

Travel Time Benefits

Two-way Mercer Street will result in an overall reduction in delays to traffic traveling through the corridor, by providing a direct westbound connection from I-5 and eliminating conflicts associated with the current indirect routing. Travel time benefits for specific routes vary from general improvements for westbound traffic to slight increases in travel time for some eastbound routes. The net travel time benefit summarized here accounts for the decrease in travel time, as well as any increases in travel time, for east-west travel through the corridor. Travel time benefits were applied to the total traffic demand projected through the corridor. (Dollar benefits are based on USDOT recommended hourly values of time in year 2000 dollars.)

- Annual travel time benefit when project opens in 2012 \$639,000
- Annual travel time benefit when Mercer West is complete (two-way Mercer to Elliott) in 2016. (This is the benefit attributable to improvements between Fairview/I-5 and Dexter Ave N) \$697,000
- Total benefits from year of opening (2012) to design year (2030) **\$15,636,000**

Freight Travel Time Benefits

The Mercer corridor is used by trucks traveling to the Ballard/Interbay/Northend Manufacturing and Industrial Center, as well as the commercial neighborhoods of Fremont and Ballard. Because of the indirect routing, trucks traveling to these destinations leave the corridor and travel north on Westlake and around the north side of Queen Anne hill. The Mercer Corridor improvements will enhance the truck route from I-5 to Westlake, reducing the number of turns required from three to one and eliminating the weaving movements that trucks and other traffic needs to make to jockey into the appropriate lane on the I-5 off-ramp and on Fairview Avenue N just beyond the off-ramp.

Traffic counts collected in 2005 indicate that 103 trucks head north on Westlake from the Mercer corridor in a 16-hour period from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. Applying the travel time benefits to the trucks traveling on this route between the year of project completion (2012) and 2030 results in a benefit of **\$138,600.**

Additional travel time benefits will be realized with completion of the entire Mercer Corridor Program from I-5 to Elliott Avenue W. The cost estimate provided above assumed that these trucks would continue to use Westlake, although some will realize additional benefits by continuing west on Mercer Street, once the Mercer West phase is completed.