

CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Policy Session Worksheet

Presentation Date: March 8, 2023

Approx. Start Time: 11 am **Approx. Length:** 1 hour

Presentation Title: I-205 Toll Project Update from Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)

Department: Department of Transportation and Development

Presenters: Brendan Finn, ODOT Urban Mobility Office Director

Della Mosier, ODOT Urban Mobility Office Deputy Director

Other Invitees: Dan Johnson – DTD Director

WHAT ACTION ARE YOU REQUESTING FROM THE BOARD?

Informational Only - Presentation by ODOT staff on the I-205 Toll Project Environmental Assessment extending from Abernethy Bridge to Stafford Road.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

ODOT has released the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the I-205 Toll Project. The EA consists of over 2,000 pages of analysis and detailed information about the I-205 Toll Project proposal. Details regarding the EA can be found on the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) website at <https://www.oregon.gov/odot/tolling/Pages/I-205-Tolling.aspx>. Although the County has requested a 45-day extension to extend the public comment period, comments are currently due to ODOT and the Federal Highway Administration by April 7.

ODOT will be presenting to the Board on the I-205 EA project, proposed tolling plan and responding to any questions the Board may have.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (current year and ongoing):

Is this item in your current budget? YES NO

What is the cost? Final total cost to be determined.

What is the funding source? Tolling as proposed by ODOT.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This item relates to all five of the county's Performance Clackamas goals:

- Build public trust through good government;
- Grow a vibrant economy;
- Build a strong infrastructure;
- Ensure safe, healthy, and secure communities; and
- Honor, utilize, promote, and invest in our natural resources.

LEGAL/POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

N/A

PUBLIC/GOVERNMENTAL PARTICIPATION:

Involves several departments and external partner agencies. ODOT is currently conducting public

engagement with jurisdictions and some service providers. Clackamas County has submitted comments on the record throughout the EA process.

OPTIONS:

N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment A: I-205 Toll Project online fact sheet

SUBMITTED BY:

Division Director/Head Approval _____

Department Director/Head Approval _____

County Administrator Approval _____

For information on this issue or copies of attachments, please contact Dan Johnson @ 503-742-4325



Project Overview

I-205 Toll Project details and benefits:

- Funds seismic improvements to eight bridges on I-205 from Stafford Road to OR 213. As a separate project, construction is underway to make the Abernethy Bridge the first earthquake-ready highway bridge across the Willamette River in the Portland metropolitan area.
- Adds the missing third travel lane in a seven-mile stretch from Stafford Road to the Abernethy Bridge. Upgrading this section to three lanes, similar to the rest of I-205, will increase safety and reduce bottlenecks.
- Uses congestion pricing through variable-rate tolls at the Abernethy and Tualatin River bridges, beginning in late 2024, at the earliest.

The Oregon Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration recently published an Environmental Assessment of the potential short- and long-term effects of the project on the transportation system, local communities, the economy, and the environment, along with possible solutions to address negative effects.

Key Benefits of Tolling and Improvements on I-205:

- Congestion reduced from 14 hours to 2 hours or less per day in 2045
- 26 percent fewer crashes
- Travel times up to 25 percent faster in the morning and up to 50 percent faster in the evening
- Transit, pedestrian, bicycle and safety investments in local cities and Clackamas County



We want to hear from you!

45-day public comment period on the Environmental Assessment

Feb. 21–April 7



SCAN ME

This fact sheet provides information on the history of the I-205 Toll Project, facts about modern tolling, and technical information from the Environmental Assessment.

Scan QR Code or visit OregonTolling.org

Tolling Information

What is Tolling?

