

# ClackCo Commissioners respond to residents' concerns on tolling plans

Dec. x, 2021

At least 175 residents participated in a virtual town hall on Dec. 1 with the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), expressing concerns about tolling and the impacts it will have on their neighborhoods, pocketbooks, and traffic.

ODOT, not Clackamas County, is the agency tasked with imposing tolls in the region at the direction of the Oregon Legislature. While ODOT has met with local jurisdictions and hosted several events to provide input on the toll program, significant outreach to the Commissioners suggests more is needed. Clackamas Commissioners wanted to provide this opportunity for residents to share their perspectives directly with ODOT and continue raising awareness for those residents who still may not yet know tolling is on the way.

In Spring 2021, the Board approved a set of transportation values that identify the county's expectations on funding solutions for the region's interstate system. Those values include ensuring a safe and equitable interstate system, supporting a vibrant economy, prioritizing disaster resiliency and climate action, and supporting healthy communities. A key priority from those values is that any tolling within the region should occur on the system at the same time so no single community is unfairly burdened.

ODOT is in the early phases of determining how tolls will work in both Clackamas County and the region. ODOT maintains that tolling is needed in order to complete the I-205 Improvements Project that will add new lanes in each direction between Stafford Road and OR 213 while seismically retrofitting the existing Abernethy Bridge over the Willamette River.

Clackamas County supports the I-205 Improvement Projects, but contends that the effects of tolling must be better understood before ODOT proceeds with the implementation of tolling. Tolling I-205 will span many different communities, and so any new toll programs should responsibly consider the users as well as the impacts of diversion away from the tolls onto local streets.

Here are just a few of the county's concerns with ODOT's current tolling plans, which were mentioned by residents in the town hall:

- Tolls will come to Clackamas County first under ODOT's current plan. This is not fair. ODOT currently plans to toll a 7-mile segment of I-205 in the fourth quarter of 2024 and then toll the rest of I-5 and I-205 in the fourth quarter of 2025.
- Clackamas County will be the only community in the region to have tolls for the purpose of paying for facility improvements, while projects in other parts of the region will be funded with dedicated state and federal dollars.

DRAFT: Commissioners Op Ed

- In the current proposal, ODOT will toll all lanes of I-205 in an area with little or no other transportation options such as local roads, transit, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This is the first toll of its kind in the United States.

We do not believe that ODOT has done enough to ensure they have heard from residents who be affected by tolling. As county commissioners, we will help elevate your voice by holding more town halls on the topic. Please continue to stay engaged in these tolling conversations and provide feedback on the current tolling plans to ODOT and your state legislators. For more information, visit: [OregonTolling.org](http://OregonTolling.org)