

SR 167 High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes Pilot Project

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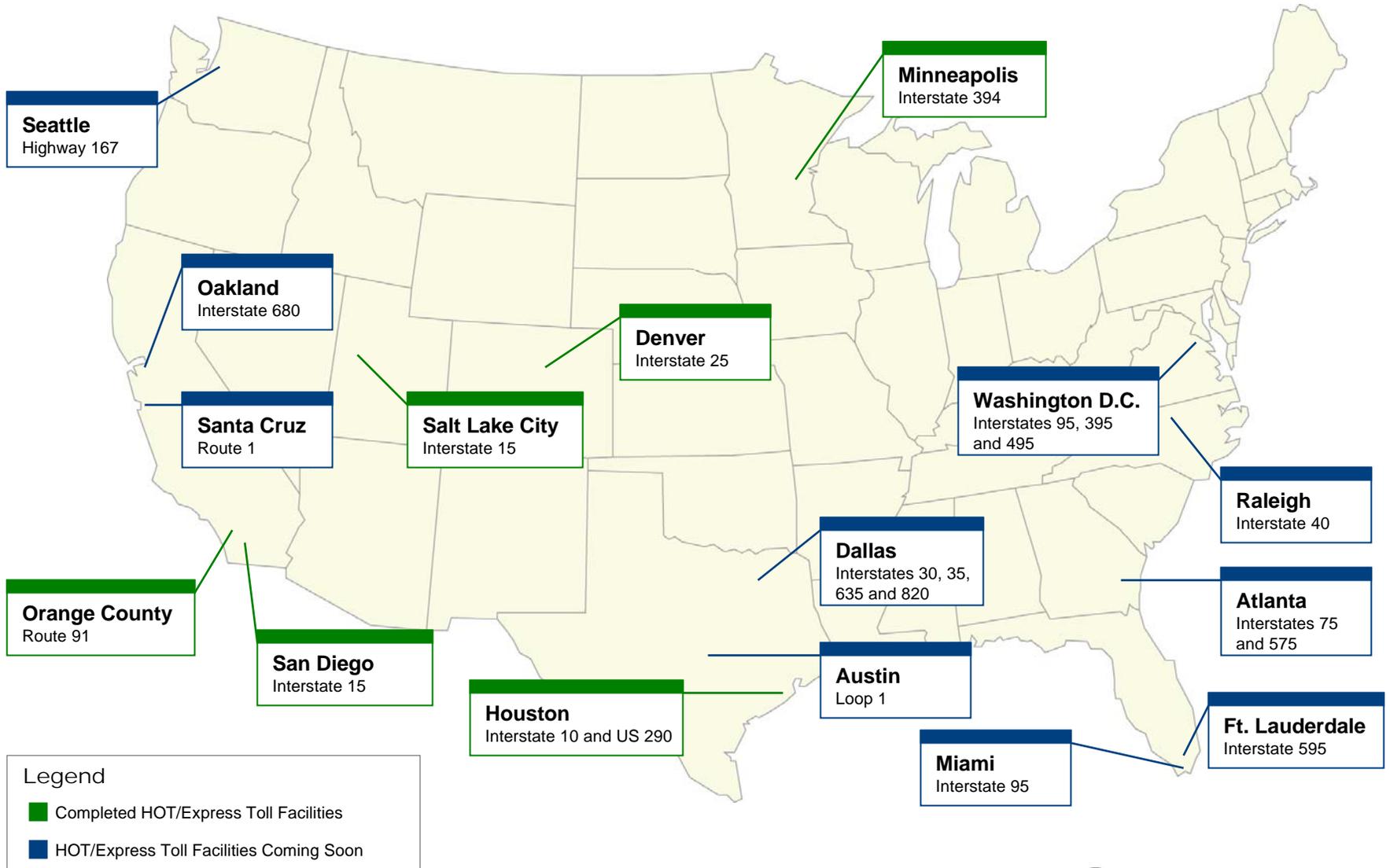
