

## Project Information

# PROJECT INFORMATION Sheet



Last Updated: 10-12-09

### FOUR-LANING U.S. HIGHWAY 12 BETWEEN BURBANK AND WALLA WALLA *Turning the Corner for Safety and Economic Vitality*

#### ■ WHAT IS THE GOAL?

Our goal is to expand the current two-lane highway into a four-lane divided highway between Burbank, Washington and Walla Walla, Washington. This will improve safety, decrease congestion, and enhance economic vitality.

#### ■ WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

##### **SAFETY**

U.S. Highway 12 from Burbank to Walla Walla is a heavily traveled, two-lane highway with average daily traffic counts of up to 13,000 vehicles per day. Freight trucks account for approximately 33 percent of the traffic volume. Cargo volumes through this section of U.S. Highway 12 can reach 10.73 million tons per year. More Americans are killed on rural roads (like U.S. Highway 12) than crowded urban expressways, even though two-lane roads carry less traffic. Since 1991, U.S. Highway 12 from Burbank to Walla Walla has experienced 1,079 accidents, of which 414 were injury accidents that resulted in 30 deaths.

##### **Traffic Accident Profile**

On October 24, 1971, 12 people were killed as the result of a head-on collision between two passenger vehicles on U.S. Highway 12, six miles

#### ■ WHAT HAS ALREADY BEEN ACCOMPLISHED?

- The U.S. Highway 12 coalition has been formed, an alliance of public and private organizations working to four-lane U.S. Highway 12. The coalition has hired a federal lobbyist (Ball Janik LLP) to elevate the project's profile in the nation's capital.

#### WHAT WOULD IT COST?

The project is being funded and constructed in phases.

**Phase 1 - COMPLETED**  
McNary pool to Attalia Vicinity  
Mile Post 299.3 to Mile Post 302.29  
**Total Project Cost.....\$11.2 million**  
*Completed August 2004*

**Phase 2 - COMPLETED**  
SR 124 to McNary Pool  
Mile Post 295.3 to Mile Post 299.3  
**Total Project Cost.....\$12.1 million**  
*Completed November 2005*

**Phase 3 - COMPLETED**  
Attalia Vicinity  
Mile Post 302.2 to Mile Post 305.0  
**Total Project Cost.....\$17.0 million**  
*Completed October 2007*

**Phase 4 - IN PROCESS**

east of Wallula Junction. At the time, this was the worst accident involving two passenger vehicles in Washington State history.

According to the Traffic Safety Bureau, a 40 percent reduction in serious injury and fatal crashes can be expected on a highway improved from two lanes to four lanes. Given the relatively high number of deaths and serious injury that occur on U.S. Highway 12, a 40 percent reduction would equate to a significant savings of lives and suffering.

### **ECONOMIC VITALITY**

Economic development is dependent on having access to a high-quality transportation system. One of the most important considerations for virtually any business looking to locate is the availability of a four-lane highway close to a prospective site. The vast majority of businesses want to be within a few miles of a four-lane highway so they can efficiently receive supplies and deliver products to their markets.

The Walla Walla valley has lost promising economic development opportunities simply because the business wanted to be located closer to a four-lane highway. Walla Walla has also been prevented from submitting responses to economic development leads because the siting criteria required access to a four-lane highway.

Expanding U.S. Highway 12 is important to our economic future. Walla Walla's per capita personal income is only 77 percent of the national average and 73 percent of the state average. This translates into approximately \$7,000 less per capita income per person living in Walla Walla County.

### **■ HOW IMPORTANT IS THE EXPANSION?**

Walla Walla to Walla Walla Corridor Study  
**Total Project Cost.....\$5.5 million**  
*Study Timeline – Spring 2004 to Late Fall 2009*

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*The US12 Corridor Study has identified a northerly corridor that eliminates the need for widening Phase 5.*

**Phase 5 - ELIMINATED**  
Attalia Vicinity to US 730  
Mile Post 305.0 to Mile Post 307.3  
**Total Cost.....\$0.8 million**

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**Phase 6 - UNDER CONSTRUCTION**  
Frenchtown Vicinity to Walla Walla  
Mile Post 325.9 to Mile Post 335.6  
**Estimated Project Cost....\$57.0 million**  
*Construction Timeline – Spring 2008 to Summer 2010*

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**US 12/SR 124 Intersection - 2010 CONSTRUCTION**  
**Estimated Project Cost....\$29.5 million**  
*Construction Timeline – Spring 2010 to Fall 2011*

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### **WHAT REMAINS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED**

**Phase 7A - PARTIALLY FUNDED**  
Nine Mile Hill to Woodward Canyon Vicinity  
Mile Post 317.2 to Mile Post 322.7  
**Estimated Project Cost....\$74.0 million**

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**Phase 7B - UNFUNDED**  
Woodward Canyon Vicinity to Frenchtown Vicinity  
**\$85,000,000**

The following are three indications that the proposed project is a top regional and state priority:

- Walla Walla County's Comprehensive Plan identifies the four-lane expansion of U.S. Highway 12 as a project of regional significance. It is supported by all local government agencies.
- The expansion of U.S. Highway 12 to four lanes from Burbank to Walla Walla is the number one transportation priority of the Benton, Franklin, and Walla Walla County Good Roads and Transportation Association.
- The Washington State Department of Transportation identifies the U.S. Highway 12 four-lane expansion as a priority project.



### FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Please contact us if you would like more information about the proposed expansion.**

**Port of Walla Walla**  
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Walla Walla, WA 99362-2269  
Phone - (509) 525-3100  
Fax - (509) 525-3101

Mile Post 322.7 to Mile Post 328.1  
**Estimated Project Cost....\$53.0 million**

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**Phase 8 - UNFUNDED**  
Wallula to Nine Mile Hill  
Mile Post 304.2 to Mile Post 317.8  
**Estimated Project Cost....\$235 million**

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\* Costs for interchanges are not included in the above estimate. The Coalition will seek funding for interchanges after U.S. Highway 12 is four-laned from Burbank to Walla Walla.

## ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Minimizing the impact on environmentally sensitive areas is a primary objective in the design of these projects. The Washington State Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration, in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, completed an environmental assessment to identify the potential impacts to natural and human communities in the corridor from Burbank to Wallula. This project required careful attention in its design, as it passed through and affected several federally managed sensitive resource lands. The environmental assessment for McDonald Road to Walla Walla has been published. Several strong partnerships were developed with state and federal agencies to address the substantial environmental challenges of this corridor improvement project.

## CURRENT DESIGNATIONS FOR U.S. HIGHWAY 12 FROM BURBANK TO WALLA WALLA

This stretch of highway currently has the following designations:

- Part of the National Highway System (NHS)
- A Washington State Highway of

Statewide Significance (HSS)

- State designated “Scenic and Recreational Highway”
- Part of “Lewis and Clark Trail Highway”
- A Washington State Strategic Freight Corridor.