



# A PARTNERSHIP TO IMPROVE SR 523



TRANSFORMING 145<sup>TH</sup> STREET INTO A SAFE, VIBRANT CORRIDOR

State Route 523 (145<sup>th</sup> Street) provides an ideal opportunity to help communities in Seattle, Shoreline and Lake Forest Park flourish in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. SR 523 is a key east-west connection for the region between bus rapid transit, future light rail, and I-5. Three locations on this corridor provide once-in-a-generation opportunities to transform into compact, vibrant, transit-oriented communities.



## A partnership for improvement

Thoughtful, coordinated investments in this key east-west corridor will support economic growth, enhance safety and access and make the most of major investments in north-south transit upgrades. A well-functioning SR 523 is vital to safe access for the movement of people and goods in the region.

In order to fully understand the necessary improvements, participating agencies, including WSDOT, Sound Transit, King County Metro Transit, and the Cities of Shoreline, Seattle, and Lake Forest Park will need to identify their key investments and priorities. It is anticipated that future improvements will include:

- Enhance safety and accessibility
- Improve capacity
- Improve regional mobility and connectivity
- Implement light rail service/Access to light rail
- Complete light rail station area planning and TOD
- Improve transit operations
- Coordinate utilities upgrades
- Improve I-5 interchange

## A design for future generations

Though the exact design of this corridor hasn't yet been developed, it is anticipated the design will consider and attempt to address all of the goals. The design will include new sidewalks separated from the roadway with landscaping strips, turn pockets, lighting, trees, improved and optimized signals, bus stops, pedestrian crosswalks, and will be designed under Green Roads guidelines to minimize environmental impacts and increase sustainability. The finished corridor will be safer, more efficient, carry more people and stimulate investment and redevelopment.

## Maximizing transit's potential

Three major north-south transit lines intersect SR 523. Current and planned transit upgrades provide opportunities to make transit far more convenient for people in neighborhoods near SR 523. From west to east:

- MetroTransit RapidRide bus service from Shoreline to Seattle on SR 99 (Aurora Avenue N).
- Near I-5, Sound Transit is planning light rail connecting Lynnwood to Northgate, University District and downtown Seattle.
- On SR 522, Sound Transit and King County Metro provide all day express bus service between Seattle and Woodinville.

## Now is the time for action

RapidRide service has begun and light rail station planning is underway. The Aurora Square Community Renewal Area is gaining momentum. Now is the time for local communities to work with WSDOT, Sound Transit, King County Metro and others to develop a clear action plan for 145<sup>th</sup> Street and to quickly pursue partnerships and funding to make the plan a reality.

We would like WSDOT to help forge a focused, action-oriented coalition. State leadership would send a strong, positive message to other potential partners because the state plays a key role in this corridor, not only due to state routes (SR523/145th Street, SR 99/Aurora Avenue North, I-5 and SR522) but also due to state-controlled land (WSDOT NW Region, Fircrest, Washington State Public Health Labs and Shoreline Community College).

# STATE ROUTE 523

## Improvement Project



# CONNECTIONS

## TODAY

State Route 523 is a key multi-modal corridor that serves as an important connection for the region to I-5 and rapid transit. The corridor is in need of significant capital improvement in order to meet the needs of current residents and future transit oriented development.

## VISION

Improving State Route 523 supports multimodal connections to light rail and bus rapid transit; facilitating transit oriented development in our community and ensuring transit access to the region's educational, residential, and business districts.

### Community Potential & TOD

Shoreline recently designated the 70+ acre Aurora Square a Community Renewal Area (CRA). WSDOT's Northwest Region Headquarters is within the CRA and Shoreline Community College's 83 acre campus is nearby. The City's redevelopment plan envisions a mixture of housing, retail, office, and entertainment uses, with an emphasis on pedestrians, bicycles, and a strong connection to RapidRide service on Aurora and the College.

### WSDOT and Aurora Square

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### BRT Connections

On SR 99 (Aurora Avenue North), King County Metro began RapidRide bus service in February 2014. This bus rapid transit service provides fast, frequent trips from Shoreline to downtown Seattle.



### Community Potential & TOD

A light rail station at 145<sup>th</sup> Street near I-5 is included as part of Sound Transit's preferred alternative for the Lynnwood Link Light Rail extension project. The City of Shoreline has identified this as a preferred station location and envisions that the surrounding area will transition to a higher density, transit-oriented community.

### Community Potential & TOD

Within walking distance of the potential 145<sup>th</sup> Street light rail station are 85 acres of State land housing both Fircrest Residential Habilitation Center and the Washington State Public Health Laboratories. If redeveloped, the properties could continue to house these invaluable state institutions while providing additional housing, jobs, and retail to the area.

### Washington State Public Health Lab and Fircrest Residential Habilitation

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### Light Rail Coming Soon

Near I-5, Sound Transit is planning light rail connecting Lynnwood to Northgate, University District, downtown Seattle and the eastside.

