

# Naches – US 12 Active Transportation Connections Study

## Introduction

The Town of Naches is in the Naches River valley at the foothills of the Cascade Mountain range about 12 miles west of Yakima on U.S. Highway 12. With its roots in agriculture and logging, there are also a multitude of nearby outdoor recreational opportunities. Naches is the gateway to numerous recreational areas along White Pass Scenic Byway and Chinook Pass Scenic Byway and White Pass Ski Area. In addition to providing services for travelers, it is a popular destination for those seeking agricultural products at local fruit stands. With recent extension of the Naches Trail that connects Naches to the Yakima Greenway, there is an increasing presence of bicyclists and pedestrian in the community.

## Issues

Bicycling occurs along sections of US 12 although alternate, parallel arterials and collectors are designated as non-motorized routes. Pedestrian activity also can be fairly significant near Naches even though it has a small population. Pedestrians cross the highway at unmarked and uncontrolled locations.

Within Naches, safety and access control improvements are a priority along US 12. US 12 provides access to local businesses in addition to travelers and freight. Truck traffic makes up approximately 15% of the traffic volumes. Operational issues at intersections of US 12 at major cross streets as volumes continue to increase. The lack of business/driveway access management poses operational and safety concerns.

## What we are doing

The Town of Naches, the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments (YVCOG) and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) are working together to provide a safe, reliable and effective transportation network for the US 12 corridor in Naches. **This study will include public and agency input to guide future improvements of the transportation network.**

The study area includes the US Highway 12 corridor between Allan Road and E. Jennings Lane and is approximately 1.6 miles long. It includes the following intersections on US 12:

- Allan Road
- Kellowry Road
- Shafer Avenue
- S. Naches Road (signal and cross walks)
- East Jennings Lane

The agency partners are conducting this study; focusing on active transportation connections and safety, to identify recommendations for changes to the system. The study will focus on the following criteria:

- Travel time reliability & safety
- Bicycle and pedestrian safety and connections especially through the US 12 highway corridor within the Town of Naches

The study will identify potential ranked strategies or solutions that meet both the goals and criteria listed above focusing on non-motorized connections to the community, as well as recreation areas and networks such as the Clements View Sports Park and the Yakima Naches Trail (Greenway extension). Analysis and evaluation of the potential solutions will use traffic modeling and analysis (transportation network & spot location) prior to completing any final recommendations for changes to the transportation system.

## What are the goals for the Study?

The study will engage local partners, transportation service providers, and the community to develop a plan that will:

- Identify transportation system deficiencies
- Evaluate multimodal connections thru the US 12 corridor
- Solicit input from the local community
- Identify potential solutions using the *Practical Solutions* approach

## How will the community be involved?

Community outreach efforts will involve seeking input from the community and participation in a stakeholder group (Multi-modal, multi-disciplinary and multi-agency team) (M3 Team). Both an in person open and online open house is planned, as well as online public survey as well as other public outreach efforts.

WSDOT SCR will use its planning and project delivery approach called *Practical Solutions*. This is a data driven process that uses community engagement early on in the study process to develop and design solutions that provide specific performance results. Using *Practical Solutions*, WSDOT aims to make the right investments, in the right places, at the right time, using the right approach.

The partners will publish a report at the end of the study that will recommend solutions for the study area based on the data and analysis, and local community input.

## Preliminary Schedule

The project partners will work with stakeholders and community members to gather feedback to understand traffic-related issues in the study area as well as develop a list of solutions and strategies that will be effective and sustainable if implemented. This feedback will inform the solution evaluation and selection process that will be take place after the study.

### Preliminary Schedule and Key Tasks

Fall 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate study</li> <li>Conduct research and compile traffic data and baseline information</li> <li>Develop Community Engagement Plan, ensuring equity and inclusion throughout the process</li> <li>Attend Sportsman’s Day and announce the study</li> </ul>
Winter 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and convene a stakeholders group (M3 Team) and any subcommittees</li> <li>Meet with the businesses and community; send a notice to area residents and businesses via US Mail</li> <li>Develop materials needed for the M3 Team and subcommittees</li> <li>Conduct public survey on transportation concerns in the study area</li> <li>Work with Technical Subcommittee on performance measures, ranking of strategies, etc.</li> <li>Meet with M3 Team to analyze progress and public survey results</li> </ul>
Spring 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct an online open house to seek input on the solutions and analysis</li> <li>Update solutions and strategies; analyze and evaluate results</li> </ul>
April 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review open house input with the M3 Team; finalize recommendations</li> <li>Final report and recommendations</li> </ul>

## Proposed Study Area - Vicinity Map