

Puget Sound Gateway Program

SR 167 and SR 509 Completion Projects

JOHN WHITE, PE
KARL WESTBY, PHD

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR
GATEWAY PROGRAM TRAFFIC

WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
JUNE 17, 2025

Agenda

- Objectives:
 - Provide Gateway program funding and progress update
 - Reminder of Level 3 Traffic and Revenue results

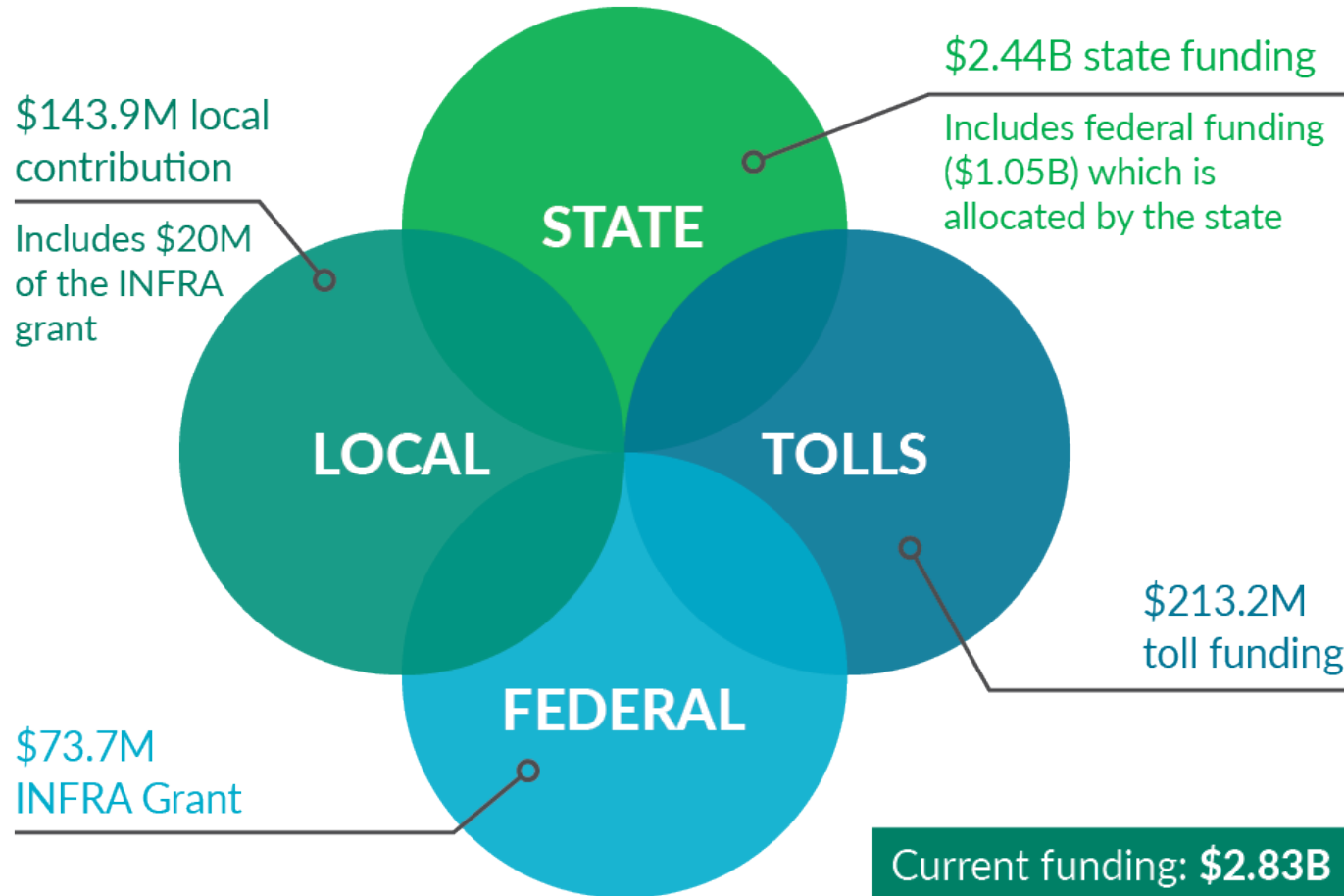
Program delivery and cost update

Puget Sound Gateway Program purpose



- Essential **connections** to the ports of Tacoma and Seattle.
- Ensure people and **goods move more reliably** through the Puget Sound region.
- Enhance the state's **economic competitiveness** by connecting the state's largest ports to key distribution centers.

