

# SR 99 First Avenue South bridge emergency deck repairs

Spring 2026

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Northwest Region Administrator



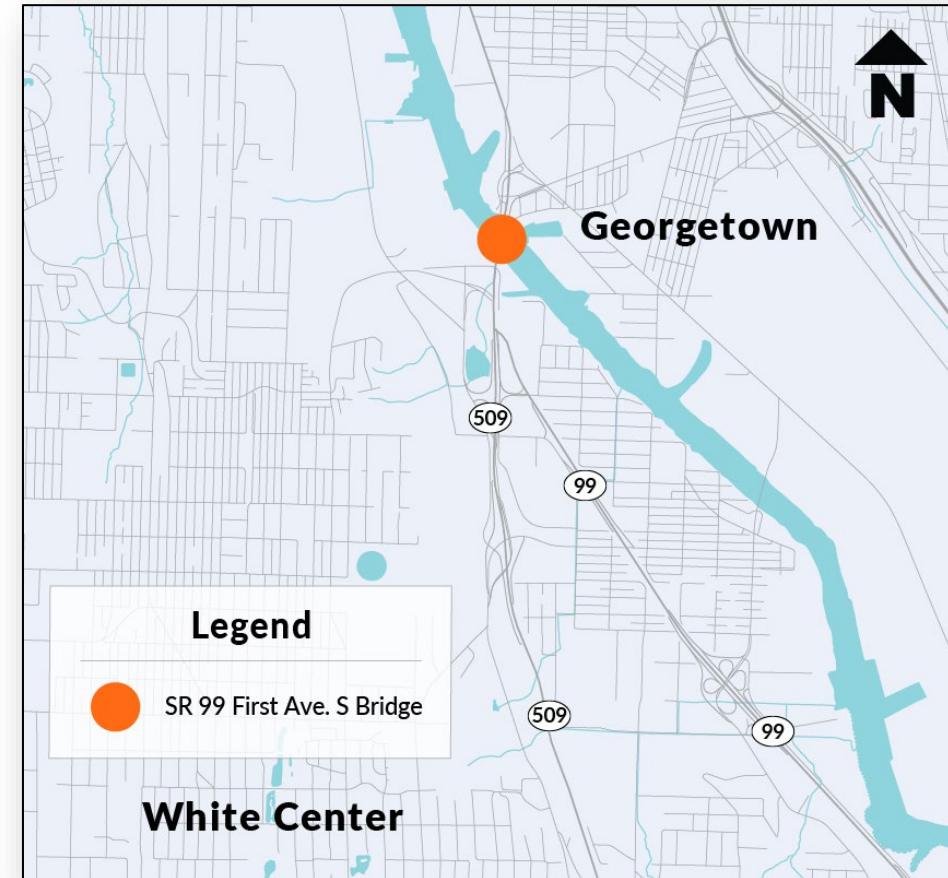
# Background and history



*The northbound SR 99 First Avenue South Bridge links South Park and Georgetown across the Duwamish River.*

# Northbound SR 99 First Ave South bridge

- SR 509/SR 99 is a critical north-south freight and commuter corridor through King County.
- The northbound span of the State Route 99 First Avenue South Bridge opened in 1954.
- It is a movable, double-leaf bascule bridge spanning the Duwamish River between the Georgetown and South Park neighborhoods.
- The bridge deck is comprised of steel grid panels placed horizontally across the travel lanes.
- Roughly 50,000 vehicles cross the bridge each day.
- The bridge typically opens at least once a day for maritime traffic.



# Rehabilitation and repair timeline



*WSDOT maintenance crews repaired the northbound SR 99 First Avenue South Bridge from above and below in March 2026.*

- The northbound SR 99 First Avenue South Bridge steel grid deck was last replaced in 1999.
- Fourteen steel grid deck panels replaced in 2020.
- Phase I emergency deck repairs completed March 2026.
- Phase II emergency repairs tentatively expected to start as early as late April 2026.
- A full bridge deck replacement is planned during the 2027 construction season.
- Schedule and closure details not yet available for 2027 deck replacement.

# Phase I emergency repairs: March 2026

- WSDOT bridge inspectors identified failures in nine steel deck grates in late February 2026.
- Two northbound SR 99 bridge lanes closed until temporary repairs could be made.
- During the week of March 9, under a full northbound closure, WSDOT maintenance crews installed steel plates over failed grids and welded cracked grids where feasible.
- Detour guided vehicle traffic through South Park neighborhood.
  - High traffic volumes reported during peak commuting hours.
- Bridge reopened with a 25-mph speed limit advisory.



