

Regional Mobility Pricing Project

Spring 2022 Engagement Report Appendix Community Engagement Liaisons Discussion Group Summaries

August 2022



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Community Engagement Liaisons Discussion Group Summaries

August 2022

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1 Community Engagement Liaison (CEL) Discussion Groups

This section includes eight discussion groups with individuals or groups who identify as youth, people living with disabilities, Latin American, Russian/Slavic, Chinese, Vietnamese, Black/African American, and Black, Indigenous, people of color (BIPOC). The discussion groups were held virtually between April and May 2022

Table 1-1. Discussion groups held as part of the tolling spring engagement.

Group	Date	Attendees
Chinese	4/16/22	10
Slavic	4/19/22	10
Spanish	4/21/22	10
Vietnamese	4/22/22	10
Black/African American	4/23/22	5
People with Disabilities	4/24/22	8
Youth	4/26/22	9
BIPOC	5/2/22	8

1.1 Chinese Discussion Group

Liaison Name	Yvonne Li
Audience	Chinese
Date	April 16, 2022
Number of Attendees	10

Introduction

Question: Tell us a little about your current experience using I-5 and I-205 in the greater Portland area. How often do you use these roads? At what times? How do you typically travel (bus, bike, drive, etc.)?

Responses:

- Typically travel by car.
- Some participants work full time and use I-205 five to six times per week.
- Some participants are retired and unemployed and use I-205 a few times a week to do groceries and run errands.
- Most people have experienced congestion issues.

Low-Income Toll Discounts and Credits

Question: Which of these options do you agree with for a low-income toll program?

Responses:

- Majority agreed with daily, monthly and frequency caps for frequent users and low-income people.
- Majority disagreed and thought that all users have equal right to comply the same rules regardless of who they are, middle class or low income.
- Some disagreed and think that their freedom to use the toll is jeopardize if capping is applied.
- Q: How will low-income be determined? If base line is set to tight, people couldn't benefit. If too loose, everyone will benefit, thus it defeats the purpose of the program.

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- Some thinks that if the purpose of tolling is to eliminate congestion, providing financial assistance is not a solution.
- No monthly toll cap. Instead of tolling, another option is to increase registration fees.
- Offer certain free tolls a month instead of credits (60 free tolls a month).
- Suggestion: instead of looking at income level, should look into the category of users, example, job type like delivery worker. Proposed for people to work locally without needing to use highways, thus reduce the highway congestion.
- Suggestion: provide monthly pass to locals, working people who use the highway daily.

Question: ODOT wants to make it easy for drivers experiencing financial hardship to apply for a discount. Which of these options would you support?

Statement	Number of participants in support
Drivers who qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are eligible for the discount	2
Families that qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch automatically are eligible for the discount	2
Transit riders who qualify for the TriMet Low Income Fare Program are eligible for the discount	0
Residents who qualify for the Low-Income Utility Service Program (for example, Pacific Power CARE Program) are eligible for the discount	3

Additional Comments:

- Two participants disagreed with this low-income program. To be fair, everyone should pay equal tolls.

Question: One of the goals of a program for people experiencing financial hardship is to make it easy for participants to enroll. Which option would be most convenient? (Select one):

Option	Number of participants in support
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Web form or app	3
Mailed application	1
In person (for example, at a grocery store or other easily accessible location)	1
Through an agency or non-profit organization where people access other services	1
Through an employer	0
Through a religious organization	0
In person (for example at a grocery store or other easily accessible location)	0
I don't have a preference	1
Other	1

Question: In designing this program, ODOT wants to address barriers or burdens to participation. What potential barriers could exist for people experiencing financial hardship to participate? (examples: finding out about the program and how to apply, language, overcoming current and historical barriers of trust, cash based toll payment options).

Responses:

- Reading and language will be a barrier and many people avoid filling out forms if they are not necessary. Thus, offering these discounts to people based on a preexisting program (SNAP for instance) could be a good method moving forward.
- If people must apply for such a thing, it is one more form to fill out, one more thing asking for information, so if there is some way to merge programs that would be ideal.
- Most people who are low-income work long hours and do not have time to show up to an office and fill out a form. The idea of an “add-on” program makes sense.
- It should be easier for people who qualify for low-income to renew benefits all at once for all programs. More information should be known about income benefits before people apply.
- Applying for low-income programs should be an annual thing, merged, and renewed automatically if possible.
- Support the “add-on idea” of having tolling benefits tied on to another low-income program.

Equity

Question: Overall, it is important to ODOT that this congestion pricing project reduces barriers and provides a benefit for people who have historically been excluded. What are the things you would you say are most important to get to this goal? It can be an idea or design option that you've heard today, or something else.

Responses:

- More benefits for people with disabilities.
- There should be an everyday use discount same as the low-income discount.
- To be fair, everyone pays the same regardless who you are. As long as you use the toll, you pay for it.
- Q: How or who decided this toll project?
- Acknowledge ODOT's initiative to wanting to listen to voices of people who have historically been excluded, but would the opinions and voices be seriously taken into action?

Question: What are some ways ODOT could ensure it is meeting equity goals as toll projects are implemented? (Examples: establishing an oversight committee, sharing progress reports)

Responses:

- Sharing progress report in Chinese.
- Q: Were the local residents involved in this decision making?
- Q: Was there any approvals or bill granted by the government or cabinet for this tolling project?

Question: The Oregon Toll Program will apply congestion pricing on I-5 and I-205 to achieve congestion management and generate revenue. Which of these additional goals are important to you?

Responses:

- Tolling is a disaster to everyone especially the locals.
- Whatever the government wants to do with the revenue is up to them.

Question: Congestion pricing and reducing vehicles that use highways can have positive climate benefits—and it is important that this does not result in negative impacts on neighborhoods near the tolled highways and lower-income drivers. Which of the following strategies are most important to you?

Responses:

Community Engagement Liaisons Discussion Group Summaries

- One participant was in support of pricing reliable, low-cost, emissions-reducing alternatives to driving (bike, walk, bus, carpool, vanpool, etc.)

Question: Should benefits of the program be extended to drivers in SW Washington?

Responses:

- No one agreed on the extended benefits, should focus on Oregon.
- A few participants were frustrated.
- Tools for all the roads, that way local residents don't have to suffer the consequences.

1.2 Slavic Discussion Group

Liaison Name	Hanna Grishkevich
Audience	Russian-speaking
Date	April 19, 2022
Number of Attendees	10

Introduction

Question: Tell us a little about your current experience using I-5 and I-205 in the greater Portland area. How often do you use these roads? At what times? How do you typically travel (bus, bike, drive, etc.)?

Responses:

- Use freeway everyday.
- I travel by car.
- Several times a day.
- Parents with kids, numerous trips, kids' activities, stores, work.
- Most people have experienced congestion issues.

Low-Income Toll Discounts and Credits

Question: Which of these options do you agree with for a low-income toll program?

Comments:

- Tolls won't affect low-income people. Many don't drive. And many won't take tolls.
- Tolls won't raise revenue from low income, so it will be subsidized by working middle class that already picks up the tab.
- Irrelevant questions about low income, as they will not be the ones with major economic changes stemming from tolling.

