

Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee (EMAC) Meeting 20 Public Comments

Date received	7/19/2022
Source	Project inbox
From	Rachel Long
Subject	Committee Public Comment

I am writing to express my concerns about the tolling project underway in Oregon City. This is direct discrimination against Oregon City residents. We already pay an outrageous amount in taxes and now you want to make residents pay each way just to go to work each day. This project is a complete disaster of epic proportions! Not only will it make traffic congestion worse, it is stealing money from hurting families and residents of a small community. No one asked the residents of small communities that will be directly affected for our opinions. Almost no one knows about the project. It's like it's being done in secret, behind the backs of the residents. This is NOT okay! Such a huge damning affect this will have on already struggling families. Everyone knows the tolls should be between Oregon and Washington and California. The interstate travel is what makes our traffic the way it is. NOT OKAY to unjustly tax already overtaxed residents of a small Oregon community. You are discriminating against residents of a particular area and forcing us to pay more than other residents in other surrounding areas. How is this justified?! I am beyond dissatisfied with Oregon government.

Date received	8/22/2022
Source	Project inbox
From	Crista Toth
Subject	Committee Public Comment

Everyone I know strongly objects to the toll being built on the highways at present. Right now all people are struggling with the regular daily cost of living due to inflation. We see the amount of money being spent on building a device that will cost the individual. It is the regular people that will suffer for this. The people simply can not afford additional fees at this time. Take a look around and assess the situation rationally. People are suffering. Don't cause more harm at this time.

Stop the toll building now. When it was approved, the people had no idea how strapped that we would be at this time due to financial hardship imposed by Covid and out of control inflation.

Stop the building of this now! Or else we will all suffer the consequences. Our family for one will never drive on the toll road. We will cause traffic delays elsewhere a purpose in order to avoid paying more in government fees, and that is what should be expected here in Oregon.

Stop the madness.

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Date received	8/22/2022
Source	Project inbox
From	Travis Woodward
Subject	Committee Public Comment

Benjamin Franklin once said "Those who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety."

Please don't punish those less fortunate than yourselves by charging them for traveling through your area. All people are created equal. That even includes those who are less fortunate financially. Please look into your hearts and feel their utter frustration. You will only regulate travel if you want to further dishearten people and further the social divide.

Date received	8/26/2022
Source	Project inbox
From	E Thor
Subject	Committee Public Comment

As a resident of Oregon who commutes daily through the pdx area I am opposed to any tolls. The use of tolls unfairly burdens the economically disadvantaged and ensure they are unable to travel freely. As an indigenous person enrolled with a federally recognized tribe in Oregon I find it offensive that the state wants to restrict my movement about my ancestral lands, and a toll is a restriction as you are taking my resources without my ability to refuse.

Date received	8/26/2022
Source	Project inbox
From	Francis Vandervelden
Subject	Chapter 3 57 page tolling document draft report.

EMAC I was reading the whole document and had a question or two that didn't go into further detail.

Persons experiencing a disability:

Is there a consolidated list from all the review studies on the term Disabled is? There has to be a list on all the other regions, Cities on what constitutes them. Case in Point I am a disable veteran with a VA 55% disability. I hobble around and refuse for now to get a DVM Disabled permit. Will the tolling like the OREGO I have been with for a couple years have the disability tag forwarded to the tolling company for the discount? Will this also show for temp Disability people that have them for a set period? If I show I have a disability and don't show the tag (many take it off the mirror) when they drive, still have the disability?

Black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC)

My Father in Law is Native American, (he hates the word indigenous) I drive him to all of his appointments at KP, will the tolling separate out when I drive him around verses just the family or himself, John is Blackfoot and 75+ years old.

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Outcome Equity:

Travel costs. Change in travel costs for historically excluded and underserved communities:

So we coworkers all live in Independence and Monmouth. Black, White, Asian and Hispanic. We are underserved as a rural community. Driving to and from Portland we are already driving 57.5 miles each way to work. Why should we have to pay the toll when we already share a car pool? Will car/van pooling discounted since are doing are part to save fuel, reduce emissions and snooze all the way to work?