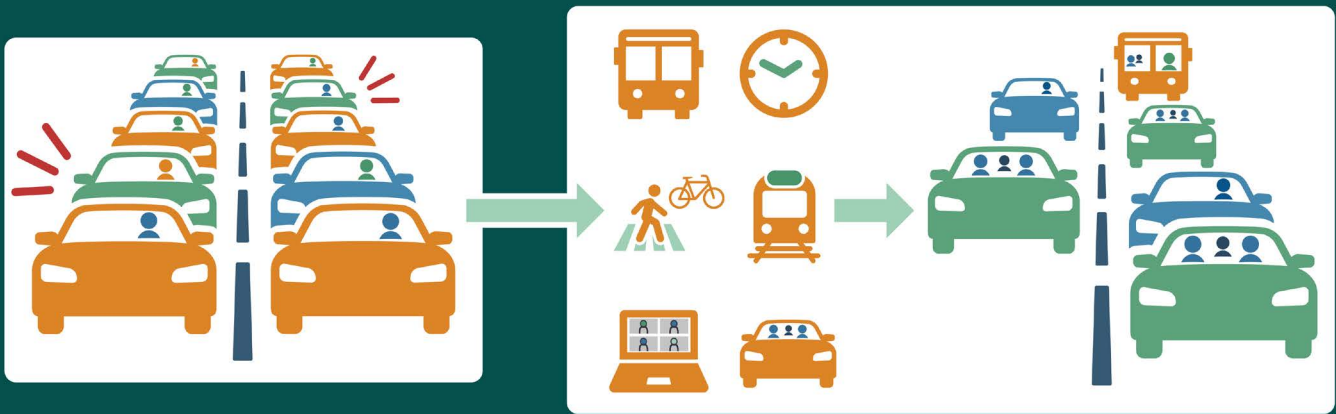
A toll is a user fee imposed on a road or bridge.

With technological advances, roads can be managed with **variable-rate toll systems** and **all-electronic tolling** to improve traffic flow and raise revenue to pay for transportation improvements.

A variable-rate toll system means tolls are higher during peak – or “congested” – periods to encourage drivers to consider changing their travel time, carpooling, taking the bus, or avoiding the trip altogether. According to the Federal Highway Administration, removing as little as 5 percent of cars from a busy road can improve traffic flow.

Variable-rate tolling gives people a choice for a faster highway trip when they need it – like when they need to get to work, make a medical appointment, or pick up their child from school or daycare.

Removing a fraction of vehicles (even as small as **5%**) from a congested roadway allows traffic to flow much more smoothly.



How Electronic Tolling Works

On I-205, tolls would be all electronic, meaning there would be **no toll booths**, and **drivers would not stop to pay**. An all-electronic collection system is convenient for travelers and allows vehicles to keep moving.

- 1 Scan** Sensors recognize approaching vehicles and scan for electronic toll tags in windshields.
- 2 Identify** If there is a toll tag, the sensors use a radio frequency to identify the account.
- 3 Confirm** Cameras photograph the license plates.
- 4 Charge** The toll is applied to the account. If the vehicle does not have a toll tag, the owner is identified by license plate and billed by mail.



Tolling Information

Why are we planning tolling in Oregon?

In 2017, the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 2017, known as “Keep Oregon Moving.” This bill committed hundreds of millions of dollars to projects addressing our congestion problem and improving the region’s transportation system.

House Bill 2017 has funded bottleneck relief highway projects, freight rail enhancements, transit improvements, and biking and walking facilities upgrades. The Legislature also directed the Oregon Transportation Commission to pursue and implement tolls on I-5 and I-205 in the Portland metropolitan region to help manage traffic congestion and help pay for roadway improvements.

In 2021, HB 3055 provided direction that allowed construction on the first phase of I-205 improvements to begin, which includes reconstruction of the Abernethy Bridge and nearby interchanges. Tolls on I-205 are needed to fund future I-205 improvements.



Equity-Informed Process

ODOT is committed to creating better transportation solutions for historically and currently excluded and underserved communities.

With the support and vision of an Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee, ODOT developed an “equity framework” with principles and steps for community engagement and how tolling should support affordability, access to opportunity, and community health.

With the equity framework as a guide, EMAC will continue to inform and evaluate the I-205 Toll Project’s equity practices well after the release of the Environmental Assessment.