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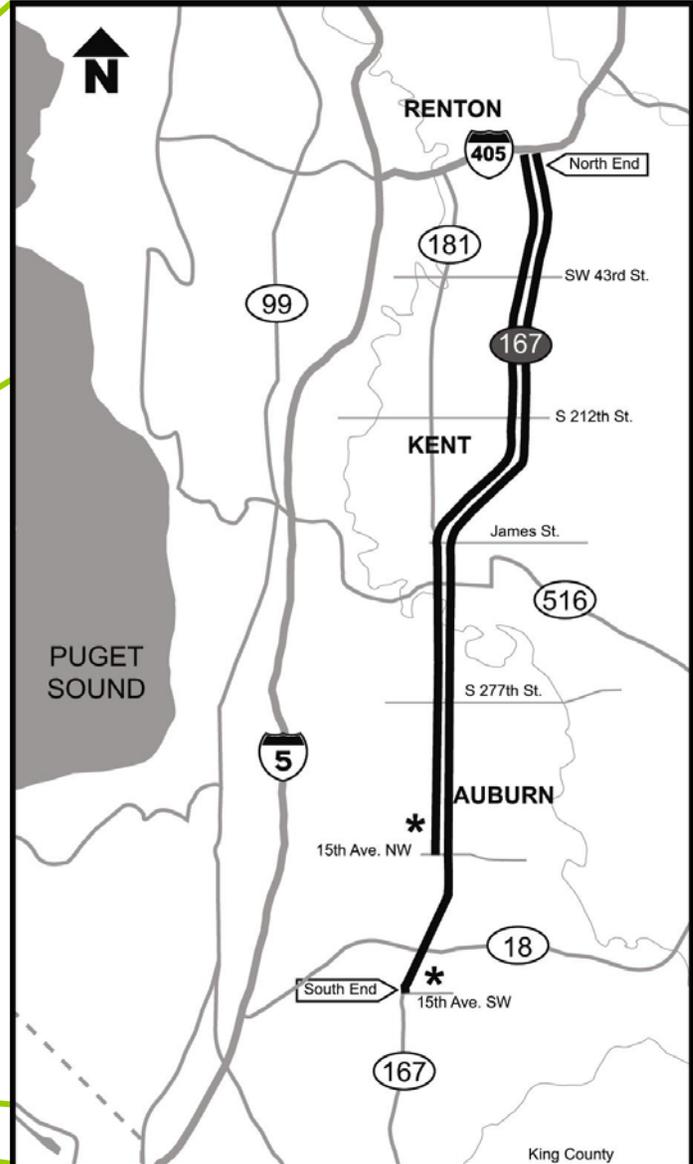
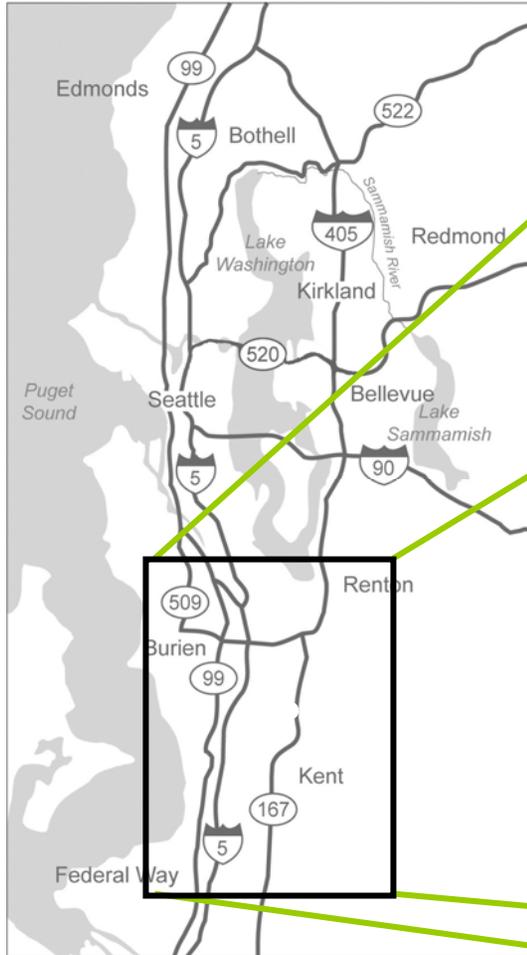
Agenda

