

## 520 Tolling Implementation Committee - Public Comments Received

Comment	
<b>From:</b>	Joseph Frost
<b>Source:</b>	info@build520.org
<b>Date:</b>	09/29/2008
<b>Zip Code:</b>	98027
<b>Comment:</b>	My Idea: Privatize the 520 bridge, including replacing it, maintenance, and toll collecting. Make sure it is a private company based in Europe, and make sure they could care less about average people. Then let them fill your pockets with cash so you can educate your kids at their colleges in Europe.
<b>From:</b>	Anonymous
<b>Source:</b>	info@build520.org
<b>Date:</b>	10/02/2008
<b>Zip Code:</b>	98040
<b>Comment:</b>	I don't think that I-90 or the East Channel bridge should be tolled at all. Mercer Islanders would be held hostage regarding this issue as these are the only ways off the Island, especially for those who work and must use these passages daily.
<b>From:</b>	Jim Pearman
<b>Organization:</b>	City of Mercer Island
<b>Source:</b>	Mail
<b>Date:</b>	10/14/2008
<b>Zip Code:</b>	98040
<b>Comment:</b>	<p>Dear Committee Chair Drewel, Members Hammond and Ford:</p> <p>On October 6, 2008 the Mercer Island City Council unanimously adopted Resolution No. 1402 regarding tolling on the Lake Washington bridges. The Resolution is enclosed with this letter. It establishes that any proposal to toll I-90 across Lake Washington requires consultation with the partners to the 1976 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on I-90; that both the R8A configuration and the consultation required by the MOA must be completed before I-90 is tolled; and that tolls must not be imposed on travel to and from Mercer Island.</p> <p>As you know, Mercer Island is closely following the work of the 520 Tolling Implementation Committee. We have taken special care to understand the potential effects on Mercer Island of all the scenarios you are studying. And we have concluded that tolls on travel to and from the Island would inequitably burden those who work, live and visit here.</p> <p>On September 11, I sent a letter to the Committee requesting that you assess the effects in all of your scenarios of not tolling trips to and from Mercer Island. We have not officially heard back from the Committee on that request, but our staff's understanding is that it can be done fairly easily. In that same letter, we also proposed that the Committee determine if and how all the revenue needed for the SR 520 project can be generated by tolling 520 alone. We understand this new scenario is now included in the second round of your modeling analysis.</p> <p>Mercer Island looks forward to hearing the findings from your second phase study. We welcome you back to our City for another Open House community event where our citizens can hear directly the results of your second round of traffic modeling. I understand our staffs are right now setting a date for this public input event.</p>

Please let me know if you have questions about our policy positions.

Best wishes,  
Mayor Jim Pearman

CITY OF MERCER ISLAND  
RESOLUTION NO. 1402  
A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MERCER ISLAND, WASHINGTON REGARDING TOLLING ON LAKE  
WASHINGTON BRIDGES.

WHEREAS, the geographic position of Mercer Island, separated from the mainland on all sides; means those who live and work on the Island cannot leave their community without using I-90; and

WHEREAS, "if tolls are imposed on the I-90 bridges, Mercer Island residents, unique among all others in the Puget Sound region, would have to pay a fee penalty each time they traveled to or from their city and

WHEREAS, Mercer Island is a small and primarily residential community of 22,000, with limited medical care, other professional services, retail and entertainment opportunities on the Island, thereby requiring access to the mainland to fulfill the needs and obligations of daily living; and

WHEREAS, if a proposal to toll I-90 across Lake Washington is advanced, the Department of Transportation and the Washington State Transportation Commission are obliged under the terms of paragraph 14 of the 1976 Memorandum of Agreement to "take no action which would result in a major change in either the operation or the capacity of the I-90 facility without prior consultation with and the involvement of the other parties [to the Memorandum of Agreement], with the intent that concurrence of the parties be a prerequisite to Commission action to the greatest extent possible under law."

WHEREAS, The Washington State Highway Commission originally approved 10 lanes for I-90, 4 general purpose lanes west bound, 2 transit lanes, and 4 general purpose lanes east bound (4-2T-4); and

WHEREAS, both the original and amended I-90 Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) were based on this configuration; and

WHEREAS, Mercer Island was projected to generate almost one full lane of traffic into Seattle; and

WHEREAS, Mercer Island has already made significant sacrifices in agreeing to give up the 4th general purpose lane for the right of Mercer Island traffic to use the transit lanes on a third priority basis

WHEREAS, the I-405 final environmental impact statement (FEIS) approved on June 10, 2002 and issued on June 28, 2002 is a comprehensive analysis studying the major transportation corridors east of I-5 and including the operation of I-90; and

WHEREAS, the I-405 Corridor Program Record of Decision documents the FEIS as approved by 24 agencies; and

WHEREAS, the Mercer Island City Council has consistently asserted the City's right and responsibility to protect Island residents, businesses and visitors from degradation of their mobility to and from the Island; and

WHEREAS, plans are now underway to replace the failing SR 520 bridge across Lake Washington, and \$1.5 to \$2 billion more is needed to fund the bridge replacement project; and

WHEREAS, roadway tolling has been identified as one of the possible revenue sources for the needed project funding; and

WHEREAS, tolling SR 520 in order to generate revenue to fund replacement of the 520 bridge places the responsibility for payment on those who actually use 520, but tolling I-90 to help fund 520 places a burden on those who do not and will not directly benefit; and

WHEREAS, the 520 Tolling Implementation Committee appointed by the State Legislature is charged with evaluating the feasibility of raising the needed funds through tolling on 520 and possibly also tolling on I-90; and

WHEREAS, the Tolling Committee's initial evaluation results indicate that more than enough revenue would be collected if I-90 were tolled in addition to 520 given the initial toll rate assumptions; and

WHEREAS, these initial evaluation results also show only a small diversion of traffic from SR 520 to I-90 if tolls are collected on SR 520 alone; and

WHEREAS, the Tolling Committee is also evaluating the "reasonableness" of tolls that might be imposed on one or both of the cross-Lake Washington bridges, and reasonableness includes the concept of equity; and

WHEREAS, the citizens and businesses of Mercer Island will be uniquely and unfairly impacted if tolls are exacted on their travel to and from their community; and

WHEREAS, tolling I-90 to pay for a new SR-520 bridge would place a disproportionate share of the costs on Mercer Island residents

WHEREAS, under State and Regional Growth Management principles all jurisdictions must achieve a balance between housing and employment, and for Mercer Island this requires daily immigration of employees, and tolls on I-90 would be a material barrier to achieving this important goal; and

WHEREAS, the 520 Tolling Implementation Committee has requested input on their initial evaluation results from all affected communities and their elected representatives,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Mercer Island as follows:

SECTION 1.

Any proposal to toll I-90 across Lake Washington would constitute an action resulting in a major change in the operation and capacity of the I-90 facility and therefore would trigger the consultation and concurrence provisions contained in paragraph 14 of the Memorandum of Agreement.

SECTION 2.

Both the continuous HOV lanes planned for construction between Seattle and Bellevue and across Mercer Island on I-90 (R8A) and the consultation and concurrence prerequisites of the Memorandum of Agreement must be completed prior to implementation of tolling on I-90.

SECTION 3.

Tolls must not be imposed on travel to and from Mercer Island on I-90, the only means of public access to and from the Island.

ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERCER ISLAND,  
WASHINGTON AT ITS REGULAR MEETING ON THE 6th DAY OF OCTOBER, 2008.

Jim Pearman  
Mayor

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**From:** Janice Morriss

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 10/15/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** I reside on Mercer Island. I am very concerned that a toll will be implemented on I90 and we will loose the freedom to leave the island. We will have no way to leave home without incurring a toll from what I see on the toll presentation. I can understand if all amenities that other Seattle and Bellevue residents enjoy are offered on Mercer Island but if we need to go to the doctor, emergency room or even a movie it will cost us. I don't feel that is fair. We are a middle income family and live there for the benefit of our children. That is discrimination.

Where else in the county does this occur where a fairly small community is forced to pay a toll to leave home. This seems a violation of a very basic freedom.

Janice Morriss

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**From:** Sharon K. Falkner

**Source:** Mail

**Date:** 10/20/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** I support early "variable pricing" tolling of the 520 and I-90 bridges to bring quick and effective solutions to our region's transportation problems. We should set the tolls so they will pay to rebuild the bridge and fund transportation choices. This will help relieve congestion and reduce climate change pollution.

I support tolling on both bridges from Bellevue and Mercer Island Seattle. I do not support a toll on the East Channel Bridge.

**From:** Jess N.  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 10/21/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** To whom it may concern:

I am a Mercer Island resident. I have lived here for 24 years now. While, yes, tolling I-90 will insure keeping traffic flowing, we are used to the terrible amounts of traffic. Your reckless decision to toll I-90 will bring those of us who are barely managing to squeak by here to financial ruin, because we cannot afford to PAY the tolls in the first place and will confine us to the island. That is not fair, it is not just. 520 residents have other options to get home. Mercer Island residents have no other option. so please do not toll us.

Sincerely,

a resident of mercer island.

**From:** Margaret Kwan  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 10/21/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:**

We would like to oppose tolling of the I-90 bridges because this would bring hardship to our family of four. I-90 is the only route connecting the island to the other cities and there is no other alternative choice. People in Seattle or Bellevue have the choice not to use I-90 or 520 if they want to avoid the toll. People living on the island will be forced to pay the toll everyday and every time when travelling out of the island. The toll raised is for re-building 520 and not for re-building I-90. We have already contributed to the construction of the 520 through various taxes. Tolling of the I-90 for Mercer Island residents will be a penalty for living on the island; property values will go down, friends & relative will avoid visiting the island if possible, delivery to the island will have added surcharge, expenses for out of the island activities will increased. I would urge the Committee to consider the above and if they wish to implement tolling of the I-90 bridges, the Mercer Island residents should be exempted from this tolling because the I-90 bridges is the only connection to the "outside" and Mercer Island residents has already suffered by the impact of increased traffic in I-90. I would like to urge the SR520 Tolling Implementation Committee and other governmental authorities to recommend AGAINST tolls being imposed on I-90 bridges.

**From:** Anonymous  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 10/23/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:**

Question 1 – Tolling the 520 Bridge in 2010 would immediately raise funds for the bridge replacement, reducing the overall cost of the project, as well as reduce congestion on the bridge, but the new bridge will not open until 2014, with the corridor fully complete in 2016. Do you think 520 should be tolled starting in 2010 or 2016?

2010

Question 2 – If only 520 were tolled, more vehicles would switch to I-90. Tolling I-90 would also allow for improvements such as new HOV lanes to be added to the bridge. Do you think the I-90 Bridge should also be tolled?

No

Question 3 – When a toll is charged to use 520, what is the one thing you are most likely to do for your trips on 520?

Pay the toll

Question 4 – How many days in the last week did you use 520?

2

Question 5 – How many days in the last week did you use the I-90 bridge?

5

Question 6 – What is your home zip code? If you work outside the home, what is your work zip code?

98040; 98133

Question 7 – Are there additional tolling scenarios that the committee should consider?

Question 8 – Do you have additional comments to share with the Tolling Implementation Committee members? Specifically, we would be interested in your opinions and thoughts on the following:

- a. Reasonableness of the tolls
- b. Traffic diversion effects
- c. Performance of the bridges when tolled
- d. Funding for the new bridge
- e. Impacts on lower income bridge users

Tolling I-90 would be extremely unfair to Mercer Island residents, workers and businesses, which all rely on I-90 for their livelihoods. I-90 and 520 are not the same corridor, and making I-90 users pay for a new 520 makes no sense. The argument that I-90 traffic may increase is bogus -- if that's the main argument then start tolling 520 first and if I-90 traffic substantially increases you can always decide to toll it later. The main beneficiaries of 520 will be those who live near the end of the bridge, and it is unfair to make Mercer Island pay for it.

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**From:** Judith Alexander  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/02/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Hello,

I am against tolls on I-90. I am a Mercer Island resident, and have been for over 10 years.

There should be no tolls on I-90. For the following reasons

- Why should we pay for 520 if we are using I-90. This makes no sense to pay for something we are not using.
- It is not unreasonable for one bridge have toll. This would be similar to the Tacoma Narrows Bridge, which now tolls and the new bridge has the tolls. The people that use the old Tacoma Narrows bridge do not pay for the new one and the people that want to use the new Tacoma Narrows Bridge pay for it.
- So, why should the traffic I-90 pay for a bridge they are not using. We are being penalized.
- There have been tolls in the past on 520 and there was no increase or problems with traffic on I-90.
- I-90 is a national highway. It connects to the east coast. 520 is a regional bridge only going from Seattle to Redmond.
- Mercer Island residents have no other way to get Seattle or the eastside. Many live on Mercer Island, but they work and have business in the Seattle area. There is no other way for us to get to Seattle.

So, please do not put tolls on I-90.

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**From:** Judith Alexander  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/02/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:**

Hello,

I have a couple of questions

When will your committee make a recommendation to the legislature about whether or not to have tolls on I-90?

Do you know how soon the legislature will make a decision about tolls on I-90?

I am against the tolls for the following reasons

- Why should we pay for 520 if we are using I-90. This makes no sense to pay for something we are not using.
- It is not unreasonable for one bridge have toll. This would be similar to the Tacoma Narrows Bridge, which no tolls and the new bridge has the tolls. The people that use the old Tacoma Narrows bridge do not pay for the new one.
- So, why should the traffic I-90 pay for a bridge they are not using. We are being penalized.
- There have been tolls in the past on 520 and there was no increase or problems with traffic on I-90.
- I-90 is a national highway. It connects to the east coast. 520 is a regional bridge only going from Seattle to Redmond.
- Mercer Island residents have no other way to get Seattle or the eastside. Many live on Mercer Island, but they work and have business in the Seattle area. There is no other way for us to get to Seattle.

