

Moving to Our Future:

Pricing Options for **Equitable Mobility**

PBOT
PORTLAND BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION



Community Task Force Meeting #10 – Meeting Summary

November 9, 2020 | 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

Relevant Materials

Please find links to relevant meeting materials below:

- [Meeting Agenda](#)
- [Meeting Recording](#)
- [Meeting Presentation Slides](#)
- [Background Memo: Tolling](#)
- [Equitable Mobility Framework \(working draft\)](#)
- [Pricing for Equitable Mobility Website](#)

Agenda

TIME	AGENDA ITEM
6:00 p.m.	Welcome & Housekeeping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda review • Finalize Meeting #9 Summary • Public comment • Project Updates
6:15 p.m.	Highway Tolling: Confirming Emerging Themes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why we're doing this now • Review emerging themes • Explore and discuss supplemental information • Document key questions for further exploration
6:45 p.m.	What comes next? Previewing upcoming pricing typologies
7:45 p.m.	Looking Forward & Wrap-Up

Attendance

Present:

Task Force Members		City Staff	Bureau
Violeta Alvarez	Jonathan Hutchison	Catherine Ciarlo	Transportation
Andy Cotugno	Justin Jackson	Shoshana Cohen	Transportation
Baofeng "Bao" Dong	Tony Jordan	Michael Espinoza	Transportation
Taren Evans	Ady Leverette	Marianna Lomanto	Transportation
Stephenie Frederick	Elizabeth Liedel Turnbull	Eric Hesse	Transportation
Monique Gaskins	Tammy Lundervold	Mel Krnjaić	Transportation
Aaron Grimmer	Sherifa Roach	Emma Sagor	Transportation
Hau Hagedorn	Sara Wright	Marty Stockton	BPS
Shani Harris-Bagwell		Ingrid Fish	BPS

Project Advisors

Vivian Satterfield	Ray Delahanty
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Absent:

Task Force Members

Brian Cooley	PK Mandel	Esme Miller
Nicole Phillips	Richa Poudyal	Ashton Simpson

Welcome & Housekeeping

Emma Sagor, Facilitator, welcomed Task Force members and informed attendees that the meeting will be recorded to ensure Task Force members and those unable to attend will have access.

Public Comment

The City will be collecting public comment throughout the entire 18-month Task Force process via email, regular mail, phone, and written and verbal comments at public events. At each meeting, Task Force members will be provided a written report of public comments received since the last meeting.

To share comments with the Pricing for Equitable Mobility Task Force, please email comments and questions to POEMComments@portlandoregon.gov. All comments received via email by the Friday before a Task Force meeting (which occur the second Monday of each month) will be recorded and shared with the Task Force at the meeting.

No written public comments were received prior to Meeting #10. No verbal public comments were shared during the meeting.

Project Updates

What's changed since the last time we met?

- **November 2020 Election**
 - City Council Changes
 - Mingus Mapps elected City Commissioner. It remains unknown at this point who will take over as Transportation Commissioner in 2021. *[Following the meeting, Commissioner JoAnn Hardesty was selected to serve as Commissioner in charge of PBOT]*
 - Ballot Measures that Affect Transportation Funding
 - Measure 26-218, Infrastructure and Transportation Payroll Tax did not pass, with “no” votes against the measure receiving 57.75% of the vote. Measure 26-218 would have authorized the Metro Council to impose a payroll tax up to 0.75% on companies with more than 25 employees, and use the revenues to fund infrastructure and transportation projects.
- **Metro Regional Congestion Pricing Study (RCPS) ongoing**
 - Metro staff still plan to connect with Task Force members in November or December 2020 to inform equity indicators for the RCPS. *[Following the meeting, 5 Task Force members participated in a sub-group meeting facilitated by Metro staff on December 7.]*
- **Further refinement to the Task Force workplan**

- Staff shared a revised workplan for upcoming Task Force meetings:
 - **November**
 - Discuss and confirm emerging tolling themes
 - Review further info on current conditions & forecasts
 - Sneak peek on cordons, area pricing and road usage charges
 - **December**
 - ***No Task Force Meeting**
 - **January**
 - Cordons & Area Pricing
 - Road Usage Charges
 - **February**
 - Pricing on commercial services
 - **April - May**
 - Review emerging ideas across all typologies (parking, tolling, cordons, RUC, & commercial services)
 - Consult technical tools & share additional research to understand how typologies interact & inform recommendations
 - **June – July**
 - Finalize recommendations
 - Complete final report

Presentation:

Meeting #9 Recap

Why stick with tolling for this month's meeting?

