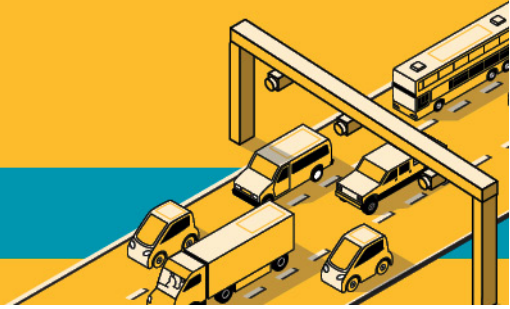


Attachment D Comments Received

D.8 WEBINARS: LIST OF QUESTIONS ASKED

I-205 Toll Project

Early Engagement Webinars Summary



WEBINAR PURPOSE

ODOT hosted three one-hour webinars to provide an interactive experience for attendees to learn about the I-205 Toll Project and ask questions of the project team to help inform their feedback on the project's draft Purpose and Need Statement and proposed alternatives. Webinars were selected as an interactive public engagement tactic instead of in-person open houses because they met guidance from the Oregon Public Health Division and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding COVID-19.

During the I-205 Toll Project early engagement comment period, the webinars supplemented the online open house by:

- Providing live presentation components and interactive question and response opportunities
- Allowing for minimal registration (only name and email) and call-in only options on Zoom, as well as streaming only on YouTube, to help limit barriers to participation
- Allowing individuals to view webinar recordings at their convenience
- Allowing for closed captioning to be translated into multiple languages on YouTube following webinars
- Allowing participants to join and participate in the webinar via a variety of device types, including computers, tablets and smartphones.

WEBINAR OVERVIEW

The information presented in the webinars supplemented the information included on the online engagement site. Each of the three webinars had identical content presented, although questions and answers varied by the attendees participating in each webinar.

The standard agenda across webinars included the following topics:

Approximate Time	Topic
5 min	Welcome and webinar orientation
25 min	I-205 Toll Project presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Project overview- Equity for Toll Projects- I-205 Toll Project Environmental Review- I-205 Screening Alternatives- What's next
25 min	Question and answer (Q&A); comment session
5 min	Closeout and adjourn

Staffing for all three webinars included:

Webinar presenters	Webinar facilitators
Lucinda Brossard, ODOT	Penny Mabie, EI (moderator)
Hannah Williams, ODOT	Brett Watson, EI (tech support)
Heather Wills, WSP	
Mat Dolata, WSP	

Webinar notifications included the following:

Date	Location
August 3 – October 16	Posted on the online engagement site (both the English-language and the Spanish-language); updated following each webinar to link to the YouTube recording.
August 3	Posted links to the webinars on the I-205 Toll Project website.
August 3	News release sent announcing webinars with access links
Aug 3 - 20	Three ODOT Facebook event posts
August 11	Project newsletter emailed with links to webinars

EVENT ATTENDANCE

Event	Date and time	Webinar attendees (Zoom webinar)	Livestreaming views (YouTube)	Post-event views (YouTube, to 10/16)
Webinar 1	Wed, 8/12/2020, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	33	9	248
Webinar 2	Tue, 8/18/2020, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.	41	19	65
Webinar 3	Thu, 8/20/2020, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.	18	7	101

IN-WEBINAR ENGAGEMENT QUESTION RESULTS

The project team used “Poll Everywhere,” an interactive software to engage the audience and provide immediate results to participants and viewers. Questions were asked throughout the 60-minute event. The poll questions were used to support the learning, engagement and evaluation process. Participants could enter their answers via text or computer to increase accessibility.

Responses	#1: Aug. 12	#2: Aug. 18	#3: Aug. 20
Question #1: What’s the furthest you’ve traveled from home in the last four months?			
A. 50 yards	0%	0%	0%
B. 1 - 5 miles	0%	0%	0%
C. 6 - 30 miles	23%	8%	17%
D. 31 - 250 miles	36%	46%	50%
E. 250 + miles	41%	46%	33%
Question #2: Prior to COVID-19, did you consider congestion along I-205 near the Abernethy Bridge to be...			
A. A very big problem	32%	27%	13%
B. Somewhat of a problem	50%	53%	38%
C. Not much of a problem	9%	13%	25%
D. Not a problem at all	0%	0%	25%
E. Don’t know	9%	7%	0%
Question #3: Tolling will make congestion worse because drivers will have to slow down to pay the toll.			
A. True	19%	27%	33%
B. False	81%	73%	67%
Question #4: If user fees (tolls) on I-205 resulted in a faster and more reliable trip, how would your regular trips change?			
A. I would change the time I travel for reduced fee	0%	0%	10%
B. I would try to avoid paying by telecommuting	5%	0%	0%
C. I would use another transportation option like transit, cycling or walking	5%	6%	0%
D. I would drive a different route that didn’t require a fee	64%	63%	60%
E. My travel patterns would not change; I would pay the fee and expect a shorter travel time	9%	31%	30%
F. Other or don’t know	18%	0%	0%
Question #5: Would you recommend this type of format in the future if in-person meetings cannot be held?			
A. Yes	100%	100%	100%
B. No	0%	0%	0%