### Bus Connections

On SR 522, Sound Transit and King County Metro provide all day express bus service between Seattle and Woodinville. Sound Transit's long range plan identifies this as a future high capacity transit corridor.



# GOALS



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### Make transit connections

King County bus rapid transit service, RapidRide, connects Shoreline to downtown Seattle along SR 99. Express bus service between Seattle and Woodinville runs along 522. Improving SR 523 will create a vital east-west link between the two and provide transit connections to the future light rail system and I-5.



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### Light Rail link for region

The Lynnwood Link light rail extension will benefit the entire Puget Sound region. Improvements to SR 523 can build upon that investment by reducing impacts to I-5 and provide better community linkages to the 145<sup>th</sup> Street Station.



### Enhance safety

Substandard sidewalks, high accident rates and increasing traffic volumes create safety challenges for all users. Improvements are needed to provide a safe environment for motorists, pedestrians and transit users.



### Support freight mobility

The safe, efficient movement of freight will remain an important component of design along SR 523. Improvements are needed to allow trucks and goods to continue moving through the corridor.



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### Improve region's I-5 connection

The operation of SR 523, particularly the interchange at I-5, impacts the ability for SR 99, SR 522 and I-5 itself to function optimally. Capacity improvements, revisions to the interchange and improvements that benefit transit, cyclists and pedestrians are all needed.



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### Transit oriented development

Improvements to SR 523 and the I-5 interchange will be an important element to support future development near the future 145<sup>th</sup> Street light rail station and in the Community Renewal Area at Aurora Square.



### Improve ADA accessibility

Currently sidewalks with utility poles, mailboxes and other obstructions significantly interfere with pedestrian mobility on SR 523, particularly for persons with disabilities. Buses are unable to deploy wheelchair lifts at several stops due to obstructions.



### Implement sustainable elements

All of the agencies that will be involved in the improvement of SR 523 have demonstrated their commitment to sustainability in past projects or operations and this project will look to be a leader in sustainable/green road design.

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# CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

## Identifying needed improvements

SR 523 is in need of significant capital improvements. Characteristics of this corridor include significant traffic congestion, an extremely overcrowded interchange, poor accessibility for persons with disabilities, cyclists and pedestrians, a collision rate nearly three times that of the region and restricted freight mobility. The need for improvements will increase with additional traffic, bicycle and pedestrian volumes, diversion resulting from tolling of the Lake Washington bridges and the operation of light rail.

SR 523 is four lanes wide along most of its length, being wider at some signalized intersections to accommodate left turn pockets. It carries significant daily traffic, with volumes exceeding 30,000 ADT.

## Walkways and ADA Barriers

Poorly constructed and maintained with almost 300 utility poles centered within the sidewalks, and a severe lack of curb ramps at intersections, these walkways fall far short of ADA requirements, restrict pedestrian mobility and limit opportunities for transit service. A 2013 report prepared by WSDOT indicates that the costs to remove ADA barriers and upgrade sidewalks to current standards is \$45 million.

## Preservation Needs

Major surface repair including overlays and the installation of curb ramps are not keeping pace with the corridors needs. Although complete overlay of the roadway is scheduled to be performed every 10-15 years, the last one was performed in 2001 and the latest WSDOT projection for resurfacing is 2017 at the earliest.

## Congestion

During the peak periods, the I-5 interchange is extremely congested. All intersections are projected to operate at LOS E and F by 2035. Improvements are critical to ensure that buses and freight will be able to travel efficiently through this corridor.

## Collisions

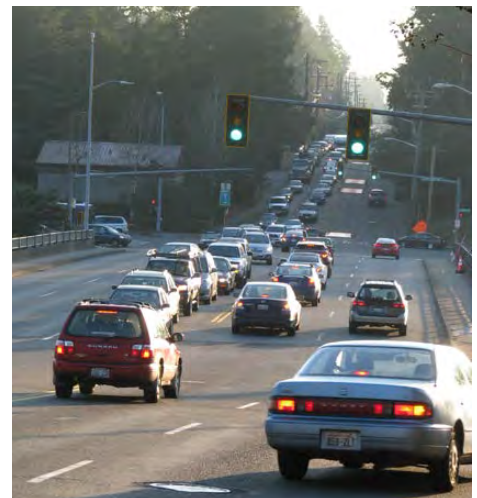
The Collision Rate is 6.03 per Million Vehicle Miles of Travel, which is more than two and a half times higher than the 2010 Northwest Region average collision rate of 2.27 for Urban Principal Arterials.

## Transit Service

One of the busiest roadways in the area but currently not a very highly used transit corridor due to its currently congested nature and marginal pedestrian facilities.

## Freight mobility

As a T-3 Truck Route, 1,000 trucks carrying almost 3 million tons travel along SR 523 daily. Improving mobility along this corridor will be critical to ensuring trucks can move safely and efficiently to their destinations.



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