

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ITEM

SUBJECT:

I-90 Tolling Update: Presentation by Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).

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Transportation Department

POLICY ISSUES:

State policy direction:

- The SR 520 Legislative Workgroup (formed under **House Bill 2211**) recommended the following to help address Cross-Lake Washington congestion and the SR 520 funding gap:
 - 1) Implement future express toll lanes on I-90 through the conversion of existing HOV lanes; and,
 - 2) Implement general tolling on the I-90 Bridge in 2014 or thereafter if the funding gap on SR 520 cannot be filled through other funding sources.
- The I-90 Tolling Project follows the recommendations of the SR 520 2011 Workgroup and seeks to implement tolling and congestion management on I-90. The project has been partially funded through **House Bill ESHB 2109, Supplemental Transportation Budget**, which directs the Department to:

“ . . . undertake a comprehensive environmental review of tolling Interstate 90 between Interstate 5 and Interstate 405 for the purposes of both managing traffic and providing funding for construction of the unfunded state route number 520 from Interstate 5 to Medina project. The environmental review must include significant outreach to potentially affected communities. The department may consider traffic management options that extend as far east as Issaquah.”
- To accomplish this directive, WSDOT will perform an **Environmental Analysis (EA)** on the effects of tolling I-90, including public outreach and engagement with agency and corridor decision makers. The I-90 Tolling Project needs toll authorization, as well as funding for design and continuation of toll systems.
- WSDOT is convening a group of elected officials in early 2013 (the **I-90 Executive Advisory Group**) to provide input into the process.
- An implementation date of 2016 is anticipated for tolling I-90.

Does Council wish to provide input to WSDOT as they begin the stakeholder engagement and public involvement process?

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL:

- Action
 Discussion
 Information

On December 10th, representatives from WSDOT's Tolling Division will provide Council an overview of the environmental review process. Following the WSDOT presentation, staff will seek Council feedback on I-90 tolling.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

The City of Bellevue continues to be a leader in advocating for improving key regional transportation corridors in a manner that optimizes regional and local travel. Tolling and pricing strategies are figuring prominently in regional discussions and decisions concerning Puget Sound corridors as a means for funding transportation corridors and better managing traffic congestion.

I-90 (between Issaquah and Seattle) and SR 520 (between Redmond and Seattle) are parallel facilities that serve as the two main routes for crossing Lake Washington. For many travelers they serve as alternative routes for one another and are collectively referred to by WSDOT as the Cross-Lake Washington Corridor.

WSDOT is undertaking an environmental review of tolling I-90 between I-5 and I-405 to raise revenue for the unfunded portion of the SR 520 - I-5 to Medina project and to help alleviate congestion on I-90. In addition to the analysis conducted for the environmental review, WSDOT is also conducting outreach to potentially-affected communities along the corridor and considering other traffic management options along I-90 as far east as Issaquah.

WSDOT Goals

The following goals for I-90 Tolling Implementation public outreach will guide development and implementation of this process. The goals are:

- Build a regional consensus on parameters of the Cross-Lake Corridor and I-90 Tolling;
- Build on concepts from the original 520 Toll Implementation Process, the Legislative Work Group, and the I-90 Corridor Working Group;
- Provide input and advice on policy issues re: traffic performance and revenue;
- Generate support for specific project elements and principles of funding/phasing;
- Educate the public about the need for tolling I-90 and benefits to tolling both bridges;
- Gather and summarize public input as a complement to the environmental assessment and for delivery to the Governor and Legislature in December 2013.

In 2012, as WSDOT studies tolling I-90 (as directed by House Bill ESHB 2109), re-engaging the 520 TIC would link the 520 funding discussions to the purpose and need for tolling I-90. The purpose for re-engaging the 520 TIC is to:

1. Review 520 performance one year after tolling implementation (tolling began on SR 520 December of 2011).
2. Continue the 520 funding process started in 2008.
3. Update the funding scenario analysis for closing funding gap (financial capacity, toll phasing traffic conditions, and diversion due to tolls).
4. Engage the public according to the 2012 legislative direction.
5. Consult with 1976/2004 Memorandum of Agreement parties.
6. Address I-90 tolling specific issues (operations, community effects, fairness, and long-term corridor improvements).
7. Update TIC findings and recommendations based on 520 performance and I-90 specific issues.

Creation of an I-90 Executive Advisory Group (EAG)

WSDOT is to convene an I-90 EAG to help the state move forward with concepts for I-90 tolling, develop recommendations, and gather community input. Key I-90 corridor cities and transit agencies (Bellevue, Mercer Island, Seattle, Issaquah, Sammamish, King County, Sound Transit) and legislators from the 37th, 41st, and 5th legislative districts form the core EAG. Because this is a larger regional effort, other Cross-Lake Corridor agencies would be invited (from the 520 TIC and Legislative Work Group processes).

