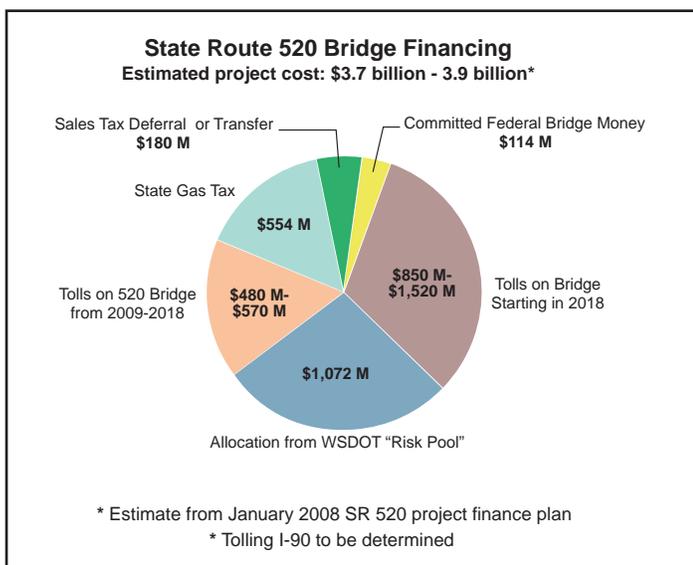


## Tolls could help fund a new SR 520 bridge

Tolling is a likely source of revenue for building a new SR 520 bridge. The legislature asked WSDOT to study tolling, and we submitted a finance plan in January 2008 that included tolling as an integral part of the funding strategy.

### What is the project finance plan?

The finance plan includes an assessment of various funding sources from federal, state and local sources, including a contribution from tolls. These funding sources were identified by the legislature. The full project finance plan is available on the project Web site.



### How much could the tolls cost?

A toll rate has not yet been established. It is likely that tolls would vary by time of day, with higher tolls during peak times and lower tolls when demand is lower. We expect the final toll rate to help strike a balance between needed revenue and realistic toll rates. The legislature and Washington Transportation Commission will set the final SR 520 toll rate.

### How much money could tolling generate for the SR 520 project?

Tolling could contribute up to \$2.1 billion for a new bridge. The exact amount generated depends on toll rates, where tolling begins and ends in the SR 520 corridor, and if the existing bridge is tolled beginning in late 2009.

### Could tolls on SR 520 cause drivers to change their driving behavior?

We expect some drivers will switch to transit or carpools, drive at different times of day, or change their destination because of tolls. Some drivers may use other routes. All of these changes are called route diversion. We will be evaluating the effects of route diversion and looking at ways to address them over the next year.

### Legislature takes action in 2008 session

Recognizing the need to fund the replacement of the vulnerable SR 520 bridge, the legislature passed two tolling bills during the 2008 legislative session. Gov. Gregoire signed them into law in March 2008.

#### House Bill 1773:

- Grants tolling authority to the Washington Transportation Commission.
- Defines the functions of the tolling authority.
- Sets statewide guidelines for tolls.

#### House Bill 3096:

- Creates a tolling implementation committee to work with the public to evaluate tolling the SR 520 bridge.
- Directs the committee to consider tolling technology, traffic diversion and possible tolling on I-90.
- Requires a report to the governor and legislature by January 2009.

## How would tolls be collected?

All tolls on SR 520 will be collected electronically without having to stop and pay at a toll booth. A *Good To Go!* transponder will be the primary way to pay the toll. Drivers set up a pre-paid account and attach a credit-card size transponder to their windshield near the rearview mirror. Overhead sensors will recognize the transponders and automatically deduct the toll from the driver's pre-paid account. The new SR 520 bridge will not have any toll booths. Everything will be done electronically.

Many drivers opt to set up automatic replenishment to a credit or debit card, so they don't have to worry about their account running low.



For more information about electronic toll collection, visit the *Good To Go!* Web page at [wsdot.wa.gov/goodtogo/](http://wsdot.wa.gov/goodtogo/)

## What if I don't have a *Good To Go!* transponder?

Vehicles without a transponder will have their license plates photographed to provide an alternate means of electronic toll collection. The driver could make payments within a set time window by phone, online, or at a customer service center. A bill for the toll could also be sent to the registered owner of the vehicle. An administrative fee may apply to cover the additional costs of this type of collection.

## Would every vehicle pay the toll?

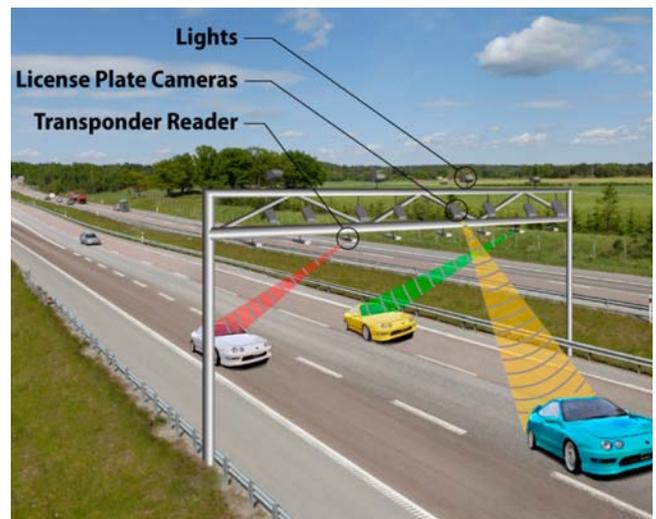
Generally, all vehicles would pay the toll. No final decisions have been made on exemptions for transit or carpools, although we evaluated several scenarios that include possible exemptions for transit and carpools with three or more people in the HOV lane. Vehicles would pay based on the number of axles on their vehicles, so larger commercial trucks or cars pulling trailers would likely pay a higher toll. The finance plan provides additional information on toll exemptions and how they affect the amount available to fund a new bridge.

## Could collecting tolls slow down traffic?

No. Electronic toll collection happens at the speed of traffic. There are no tollbooths, and no need to slow down. Drivers sign up for a *Good To Go!* account and can either choose to have their account automatically replenished when it gets low or monitor it themselves.

### How does electronic toll collection work?

As a vehicle approaches a toll collection point on SR 520, an overhead reader searches for a *Good To Go!* transponder. When the transponder is detected (green), the user's toll account would be charged for the current trip. If no transponder is detected (red), the vehicle's license plate is photographed (yellow) and recorded for payment or billing as described above.



### For more information:

**Phone:** 1-888-520-NEWS (6397)

**E-mail:** [SR520Bridge@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:SR520Bridge@wsdot.wa.gov)

**Web site:** [wsdot.wa.gov/projects/SR520Bridge](http://wsdot.wa.gov/projects/SR520Bridge)



**Washington State  
Department of Transportation**

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