Question: ODOT wants to make it easy for drivers experiencing financial hardship to apply for a discount. Which of these options would you support?

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Statement	Number of participants in support
Drivers who qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are eligible for the discount	2
Families that qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch automatically are eligible for the discount	2
Transit riders who qualify for the TriMet Low Income Fare Program are eligible for the discount	4
Residents who qualify for the Low-Income Utility Service Program (for example, Pacific Power CARE Program) are eligible for the discount	1

Additional Comments:

- Families with free lunch.
- Low-income families already receive benefits. We were low income for years and we know what the benefits are. Tolls won't affect low-income families (most low-income families do not go to work daily, taking kids 4 times a day to swimming lessons), and they will have discounted options. Where are options for reduced toll or credits for hard-working middle-class families?

Question: One of the goals of a program for people experiencing financial hardship is to make it easy for participants to enroll. Which option would be most convenient? (Select one):

Option	Number of participants in support
Web form or app	5
Mailed application	1
In person (for example, at a grocery store or other easily accessible location)	1
Through an agency or non-profit organization where people access other services	0
Through an employer	0
Through a religious organization	1

Community Engagement Liaisons Discussion Group Summaries

I don't have a preference	3
Other	3

Additional Comments:

- Electronic and paper versions should be available.
- Welfare and benefit offices should have enrollment papers.
- Post offices should have applications.
- We talk a lot about HOW to do it, best WAY to do it, we are asked serious questions about an issue that we STILL do not know the COST of the issue and very many important cost related things that would inform us about the “hows.”

Question: In designing this program, ODOT wants to address barriers or burdens to participation. What potential barriers could exist for people experiencing financial hardship to participate? (examples: finding out about the program and how to apply, language, overcoming current and historical barriers of trust, cash based toll payment options)

Responses:

- No practical barriers. People will know how to apply for help.
- Help should be available to the middle class, employers encouraged to give passes, special programs for working people, tax deductions, etc.

Equity

Question: Overall, it is important to ODOT that this congestion pricing project reduces barriers and provides a benefit for people who have historically been excluded. What are the things you would you say are most important to get to this goal? It can be an idea or design option that you've heard today, or something else.

Responses:

- When we talk about equity and underrepresented communities, whom do we mean exactly? If it's working immigrants - then no, our voices (opposing the tolling of all lanes at all times) is not heard. We are not getting answers as to how these decisions were made and by whom, and how this is not widely publicized. A stay-at-home mom with multiple kids who uses a highway 5 times a day is not represented. Where are her rights and respect to her duties, service, and economic wellbeing?

Question: What are some ways ODOT could ensure it is meeting equity goals as toll projects are implemented? (Examples: establishing an oversight committee, sharing progress reports)

Responses:

- Equity implies choice. Other states and cities gave people a choice: save money or save time. We are not given a choice. The people living near side roads are deprived of their choice to have clean air, no traffic, no freight cars on their streets.

Question: The Oregon Toll Program will apply congestion pricing on I-5 and I-205 to achieve congestion management and generate revenue. Which of these additional goals are important to you?

Comments:

- There is an understanding that revenue is necessary, yet, no agreement or consensus that all lanes should be tolled. Anger expressed that this question is off the table.

Question: Congestion pricing and reducing vehicles that use highways can have positive climate benefits—and it is important that this does not result in negative impacts on neighborhoods near the tolled highways and lower-income drivers. Which of the following strategies are most important to you?

Responses:

- Clean air will not be achieved (same traffic just on a different street).
- Electrical cars are a solution – but the benefits for purchasing through federal gov grants and tax credits should be substantial (for a switch).
- The goals listed to be achieved will NOT be achieved through this entitative, specifically for the following reasons:
 - Benefits for historically and currently excluded and underserved communities --as previously mentioned – certain groups' voices and rights are overlooked (moms, working class, middle class)
 - Local and regional air quality improvement and reductions in greenhouse gases that help reduce climate change effects (with re-routing – the air quality will decrease on side roads)
 - Investments in regional priority congestion relief projects -- Rerouting will be must for many people and thus traffic will be created in different spots. Is there a back up plan? What is the solution if on the 1st day of tolling, 205 is empty and all side roads are backed up, the city stalls, businesses won't open, hospitals won't have staff. What is a back up plan? Is there a way to simulate the first week, have a test pilot week. But then all the money invested into developing this program, how do you justify it if it does not work?
 - Community health and safety– Health is air quality, noise, less cars (safety of neighborhoods). So no safety achieved
 - Enhanced transit, walking, and rolling choices to reduce congestion - Not getting on a bike. Kids. Bags, work. Not safe. Impossible.

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- Safe travel – See above
- Limiting rerouting to adjacent roads and neighborhoods from drivers avoiding the tolled interstates Ограничение перенаправления водителей на соседние дороги и районы, избегающих платных автомагистралей – rerouting of cars and heavy trucks will damage the side roads, more money will be needed to repair. What are we achieving?

Question: Should benefits of the program be extended to drivers in SW Washington?

This question was not asked due to time constraints.

1.3 Spanish Discussion Group

Liaison Name	Paul Riek and Romeo Sosa
Audience	Spanish
Date	April 21, 2022
Number of Attendees	10

Introduction

Question: Tell us a little about your current experience using I-5 and I-205 in the greater Portland area. How often do you use these roads? At what times? How do you typically travel (bus, bike, drive, etc.)?

Responses:

- I drive on I-205; I use it frequently and use it every day for work. I use I-5 rarely because of the pandemic; I'm not working. I use it in the morning rush hour to get to work but return late at night.
- I use I-205 about 3 times a week; I use I-5 once or sometimes twice a week. When I get back at 3pm it is very congested.
- I use I-205 more; I don't use it daily but about twice a week. I use I-5 very little; I don't have a specific schedule but sometimes I use it during rush hour, and I use it from 2pm to 3pm several times a week.
- I sometimes use I-205 about twice a month.

Low-Income Toll Discounts and Credits

Question: Which of these options do you agree with for a low-income toll program?

Recommendation	# of Participants in Support
Ongoing discounts or exemptions for people experiencing financial hardship	7
Free transponder with a \$25 initial credit for people experiencing financial hardship	2
Receipt of free transit credits that can be applied to the use of buses, trains or streetcars in the region	2

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A daily or monthly toll cap for frequent interstate users experiencing low incomes	5
Providing people experiencing low-incomes with a credit for a limited number of free or discounted toll trips per month	5

Additional Comments:

- It would be good to do a study to see how many people are affected and how many people use it and what is the best way to support them, maybe giving them incentives. This project affects the most vulnerable people.
- Another option would be that those who use I-205 more for commuting to work could be given a discount.
- Q: What about low-income people? I don't think it's fair to charge them because in my case I only use it twice a week.
 - A: You would qualify because you do not have much income; you would have to fill out the application with that information, and then you would receive a discount.)

Question: ODOT wants to make it easy for drivers experiencing financial hardship to apply for a discount. Which of these options would you support?

This question was not asked due to time constraints.

