



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

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DATE: January 10, 2023

TO: Regional Toll Advisory Committee

FROM: Kris Strickler,
Director and RTAC Chair

CC: David Kim, RTAC Facilitator

SUBJECT: Reflections on RTAC charter discussion of December 5, 2022

At our last meeting, the discussion centered around your additional comments on the draft charter. I heard several comments of appreciation for the edits that were made between meeting 2 and meeting 3 from your feedback. Given the volume and importance of the work in front of us, I am interested in moving into substantive dialog. As I said in December, I didn't hear anything in our discussion that was outside of the purview of the committee. This memo provides my reflections and a path forward.

What I heard:

- Concern with effects of rerouting to local roads and the associated negative effects to safety, congestion and greenhouse gas emissions. There were suggestions to add "associated travel corridors" to the traffic operations factor for consideration (page 4).
- Recommendation to include toll revenue allocation, including funding of diversion mitigation efforts, as part of the committee work.
- Various comments for clarity on the priorities for making committee recommendations, including reducing vehicle miles traveled, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, raising revenue, reducing diversion, reducing congestion, improving safety, reducing community impacts, and improving reliability of biking/walking/transit.
- Comment that climate adaptation strategies are important to consider along with climate mitigation.
- Suggestion to discuss scoping and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process to enhance understanding.

Moving ahead based on your comments:

To better align with current language in the draft amendment to the Oregon Highway Plan and state policy, edits proposed during the meeting related to travel corridors and addressing effects to climate change have been added to the draft for your consideration.

Our work together requires us to discuss how local road congestion is monitored and addressed, per the draft charter. Staff will present data and information to support your deliberations. RTAC members will have access to all information available to NEPA Participating Agencies to inform discussions with the RTAC.

Finally, the last key question in the draft charter relates to revenue allocation, where I expect a robust conversation that will allow me to report to the Oregon Transportation Commission in advance of their decisions on toll rate setting, the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan and other funding decisions. RTAC revenue discussions will occur in parallel with the Regional Transportation Plan. However, not all information related to rates or revenue potential will be available before the end of 2023. As a result, getting clear recommendations from RTAC on criteria or guidance will be most helpful for the OTC's future decision making.

I asked staff to pull together an adjusted draft of the charter, along with an updated matrix (attached) of your comments and how they are addressed or will be addressed in the future as part of our discussions.

Again, I thank you for all your comments to date and especially for the time you have already taken as part of this process. I look forward to our continued work together to improve our transportation system for the people of Oregon and SW Washington.