Puget Sound Gateway Program funding



How was the \$155 million funding gap filled?

- \$33.2 million in toll funding appropriated
- \$121.8 million Move Ahead Washington account funding appropriated to state funding

Gateway Program expressway toll points

SR 509



SR 509, I-5 to 24th Avenue South – fall 2025
SR 509, 24th Avenue South to South 188th Street – fall 2028

SR 167

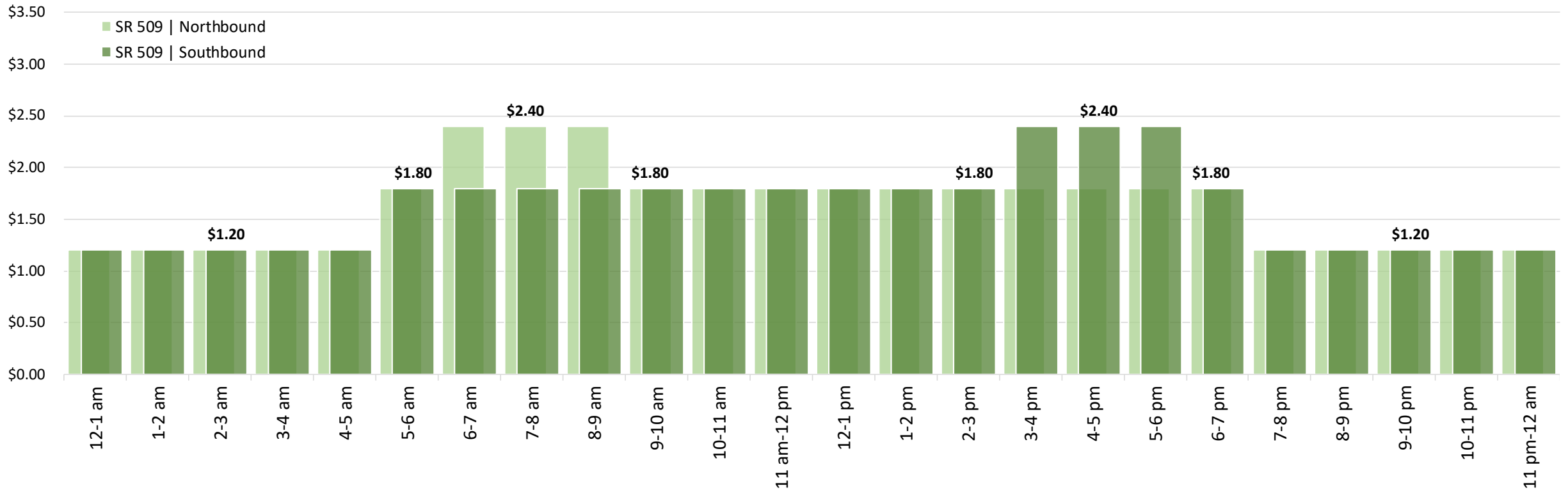


SR 167, I-5 to SR 509 New Expressway – December 2026
SR 167, I-5 to SR 161 New Expressway – fall 2029

Note: no existing portions of SR 509 and existing SR 167 general purpose lanes will be tolled

