

# Oregon Toll Program

## Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee Meeting #11 Summary



<b>Subject</b>	Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee Meeting #11
<b>Date and Time</b>	July 28, 2021   3:30-5:00 p.m.
<b>Location</b>	Online via Zoom
<b>Recording</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=361fOi8U_gQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=361fOi8U_gQ</a>

### EQUITY AND MOBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Attendees	Organization
Abe Moland	Clackamas County Health and Transportation
Amanda Garcia-Snell	Washington County Community Engagement
Bill Baumann	Community in Motion
Diana Avalos Leos	League of United Latin American Citizens; Latino Youth Conference
Dwight Brashear	SMART
Eduardo Ramos	At-large member
Fabian Hidalgo Guerrero	Causa
Ismael Armenta	At-large member; Oregon Walks
James Paulson	WorkSystems Inc. Board
John Gardner	TriMet
Kari Schlosshauer	At-large member; Safe Routes Partnership
Michael Espinoza	Portland Bureau of Transportation
Sharon Smith	Oregon Transportation Commission

Absent: Germaine Flentroy - Beyond Black/Play, Grow, Learn; Park Woodworth - Ride Connection; Dr. Philip Wu - Oregon Environmental Council

### PROJECT TEAM

Name	Meeting Role	Name	Meeting Role
Jessica Stanton	Facilitator	Lucinda Broussard	Project team
Anne Pressentin	Project team	Ping Khaw	Project team
Hannah Williams	Project team	Nicole McDermott	Project team
Garet Prior	Project team	Chris Lepe	Project team
Heather Wills	Project team	Spiro Pappas	Meeting notes
Nick Fazio	Zoom host	Scott Bucklin	Project team
Kirsten Hauge	Project team	Joy Agbugba	Project intern

## **WELCOME**

Jessica Stanton (meeting facilitator) welcomed the committee members and opened the meeting with a centering exercise. Jessica reiterated the importance of the EMAC's work, reviewed the Working Together Agreements, and provided an overview of the meeting purpose – to guide the development of a toll program with tangible and equitable investments in neighborhood health and safety. Jessica provided an overview of the proposed outcomes and the agenda. The proposed outcomes were to take the next step forward on EMAC recommendations to the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) on neighborhood health and safety, and to know more about what ODOT is hearing from the community. The agenda included a public comment period and committee report out.

## **SETTING THE TABLE**

Jessica provided an overview of the EMAC Game Plan to reorient committee members to the process for developing recommendations to the OTC. Jessica reiterated that previous meetings were focused on transit and multimodal. The focus is now on neighborhood health and safety. The committee will then discuss affordability, access to jobs and environmental justice transportation at the August meeting. During the September through November meetings EMAC will focus on furthering and finalizing the recommendations they will present to the OTC in November.

## **TODAY'S MEAL**

Garet Prior (project team), reviewed background content introduced at the last EMAC meeting intended to help “set the table” and prepare the EMAC for the discussion of neighborhood health and safety policies and strategies. First, Garet recognized the catastrophe regarding the heat wave that struck Washington and Oregon this summer, and the some of the communities hardest hit by the heatwave are also some of the communities being evaluated under the Equity Framework.

Garet described ODOT's commitment to neighborhood health and safety investments that will be included in strategies, policies, and performance measures. He reviewed the three documents that were introduced in the previous EMAC meeting and noted the proposed updates that came from the EMAC discussion groups and subsequent NEPA Scuba team meetings. Those three documents are:

1. Tolling, Neighborhood Health and Safety: Research
2. Tolling, Neighborhood Health and Safety: Policy & Strategy Options
3. Performance Measures: Neighborhood Health and Safety

Chris Lepe (project team) walked through EMAC’s preferred policy and strategy options to confirm the updates made to the policy and strategy options document (see [Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee Meeting 11 presentation](#) [slides 15-22] and [meeting recording](#) [video; 8:40]).

### Neighborhood Health and Safety Poll

Jessica facilitated a poll for committee members. The poll was intended to assess how committee members felt about the neighborhood health and safety recommendations.

11 EMAC members responded.

Question	0-20%	20-40%	40-60%	60-80%	80-100%
How close are we to a recommendation on neighborhood health and safety policies and strategies?	0	2	2	3	4

Jessica followed-up the poll with discussion, asking EMAC members to share their thoughts. Jessica asked those who voted under 40% what could bring those policies and strategies closer to OTC recommendations.

### Committee Comments

- A committee member shared that they feel the policies are going in the right direction, but they have concerns regarding the financial plan for the toll revenues and how equitable investments will be made. The committee member noted that recent funding commitments were made towards the construction of the Abernathy Bridge, and that there is a lack of clarity around how much remaining funding will be made available for different investments.
- Another committee member is concerned that if funding is only available for long-term projects, the communities will think revenue will only be going to a bridge or other project(s) that will take 5+ years to implement. There is concern that funds won’t get to the communities for smaller projects or other efforts that would make a more direct impact.
  - Jessica noted that if more of the financial information was clarified, this would help bring the strategies and policies closer to recommendations.
- A committee member noted the need for detail surrounding the terms used. For example, how was safety defined and what was considered “near” the communities. There is concern regarding how the program would provide benefits to community members within certain zip codes. They mentioned that although the strategies and policies were in a good place, they would feel better if there was more index or glossary on the terms used.
  - Jessica asked if the committee member would like to see a glossary or index in the package of recommendations. The committee member said they would like to see that as a separate document, where it includes financial estimates and definitions of terms (such as, low income).

