

Regional Mobility Pricing Project

Summer 2021 Engagement Report Appendix

Discussion Group Summaries

November 2021



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Prepared for:



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1 Discussion Group Summaries

This section includes summaries from six community discussion groups that were held with members of historically excluded and underserved communities.

Table 1-1. Discussion group summary table

Discussion group	Date	Number of attendees
Vietnamese Discussion Group	August 4, 2021	10
Latin American Discussion Group	August 10, 2021	11
Chinese Discussion Group	August 15, 2021	12
Native American Discussion Group	August 16, 2021	6
Slavic Discussion Group	August 17, 2021	13
Black/African American Discussion Group	September 13, 2021	7

1.1 Vietnamese Discussion Group

Liaison Name:	Jay Tang and Thi Luong
Audience:	Vietnamese Community
Date:	8/4/2021
Number of Attendees:	10

I. Introduction

1. **What's your name and what part of town do you live in?** (*Note: can omit names from summary*)

Response:

Most participants live in SE Portland and some are in NE Portland.

2. **Tell us about your experience on I-5 and I-205.**

- Is traffic a problem?

Response:

Congestion is mainly the problem for them to go to work, visit family and go shopping, especially during rush hour.

II. Discussion about key issues

3. What do you see as the biggest problems on I-5 and I-205? What makes it hard to get to where you need to go?

Response:

Options	# of responses
Traffic is getting worse.	Mostly yes.
There is not enough money from gas taxes and other revenue sources to fix Oregon’s highways and reduce traffic.	Mostly disagreed.
It takes too long to get to work.	Yes due to conjection.
It takes too long for trucks to deliver goods.	They might not know since none of them are not truck driver.
Cars and trucks stuck in traffic means more emissions and contributes to climate change.	They might not care enough to tell.
It’s not easy for people with low incomes, disabilities, and other barriers to get to where they need to go.	Most are low income but have no issue go where they needed to.

4. **What type of community destinations do you need to get to? What is missing from the list below?** *Ask attendees to share feedback in the chat.*
- a. Schools
 - b. Hospitals/Medical Centers
 - c. Parks
 - d. Work
 - e. Community Centers
 - f. Local markets/shops
 - g. Community gathering places
 - h. Places of worship
 - i. Libraries

Response:

Participants listed work, shops, places of worship, and visiting family (not on the list), as the primary places they go.

5. **To fix our transportation problems, driving on I-5 and I-205 may mean paying a toll in the future. If there were a toll on these highways, how would that impact you? How many of you have experience paying a highway toll – either at a toll booth or electronic tolls?**

Response:

For the low income community members using the I-5 and I-205 route daily, this will have a big impact on them financially. They had tolling experience from other places like from San Francisco, and San Jose, California.

III. Ideas about benefits and solutions

6. **We understand no one wants to pay tolls or fees, but tolling does provide benefits. Which benefits are most important to you?** *Review all benefits first and show on screen, then go around the table and invite each person to speak.*
- a) Fewer hours of slow traffic each day
 - b) More reliable trips – knowing I can travel 45 mph on average on the highway any time of day, even during rush hour.
 - c) Reduce vehicle emissions to lessen the impacts of climate change.
 - d) Less slow traffic for trucks carrying goods– so deliveries arrive on time.
 - e) Funding for transportation projects because gas taxes and other revenue sources that are used to pay for these projects are now not enough.
 - f) Support bus, biking, walking, and rolling improvements that help reduce traffic.

Response:

Community members listed less time in traffic, more reliable trips, funding for transportation, and alternate transportations as the most important benefits.

7. **In Oregon, the benefit of paying a variable toll is a known toll rate at the time you travel, less traffic and a more reliable trip. If we start a toll program, how can we make this easier for community members? A toll program would be better for me or my community if...** *List each option below and ask people to raise their hands if they agree.*

Options	# of responses
Drivers experiencing low incomes could pay lower tolls.	Mostly yes.
Toll fees are used to fund projects that help reduce traffic.	They wants to know how ODOT spend the fund.
Good toll-free transportation options exist – like other roads, reliable buses and trains, or safe biking and walking routes.	They support this.

Options	# of responses
Highway drivers stopped using local streets to avoid highway traffic.	Need more data.
I could get to where I need to go faster.	Yes.
I could know how long it would take for me to get to where I need to go.	Yes.
There were neighborhood improvements like safe sidewalks, bike lanes, and more comfortable bus stops.	Yes.
Express buses could drive on highway shoulders.	They likes the idea.

8. What other ideas do you have to make tolling easier for you and your community?

Response:

- Low income subsidy for the tolling.
- Clear plans how ODOT going to use the fund generated from the tolling.
- Languages assistance regarding how to pay the toll.

9. **Ask people to provide a thumbs up or thumbs down if they agree or disagree with the following choices:**

Response:

The answers are on the survey. We don't have enough data from the discussion group.

IV. Final comments

10. Anything else you would like to share with us today?

Response:

- They wanted to see the survey results.
- Is this project going to work? What if this doesn't work out? What is the alternative to counter congestion besides "forcing" this project to the public.
- How ODOT is going to spend the fund generated from the tolling.
- Any discussion group like this one and where to get updates from this project.

11. **Zip codes:** They are from the survey. We don't have them on hand.

1.2 Latin American Discussion Group

Liaison Name:	Paul Riek and Romeo Sosa
Audience:	Latinx Community
Date:	8/10/2021
Number of Attendees:	11

I. Introduction

1. **What's your name and what part of town do you live in?** (*Note: can omit names from summary*)

Response:

- East Portland(1)
- NE Portland (3)
- Vancouver, WA (1)
- Milwaukie (4)
- Oregon City (1)
- Troutdale (1)

2. **Tell us about your experience on I-5 and I-205.**

- Is traffic a problem?

Response:

- Jantzen Beach is always a bottleneck.
- Any accident backs up traffic.
- There aren't enough bridges or highways for so much traffic.

II. Discussion about key issues

3. **What do you see as the biggest problems on I-5 and I-205?** What makes it hard to get to where you need to go?

