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City Council

Briefing on US 101 / West Olympia Access Project

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Title

Briefing on US 101 / West Olympia Access Project

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

The Land Use and Environment Committee received a briefing on the status of the US 101/West Olympia Access Project and were supportive of the project moving forward.

City Manager Recommendation:

Receive a briefing on the status of the US 101/West Olympia Access Project, and provide comments.

Report

Issue:

Status of the US 101/West Olympia Access Project.

Staff Contact:

Mark Russell, P.E., Director of Transportation, Public Works, 360.753.8762

Presenter(s):

Mark Russell, P.E., Director of Transportation, Public Works

Randy Wesselman, Transportation Engineering and Planning Manager, Public Works

Perry Shea, SCJ Alliance

Background and Analysis:

In 2010, the City and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) completed an evaluation of transportation needs on Olympia's Westside. One of the outcomes of this West Olympia Access Study was a decision to build new freeway ramps to US 101 because the Black Lake Boulevard and Cooper Point Road intersection is projected to fail within the next six years due to increased regional traffic and from development. This means a person driving a car could wait through three or more cycles of a traffic signal.

Two freeway access ramps are being proposed to reduce the growth of traffic at Black Lake Boulevard and Cooper Point Roads. The ramps will improve access to medical facilities and businesses, and provide route options in this area.

The new ramps are proposed at:

- Kaiser Road. Construction of an eastbound on-ramp and westbound off-ramp. Construction is anticipated 10-15 years from now.
- Yauger Way. Construction of a westbound off-ramp extension at Black Lake Boulevard to connect to Yauger Way will be built following the Kaiser Road ramps, beyond the 20-year planning horizon.

City Council had extensive involvement in developing this Westside transportation solution and has made this project a priority, including legislative funding requests. Before the ramps can be designed and built, an Interchange Justification Report (IJR) and environmental documents must be approved by WSDOT. The IJR process includes the following eight policy topics to be evaluated:

1. Need for access point revision
2. Reasonable alternatives
3. Operation and collision analysis
4. Access connections and design
5. Land use and transportation plans
6. Future interchanges
7. Coordination of transportation improvements
8. Environmental processes

In June 2014, Council approved a consultant, the team of Parametrix and SCL Alliance, to complete the IJR. Over the last eight months, the consultant team worked with the technical staff from the following agencies to develop and define the scope of the project: City of Olympia, WSDOT (Olympic Region and Headquarters), Thurston County, Federal Highways Administration, Thurston Regional Planning Council, Intercity Transit, and the City of Tumwater.

The scoping work is focused on identifying environmental issues which will be evaluated, traffic analysis requirements, concept variations of the new US 101 freeway ramps identified in the West Olympia Access Study, and a public outreach plan.

The technical team identified a variation in the design of the new US 101 freeway ramps. Preliminary analysis shows that this new concept variation will potentially provide access at a lower construction cost and facilitate construction sooner than originally thought. Staff will share this concept with Council.

Completion of the IJR is expected by the end of the first quarter of 2016. This work will result in the following:

1. Approval of the IJR by WSDOT which justifies the need for new access to US 101;
2. Receipt of Engineering and Operational Acceptability from WSDOT in order to move forward with the design, right-of-way, and construction phases;
3. Completing approximately 10-15% design which will include drawings showing the ramps and a more comprehensive cost estimate; and
4. Approval of environmental documents from WSDOT.

The purpose of this meeting is to provide a briefing on the status of the US 101/West Olympia Access

Project, review concept variations of the new US 101 ramps, and outline next steps in the Environmental and Interchange Justification Report process.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

The West Olympia Business Association has expressed great interest in and support for this project. Capital Medical Center is also supportive of this project to improve emergency response services and access to the Westside. Westside neighborhoods have expressed interest in the outcome of this project.

Financial Impact:

The City Council approved the scope of work and Consultant Agreement on June 10, 2014, with a not-to-exceed contract amount of \$1,500,000. The total project budget to complete the IJR and environmental documents is \$1,600,000.

Attachment:

Map