*Repairs completed over five days in March 2026 addressed fractures in steel deck grates.*

# Phase I emergency repairs: March 2026

Before



After



# Phase II emergency repairs: April-June 2026

## Project timeline

March 2026	Fabrication begins on steel deck plates
Early April 2026	Emergency contractor selected
Late April 2026	Begin construction (tentative)
Early June 2026	Project completion (tentative)

## What to expect

- Overnight northbound SR 99 lane closures before/after construction for site prep.
- All lanes of northbound SR 99 will close across First Avenue South bridge.
- Construction/closure timeline could include:
  - Weekend full closures.
  - Weeknight full closures.
  - Most likely a combination of weekend and weeknight full closures.
- Northbound SR 99 traffic will follow same detour as March emergency work.
- First Avenue Bridge Trail closed during construction.
  - Shuttle van will carry pedestrians, cyclists around construction.

# Schedule considerations for Phase II repairs

- Bridge needs immediate repairs before 2027 deck replacement.
- Delaying repairs could mean more intensive repairs with significantly longer closures.
- Goal of restoring SR 509/99 corridor to full capacity as quickly as possible.
- Regional highway system must be fully operational for World Cup (Summer 2026).
- Coordinating closures around other major construction happening in greater Seattle.
- Contractor crew availability/procurement time for replacement panels.
- Balancing efficiency with interests of residents, neighbors, commuters, freight and maritime communities.



*Phase II emergency repairs in April and May will replace 10 failing steel deck grid panels covered by steel plates since temporary repairs were completed in March.*

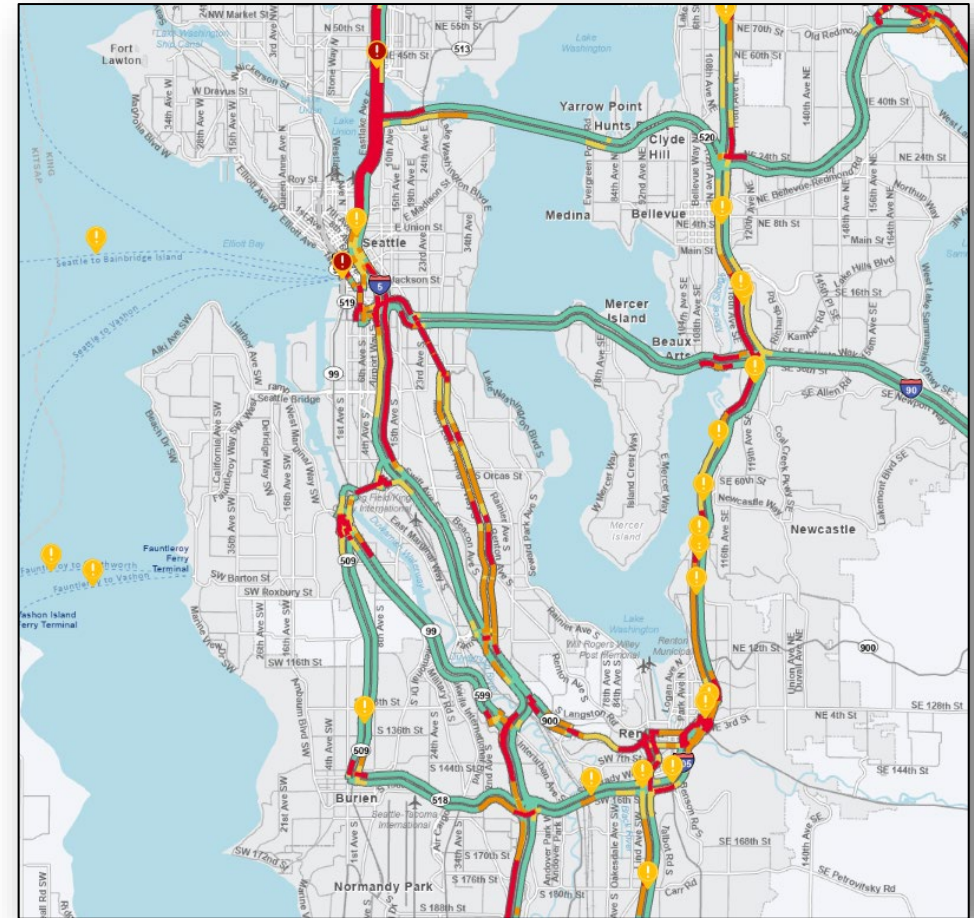
# Northbound SR 509/SR 99 vehicle detour route



