

Federal Way City Center Access Project 312th, 324th, and City Center Business – Targeted Outreach Briefing Summary

Overview

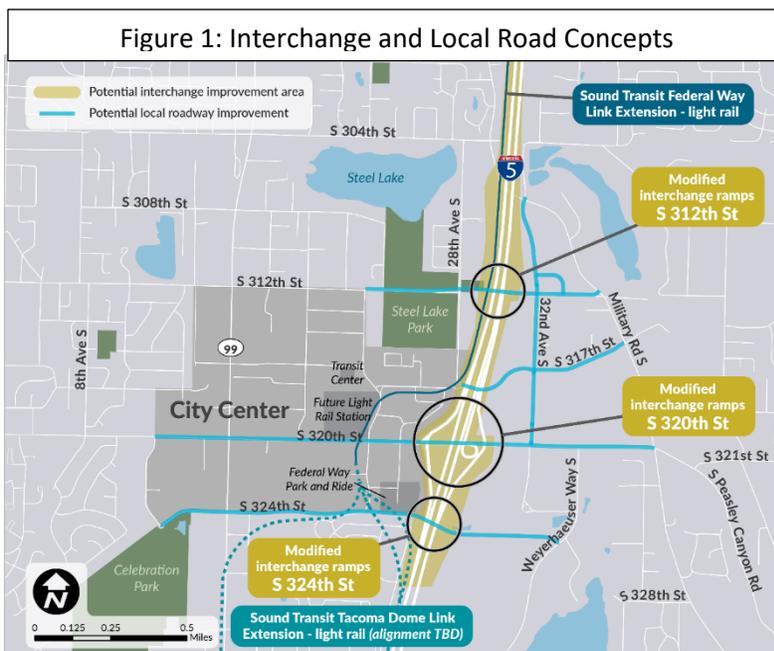
The City of Federal Way’s City Center Access (CCA) Study Team is working to identify a solution to traffic congestion in the City Center area (defined as the area near S 320th Street between SR 99/Pacific Highway and Military Road S).

In early 2019, the study team concluded only changing access to I-5 will ease City Center congestion. We hosted two neighborhood meetings and one business briefing for the community to learn about possible solutions, including modifications at S 312th Street, S 324th Street, and local projects. We hosted these two meetings for people who live near the directly impacted areas and one for businesses. We focused our outreach for these meetings with door-to-door outreach to ensure we were engaging those neighborhoods that stand to be more directly impacted by the options we are evaluating. We wanted to respect how they might be impacted by giving them the first and early chance to provide feedback.

Format

The project team gave the same presentation at each briefing. They introduced the purpose and need of the study, including explaining how regional growth and future density will create more traffic congestion. Project staff presented the interchange modifications and local elements as shown on Figure 1.

After the presentation, attendees asked questions and shared comments as a full group.



Key themes

Several key themes emerged from the neighborhood meetings, including:

- Significant concern about an interchange modification at S 312th Street and local improvements near S 312th Street east of I-5 on S 312th Street, S 316th Street, and 32nd Avenue.
- Concern about noise, air, and safety impacts to Steel Lake Park with any changes to S 312th Street.

Neighborhood briefings

The project team hosted neighborhood meetings at Federal Way City Council chambers on the evenings of Tuesday, May 14 and Monday, May 20. Over 35 individuals attended the two meetings.

Comments on interchange ramps

General

- Concern that these solutions do not help commuters pass through the City Center to get home
- Suggestion to consider interchanges outside the City Center area (at S 304th Street or S 336th Street)
- Suggestion to find ways to get traffic off I-5 altogether
- Community members expressed concern that this new study is simply a revival of the 2009 study where the community expressed significant opposition to the S 312th Street interchange, which is part of the public record of the prior study

S 312th Street Ramp Modification

- Concern about adding congestion to S 312th Street and Pacific Highway
- Concern about impacts to local streets' impact on Steel Lake Park, specific to children's safety;
 - This included specific concerns about park users, including children, crossing a busier S 312th Street.
- Concern for increased congestion on local streets, including concerns that remedies do not seem included in the current options
 - Some specific concerns that individuals will not be able to get out of their neighborhood onto S 312th Street with the additional lanes and traffic
- Concern about impacts to wetlands and Hylebos Creek
- Concern about impacting neighborhood character and Steel Lake Park
- Confusion that this option would not be considered again after 2009 process
- One individual expressed support for the S 312th Street interchange modification

S 324th Street Ramp Modification

- Concern for increased congestion on local streets, including concerns that remedies do not seem included in the current options
- Suggestions that this may be the preferable option

- One individual expressed concern that the S 324th Street interchange modification would not solve the congestion problems
- S 312th Street ramp has better connections to the west than S 324th Street connection; concern that traffic coming from I-5 has nowhere to go to the west

S 312th/324th Street Ramp Modification

- Concern that building more lanes would not solve the problem

Comments on local improvements

General

- Need for additional east-west routes other than S 320th Street
- Experience that congestion is mostly from commuters who live outside the City Center

S 312th Street widening

- Concern about lack of parking at recreational facilities
- Concern about losing access to homes during and after construction
- Concern about adding traffic signals on S 312th Street and the effect on residential access