**From:**

Ron Hanson

**Source:**

info@build520.org

**Date:**

11/05/2008

**Zip Code:**

98040

**Comment:**

NO tolls on I-90 for Mercer Island residents!

**From:**

Loretta Hanson

**Source:**

info@build520.org

**Date:**

11/05/2008

**Zip Code:**

98040

**Comment:**

I-90 is our only way off the island. NO tolls for residents of Mercer Island.

**From:**

Wei-i Li

**Source:**

info@build520.org

**Date:**

11/05/2008

**Zip Code:**

98040

**Comment:**

Sir:

I wish to object in the strongest terms to implementing a plan to toll any vehicle using Interstate 90, in a scheme to offset costs for replacing State Route 520 Washington Lake Bridge.

The rationale provided (I-90 as an alternate route to avoid paying a 520 toll) is only a concept, and not based on fact. The impact on Mercer Island residents and off-Island employees (including first responders such as 911) is real and substantial.

No real evidence of alternate funding for the replacement bridge has been realistically explored in your local presentations.

Respectfully,

**From:** Rita Bout  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/06/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98027  
**Comment:** I would gladly pay tolls on both the 520 & I90 bridges starting in 2010. I think it would a good to have some sort of discount pass for everyday commuters. I try to use buses when I travel to Seattle and I think if a toll was imposed more people would explore this option.

I have lived in other states that have toll bridges and highways, it is very successful in paying for upkeep and new roads. It is time for WA residents to pay per trip; to me it makes more sense than raising property taxes.

**From:** Dick Hitch  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/06/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** To prevent 520 traffic from moving to I-90, I believe I-90 should have a toll that is somewhat lower than that of 520 (perhaps 80%) to partially off-set arguments that a toll should only pay for the tolled roadway.

There should be a concession to Mercer Island residents due to their unique geography and dependence upon I-90 to get to services ... and upon those who work on MI but who live elsewhere (a large part of the MI workforce).

The proposal of charging 50% to those using I-90 to come or leave the Island is reasonable. However, I think it would be a better solution to have a toll of, say, 20% for those coming to or going to the EastSide, and 30% for those coming or going on I-90 to Seattle. This is because Mercer Island is largely attached to Bellevue for many services, and a rate of a 20% toll would not be viewed as economically cutting MI off from the Eastside.

In addition, I believe that I-90 tolls should probably begin earlier than 2016 if traffic studies show a material traffic diversion from 520 to I-90 (if 520 is tolled and I-90 is not).

Another issue is the use of the MI Park and Ride lot. Any I-90 tolls should not encourage Eastside residents to drive to the MI Park and Ride (instead of Eastside Park and Rides) for the purpose of toll avoidance.

Finally, I believe the estimated toll prices are based on an assumption that the tolls will increase over time? I believe that the projected toll price should be shown for 2016, 2021, 2026 and so forth. Because the tolls are essentially to pay for long-term bonds, inflation is not a factor, it is simply how debt service is constructed. I want to be convinced that projected toll increases (that are not shown on the web documents) are disclosed and that the early tolls are not being kept artificially low.

The outcome of the models are interesting, but as the peer review documents point out, they have some imperfections. I believe that the Legislature should be able to modify the toll policy after the new 520 has been in service for a few years and real data is available (of course, the modification would need to be done under the constraints that the toll revenue would produce its share of bond fund income).

Thanks for making information about this project readily available.

**From:** Lisa Belden  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/10/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Hi: How can I get a copy of the new evaluations?  
  
Thanks,  
  
Lisa

**From:** Judith Alexander  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/10/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Hello,  
  
It makes absolutely no sense to put tolls on I-90. I-90 is an interstate and it is the only way to go to east all the way to Boston. 520 is just a regional highway from Seattle to Redmond.  
  
Also, the transportation department built the new Tacoma Narrows Bridge and they only put tolls on the new bridge and not on the old one. Why didn't you put on the tolls on the old bridge? Because it didn't make sense, just like putting tolls on I-90 doesn't make sense.  
  
When 520 first was built there were tolls on that bridge and no tolls on I-90 and there were no traffic problems. If you wanted to take 520 you knew you had to pay.  
  
Why should the people who take I-90 pay for a bridge they won't use? I thought the purpose of tolls was to pay for bridge that is being built. I-90 is built. The tolls should only be for 520.  
  
As you can tell I'm upset and angered by this. So, please only consider tolling 5-20.

**From:** Jordan Schmidt  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/10/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98059  
**Comment:** In interest of myself I do not feel a toll should be slapped on 90 to make a new 520. My life in this region takes me over 520 a max of ten times a year, 90 on the other hand is several hundred to a thousand. Selfish, yes, but i do not have the slightest desire to contribute to the 520 development via tolls. I'm sure i'm not the only one in this boat.

**From:** Wei-i Li  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/10/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I must object strenuously to the idea of imposing a toll on Interstate 90 across Lake Washington -- to generate funds to pay for SR 520 Bridge Replacement Project.  
  
Tolling ought to be imposed on the users of 520 with variable tolling depending on the number of occupants/car and time of day as has been outlined.  
  
Any funds obtained through tolls must be used only to pay for capital construction on 520 Bridge and not for unrelated projects.  
  
520 tolling should be imposed beginning 2010.  
  
"Diversion to I-90" is an unproven concept. The impact of any diversion on the I-405 corridor in Bellevue needs to be addressed.

Do you really think it fair to impose an I-90 toll on ambulance and fire responders to Mercer Island? as well as off-Island employees such as teachers, Island business employees such as cooks and waiters and gardeners?

Sincerely,  
Wei-i Li, MD

**From:** Ed & Dawn Lee  
**Source:** Tolling web survey  
**Date:** 11/11/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I understand the need to raise funds for transportation projects and support that. I would support some level of tolling on I-90 if Mercer Island residents had a "stipend" that covered a reasonable portion of tolling costs per driver. The flaw in the assumptions for my family and others who live on Mercer Island is that we have "another" route we can take. The number of people who work and live on Mercer Island is very small; most people live here and work somewhere else. Many people (like my family) have two-income households where one person works in Seattle and one person works on the Eastside; this is why we chose to live on Mercer Island in the first place so that we would reduce commutes for both of us from our previous Seattle home. My husband and I use I-90 daily. Often on weekends, it is together. During the week, it is rare that we are able to commute together, but do so when circumstances allow. Public transit is difficult for my husband to use, as he is a banker and must visit clients around Seattle as part of his job. I would use public transit more if it didn't require 2 to 3 bus changes to get to Microsoft; the proposed light rail would be highly beneficial and would encourage me to use public transit a lot more. However, it seems the timing for that is likely later than when the 520 bridge and tolling options could be started.

**From:** Kim McFadden  
**Source:** Tolling web survey  
**Date:** 11/11/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I am not so opposed to tolling on I-90 providing the tolling is in one direction only. It is inappropriate to toll in both directions as this landlocks Mercer Island residents with no way to leave the island without paying a toll. Since we have to leave the island to do the majority of our errands, work, etc. it is an unfair burden to require us to pay every time we "leave our backyard." To assume we can afford it is also inappropriate, not everyone who lives on MI makes a lot of money. thank you

**From:** Andrea Kristof  
**Source:** Tolling web survey  
**Date:** 11/11/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Tolling on I-90 is an unfair burden to Mercer Island Residents and those who work on Mercer Island (but do not live there), as we have no choice but to use the I-90 bridge. If Tolling were to be considered on Mercer Island, then Island residents and workers should be exempt from the toll. Tolling on I-90 would also place an unfair burden on Mercer Island Employers who may attract fewer employees if a toll is required (or the employers would have to subsidize the employees by paying the toll in order to attract workers)

**From:** Erik Jansen  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/11/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:**

I recently had an idea that might be of interest. Using the same radio tag technology that one would use to "read" the vehicle as it speeds through a toll plaza, simply erect two "redundant" readers – one on the span east of the Island, one west span. It's simple: if a car goes through one but not the other (in a reasonable period of time), it is a MI destination traveler and logically either (1) a resident or (2) an island destination driver (visitor, shopper, worker, etc). In any case, one has clearly identified the target group for necessarily different treatment. Whether a deep discount or a no charge toll case, it is a self policing policy so long as tolls are read electronically, which they will have to be or the traffic congestion will be unacceptable.

Just an idea that may help administer the dispute. Now, its "merely" a political issue as to how much of a discount or other treatment to issue these cases.

**From:**

Gary Morishima

**Source:**

Tolling web survey

**Date:**

11/11/2008

**Zip Code:**

98040

**Comment:**

NO tolls on I-90 for residents of Mercer Island

**From:**

Matthew Adleberg

**Source:**

info@build520.org

**Date:**

11/11/2008

**Zip Code:**

98040

**Comment:**

Where is the information in regards to the ADVERSE effect tolling only 520 will have on the residents of Mercer Island, How are we expected to be able to go anywhere, anytime?

The results below find that traffic flow on 520 will increase once it is tolled, OBVIOUSLY, everybody will be on I-90 for CRYING OUT LOUD.

Again how are residents of Mercer Island supposed to be able to travel anywhere, I-90 will be eternal and forever gridlock.

The way you folks continue to ignore these questions is frankly STUNNING.

Thanks,

MLA

**From:**

Denise Joffe

**Organization:**

No Toll on I-90

**Source:**

Fall 2008 OH Comment Form

**Date:**

11/12/2008

**Zip Code:**

98040

**Comment:**

Unfair burden on Mercer Island (MI) residents who won't benefit. Why not tax the Alaskan Viaduct, I5. Spread the burden. You come to MI because you think we have money like Willie Sutton "because that's where the money is." We live on an Island that is not self sufficient. We must leave for almost everything, there is no alternative route. As a working mother of 3 children I can make 15 trips/day. You will rob us. Variable tolling discriminates against those of us with jobs, businesses, schools etc. that operate during the day. We have no choice. We have to show up for work on time. Tolls will desimate lower wage jobs on Mercer Island. Businesses will have to somehow offer extra compensation and that will be an unfair burden on them. etc. I simply don't understand why the drivers on the I90 bridge are responsible for funding 520 any more than those in Puyallup of anywhere else.

**From:**

Randy Ottinger

**Source:**

Fall 2008 OH Comment Form

**Date:**

11/12/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** I would like to see the impact of exempting Mercer Island residents from I-90 tolls on the impact to revenue.

**From:** Jenny Selby

**Source:** Fall 2008 OH Comment Form

**Date:** 11/12/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** I am willing to pay my share of road improvement with tolls. However, my concern lies with the impact tolls will have on Mercer Island commerce and services. Lots of our teachers come off island, lots (all?) of our service repair people come from off-island, our shop keepers, our firemen, our policemen, etc. Tolling will impact most those who ensure the basic needs of us on Mercer Island.

Tolls will also cause us to pay double, once to use the bridge, second in higher fees for repairs, food, etc. give us a way to lessen this burden on others on whom we depend.

**From:** Carrie Wernick Newman

**Source:** Tolling web survey

**Date:** 11/13/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** I strongly believe (1) People living and/or working 20 or more hours per week on Mercer Island should be exempt from paying the toll on I-90 (either direction). People with the zip code of 98040 and off-island "full time" employees could get a special monitor for their car that would not deduct money across I-90. They would have to pay standard amounts for crossing the 520 bridge. Alternatively, (2) Not toll those using the HOV lanes, and allow Mercer Island residents and full time employees of Mercer Island use of the HOV lanes, much like it presently exists. This would also encourage carpooling. Primary reasons why: 1. Mercer Island residents seldom use the 520 bridge. I don't think residents should help to pay for 520 improvements by getting tolled on I-90, especially when it's the only means to get to/from one's home. 2. Most of our public servants (police, fire fighters, city workers, teachers ...) commute to the Island. I am afraid we may lose good employees who already can't afford to live on the Island. 3. Many residents go to Seattle &/or Bellevue on nearly a daily basis for basic needs: employment, medical appointments, children's extra-curricular activities... There is very little in terms of businesses here on the Island. This can be very costly in a single day. Please take my suggestions into consideration. Thank You, Carrie Wernick Newman

**From:** Eva Zemplyeni

**Organization:** No Toll on I-90

**Source:** Mail

**Date:** 11/14/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** Dear Chairman Drewel:

We are submitting over 2,100 additional signatures from Mercer Island residents on a petition against placing tolls on I-90. Combined with our previous 800+ signatures, your committee now has approximately 3,000 signatures expressing this point of view. I am also forwarding two letters that I requested from the Mercer Island City Clerk written by the Mercer Island School District Superintendent, Gary Plano. The letters contain important information about the negative impact of tolls on I-90 on our public school teachers/staff and school district. The letters were presented to the Mercer Island City Council, but I don't know if they were forwarded on to you, the [www.build520.org](http://www.build520.org) site, and to the 520 Tolling Implementation Committee members.

Mr. Plano states in his letter that over two-thirds of Mercer Island public school teachers/staff live off island, 53% of whom commute from Seattle and 47% come from the Eastside. Most of Mercer Island's new and younger teachers come from the Seattle. He also states that tolls on I-90 would be a serious impediment to their continued involvement in our schools, due to the high cost. What he doesn't say in his letters, but testified to before the Mercer Island city council, is that the school district cannot reimburse the teachers'

and staffs' toll expenses because the MISD is already at the top salary/levy level allowed by state law. Consequently, tolls on I-90 would come out of the MISD teachers'/staffs'/principals' own pockets.

While Mr. Plano's comments are directed toward the high cost to teachers/staff/school district personnel of ONLY ONE round-trip on I-90, the fact is that many of the teachers, principals, and staff employed by the MISD make MORE THAN ONE round trip on I-90 per school day to Mercer Island, since they come back again to Mercer Island in the late afternoon and evening to participate in various activities essential to and enriching of the academic, athletic, artistic, and social school environment. Community service projects directed by teachers and staffed by students would doubtlessly be affected since these require travel east or west. Off-island public school and private school students would be impacted as well.