Just a few things in my head, thank you for your time. BTW OREGO is AWESOME!

Date received	8/28/2022
Source	Project inbox
From	Mary Rigert
Subject	Committee Public Comment

NO TOLLS!

I do not know how or when this “committee” has been formed and come to the conclusion that Oregon citizens want “tolls” on our roads.

WE DO NOT WANT TOLLS ON OREGON ROADS.

We expect gas taxes and money from other Oregon taxes to with upkeep and new roads strengthen our road system. Commerce needs to be encouraged, NOT discouraged.

Several family/friend members have left Oregon. I want to stay and keep it filled with prosperity which includes a thriving transportation system for vehicles.

You say:

“They help solicit feedback and participation from youth, older adults, Black, Indigenous, people of color, and multi-racial people, people who may speak a language other than English, and people living with a disability.”

Each of us is a WHOLE person who pays taxes or just want the state to take care of the roads so that we will transport ourselves, no matter age, color, sex or other language! Grow up, please. We are each adults to prosper and take care of our environment very well, thank you.

Note: This comment was sent verbatim on 6/20/2022 and appears in the Meeting 19 Public Comments.

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Date received	11/22/2022
Source	Project inbox
From	Benjamin Van Winkle
Subject	ATTN: Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee // RE: Tolling I-5 and I-205

I wanted to provide feedback on the proposed tolling I-5 and I-205. I have read the provided materials on the ODOT website, and I have watched the “How will tolling work on I-5 and I-205” video. After careful consideration, I remain strongly AGAINST tolling of I-5 or I-205. Please do not do this!

I am a Lyft driver. I make my very meager living on the road. I strongly suspect that adding tolls will add to my personal operating costs in a such a way as to make my work financially unfeasible. While I know that in areas with tolls Lyft typically adds the costs of those tolls to the rider’s fare, what many people do not realize about rideshare, is that all of the costs involved of GETTING to the passenger to pick them up are placed on the driver. This means that if the proposed tolls go through then I, as a driver, would have to pay just to get to my passenger’s pickup location. One or two tolls a day would not be that big of a deal, but multiple tolls would add up very quickly.

That’s my personal concern, about how the proposed tolls would affect me personally, but I am also dubious about the stated goal of reducing congestion. As I understand the premise, by inflicting a higher toll on drivers during busy times this will encourage drivers to plan their trips during non-peak hours, thus reducing congestion. But how will the proposed toll be any more of a disincentive than having to sit in traffic? What I mean is that the traffic jams during peak hours already provide a substantial disincentive to not drive during those times. The people who CAN plan their trips for different times are doing that already. I strongly suspect that the congestion on Portland area freeways has more to do with pure population growth, and less to do with people being careless about timing their trips. I don’t see adding a toll being an effective way to reduce congestion.

The long and the short of it is that this Portland area resident and voter is strongly AGAINST any tolling measures. Don’t do it!

Date received	11/22/2022
Source	Project inbox
From	Debbie Guzie
Subject	EMAC public comment

NO TOLLING please?

Please consider the risks and liabilities tolling will create.

Drivers hoping to avoid tolling will look to travel on surface streets and will negatively affect neighborhoods. The list of problems that this creates in just the Old Willamette neighborhood in West Linn include:

1. Miles of back up on Borland Road when I-205 is slow. This already occurs and will get much worse.

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2. Additional traffic comes with more danger to pedestrians. This area has significant pedestrian traffic resulting from restaurants, food carts, bars, hair salons, summer markets, and more.
3. Risk of more fender benders. The on-street parking on Willamette Falls Drive, creates bad blind spots for those that are backing up into traffic.
4. More confused drivers with risk of additional accidents. There are weird set-back stop signs on the side streets that meet up with Willamette Falls Drive. These create a problem when you stop at the stop sign but then have to slowly roll forward so the oncoming traffic can see you.
5. Endangering school children and pets. The commuters that are in a hurry, already get off of Willamette Falls Drive and race through side streets that have no sidewalks. They expect 4 way stops that do NOT exist. They endanger the children at Willamette Primary School, pedestrians and pets.
6. More accidents. Many of the side streets do not have street lights. It is very dark! This becomes a much bigger issue when daylight hours are shorter and commuters are driving in the dark.
7. Hitting wildlife. We have plenty of wildlife since we are close to The Tualatin and Willamette rivers. Squirrels, Coyotes, Deer, Skunks, Possums, and feral cats live here alongside us and our pets. No one wants to run into an animal.

