

Oregon Toll Program

Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee Toll Terms



POLICY

A policy is a statement or administrative rule used to guide decisions and identify actions in pursuit of an outcome, such as advancing equity. As directed by the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC), EMAC will provide recommendations for toll policies that relate to equity and mobility strategies. Through policy decisions, the OTC will define equitable tolling by shaping the Oregon Toll Program and individual toll projects (e.g. I-205 or I-5/I-205). **Policies are NOT specifically tied to the toll project environmental analysis.**

Example

“To address the impact to individuals without a bank account, the Oregon Toll Program will develop and offer a system to accept cash payment for payment of toll charges.”

MITIGATION

Mitigation is a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) term that addresses impacts identified in the environmental analysis for a toll project (e.g. I-205 or I-5/I-205). A mitigation can be a specific project or investment or be a general statement that describes how ODOT will work toward a solution in the future. **A mitigation investment or strategy is tied to the toll project environmental analysis and must be related to an identified impact.**

Example - specific

Due to the increased traffic diversion from tolling on I-205, the intersection of B Ave and C Street will need an additional right turn lane and sidewalk.

Example - general

ODOT will work with local partners to develop a transportation solution for the intersection of B Ave and C Street to address the traffic diversion from tolling on I-205.

CONGESTION OR VALUE PRICING

This type of tolling charges a higher price during peak traffic periods. It's also called value pricing or variable rate tolling. The higher fee encourages some drivers to use other travel options such as carpools or transit, or change their travel time to less congested times of the day, or change where they are going. Congestion pricing is used in places such as on the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge and in Seattle for the SR 520 Bridge and the SR 99 Tunnel. This is different than fixed-rate tolling, in which users pay a flat, static rate to use a road or bridge regardless of congestion or time of day.

What we are doing: We are using variable rate tolls or congestion pricing. The rate of the toll will vary based on congestion at peak and non-peak hours. Even a small decrease in the number of people trying to get on the highway will make for faster commutes.

DYNAMIC PRICING

In a dynamic pricing system, tolls fluctuate in real time based on congestion. San Diego is one city with dynamic pricing on express lanes.

We will not be dynamic pricing: In the Portland area, we are considering a predictable way of tolling where toll rates vary according to a set schedule so you would know the cost in advance. We are analyzing variable rate tolls, not dynamic pricing. We want highway users to know how much a toll costs before they start their trip.

TOLL OR TOLLING

A toll is a user fee to drive on a road or across a bridge. Tolling is currently in place in many cities across the country, including Tacoma and Hood River.

What we are doing: We use the words “toll” and “tolling” instead of “pricing” or “user fee” because most people understand these words, they translate better into other languages spoken in the region, and we want to be transparent.