To date we have not seen a scenario in any of the nine tolling choices which acknowledges or addresses the unique situation of Mercer Island residents, employees, students, and visitors in view of the fact that the Mercer

Island City Council voted unanimously to pass a resolution against tolls on travel to and from Mercer Island.

Thank you very much for your time.

Respectfully yours,  
Eva Zemplenyi,  
No Toll On I-90

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**From:** Patricia Wandell  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** No Tolling on I-90 Petition  
**Date:** 11/14/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I hope you will reconsider your plan to put a toll on I-90 bridge. With the cost of gasoline so high now, it would be the last straw from many families.

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**From:** Elizabeth Hardisty  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** No Tolling on I-90 Petition  
**Date:** 11/14/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** As a 38 year island resident I have loved and contributed to my home community. Now a single and senior citizen, I am learning to live on a strictly limited income - while watching my small saving 'melt' in the recent economic implosion. To pay an I-90 toll would be a bitter hardship or unsupported burden for those of us who, now aging, made our financial plans assuming no added transport cost! Please: NO TOLL!

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**From:** Beth Brennen  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/16/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** To Whom It May Concern:  
  
I am a long time resident of Mercer Island and I think tolling I-90 would have many negative consequences. First, I fear that it would do severe economic damage to the city of Seattle as people from the eastside would limit their trips into Seattle for shopping, theater, dinner, etc. Secondly, it is wrong to put tolls on a road that Mercer Island residents must use to leave or enter the Island. We have no choice. We must use I-90. Thirdly, tolling is a poor choice to pay for a highway. The toll booths are unattractive and slow down traffic plus there is a considerable cost to build and maintain the tolling stations.

**From:** Klaus & Thyrsa Jensen  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/16/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** My wife and I are long-time residents of Mercer Island (since 1980).

There is no hospital on Mercer Island, There is no Costco on Mercer Island. Our doctor is located in Seattle etc. etc. The only way we can travel to destinations like the above is by using I-90. There is no other alternative.

We are retirees living on fixed income - if you impose these tolls on us it will create a financial hardship on us and we will be forced to consider move to another city.

Mercer Island residents are unique in respect of having no choice - we have to use I-90 to travel on and off the island.

For the above reasons, we strongly oppose any tolls be imposed on residents of Mercer Island for any purpose whatsoever.

We originally paid our share in Federal Income taxes to pay for the construction of of the Interstate highway system, including I-90. It makes no more sense to impose a toll on the I-90 bridge than to impose a toll on for example I-5 to and from Olympia. In both cases you are charging for access to and from the federal Interstate Highway system. Is that even legal under federal law?

**From:** Klaus & Thyrsa Jensen  
**Source:** Tolling web survey  
**Date:** 11/16/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** My wife and I are long-time residents of Mercer Island (since 1980). There is no hospital on Mercer Island, There is no Costco on Mercer Island. Our doctor is located in Seattle etc. etc. The only way we can travel to destinations like the above is by using I-90. There is no other alternative. We are retirees living on fixed income - if you impose these tolls on us it will create a financial hardship on us and we will be forced to consider move to another city. Mercer Island residents are unique in respect of having no choice - we have to use I-90 to travel on and off the island. For the above reasons, we strongly oppose any tolls be imposed on residents of Mercer Island for any purpose whatsoever. We originally paid our share in Federal Income taxes to pay for the construction of of the Interstate highway system, including I-90. It makes no more sense to impose a toll on the I-90 bridge than to impose a toll on for example I-5 to and from Olympia. In both cases you are charging for access to and from the federal Interstate Highway system. Is that even legal? Sincerely, Claus and Thyrsa Jensen Mercer Island

**From:** Ethan Batson  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/16/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Really and truly, any of the above tolling scenarios would be extremely detrimental to all Mercer Island residents. I understand the need for fundraising for the project, yet fail to see any of the above options taking Mercer Island into adequate consideration. Although I will most likely be gone from the Island before any tolling takes place, in order for any person to leave, in these scenarios, a toll would have to be paid. The cost of going to the mall would increase, the movies as well, Seattle as a whole (and parking in Seattle is already quite the large sum), residents going to work in Seattle or Bellevue would be affected greatly (paying a toll every day just to make a salary for them/their family?), and many people won't be able to afford these developments. Being one of them myself, I am most concerned for the teenage population: we already have little money, and with the current economic crisis most families are decreasing our budgets greatly. With tolls either direction, our experiences would be generally limited to MI purely for the financial reasons... and this community is already sheltered enough. Any more, and Mercer Island suddenly becomes a negative place to live.

**From:** Terry Donovan  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/16/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I LIVE ON MI I DO NOT WANT TO SEE A TOLL FOR ANYONE WHO LIVES ON THE ISLAND OR WORKS ON THE ISLAND.

**From:** Terry Donovan  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/16/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Mercer Island No Toll on I-90  
  
I self employed person and Mercer Island resident, I oppose any toll in either direction for anyone who lives on MI or has employment on MI.

**From:** Beverly Harris  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/16/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** We have already paid for the I90 bridge. How can you charge us again to cross a bridge that is paid for? Those of us living on Mercer Island would be doubly impacted by tolling I90 as we have to cross one way or the other for almost all services and shopping and work. It is not an option for us. We bought on Mercer Island because the bridge was there and paid for.....Think carefully about you ways to raise money.

**From:** N. Michael Hansen  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/16/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I oppose tolls on I-90. I am a retired lawyer on a modest government pension. I have lived on Mercer Island since buying my house in 1962. I spend three days each week, on average, as a volunteer on legal matters to non-profit organizations either east or west of the Island. The prospect of my having to pay tolls in order to get on and off the Island to volunteer my services to these organizations will result in my having to stop volunteering.  
In my opinion, it is not only unfair that Mercer Island residents would be the only people unable to escape paying for Redmond's new bridge by going around the Lake, but it will result on people like me being unable to continue to contribute to the larger community.

**From:** Denise Manner  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/16/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** To Whom It May Concern,  
  
We have several objections to placing tolls on I-90 to pay for projects elsewhere, such as the proposed 520 bridge.

First, it places a burden on those who live and work on Mercer Island to pay, although we do not, and will not, directly benefit. For example, proponents of placing taxes or tolls on I-90 travel cite the purported benefit of avoiding an increase in traffic on I-90 if only 520 is tolled; however, the Tolling Committee itself indicates that this increase will be minimal at best. Unless the Legislature and Tolling Committee plan to place tolls on every highway, such as I-5, the Alaskan Way Viaduct, the West Seattle Bridge, Route 2, Route 522, and route 167, then this is simply a money grab in the tradition of Willie Sutton, "because that's where the money is." This is a serious issue of fairness and equity: we are no closer to 520 than those using these other highways!

Second, those who live and work on Mercer Island will be unfairly singled out, since we have no alternative routes. Unless we swim or walk across Lake Washington, or travel at unusual times, we will be forced to pay the highest possible fees, with these fees being levied repeatedly over the course of a given day. For example, a family with two parents working off-island, with children attending school or extra-curricular activities, could travel to and from Mercer Island up to 10 times/day. With proposed rates of up to \$5/crossing, this would easily become a confiscatory level of taxation.

Third, Mercer Island residents have already been specifically targeted for reduced access to I-90 as the result of planned modifications to HOV and central lane use, through the decision to pursue Alternative R-8A with high capacity transit taking over the central lane segments of I-90. Simply assuming that theoretical provision of "additional transit facilities and services such as additional bus service, parking available for Mercer Island residents, and other measures" will be an acceptable alternative is unrealistic, and does not coincide with how real people and real families live.

Fourth, the Tolling Committee has clearly accepted the concept of Variable Tolling. To quote the Tolling Committee, "People who choose to travel during the busiest times would pay more and those who travel when there is less traffic would pay less."

Although this may seem attractive to government planners, the unemployed, those without children, or those with the ability to choose their own hours, the fact remains that the vast majority of citizens have little choice in terms of work hours. Schools, for example, will not suddenly change to late night hours; nor will hospitals, stores, or financial institutions. Thus, the burden will fall most heavily on workers, parents, and those in service professions.

Last, despite the cheery assertion by the Tolling Committee that "The legislature will determine whether tolls are removed when the bonds for the facility are paid off or whether some level of tolls remain to pay for operations and maintenance and repair of the bridge," it is a sad but true fact that tolls and taxes, once placed, are almost never lifted. Thus, this toll becomes yet another permanent tax.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

**From:** Julie Gardner

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/16/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** I am a Mercer Island resident. I work in Seattle and take advantage of the North End Park and Ride to commute daily to Seattle back and forth by bus. I think it is important that everyone contribute to our roads improvement plan and believe that all of us should pay something to subsidize construction of highways and other infrastructure. However, I do not believe that residents of Mercer Island, who have no recourse except I-90 to leave or enter the Island, should have to pay a full rate toll to access the Island. I think that residents and nonresident commuters (who work on the Island) should be able to purchase discounted toll tickets. That would enable our teachers and civil servants an affordable commuting option, and would offer Island residents affordable access to off-Island amenities,

For Example: I have two children in high school. It has happened that I find out in the evening that school supplies are needed for a project due the next day. After checking at the local dime stores, I find that the supplies are sold out, and have to drive to Bellevue to an office supply store to obtain the needed goods. These trips are not "luxury trips" but are required for my children's education. Were I to need to access emergency health care, I would have no recourse but to drive to Seattle or Bellevue to the emergency room. As Island residents, we should not be penalized because we live at some distance from vital commercial centers. Please offer us a practical (and workable) alternative to a straight toll.

**From:** Jeffrey Frankel

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/16/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** How did I-90 get into this discussion? If citizens want to avoid a toll on 520. they can get around it and should have that option, but if you live or work on MI you would pay between 5-10 after tax dollars per work day. The introduction stated that the people who use the bridge should pay, not the people who use another bridge(I90). It is too bad you need to resort to this line of thinking. You would not want to pay a toll to get drive to your house. I90 is our only road.

**From:** Lonnie Rosenwald

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/17/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** There should be exceptions or discounts for non-residents working on Mercer island. One problem with the lower night rate is teenagers will be more inclined to drive later at night.

**From:** Jim Whitehead

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/17/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** 1. Tolling makes sense for all congested roads - I5, I405, SR520, I90, SR99, SR522, and others 2. In coordination with both road tolling and ST phase 2 development, transit fares should be increased. General sales tax is OK as a PART of transit development funding, but the drivers and riders who directly benefit should pay a (larger) share of the cost.

Best regards,

Jim Whitehead  
Mercer Island

**From:** Man Kim

**Organization:** No Toll on I-90

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/17/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** Dear Sirs,

I am writing to strongly oppose tolling I-90. Tolling to negatively impact all aspects of communities connected to I-90. This will especially impact businesses, teachers, students, and other workers who have to access I-90 to work, teach, study, and be involved in community activities.

**From:** Joe Smith

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/17/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** I do not support a toll on the I-90 bridge. Let those who use 520 pay for it. I foresee massive congestion if you toll any bridge. I believe tolling both will essentially cause gridlock at rush hours - it's bad now!!!!!!!

**From:** Rob MacAulay

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/17/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** I am a Mercer Island resident. I am writing to endorse tolling on I -90 if 520 has tolling, but to request that some accommodation be given to Mercer Island residents. It is grossly unfair to toll Mercer Islanders every time they leave the island, as the vast majority have no choice but to leave daily for work, shopping, college, hospital visits, movie theaters, cultural events, etc. No other group of citizens impacted by tolling is similarly situated, as all others have realistic options for the almost all services without crossing the lake. We have no realistic options but to leave the island.

In addition, our school teachers, police and fire fighters and other government employees won't be able to afford to work on MI if they have to pay tolls. If MI can't be entirely excluded from tolls, then its residents and visitors should get 2 free passes a day per adult (enough to make one round trip per day) at a minimum.

Thank you for your consideration.

**From:** Nancy Irwin

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/17/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** While I agree that 520 needs to be rebuilt, I do not agree with tolling I90. It would seem more equitable to wait until I90 needs replacement to toll Mercer Island.

Thank you for consideration of my viewpoint.

**From:** Carol Schapira

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/17/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** As a long term resident of Mercer Island, I use the bridge regularly for work, and take the bus about half the time. Because I-90 runs across the Island, I accept the traffic, noise, and pollution that is required for people who need to access Seattle or the Eastside as a given. I believe it is woefully unfair to impose tolls now (2010) when it is years before the 520 mess will be resolved. I hope you look at other options for those of us residents who have no other option than to use I-90.....

Thank you

**From:** Kathleen May

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/17/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** Committee for 520: We humbly beg you to not put tolls on the I-90 bridge for Mercer Island users. We have been through several years of broken windshields from construction debris and disruption during the construction of our bridge. Everyone else has an alternate route to use to get to Seattle or the Eastside without using a bridge. We, on Mercer Island do not. Our only access is by the bridge or swim. A toll would also place a great financial burden on our school employees who live off the Island.

Also, It is not prudent to cut the original size of the 520 bridge. We do not want to have to go through this mess again in several more years. Our cities are still growing.

Please, listen to us. We have lived on Mercer Island for forty years. We are retired and hope to stay here. We already pay high taxes. Don't increase our taxes again by putting a toll on our survival bridge.

**From:** CS Claycomb  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** We have lived on Mercer Island for over 40 years. Due to necessities it is necessary to go off of the island, usually on a daily basis, mainly to the eastside. Sometimes multiple trips off the island on a daily basis are needed. Is the plan to require that each time an island resident leaves the island that a toll must be paid.  
  
This could result a very substantial amount if we are to maintain our life style of over forty years.

**From:** Rose Dembo  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Mercer Island residents should not have to pay tolls to access the only way on or off their Island. We should be issued stickers for our cars that permit us to use I-90 without paying tolls.