Responses	#1: Aug. 12	#2: Aug. 18	#3: Aug. 20
Question #6: Did this event provide you with the information you need to submit comments?			
A. Yes	100%	94%	83%
B. No	0%	6%	17%

Attachments:

- Verbatim transcript of question and answer sessions

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WEBINAR 1 (8/12/20) Q&A

Penny: I'm going to ask the first question. This refers to Lucinda. **When you said that tolls can make small shifts in travel times... what do you mean by that, and what would that look like to highway users?**

Lucinda: So I think Mat actually touched on that also, and we're talking about people who choose to go at a different time. So if you're choosing not to go during a peak time, a different time, there are less cars on the road during the peak time, making congestion less, and so traffic can flow.

Penny: And I understand that it, as you said, a small shift can actually have quite a bit of influence on the reduction in congestion... is that right Mat?

Mat: That's absolutely right. You know, congestion is sort of additive, and each additional car on the roadway adds more delay than the car before it.

Penny: Okay, great. Thank you. We've got another question: **what about commercial vehicle pricing? Are there any considerations about that?**

Lucinda: All toll rates will be taken into account by the Oregon Transportation Commission, but I think I just want to ask Mat: during the analysis do you guys price commercial vehicles different than regular vehicles?

Mat: Yeah. At this point we've not priced them differently. Our current modeling work has assumed the same toll rate for all vehicle trips.

Penny: Okay, great. Thank you. Our next question is: **can you talk more about cars using side roads and causing more congestion in residential streets. If people take different reroutes you will not collect all of the funds you're hoping to with tolls, correct?**

Lucinda: Mat, can you talk about diversion?

Mat: Yeah, absolutely. That's definitely a very important consideration. I think there can be rerouting effects. Part of the variable rate pricing is intended to limit that, so we have higher toll rates during the peak hours when more people want to travel (and there's congestion in the surrounding system, as well), and lower toll rates in those other periods. So, we've identified where we think the diversion patterns would potentially be located. A lot of that information is in the in the technical report. But one of the goals of the project is to limit that [diversion], so that requires hitting that sweet spot in the toll rates that Heather identified. In the in the Environmental Assessment that's where we'd really get into those impacts and detail of whether there are impacts during the peak hours when we have that congestion happening on the side

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street system, whether or not the tolling on I-205 would affect the ability of those other intersections and roadways to operate well.

Penny: Thank you, Mat. This next question is about tolling revenue. It's kind of a two-part question... **will the tolling revenue be used only on I-205 related projects, and once those projects are paid for will the toll go away or will it be used on other projects that perhaps don't relate to I-205? So what would be the use of the revenue if the projects on I-205 are completed?**

Lucinda: So let me answer the first question. Tomorrow I'll be in front of the Oregon Transportation Commission to ask the question about dedicating the revenue collected on the corridor to stay on the corridor. Today I don't have the answer. Today my answer would be that any revenue generated would go into a congestion relief fund, and it would be distributed to congestion relief projects. Tomorrow, or when they make a decision, we might have a different answer about using the money on the corridor in which it was collected. And will tolls go away? That's actually another question that the Oregon Transportation Commission gets to decide, so I don't know. Will you use it [revenue] on other projects not related to I-205? I think I tried to answer that in the first one, saying that the revenue would be dedicated to that corridor.

Penny: This next one's going to be for you, Hannah. **What kind of information is ODOT providing to the surrounding communities regarding the impact to those who will attempt to bypass the tolling stations? There are some communities like West Linn that are already experiencing overcrowding due to cars taking shortcuts to bypass traffic. How and what are you communicating with the nearby communities?**

Hannah: Thanks, Penny. We are going out and about to provide information about the projects, but also bring information back in. That two-way engagement is done a couple of different ways. We're providing briefings to jurisdictions all over the Portland Metro Area (that includes Oregon and southwest Washington). We're headed to West Linn in September, we just put that on our calendar for City Council. So we have those briefings and we also have information on our website, we send emails out to not only our regional partners, jurisdictions, and agencies but also our community partners, so a lot of different community-based organizations. We send information to them and we're also making phone calls and connecting with different community-based organizations that serve different communities in our region. We're asking them what the best way to reach folks is and also provide them with information about the project and get their feedback about tolls.

Penny: Thank you, Hannah. **This next question is about economic impact specific to West Linn and Oregon City residents. A questioner asks if tolling will have a disproportionate economic impact on West Linn and Oregon City residents, and will West Linn residents be required to pay tolls every time they access I-205?**

Lucinda: I think Heather is for the economic piece of that because I think that's part of NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act), so Heather can talk about that. I think the other piece was

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will West Linn residents be required to pay tolls? That would be something that the Oregon Transportation Commission would have to decide, because you're talking about an exemption from paying tolls and that's done through the Commission.