- A committee member suggested to explicitly state “funding for smaller community-based projects” somewhere within the strategies and policies as a method of taking steps towards clarity surrounding equitable investments. They also expressed support for investing in community-based projects before large infrastructure would be built. The committee member suggested using language that states support for smaller community-based projects as a method of deploying investments and focusing on neighborhood-scale improvements.
- Another committee member voiced support for the previous comment and added that the suggestion in the previous comment would be strategic in translating system-scale investments down to the community level at community organizations and local jurisdictions. Providing the tools and funding/support to make impactful changes to the transportation system that addresses equity, safety, and reducing climate emissions.
- A committee member suggested including language in the strategies and policies that emphasizes some ability for neighborhoods to be involved in the impacts investment decision making.

Jessica thanked the committee members for their comments and encouraged all committee members to reach out if they have additional comments.

Following the discussion, Gareth reviewed the EMAC Game Plan and noted that ODOT plans to bring research on implementation, assumed toll rates, and revenue estimates before EMAC provides their recommendation to the OTC. He also mentioned that the full committee meeting in August will review impacts to low income communities and environmental justice transportation needs. Gareth explained that the EMAC Navigators sub-committee is working on more detail to develop their recommendations and that ODOT is working on a process to provide committee members with financial information regarding assumptions in the value pricing feasibility analysis. Gareth stated that as the federal review process begins, ODOT will gain more information regarding where tolling will have benefits and burdens.

Gareth described a detailed schedule that ODOT is proposing showing what the EMAC Navigators will focus on and how the EMAC Navigators will help inform EMAC’s work (*see [Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee Meeting 11 presentation](#) slide 28*).

### **Discussion: Does the support proposed by ODOT meet your needs?**

Jessica facilitated a discussion on how committee members felt about the support proposed by ODOT. Committee members did not comment but did provide a general thumbs-up expressing positive feedback surrounding the support proposed by ODOT.

## **EMAC NAVIGATORS REPORT OUT**

James Paulson and Fabian Hidalgo Guerrero provided an overview of the EMAC Navigators meeting that took place. James and Fabian presented the key -statements that came from that

meeting with interest in receiving input from all committee members (see [Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee Meeting 11 presentation](#) [slides 30-36] and [meeting recording](#) [video; 29:45]).

James noted that he believes the public comments are important in the public engagement process, and EMAC needs to be cognizant of the public comments received. James also mentioned that the EMAC Navigators discussed how EMAC's work on the I-205 Toll Project does not uniformly apply to the Regional Mobility Pricing Project, but rather informs it. Fabian added that the key statements came from the conversation EMAC Navigators had with ODOT surrounding taking ownership of the recommendations, with the hope that the key statements are further discussed and that committee members provide further suggestions. James invited committee members to ask questions and request further clarity on the key statements.

## Questions

Jessica walked through questions that were expressed by EMAC committee members (see [Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee Meeting 11 presentation](#) [slides 37-39] and [meeting recording](#) [video; 37:40]). Jessica explained how for each potential policy and strategy, EMAC was asking ODOT to give answers that would strengthen and inform their recommendations. She prompted committee members to think of these questions as tools that would explore the impact and implementation for the policies and strategies. Jessica noted that the questions and answers are another section of the recommendations that EMAC is developing.

### **Discussion: Are these the right questions?**

Jessica opened a discussion regarding the questions she reviewed. Committee members did not comment but did provide a general thumbs-up expressing positive feedback surrounding the questions presented.

Garet outlined that it is important to not overgeneralize the needs of equity, and that we are clearly identifying the different communities in the Equity Framework, including what the specific needs are for these communities at the I-205 Toll Project level and the Regional Mobility Pricing Project level (see [Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee Meeting 11 presentation](#) slide 41). The screenshot in the document is key for setting up an outline, entailing feedback on tolling from a specific group within the Equity Framework and any strengths and needs identified through outreach. Garet distinguished using the term strengths instead of assets, making it clear that Equity Framework communities are not only viewed by what their needs are but are viewed by the assets and strengths within the communities.

### **Discussion: Is this how you want information from Equity Framework communities to come back to you?**

Jessica facilitated a discussion on how committee members would like to receive the information from Equity Framework communities. Jessica asked committee members if it was clear that we are not grouping everyone into the same category, and whether the feedback is specific enough to each project.

### **Committee Comments**

- A committee member expressed the importance of receiving prioritization from the various communities. The committee member mentioned they were not sure how community information was collected, so it would be helpful to receive an understanding of how information from the communities could be gathered.
  - Ping Khaw (project team) responded, noting that they just completed a second round of community engagement. Ping noted that although it is sometimes difficult to receive community input, the community liaisons are effective in collecting it. Community liaisons are briefed so they know how to answer basic questions. If a question is complicated, then the community liaisons will reach out to Ping for further support. Information is shared with the project team, and most of the time the questions are generic.
- The committee member followed-up Ping's answer with a question on community resistance. As the need to address community resistance continues, the committee member asked how he can find out the level of community resistance and how it could be mitigated. He felt that if community resistance wasn't addressed, it would be difficult to execute successfully.
  - Ping added that the community liaisons are sympathetic when approaching community members. The community liaisons themselves understand the residents in the neighborhood and understand that it is a painful burden for certain individuals. Community liaisons are always seeking feedback and suggestions from residents to tolling alternatives.
- The committee member added that sometimes members of the public are not equipped to answer the questions they are being asked. The committee member suggested surveys that capture sentiment rather than ideas.
  - Hannah Williams (project team) echoed Ping's point. Hannah recalled a meeting two weeks ago that included intentional briefs with community liaisons to assess if any changes to community engagement should be made. The community liaisons are also brought into planning efforts to adjust and nuance community engagement efforts. Something that arose in the meeting was honesty surrounding the action of tolling communities, and that discussion groups should focus on finding solutions to easing the financial burden on certain communities.
- The approach should also take actions that will mitigate the impact of tolling. Community liaisons should ask members of the public for ideas on how to ease the burden as tolling is implemented to help offset the impact of tolling. Identifying the neighborhood needs, such as bike parking and sidewalks, may help members of the public as tolling is implemented.
- A committee member expressed hope for nuance in the priorities and concerns being discussed. He suggested community liaisons should ask users who travel without a car and identifying their needs, noting that users who are not using cars provide insight into making their experiences better.