Response:

Options	# of responses
a) Traffic is getting worse.	7
b) There is not enough money from gas taxes and other revenue sources to fix Oregon’s highways and reduce traffic.	3
c) It takes too long to get to work.	1 (only when the bridge is up)
d) It takes too long for trucks to deliver goods.	2
e) Cars and trucks stuck in traffic means more emissions and contributes to climate change.	5
f) It’s not easy for people with low incomes, disabilities, and other barriers to get to where they need to go.	6

4. **What type of community destinations do you need to get to? What is missing from the list below?** *Ask attendees to share feedback in the chat.*
- j. Schools (0)
 - k. Hospitals/Medical Centers (1)
 - l. Parks (0)
 - m. Work (6)
 - n. Community Centers (0)
 - o. Local markets/shops (1)
 - p. Community gathering places (0)
 - q. Places of worship (2)
 - r. Libraries (0)
 - s. Missing: Visit family (1), Leave town (1)
5. **To fix our transportation problems, driving on I-5 and I-205 may mean paying a toll in the future. If there were a toll on these highways, how would that impact you? How many of you have experience paying a highway toll – either at a toll booth or electronic tolls?**

Response:

- How would that impact you? Financially! We already pay vehicle registration fees, DEQ, insurance, and other costs, and wages haven't increased, so it will impact our finances.
- Experience paying a highway toll:
 - On I-5 near Seattle they have just started charging tolls in some places, but on specific lanes, and if you don't want to pay, you can take the free lanes, which are slower.
 - In New Jersey I paid about \$22 in tolls for one round trip. You say that charging tolls will reduce traffic congestion and allow for better maintenance, but my experience was that in spite of paying toll, traffic was very congested and the highways were in worse condition than here.

- In Mexico they have tolled highways, but there is always the option to take the free highway, which is slower.
- In Chile, for the last 15 years tolls have been charged on most highways and even on major urban streets, using the same technology as has been proposed for the Portland area. Drivers receive bills in the mail for the tolls they have incurred. This system has improved traffic, reduced pollution, and allowed significant improvements in the highway system.

III. Ideas about benefits and solutions

6. **We understand no one wants to pay tolls or fees, but tolling does provide benefits. Which benefits are most important to you?** *Review all benefits first and show on screen, then go around the table and invite each person to speak.*
- a) Fewer hours of slow traffic each day
 - b) More reliable trips – knowing I can travel 45 mph on average on the highway any time of day, even during rush hour.
 - c) Reduce vehicle emissions to lessen the impacts of climate change.
 - d) Less slow traffic for trucks carrying goods– so deliveries arrive on time.
 - e) Funding for transportation projects because gas taxes and other revenue sources that are used to pay for these projects are now not enough.
 - f) Support bus, biking, walking, and rolling improvements that help reduce traffic.

Response:

Options	# of responses
a) Fewer hours of slow traffic each day	4*
b) More reliable trips – knowing I can travel 45 mph on average on the highway any time of day, even during rush hour.	5
c) Reduce vehicle emissions to lessen the impacts of climate change.	3

Options	# of responses
d) Less slow traffic for trucks carrying goods– so deliveries arrive on time.	1
e) Funding for transportation projects because gas taxes and other revenue sources that are used to pay for these projects are now not enough.	0
f) Support bus, biking, walking, and rolling improvements that help reduce traffic	4

* It's really unknown whether traffic would actually be reduced; we'll have to wait and see.

7. **In Oregon, the benefit of paying a variable toll is a known toll rate at the time you travel, less traffic and a more reliable trip. If we start a toll program, how can we make this easier for community members? A toll program would be better for me or my community if...** *List each option below and ask people to raise their hands if they agree.*

Options	# of responses
a) Drivers experiencing low incomes could pay lower tolls.	5
b) Toll fees are used to fund projects that help reduce traffic.	3*
c) Good toll-free transportation options exist – like other roads, reliable buses and trains, or safe biking and walking routes.	10**
d) Highway drivers stopped using local streets to avoid highway traffic.	0***
e) I could get to where I need to go faster.	3
f) I could know how long it would take for me to get to where I need to go.	4
g) There were neighborhood improvements like safe sidewalks, bike lanes, and more comfortable bus stops.	3
h) Express buses could drive on highway shoulders.	2

Response:

*The word “projects” is very vague; what type of projects would they be? It could be a way to trick people; they could fund a project that really doesn’t help reduce traffic for us, for the Latinx community.

**Yes, if there is free highway option.

***The question is confusing, tricky and unfair. If I have to choose between paying a toll and buying a gallon of milk for my children, obviously I will use local streets, and that will cause problems for other people. I wouldn’t want more traffic on my street either, but if I have to choose... And the same thing will happen with other low-income people.)

8. What other ideas do you have to make tolling easier for you and your community?

Response:

- It’s difficult to know how to answer that, since we are just learning about the program.

9. Ask people to provide a thumbs up or thumbs down if they agree or disagree with the following choices:

Options	Agree	Disagree
a) Would you pay a toll if you could save 10 minutes of travel time?		4
b) Would you pay a toll if you could save 30 minutes of travel time?	4	
c) Would you pay a \$3 toll per trip during an afternoon commute, if you knew you were able to travel 45 mph on average?		3
d) Let’s say the toll is \$3 during rush hour and 30 minutes after rush hour it lowers to \$1. Would you delay your departure time to pay a lower toll?	6	
e) Would you pay a highway toll to avoid stop-and-go traffic on local streets?	1	1*

Options	Agree	Disagree
f) If there was a toll on the highway, would you use a local train or bus if you knew it would take about 40 minutes or less to reach your destination?		2**
g) Would you change where you shop or eat if there was a toll?		2
h) Would you be more likely to visit local businesses if you knew you would avoid a toll?		4
i) Would you be more likely to pay a toll on a daily basis - when you're driving to work or school?	3	

Response:

*It's the same tricky question again.

**They're not considering people's quality of life, especially now when there is so much cancer and other serious diseases. They're just thinking of money.

