwood ahead of the initial East Link segment between Bellevue and Redmond.



#### POPULATION



#### **URBAN CENTERS NEAR I-5**

Arlington, Marysville,

Everett, Lynnwood, Mill Creek, Mountlake Terrace and others

#### FEATURES



Port of Everett, Paine Field

LENGTH OF I-5 CORRIDOR

**9**<sup>S</sup> 40 Miles

#### I-5 INTERSECTS

SR 532, SR 530, SR 531,
 SR 526, SR 525, SR 104,
 US 2 and I-405

#### I-5 PARALLELS

🕽 🗍 🛛 SR 9

- As cities grow in the northern part of the county, there is interest in improving existing I-5 interchanges and potentially building new ones to accommodate increased traffic.
  I-5 interchanges at 172nd Street Northeast (SR 531), 156th Street Northeast and 164th Street Southwest (SR 528) were mentioned.
- Jurisdictions and agencies are discussing plans for improving safety and capacity on major east-west corridors that cross I-5 due to increased traffic on 128th Street Southwest (SR 96) and 164th Street Southwest.
- Major parallel routes, such as SR 527 in the city of Mill Creek, are being considered for safety and capacity improvement projects.
- Transit development and infrastructure improvements are being discussed for the county's northern communities such as Smokey Point, where demand for transit service is increasing. Parking capacity at light rail stations is a challenge.
- Increasing capacity on I-5 is an issue for land use requirements under Snohomish County's Vision 2050.
- Long-term development projects are being planned for **Quil Ceda Village** on the Tulalip Reservation. Development is expected to increase traffic at the I-5 interchanges at 116th Street Northeast and 88th Street Northeast, as well as along the 27th Avenue Northeast corridor.
- Survey results show people in Snohomish County with higher incomes are commuting less post-pandemic, but they still make vehicle trips on I-5 for non-work reasons.

- There is interest in high-speed rail planning conversations, as well as improving Amtrak Cascades service.
- Pedestrian improvements are needed in Lynnwood and other communities to improve accessibility and safety around transit corridors.

Active or imminent construction projects in Snohomish County, listed below, focus primarily on improvements to I-5 interchanges and major east-west corridors that intersect with I-5.

- There are active or upcoming construction projects on major **east-west highways** that intersect with I-5, including US 2, SR 526, SR 530 and SR 531.
- Interchange improvement projects are underway near the Tulalip Reservation, in Marysville and in Everett.
- Major **commercial and residential developments** are underway around the Port of Everett.
- Projects for the *Revive I-5 Program* will take place in Snohomish County over the next decade.
- A new I-5 crossing project at *Poplar Way* in Lynnwood is nearing final design.

# What are your thoughts, ideas and/or concerns related to I-5?

Snohomish County listening session participants' key concerns, which are listed below, included regional growth and associated impacts on I-5 traffic and interchanges, corridor accommodations for transit services and the need for more effective I-5 lane management. Other needs and concerns raised included safety, I-5 environmental impacts and corridor resiliency.

- Existing I-5 interchanges need upgrades to address major congestion issues. This challenge is especially present in the urban areas of the county.
- Freight mobility is often hindered by I-5 congestion. The Port of Everett is seeking methods for moving freight without using I-5.
- Additional **non-interchange I-5 crossings** would facilitate east-west mobility across I-5, especially for those biking, walking or rolling.
- Certain sections of the I-5 corridor are more dangerous than others. There are **many traffic collisions** in south Everett between 41st Street and Marine View Drive on northbound I-5.
- There is a **capacity challenge** on I-5, especially around Everett.
- Cities in the area are **growing rapidly**. Residential and commercial developments near the Port of Everett will affect freight access to the port. The Cascade Industrial Center in north Marysville is expected to bring tens of thousands of **new jobs**.
- Addressing **seismic vulnerabilities** of I-5 infrastructure should be a priority.

- The **HOV system** in Snohomish County needs to be updated to make it more effective. Increasing passenger capacity regulations or using other types of managed lanes were raised as possible solutions.
- Exit 194 in Everett gets very congested, which can uniquely impact those who have disabilities and use vanpools to commute.
- Area **paratransit** routes are **not efficient**, and users can experience long commutes.
- A holistic approach to I-5 planning is needed. Lack of coordination between jurisdictions can lead to growing corridor traffic problems.
- Park and ride locations and parking capacity need to be considered in I-5 corridor planning to improve **inter-county transit connectivity**, which is currently a challenge in Snohomish, Skagit and Whatcom counties. **Direct access ramps** from park and rides to I-5 would benefit transit service efficiency.
- I-5 north of SR 526 does not experience significant congestion.
- Traffic on I-5 spreads invasive plant species to surrounding environments. This is an environmental concern on the Tulalip Reservation.
- Wildlife crossings must be considered in I-5 planning efforts.
- I-5 in the county is vulnerable to natural disasters. **Stormwater, floodplain and resiliency** planning are essential.
- SR 9 is a **major I-5 parallel route** through Snohomish County. This highway and its connections to I-5 need to be part of future corridor planning.

### Who else in your community should we engage moving forward, including underserved communities?

- Cascade Industrial Center
- City of Lynnwood Planning Department
- City of Monroe
- City of Mountlake Terrace
- City of Snohomish
- City of Stanwood
- Committee for Improved Transportation
- Dial-A-Ride Transportation Paratransit (Community Transit)
- Delta Neighborhood in northeast Everett (low-income, BIPOC and LEP communities)
- Downtown Everett Association
- Duwamish Tribe of Indians
- Everett Housing Authority
- Everett Naval Station
- Homage
- Housing Authority of Snohomish County
- Housing Consortium of Everett and Snohomish County
- Housing Hope

- Lynnwood Chamber of Commerce
- North Sound Transportation Alliance
- On-Trac
- Rabanco garbage facility near Riverside Business Park in Everett
- Residents renting in Lynnwood
- Seattle Premium Outlets
- Snohomish Bicycle Club
- Snohomish County Committee
- Snohomish County Citizens Committee
- Snohomish County Human Services Department
- Snohomish County Infrastructure Coordinating Committee
- Snohomish County Planning Advisory Committee
- Snow Goose Transit
- The Arc of Snohomish County
- Trucking community on East Marine View Drive
- Tulalip Resort and Casino
- Users of the emergency access road on 75th Street Southeast in Everett
- Valley View neighborhood in Everett

# **King County**

This section includes feedback received from participating jurisdictions and organizations within King County as well as from statewide organizations who provided county-specific input.

### Area snapshot

King County is in the central Puget Sound region between Snohomish County to the north and Pierce County to the south. The county contains about 38 miles of the I-5 corridor, which intersect with four state highways and two interstates: SR 522, SR 520, SR 18, SR 161, I-405 and I-90. I-405 parallels I-5 in the northern part of the county and SR 167 parallels I-5 in the southern portion.

King County is the state's most populous county, with approximately 2.25 million residents. I-5 passes through Seattle, the state's largest metropolitan city. The I-5 corridor through King County is surrounded by a mix of urban and suburban environments. The county also contains the Port of Seattle and Seattle-Tacoma International Airport.