# Communication and outreach strategies

We use multiple communications tools to share news, updates and information about WSDOT projects:

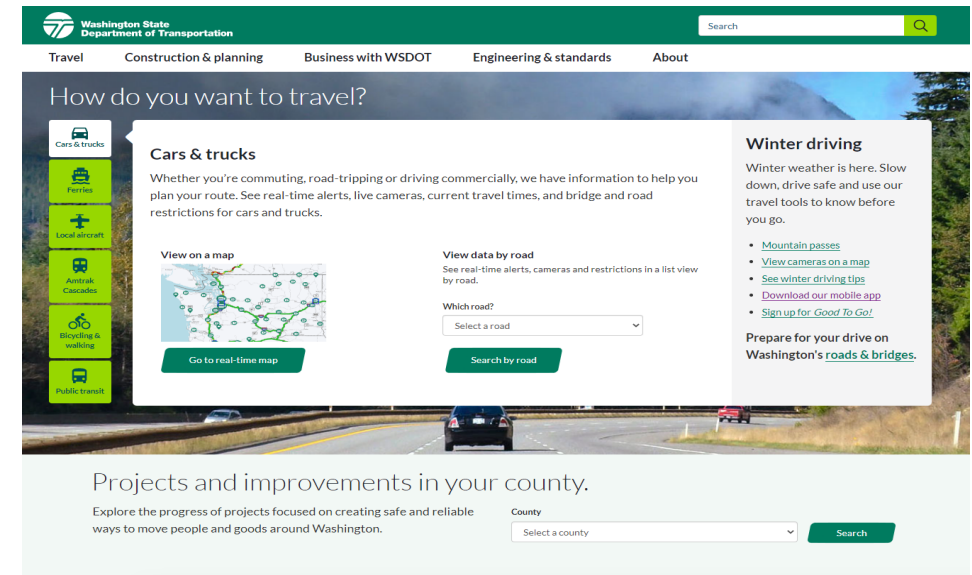
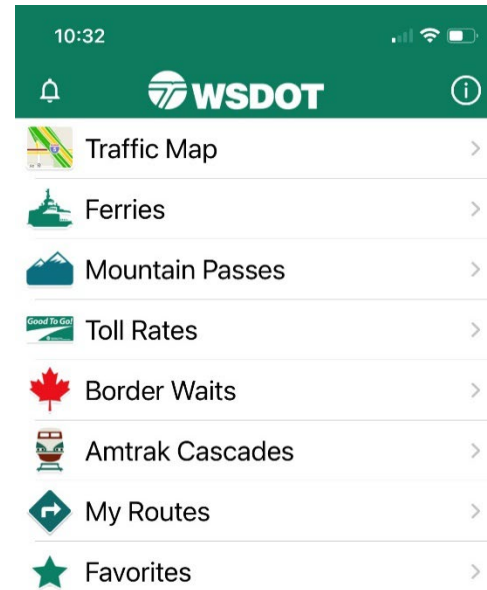
- News release/media interviews
- Frequent social media posts: (Facebook/Instagram/X/Bluesky/Reddit)
- Project website
- Coordination with first responders and transit agencies
- Inclusion on WSDOT real-time travel map
- Articles in weekly King County traffic newsletter
- Direct outreach to community/neighborhood groups
- Overhead highway signs along SR 99 and I-5 corridors
- Message boards within South Park neighborhood
- Message boards on SR 99/SR 509 as far south as Burien



WSDOT's travel center map contains real-time traffic, construction and closure information throughout Washington and the Puget Sound.

# Stay up-to-date

- **WSDOT home page:** [www.wsdot.wa.gov](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov)
- **Project website:** [bit.ly/FirstAveSBridge](http://bit.ly/FirstAveSBridge)
- **WSDOT social media and mobile app:** [wsdot.wa.gov/travel/mobile-app-and-social-media](http://wsdot.wa.gov/travel/mobile-app-and-social-media)
- **Get the WSDOT app:** in the Google Play or App Store
- **Real-time travel map:** [wsdot.com/Travel/Real-time/Map](http://wsdot.com/Travel/Real-time/Map)
- **WSDOT email newsletters:** [public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WADOT/subscribe/new](http://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WADOT/subscribe/new)
- **Communications inbox:** [NWPublicAffairs@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:NWPublicAffairs@wsdot.wa.gov)



# Questions?

## Contact us

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