IV. Final comments

10. Anything else you would like to share with us today?

Response:

- Why wasn't I-84 included in this project? I-84 ends in the center of Portland, so many wealthy people use it. (Josh explained that the Legislature passed a bill in 2017 with instructions to focus on I-5 and I-205, already an enormous task.)
- How can we be sure that the funds generated from tolls will be used to improve highways and roads, and not used to finance bureaucracies? This includes meetings like this one, where we talk a lot but we don't actually do anything; and yet funds must be spent to hire people to organize meetings like this to listen to the community, which is important. (Josh replied that a fund is being set up for congestion relief, but it is important to continue to ask how we can be sure.)
- Charging tolls will not guarantee that traffic flow will improve, because most people have to travel during rush hour to get to work on time. (Josh replied that federal law requires that if a toll is charged, the agency must make sure that traffic moves at 45 MPH on average.)

- How is this going to work? I use the freeway several times a day: to go to work, to take my kids to their practices and games. Will tolls be charged every time you use it (I-5/I-205)? (Josh replied: Yes, you would be charged every time you use it, so you may be charged multiple times in one day. You would be charged based on the distance you travel, for every exit you pass. There will be many sensors.)
- There are other options: using the map and satellites, new roads could be built.
- There has to be an option of a toll-free highway. Whenever there is a tolled highway there is always a free highway. So the question is: Which highway will be the free option? Or will I have to use local streets?
- Not everyone can change their schedule just because toll is charged. People will continue to use the highway and they will pay the toll.
- If you charge a toll, the traffic will move to other routes, just as it does when there is an accident. By freeing up one bottleneck, you will cause another.
- You should reconsider the idea that charging tolls would reduce traffic congestion. The chances of that happening are very small. The only way it would work is if there's a choice between free and toll routes.
- Latinx and immigrants in general will be the most affected by this, because we are the ones who have to travel the farthest. We live so far from where we work. We Latinxs can't take the Max or the bus because it would take us much too long to arrive. I, for example, would have to spend 2 hours on public transportation each way to go clean a house. It would be a huge loss of time and a huge loss of quality of life for us Latinxs.
- We already pay gas taxes and DMV fees. I just registered a vehicle, and it cost almost \$500! Those who use the more efficient cars are professionals; we have to buy more gasoline, and it's expensive.
- You need to consider people's overall quality of life.

11. . Zip codes:

Response:

- 97045 (1)
- 97060 (1)
- 97211 (1)
- 97212 (1)

- 97217 (1)
- 97218 (1)
- 97233 (1)
- 97267 (3)
- 98661 (1)

1.3 Chinese Discussion Group

Liaisons Name:	Yuhan Wang Kinder and Yvonne Li
Audience:	Chinese Community
Date:	Aug 15, 2021
Number of Attendees:	12 Community Members

I. Introduction

1. **What's your name and what part of town do you live in?** *(Note: can omit names from summary)*

Response:

12 Community members attended the discussion group, little over half are from SE Portland, 3 from Beaverton, one from Gladstone and one from Vancouver.

- Community Member, Powell & 113th Ave
- Community Member, SE Portland & Holgate Blvd.
- Community Member, SE Portland
- Community Member, 148th Ave & Division Street
- Community Member, Beaverton
- Community Member, Beaverton
- Community Member, Vancouver (travels often to Portland & Beaverton)
- Community Member, SE Portland
- Community Member, Beaverton & Tigard
- Community Member, Gladstone (travel to airport daily for work)
- Community Member, SE Portland on Holgate Blvd.
- Community Member, 118th Ave. (works near Airport)

2. Tell us about your experience on I-5 and I-205.

- Is traffic a problem?

Response:

Everyone agreed that traffic is an issue on I-5 and I-205. Some community members travel on I-205 for work for medical needs and daily uses.

- One community member works at an Asian health center, and is required to travel frequently, specifically on Division Street. Respondent generally gets off work around 8:00pm and uses Foster Blvd. via I-205 to go home. The traffic has gotten much worse than years back. The respondent’s experiences traveling on I-205 between Division and Foster is bad all the way to West Linn, and questions where would be a good tolling point?
- A community member indicated the side streets around I-205 are also already congested.
- A community member works on Jansen Beach and lives in Beaverton, so they travel on Highway 26 which is very congested up to I-5. Respondent doesn’t think the traffic on I-5 is bad, however it will still take about an hour to an hour and a half to go home after work.
- A community member heard there will be a new I-5 bridge connecting to Vancouver to ease the traffic, and wonders if that is still happening? Reason being, if there’s an alternative route to Vancouver, maybe they will be able to avoid toll.
- A community member indicated that even if they are trying to avoid rush hour for work, the traffic is also getting bad during normal hours, especially exiting airport using I-205. A community member stated that they manage to save some time using local roads, and is concern that tolling will worsen the traffic on local roads.

II. Discussion about key issues

3. What do you see as the biggest problems on I-5 and I-205? What makes it hard to get to where you need to go?

Response:

Options	# of responses
Traffic is getting worse.	13
There is not enough money from gas taxes and other revenue sources to fix Oregon’s highways and reduce traffic.	2
It takes too long to get to work.	8

Options	# of responses
It takes too long for trucks to deliver goods.	5
Cars and trucks stuck in traffic means more emissions and contributes to climate change.	10
It's not easy for people with low incomes, disabilities, and other barriers to get to where they need to go.	8

4. **To fix our transportation problems, driving on I-5 and I-205 may mean paying a toll in the future. If there were a toll on these highways, how would that impact you? How many of you have experience paying a highway toll – either at a toll booth or electronic tolls?**

Response:

- A few community members had highway toll experience. One community member mentioned that the California toll towards San Jose highway 680 has electronic toll, but there is still congestion and the traffic hasn't been reduced. One of the participants' experiences on one of the California tolls is people that don't like to use electronic tolls, and that people still line up to pay cash toll. For the Seattle highway toll experience, no one really uses that toll, and that only out of town visitors might use by accident. Another community member suggested utilizing the Japanese model where drivers are only tolled for the portion of road they use.
- Having tolls on these highways will impact people that use the highways multiple times a day for work or medical reasons. It will also impact the local residents who live near the highways because people will choose to use local roads to avoid tolls. Community members also indicated that it will be a hard transition to paying a toll when they were previously free, and that the community members hope that it is not the entirety of I-5 or I-205 that are tolled.