Heather: Thanks, Lucinda. Yes, economic impacts is something that we'll be evaluating during the environmental review process. We'll look at it from a lot of different angles, one is businesses, so the economic impact of paying a toll to businesses who travel through the corridor. Another angle is local residents, where are they going to, and what kinds of impacts that might have. And then additionally we'll be looking at it from a community perspective. So, we'll hit it in a lot of different ways, and we're currently working on our methodology on how exactly we're going to do that. It's going to take a lot of different data sources and stuff, but yes, we will definitely be looking at that from a lot of different angles.

Penny: Thank you, Heather. Mat, I think this next one is coming to you. It's a question about an alternative. **If reducing traffic congestion on I-205 is the goal, why would Alternative 4 be best? It seemed like it had a bad traffic result.**

Mat: That's a good question. All of the alternatives are highly effective at decreasing traffic congestion along I-205. The virtue of Alternative 4 is it gives you the greatest flexibility. So in the long term you can adjust and have potentially one segment with a higher toll rate than another segment (if that's how things evolve and one specific segment has a higher demand). So that flexibility and that ability to manage traffic congestion in the long run is one of the areas that Alternative 4 does well at. However, in the grand scheme of things all of the alternatives do a really great job addressing congestion on I-205.

Penny: Thank you, Mat. Lucinda, I think this one's headed your way. **Is this considered an independent project, or is it a test to see how people will react to tolling the bridges into Washington?**

Lucinda: This is not a test. It's not independent. The Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis looked at tolling on I-205 and I-5, and this is one of the first projects towards the congestion management plan. So, I-5 will also be looked at next for tolling.

Penny: Thank you. **The congestion in this area is largely due to the reduction of lanes on I-205 from three to two. Does the rebuilding include more lanes on I-205, and is there a plan to use revenue to increase capacity either through more lanes or alternative through-routes?**

Lucinda: I can mention about the improvement project... I'm trying to see how we can answer the rest. The improvement on I-205 is the third lane, and then I think I'm going to punt to Mat because the question would then be "when we're doing the modeling, are we showing the third lane in the model?" I think that gets to the question does the rebuilding include more lanes on I-205? At this point it's just the three lanes, and I would ask Mat during the modeling are you looking at the three-lane configuration or the current configuration?

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Mat: All of these alternatives for tolling include the assumption that the widening project will occur on I-205 between OR 213 and Stafford Road.

Lucinda: So those are the only improvements that are in the modeling regarding an increase in capacity.

Penny: Here's another question about equity. **I hear all the ideas about equity and you're sharing a lot, but do you have any concrete ideas for how you're going to equitably implement this project. I'm thinking in particular of construction workers or landscapers or other workers who may be required to use their own vehicles to get to work sites around the area using I-205. Any concrete ideas or thoughts about infusing equity into the outcomes?**

Lucinda: the equity committee is set up—they just convened in May. They'll be working on the Equity Framework and Hannah can talk more about that.

Hannah: I would say that we will be having our third meeting on August 26, and these are the types of things that the Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee [EMAC] is really going to be grappling with. They'll be thinking about all these different perspective and potential impacts to folks and how people use that area and how it would impact them, so as far as concrete ideas I'm not sure that we have those quite yet. That is something that we'll be working together with the EMAC to get to that point. If you're able to attend the meeting there's public comment, and it'd be really great to put that in front of our Equity Mobility Advisory Committee. You can also always submit comments ahead of time to the committee to make sure they have those perspectives top of mind when they're thinking about those strategies for improving mobility for folks.

Penny: Here's a question from our inbox: **have you considered charging different toll rates for regular, daily commuters and necessary travel versus casual users, or different tolling rates in the equity conversation where the commute is necessary to obtain income? Have you talked about this or considered this at all?**

Lucinda: Toll rates are determined by the Oregon Transportation Commission. We will be bringing recommendations to them, I'm sure, from the Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee regarding people using tolls and how that might affect them and what might be some of the mitigation measures they can put in their toll rates to accommodate that. At this point we don't have any toll rates or any schema about how the rates would be applied.

Penny: Thank you, Lucinda. I want to note the time. This is our official ending time for the webinar, but it looks like we have about four or five questions left. Panelists, would you like to stay on a little bit and take those four or five more questions if we can? Everybody okay with that? All right let's see if we can knock these out. **As a cyclist, this is one about the Arch Bridge between Oregon City and West Linn, I'd like to see that be converted to a bike/ped access only so I have a safer bike route. How would this impact car traffic diversion from I-205 tolling? So it's converting the Arch Bridge between**

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Oregon City and West Linn to bike/ped access only to provide a safer bike route. How would that impact car traffic diversion from I-205 tolling?

Lucinda: I'm going to send this to Mat because it's question of is there an alternative that takes into account that the Arch Bridge is not available for car traffic. Number 1, is it in the modeling in the RTP, is it considered already through Metro's modeling, and then number 2 have you guys looked at that?