Learn more about the [Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee \(EMAC\)](https://OregonTolling.org) at OregonTolling.org.

What is an Environmental Assessment?

Project milestone reached: ODOT and the Federal Highway Administration analyzed proposed improvements and tolling on I-205 and have published results in an Environmental Assessment.

This report identifies the potential short- and long-term effects of the project on the transportation system, local communities, the economy, and the natural environment, and potential solutions to address negative effects. This process is required by the federal government, per the National Environmental Policy Act.

The Environmental Assessment compares the effects in 2045 of two alternatives:

- **BUILD** Alternative, which includes building a third lane in each direction between Stafford Road and OR 43, a northbound auxiliary lane between OR 99E and OR 213, toll gantries and variable-rate pricing, and seismic bridge upgrades on I-205.
- **NO BUILD** Alternative, which would have no additional improvements to I-205 and no tolls.

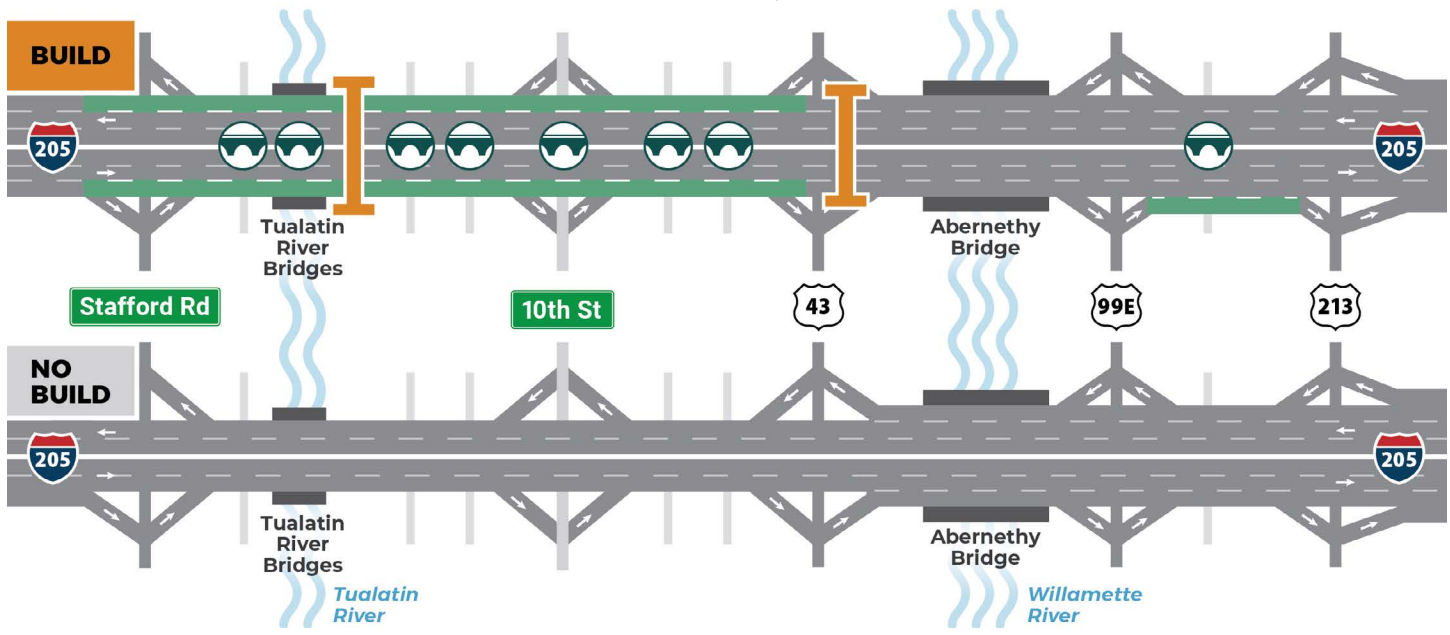


Illustration Not To Scale

Bridge Upgrades	Toll Gantry	Build Alternative Lane Configuration
Bridges with Seismic Upgrades • Borland Rd • Tualatin River	• Woodbine Rd • Blankenship Rd	• 10th St • Sunset Ave • West A St • Main St

The Environmental Assessment compares short-term and long-term effects from both alternatives in several areas, including, but not limited to:

- Travel times, traffic volumes, and the extent of rerouting traffic from I-205 to local streets
- Safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles
- Freight movement
- Local and regional economy
- Social resources, communities, and environmental justice, including low-income households
- Air quality, climate, and noise
- Natural and cultural resources

Visit our website at OregonTolling.org for more details.