III. Ideas about benefits and solutions

5. **We understand no one wants to pay tolls or fees, but tolling does provide benefits. Which benefits are most important to you?** *Review all benefits first and show on screen, then go around the table and invite each person to speak.*
- a) Fewer hours of slow traffic each day

- a. Community members don't really think toll will reduce traffic, looking at places like New York, Seattle, and California with toll freeways; the roads are still very congested.
 - b) More reliable trips – knowing I can travel 45 mph on average on the highway any time of day, even during rush hour.
 - a. It will benefit people in higher income brackets, and will have negative impact on poor people.
 - c) Reduce vehicle emissions to lessen the impacts of climate change.
 - a. Community members agree. Promoting electric cars will also help
 - d) Less slow traffic for trucks carrying goods– so deliveries arrive on time.
 - a. Traffic will not change, so maybe can only the rate can be controlled; possibly charge the trucks more if they'd like to travel faster.
 - e) Funding for transportation projects because gas taxes and other revenue sources that are used to pay for these projects are now not enough.
 - a. Community members wondered if the Infrastructure Bill will benefit them.
 - f) Support bus, biking, walking, and rolling improvements that help reduce traffic.
 - a. Agree
6. **In Oregon, the benefit of paying a variable toll is a known toll rate at the time you travel, less traffic and a more reliable trip. If we start a toll program, how can we make this easier for community members? A toll program would be better for me or my community if...** List each option below and ask people to raise their hands if they agree.

**Unable to collect this data.*

7. What other ideas do you have to make tolling easier for you and your community?

Response:

- Provide medical use pass
- Different use paying different rate

- Only toll during rush hours

8. Ask people to provide a thumbs up or thumbs down if they agree or disagree with the following choices:

*Unable to record result due to zoom viewing limitation when presenting slides, I would highly recommend for future zoom discussion group not to ask participant raising hand for feedback.

IV. Final comments

9. Anything else you would like to share with us today?

Response:

- Is there a way to see data on other state's toll result?
- What's next step? Will we be able to see the feedback from the community? (answered by Josh)
- Can Josh share any study of toll projects that has positive impact? We are the first to convert free-use freeway to toll freeway in the national, so not much data yet. However, many places and country like Singapore has good result from toll roads and this is a very complicated issue, we are still at early stage of the project.
- A suggestion would be to have a express lane, so people have choices.
- The reason why we decided to toll all lanes in OR project is because many of our freeway that we are considering tolling only have 2 lanes, if we only toll one lane that will tank the traffic and it will not work.
- If we are planning to expend our freeway in the future, will it be possible to plan for express lane? (Josh: reason why it's not being considered is because there are businesses and residents along our freeway making it difficult to expand the freeway.

10. Zip codes:

Response:

- 97008
- 97266
- 97007

- 98683
- 97027
- 97070
- 97223

1.4 Native American Discussion Group

Liaison Name:	William Miller
Audience:	Native American Community
Date:	8/16/21
Number of Attendees:	6 (1 joined later)

I. Introduction

1. **What's your name and what part of town do you live in?**
2. **Tell us about your experience on I-5 and I-205.**
 - Is traffic a problem?

Response:

Discussion group attendees introduced themselves, and most attendees stated they often experience bottlenecks on I-5 and I-205.

- One community member lives in North Portland, they tend to go to Vancouver only during non-rush hour times. They don't like sitting in traffic. Traffic is a problem during rush hour time.
- One community member often ends up in traffic jams and bottlenecks. They normally have to just take the second exit after getting on the highway. It can be time consuming. They do see an issue on both I-5 and I-205.
- One community member is a courier and lives in Vancouver. They frequently travel out towards Tualatin and think I-5 is definitely a problem, but are unsure about I-205.
- A community member in Vancouver, see a lot of road construction. One of their jobs is on the Ross Island Bridge, which normally takes 15 minutes to reach in the morning, and when coming home they experience a bottleneck, it can take one and a half hours to one hour and 45 minutes to get home. There are frequent bottlenecks and slow traffic, especially on I-5 heading northbound.
- Another community member lives in Outer SE Portland, near the rim of Happy Valley. They like the new changes on I-205 and don't think there's that much of a bottleneck except in certain spots.

After Hannah presented background information on the Regional Mobility Pricing Project, an attendee had a comment.

- It seems that working people will have to pay a high amount during peak congestion times because of their work hours.
 - Hannah responded: that’s a great point and that’s why we’re here: To discuss the purpose and needs for tolls, and talk about people who have choices and those who do not. You are right that some people may have flexibility in choosing when to travel, while others may have less choice. Tolling will be just one of the tools used to manage congestion.

II. Discussion about key issues

3. What do you see as the biggest problems on I-5 and I-205? What makes it hard to get to where you need to go?

Response

- It seems like once drivers get over the I-5 bridge, traffic dies down, but before the bridge, traffic is bumper to bumper. Community members wonder what happened to the MAX line and the I-5 Project that was going from Portland to Vancouver?
 - Response: That is a separate project. We will provide you with the information about the IBR project.
- On I-205, traffic is not too bad and traffic still flows. For I-5, heading towards Tualatin, and near Terwilliger, traffic flows well. But going back towards Vancouver, the bridge is so narrow. People worry about going fast on the bridge, so that is the biggest bottleneck.
- One of the worst spots is right by the Rose Quarter, something should be done with that area. A little farther north from that area, there is a bottleneck with the on-ramps.

