



January 20, 2009

SR 520 Tolling Implementation Committee
Bob Drewel, Executive Director, PSRC
Richard Ford, Transportation Commission
Paula Hammond, Transportation Secretary, WSDOT
c/o Puget Sound Regional Council
1011 Western Avenue, Suite 500
Seattle, Washington 98104-1035

Subject: SR 520 Tolling Implementation – Comments on Draft Report Content

Dear Committee Members:

Thank you for your continued efforts in involving local agencies in the process of evaluating tolling for financing the 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV project. The process has proven to be a thorough and transparent evaluation of tolling alternatives and has had broad and inclusive engagement by citizens and elected officials. Your outreach to our City officials and the citizens of Renton in particular is very much appreciated. This work has laid a firm foundation that will ensure that the governor and Legislature will have the information they need to choose an option that is affordable and within the means of our region, while considering the effects on neighborhoods, quality of life, traffic and the environment.

In reviewing the January draft report, it appears that tolling only SR 520 will most likely fall short of the Legislative funding target. The only scenario of the five scenarios that tolls only SR 520 and also meets the low end of the funding target requires the highest tolls to users. Given these financial capacity results in the draft report, the need to toll both SR 520 and I-90 seems likely unless other funding options are developed. The tolling of both bridges would create the greatest impact on south King County and the City of Renton. As stated in the draft report, the "peak period diversion to I-405 (at SR 167 in Renton) is greater in the two-bridge scenarios, with volume increases reaching 8 percent." This exceeds the diversion volume around the north end of Lake Washington by 3 percent and would significantly impact congestion within the City of Renton and negatively affect our community and economic development. Aside from the need to finish the planned improvements along the south end of I-405, the City arterials continue to be our main concern, especially if construction on I-405 forces some of the diversion traffic onto our arterials.

We are encouraged that your draft report has recognized this in your two-part approach to diversion mitigation and has identified south I-405 as one of five areas where data and input indicate there will be diversion effects. We agree that the following mitigation



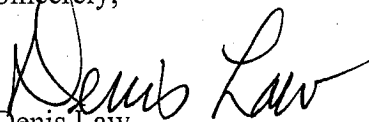
recommendations for diversion as identified in the draft report could benefit our city if implemented:

1. System-wide instrumentation and traffic monitoring to the parallel north-south corridors such as Coal Creek Parkway and Duvall Avenue to SR 169 need to be implemented prior to diversion impacts.
2. Traffic reporting with electronic driver information signs at decision points on I-405 and parallel corridors need to be implemented prior to diversion impacts.
3. A toll mitigation account that responds to actual traffic diversion effects and a joint state/local process to decide which actions to take to mitigate the effects of diverted traffic.
4. Advanced traffic management technology on SR 520, I-90, I-405 and I-5.
5. Transit service expansion via the Urban Partnership Agreement in **all** impacted corridors and possible other improvements to transit service in response to anticipated or actual traffic diversion should be considered.
6. If I-90 is also tolled, transit-related improvements such as new or expanded park-and-rides should be added along I-405. Early implementation of BRT for the I-405 corridor should also be considered.
7. In a two-bridge scenario, expansion work on I-405 and I-405 alternative routes should proceed as quickly as possible.

We certainly appreciate the complexities of the transportation analysis you have completed to date and the myriad of variables that are considered in the 10 tolling alternatives. We trust the draft report will take this into consideration and focus on operational measures that are flexible in responding to actual and changing diversion effects along the I-405 corridor and parallel local arterials.

We look forward to the continuation of the process and release of the final report to the governor and Legislature.

Sincerely,



Denis Law
Mayor

cc: Renton Legislative Delegation
Renton City Councilmembers
Jay Covington, Chief Administrative Officer
Gregg Zimmerman, Public Works Administrator
Peter Hahn, Deputy PW Administrator, Transportation
Jim Seitz, Transportation Planning Supervisor