ODOT is seeking comments on the Environmental Assessment. Comments may be submitted by calling, mailing, emailing, or attending a virtual public hearing hosted by ODOT. All comments will be reviewed and will help inform next steps. ODOT will continue to provide ongoing project updates and opportunities for involvement.



What Did We Find?

The following pages share key details included in the project's Environmental Assessment. Interested in learning more? Visit OregonTolling.org to read the full document, view an interactive map, or watch detailed videos about the project.

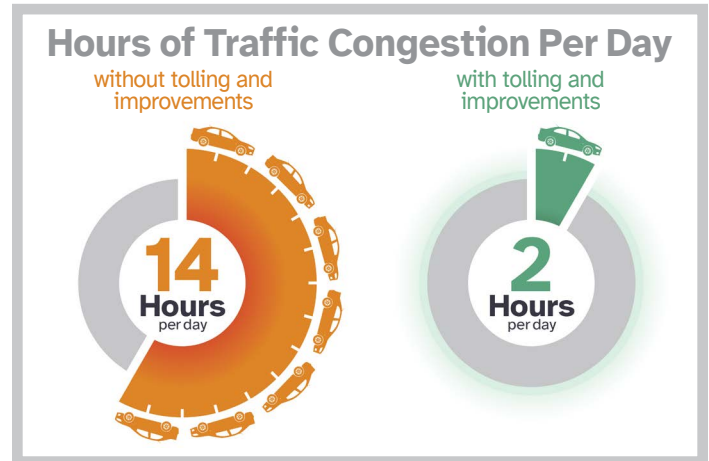


Transportation Effects

On I-205, traffic congestion and safety improve with tolling and improvements

Without planned highway improvements and tolling, there would be up to 14 hours of congested conditions per day on some areas of I-205 by 2045, as more vehicles use the highway. With the planned improvements and tolling, congestion on some areas of I-205 would be reduced to 2 hours or less per day in 2045.

With improvements and tolling, travel times through the project area of I-205 would be faster by about 25 percent in the morning rush hour and up to 50 percent in the afternoon rush hour compared to without the additional improvements and congestion pricing.



Freight trucks would also benefit from these improvements; most would experience similar or shorter travel times whether on I-205 or other routes like I-5 and OR 213.

The modeling also projects 26 percent fewer crashes on I-205 compared to not building the improvements and not tolling.



On local streets, traffic congestion improves in some locations and worsens in others

Today, local communities are already seeing traffic on local roads as cars reroute from the interstate due to heavy congestion during peak commute hours. Traffic on some side streets would get better, while other streets will see more congestion compared to not building the project.

We are working with local cities to plan neighborhood street and safety projects

ODOT is collaborating with local governments to address potential negative impacts resulting from drivers trying to avoid tolls by rerouting to local streets. ODOT will identify and pay for these solutions – also called mitigation – to reduce adverse impacts identified in the environmental review process. Some potential fixes include:

- Changing roadway striping and lane configurations
- Adding roundabouts and new or modified traffic signals
- Providing priority for buses on certain streets
- Improving sidewalks and walkways
- Ongoing monitoring of the transportation system to identify issues as they arise



Economics

Tolling increases household transportation costs

The Environmental Assessment shows annual transportation costs for the average household would be less than one percentage point higher with tolling compared to without tolling. For a household with an income of \$88,000, tolling would represent an average increase in annual transportation costs from \$7,000 to \$7,600 per year. Drivers who are able to use tolled routes save travel time and vehicle operating costs.

