The FAST Partnership helps move our economy.

Since 1998, a coalition of public and private partners in the Puget Sound maritime freight gateway has leveraged $568 million of public and private funding for strategic freight mobility infrastructure improvements. Another $300 million is needed to complete the remaining 16 of the 25 most important FAST Corridor projects.
FAST Corridor

Keeps the Puget Sound Gateway Open

As one of the West Coast’s largest Pacific Rim trade hubs, the Puget Sound ports of Tacoma, Seattle and Everett link worldwide suppliers and markets. Washington State and the entire nation depend on the ability of the highways and rail lines in the Puget Sound gateway to move goods for retail, industrial and agricultural sectors.

FAST Vision & Goals

Each of the FAST Corridor partners works to achieve a common freight mobility vision. That vision integrates local and regional transportation system improvements along mainline rail lines and truck corridors near ports in the central Puget Sound region. These projects move international maritime and domestic trade, while supporting Puget Sound’s economy and locally mitigating the impact of freight that benefits other parts of the country. The FAST Corridor’s goals are to:

**Improve the functionality**, capacity and connectivity of the mainline rail system.

**Eliminate choke-points** where railroad and arterial networks intersect.

**Provide safe rail crossings** and reliable emergency access for local communities.

**Establish reliable truck links** between ports, railroad intermodal yards and regional distribution centers.

The FAST Corridor public-private partnership was established to move needed goods and support port operations on the highways and rail lines that sustain the maritime international trade corridor through the Puget Sound region. To date, nine FAST Corridor projects, costing a total of $568 million have been completed by the Partnership. The FAST partnership is seeking another $300 million for projects to keep freight moving in the face of unparalleled growth in freight traffic and in Puget Sound communities.
What’s at Stake?

In Washington State alone, maritime trade supports **30,000 direct, indirect and induced jobs**. An additional 300,000 Washington State jobs are related to these activities. The direct, indirect and induced jobs alone represent about **$1.8 billion in personal income** per year.

Puget Sound ports serve a national market. **65% to 75%** of the international containers entering these ports are **transferred to rail to supply inland markets** beyond Washington State.

Together, the ports of Seattle and Tacoma comprise the **third largest marine container load center** in North America, behind only Los Angeles/Long Beach and New York/New Jersey. These West Coast ports provide critical network redundancy should one of the ports become impassable because of congestion or catastrophe.

Total maritime trade in Washington State 2004 was **$12 billion in exports** and nearly **$60 billion in imports**.

The ports have exceeded demand projections, processing 3.6 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs)* in 2004 and **4.2 million TEUs** in 2005.

*If our ports cannot handle the expected surge in international trade, the region risks a confrontation between trade and affected local communities, as Southern California is experiencing.*

Prosperity Partnership, A Regional Economic Strategy for the Central Puget Sound Region, 2005

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*Port of Everett*  
*Port of Seattle*  
*Port of Tacoma*

**Puget Sound**  
*Gateway to the Pacific*

*Freight investments keep our economy moving.*
The Ports of Tacoma, Seattle and Everett are investing heavily to improve both the capacity and operations of their terminals and to help build the transportation infrastructure needed to grow. BNSF Railway and Union Pacific are also investing in mainline rail infrastructure.

Nearly one in three Washington State jobs relates to international trade. Improvements to all modes of freight and goods mobility support local jobs and businesses.

Washington State’s farmers and manufacturers profit from the lower cost “backhaul” trips for railroads and maritime shipping lines, which allow them to reach overseas markets at a more competitive cost.

The FAST Corridor projects accommodate through-movements to inland markets, serve the freight needs of Washington’s producers and suppliers, and distribute freight and goods locally. They are an integral element of a broader, overarching freight strategy within the Puget Sound Region and statewide, including:

- The transportation element of the Prosperity Partnership regional economic competitiveness strategy;
- Puget Sound’s Regional Transportation Plan (Destination 2030);
- The Washington Transportation Plan Freight and Rail Elements, which also focus on producers and suppliers, gateways and local distribution; and
- The four-state West Coast Corridor Coalition.

More than half the value of the exports leaving our ports are goods produced in Washington State.