**From:** Leslie Magid  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** As a Mercer Island resident, I find it unconscionable that you are looking at tolling island residents each time they leave Mercer Island. Many residents have children in schools in Seattle, work in Seattle and require many basic services (like health care) off the Island. The scenarios you have described put a large penalty on Mercer Island residents who must travel across the bridge, often several times a day. There doesn't seem to be any acknowledgment that there are no alternative routes off Mercer Island.  
  
I implore you to design a solution/scenario where you acknowledge the unique constraints of Island residents and make the responsible accommodations. Your scenarios are incredibly insensitive to the realities Island residents face.  
Thank you!

**From:** John Kern  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** My name is John Kern and my family of 6, all of whom are all drivers, live at 7225 SE 29th Mercer island, WA. I am emailing you to express my STRONG opinion that subjecting Mercer Island residents to tolls on I-90 and would subject island residents and those critical persons employed by Mercer Island businesses/organizations (such as schools, police and fire) to toll costs that would be disproportionately high given our use of the I-90 as a result of our residence or employment.  
  
Residents should be exempted or offered a discount at a minimum, otherwise we could end up paying thousands of dollars more in tolls which would in all likelihood impair property values placing a further disproportionate burden on residents. I'm not categorically against a toll road but I am against unfairly burdening residents and employers/employees in one community.

**From:** Mark Li  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:**

If funds are required to build the 520 corridor then the users of the 520 bridge should bear that burden alone. Tolling the users of I-90, especially those on Mercer Island who have no other options, is unfair. I would support tolling on I-90 to build a new I-90 bridge, as it was done for the original bridge. Your own data has show that there is very little crossover between I-90 and 520 users. There are two distinct corridors. The law says that you should not tax another area to pay for a different area. At the meeting one representative stated that their is an idea that both bridges are one corridor; your data does not support that statement. Additionally, any tolling on I-90 would disproportionately burden Mercer Island residents as there is no other option to divert to a non-tolling route. Businesses, the MI school district as well as city employees all would be negatively impacted. This impact will make it harder for MI to support a thriving community with amenities .

**From:**

Don Sutkus

**Source:**

info@build520.org

**Date:**

11/17/2008

**Zip Code:**

98040

**Comment:**

I agree that the new 520 bridge will be an important component of the Puget Sound region's future transportation system and that the cost of the new bridge should be born by all drivers in the area (both those that use 520 and those that don't). It seems though that tolling I-90 to pay for a new 520 bridge is an arbitrary way to generate revenue from Puget Sound drivers who do not often use the 520 bridge. Why not put a toll on sections of I-405 and I-5 as well? These roads don't cross water like 520 does but they like I-90 are integral parts of Puget Sound's transportation system.

As a resident of Mercer Island I am also concerned about the financial penalty that would be imposed on my family by an I-90 toll. It is unfair to put a tax on someone for going to and from their place of residence and that is exactly what a toll on I-90 would be for Mercer Island residents. This 'tax' would affect our monthly budget as well as putting a drag on the value of our home.

My wife and I both want a world-class transportation system in this area. We are both willing to pay for this system but feel that ALL drivers in the region should be asked to contribute to the cause, regardless of where they live in the area.

If you have the resources, I would be interested in your response to the position I have outlined above.

Best Regards

**From:**

Milford Walker

**Organization:**

No Toll on I-90

**Source:**

Fall 2008 OH VC - Mercer Isl

**Date:**

11/17/2008

**Zip Code:**

98040

**Comment:**

I am a Mercer Island resident. I've had the pleasure of experiencing east coast turnpikes. They keep the speed up by having 12 toll booths across the roadway.

**From:**

Michelle Goldberg

**Organization:**

No Toll on I-90

**Source:**

Fall 2008 OH VC - Mercer Isl

**Date:**

11/17/2008

**Zip Code:**

98040

**Comment:**

How did you predict or forecast the changes in traffic and destination that you're using, and how congestion and speed will change? How are changes to a scenario handled procedurally? Has there been any examination of looking at an exemption or discount for Mercer Island residents? Not just for east channel, but for any crossing?

Will there be segment tolling on Mercer Island under these scenarios? Would segment tolling on 520 affect Mercer Island? Have you looked at a flat rate for Mercer Island residents who have to go on and off the island? In most of the promotional material, 520 is stressed. I-90 crossings need to be emphasized as well.

**From:** Kevin Scheid  
**Source:** Fall 2008 OH VC - Mercer Isl  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** One comment: I think there is a gaping hole when you look at the island, if you only look at commuting and people who use the bridge, and not the impact on the cost of living. Nothing is really produced here so the cost of goods coming to Mercer Island will go up. You've discounted that whole issue. Cost of living will go up. Another question: if you're setting a precedent where you're raising money for one bridge by taxing another area, why not spread that out? Why not toll I-5 going into Seattle? It would reduce the burden to all?

**From:** Judith Alexander  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** Fall 2008 OH VC - Mercer Isl  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I am a Mercer Island resident against tolls. We're paying for a bridge we're not using. I have a question on your survey: one question is tricky and I am afraid it will come out wrong. Question 1 on page 2 asks if I support using tolls to pay for the 520 bridge project, but it doesn't specify which bridge. It's not a clear question or a fair question. Can we cancel that question out?

**From:** Randy Ottinger  
**Source:** Fall 2008 OH Comment Form  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** We who live on Mercer Island chose this location because of the ease of access to Seattle and Bellevue. We have seen our real estate expenses and taxes rise greatly because of the attractiveness of the location. If I-90 were to be tolled it would lower the value of our location, and would like to see lower real estate taxes offset toll increases. Better would be not to toll I-90 because this truly is a problem that is localized to those who chose to live near I-90.

**From:** Margaret Li  
**Source:** Fall 2008 OH Comment Form  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I-90 should not have a toll for residents of Mercer Island.  
  
The committee should have studied how much revenue would be based on an I-90 toll. It does not appear to be a significant amount.  
  
We have no option to obtain many services except by leaving the island.  
  
Teachers, policemen, firemen, office and store workes must live off island. They will require an increase in saleries.

**From:** Betty & Jim Rauch  
**Source:** Fall 2008 OH Comment Form  
**Date:** 11/17/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:**

1. I90 is an Interstate Highway. How can it be "tolled"?
2. There are no hospitals on Mercer Island and not very many doctors.
3. Most of the people who work here - teachers, policemen, firemen, clerks, etc. do not live here.
4. Mercer Island is a suburb. We have no ferries as the San Juans etc.

**From:** Gary Plano

**Organization:** Mercer Island School District

**Source:** Mail

**Date:** 11/17/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** On behalf of over 435 employees of the Mercer Island School District who may be impacted financially, under the 520 Tolling Commission's currently proposed tolling scenarios, thank you for this opportunity to speak with you this evening.

The Mercer Island School District employs the best and brightest in the workforce in Washington State. While nearly one-third of our employees are Island residents, over two-thirds of our employees live off Island and would be impacted by the tolling scenarios. For example under the Department of Transportation's Scenario Number 3, an employee would pay \$5.85 per day (this is, \$2.60 in the morning and \$3.25 in the late afternoon) to travel to and from his/her place of employment. On an annual basis, the financial impact to a 183-day employee to travel to and from work would be \$1,071 and to those employees who work year-round the financial impact would be over \$1,500.

If the I-90 Bridge is tolled, especially in both directions, it means that our employees do not have another route available for their commute to work and are subject to extra fees. This hardship will certainly impact our ability to attract the best and brightest teachers and support staff to continue to deliver the high quality educational programs many on the Island deserve and expect.

Due to these unique circumstances, I support the Mercer Island City Council's Resolution being proposed, tonight, which includes:

- No tolls on I-90: Tolls must not be imposed on travel to and from Mercer Island on I-90, which provides the only means of public access to/from the Island.
- One toll-free segment: Tolling at a single location would provide the tolling ingress and egress from at least one direction. If and when tolling I-90 across Lake Washington is considered, at least one route to and from Mercer must remain un-tolled.

I thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on these important issues on behalf of the Mercer Island School Board and the employees of the Mercer Island School District.

Sincerely,  
Gary Plano, Ed.D  
Superintendent

**From:** Suzanne Davis

**Organization:** No Toll on I-90

**Source:** Fall 2008 OH VC - Mercer Isl

**Date:** 11/17/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** I've resided on Mercer Island for over 37 years. I am here to speak against the use of tolls on Mercer Island residents. Tolling would treat Mercer Island residents unfairly, as I-90 is the only means of access west or east for Islanders. Under the plan, Islanders would be tolled to come or leave the island on a roadway that is already paid for. I am unaware of any other community in the state that imposes a toll on residents where their means of access is already paid for. The closest example is residents of the San Juan and Vashon Islands. Residents there are dependent upon ferries. They pay tolls, but they do not include the cost of capital to build a ferry. The tolls there are not uniform, they vary throughout the system. For Islanders there is no relationship between the toll imposed and the benefits received. It would be as if Washington State Ferries asked residents of Vashon Island to subsidize those on San Juan Island. Finally, I

am a senior. 22% of citizens on the island are seniors. We are being asked to pay for tolls on a bridge that will be rarely used, when we are already paying high real estate taxes and other costs. This situation compounds the unfairness.

**From:** Steve Bryan  
**Source:** Fall 2008 OH VC - Mercer Isl  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I am a Mercer Island resident. Having lived through the I-90 rebuild, the 520 rebuild is a complete rebuild from I-5 to 405. Did the traffic model include all the construction work in the diversion analysis or was it just based on tolls? --- The computer analysis is inadequate if you're not evaluating construction (bridge and approaches) related diversion. In my mind this makes the numbers completely unrealistic. The other thing that has been brought up by the Mayor and Council, is that you should look at tolling I-90 traffic for only those who go all the way across the bridge. That way Islanders would not be tolled. That scenario should be looked at by the Legislature.

**From:** Steve Bryan  
**Source:** Fall 2008 OH Comment Form  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Make sure light rail is possible to add at a later date.  
  
Engineering should be included for rail expansion.

**From:** Randy Ottinger  
**Source:** Fall 2008 OH VC - Mercer Isl  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I am a resident of Mercer Island. I don't like the idea of tolls period. We've seen our real estate taxes go up dramatically. Would it be possible to look at some sort of assessment for people who utilize the 520 corridor. Looking at the presentation, it doesn't seem like Mercer Islanders use 520 at all. The issue is how you decide to charge those who have chosen to live near the bridge. Assess real estate taxes for those in the 520 corridor.

**From:** Minnie Clements  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** No Tolling on I-90 Petition  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** unknown  
**Comment:** I'm on social security and my family doctor is in Factoria. Don't give me a reason for not going to the doctor when I need, because of the lack of funds to pay the tolls. Please do not toll on I-90.

**From:** Lester Nordland  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** No Tolling on I-90 Petition  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** unknown

**Comment:** You might propose issuing free passes for all Mercer Island residents, so the (the State) could still charge toll for all other users (Eastsiders and Westsiders).

**From:** Jim Horn

**Organization:** Eastside Transportation Association

**Source:** Fall 2008 OH VC - Mercer Isl

**Date:** 11/17/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** Thanks for coming to Mercer Island again. I have five points to make:

- You made a point that when tolls are in place, speeds improve. Effective utilization of ramp meters would accomplish the same thing as tolling with no additional cost to the taxpayer.

- Tolling both bridges results in 5 – 10% of people choosing to go elsewhere. This could cause more division between the communities on the east and west sides of Lake Washington.

- You have nine scenarios and its interesting to note that only one conforms to existing state policies. When the Washington State Transportation Commission set the tolls on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge, they made everyone pay, including transit. Among these scenarios, only one tolls transit. Revenue would increase if you tolled transit. The people who enjoy the new HOV/transit lanes would pay nothing under these scenarios, and that's not fair.

- Why is this the only bridge that can't pay for its cost with tolls? Tacoma Narrows Bridge, the Hood Canal Bridge, the original I-90 bridge, the original 520 bridge were all were paid for with tolls just on one bridge. I think the new 520 bridge is not being built to meet demand, so you don't have enough cars to pay for the tolls. Capping capacity and including too much infrastructure as part of the project all result in not being able to raise enough money.

- Tolling I-90 results in a disproportionate share of islanders paying for the replacement of the 520 bridge. We understand that transportation projects cost money and we're willing to pay our share, but tolling I-90 results in a disproportionate amount of islanders paying for the 520 bridge.

**From:** Bob Blasich

**Source:** Fall 2008 OH Comment Form

**Date:** 11/17/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** 1. Please review an scenario evaluating funds generated without tolls from Mercer Island residences.

2. Please review a scenario with discounts to MI residences.

More work needed to provide equality.

**From:** Mary Nelp

**Source:** Fall 2008 OH Comment Form

**Date:** 11/17/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** I feel strongly that Mercer Island residents and those with regular Mercer Island destinations should receive special consideration for any tolling scenario on I-90. We are totally dependent on moving along I-90. To have to pay for each trip is a huge hardship. In addition to the toll on residents, it will have a major financial impact on Island businesses and services. Consider the labor, teachers, contractors, care providers and a myriad of other regular Mercer Island travellers who are not residents. We will have to pay for a plumber or a teacher to make these regular trips - or they will choose not to. The tolls will be a noose around our necks! While some payment for transit is warranted, there should be special considerations of the cost to Mercer Island residents.

**From:** Suzanne Skone  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** No Tolling on I-90 Petition  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Please note that the state ferry system subsidizes transportation to other islands. I'm for no tolling for Mercer Island residents or at least 1 free round trip daily - I'm willing to pay a toll after that. This can easily... [incomplete]

**From:** J.G. Elkington  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** No Tolling on I-90 Petition  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I cannot remember the last time I used SR 520 bridge in 33 years since we moved to Mercer Island. In addition, we previously lived in Newport Hills and, again, we never used SR520.