- Overview of pilot project
- Electronic tolling
- Opening week expectations
- Enforcement in the lanes
- Outreach to drivers
- Feedback from the public
- Project assessment

Where are other HOT lanes nationally?

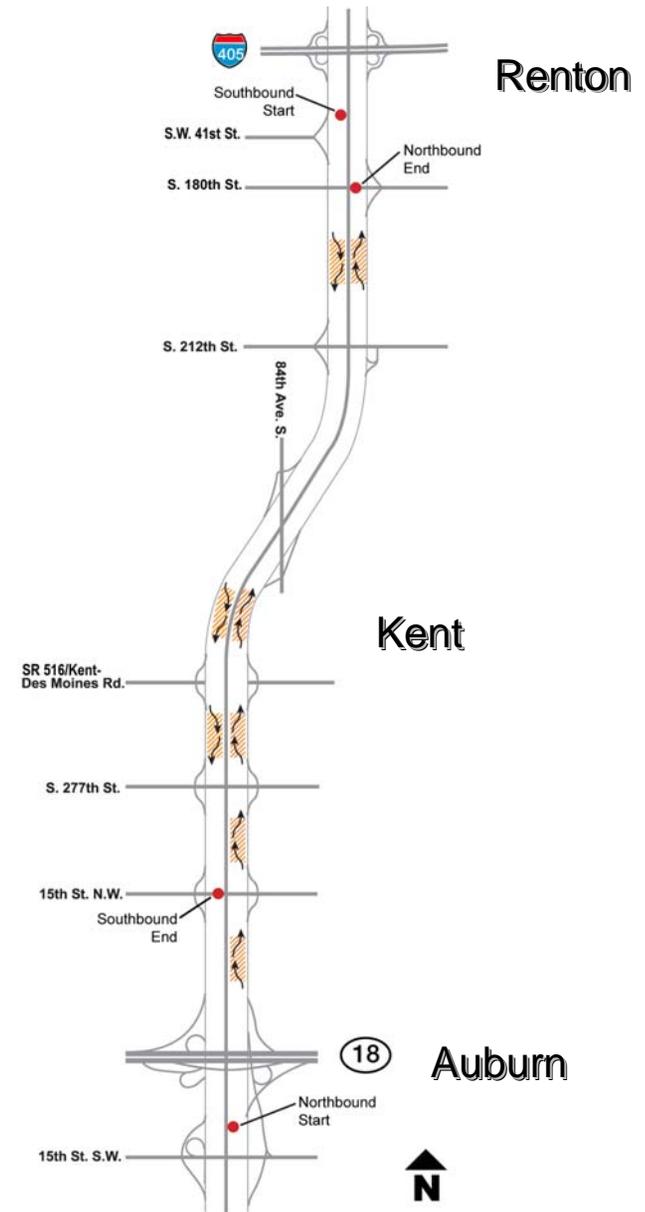


SR 167 HOT lanes



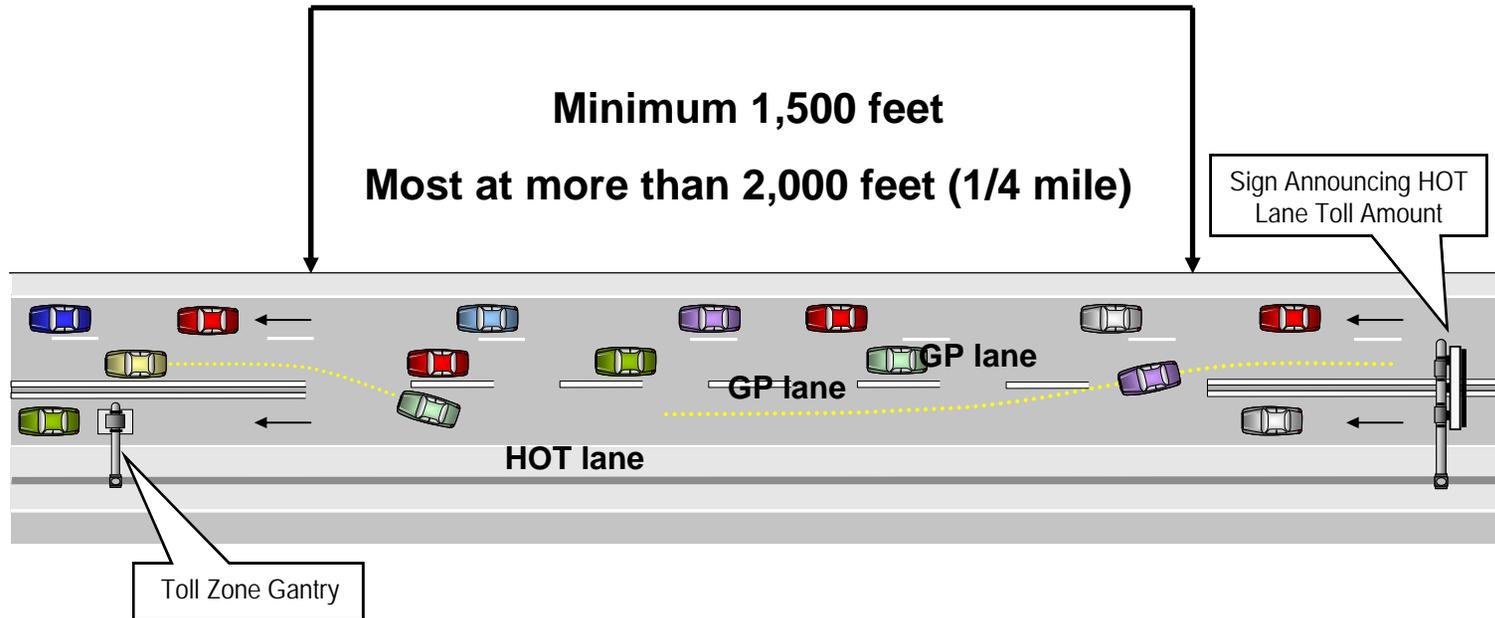
Key features

- Free flow operations goal for HOT lanes: at least 45 mph - 90% of the time during peak period.
- More than nine miles of HOT lanes.
- 10 access points.
- HOV 2+ and motorcycles free.
- Operating during the day (typically tolled between 5 am and 7 pm), open to all traffic at night.
- Variable tolls between 50¢ and \$9.
- Revenue will be used to pay for operations and maintenance, increased enforcement, and added incident response.