Improving the Velocity of Freight through the Ports

The Port of Tacoma Road Overpass project, a 2001 FAST Corridor project, today expedites truck movements into and out of the Port of Tacoma. It grade separates the Port’s main highway access from an on-dock rail facility, and enhances rail yard capacity and switching operations.
FAST Corridor Helps

Grow our state and local economies

As trans-Pacific trade continues to drive the state's economy, the communities located along the FAST Corridor are also growing. FAST Corridor is committed to minimize conflicts. FAST Corridor has already constructed nine priority projects that improve access to the ports and separate major arterials from railroad tracks.

Container volumes are expected to double by 2020. Train volumes between Seattle and Tacoma could also double in the next 20 years — from an average of 85 to about 190 trains per day by the year 2025.

With the completion of 16 more projects, the FAST Corridor partners will have grade separated most of the major arterials crossing the rail lines to the ports. These actions also serve truck traffic passing through our communities to our ports and our largest industries, warehouses and distribution centers.

Grade separated roads and rails also serve these objectives:

**Support urban centers** by reducing conflicts between urban growth and the growth of freight traffic.

**Improve truck mobility to industrial centers** by increasing capacity and travel time reliability along these major arterials.

**Improve emergency response** by removing road barriers to fire and medical emergency services.

Freight investments keep our economy moving.
FAST Corridor
Benefits Beyond Local Borders

Direct beneficiaries from FAST Corridor projects include:

- **Local communities**, with neighborhoods that will be reconnected across railroad tracks.
- **The State of Washington’s economic well-being**, which is strongly linked to foreign and domestic trade.
- **The ports**, that count on efficient truck and rail connections to increase the capacity and velocity for freight.
- **The railroads**, which benefit by reducing vehicle-rail conflicts, and increasing average operating speed.
- **The nation**, which benefits from the capacity, security and reliability provided by Puget Sound ports as a major international gateway.

The remaining FAST Corridor projects include the highest priority uncompleted grade separation projects in King, Pierce and Snohomish counties. All of the projects provide a regional freight benefit beyond the local area. Each grade separation added to the corridor improves the traffic grid in the larger subarea. For example, two completed projects at each end of the City of Kent — South 180th Street to the north and South 277th Street to the south — created a system that commuters use to better access the growing residential areas on the East Kent Hill. Completing Kent’s South 228th Street project in the middle will connect the valley westward to a proposed new SR 509 route to the Port of Seattle. The FAST Corridor Partnership is now looking for new avenues — and new partners — to help fund these critical projects under increasingly challenging conditions.

**Grade separating arterials from rail corridors**

The South 277th Street project was widened from two to four lanes from SR 167 to Auburn Way and separates both BNSF and UP rail traffic from street traffic with two overpasses. Today, the project:

- Improves safety at rail/street crossings;
- Reduces cars and truck delay;
- Increases capacity of arterial streets in Kent and Auburn;
- Mitigates the impact of increased freight and commuter rail; and
- Allows unencumbered switching into the UP rail yard.

Local communities, with neighborhoods that will be reconnected across railroad tracks.

The State of Washington’s economic well-being, which is strongly linked to foreign and domestic trade.

The ports, that count on efficient truck and rail connections to increase the capacity and velocity for freight.

The railroads, which benefit by reducing vehicle-rail conflicts, and increasing average operating speed.

The nation, which benefits from the capacity, security and reliability provided by Puget Sound ports as a major international gateway.
The FAST Corridor Partnership has completed nine of 25 projects and will begin constructing four more by Summer 2006. The Partnership’s highest priority now is to complete the following FAST Corridor projects and project phases.

- **Lowell River Road Overcrossing**: Grade separates BNSF mainline and Lowell River Road (formerly Riverfront Parkway). Improves safety, reduces vehicular delay and allows increased train speeds. (Everett)

- **SR 519 Phase 2**: Increases capacity of grade separation linking Seattle waterfront and Port of Seattle with I-5 and I-90. Improves safety by separating rail and pedestrian traffic. (WSDOT)

- **Spokane Street Viaduct**: Increases the capacity and safety of the primary east-west linkage between the Port of Seattle’s largest container terminals and I-5. (Seattle)

- **East Marginal Way**: Grade separates tracks to terminals 5 and 18, UP and BNSF yards and Whatcom Yard. Connects lead track to terminal on-dock rail yards. (Port of Seattle)