Options	# of responses
Traffic is getting worse.	All agree
There is not enough money from gas taxes and other revenue sources to fix Oregon’s highways and reduce traffic.	All agree
It takes too long to get to work.	All agree
It takes too long for trucks to deliver goods.	All agree

Options	# of responses
Cars and trucks stuck in traffic means more emissions and contributes to climate change.	All agree
It's not easy for people with low incomes, disabilities, and other barriers to get to where they need to go.	All agree

4. What type of community destinations do you need to get to? What is missing from the list below?

- a. Schools
- b. Hospitals/Medical Centers
- c. Parks
- d. Work
- e. Community Centers
- f. Local markets/shops
- g. Community gathering places
- h. Places of worship
- i. Libraries

Response :

What's missing from the list:

- Family
- Hospitals/medical centers – especially for emergencies
- Home-based businesses for self-employed people, deliveries, going to warehouses for business owners

5. **To fix our transportation problems, driving on I-5 and I-205 may mean paying a toll in the future. If there were a toll on these highways, how would that impact you? How many of you have experience paying a highway toll – either at a toll booth or electronic tolls?**

Response:

- It would impact community members' budget, and may slow them down when they pay the toll?
 - Response: There is no stopping at a toll booth.
- Community members could see it impacting working people more – would they get discounted rates?
- One community member goes back and forth on I-5 and I-205 all day long for their courier route– and wonders how it will impact fees, and whether there will be a toll based on the amount of road use, if there will be monthly toll you could pay, and how would it impact people who are on the road everyday.
 - Response We don't know yet. This type of research and work being done by EMAC, a committee that is trying to understand this better.
- One community member is a single mom, some people live paycheck to paycheck, how will this work with people's budget?
 - Response: We are noting these comments for the project team.
- On community member questioned whether traffic will be changed at all, and if the only outcome will be the city making more money.
- Another community member state that if tolling was in the spots that it needed to be in, then that's fine. But traffic isn't going to change, and questioned if cars are not stopping at the toll, how will traffic/congestion get fixed?
 - Response: Just a 5% shift in when people use the highway will help reduce traffic. The fluctuation in the price is how this can help reduce traffic.

III. Ideas about benefits and solutions

6. We understand no one wants to pay tolls or fees, but tolling does provide benefits. Which benefits are most important to you?

- a) Fewer hours of slow traffic each day
- b) More reliable trips – knowing I can travel 45 mph on average on the highway any time of day, even during rush hour.
- c) Reduce vehicle emissions to lessen the impacts of climate change.
- d) Less slow traffic for trucks carrying goods– so deliveries arrive on time.
- e) Funding for transportation projects because gas taxes and other revenue sources that are used to pay for these projects are now not enough.
- f) Support bus, biking, walking, and rolling improvements that help reduce traffic.

Response:

- Community members support bus, biking, and walking improvements that help reduce traffic, and believe it would be good to take more cars off the highway
- Community members believe in reducing emissions. This will lead to healthier lungs for people walking and biking, even though not everyone can use those options. Less traffic for trucks is also an important benefit.
- Community members look forward to fewer hours of slow traffic. But don't understand how it would work. The people who are on the road and commuting to work are not going to change their job to avoid the toll. They are still going to be on the road. One community member stated that if they have to go somewhere, they're going to go, regardless of the price.
- Community members want to see real examples of how tolling would work.
- Community members state that it would be good to see more carpooling. It could be beneficial for tolling and could help group people together who are going to work.
- If tolling does get implemented, it would be a good idea to offer lower rates to incentivize people to carpool.

7. . In Oregon, the benefit of paying a variable toll is a known toll rate at the time you travel, less traffic and a more reliable trip. If we start a toll program, how can we make this easier for community members? A toll program would be better for me or my community if...

Options	# of responses
Drivers experiencing low incomes could pay lower tolls.	1
Toll fees are used to fund projects that help reduce traffic.	1
Good toll-free transportation options exist – like other roads, reliable buses and trains, or safe biking and walking routes.	2
Highway drivers stopped using local streets to avoid highway traffic.	
I could get to where I need to go faster.	
I could know how long it would take for me to get to where I need to go.	
There were neighborhood improvements like safe sidewalks, bike lanes, and more comfortable bus stops.	
Express buses could drive on highway shoulders.	2

Response:

- The first option (drivers experiencing low incomes could pay lower tolls) may cause more harm than good, people would be upset.
- Tolling will redirect a lot of traffic to other roads. We will need more maintenance on other roads due to cars using other options.
- I like the express buses option. It would help me get off the road if that was an option.

8. What other ideas do you have to make tolling easier for you and your community?

Response:

- One community member state that they like the electronic aspect and having one known price.
- A participant stated that they need more education on this and more input, and asked which groups are involved with this? NAYA, NARA, BIPOC groups?
 - Response: We are doing briefings, online e-news, website, workshops. If there’s other pages or newspapers or any ideas you have, please share where else to share information.
- It would be nice to have a small questionnaire to share input. Community members could share it with NAYA, Elders in Action, and on social media.
- It would be easier if there was only one toll price, no matter the time. One participant said that they are a worker and are getting punished more for being working class and having to work during 9-5 time. They can’t just change their career to save a few dollars and avoid tolling.
- It would be fair to pay the same no matter what time of day.

9. Ask people to provide a thumbs up or thumbs down if they agree or disagree with the following choices:

Options	Agree	Disagree
Would you pay a toll if you could save 10 minutes of travel time?		6
Would you pay a toll if you could save 30 minutes of travel time?	4 yes, 2 depends	
Would you pay a \$3 toll per trip during an afternoon commute, if you knew you were able to travel 45 mph on average?	2 yes	2
Let’s say the toll is \$3 during rush hour and 30 minutes after rush hour it lowers to \$1. Would you delay your departure time to pay a lower toll?	1 yes	3

Options	Agree	Disagree
Would you pay a highway toll to avoid stop-and-go traffic on local streets?	1 yes	3
If there was a toll on the highway, would you use a local train or bus if you knew it would take about 40 minutes or less to reach your destination?	2 yes	2 no, 1 depends
Would you change where you shop or eat if there was a toll?	3 yes	2
Would you be more likely to visit local businesses if you knew you would avoid a toll?	6 yes	
Would you be more likely to pay a toll on a daily basis - when you're driving to work or school?	3 yes	1 no

Response:

- What if you're leaving work, are you supposed to wait around to save \$2? "I am not going to reschedule my schedule to pay a toll".
- Using a local train or bus: Would depend on what they are bringing on my trip and if I am going to work. If they are carrying a lot of things, it would be difficult to use public transit.

