

# Washington State Transportation Commission **Tolling Report**

Patty Rubstello, P.E., WSDOT Assistant Secretary of Tolling

February 15, 2017

# AGENDA

- 2016 Annual Toll Report
- Toll Division Business Plan
- Toll Rate Sufficiency for FY 2018
- I-405 Express Toll Lanes 15-month update

# 2016 ANNUAL TOLL REPORT

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- Provides an overview of toll facility operations and performance, specifically how tolling facilities are meeting their financial obligations while providing faster, more reliable trips.
- Highlights improvements to our customer service operations that will help meet the rapidly growing demand.

**46.6 million**

toll transactions

**23.2 million** SR 520 Bridge

**14.8 million** Tacoma Narrows Bridge

**7.5 million** I-405 express toll lanes

**1.1 million** SR 167 HOT Lanes

**1 million** different vehicles  
used the I-405 express toll lanes

**\$161.3**

**million**

gross toll revenue

**\$78.2 million**

Tacoma Narrows Bridge

**\$69.4 million**

SR 520 Bridge

**\$12.3 million**

I-405 express toll lanes

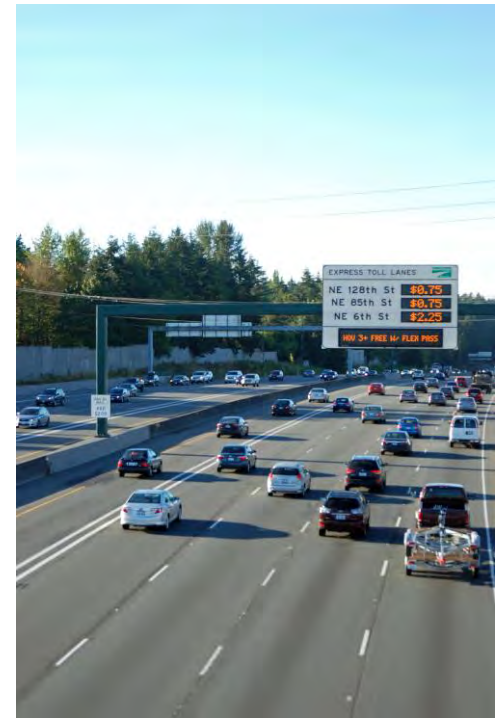
**\$1.4 million**

SR 167 HOT Lanes

# 2016 ANNUAL TOLL REPORT

## Tolling facilities are meeting their intended objectives:

- The Tacoma Narrows Bridge is on track to meet its financial obligations for debt payment.
- The SR 167 HOT lanes continue to reduce congestion and travel times for everyone commuting in the corridor.
- SR 520 users are seeing reliable travel times across Lake Washington on the new floating bridge while their toll dollars help pay for the new bridge's construction.
- During the first nine months of operation, the I-405 express toll lanes saw demand steadily increase with ramp-up occurring faster than anticipated.



# 2016 ANNUAL TOLL REPORT

## **Good To Go! Customer Service:**

- In July 2015, WSDOT introduced Customer's Program for Resolution
  - Makes it easier for customers to resolve a toll bill
  - Customers receive first-time forgiveness of late fees and penalties
  - \$2.6 million collected from unpaid tolls
- Since the launch of the I-405 express toll lanes, WSDOT has:
  - added capacity at the call center
  - reduced call wait times

