

Community Task Force Meeting #9 – Meeting Summary

October 12, 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 #8 Summary• Public comment• Project Updates
6:15 p.m.	Presentation and Q&A: Regional Highway Tolling Conversations & Feedback to Date <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summary of Task Force Comments from Meeting #8• Context: Oregon Toll Program and I-5/I-205 Projects
6:45 p.m.	Task Force Discussion: Diving Deeper & Gathering Further Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Push polls and full group discussion
7:45 p.m.	Looking Forward & Wrap-Up

Attendance

Present:

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

Project Advisors

Vivian Satterfield	Ray Delahanty
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Absent:

Task Force Members

Brian Cooley	Taren Evans	Hau Hagedorn
PK Mandel	Nicole Phillips	Richa Poudyal

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.

Marianna Lomanto began the meeting by recognizing Indigenous People's Day and read aloud Portland City Council's 2020 Proclamation to recognize [Indigenous People's Day](#).

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.

One written public comment was received prior to Meeting #9. No verbal public comments were shared during the meeting.

Link to comment(s) provided:

- [Corrie Parrish](#)

Project Updates

This meeting marks the halfway point of the POEM Task Force engagement process. Work accomplished to date includes:

- **Adopted a charter & working agreement** to guide Task Force work
- **Reviewed Portland's transportation planning history** and the importance of centering equity in mobility conversations
- **Developed a draft framework for equitable mobility** in Portland
- **Adjusted to meeting remotely** over Zoom
- **Remained committed to equitable mobility work** despite numerous challenges—COVID-19 pandemic, wildfires, and social unrest surrounding a much-needed reckoning around racial justice—using these events to highlight the essential work of advancing equitable mobility
- **Applying our equitable mobility framework to various pricing typologies** and engaging in deep discussions around opportunities, risks, and questions for further exploration.

Presentation:

Shoshana Cohen presented on sentiments shared during Meeting #8 and reviewed the status of regional tolling initiatives being pursued by state agencies.

Meeting #8 Recap

Potential Effects of Tolling

- Reduce vehicle miles travelled (driving)
- Improve reliability and efficiency of travel trips
- Encourage more sustainable modes of travel
- Improve air quality and reduce climate and health impacts (especially for communities who live in high-exposure areas)
- Support economic opportunity by improving circulation, moving goods efficiently and creating more sustainable jobs

Revenue Reinvestment Opportunities:

- Prioritize demand management vs. highway expansion
- Specific interest in transit: expansion, improvements, fares
- Prioritize benefits for BIPOC communities
- Prioritize non-auto modes of transportation (transit, biking, rolling, walking); also acknowledge disparity in car access
- Nexus of transportation and housing; mitigating displacement impacts

Concerns & Questions:

- **Affordability** and burdens on low-income people
- **Diversion** onto local streets or other facilities & potential impacts (safety, pollution) to neighborhoods
- Burden on **auto-dependent groups** (e.g. small businesses, gig workers, persons with disabilities, people who have been displaced to farther neighborhoods, people **without viable alternatives**)
- **Enforcement** and impacts on **personal safety**
- **Privacy** and technology
- The impacts of **increased speed**, even if VMT is reduced
- Unclear or competing **goals** and need to tease out objectives (demand management v. revenue v. climate)
- **Not all VMT is the same.** Electric VMT, carpools, etc. have less climate impact. Design for this.
- Impacts to **freight** and economy of higher costs v. better flow

- **Restrictions on revenue** use
- **Information gaps** and data needs:
 - Peak time road auto users – who would be impacted?
 - Toll rate and amount of revenue available for reinvestment

Vivian Satterfield, POEM Project Advisor, shared some of her experiences working on other transportation-related community advisory committees in the Portland region. Some of her main points are summarized below.

- Tolling discussions in the Portland region have been ongoing for a long time and there has been evolution of thought around how we consider equity in tolling. The following forms of equity have been considered:
 - **Income Equity**- this involves considering how we create a system that doesn't put the burden of travel costs on low-income individuals. Important to remember that low-income drivers have less flexibility than other road users and may be disproportionately affected by transportation pricing.
 - **Geographic Equity**- this involves considering whether some parts of the region would be "worse off" as a result of tolling, especially from diverted traffic, (e.g. conversations on pricing I-205 led to concerns around diversion of traffic onto High Crash Corridors in East Portland, which are already high-capacity and high-speed arterials that could become more dangerous should traffic be diverted as a result of tolling.)
 - **Modal Equity**- this involves considering how tolling can be designed to charge different amounts depending on transportation mode, stemming from the idea that many people don't think it's fair to charge people carpooling the same amount as those driving alone.
- Many other places already have tolling systems in place. It's important to consider what Portland may be able to learn from them
- Tolling conversations are happening often in silo of one another, at the state, regional, and local levels, with agencies convening separate advisory groups for each process.