Mat: The Oregon City Arch Bridge is in the modeling we have. We've not looked at a scenario where we would close that to vehicle traffic and what kind of effect that would have. So I could offer speculation, but we'd probably need to really run the analysis to look at that. But in general I think that's definitely one of the potential diversion routes that we've identified in our alternatives, particularly Alternative 1, the point toll on the Abernethy Bridge, there would be some shifts over to that bridge. So yes, I think we would really have to look at it further to give a concrete answer.

Penny: Well, let's stay on the Arch Bridge for this next question. **Given the lack of alternatives for crossing the Willamette River between Sellwood and the Canby Ferry, local traffic over the Arch Bridge is going to go up sharply as your numbers implied. What mitigation measures are being considered for this old, limited capacity bridge?**

Mat: We haven't identified any mitigation measures at this point. At this point, we're trying to have a consistent baseline across all these different five alternatives when we look at them. In the Environmental Assessment, that's when we really dive into those details and figure out whether or not there are any locations that could be impacted by tolling and diversion routes. The region and the state identify mobility standards for traffic operations and delay. We check against those with and without the project and figure out what kind of mitigations are needed on the local system to allow it to handle the diversion of traffic.

Penny: On a different topic, **is there any data on how tolling the major road work will affect property values, gentrification, and property tax revenues?**

Lucinda: There probably is, and we can look for that. We'll post it on our website. I'm sure there's somebody who's done a study about that for sure, so we'll put it on the website.

Penny: **The tolling initiative is presented as a series of alternatives, yet all the alternatives involve tolling I-205. Are there other alternatives to tolls being considered or, if they were considered, why were they rejected?**

Mat: The Environmental Assessment will include a no build/no toll scenario as a baseline, so that is an option that will be considered going forward. In terms of the big-picture in terms of alternatives to tolling, in the Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis that Lucinda talked about earlier there was a lot of work done looking at regional concepts and what kind of tolling could benefit

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the region overall. And then at the really big-picture level, there's the Regional Transportation Plan which looks at lots of different tolling projects. So, I'd say yes, there have been lots of different strategies considered, including in the Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis, and we'll continue to look at the no-toll option going forward.

Penny: Here's an interesting question: **has ODOT considered a contraflow lane to help address both AM and PM peak traffic? Mat, could you please explain what a contraflow lane is?**

Mat: I believe that's referring to what's also called a reversible lane, so it could go in one direction in the peak hour and then in another direction during a different peak hour. I don't know for sure the answer to that question, but I've not seen it considered currently. I know that it's currently a divided highway and so there's a split between the directionalities existing, so I'm sure there would be some significant cost to looking at something like that with the current the way that I-205 is designed.

Penny: **Has it been considered to separate trucks from cars similar to the I-5/SR 99 truck bypass? This questioner's observation is that a lot of delays westbound are because trucks block the OR 213 on-ramp and slow things down going up the West Linn hill. Have you considered separating trucks from cars?**

Mat: I've not seen anything like that. The Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis did look at a single lane tolling, which generally don't support truck traffic on them (though they can). But no, I've not seen any concepts that would separate cars and trucks on I-205.

Penny: **Will tolling go to the voters before being implemented, or was this decision made differently?**

Lucinda: This was a decision made in 2017 to toll, so will it go to the voters again? No, I don't believe so.

Penny: And that 2017 decision was by the Oregon Legislature, right?

Lucinda: House Bill 2017, yes.

Penny: Thank you. **What ideas do you have for mitigating the traffic diversion into the West Linn area and Stafford? Have you started to think about mitigation ideas for those areas, yet?**

Lucinda: I'm going to answer for you this time, Mat. What we've done is really this high-level look. What's going to happen during the environmental review process, as you look deeper, will be that deeper look into where these diversions will happen and what's happening there. So we haven't got there yet. We're identifying at this point where diversion could happen. Once we pull these alternatives into the environmental review process, we'll go into that deeper dive of where is diversion would happen and how it can be mitigated. So at this point we don't have those answers.

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Penny: Thank you, those are the questions that we have that were answerable, and I appreciate you all staying on a little longer.

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WEBINAR 2 (8/18/20) Q&A

Penny: It's the audience's turn. We would like to know what questions you have, and I've seen some being entered into the question box as we're going. Again, if you haven't done that yet, if you're following along in Zoom you can type your question directly into the Q&A window. If you are listening you can email your question to oregontolling@odot.state.or.us. I'm going to read the questions and ask the panelists to do their best to answer them, recognizing that we have lost one of our technical supports. So will the rest of you do the best that you can while we hope that Mat comes back.

Penny: Let me see here... **the first question is how did you decide where to put the toll?**

Lucinda: The Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis did the determination about where to look at where we would place tolls. At this point, it's OR 213 to Stafford Road on I-205, and Going to Multnomah on I-5.

Penny: Thank you very much. **Another question is are there any I-205 improvement projects planned that are not connected to tolling, such as on-ramp signage, off-ramps, etc.?**

Heather: There's the real-time signs that are being installed right now, but I'm not sure about other improvements besides those that are part those are all part of the I-205 Improvements Project. So those are the ones that I know about.