Access points

- Access points - defined locations for entering and exiting the HOT Lane.



- Tolls collected by electronic system
 - No toll booths
 - Same tolling transponder and Customer Service Center as the Tacoma Narrows Bridge.

Electronic tolling and interoperability

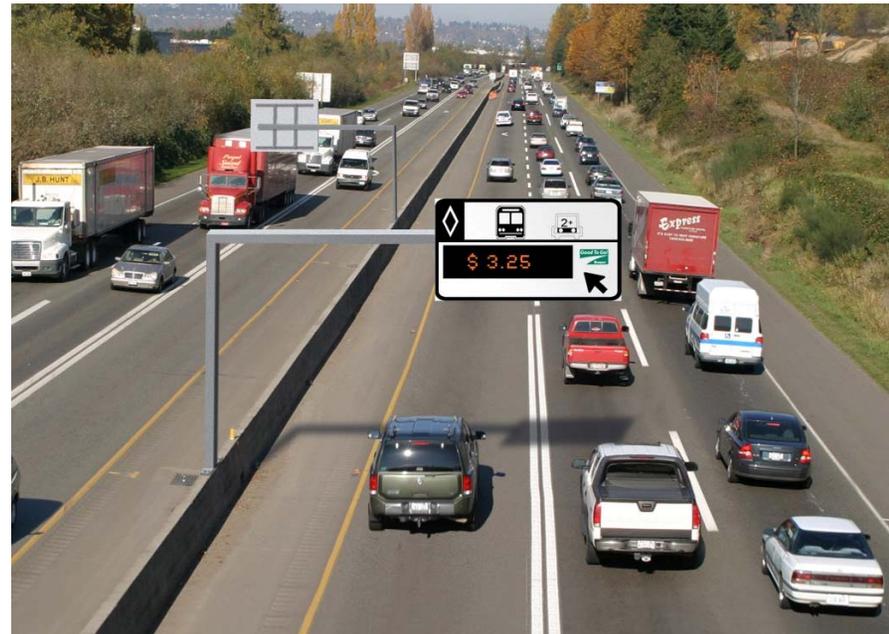


- The *Good to Go!* payment system is used on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge and will be used on the SR 167 HOT Lanes Pilot Project.
- Washington drivers have easily embraced electronic tolling and signed up record numbers – over 91,000 accounts and 220,000 transponders – the most successful launch in the country.
- Over 9,000 of the accounts are in the SR 167 corridor = some 20,000 transponders.