Task Force Q&A

After Vivian Satterfield's presentation, Task Force members were invited to ask questions. A thematic summary of questions and answers is included below.

- **Evolution of Thought around Equity-** Task Force members asked about Vivian’s evolution of thought around equity during her engagement with various community advisory group processes.
 - Vivian explained that much of her evolution of thought occurred during technical presentations. The POEM Task Force engagement process is similar as members are presented with in-depth information and are learning throughout the process. Vivian emphasized the importance of these learning opportunities, especially as most people have limited modal experience and are only familiar with one or a few transportation modes. This Task Force will continue to move the equity conversation forward and unpack potential impacts of transportation pricing on individuals and the larger system.

- **Common Challenges-** Task Force members asked what common challenges might exist across these processes in terms of stakeholder engagement and barriers to implementation.
 - Vivian noted that some aspects of pricing, such as enforcement, require robust conversation, and we may not have all the answers immediately. Policy options must be thoroughly evaluated to ensure they won’t create negative feedback loops.

- **Inaction on Climate Change-** Task force members shared feelings of worry and frustration around humanity’s overall inaction on climate change and the cultural opposition to many pricing options.

- **More Detail on Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)’s Engagement Process-** Task Force members were interested to learn more about ODOT’s 2017-2018 community engagement process and raised skepticism around whether the recommendations emerging from that are being followed.
 - Vivian explained that the ODOT community engagement process emerged in response to [House Bill 2017](#) (“Keep Oregon Moving,” a funding package to implement congestion-reducing projects, highway and bridge improvements, and transit projects around the state). The legislative directive identified specific assets to examine. ODOT recognized the importance of a regional toll system and identified roads accordingly.
 - Robust technical information from the Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis can be found on ODOT’s toll program website:

<https://www.oregon.gov/odot/tolling/Pages/Library.aspx>

- PBOT staff clarified that the charge of this group is to advise the City as it considers different potential pricing policies. The POEM Task Force's work around equitable tolling will inform and shape City of Portland's engagement in the ODOT regional tolling process.

After Task Force Q&A with Vivian, Shoshana Cohen resumed presenting on other tolling work undertaken at the state and regional levels.

Oregon's Constitutional Language Related to Toll Revenue Use & ODOT Interpretation

Oregon Constitution, Article IX, Section 3a:

*"[...] use of revenue from taxes on motor vehicle use and fuel [...] shall be used exclusively for the **construction, reconstruction, improvement, repair, maintenance, operation and use** of public highways, roads, streets and roadside rest areas in this state"*

ODOT Interpretation: Tolls Likely Subject to Restriction

Examples of likely **eligible** investments include:

- Transit facilities within the highway or street right-of-way (lanes, stops, signals, etc.)
- Park and ride locations in or adjacent to the right-of-way that serve buses
- Highway pull-outs to accommodate buses
- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the highway, or street right-of-way
- Highways/road maintenance and expansion
- Carpool lanes
- EV facilities within the right-of-way¹

Examples of likely **ineligible** expenses include:

- Transit service or fares
- Incentives for mobility options like bikeshare, transit or e-scooters
- Cash rebates

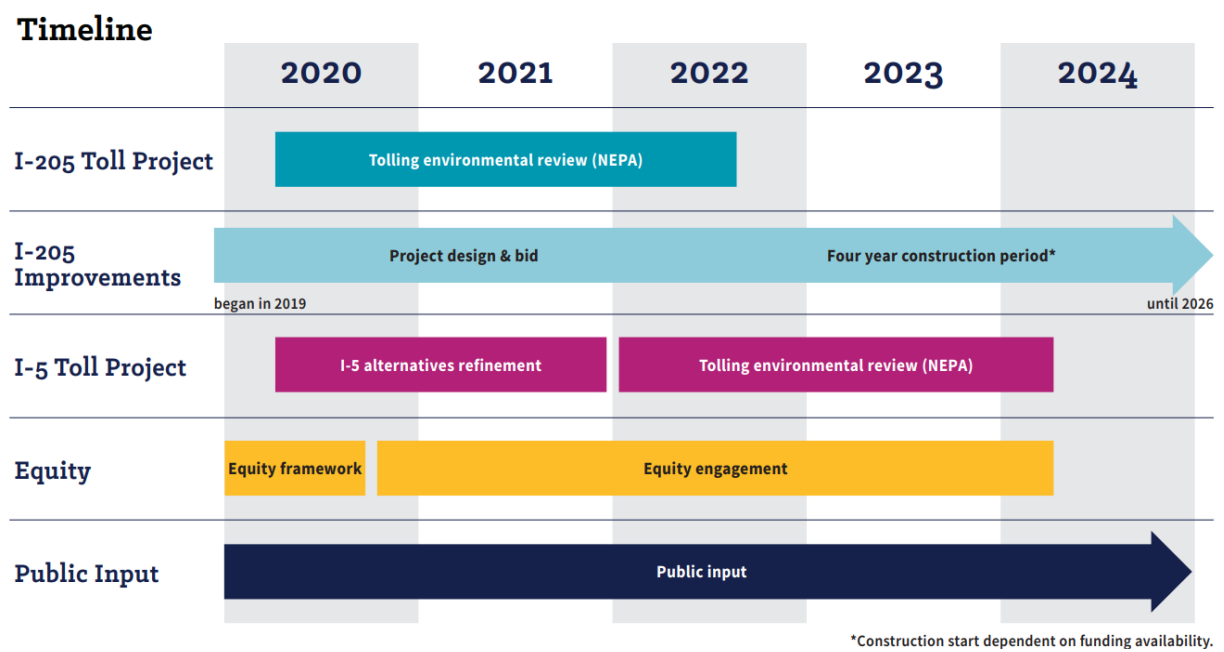
¹ Subject to review & need to confirm with ODOT

