

# Designing a Toll System that Benefits People Experiencing Low Incomes

People experiencing low incomes may be more heavily impacted by tolls than others. They often have less flexibility with travel times and may not have access to other transportation options. To respond to this concern, the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) and the Oregon Legislature directed the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to identify equitable solutions for people who are less able to pay a toll. ODOT has published options for consideration in a draft report.

This report informs ODOT's approach to implement a low-income toll benefit program before tolling would begin, currently planned for 2024.

## What does the report include?

The document provides options for consideration on the following:

- Income eligibility and verification
- Types of benefits (e.g., discount, exemption, credit, free trips, etc.).
- Design of an inclusive, effective system
- Initiation and monitoring the low-income toll program

This report details previous work in Oregon and across the United States to minimize the burden on people experiencing low incomes, research on other toll program methods, analysis of how toll discounts or credits could affect transportation goals, and feedback from local and statewide voices. The report also identifies future decisions for toll rate setting, operations and monitoring.

## What is the timeline?

The report is due to the Oregon Legislature and OTC in September 2022.

OTC is the toll rate setting authority and decision-making power for toll rates, including income-based toll rates. ODOT would administer benefits in coordination with the community and users before tolling begins.

## How is the report being developed?

In 2021, the Oregon Toll Program's Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee reviewed actions other toll programs have taken to address impacts to people experiencing low incomes and discussed what would be best for Oregon. This feedback was the starting point.

To develop and select eventual recommendations, the following input guides the analysis:

- Ongoing feedback from the Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee
- Focused conversations with people experiencing low incomes who drive on I-5 and I-205
- Results of a public online survey in spring 2022
- Research on existing needs and possible impacts to transportation goals such as congestion management and revenue generation with tolls
- Lessons learned and best practices from other toll programs as well as service providers in Oregon that offer benefits
- Partner engagement

## Report Engagement and Development



## How can people be involved in the decision-making process?

- Visit [OregonTolling.org](https://OregonTolling.org) for the latest information and next steps.
- Provide feedback on the draft report between **June 27 to July 18**. Please email the project team at [OregonTolling@odot.state.or.us](mailto:OregonTolling@odot.state.or.us) and include "Low-Income Toll Report" in the subject line.
- Provide comments at the OTC meeting on September 14. Learn more about how to share comments by visiting the [OTC website](#).



**Please reach out with questions about the Low-Income Toll Report:**

« Scan the code to go to the Oregon Tolling website

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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.