Freeway commuters that are unfamiliar with the area and it's nuances, will and already do cause additional risks for themselves, other drivers, pedestrians and animals. I've seen and experienced all of this first hand.

Please recognize that tolling I-205 comes with serious side effects. The traffic will not go away, it will be pushed into our neighborhoods and side streets. I have to question if ODOT has really considered ALL of the risks and liabilities.

Thank you,
Debbie Guzie

Date received	11/22/2022
Source	Project inbox
From	NA NA
Subject	EMAC Public Comment

I am a home owner in North Portland and I am violently opposed to ODOT's plan to congestion toll Portland.

I will loudly oppose this regressive tax that will negatively impact poorer Portlandians the most. I will make sure to vote for Metro candidates who oppose this outrageous tax on the poor.

Greedy ODOT is picking a fight that they will lose.

There's no way you can claim a regressive tax like congestions tolling won't severely impact the economically challenged and Portlandians of color the most. This tax will expose ODOT's claims of "equity" as a lie.

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Date received	11/22/2022
Source	Project inbox
From	Virginia Rose
Subject	Scoping Comments-Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee

Dear Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee:

Do Not Toll 205 or I-5. I completely disagree with any toll of any kind on Freeways 205 and I-5.

- I think it's completely unfair for the government to toll at specific times and have us pay a toll when we just happen to have to commute to work at that time and don't have to pay if we work at an off time. For instance, I'm a School Counselor and would always have to commute/work between 6 to 5, which would always be tolled. I can't change when I work and commute at a different time so I wouldn't have to pay the toll-I can't make that choice.
- I know you said you are going to put in some kind of low-income payment system for those with less money, but are you also going to do that for senior citizens who need it, teens and college students who can't afford the tolls, and those with disabilities?
- Having an all-electric system also smacks a little of Big Brother, keeping track of when we travel and where. Who is going to have access to this information? It seems like whenever there is this type of information gathered, either the government or the police get a hold of it, usually under the guise of looking for information for crimes committed. Not that I want toll booths either. Neither choice is viable.
- How are you going to get toll payments from visitors passing through or company trucks, etc. passing through if everything is electronic? Would they have their own toll booth? Will you toll Washingtonians coming out of Washington who commute to Oregon for work or shopping?
- To avoid a toll, people are bound to try to bypass them and go on side streets. This will cause a lot of problems in neighborhoods near the toll entrances and exits-heavy traffic, more accidents, more pollution near homes.

It seems like a fairer type of system would be taxes on gas, which would at least get those people who live in Oregon and travel here; although I admit it might not get all visitors and people coming over from Vancouver especially-they may not stop for gas.

I hope you actually listen to the people, who I know will not want tolls on 205 and I-5 and not just ram this through like most of these types of proposals are. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Virginia Rose

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Date received	11/22/2022
Source	Project inbox
From	Kerry Garrow
Subject	EMAC

Hello, from one of thousands of fixed income residents of Charbonneau. We are all concerned about the heavy financial burden that the tolls will place on our lives. Most everyone that lives here does their shopping, banking and medical care in Wilsonville. This community is not part of the problem on the freeways. I would like to see our public servants take care of the aging population by exempting us from the tolls or adjusting their locations so that we can go safely and affordably about our business. We all wait to go out after rush hour in the morning and endeavor to get home again before the craziness begins again around 2:30 pm.

Our 95 yo mother lives in SpringRidge in Charbonneau and she depends on us to transport her for shopping, banking and medical appointments. This financial burden would just be too much for us.

