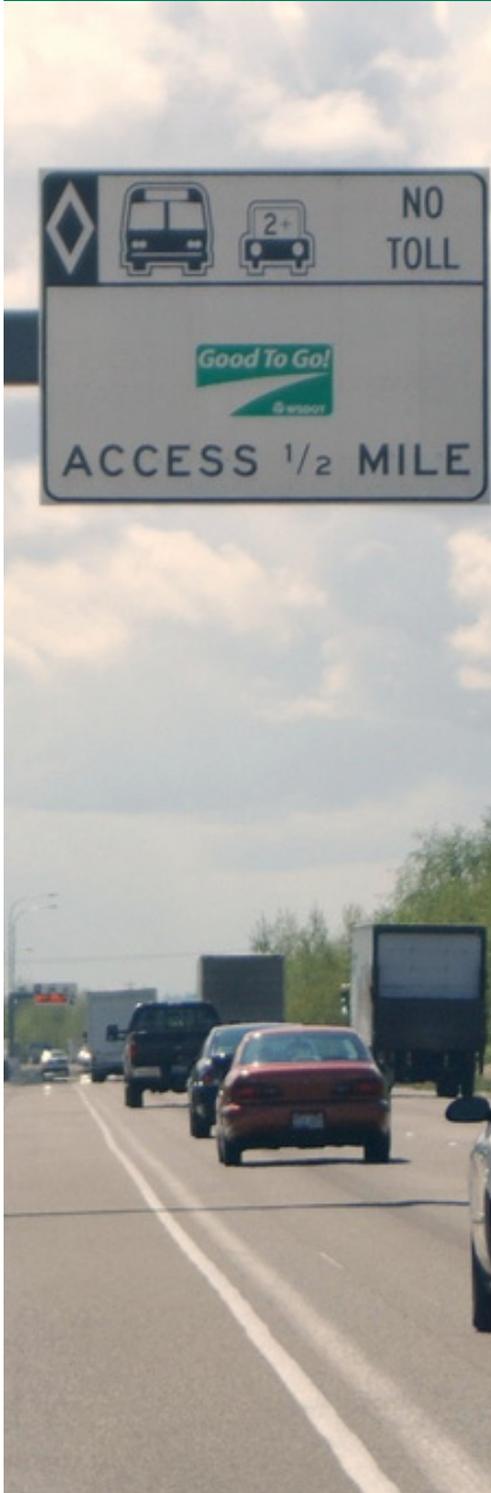




Washington State
Department of Transportation

SR 167 HOT Lane Extension



Appendix B

Executive Advisory Group Interest Statement

I-405/SR 167 Executive Advisory Group
Interest Statement supporting Phase I of Express Toll Lanes on I-405

Action is needed in 2011

As members of the I-405/SR 167 Executive Advisory Committee, we urge the adoption of legislation in 2011 authorizing the use of express toll lanes at the north end of I-405. This corridor is vital to the state's economy and construction of express toll lanes would create jobs, leverage user fees for accelerating corridor improvements, and provide long-term congestion relief. Failing to act in 2011 would indefinitely delay investment in the I-405 and SR 167 corridor and will negatively impact the transportation system, the Region's economy, and the quality of life for those citizens using the corridor.

Keep the I-405 / SR 167 Corridor Flowing Smoothly to Support Economic Development

- The combined I-405, SR 167 and SR 512 corridor forms the only north-south alternative to I-5 through Pierce, King and Snohomish counties. Serving 1.1 million trips per day, it is the second most heavily traveled corridor in the state with some areas suffering congestion up to 10 hours daily. In 2009, there were 767,821 jobs in communities along the corridor.
- This congestion slows both commuters and state freight connections accessing major commercial, manufacturing and warehouse facilities. It also hampers business development along the corridor, which continues to create jobs that provide an economic benefit to the Region and State.
- Despite the recent completion of major transportation investments in the corridor, an estimated \$2 billion in additional investment is needed to address remaining critical gaps in the 405 and 167 corridor, to combat mounting congestion and to meet the needs of the region's transportation system and support our economy.

Find Solutions that Move People and Goods as Efficiently as Possible

- We support authorization of the first phase of the express toll lanes to reduce congestion and help fund the full corridor improvements.
- When compared to adding only general purpose lanes, express toll lanes can move more people and vehicles through the corridor. That means both the driver in the general purpose lane and the driver choosing to use the express toll lane has a faster, more reliable trip.
- Express toll lanes provide options to people. It means the plumber trying to get to an appointment knows there is an option to get there on time, and it means a parent trying to get to a school play won't miss their child's performance because they were stuck in traffic.
- Express toll lanes also generate funding for remaining improvements in the corridor and enable the state to leverage user fees as a funding source.
- An independent Expert Review Panel recently concluded that WSDOT's express toll lanes analysis was sound and aligned with industry standards in the areas of Policy, Methodology, Phasing, and Financing.

Key Policy Areas Requiring Additional Analysis

- The Executive Advisory Group recognizes the decision to move from a 2+ to a 3+ occupancy requirement in this corridor has multiple implications and requires additional work, including more public outreach. However, we are convinced that options exist with express toll lanes and its associated technology that could meet the corridor's performance and revenue needs while providing benefit to two-person carpool users. To this end, WSDOT should conduct the necessary work to assess the revenue, performance and system implications of potential options to find the combination that works best.

- Corridor tolling improves traffic in the corridor, but also on adjacent facilities. Decisions regarding the use of express toll lanes should be accompanied with direction to WSDOT work with cities to minimize impacts and monitor city streets for effects, and recognize the need for geographically equitable decisions that do not disproportionately affect individual communities.
- WSDOT should develop a financial plan regarding express toll lanes to provide decision-makers with the most affordable financing options that will provide toll payers with the greatest benefit for their investment, including analysis of using the State's general credit and public private partnerships.

The I-405/SR 167 corridor needs to be fixed. Moving ahead with express toll lanes would create construction jobs, leverage user fees for accelerating corridor improvements, and provide long-term congestion relief. Taking action in 2011 will benefit the transportation system, the region's economy, and the quality of life for those citizens using the corridor. Our region cannot afford inaction.

In supporting express toll lanes authorization, we also urge the Washington State Department of Transportation to work closely with affected stakeholders and interests on the array of timing questions, financing questions and implementation issues associated with this program.

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Puget Sound Regional Council

Grant Degginger
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Bellevue City Councilmember

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Mayor of Puyallup

Jim Haggerton
Jim Haggerton
Mayor of Tukwila

Dave Gossett
Dave Gossett
Snohomish County Councilmember
substituting for former EAG member and Snohomish County Councilmember Mike Cooper



I-405/SR 167 Direct Connector



Legend

- Phase 1 (Funded)
- Phase 2 (unfunded)
- Existing