## Meeting with OTC

Garet outlined what EMAC members should expect from the November meeting with the OTC and what will take place after the November meeting (see [Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee Meeting 11 presentation](#) [slides 43-44] and [meeting recording](#) [video; 55:30]). Garet reminded EMAC members that two meetings with the OTC will take place, one in November and one in the Spring of 2022.

## Discussion: Does this process make sense?

Jessica opened a discussion regarding whether the OTC November meeting process makes sense to committee members. Committee members did not comment but did provide a general thumbs-up expressing positive feedback regarding the process.

## Performance Measures

Garet discussed the performance measures related to neighborhood health and safety (see [Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee Meeting 11 presentation](#) [slides 46-50] and [meeting recording](#) [video; 59:40]). He reviewed the NEPA tree and noted the performance measures help identify impacts, benefits, and burdens. Garet also noted that the goals, objectives, and performance measures will help identify where investments and mitigation will be committed. Garet briefly highlighted the “what we heard and what we’re doing about it” section for performance measures. Garet noted that the NEPA Scuba team subcommittee will continue to evaluate the performance measures and asked the committee members if they had any additional feedback for ODOT. No committee members provided feedback.

## PUBLIC COMMENT AND COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORT OUT

### Verbal public comment

Jessica welcomed members of the public for the verbal comment period. Jessica outlined the process and noted each person would have up to 2 minutes to speak. Two individuals provided verbal public comments.

- Lorely Miller from Oregon City expressed concerns about the public engagement process and rerouting and diversion. Lorely stated her opposition to tolling. [See Equity ad Mobility Advisory Committee Meeting #11 \[video\]](#); 1:05:25.
  - Garet responded to the public comment. [See Equity ad Mobility Advisory Committee Meeting #11 \[video\]](#); 1:07:50.
- John Ley from Clark County expressed concerns about other examples of tolling, economic impacts, revenue and taxes, rerouting and diversion, and congestion observations. [See Equity ad Mobility Advisory Committee Meeting #9 \[video\]](#); 1:09:10.

Jessica thanked the members of the public for providing their verbal comments as she concluded the public comment period. Jessica reminded members of the public that comments can be sent to ODOT's website at any time, comments can be submitted via email at [oregontolling@odot.state.or.us](mailto:oregontolling@odot.state.or.us), and verbal comments can be submitted by calling 503-837-3536 and leaving a voicemail.

### **Committee Member Report Out**

Michael Espinoza reported out on the Pricing Options for Equitable Mobility task force (see [Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee Meeting 11 presentation](#) [slides 54-63] and [meeting recording](#) [video; 1:12:10]). Michael noted the task force has been meeting over the last 18 months, and in early July they voted to adopt a set of recommendations that will go to the City Bureau Leadership and City Council this Fall.

### **Regional Mobility Pricing Project**

Garet gave an overview of the Regional Mobility Pricing Project. Garet noted that the footprint is along I-5 and I-205 in Oregon, and the goals shown on the screen are from the Urban Mobility Office (see [Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee Meeting 11 presentation](#) slide 64).

### **Regional Mobility Pricing Project Community Engagement**

Hannah Williams provided an overview of the Regional Mobility Pricing Project Community Engagement efforts (see [Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee Meeting 11 presentation](#) [slides 65-67] and [meeting recording](#) [video; 1:20:40]). Hannah noted that they want to hear from members of the public about congestion pricing on I-5 and I-205, and would like to hear from the community as they look for ways to address congestion, equity, climate change, and look for a sustainable funding source to fund transportation improvements. They are seeking to identify regional priorities, what the goals of the project should be, and which alternatives ODOT should study further.

### **Discussion Groups**

Ping Khaw provided an overview of the Regional Mobility Pricing discussion groups (see [Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee Meeting 11 presentation](#) [slide 68] and [meeting recording](#) [video; 1:24:10]). Ping noted that there are 8 liaisons, two liaisons for each language group they are communicating with. Community liaisons are recruiting Equity Framework-identified communities for their discussion panels. They have set the goal to have 50 survey responses per liaison.

### **Current Tolling Legislation**

Jessica provided committee members with an opportunity to share thoughts, reactions, or questions regarding the current tolling legislation. No members asked questions or provided comments.



## NEXT STEPS

Jessica reviewed next steps for the committee:

- At the next EMAC meeting on August 25, 2021, the committee will hold a workshop on impacts to people experiencing low incomes and next steps regarding the EMAC recommendations on policy, strategy, and performance measures.

Jessica reminded members to fill out the meeting evaluations to help identify areas for improvement. She thanked the committee members for their time and input and adjourned the meeting.

*Note: This document is only a summary of issues and actions from this meeting. It is not intended to be a transcript of the meeting, but rather an overview of points raised and responses from the Project Team. We have posted a full recording of the meeting on the [committee webpage](#).*

*The information in this document, and the public and agency input received, may be adopted or incorporated by reference into a future environmental review process to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act.*

*Please note that committee member and public comments during meetings are part of the public record and open to public records requests through the Oregon Public Records and Meetings Law.*

Si desea obtener información sobre este proyecto traducida al español, sírvase llamar al 503-731- 4128.

Nếu quý vị muốn thông tin về dự án này được dịch sang tiếng Việt, xin gọi 503-731-4128.

Если вы хотите чтобы информация об этом проекте была переведена на русский язык, пожалуйста, звоните по телефону 503-731-4128.