**From:** Richard Eichler  
**Source:** Fall 2008 OH Comment Form  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** As a long time retired resident of Mercer Island I am adamantly opposed to imposing tolls on I-90 to pay for a bridge we rarely if ever use. This is a case of taxing a captive audience who have no alternative to reach our medical facilities or major shopping and entertainment centers. It is wrong, unfair and exploiting a community that is "a sitting duck"!!

**From:** Eva Zemplenyi  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** Fall 2008 OH VC - Mercer Isl  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** We will be paying for half the cost of the 520 bridge and that won't just affect residents. People think this wealthy community can afford it, but 2/3 of the Mercer Island school district staff live off the island, as well as staff for the Jewish Community Center, the fire department, police department. We have to take that into consideration. Businesses here will have a harder time attracting employees if they have to pay \$1500 a year to get to work.

**From:** Wei-i Li  
**Source:** Fall 2008 OH Comment Form  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I am against tolling I-90!  
  
a) No evidence that significant (>10%) of 520 users will divert to I-90 with institution of 520 tolling.  
b) An I-90 toll penalizes workers who commute to Mercer Island businesses.  
c) Unfair tolls exacted on any and all first responders to Mercer Island from Bellevue and Seattle: firemen,

medics, etc.

d) Targets Mercer Island residents who work or attend schools and colleges off-island.

e) Unfairly exacts toll on a Federal Interstate road to pay for a state project (on tourists, truckers).

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**From:** Don Remppe  
**Source:** Fall 2008 OH Comment Form  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Being a Mercer Island resident and very seldom do I ever use 520 I do not feel that I should have to pay a toll for a facility I will not use.

In addition - for those who work but do not live on Mercer Island and will have to pay twice a day the rush hour fee that over a year's time it will be a significant dollar amount for them to bear.

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**From:** Jim Pearman  
**Organization:** City of Mercer Island  
**Source:** Fall 2008 OH VC - Mercer Isl  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** The City of Mercer Island appreciates the excellent work the Committee and its staff have done. It's enormously helpful to forecast the effects of nine different combinations of tolling rates and locations. Like you, Mercer Island is looking for the best way to fund the replacement of the 520 bridge, while maintaining the smoothest traffic flow to and from Seattle and the Eastside.

We know the Committee has received a great deal of input from citizens, businesses and elected officials, and quite a lot has come from us on Mercer Island. We've forwarded to you statements of our interests and a Resolution adopted by the City Council in early October. We understand you will be including our written input in your final report to the Legislature and the Governor in January. Some of my fellow Council members will also be speaking this evening on the points we want the Tolling Committee to consider. In addition, you may recall that our letter of Sept. 11 requested three analyses that would benefit from the Traffic Forecasting Model you are using to test your tolling scenarios.

- We're gratified that you created and tested a scenario that assumes tolls only on 520, at tolling rates that generate enough revenue to fill the funding gap projected by the Legislature. New Scenario #6 does indeed raise over \$1.5 billion with 520 tolls averaging \$2.36 in 2010 and \$2.92 in 2016. In this scenario, the impacts on I-90 are only very slight during peak hour travel. This is good news.
- We also suggested a scenario that includes tolling on I-5 and I-405 not only to generate revenue for the 520 project, but to address diversion across the I-90 bridge and around the lake to the north and south. We understand from your staff that such a scenario would have been outside the Committee's charter as laid out in House Bill 3096.
- Our third request was for the Committee to test what would happen if travel to and from Mercer Island is not tolled in each of the scenarios that impose tolls on I-90. We requested this analysis because our policy position - stated in our October Resolution is that "Tolls must not be imposed on travel to and from Mercer Island on I-90 ... " We feel it is our responsibility to know whether that policy position would have an adverse effect on funding for the 520 bridge project, and whether it would somehow negatively affect transportation within the corridor.

We understand that the Committee has not been able to include this variable in the scenarios tested so far. However, the answer is very important to Mercer Island.

I asked our City Manager if our own staff would be able to determine what the results would be at least regarding the revenue question - if travel to and from the Island is not tolled in the scenarios that assume tolls on I-90.

Although the City of Mercer Island doesn't have access to the PSRC model directly, our staff are conversant with how it works and have talked with your staff who operate the model. They estimate that of all the trips across the lake on I-90, about 20% are trips to or from Mercer Island.

Our staff believe that may be a little high, but because in order to generate a "worst case" estimate, we used the 20% figure.

When we calculated the amount of the tolls paid by 20% of the trips across I-90 in scenarios #3, #4, #8 and #9, and then removed that figure from your revenue projections, in every case the resulting funding for the 520 bridge project filled or exceeded the funding gap of \$1.5 to \$2 billion.

Admittedly, without actually using the model we can't be fully confident that our proposal still generates the needed funds. But every way we tested this, the result was just that - funding for the 520 bridge replacement comes in at the top of the range of the funding needed or, in one case, above that range.

We still would encourage the Committee to check our conclusion. We acknowledge it will take more of your staff time to do that. But we believe knowing the answer with certainty will strengthen your final report and provide useful information to the Legislature.

I want to leave the Committee with the position we took in our Resolution 1402: Even if I-90 must be tolled to reach the funding needed for 520, travel to and from Mercer Island should not and need not be tolled.

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**From:** Rivian Smith  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** Fall 2008 OH Comment Form  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:**

1. HOV lanes should be consistent. Why three people for 520?
2. Changing tolls at peak times is regressive and punitive. People have to work. It's like price gouging.
3. Why not capture the air space over existing roads to build mass transit or HOV lanes instead of consuming our natural resources and creating a concrete jungle with roads, support towers and other concrete structures.
4. If traffic congestion is a problem design a plan that forces us to use that option rather than designing options or creating choices that adds to the stress of people paying high tolls because mass transit is not convenient.

BE CREATIVE, BOLD AND 21ST CENTURY

CONCRETE, RUBBER AND PETROLEUM IS OLD STYLE

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**From:** Lisa Belden  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** Fall 2008 OH VC - Mercer Isl  
**Date:** 11/17/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:**

I have two questions. One, with regard to exempting from tolling, travel to and from Mercer Island -- I understand that the council in a letter on September 11th set forth that they wanted that scenario studied, and its my understanding that the committee only decided to study only one of the two that scenarios that the council asked you to look at.

My second question is that it seems like your materials are still saying that if tolls are applied to I-90 they would go for improvement on I-90, its my understanding that the only planned improvement on I-90 would be R8A, and that Paula Hammond and Joni Earl have agreed that ST would pay for the remainder of R8A if Prop 1 passed, which it did. What improvements would happen on I-90 if tolls were placed on I-90? If ST is now obligated to pay for R8A improvements, what additional improvement on I-90 would tolling pay for?

In summation it seems like people are against tolling on both bridges. In 2008, the Legislature passed Bill 1773. That law says that tolls on a facility can only go toward the management, operation and improvements of a facility. If there are no improvements left to pay for on I-90, where will that money go?

**From:** William H. Ellis  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/18/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** Last evening I attended the tolling meeting on Mercer Island. It became clear from the facts shown in the presentation that the concept of tolling both 520 and I-90 has nothing to do with speed of transit or diversion of traffic from 520 to I-90. The only issue is money!

It is equally obvious from the data that the so called corridor is a myth. The data clearly shows that people that travel 520 frequently seldom travel I-90 and people that use I-90 seldom travel 520. I can agree with that in my own case because I doubt that in the 21 years I have lived on Mercer Island that I have crossed the 520 bridge more than 10 times a year. Once again the corridor case is being fabricated as a method of getting people that use I-90 to pay for the 520 bridge.

It was also pointed out by Jim Horn that WA State law specifically states that tolls are to be collected only on the facility that they pay for. How simple is that concept!

Furthermore, it was also noted by one of the State personnel at the meeting that nowhere in the United States is tolling an interstate highway used to pay for a local facility.

There are all kinds of precedents being abused in this approach to paying for 520 and it is likely that if tolling I-90 becomes a part of the plan the 520 project will be held up for many years because of litigation.

And so far I haven't even mentioned the devastating financial burdens that will impact Mercer Island if tolling I-90 is permitted. Some examples of that are:

- Businesses that employ off island people will find it much more difficult to hire people or will have to pay considerably more to hire them. This will cause the residents of Mercer Island to pay more for services on Mercer Island.
- Mercer Island will have a more difficult time hiring teachers, firefighters, police officers or will have to pay more to hire them. Again the residents of Mercer Island will be taxed more to pay for them.
- Apartment owners on Mercer Island will be devastated because people will choose to live in either Seattle or Bellevue instead of Mercer Island. Again this will cause a financial burden to Mercer Island.

There are probably many other financial burdens caused by tolling that I haven't even considered.

Please note that other communities will not see the same impact as Mercer Island which means that Mercer Island residents are being discriminated against by State policy.

If precedents are going to be shattered by this unreasonable approach of paying for one facility by tolling another, then tolling I-5, I-405 and the highway 99 should be brought into the mix. Tolling those highways would accomplish the following:

- More revenue would be raised in a shorter period of time.
- The financial impact on Mercer Island would be mitigated because no matter where people went they would be paying tolls. Consequently, they might as well go to Mercer Island as always because the financial impact would not be any greater than going anywhere else on the highway system.
- Tolls could be less because the burden would be shared by a much larger number of toll payers.
- It would be much more difficult to avoid the tolls by choosing other roads.

Having said that don't be misled into thinking that I believe this is a good idea. It is certainly a better idea than tolling I-90 along with 520 but it is my opinion that tolls should only be collected on the facility to which they are being applied. This is how it has always been and that should not change.

If the State cannot figure out how to pay for a new 520 bridge with tolls on 520 alone then the facility should not be built or another source of funding should be worked out. Maybe the right idea is to determine how to upgrade and maintain the current 520 bridge and apply tolls to that bridge for those needed repairs and upgrades.

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**From:** Harvinder Chowdhary  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/18/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I am against TOLLS on I-90 in any shape or form.

**From:** Bingley's  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/18/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I tried to go to the meeting last night but there was no place to park so I left as did many others.  
  
Please be advised my family is VERY opposed to tolls on I90. We pay more fees and taxes in this state than my parents do in Ohio, my brother's family in Pennsylvania and my other brother's family in California. We pay enough to build gold plated bridges in this state. What are we doing wrong other states are doing right?  
  
You don't suppose our DOT will leave the hatches open and sink the bridge to get funding do you?

**From:** Shane McArthur  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/18/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** The I-90 Bridge (not mention it is an Interstate) is paid for. It doesn't make any sense to toll a paid for bridge. It will also cripple business located on MI. I am a Mercer Island resident who has no choice but use the bridge to get to work and to get home. My wife has no choice but to use it for Dr. appts etc. I would not have moved there if I knew tolling I-90 was an option.  
  
I am definitely for tolling 520 only. If it makes the I-90 bridge more crowded, so be it. Paying to drive on a paid for bridge is wrong.

**From:** Sue Harris  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/18/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I would like to register my disapproval re tolling on I-90 in either direction. I live on Mercer Island, work in Seattle, and frequently shop and have appointments on the Eastside. It is unfair to toll MI residents or people coming to/from MI, as we have no other options for getting to &/or leaving MI.

**From:** Michael Magnussen  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/18/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** What about those of us who live and/or work on Mercer Island? Is it fair to toll us? We have no alternate route than the I-90 bridge to get on and off the Island. It is easy for 520 travelers and residents in that area to propose tolling both bridges as a solution, but they can choose to travel other routes. If I-90 needs to be tolled, M.I. residents and workers should be exempt - PERIOD. We shouldn't be charged every time we want to leave our city. And I think that it is a bit unfair to nail South Bellevue and Issaquah/Snoqualmie commuters and residents with bridge taxes for a bridge that they rarely use. However, at least they can choose alternate routes. 520 users will be able to pay off their own bridge.

**From:** Michael Magnussen  
**Source:** Tolling web survey  
**Date:** 11/18/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** You need to clean up the 520 mess without punishing Mercer Island residents and employees who work over here. We have no alternate route besides the I-90 bridge. People in the 520 corridor can decide to use alternate routes. We can't. If you want to charge Bellevue, Issaquah and Seattle residents (among others) who don't stop on the Island to use the I-90 bridge, that is fine because they have other choices. A mere discount for us is an insult and not good enough.

**From:** Aradhna

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/18/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** I VOTE AGAINST TOLL FOR I-90.

There is no need to expand I-90 and there is no justification to impose toll on people living on Mercer Island to pay for expansion of 520 bridge. HENCE NO TOLL ON I-90 FOR MERCER ISLAND RESIDENTS PLEASE.

**From:** Gay Morris & Ben W. Wakefield

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/18/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** Please count us as objecting vehemently to the tolling of I-90 to help finance the 520 bridge repair. I-90 has been paid for with our tax dollars already and is an Interstate highway, which should make it exempt from tolling for local road improvement projects. Also, we are retired people and as such are on a fixed income. Tolling will be prohibitively expensive for us as we have medical problems and have to travel to the clinic frequently. We can work around the peak hour congestion, so it will not be a problem for us. Thanks.

**From:** Kris Massey

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/19/2008

**Zip Code:** unknown

**Comment:** If it matters, I vote for option 9, tolling both bridges in 2009.

**From:** Robert Kaplan

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/19/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** Mercer Island residents and workers, who are completely dependent on I90 bridge to get home or to work, should not be tolled the same way as commuters crossing the island for transit only.

Please consider this proposal:

- Use electronic tolling.
- Install sensors at the east and west terminuses of Mercer Island.
- Any vehicle that takes more than 1 hour to transit the island (or exit from the direction it entered) is not charged a toll -- it is obviously either a resident, a shopper, or someone working on Mercer Island.

This is a fair way to insure that those dependent on the I90 bridge for work or residence are not penalized; those using the bridge for commuting pay a commuter toll.

Thank you.

