

# PUGET SOUND REGIONAL COUNCIL PRIORITY PROJECT LIST

## ***NARRATIVE PROJECT INFORMATION - October 2011***

*Due to Peter Heffernan ([peter.heffernan@kingcounty.gov](mailto:peter.heffernan@kingcounty.gov) no later than close of business Wednesday October 12.*

**Project Sponsor:** City of Shoreline

**Project Name:** Aurora Avenue N Corridor Improvements

**Project Location:** Aurora Avenue N Corridor, NE 192<sup>nd</sup> Street to NE 205<sup>th</sup> Street

**What type of project is it:** Support Centers \_\_\_\_ Corridors Serving Centers  X

### **Plan Consistency:**

- Transportation 2040 project number: 3569
- Is the project consistent with the Transportation 2040: Yes  X  No \_\_\_\_

**Project Description - No more than two full pages - (see evaluation criteria for information to include):**

The purpose of the Aurora Corridor Improvement Project, N 192<sup>nd</sup> Street to N 205<sup>th</sup> Street, is to improve safety, circulation, and operations for vehicular and non-motorized users of the roadway corridor, to support multi-modal transportation within the corridor, and to support economic stability along the corridor. The Aurora Corridor Improvement Project, N 192<sup>nd</sup> Street to N 205<sup>th</sup> Street, includes the following elements:

- Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes in each direction;
- two general-purpose lanes in each direction;
- continuous sidewalk, curb, and gutter on each side of the roadway;
- landscaped center median with left-turn and u-turn pockets;
- interconnected, coordinated signal system with transit signal priority;
- improvements to intersections

The proposed project would improve regional system linkage by providing additional lane capacity, improved intersection capacity, and improved signal coordination. It would also continue the improvements constructed between N 145<sup>th</sup> Street and N 185<sup>th</sup> Street and the improvements under construction between N 185<sup>th</sup> Street and N 192<sup>nd</sup> Street. This will create a consistent continuous corridor throughout the City. The proposed project would address capacity needs through improvements to intersection geometry and capacity, channelization, signal improvements, and additional lane capacity for business access and transit. By consolidating the number of access points in accordance with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) criteria, capacity in the corridor would be improved through the reduction of conflicts and traffic friction. The capacity of the current facility is inadequate to accommodate projected traffic volumes. The corridor currently supports 39,000 to 42,000 vehicles per day.

Improving safety for motorists, pedestrians and transit users is one of the driving forces behind the Aurora Corridor project. The project will create four north-south general purpose travel lanes and two business access and transit (BAT) lanes, which will increase the safety and mobility of the corridor. Other goals are improving traffic flow, improving transit efficiency and reliability with transit lanes, enhancing economic development potential, enhancing the livability of adjacent neighborhoods and supporting the goals and vision for this corridor that the community expressed prior to Shoreline's incorporation in 1995. In reaching these goals, the project will provide urban facilities and landscaping for an aesthetically pleasant environment that will lead people efficiently to, and through, the community.

Aurora Avenue N in Shoreline has one of the highest accident rates of any highway in the state, averaging (along the 3 mile corridor) one fatality a year. WSDOT collects and compiles historical collision data for state highways, including Aurora Avenue N (SR 99). Several areas of Aurora Avenue N, between N 165<sup>th</sup> Street and N 205<sup>th</sup> Street, have been given poor safety designations by WSDOT. WSDOT has identified one high accident corridor (HAC), three high accident locations (HALs), and two pedestrian accident locations (PALs) on Aurora Avenue N, between N 165<sup>th</sup> Street and N 205<sup>th</sup> Street, for the 2007–2009 biennium. Between 2003 and 2005, the average annual collision rate for the entire Aurora Avenue N corridor within Shoreline was calculated to be 5.5 accidents per million vehicle miles traveled. This greatly exceeds the 2005 statewide average

for urban principal arterials of 2.6 accidents per million vehicle miles. There is strong public concern for general traffic safety and pedestrian safety along the corridor. The current condition of numerous driveways, limited curb and sidewalks, and erratic parking all contribute to the safety issues identified for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles, and reflected in the HAL, HAC, and PAL designations.

Many components of the Aurora Corridor project will increase safety and mobility. The construction of the raised median with focused left and U-turn pockets, new signals, sidewalks and access control on the street edges will greatly enhance safety, as none of these exist today. The raised median will eliminate the current uncontrolled movements in the center left turn lane. It will also provide left turn pockets at locations that will enhance safety. The median also provides an unofficial refuge for pedestrians that may continue to cross the street at uncontrolled intersections. The improved signals will provide controlled locations for left and U-turn movements, give pedestrians (especially those with mobility challenges) safe crossing locations, and since the bus stops are located at signalized intersections, will provide bus patron crossings at safe locations. The rebuilt signals will include audible elements for the sight impaired, and countdown pedestrian leads. Pedestrian linkages to Shoreline's Interurban Trail (completed in 2008) are being constructed as part of the project, further increasing usage of Aurora for pedestrian and transit use. The project will also improve the safety on side streets that intersect Aurora Avenue by providing new sidewalks as part of the re-grading to less steep approach lanes. This will also better connect neighborhoods to the street, especially the access of pedestrians to bus stops.

The implemented project components on Aurora Avenue N from N 145<sup>th</sup> Street to N 165<sup>th</sup> Street have already significantly improved the safety on that section of Aurora. According to data from the Washington Department of Transportation, using data from the 12 months preceding the start of improvements and the 12 months after the improvements were completed; accidents were reduced by 61%. As we are making comparable improvements on the remaining portions of Shoreline's Aurora Corridor, we expect similar reductions in accidents along the entire corridor.

The overall Aurora Avenue N Corridor improvements benefit the regional transportation system, not simply the City's transportation system. The improvements provided will add BAT lanes, interconnect traffic signals, implement access management, provide longer turning pockets and build a raised median that will increase the safety and mobility of users in the corridor. Without the addition of the BAT lanes, transit vehicles will remain delayed by traffic congestion. Transit service benefits by the creation of the BAT lanes (to be used by transit and right turning vehicles), transit shelters, sidewalks, signal preemption and the overall improved mobility of the corridor. Even with continued growth in housing and economic factors, in 2022 we anticipate that the LOS along the corridor will maintain a LOS of E or better once the project is completed. The redevelopment of Aurora is crucial to the successful implementation of King County Metro Transit's E Line, which is part of their bus rapid transit (BRT) program. Known as Rapid Ride, this program was approved by King County voters in 2006 as part of the Transit Now initiative. Rapid Ride will provide frequent, all-day service on 6 corridors in King County. . The goal of the design of Rapid Ride - from the look of the buses, the stops, and its operation - is to keep people moving quickly throughout the six heavily used travel corridors. This will be made possible by the construction of the BAT lanes and other Aurora Corridor improvements.

## **Project Status & Timeline**

**Where is the project at in development?**

**What is the timeline for this project from start to completion?**

*(Please identify the major phases)*

NEPA and all environmental approvals are complete. All feasibility, planning and study documents are been complete. City Council has given approval for the project.

Project Schedule is as follows (pending funding availability):

|                            |               |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| Environmental Complete     | November 2007 |
| Right of Way Complete      | May 2012      |
| PS & E Complete            | April 2012    |
| Construction Advertisement | July 2012     |
| Construction Completion    | April 2014    |

## **Additional Comments**

This funding would fully fund the project, allowing for construction on the final segment of Shoreline's 3 mile Aurora Corridor Project.