## What are the key planning conversations related to I-5 in your area?

Area planning topics raised by participants, listed below, primarily focused on improving access across I-5, enhancing the north and south movement of freight and addressing the congestion associated with residential and commercial growth in area cities.

- The Puget Sound Gateway Program is central to freight mobility planning.
- The addition of a new commercial airport is part of planning discussions for ports in the region.
- Sound Transit's light rail expansion is a central part of planning efforts for many cities, including Shoreline, Seattle, Bellevue, Kent and Federal Way.
- Multimodal access across I-5 is a planning priority for the SeaTac, Shoreline, Kent and Seattle communities, especially where new light rail stations are being built adjacent to I-5.
- I-5 lids in downtown Seattle are being considered in planning conversations.



#### POPULATION

İİ	2.25 million residents
Lst	The most populous county

O Urban and suburban

### **URBAN CENTERS NEAR I-5**



Seattle, Shoreline, Tukwila, Renton, Kent, SeaTac, Federal Way, Des Moines, Auburn and others

#### **FEATURES**

- Seattle-Tacoma
- International Airport, Port of Seattle

#### **LENGTH OF I-5 CORRIDOR**

38 Miles

#### **I-5 INTERSECTS**

SR 522, SR 520, SR 18, SR 161, I-405 and I-90

#### **I-5 PARALLELS**

I-405 in northern part of the county, SR 167 in the

southern portion

- Area planning efforts are addressing traffic congestion associated with **residential and commercial growth**, especially in south King County. The cities of Tukwila and Federal way are planning for major developments in their urban centers soon.
- Area transit agencies are working to **restructure transit routes** around new light rail extensions.
- Planning efforts are underway for multiple
  I-5 interchange improvement projects in Federal Way.
- New lane management solutions are being discussed. Tolling, transit-only lanes, freight lanes, road use charges and additional HOV lanes are potential options.
- High-speed rail is an important longer-term solution. In the near-term, intercity transit routes can help alleviate congestion, such as a direct route between Olympia and Seattle.

Active or imminent construction projects in King County, which are listed below, are primarily associated with large-scale capital projects in the region, including the Puget Sound Gateway Program, Sound Transit Link light rail extensions and the *Revive I-5 Program*.

- The SR 509 Completion Project is currently in stage 1b and will result in the first mile of a new SR 509 Expressway, new I-5 ramps, new interchanges and a new bridge. This project is expected to bring improvements for people and freight traveling through south King County.
- Construction for Sound Transit's new light rail stations is underway or coming soon in Shoreline, Kent, Des Moines and Federal Way.
- Area jurisdictions are constructing or planning multimodal infrastructure across I-5 to improve non-motorized access to future light rail stations. Construction for the Shoreline 148th Street Non-Motorized Bridge is expected to start in 2023.

- There are ongoing multimodal improvement projects happening on major **east-west corridors** that cross I-5, including at North 175th Street and North 145th Street in Shoreline.
- Sound Transit is developing new **bus rapid transit** routes in east King County that will intersect with I-5.
- Projects for the Revive I-5 Program will take place throughout King County's I-5 corridor over the next decade.

# What are your thoughts, ideas and/or concerns related to I-5?

King County listening session participants' key concerns, which are listed below, included challenges to east-west mobility across I-5, major congestion and costs and risks associated with vulnerable I-5 infrastructure. Other thoughts and ideas raised included prioritizing transit investment and movement along the corridor, the need for a systemwide approach to planning and freight mobility optimization.

- I-5 needs to be considered as part of a holistic freeway network that connects with I-405, I-90, SR 520, SR 18, SR 167 and SR 522.
   More efficient interchanges and connectivity of HOV and toll lanes would make the entire system operate better for all users.
- Consider transit-only lanes to improve access for commuters to downtown Seattle and other employment centers.
- Prioritize using **existing I-5 infrastructure** more effectively instead of adding lanes.
- Addressing I-5 seismic vulnerabilities should be a priority. Emergency lifeline routes need to be established and maintained.
- Aging I-5 infrastructure is a source of frequent lane closures and increasing congestion. There needs to be more resiliency planning to mitigate closure impacts.

- Freight mobility through the county, especially in Seattle, is challenging due to congestion. Ports and trucking services seek alternative routes or methods for moving goods north and south. Kent's warehouse district depends on the ability to move goods through the region efficiently.
- There are opportunities for **inter-agency collaboration** with WSDOT and local jurisdictions to better communicate transportation information to I-5 travelers.
- The Virtual Coordination Center partnership between WSDOT and the University of Washington is a good step in coordinated incident response.
- Major **east-west corridors** that intersect I-5 need improvements to facilitate travel and ease access on and off of I-5.
- Multimodal access and safety across I-5 is a major challenge, especially in downtown Seattle. Overpasses in the area do not feel comfortable or safe for people who bike, walk or roll across I-5. Pedestrian and cyclist safety should be a priority.
- I-5 is an access barrier for many communities.
- Rethink a more efficient way to bring people on and off the freeway in downtown
   Seattle, potentially reducing the number of downtown exits.
- People of color are being displaced from Seattle but still need access to downtown.
   Transportation equity needs to be a priority for I-5 planning efforts.
- I-5 planning in the county's urban areas must balance the movement of a growing number of people and goods with **limited space and right of way**.
- **Trails and bicycle paths** need to be part of I-5 corridor planning.
- WSDOT should work with local jurisdictions to **build or improve park and rides** along

the corridor that accommodate local needs for capacity and electric vehicle charging infrastructure and locations. **Increasing bus electrification** will require more charging points.

- Encampments along the I-5 corridor pose safety and maintenance challenges. Conditions for people living in encampments are hazardous.
- I-5 spillover traffic in cities along the corridor, such as Des Moines and Tukwila, can create back-ups on surface streets.
- As I-5 traffic grows, there are increasing burdens on local emergency services, including financial costs and operational changes to avoid use of I-5 as much as possible.
- More ramp meters could help alleviate
  I-5 traffic in regularly congested areas of the corridor.
- Funding allocation for projects along I-5 should align with the pace of growth. Areas that are growing faster need more funding.
- HOV lanes fill up, making them ineffective for carpool travelers and transit. Increasing passenger capacity regulations or converting to transit-only lanes was suggested to improve managed lane efficiency.
- Seattle area transit has capacity for additional ridership. **Increasing public transit use** by improving transit reliability and efficiency could take cars off I-5.
- The Northgate pedestrian bridge project should be a blueprint for the kinds of pedestrian crossings needed near the University District.
- Signage and lane markings can create confusion for drivers, especially when navigating freeway interchanges in the Seattle area.
- There is often congestion when accessing **Sea-Tac Airport**.