**From:** Robert Kaplan  
**Source:** Tolling web survey  
**Date:** 11/19/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Electronic tolling should be configured so that there are sensors at both the east and west ends of Mercer Island. Any vehicle that takes more than x minutes (e.g. 1 hour) to cross the island (or exit the same station that it entered) should not be charged a toll: the individual driving would either be a resident of MI or someone working or shopping in MI.

**From:** Marcia Crockett  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/19/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** My husband and I moved to Mercer Island 8 1/2 years ago. He works in Seattle; our doctors and dentist are all off of Mercer Island; any consultants of any kind are off of Mercer Island; our volunteer commitments are off of Mercer Island; our recreational activities are off of Mercer Island; any hospital necessities are off of Mercer Island. We moved here, to be centrally located, after our children were raised and educated. We were fully involved in the off island community in which we raised our family. Shortly we will face full retirement. The only reason we were able to justify moving to Mercer Island was because of the untolled access to and from the island on I-90.  
  
The people WHO LIVE HERE have no other way to access the greater community, with its daily and emergency necessities. From here we never use the I-90 bridge and do not feel that we should be forced to pay for its repairs and replacement. If you insist on tolling both bridges, the residents of Mercer Island should be totally exempt from paying the tolls. It is our ONLY access!!!! That is a terrible burden for all residents in 98040.

**From:** Allyson Gemmell  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/19/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** We are very much against tolling the I-90 bridge. As an Island resident we have no other way off the Island. A toll would be a real hardship on our children who attend school off-island.

**From:** Joe McNulty  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/19/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** For the 2010 and 2016 scenarios, what assumptions were used for the I-90 roadway? Specifically, are traffic volumes based on:  
  
(1) using the I-90 center roadway for light rail,  
  
(2) for two way bus traffic exclusively,  
  
(3) for a combination of one- or two-way bus and HOV traffic,

(4) for the current reversible configuration with the addition of one lane in each direction to the outside roadways?

Thanks

**From:** Denise Joffe  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/19/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Dear Mr. Olson,

We have several objections to placing tolls on I-90 to pay for projects elsewhere, such as the proposed 520 bridge.

Firstly, the idea that either bridge requires a user fee (or toll) is based on the assumption that only those that actually cross the bridge are using it. What about all the cargo and merchandise that travels to Seattle and the rest of WA state over the bridges and are consumed by all of its citizens? All citizens of WA state use the bridge either directly or indirectly and should be responsible for its cost. If the bridge cost is becoming obscene, then pare it down. We don't need to build a Audi if we can only afford a Toyota.

Secondly, it places a undue burden on those who live and work on Mercer Island (MI) to pay; although we do not, and will not, directly benefit. Where is the graph showing the disproportionate cost that we will incur because we are hostages on the island? Most of us leave the island at least once a day if not many more. We have no choice, we must leave Mercer Island for almost everything. In addition, as MI residents, we will end up having to pay for the bridge crossings of all our employees, whether they are babysitters, plumbers, garden workers, teachers etc through higher wages and prices. Therefore, our total cost will be more than just the number of crossings we make as individuals.

Third, the multiple graphs and studies that show reduced traffic and improved speeds with tolling assume there will be fewer cars but this is not likely to occur for those of us who have jobs and must get to and from work during peak hours. In any event, it might be worthwhile asking citizens if your slight projected improvements in these issues are worth the cost. Incidentally, it is obvious that you are reaching with all your purported benefits of this tolling. Clearly, you are looking for ways to convince us that this charge will benefit us.

Fourth, I attended a meeting on Mercer Island where the collection technique was described and I would be curious if it is legal to use electronic means to follow every car that crosses the bridge, either by transponder systems or by photographing the license plate of those cars without the device? On the east coast, toll stations are made available to those who do not want to be tracked. Have you investigated the legality of this intrusion?

Fifth, what is the cost of all these high tech collection techniques you plan on implementing? It would be far more cost effective to find other less laborious and equitable ways of raising money for this bridge that will be far more cost effective.

Finally, it was interesting to learn that the legality of this planned tolling is not even known since there is no precedent for the use of tolls collected on federal highways being used for the construction of other roads. Why are we spending large funds of our tax dollars to investigate this prior to determining its legality?

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

**From:** Jayne Spector  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/20/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** The proposed tolls for I90 would cause great hardship to those who live and work on Mercer Island. The citizens of Mercer Island cannot leave the island without using I90. I also do not understand the logic of tolling one bridge user to pay for another bridge. That makes no sense to me. This will hurt our community. Either increase transportation taxes for the entire area, or charge a higher toll on the 520 bridge.

If there is to be a toll for I90 bridge users then there should be a special pass for those who live or work on MI. You should be able to apply and purchase a pass for a nominal fee, for example \$20 a year.

**From:** Jayne Spector  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** Tolling web survey  
**Date:** 11/20/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** Do not toll I90. People on Mercer Island do not have any choice in what highway we take to leave the island. Tolling is an unfair option for those who live and work on Mercer Island. It will hurt our community.

**From:** Suzette Piper  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/20/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** I live on Mercer Island I am against any kind of tolling for I-90. We are in a unique situation as we have no alternative means of getting off of the island without using I-90. At least the users of 520, residents of Seattle and Bellevue have a choices. We do not. In addition, the majority of our school staff, emergency workers, etc. do not live on the Island and will be negatively impacted if they have to pay a toll to get to work.

Thank you

**From:** Andy Willett  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/21/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** It seems to me that, if it is decided to put a toll on both bridges, that there has to be some kind of special consideration given to Mercer Island residents. A toll on the 90 would potentially put the greatest financial burden on those who live or work on the island, yet we'd also be the ones to receive the least direct benefit amongst cross lake commuters from an improved 520. As a Seattle area citizen, I'm happy to contribute to the 520 via the gas tax. But a toll on the 90 would be simply unfair.

Give MI residents and those who work on MI an exemption to any tolls - similar to the policy in place today for use of the HOV lanes.

**From:** Kai Bottomley  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/21/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** 520 Tolling Committee-

I want to offer you my input on the proposal to require tolling on I-90. As a Mercer Island resident and business owner in Bellevue, I want to express my strong sentiment against this proposal.

As a resident of Mercer Island, we are required to go "off island" for many of our basic living purchases, many doctor appointments, etc. As a business owner in Bellevue, I travel to Seattle and other areas to meet with clients on a regular basis. Almost all of these trips are on I-90. I find it grossly unfair to even raise the idea that I could end up paying thousands in tolls each year for a bridge improvement that I do not use; particularly in this economy. I am not opposed to tolling areas; they seem to work well on the Narrows Bridge and the hot lanes of Hwy. 167. However, to toll drivers that do not use 520 to pay for this particular project is grossly unfair. I strongly urge you to not impose tolls on I-90 and to work at a more fair proposal that collects money from those who use 520.

Thank you.

**From:** Jim Pearman

**Organization:** City of Mercer Island

**Source:** Mail

**Date:** 11/21/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** Dear Bob:

Mercer Island citizens and the elected officials are resolute in their position that tolls must not be imposed on travel to and from their City. On Monday evening I spoke at the Tolling Committee's Open House here on the Island. I reported our staff's conclusion that if toll revenue attributable to travel to and from the Island is removed from the total tolling revenue in the "two-bridge" toll scenarios, the resulting revenue total fulfills the funding gap in all cases.

I want to reiterate that, without the full capability of the PSRC model, our calculations may not be considered as dependable as the Committee's modeling results. However, using the most conservative estimates and methods, every one of calculations yielded a revenue result above the median funding target of \$1.75 billion.

Obviously, Mercer Island would still appeal to the Tolling Committee to re-analyze Scenarios #3, #4, #8 and #9 removing tolls on travel to and from Mercer Island, as we requested on September 11, 2008 (letter attached). We are confident that the results will show revenues sufficient to fulfill the project funding needs estimated by the Legislature last spring.

If that is not possible given the Committee's timing constraints, as you indicated on Monday, we request that you give our contention a prominent place in your January report. We will be happy to discuss our assumptions, methods and calculations in greater detail with your Committee staff as they prepare the draft report. I am attaching a copy of my remarks from Monday evening, and I invite you to contact me or Linda Herzog to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,  
Jim Pearman, Mayor

**From:** Newell Wagner

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/21/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** 520 commuters are the primary beneficiaries and should be tolled whether they use 520 or I90 by neighborhood location on the toll ID cards. Advertise that information. The state has been over paid by the lofty tax assessments.

**From:** Jeff Lykken

**Source:** Tolling web survey

**Date:** 11/22/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98056  
**Comment:** The smartest thing to do with tolling money is to make sure an 8 lane bridge can be built in the near future. (Lake Pontones) Look at Route 16 bridge. In the begining it was to ba a 6 lane bridge. In the end they restriped it and made it an 8 lane bridge. With all the money being spent on tolls ect. Lets not build another I-405 in Renton a worthless 2 GOP lane and HOV mess. With growth management focusing on growth in the cities it only makes sense to invest in the bridge that we really need. By the time the current bridge is completed it will already be over capacity unless you toll the hell out of it. Jeff Lykken

**From:** Eva Zemplenyi  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/24/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Dear Bob,  
  
Again thank you for taking the time to meet with me. Here I am again, concerned about the inequity of being charged a a toll each time I leave MI. In that vein, I think that it would necessary for your committee to evaluate the scenario that the Mercer Island City Council proposed about leaving access to and from MI without a toll. I believe that the city evaluated that scenario on its own and found that it would raise an adequate amount of revenue. Correct me if I am wrong, but unless your committee officially evaluates that scenario, as it has nine others, the legislature will not even consider it. It will have no information about a possibility which would very much impact Mercer Island and which the Mercer Island City Council endorsed..  
  
Thank you and Happy Thanksgiving,  
Eva Zemplenyi  
No Toll on I-90

**From:** Suzanne Davis  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** Mail  
**Date:** 11/24/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Dear Governor Gregoire:  
  
On November 17, 2008, I attended an open house and public comment session on Mercer Island hosted by the Tolling Implementation Committee regarding the 520 Bridge. The Committee presented information on nine scenarios for the imposition of tolls to recover the capital costs for construction of the bridge and - apparently - to fund other transportation projects not directly related to the construction of the 520 Bridge. The Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) speakers at the open house said that tolls will provide the majority of funds for the construction of the 520 Bridge. The Seattle Times confirms that percentage in its November 21 edition.  
  
I contend that the use of tolls on both the 520 bridge, but particularly on the I-90 Bridge, will be counterproductive and wrong. A more fair approach would be one similar to that used for the funding of the Washington State Ferry System or a modification to the gas tax to allow a regional tax on vehicular fuel within King County or the regional geographical entity that benefits from the improvement to the 520 Bridge. Either approach spreads the costs to a wider tax base. It should be kept in mind that the I-90 corridor is the major east-west transportation route in Washington. It is separate and distinct from SR 520. The later is a state route that carries traffic between Seattle and Redmond and other communities on the East Side.  
  
Let me begin by pointing out that when I moved to Seattle area in 1970, I paid a toll on the current 520 Bridge of 35 cents until it was removed in approximately 1978. The toll was only imposed one-way for traffic headed into Seattle. Adjusted for inflation per the CPI index, that toll would be \$2.08 in January 2008 dollars. In contrast and based upon information handed out at the November 17 open house, WSDOT would impose tolls in both directions at an amount that is almost twice as high as the one-way inflation adjusted toll for the original bridge. For the paying user, the cost is four times as high if traveling in both directions. WSDOT did not explain why the capital costs of the current proposal should be four fold or more than the

inflation-adjusted cost of the original bridge. Thus, however the 520 Bridge is funded, it is incumbent upon you as governor and the Legislature to insist that every effort be made to keep costs to a minimum and that tolling continue only until the bonds issued for the construction of the bridge are paid off and the bonds redeemed.

The tolling process, as explained by WSDOT at the November 17 open house, has serious flaws. WSDOT speakers indicated that tolls would be electronically assessed and would not involve the receipt of cash. Vehicles would be electronically metered and those without the sensing device will have photographs taken that include their vehicle licenses. If WSDOT determines that the vehicle is within an undefined geographical area, it would send the owner a charge for the use of the bridge. This description of electronic tolling has a "Rube Goldberg" quality about it. Significantly, WSDOT has not installed such a system on the new Tacoma Narrows Bridge. Drivers can still pay cash. In determining the validity of this state-of-the art technique, one should keep in mind other highly touted high tech logistical efforts that failed such as the computerized baggage retrieval system at the Denver International Airport, an unmitigated failure that was ultimately abandoned after losses exceeding hundreds of million dollars.

Additionally, WSDOT is of the opinion that most residents in Seattle and the Eastside will not use other routes than the two bridges and will accept tolls. WSDOT representatives passed out spreadsheets in support, but the public has no information on how it derived the numbers therein on "diversion" of traffic. I question its estimate. In any event, the situation is ripe for the application of the doctrine of unintended consequences. WSDOT's tolling proposals provide a significant economic incentive not to use either bridge.

I want to address the situation of residents of Mercer Island where I have lived for many years. I-90 is the only means of access to and from the Island. Both the original Lacey V. Murrow Bridge and current I-90 Bridge (or Homer Hadley Bridge) have been paid for, the original bridge through tolls and the current bridge through Interstate Highway and other federal and state funds. For Mercer Islanders, I-90 tolling imposes a penalty tax for living there. It's also a penalty for anyone who has a business on the Island or works there. The exact amount of the penalty is uncertain. One group has estimated that each vehicle might pay \$1,500 per year to gain access to the Island. That figure was based on one round-trip toll of \$6 per day times 5 days times 50 weeks. Of course, if more than one family member works off-island, or if anyone else in the family ever goes off-island in a car, the penalty tax could easily end up at high multiples of the \$1,500 base figure. This added cost of living does not include indirect costs of high tolls on I-90, such as our having to also pay the tolls of people/businesses who drive to the island to deliver goods and services to our homes, schools, city government, and businesses; loss of market value of homes and businesses; and potential deterioration in the quality of Mercer Island's excellent schools.

