

# Final EIS Update

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*This Final EIS Update provides a summary of the information contained in the Rhodes Lake Road Corridor Study Programmatic Final EIS.*

## **1 What is the purpose of this Final EIS update and how does it relate to the Rhodes Lake Road Corridor Study and Draft EIS?**

This Final EIS Update provides a summary of the information contained in the Rhodes Lake Road Corridor Study Programmatic Final EIS. This Final EIS responds to questions asked and comments made to the Programmatic Draft EIS completed for the Rhodes Lake Road Corridor Study.

## **2 What information is contained in this Final EIS?**

This Final EIS includes the following:

- Cover Letter
- Updated SEPA Fact Sheet
- Final EIS Update
- Draft EIS Errata Sheet
- Additional Appendices
- CD of the Draft EIS, with minor changes indicated

## **3 What is included in the Draft EIS errata sheet?**

The Draft EIS errata sheet provides a list of items that were changed to address comments received on the Draft EIS. The

changes indicated on the errata sheet are contained in the CD of the Draft EIS included as part of this Final EIS.

#### **4 What information is contained in the appendices?**

There are a few repeating comments and questions that were made in response to the Draft EIS. These comments and the County's responses to them are contained in Appendix I. In addition, we have provided additional information in the attached appendices to respond to comments and questions made on the Draft EIS as described below.

##### **Appendix I, Draft EIS Comments and Responses**

Appendix I includes a summary of the comments received on the Draft EIS and our responses to them. It also provides a copy of each comment letter received and our specific response to these comments.

##### **Appendix J, Traffic Assessment for Phased 2030 Baseline Improvements**

Appendix J responds to public comments and questions related to widening SR 162 and SR 410. Some commenters expressed concern that the Draft EIS evaluated "ideal" traffic conditions, which included a baseline roadway network where SR 162 would be widened to four or five lanes and SR 410 would include a new HOV lane in both directions. Although these improvements are included in WSDOT's long-term plans, funding has not yet been secured. Potential for short-term funding through the Regional Transportation Improvement District (RTID) package diminished with the defeat of the RTID ballot measure in November 2007. Commenters wanted to see what would happen to the surrounding roadway network if a Rhodes Lake Road Corridor were built, but SR 162 and SR 410 were not widened.

We maintain that the assumptions made in the Draft EIS analysis, which included widening SR 162 and SR 410, are appropriate for a corridor-level planning study, and that a more detailed analysis of network conditions with establishment of a new Rhodes Lake Road corridor, but without widening of SR 162 and SR 410, should be a component of a project-level EIS.

However, to respond to comments from the public, we did evaluate what conditions would be like if SR 162 and SR 410 were not widened and a Rhodes Lake Road Corridor were constructed. Appendix J shows the results of this analysis.

#### **Appendix K, Evaluation of an Additional Orting Alignment**

A few commenters asked us to consider an additional alignment that would connect the Plateau to an east-west corridor that would be built to the north of Orting and would connect to 176<sup>th</sup> Street Extension. Appendix K evaluates this additional alignment.

#### **Appendix L, Rural Roadway Design Concepts**

Commenters asked how the rural character of the Puyallup Valley would be preserved if a Rhodes Lake Road Corridor is built. Specifically, people are concerned about preserving farmlands, the rural nature of the area, and area views. Appendix L discusses possible roadway designs that could minimize these effects to the surrounding area.

#### **Appendix M, Traffic Origins and Destinations**

Appendix M provides additional traffic information that shows where people in the study area are travelling from and going to. This information clearly shows that traffic heading to and from the Plateau is heading in an east-west direction.

#### **Appendix N, Mitigation Summary**

Appendix N provides a summary of mitigation measures discussed in the Draft EIS and this Final EIS.

### **5 What happens next?**

Once this Final EIS is issued, Pierce County staff will recommend that the Pierce County Council establish a Rhodes Lake Road Corridor, specifically along the alignment of Alternative D, the preferred alternative. The Council will then decide if they are going to establish a Rhodes Lake Road Corridor, and if so, which corridor they will establish. If the Council decides to formally establish Alternative D as the Rhodes Lake Road Corridor, they must establish it through an ordinance that requires a public hearing. Once the ordinance is in place, the County could move forward with a project-

specific environmental process that would involve developing additional and specific design detail, detailed environmental impacts analysis, and the development of specific mitigation strategies.