

Statewide Toll Rulemaking Advisory Committee Meeting 4 Public Comments

Date received	03/24/2023
Source	Committee Inbox
From	Peter Noordijk
Subject	STRAC: Public Comment

Dear committee:

My concerns about tolling in Oregon fall into several areas, principally focused on the impossibility of implementing tolling in an equitable manner, and the equity and environmental implications of ODOT capturing a long-term fee-based revenue source that side-steps the legislative process, and de-emphasizes Oregon's only carbon-tax (the fuels tax) in our transportation mix.

1) Tolling converts public roads from public goods to club goods. By definition, tolling road use, converts a public good into a semi-private good, use of the roadway becomes a privilege available to those who can afford it. The anticipated changes in driver behavior in the analyses presented by WSP USA, are premised precisely on roadway availability being contingent access to markers of privilege. Tolling may end up being another tax on poverty.

1a) Privilege 1: ready access to money, and the ability to absorb credit charges through credit cards, absorb the ability to lend money to ODOT (or the vendor) by holding money in an advance pay account, or the additional resources to pay the proposed post-pay surcharge.

1b) Privilege 2: time and workplace flexibility. The congestion-based tolling structure will privilege users who have the choice of whether to access the roadways during rush-hours. Unfortunately, lower-wage workers are the ones with the least choice in how and when to travel to their workstations.

1c) Privilege 3: Time and mental load availability. The proposed off-sets for low-income persons require additional consumption of low-income person's time, or additional money. The increased mental and time resource load on low-income heads of household for any program that requires individuals to maintain awareness of special programs, and to go through the process of asking the government (or vendor) for special dispensation. Post-use payment issues involve additional penalties for people who may use the monetized sections without pre-payment or valid credit cards and need to pay after use.

Challenging charges will also take time, and could incur additional expenses.

2) I live in North Portland, and anticipate increased commuter use of neighborhood streets at unsafe speeds and unsafe behaviors, in order to avoid toll transponders. ODOT has shown a long-standing disregard for pedestrian and cyclist safety on ODOT-administered roadways in the Portland area.

3) Creating revenue stream tied to highway use will reinforce ODOT's continued focus on road-building over other forms of safe and efficient transportation. Relieving congestion by making transportation a privilege will focus ODOT's efforts around the areas of monetization, and de-emphasize movement of

Memorandum

STRAC Public Comment / April 27, 2023

goods or people using mass-transit, off-highway or non-motorized transportation. All of those other options are innately more equitable than turning the interstate into a club-good.

4) The gas-tax is effectively Oregon's only carbon tax. Shifting revenue generation simply to road-use removes the ability of individuals to reduce transportation costs by operating more efficient vehicles. It also de-couples using carbon from the additional costs to highway and infrastructure maintenance brought by fire and extreme weather events.

5) Setting a fee-based revenue stream for ODOT decouples the elected legislature from influence over a major part of ODOT's budget. Less oversight by elected officials coupled with the active representation on the strac advisory committee of commercial interests seems to reduce the long-term voice on affected communities instead of amplifying it.

Thank-you for all our hard work on these questions.

Sincerely,

Peter Noordijk
7801 N. van Houten
Portland, OR 97203

Date received	03/24/2023
Source	Committee Inbox
From	Michael Milch
Subject	STRAC Public Comment

Question: Will the Governor be authorized to designate large parcels of land outside the Urban Growth Boundary to accommodate the large data centers that will be needed to store the billions of high resolution photographs of vehicle license plates captured by tolling gantries in order to settle any billing disputes involving vehicles without transponder stickers?

Michael Milch
Mayor of Gladstone

Memorandum

STRAC Public Comment / April 27, 2023

Date received	03/29/2023
Source	Committee Inbox
From	Kerri Fiero
Subject	tolling 205 public comment