L3 Study *Good To Go!* variable toll rates | SR 509

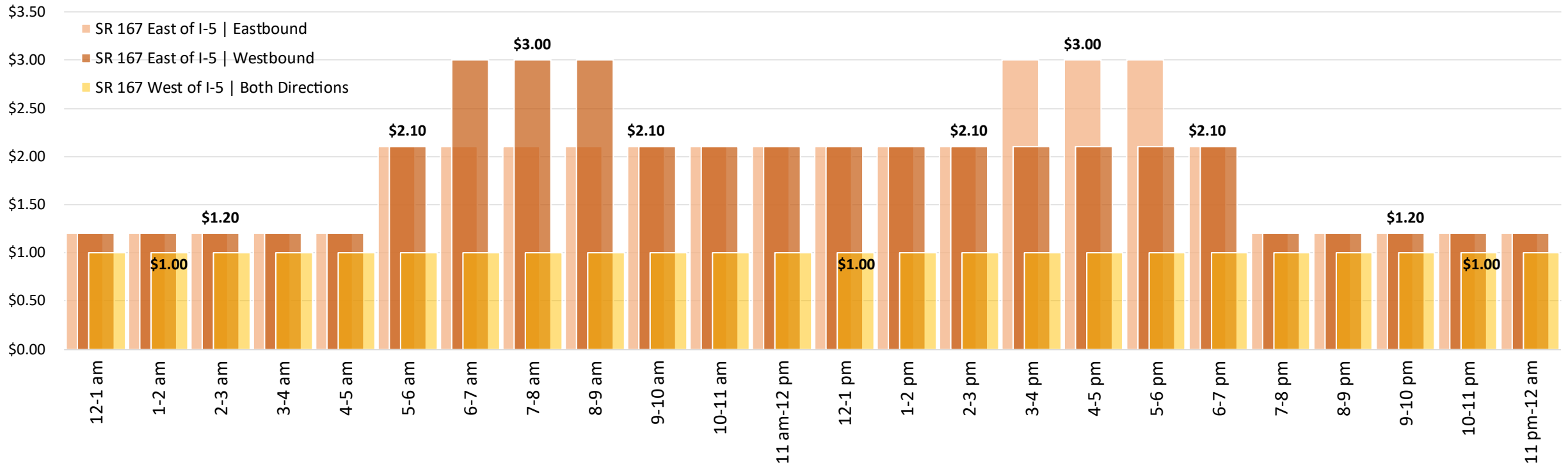
Year of opening, Monday – Friday



2.15% annual escalation starting on July 1, 2030
Weekends assume minimum toll rate for the facility

