

I-405 CORRIDOR IMPLEMENTATION INTEREST STATEMENT

Approved by Bellevue City Council on March 7, 2005

Background

The City of Bellevue is committed to supporting important regional transportation corridor improvements. I-405 has received notable legislative and funding attention in recent years due in part to Bellevue's continued advocacy. I-405 (between I-90 and SR 520) carries over 205,000 vehicle trips and 260,000 person trips each day. This section of I-405 was identified by the Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation as one of the worst congestion choke-points in the state with over 26,000 hours of person delay every day.

Bellevue's May 2000 *I-405 Study/EIS Interest Statement* identified key principles that continue to be important as corridor improvements move from design to construction. These include: (1) advancement of Bellevue's Regional Transportation Vision (recently updated as Bellevue's Regional Mobility Interest Statement); (2) preservation of Bellevue's neighborhoods, and (3) advancement of action alternatives that include a broad array of facility improvements—general purpose widening, Bus Rapid Transit and demand management strategies.

The following principles represent a more refined articulation of the City's vision for I-405 implementation, with special attention to improvements in Bellevue's downtown that are of significant regional consequence.

Guiding Principles for I-405 Project Implementation

The Washington State Department of Transportation, in close collaboration with the City, should:

- 1. Maintain a Long-Term Commitment for Corridor Improvement:*** Continue to advocate for implementation of the I-405 Corridor Master Plan along the entire corridor in an effort to improve traffic congestion on this critical regional corridor. I-405 is among the state's most critical freight corridors, is among the most congested in the state and country, and serves as is the economic back-bone for East King County communities and is a critical link for regional commerce and mobility; and
- 2. Execute a Detailed Phasing Plan:*** Select a project phasing program that best minimizes traffic congestion based on analysis of regional system traffic shifts that would be created by regional corridor construction phasing scenarios and elimination of bottlenecks; and
- 3. Seek Early Right-of-Way Cost Savings Measures:*** Pursue long-term cost savings through early Right-of-Way purchases within the anticipated areas for reconstruction; and

4. ***Seek Discrete Projects that Uphold Sound Regional Planning:*** Ensure that projects implemented on I-405 between I-90 and SR 520 compliment the City's Downtown Implementation Plan and help fulfill the requirements and opportunities afforded by the State Growth Management Act and the Region's Destination 2030 Plan; and
5. ***Ensure Responsible Environmental Mitigation:*** In an effort to protect Bellevue's neighborhoods adjacent to I-405, ensure that all environmental impacts are mitigated responsibly under current state and federal law including and not limited to: noise, air and water quality.
6. ***Support Effective Regional Coordination:*** I-405 is one of several key corridors, including SR 520, I-90, the Alaskan Way Viaduct, SR 522 and SR 167, in need of significant investment in the Puget Sound area. Regional coordination and phasing of the projects to minimize impacts is imperative to keep the region moving as concurrent projects are constructed. The City strongly encourages the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to advance appropriate projects along I-405 and I-90 in advance of other major corridors in order to mitigate impacts associated with the Alaskan Way Viaduct and SR 520 reconstruction projects. Traffic congestion impacts that would otherwise be felt in downtown Bellevue and cities to the south without such advanced mitigation would significantly affect the larger regional transport system.

Key Elements of Implementation

1. **NE 10th Access and Circulation.** It is Bellevue's highest priority to seek full funding for the NE 10th interchange and associated I-405 improvements in order to accommodate expected downtown growth and overall I-405 volumes. Improvements required to implement NE 10th will benefit the broader I-405 and SR 520 regional system.
2. **I-405 Downtown/Mainline Capacity and Management.** The City recognizes that future demand on I-405 is nearly evenly split between mainline traffic and those going to/from downtown Bellevue. It is imperative that mainline solutions be fully examined to keep traffic moving smoothly, especially at peak periods and with regard to SR 520 project mitigation. Further, the same rigor and deployment of traffic management techniques used for Access Downtown should be deployed for all I-405 mainline improvements in an effort to anticipate, manage and mitigate traffic volumes during construction.
3. **I-405 Improvements between SR 167 and I-90.** This segment of I-405 must receive priority funding to facilitate predictable regional travel in advance of other major corridor construction. The existing corridor is inadequate to handle general traffic and freight demand, which leads to safety and risk issues. Any regional corridor construction activity that will displace additional traffic onto I-405 will further exacerbate traffic congestion and safety issues associated with this corridor.
4. **NE 2nd Access and Circulation.** Pursuant to the I-405 Master Plan and Bellevue's Downtown Implementation Plan, the NE 2nd interchange must receive high priority for near-term implementation in order to mitigate expected travel growth in downtown Bellevue within the corridor generally. This additional access will allow for greater choice and distribution points for access to/from downtown.