Mat: No, at this point all of the toll alternatives include the widening project on I-205 so we have a consistent comparison across all of the alternatives. We're using the Regional Transportation Plan assumptions (the financially constrained assumptions) for 2027. Again, consistent assumptions across all of the alternatives.

Penny: **Won't tolling cause spilling onto side streets into West Linn neighborhoods? As a West Linn resident, will I be tolled?**

Lucinda: The survey talked about diversion, which is people moving off of a tolled road onto a non-tolled road. Will there be diversions specifically in West Linn? I could tell you that there will likely be diversion everywhere if 67 percent say they're not going to use the toll road, so yes. I think the other question was will you be tolled if you lived in West Linn? The Transportation Commission determines not only the toll rates but also the exemptions, so we will not know about those until after we're done with the environmental review process and the Oregon Transportation Commission takes on toll rate setting and exemptions.

Penny: **Why do our normal road taxes not pay for I-205 improvements?**

Lucinda: Normal road taxes are being depleted as we speak. OreGO is one of the programs that we have here where you, the road user, pay for what you use on the road to support or to supplement what the gas tax is doing. The gas tax is dwindling, it is not available. We are

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running out of gas tax so there has to be another way to finance or fund projects, not only new projects but just maintenance and repair on roads. So can I just add that gas tax is dwindling for another reason, and that's because our cars are so much more efficient, so we're using less gas so buying less gas equals less gas tax.

Penny: The next question is how much do you intend to charge for the toll, or what is the anticipated or planned range?

Lucinda: I think I answered that, but I'll answer again, and that is that toll rate setting will be done by the Oregon Transportation Commission, and that happens after the environmental review process. We don't know the range or the tolls yet.

Penny: Is this monetizing traffic for existing infrastructure? Is that what these tolls are doing?

Mat: The toll is applied, kind of like Lucinda said, to manage congestion. It's a dual purpose to manage congestion and revenues but the idea behind the congestion management component is to have a higher toll rate during those periods when the demand is highest, so during our peak hours. So like Lucinda said, if you can get a few of the cars to get off those bottlenecks due to the toll rate you can increase the traffic throughput travel times and speeds throughout the corridor. So that's the fundamental concept behind it, is to toll when the demand is highest and that benefits the entire system because it can get traffic back up and moving again.

Penny: This next one is a multiple part question, so I'm going to ask it in parts. **First, when will the feasibility studies be shared with the public?** I think that might be... I'm not sure if that's the feasibility study which is done or if that is referring to the current work that is being done. Perhaps can we take a crack at when will the current studies be shared with the public?

Lucinda: The current analysis are available now we have those and we are sharing those on our website.

Penny: Another part of this question is: **are there studies in real life examples that you can share that prove that tolling all lanes of highways can reduce congestion?**

Lucinda: You can see some in Washington. The Tacoma Narrows Bridge is a great example of that, so it the 520 bridge. Toll all lanes and move traffic. And those are just some local examples. All over the country you can see where congestion has been relieved by tolls, on all lanes on a road that got additional infrastructure, yes.

Penny: Is it possible to avoid or mitigate the diversion routing traffic into neighborhoods, which could negatively impact people and local infrastructure. Is it possible to not have that happen or to limit that?

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Mat: The diversion is definitely an important question. We've heard about it consistently throughout the process. We will look at that in detail in the Environmental Assessment. We'll look at how the diversion happens, particularly in the peak hours. So, if during the peak hours when congestion is the highest, tolling is shifting traffic onto other roadways, there are mobility standards identified where these intersections have to work at a certain level. To function otherwise they need to be improved. So we'd call that a mitigation. If diversion causes a nearby intersection or roadway to fail to meet those mobility criteria, we'll identify that as an impact due to I-205 tolling and there would need to be mitigations identified.

Penny: **How is tolling being implemented without voter approval, and a corollary to that is aren't there federal statutes that prohibit tolling on existing infrastructure?**

Heather: I'll go ahead and with the federal statute component. So there are several federal authorizations for tolls. There are some that require that you can only toll improvements that you build. That is one way to authorize tolling. There is also another authorization, which is called the Value Pricing Pilot Program, and you can get authorization from the Secretary of Transportation to toll existing infrastructure. Oregon has a spot in that program, so we could utilize that as well.

Lucinda: Just to add that we are now trying to go through that process with FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) under an Environmental Assessment, which they've designated. So we're working with FHWA as we speak. Regarding the vote: Oregon House Bill 2017 gave authority to toll and they gave that authority to the Oregon Transportation Commission.

Penny: **The next question is about the fairness of tolling, and why only Clackamas County residents should have to pay to use the freeway when in other places in Oregon the freeways are free?**

Lucinda: On the question of fairness... literally, it's whoever uses [the road] pays because it is a user fee, and we are looking at tolling on I-5 also. So actually, Clackamas County or I-205 OR 213 to Stafford Road is the first project in the toll program.

