

Comprehensive Tolling Study

Part 2

Exploration of Potential Tolling Opportunities in Washington State

Presented to
Washington State Transportation Commission

By

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Comprehensive Tolling Study

“Tolling Study 1”: Eight Proposed Policies

 **Overall direction**

 **When to use tolling**

 **Use of toll revenue**

 **Setting toll rates**

 **Duration of toll collection**

 **State Toll Authority to set toll policy**

 **WSDOT to implement policy**

 **Toll collection systems**

2007 Legislative Direction

- **“Planning grade toll study based on recommended policies”**
- **Consider specific tolling options**
- **Specifically mentions of SR 520 Bridge and I-405 Managed Lanes**

Reasons to Consider Tolling in Washington

- **Growth**
- **Decreasing operational efficiency of existing transportation system**
- **Declining revenue for transportation**
- **Increasing costs to deliver and maintain transportation infrastructure**
- **Tacoma Narrows and SR 167 HOT lanes projects demonstrate tolling is viable in Washington**

Intricate Issues Considered

- Numerous projects in one corridor at the same time, e.g.,
 - I-405 and Lake Washington
- Numerous projects and proposals around the Puget Sound Region – relate to “equitably applied” policy
- Short term steps need to fit in long term vision
- Most projects involve tolling existing free facilities
- Use of toll revenue and duration of tolling
- “Pre-construction tolling”

Ongoing Public Awareness Efforts by WSDOT

- **\$935,000 Federal Grant to advance public awareness and acceptance of value pricing and associated operational toll concepts from a “users perspective”.**
 - **Communicate concept of pricing and how it can help manage traffic**
 - **Just getting underway**

Current Events in Tolling in Washington State

- **Second span of Tacoma Narrows open and tolled**
- **SR 167 HOT Lanes to open this spring**
- **Intense efforts to address funding of SR 520 Bridge**
 - **ESSB 6099 directed WSDOT to prepare a finance plan:**
 - **State funding, Federal funding, at least \$1B in regional contribution, and tolling**
 - **Proposition 1 was to have provided the regional contribution, but it failed**

SR 520 Bridge Finance Plan Options from WSDOT

- Five options, including pre-construction tolling options
- Raised policy questions:
 1. *Should a broader range of tolling scenarios be considered? Should we include tolls on I 90 as part of a system of cross-Lake Washington travel?*
 2. *What toll levels will the public accept?*
 3. *What is the appropriate tradeoff between revenues and traffic?*
 4. *Should all of the SR 520 toll revenues be dedicated to the SR 520 bridge project or should a portion of the revenue be used for other purposes?*

more....



SR 520 Bridge Finance Plan Options from WSDOT

- **WSDOT questions are similar to questions from Tolling Study 1**
- **Commission's view was:**
 - **For a more expansive view of tolling**
 - **Consider tolling in overall context of transportation system:**
 - **Revenue and system efficiency**
 - **Move away from project specific financing**
- **Commission's response:**
 - **Look at policy questions through the lens of 8 Tolling Study 1 policies**

Evaluation Criteria

Consistency with Policy 1

Overall Direction

● Short Term

- Accelerate implementation of high-cost/high-need projects.
- Use price differentials as appropriate to make most effective use of the system.
- Convert HOV lanes to tolled express lanes.

● Medium Term

- Consider potential for building additional capacity as tolled express lanes through more extensive study of long-term costs and benefits.
- Consider broader use of tolling to optimize system performance.

● Long Term

- Consider more extensive use of tolls.

Consistency with Policy 2

When to use tolling

- **Contribute to a significant portion of the cost of a project that cannot be funded solely with existing sources.**
- **Optimize system performance.**
- **Not have significant adverse impacts through diversion of traffic to other routes.**
- **“Be fairly and equitably applied” not suitable for individual project evaluation criteria**

Tolling Applications Evaluated

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Lake Washington Corridor

Tolling Application	Type	Objective
<i>Central Puget Sound Region</i>		
1. Lake Washington Corridor:		
1a. SR 520 Bridge Replacement Project	Toll Bridge	Revenue to build project.
1b. I-90/SR 520 Corridor Tolling	Toll SR 520 and I-90 corridors	Revenue to build project.
1c. Urban Partnership Agreement Proposal/Lake Washington Corridor Management Project (I-5 to I-405)	Toll SR 520 Corridor	Traffic management and revenue.
1d. I-90: I-5 to I-405	Convert planned R8A HOV to HOT	Traffic management.
1e. I-90: I-405 to Issaquah	Convert HOV to HOT lane	Traffic management.

- **Numerous proposals, all with merit**
- **Tolling SR 520 alone insufficient, tolling both breaks new ground**
- **Interesting opportunities for congestion pricing, including the UPA proposal**

I-5 Corridor – Central Puget Sound

Tolling Application	Type	Objective
2. I-5 Corridor – Central Puget Sound:		
2a. I-5 Pavement Reconstruction and Bottleneck Improvement Projects	Toll I-5: Tukwila to Northgate	Revenue to pay for improvement and traffic management.
2b. I-5 System HOV to HOT Lane Conversion	Convert HOV to HOT lanes	Traffic management.
2c. Westside Corridor	New freeway parallel to I-5	Revenue for a new freeway.
2d. Alaskan Way Viaduct	Several options : area toll or toll viaduct replacement	Revenue for highway infrastructure and/or traffic management and transit.