- Great discussion at last two meetings; want to confirm we're capturing themes from Task Force discussions accurately
- Regional tolling conversation is active. Potential near-term opportunities to share emerging themes with Portland leadership & inform live conversations
- Themes being discussed around tolling will likely apply to future typologies. Coalescing Task Force thinking now could jumpstart future conversations.

Discussion Plan for Meeting #10

- Review what the Task Force discussed at Meeting #9—three topics:
 1. Tolling and equitable mobility
 2. Tolling system design and priority outcomes
 3. Tolling revenue and complementary strategies
- Look at some supplemental information from the POEM technical team for further context
- Discuss emerging themes:
 - *Are we missing or mischaracterizing anything?*
 - *Vote at end: **Do these themes capture the Task Force sentiments to date?***

Topic 1: **Tolling & Equitable Mobility**

The recap of what we heard from Meeting #9 can be found in the [meeting slide deck](#), slides 15-17.

Supplemental information

Building on Task Force comments from prior meetings, staff pulled together additional research and data to inform the conversation around current system inequities and what they mean for the future. Staff are continuing to explore these questions and are working on creating a more robust, data-informed report that will explore each of these themes in greater depth.

a. The Transportation System Status Quo is Inequitable & Unsustainable

- Inequities in Mobility Access, Options
 - Car Access- 31% of Black households don't have access to a car, compared to 14% of white households
 - Transit Ridership- A greater proportion of BIPOC Portlanders (17%) ride public transit than white Portlanders (11%).
 - Bus Reliability- Bus speeds decreased by 14% between 2000-2020
 - Access to Destinations- BIPOC Portlanders have access to 27% fewer jobs and services within a 45-minute transit ride
- Inequities in Climate & Health Outcomes
 - Climate Change- Transportation GHG emissions are up 8% since 1990, and climate impacts disproportionately burden BIPOC and low-income Portlanders
 - Environmental Justice- More diverse Portland neighborhoods (>15% BIPOC) experience 2-3 times higher rates of diesel pollution
- Inequities in Safety
 - Lethal Traffic Crashes- People walking in East Portland are 2.5 times more likely to be killed in traffic crashes
 - Traffic Enforcement- In 2019 traffic stops, police searched Black people at more than twice the rate of white motorists and pedestrians
- Inequities in Economic Opportunity
 - Transportation Jobs- Women are underrepresented in transportation sector jobs
 - Freight Jobs- BIPOC Portlanders are underrepresented in freight jobs, which are relatively higher-paying for those with only a High School education.
 - Commute Times- Average commute times are 20% longer for Black Portlanders than for white Portlanders. Commute time is a critical factor in the ability to escape poverty.

b. Current projections show VMT & associated challenges will continue rising

- 500,000 more people are expected to live in the Portland region by 2040
- 2040 Regional Transportation Plan includes over \$15B of capital investment and ~\$30B in operations and maintenance investment, including \$5B for transit expansion
- Models suggest current levels of investment won't be enough to meet City goals
 - 2040 RTP per Person VMT Goal: 10% reduction;
 - Modeled projection: 4% reduction
 - 2040 RTP Mode Share Goal: 45% of trips by transit, biking and walking (3x baseline);
 - Modeled projection: 19% of trips by transit, biking and walking
- Bottom line: Significant investments in transit and other planned multimodal projects won't reduce driving miles enough to have associated climate emissions reductions, mobility, equity, and safety benefits.