**3** Customer Service Centers  
**143,000** visits



Bellevue: 64,000  
Gig Harbor: 59,000  
University District: 20,000



501,000 phone calls



3.7 million emails



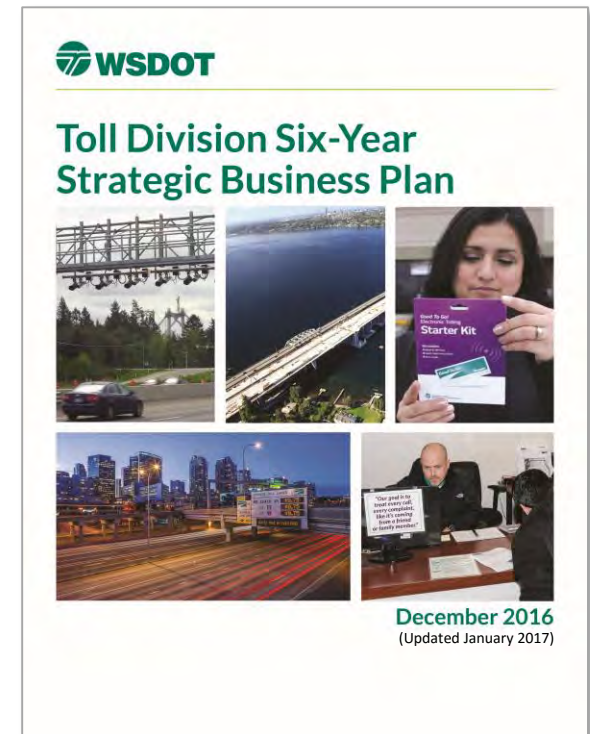
3.5 million pieces of mail

Source: WSDOT Toll Operations

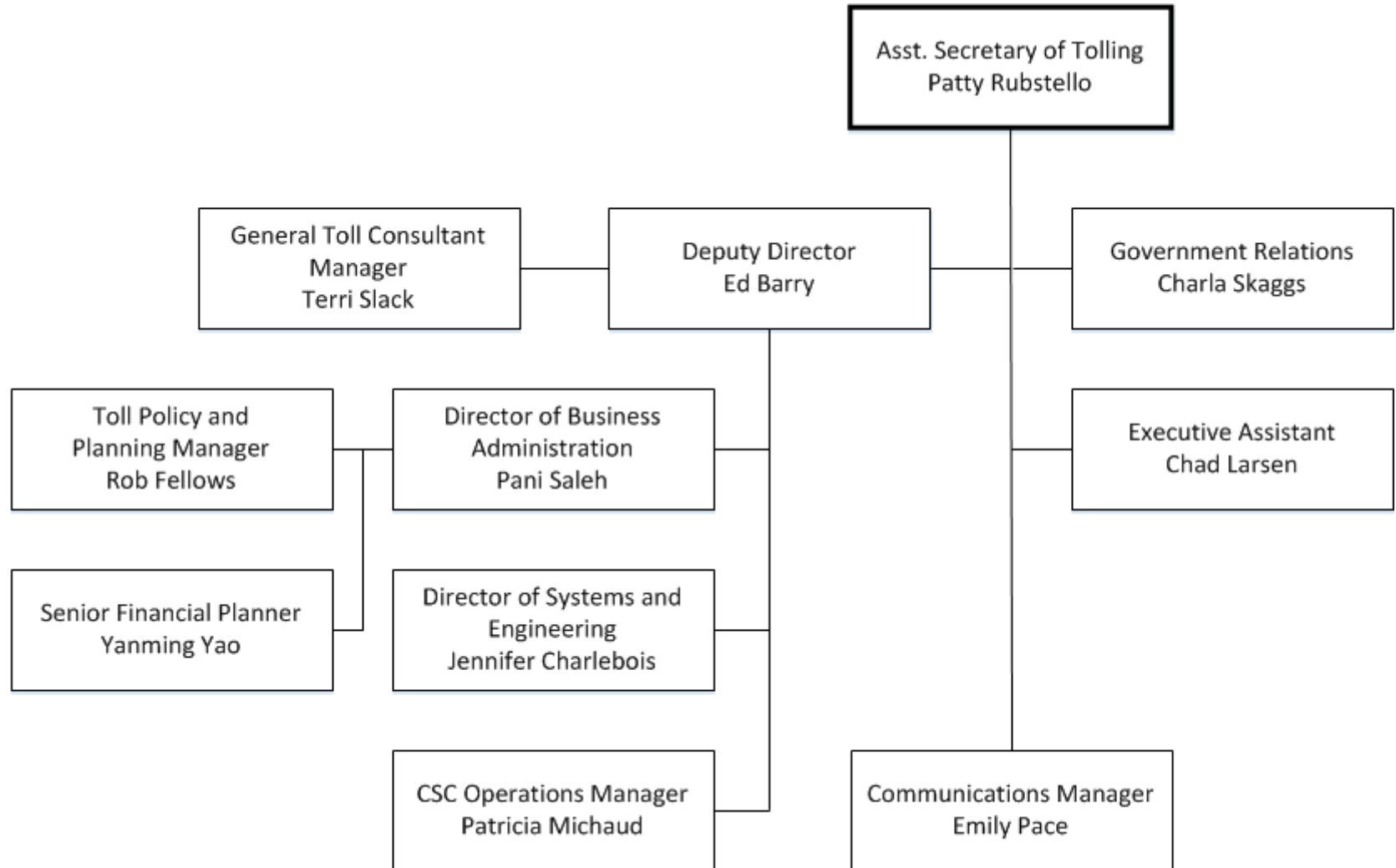
# TOLL DIVISION BUSINESS PLAN

# TOLL DIVISION BUSINESS PLAN

- **Purpose:**
  - Serve as a strategic planning tool for the Toll Division.
  - Help the policymakers and stakeholders external to the Toll Division understand the range of activities we are engaged in, the challenges we face, and the reasons we do what we do.
- **Three chapters:**
  - Description of Toll Division business activities
  - Goals, desired outcomes and work program
  - Challenges, opportunities and initiatives
- Future updates will include performance measures and capital replacement plan.



# TOLL DIVISION LEADERSHIP TEAM



# TOLL DIVISION BUSINESS PLAN

## Goals and Priority Outcomes:

- **Goal: High Quality Customer Service**
  - Provide customer driven services
  - Create a customer focused culture through continuous improvement
- **Goal: Outstanding Program Delivery**
  - Launch toll system projects successfully on schedule and within budget
  - Operate and maintain tolling systems and facilities
  - Provide responsible stewardship of financial plans and state resources
  - Develop and retain a high quality workforce
- **Goal: Proactive, Transparent Communication**
  - Increase public awareness and understanding of tolling
  - Increase awareness and participation in the *Good To Go!* program
  - Provide timely and responsive information and reports to partners, stakeholders, customers, the public and the media

## Challenges, Opportunities and Initiatives:

- **Procuring Toll Systems and Customer Service Vendor Contracts**  
Our most significant challenge is to replace our existing toll vendor contract which expires in 2018 with a new procurement that meets business needs and provides flexibility and state-of-the art capabilities.
- **Building Staff Capability and Retaining Talent**  
WSDOT as an agency is committed to improving salaries and career development opportunities.
- **Other Challenges, Contingencies and Opportunities**
  - Fostering alignment between multiple decision authorities
  - Achieving consistent and reliable service given changing requirements
  - Reliance on vendors to meet customer service goals
  - Tolling Interoperability
  - Changes in payment systems and vendor capabilities
  - Project schedules may change
  - Uncertainty about the future role of tolling

# TOLL DIVISION BUSINESS PLAN

## How we keep improving:

- **Lean Program**  
Promotes a culture of continuous improvement; provides methods and tools to review routine processes to add value and identify unnecessary steps.
- **Training Program**  
Supports WSDOT's commitment to employee development, emphasizing skill development, personal development, and professional development.
- **Program Management Organization**  
Oversees Toll Division's business operations and projects assessing status, trends, controls, risk governance, change management and Lean initiatives.
- **Peer to Peer Reviews**  
Conduct in-person workshops with peer professionals to promote industry learning and availability of expertise and experience of others.
- **Expert Review Panel**  
Provides ongoing independent guidance and information on industry trends and practices, currently focused on new toll system procurement.

