



SHORELINE
CITY COUNCIL

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January 22, 2020

Governor Jay Inslee
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504

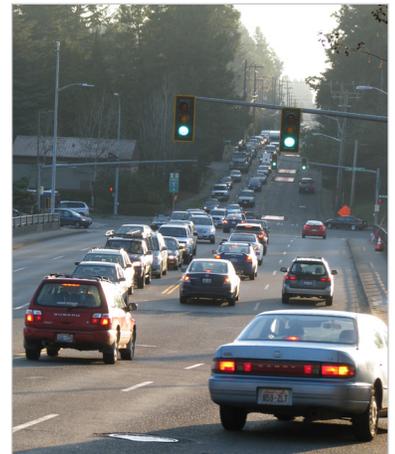
Sec. Roger Millar
Washington State Department of Transportation
310 Maple Park Ave. SE
PO Box 47300
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Governor Inslee and Secretary Millar:

On behalf of the City of Shoreline, I am writing to urge you to retain funding within the State Transportation Budget for the City of Shoreline's Connecting Washington grant for transportation improvements along the SR 523/145th Street Corridor. This project is, at heart, a regionally significant safety and mobility project that is essential to be operational before urgently needed regional bus and light rail service begins in 2024. This project and upcoming regional transit service substantially benefits the region's most vulnerable populations, and without this funding, there is considerable risk that project will not be built.

The SR 523/145th Street Corridor is a safety and mobility project. The 145th Street Corridor is the primary corridor in north King County connecting some of the region's busiest corridors, including SR 522/Lake City Way, Aurora Avenue, and I-5 to the opening-in-2024 Shoreline South Link Light Rail Station, yet the 145th Street Corridor is characterized as severely congested and inaccessible. Collision rates are over 6 per million vehicle miles of travel, which is three times higher than the WSDOT Northwest Region average collision rate for an Urban Principal Arterial. Sidewalks on 145th Street are non-existent and/or have utility poles in the middle blocking the passage of pedestrians and are generally inaccessible for persons in wheelchairs. Funding is needed to improve safety for all modes of travel through the corridor to the future Shoreline South Light Rail Station at NE 145th Street and Interstate-5 and to carry riders to the Urban Centers of Lynnwood, Northgate, the University of Washington, and downtown Seattle.

The project serves vulnerable users. The SR 523/145th Street Corridor Project aims at serving the vulnerable users by implementing sidewalks, bike facilities, and bus stops so that people can access transit or travel in non-motorized modes through the corridor connecting to the Link Light Rail. There are currently no bike facilities along the corridor, and sidewalks are not accessible for persons with disabilities.



All intersections in the corridor are projected to operate at LOS E and F by 2035 if no improvements are made.

The project corridor currently does not comply with the ADA, and it is not accessible for pedestrians, especially persons with disabilities to walk to the Light Rail Station opening in 2024. WSDOT, Sound Transit, and the cities of Shoreline and Seattle have an obligation to meet ADA access for persons accessing the light rail station on this multi-jurisdictional corridor.

In socioeconomic terms, the project is bounded by census tracts identified by the PSRC "Opportunity Index" maps as "High" based on high percentage of low income and minority populations with limited transportation choices. Transit dependent users have limited ability to access buses along 145th Street due to inadequate or nonexistent sidewalks.

Cost could go up significantly without access to the Connecting Washington funds for property acquisition and puts an undue burden on property owners.

Not moving the project forward in this biennium may have a significant impact on the overall cost of the project due to the increasing property acquisition and future construction costs. Because of redevelopment activity in the project area around the new light rail station, property costs are escalating rapidly. CW funds are planned to support the property acquisition needed for the project, and it would be prudent to acquire the necessary right of way before property costs escalate beyond the project budget. In addition, the project team has communicated to numerous affected property owners the expected timeline for property acquisitions. Deferring the project puts an undue burden on property owners who may be in "limbo" regarding property improvements and/or relocation.

Time is of the essence. Because the need for the SR 523/145th Street Corridor Project is driven by the urgent need to improve access to the light rail station due to open in 2024, delay in funding will shrink the window of opportunity to secure the remaining funding and deliver the project within that time frame. Failure to deliver this project prior to opening creates the possibility that the project might not be undertaken at all, given that both the corridor traffic and real estate development will have increased significantly during the project's hiatus.

The City of Shoreline deeply appreciates your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Will Hall, Mayor
City of Shoreline

CC: Debbie Driver, Office of the Governor
Shoreline City Council



Utility poles impede pedestrian and wheelchair user access along SR 523/145th.



Transit operations are limited by the corridor's congestion and limited pedestrian facilities.