



Western Bypass and LUTRAQ

As part of the *Taking Stock* phase of the Washington County Transportation Futures Study, the study team reviewed key planning influences—from the 1970's to current times—that reflect the county's planning history and what we know of the future. Part of this “look back” includes understanding the history and implications of the Western Bypass study and the 1,000 Friends of Oregon's “making the Land Use, Transportation and Air Quality connection” (LUTRAQ) study.

History of the Western Bypass Study

Mid-late 1980s: Plans in place to build a road connecting Tualatin and Hillsboro

In response to a decades-long conversation about the need for north-south circumferential travel in southeastern Washington County, Metro recommended construction of a major new highway from Tualatin to Hillsboro. This Tualatin-Hillsboro corridor was adopted into County and regional plans for further evaluation. Other transportation improvements were planned and some constructed under the assumption that a bypass facility would eventually be constructed.

Late 1980s: The focus broadens to consider the greater southeast Washington County area

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) initiated a process to select a location for the Tualatin-to-Hillsboro Bypass. However, ODOT and others began questioning the focus on this smaller bypass without also looking at the option of a full bypass from 1-5 to Oregon 26. Some questioned whether a bypass was needed at all. Thus the focus of the Western Bypass Study broadened to include a look at more options.

Early 1990s: Western Bypass Study analysis begins, and many options are considered—and a transit-oriented development option is added to the mix

ODOT began an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) analysis to evaluate bypass alternatives. Simultaneously, 1,000 Friends of Oregon began a study to consider whether urban growth could be redirected to patterns to reduce automobile use and avoid expansion of major roads. LUTRAQ used a transit-oriented development model that clustered jobs, residences, and shopping near transit lines that encouraged biking and walking.

ODOT folded the LUTRAQ study into the Western Bypass Study. The Western Bypass Study EIS considered five alternatives, including the bypass alternative, LUTRAQ alternative, and other combinations of planned projects, Transportation System Management (TSM), and arterial expansion projects.

Mid-1990s: A recommended alternative is selected. It does not include a bypass alternative.

The Recommended Alternative eventually selected included a package of roadway and transit improvements, along with a Transportation Demand-Management (TDM) program and select arterial expansion projects. It did not include the Bypass Alternative.

Where are we with implementing the recommended alternative?

Over 75 percent of the projects included in the Recommended Alternative have been constructed or are committed. The table below shows an overview of the status of recommended projects and highlights some of the notable projects not advanced into project development.

| What was included in the Recommended Alternative | Status today |
|--|---|
| 38 roadway and transit projects that already had committed funding | All have been completed, including the I-5/Oregon 217 interchange and the Westside light rail to Hillsboro. |
| 56 roadway and transit projects along with a TDM program | 43 have been constructed, partially completed, or are committed and/or under construction. 13 roadway and transit projects have not advanced into project development, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oregon 217 – widen to six lanes (Canyon Road to 72nd Avenue)• Oregon 99W – widen to six lanes (I-5 to Oregon 217)• Oregon 217 – express bus service (though WES was built)• Demand-responsive transit service• Some TDM measures• Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway – widen to six lanes (SW 117th to Hwy 217) |
| 5 arterial expansion projects | Two have been completed and/or are substantially complete, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Murray Boulevard intersection improvements• Cornelius Pass improvement The three projects that have not advanced into project development are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1-5 to 99W Connector (between Tualatin and Sherwood)• Oregon 99W – widen to six lanes (Oregon 217 to Durham Road) – upgrade to limited access facility (Durham Road to Sherwood)• Scholls Ferry Road – widen to six lanes (Oregon 217 to 121st Street) |

Lessons Learned and Challenges Ahead

- The Western Bypass Study caused cities and the County to shift their view of land use planning on the Westside from a more purely highway-oriented perspective to looking at a **more balanced transportation system**. The County and its cities have used these design principles to serve as community-building strategies, resulting in a **more efficient urban form that encourages transit, walking and biking**.
- Although significant strides have been made in providing travel options and reducing vehicle miles traveled per person, **most people still drive**. The County and its cities will need to provide additional transportation capacity to meet the demands of a growing population and employment base. Today almost half of the employees working in Washington County live outside of the County, contributing to major **transportation challenges that need to be addressed**:
 - Rising commuter traffic between Portland and Washington County employment centers.
 - North-south commuting pressures, particularly along Hwy 217, Oregon 219, Scholls-Sherwood Rd, and Roy Rogers Rd.

The County is expected to grow dramatically in the future, adding 200,000 more residents and 122,000 additional jobs by 2035.

That's the equivalent of adding another City of Beaverton and City of Hillsboro.