Question: The Oregon Toll Program will apply congestion pricing on I-5 and I-205 to achieve congestion management and generate revenue. Which of these additional goals are important to you?

This question was not asked due to time constraints.

Question: Congestion pricing and reducing vehicles that use highways can have positive climate benefits—and it is important that this does not result in negative impacts on neighborhoods near the tolled highways and lower-income drivers. Which of the following strategies are most important to you?

This question was not asked due to time constraints.

Equity

Question: Overall, it is important to ODOT that this congestion pricing project reduces barriers and provides a benefit for people who have historically been excluded. What are the things you would say are most important to get to this goal? It can be an idea or design option that you've heard today, or something else.

This question was not asked due to time constraints.

Question: What are some ways ODOT could ensure it is meeting equity goals as toll projects are implemented? (Examples: establishing an oversight committee, sharing progress reports)

Responses:

- A committee to review and evaluate every year to see if it's helping and also a committee to be monitoring constantly.

Question: The Oregon Toll Program will apply congestion pricing on I-5 and I-205 to achieve congestion management and generate revenue. Which of these additional goals are important to you?

Statement	# of participants
Benefits for historically and currently excluded and underserved communities	2
Local and regional air quality improvement and reductions in greenhouse gases that help reduce climate change effects	5
Investments in regional priority congestion relief projects	5
Community health and safety	5
Enhanced transit, walking, and rolling choices to reduce congestion	1
Safe travel	3
Limiting rerouting to adjacent roads and neighborhoods from drivers avoiding the tolled interstates	3

Additional Comments:

- I chose health and safety because if you run into traffic, it can cause stress or accidents. In our countries when the buses are in a hurry the drivers don't care; they want you to get off quickly. In this country there are people who are in a hurry and can cause accidents because they don't even give enough time to the people who are crossing because they want to get to their destination on time.
- When there is traffic, many people get nervous and want to get to their destination. I think this project benefits all of us for our safety.
- Everything we are talking about is for the good and safety of ourselves, but they shouldn't charge a high price.
- What they are doing is good, but in certain ways it is going to hurt low-income people, especially those who use it daily. It is good that they are looking at the quality of life of those of us who live

here.

Question: Congestion pricing and reducing vehicles that use highways can have positive climate benefits—and it is important that this does not result in negative impacts on neighborhoods near the tolled highways and lower-income drivers. Which of the following strategies are most important to you?

This question was not asked due to time constraints.

Question: Should benefits of the program be extended to drivers in SW Washington?

This question was not asked due to time constraints.

1.4 Vietnamese Discussion Group

Liaison Name	Jay Tang
Audience	Vietnamese
Date	April 24, 2022
Number of Attendees	10

Introduction

Question: Tell us a little about your current experience using I-5 and I-205 in the greater Portland area. How often do you use these roads? At what times? How do you typically travel (bus, bike, drive, etc.)?

Responses:

- Participants using I-5 and I-205 to commute to work.
- To work and drop off kids.
- Using it everyday, 1-2 times a week, 6 times a week.
- All driving car.
- 1-2 times a week, 6 times a week, everyday.
- For this group the average commute time is from 7-8-9AM to 4-5-6PM, Monday to Friday. Weekend is random. One participant shared that on Monday to Friday, if she using the I-5 to reach her destination by 8AM, she will need to get out by 7AM and arrival time will be 7:35AM. If she got out at 7:35AM the arrival time will be at 8:30AM. Her finding was 7:30 – 8:00 morning time has the most congestion in everyday. 30 minutes stuck in traffic on I-5 is the norm, she mentioned.

Low-Income Toll Discounts and Credits

Question: Which of these options do you agree with for a low-income toll program?

Reponses:

- All agreed that ODOT should offer discount for low-income drivers.
- To be fair, any discount for the Middle class income?
- One suggested that we should implement a Transfer Program to drivers from the unused Free Transit credits, so they can use it to reduce the tolling cost rather than on public transportation.

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Question: ODOT wants to make it easy for drivers experiencing financial hardship to apply for a discount. Which of these options would you support?

Statement	Number of participants in support
Drivers who qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are eligible for the discount	8
Families that qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch automatically are eligible for the discount	7
Transit riders who qualify for the TriMet Low Income Fare Program are eligible for the discount	7
Residents who qualify for the Low-Income Utility Service Program (for example, Pacific Power CARE Program) are eligible for the discount	1

Additional Comments:

- Most agreed with all 4. One suggested on the 3rd, if the people already been using public transportation, they should receive additional discount since they are not using the toll program.
- One suggested besides all these low-come assistance programs, ODOT should consider offer the discount or credit for low-income immigrant/refugee that aren't in these assistance programs.
- Q: If they have the discount or credit, how does that work with the rental car? How about the visitor?

Question: One of the goals of a program for people experiencing financial hardship is to make it easy for participants to enroll. Which option would be most convenient? (Select one):

Option	Number of participants in support
Web form or app	5
Mailed application	5
In person (for example, at a grocery store or other easily accessible location)	2
Through an agency or non-profit organization where people access other services	1

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Through an employer	1
Through a religious organization	0
I don't have a preference	0
Other	0

Additional Comments:

- Participants suggested library, utility bills enrolling implementation, tax filing enroll implementation.

Question: In designing this program, ODOT wants to address barriers or burdens to participation. What potential barriers could exist for people experiencing financial hardship to participate? (examples: finding out about the program and how to apply, language, overcoming current and historical barriers of trust, cash based toll payment options)

Responses:

- Some folks have no access to the internet to obtain information. With letters from the mail might increase the overall tolling cost. With the folks has no bank account, ODOT should consider the cash option for enrollment.

Equity

Question: Overall, it is important to ODOT that this congestion pricing project reduces barriers and provides a benefit for people who have historically been excluded. What are the things you would you say are most important to get to this goal? It can be an idea or design option that you've heard today, or something else.

Responses:

- Scam. With the new fee will create new opportunity for the scammers. Some immigrant/refugee with language barrier, they might fall into that. (ODOT is the biggest scammer. Liaison heard it multiple times during the survey collection period)

Question: What are some ways ODOT could ensure it is meeting equity goals as toll projects are implemented? (Examples: establishing an oversight committee, sharing progress reports)

Responses:

- Multiple languages availability in mail letter regarding enrollment and billing.
- Bring yellow color in the mail please. So they are aware that the letter is coming from DMV/ODOT.
- A big billboard or LED sign, maybe in different languages to inform the public regarding this new fee. TV announcement also.

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- QR code from the mail letter and everyone scan to pay for the fee. Just like TriMet.
- Any more advisory focus group for the public to follow up? Any survey to follow up after the tolling program activated?
- Any penalty for being late to pay? We should give them a warning or a chance.
- Is there a gate or barrier to prevent you from going through if you are not paying?
- If we using the toll all year long, any tax deductible?
- California has tolling but it doesn't help with the congestion. Do we have more analyzed data to back up this project? Cherry picking?
- Express line available with the fee? California has it and it works.
- Do we expect for tax for this upcoming project?

Question: The Oregon Toll Program will apply congestion pricing on I-5 and I-205 to achieve congestion management and generate revenue. Which of these additional goals are important to you?