Penny: **There is planned I-205 widening. How many lanes would it be widened to?**

Lucinda: It would be widened to three lanes to match the three lanes that run in both directions.

Penny: **Will we have a chance to express our opinions regarding any exemptions to toll rates living in West Linn or Oregon City? We would be hit with the toll non-stop.**

Lucinda: Hannah, can you talk a little bit about this? That's part of the EMAC.

Hannah: You can always provide your comments. We have a comment period right now, so, again, going to the online open house and providing your comments. Another opportunity is to attend an EMAC meeting, and you can provide public comment there, as well. You could also

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submit your comment in advance, and we'll get them to the EMAC members. Our EMAC committee will be talking about different strategies to try to make tolls as equitable as possible. You can also tune into Oregon Transportation Commission meetings, too, and provide comments there, as well. So just some other options for getting your comments out.

Penny: How was it determined that only between OR 213 and Stafford Road on I-205 would be tolled versus all of I-205?

Lucinda: That was part of the Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis, and they did look at I-205. However, what they came out with was the recommendation to toll OR 213 to Stafford Road first. It doesn't preclude the rest of I-205 from being tolled, it's just first.

Penny: How are you addressing the fact that there's little public transit in this area? Is MAX planned to be part of this project in the future?

Hannah: We have a Transportation and Multimodal Working Group that is made up of a bunch of our regional partners and their technical staff, and they come together to help provide that local perspective about transit and multimodal options in the areas that they serve.

Lucinda: I just want to add one thing: transit is included in our multimodal group, so we do have transit representatives in that group, also.

Penny: Do you know how much it will cost to fund and operate the tolling program and how much is needed for funding improvements to address congestion?

Lucinda: We do not, because at this point we do not know where those tolls are going to terminate, where those gantries might be. The five alternatives we showed are very different when you talk about operation costs.

Penny: What are the design criteria being used for the relief of congestion? Are you designing the freeway to accommodate all projected traffic, or are you planning for regional and local transportation networks to provide congestion relief?

Mat: It's about that that dual objective. We're looking at that balance that Heather talked about of having the rates generate revenue to fund potential improvement projects and then also being high enough to manage congestion. They're both important goals, so it's about setting the toll at a rate that achieves both of those objectives. Like Lucinda said, ultimately the OTC [Oregon Transportation Commission] will make those decisions. But this the strategy we believe will be effective at reducing congestion dramatically in the corridor.

Heather: Mat, isn't congestion reduction defined as moving around 45 miles per hour?

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Mat: Yes, that's sort of where traffic throughput can be highest – when traffic's moving at about 45 miles an hour.

Penny: **Federal funding has historically paid for improvements on interstate freeways. Has any federal funding been sought?**

Lucinda: Federal funding is another pool of money that's disappearing. I'm trying to remember the last time... I think it's been seven or eight years we've been talking about how it's been dissipating. So it's not a renewable fund anymore. We will be looking at all funding opportunities though to pay for the I-205 project.

Penny: We have a number of questions still waiting, and I know we're not going to get to all of them. We've already gone five minutes over our scheduled stop time. I'm going to just take a couple more if you all can agree to stay on just a few minutes longer. And Hannah, perhaps you can talk about how these questions that we don't get to will be responded to, or what we will do with them.

Hannah: You bet. We'll respond to them, and we'll post these responses on our website.

Penny: **Will the money collected through tolls be used only for improvements on I-5 and I-205 within the tolled corridor, or will it be used to fund statewide transportation needs?**

Lucinda: Actually, funds collected from tolls go to a congestion management fund or a bottleneck fund and that's all they can be used for.

Penny: **Given the impacts of COVID on traffic, will the need for congestion relief be reassessed prior to proceeding with tolling?**

Mat: Our analysis right now is focused on 2027. In the NEPA alternatives we'll be looking at a 20-year, beyond the 20-year, horizon... likely 2040 or 2045. So none of us know, yet we're all trying to figure out and learn what this current situation means for the long term, but we're already seeing traffic volumes and traffic demand in the system bounce back pretty significantly. Our perspective is definitely long term and we expect traffic demand to continue to grow in the long run, and we'll continue to reassess what's going on currently and think about how it might change things in the long run.

Penny: **Looking to the future, have self-driving cars and trucks been factored into the throughput capacity? For instance, self-driving cars can run faster and closer together.**

Lucinda: I know something about automated vehicles, but let me ask Mat: is that in your 2040 model?

Mat: Not currently. That's another factor and a future unknown, but we have not assumed any additional higher capacity or throughput due to automated vehicles in the future.

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Lucinda: At this point, no.

Penny: **If the money generated by the toll is used to make I-205 three lanes and includes improving the Abernethy Bridge, once those projects are completed will the toll be taken away?**

Lucinda: That is the Oregon Transportation Commission's decision.

Penny: **In Alternative 3, can you explain what multiple bridges you were referring to?**

Mat: It's Abernethy Bridge over the Willamette River, and then there's multiple bridges over the Tualatin River, as well. From a management perspective that means tolling two segments of I-205 so it's the pieces of I-205 east of Stafford Road and then the pieces of I-205 over the Abernethy Bridge between OR 43 and OR 99E.