IV. Final comments

10. Anything else you would like to share with us today?

Response:

- "I would like to attend another meeting about this so I can hear more information".
- "I would be open to a discussion on how to come up with a monthly fee to use the highways, as opposed to various prices at different times".
- "I think we already pay a fee for driving the highway".
- "I agree and also think the fee might not be enough to pay for the projects and the use of road".

- “A monthly rate would be good, especially for people who have businesses that require a lot of driving”.
- “When I was having health issues, I wouldn’t have been able to drive and pay the fees for multiple trips”.
- “There should be an honored citizen pass to get medical appointments covered for people with disabilities, low income, and the elderly”.
- “How will low-income people access medical care? If you are on a fixed income, you can’t afford to keep going back and forth to access care”.

1.5 Slavic Discussion Group

Liaison Name:	Hanna Grishkevich and Maria Gvozdicov
Audience:	Slavic Community
Date:	08/17/2021
Number of Attendees:	13

I. Introduction

1. **What's your name and what part of town do you live in?** *(Note: can omit names from summary)*

Response:

Community members introduced themselves and listed their zip codes. All respondents live near I-205 or I-5, one couple is moving to the 205 area, and all use the freeways for work and other places.

2. **Tell us about your experience on I-5 and I-205.**

- Is traffic a problem?

Response:

- Most community members agreed that traffic is an issue on I-5 and I-205:
 - Traffic IS a problem.
 - Biggest problem to make it from SE to Vancouver.
 - The connection between I-205 and I-5 is a constant bottle neck .

II. Discussion about key issues

3. What do you see as the biggest problems on I-5 and I-205? What makes it hard to get to where you need to go?

Response:

- Community members agree that traffic is an issue, but understand that tolling is meant to manage congestion on the freeway. Community members also stated that they have already paid taxes for the freeway and don't want to pay more.
- Participants expressed a concern regarding the cost of the project, and the expected congestion impacts. One community member explained that the toll feels like a punishment for working people, as they will have to pay it morning and evening. Additionally, participants wondered about a possible new bridge, and as the bridge is being built with tax payer dollars why should community members have to pay a toll as well.
- Community members don't believe \$510 million will cover the cost of fixing the roads. "Can you guarantee our money will be used for fixing roads? How will we know?"
- Community members asserted that removing 5% of electric cars would decrease traffic. Participants did not feel that it was fair that electric vehicles do not have to pay the gas tax.

Options	# of responses
Traffic is getting worse.	All agree
There is not enough money from gas taxes and other revenue sources to fix Oregon's highways and reduce traffic.	Most disagree (Electric cars aren't paying gas tax)
It takes too long to get to work.	
It takes too long for trucks to deliver goods.	
Cars and trucks stuck in traffic means more emissions and contributes to climate change.	
It's not easy for people with low incomes, disabilities, and other barriers to get to where they need to go.	

4. **What type of community destinations do you need to get to? What is missing from the list below?** *Ask attendees to share feedback in the chat.*
- a. Schools
 - b. Hospitals/Medical Centers
 - c. Parks
 - d. Work
 - e. Community Centers
 - f. Local markets/shops
 - g. Community gathering places
 - h. Places of worship
 - i. Libraries

Response:

Community members listed work, visiting friends, church, school, and the gym as the primary locations they travel to.

5. **To fix our transportation problems, driving on I-5 and I-205 may mean paying a toll in the future. If there were a toll on these highways, how would that impact you? How many of you have experience paying a highway toll – either at a toll booth or electronic tolls?**

Response:

- Community members suggested narrowing residential streets, and adding sidewalks to benefit neighborhoods, and investing in adding a lane to the freeway – participants pointed to I-205, and when the side roads were narrowed more people used the freeway. They also suggested considering rebates for not using the roads.
- Several people have experienced paying tolls.
- The participants did not believe that tolling would control traffic, and questioned the fairness of cyclists and scooters using the same roads without paying taxes or tolls, as cyclists, particularly in downtown Portland, create a lot of traffic. People asked for research on states where the congestion had been fixed via tolling.

- Community members questioned whether another bridge will be built, and whether truckers will pay more at tolls. Participants also stated that Washington drivers don't pay Oregon taxes, and should pay for roads they use.
- Community members said they would not be more likely to pay a toll on a daily basis.
- People suggested only one paid lane, vs all lanes paid.

III. Ideas about benefits and solutions

6. **We understand no one wants to pay tolls or fees, but tolling does provide benefits. Which benefits are most important to you?** *Review all benefits first and show on screen, then go around the table and invite each person to speak.*
 - a) Fewer hours of slow traffic each day
 - b) More reliable trips – knowing I can travel 45 mph on average on the highway any time of day, even during rush hour.
 - c) Reduce vehicle emissions to lessen the impacts of climate change.
 - d) Less slow traffic for trucks carrying goods– so deliveries arrive on time.
 - e) Funding for transportation projects because gas taxes and other revenue sources that are used to pay for these projects are now not enough.
 - f) Support bus, biking, walking, and rolling improvements that help reduce traffic.

Response:

Community member stated that they had a hard time coming up with a list of benefits as they don't believe tolls would help them get anywhere any faster, or decrease congestion. Ultimately, participants did not see any benefits to tolling. Further, many participants live in West Lynn, and the only way to get there is I-205. Participants asked if residence would have to pay the toll.

7. **In Oregon, the benefit of paying a variable toll is a known toll rate at the time you travel, less traffic and a more reliable trip. If we start a toll program, how can we make this easier for community members? A toll program would be better for me or my community if...** *List each option below and ask people to raise their hands if they agree.*

Response:

- Participants generally disagreed with listed options, but suggested that residents who need to use the freeway should not have to pay tolls, and that an express lane should be used which would be the only tolled lane.