# TOLL RATE SUFFICIENCY FOR FY 2018

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- **Traffic and revenue projections for FY 2017 Q2 are on track.**
  - For both the SR 520 and Tacoma Narrows bridges, the variance between forecast and actual transactions and revenue were less than 1 percent.
- **Tacoma Narrows Bridge rates are sufficient for FY 2018.**
  - No toll rate increase is required.
  - *Good To Go!* rates will remain at \$5, toll booths at \$6, and Pay By Mail at \$7.



# TOLL RATE SUFFICIENCY FOR FY 2018

- **SR 520 rates are barely sufficient.**

- The State Treasurer certified that toll rates are projected to be sufficient for the duration of future bond payments, though the margin is slight.
- Toll rates adopted in FY 2016 will raise FY 2018 rates by 5 percent and introduce overnight tolls.

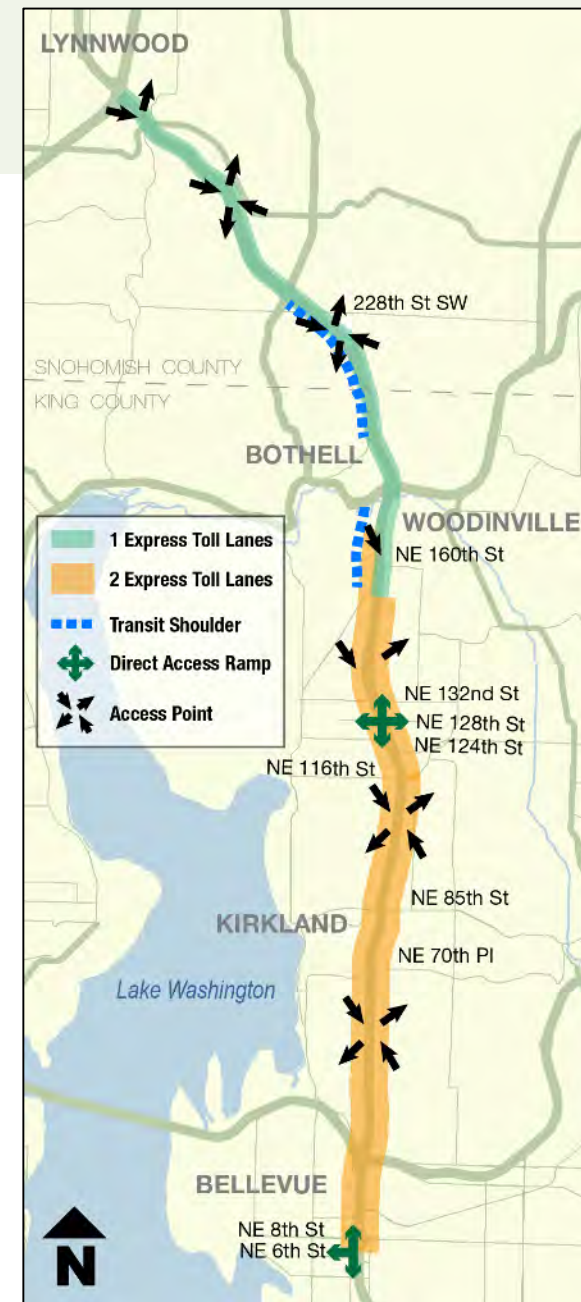
Monday – Friday Toll Rates	FY 2017 Good To Go! Pass	FY 2018 Good To Go! Pass	Weekend Toll Rates	FY 2017 Good To Go! Pass	FY 2018 Good To Go! Pass
11 pm to 5 am (overnight)	\$0.00	\$1.25	11 pm to 5 am (overnight)	\$0.00	\$1.25
5 am – 6 am	\$1.90	\$2.00	5 am – 8 am	\$1.30	\$1.40
6 am – 7 am	\$3.25	\$3.40	8 am – 11 am	\$1.95	\$2.05
7 am – 9 am (am peak)	\$4.10	\$4.30	11 am – 6 pm (midday peak)	\$2.50	\$2.65
9 am – 10 am	\$3.25	\$3.40	6 pm – 9 pm	\$1.95	\$2.05
10 am – 2 pm	\$2.55	\$2.70	9 pm – 11 pm	\$1.30	\$1.40
2 pm – 3 pm	\$3.25	\$3.40			
3 pm – 6 pm (pm peak)	\$4.10	\$4.30			
6 pm – 7 pm	\$3.25	\$3.40			
7 pm – 9 pm	\$2.55	\$2.70			
9 pm – 11 pm	\$1.90	\$2.00			

# I-405 EXPRESS TOLL LANES 15-MONTH UPDATE

# I-405 express toll lanes

## Quick facts

- **Opened Sept. 27, 2015**
- **17 miles of express toll lanes**
- **Operation hours: 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. Mon – Fri**
- **Toll Rates**
  - Minimum Toll Rate           \$ 0.75
  - Maximum Toll Rate           \$ 10.00
- **Carpool Policy**
  - 3+ carpools with Flex Pass exempt at all times
  - 2+ carpools exempt except 5-9 a.m. and 3-7 p.m. on weekdays



# I-405 express toll lanes

## 15-month highlights

### **Provide a choice for drivers**

Drivers made **18 million trips** in the first 15-months

### **Provide a faster and more predictable trip**

Express toll lanes drivers are saving **up to 5 minutes** over the previous HOV lanes

*Oct. 2014-Sept. 2015 vs. 2016 for the full corridor trip.*

### **Fund future corridor improvements**

Covering costs and funding the northbound general purpose **Peak-Use Shoulder Lane project.**