Hypothetically Eligible Project Types:²

- Funding for improvements on corridors such as MLK Jr. Blvd, 82nd Ave.
- Rose Lane investments
- Neighborhood Greenways
- Highway Transit or Carpool Lanes

Oregon Toll Program Background

Figure 1 | ODOT Toll Project Timeline (2020-2024)



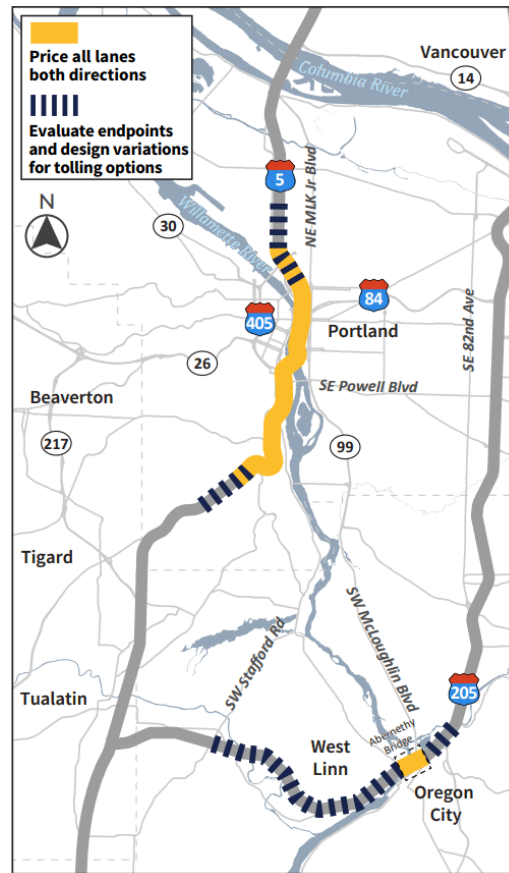
- **2017: Oregon Legislature Passes HB 2017, "Keep Oregon Moving"**
 - Includes fuel tax increase, commitments to transportation projects around the state and directs the Oregon Transportation Commission to implement tolling on I-5 and I-205 in the Portland region to manage traffic congestion
- **2017-2018: ODOT Conducts a Feasibility Analysis**
 - The first phase of HB 2017 work required ODOT to conduct a feasibility analysis, which they did with the guidance of an advisory committee of regional stakeholders, including the City of Portland.

² Eligible per the constitutional restriction, does not necessarily mean they would be investments from toll revenue

- Prior letters submitted by City of Portland convey support for ODOT's continued tolling evaluation and desire for ODOT to focus more heavily on demand management than on raising revenue, with an equity, climate, and safety lens toward program design
 - Analysis showed tolling could help manage congestion and raise revenue on I-5 and I-205
 - ODOT submitted application to and received initial approval from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to advance tolling projects
- **2019-Present: ODOT Advancing Environmental Policy Review on I-5 & I-205 Projects**
 - The current phase of the project is the environmental policy review
 - The I-205 project is progressing more quickly than the I-5 project

I-5 & I-205 Projects

Figure 2 | Proposed Locations for I-5 & I-205 Toll Programs



- **Project goals:**
 - Manage congestion
 - Generate revenue

- **I-205 Overview:**
 - **Current status:** Evaluating options for tolls at or near the Abernethy Bridge
 - Toll revenue could help fund the planned widening and seismic improvements from Stafford Road to OR 213
 - Tolling could begin in 2023 (about two years ahead of I-5 process)