c. There is no single solution to achieving our greenhouse gas and mobility goals

- PBOT is using a modeling tool called VisionEval to explore strategies to reach our greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled reduction targets.
 - *Key insights gained to date:*
 - Emissions reductions are greater when complimentary strategies are pursued in tandem (e.g. "carrots" and "sticks")
 - The City can't do it alone, Portland-based strategies need to be combined with strong regional and state actions

Emerging themes related to this topic

- **Tolling has the potential to improve equitable mobility over the status quo, particularly compared to a "do nothing scenario,"** which will likely lead to either increased congestion or highway expansion, each of which have associated costs.
- **There are still doubts that tolling can be implemented in an equitable way.** Transportation investments and decisions to date have burdened Black, Indigenous, People of Color, low-income Portlanders and persons with disabilities. If tolling proceeds, an explicit commitment to minimizing burdens on these groups and local stakeholder oversight are essential.

Task Force discussion and feedback

Staff asked Task Force Members for comments and whether anything is missing from current considerations.

- Add word to sentence: "Transportation investments and decisions to date have **disproportionately** burdened..."
- **Local stakeholder oversight:** Task force members noted that local oversight of revenue allocation is particularly important for ensuring equitable outcomes.

Topic 2: Tolling System Design & Priority Outcomes

The recap of what we heard from Meeting #9 can be found in the [meeting slide deck](#), slides 23-24.

Supplemental information

Meeting Portland's climate goals will require a significant decrease in vehicle-miles-travelled (VMT) AND rapid decarbonization of the remaining VMT on the road.

- Fuel shifting = both changing vehicle types and making fuels cleaner
- VisionEval showing that combining fuel shift with incentives, pricing and more mixed-use and compact land use results in significantly greater emission reductions.
- [Recent analysis](#) by Climate Solutions also found that "reducing VMT and electrifying transportation has many benefits and is the optimal scenario for overall broad social benefit" (such as improved health outcomes and lower cost), while achieving greater emission reductions.

The more dynamic and means-based the tolling program design, the less regressive it will be.

- TransForm's report "[Pricing Roads, Advancing Equity](#)" explains the connection between dynamic pricing, means-based discounts/exemptions/ rebates, and equity impacts.

PRICING STRATEGY EQUITY MATRIX	
PRICING STRATEGY	EQUITY IMPACTS
24 hour Flat-rate pricing	Likely to be most regressive strategy, charging low-income drivers who often don't commute at peak commute hours. Least efficient at reducing congestion. Used on many tolled facilities.
Dynamic pricing varies with time or congestion	Efficient charging system but may be regressive (though likely less regressive than gas and sales taxes).
Dynamic pricing with some means-based discounts or rebates	Less regressive due to discounts.
Means-based pricing with targeted caps and/or exemptions	System designed specifically not to be regressive. Some loss of efficiency as plentiful discounts, caps and exemptions may limit the congestion and climate benefits.

Emerging themes related to this topic

- **Tolling programs should be explicitly designed to prioritize climate & equity outcomes.** Prices should be set to effectively reduce combustion

engine and single-occupancy vehicle miles travelled, while impacts on low-income community members should be minimized through variable rates and discounts/rebates/exemptions.

- For tolling to advance equitable mobility, **safeguards must be built in to avoid discrimination and/or disproportionate burdens** of payment technologies or enforcement systems. More research is needed to identify models for equitable tolling systems.

Task Force discussion and feedback

Staff asked Task Force Members for comments and whether anything is missing from current considerations.