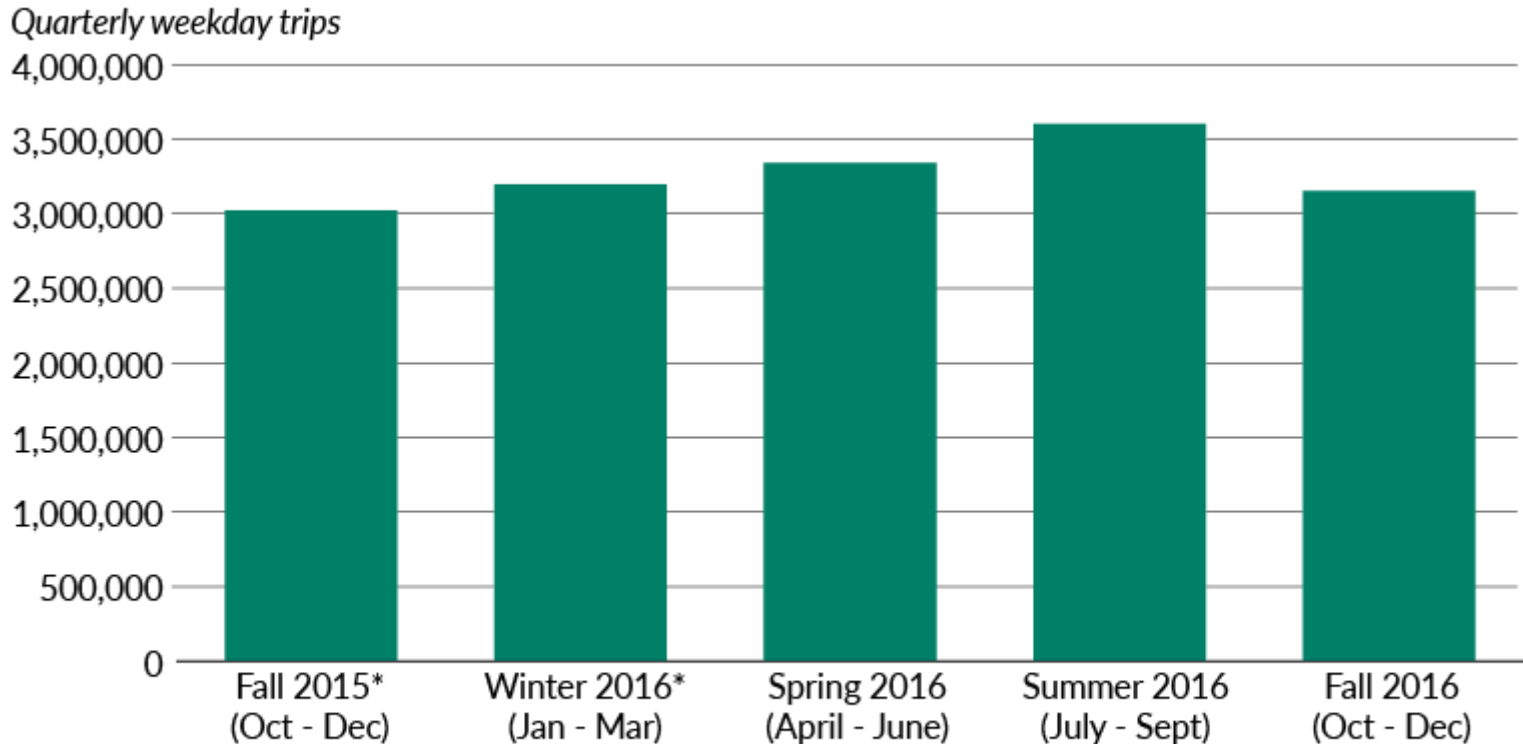
Despite often paying \$10 a trip commuting from Mukilteo to Kirkland... “I saved an hour a day, easily,” she said. “I’m a happy user.”  
– Sheri Clarke, I-405 driver

# What we're seeing:

Drivers made 18 million trips in the first 15 months

**Quarterly express toll lane trips remain above 3 million. The decline in fall 2016 is consistent with seasonal travel patterns.**

## Total weekday trips in the express toll lanes (Oct. 1, 2015 to Dec. 31, 2016)



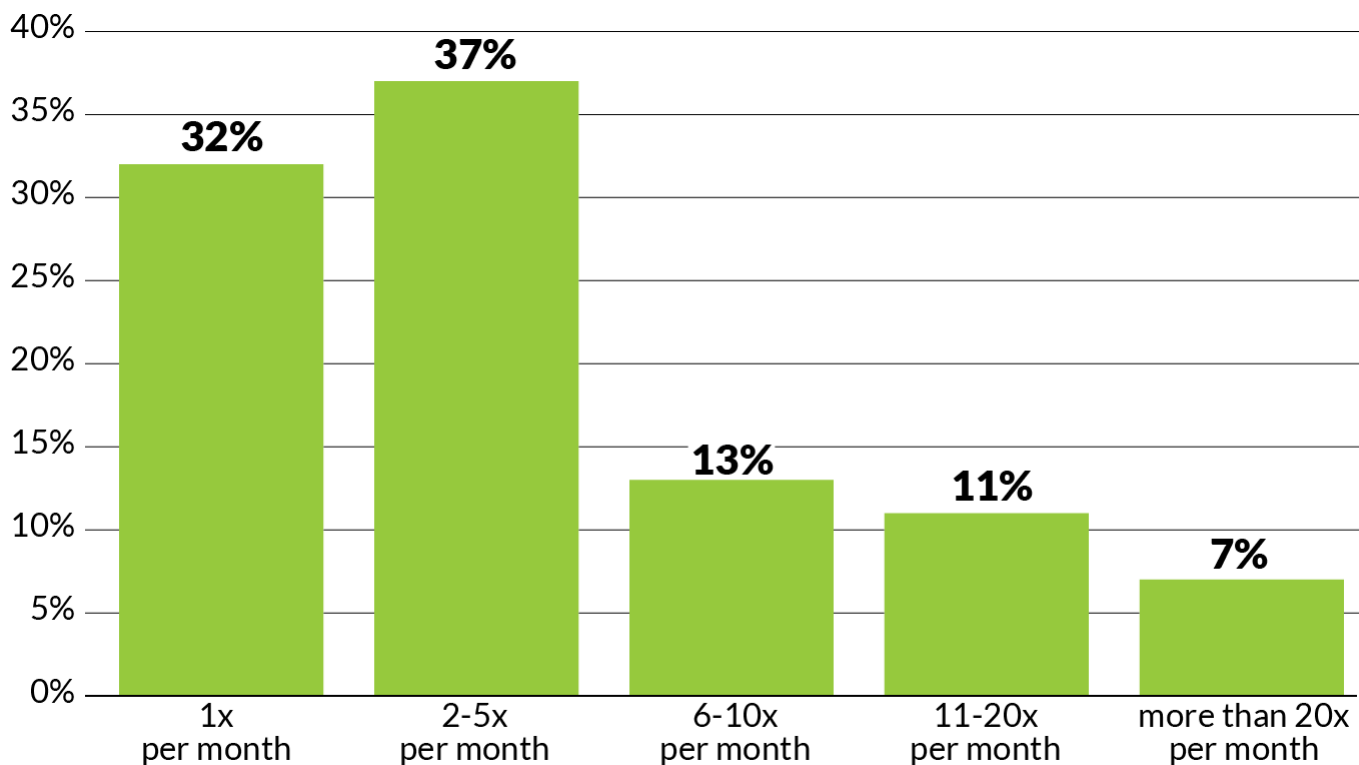
\*Note: Oct 1, 2015 to Mar 17, 2016 - includes all weekday trips (24hrs/day).  
Mar 18, 2016 to Dec 31, 2016 - includes weekday trips from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
No Weekends are included in this graph.