Penny: This question is about population growth. **Portland area population growth through 2027 will increase demand [on our roads]. Has this been factored into the 15 to 35 percent reduction figures that you quoted?**

Mat: That is factored in. Those numbers are all comparing back to a 2027 baseline scenario that wouldn't control tolling, so those are not relative to current volumes or pre-COVID volumes, they're compared to the 2027 baseline scenario. Again, in all of our alternatives we're trying to have a consistent set of assumptions in those comparisons.

Penny: **Will other agencies receive any tolling revenue to help with needed improvements?**

Lucinda: We are talking to the Transportation Commission about dedicating revenue that's collected on a corridor to stay on a corridor. I think [this question] would be a conversation after that.

Penny: **There are apartments and small homes from Stafford Road to OR 213. How will lower income families be helped? Has anyone directly reached out to these individuals?**

Hannah: That's really great information, thank you for sharing. That's the type of information that you can only get from that local perspective. I don't know exactly if we've reached those folks that you've identified, so if there's any organization you can recommend or any additional information you could send to follow up on, I'd love to do that. In general, we have a pretty big engagement approach where we're really providing briefings and going out and working with local jurisdictions. We're also working with our Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee members to help spread the word. We're placing ads in local papers along that area. We're also using social media ads, too, so we're trying a bunch of different things. Again, that really specific question is very helpful, so if you're able to send more information to oregontolling@odot.state.or.us that would be really great.

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Penny: You're also working with a long, long list of service organizations and community-based organizations as well, right? Hoping to reach these kinds of communities?

Hannah: That's true. We do have community-based organization outreach.

Penny: **Can you explain Alternative 2 again? How do the tolling gantries work for people who don't want to use the Abernethy Bridge?**

Mat: The only difference between Alternative 2 and Alternative 1 is that there would be gantries on either side of the bridge, so there would only be a toll assessed if you crossed both of those gantries. If you were traveling on I-205 and you said "well, I'm going to avoid the toll by jumping off of I-205 and using the Oregon City Arch Bridge" and then you jump right back on I-205 at the OR 99E interchange, that alternative would capture that pattern specifically. A local user who's just crossing one of those gantries and just getting off at the Oregon City Arch Bridge and then traveling into Oregon City would not be assessed at all.

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WEBINAR 3 (8/20/20) Q&A

Penny: You can type your question into the Q&A window if you're on the Zoom platform. If you're just listening or if you're following along on YouTube, you can send your questions via email to oregontolling@odot.state.or.us. I have access to both sets of questions, those coming into the Zoom platform and those coming in via email, and I'm going to read those and direct those questions to our panelists. Let me see, what do I have here for the first question?

Penny: This question asks **how has electronic tolling helped in other areas like Seattle? It seems like there's still lots of traffic congestion up there, and the tolls that have been implemented don't seem to have helped.**

Lucinda: So we're talking about I-405 in Seattle. That's a managed lane. There are just two lanes that are tolled. The other lanes are general purpose lanes. So those are choice lanes... if you choose to get in it, you can. If not, you don't. We're talking about tolling all lanes in both directions on I-205, so it's a different configuration.

Penny: **Won't tolling I-205 just make traffic worse on I-84?**

Mat: I'll start by just saying that at this point it's a preliminary look. We do have a lot of key locations identified in a scale of potential rerouting identified in our technical report. In terms of the rerouting onto the regional freeway system, I think that's a logical thing to think, right? You toll I-205 and there's going to be people shifting over to I-5 or I-84. However, we really didn't see as much of that as you might initially think. Again, when I talked about immediately outside of our tolled area we really saw relatively small increases. More of the effects were locally oriented. There was some potential for shifts to I-5 and I-205, but it was generally pretty small... 2 percent or so, or less, over the course of a day. Again, a lot of that was during those off-peak times and less of it was during the peak hours. In short, we didn't see very much of that.

Penny: This question is about selecting tolling in just places on the I-205 system. **The question is why not just toll the entire I-205 and I-5 system? It seems like a toll in just one section or another is just going to push people off onto side roads or somewhere else in order to avoid tolls and make those roads more congested and dangerous.**

Lucinda: We haven't done that analysis. We're only doing the analysis of the I-205 project that we are doing now, and the preliminary analysis we did on I-5 during the Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis. As Mat said, looking at the I-205 project, will traffic flow over to I-5 for diversion? We're not seeing much of that.

Penny: **Isn't mass transit more expensive and less effective than expanding roadways?** Looks like that's a question that we'll need to dig into a bit further and put it on the website.

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Penny: There's a question about funding. **Why aren't there funds in the state budget to expand roadways? If population growth is up, why hasn't I-205 been expanded to go along with the population growth?**

Lucinda: The gas tax is what pays for roadways and, as you know, our cars have become so much more efficient. Less gas tax, so with that in mind their gas tax or that revenue is not keeping up with the population, because our vehicles are much more fuel efficient. We all like that, but that means that there's less revenue being taken in by the state.