This question was not asked due to time constraints.

Question: Congestion pricing and reducing vehicles that use highways can have positive climate benefits—and it is important that this does not result in negative impacts on neighborhoods near the tolled highways and lower-income drivers. Which of the following strategies are most important to you?

This question was not asked due to time constraints.

Question: Should benefits of the program be extended to drivers in SW Washington?

This question was not asked due to time constraints.

1.5 Black/African American Discussion Group

Liaison Name	Roseline Vakkai
Audience	Black/African American
Date	April 23, 2022
Number of Attendees	5

Introduction

Question: What’s your name, and what part of town do you live in?

Responses:

- One person from West Linn
- Three from Portland
- One from Hillsboro
- One from Vancouver, WA.

Question: Tell us a little about your current experience using I-5 and I-205 in the greater Portland area. How often do you use these roads? At what times? How do you typically travel (bus, bike, drive, etc.)?

- I use the highway almost every day.
- I live in Hillsboro and use the bus a lot but also the highway at times. Belinda noted that it was difficult to think about a fair low-income proposal if nobody knows what the toll rates are going on, essentially a “cart before the horse” situation.

Low-Income Toll Discounts and Credits

Question: Which of these options do you agree with for a low-income toll program?

Recommendation	# of Participants in Support
Ongoing discounts or exemptions for people experiencing financial hardship	2
Free transponder with a \$25 initial credit for people experiencing financial hardship	2

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Receipt of free transit credits that can be applied to the use of buses, trains or streetcars in the region	2
A daily or monthly toll cap for frequent interstate users experiencing low incomes	1
Providing people experiencing low-incomes with a credit for a limited number of free or discounted toll trips per month	1

Additional Responses:

- It was difficult to think about a fair low-income proposal if nobody knows what the toll rates are going on, essentially a “cart before the horse” situation.

Question: ODOT wants to make it easy for drivers experiencing financial hardship to apply for a discount. Which of these options would you support?

Statement	Number of participants in support
Drivers who qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are eligible for the discount	2
Families that qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch automatically are eligible for the discount	2
Transit riders who qualify for the TriMet Low Income Fare Program are eligible for the discount	1
Residents who qualify for the Low-Income Utility Service Program (for example, Pacific Power CARE Program) are eligible for the discount	2

Additional Responses:

- Q: Are undocumented people being factored into these decisions?
 - A: This is a great consideration and we will relay this back to ODOT.
- I did not vote in this poll as I thought “all of the above” was the correct answer

Question: One of the goals of a program for people experiencing financial hardship is to make it easy for participants to enroll. Which option would be most convenient? (Select one):

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Option	Number of participants in support
Web form or app	3
Mailed application	1
In person (for example, at a grocery store or other easily accessible location)	1
Through an agency or non-profit organization where people access other services	1
Through an employer	0
Through a religious organization	0
In person (for example at a grocery store or other easily accessible location)	0
I don't have a preference	1
Other	1

Additional Responses:

- Recommend that people apply through the county.

Question: In designing this program, ODOT wants to address barriers or burdens to participation. What potential barriers could exist for people experiencing financial hardship to participate? (examples: finding out about the program and how to apply, language, overcoming current and historical barriers of trust, cash based toll payment options).

Responses:

- Reading and language will be a barrier and many people avoid filling out forms if they are not necessary. Thus, offering these discounts to people based on a preexisting program (SNAP for instance) could be a good method moving forward.
- If people must apply for such a thing, it is one more form to fill out, one more thing asking for information, so if there is some way to merge programs that would be ideal.
- Most people who are low-income work long hours and do not have time to show up to an office and fill out a form. The idea of an “add-on” program makes sense.

Community Engagement Liaisons Discussion Group Summaries

- It should be easier for people who qualify for low-income to renew benefits all at once for all programs. More information should be known about income benefits before people apply.
- Applying for low-income programs should be an annual thing, merged, and renewed automatically if possible.
- Support the “add-on idea” of having tolling benefits tied on to another low-income program.

Equity

Question: Overall, it is important to ODOT that this congestion pricing project reduces barriers and provides a benefit for people who have historically been excluded. What are the things you would you say are most important to get to this goal? It can be an idea or design option that you’ve heard today, or something else.

Responses:

- The messaging of the project is important. Currently it seems like just more money out of their pocket with no real benefits to the average consumer. Also, the explicit benefit of tolling needs to be seen for people to be encouraged about the project.
- For middle-class workers those dollars out of their paycheck are critical.
- Why can we not have those in upper brackets of income pay for this? That, or why don’t we raise the gas tax in Oregon as that might be more equitable and would not hit the middle class as hard?
- You should not burden people who are already over-burdened and that is exactly what the toll appears to be doing.

Follow up question: What specific income levels should pay the toll?

- I do not think the toll should be income-based at all. For example, maybe trucks should pay higher for tolls as they create congestion and harm the roads more.
- You should not burden people who are already over-burdened and that is exactly what the toll appears to be doing.

Question: What are some ways ODOT could ensure it is meeting equity goals as toll projects are implemented? (Examples: establishing an oversight committee, sharing progress reports)

Responses:

- How could it be communicated to the community that the toll program exists? More frequent check-ins from ODOT are needed to ensure equity.
- An equity committee should go straight to community organizations if they want to ensure any sort of equity goal will be weight.
- How would an oversight committee reach the people they want to reach?

Community Engagement Liaisons Discussion Group Summaries

Question: The Oregon Toll Program will apply congestion pricing on I-5 and I-205 to achieve congestion management and generate revenue. Which of these additional goals are important to you?

Statement	# of participants
Benefits for historically and currently excluded and underserved communities	2
Local and regional air quality improvement and reductions in greenhouse gases that help reduce climate change effects	1
Investments in regional priority congestion relief projects	1
Community health and safety	3
Enhanced transit, walking, and rolling choices to reduce congestion	1
Safe travel	1
Limiting rerouting to adjacent roads and neighborhoods from drivers avoiding the tolled interstates	1

Responses:

- Other routes will be affected if tolling is implemented; safety is a top priority. Accident rates are going up and thus so is insurance. Would like to see safer streets because of this program.

Question: Congestion pricing and reducing vehicles that use highways can have positive climate benefits—and it is important that this does not result in negative impacts on neighborhoods near the tolled highways and lower-income drivers. Which of the following strategies are most important to you?

Responses:

- Providing reliable, low-cost, emissions-reducing alternatives to driving (bike, walk, bus, carpool, vanpool, etc.)
- Improving health and safety of those living in neighborhoods near tolled highways
- Monitoring local air quality

Additional Responses:

- Not everyone is comfortable or able to carpool.

Community Engagement Liaisons Discussion Group Summaries

- Carpooling is not a logistically beneficial option for everyone. Additionally, lasting solutions to reduce congestion are essential as the population grows so option #1 is the most important.
- There will always be a community that is negatively impacted by prioritizing climate. Health and safety are a top priority.

Question: Should benefits of the program be extended to drivers in SW Washington?

Responses:

- Taxes in Oregon should stay in Oregon.
- This should be a state-level conversation and not sure if the everyday person should make the decision.