### Who else in your community should we engage moving forward, including underserved communities?

- Aging & Disability Services for Seattle & King County
- Aurora Reimagined Coalition
- Charlie's Produce
- Eastrail Partners
- Federal Way Chamber of Commerce
- Federal Way Economic Development Department
- Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center
- Freight community in Kent
- Green River College
- Highline College
- Hopelink Kent
- Hopelink Shoreline
- Hopelink Eastside Easy Riders Collaborative
- LeafLine Trails Coalition
- Manufacturing and industrial organizations
- MTRWestern

- NW Seaport Alliance
- Pacific Maritime Association
- Pacific Merchant Shipping Association
- Puget Sound Regional Council Equity Cabinet
- Save Weyerhaeuser Campus
- Seattle Fire Department Emergency Operations
- Seattle Neighborhood Greenways
- Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs
- Seattle Southside Regional Tourism Authority
- Seattle Southside Chamber of Commerce
- Seattle Subway
- Seattle Transit Riders Union
- Segale Properties
- Shoreline Community College
- Starfire Sports
- State Ecology Office and other major employers in Shoreline
- Washington Apple Commission
- Washington Maritime Federation
- Washington Potato Commission
- Washington Public Ports Association
- World Relief Seattle

# **Pierce County**

This section includes feedback received from participating jurisdictions and organizations within Pierce County as well as from statewide organizations who provided county-specific input.

### Area snapshot

Pierce County is located in the south Puget Sound area between King County to the north and Thurston County to the south. Approximately 25 miles of the I-5 corridor run through the county, intersecting Tacoma in the northern part of the county and Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) in the south. In Pierce County, I-5 intersects with three state highways and one interstate: SR 167, SR 7, SR 512 and I-705. SR 7 and SR 507 parallel I-5 through much of the county.

Pierce County is the state's second most populous county with about 925,000 residents. The northern section of Pierce County's I-5 corridor is surrounded by a dense urban and commercial environment, as it passes by Fife, Tacoma and Lakewood, as well as the Port of Tacoma, one of the busiest ports in the region. Suburban communities and JBLM surround most of the county's southern I-5 corridor.

## What are the key planning conversations related to I-5 in your area?

Area planning topics raised by participants, listed below, primarily focused on increasing overall mobility in the county as the regional population and subsequent traffic volumes grow. Other planning priorities mentioned include flood and climate change impact mitigation, multimodal I-5 crossings and safety.

- Growth management is a major focus of many planning efforts around I-5 in Pierce County. Traffic volumes are rising with continued residential and commercial development.
- HOV system expansion between Tacoma and Dupont is being considered. The potential effects on low-income populations and communities of color in the area is a concern that needs to be addressed.
- The City of Tacoma is evaluating mobility across I-5 for those who drive, bike, walk and roll to determine opportunities for improved crossings.



#### POPULATION

925,000 residents

2<sup>nd</sup> most populous county



Mix of urban, commercial/ industrial and suburban

#### **URBAN CENTERS NEAR I-5**

Tacoma, Fife, Lakewood ●間 and others

#### FEATURES



Port of Tacoma, Joint Base Lewis-McChord

#### **LENGTH OF I-5 CORRIDOR**

QS 25 Miles

**I-5 INTERSECTS** 

SR 167, SR 7, SR 512 and I-705

#### **I-5 PARALLELS**

SR 7 and SR 507

- Improving north and south freight mobility is a key part of county planning efforts, and the Puget Sound Gateway Program projects are an important component.
- Sound Transit service expansion is a central part of transportation planning for many jurisdictions and agencies. Subarea and station access planning efforts are underway in the cities of Tacoma, Lakewood and Fife.
- Jurisdictions are working to address floodplain risks around Clover Creek, just north of JBLM.
   Flooding has caused I-5 closures in the past.
- Climate change poses a threat to I-5, especially around the Nisqually Delta. Pierce County is developing plans to mitigate climate change impacts.
- There are potential **tribal developments** on the horizon adjacent to I-5 and the Emerald Queen Casino.
- Vision Zero Tacoma is central to the city's transportation planning efforts.

Active or imminent construction projects in Pierce County, which are listed below, are primarily associated with major transit and highway expansion programs, especially those around Tacoma.

- The SR 167 Completion Project is in stage 1b and will result in a new expressway between I-5 and SR 509. This project is central to freight mobility in south Puget Sound as it provides a link to the Port of Tacoma.
- Construction for the Tacoma Dome Link Extension will begin as early as 2026, adding 10 miles to the light rail system between Federal Way and Tacoma.
- An interchange rebuild project is starting near Dupont to address chronic congestion around JBLM as part of the larger I-5 Mounts Road to Thorne Lane I/C - Corridor Improvements project.

# What are your thoughts, ideas and/or concerns related to I-5?

Pierce County listening session participants' key concerns, which are listed below, included congestion and associated impacts on transit, freight and commuters, as well as I-5 flood and erosion vulnerabilities. Other thoughts and ideas raised included safety, I-5 crossings, HOV system expansion and environmental concerns, especially around tribal lands and local waterways.

- Congestion is a major challenge where I-5 passes through Tacoma and JBLM. Traffic volumes will continue to increase as the county population grows.
   HOV expansion or managed lanes could help alleviate congestion.
- Using existing I-5 infrastructure more efficiently will be more effective than building additional **lane capacity**.
- The **lack of truck parking** along I-5 is an issue. Truckers often park on the side of the road or along I-5 ramps.
- Multimodal access across I-5 is a challenge for communities split by I-5, such as Lakewood, Tacoma, Fife and the lands of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians. Pedestrian access should be a high a priority in a future I-5 Master Plan.
- Alternative high-capacity transit options such as **high-speed rail** would help alleviate I-5 congestion and improve freight mobility and transit services in the region.
- There are **few parallel routes** along I-5, which makes it the most important north-south corridor for the local economy and JBLM.
- Safety is a major concern on I-5. The section of I-5 between Fife, Milton and Tacoma is one of the most dangerous on the corridor with a high volume of collisions. This traffic safety challenge has a disproportionate impact on Puyallup Tribal members.

- The effects of air and noise pollution on communities surrounding the I-5 corridor need to be addressed. These effects are disproportionate on communities of color.
- Flooding and erosion around the Nisqually Delta are a significant concern and make I-5 structures in the area vulnerable.
- Future WSDOT I-5 planning efforts should consider **impacts to tribes** in Pierce County, especially where I-5 intersects with waterways. Local waterway pollution from I-5 traffic affects tribal members and natural resources.
- Encampments along the corridor pose challenges to nearby cities and communities. Conditions are unsafe for people living in encampments, and it is difficult for smaller cities to manage safety and sanitation issues.
- I-5 maintenance is needed between Fife and Milton, especially on interchanges and bridge structures. Issues include overgrowth, debris and aging infrastructure.
- Freight movement is crucial in the county. For example, the Port of Tacoma accounts for 80 percent of goods on the shelves in Alaska, all transported by truck.
- There is a high volume of commuting traffic from Pierce County to King County.
- The Legislature wants to **double manufacturing capacity** in the county over next 10 years, which, if reached, will amplify issues on the transportation system along the I-5 corridor.

## Who else in your community should we engage moving forward, including underserved communities?

- Bridge Development Partners
- City of Edgewood
- Downtown on the Go
- Economic Development Board of Pierce County
- Edgewood Chamber of Commerce
- Giaudrone Middle School
- Jenny Reed Elementary School
- Manufacturing and industrial organizations
- Pacific Maritime Association
- Pacific Merchant Shipping Association
- Pierce County Health Department
- Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Housing and Communications Departments
- South Sound Alliance
- The Tillicum community
- Transportation Choices Coalition
- Washington Apple Commission
- Washington Maritime Federation
- Washington Potato Commission
- Washington Public Ports Association

# **Thurston County**

This section includes feedback received from participating jurisdictions and organizations within Thurston County as well as from statewide organizations who provided county-specific input.