如果您想瞭解這個項目，我們有提供繁體中文翻譯，請致電：503-731-4128。

如果您想了解这个项目，我们有提供简体中文翻译，请致电：503-731-4128。

For Americans with Disabilities Act or Civil Rights Title VI accommodations, translation / interpretation services, or more information call 503-731-4128, TTY (800) 735-2900 or Oregon Relay Service 7-1-1.



## MEETING CHAT BOX RECORD FROM ZOOM

16:15:27 From Jenn Buman to All panelists : can you please post the website that has this info please. I am going to have to sign off early.

16:16:03 From Robert McCarthy to All panelists : Where might I find the contact information for participants? Thanks, from Robert McCarthy, President Bolton Neighborhood Association, West Linn

16:16:58 From Hannah Williams to All panelists : Materials on this page please scroll down.  
<https://www.oregon.gov/odot/tolling/Pages/Advisory-Committee.aspx>

16:22:08 From Diana Avalos Leos to All panelists : Agreed

16:27:44 From Bill Baumann to All panelists : I agree with Sharon's thoughts

16:32:26 From Robert McCarthy to All panelists : Garet and Hannah I would appreciate your contacting me at [remcc11@gmail.com](mailto:remcc11@gmail.com). Thanks, Robert McCarthy

16:33:17 From Diana Avalos Leos to All panelists : Great

16:36:28 From Nick Fazio to Everyone : Hi Robert - We've got your email saved so we'll reach out. Thanks!

16:43:55 From Lorely Miller to All panelists : Lorely Miller email at [lorelyrose@comcast.net](mailto:lorelyrose@comcast.net)

16:44:23 From Lorely Miller to All panelists : Lorely Miller #fivezerothree-foursixseven-eighteightfivefive

16:44:28 From Hannah Williams to Lorely Miller and all panelists : Lorely please contact me and let's connect.

Hannah Williams (she/her/hers)

Community Engagement Coordinator, Toll Program

Oregon Department of Transportation

Urban Mobility Office

Matthew L. Garrett Building

123 NW Flanders St., Portland, OR 97209

Cell: [fivezerothree\[eight\]ninefour\[four\]one seven three](tel:5038944173)

[Hannah\[dot\]Williams@odot\[dot\]state\[dot\]or\[dot\]us](mailto:Hannah.Williams@odot.state.or.us)

16:44:53 From Lorely Miller to All panelists : Thank you

16:45:06 From Jan Roxburgh to Everyone : Thank you Lorely and John Ley! I agree with you both.

16:46:04 From John Ley to All panelists : John Ley -- [pilotjpl@aol.com](mailto:pilotjpl@aol.com)

16:54:35 From Michael Espinoza to All panelists : Thanks for providing me the space to update on the POEM project. You can read the full Task Force recommendations here:

[https://www.portland.gov/sites/default/files/2021/2020\\_0714\\_poem\\_recommendations\\_adopted.pdf](https://www.portland.gov/sites/default/files/2021/2020_0714_poem_recommendations_adopted.pdf)

Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee Meeting #11 Summary  
July 28, 2021

16:54:53 From Michael Espinoza to All panelists : You can contact me directly at Michael[dot]espinoza@portlandoregon[dot]gov

16:55:22 From Sharon Smith to All panelists : I am getting a lot of background noise

16:55:54 From Sharon Smith to All panelists : Hannah's audio is not great

16:56:25 From Gareth Prior to All panelists : EMAC's draft recommendations/preferred options will be sent through the community engagement work you are hearing about from Hannah -- it will happen now and in the future

16:57:54 From Ping Khaw to All panelists : sorry i got to go.. soon.

17:02:05 From John Ley to All panelists : Is what is decided upon for I-205 going to end up being placed on ALL regional highways? Meaning I-5, I-84, US 26, and 217 will all have the same tolling structure?















people are on the committee from the areas that will be directly affected by these tolls? Again, I would like a response.

Lisa O'Brien

---

<b>Date received</b>	7/16/2021
<b>Source</b>	Project inbox
<b>From</b>	Paul Edgar

---

Subject: (I-205 Tolling Process, that includes an Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee)

I was at the Clackamas County Commission meeting last night and the two County Commissioners that have stated total agreement with what I wrote in these comments are Martha Schrader, and Paul Savas. I also gave Paul Savas a edited document on the need to have TriMet Re-Envision its Methods of Transport. Paul Savas told me last night that he had suggested something along this idea 4-years ago, but maybe technology was not where it is now. I ran this also ran by a ex-head of planning for TriMet and had him help me create a new version that is totally targeted at TriMet with the hope that it will get major press in the Oregonian.

Oregon City and Clackamas County both have Transportation Committees and there should be Joint Public Meeting with them, and Public Work Sessions with the Cities of Oregon City Gladstone, West Linn and Canby and their City Commissions.

This Congestion Management/Tolling, as proposed is a killer and greater numbers of people will be Physically Killed, with massive diversion on arterial, roads and bridges that have no ability to safely handle quadrupling of the incidents of travel on them. City's like Oregon City's Downtown and it future with the re-development of the Mill Site as a major attraction will bring chaos, with the anticipated number of visitors that will be equal Multnomah Falls. Right at that intersection of Main Street and Highway 99E/McLoughlin Blvd and with 10,000 new vehicle trips and 40,000 times the cross walk light will be tripped and all hell will breaks loose.

There is limited Transit in Clackamas County and transit is not sought as a solutions and it represents maybe 1% of the alternative modes of transportation. My son is a doctor who likes to bike and he comes into Oregon City and loops back via West Linn, LO and he lives right next to Grant High School in Portland. The people on the Bike and PED Paths are the half of 1% percent, that use that mode of Transport. These Bike Advocates, are more often the elite, white and educated and are not part of those who have time to loose with Transit, but use their Bikes to stay sane and let the tension out of their lives.