- **I-5 Overview:**
 - **Current status:** Initiating additional traffic and mobility analysis
 - Focusing on about seven miles through central Portland approximately between North Going/Alberta Street and SW Multnomah Boulevard
 - Initial analysis continues through 2021; Anticipate starting National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) [review process](#) in 2022

City of Portland’s Role in ODOT Toll Program: *How POEM can influence these projects?*

- City is a key stakeholder in the process, though doesn’t hold decision-making power
 - The City does not have decision-making or implementation authority on ODOT facilities
- City is participating in the NEPA review process
- City has a representative at Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT), Region 1 Area Committee on Transportation
- POEM Task Force is charged with making recommendations to PBOT and BPS leadership and can inform how the City shows up in the toll planning process, including through:
 - Formal comments during comment periods
 - Questions raised in technical discussions
 - City statements at JPACT and the ACT, as well as to the Oregon Transportation Commissioner or State Legislature.

Follow-Up Questions & Comments

PBOT Staff encouraged Task Force members to follow-up and learn more by referring to ODOT project pages or contacting the ODOT toll project team. They are doing extensive community engagement right now, especially for the I-205 project.

Visit the I-205 online open house and provide comments by **October 16:**
odotopenhouse.org/i205toll

Contact the ODOT Toll Program team:

Hannah Williams, Toll Program Community Engagement Coordinator
Hannah.Williams@odot.state.or.us
503.894.4173

Task Force Discussion

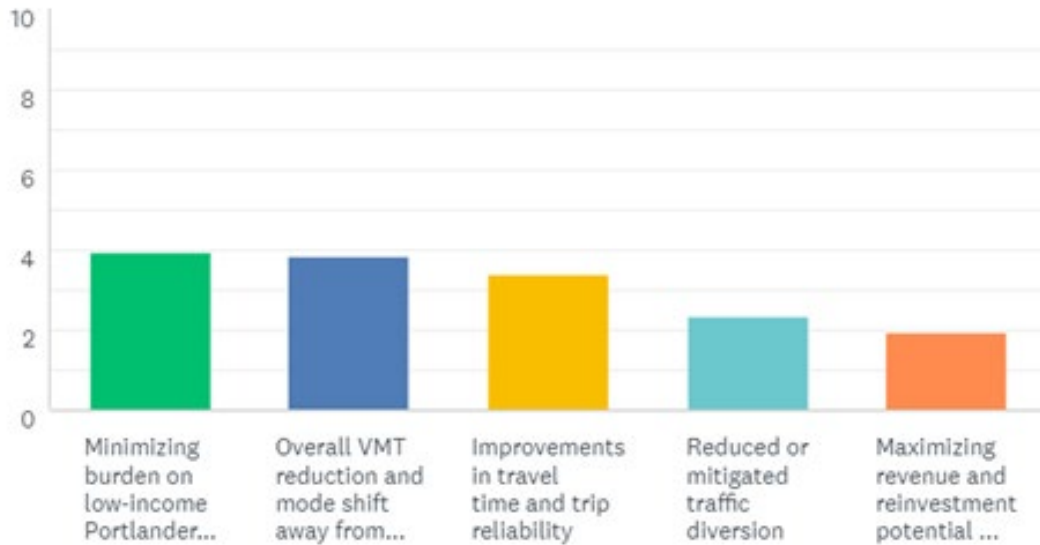
Following the staff presentation, the Task Force had a full group discussion, adhering to the following structure:

- 3 Sections, ~20 minutes each:
 - Topic 1: Toll Program Design
 - Topic 2: Revenue & Complementary Strategies
 - Topic 3: Can Tolling Advance Equitable Mobility?
- In each section:
 - Quick survey first to get initial reactions to key questions
 - Full group discussion on results and additional perspective

