



## US 2 Trestle Capacity Improvements and Westbound Trestle Replacement PEL Study

Executive Advisory Group, Meeting #1 Summary

Tuesday, April 23, 2:30 p.m.

Microsoft Teams

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### Meeting Purpose

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) hosted the first meeting of the Executive Advisory Group (EAG) for the US 2 Trestle Capacity Improvements and Westbound Trestle Replacement Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study to develop a common understanding of the current PEL process and gather feedback on the draft National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Purpose and Need statement.

### Attendees

*(alphabetically by first name)*

#### EAG:

- Rep. Carolyn Eslick, 39th Legislative District and City of Sultan
- Cory Christopherson, proxy to Rep. Mary Fosse, 38th Legislative District
- Deborah Bell, Snohomish County
- Doug Bender, Tulalip Tribes Roads and Transportation
- Douglas McCormick, Snohomish County
- Ralph J Rizzo, FHWA
- Sen. John Lovick, 44th Legislative District
- Megan Dunn, Snohomish County Council
- Jon Nehring, City of Marysville
- Josh Brown, PSRC
- Kim Klinkers, City of Lake Stevens
- Linda Redmon, City of Snohomish
- Nicole Smith, Tulalip Tribes Roads and Transportation
- Reema Griffith, Washington State Transportation Commission
- Ric Ilgenfritz, Community Transit
- Ross Bichel, Tulalip Tribes Roads and Transportation
- Rep. Sam Low, 39th Legislative District and Snohomish County

#### WSDOT:

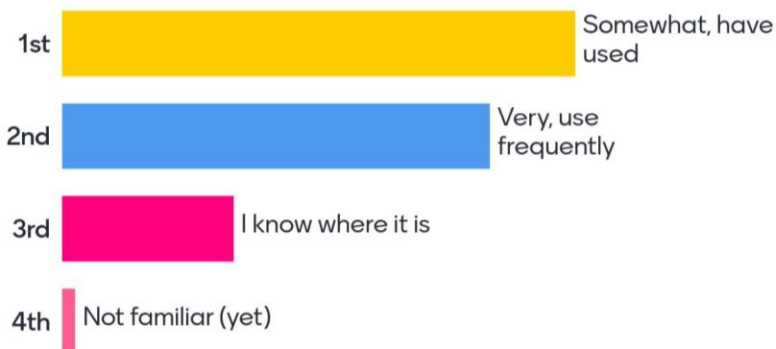
- April Delchamps, WSDOT
- Brian Nielsen, WSDOT
- Cameron Kukes, WSDOT
- Curt Winningham, WSDOT
- John Chi, WSDOT
- Josh Shippy, WSDOT
- Kyengo Ndile, WSDOT
- Lisa Sakata, WSDOT
- Maraea Skeen, WSDOT
- Oteberry Kedelty, WSDOT
- Robin Mayhew, WSDOT
- Scott Davis, WSDOT

#### Consultant study team:

- Chris Wellander, WSP
- Jared Nakamoto, WSP
- Jennifer Rash, PRR
- Larissa King Rawlins, WSP
- Laurence Idos, PRR
- Michael Horntvedt, Parametrix
- Michelle Auster, PRR

## Welcome and Introductions

WSDOT and the consultant study team welcomed attendees to the first EAG meeting with a safety moment, introductions, meeting purpose, and agenda. WSDOT invited attendees to answer the following Mentimeter poll question: *How often do you use the US 2 trestle?* Input captured in the bar graph below shows that most attendees have used the trestle.



WSDOT then conducted a roll call and asked attendees to introduce themselves when called.

## PEL Study Overview

Before going into the overview, the consultant study team asked everyone to complete a trivia question through Mentimeter: *When was the last US 2 trestle study completed?* Results were across the board, with the majority of respondents choosing 2021, which is the correct answer.

WSDOT briefly reviewed previous planning studies of the US 2 trestle or its connections led by WSDOT and the City of Everett, dating back to 2009. It was noted that the 2021 US 2 Westbound Trestle Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study provided recommendations that are guiding the current PEL Study, including expanding the study area to include Interstate 5, considering multi-modal mobility options, and continuing to conduct robust tribal, community, and agency engagement.

The intent of the current PEL Study is to hear from a broad range of voices and directly adopt a Purpose & Need statement and a range of alternatives into NEPA to streamline a future NEPA process.

## US 2 Trestle PEL Study Status

The PEL Study process is similar to other planning processes. The biggest difference is the PEL Study process includes four FHWA concurrence points.