There is a planned traffic circle that is in the JPACT Priorities and give-a-ways to the Cities and Oregon City is going to get one, at a 5 way intersection: Linn Ave, Warner Parrot, Warner Milne, Central Point, and we did a traffic count on this intersection and it averages approximately 10 Bike Incidents of Travel per month.

It is not essential Transportation Investment, and in the justifications for this Traffic Circle we see listed Bike and PED Modes as a critical justification for this investment. I am a analyst and I

have seen how the "Books are Cooked" and how figures and lie. Common Sense gets left by wayside in a lot of decisions that have Political Over-Tones to them.

There is so little responsible justification for Congestion Pricing/Tolling of the I-205 Corridor, when you count up the Point Value, in Critical Thinking exercise, when one looks at the big picture of how we can best address the needs of Regional Congestion and Transportation Investments. I have suggested to the Clackamas County Commissioners that if we get Targeted Funding from the Biden Transportation and Infrastructure Bill in Congress that funds all of the monies needed for the I-205 Corridor and Abernathy Bridge Improvements, this will eliminate 90% of any justification for Tolling the I-205 Corridor.

What could be done however, is to add a 4th and new Toll Lane or Truck Lane to all of the improvement proposals of what could and should be done to divert traffic away from the I-5 Corridor where there is a 50% uptick in any Construction Costs in Urban Settings. The Urban I-5 Corridor is broken from the interstate Bridges to Tualatin and it is too expensive to fix. Smart money would be to invest into alternatives and the cheapest with the greatest ROI is the I-205 Corridor and it should be Free Flowing and incentivizes vehicles to bypass congestion and get around Urban Portland, and it should be like putting cheese on a mouse trap and Tolling it is 180 degrees in the opposite direction.

Again, there is NO Equity to those who live and work in Clackamas County or use the I-205 Corridor by Tolling it !!!!.

Paul Edgar

**Attached document is transcribed here:**

We need to have TriMet & the Greater Portland-Metro Re-Envision its Methods of Providing Transport. TriMet must revise its Methods of Providing Transport. TriMet Transit Ridership has fallen 57% when compared to the same month preceding the COVID Pandemic. But that does not tell the whole story of where this loss in TriMet Transit Rider comes from. Ridership has been falling on MAX Light Rail Transit for the last decade, but in the Pandemic, it is close to 15% of what it was pre-pandemic. Commuters within the marketplace has stepped away from MAX Light Rail Transit. TriMet says, "it will take several years to recover", but will it, and it points too, that it is time to "Revise its Methods of Providing Transport". Virtual Offices have permanently changed how the business community does their work, and significant numbers of businesses are permanently reducing their office foot-prints providing needed cost saving. How things are done is being re-examined across the business community and it is time for the Greater Portland Transit Agency, "TriMet" to face the realities of the wants and desires of the "Marketplace". At the same time TriMet is losing transit ridership, the number of vehicles using our roads, highways, and bridges has been increasing in record levels for the last decade. This increase in "Incidents of Travel/Trip Generation" on our roads, highways and bridges, has brought about limited investments necessary to limit or reduce "The Cost of Congestion" that is negatively impacting the environment, people, and the business community. Going place to place in the Supply Chain, takes longer times with a

significant increase in operating costs. Gas and diesel vehicles are idling and operating in less than efficient ways putting much higher level of Carbon Emissions into the air.

Our Greater-Portland-Metro Area must now face the rippling effects of "Inflation" that is added to the cost of everything. Alternative strategies must be implemented. The Greater Portland-Metro Transportation Planning entities, the Sate Legislature, and The Oregon Transportation Commission have advanced their solutions, and that is to institute Congestion Pricing and Management where they increase cost through Tolling the use our roads, highways, and bridges as a solution, to reducing congestion. With "Tolling" comes with a whole slew of negative side-effects including the "killer"

with increased inflation. There has been a perceived positive side-effects, that includes greater revenues and it lessens the difference between transit options and driving a car. However, getting to a transit stop and using transit that is not close enough to where you need to go, in the 1st and last mile has a very spotty record of achieving the desired results. In highly dense population areas with frequent bus services close to where people live and work, bus transit works.

Climate Change has now come to the forefront and it has become a primary element in all of our decisions we make associated with short- and long-term Transportation Planning. We must reduce Vehicle Carbon Emissions with the new technologies of; automation, artificial intelligence, and technology improvements in batteries, and other electrical power storage devices. These and future advances will be the key to our survival as a sustainable civilization.

It is time to re-envision the Methods we use and deploy in providing transport. There is the capability today or in the near future to go farther in in zero emission vehicles, and we have electric Vans/Buses to smooth out the highs and lows of carbonless powered new generation of vehicles. The very expensive old technologies that are not energy efficient or good for the environment need to be twilighted and replaced. We are talking about a lot more than the just gas and diesel buses, trucks and cars.

There is a need to re-examine the inefficiencies and costs associated with light rail and commuter rail methods and vehicles that are no-longer affordable to operate. We did it with our LED light bulbs and street lights that have created reductions in electrical power usage with an amazing Return on Investment (ROI). Today's Light Rail Transit can now be replaced with new technology that is in-sync with today's life styles and the marketplace that consumes far less Electrical Power and dramatically reduces labor costs. We have the technology base that can create a new type of affordable Transport Vehicles, in All-Electric Van's and Mini-Buses.