### Area snapshot

Thurston County is situated on the southern tip of Puget Sound in western Washington. The county's 29 miles of I-5 begins at the mouth of the Nisqually River near the northeastern border with Pierce County. The corridor then continues through the state capitol of Olympia, where it intersects with U.S. Highway 101 (US 101), the primary route to the Olympic Peninsula. I-5 also intersects with two state highways and one U.S. highway: SR 510, SR 121 and US 12. SR 507 parallels I-5 through much of the county.

Thurston is the state's sixth most populous county, with just less than 300,000 residents. The capitol city of Olympia constitutes the most densely populated section of the I-5 corridor in Thurston County. I-5 travels through a mix of rural and suburban environments in the southern portion of the county.

# What are the key planning conversations related to I-5 in your area?

Area planning topics raised by participants, listed below, primarily focused on optimizing traffic flow along the I-5 corridor to accommodate residential and commercial growth.

- The I-5 corridor is being evaluated between **Tumwater and Mounts Road** near the Thurston and Pierce County border as part of a Planning and Environmental Linkages study to develop mid- and long-term transportation system strategies.
- The **Nisqually Delta** is a major area of focus for county jurisdictions and agencies due to its importance to local environmental health, local tribes and its intersection with I-5.
- Regional jurisdictions are evaluating opportunities for **improved** or additional high-capacity transportation along I-5.
- Early planning work for **HOV system expansion** into Thurston County is ongoing.
- Multiple planning efforts are underway around the **Grand Mound** area, where I-5 meets US 12 and Old Highway 99, to meet the area's rapidly growing transportation needs.
- Area jurisdictions and agencies are planning for the potential addition of a **commercial airport**.



# POPULATION 300,000 residents ŤŧŤ 6<sup>th</sup> most populous county Some urbanized areas with 66 mix of rural and suburban **URBAN CENTERS NEAR I-5** ●■ Olympia, Tumwater, Lacey **FEATURES** Port of Olympia, و ل State Capitol **LENGTH OF I-5 CORRIDOR** QS<sup>°</sup> 29 Miles **I-5 INTERSECTS** SR 510, SR 121, US 101 and US 12 **I-5 PARALLELS** N/A

- Thurston County planners are considering transportation improvements around Yelm to alleviate congestion caused by diverted I-5 traffic.
- The I-5 and US 101 interchange is a **congestion point** that needs improvements.
- Transit agencies that operate in Thurston County are working with WSDOT and the Federal Highway Administration to improve I-5 access to corridor park and rides.
- **Freight mobility** is a transportation planning priority for most participants.
- Additional projects to address safety issues around accessing the JBLM main gate have been considered, but not advanced.
- It is important to consider opportunities to create wildlife crossings.

Active or imminent construction projects in Thurston County, listed below, primarily focus on I-5 interchange improvements and transit signal prioritization.

- Multiple I-5 **interchange improvement** projects are underway.
- Area transit agencies are supporting a project to improve **signal priority for transit services** near the Martin Way East interchange.

# What are your thoughts, ideas and/or concerns related to I-5?

Thurston County listening session participants' key concerns, listed below, included congestion caused by a combination of regional growth and a lack of parallel routes along the corridor. Other issues and ideas included transit prioritization, environmental vulnerabilities and the need for agency coordination.

- I-5 congestion continues to worsen as more people move to Thurston County. Congestion affects the effectiveness of transit services and ridesharing programs along the I-5 corridor. Unreliable transit times reduce ridership.
- A lack of parallel routes causes severe backups on major arterials when lanes are closed on I-5. Roads in cities like Yelm cannot handle high traffic volumes.
- More HOV lanes are desired in Thurston County. Many participants noted that HOV and transit only lanes are more efficient solutions than increasing lane capacity.
- Thurston County needs additional resources to support **inter-county express transit services**.
- Access to and from JBLM is a challenge for the region. People traveling to and from the base contribute to congestion on I-5 and surrounding cities such as Yelm and Lacey. If there is a closure and JBLM employees cannot report for duty, it becomes a missionreadiness issue.

- Addressing environmental concerns and bridge vulnerabilities around the Nisqually Delta should be a WSDOT priority.
- Transportation planning around the I-5 corridor should be a **coordinated effort** instead of a region-by-region approach.
- Participants expressed appreciation for proactive and frequent communication regarding I-5 construction projects. This helps local jurisdictions prepare for traffic impacts.
- WSDOT needs to prioritize and **invest in transit and alternative transportation methods**. Continued investment in singleoccupancy vehicle infrastructure will encourage people to continue buying cars.

### Who else in your community should we engage moving forward, including underserved communities?

- Capital City Council of the Blind
- City of Tumwater
- Elected officials in Thurston County
- Nisqually Indian Tribe
- People First of Washington
- Squaxin Island Tribe
- State employees who live in Thurston County
- Thurston Regional Planning Council

# **Lewis County**

This section includes feedback received from participating jurisdictions and organizations within Lewis County as well as from statewide organizations who provided county-specific input.

### Area snapshot

Lewis County is located in southwest Washington between Thurston County to the north and Cowlitz County to the south. Approximately 28 miles of the I-5 corridor run through the county. I-5 intersects with five state highways and one U.S. highway in Lewis County: SR 507, SR 6, SR 508, SR 505, SR 506 and U.S. Highway 12 (US 12).

Lewis County is the state's 16th most populous county, with about 84,000 residents. The county's largest cities are situated along the I-5 corridor. Lewis County is primarily rural, with urban environments around Centralia and Chehalis.

# What are the key planning conversations related to I-5 in your area?

Area planning topics raised by participants, listed below, primarily focused on addressing the effects of regional residential and commercial growth on the I-5 corridor, especially around Chehalis and Centralia.

- Planning efforts are underway to address the **continuing residential growth** in Lewis County by **upgrading major interchanges** such as Rush Road.
- Subarea plans around Chehalis and Centralia are considering locations for new I-5 interchanges (north of Harrison Avenue) to accommodate commercial development.
- Jurisdictions are planning to alleviate congestion by adding parallel routes along the corridor and seeking to increase I-5 lane capacity in some areas, especially between Chehalis and Napavine, where there is a segment with only two lanes in each direction.
- Transit agencies are looking to make **improvements to park and rides** at I-5 Exits 63 and 77 to improve transit ridership.
- Food mitigation efforts are considered in many jurisdictions' infrastructure plans.



### POPULATION

84,000 residents

16<sup>th</sup> most populous county



Primarily rural with some urban environments

#### **URBAN CENTERS NEAR I-5**

Centralia, Chehalis,

#### FEATURES

Port of Chehalis

#### LENGTH OF I-5 CORRIDOR

**2**8 Miles

#### I-5 INTERSECTS

SR 507, SR 6, SR 508, SR 505, SR 506 and US 12

I-5 PARALLELS

ĴĴ N/A

Active or imminent construction projects in Lewis County primarily focus on improving mobility around major interchanges and enhancing parallel north-south routes. Listed below are these projects or discussion around needed projects.

