



Washington State
Department of Transportation
Paula J. Hammond, P.E.
Secretary of Transportation

Transportation Building
310 Maple Park Avenue S.E.
P.O. Box 47300
Olympia, WA 98504-7300

TEL: 360-705-7000
TTY: 1-800-833-0388
www.wsdot.wa.gov

February 27, 2009

The Honorable Mary Margaret Haugen
Chair, Senate Transportation Committee
Post Office Box 40410
Olympia, WA 98504-0410

The Honorable Judy Clibborn
Chair, House Transportation Committee
Post Office Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Dear Senator Haugen and Representative Clibborn:

I am pleased to provide you with the first annual report on the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) four-year SR 167 High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes Pilot Project. The enclosed performance summary complies with RCW 47.56.403.

The SR 167 HOT lanes opened to drivers on May 3, 2008, and have performed very well, with opportunities for growth. Drivers choosing to pay \$1.25 have saved 9 minutes of travel time through this congested corridor. The technology implemented has worked exceptionally well, with few problems. Usage has been less than projected, which may be a reflection of the relatively short length of the pilot segment and the downturn of the economy. Overall, WSDOT is very pleased with the performance of the pilot project.

The pilot project evaluates how HOT lanes and variable tolling can improve traffic flow and ease congestion. Here is what we have learned from the project so far:

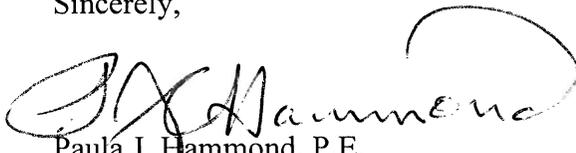
- Between May and December 2008, more than 20,000 *Good to Go* users paid to use the HOT lanes.
- The average toll paid was \$1.
- The average monthly revenue was \$25,600.
- HOT lane usage increased 57 percent since opening in May 2008. The highest number of tolled trips per day in May was 1,220. By December, the number of trips reached 1,914.
- Despite the growth in tolled trips, HOT lane usage was 63 percent less than projected. The spike in gasoline prices, worsening economy, improved transit options, decreased overall traffic volume and length of the pilot segment are the likely causes.

The Honorable Mary Margaret Haugen
The Honorable Judy Clibborn
February 27, 2009
Page 2

- For a \$1.25 toll, the northbound HOT lane provided drivers with an average savings of 9.1 minutes during the morning peak rush hour. The highest travel time savings was 20 minutes over an 8-mile segment.
- The HOT lanes do not appear to have an adverse impact on safety. The average number of collisions per month from May through September 2008 was less than the same months in 2007, and similar to the last four-year average.
- Travel times for carpools and transit maintained at free flow, where the 45 mph or better performance target was met 99 percent of the time.
- There is room for continued growth in the HOT lanes for additional carpool vehicles, transit or toll-paying solo drivers (400 to 500 vehicles per hour).
- Transit ridership in the corridor increased almost 25 percent from the same time period the previous year.

Thank you for your continued support. If you would like a briefing on this project, please call my office at 360-705-7054.

Sincerely,



Paula J. Hammond, P.E.
Secretary of Transportation

PJH: slm

Enclosure

cc: Dan O'Neal, Transportation Commission Chair
Kelly Simpson, Senate Transportation Committee
Beth Redfield, House Transportation Committee