L3 Study *Good To Go!* variable toll rates | SR 167

Year of opening, Monday – Friday

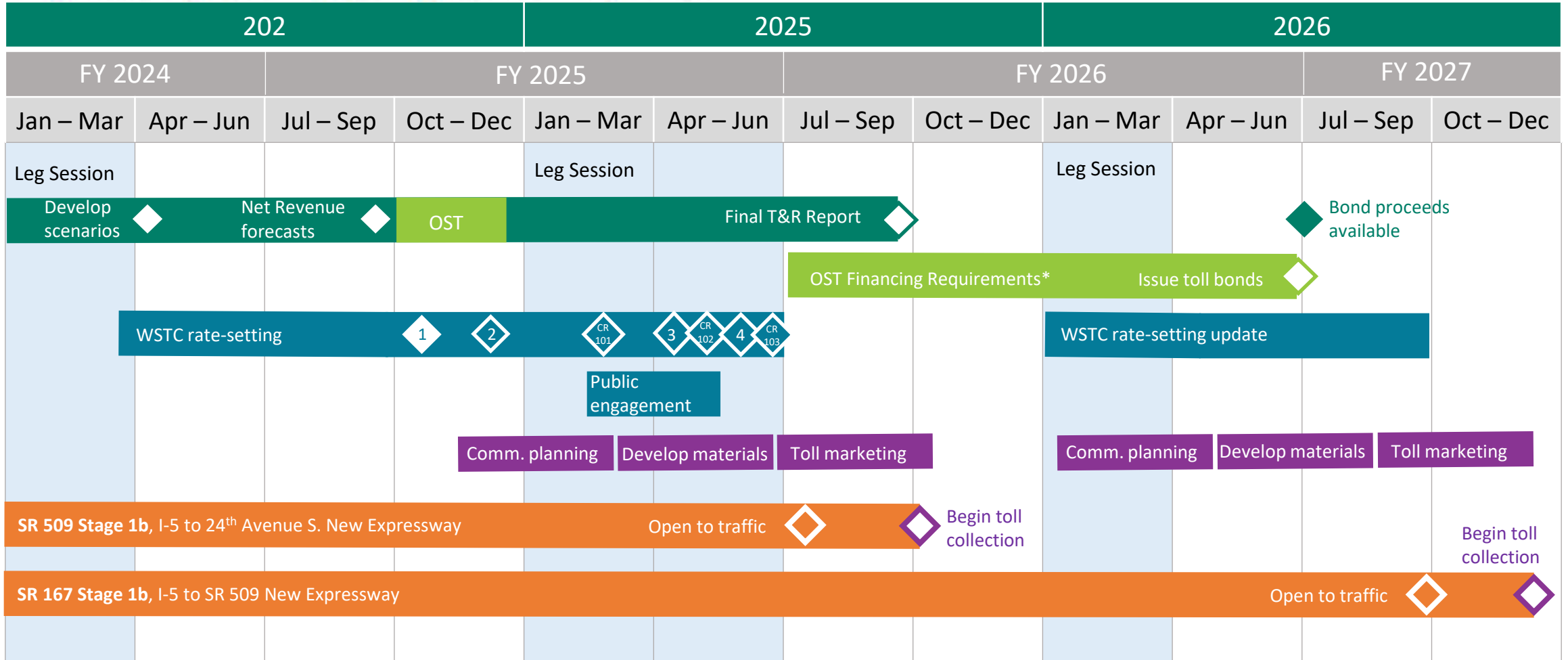


2.15% annual escalation starting on July 1, 2030
Weekends assume minimum toll rate for the facility

Toll Rate Setting Process – Puget Sound Gateway

5/29/25

● WSDOT
 ● WSTC
 ● OST
 ● Design-Builder
 ● Toll Division



Toll rate-setting process

- 1 October workshop – review draft level 3 results
- 2 December full WSTC meeting – WSDOT and OST present Level 3 T&R results
- 3 April full WSTC meeting – Select single toll rate proposal
- 4 June public hearing

* Master Bond Resolution (MBR) development, rating agency presentations, etc.

Thank you

More information:

John White, PE

Puget Sound Gateway Program Administrator

(206) 805-2966

John.White@wsdot.wa.gov



Puget Sound Gateway Program Rate-Setting

Carl See

Deputy Director

Washington State Transportation
Commission

Aaron Halbert

Financial Analyst

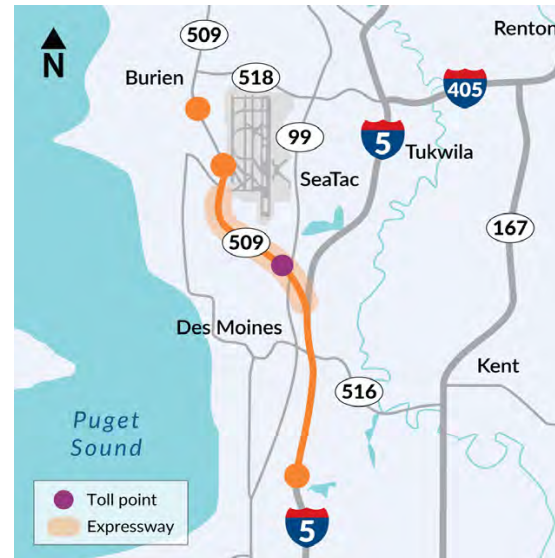
Washington State Transportation
Commission

Toll Rate Setting Considerations

Tolling the Puget Sound Gateway Expressways

- Tolled Expressways on SR 509 and SR 167 will manage traffic and help fund construction and ongoing maintenance of the roadways.
- Tolling on the first portion of the SR 509 Expressway is expected to begin in Fall 2025.
- Tolling on the SR 167 Expressway west of I-5 is expected to begin in December 2026.
- The WSTC will adopt toll rates for both facilities in June 2025.

SR 509 Expressway



The new tolled SR 509 Expressway will extend from South 188th Street in Burien to I-5 in SeaTac near South 212th Street.

SR 167 Expressway



The new tolled SR 167 Expressway will extend from N Meridian Ave. in Puyallup to I-5 in Fife and from I-5 to SR 509 near the Port of Tacoma.

Tolling will not be added to existing portions of SR 509 or SR 167 general purpose lanes.

Toll Rate Setting Direction

Statutory direction on setting of toll rates for the Puget Sound Gateway Expressways (RCW 47.56.895):

- The Tolling Authority shall set a variable schedule of toll rates to maintain travel time, speed, and reliability on the Puget Sound Gateway Expressways.
- The Tolling Authority may adjust toll rates to reflect inflation as measured by the consumer price index or as necessary to meet eligible financial obligations and to optimize system performance.
- After the bonds issued are retired, the Tolling Authority must reduce the toll rates commensurate with this reduction.
- Direction on consideration of low-income discount for residents in close proximity to the SR 509 completion project corridor.

