

520 Tolling Implementation Committee

For Immediate Release

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Conversation about tolling 520 begins next week

SEATTLE – The 520 Tolling Implementation Committee will hold its first meeting next week to begin a conversation with the public regarding tolling options and the best terms for users of the bridge, taxpayers and the adjacent communities. Tolls have been identified by the legislature as a way to help pay for a new 520 between Seattle and Bellevue.

The 520 floating bridge and other structures in the corridor such as the Portage Bay Bridge need to be replaced because they are vulnerable to earthquakes and wind storms. The proposed replacement plan will make traveling safer for drivers and move more people between Seattle and the east side of Lake Washington, on three lanes in each direction. One lane in each direction will be dedicated for carpools and buses.

The Washington state Legislature approved House Bill 3096 in May, which formed the tolling implementation committee and designated as its members:

- Bob Drewel, Executive Director, Puget Sound Regional Council
- Paula Hammond, Secretary, Washington State Department of Transportation
- Dick Ford, Chair, Washington State Transportation Commission

The first meeting of the committee will be held:

Tuesday, June 17, from 3 to 4:30 p.m.

Puget Sound Regional Council Board Room, 1011 Western Avenue, Suite 500, Seattle

The committee was created to evaluate tolling options for the 520, listen to feedback from those impacted by tolls, and submit a report to the governor and Legislature in January 2009. The committee will consult with local jurisdictions around Lake Washington and seek public input through open houses and surveys. A new Web site provides a way for the public to learn about tolling 520 and provide feedback. The site, www.build520.org, will be updated regularly as the committee conducts its work.

The committee is also directed to report on:

- how traffic will change when 520 is tolled and recommend mitigation measures for diverted traffic;
- advances in tolling and traffic technology; and,
- partnerships with the business community.

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