- **Willis Street**: Grade separates two tracks on SR 516 serving over 300 businesses and warehouses. Improves safety, reduces vehicular delay and allows increased train speeds. (Kent)

- **Stewart Road East**: Provides second of two grade separations over UP mainline tracks. Part of corridor improvements from Lake Tapps to SR 167. (Pierce County)

- **70th and Valley Corridor**: Widens highway at cross roads of major truck corridor. (Fife)

- **SR 167 Right-of-Way Purchases**: Reduces future cost of link between Port of Tacoma and I-5 by timely purchase of right-of-way properties. (WSDOT)

- **East Marine View Drive**: Provides direct access from I-5 to Port of Everett and completes arterial corridor serving the port, naval station, and the industrial area. (Everett)

- **Lander Street**: Grade separates east-west arterial from BNSF mainline and switching tracks to an intermodal waste transfer yard. (Seattle)

- **Duwamish ITS**: Improves truck efficiency and reduces congestion near the Port of Seattle. Improves signal system and provides truckers real-time traffic information. (Seattle)

- **ITS & Incident Response System**: Expands Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) on key freeways to ports of Seattle and Tacoma and expands incident response to improve congestion and traveler information. (WSDOT)

- **M Street**: Provides grade separation to mitigate the impact of train traffic over Stampede Pass, which could gridlock downtown Auburn. Completes a major north-south arterial. (Auburn)

- **Shaw Road Extension**: Improves access to SR 167 and the Port of Tacoma. (Puyallup)

- **North Canyon Road Extension**: Creates new alignment with grade separation, linking south Pierce County industrial area with SR 167. (Pierce County)

- **Lincoln Avenue**: Grade separates multiple tracks, allows improved on-dock rail design, improves truck access to the Port of Tacoma. (Port of Tacoma)

- **South 228th Phase 2**: Grade separates South 228th Street from BNSF and UP mainlines to provide a five-lane arterial that links the valley warehouse and industrial area with I-5 and the planned SR-509. (Kent)

- **South 228th Phase 1**: Widens highway at cross roads of major truck corridor. (Fife)

- **70th and Valley Corridor**: Widens highway at cross roads of major truck corridor. (Fife)

- **Lincoln Avenue**: Grade separates multiple tracks, allows improved on-dock rail design, improves truck access to the Port of Tacoma. (Port of Tacoma)

* ITS = Intelligent Transportation Systems
The FAST Partnership Delivers

The Freight Action Strategy for the Everett-Seattle-Tacoma Corridor (FAST Corridor) is a partnership of 26 local cities, counties, ports, federal, state and regional transportation agencies, railroads and trucking interests, intent on solving freight mobility problems with coordinated solutions.

They have shared information and funding resources — sometimes shifting funds from projects that were delayed to those that were ready to begin — to benefit the program as a whole. Because of this team approach, projects were built which otherwise might never have been completed. Since 1998, the partners have identified and assembled $568 million of public and private funding to build nine strategic infrastructure improvements and start four more.

FAST Partners

State & Federal
Washington State Department of Transportation
Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board
Transportation Improvement Board
Federal Highway Administration

Region
Puget Sound Regional Council

Ports
Port of Everett
Port of Seattle
Port of Tacoma

Counties
King County
Pierce County
Snohomish County

Cities
Algona
Auburn
Everett
Fife
Kent
Pacific
Renton
Seattle
Sumner
Tacoma
Tukwila

Freight Carriers
BNSF Railway
Union Pacific Railroad
Washington Trucking Association

Ground-breaking ceremony for South 228th grade separation (Kent)

This brochure was produced by the FAST Corridor Partnership to inform people in decision-making and policy roles, as well as the broader public, about how the FAST Corridor improves our system of freight mobility.

For further information, visit www.psrc.org/fastcorridor/

April 2006
FAST Corridor Project Status

Grade Separation
- [ ] Design
- [ ] Construction
- [ ] Complete
- [ ] Phase I: Complete Phase II: Construction

Railyard Access
- [ ] Design
- [ ] Complete

Truck Access
- [ ] Design
- [ ] Construction

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
- [ ] Design
- [ ] Construction

Railroads
- [ ] Highways
- [ ] International Waterways