# What we're seeing:

Drivers use the lanes when they need them

## Average monthly express toll lane travel frequency for *Good To Go!* pass users

(Oct. 2015 – Dec. 2016)



*“Time is the only thing I'm never going to get back, so I'll pay a couple bucks to cut my commute in half.”*

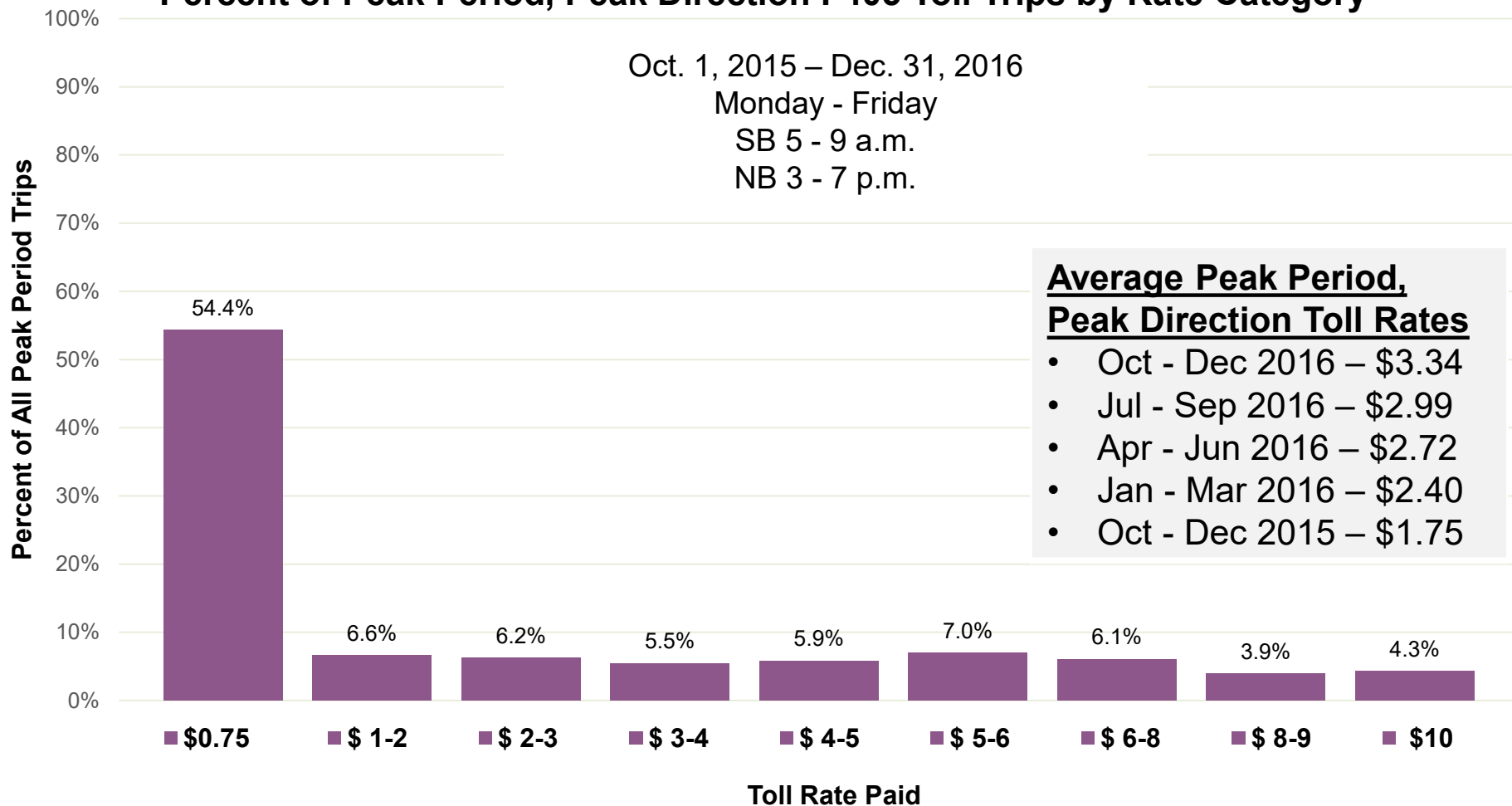
**– Jonah, I-405 driver**

Source: Unique *Good To Go!* passes on I-405  
Weekdays from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m.