Two-phase opening

1. April 12 – 19 complete double-line striping that creates $\frac{1}{4}$ mile entry and exits points from the HOT lanes into and out of general purpose lanes.
2. April 26 opening of HOT lane system at 10:00 a.m. and the commencement of tolling for solo drivers.



Enforcement by WSP begins for each phase as soon as it opens.

All dates are dependent on the weather.

Opening week expectations

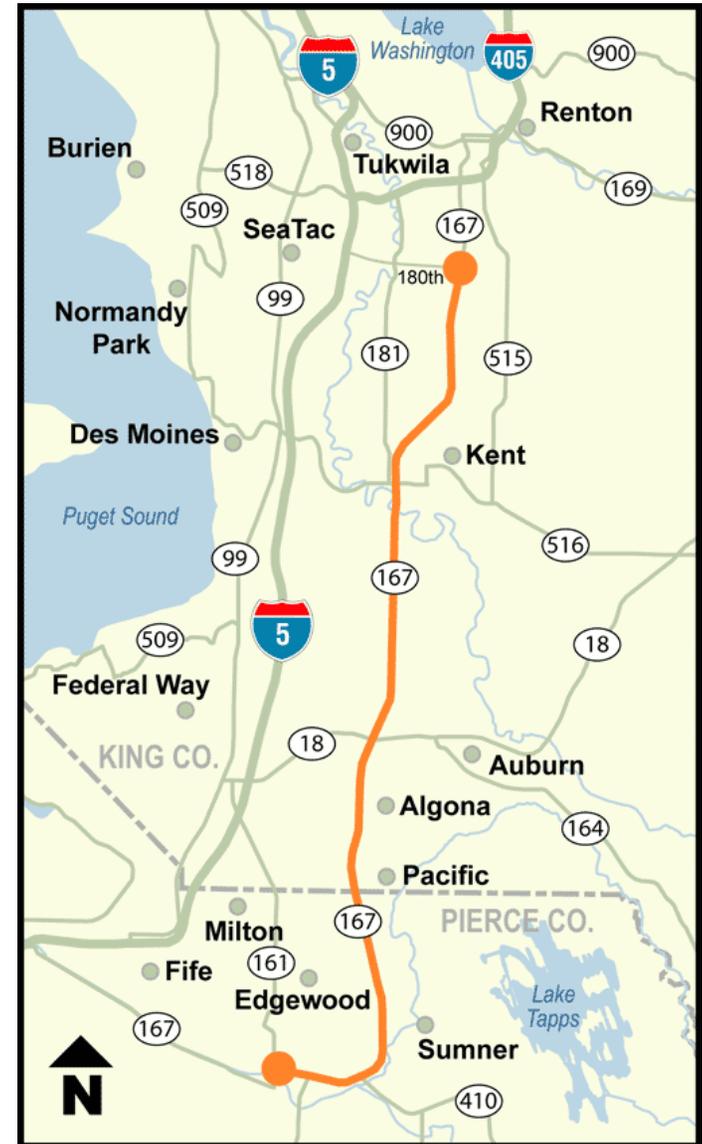
April 26 – May 3

- New technology will need to be refined to meet our needs.
- Complicated logarithms must be tweaked to find our “sweet spot.”
- We’ll learn from each experience and make the system better.
- There is a possibility the system will reach \$9 or go to “HOV only” during peak commute times.
- Confusion about crossing double white lines and when to start moving over to make your exit.
- Important to remember this is a pilot project, designed to gain information and improve as we go.



