

Tacoma Narrows Bridge Citizen Advisory Committee

Recommendations to the Transportation Commission

Approved January 10, 2007

The Tacoma Narrows Bridge Citizens Advisory Committee makes the following recommendations to the Washington State Department of Transportation with respect to the Tacoma Narrows Bridge project:

1. The cash toll price be \$3.00 per vehicle and the electronic toll collection (ETC) price be \$1.00 per vehicle from the opening date of toll collection until changed. If the 2007 Washington State Legislature does not appropriate the sum of TEN MILLION DOLLARS (\$10,000,000) for the purpose of reducing tolls, the tolls should be \$3.00 and \$1.75, respectively, for the cash toll and the ETC toll.
2. The per axle charge should commence on the same date as the above toll and based upon the toll rates.
3. The tolls should not commence on or shortly before a national holiday.
4. In recognition of the facts that payment on the bonds issued to finance the Tacoma Narrows Bridge must be made semi-annually and that by law or contract covered expenses can not exceed income actually received, a reserve should be established but such reserve should be kept at a level, not so high that an unreasonable amount accumulates and so low that tolls have to be changed more often than reasonably necessary in order to cover any temporary shortage.
5. At the present time no discounts or exemptions should be granted to those mentioned within the authorizing legislation of RCW 47.46.090 (2) of frequent users, senior citizens or students, in part because of the difficulty of identifying those persons within a group and assuring that there was no abuse to the system, in part because of favoring one worthy group to the expense of another worthy group and in part because of the administrative cost in administering such discounts or exemptions.

6. At the present time no discounts should be granted to carpools, transit busses, city, county or state vehicles or emergency vehicles except to the extent otherwise expressly provided by law.
7. No consideration should be given at the present time to the early retirement of the bond debt since, to do so, would cause the tolls in the near future to increase.
8. No variable or time of day pricing should be considered until after both bridges are fully operational and the DOT has traffic statistics from which a more informed decision could be made.
9. The minimum amount to establish an ETC account should be \$30.00.
10. The DOT is encouraged to include in its Good to Go! program one or more methods whereby a merchant or business person may purchase one or more single usage passages for its customers.
11. Future legislation establishing advisory committees for future projects should be more precisely written so as to make clear that the advisory committee's recommendations only concern amounts of tolls, collection, possible discounts and exemptions, possible early retirement and variable or time of day pricing and does not concern the fairness of the imposition of tolls, the location and size of toll facilities, and lane configuration.
12. The DOT provides monthly reports to the CAC members concerning collections, expense and traffic flow.
13. The DOT assists the CAC in holding meetings every three months, commencing in October 2007.
14. To the extent practicable all fines imposed for toll violations should be returned to the Tacoma Narrows Bridge Toll.
15. Future State of Washington highway projects costing more than the Tacoma Narrows Bridge project, such as but not limited to the Alaska Way Viaduct and State Route 520, be funded by the State of Washington in a percentage not to exceed what the State has paid on the Narrows Bridge and, if funded to a higher percentage, then the State should buy down the tolls on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge by the same amount.