# What we're seeing:

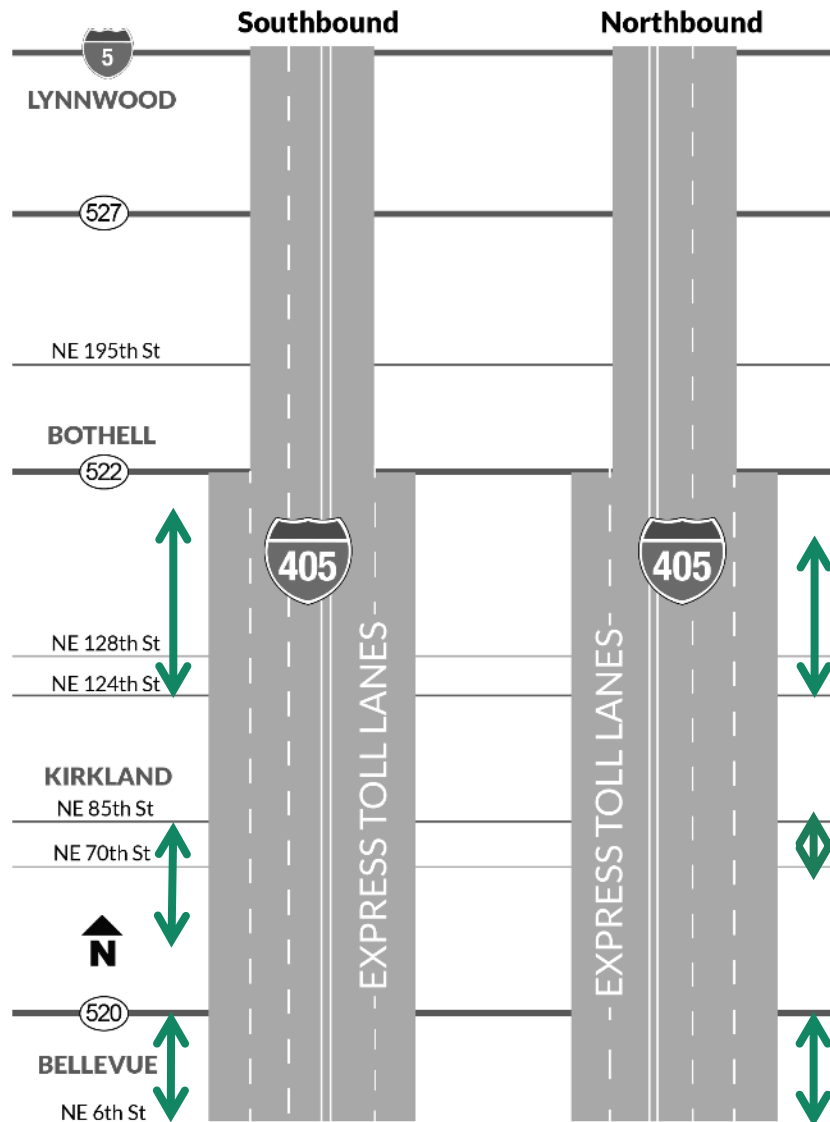
## What drivers are choosing to pay

### Percent of Peak Period, Peak Direction I-405 Toll Trips by Rate Category



# What we're seeing: I-405 is moving more vehicles at peak periods in most areas

WSDOT added **12% increase** in southbound lane capacity.

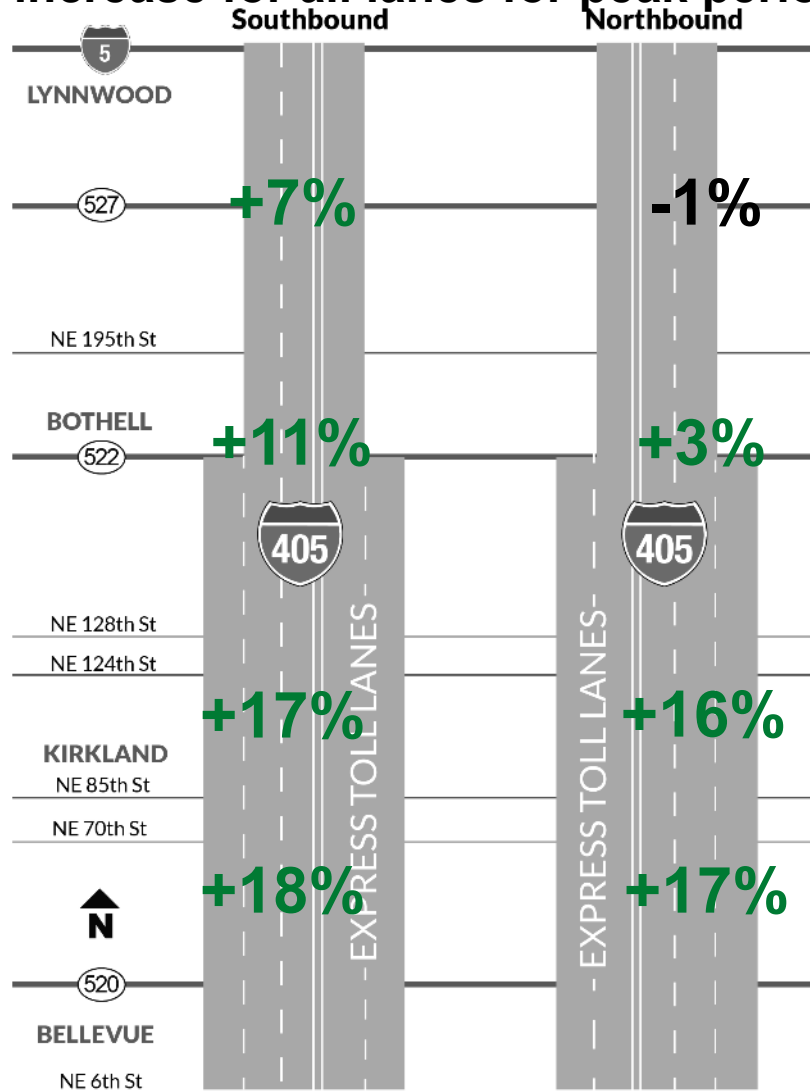


WSDOT added **5% increase** in northbound lane capacity.