Final Remarks

- I believe that taking money from drivers is not the best option and that there are alternatives that are more equitable.
- Thank you for having this group. I do not want the toll.

1.6 People with Disabilities Discussion Group

Liaison Name	Trevor Attenberg
Audience	People with Disabilities
Date	April 24, 2022
Number of Attendees	8

Introduction

Question: What’s your name, and what part of town do you live in?

Most participants responded as being from locations across the City of Portland. Additionally, one person was from Vancouver, and one person was from Salem.

Question: Tell us a little about your current experience using I-5 and I-205 in the greater Portland area. How often do you use these roads? At what times? How do you typically travel (bus, bike, drive, etc.)?

Responses:

- I’m transit dependent, and use a bus to travel between Portland and Vancouver
- I use paratransit and TriMet Lift – I don’t use I-5 or I-205 often.
- I travel to and from Salem for work. There are no affordable public transit options, so I drive. I drive people as a caregiver. I have my own car, and I also use I-5 to get to California and North Washington.
- I mainly use I-5 between Steel Bridge and Vancouver, using C-Tran (Clark County Transit) and TriMet connection buses on I-5.
- I travel here on medical Business hours. I use a caregiver-driven vehicle. I cannot use paratransit, nor public transportation, not only due to COVID-19 risk and folks stopping mask use, but, also, the bumpiness makes neurological symptoms much worse, and specialists advise me to avoid public transit. I also must travel out of state for specialist care.
 - I use both. I’m transit-dependent for medical and fun.
 - I use I-5 4 or 5 times a week between 5 and 8AM, and 4 or 5 times a week between 4 and 6PM using I-5 or I-205. I use them to get around parts of Portland.

Low-Income Toll Discounts and Credits

Question: Which of these options do you agree with for a low-income toll program?

Recommendation	# of Participants in Support
Ongoing discounts or exemptions for people experiencing financial hardship	6
Free transponder with a \$25 initial credit for people experiencing financial hardship	4
Receipt of free transit credits that can be applied to the use of buses, trains or streetcars in the region	5
A daily or monthly toll cap for frequent interstate users experiencing low incomes	4
Providing people experiencing low-incomes with a credit for a limited number of free or discounted toll trips per month	3

Additional Comments:

- I think there needs to be a sliding scale based on the person's take home income, not gross income. and rent should be a factor. I pay \$1200 a month in rent alone
- It needs to use income guidelines that are more generous than the standards normally used.
- The ways low income or financial hardship should be defined or calculated needs to be shared with us so we can best answer these questions or give recommendations
- I agree, not having a definition of "low income" makes this difficult
- Why not just have a transit discount or free transit for all people taking transit rather than finding out who is eligible and who is not, regardless of income? That lowers barriers for everyone and simplifies the process.

Question: ODOT wants to make it easy for drivers experiencing financial hardship to apply for a discount. Which of these options would you support?

Community Engagement Liaisons Discussion Group Summaries

Statement	Number of participants in support
Drivers who qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are eligible for the discount	6
Families that qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch automatically are eligible for the discount	5
Transit riders who qualify for the TriMet Low Income Fare Program are eligible for the discount	5
Residents who qualify for the Low-Income Utility Service Program (for example, Pacific Power CARE Program) are eligible for the discount	6

Additional comments:

- Using federal guidelines of income isn't helpful, their guidelines work off gross income and do not include rent, utilities, food, or gas. Affective income is what should be used.
- If you have an unrelated live-in caregiver, their income is also counted as the household's income, when it really should not be included.
- Income guidelines need to be for Portland Metro. Costs here are higher than the rest of Oregon. And more than most other regions in the US.
- I also think workers like care providers and health care workers should not have to pay if traveling for work. We are in a workforce crisis, and many providers are doing what they can to help meet their needs. As a caregiver, and someone who has a disability, I fear adding this toll might prevent providers reaching people outside of Portland
- Is there anything for college students?
- The programs listed in that poll is a great example of how low-income qualifications are out of date, and do not include how high rent is, and take-home income -- they go off gross income, and do not include many living costs.
- There needs to be thought about how to spread the word to people, as a lot of people don't know that they are eligible for these types of discount programs.
- I wonder about the working poor -- people that just barely fail to qualify for all of these programs, but yet are definitely making minimum wage and paying too much for their rent.
- I think physicians that often make 6 figures can be tolled. So, the rules should not apply to all medical professionals. But definitely not in-home caregivers who only make \$16/hr.

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- What about undocumented folks?
- The rules mentioned above state, “care workers should not have to pay if traveling for work”. This should apply to in-home caregivers, but not necessarily other medical professionals that are well compensated and get all sorts of perks anyway.
- As an in-home caregiver, we get barely anything for mileage. I can see adding another cost really discouraging providers with reaching people with disabilities outside Portland.
- This also includes so many lower paid contract workers that get zero benefits nor protections because they are independent contractors but are required to travel throughout Portland Metro.

Question: One of the goals of a program for people experiencing financial hardship is to make it easy for participants to enroll. Which option would be most convenient? (Select one):

Option	Number of participants in support
Web form or app	4
Mailed application	4
In person (for example, at a grocery store or other easily accessible location)	6
Through an agency or non-profit organization where people access other services	3
Through an employer	3
Through a religious organization	4
I don't have a preference	1
Other	2

Additional comments:

- I think it should be as many options as possible, because we all have different ways of accessing.
- They shouldn't narrow it down so that it's mainly just on the web, because a lot of people do not access the web as easily, like seniors. They learned this when they tried dispersing information about the Covid vaccines primarily through the web.
- Note that some people don't have a mailing address.

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- There needs to be funding for people that will be facilitating the application process for these programs, or else access really isn't being created. We have seen this already with places like OHP. There are too few people helping, so the system is bogged down, and people have to wait weeks to access services and programs. Make sure to direct money to help people get enrolled.
- More staff facilitating the application process would also help with language barriers.
- There should be multiple options for accessibility. Not everyone has a phone or internet. Apps work best for some assistive technology, and mailing documents works best for some as well.
- There should be a number to call to speak to someone directly to enroll.
- There should be as many options as possible because access looks differently for different folks.
- When a person applies for or gets a license, or votes, might automatic enrollment happen? Can something like that also happen?

Question: In designing this program, ODOT wants to address barriers or burdens to participation. What potential barriers could exist for people experiencing financial hardship to participate? (Examples: finding out about the program and how to apply, language, overcoming current and historical barriers of trust, cash-based toll payment options)

Responses:

- Going through any process at all is a barrier in and of itself, I mean we all know that, I think, but I mean, if we move from that, basically.
- Consider folks who are unable to use public transit due to health conditions or their disabilities.
- I think there really needs to be considerations for the community of people with disabilities.
- The cost of living has been going up. There is a cut off for those receiving SNAP benefits. How do you plan to address this, especially for those with low income?
- I work for someone who gets very overwhelmed by financial tasks, and sometimes leaves things due to stress, and penalties/fines pile up and add to their debt.
- Being BIPOC
- Paperwork especially for folks severely ill. Not having a reliable mailing address where they can receive mail. Living in an area with lots of thefts and things like mail being stolen.
- Access to information on other routes to avoid tolls, and what the increase in trip time would be. Questions to consider about other routes: Do these other routes have good roads, minimal curves, minimal hilliness, and accessible bathrooms?

