



Current 4th Avenue off-ramp from I-90 and South Royal Brougham Way.

Next Steps

WSDOT, City of Seattle, and Port of Seattle are sharing the results of the 30-day review with project partners, elected officials, and interested parties. Additional cost, traffic and design information for the three options will be available this fall. The three agencies are committed to working together, with the other project partners, and interested groups to reach a decision on project direction by the end of the year.

For More Information

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Washington State
Department of Transportation

SR 519 Intermodal Access Project

September 2006

State Route 519 is a vital east-west transportation route through Seattle

The goal of the SR 519 Intermodal Access Project is to increase mobility and safety by improving connections between I-5, I-90, and the waterfront. Additionally, the project will increase capacity for vehicles and improve safety for pedestrians as they walk to transit, neighborhoods, and event facilities. This will benefit all modes of travel from freight vehicles at the Port of Seattle's terminals to ferry riders going to Colman Dock.

Phase 1 of the project is completed

In 2004, WSDOT opened to traffic the new South Atlantic Street (Edgar Martinez Way) on-ramps to I-5 and I-90 and the South Atlantic Street overpass. These new connections were envisioned as the first phase of grade-separated crossings at South Atlantic Street and South Royal Brougham Way. Upon opening, freight, ferry and event traffic saw immediate improvement in their connections to the Port of Seattle, waterfront and stadium areas.

Phase 2 of the project is under discussion

During the time when Phase 1 was under construction, changes in the project area and to the conditions established in a 2000 memorandum of agreement between the project partners resulted in reevaluation of the original Phase 2 plans.

When concerns were expressed over the results of a Feasibility Study that identified potential alternatives to the original design, WSDOT, the Port of Seattle, and the City of Seattle jointly agreed to revisit the alternatives. This resulted in a 30-day study of potential alternatives that involved technical staff from the three agencies as well as independent traffic and design experts. This effort resulted in three Phase 2 options for improving access and safety that the team felt warranted further consideration.

Vicinity Map



Aerial photo of the SR 519 project area.

Phase 1



Photo of the completed Phase 1.

South downtown Seattle is changing

South downtown Seattle has undergone significant changes since the 2000 memorandum of agreement was signed and more are in the works. A few examples of changes that affect plans to improve the SR 519 corridor include: 1) relocation and expansion of rail lines serving King Street Station; 2) construction of a new hotel at First Avenue and South Royal Brougham Way; and 3) growth in the Port of Seattle resulting in greater need for access to the nearby rail yards, I-5, and I-90.

The 30-day study for 519 Phase 2 alternatives

In 2005, after identifying the changes affecting the project's original scope, WSDOT recognized the need to revisit the design of Phase 2. In April 2006, WSDOT completed a feasibility study that determined if alternatives to the original Phase 2 design existed. Over 21 alternatives were identified and three were chosen as viable alternatives.

In July 2006, a 30-day study was commenced to further analyze:

1) the new alternatives; and 2) whether previously eliminated ideas could be modified into feasible solutions. This study resulted from conversations held between WSDOT, City of Seattle and Port of Seattle executives. Those conversations revolved around the reconsideration of Royal Brougham corridor options, and the need to ensure that the previously explored Atlantic/Massachusetts corridor options would be compatible with freight movement between the interstate and Duwamish area.

The study, which was a joint effort between 25 experts from WSDOT, Port of Seattle and City of Seattle, identified three options for further consideration. The three options were the end result of collaborative and innovative work sessions infused with new thinking about the project. The work process included discipline-specific orientation meetings, sub-team brainstorming sessions, three full-team initial workshops, and one final workshop.



Option A: Royal Brougham Corridor

Three options for further consideration

Option A: Royal Brougham Corridor

This option would terminate I-90 at a new elevated intersection with access to a westbound-only South Royal Brougham Way. Access from westbound I-90 to Fourth Avenue would be the same as today. The new access to South Royal Brougham Way would be provided with a new signal at the elevated intersection. Issues requiring further evaluation include:

- Determining the ability to ensure interstate traffic safety by managing speeds and flow at the signalized intersection, I-90, and I-5.
- Managing traffic if a 10% grade to the signal west of First Avenue on South Royal Brougham Way diverts trucks to First Avenue and South Atlantic Street.
- Verifying if local corridor closure will be required during Safeco and Qwest field events and whether those closures create traffic management issues.
- Determining whether this option can be built within existing plus anticipated funds.

Option B: Atlantic Corridor

This option would construct a new westbound off-ramp from I-5 and I-90 via the current South Atlantic Street Overpass (South Atlantic Street's current eastbound lanes would remain intact). A grade separated crossing at South Royal Brougham Way would also be constructed (this is described in more detail as Option C below). Issues requiring further evaluation include:

- Determining the ability to ensure interstate traffic safety by managing speeds and flow at the signalized intersection, I-90, and I-5.
- Identifying improvements needed along East Marginal Way, South Atlantic and Colorado Streets to ensure an efficient route for Port of Seattle trucks.
- Determining if new pedestrian facilities along South Atlantic Street will be needed between Fourth Avenue and the right field and home plate Safeco gates.
- Verifying if local corridor closure will be required during Safeco and Qwest field events and whether those closures create more traffic management issues.
- Determining whether this option can be built within existing plus anticipated funds.



Option B: Atlantic Corridor

Option C: Local Improvements

This option would forgo new interstate access to SR 519 and would instead construct a new South Royal Brougham Way local connection between First and Fourth Avenue, along with upgrades to the intersections of Fourth Avenue and South Atlantic Street and First and South Atlantic Street. Issues requiring further evaluation include:

- Determining useful life of improvements.
- Clarifying whether this option could be phased with either Option A or B.
- Assessing the affect on trucks that will have to use the existing Fourth Avenue I-90 ramp if this option were chosen.
- Determining whether this option can be built within existing funds.



Option C: Local Improvements