Penny: Another question is about the Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee. **There's a question about if the members are all daily commuters and if they drive daily to their jobs. It seems like to have them fully represent this and be more equitable, they should all be commuters.**

Hannah: I think it's important to have many perspectives. Remember we're leading with equity in this project and so, you know we are making space for folks who traditionally or currently have been underserved or underrepresented. I think the best way to answer this question would be to go on our website organtolling.org and click on the advisory committee link. Then you can see the members that are on there and the organizations that they're affiliated with. You could also scroll down to the list of meetings, and for the first meet and greet that was in May 2020 you could read the meeting summary. There's some great introductions included so you can learn more about the folks that are on there, and I do believe there are some folks that are commuters. I don't know everybody's current commuting routine.

Penny: In the quick polls that we did 60 percent of the people who responded here in this webinar said they would divert off of the tolled roads. Fifty percent said they don't have a problem with the traffic. **Is there an option or a look where no tolls would be added? When you do an environmental review, don't you always look at a "no action" alternative, Heather?**

Heather: Yes, we have a "no toll" alternative that we compare the other alternatives against.

Penny: I have a question about the length of the tolls. **How long will they last, and corollary to that is what do we get for paying for roadways that we now get to use for free?**

Lucinda: What do you get for paying for a toll on a road that was free? A seismic upgrade on I-205 on the Abernethy Bridge, and a lane improvement so it goes from two to three lanes, so you do get improvements on I-205. And I think the other question was about will tolls go away and how long will they last? I don't know. That's an Oregon Transportation Commission question for how long tolls will last after you pay all the bills for doing all the improvements.

Penny: **Are you thinking about tolling the I-205 and the I-84 intersection? Congestion there is also very bad.**

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Mat: At this point we're looking at tolling on I-205 between Stafford Road and OR 213. The Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis did look at wider, more regional concepts of tolling along I-5 and I-205, so at this point this is sort of the first phase and consistent with what came out of that Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis.

Penny: **How can tolling be equitable if it is restrictive in terms of freedom of travel and if it costs more for people in need?**

Hannah: I would go back to the goals for our toll projects. We're looking to make a more reliable trip and to improve mobility for folks. Improved mobility will allow for more travel. Your question about how can tolls be equitable... that's the million-dollar question and that's what we're working on with our Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee. That's something they'll be grappling with and it's also another plug for why it's important for you to go to our online open house to provide your comments so that we can know what's important to you for improving your mobility.

Penny: **Why not use the funds to build wider roads instead of restricting driving to raise money?**

Lucinda: I don't know about the restricting driving to raise money portion, but I like to think of it kind of broader. How many more lanes would you have to build to fulfill the population growth that you're going to have? If it's 23 percent by 2040, how many lanes would be necessary to relieve congestion, number one, and number two, do we have land to do that or are we then moving into communities and displacing them? So, congestion management, when you think about it now, you're doing something in the present for what you know is going to happen in the future. It's what we're working on. We're trying to control that now because we realize that in the future, with population growth, we're going to need something and building more lanes is probably not the answer. You can't build your way out of congestion.

Penny: This question is about what area you looked at. **When you looked at the corridor, did you look at impacts south of the corridor through OR 99 E? Have you looked at the impact of the smaller communities affected by increased diversion traffic?**

Mat: We have identified the rerouting patterns overall. It's still a preliminary look in terms of evaluating the impacts of those reroutings. That's really where that detailed analysis happens in the Environmental Assessment. At this point we're just identifying the scale of the potential impacts and the locations that could be potentially impacted. We'll need more detailed study and traffic and operational traffic analysis at these different locations to see which ones are able to operate within their mobility standard and which ones might require some kind of an improvement due to diversion. So that more detailed analysis is still to come. Right now, we have kind of a preliminary look about the scale and the location of potential diversion patterns, but in order to truly analyze what the impacts of that are going to be we need that more detailed analysis that'll come in the Environmental Assessment.

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Penny: We have a question about the correlation with tolls on I-205 and if they'll help on I-205, how will they help OR 217. Will they help congestion there? Is there any correlation?

Mat: Up to this point the Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis and the tolling studies in the region have looked at totally on I-5 and I-205, but the fundamental concepts the things that Lucinda just talked about, about managing congestion with tolls that could feasibly work on other freeways as well, but at this point we're studying I-5 and I-205

Penny: Before I let you get away, we did have a last question come in. I'm going to add that one in. **Has tolling across the metro area from Wilsonville to the Washington border been discussed? Should tolls be spread evenly to address the needs of the transportation network as a whole, for example the Columbia River Crossing replacement? It's kind of a macro look at the tolling program, right?**

Lucinda: Yeah, and this is the beginning of the tolling program, not the end. When the Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis was done it wasn't just to do these projects, it was regarding the corridor, so from I-5 all the way down and then from I-205 where it meets I-5 all the way to the Glenn Jackson Bridge. It looked at, kind of river to river. These are the first projects.