

**Kirkland Transportation Commission  
Meeting Notes  
Wednesday September 23, 2009**

**Call to Order**

Jon Pascal called the meeting to order at 6:01. Members Present: Sandeep Singhal, Mike Miller, Morgan Hopper, Don Samdahl,. Kirkland Staff present: Dave Godfrey, Daryl Grigsby, Public Works Department Others present: Wendy Taylor, Kurt Westby, Colleen Gants, (Eastside tolling corridor study) Jennifer Charlebois, (520 tolling) Dave Edwards, Julie GaNung, (SR 520 eastside project) WSDOT

**Approval of meeting notes from July 22:**

Notes approved unanimously with correction that Sandeep Singhal was present. Motion by Samdahl, second by Singhal.

**Comments from the Public**

None.

Commission members requested more information in advance of meetings concerning specific action to be taken on agenda items. When presentations are made to the Commission, members would like adequate time to discuss the Commission's response.

**Eastside Corridor Tolling study**

WSDOT staff made a presentation on the Eastside Corridor Tolling Study. The Commission discussed suggestions that should be passed on to the Mayor to aid his work on the Executive Committee. A memo to the Mayor, as prepared by the Commission after the meeting is attached.

**SR 520 Eastside study**

WSDOT staff made a presentation on the SR 520 Eastside project. The Commission's major comments included: If funding is limited, how will investments be prioritized? What thinking has been done on construction phasing and duration? There's a need to improve the South Kirkland Park and Ride entrance. How will the bicycle trail be completed between 108th NE and 124th NE? An EA on the Eastside project will be released in mid-November and the Commission will review it and prepare comments for consideration by the Council.

**SR 520 Tolling implementation project**

WSDOT staff made a presentation on the SR 520 Tolling implementation project. The Commission decided to prepare a letter to the Washington State Transportation Commission for consideration by the Council. The letter, written after the meeting and submitted to Council is attached. The Commission is also interested in the methods that are planned for determining diversion caused by tolls. Staff was directed to work with WSDOT staff to get more information on this.

**Updates**

Samdahl: Attended the debate of County Executive candidates held at the ETP meeting.  
All others: none

**Motion to Adjourn made at 9:01 by Samdahl, second by Miller Approved unanimously.**



## **CITY OF KIRKLAND**

### **Department of Public Works**

**123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3800**

**[www.ci.kirkland.wa.us](http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us)**

**To:** Jim Lauinger, Mayor

**From:** Transportation Commission, Jon Pascal, Chair

**Date:** September 30, 2009

**Subject:** COMMENTS FROM TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION ON EASTSIDE  
CORRIDOR TOLLING STUDY

At our September 23 meeting, the Transportation Commission was briefed by WSDOT staff on the I-405 Eastside Corridor Tolling Study. The Commission had the following comments for your consideration as you prepare for the October 29th Executive Advisory Committee meeting.

#### *Priority for transit*

The first priority for operation of HOT lanes should be to ensure speed and reliability for transit. The HOT lane should be designed to allow unimpeded movements for buses.

#### *Operations and traffic management over revenue*

The Commission believes that, in keeping with the City's roadway pricing policy, a higher priority should be given to toll rates set to optimize operations and traffic management rather than to maximize tolling revenue.

#### *Use of revenue*

While we do not promote funding "firewalls" or "subarea equity", we do believe there should be broad geographic equity between where toll revenue is collected and where it is spent, since it is a 50-mile corridor. For example, if the segments of I-405 north of Bellevue collect the majority of the revenue, we would be concerned if all the revenue funds capital improvements in Renton or Kent at the expense of not mitigating potential local impacts. Again, in keeping with the City roadway pricing policy, tolling revenue should be allowed to be spent on transit or other improvements that support transportation in the corridor.

#### *Access*

WSDOT is assuming that toll paying SOVs would be allowed to use direct access facilities like those at NE 128th Street. Because these ramps were constructed with Sound Transit funds, that may be a flawed assumption. In any event, more work should be done by WSDOT to understand the costs and feasibility of using ramps paid for by Sound Transit.

*Range of alternatives*

The Commission did not feel that the alternatives being tested were of adequate breadth. We did not see an alternative that reflected the complete I-405 master plan vision for example. The I-405 master plan includes direct access facilities at NE 85th Street, yet it is not included in any of the alternatives. The study should at least understand how further investments may or may not enhance the corridor and operations of the toll facilities.

*Length of corridor*

It's not clear how the full 50 mile HOT lane corridor would be used by various travelers. The relationship of tolling, capacity and trip length should be explored. For example, many Kirkland travelers only use a short segment of I-405 so it's not clear how the tolling corridor will benefit or not benefit Kirkland.

cc: Kirkland City Council  
Dave Ramsay, City Manager  
Daryl Grigsby, Public Works Director

October 7, 2009

Ms. Carol Moser, Chair  
Washington State Transportation Commission  
PO Box 47308  
Olympia, WA 98504-7308

Dear Ms. Moser:

Last month, WSDOT staff briefed the City of Kirkland Transportation Commission on the SR 520 tolling project. Our Commission subsequently raised two points for Council consideration. Please consider the following comments and recommendations as you deliberate implementation of tolling on SR 520.

The City Council recognizes and respects the Commission's authority to establish toll rates on State Highways. At the same time we recommend that the Commission give WSDOT the latitude to make changes to the toll rate within certain limits. This will allow quicker response to any unintended consequences of SR 520 tolling that may occur, for example traffic diversions to other facilities.

Current WSDOT recommendations call for toll exemptions for transit and transit agency owned vanpools. We support this recommendation and feel that consideration should also be given to toll exemptions for private carpools. Supporting carpools will be an important strategy to reduce the traffic impacts of the SR 520 reconstruction project. While WSDOT staff pointed out some of the safety and enforcement concerns with exempting carpools, we urge the Commission to consider creative ways to support strong carpool incentives.

Staff from Kirkland will be contacting WSDOT staff on several other project issues. These include items such as the development of performance standards to monitor possible impacts to local arterials and alternative routes, implementation of a strong TDM program, placement and content of signing, and the distribution of transponders for toll collection. The City of Kirkland was an early supporter of tolling and we continue to believe that tolling, supported by a strong transportation demand management program and complimented with additional transit service will be a positive change for the SR 520 corridor.

Sincerely,  
Kirkland City Council

By James L. Lauinger, Mayor