Topic 1: Toll Program Design

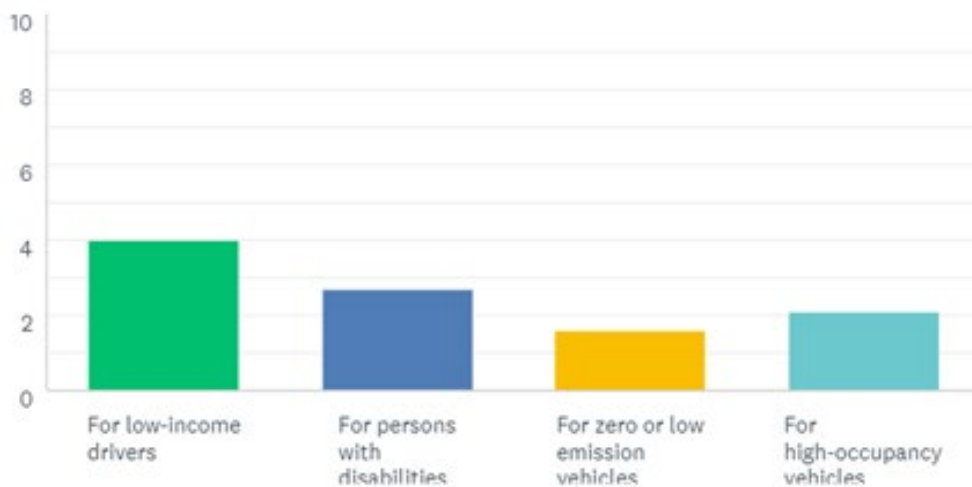
Question 1: Agencies can design toll programs in different ways to achieve different outcomes. What factors or potential outcomes should the City of Portland prioritize when it shows up in regional tolling conversations? *(Task Force members were invited to rank five options, the graph below shows the weighted score of each option)*

Answered: 16 Skipped: 0



Question 2: When designing toll programs for our region, **which type of discounts, exemptions or rebates** should the City of Portland advocate for? (Task Force members were invited to rank five options, the graph below shows the weighted score of each option)

Answered: 15 Skipped: 1



Discussion:

- **Limiting Burden on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and Low-Income Communities is Central to This Work-** Many Task Force members commented that *reducing* existing burdens on BIPOC, disabled, and

low-income people (i.e., going beyond not creating any new burdens to address and reduce the inequities of the current system) should be the central focus of this group. Concerns were raised over the potential for tolls to have disproportionate effects on out-of-town traffic coming into Portland, especially given that many BIPOC and low-income families are being displaced to suburban areas outside of Portland. It was noted that careful consideration must be given to understand whether the benefits of tolling outweigh the inevitable burdens increased costs will have on these groups. Additionally, recognition of the current inequities inherent in the transportation system were mentioned as a reminder of the burdens that the existing system places on many of its users and the need to move away from the status quo.

- **Balancing Outcomes-** Other Task Force members agreed that reducing current inequities is a central focus of this work and reminded the group that this work must balance a broad set of outcomes, such as reducing greenhouse gases (GHG), vehicle miles traveled (VMT), congestion, travel times, reliability, etc. It was noted that reducing GHG/climate emissions was not a stand alone choice (but is closely tied to reducing VMT and shifting from combustion-engine vehicles).
- **Tolling Implementation-** Questions were raised around the finality of ODOT's tolling implementation and whether current discussions will inform implementation or if they are still in an exploratory stage.
 - PBOT Staff noted the "*shall*" language around tolling included in HB 2017, indicating that the goal is to implement a tolling system. They also noted that the process is very complicated, is likely to take many years, and the project proposal could change over time.
- **Revenue Complexities-** Rich discussion around revenue highlighted some of the complexities and competing priorities inherent to pricing. There was recognition that achieving many of the desired outcomes will require funding so raising revenues (and increasing the amount of money available) should be a priority. However, other Task Force members mentioned that maximizing revenue can be tricky as the maximum-revenue model might involve charging everyone a lower toll that doesn't ultimately reduce traffic, VMT, or congestion; whereas a tolling structure that makes the most significant reductions in VMT or traffic time may not be optimized to make money. There was interest in exempting individuals under a certain income from paying tolls and instead requiring businesses, freight companies, and others who can afford it to pay