- **Additional Consideration of How and for Whom to Minimize Burden:** Task Force members noted the importance of understanding who in the system is disadvantaged then using that understanding to shape the system going forward, including clarifying and specifying the groups that should be prioritized for rebates, discounts, and exemptions. The following themes emerged from Task Force discussion:
 - **Be as Specific as Possible-** Important to explicitly note the groups we don't want to disproportionately burden through this process. For example, BIPOC may not be specific enough to capture what we're thinking when considering necessary safeguards. Other Task Force members noted the historical destruction of intergenerational wealth in Black families and the environmental justice implications of racist planning decisions (e.g. heightened pollution exposure in Black communities bisected by I-5). Task Force members stated a desire for those disproportionately disadvantaged in the past to disproportionately see the benefit and potential revenue of current and future pricing programs. Task Force members also recognized the limitations of current data and the need to balance desire for specificity with program intentions and not letting incomplete answers interfere with making decisions and landing on priorities that will achieve the most good.
 - **Focus on Income-** Some Task Force members said it may be most feasible to design a pricing program with discounts/exemptions based on income to address the burdens we are aiming to alleviate. Additionally, Task Force members made the point that the lowest income people often cannot afford cars and ride transit, highlighting the importance of investing in transit to improve equity outcomes. Other Task Force members noted that as Portland's neighborhoods change experience gentrification or displacement pressures, safeguards built around income rather than geography may be more effective.
 - **Distinguish Race from Income-** Task Force members noted the importance of not conflating race and income. They noted the need to better understand intersection with income and whether considerations

should be a “both-and” or an “either-or” when identifying rebates, discounts, and exemptions.

- **Geography** - Some Task Force members suggested exemptions could be based on (residential) zip code or geographic locations. Task Force members highlighted the intersection of race and geography as where people live often affects the transportation options available to them.
- **Job Class Exemption**- Task Force members acknowledged that some professions, such as landscapers and contractors, are more vehicle-dependent and thus may be disproportionately burdened by a toll or road fee. Some Task Force members suggested fee structures consider exemptions or discounts for employees and/or companies that rely on vehicles for their operations and may have few alternatives if a toll or other charge is implemented.
- **Enforcement & Race**: Task Force members raised concerns around the racial implications of enforcement
- **Make Participation Easy**- Task Force members highlighted the need to reduce the red tape and burden often associated with programs designed to provide discounts, rebates, and exemptions. Task Force members advised pursuing an approach that minimizes burden for participants and city administrators. Identifying umbrella criteria (e.g. income) that may cover multiple sub-criteria (e.g. business type) may be effective at reducing burden and confusion.
- **Consider Impacts of Fee Structure on movement of goods and people in the city**- Recognizing the desire for an economically viable city, some Task Force members said consideration should be given to the impact tolling may have on the flow of people and goods into and out of the city.
- **Revenue & Exemptions**- Task Force members discussed the delicate balance of revenue and exemptions. Task Force members recognized that exempting too many people may only raise money and not reduce congestion and GHG emissions.
- **Importance of Language**- Task Force members raised concerns around the language we use and the power of words. For example, as noted above, concerns that BIPOC is not a specific enough term for describing the safeguards and design considerations necessary for making an equitable system. Other Task Force members felt the term BIPOC may be “too academic” and not resonate with communities that may not be familiar with the term. Additional concerns around the use of the term “disabled” were raised.
- **Reimagine Car Access**- Task Force members noted the opportunity this process presents to rethink how people access to cars and the role carshare systems may play in reducing current disparate access to vehicles.

Topic 3: Tolling Revenue & Complementary Strategies

The recap of what we heard from Meeting #9 on this topic can be found in the [meeting slide deck](#), slides 29-30.

Supplemental information

More work is needed to understand community mobility needs and priorities. Recent research suggests making non-driving modes more accessible, efficient, and affordable would benefit low-income and BIPOC Portlanders

- Most Metro area residents still rely on driving for many activities, but 48% are interested in using a non-driving option more ([2017 Travel & Awareness Survey](#))
- Non-driving options particularly play an important role in the lives of youth and lower-income residents ([2017 Travel & Awareness Survey](#))
- “Causing less pollution,” “reducing stress” and “saving money” are compelling reasons to drive less ([2017 Travel & Awareness Survey](#))
- Many BIPOC residents already use non-driving travel options, and say they want greater ability to predictably plan and count on reliable, safe and comfortable trips ([Regional Travel Options Communities of Color Research Report](#))

PBOT Staff are hoping to gather more information on these topics through surveys and/or focus groups in the coming months.

