

November 6, 2023

## Oregon Toll Program Implementation Report Outline

### Equitable Toll Program Development and Diversion Management and Mitigation Plans

As ODOT works to implement tolls on I-5 and I-205 in the Portland metro region, input from community members and leaders throughout the region continues to shape the Oregon Toll Program. Through this process, we have heard two primary questions raised by elected officials and residents:

- How will ODOT ensure a toll program is equitable and does not cause further harm to low-income families?
- How will tolls on major interstates impact travel on nearby local streets and neighborhoods?

On May 4, 2023, in response to concerns raised by elected officials and region residents, Governor Kotek directed ODOT to delay toll collection until January 1, 2026. The updated timeline provides us more time to develop a toll program that works for Oregonians and the Portland metro region, with public and partner input throughout the process.

Before toll collection can begin in 2026, there are many decisions still to be made to shape the Oregon Toll Program policies, pricing, and design. The Implementation Report will give the public and our partners an update on our efforts and plans to center equity in the Oregon Toll Program and our plans and process to minimize traffic diversion to local streets. It will provide an overview of the key decisions that have been made and how public input has influenced the toll program since 2017. It will also detail how partners and the public will help inform the important decisions ahead.

This outline provides an overview of the contents of the Oregon Toll Program Implementation Report that will be presented to the Oregon Transportation Commission on December 11, and sent to the governor's office by December 15.

### Equitable Toll Program Development Plan

***The impact of tolls on low-income households is one of the primary concerns we have heard in our work with regional partners and through community engagement.***

This section will present our continued efforts to center the voices of community members who have been historically underrepresented in transportation decisions. We will share the work that has been led by the Equity Mobility Advisory Committee (EMAC) to establish a low-income toll program, and we will detail upcoming policy decisions that could impact low-income and underserved communities.

There are many decisions that have not yet been made for the toll program policies or projects. Some of these outstanding decisions include income thresholds for benefits and draft rules for enrollment,

verification processes for the low-income toll program, and toll rate-setting and rate-adjustment processes.

As we continue to develop the Oregon Toll Program, it is critical that ODOT and our partners have the information and analysis they need to make informed recommendations on impactful policy decisions.

The Equitable Toll Program Development Plan will dive into four topic areas:

- **Understanding equity and the needs of our community:** *We are engaging our partners and the region's public as we develop the Oregon Toll Program, with the desire to reflect their input in the program.* This section will focus on equitable engagement and how input received has and will inform decision making.
- **Establishing a low-income toll program:** *While we are one of the last metropolitan areas in the United States to implement tolling, we will be the first in the country to have a low-income toll program on day one of operations.* This section will describe the low-income toll program purpose, development process, next steps, and anticipated outcomes.
- **Developing toll rules for an accessible and equitable toll program:** *We are prioritizing equity as we develop the broader foundational statewide toll rules for the Oregon Toll Program, which will be applicable to all future toll projects in the state.* This section will present an overview of the toll rulemaking policy process, policy decisions already made, and those occurring in the future.
- **Long-term equity commitments and accountability:** *We plan to sustain our equity commitments by establishing and committing to a long-term monitoring and accountability processes.* This section will provide an overview of key accountability considerations, commitments made by the Oregon Transportation Commission, and decision points to establish the accountability process.

## **Diversion Management and Mitigation Plan**

***We have heard regional and local partner agencies, residents, and businesses express great concern about traffic diversion from the tolled interstates to adjacent highways and local roads. As we plan, design, and ultimately implement the toll program, our top priority is to significantly improve travel on the tolled interstates and raise revenue for transportation needs, and to do so in a way that minimizes impacts to local communities.***

This section will present our approach to limiting vehicle diversion from the tolled interstates onto the local road network through toll project development and design. A process timeline will be presented that details when and how diversion mitigation will be identified, and when the public and partners will be engaged in that process. The plan will outline our proposed approach to developing the Oregon Toll Program Adaptive Traffic Management Framework, including the preliminary steps we will take to continuously assess the effectiveness of the toll projects. This will include how and when we will initiate a process to identify solutions for any unforeseen traffic impacts. This plan will cover three topic areas:

- **Toll program and project design:** *We aim to avoid and minimize traffic diversion from the tolled interstates to adjacent highways and local roadway network in the first place by (1) setting appropriate toll rates to balance traffic at the lowest fee possible and (2) selecting gantry locations to discourage excessive toll avoidance. If analysis identifies traffic diversion that causes community impacts through the federal environmental analysis and review process, we will work with impacted communities to identify and implement mitigation.* This section will focus on our goal to avoid and minimize diversion early in the development process, such as through identifying appropriate toll rate

structures and toll gantry locations. It will also present our approach to identifying, developing, and vetting required mitigation for harmful diversion.

- **Oregon Toll Program Adaptive Traffic Management Framework:** *After implementing toll projects, we will not “set it and forget it.” We will continue to collaborate with regional partners to assess travel and diversion patterns after tolls begin and into the future. As the toll system begins operation, if we find that it causes any significant traffic diversion impacts to the local community and roadway network, we will work with partners to identify solutions.* This section will present a summary of steps to establish and adjust components of a management program, the toll project, or the toll program as a whole as needed to reflect evolving needs and conditions.
- **Projects that complement the Oregon Toll Program:** *We will continue to collaborate with regional partners to explore other multimodal investments and funding opportunities to expand travel options for those who need to travel on or near the tolled interstates.* This section will present the efforts and next steps to support our partners to identify and refine the list of projects that complement the toll projects.