ODOT is committed to providing a low-income toll program when tolling begins. This program is still in development. Exemptions, credits, or discounted tolls are being considered for people or households earning less than a certain income level.

Local businesses benefit from changes in traffic patterns

As some drivers choose different travel routes, consumer spending at shops, restaurants, and other businesses is expected to increase in three local commercial districts:

- First Ave in Canby (OR 99E)
- Willamette Falls Drive in West Linn
- Main Street in Oregon City

This additional consumer spending would translate into increased employment and income in these areas.

There will be regional economic benefits

Project construction would generate temporary benefits to the economy of the Portland metropolitan region through the purchase of supplies and materials and the creation of jobs. Long-term benefits include increased employment opportunities, more predictable freight deliveries, and safer highways.

By 2045, highway improvements and tolling would result in millions of dollars per year in savings and benefits to the regional economy compared to not building the project.

The project would provide long-term economic benefits for travelers and the region

\$105 million in Annual Net Economic Benefits
from 2027-2045*

Includes \$9.8 million in annual cost savings for freight industry because of greater trip reliability



Better on-time trip reliability



Shorter travel times



Lower emissions from air pollutants



Lower road & vehicle maintenance costs



Fewer vehicle crashes

Value is in 2021 dollars and relative to the No Build Alternative. Annualized benefit would be ~\$41M in 2021 dollars with adjustments for inflation (7%)



Air Quality, Climate and Noise

Long-term air pollution decreases

Air pollution is expected to decrease over time, both with and without the project, because of stricter vehicle standards and technological advances, like electric vehicles. However, the project would result in up to 9 percent lower emissions from air pollutants in 2027 and up to 12 percent lower emissions from air pollutants in 2045 when compared to not building the improvements and tolling.

Contributes to ODOT's efforts to meet climate change goals

Future greenhouse gas emissions are expected to decrease due to better fuel economy standards, the transition to cleaner fuels, and electric vehicles. The Environmental Assessment shows that with the highway improvements and tolling, these greenhouse gas emissions would be 6 percent lower in 2027 and 4 percent lower by 2045 when compared to not building the improvements and not tolling.

Improvements and tolling on I-205 would not raise noise levels in the long term

At most locations, the project would not noticeably raise noise levels in the long term according to noise models. Predicted traffic noise levels in 2045 under the project would exceed ODOT and FHWA noise standards at some locations along I-205 from the addition of the third lane. To address long-term noise effects from the project, three new noise walls are recommended along I-205 near Blankenship Road.



Social Resources, Communities, and Environmental Justice

I-205 travel times improve for everyone

All travelers will experience the benefits of highway improvements and tolls on I-205 – including those experiencing low incomes and communities of color. These benefits include reduced congestion, improved seismic safety, fewer delays, and fewer crashes on I-205.

We also found that most people would see the same or improved access to jobs and community places such as libraries, schools, parks, and medical facilities in 2045.

Higher travel costs come with transportation benefits for everyone, including households experiencing low incomes

The Environmental Assessment shows that households with incomes below the federal poverty line would be more financially impacted by tolls than households above the poverty line due to higher transportation costs as a share of their household budgets. Read on for more details about a Low Income Toll Program in development.

However, improved traffic on I-205 is expected to have benefits that would reduce costs for all households, including households experiencing low incomes, such as shorter travel times and fewer crashes.

A low-income toll program is in development to help lessen burdens and negative impacts

ODOT is committed to providing a low-income toll program when tolling begins. We want a fair toll program that improves travel options without burdening struggling budgets. This low-income toll program is still in development and may include exemptions, credits, or discounted tolls, for people or households earning under a certain income level.

How to Comment

We want to hear from you! The official public comment period is open.

Your comments on the Environmental Assessment will help the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration make informed decisions about the project.

Clear and specific comments are the most helpful.