PBOT worked with firm [Fehr & Peers](#) to assess the relative effectiveness of different strategies at reducing VMT across cities.

They found pricing has the most significant impact on VMT. After pricing, the following strategies had the biggest VMT reduction potential.

- Incentives : employer subsidized transit and free or subsidized passes for older adults and youth.
- Transportation Demand Management (TDM) requirements: employer cash-out and commute trip reduction programs
- Combining Strategies: pricing, incentives, requirements, and information work together well to incentivize and disincentivize travel behaviors (i.e. Transportation Wallet with priced parking and package of incentives)

Emerging themes related to this topic

- **The use of toll revenue is very important:** If revenue use is restricted, tolling is less likely to positively impact equitable mobility. If driving is more expensive, robust alternatives to driving alone must be available. Revenue should be available to support these alternatives. Transit is one of the most critical potential investment areas.
- **Tolling is not a stand-alone solution:** The Portland region must continue to make non-driving options more accessible and attractive, while concurrently improving car access for low-income people when non-driving options are not realistic. This includes investments in transit, biking, & walking infrastructure; expanded mobility incentives; land use planning policies to create more complete

neighborhoods; preservation and development of affordable housing near centers and corridors; and support for transitioning to electric and low-carbon fuel powered vehicles.

Task Force discussion and feedback

- **Complementary Strategies:** Task Force members noted that undertaking complementary strategies together for multiplying effect is important and are curious to know the land use actions that can be taken to complement transportation actions.
 - **Comparable Transit Travel Times & Experience:** Task Force members noted that faster transit times are required to help people transition towards using transit and that if it's faster to travel by car, then it is unlikely that people will change their travel behaviors. Additionally, Task Force members noted if trains and buses are a nice experience, accessible, and faster, then car use will decline. Some Task Force members tied this conversation back to questioning investment of transit in rural communities where travel times and experience between transit and personal vehicles is likely to be more pronounced. Task Force members also noted the challenges of confronting a cultural dependence on driving asserting that while it may not be practical to bring transit to every rural area, that implementing accessible park and ride hubs with fast and efficient public transit could be an effective way to overcome existing culture of driving, noting that transit can be an option for some trips, but that the conversation doesn't always need to be an "either/or" mode choice.
 - **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD):** Task Force members debated the inclusion of transit-oriented development (TOD) in the list of parallel strategies needed to advance equitable mobility.
 - Some Task Force members discussed TOD in the context of the transportation-housing nexus, seeing TOD as a way to effectively connect people to transit so accessing transit is easier and transit riders don't need to park-and-ride, for example. Task Force members highlighted the importance of explicitly noting the inclusion of affordable housing in TOD to avoid gentrification.
 - Other Task Force members voiced disagreement in the inclusion of TOD, noting concerns about the length of time TOD takes and the tradeoff between increasing service in TOD areas versus existing neighborhoods not well served by transit.
 - The group agreed not to explicitly mention TOD in the theme, but ensure the importance of affordable housing, land use policies and expanded transit access were called out.
- **Revenue Reinvestment:** Task Force members expressed concerns around the constitutional restriction over spending of toll revenues. Task Force members sought clarity on whether tolling itself (and exemptions for low-income people) will benefit intended communities or if the benefits and solutions to improve equity

depend on sufficient funds to invest in projects to improve equitable mobility. Some Task Force members noted that revenue reinvestment should be a secondary aim to the primary goals of climate and equity. Additional Task Force members expressed desire to discuss local oversight of toll revenue and concerns around relying on revenue reinvestment as the core equity approach, given the barriers to earmarking funds and limits of stated preferences appearing in final legislation.