Thank you for your consideration and service,
K L Garrow

Date received	11/22/2022
Source	Project inbox
From	Dr. Kendall Horn
Subject	Interstate tolling

To the Committee,

I would like this entered into written testimony on tolling on I5 and I 205 and any other current proposed tolling of existing roads. I am not opposed to tolling new lanes particularly bypass and high speed or HOV lanes. I regularly use toll lanes while transiting other states however in all cases in other state existing interstate and state highways are not tolled and are no cost alternatives to toll roads. I am unalterably opposed to placing tolls on existing roads and "congestion pricing". Both of these proposals reward individuals that work at home or have flex schedules that allow avoidance of toll roads and congestion pricing and penalize individuals that are employed in shift work, trades, and delivery and home services. These groups tend to be lower income than those individuals working remotely and working flex schedules and is inherently unfair and discriminatory. It is also both inflationary as costs of tolls inflicted on delivery of goods and services will be passed along and tolls will negatively impact workers income that have no choice but to pay tolls to maintain employment with no guarantee that their employers will be inclined or able to compensate them for the increased cost of commuting. Thank you for entering this into testimony on tolling

Sincerely
Kendall F Horn DMD

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Date received	11/30/2022
Source	Project inbox
From	Brian Hall
Subject	EMAC Public Comment

Hi,

Could you provide specific details on the below points, as I've yet to see any.

1. How will odot, or other involved agencies, avoid and/or prevent traffic diversion into West Linn, Lake Oswego and other surrounding communities to avoid tolling?
2. How will odot, or other involved agencies, prevent unfair and excess tolling on communities that are adjacent to the tolled areas (like west Linn, Lake Oswego and Oregon City residents), which have no other options but to use I-205 to access any other areas?
3. How will odot, or other involved agencies, prevent unfair and excess tolling on community residents (like west Linn, Lake Oswego and Oregon City residents) that cannot modify their established driving patterns, due to employment, health care, child care/school, etc.?
4. I would like to hear from someone in this process who has performed an itemized accounting of all funding sources odot, and other involved agencies, to determine they are being effectively allocated and consumed. That there is no waste occurring.
5. A detailed explanation for why tolling is the only option to provide any necessary gap funding that will unfairly burden selective communities and why these specific entry/exit points for the tolling were selected?

Date received	12/1/2022
Source	Project inbox
From	Alice Fessler
Subject	EMAC Public Comment

Well as I stated above, no tolling please!

I have yet to work with an employee who allows me too much flexibility in my start and stop time. So why is their rush hour....could it be because most businesses still have the basic 8-5, 9-6 schedule for employees?

Maybe it's because every school I know (and I have worked in education for 25 years) follows a 7:30 early start to around 4:15 ending?

So unless banks, medical offices, and certainly ALL government businesses including schools are going to allow flexibility in their schedules, we don't have a choice as to when we drive on the roads. I would love to NOT be in rush hour traffic on I-205 or stuck in any traffic but I don't have that choice.

So to make my commute even worse, hey, how about charging me to drive in this rush hour traffic??

I am already paying gas taxes, (gladly), registration fees (gladly), car insurance (gladly) and a car payment (only a few more left!!) and maintenance needed to keep my car running (new tires last month, new brakes this past summer) and I accept that this is the price I pay to own a vehicle and be able to drive. And I believe that is good enough! I cannot scrape together any more money to pay for a toll (remember, I work in the education field).

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I've lived in Oregon my entire life and I am well equipped to find my way through neighborhoods whenever possible but I cannot cross the Willamette River via a neighborhood. Canby Ferry....maybe!

So I will be one of those commuters who won't even need GPS to find my way to work via small back roads that wind through local neighborhoods. And trust me, you do not want commuters doing that. It will only end up with more car vs pedestrian accidents because that's where the people are....walking nearby neighborhood streets. I have yet to see too many people strolling along I-205.

In conclusion, if you believe this will be such a positive thing for all commuters, than by all means let the commuters of the greater Portland metropolitan area vote on this issue. Why wouldn't you???

Sincerely,
Alice Beseau