The Transit Agencies in our Cities need to take a serious look at what Uber and Lyft developed and determine how they can use of this new technology in creating new vehicles that align with it, and the Public Transit Agency's missions. This is where people with their personal mobile device, order out their ride and a Van's or MiniBuses get dispatched. Those needing transport get a conformation Bar Code sent to their smart devise that they will use when they get on their Van or Mini-Bus. The pickup and delivery routes are automatically determined and they could even use the current bus stops at reduced rates. These vehicles could/should be mass-produced in America and fully automated with zero-emission, coming from all-electric design and have a

very low cost. We should be able to have significantly more Electric MiniBuses for the price of one of the old technology Large Buses.

TriMet' s MAX Light Rail Transit is an example of old technology with fixed rail that is very expensive to build/create, and very labor-intensive and costly to operate and maintain. It offers little or NO flexibility in its routes. This and other factors have created the cause and effect that has resulted in Light Rail Transit losing ridership to a level that makes it obsolete and no-longer sustainable.

Analyst suggest that in the future, Hybrid and Virtual Offices will result in a 50% reduction in those who in the past have commuted to Central Offices or Workspaces. Their needs are now more random and this has become the new normal. This is not for everyone, but this change is so significant and its effect on MAX Light Rail Transit so great that it requires this new evaluation. The Uber and Lyft model of service is so nimble, Public Transit Agency must now adapt to the Marketplace.

Uber and Lyft have provided us with a "Proof of Concept" in a more convenient service model but they still have limitations of the capabilities and with the limited capacity of our roads, highways and Bridges. They also have to deal with independent contractors, and their vehicles of choice. To reach our Carbon Emissions Reductions, we must require that these vehicles used in public transport vehicles that are Hybrid or NO-Carbon Emissions in Urban Greater Portland-Metro Geographic Area.

Transit Agencies must embrace this new technology, taking what is good and discarding what is bad and creating a more environmentally correct approach. We now have bus and bike lanes that allow buses to navigate in congestion time frames and those lanes would be perfect for new All-Electric Van's and Mini-Buses in a new transport system, that produces little or NO Carbon Emissions, and gets people where they need to go faster and cheaper.

TriMet must immediately table its proposed \$3 .5 Billion Dollar Southwest Corridor MAX Light Rail Transit Line and repurpose those funds for Right of Way

Improvements-enhancements, along with new computer technology and software capable of addressing the needs of a new Fleet of All-Electric Vehicles akin to Uber and Lyft. The "Marketplace Demands" a totally automated and more convenient and affordable/cost effective Methods of Providing Transport. We must not lose this opportunity to transform how the Transit Agencies address what the people want and the environment requires in a time of Climate Change.

Paul O. Edgar  
pauloedgar@q.com

---

<b>Date received</b>	7/22/2021
<b>Source</b>	Project inbox
<b>From</b>	Ron Miller

---

Subject: Committee Public Comment

I know you don't really want to hear my opinions - as the outcome of this entire process is a foregone conclusion.

But -

In no way am I in favor of paying additional usage fees for roads that I (and the public) have already paid for over the years. This stupidity was tried in Vancouver, BC and the public had a referendum and cancelled the entire toll project. Good for them.

We seem to go through waves of problem solving (Metered Ramps, HOV lanes, Light rail, motorcycles riding between lanes, roundabouts, and now toll roads). The real problem is a lack of transportation resources (IE roads, bridges and tunnels). This will only get worse as electric vehicles can't be argued against as polluters.

All of the current bottlenecks have been known for 30 years. I5 North Portland, Hwy 217, I205/I84, I5 east side, Hwy 26/I405, I5 Wilsonville. Nothing has been done to fix them. Nothing you are considering now will fix them.

Imagine if there was no I205 system.....how bad would it be. It was visionary when it was built. We need more visionary projects, not throttles to the current system.

At least California believes in freeways and constantly builds and improves them. It isn't great, but you often have alternative pathways. When they do put in a toll lane, there is usually 1 or 2, with 4 or 5 commuter lanes as well. You have a choice.

Ron Miller

1777 SE Brookwood Ave.

Hillsboro, OR 97123

---

<b>Date received</b>	7/22/2021
<b>Source</b>	Project inbox
<b>From</b>	Josh Gaines

---

Subject: Committee Public comment

Regarding the questions on your last poll:

None of the potential benefits of your poll are real. People will not adjust commute times to avoid higher tolls because people are commuting at peak times because that's when they have to commute for their jobs. Without changing when businesses open and close in portland, you can't change when people have to drive for work.

---

<b>Date received</b>	7/22/2021
<b>Source</b>	Project inbox
<b>From</b>	Jeannine Herndon

---

Subject: Committee Public Comment I5 and 205 Tolls Resident Input

Greetings,

Thank you for the invitation to the Oregon community to provide input regarding the tolls that are being planned on I5 and 205.

In the 15+ years that I have been a resident of Oregon, I have lived and worked in places that required commuting in Tigard, between Tigard and Beaverton, Beaverton and Portland, Vancouver and Hillsboro, Corvallis to Albany, Monmouth and Lebanon, Corvallis to Hillsboro and Salem to Hillsboro. For some of these commutes I have been able to ride a bicycle or a bus/lightrail. For most though, the commute has required driving on both I-5 and 205. I have had an opportunity to observe traffic and transport conditions in several different stretches of roads and freeways. I have also noticed an increase in traffic, traffic delays and a decline in driver courtesy and an increase in hazardous driving over the years. I agree that changes need to be made to improve travel conditions for everyone and help our communities be more productive, reduce wasted time and money and reduce the impact that driving has on our natural resources and environment.

I do not know the details of how taxes and fees collected for transportation are administered and invested, and hence do not have an informed opinion to share in this regard. If there are not enough funds to carry out the necessary costs in any endeavor, it seems that the first step would be to make an in-depth analysis of how these funds are being collected, administered and spent and reorganize/reprioritize where needed.

I agree that tolls can be a tool to raise funds. I disagree that tolls in themselves will reduce traffic or improve driving conditions solely on the assumption that paying a toll will discourage people from driving on I5 and 205.