- The I-5 corridor **between Chehalis and Centralia** is a particular area of focus for upcoming construction projects.
- Jurisdictions are working to **expand capacity on roadways** that parallel I-5 to alleviate freeway congestion.
- Interchange projects near Chehalis and Centralia will create more efficient access on and off I-5 and reduce congestion.

# What are your thoughts, ideas and/or concerns related to I-5?

Lewis County listening session participants' key concerns, listed below, included congestion caused by a combination of regional growth and lack of I-5 lane capacity and the need for improved interchanges and bridges. Participants also identified a need for more parallel routes, flooding vulnerabilities on I-5 and opportunities for increased transit infrastructure.

- Sections of I-5 with only two lanes pose a significant challenge to corridor mobility.
  Adding additional capacity on I-5 will help alleviate regional congestion and improve roadway conditions, especially in the two-lane section. HOV lanes could be added if additional lanes are built.
- Residential and commercial growth in the county is contributing to congestion. More travelers are using I-5 to commute to Portland, Seattle and north of Seattle.
- Many I-5 interchanges need capacity and safety improvements, including Rush Road.

- There are opportunities to **expand transit use** in Lewis County by investing in transit centers with electric vehicle infrastructure. Rideshare programs and light rail would be effective in this region.
- Area I-5 bridges are regularly struck by vehicles because they do not meet current height standards. Frequent bridge maintenance is a source of congestion. Many I-5 bridges cannot handle freight vehicles carrying excess loads, thus forcing trucks to detour onto other highways.
- A seismic study of Lewis County structures would be helpful for planning.
- Flooding on I-5 has resulted in financial impacts for local economies and should be addressed to increase resiliency. Landslides are also a concern.
- The lack of parallel routes is a challenge. When I-5 closures occur, commuters and freight vehicles use local roads, which are not equipped to handle freight and high traffic volumes.
- Lewis County has many barriers that affect **mobility** in its cities, including I-5, rivers and the railroad.

# Who else in your community should we engage moving forward, including underserved communities?

- Centralia College
- Chehalis Advisory Board
- Chehalis Chamber of Commerce
- Chehalis Rotary
- Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation
- Lewis County Port Authority
- Port of Chehalis
- United Natural Foods

# **Cowlitz County**

This section includes feedback received from participating jurisdictions and organizations within Cowlitz County as well as from statewide organizations who provided county-specific input.

### Area snapshot

Cowlitz County is located in southwest Washington, situated between the Columbia River on its western border and Mount Saint Helens on the east. Thirty six miles of I-5 run through the county. Between Kelso and Woodland, I-5 sits in a narrow corridor between the Columbia River and rolling mountains. I-5 intersects with five state highways: SR 504, SR 411, SR 4, SR 432 and SR 503.

Cowlitz County is the state's 12th most populous county, with nearly 110,000 residents. It is also home to two major ports in Longview and Kalama. Cowlitz County has a mix of rural and urban environments, with most major urban centers located along the I-5 corridor.

### What are the key planning conversations related to I-5 in your area?

Area planning topics raised by participants, listed below, primarily focused on the environmental impacts on I-5, specifically the need to address flooding and landslides.

- Closures on I-5 due to flooding, landslides or accidents are challenging due to the lack of adequate parallel routes. I-5 traffic using local area roads, such as Green Mountain Road, are not equipped to handle freight vehicles and high traffic volumes.
- I-5 between Woodland and Kelso experiences regular flooding and landslides.
- The cities of Woodland and Kelso are conducting planning efforts to address congestion around interchanges at Exit 21 in Woodland and Exit 39 in Kelso (Allen Street corridor).
- Bridge replacement and improvement studies are underway, including the East Fork Lewis River Northbound Bridge Replacement Study and the SR 433 Lewis and Clark Bridge Finger Joint Replacement Project. It is anticipated that construction will cause significant traffic congestion due to the lack of alternate routes.
- Transit agencies are working with WSDOT and local jurisdictions on efforts to improve park and rides along the I-5 corridor and expand bus services.



#### POPULATION



12<sup>th</sup> most populous county



Primarily rural with some urban centers

#### **URBAN CENTERS NEAR I-5**



Castle Rock, Longview, Kelso, Kalama, Woodland

#### FEATURES



**LENGTH OF I-5 CORRIDOR** 

**O**<sup>2</sup> 35 Miles

**I-5 INTERSECTS** 

SR 504, SR 411, SR 4, SR 432 and SR 503

**I-5 PARALLELS** 

Î Î N/A

In Cowlitz County, there are few major construction efforts on I-5 underway. Most of the projects mentioned are maintenance or paving projects on bridges, ramps and other roadways.

# What are your thoughts, ideas and/or concerns related to I-5?

Cowlitz County listening session participants' key concerns, listed below, include environmental and resiliency as they relate to flooding, landslide and lack of adequate parallel routes during I-5 closures. Issues and ideas relating to local growth, congestion, transit service and I-5 crossings were also raised.

- Flooding affects I-5 and requires ramp closures and full closures of I-5.
- Lack of adequate parallel routes contributes to congestion on I-5 and local roads and affects emergency service response networks. No adequate freight access is available.
- I-5 bridges are a source of traffic congestion due to their reduced lane capacity and frequent maintenance projects. I-5 bridges are often struck by vehicles, which results in the need for repairs and subsequent lane closures.
- **Population growth** and development are contributing to increased traffic on I-5 and at interchanges.

- Existing park and ride facilities lack sufficient parking capacity or proximity to population centers to meet the needs of the increasing number of commuters.
- There is a significant number of people traveling between Longview, Kelso and Vancouver who would benefit from **improved transit access**.
- Cities that are bisected by I-5 need **better pedestrian and bicycle access across I-5** by narrowing vehicle lanes, adding bike lanes and building pedestrian infrastructure such as trails or bridges.

# Who else in your community should we engage moving forward, including underserved communities?

- City of Woodland
- Cowlitz Indian Tribe
- Ilani Casino and Event Center
- Kelso Longview Chamber of Commerce
- Longview Industrial Area
- OI Glass
- Residents living along the Green Mountain Road detour route
- RSG Forest Products
- Steelscape

# **Clark County**

This section includes feedback received from participating jurisdictions and organizations within Clark County as well as from statewide organizations who provided county-specific input.

# Area snapshot

Clark County is located in southwest Washington, adjacent to the Columbia River and the state of Oregon across the river on its southern and western borders. Approximately 21 miles of the I-5 corridor run through Clark County. The southern end of Washington's I-5 corridor begins in Clark County. In the northern part of the county, I-5 passes through rural communities before entering the more suburban and denser urban environments of Vancouver near the county's southern border. I-5 intersects with four state highways and one interstate in Clark County: SR 501, SR 502, SR 500, SR 14 and I-205. SR 503 parallels I-5 through most of the county.

Clark County is the state's fifth most populous county with about 480,000 residents, and it contains Washington's fourth largest city, Vancouver. The county also borders the major metropolitan city of Portland, Oregon, which gets thousands of daily commuters traveling from southern Washington communities.

### What are the key planning conversations related to I-5 in your area?

Area planning topics raised by participants, listed below, primarily focused on Vancouver and the Interstate Bridge Replacement Program.