Toll Rate Setting Guidance

Policy guidance on setting toll rates (RCW 47.56.830):

- Toll rates, which may include variable pricing, must be set to meet anticipated funding obligations.
- To the extent possible, the toll rates should be set to optimize system performance, recognizing necessary trade-offs to generate revenue.

Toll Rate Setting Guidance

Setting of toll rates should also support the policy guidelines for the use of tolling in Washington State (RCW 47.56.830):

- Contribute a significant portion of the cost of a project.
- Be fairly and equitably applied in the context of the statewide transportation system.
- Not have significant adverse impacts through the diversion of traffic to other routes that cannot be reasonably mitigated.
- Consider relevant social equity, environmental, and economic issues.
- Directed at making progress toward the state's greenhouse gas reduction goals.

Toll Rate and Policy Options Considered

Scenarios	Toll Rates	Toll Escalation	Truck Tolls	Low Income Discount
A	SR 509 & SR 167 – East of I-5: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1.20 to \$2.40 (SR 509) • \$1.20 to \$3.00 (SR 167) • Vary by time of day & direction SR 167 – West of I-5: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1 at all times of the day 	2.15% escalation every year, starting in Fiscal Year 2031	Vehicles with 3+ axles pay a multiple of the base toll	Potential consideration of future system-wide low-income program
B			All vehicles pay the same toll	
C			Vehicles with 3+ axles pay a multiple of the base toll	50% discount for SR 509 area residents at 0-200% of Federal Poverty Level
D			All vehicles pay the same toll	

Assumes system-wide tolling exemptions will apply to the Expressways, including for transit and emergency vehicles.

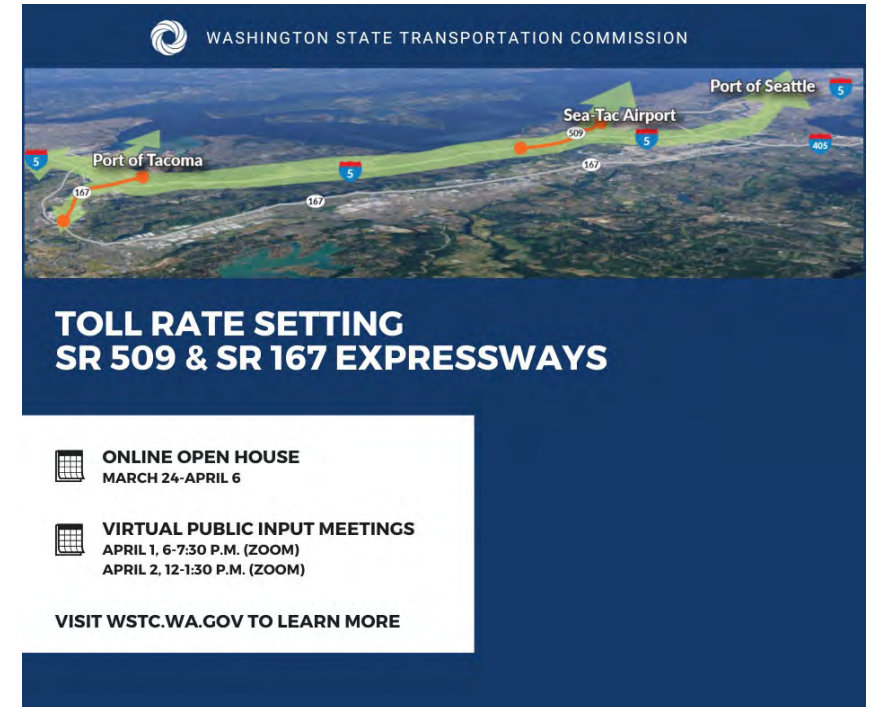
The Office of the State Treasurer determined that all four toll rate options meet financial sufficiency requirements.