In carrying out their assigned duties, EAG members will:

- Attend or be represented at all committee meetings.
- Identify issues vital to the Cross-Lake Corridor tolling implementation process.
- Provide strategic advice (not formal recommendations) to WSDOT.
- Assure opportunities for public, business and civic group involvement.
- Develop funding and phasing principles to help guide the budget and schedule objectives.
- Represent the governments and agencies they belong to and assist in building/maintaining regional consensus.
- Help resolve conflicts between governments and agencies.
- Support implementation of the adopted strategy.

Bellevue will be asked to participate in the EA study in the coming months.

ATTACHMENT:

WSDOT I-90 Tolling Project Fact Sheet



I-90 Tolling Project

Purpose and Background

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Legislative History and Directives

To help address Cross-Lake Washington congestion and the SR 520 funding gap, the SR 520 Legislative Workgroup (formed under House Bill 2211) recommended the following:

- (1) Implement future express toll lanes on I-90 through the conversion of existing HOV lanes
- (2) Implement general tolling on the I-90 Bridge in 2014 or thereafter if the funding gap on SR 520 cannot be filled through other funding sources

The I-90 Tolling Project follows the recommendations of the Workgroup and seeks to implement tolling and congestion management on I-90. The project has been partially funded through House Bill ESHB 2109, Supplemental Transportation Budget, which directs the Department to

“ . . . undertake a comprehensive environmental review of tolling Interstate 90 between Interstate 5 and Interstate 405 for the purposes of both managing traffic and providing funding for construction of the unfunded state route number 520 from Interstate 5 to Medina project. The environmental review must include significant outreach to potentially affected communities. The department may consider traffic management options that extend as far east as Issaquah.”

Tolling I-90 is not a new idea.

Tolling I-90 was a recommended strategy of the 2008 SR 520 Toll Implementation Committee and the 2009 SR 520 Legislative Work Group – both directed by the legislature to review toll implementation strategies. Additionally, the I-90 Tolling Study complements WSDOT’s I-90 Bellevue to North Bend Corridor Planning Study (2012), a strategy for transportation improvements east of I-405 along the I-90 corridor.

1999 – 2002	Trans-Lake Washington Study
2008 – 2009	520 Toll Implementation Committee
2008 – 2012	I-90 Route Development Plan
2009	Seattle/Lake Washington Corridor Urban Partnership Agreement (UPA)
2012	I-90/Cross-Lake Washington Tolling Study

Approach to Environmental Review of I-90 Mainline Tolling

WSDOT plans to address the needs of the I-90 corridor by preparing a NEPA Environmental Assessment (EA) for I-90 Corridor Tolling Elements. This effort will focus on completing the legislative directive to study the environmental impacts of implementing mainline tolling on the I-90 bridge.

Approach to Outreach for Other Traffic Management Options

WSDOT will continue to work with communities in the I-90 corridor to evaluate potential congestion management improvements initially identified in the I-90 Bellevue to North Bend Corridor Planning Study.

Project Schedule

Toll authorization is needed by the 2014 legislative session. Once that occurs, construction to implement tolling would begin summer 2014 and tolling could begin, depending on the alternative chosen, by 2015 or 2016.



I-90 TOLLING PROJECT

DRAFT 9/19/12

PROJECT TASKS	2012		2013			2014		2015/2016
	June - Aug	Sept - Dec	Jan - April	May - Aug	Sept - Dec	Jan - April	May - August	Sept - Dec
Environmental Analysis and FONSI	[Bar]		● Scoping Meeting	● D. R. Open House	◆ Public Hearing	◆ FONSI		
Screening of Alternatives	[Bar]							
Pre-Environmental Traffic and Tolling Analysis	[Bar]							
Project Funding (Level 2 T&R, Capital Investment Finance Plan)		[Bar]						
Tolling Policy Package Development			● 2013 Legislative Session ●			◆ Submit to Legislature		
Stakeholder/Public Outreach	● PI Plan & Materials & Development	[Bar: Informal Outreach]	[Bar: Formal Outreach]					
	↔ 1:1 Stakeholder Briefings							
Civil/Structural Design	[Bar: Support Environmental Process]		[Bar: Begin PE]			[Bar: Complete PS&E]		
Civil/Structural Construction							[Bar]	
Toll System Design/Install		[Bar: Concept Development/Support Environmental Process]				[Bar: Vendor Negotiations]	[Bar: Begin Design/Install]	

For More Information:

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