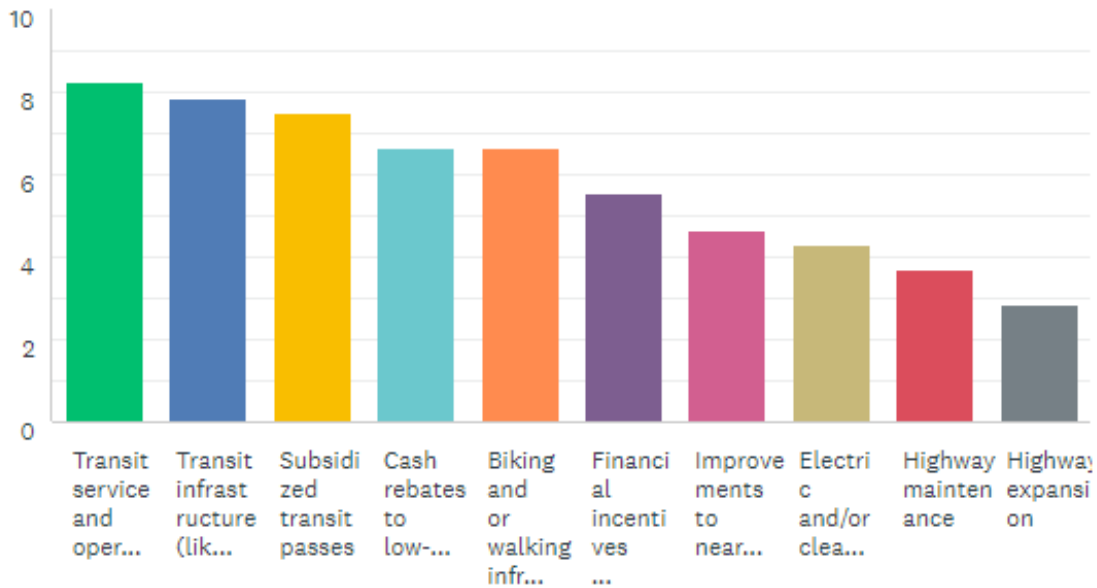
tolls. In response, the tension between carving out exemptions from tolls and revenue generation was raised by another Task Force member, noting that if too many people are exempt, a pricing program may only raise money and not reduce congestion, VMT, and GHG emissions. Task Force members also noted that it's likely no one will be happy to have to pay a toll, and if they are, they will want to see immediate results (e.g. reduced travel times) and that revenue generation seems like a longer-term outcome, so pricing strategies may need to change over time. Task Force members also noted that steps need to be taken to start the process of amending the constitution and address how revenues from transportation pricing can be invested.

- **Mistrust from the Disabled Community-** Task Force members raised concerns and noted the mistrust around revenue spending among the disabled community given Portland's history. Task Force members noted how the disability community is familiar with funding priorities changing from the inception of a project.
- **Health Impacts of Traffic-** Task force members are interested to know the health impacts of vehicle pollution on residents living along highways and arterials.
 - A Portland State University study was shared in the group chat that analyzes the proportion of BIPOC communities living near industrial sites and corresponding pollution:
<https://www.opb.org/news/article/oregon-portland-study-people-of-color-polluted-neighborhoods-redlining-covid-19/>
- **Additional Information on the Demographics of Road Users-** Task Force members noted that additional information on the demographics of road users is needed to really understand the impact exemptions will have. For example, knowing the proportion of exempt vs. non-exempt (e.g., drive gas vehicles, are medium- to high-income, are not disabled, and do not carpool) drivers may help estimate the revenue and/or behavior-changing tolls that may be appropriate.
- **Local Influence & Control in State-Led Decision-Making-** Task Force members cited concerns over PBOT's ability to influence a state-run (ODOT) process in the Portland area. Task Force members expressed an expectation that the City will participate in the design of tolling projects and decisions

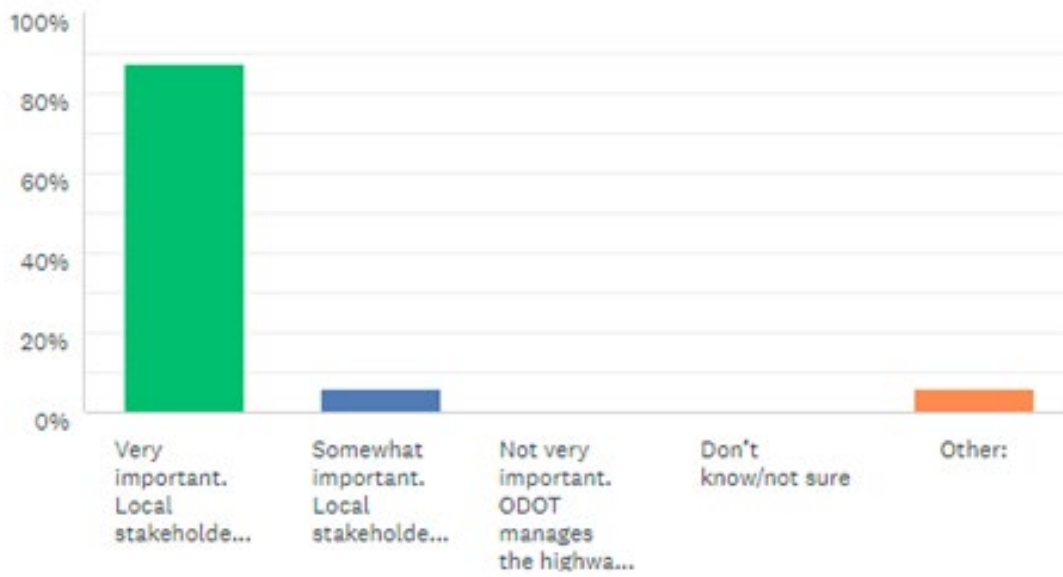
around revenue reinvestment. They also expressed sentiment that the voices of the Portland region should be weighted more than outside voices.