To Whom it may concern,

Tolling on 205 not fair to Oregon city residents at all. Streets are already bogged down clogged up and there are a few thousand Apartments and low income apartments being built on those bogged down roads. It takes 5 consecutive traffic lights to get through the one light at 213 to get across it during traffic hours. There have been NO road improvements already and more apartments and homes being built other places also. Now you want to add all the traffic getting off highway to avoid toll area. Also it will cause problems with Police, Fire, ambulance, first responders, County and state workers, PGE will have problems getting to places and doing their work with so much more traffic and traffic problems. So you will be risking lives and needed services in all of our area and if you think that's ok you need to think again. There are 2 rivers we can't get across to go anywhere you have us boxed in we don't have shopping other than Fred Meyer's and groceries but other shopping none that we will be able to get to Oregon city is NOT equipped to handle this at all, and we won't be able to get to even Clackamas in timely manner. It already takes 30-45 Min's one way. and you want us to pay the toll also if we get on Highway which is one of 2 options to cross rivers and Both would be tolled. The only ways across the river except the bridge down town Oregon city that gets hugely all blocked up already and is just 2 lanes it blocks up down town and parts of West Linn but you want to add to that. The road to avoid 205 S. is also very backed up This could cost us hours. The area you picked is not appropriate with the rivers there and such small roads in Oregon city. It will cause a bottleneck, accidents, road rage, hassles for Police fire and all needed services and first responders, It will also cause increased prices for everything as trucks will charge more to stores and we will get that expense also and so much frustration you will be trapping those of us who live in Oregon city. I have lived here over 30 years. You also are not considering all the apartments going in that are going to cause a huge amount of more traffic already and the fact that Oregon City has no real shopping or a motel we are not as a town equipped to handle this our roads are already filled some don't have hours to spend to go elsewhere to shop and Some can't sit that long due to disabilities. Just so very wrong Toll roads don't work anywhere else why do you think they will work here you are wasting more money on doing this using our tax dollars for something we don't want at all, nobody does in this area, especially in Oregon city.. Lets us vote on it and let those it affects the most as we live near by have the say. You also did not make necessary road enhancements and you did not take our livability into consideration. I would move if I could but I'm disabled and Can not physically do what it takes to move nor can I afford to hire people to do it for me. and just going to doctor will cost me \$8 to go one exit and back really 1/2 to 3/4 mile and about 1 hour of time this would double that time I have no way to avoid the toll as I have to cross both rivers and I can't sit for over 45 mins or it damages my spine So what am I to do let you cause me harm. That is just so very wrong. I don't even leave Oregon city but would have to pay a toll twice to Doctor or to get my prescriptions. The small bridge is always backed up already. It will cause people their jobs and livelihoods by being late due to huge traffic issues in our town and being unable to get to work besides the cost of tolls So Many do not have an extra \$180 a month and more due to trucks and services having to pay tolls and economy that's already to high going up more. The added costs and problems will cause more homelessness, More crime when we have little police or law and order, and cause more anger outrage and frustration. The State is causing more problems to their people than good. Its just greed by our Government and leaders that does not use tax money

Memorandum

STRAC Public Comment / April 27, 2023

efficiently as it is and does not care about the people who pay the taxes. You will be causing harm to the people of this area. I am so against 205 being a toll road and really believe you did not take the residents Of Oregon City being trapped and highly burdened into consideration. at least give us free tolls, but would prefer this whole idea being stopped its a waste of time money and causes more problems than its worth as your toll road will cause us so many problems and heartache just with the traffic coming in our town to avoid the toll, as well as added time loss in our schedules less services and problems for buses first responders and more. You Will be ruining lives already having to work 2 jobs to make it and cutting out any real family time by just adding even more travel time. Just so very wrong. Obviously the People in this area do not matter to Our Leaders or Our Government The Oregon city Government officials are all against this but you wont listen to reason.Cause a worse economy cause delays in first responders and needed care Cost people their homes Jobs and just ruin lives that is not right. So very wrong to Use a trap to get more tolls and Harm the residents that live near by. Just so very WRONG and would harm many of The people who pay taxes that pay your salary. We are your boss not the other way around. Why would you think this is OK at all WE THE PEOPLE do not want this at all Stop The toll on 205 Please.....Kerri

Kerri Fiero, Oregon City resident for over 30 years. I am also disabled for 11 years and can not move away.

Date received	04/05/2023
Source	Committee Inbox
From	John Schiavo
Subject	Tolling...and motorcycles

Hello,

I watched the last STRAC meeting on YouTube. I was hoping to see some in-depth discussion on what consideration is being given specifically to motorcycles for the upcoming tolling proposal(s), but it seems none has been given thus far. I'm not sure if this request is most relevant for STRAC (or some other group/body). If this suggestion is better addressed to another group please forward it to that group.