- The I-5 Interstate Bridge Replacement Program (IBR) will begin as early as 2025 and have significant effects on Vancouver and surrounding communities. Local jurisdictions are looking to minimize this program's impacts to downtown access and improve multimodal mobility across I-5 within Vancouver.
- Major interchange and east-west corridor improvements are being considered around Vancouver and other urban areas in Clark County. The Northwest 179th Street corridor and I-5 and I-205 interchange were mentioned.
- Planning is underway to improve access to the Port of Vancouver by extending Northwest 32nd Avenue.
- Transit program and route expansions are being considered for the near future around Vancouver and in north Clark County. The I-5 corridor between Ridgefield and Northeast 99th Street is an area of focus.



### POPULATION





Primarily rural in the north, a mix of suburban and urban in the south

### **URBAN CENTERS NEAR I-5**

Vancouver, Battle Ground, Ridgefield

#### **FEATURES**

- **Oregon-Washington**
- border, Port of Vancouver

#### **LENGTH OF I-5 CORRIDOR**

**Q S** 21 Miles

#### **I-5 INTERSECTS**

SR 501, SR 502, SR 500, SR 14 and I-205

#### **I-5 PARALLELS**

SR 503

Active or imminent construction projects in Clark County are primarily located around the city of Vancouver. The focus and types of such projects are listed below:

- Construction projects happening around Vancouver are focused on improving mobility across I-5 for people driving, walking and biking.
- There are also projects underway to enhance freight access to and from the Port of Vancouver.

# What are your thoughts, ideas and/or concerns related to I-5?

Clark County listening session participants' key concerns, listed below, included local congestion and its associated impacts on transit services and the growing number of I-5 travelers. Ideas and issues related to electric vehicle infrastructure, I-5 access and flood resiliency were also mentioned.

- **Congestion on I-5** affects transit services and local traffic. **Growth in the region** will continue to add more cars on the road. This congestion challenges goods movement and reliable access for emergency and other essential services.
- Strategies for managing existing lanes are preferable to adding new I-5 capacity.
- WSDOT could develop a **congestion management toolset** for local jurisdictions.
- I-5 planning needs to incorporate **electric vehicle infrastructure** to accommodate the rapid shift to electric vehicles.
- Lack of direct access ramps to I-5 and signal priority at interchanges affects travel times for transit services. Some transit routes avoid I-5 at peak traffic hours.
- Sections of I-5 through Clark County are at a lower elevation and **vulnerable to flooding**.

- I-5 structures in this part of the corridor could be at risk in the event of significant **seismic activity**.
- There are opportunities to improve access to I-5 for some Clark County cities and tribes. These opportunities include a westward extension of SR 502 and additional on-ramps in Woodland.
- The I-5 **interchange** with **SR 500** presents **safety challenges**; short on-ramps and distances between exits at the interchange leads drivers to make **rapid lane changes**.
- The I-5 interchange with I-205 may lack the needed capacity to accommodate future growth in the region.

# Who else in your community should we engage moving forward, including underserved communities?

- City of Battle Ground
- City of Richfield
- City of Vancouver Neighborhood Association
- City of Woodland
- Clark County Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Columbia Corridor Association
- Cowlitz Indian Tribe
- Friends of Clark County
- OI Glass
- Residents in north Clark County (rural area, property owners, low income)
- Residents in south Clark County (BIPOC, mostly renters, low income)
- Rosemere neighborhood
- RSG Forest Products
- Steelscape
- Team 99
- Vancouver Casino



# Recommended Statewide Organizations and Businesses to Engage Moving Forward

- AARP Washington
- Amazon
- Amtrak
- Center for Independence Washington
- Costco
- Darigold
- FedEx
- Jewish Community Services
- League of United Latino American Citizens

- Microsoft
- NAACP
- Safeway
- Transportation Futures Alliance
- UPS
- Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
- Washington State Emergency Management Division

- Washington State Independent Living Council
- Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner (Flood Insurance)
- Washington Tourism Association
- World Relief



# Who we heard from

The I-5 Study team conducted listening sessions with participants representing a wide range of transportation interests, both inside and outside the agency.

Participants included over 350 individuals representing over 137 different jurisdictions, tribes, agencies, WSDOT regions and divisions, businesses and community-based organizations, including those representing vulnerable populations and overburdened communities.

# **WSDOT Staff and Participants**

The following staff either represented WSDOT at external listening sessions or participated in internal sessions. Internal sessions were held with representatives from Region leadership, Tribal and Federal Relations, Headquarters Planning Office, Transportation Economic Partnerships, and Rail, Freight and Ports Division.

April Delchamps Planning Manager, UMAM Management of Mobility Division

Brian Nielsen Regional Administrator, Northwest Region

Carley Francis Regional Administrator, Southwest Region

Chris Damitio Assistant Regional Administrator, Northwest Region

Dan Hoyt Planning and Land Use Manager, UMAM Management of Mobility Division

Gaius Sanoy Planning and Program Manager, Olympic Region

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Manuel Abarca Traffic Design Engineer, Olympic Region

Megan Cotton Tribal and Federal Relations Director, Headquarters

Megan Nicodemus Tribal Relations, Planning Office

Monica Harwood Duncan Regional Traffic Engineer, Southwest Region

Paul Kruger Transportation Engineer, Rail, Freight and Ports Division

Richard Warren Planning Studies Manager, UMAM Management of Mobility Division Robin Mayhew Assistant Regional Administrator, Northwest Region

Ron Pate Director of Rail, Rail, Freight and Ports Division

Sarah Ott Traffic Engineer, Olympic Region

Steve Roark Regional Administrator, Olympic Region

Tamara Greenwell Communications Manager, Southwest Region

Todd Carlson Planning and Engineering Services Manager, Northwest Region

Tonia Buell Alternative Fuels Program Manager, Transportation Economic Partnerships

Travis Phelps Director, UMAM Management of Mobility Division

# **Organization and Jurisdiction Participants**

The following jurisdictions, organizations and businesses participated in individual or small group listening sessions.

#### **AAA of Washington**

Andrea Lucky Chief People Officer

Gregory Hagen Fleet Supervisor

Laura Ray Vice President of Corporate Affairs

Michelle Glass Vice President of Travel Services

Percy Hoffman Automotive Solutions and Technology Expert

# Associated Cities of Washington

Brandy DeLonge Government Relations Advocate, Associated Cities of Washington

#### Association of Washington Business

Mike Ennis Government Affairs Director for Transportation, Land Use, Telecom, and Vitality

Representatives from the following organizations were present:

- Washington Policy Center
- Fred Meyer - Seattle Tacoma

International Airport

#### Association of Washington Counties

Axel Swanson Washington State Association of County Engineers (WSACE)