Equity

Question: Overall, it is important to ODOT that this congestion pricing project reduces barriers and provides a benefit for people who have historically been excluded. What are the things you would you say are most important to get to this goal? It can be an idea or design option that you've heard today, or something else.

Responses:

- Outreach to Disabled, BIPOC, immigrant, and refugee communities to help guide this process. Paying them for their time and expertise. We need a very diverse population.
- Specific focus groups for marginalized communities led by folks from those communities.
- For people that take paratransit, it is important to note that they can't cross state lines with the current paratransit systems. Also, many use a lot of volunteer drivers. TriMet sometimes contracts with Radio Cab as well.
- Alternative options must be accessible and well supported to allow people to have a real choice of how they can get from one place to the other.

Question: What are some ways ODOT could ensure it is meeting equity goals as toll projects are implemented? (Examples: establishing an oversight committee, sharing progress reports)

Responses:

- PBOT has a complaint form, if you are having a problem with Rideshare you can submit a complaint. They should have a complaint program for the toll program.
- Hiring people from diverse communities, making sure their workspaces in this project are equitable. I think an oversight Committee is needed to make sure this is an equitable project
- I want to note that many community groups have a division between racial equity and disability rights. We know that folks who lie at intersections are often more vulnerable and experience more marginalization. Be sure to outreach for a large and diverse crowd. We also need to consider LGBTQIA+ communities.
- If this is earlier in the process, why hasn't there been a committee set up populated with representatives from marginalized populations overseeing this work? This needs to happen from the outset BEFORE decisions are made.

Question: The Oregon Toll Program will apply congestion pricing on I-5 and I-205 to achieve congestion management and generate revenue. Which of these additional goals are important to you?

Community Engagement Liaisons Discussion Group Summaries

Statement	# of participants
Benefits for historically and currently excluded and underserved communities	4
Local and regional air quality improvement and reductions in greenhouse gases that help reduce climate change effects	4
Investments in regional priority congestion relief projects	2
Community health and safety	5
Enhanced transit, walking, and rolling choices to reduce congestion	4
Safe travel	5
Limiting rerouting to adjacent roads and neighborhoods from drivers avoiding the tolled interstates	4

Additional Responses:

- Air quality also affects one's health, so some of these overlap.
- It would be very interesting to monitor air quality after the tolling goes into effect.
- Lower income and BIPOC, immigrant/refugee communities are often pushed out and often can be located near highways. Air quality is important, but if there are impacts, what solutions are there too?
- All of these are important, so it is hard to choose.

Question: Congestion pricing and reducing vehicles that use highways can have positive climate benefits—and it is important that this does not result in negative impacts on neighborhoods near the tolled highways and lower-income drivers. Which of the following strategies are most important to you?

Responses:

- I think it's really important to look at improving health and safety for those living in neighborhoods near highways because that is where a lot of low-income people live.

1.7 Youth Discussion Group

Liaison Name	Tana Atchley
Audience	Youth
Date	April 25, 2022
Number of Attendees	9

Introduction

The facilitator welcomed the group and asked people to introduce themselves. Participants shared where they were from.

- Three from Portland
- One from Tigard
- One from Beaverton
- One from Happy Valley
- One from Mall 205
- One from Gateway
- One from Milwaukie

Question: Tell us a little about your current experience using I-5 and I-205 in the greater Portland area. How often do you use these roads? At what times? How do you typically travel (bus, bike, drive, etc.)?

Responses:

- I use I-205 in the evenings about four times per week. I don't always have a car available to drive. If I am traveling without a car, I take the MAX.
- I own a car and drive on I-205 at least twice a day to get to and from school. I don't use MAX or the bus because I have my own car. I don't have any issues with I-205, but when school ends between 4-6pm there is always traffic. Traffic is not as bad in the morning and generally, I don't mind it because I only take short trips on the freeway.

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- I use I-205 every day to go to school and notice that traffic is worse in the evenings. During my trip, I merge onto I-84 which is always congested.
- I take the freeway to the Moda Center, or downtown Portland around 1-2 times per week. I usually drive in the evenings and don't think the rush hour is too bad. A car is my main source of transportation.
- I use I-5 to travel 4 times per week. One day a week, I have to head to the south side at around 4pm. I can cut my trip time in half if I wait until 6:00pm. I live in Tigard and there are not many transportation options available.
- I use I-205 when I need to go to work, or when I have an appointment. I don't have an issue with traffic except for in the evenings.
- I use I-5 3-4 times per week to go to Lake Oswego or McGlothin. Traffic gets heavy around those exits. When driving North towards Washington there isn't much traffic
- I use I-205 and notice a lot of traffic in the evening
- I use I-205 to go to soccer at around 9-10pm at night and it is still busy.

Low-Income Toll Discounts and Credits

Question: Which of these options do you agree with for a low-income toll program?

Recommendation	# of participant
Ongoing discounts or exemptions for people experiencing financial hardship	3
Free transponder with a \$25 initial credit for people experiencing financial hardship	2
Receipt of free transit credits that can be applied to the use of buses, trains or streetcars in the region	2
A daily or monthly toll cap for frequent interstate users experiencing low incomes	3
Providing people experiencing low-incomes with a credit for a limited number of free or discounted toll trips per month	1

Additional Responses:

- Q: Will there will be any exemptions for students?
 - A: There will be a low-income policy which could certainly include students.

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- Q: What about people who live in an area where there are no bus stops within walking distance?
 - A: That is a great point, it might not be the best option for everyone. It would mean a combination of credits for people with less access to public transportation.
- An idea could be to charge people who have received a DUI, or been in an automobile collision a higher toll rate.

Questions: ODOT wants to make it easy for drivers experiencing financial hardship to apply for a discount. Which of these options would you support?

Statement	Number of participants in support
Drivers who qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are eligible for the discount	4
Families that qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch automatically are eligible for the discount	5
Transit riders who qualify for the TriMet Low Income Fare Program are eligible for the discount	3
Residents who qualify for the Low-Income Utility Service Program (for example, Pacific Power CARE Program) are eligible for the discount	6

Additional Responses:

- I chose the last option because some people take advantage of free and reduced lunch. I think the low-income choice is better because you can check that people have low income.
- Related to free and reduced lunch, often times those are families with a lot of kids. Low-income discounts for tolls would be helpful for them.

Question: One of the goals of a program for people experiencing financial hardship is to make it easy for participants to enroll. Which option would be most convenient?:

Option	Number of participants in support
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Regional Mobility Pricing Project

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Web form or app	6
Mailed application	2
In person (for example, at a grocery store or other easily accessible location)	3
Through an agency or non-profit organization where people access other services	3
Through an employer	2
Through a religious organization	2
I don't have a preference	0

Additional Questions and Comments:

- Q: Will the installation of the toll system effect traffic?
 - A: *ODOT does not have a construction plan yet, but it should be minimal.*
- I think the web form, or the app would be the best way to get in touch with people.
- I picked web form or app, I also picked in-person, or through an agency. Not everyone has access to a cell phone or a computer and there could be language barriers. Some people might have questions as they fill out the form. Having someone there to guide them through the process could be helpful.
- Q: Will ODOT raise the speed limit with the toll?
 - A: *ODOT will not; instead, the goal is to get people to be able to drive at faster speeds during congested hours.*
- I think the app or web from is great, but also having the other options available as well would be good so people could choose.

