



Christine Eggers
City Clerk
P.O. Box 1307
Issaquah, WA 98027-1307
Phone: (425) 837-3000
Fax: (425) 837-3009

NOA 08-67

NOTICE OF ACTION ISSAQUAH CITY COUNCIL

December 5, 2008

TO: Bob Drewel, Chair
520 Tolling Implementation Committee
c/o Puget Sound Regional Council
1011 Western Ave., Suite 500
Seattle, WA 98104-1035

RE: Consideration of Draft Letter to 520 Tolling Implementation Committee

AGENDA BILL NO: AB 5931

DATE OF ACTION: December 1, 2008

ACTION TAKEN: Approved proposed letter, as amended, to the 520 Tolling Implementation Committee. (See Attachment.)



Christine L. Eggers, City Clerk

cc: Paula Hammond, WSDOT Secretary of Transportation
Richard Ford, Washington State Transportation Commission
Issaquah City Councilmembers
Ava Frisinger, Mayor
Leon Kos, City Administrator
Joe Meneghini, Deputy City Administrator
Bob Brock, PWE Director



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December 4, 2008

Bob Drewel, Chair
520 Tolling Implementation Committee
c/o Puget Sound Regional Council
1011 Western Ave., Suite 500
Seattle, WA 98104-1035

Dear Chairman Drewel:

In the City of Issaquah, we appreciate your efforts to create a tolling plan for financing the new SR-520 floating bridge and other traffic flow improvements. Your outreach and presentations have been informative, and provide a strong foundation for working together to evaluate our regional tolling options.

We want to share our input on a few key areas of the ongoing discussion:

First, we fully support implementing tolls on SR-520 in 2010 as a means to finance new construction in that corridor, as well as for mitigation on other Eastside roads that could be impacted by diversion effects. We are particularly concerned about diversion onto north-south routes (e.g. I-405) as alternatives during peak hours; we believe that those routes should receive improvements before any charges are considered on I-90.

Second, with I-90 being our residents' primary access point to Seattle, we are strongly supportive of maintaining a free or low-cost method for minimum-wage workers and local business to cross Lake Washington on that bridge. A reduced monthly rate for frequent users, as occurs with a bus pass, would be beneficial, and a strong revenue source for the State. Improvements to transit service, and building a facility at I-90 and SR-18 would also assist commuters.


Third, we believe it is very important to enhance transit options between Issaquah and Seattle, Bellevue, or Redmond prior to tolling. We encourage decision-makers to fund light rail along I-90 to Issaquah as a high priority, should finances become available, as Issaquah is well-situated on an optimal high-capacity transit corridor.

Fourth, we endorse a proposal similar to Rep. Judy Clibborn's idea for a combination of HOT lanes and free lanes on I-90 (e.g. SR-167 model). Until light rail is added on the I-90 center roadway, it can be converted to bi-directional HOT lanes to generate revenue.

Finally, we are very interested in ensuring the practicability of tolling is achieved efficiently. There may be significant costs incurred in educating the public about the need for toll- or HOT- transponders, significant costs in obtaining those devices, and significant costs in enforcing violators. Additionally, signage would be necessary to inform drivers of the cost as they drive ahead, especially important to many visitors.

Thank you in advance for the consideration of our comments; we look forward to working with you and other jurisdictions to meeting the challenge of repairing our infrastructure and keeping our citizens moving across Lake Washington and around the Eastside.

Sincerely,


for Maureen McCarry, Fred Butler
Issaquah City Council President, Dpty Council Pres.
On behalf of the City of Issaquah

cc: Paula Hammond, WSDOT Secretary of Transportation,
Richard Ford, Washington State Transportation Commission