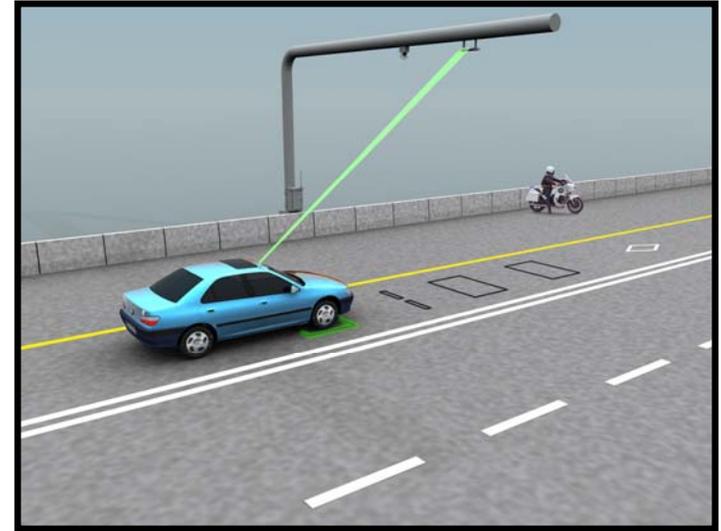
Additional SR 167 work

- Completion of the highway widening from Auburn to Puyallup.
 - one southbound lane from 277th St to 8th St E in Pierce County
- Improvements to the I-405 / SR 167 interchange (one of the most congested in the state) including:
 - one lane in each direction to I-405 between I-5 and SR 169
 - one southbound lane on SR 167 between I-405 and S. 180th
 - Proposition One included freeway to freeway HOV ramps



HOT lane enforcement

- Consistent enforcement is important to build public trust and sense of fairness.
- WSDOT is working with the Washington State Patrol to enforce the new rules of the road.
- Traffic citations can be issued for the following violations:
 - Illegal use of HOT lane by single-occupancy vehicle
 - Attempt to avoid paying required toll
 - Crossing double white lines
 - **Three possible citations, each citation is \$124**
- Drivers can use the HERO system to report violators.



Simulation of WSP monitoring HOT lanes



Hand-held Enforcement Reader

Summary of public outreach activities

- **Design and construction**

- Public open houses held in 2005 and 2006.
- 6 focus groups – general public, low-income, small business.
- Project survey of SR 167 drivers.
- Presenting project information to local commute trip reduction program meetings.
- Outreach to local elected officials.
- Ongoing responses to citizen correspondence.

- **Opening**

- Driver education campaign to inform drivers about the new rules of the road when HOT lanes open.
- *Good to Go!* mobile customer service centers at locations along SR 167.



Feedback from public

Most frequently received complaints in the last month

1. “HOT lanes are not a good idea” – 35 comments “It is doubtful this will do anything other than increase congestion.” “These toll lanes are ridiculous!”
2. “HOT lanes will slow the HOV lane” – 21 comments “45 mph is a slow down of the HOV lane.” “This added traffic in the HOV lane has now reduced the benefit of a HOV lane to little more than the same crawl of other lanes.”
3. “I don’t like the transponder shield” or “The shield should be free” – 20 comments “Why should I have to pay to shield my transponder when I carpool? This is another government rip-off.” “Wow, what a bargain. I have to pay so I don’t have to pay.”
4. “How do I avoid a charge when I’m an HOV?” – 14 comments “How does this work when I have two people in my car?”

Feedback from public

Support for the HOT lane concept

1. “My commute from Orting to Bellevue every day is very difficult. I would pay a toll for a chance to save time.”
2. “These HOT lanes are a very, very, very good idea and I'm glad to see it being tested in our state.”
3. “I use SR 167 between Auburn and Renton daily and I am looking forward to being able to use the HOV lane if I so choose.”

User feedback on Minnesota HOT lanes

A system very similar to SR 167
HOT lanes opened in Minnesota in
2005. Survey of MnPASS drivers
found:

- 95% satisfaction with all electronic tolling
- 85% satisfaction with traffic speed in lane
- 76% satisfaction with dynamic pricing
- 66% satisfaction with safety of merging



Project assessment

WSDOT will report to the Legislature and the Transportation Commission annually, on such items as:

- a. Freeway efficiency and safety;
- b. Effectiveness for transit;
- c. Person and vehicle movements by mode;
- d. Ability to finance improvements and transportation services through tolls;
- e. The impacts on all highway users. The department will analyze aggregate use data and conduct, as needed, surveys to assess usage of the facility with geographic, socioeconomic, and demographic information.

For more information

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