8. **What other ideas do you have to make tolling easier for you and your community?**

Response:

- Participants indicated that taxes, were a concern for them, particularly Multnomah County taxes.
- Add a free lane (not all lanes paid).
- Build an additional bridge.
- Widen streets that are perpendicular to the discussed freeways.
- Create alternative routes first, then implement tolls.
- Equity for those who have to use the toll to get to work.
- Equity for truck drivers (who already pay more).
- Rebates and discounted cost for certain populations.
- Charge electric vehicles an additional fee (since they do not pay the gas tax) .

9. **Ask people to provide a thumbs up or thumbs down if they agree or disagree with the following choices:**

Options	Agree	Disagree
Would you pay a toll if you could save 10 minutes of travel time?		6

Would you pay a toll if you could save 30 minutes of travel time?		
Would you pay a \$3 toll per trip during an afternoon commute, if you knew you were able to travel 45 mph on average?		
Let's say the toll is \$3 during rush hour and 30 minutes after rush hour it lowers to \$1. Would you delay your departure time to pay a lower toll?		
Would you pay a highway toll to avoid stop-and-go traffic on local streets?		
If there was a toll on the highway, would you use a local train or bus if you knew it would take about 40 minutes or less to reach your destination?		
Would you change where you shop or eat if there was a toll?		
Would you be more likely to visit local businesses if you knew you would avoid a toll?		
Would you be more likely to pay a toll on a daily basis - when you're driving to work or school?		

Response:

- Participants indicated that they disagree with the listed options.

IV. Final comments

10. Anything else you would like to share with us today?

11. Zip codes:

Response:

- 98661
- 97086
- 97086
- 97232

- 97206
- 97129
- 97129

1.6 Black/African American Discussion Group

Liaison Name:	Germaine Flentroy
Audience:	Black/African American
Date:	9/13/21
Number of Attendees:	7

I. Introduction

1. What's your name and what part of town do you live in?
2. Tell us about your experience on I-5 and I-205.
 - a. Is traffic a problem?

Response Summary:

Discussion group attendees introduced themselves and described their experience traveling on I-5 and I-205.

- Travel on I-205 has been congested all the time. It used to be a smooth flow, but now it's crowded no matter what time it is.
- I've lived here for 15 years and have never seen so much traffic. Barriers and construction cause confusion and toll booths would slow traffic.
- I live in Portland and feel that people would not be able to adapt to tolls.
- I live in NE Portland. Traffic is not too bad on I-205, but rush hour has extended throughout the day. I have a problem with people driving too fast or too slow and causing accidents. People need to be aware of their surroundings.
- I live in SE Portland. Driving on I-5 and I-205 is hectic and there are too many people in the town.
- I'm from Texas where we have tolls. People drive slow in Oregon and think tolling could work here.

- I live in North Portland. Traffic is terrible and it will be interesting to see how the tolls work here. Will it make traffic worse? Affordability is also a concern.
- I live in NE Portland. I'm excited to see how tolling will play out. I have lots of friends and family who drive across I-205, but I do not.
- I live in SE Portland. There is bumper to bumper traffic with too many cars and too many people.
- I work part time in Vancouver and go to college in Portland. I'm concerned how tolling will work, especially if it is based on rush hour. With schools going back in person, there are many times I will be traveling from school and work during rush hour. Working part time, I'm concerned about how I'm going to make it work with my budget.

After Hannah presented background information on the Regional Mobility Pricing Project, attendees asked the following questions and comments.

- How will ODOT determine income limitations for income based tolls?
- Will there be a discount for student or people with low incomes?
 - Hannah: All of these big questions are policy questions. We're trying to make recommendations on how to make it easier. It's helpful to express these concerns and different scenarios.
- The electronic concept is good. Do you think people will actually buy stickers and pay for it, or will they just get the bill? What are the repercussions for people who don't pay the tolls? How would it work if people avoid the tolls?
- For income-based toll rates, how will income changes be reported? Someone could have a high income one year, but then a low income the next year.
- What does the ticketing process look like if someone doesn't have the proper tag? How will this affect the person's driving record? Is there any leeway since the program is new?
- How will you give back to the community with the tolls?
 - Hannah: Right now, the toll project is very conceptual. There are many questions about how much it will cost and how much we will raise. Yes, tolling will help fill in the gaps for projects and community investments. This is also what the EMAC is working on - making recommendations to the tolling project team and the OTC.

II. Discussion about key issues

3. **What do you see as the biggest problems on I-5 and I-205? What makes it hard to get to where you need to go?**

Did not ask the question directly. This was addressed during the introductions at the start of the meeting.

4. **What type of community destinations do you need to get to? What is missing from the list below?**
 - a. Schools
 - b. Hospitals/Medical Centers
 - c. Parks
 - d. Work
 - e. Community Centers
 - f. Local markets/shops
 - g. Community gathering places
 - h. Places of worship
 - i. Libraries

Response Summary:

What's missing from the list:

- Family – visiting family in other places
- Nightlife
- Restaurants
- Entertainment

5. **To fix our transportation problems, driving on I-5 and I-205 may mean paying a toll in the future. If there were a toll on these highways, how would that impact you? How many of you have experience paying a highway toll – either at a toll booth or electronic tolls?**

Response Summary:

- I think it would affect our everyday life, especially because we don't know how much the toll will be yet.
- I have experienced a toll booth, and if you don't pay the toll it can be expensive when there is a penalty by mail. I learned this the hard way with a rental car.
- I have never experienced paying for a toll. I do work and take I-5 almost everytime I go to work. This would be new for me and would affect me a lot.
- I've never experienced paying a toll. I only drive on these freeways periodically, so it wouldn't impact me that much until I see the cost of the toll.
- I can see it working if traffic is moving. Since it is new, will traffic be slower because people will not know which lane to be in?
 - People will be confused going around the tolls and that may slow people down.
- I have had experience out of town going through a toll. I remember going through the same toll three times because I got lost.
 - There should be a system that tracks whether people cross the toll multiple times, so that if they get lost they don't get penalized with multiple times when they have to turn around.
- I think having traffic is a part of traveling. I hate being in traffic, but I think tolling would cause more havoc on the freeway.
- How would this affect people's driving? How would that make people slow down?
- Do you think this would impact how police conduct traffic stops?
- What's going to happen if you don't pay your toll? Will it go up by a certain amount?
- For people that ride the bus, will there be a pass system for tolls?
 - Would you get pulled over if you aren't paying the toll?
 - [Hannah noted there there would likely not be live enforcement. There would be a letter and request for payment by mail.]

