

Memorandum

Date	Revised August 25, 2023
To	Regional Toll Advisory Committee (RTAC)
From	RTAC Project Team
Subject	RTAC Nexus Project List Development and Selection Criteria

1. Introduction

Over the past year, ODOT has heard from partners that there is a desire for more mitigation than will be identified through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. Partners are seeking investments that will complement pricing and further encourage mode shift and reduce vehicle miles traveled. Partners have shared they know the system well and know the types of projects that will be needed to address impacts. After receiving this input, ODOT convened regional public transportation providers to develop a Public Transportation Strategy (PTS); and requested that partners develop a list of projects that have a clear nexus to toll-related impacts.

This memorandum documents the proposed approach and revised selection criteria to develop the Regional Toll Advisory Committee (RTAC) list of pedestrian, bicycle, and other roadway projects that have a nexus to improving mobility in concert with a congestion pricing system on I-5 and I-205. This process will be coordinated with the ongoing effort lead by public transportation agencies to develop a PTS that best complements regional congestion pricing.

This document summarizes the conversation that began at the June 20, 2023, RTAC meeting, and addresses feedback from members and staff.

2. Nexus List Proposed Development Process

ODOT staff will work with senior staff from jurisdictions in the region to draft a list of nexus pedestrian, bicycle, roadway, and other mobility projects for RTAC consideration. The proposed approach to developing the draft nexus project list includes:

1. Develop definition and selection criteria for projects with a nexus to the proposed toll system on I-5 and I-205. RTAC reviews and provides input to the definition and criteria (June-July 2023).
2. ODOT will request jurisdictions/partner agencies to identify potential nexus projects using the definition, criteria, and a simple intake form. Any jurisdiction may submit a project, including jurisdictions not directly represented at the RTAC table (Request initiated in early August 2023).
3. Partner agencies/jurisdictions submit initial nexus projects using the intake form (By September 5, 2023).
4. The ODOT Toll Project team will work with senior partner agency staff to review, discuss, and identify the nexus projects that meet the criteria for discussion of by RTAC (September 2023). Once a draft list has been developed, projects may be sorted or grouped in categories to facilitate review and discussion.

5. RTAC members may choose to submit additional potential projects by October 12, 2023.
6. RTAC will discuss and refine the list of nexus projects as well as next steps based on the outcomes of staff discussions (September and November 2023).
7. The refined nexus project list and next steps will be considered in the development of ODOT's Implementation Plan due to Governor Kotek on December 15, 2023.
8. The list will be considered a working draft as the toll projects continue to develop. RTAC staff will revisit the nexus and PTS project lists as additional traffic modeling data is available and to discuss funding options once revenue projections are known.

Nexus and PTS lists may be revised and/or prioritized as the following information is available:

- NEPA analysis
 - Benefits/impacts/mitigation for RMPP (2024)
 - Benefits/impacts for I-205 Toll at Abernethy (2024)
- Low-income toll program parameters (2024)
- Revenue analysis
 - Level 2 Traffic and Revenue Analysis for I-205 (2024)
 - Level 2 Traffic and Revenue Analysis for RMPP (2024)
- Identification of Nexus, and refinement of PTS, project costs, implementation timeframes, and identification of matching funds or additional funding sources that could support delivery (2025)

3. RTAC Input

The following elements of the draft nexus project definition and selection criteria changed as a result of input from several RTAC members and staff:

Many respondents indicated that the definition of nexus either needed no further editing or was headed in the right direction. Minor text edits were made to the definition previously presented to enhance clarity. Several requested more information about the purpose of the nexus project list – this section has been added to this memo.

Many respondents indicated that the selection criteria are generally those that should be considered for nexus project list development. There was eagerness for more information about how selection criteria would be used, and the level of detail required from local jurisdictions. The project team reorganized the selection criteria into three categories, including: relationship to congestion pricing, equity, and project readiness. Additionally, individual selection criteria (project location, readiness) are more clearly defined based on member feedback. This includes broadening the definition for project location and project

readiness. Some suggested criteria, such as project funding, were removed to simplify and focus the list. Project funding and cost will now be considered at a later stage.

Input received is available upon request.

4. Purpose of the Nexus Project List

RTAC, and by association all regional ODOT Toll Project partners and jurisdictions, are asked to engage in an effort to identify pedestrian, bicycle, roadway, and other mobility projects¹ that have a nexus to congestion pricing when it is implemented on I-5 and I-205 in the Portland metropolitan area. The nexus projects are key projects that advance multimodal accessibility, are critical to achieving congestion relief in our region, and provide access to opportunity or address transportation-related disparities and barriers experienced by the Toll Projects' Equity Framework² communities.

The nexus project list (as well as the final Public Transportation Strategy project and supportive services list) is intended to aid ODOT and regional partners as the Toll Program advances, funding opportunities become available, and strategic partnerships and investments are aligned. Nexus projects are, in many cases, ambitious and essential infrastructure investments that are needed to provide mobility options in the region within the context of a priced system. Paired together, regional pricing and investments in the pedestrian, bicycle, roadway, and transit systems can support regional and state goals related to equity, mobility and climate. The nexus project list may change and expand as funding and regional priorities and needs change.

5. Nexus Project Revised Definition

Nexus projects are pedestrian, bicycle, roadway, or other mobility projects that would complement a tolling system on I-5 and I-205 in the Portland metropolitan area by:

- Supporting congestion relief on a corridor that may become more congested with the implementation of tolling, OR improving access to public transportation, OR improving mobility options on a toll highway traffic diversion corridor, AND
- Providing access to opportunity OR addressing transportation-related disparities and barriers experienced by the Toll Projects' Equity Framework³ communities.

¹ Note, the Public Transportation Strategy is a separate effort underway to identify specific public transportation projects and supportive services that are complementary to a congestion pricing system on I-5 and I-205.

² Toll Projects Equity Framework.

https://www.oregon.gov/odot/tolling/Documents/Toll_Projects_Equity_Framework_with_AppendixA.pdf

³ Toll Projects Equity Framework.

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6. Nexus Project Revised Selection Criteria

Category	Selection Criteria
Congestion Pricing Nexus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Location – Project is within a corridor that may become more congested due to tolling diversion. • Safety – Project is focused on addressing a safety concern at an identified high injury location for vehicle drivers, pedestrians, or bicyclists. • Network Connectivity – Project provides additional connections to the street network. • Transit – Connects to/expands access to public transportation or complements a Public Transportation Strategy project or supportive service.
Equity⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Location – Project serves Equity Framework communities. • Equitable Engagement – Equity Framework communities have had or will have the opportunity to engage in project development. • Benefits – Project reduces travel times and/or increases modal options for Equity Framework communities. • Access to job centers – Project increases accessibility to job centers for Equity Framework communities. • Climate – Provides opportunities for reduced greenhouse gas emissions (or could contribute to improved air quality) or encourages multimodal transportation use.
Project Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning stage, implementation phase, public engagement – • Project is included in regional transportation plan or a local plan. • Project will be ready for implementation within 5 years. • Project will be ready for implementation in 5 to 10 years. • Project has had some early planning conducted and/or completeness of project design. • Project is supported by facility owner and nearby communities.

⁴ EMAC review may result in adjustments to these screening criteria.