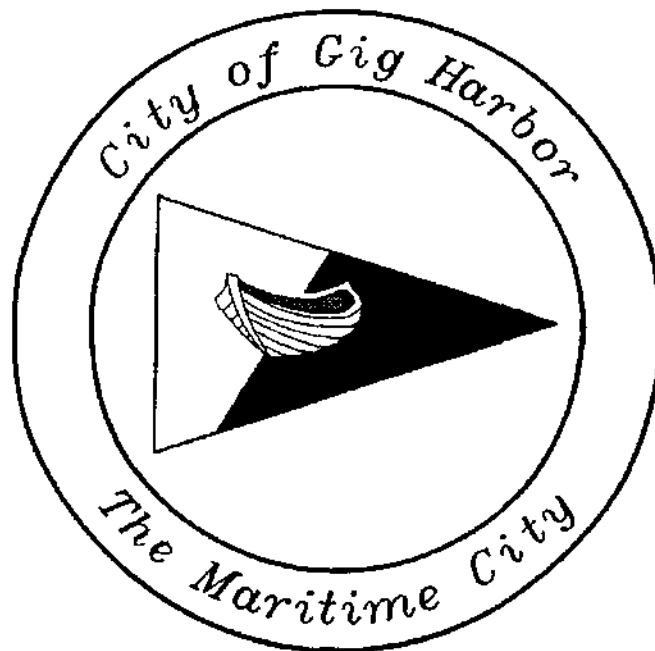


Gig Harbor Special City Council Meeting



**June 19, 2000
6:00 p.m.**

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE GIG HARBOR CITY COUNCIL

June 19, 2000 - 6:00 p.m.

Gig Harbor City Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER:

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Economic Impacts of the Proposed Narrows Bridge project.

ADJOURN:



City of Gig Harbor. The "Maritime City"

3105 JUDSON STREET
GIG HARBOR, WASHINGTON 98335
(253) 851-8136

TO: CITY COUNCILMEMBERS
FROM: MAYOR GRETCHEN WILBERT *GW*
SUBJECT: NARROWS BRIDGE FEIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS
DATE: JUNE 19, 2000

INFORMATION/BACKGROUND

I'm sorry to miss this very important meeting. A granddaughter's graduation takes precedence. I do have an opinion I'd like to share as you deliberate whether or not we, as a city, should respond to the FEIS, and what our response should be.

I believe we should respond to the failure of the FEIS to address the economic impacts to the citizens of Gig Harbor and the Kitsap Peninsula.

First, I want to thank Mark for the hours and hours he has given to attending meetings, conferring with Tom Horken of United Infrastructure, and analyzing the DEIS and the FEIS.

I also believe, as reported in the Seattle PI, that the Washington Transportation Commission (an appointed advisory group), holds a trump card to eliminate the United Infrastructure contract. Nothing would make me happier. *It's still unbelievable to continue to anticipate spending \$700 million plus for a bridge that not only won't solve the problems, but will create more congestion at both ends.* I believe we have a card to play.

A year ago, I carried a copy of your Resolution No. 533 in opposition of the toll to Governor Locke. He indicated to me how surprised he was to see the toll initiative on his ballot in Thurston County. At about the same time, with Resolution in hand, I testified before the Washington Transportation Commission and the Governor's Blue Ribbon Transportation in opposition to the tolls. I also testified before the Senate Transportation Committee.

Now, I believe that timing is right for the voice of the City of Gig Harbor to be heard once again. I believe that we owe it to our citizens and our neighbors to do what we can to share our voice. You have all heard the saying "*silence sometimes speaks louder than words.*" We must not be silent on this issue.

The Washington State Transportation Commission is looking for us "to play our card." I'll carry the Council's message for you wherever it needs to go. To help make the contract go away would be money well spent on our part. An appeal of the FEIS might be one method to play that card.

June 16, 2000

Mayor Gretchen Wilbert
Gig Harbor City Council Members

I am here to encourage you to appeal the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) on the proposed second Narrows Bridge. I have many concerns, as a resident of the City of Gig Harbor.

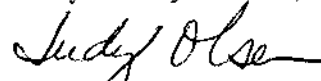
I would like to speak to you tonight as a homeowner and parent. From this perspective my biggest concern with the FEIS is the complete lack of a decent Economic study. As a homeowner I would like to know what the impact on my property value will be. I want to know if it's reasonable to plan on selling my home in 5 years or whether we'd be better off to sell sooner. As a parent I have serious concerns about how the tolls will impact the schools. It is difficult enough to pass school levies in this area. I would suspect that when you add an extra expense of \$100-\$300 a month onto the budgets of Peninsula residents they will be much less likely to give to the school.

On a larger scale, what impact will these tolls have on the overall make-up of this community? Again, I suspect, that lower to middle income families will be forced to move across the bridge. That in turn will have a tremendous effect on schools, business and other services. Lastly, and the issue that may be most important to you- What will this do to tourism? I think I can answer that without a study. It will greatly diminish, if not kill it, and change the character of our town forever.

As I have stated, these are my suspicions of what will happen. The reality is that no one can effectively answer these questions because there has been no study! Why hasn't one been done? The Department of Transportation says it is because the tolls and the bridge are two separate things. If that's the case maybe they could let us opt to have one without the other. "The tolls are simply a means of paying for the bridge". That is simply their way of avoiding the study that they know will show negative economic impacts on this community. How could it not? If this useless project goes through these things will happen, but it is important to receive some mitigation where we can. And yes, it's probable that any mitigation costs will be tucked back into the tolls that we pay. But that should not prevent us from seeking those measures, especially for the sake of our schools.

I realize that it would cost the city a considerable amount of money to appeal the FEIS, but I think it is imperative that you do so. It is not a wonder so many people in this town feel defeated by this project. Everyone knows that it is a bad deal, and yet they feel like there is nothing they can do about it. It is important for you, the leadership of our community, to take a stand against Goliath. Please do not be intimidated by the opponent or by the cost. If you look simply at the FEIS you will see that it is woefully incomplete. It is up to you to demand a proper Economic study be done to protect Gig Harbor from irreparable harm.

Thank you for your time,



Judy Olsen

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Gig Harbor, WA 98335

853-7001