ODOT and FHWA want to know what you think about the possible impacts, benefits, and mitigation identified in the Environmental Assessment. We encourage you to make your comments as clear and specific as possible. The most helpful comments reference specific information from the Environmental Assessment.



We want to hear from you!

45-day public comment period on the Environmental Assessment

Feb. 21 – April 7

You can comment in several ways.

- Complete the Environmental Assessment [comment form](#) by scanning QR code here
- Email: I205TollEA@odot.oregon.gov
- Call us: 503-837-3536 and leave a voicemail message
- Submit a written comment form, available at in-person events
- Tell us, at a virtual public hearing or in-person commenting opportunity. Visit OregonTolling.org for more details.



SCAN ME

For Americans with Disabilities Act or Civil Rights Title VI accommodations, translation/interpretation services, or more information call 503-731-4128, TTY (800) 735-2900 or Oregon Relay Service 7-1-1.

Si desea obtener información sobre este proyecto traducida al español, sírvase llamar al 503-731-4128.

Nếu quý vị muốn thông tin về dự án này được dịch sang tiếng Việt, xin gọi 503-731-4128.

Если вы хотите чтобы информация об этом проекте была переведена на русский язык, пожалуйста, звоните по телефону 503-731-4128.

如果您想了解这个项目，我们有提供简体中文翻译，请致电：503-731-4128

I-205 Toll Project Environmental Assessment

Clackamas County Commission
3/8/2023

Brendan Finn (he/him)
Della Mosier (she/her)

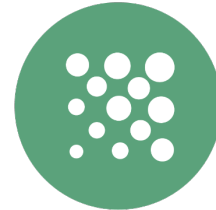
Barlow tollgate, Rhododendron, 1885



Responding to Legislative Direction



2015-2016: Governor led transportation visioning panel with meetings around the state



2020-2021: Urban Mobility Strategy adopted to coordinate all projects for climate, equity, safety and mobility







2017: House Bill 2017 passed identified core projects and gave direction to study and implement a toll program for congestion relief








2021: House Bill 3055 passed allows for financial flexibility to deliver core projects, including toll program development

Urban Mobility Strategy Map

ODOT Projects

-  System Improvement Project
-  Bike/Ped Crossing Project
-  Regional Mobility Pricing Project
-  I-205 Toll Project

Partner Project with ODOT Support

-  System Improvement Project
-  Bike/Ped Crossing Project
-  Bus on Shoulder Pilot
-  TriMet Project
-  Multimodal/Community Study

Note: Core project names are boxed





I-205 TOLL PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

OVERVIEW

1. Introduction

2. Urban Mobility

National Environmental Policy Act

What is NEPA

Federal policy that requires agencies to incorporate environmental analysis and public input into decision-making process

Legally-required for many projects that receive federal funding or that require decision by federal agencies

Addresses impacts to a variety of resources (community, environmental, and historic)

NEPA can include preparation of an Environmental Assessment, which compares the effects in the future of a Build and No Build Alternative

I-205 Toll Project Overview



- Studying variable-rate tolling on **all lanes** of **I-205** between **Abernethy Bridge** and **Tualatin River Bridge** to give travelers a better and more reliable trip.
- **Toll revenue** is needed to **improve I-205** from Stafford Road to OR 213, including a third travel lane in each direction and increasing earthquake resilience.
- An **Environmental Assessment** is available for public comment.

I-205 Toll Project



Environmental Assessment Alternatives

Build Alternative

Tolls would be implemented at the Abernethy Bridge and Tualatin River Bridges. Planned I-205 improvements, including a third lane between Stafford Road and OR 213 and seismic upgrades, would be built using toll funding.

No Build Alternative

No tolls would be implemented. Additional planned improvements on I-205 between Stafford Road and OR 213 would not be built.