Question: In designing this program, ODOT wants to address barriers or burdens to participation. What potential barriers could exist for people experiencing financial hardship to participate? (examples: finding out about the program and how to apply, language, overcoming current and historical barriers of trust, cash based toll payment options).

Responses:

- I think not knowing about the program would be the biggest barrier. There are a lot of things I do not do because I do not know about them. Additionally, there are people that only use cash and are unbanked.

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- People not having the time to learn about these options would be a barrier. I know sometimes these programs can involve a lot of paperwork and confusing materials. Making applications as simple as possible would be helpful.
- I think the forms should be simple. I think once tolling starts, people will try to find ways to get discounts.

Equity

Question: Overall, it is important to ODOT that this congestion pricing project reduces barriers and provides a benefit for people who have historically been excluded. What are the things you would you say are most important to get to this goal? It can be an idea or design option that you've heard today, or something else.

Responses:

- I think giving them discounts through SNAP would be the best

Question: What are some ways ODOT could ensure it is meeting equity goals as toll projects are implemented? (Examples: establishing an oversight committee, sharing progress reports).

Responses:

- Having quarterly meeting minutes would be helpful as well as having different community members' present to discuss how this is affecting the community. Sharing a pamphlet of financials and being transparent about how much revenue was accumulated, and where it went could be helpful as well.
- The people that are impacted, are those that use those roads the most. The toll should be based on how much you use the road and not who you are.
- Q: Is there a way for ODOT to track how many times people pay a toll and compare it to demographics?
 - A: No demographic data is tied to the sticker for privacy reasons. There are other ways ODOT can figure out what system user demographics are.
- Q: Near where I live, a lane was removed. Do you know why ODOT removed lanes?
 - A: I don't know about that project. It could be that there is a parking deficit. Sometimes they put in parking and a bike line to improve the road for non-drivers. The road you are referring to might be owned by the city.

Question: The Oregon Toll Program will apply congestion pricing on I-5 and I-205 to achieve congestion management and generate revenue. Which of these additional goals are important to you?

Statement	# of participants
Benefits for historically and currently excluded and underserved communities	8

Regional Mobility Pricing Project

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Local and regional air quality improvement and reductions in greenhouse gases that help reduce climate change effects	3
Investments in regional priority congestion relief projects	5
Community health and safety	3
Enhanced transit, walking, and rolling choices to reduce congestion	4
Safe travel	1
Limiting rerouting to adjacent roads and neighborhoods from drivers avoiding the tolled interstates	2

Additional Comments:

- Investing in regional priority congestion relief projects is important to me. In my area, lanes were removed, cross walks were put in, and speed limits were reduced by 10 miles per hour. That all increased the traffic.
- Q: Regarding community safety, there are a lot of homeless people who park vans and leave garbage. They steal cars and the Police don't do anything. Do you know what they might do about that?
 - A: That is a big topic in Portland.
- People are going to try to find a way to avoid tolls from the offset.

Question: Congestion pricing and reducing vehicles that use highways can have positive climate benefits—and it is important that this doesn't result in negative impacts on neighborhoods near the tolled highways and lower-income drivers. Which of the following strategies are most important to you?

Responses:

- Option #1 is the most important because people are going to try to find ways to avoid tolling. If there are other transportation options, people might opt for them as an alternative.
- People may use surface streets to avoid the freeway, and that could increase traffic next to the tolled streets.
- Give a gift card to students who get good grades. Give toll credits as an incentive.

Question: (Optional if time allows) Many commuters from SW Washington use I-5 and I-205 in the Portland area. Drivers from SW Washington will pay a toll and experience the same benefits to travel time and reliability. If toll revenue produces excess funds, the Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee is exploring whether to recommend extending other benefits in SW Washington. How much do you agree or disagree with their idea to extend benefits to SW Washington, does this seem reasonable? If you are an

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Oregon resident, how do you feel about it? (Examples: transit/bike/pedestrian toll-free travel options, improvements to safety, other improvements to local traffic)

This question was not asked due to time constraints.

1.8 BIPOC Discussion Group

Liaison Name	Tana Atchley
Audience	Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC)
Date	May 2, 2022
Number of Attendees	5

Introduction

Question: What's your name and what part of town do you live in?

Responses:

- One person from Milwaukie
- Two people from Portland
- One person from Washington County

Question: Tell us a little about your current experience using I-5 and I-205 in the greater Portland area. How often do you use these roads? At what times? How do you typically travel (bus, bike, drive, etc.)?

Responses:

- I only drive on I-5 and I-205.
- I use I-205 to go to work in Lake Oswego during rush hour and use my car. The bus is not an option because there is no direct transit. If I wanted to take a bus it would be very indirect.
- I primarily drive on I-205, twice a week on Wednesday and Saturday to visit family. I go in the morning and evening just after rush hour.
- I use both highways a couple times a week. I go to Washington for ceremonies, foraging, and to pick up a co-worker who doesn't have transportation. I avoid the busiest times.
- I use both for work and travel because I have friends in Vancouver. There are cultural events like pow wows that I go to.
- I use I-5 and I-205 multiple times a day for work Monday through Saturday to get to Gresham, Portland, Tigard, and Tualatin.

- I use both for school and work every day.
- Before working from home, I used I-205 and I-5 a lot to get to and from work. Since I started working from home, most of my travel is on I-205. I have friends all over the place, so I travel to friends usually on the weekend.

Low-Income Toll Discounts and Credits

Question: Which of these options do you agree with for a low-income toll program?

Recommendation	# of participant
Ongoing discounts or exemptions for people experiencing financial hardship	7
Free transponder with a \$25 initial credit for people experiencing financial hardship	6
Receipt of free transit credits that can be applied to the use of buses, trains or streetcars in the region	2
A daily or monthly toll cap for frequent interstate users experiencing low incomes	3
Providing people experiencing low-incomes with a credit for a limited number of free or discounted toll trips per month	2

Additional Responses:

- I didn't choose hour limitations, because I want to give the opportunity to everyone regardless of their tax bracket. If you limit them, you are only giving them the opportunity to be mobile during certain hours. There should be discounts and credits at flexible times.
- If you put it on a cap, it will be class warfare on poor people. You are making it harder for people that need to commute every day. I get it is for improving congestion. A lot of these people don't have a choice. I think anything tied to preferred hours is inherently an equity issue. Most people don't choose when they go to work.
- Q: Has price been decided yet?
 - A: Prices have not been decided yet. We are in a very early phase and there is a lot of work to be done to decide on what the prices will be.
- It feels like everyone should get \$25 in the beginning. That is a drop in the ocean. The free transponder sounds good. We want to make it convenient or easy. It sounds like there are a lot of loopholes. We are addressing a low-income issue, but not the privacy issue. If we don't have the option that people can't pay on the bridge, it feels like something is missing.