- 1: Determine reason for PEL Study and desired outcomes
- 2: Purpose and Need and project limits
- 3: Evaluate and screen alternatives and identify red-flag environmental impacts and potential mitigation
- 4: Finalize PEL report

This process to identify and screen alternatives includes a pre-screening, followed by a Level 1 and Level 2 screening. Level 1 is high-level and less intensive, more qualitative. Level 2 is deeper analysis, more intensive, more quantitative.

There are other existing or planned projects in the preliminary study area that require ongoing information sharing, creating a coordination “sandbox”, including the City of Everett’s I-5/US 2 Interchange Planning Study. Additionally, the study team is regularly coordinating with FHWA, the WSDOT Toll Division, and other study area jurisdictions.

In addition to community engagement, WSDOT will collect feedback from the Technical Working Group (TWG), the Resource Agency Committee (RAC), and tribal partners to inform the decision-making structure with FHWA.

### **EAG Roles and Responsibilities**

WSDOT reviewed EAG responsibilities including meeting four times over the course of the PEL study, reviewing technical information with members from the TWG, and promoting public feedback opportunities with their constituents. For its role, the study team will share information with EAG, report out on community engagement, and report back on how EAG feedback was used. WSDOT then reviewed an overview of the PEL committee process, including EAG meetings, their high-level agendas, and how they overlap with other PEL committees.

### **Community Engagement**

The study engagement lead reviewed the PEL study community engagement objectives, introduced the study engagement area, and reviewed findings from the demographic analysis of the engagement area. Findings from this analysis included language access needs, with planned translated materials in Korean, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

The study team reviewed who participated in 15 listening sessions, with community-based organizations in the engagement area, including neighborhood groups, social and human service organizations, and advocacy groups active that serve a variety of interests like active transportation. Key themes from the listening sessions include:

- People find travel on the trestle generally challenging, especially during peak travel hours.
- Communities on the east side of the trestle are heavily reliant on it for accessing essential needs like medical care and jobs, as well as amenities like retail and restaurants.
- Access to active transportation facilities and transit options could be improved.
- There are mixed feelings on tolling, with strong opposition from communities on the east side of the trestle.

The next engagement milestone will be an online open house and survey for public review of the draft NEPA Purpose & Need statement between May 14 and June 7.

#### *Questions/Comments:*

- Mayor Linda Redmon, City of Snohomish, asked if the study engagement team were planning tabling events anywhere outside of the bookends of the trestle.
  - The study engagement team showed the preliminary engagement area in the slide deck to illustrate that engagement would reach beyond the communities on either end of the trestle. The engagement team will work with Mayor Redmon to identify potential engagement sites in Snohomish.
  - Mayor Redmon also requested WSDOT invite Council President Tom Merrill, Public Works Director Nova Heaton, and City Engineer Yosh Monzaki for future PEL committee meetings. The study team confirmed Yosh Monzaki was invited to participate in the TWG.

- Mayor Linda Redmon, City of Snohomish, also asked if the study webpage will include links for community input.
  - The engagement team covered ways the public will be able to provide feedback during comment periods, including through the online open house and the survey. The link to the online open house will be on the main study webpage. The team will also follow up with a toolkit to provide an easy way for EAG members to notify their communities.

### Draft NEPA Purpose & Need and Supporting Data

The final Mentimeter poll asked: *What are the most critical needs for travel on or near the US 2 trestle?* Input is captured in the word cloud below with the size of the word indicating how often it was submitted. The word “safety” appears largest, followed by transit, reliability, and capacity.



WSDOT reflected on the needs in the Mentimeter to transition into the discussion on the draft NEPA Purpose & Need statement. The purpose and need statement definition and composition was reviewed, highlighting that, consistent with 23 U.S.C.168, this PEL Study intends to adopt the Purpose and Need statement into the future NEPA review process. WSDOT then reviewed the draft purpose statement, followed by the draft NEPA needs statements for multimodal mobility, safety, and resiliency, asking for EAG comments along the way.

#### Questions/Comments:

- Deborah Bell, Snohomish County, asked if the study team thought about the infiltration of sea water to the structure in the climate resiliency plan as the Snohomish River becomes more of a tidal river.
  - WSDOT answered that yes, the team is looking into that. The analysis isn't complete yet and no data is available, but rising sea levels are a consideration.

#### Next Steps / Action Items

- The study team reviewed upcoming activities and the evaluation framework for identifying a range of alternatives.
- Upcoming activities include:
  - EAG Meeting #1 materials will be posted on the study website.
  - A public online open house and survey, held from May 14 to June 7.
  - FHWA Concurrence Point #2 in June



- The study team will develop an analysis framework and screening criteria for Level 1 Screening.
- The study team will schedule TWG Meeting #2 in July.
- The next meeting of the EAG is anticipated this fall.