

I-5/Port of Tacoma Road Interchange

Position

Support the appropriation in the 2023/25 biennium of the \$35 million in state funding included in *Move Ahead WA* for the City of Fife's Interstate 5/Port of Tacoma Road Interchange project—a critical chokepoint to accessing the NWSA's Tacoma facilities.



Background

The *Move Ahead WA* statewide transportation package authorized \$35 million for Phase 2 of the project, but did not specify when the funding would become available to the City of Fife. The Port supports appropriating the funding in the 2023-25 state transportation budget.

Project description

The project is a multi-phased plan to improve the Interstate 5/Port of Tacoma Road interchange. The overall interchange reconfiguration would create a one-way couplet by adding a new bridge over I-5 at 34th Avenue East to carry northbound traffic while the existing bridge at Port of Tacoma Road will be converted to one-way southbound. Locating the new southbound exit ramp from I-5 closer to the freeway and farther from Pacific Highway will eliminate tight turns for trucks and avoids interference with the intersection of Port of Tacoma Road and Pacific Highway.

Fixing a critical freight corridor chokepoint

The interchange is the main access to the Port of Tacoma, as well as providing access to the north Fife business district. It truly is the “last mile” for products grown and manufactured in the Pacific Northwest for export overseas. It also serves as a critical choke point for truck movements between the Port and the warehouses and distribution centers in the Green River and Puyallup River valleys—the second-largest logistics center on the West Coast. 44% of regional truck trips by the ports of Tacoma and Seattle are destined for this area. Operational benefits include:

- Improve freight mobility to and from the Port, which in turn, improves access to local and area businesses.
- Reduce AM travel time on I-5 between SR 18 and I-705 in 2040 by 3 minutes. The AM travel time reduction is significant as it is the period where the interchange serves the largest volume of trucks/freight entering and exiting the Port of Tacoma.

The reconstructed interchange will have significantly less conflict points and simpler signal phasing than the existing interchange, which will lower accident rates.

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