As I pointed out in my statement to the WSDOT Tolling Committee, Mercer Island is unique. A possible comparable situation to Mercer Island residents are those who live or work on Vashon Island and the San Juan Islands. The only reasonable access for those island residents is service by the Washington State Ferry System. They pay tolls for use of the ferries, but that toll does not include any of the capital costs of the ferries and covers only eighty percent of the operating costs. Thus the State of Washington has decided to subsidize the residents of Vashon and the San Juan Islands while placing the burden of both capital and operating costs on the residents (and workers) on Mercer Island.

Even that comparison understates the burden placed on Mercer Islanders. First, residents on Vashon and the San Juans knew in advance that they would have to pay tolls of some sort before they chose to live or work there. They could take the cost of the tolls into their decision to live there. Mercer Islanders do not have such a choice. Second, one only need look at the Washington State Ferry tariffs to see that the State Ferry System charges different tolls for different runs. Presumably the Ferry System has a rational basis for calculating tolls based upon the operating cost of the run, and island residents pay accordingly. They are not paying a toll to subsidize the cost of a resident of another island on some other run - which is the situation here. WSDOT is asking Mercer Islanders to pay for access - which they have already paid for through tolls and taxes for a bridge which they will not use. WSDOT's proposal is unlike any other situation in the State of Washington. That it is unfair is an understatement. It should not be allowed.

I am a senior citizen, one of more than 18.7 percent living on Mercer Island. I frequently travel to Seattle by car for doctor and hospital appointments at Seattle's outstanding medical centers. As a children's librarian and retired from the Seattle Public Library, I continue to volunteer with storytimes at Morningsong Early Learning Center, a licensed child care program for homeless families. I also volunteer at the Washington Park Arboretum and The Mountaineers. I will have to consider seriously the continuation of my volunteer commitments if the tolls are imposed on the I-90 Bridge.

Thank you for considering my comments.

**From:** Dennis Hopkins  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/25/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** My name is Dennis Hopkins. I'm a 21 year resident of Mercer Island. I am against the options that include a toll on I-90. I can understand a toll on the bridge being replaced but adding a toll on I-90, which happens to go over an island, is another matter. For the residents who work off island to the west and those that work on the island coming from the west, there is realistically no other route to take (going east all the way around to Seattle would add about an hour's worth of pollution and clog that traffic jam further). Selecting an I-90 toll option forces a disproportionate cost on this relatively small group which seems very unfair. Other residents of the region have more commuting options than we do, so select a tolling option without I-90 please.

**From:** Denis Law

**Organization:** City of Renton

**Source:** Mail

**Date:** 11/25/2008

**Zip Code:** 98057

**Comment:** Subject: 520 Tolling Implementation - Input to Draft Report

Dear Committee Members:

We applaud your efforts thus far in evaluating tolling as a financing option for the 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project. The process has been a thorough and transparent evaluation of tolling alternatives, including broad and inclusive engagement by citizens and elected officials. This firm foundation ensures that an option which is affordable and within the means of our region, while considering the effects on our neighborhoods, quality of life, traffic and the environment, will be chosen.

As the committee moves closer to producing its draft report, our main concern -- as stated in our July 31, 2008 letter -- continues to be the negative effect the traffic diversion could have on our community. We were particularly concerned that Stage 2 of the I-405 funded work would be stalled. We cannot help but think that Secretary Hammond listened to our concerns at that time, and we are very pleased that the project is back online. However, City arterials remain a concern, especially if construction on I-405 forces some of the diversion traffic onto arterials. We are encouraged that this issue has been recognized in your two-part approach to diversion mitigation, with south I-405 identified as one of five areas where data and input indicate possible diversion effects.

We also appreciate the complexities of the transportation analysis you have completed to date and the myriad of variables that are considered in the nine tolling alternatives. We trust the draft report will consider the analysis and tolling information, plus focus on operation measures that are flexible and respond 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 draft report in January.

Sincerely,  
Denis Law  
Mayor

**From:** Lisa Belden

**Organization:** No Toll on I-90

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/26/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** Dear 520 Tolling Implementation Committee:

Given the severe negative impacts that tolls on I-90 would have on Mercer Island (its residents, schools, city government, businesses, property values, cost of living, quality of life), is it legal to toll I-90 without doing an Environmental Impact Statement?

The 520 Tolling Implementation Committee has FAILED TO STUDY the negative impacts of I-90 tolls on Mercer Island. It has failed to study what the city council of Mercer Island and its citizens have requested. Its public presentations have been totally devoid of any information about the negative impacts on Mercer Island. There is no community, city government, school district, public safety department, residents,

businesses so utterly and completely impacted by tolls on I-90 as Mercer Island, yet the Committee has failed to study the impacts, and failed to study exempting travel to and from Mercer Island from tolls in its "Tolling Choices".

Although the Tolling Committee's website states that the Committee is NOT making "recommendations" to the state legislature, I can not imagine a stronger recommendation than refusing to study the tolling option of exempting travel to and from Mercer Island, and refusing to put that tolling option forward to the state legislature as one of the "Tolling Choices".

**From:** James Aitken

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/26/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** I attended the open house that was held at the Jewish Community Center. You people are crazy to suggest that I-90 should be tolled to pay for new 520 Bridge.

1. It should be illegal that you can put a toll on a federal interstate highway in order to pay for improvements to a state highway corridor.

2. The impact on businesses on Mercer Island will be impacted as many of the employees come from off Island and will have to pay a toll or the business will have to increase salaries to compensate them.

3. Your plan to photograph the license plate of all the people that aren't in your database and then send them a bill is totally absurd.

4. Your experience with the Tacoma Narrows Bridge is a disaster....private company built the bridge and is now increasing the toll after a few years in operation....but now plans to raise the toll again in 4 months because with the economic bubble popping, fewer people than expected are using the bridge and they have the right to increase the toll because of this.....GIVE ME A BREAK!!!

The person that presented the info at the meeting on Mercer Island was a complete DUNDERHEAD!! Had the director of Transportation not been there to correct him a number of times the guy would have been tarred and feathered.

**From:** Gary Plano

**Organization:** Mercer Island School District

**Source:** Mail

**Date:** 11/26/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** Dear 520 Tolling Implementation Committee Members:

On behalf of over 435 employees of the Mercer Island School District who will be impacted financially under the 520 Tolling Commission's currently proposed tolling scenarios, I am taking this opportunity to speak for them on this very important issue.

The Mercer Island School District employs the best and brightest of the workforce in Washington State. While nearly one-third of our employees are Island residents, over two-thirds of our employees live off Island and would be impacted by the tolling scenarios. For example under the Department of Transportation's Scenario Number 3, an employee would pay \$5.85 per day (this is, \$2.60 in the morning and \$3.25 in the late afternoon) to travel to and from his/her place of employment. On an annual basis, the financial impact to a 183-day employee to travel to and from work would be \$1,071 and to those employees who work year-round, the financial impact would be over \$1,500.

If the I-90 Bridge is tolled, especially in both directions, it means that our employees do not have another route available for their commute to work and are subject to extra fees. This hardship will certainly impact our ability to attract the best and brightest teachers and support staff to continue to deliver the high quality educational programs many on the Island deserve and expect.

Approximately 53% of our employees commute eastbound and 47% use the westbound lanes of I-90. Additionally, many school programs travel westbound for athletics and activities; school budgets will be negatively impacted due to the additional costs that tolling would require. Here are just a few highlighted examples:

MISD school buses that take students to various off-island school related events ---- the Marching Band, music competitions, JV and Varsity sports teams (e.g., the highschool cross country team that likely takes three buses to meets due to the number of team members, football, soccer and basketball teams, swimming, water polo, gymnastics, volleyball, and tennis teams that travel off-island for their games/meets) will all result in increased costs to families and to the school district. Tolling will also impact elementary schools, the middle school and high school cultural events too.

Our buses are repaired off-island and those additional tolling costs will negatively impact our budget. The fuel we use in our vehicles arrives via I-90, as well as all of the books, teaching materials used at our schools, the school cafeteria milk, food, and drinks. All of our deliveries come via I-90 and would be tolled.

There will certainly be a negative impact on teachers/staff who come back to the island (another round-trip on I-90) to participate in late afternoon and/or evening school activities such as sports teams coaches, leaders of musical programs and productions (the Marching Band, Symphony, Wind Ensemble, Jazz Band, Choir, etc.) and other performing arts (plays, musicals, Steel Drum Band), not to mention teachers/staff involved in leading the school newspaper, debate teams, chess teams, school clubs, community service for students, tutoring, curriculum nights, fund-raising events, parent-teacher conferences, school festivals, PTA involvement, etc.

Tolling I-90 will certainly impact our ability to attract the best and brightest teachers and support staff in order to continue to deliver the high quality educational programs many on the Island expect and deserve. I thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on these important issues on behalf of the Mercer Island School Board and the employees of the Mercer Island School District.

Sincerely,  
Gary Plano, Ed.D.

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**From:** Judith Alexander  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/26/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Hello,

Obama has repeatedly said that his administration wants to help fund public works projects that will improve infrastructure such as roads and bridges to put people to work.

520 would be a project that will improve our infrastructure and building the bridge will put lots of people to work. If you can get at least some funding from the Obama administration to build 520, then you wouldn't need toll I-90. I am against tolling I-90, because it is unheard of and it doesn't make sense to make people on I-90 to pay a the new 520 bridge which they won't use.

So, please apply to Obama's administration early to ask for funding for the 520 bridge. Our Governor Christine Gregoire knows Obama, you should use her office to contact the new administration now to apply early for funds to build 520.

Also, let the legislature know before they make any decision whether or not toll I-90 to wait until you find out how much the new Obama administration would give the state to build 520.

So, let's get the ball rolling and get our Governor to contact the Obama administration early.

Thank you

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**From:** Lisa Belden  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/26/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Can you please give me the cite to the state legislature's policy/law that set up the Tolling Committee? I know you did that once, but I've misplaced it. Sorry.

As to your question about "who is saying the Committee is refusing to study an MI exemption" ---- I am and lots of other Mercer Island citizens who were present at the Nov. 17 Open House on Mercer Island --- the presentation put on by the 520 Tolling Committee.

The basis:

1) I specifically asked Bob Drewel (and you) when you were both present at the Eastside Transportation Association general membership meeting on August 26, 2008 at Unigard Insurance, where the topic and presentation by Bob and you and Charlie was on the 520 Tolling Implementation Committee and the first 4 tolling scenarios and study results, to include exempting Mercer Island traffic from tolls on I-90 in the Committee's studies/analyses. I complained also about the lack of timely outreach to the Mercer Island community about tolling I-90, and I complained about Mercer Island being included so late in the process that their input was made ineffective. You assured me at that meeting, that there was plenty of time for Mercer Islanders to get their input in and "in time for it to be effective" in terms of the Tolling Committee's tolling scenarios and "Tolling Choices". I got my input in on August 26, directly to you and Bob Drewel at that meeting.

2) The Tolling Implementation Committee was later asked by the MI city council, through Mayor Pearman's letter to the Tolling Committee dated Sept. 11, 2008, to study the MI exemption --- exempting travel to and from the Mercer Island.

3) The Committee was also asked to conduct this study by citizens of Mercer Island in emails, and at the Nov. 17 Open House put on by the Tolling Cmte.

4) David Hopkins, WSDOT staff, told me at the Nov.17 Open House that the Tolling Committee would not be studying the position.

5) At the Nov. 17 Open House, the Tolling Committee members present (Bob Drewel and Paula Hammond) confirmed that the tolling scenario put forth by the MI city council... travel to and from Mercer Island must be exempt from tolls ----- would not be studied in advance of the Committee making its report to the state legislature.

6) The Committee is not putting forth as a 10th "Tolling Choice" exempting travel to and from Mercer Island.

That amounts to a refusal by the Tolling Committee to study the tolling scenario.

Sincerely,

Lisa Belden

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**From:** William Frizzell  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/27/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** As a resident of Mercer Island I would like to voice my opposition to imposing a toll on I-90 in order to pay for a new 520 bridge. Because we live in a small community Mercer Island does not provide most basic services and consequently residents are forced to drive off island for these services. A toll on I-90 would impose an undue burden on island residents as only island residents would be forced to pay the toll every time they go shopping.

I hope the 520 Tolling Implementation Committee will look for ways of funding the new 520 bridge that do not impose penalties on specific communities.

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**From:** Gholam Sanii  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/28/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I HERE BY OPPOSE TOOLING FOR I-90 FOR MERCER ISLAND RESIDENCE. THANKS.

**From:** Jim Sepic  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/28/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Dear Committee:

My family and I are opposed to tolling I-90 both ways.

Unlike the other Puget Sound areas, Mercer Island does not have the infrastructure to support its needs (Retail, Medical, Government Services, etc). We are dependent on the Eastside for our basic needs. Consequently, frequent off island trips are required.

Mercer Island resident will significantly pay more in tolls than others. This is NOT FAIR and we should not be land locked.

Minimally we need free access to the Eastside.

Thanks

**From:** Lisa Belden  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/28/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Dear 520 Tolling Committee:

I am from Mercer Island. I am against the proposed tolling of the I-90 bridges.

The I-90 bridge has already been paid for. We should not have to pay a second time just to use it.

I have lived in Washington state for over 24 years. First on Vashon Island; then in downtown Seattle (First & Spring); and now on Mercer Island (for 16 years). During that 24 year time frame, I've only used the SR 520 bridge four or five times.