# What we're seeing: I-405 is moving more vehicles at peak periods in most areas

## Combined volume increase for all lanes for peak period, peak direction trips

12% increase southbound in lane miles

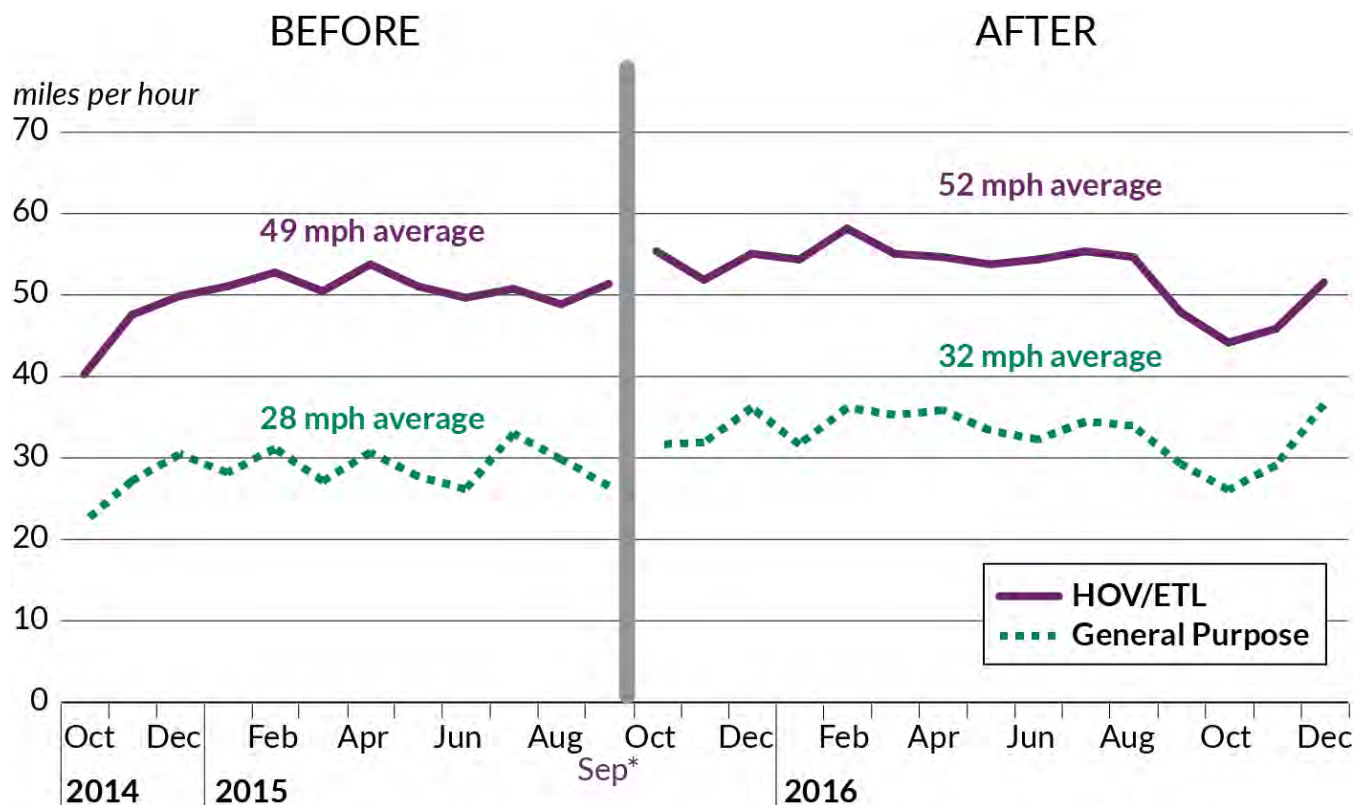


5% increase northbound in lane miles

# What we're seeing: The express toll lanes are moving morning drivers faster

For a full corridor trip during the peak period, the express toll lanes are moving vehicles faster and saving drivers time over the general purpose lanes.