Topic 2: Revenue & Complementary Strategies

Question 1: When considering highway toll projects, what **complementary strategies/services** are important to evaluate and/or what areas are most important for **potential investment** of toll revenue to create an equitable system?



Question 2: How important is **local involvement in toll revenue decisions**?



Discussion

- Investments that Improve the Lives of BIPOC & Low-Income Communities-** Task Force members acknowledged that they don't know which investments will most dramatically improve the lives of BIPOC and low-income residents in the short and long term. They noted that this analysis (informed by community input) should help to guide reinvestment decisions.
- Distinction between Race/Ethnicity & Class-** Task Force members reminded the group that race/ethnicity are different concepts and to avoid conflating them with income. They also noted the importance of treating these concepts independently to ensure rebates reach the desired communities (e.g., an income-based rebate may not reach the BIPOC communities that the group is trying to reach).
- Housing & Anti-Displacement-** Task Force members noted the interconnectedness between transportation and housing and recommended expanding the potential for reinvestment to include housing and anti-displacement measures.
- Safety-** Task Force members noted that investments that improve safety can have equity benefits.

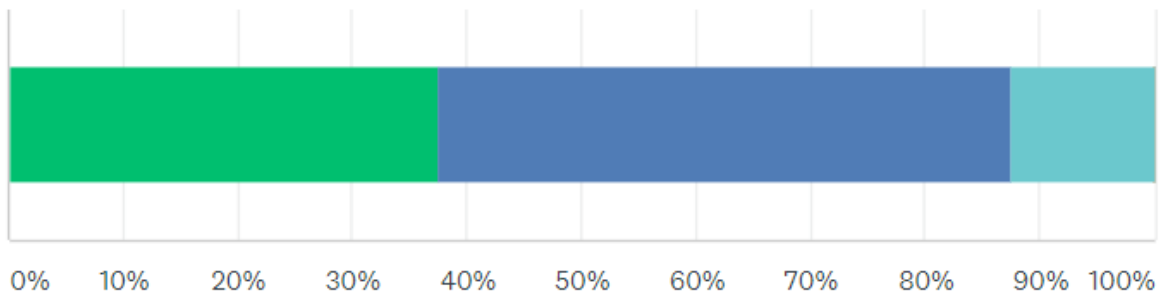
- **Transit-** Multiple Task Force members noted the importance of investing in transit as an equity strategy, especially given the dependence of the disabled community and those of lowest-incomes who cannot afford to own a car.
- **Role of Cars-** Task Force members raised the fine balance for the role of cars that must be struck in a reimagined future. Task Force members noted the tension between the utility of cars, especially in a system with so much car-oriented infrastructure already locked-in, and the negative externalities associated with them. Given the reality that some cars will remain in a future transportation system, steps must be taken to change the way people access and use vehicles, especially as equity can be measured by a lack of access to vehicles. Additionally, the Task Force discussed shifting to electric vehicles (EVs) and the potential equity benefits from reducing air pollutants along major arterials as well as the need to ensure equitable access were discussed.
 - **Oregon Electric Vehicle Dashboard-** Current rate of EV use is around 5%: https://www.oregon.gov/energy/Data-and-Reports/Pages/Oregon-Electric-Vehicle-Dashboard.aspx?_cldee=Z3JlZ29yeS5hbGRlcnNvbkbWZ24uY29t&recipeid=lead-f6498b77ca58ea11a994001dd80081ad-40fa45fd585b4c498ea99fec46ef1596&esid=2952b753-7ff7-ea11-a813-001dd8018943
- **Balancing Short- & Long-Term Needs-** Task Force members noted the tension between meeting short- and long-term equity needs and the tension between equity metrics. For example, if one metric of equity is that everyone has access to a vehicle, while at the same time we are trying to encourage everyone to mode shift, then the two aims are inherently at odds with one another. Additionally, Task Force members noted that people of varying means may be affected differently by increased costs. For example, those more affected by increased costs may be earlier to shift transportation habits which may benefit the system but are then being forced to disproportionately absorb system-level changes being sought. If those folks are forced to switch to other modes before infrastructure and service conditions are improved for alternative modes, such as walking, bike, and transit, then they may experience negative impacts as a result.
- **Distinct Future Pathways** - Task Force members reminded each other that the current course of our transportation is one that leads to congestion, climate change, and further inequities, and that taking no action will almost

assuredly lock-in those negative impacts. The work of considering pricing strategies is an opportunity to chart a different path, one where an alternative and better future is possible.

