2020 FHWA REGIONAL COMPETITION: PROJECT SPONSOR FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

AGENCY: WSDOT
PROJECT: SeaTac Access (SR 509 Completion Stage 1b)

Question #1: The application mentions the provision of a portion of trail and community sidewalks. Can a more detailed map of these locations, and their connections to other facilities, be provided?

Answer #1: The enclosed maps (separate attachment) show the nonmotorized project elements paid for by or constructed with the SeaTac Access project, described below.

1. The project includes funding for Lake to Sound Trail Segment C, which extends the Lake to Sound Trail from its existing terminus in SeaTac at Des Moines Creek Park (S. 200th Street) to S. 188th Street in Burien. S. 200th Street has existing sidewalks and bike lanes that will connect the new trail to the Angle Lake District and Angle Lake Station. No other existing facilities provide nonmotorized or ADA access to the west from the Station so the Lake to Sound Trail and S. 200th Street connection provides broad community benefits.

2. The SR 509 Stage 1 project, as represented in the RTIP, corrects gaps in the nonmotorized system at the I-5/SR 516 interchange and links existing sidewalks from Veterans Drive to SR 516 (map detail, Exhibit A). This creates new nonmotorized and ADA accessible connections along both directions of SR 516 from the SR 516 bus facilities (flyer stops and park and ride) to the Kent-Des Moines Light Rail Station Area and Midway commercial district.

3. The existing S. 216th Street Bridge has uncomfortably narrow facilities for nonmotorized traffic, with one 11-foot-wide general purpose lane in each direction and a less than 3-foot-wide area for pedestrians to squeeze across the bridge (map detail, Exhibit B). The project will reconstruct the Interstate 5/S. 216th Street Bridge with 6-foot-wide sidewalks and 5-foot-wide bike lanes in each direction (see current and completed cross-sections, below). This facility connects the neighborhoods east of I-5 to the community shopping district on Pacific Highway S. No other routes in the vicinity provide barrier-free nonmotorized access because the neighborhood was cut off from the main commercial district when I-5 was constructed. A WSDOT survey showed several pedestrians cross this bridge each day to access employment, shopping, school and transit even without full width sidewalks on the bridge because it is the only walkable route.
4. The project relocates and constructs local access to the Madrona neighborhood at S. 206th Street, S. 208th Street, a new 34th Avenue S and the eastern portion of S. 204th Street. This creates a new connection from Pacific Highway S. to several multifamily complexes that have no common public street or accessible pedestrian routes (map detail, Exhibit C). The sidewalks connect existing facilities at Madrona Elementary School to the north with Pacific Highway S. to the southwest.

**Question #2:** Please provide more detail on the connection to the Sound Transit Angle Lake Light Rail Station.

**Answer #2:** The project improves connections to Angle Lake Light Rail Station by providing more direct access to regional highways. It reduces traffic volumes on local arterials and cuts travel time to the Station. Faster station access time benefits transit because riders’ mode choice responds to total travel time. The project shortens route between I-5 and Angle Lake Light Rail Station by about 0.2 miles, but the travel time improves considerably due to more direct highway access and three fewer traffic signals. Synchro analysis found the travel time between I-5 and SeaTac will reduce by 54 percent in the AM peak hour and 40 percent in the PM peak hour using SR 509 compared to S. 200th Street. With the project, traffic volumes drop 22 percent on S. 200th Street in 2025.

Nonmotorized access to the station improves because the traffic draw of SR 509 reduces traffic and supports planned sidewalk and bicycle improvements on S. 200th Street. Nonmotorized benefits in the Station Area are described further in Answer 3, below.

**Question #3:** The application discusses the benefits to the regional growth center and walkability, while at the same time referring to the heavy freight usage in the area. Please elaborate on the diverted / reassigned travel patterns and the corresponding benefit to the center. Additional graphics might be useful.

**Answer #3:** The project benefits both the Regional Growth Center and freight terminals by improving travel time and reducing freight traffic on local arterial streets. More direct access to the regional highway system (I-5) reduces the burden on local streets while significantly reducing travel time for trucks and Station Area traffic (see traffic routing map, below). There are 12 truck terminals immediately south of the SR 509 ramps and the Light Rail Station area is within one mile to the north. All three major traffic generators (freight terminals, transit station,
and planned regional center development) will see improved travel times and access because of the close proximity of SR 509 ramps connecting to the regional highway system.

SeaTac Access shortens trips on the local street network for freight and transit access.

Benefits to walkability. The project improves pedestrian access by reorienting traffic away from the SR 99/S. 200th Street intersection. That location is designated as the “District Center” where urban density will be focused within the Angle Lake neighborhood. The new SR 509 helps implement the land use plan for the Angle Lake neighborhood by improving vehicle access to the south, in a location that draws traffic away from the District Center. Walkability of the District improves because of the dense land uses, close station proximity, S. 200th Street lane reductions and reduced traffic at the District Center.

Benefits to freight generators. WSDOT expects truck trips to shift from S. 200th Street to SR 509 because the new ramps eliminate 1.25 miles of extra arterial circulation between Des Moines Business Park and Interstate 5. The new ramps are 0.5 miles from the Business Park compared to 1.75 miles via the existing route at I-5/SR 516 interchange. Traffic analysis shows major reductions in truck traffic on local arterials for full SR 509 buildout in 2045 (the only case with
available data). The project (SR 509 Stage 1) offers significant travel time savings to these uses even without Stage 2.

SR 509 Completion Significantly Reduces Truck Trips on Local Arterials
2045 (full build)

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AM Peak</th>
<th>PM Peak</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S. 200th Street west of SR 99</td>
<td>-27%</td>
<td>-36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. 216th Street east of SR 99</td>
<td>-68%</td>
<td>-29%</td>
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Benefits to transit access. The new SR 509 ramps are also 0.5 miles from Angle Lake Station. The future travel distance for auto and bus connections to Angle Lake Station is a modest 0.2 miles shorter via SR 509 than the existing S. 200th Street Route. However, significant travel time benefits accrue because the new route has only two traffic signals compared to five existing traffic signals between I-5 and Angle Lake Stations. Synchro analysis showed a 40 to 54 percent reduction in travel time for cars and buses accessing Angle Lake Station.

Benefits to planned development. The Angle Lake Station Area Plan calls for urban development in a walkable neighborhood with excellent transit access. The SeaTac Access project improves the prospects for successful implementation of the Plan through improved regional connections and reduced traffic impacts on local streets. The District Center area focused on S. 200th Street benefits from reduced truck and transit station traffic. The property between Angle Lake Station and the new SR 509 is a development opportunity area (text inset below). The plan indicates development interest in dense urban land uses would generate more pedestrian trips in the Angle Lake District. That development site will benefit from regional highway access within 0.2 miles of the site.

Angle Lake District Station Area Plan (City of SeaTac)

SOUTH OF ANGLE LAKE STATION: Ten parcels have been assembled comprising approximately 8.5 acres on the southwest corner of 28th Avenue S and S 200th Street, immediately adjacent to the light rail station. A major developer is currently developing plans for the site, with a focus on office and related uses.