

**Notice of Determination of Non-Significance
Determination of Non-Significance
And
Adoption of Existing Environmental Document**

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) issued a Determination of Non-Significance for the three projects on Interstate 5 (I-5), I-5: M Street to Portland Avenue – HOV; I-5: Portland Avenue to Port of Tacoma Road – Northbound HOV; and I-5: Portland Avenue to Port of Tacoma Road – Southbound HOV. The projects will improve traffic flow and increase traffic safety by designing and constructing southbound and northbound HOV lanes on I-5, improving ramp alignments, and adding auxiliary lanes.

Description of Proposed Project

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and WSDOT issued a supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) on July 31, 2009 and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on January 7, 2010, for three Tacoma/Pierce County High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) projects: I-5: M Street to Portland Avenue – HOV; I-5: Portland Avenue to Port of Tacoma Road – Northbound HOV; and I-5: Portland Avenue to Port of Tacoma Road – Southbound HOV. The proposed projects include the following improvements:

I-5: M Street to Portland Avenue – HOV

- Reconstruction of mainline I-5 northbound and southbound, including additional HOV lanes
- Reconstruction of on- and off-ramps at the northbound and southbound I-5/I-705/SR 7 interchange
- Demolition of existing bridges and reconstruction of new bridges at Pacific Avenue, McKinley Way, and East L Street
- Reconstruction of city street approaches to the Pacific Avenue Bridge, McKinley Way Bridge, and L Street Bridge
- Construction of a new bridge on a new northbound I-5 alignment over I-705. The existing northbound bridge will be retrofitted for HOV lanes
- Construction of retaining walls
- Upgrades to signing, illumination, storm water collection facilities, and water quality treatment facilities; and resurfacing and reconstruction of main line I-5

I-5: Portland Avenue to Port of Tacoma Road – Northbound HOV

- Reconstruction of a portion of Portland Avenue under mainline I-5 overcrossing
- Widen and seismically retrofit I-5 bridges over East Portland Avenue and East Bay Street
- Reconstruction of East Bay Street from East 27th Street to East 28th Street from a one-way roadway to a two-way roadway
- Reconstruction of East 28th Street from Portland Avenue to Bay Street/northbound I-5 on-ramp
- Construction of new ramp metering system at the East 28th Street on-ramp to northbound I-5
- Reconstruction of East 27th Street from the Puyallup River Bridge off-ramp to the southbound I-5 on-ramp

- Reconstruction of and improvements to the existing northbound I-5 on- and off-ramps in the vicinity of East Bay Street and northbound SR 167
- Removal and reconstruction of mainline I-5 and northbound on- and off-ramp bridges over T Street utilities
- Construction of a temporary work bridge over Puyallup River
- Construction of a new northbound I-5 bridge over the Puyallup River, the railroad, and SR 167
- Construction of new retaining walls
- Realignment of 20th Street East in Fife
- Widening of northbound mainline I-5 to accommodate an HOV lane
- Widening a portion of southbound main line I-5 east of Port of Tacoma Road to accommodate HOV lanes
- Reconstruction of and improvements to the signal systems at multiple intersections
- Upgrades to signing, illumination, stormwater collection facilities, and water quality treatment facilities; and resurfacing and reconstruction of mainline I-5

I-5: Portland Avenue to Port of Tacoma Road – Southbound HOV

- Reconstruction of city street approaches to East Portland Avenue and East R Street to accommodate a change in grade
- Realignment and reconstruction of a new southbound I-5 off-ramp to East 27th Street
- Reconstruction of East 27th Street from the Puyallup River Bridge off-ramp to the southbound I-5 on-ramp
- Removal of the structures and reconstruction of the southbound on- and off-ramps crossing the T Street utilities
- Relocation of a 16-inch high pressure gas main
- Construction of a new southbound I-5 bridge over the Puyallup River, the railroad, and SR 167
- Demolition of the existing bridges over the Puyallup River, the railroad, and SR 167
- Widening southbound I-5 to accommodate HOV lanes
- Construction of new retaining walls
- Upgrades to signing, illumination, stormwater collection facilities, and water quality treatment facilities

Benefits to the Environment

The I-5: M Street to Port of Tacoma Road HOV projects will provide many short and long term benefits, including:

- Improved throughput and speeds of vehicles with the reconstruction of mainline I-5 northbound and southbound (including HOV lanes), on- and off-ramps at the northbound and southbound I-5/I-705/SR 7 interchange, city street approaches to the Pacific Avenue Bridge, McKinley Way Bridge, and L Street Bridge, and construction of new bridges over the Puyallup River

- Improved safety with seismic retrofits of all bridges being reconstructed or constructed
- Improved water quality by treating over 300% of new impervious surface with enhanced treatment facilities
- Constructing a mitigation site that removes approximately 30 acre-feet of fill that will offset project impacts to the floodplain, and result in a higher level of wetlands and riparian benefits to salmonid species.

Location of proposal: The projects limits are located in the cities of Fife and Tacoma, Pierce County, within the WSDOT right-of-way on I-5 between Milepost 132.88 and 136.61.

Title and Description of documents being adopted: The Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), January 2010, I-5: M Street to Portland Avenue – HOV; I-5: Portland Avenue to Port of Tacoma Road – Northbound HOV; and I-5: Portland Avenue to Port of Tacoma Road – Southbound HOV. The FONSI contains the final results of the environmental analysis that evaluated the build and no-build alternatives. Additionally, the FONSI addressed public comments made on the Environmental Assessment. The FONSI conveys information to the public and project decision makers so well informed decisions can be made. The FONSI can be found at the program site at:

<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/piercecountyhov/>

Documents may be examined during regular business hours at: Tacoma/Pierce County HOV Program Office - 724 Quince Street, Suite 206, Olympia, WA 98504

Copies are also available at the following locations: downtown Tacoma Library (Northwest Section), Fife City Hall, and various Pierce County libraries in the Tacoma area.

The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c). This decision was made after review of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public upon request.

This Determination of Non-Significance is issued under WAC 197-11-340(2); the lead agency will not act on this proposal for 14 days from the issuance date below.

Name of agency, proponent, or applicant giving notice:

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Signature: Carrie M. Berry **Date:** 4/16/2010

Date of Notice: April 16, 2010
End of Comment Period: April 30, 2010