Vehicles driving on I5 and 205, two major thoroughfares through the state and into the Portland Metro area, are likely in their majority vehicles that are traveling long distances and have to be on those freeways to transport goods, workers and travelers. Other than diverting traffic to nearby backroads and alternate routes, tolls are not going to reduce traffic.

Tolls will increase the cost of every good that is driven into, through or out of the Portland Metro area on I5 and 205. They will increase the costs for workers who have to commute on these routes and in the long run probably increase the cost of services that require the use of these roads. All land imports and exports driven on I5 and 205 will have an increase in transportation cost and consequently on consumers.

If the tolls proposed on I-5 and 205 are implemented, they will raise money, and that money should directly benefit the users of said roads.

It is my opinion, that the funds collected from any toll on I5 and 205 should be invested into improvements of these particular highways, maintenance and expansion of lanes in order for this collection to improve availability of use and safety and reduce congestion and travel times.

Unless there will be an expansion of railroad or other similar alternative transportation methods, every vehicle that currently drives on I-5 and 205 will still be driving on these freeways regardless of whether or not there is a toll.

In order to reduce traffic on roads, there are also other areas where the State of Oregon could be more active and perhaps more significantly reduce drivers on roads and traffic congestion:



1. Construction of alternate long-distance transportation infrastructure:

A. Expansion of railroad for freight coming and going from Oregon (though the I-5 corridor and the 205 route specifically)

B. Expansion of regular schedule/reliable and expanded hours of railroad/lightrail transportation for passengers/commuters between major cities and population hubs (specifically along I-5 and 205)

C. Expansion of regular schedule/reliable and expanded hours of multiple-rider vehicle transportation like buses and shuttles for passengers/commuters between major cities and population hubs, not only within them (specifically along I-5 and 205)

2. Financial incentives (possibly Oregon state tax credits) for employers who offer:

A. Work from home options for workers who do not perform any on-site or face to face customer/client facing services

B. Alternate work schedules and business hours for employees who need to work on site (manufacturing, agriculture, healthcare, any other on-site or in-person customer facing service)

C. Transportation programs for employees who work in areas where there is mass transit, safe bicycle infrastructure and carpooling/share ride options (this would not apply to workers living and/or working outside of areas where these services are available)

D. Incentives for employers to set up business locations and open up more good paying diverse jobs outside of the Portland Metro area and in other cities, town and population hubs

Improving infrastructure in the whole state will open up Oregon for greater economic growth. The cost of living in the Portland Metro area and increasingly in nearby cities is way too high, and these high costs are expanding farther out geographically each year. My fear is that tolls will add to these ever increasing costs and not result in a tangible benefit for workers, employers, residents or people driving on I5 and 205.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my input.

Kind regards,

Jeannine Herndon

503-957-7857

2590 5th St NE

Salem, OR 97301

Cc: sen.petercourtney@oregonlegislature.gov

A copy of this note was also submitted to the Office of Oregon Governor Brown through their website.

---

<b>Date received</b>	7/23/2021
<b>Source</b>	Project inbox
<b>From</b>	Doug Bragg

---

Subject: Tolling Comments

Tolling Committee(s):

I am responding to the recent email asking for community input on the tolling project(s).

Initially, it seems that this is another means of pushing public transportation on a public that is very much addicted to personal automobiles. Unlike other cities which have invested in and have extensive reliable public transportation (Chicago's L and Metro; New York's Subway; the rail system throughout Europe), the Portland metro area - particularly along the routes considered for the tolls - do not. Instead we have buses, that are stuck in traffic and don't go where they need to go (too few buses, too spaced out, too many different places that one might travel to). Oregonians like their personal cars. Villabois (sp?) in Wilsonville was designed to have no parking, to discourage people from having cars. The result, there are cars lined up on the side of the road. We put compact spaces in parking lots to encourage smaller cars. What happened? SUVs park there. Oregonians aren't abandoning their cars.

City governments have tried encouraging biking and pedestrian routes. Of course, those fail to eliminate traffic on account of distance (no one is going to walk from West Linn to Portland. I doubt that biking that on a regular basis is an option), and weather. Oregon is not known for sunshine year round - for good reason. Walking and bicycling in overcast and rainy weather is, of course, dangerous, on account of the car traffic. This would seem particularly true on side streets. Particularly in West Linn where there are a number of feeder streets down to Hwy 43, during busy traffic times, drivers may have a small window in traffic to go, only to not see the pedestrian or bicyclist coming the other way.

Also, based upon current news reports, home prices are soaring, small businesses are suffering and in many cases have shut down because of a pandemic, and with prices of many things (particularly in the construction industry) going sky-high, it seems only a matter of time before other costs (such as food and healthcare) go up too.

And in this environment of raising costs of living, significant unemployed, and with no reasonably available / reliable public transportation options, the State of Oregon wants to impose a tolling program and charge people for trying to go to work? For trying to go to the store for groceries?

This increased cost comes at a terrible time.

And it will cut down mobility - particularly for the most financially struggling of us.

I understand that one of the goals is to put in place other travel options. The question, though, is what other travel options? Those other options need to be first and foremost in the presentations, so that people know that there is a reasonable option to driving. Without viable alternatives to personal cars, the Toll is simply another tax, and it will absolutely disproportionately affect people based upon income class.

Many of the poorest in the community - those who may not be documented, for instance, will likely not wish to register with the state to get a pass for the tolls. But their children - born here and citizens - will suffer from the income hit too.

Or do you just plan on giving a free pass to anyone who does not make enough money to file their taxes? But, how will that be administered?