- Is there a pass if you have multiple drives or if you have to go through multiple times?
 - Yes, this would be helpful and make tolling easier for our community because you would know the amount. A day pass would be helpful if you're doing multiple trips per day.
- There should be a set price or reduced price for Ride to Care – they are going through multiple times and this would be expensive.
- Concern that if tolling results in a bill you will have to pay this may prevent you from getting or keeping your license.
- I go to work and school and will have to travel to multiple dental offices. I will be going to Vancouver multiple times a day not knowing a set price and knowing that I will have to pay this multiple times is concerning.
- For someone who is on call, they will have to go back and forth no matter what time it is. This is difficult if you have family in Vancouver too.

III. Ideas about benefits and solutions

6. **We understand no one wants to pay tolls or fees, but tolling does provide benefits. Which benefits are most important to you? *The project team reviewed the following list of expected benefits, then invited comment.***
 - a) Fewer hours of slow traffic each day
 - b) More reliable trips – knowing I can travel 45 mph on average on the highway any time of day, even during rush hour.
 - c) Reduce vehicle emissions to lessen the impacts of climate change.
 - d) Less slow traffic for trucks carrying goods– so deliveries arrive on time.
 - e) Funding for transportation projects because gas taxes and other revenue sources that are used to pay for these projects are now not enough.
 - f) Support bus, biking, walking, and rolling improvements that help reduce traffic.

Response Summary:

- Believe that emissions do cause climate change. We have had triple digit summers.
 - Pollution is affecting the environment and animals. We are seeing higher temperatures.
 - Use of gasoline is affecting our climate.
7. **In Oregon, the benefit of paying a variable toll is a known toll rate at the time you travel, less traffic and a more reliable trip. If we start a toll program, how can we make this easier for community members?** *Participants indicated which of the options they felt would make tolling easier on their communities:*

Options	# of responses
Drivers experiencing low incomes could pay lower tolls.	5
Toll fees are used to fund projects that help reduce traffic.	4
Good toll-free transportation options exist – like other roads, reliable buses and trains, or safe biking and walking routes.	1
Highway drivers stopped using local streets to avoid highway traffic.	0
I could get to where I need to go faster.	2
I could know how long it would take for me to get to where I need to go.	0
There were neighborhood improvements like safe sidewalks, bike lanes, and more comfortable bus stops.	2
Express buses could drive on highway shoulders.	0

Response Summary:

- Street improvements take a long time so I don't see how that would help.

8. What other ideas do you have to make tolling easier for you and your community?

Response Summary:

- There were several comments and questions about how toll revenues could be used:
 - Is there any way the money raised from tolls could help with education and youth programs?
 - Would some of the money offset some of the fines? This could be given to community based organizations to offset some of the costs.
 - A “toll day” could be a community service day to take care of the toll fine (i.e., do community service instead of having to pay the toll).
 - Some of the money raised through tolling should be given to people who may go through the toll by mistake and can’t pay.
 - We should be helping determine what the money should be going towards, like public safety.
 - There should be a grant that is designated for Black communities or community organizations. Tolling revenue could be designated to help lower income drivers and or Black communities for job training with ODOT.
 - Survey people of color to ask what they want to do with the money.
- What happens if the car isn’t registered and the driver isn’t the registered owner? Who will pay the ticket?
- Does the money have to go to transportation or can it go to non-transportation organizations?
- Get more input from people who are struggling in the community.
- How can the community benefit from the project?
- How many jobs would this toll bring to Oregon? The customer service side of administering the toll could create jobs.
- It’s important to have different job options. Working in fast food restaurants isn’t enough to pay the bills and people are looking for more fulfilling jobs.

9. The project team asked participants to provide a thumbs up or thumbs down if they agree or disagree with the following choices:

Options	Agree	Disagree
Would you pay a toll if you could save 10 minutes of travel time?		6
Would you pay a toll if you could save 30 minutes of travel time?	2 depends, 4 yes	
Would you pay a \$3 toll per trip during an afternoon commute, if you knew you were able to travel 45 mph on average?		6
Let's say the toll is \$3 during rush hour and 30 minutes after rush hour it lowers to \$1. Would you delay your departure time to pay a lower toll?	3 yes, 2 probably	
Would you pay a highway toll to avoid stop-and-go traffic on local streets?	1 not sure, 1 yes	1
If there was a toll on the highway, would you use a local train or bus if you knew it would take about 40 minutes or less to reach your destination?		5
Would you change where you shop or eat if there was a toll?	2 yes, 2 depends on the toll price	
Would you be more likely to visit local businesses if you knew you would avoid a toll?	1 yes, 1 it depends	1
Would you be more likely to pay a toll on a daily basis - when you're driving to work or school?	4	

Response Summary:

- Traffic may increase as people choose to travel during low traffic times.

- There should be one price for tolls regardless of rush hour – people have to get used to change and lots of people will be against it.
- For the bus option, it depends on where my destination is.
- I would rather drive, especially with Covid.
- Public transportation is not as safe as it used to be. It's still going to be crowded and a lot of people will be trying to get on the bus. How many more buses are you going to have to accommodate these people?
- It seems like everytime you drive across the bridge, there will be a charge.
- Set a monthly pass or price because working and going to school is going to be a lot.
- Visiting local businesses would depend on the type of business and if the business meets my needs.

IV. Final comments

10. Anything else you would like to share with us today?

No Responses