Topic 3: **Can Tolling Advance Equitable Mobility?**

Question 1: How much do you agree with the following statements:

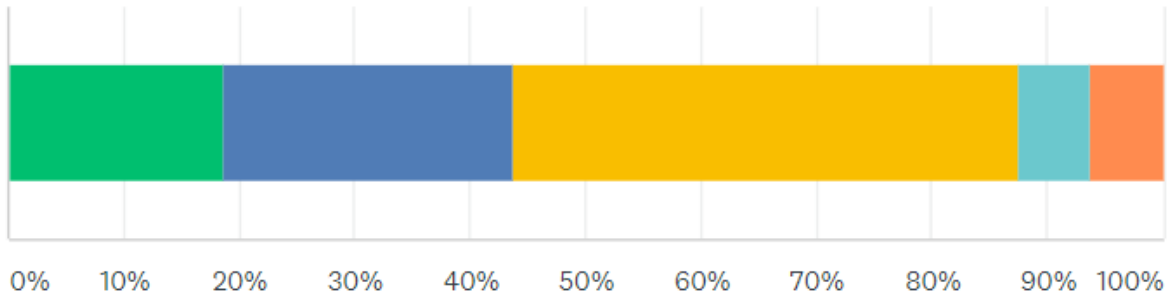
- Highway tolling has the **potential to increase equitable mobility**



- Strongly agree – tolling could manage demand and reduce the costs of the status quo.
- Somewhat agree – tolling has the potential to advance equitable mobility with the right investments.
- Somewhat disagree – I’m concerned the impacts of tolling might outweigh the benefit.
- Strongly disagree – I don’t believe tolling can advance equitable mobility.
- Don’t know/not sure

Question 2: How much do you agree with the following statement:

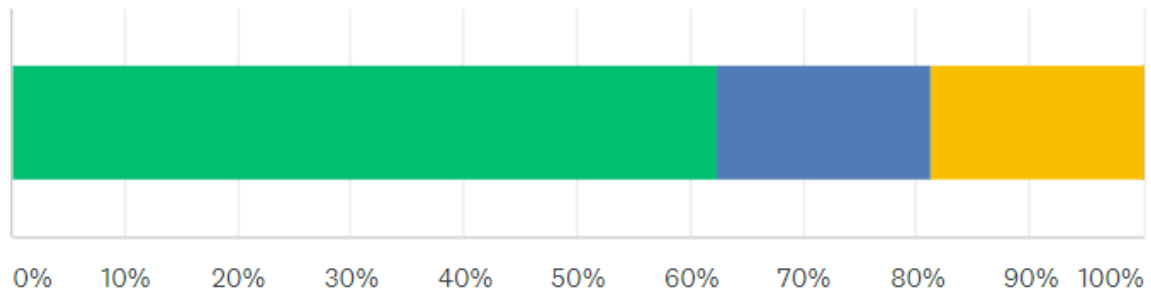
- If highway toll revenue is **subject to the constitutional restriction** (*and therefore limited to capital improvements in the right-of-way such as walking, biking or bus infrastructure on roads, but not funding for transit operations or mobility incentives*), **tolling could still potentially increase equitably mobility**



- Strongly agree – variable tolling, if designed right, has the potential to lead to signifi...
- Somewhat agree – there could still be benefits, but not as much as if you could spend
- Somewhat disagree – tolling will not do enough to advance equitable mobility unless r
- Strongly disagree – the negatives outweigh the benefits, regardless of revenue restrict
- Don't know/not sure

Question 3: How much do you agree with the following statement:

- Highway **tolling should be used** in our region to manage our existing highway system as efficiently as possible **before we expand our highways.**



- Strongly agree – tolling for demand management should be implemented before expa
- Somewhat agree – tolling should be evaluated, but implementation should be depend
- Somewhat disagree – both tolling and expansion should be evaluated and may be nec
- Strongly disagree – highway expansion paid by fuel taxes is a better way to accommoc
- Don't know/not sure

Discussion

- **Challenging Work-** Task Force members expressed the difficulty of this work given that we live in a system that is structurally designed for cars, where once a family has a garage, then it's not a huge additional cost to get a car. Task Force members recognized that the nature of this work is inherently an uphill battle where this group is trying to address a system that is built one way and to re-envision how it might be built another way and the far-reaching nature of those conversations, covering themes from transportation, to housing, safety, climate change, cost of living, etc.
- **Resources & Other Projects**
 - **Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee (TPAC) Workshop-Regional Congestion Pricing Study**
<https://www.oregonmetro.gov/events/tpac-workshop-regional-congestion-pricing-study/2020-10-07>
 - **Transportation Wallet Update:** 2020 Transportation Wallet program report: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/757304>

Wrap-up & Next Steps

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

Meeting #10: November 9, 2020 6 – 8 p.m.

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