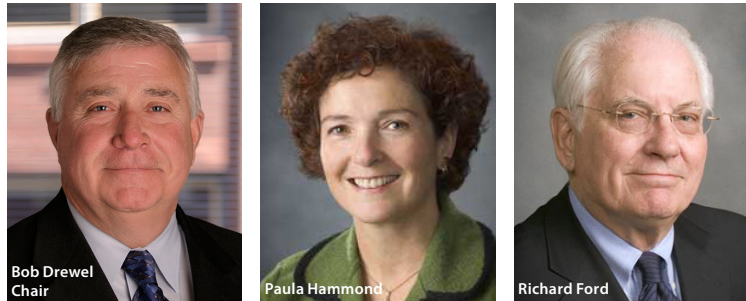


520 Tolling Implementation Committee

May 12, 2008



What is the 520 Tolling Implementation Committee?

The 520 Tolling Implementation Committee was created by an act of the state legislature in 2008. The Committee is composed of: Bob Drewel, Executive Director of the Puget Sound Regional Council, Washington Transportation Secretary Paula Hammond and Washington Transportation Commissioner Richard Ford.

The Committee is charged with evaluating tolling for financing the 520 Bridge Replacement Project, engaging citizens and regional leadership in the evaluation, enhancing understanding of tolling alternatives, and reporting to the Governor and the state legislature in January 2009.

The act recognizes that \$1.5 to \$2.0 billion in funding from toll revenue may be required to secure financing for the project. Different approaches to tolling have implications for state resources already secured for the project, toll payers, adjacent communities and the wider region.

The Committee's Approach

The Committee is approaching its task within a framework that will provide answers to a key question: How can funding be secured for the new 520 Bridge under the best terms for taxpayers, bridge users and adjacent communities?

The Committee anticipates a thorough and transparent evaluation of tolling alternatives and broad and inclusive engagement by citizens and regional leadership.

What is the Committee specifically charged with?

The act charges the Committee with:

- Evaluating the potential diversion of traffic from Highway 520 to other parts of the transportation system, including Highway 522, and other state highways (such as I-90 and I-405) and local roadways and recommending mitigation measures
- Evaluating advanced tolling technology
- Evaluating new applications of emerging technology to better manage traffic
- Exploring opportunities to partner with the business community to reduce congestion and financially contribute to the project
- Conferring with mayors and city councils of jurisdictions adjacent to Highway 520, Highway 522 and I-90

- Conducting public work sessions and open houses
- Providing a report to the governor and legislature by January 2009

The Committee is specifically charged with engaging citizens on the following topics:

- Funding a portion of the 520 replacement project with tolls on the existing bridge
- Funding the 520 replacement project and improvements on the I-90 Bridge with a toll paid by drivers on both bridges
- Providing incentives and choices for transit and carpooling
- Implementing variable tolling as a way to reduce congestion

What information is being generated to support this effort?

Staff at WSDOT and the Puget Sound Regional Council are already moving forward with traffic modeling that will inform the Committee's evaluation and outreach. This information will supplement that developed for the 520 Finance Plan transmitted to the legislature in January. One of the key additions is the concept of tolling I-90 in some form in addition to 520 to address diversion, funding and congestion issues. Information from the initial evaluation is hoped for in July and is expected to lay the foundation for evaluation and outreach.

What types of outreach is contemplated?

Engaging people with a direct interest in the future of the 520 is critical to providing the legislature and governor with information to develop a detailed funding plan for the corridor. The goal is to engage the public in a frank and open discussion of tolling and provide information to enable everyone with an interest to fully participate in the evaluation of different approaches to tolling. The Committee is also charged with conferring with leadership from adjacent jurisdictions and anticipates early interaction to determine the most workable approaches for Mayors and City Councils.

Approaches currently being considered include web-site information, public open houses, surveys, media outreach, and focused meetings with various stakeholders and user groups.

What is the schedule for the effort?

Over the next two months the data required to launch the evaluation will be developed. Committee members will be meeting with key stakeholders to understand their issues and concerns with respect to tolling and financing the bridge, impacts on state and local routes, and developing criteria to consider in evaluating alternatives.

Under the current timetable public engagement could begin in early summer.

Based on the initial rounds of outreach the Committee may ask that additional data be developed to respond to concerns and answer key questions raised. A second round of outreach would likely occur in the fall.