- **All options consistent with criteria**
- **Comprehensive decision approach to this corridor, together with Lake Washington and I-405/SR 167 is desirable.**

I-405/SR 167 Corridor HOV/Express Toll Lanes

Tolling Application	Type	Objective
3. I-405/SR 167 Corridor:		
3a. I-405 North	Express toll lanes	Traffic management and transit enhancement plus revenue for highway infrastructure.
3b. Eastside Express Toll Lanes: I-405/SR 167	Regional system of toll lanes	Traffic management and transit enhancement plus revenue for highway infrastructure.
3c. I-405/SR 167/SR 512 Express Lane Beltway	Regional system of toll lanes	Traffic management and transit enhancement plus revenue for highway infrastructure.

- **Numerous opportunities, all expensive and involve new lane construction and direct connections**
- **Question is whether pursuing express toll lanes makes sense if more extensive pricing is to be considered eventually**

Outside of Central Puget Sound Region

Outside of Central Puget Sound Region

4. I-5 in Lewis County	Toll I -5	Revenue for corridor improvements.
5. SR 395 North Spokane Corridor	Toll new corridor	Revenue for new corridor.
6. Columbia River Crossing	Toll bridge	Revenue to build bridge; potential for traffic management.
7. I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East and I -90 Snoqualmie Pass East – Hyak to Keechelus Dam	Toll I -90	Revenue for pass improvements.

- **I-5, CRC, I-90 Snoqualmie all meet criteria;**
- **SR 395 does not**

Tolling Applications Not Evaluated in this Report, but Potentially Appropriate for Future Consideration

Tolling Application	Type	Objective
Central Puget Sound Region		
1. U.S. 2 Corridor		
1a. U.S. 2 Trestle	Toll trestle	Revenue
1b. U.S. 2 Corridor	Toll Corridor	Revenue
2. Proposed New Puget Sound Limited Access Highways		
2a. SR 167 – Tacoma to Edgewood New Freeway Construction	Toll new freeway	Revenue
2b. SR 704 Cross Base Highway	Toll new highway corridor	Revenue
2c. SR 509 Freight Congestion Relief Project	Toll new highway corridor	Revenue
3. Regional System Tolling		
3a. Convert all Existing and Future Central Puget Sound HOV lanes to HOT lanes	System HOV to HOT conversion	Traffic management and revenue generation for project improvements .
3b. Toll all Central Puget Sound Freeways	Regional tolling	Revenue for improvements and traffic management .
3c. Toll all Central Puget Sound Freeways and Arterials	Regional tolling	Revenue for improvements and traffic management .
Outside of Central Puget Sound Region		
4. N. Wenatchee Columbia River Third Bridge Crossing	Toll Bridge	Revenue
5. I-5 Improvement Projects		
5a. I-5 Skagit County	Toll I-5	Revenue
5b. I-5 Whatcom County	Toll I-5	Revenue
6. SR 395 North Spokane Corridor	Toll new corridor	Revenue

Recommendations

A lot has happened since Tolling Study 1

- **Tacoma Narrows second span opened**
- **Increasing national discussion on tolling existing Interstate highways**
- **I-35W Bridge collapse in Minneapolis**
- **Federal government encouraging congestion pricing**
- **Regional Proposition 1 failed**
- **National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission encouraged tolling**

Eight policy statements are still as valid as ever

Guiding Principles

 **Consider system impacts**

 **Consider pre-construction tolling**

 **Pursue Federal waiver for I-90 tolling**

 **Duration of toll collection – tolling should not end when initial debt is paid**

 **Public awareness and acceptance – advance**

 **Effectively engage the private sector**

Illustrative phasing concepts

- **Projects/systems open or in progress:**
 - **Washington State Ferries (in operation)**
 - **Tacoma Narrows Bridge (recently opened)**
 - **SR 167 HOT lanes (Spring 2008)**
- **Short term opportunities**
- **Medium term opportunities**
- **Long term opportunities**

Short Term Opportunities

Within 10 years

- **SR 520 and I-90**
- **I-405 North Express Toll Lanes**
- **I-90 over Snoqualmie Pass**
- **I-5 in Lewis, Thurston, Cowlitz Counties**
- **I-405 Express Toll Lanes**

Medium-Term Opportunities

Within 20 years

- **Toll Columbia River Crossings**
- **Toll I-5 in Skagit and Whatcom Counties**

Long Term Opportunities

Beyond 20 years

- **Comprehensive tolling in Central Puget Sound by time of day, combined with active traffic management, increased transit service**
- **Comprehensive statewide tolling to replace the motor fuel tax**

Next Steps

-  **Further investigation into dollars and cents of pre-construction tolling**
-  **Evaluation of private sector to create more value for money**
-  **Investigation into how other parts of the country have addressed revenue distribution issues**
-  **More in-depth feasibility studies of particular projects not being studied by WSDOT or others**
-  **Further investigation into truck only toll lanes or other freight oriented projects, such as container fees**
-  **If Governor's Request Bill related to SR 520 is enacted, work w/ WSDOT to accelerate resolution of policy issues**

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