

CHRISTINE O. GREGOIRE
Governor



STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

P.O. Box 40002 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0002 • (360) 753-6780 • www.governor.wa.gov

March 3, 2008

The Honorable Frank Chopp
Speaker of the House
Post Office Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

The Honorable Lisa Brown
Washington State Senate
Post Office Box 40403
Olympia, WA 98504-0403

The Honorable Mary Margaret Haugen
Washington State Senate
Post Office Box 40410
Olympia, WA 98504-0410

The Honorable Judy Clibborn
Washington House of Representatives
Post Office Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Dear Speaker *Chopp*, Senators Brown and Haugen, and Representative Clibborn:

As you know, the SR 520 bridge is a vulnerable structure that must be replaced. In the last four years, we have made progress toward a goal of replacing the structure and improving the corridor by 2018. I have informed the Department that the timeline is too long. After receiving the bridge replacement finance plan in January, I asked the Washington State Department of Transportation to explore options for accelerating the construction of the SR 520 bridge and necessary improvements to the corridor.

Late last week the Department reported back to me. With your passage of my 520 bill, I am pleased to inform you that a new SR 520 floating bridge will be complete in the Fall of 2014. The full SR 520 corridor improvements from Interstate 5 to Interstate 405 will be complete by 2016. These changes, in addition to the pontoon proposal provided in January of 2008, will provide a savings of approximately \$500 to \$700 million on the total project cost and avoid delay costs.

Enclosed please find a memo addressed to me from Secretary Hammond providing the steps we will take to move this very important project along in an expedited manner.

Further, I am pleased to inform you that a location for pontoon construction has been determined. This is important so we can begin in 2009. Grays Harbor will be the location for the pontoon construction.

I appreciate all your continued efforts on this critical project and look forward to the opportunity to work together to build a new SR 520 bridge by 2014.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris".

Christine O. Gregoire
Governor

Enclosure





Washington State
Department of Transportation
Paula J. Hammond, P.E.
Secretary of Transportation

Transportation Building
310 Maple Park Avenue S.E.
P.O. Box 47300
Olympia, WA 98504-7300

360-705-7000
TTY: 1-800-833-6388
www.wsdot.wa.gov

March 3, 2008

The Honorable Christine Gregoire
Governor, State of Washington
PO Box 40002
Olympia, Wa 98504-0002

Dear Governor Gregoire:

In January you asked us to explore opportunities for expediting the construction schedule for the SR 520 bridge replacement project, as well as methods for saving costs on the project. I asked our project engineers to focus on how the critical safety problems can be addressed as quickly as possible.

I am pleased to inform you that a new SR 520 floating bridge will be complete in the Fall of 2014. Additionally, the full SR 520 corridor improvements from Interstate 5 to Interstate 405 will be complete by 2016. These changes, in addition to the pontoon proposal provided in January of 2008, provide a savings of approximately \$500-700 million on the total project cost.

We will be able to accomplish this accelerated schedule through the following actions:

- By expediting the environmental process
 - Identify SDEIS options in April 2008
 - Identify preliminary preferred option in December 2008
 - Identify final preferred option in May 2009
 - Streamline Federal ESA consultation process
 - Advance wetland mitigation projects
- By advancing pontoon construction
 - Begin pontoon construction in fall 2009 at existing graving dock facilities
 - Accelerate permitting and mitigation for new graving dock at Grays Harbor and begin site construction in spring 2010
- By accelerating construction in the SR 520 corridor
 - Identify and implement early projects (transit ramps, stormwater and other mitigation sites)
 - Accelerate Portage Bay Bridge construction
 - Break ground in corridor no later than spring 2012
- By finalizing the finance plan
 - Build on the financial plan outlined in ESHB 3096
 - Adopt final tolling plan and cash flow plan to support accelerated construction by May 2009

Should you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Paula J. Hammond, P.E.
Secretary of Transportation