Benefits of the I-205 toll and improvements projects include:

Congestion

- **Generating 50% faster travel times** in the evening and up to **25% faster times** in the morning
- **Reducing congestion from the expected 14 hrs** in 2045 without tolling and the improvements **to 2 hrs**

Safety

- **Increasing safety with 26% fewer crashes**

Economic

- **Providing \$105 million** in annual net economic benefits from 2027 – 2045
- **Creating \$9.8 million** in annual cost savings for the freight industry because of greater trip reliability

Environment

- **Decreasing air pollution** by as much as **9%** in 2027 and **12%** in 2045

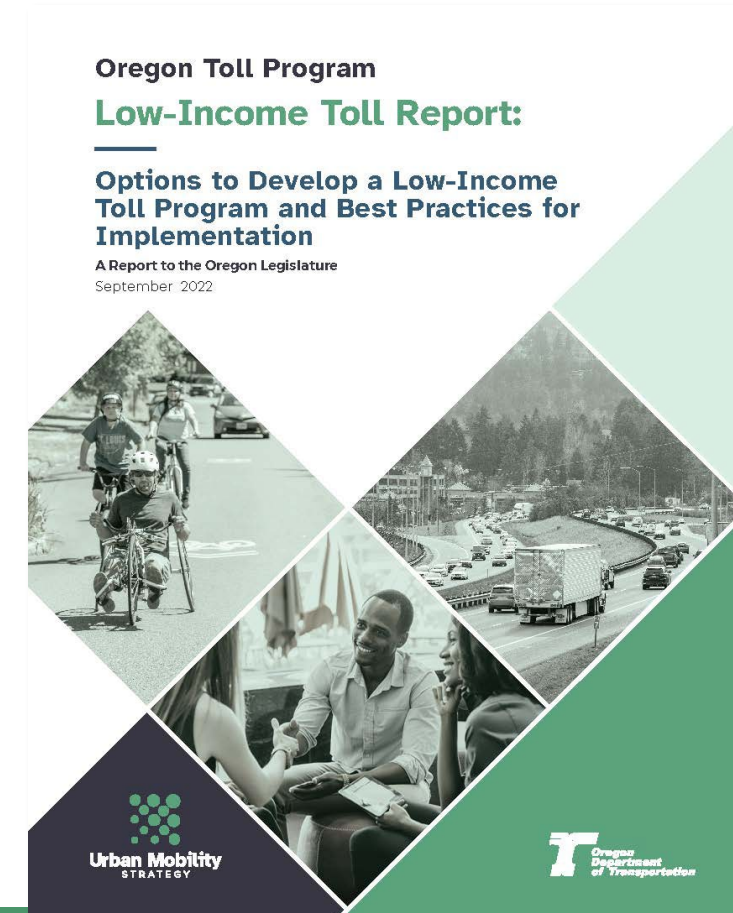
Significant public outreach efforts

- **333** public briefings and presentations
- **41** events (tabling, workshops, listening sessions)
- **47** focus group or stakeholder interviews
- **25,510** online survey responses
- **5,099** comments received through emails or phone calls



Ways ODOT has incorporated feedback so far

- Centering equity in the project development
- Developing a low-income toll program
- Enhancing public transportation and multimodal options
- Keeping toll revenue in the corridor where it is collected
- Addressing negative impacts from diversion



How to comment on the environmental assessment

- Provide clear and specific comments – share your feedback about the possible benefits, impacts, and mitigation
- Submit your comment by:
 - Complete the comment form linked on at our website OregonTolling.org
 - Submitting a paper comment form at an in-person event
 - Emailing I205TollEA@odot.oregon.gov
 - Calling 503-837-3536 and leaving a voicemail message
 - Sharing your comment at a webinar or the online public hearing



**We want to
hear from you!**

60-day public comment period on the
Environmental Assessment

Feb. 21 – April 21

Join us at an upcoming event!

- **Webinars:**

- Tuesday, March 14: 6:00-7:30 p.m.
- Thursday, March 16: 12:00-1:30 p.m

- **Virtual public hearing** (with concurrent in-person opportunity for oral comment to a court reporter):

- Tuesday, April 4, 3:00-6:00 p.m.

- **In person:** View our online calendar for information table locations and verbal comment details

Oregon Toll Program timeline



Thank You