Question: ODOT wants to make it easy for drivers experiencing financial hardship to apply for a discount. Which of these options would you support?

Statement	Number of participants in support
Drivers who qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are eligible for the discount	8
Families that qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch automatically are eligible for the discount	6
Transit riders who qualify for the TriMet Low Income Fare Program are eligible for the discount	7
Residents who qualify for the Low-Income Utility Service Program (for example, Pacific Power CARE Program) are eligible for the discount	5

Additional Suggestion:

- OHP Rent Support Program

Additional Comments:

- I want to add that not everyone can sign up for SNAP. If you are houseless, living with a friend, or if you have any savings you can't sign up for SNAP. There are many more programs. There should be a program with ODOT if people show their bank statement or their income. CBOs are missing. If people are working with specific CBOs, they should be a part of the system.
- Would it be possible to include businesses in the process? If someone must travel a lot for work, do their business owners help pay since it is not their responsibility? Certain businesses could help provide something to help people qualify.
- I mentioned earlier that I use both highways frequently for work. Given that someone has limited funds and tolls are charged to the driver. If you are low income and have to pay tolls then get reimbursement later, your money is frozen up for a bit.
- I see that both of these questions involve people taking public transportation, in the other questions it mentioned applying credits to public transportation. If I am using a car, it is less likely for me to use public transportation. If I were to take my car that is what I would do.
- Q: How will the toll help pollution? When there is no incentive for drivers to take public transportation, you will still have the same number of people driving on a daily basis.

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- A: We haven't done a detailed analysis yet. We are doing a regional analysis.
- Q: Is the aim of the toll to somewhat deter people from going for a drive? Or is it to make money for ODOT?
 - A: This is a critical question. It will make money for ODOT as part of the project's goal to raise revenue to improve the roads. The real key here is to have higher tolls during peak hours to encourage people to take a shorter trip or take a different route. It is providing an incentive to drive during a different time.
- We should eliminate the project. We have not heard once that anyone sits in traffic for pleasure. People sit in traffic to go to work during those times. If we are saying that we want money to make the road safer, what is that safety component? If we want people to use an alternate route, that will be a longer route through smaller neighborhoods. None of these reasons make sense until we have public transportation. ODOT wants to make money for itself, it's not about anything else.
- Q: I can see that ODOT is trying to raise money. Is ODOT already getting money through tax dollars? Between Sellwood and I-205, there is no other route option for people in Milwaukie.
 - A: A lot of road improvements are paid for by the gas tax which has not been raised for a long time.
- We have already paid for a majority of this project though gas and income tax. We are paying for the IBR program and will be tolled on top of it. I think if we are already paying for something and then charged for it, what is the privilege of using it?
- We are talking about emissions and safety, but we need to say that ODOT wants to raise money. Everything else doesn't make sense when people don't have options.
- We are talking about emissions. I work in environmental services, we know nature is recovering from infrastructure impacts. What I am seeing is how the money is coming in already through taxes. It seems like we are paying more and more regardless of the gas tax. I don't see the logic in some of this.

Question: One of the goals of a program for people experiencing financial hardship is to make it easy for participants to enroll. Which option would be most convenient?

Option	Number of participants
Web form or app	8
Mailed application	4
In person (for example, at a grocery store or other easily accessible location)	7

Community Engagement Liaisons Discussion Group Summaries

Through an agency or non-profit organization where people access other services	7
Through an employer	5
Through a religious organization	5
I don't have a preference	
Other?	

Question: In designing this program, ODOT wants to address barriers or burdens to participation. What potential barriers could exist for people experiencing financial hardship to participate? (examples: finding out about the program and how to apply, language, overcoming current and historical barriers of trust, cash based toll payment options)

Responses:

- Your examples are spot on to all that apply, think about new people coming to the city. There are barriers of trust.
- Language barrier will be a big one.
- Q: Has there been an economic study about this? How is everyone experiencing inflation?
 - A: The low-income policy will include thresholds for what qualifies as low income, with inflation that threshold changes.
- Q: I was thinking of an economic study that looks at after the toll has been implemented and the forecast cost of living.
 - A: We are doing that study by looking at current income levels in the region. In Portland, incomes are on average lower than Seattle. We are looking at different income levels in Portland and also forecasted incomes and costs. Part of the toll program will be analyzing tolls and toll discounts after it is implemented. Every toll program has a monitoring process.
- Rental assistance.
- The most equitable thing is not to have tolls in the first place.

Equity

Question: Overall, it is important to ODOT that this congestion pricing project reduces barriers and provides a benefit for people who have historically been excluded. What are the things you would you say are most important to get to this goal? It can be an idea or design option that you've heard today, or something else.

Community Engagement Liaisons Discussion Group Summaries

Responses:

- I think for immigrant and refugee communities, it is good to reach out to non-profits. Community education through a non-profit organization is effective.
- Adding public transit. Every agency wants more money and corporations are not paying. People making less than \$50K are paying. Government agencies are taking money from people who are currently being marginalized. Instead of building an equitable system, we are burdening people. If ODOT is intentional about equity, please do something about public transit first. This is wrong.
- You have to build trust first. CELs are trying to tell partners that you have to build trust first. You are asking us to give our responses, I don't want to answer some of these. If I give you an answer you are going to run with it before you get the nuance.

Question: What are some ways ODOT could ensure it is meeting equity goals as toll projects are implemented? (Examples: establishing an oversight committee, sharing progress reports)

This question was not asked due to time constraints.

Question: The Oregon Toll Program will apply congestion pricing on I-5 and I-205 to achieve congestion management and generate revenue. Which of these additional goals are important to you?

Statement	# of participants
Benefits for historically and currently excluded and underserved communities	5
Local and regional air quality improvement and reductions in greenhouse gases that help reduce climate change effects	4
Investments in regional priority congestion relief projects	4
Community health and safety	3
Enhanced transit, walking, and rolling choices to reduce congestion	4
Safe travel	4
Limiting rerouting to adjacent roads and neighborhoods from drivers avoiding the tolled interstates	1

Question: Congestion pricing and reducing vehicles that use highways can have positive climate benefits—and it is important that this doesn't result in negative impacts on neighborhoods near the tolled highways and lower-income drivers. Which of the following strategies are most important to you?

This question was not asked due to time constraints.

Question: (Optional if time allows) Many commuters from SW Washington use I-5 and I-205 in the Portland area. Drivers from SW Washington will pay a toll and experience the same benefits to travel time and reliability. If toll revenue produces excess funds, the Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee is exploring whether to recommend extending other benefits in SW Washington. How much do you agree or disagree with their idea to extend benefits to SW Washington, does this seem reasonable? If you are an Oregon resident, how do you feel about it? (Examples: transit/bike/pedestrian toll-free travel options, improvements to safety, other improvements to local traffic)

This question was not asked due to time constraints.

Quality Control Record

Document Originator			
Date	Document Status (Version)	Reviewer	Completed

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