On the other hand, I and my family members use the I-90 bridges 6 to 20 times a day. We don't drive long distances. We just drive often to meet the necessities of an active family life with two children and two working parents. Our children played soccer and basketball, at both the premier club level and in high school. They each had practices off-island several days a week, at different locations, and games off-island almost every Saturday or Sunday. My daughter and son doubled up with Mercer Island basketball so they had even more off-island practices and games. Both were also long-distance runners, competing at the top state level. That meant more trips off-island to meets and for training. My daughter is now a senior at Stanford, and on its cross-country and track teams. My son is a freshman at UW, and looking into their crew program. Both attended Mercer Island public schools from kindergarten through 12th grade. They don't use the SR 520 bridge either.

Many island families are just like mine ---- two working parents with children and many off-island activities and needs. We go to sports and cultural activities on both sides of the lake. Our medical care is in Seattle. We shop in both Seattle and Bellevue. Our friends live on both sides of the lake. We don't want to have to pay a toll to go to dinner at their house, or for them to visit us. People who take care of our household needs (the plumber, electrician, carpet cleaner, roofer, window repair, the cable guy, our meter readers, the fence repair company, the painter, the pressure cleaner person, come from both sides of the lake. We go to Costco in Issaquah and in Seattle. We go to the art walk in Seattle. We are members of the Seattle Art Museum. We get our cars serviced in Bellevue. There is no car service available on Mercer Island, other than gas stations. Our kids go off island to see the world and enjoy both sides of the lake.

It is unfair and inequitable to impose tolls on a captive island to pay for the SR 520 bridge. We have only one way on and off the island.... I-90. It is unfair to single out a small segment of the traveling public to help pay for the new 520 bridge, a bridge we don't use. The 520 Tolling Implementation Committee's own studies and power point presentation at the MI Open House show that Mercer Islanders do not use the SR 520 bridge.

A new tax burden should not be onerous or have such disproportionate impact as tolls on I-90 would have on Mercer Island, unless travel to and from the island is exempt from tolls. Tolling I-90 would literally be

like drawing a circle/boundary around one small neighborhood and saying you can't get out of that circle, or back into it, without paying high tolls.

Why doesn't the state draw a similar circle around the Montlake neighborhood, or Capitol Hill or Laurelhurst or Madison Park or Queen Anne Hill; or around Magnolia, Rainier Valley or Beacon Hill, or West Seattle or Medina or Clyde Hill or Newcastle or Kenndale, and tell residents of ONE of those neighborhoods that they can't leave their neighborhood, and they can't get back home again, without paying high tolls.

Also tell them, that the state is only going to do that to one neighborhood, and that the tolls will be spent to build a bridge elsewhere, one they don't use.

We have to use I-90 many times a day, not just once a day as a way to get to/from work, but many times a day, to get to needed goods and services and activities. We don't have another road or ferry choice. We have to use I-90 many times a day to maintain a normal family lifestyle that other communities take for granted and can access without crossing the lake.

Almost all health care and dental care is located off-island. We don't have a hospital or even an urgent care facility on the island. We have few stores. The only "department" store on the island is RiteAid. There is no place to get cars serviced on island, except for a few gas stations. There is no place to buy clothes or shoes. There is only one small bookstore. There is no music store. There is no live entertainment outside of Middle School and High School productions. There are a few small restaurants. There is no movie theatre. We have one small library. We are dependent upon getting off the island on I-90 and have only one way to get back to our homes ---- I-90.

We can't get to the Cascades, the Olympics, to Puget Sound, Seattle, Bellevue, to the SEATAC airport, to professional sports games, to Seattle museums, to the Seattle Symphony, to plays, musicals, ballet at the Seattle Center or in downtown Seattle, to Costco, to hospitals that we have helped pay for, to UW (ditto), to the islands in Puget Sound, let along to our friends and relatives' houses, to our kids' sports practices and games and music lessons and recitals --- without traveling on I-90.

Tolling I-90 would amount to a confiscatory level of new taxes. It would not fall evenly. As a matter of fact, the 520 Tolling Implementation Committee's studies show that I-90 users would be contributing more to the financing of the SR-520 bridge than the actual users of the SR-520 bridge. The tolls would fall disproportionately on I-90 users, and on one captive island (Mercer Island).

Tolls on I-90 would hurt our public and private schools. Over 2/3's of the Mercer Island public school district teachers/staff live off-island. The School District cannot reimburse the teachers/staff for their tolls as the school district is already at the top levy limit allowed. Tolls would be an added out-of-pocket expense for our teachers/staff/principals.

All but one of our public safety personnel (police, ambulance, fire) live off-island. Our recycling, garbage and yard waste services comes from off-island, as do all utilities (electricity, water, natural gas, phone, cable). The people who collect those materials and who maintain and repair those utilities come from off-island. Are we to pay their tolls too?

All our food comes from off-island. All our electronics, plants, cookware, plates, utensils, flooring, furniture, roofing material, windows, house-building materials, paint, carpet, towels, light bulbs, hammers, nails, ovens, refrigerators, refrigerator magnets, computers, printers, printer ink, washing machines, furnaces, TV's, stereos, and medicines comes from off-island.

Literally, everything and every body has to get here by I-90. They come from both sides of the lake. Are we to pay for their tolls too?

In-home hospice care and elder care generally comes from the Seattle side of the lake.

We need un-tolled access to both the Seattle side of the lake and to the Bellevue side.

Tolls on I-90 will make it hard to sell our homes.

Families and individuals looking for a place to live would have to evaluate an unusual, added high cost of living, not present in Bellevue, Clyde Hill, Madison Park, Montlake, Capitol Hill, Laurelhurst, Newcastle, Kirkland, Redmond, Magnolia, or West Seattle. With a proposed round-trip toll of \$6.00 a day, Monday through Friday during the hours of 5AM to 9 AM and 3 PM to 7 PM, a family would spend a minimum of \$1500 per year if only one family member drove off-island once a day. If two parents work off-island and drive separately, the cost would rise to over \$3,000 a year. Mercer Island residents, however, do not just use the I-90 bridge to go to work. The I-90 bridges are our only access for every need and off-island activity- medical appointments, shopping, entertainment, student after-school activities, and everything else. The \$1500 a year baseline can easily be doubled, tripled or further multiplied, depending on the number of family members and family activities. This added expense would have to be considered by anyone thinking of buying a home on Mercer Island. Plus, they would have to consider how much it would cost for their relatives and friends to visit or come over for dinner. And they would have to consider the added cost that would be charged by schools, pre-schools, and persons delivering goods or services to their home, and the added cost of city government, with taxes piling upon taxes and tolls. Tolls on I-90 will reduce home values.

Tolling I-90 would place an unfair, onerous tax on people who drive short distances. Mercer Island residents may only drive 2 to 3 miles to get to work, or to places in Seattle or Bellevue, and yet we would get hit with high penalty tolls since the only way to get either place is on I-90. Meanwhile, people who do drive long distances will not have to pay toll taxes, much less multiples of tolls, even though they drive many more miles on the highway or road systems in the Puget Sound area. That is as long as they don't drive on I-90.

Tolling I-90 would place a disproportionate, unfair, and onerous share of the cost of the funding the 520 bridge on Mercer Island, while sparing those who drive more.

A much fairer way to fund the SR 520 is to reduce its cost; toll all users of the 520 bridge, including transit, pedestrians and bike riders along with vehicles that use SR 520; to get Sound Transit to pick up the cost of the transit improvements (the two additional transit/HOV lanes; the added expense of making the bridge ready for light rail; the expensive transit lids); to make the City of Seattle pay for the expensive interchanges it wants to meet the demands of its Montlake neighborhood; and seek more funds from the federal government with the expected economic stimulus funds.

If any remaining construction cost remains after that funding process, the cost should be spread as broadly as possible through an increased gas tax or local improvement district or local benefit district, and NOT by tolls on I-90.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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**From:** Mark Madden

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/28/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** Tolls on I-90 place an unfair burden on Mercer Island residents and businesses. I do not object to paying for transportation projects. I support transportation projects even though I do not use them because I believe in the existing transportation programs that provide for all of us. Tolls on I-90 pose a mandatory tax higher for people on Mercer Island than the users of SR-520 will pay.

Most users of SR 520 have options of using SR 520, Renton, Kenmore or I-90 to travel between east side and west side. Mercer Islanders do not have options. And, they need I-90 for almost any type of trip. I need I-90 to go to the Home Depot Store, Costco, Fred Meyer, any shopping center, taking care of my sick parents, and sometimes work (I usually take the bus). Tolls would require me to pay many times more than most people traveling between the east side and the west side. Additional costs may be paid for all services that come from off the Island.

Thank you for seeking input.

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**From:** Tom Snyder

**Organization:** No Toll on I-90

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/28/2008

**Zip Code:** 98040

**Comment:** Dear Sirs or Madams:

I am writing in strong protest against the plan to enforce tolling on the I-90 bridge. We on this island are totally dependent on the bridge, and would be forced to pay the toll sometimes several times per day. There are others, such as teachers and workers, who work on this island and do not earn high wages, but will be forced to pay a toll. Such a measure will place a very unfair burden on a select few so that the state can build a bridge which those who use I-90 will almost never use. In short, this is a highly unfair measure.

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**From:** Bryan Cairns

**Source:** info@build520.org

**Date:** 11/29/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I wish to take this opportunity to object to future tolls on I-90 for Mercer Island (MI) residents. There are many reasons most of which you will well know including;

- MI has no access to essential facilities without crossing the bridge.
- MI residents will pay a disproportionate price as they have to cross the bridge not only to commute to work but also for shopping, education, entertainment, and social activities. My wife and I may well cross the bridge 3 or more times a day.
- MI'ers in voting to support lite rail across the bridge accepted reduced auto access. Tolls would impose an added burden.
- The issue of tolling a federal highway for regional expenditure remains an issue. Etc., etc..

**From:** Lynn Lewicki  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** Tolling web survey  
**Date:** 11/29/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I strongly oppose tolls on I-90, especially for people who live and/or work on Mercer Island. Since people who live and/or work on Mercer Island have no alternate access to the Island, charging tolls would put an unreasonable financial burden on residents and workers. A toll for access to or egress from Mercer Island could result in workers choosing to work elsewhere, thus hampering the City's, the School District's, businesses' and residents' abilities to attract and keep qualified workers, who live off-island. Mercer Island is a small community, which does not have the full range of services (hospitals and other medical facilities, variety of stores, schools and colleges, athletic facilities, charitable organizations) located in Seattle, Bellevue, Issaquah and other surrounding communities. Unlike residents of other communities with alternate access routes, Island residents would be unduly burdened with paying tolls to leave and return to our homes, often on a daily basis, in order to continue to use these broader services. Why should residents of communities along the I-90 corridor be required to pay for the construction and operation of 520, when many/most may never or rarely use the 520 corridor? That the traffic on I-90 would be slower if only 520 is tolled is speculative. Also, in trying to justify tolling I-90, vague improvements to the I-90 bridges were mentioned, but not specified. "Improvements" to I-90 on Mercer Island appear to be on-going, and apparently are funded by the federal government since I-90 is part of the federal interstate system. Thank you for considering my comments in opposition to tolling I-90.

**From:** Catherine Eppel  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** No Tolling on I-90 Petition  
**Date:** 11/30/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I've live here since 1954 - now 54 years later - they want to "prison" us from access to the "outside."

**From:** Paulette Doulatshahi  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/30/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** My family is strongly opposed to tolling Mercer island residents, who rely on I-90 for access to their homes. Tolling would impose undue hardships upon Mercer Island residents.

**From:** Kristine Johansson  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/30/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** We are against having tolls on I-90...Most specifically tolls that would impact Mercer Island residents each time they needed to leave the Island.This would not only be costly, but will punish a population that has no alternative road to take to go to work/school functions/etc.  
  
Thanks.

**From:** Christian Belady  
**Organization:** No Toll on I-90  
**Source:** No Tolling on I-90 Petition  
**Date:** 11/30/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** However, as another option I'm ok with toll as long as MI residents are exempt.

**From:** Michael Boyd  
**Source:** Tolling web survey  
**Date:** 11/30/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I am opposed to tolling I-90. I am a resident of Mercer Island and consider this community's situation unique in that many essential services are not available on Mercer Island and require using the I-90 bridge whether we want to or not. I can't alter my transportation route to avoid tolls if they are placed on I-90 while residents in every other community will be able to do. I consider tolls on I-90 for Mercer Islanders as an unfair tax that should be shouldered instead by all citizens and drivers in Washington state.

**From:** Shirley Ellis  
**Source:** info@build520.org  
**Date:** 11/30/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** Comments for the 520 Tolling Implementation Committee:  

- 520 should be paid for by those who use it.  
If that can't be done, the project should be pared back until there is sufficient use to warrant the extent of the addition. Your study shows that users of the two bridges largely use one, not the other, the greatest percentage of time. It's certainly true for me.
- No tolls should be put on I-90 for payment of another bridge or facility.  
There is no state precedent for such an irresponsible action, and law suits are not what the state or cities need to spend their time or money on. There are better plans to consider. Even paring back would be better.
- No plan that tolls getting to & from Mercer Island must be implemented or tolerated.

Because of the necessity of islanders to go off island for normal business, shopping, professional help, medical facilities, recreation, volunteer work, etc frequently in the course of a day or week, they would be unfairly singled out and discriminated against. Not only would this enormously effect families directly, but would also add taxes because of city workers, delivery people, repair people, any service to the island, effecting the whole economy of the city. No other city—Bellevue, Renton, Redmond, not even Seattle would be unfairly treated like this and affected like this should tolls be added. Not one.

- Tolls are not necessary as the only regulator of traffic speed and flow. Traffic lights to enter a roadway have shown to be effective tools for equalizing traffic speeds.

Please add my comments for your consideration.

**From:** Marilyn Wellnitz  
**Source:** No Tolling on I-90 Petition  
**Date:** 11/30/2008  
**Zip Code:** 98040  
**Comment:** I own a preschool on MI. Tolling would be disastrous!