## Average Southbound AM Peak Period (5-9 a.m.) Monthly Speeds (mph)

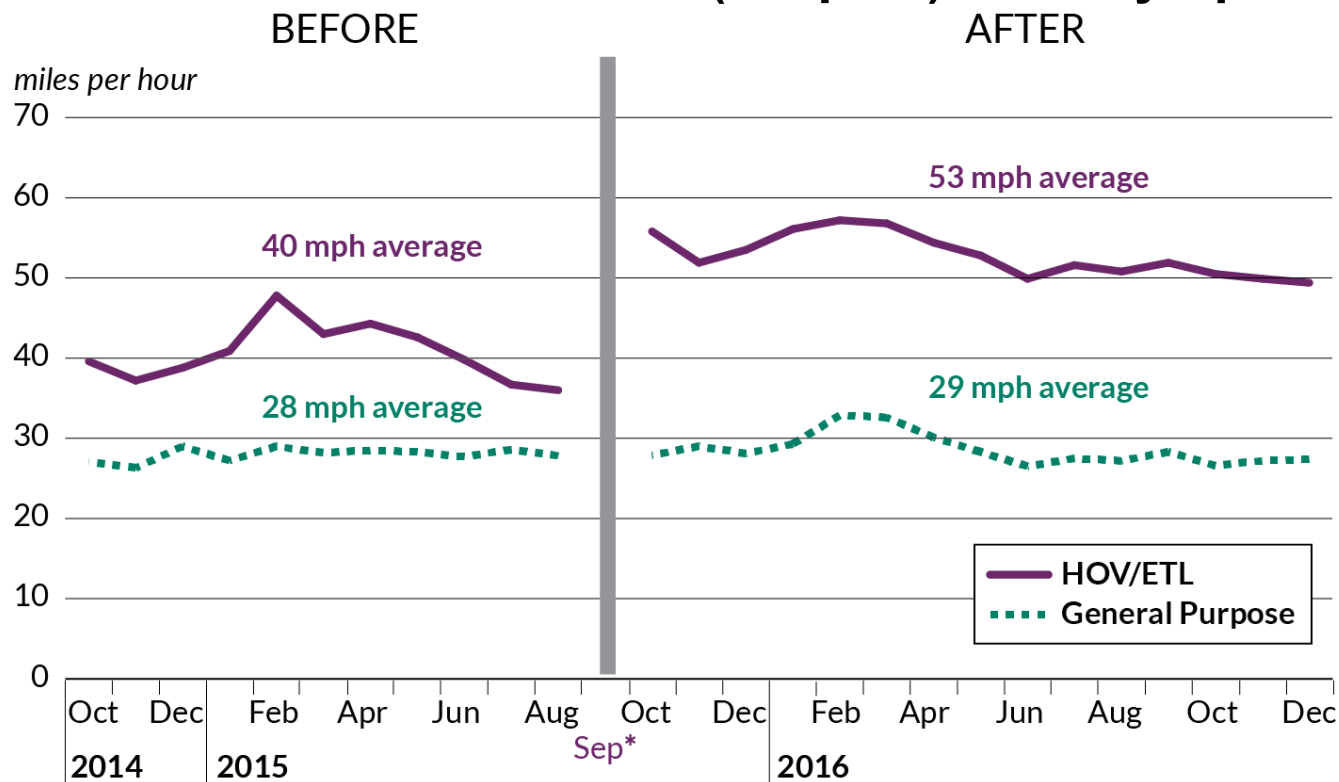


\* Due to construction activity impacting traffic loop data in the northbound HOV lane, September 2015 data was inaccurate and removed.

# What we're seeing: The express toll lanes are moving evening drivers faster

For a full corridor trip during the peak period, the express toll lanes are moving vehicles faster and saving drivers time over the general purpose lanes.

## Average Northbound PM Peak Period (3-7 p.m.) Monthly Speeds (mph)



\* Due to construction activity impacting traffic loop data in the northbound HOV lane, September 2015 data was inaccurate and removed.

# What we're seeing: Transit riders are getting faster, more predictable trips

## KING COUNTY METRO

- **9% increase in daily ridership**
- **Up to 8 minutes travel time savings**

*(Ridership and savings varies by route, data compared to before tolling)*



## COMMUNITY TRANSIT (Includes Sound Transit)

- **2% increase in peak period ridership**
- **Up to 4 minutes travel time savings**

*(Ridership and savings varies by route, data compared to before tolling)*



**What we're seeing:** Drivers appreciate having the option to use the lanes

*What do you think about the express toll lanes?*

***“ They help get me where I need to go faster. ”***

**– Jodi, I-405 driver**



***“ The fact that I can scoot between Kirkland and Bellevue for 75 cents while the regular lanes are stopped, makes it a winner! ”***

**– Commenter on the Feb. 3 Seattle Times article: *The I-405 toll-lane experiment: How's it working for drivers, and the state?***

# What we're seeing:

Express toll lanes are funding future improvements

## Revenue overview

- Continue to meet revenue goals
- Provided \$10 million in funding for the northbound general purpose Peak-Use Shoulder Lane project.

## Total revenue since the express toll lanes opened

- Total Gross Revenue - \$27.4 million
- Total Net Revenue - \$17.5 million



# Peak-Use Shoulder Lane

## Northbound I-405 from SR 527 to I-5

### Scope

- Convert right shoulder to general purpose peak-use shoulder lane on northbound I-405 between SR 527 and I-5
- Build new noise wall for area residents
- Complete improvements to express toll lane signage and access

### Timeline

- **Nov. 2016:** Design-build contractor selected
  - Graham Contracting Ltd.
  - *Funded with I-405 express toll lane revenue*
- **Winter 2017:** Construction start
- **Spring 2017:** Open to traffic



# Legislative Direction

The **2016 Supplemental Transportation Budget** directed WSDOT to study the north end of I-405, specifically:

**“the identification and prioritization of projects that will help reduce congestion and provide added capacity on the Interstate 405 tolling corridor between state route number 522 and Interstate 5.”**



# I-405 North End Projects Charrette

## Two-day workshop

Nov. 16 and 29, 2016

## Interagency participation:

- Cities of Bothell and Woodinville
- Community Transit
- Federal Highway Administration
- King County Metro
- Snohomish County
- Sound Transit
- WSDOT



## Objectives:

- Review WSDOT I-405 north end phasing concepts, brainstorm alternative solutions
- Gather input on challenges and considerations for improvements
- Develop recommendation for next priority improvements from Master Plan



# Potential Phase 1 (~\$450M)\* Base + Enhanced SR 527 DA

## Lanes

- One new express toll lane in each direction from SR 522 to SR 527

## Ramps

- SR 522 direct access ramps
- SR 527 inline station direct access ramp (to east, north and south)

## BRT

- In ETL from I-5 to south of SR 527

## Benefits

- **Reduces southbound congestion from SR 527 to SR 522**
- Provides limited northbound congestion relief SR 522 to SR 527
- 2 minute travel time savings for transit at SR 527 direct access
- Improved BRT travel times
- Reduces frequency of high tolls

## Estimated schedule

- 7 year project

\*Order of magnitude cost for comparison purposes

# CONTACT

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