S 317th Street overpass

- Concern about impacts to wetlands east of I-5 in S 312th neighborhood
- Concern about impact to properties and investments
- Concern about changing the rural community character
- Concern about annexation
- Concern about increased congestion on Military Road

Comments on outreach process

- Concern about prioritizing outreach in certain neighborhoods
- Lack of sharing information at Planning Commission meetings
- Concern about coordination with Sound Transit
- Concern that a decision has already been made
- Requests for additional opportunities to provide input and better advertising of outreach events
- Request to use reader boards on S 320th Street to advertise public meeting
- Suggestion to reach out to everyone who signed the 2009 petition
- Request to see more graphic representations of proposed alternatives at a smaller scale
- Request to build high-capacity parking facilities at the park-and-ride

Comments on other topics

- Previous 2009 study was not cost effective
- Concern about inaccuracy of economic models – we are losing jobs, City Center is not vigorous
- Concern about location of Sound Transit OMF site
- Questions about timeline for construction



Updated June 20, 2019

- Concern for increased congestion on local streets, including concerns that remedies do not seem included in the current options
- Question about how design and construction would be funded
- Concern about how the former Weyerhaeuser properties will be used
- Comment about current lack of access to transit
- Request for City to collaborate with Tacoma's planning studies

Business briefing

The project team hosted a business briefing at Federal Way City Council chambers on the afternoon of Tuesday, May 21. Two individuals attended the briefing.

Key themes

- Concern about construction schedules during business hours
- Issues with overflow parking from events
- Encouraged the city to think about parking and impacts to businesses during construction
- Interest in development of the former Weyerhaeuser facility

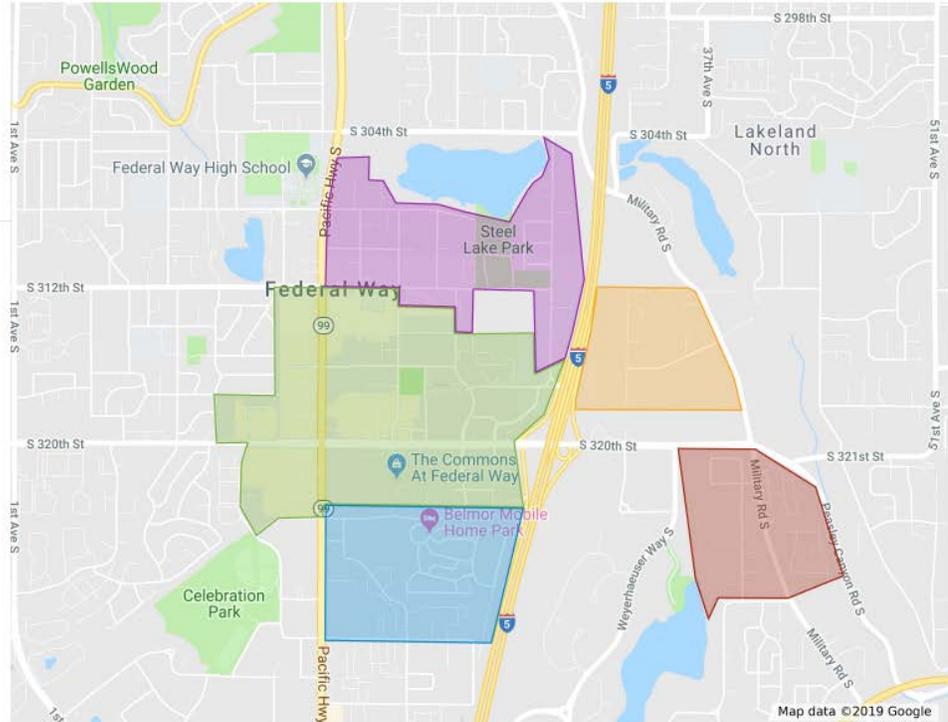
Getting the word out

The project team invited residents and businesses to meetings through targeted outreach in these areas near the project:

- Steel Lake neighborhood
- S 312th Street east of I-5
- Northlake neighborhood
- Belmor Park
- Multifamily housing in City Center

The team distributed flyers to single family residences and posted flyers in multifamily common areas. The outreach team also conducted door-to-door visits with single family residences in the areas potentially most impacted.

- City Center Access Door-to-Door
-  Steel Lake Neighborhood
 -  312th East of I-5
 -  Northlake Neighborhood
 -  Belmor Park and Multifamily
 -  City Center Businesses



Flyer distribution dates and locations:

- Wednesday, May 1, 2019 – Steel Lake neighborhood
- Thursday, May 2, 2019 – Steel Lake neighborhood
- Tuesday, May 7, 2019 – 312th East of I-5; Northlake neighborhood
- Thursday, May 9, 2019 – 312th East of I-5; Northlake neighborhood; BelMor Park
- Thursday, May 16, 2019 – City Center businesses
- Friday, May 17, 2019 – City Center businesses

Staff gave flyers to residents and business staff and invited them to the upcoming briefings. We also asked property managers to post the flyers if space was available. Many of the business staff appreciated the City hosting briefings as an opportunity for their community to learn more about the project. Many businesses also noted they received previous information and packets from outreach teams and appreciated the follow-up.