#### Association of Women and Minority Businesses

Irene Reyes Founder and Chair of the Board of Directors

#### Boeing

Eugene Green Senior Manager for Boeing Licensed Transportation

Perry Hoffman Manager for Boeing Licensed Transportation

Rich White State and Local Government Operations

Vickie Currie Manager for Boeing Licensed Transportation

#### **Cascade Bicycle Club**

Lee Lambert Executive Director

Rachel Schaffer Seattle Policy and Advocacy Director

#### Cascadia Innovation Corridor

Alan Hart VIA Architecture

Andrea Newton Urban Land Institute

Bernard Abelson McElhanney Consulting Engineers

Christoph Rufenacht Vancouver International Airport

Colleen Kerr Microsoft David Hoff Ledcor Group

Kate Joncas MIG

Kevin Desmond Sam Schwartz

Molly Keenan Lodestar Partners

Paula Hammond Co-Chair, WSP

#### **City of Arlington**

Paul Ellis City Administrator

Marc Hayes Development Director

#### **City of Bellevue**

Janice Zahn Council Member Katie Halse Transportation Policy Advisor

#### **City of Bellingham**

Chad Schulhauser Assistant Director of Engineering

Chris Comeau Transportation Planner

Steve Haugen Traffic Signal Supervisor

#### **City of Blaine**

Gary McSpadden Public Works Director

Manroop Kaur Public Works Project Manager

Mike Harmon City Manager

Richard May Mayor Pro Tem

#### **City of Bothell**

Eddie Low Deputy Public Works Director

Eric Leonhart Public Works Director

#### City of Centralia

Kelly Smith Johnston Mayor

Kim Ashmore Public Works Director

Patty Page City Engineer

#### City of Chehalis

Jud Riddle Interim Water Superintendent

Tammy Baraconi Planning and Building Manager

#### **City of Des Moines**

Tommy Owen City Engineer

#### **City of Everett**

Nick Harper Deputy Mayor Ryan Sass

Public Works Director Tom Hood City Engineer

Yorik Stevens Wajda Planning Director

#### City of Federal Way

Rick Perez City Traffic Engineer Susan Honda Deputy Mayor

#### City of Ferndale

Kevin Renz Public Works Director Michael Cerbone Community Development Director

#### City of Fife

Derek Matheson City Manager Pat Hulcey Council Member

City of Kent

David Paine Transportation Planner Rob Brown Transportation Engineer

#### **City of Kirkland**

Jay Arnold Deputy Mayor

#### City of Lakewood

Dave Bugher Assistant City Manager

Paul Bucich Public Works Engineering Director

Tiffany Speir Strategic Planning Manager

#### City of Lynnwood

David Mach Public Works Manager

#### **City of Marysville**

Jeff Laycock Public Works Director

I-5 Study Listening Sessions Summary // Who We Heard From

Max Phan City Engineer and Assistant Public Works Director

#### **City of Mill Creek**

Frank Reinart City Engineer

Martin Yamomoto City Manager

Mike Todd Director of Public Works and Development Services

#### **City of Milton**

Dustin Madden Public Works Director

#### **City of Mount Vernon**

Gary Molenaar Council Member Jill Boudreau Mayor

Juan Morales

Council Member Mary Hudson Council Member

Melissa Beaton Council Member Richard Brocksmith Council Member

#### **City of Napavine**

Shawn O'Neill Mayor

#### **City of Newcastle**

Jeff Brauns Public Works Director

#### **City of Seattle**

Adiam Emery Executive General Manager, Seattle Mayor's Office

Bill LaBorde Senior Policy Advisor and Council Liaison

Greg Spotts Director, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)

Kit Loo Bridge Operations and Engineering Manager, SDOT

#### **City of SeaTac**

Florendo Cabudol City Engineer

#### **City of Shoreline**

Nytasha Walters Transportation Services Manager

#### **City of Tacoma**

Carrie Wilhelme Senior Transportation Planner Jennifer Kammerzell Interim Transportation Division Manager

Josh Diekmann Traffic Engineer

Leigh Starr Assistant Division Manager

Rosa McLeod Director of Government Relations

#### **City of Tukwila**

Brandon Miles Senior Planner

#### **City of Vancouver**

Ann McInerny-Ogle Mayor

Katherine Kelly Senior Policy Advisor

Rebecca Kennedy Deputy Director of Community Development

#### **Clark County**

Christopher Carle Capital Program Manager

Gary Albrecht Transportation Planner

Kaley McLachlan-Burton Community Engagement & Inclusion Manager

Ken Lader County Engineer

Rob Klug County Traffic Engineer

#### **Community Transit**

Scott Ritterbush Planning Project Manager

Thomas Tumola Planning Manager

#### **Commute Seattle**

Transportation Specialist

Transportation Specialist

**Conference on Minority** 

**Transportation Officials** 

36

Washington Chapter

Grantley Martelly

President

Bethany Goad

Kendle Bjelland

**Program Director** 

Kirk Hovenkotter

**Executive Director** 

Priya Balan

Zarina Infante

**Program Manager** 

#### **Cowlitz County**

Chris Andrews Roads Project Manager

Susan Eugenis County Engineer

#### Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments

Bill Fashing Executive Director

Lauren Read Mobility Management Coordinator

Robert Stevens Transportation Planner

#### **C-TRAN**

Taylor Eidt Planning Project Manager

#### Disability Mobility Initiative, Disability Rights Washington

Anna Zivarts Director

Amandeep Kaur Physician, The Everett Clinic

Betty Fitzpatrick Community Member

Brian Baker Community Member

Ivanovah Smith Activist Advocate, At Work!

Laura Lovesian Community Member

Linda Moran Community Member

Philip Bradford Community Member

#### Eastside Transportation Partnership

Regular meeting attendees

#### Economic Alliance of Snohomish County

Andy Thompson Chair, Snohomish County Committee for Improved Transportation

Gary Clark President and CEO

Rashma Agarwal Director of Government Relations

Reid Shockey Founder and President, Snohomish County Committee for Improved Transportation

#### El Centro De La Raza

Estela Ortega Executive Director

45 members in attendance

#### Feet First

John Stewart Vice President

Jonathon Freedman Policy Committee

#### Federal Emergency Management Agency

Bryr Harris NFIP/ESA Specialist

Dennis Jeney Acting Earthquake Program Manager

John Graves Floodplain Management and Insurance Branch Chief

Roxanne Reale-Pilkenton Floodplain Management Specialist

Suzanne Sarpong Floodplain Management Specialist

#### Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

Gary Martindale Southwest Region Area Engineer

Liana Liu Olympic Region

Area Engineer Lindsey Handel

Seattle Area Urban Engineer Matthew Pahs

Statewide Planner

Michael Villnave Area Engineer, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom Counties

Sharon Love Environmental Program Manager

#### Greater Vancouver Chamber

**Greg Miller** Director of Government Affairs, Peacehealth

John McDonagh President and CEO, Greater Vancouver Chamber

Nelson Holmberg Community Affairs Manager, Northwest Natural

#### **Intercity Transit**

Ann Freeman-Manzanares General Manager

Rob LaFontaine Planning Manager

#### International Mobility and Trade Corridor Program

Regular members present include the following representatives:

Bill Lawrence City of White Rock, BC

Brittny Valdez U.S. Customs & Border Protection

Christopher Borst U.S. Customs & Border Protection

Cory Paterson BC Trucking Association

Gorav Nagi Canada Border Services Agency

Harmit Gil U.S. Customs & Border Protection

Kelly Monroe U.S. Border Patrol

Laurie Trautman Border Policy Research Institute, Western Washington University

Randolph Greene U.S. Customs & Border Protection

Ryan Vanderstar Canada Border Services Agency

Sean Connell Office of U.S. Representative Rick Larsen

Shivonne van Wessem U.S. Customs & Border Protection

Sung Choi U.S. Consulate General, Vancouver

#### King County

Chris O'Claire Director of Mobility

Kim Becklund Capital Partnerships Supervisor

#### King County Metro

Erik Rundell Transportation Planner

Matthew Crane Vehicle Maintenance Division

#### **Lewis County**

Josh Metcalf Public Works Director

Mike Kroll Transportation Planner

Tim Fife County Engineer

#### Lid I-5

Bruno Lambert Steering Committee

Greg Briggs Advisory Council

John Feit Co-Chair

Scott Bonjukian Co-Chair

#### National Association of Minority Contractors Washington Chapter

Robert Armstead President

Eddie Rye, Jr. Board Member

#### Northwest Minority Builders Alliance

Vicky Schianterilli Initial Director

#### Northwest Mountain Minority Supplier Development Council

Fernando Martinez President and CEO

Northwest Seaport Alliance

Christine Wolf Senior Transportation Planner

#### **Oregon Metro**

Margi Bradway Deputy Director, Planning, Development and Research Department

#### Peninsula Regional Transportation Planning Organization

Bek Ashby Executive Board Chair, City Council Member City of Port Orchard

Edward Coviello Transportation and Land Use Planner, Kitsap Transit

John Clauson Executive Director, Kitsap Transit Lindsey Schromen-Wawrin City Council Member, City of Port Angeles

Miranda Nash Fiscal Agent, Jefferson Transit

Randy Neatherlin County Commissioner, Mason County

#### Pierce County

Hugh Taylor Council Analyst

Jen Tetatzin Director of Planning and Public Works

Jesse Hamashima Transportation Planning Supervisor

Ryan Mello County Council Member

#### **Pierce Transit**

Earl Fowlkes Assistant Manager, Communication Center

Darin Stavish Principal Planner

Mark Davilla Service Impacts Supervisor

#### Port of Bremerton

Arne Bakker Chief Operating Officer

#### Port of Everett

Adam LeMieux Government Affairs Manager

Garret Jensen Planner

Laura Gurley Planner

#### Port of Kalama

Mark Wilson Executive Director

Patrick Harbison Commissioner

#### Port of Olympia

Amy Evans Commissioner

Bob Iyall Commissioner

Sam Gibboney Executive Director

#### Port of Seattle

Eric ffitch Government Relations Manager Geraldine Poor Regional Senior Manager, Regional Transportation

#### Port of Tacoma

Christine Wolf Senior Transportation Planner Eric Johnson Executive Director

#### Port of Vancouver

Jim Hagar Economic Development Project Manager

Mike Bomar Director of Economic Development

Ryan Hart Chief External Affairs Officer

#### Puget Sound Regional Council

Josh Brown Executive Director

Kelly McGourty Director of Transportation Planning

#### **Puyallup Tribe of Indians**

Andrew Strobel Director of Planning and Land Use

Angela Dillon Environmental Planner

Robert Barandon Planner

#### Regional Access Mobility Partnership

Regular meeting attendees

#### **RiverCities Transit**

Jim Seeks Director

SeaShore Transportation Forum

#### Regular meeting attendees

#### Seattle Fire Department

Byron (Sean) Branum Battalion Chief

#### Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce

Amy Grotefendt Consultant, Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce

Betz Mayer Assistant Director, Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) Bradley Miller Transportation Group Director, HNTB

Bruce Agnew Director of NW Transportation Infrastructure Accelerator and Director of ACES

Charles Knutson Senior Public Policy Manager, Amazon

Goran Sparrman Vice President & Business Development Officer, HNTB

Jennifer Basset-Hales Vice President, Jacobs

Lars Erickson Public Affairs, Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce

Lily Hayward Policy Specialist, Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce

Mark Weed Managing Member, Main Street Equity Partners LLC

Nick Jackal Director of Community Relations and Organizing, Downtown Seattle Association

Phil Miller Senior Transportation Planner, University of Washington

Rachel Smith President, Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce

Rob Fellows Transportation Planning Director, WSP

#### Skagit Council of Governments

Kevin Murphy Executive Director Mark Hamilton Senior Transportation Planner

#### **Skagit County**

Forrest Jones Planner Grace Kane County Engineer

#### **Skokomish Indian Tribe**

Marty Allen Transportation Planner

#### **Snohomish County**

Doug McCormick Deputy Public Works Director and County Engineer Matthew Ojala Project Manager

Sam Low County Council Member

Steve Dickson Transportation and Environmental Services Director

#### Snohomish County Transportation Coalition

Brock Howell Director

#### **Sound Transit**

Alex Krieg Director of Access, Integration and Stationary Planning

Brian de Place Director of System and Service Planning

#### South County Area Transportation Board

Regular meeting attendees

#### South Sound Military and Communities Partnership

Bill Adamson Program Director

Maria Tobin Program Coordinator

#### Southwest Washington Region Transportation Council

Dale Robbins Planning Manager

Lynda David Principal Planner

Mark Harrington Principal Planner

Matt Ransom Executive Director

Shann Westrand Staff Assistant

#### Tabor 100

Henry Yates Public Affairs Chair

#### Tacoma and Pierce County Chamber

Andrea Reay CEO

Ryan Spence Board Member

David Schrodoel Metropolitan Development Director

#### Tacoma-Pierce County Black Collective

Bill Dickens Economic Development Chair Lyle Quasim

Chair

#### Thurston County

Robin Campbell Assistant County Manager

Scott Lindblom County Engineer

Tye Menser County Commissioner

#### Thurston Regional Planning Council

Marc Daily Executive Director

#### Transportation Choices Coalition

Hester Serebin Policy Director

#### Tribal Transportation Planning Organization

Regular meeting attendees

#### Tulalip Tribes

Allison Warner Wetland Program Coordinator

#### **Twin Transit**

Joe Clark Executive Director

Michael Richards Operations Supervisor

Maggie McCarthy Operations Manager

Maleah Kuzminsk Community Relations Manager

#### Washington Emergency Management Association

Ross McDowell President-Elect

#### Washington Farm Bureau

Caleb Gwerder Government Affairs Coordinator

#### Washington State Patrol

Dan Atchison Assistant Chief, Field Operations Bureau

Captain James Prouty Field Operations, Headquarters

Captain Jason Cuthbert Motor Carrier, Safety Division

Captain Jason Linn Commander District 5 (Vancouver)

# Washington Trucking Association

Sherri Call Executive Vice President

Jim Christofferson Peninsula Truck Lines

Jim McSpadden Skagit Transportation

Ron Kieswether

Peninsula Truck Lines Steve Holtgeerts

Peninsula Truck Lines

Tim Vander Pol Peninsula Truck Lines

#### Washington Roundtable

Neil Strege Vice President

#### Whatcom County

Doug Ranney County Traffic and Development Manager

Jim Karcher County Planner

Matt Aamot County Planner

Roland Middleton Special Programs Manager, Public Works

# Whatcom County Council of Governments

Hugh Conroy Director of Planning

Jaymes McClain Senior Planner

Melissa Fanucci Principal Planner

Robert Wilson Executive Director