Issue: Please address the consideration given to motorcycles for the ODOT tolling project proposal. In the past, I have submitted comments on this topic suggesting motorcycles should be free for tolling, now I'm requesting this issue specifically be address in documents or with meeting time. From what I have seen of ODOT meetings, no specific consideration has been given to motorcycles as of yet.

If your goals are: a) reduce traffic congestion, b) support infrastructure maintenance, and c) accomplish this in an environmentally-friendly manner it seems to me that you would want to encourage more motorcycles on the roads by having lower (or free) tolling rates.

Here are my reasons:

- 1) motorcycles take up less space on the road, thereby reducing congestion
- 2) motorcycles weigh less than a vehicle (about 10%-15% of the average passenger car) and have half as many tires (less wear and tear to infrastructure)
- 3) They are more fuel-efficient than most vehicles (i.e. more environmentally-friendly)

Please address this in the April meeting. I support the general idea of tolling to reduce congestion, support infrastructure maintenance/upgrades, and I see environmental benefits as well, however, I want

Memorandum

STRAC Public Comment / April 27, 2023

to see it implemented wisely and with at least some consideration given to more efficient means of transportation.

Thank you,
John Schiavo
Milwaukie, Oregon

p.s. If motorcycles are expected to carry transponders, where will they be placed?

Date received	04/09/2023
Source	Committee Inbox
From	Jim Santee
Subject	tolling

First and foremost I am not opposed to tolling. It is how it is executed or carried out.

In the "old days" there were toll booths, stop, drop in your money and swing arms opens and you drive off. Then came along the toll transponder that was placed in the car or truck window. As one drove the toll section the highways agency would interrogate the transponder and charge the appropriate toll the account holder of the transponder. Depending on the state or jurisdiction one had to pay a handling fee for the transponder and a monthly or quarterly maintenance or convenience fee on top of the toll charges. Now comes the license plate reader tolling system where the highways agency reads the license plate and either charges the user's pre-arranged account or sends off a bill to those without an account plus a billing fee. Now keep in mind if one has already setup an account under this system many times there is still a maintenance fee that is charged even if you DO NOT use it. My son had this problem even though he has moved out of the SF Bay Area and living the Middle East. I you have not setup an account for the tolling agency you will receive a bill plus a "convenience" charge on top of that for NOT have a account setup. So the infrequent traveling gets charged for not have a transponder or setting up an account.

About twice a year I drive on the Tacoma Narrows bridge toll bridge. I pay cash and charged an extra fee for doing so, even though it is NOT practical to have a either a transponder or setting up an account. Here is my big concern: Oregon is essentially a rural state with a lot of rural traffic passing through the Portland area with NO intention of stopping. A lot of this traffic is going to carry the burden of the "billing fee" or "convenience fee". Let's not go there. You guys need to figure this out before it gets political, and very hotly political. I only go to Portland to fly out via PDX, I absolutely do not travel into Portland proper. It is too dangerous. It reminds me of Oakland and the surrounding area. I was in Portland a few months ago and the experience was awful.

Again, I am not opposed to tolling for those who travel in the regional roads on a daily basis. Now the question becomes what will the tolling software and equipment vendor charge ODOT and regional road agencies for their support service. Based on what I have heard in the past it will be gravy train for the "belt way bandit" to make a lot of money leaving the road and highway agencies burdened with these costs and having continually raise fees and tolls. ODOT really needs to flesh this one out. If we were going to have tolls then the rural residence who OCASIONALLY travel on tolls should not carry a burden of excess

Memorandum

STRAC Public Comment / April 27, 2023

fees, and the state should get at least 90% of the toll revenue from the tolling equipment provider agreement.

Live in rural Clatsop County and I am NOT opposed to tolling, I just want to make it fair and reasonable. I am a public transport geek. I love passenger rail, wish we had a good statewide system here.

Please consider this to be public testimony and part of the public record on tolling.

Wish you the best in your efforts trying to thread this needle.

Jim Santee
42162 Bagley Lane
Astoria, OR 97103
503.458.6429
jsantee@pacifier.com