Summary of Public Engagement

WSTC Public Engagement

The WSTC provided the following opportunities for the public to learn about the tolling options under consideration and to provide comments ahead of the Commission issuing its proposal:


- **Online Open House:** March 24 – April 6
- **Public Input Meetings (virtual):** April 1 & 2
 - Tuesday, April 1, 6pm – 7:30pm
 - Wednesday, April 2, 12pm – 1:30pm
- **Email**




WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Port of Tacoma Sea-Tac Airport Port of Seattle

**TOLL RATE SETTING
SR 509 & SR 167 EXPRESSWAYS**

 **ONLINE OPEN HOUSE**
MARCH 24-APRIL 6

 **VIRTUAL PUBLIC INPUT MEETINGS**
APRIL 1, 6-7:30 P.M. (ZOOM)
APRIL 2, 12-1:30 P.M. (ZOOM)

VISIT [WSTC.WA.GOV](https://www.wstc.wa.gov) TO LEARN MORE

Online Open House

From March 24 – April 6, the WSTC hosted an Online Open House for the purpose of:

- Sharing information on the policy changes under consideration; and
- Offering the public an opportunity to provide comments on them.

Over 1,600 comments were provided from **over 430 individuals**, with about 300-400 comments apiece on toll rates, policy options, and general feedback. General themes included:

- General opposition to the use of tolls.
- Sentiment that proposed toll rates are too high.
- About twice as much support than opposition for higher tolls on vehicles with 3+ axles.
- More support for a low-income discount program than opposition.
- Requests for additional discounts such as for seniors or local residents.

Key Respondent Metrics - Demographics

Household Income

161 respondents provided HH income information. Of these:

- **6%** under \$30,000
- **15%** \$30,000-\$75,000
- **43%** \$75,000-\$150,000
- **14%** \$150,000-\$200,000
- **17%** over \$200,000
- **About 11%** with a HH income below about 200% of the Federal Poverty Level

Race and Ethnicity

160 respondents provided information on their racial or ethnic background. Of these:

- **75%** identified as white / Caucasian only
- **25%** people of color*

Place of Residence

163 respondents provided valid zip code information. Of these:

- **83%** from King or Pierce County
- **17%** from other areas throughout Washington state

** People of color defined as those who self-identified as either American Indian or Alaskan Native/Indigenous, Asian or Asian American, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or other.*

Public Meetings & Email Input

WSTC held two virtual public meetings (April 1 & 2):

- **86** people attended with public input that included:
 - **40 Questions:** Themes included the potential low-income toll discount program, proposed toll rates and funding, traffic impacts and project-related decisions.
 - **4 Comments:** Topics included input on projects decisions, impacts of tolls on commuters, and concerns about the truck toll multiplier.

About 200 emails received via WSTC website and public inbox

- Majority of input generally opposed the use of tolling on the Expressways.

Engagement with Regional Partners

- Participate in the Puget Sound Gateway Program's Executive and Steering Committees providing periodic updates on the toll rate considerations and process.
- Briefings held with local jurisdictions and legislators.
- Input from regional partners included:
 - Mayor Victoria Woodards, City of Tacoma
 - The Northwest Seaport Alliance
 - Joe Vinson, City Councilmember, City of SeaTac

WSTC's Proposed Toll Rate and Policy Options

- The WSTC selected **Toll Rate Scenario A** in April 2025 as it's official proposal for further public review and comment.
- Directed preparations commence for offering a system-wide low-income program beginning with the Puget Sound Gateway Expressways in 2026.

Scenario	Toll Rates	Toll Escalation	Truck Tolls	Low Income Discount
A	SR 509 & SR 167 – East of I-5: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1.20 to \$2.40 (SR 509) • \$1.20 to \$3.00 (SR 167) • Vary by time of day & direction SR 167 – West of I-5: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1 at all times of the day 	2.15% escalation every year, starting in Fiscal Year 2031	Vehicles with 3+ axles pay a multiple of the base toll	System-wide low-income program with discounted toll rates for SR 509 & SR 167 Expressways by December 2026

Assumes system-wide tolling exemptions will apply to the Expressways, including for transit and emergency vehicles.

WSTC's Proposed Toll Rate and Policy Options

- The public comment period for this proposal concluded on June 10.
 - One public comment was received during this period, expressing opposition to the use of tolls on roads in Washington state.
 - Final public input to be received at today's public hearing.
- Following adoption by the Commission, toll rates and policies for the Puget Sound Gateway Expressways will take effect in Fall 2025.

Thank You!

Contact:

Carl See

WSTC Deputy Director

transc@wstc.wa.gov

360-705-7070

Aaron Halbert

WSTC Financial Analyst

transc@wstc.wa.gov

360-705-7070