- **Annual Basic Income for Transportation:** Task Force members raised the idea of implementing an annual basic income for transportation that would give low-income households autonomy to invest their transportation dollars where they choose. Task Force members noted that such a strategy, the City could proceed with more aggressive policies to curb car use and single-occupancy trips.
- **Goods Movement:** Task Force members raised the importance considering goods movement in addition to moving people as pricing strategies are evaluated.
- **Collaboration with ODOT Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee (EMAC):** Task Force members asked if there could be an opportunity for the POEM Task Force to meet (virtually) with the ODOT Equity group
 - Staff appreciated the suggestion and said they will consider what may be possible to facilitate conversation between these groups. PBOT staff noted that the City of Portland has rules about how City advisory bodies communicate with external groups as they are charged with advising the City.

Poll: Do these themes capture the Task Force sentiments to date?

Task Force members were asked to respond to a poll about whether these themes accurately capture the Task Force's sentiments today, if the edits discussed as a group this evening are incorporated. They were able to select "thumbs up" if they were very comfortable with the draft themes; "thumbs sideways" if they were somewhat comfortable but still wanted to discuss more; or "thumbs down" if they were uncomfortable with the themes as presented.

75% of respondents voted "thumbs up" and 25% voted "thumbs sideways."

The revised themes incorporating feedback received during this meeting are appended to the end of this meeting summary.

Wrap-up & Next Steps

Emma Sagor thanked participants for their participation and shared the topic for the next Task Force meeting.

Meeting #11

- Date: January 11, 2021 6 – 8 p.m.
- Topic(s): Cordons, area pricing, and road-usage charges

Please give us your feedback so we can improve!
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PLK33PP>

Revised Task Force tolling themes based on November 9 meeting discussion

Note: These themes may be revised and expanded on as we continue to discuss further pricing typologies.

Tolling and equitable mobility

- Tolling has the potential to improve equitable mobility over the status quo, particularly compared to a "do nothing scenario," which will likely lead to either increased congestion or highway expansion, each of which have associated costs.
- There are still doubts that tolling can be implemented equitably. Transportation investments and decisions to date have disproportionately burdened Black, Indigenous, People of Color, low-income Portlanders and persons with disabilities. If tolling proceeds, an explicit commitment to minimizing burdens on these groups is critical.
- Local stakeholder involvement in revenue allocation is essential to developing a tolling system that advances equitable mobility.

Tolling system design and priority outcomes

- The goal of a tolling system should be to improve mobility for people and goods through demand management. Tolling system design should also explicitly prioritize climate and equity outcomes.
- Prices should be set to effectively reduce combustion engine and single-passenger vehicle miles travelled.
- Variable rates and discounts/rebates/exemptions should be used to minimize impacts on low-income community members.
- For tolling to advance equitable mobility, safeguards must be built in to avoid discrimination and/or disproportionate burdens on Black, Indigenous, Latinx and People of Color, low-income drivers and persons with disabilities. This includes :
 - Toll program design that addresses:
 - Accessibility of payment systems (I.e. drivers who don't have credit card/bank account)
 - Accessibility of technology (I.e. transponder access)
 - Privacy concerns for program technology
 - Impact of toll fees on low-income drivers
 - Toll payment enforcement processes that address:
 - Profiling concerns for different communities
 - Impact of fines and tickets on low-income drivers
- More research is needed to identify specific models of these safeguards and to consider things like geographic impacts and ease of use.

Tolling revenue and complementary strategies

- The use of toll revenue is very important. If revenue use is restricted, tolling is less likely to positively impact equitable mobility.
 - If driving is more expensive, robust alternatives to driving alone must be available. Revenue should be available to support these alternatives.
 - Transit is one of the most critical potential investment areas.
 - There are concerns about the potential implications of the constitutional restriction on reinvestment, which could limit the ability of tolling to support equitable mobility improvements.
- Tolling is not a stand-alone solution. Our region must continue make non-driving options more accessible and attractive, while also improving car access for low-income people when non-driving options are not realistic.
 - This includes investments in transit, biking and walking infrastructure; expanded mobility incentives; land use planning policies, to create more complete neighborhoods; preservation and development of affordable housing near centers and corridors; and support for transitioning to electric and low-carbon fuel powered vehicles.