Registering carpool vans? How will this work? Send something into the DMV and wait 6 months? (I paid off my car last year; after mailing the Title in, it took months for the DMV to process and send back. The 6 months thing is not an exaggeration). Or is ODOT going to manage this? Does it have the infrastructure to process this? What will the cost to the public be of managing this agency? Presumably the Car Pool Van Registrations will have some sort of fee to set off the cost of processing the applications... meaning that they will have to pay the fee up front or pay the tolls over time, but they don't get out of paying.

I see that one goal is to lessen impact around the toll roads. How? If I understand correctly, if anyone who lives in West Linn wishes to get on 205, they will be charged a Toll. Therefore, people in West Linn looking to go to Oregon City or to take 99E or 213 anywhere are going to go through downtown Oregon City on that narrow bridge. The intersections along this section of 43 from the overpass to the bridge area already terrible. The Main Street / Bridge intersection in Oregon City is equally bad - you know this. Tolling will make that route the preferred route for people in West Linn going to Oregon City - which will make that situation far, far, worse. How is the committee planning on dealing with that additional congestion when neither Clackamas County, Oregon City, West Linn or ODOT have been able to do anything to lessen the existing congestion in the last 10 years (or more)?

Whatever will be put in place to reduce the anticipated congestion must be done before tolling is implemented. Otherwise, when the tolling is implemented, it will be a nightmare, as people immediately take these alternate routes.

Your email said that "Drivers only pay for what they use." -> we already pay for what we use through gasoline taxes and DMV car and license registration fees. Will these fees and taxes be reduced because the toll program will now be "charging drivers for what they use?"

Tolls allegedly help traffic move more smoothly. I recently had the privilege of being stopped in line waiting to pay the toll to cross the Hood River bridge. But for the toll booth, traffic would have gone along just fine. The toll booth acted as an unnecessary stop sign, slowing traffic down - not helping it move smoothly.

It is unclear how Tolls can make a trip more reliable. Anecdotally, cause of most of the significant delays in trips along the freeways (for me) has been car accidents or College Football games. Unless Tolls eliminate both, there will still be delays and unreliability on the road.

And toll pricing won't be a surprise? I've lived in Oregon for 40 years, and the only toll roads I am aware of are the Bridge of the Gods and the Hood River Bridge. Toll booths popping up anywhere else will be a surprise! Older drivers in particular will take a long time to adjust to toll booths. This will be a shock and a surprise, and may very well cause accidents as people try to avoid the toll booth at inopportune times or don't have funds on hand to pay the toll because they've never needed to before!

As for the environmental impact, I assume that we have evaluated the impact and cost of building the infrastructure needed for the additional public transportation, the significant side road improvement (including, I presume the widening of roads and redesign of existing intersections), as well as the environmental impact of the additional cars driving through

Oregon City or West Linn to avoid the tolling. And that, in comparison to this environmental impact, the tolling approach is a lesser evil.

Of course, with construction material costs going through the roof at the moment, the cost to the public of building these facilities is not going to be insignificant. How long, realistically, will it take for this tolling program to actually raise the money to pay for itself, let alone road maintenance?

It's been said you can't stop progress. Tolling, to me, isn't progress. It's a means of letting the guy that can afford the fancy BMW get to go 80mph on I-205 by making sure that folks barley making ends meet have to turn down the job interview, go to a less desirable grocery store, or not take their kids to an annual checkup. But, for the sake of argument, let's say it is, somehow, progress, I sincerely hope that the plan you adopt will call for: 1) Implementing road improvements to side streets to manage the significant increased congestion that tolling will create; 2) Implement viable public transport options for all of the communities impacted (which includes not only the communities where the toll roads are located, but the communities where the drivers were going in the first place! No one will take public transportation if public transportation won't get them to their end point.); and then 3) implement the tolling - but only if #1 and #2 are actually working to reduce congestion.

Another idea - put a pin in tolling for now. Set it aside for 3 years. Working from home for the last 18 months has changed the dynamic for a number of businesses and employees. It's hard to say what the new "normal" will be for working folks - which I presume is the source of the significant congestion. Rather than punishing people for working by charging them more money to get to and from work, why not wait and see what the new normal looks like. It may well be that this congestion problem will solve itself by the way businesses adapt to doing mixed at home and at the office work.

My two cents.

Doug Bragg

West Linn Resident

Native Oregonian

---

<b>Date received</b>	7/23/2021
<b>Source</b>	Project inbox
<b>From</b>	Ethan Lamb

---

Subject: Committee Public Comment

Fuck you. Fuck your tolls.

---

<b>Date received</b>	7/23/2021
<b>Source</b>	Project inbox
<b>From</b>	Tony

---

Subject: Committee Public Comment

You need to completely scrap the tolling ideas for any of the metropolitan area freeways. If you had the slightest clue how to manage your damn budget tolling would not be an option you are stupidly considering. All tolling will do is completely screw up surface street traffic because most motorists DO NOT WANT IT and will use surface streets to avoid it. ANY AND ALL PERSONS involved with this study and this idiotic idea need to be fired. Whoever is in charge of the budget also needs to be fired because it is more than obvious they DO NOT know how to do their jobs. My words will probably go unnoticed because truth be told you are a government entity and DO NOT give one rat's ass about what the general public has to say....you keep saying you do but I was born and raised in Oregon and ODOT and PBOT have DESTROYED our roads making them impassible because of mismanaged budgets and giving right of way to bike lanes. I know bike lanes are not part of the tolling project but if ANY transportation entity would submit an idea to get money from the cyclists for roads and whatnot you would not ALWAYS have to go after motorists money. Most of the center of I-205 is not even being used for what it was designed for. Why make stupid ideas of tolling when you are not even using the freeway as it was originally intended. As said before, every single person involved in the study and planning of this idea NEEDS to be FIRED!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Neither ODOT nor PBOT would not a good idea if it jumped up and bit em in the ass