

2015 SR 16 Tacoma Narrows Bridge Rate Increase Messaging

Key Messages

The Transportation Commission is proposing a 50 cent increase to toll rates for the Tacoma Narrows Bridge (TNB) on July 1 of both 2015 and 2016. Two years ago, the Transportation Commission adopted a two-year toll rate schedule that included quarter increases in both 2013 and 2014.

Each year, the Transportation Commission, with guidance from the TNB Citizen Advisory Committee, examines traffic and revenue statistics to ensure the toll rates for the Tacoma Narrows Bridge cover costs as required by law including debt payments, operational costs, and maintenance of the bridge.

The Transportation Commission works with WSDOT and the TNB Citizen Advisory Committee to establish new toll rates through an open process to ensure we have an efficient and accountable system.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who sets Tacoma Narrows Bridge toll rates?

The [Washington State Transportation Commission](#) sets toll rates for all Washington state toll facilities. The commission gathers input and feedback from the Tacoma Narrows Bridge Citizen Advisory Committee and WSDOT during the rate setting process.

How does the commission make their decision?

The [Washington State Transportation Commission](#) works with WSDOT and the public to establish toll rates for all highways and bridges in Washington state. The WSTC begins each toll setting process with the advice of the Governor's appointed Tacoma Narrows Bridge Citizen Advisory Committee. WSDOT presents and the WSTC reviews traffic and revenue each year to determine whether new toll rates are needed to cover operational costs and debt payments. At meetings in early 2015, WSDOT presented the information shared with the Citizen Advisory Committee. The Citizen Advisory Committee provided their toll rate recommendation to the commission. The commission takes into consideration all relevant traffic and financial information when determining toll rates.

Why are toll rates increasing?

The payment schedule for the bonds sold to build the bridge changes each year. From fiscal year 2013 to fiscal year 2017, debt service payments grow from \$45 million to \$70 million annually.

What information does the commission consider when setting toll rates for the bridges?

The commission reviews traffic volumes, gross revenues, traffic and revenue forecasts, and anticipated costs when determining the needed toll rate levels. Per state law, all tolls collected on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge are used to pay the debt on bonds used to finance the new bridge, and cover ongoing operations and maintenance costs.

When do the new toll rates go into effect?

The proposed rates go into effect on July 1, 2015 and July 1, 2016.

How much more will the average commuter pay to use the bridge?

The 50-cent rate increase results in \$2.50 more per week for the average weekday commuter using a *Good To Go!* pass or approximately \$10 more per month to use the bridge.

What is the sufficient minimum balance on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge and how does it affect toll rates?

The sufficient minimum balance ensures that we have enough revenue to cover at least 45 days of expenses if there were an interruption in toll revenue collection or if traffic volume declines due to an unforeseen circumstance. The revenues generated to provide this sufficient balance are retained in the Tacoma Narrows Bridge account and cannot be used for any other purpose.