



# TOLLING, NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH AND SAFETY: EMAC POLICY & STRATEGY OPTIONS

This initial list of policy and strategy options for EMAC is based on the “Tolling, Neighborhood Health and Safety: Research” document, conversations with Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee (EMAC) and Equity Framework-identified communities<sup>1</sup> as documented in our [I-205 Toll Project Engagement Summary](#), and an understanding of how the current transportation system works today through our [I-205 Toll Project Corridor User Analysis](#) (summary provided later in this document).

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<sup>1</sup> Equity Framework-identified communities include people experiencing low-income or economic disadvantage; Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; older adults and children; persons who speak non-English languages, especially those with limited English proficiency; persons living with a disability; other populations and communities historically excluded and underserved by transportation projects.

## INITIAL LIST OF NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY AND STRATEGY OPTIONS FOR EMAC

### Trauma-informed practice statement

“Trauma-informed practices should drive policy decisions, which will support assets within Equity Framework-identified communities. To advance equity in development of the Oregon Toll Program through delivering tangible, opening-day neighborhood health and safety investments, the Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee provides the strategy recommendations to the Oregon Transportation Commission to prioritize investments.”

### POLICY OPTIONS

#### Toll revenue dedication

- Dedication of (%) toll revenues or (\$) annually to address impacts from diversion.
- Dedication of (%) toll revenues or (\$) annually to Community Based Organizations to invest in programs or projects that improve neighborhood health or safety.

#### Toll exemptions, discounts, credits, or rebates

- Public emergency response vehicles (fire trucks, ambulance, police, etc.).
- Non-emergency medical transportation services, which provide rides to services such as primary care, behavioral health, urgent medical care, dental, dialysis, or specialty medical care.

#### Definition of the corridor for investment

A balanced approach of focusing on highway and areas farther from the highway that will be affected is needed. Consider a wider area of impact to include rural areas where Equity Framework-identified communities live, not a limited distance from the highway.

### STRATEGY OPTIONS

#### Address historic disinvestment in communities adjacent to the highways that will be impacted by diversion to improve air quality and health through design elements or investments

Provide investment to address the following transportation factors that affect health outcomes:

- **Access to human needs:** providing (or inhibiting) access to means of livelihood (e.g., jobs), essential goods (e.g., food, fuel and water), and essential services (e.g. health care, health promoting activities, and education)
- **Neighborhood livability:** facilitating movement of people and goods, physical activity, and social engagement, and limiting crime and disorder in one’s immediate neighborhood surroundings
- **Safety:** preventing injuries and fatalities in the transportation system

- **Environmental quality:** preventing emissions of environmental pollution (noise, air, water) related to system operation and associated health impacts

**Improve community health through the implementation of the toll system**

- Design the toll system to lessen congestion on the highways to improve the lives of those living near them, which are disproportionately historically underserved or excluded communities
- Take additional steps than what is traditionally measured in the federal review process (e.g. air quality, noise, vibration, and access to health care facilities) to connect transportation planning to health outcomes; consider the integrating a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) or elements of an HIA into the process

## EMAC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK

ODOT will also leverage prior and future input from EMAC, Equity Framework-Identified Communities, and other agencies in the region to define equitable investments and strategies for the toll projects. The following is specific input on neighborhood health and safety investments and strategies we have received to date:

### EMAC Input

- Safety is a key consideration, both physical safety and perceived safety. Are facilities safe for all users? How will traffic rerouting affect safety?
- Transit access and safe crossing areas for/near transit areas.
- Investments need to be balanced between highway improvements and neighborhood improvements.
- Safety impacts and exposure need to be highlighted when measuring bike and pedestrian safety.
- Focus on safety enhancements, not just how the system performs.
- Need to map health disparities
- Include health factors in performance measures
- Need to quantify health impacts for low-income individuals living near/on facilities that will see increased traffic.
- Need to consider people living with disabilities and transit-dependent populations.
- Incorporate a public health lens and integrated a trauma-informed perspective.
- Consider the following health outcomes as they relate to transportation corridors:
  - Lung health
  - Cardiovascular health
  - Mental health
  - Physical health
  - Travel safety
  - Cancer
- Address climate change as well as health and safety.
- There is a potential for tolls to decrease emissions if paired with incentives to use public transit.

### Input from Equity Framework-Identified Communities

During the I-205 Toll Project engagement period from summer-fall 2020, we received about 4,000 survey responses. About 650 responses came from people who self-identified as Black, Indigenous, People of Color or of Slavic decent. About 460 said they were 65 or older and about 550 said their annual household income was \$50,000 or less.

The following is a brief summary of the input received related to neighborhood health and safety.

- Top concerns for all respondents included (*order of these top concerns changed depending on the demographic group*):
  - Provide alternative, non-tolled driving routes

- Minimize impact on people of low-income or otherwise underserved
  - Reduce traffic congestion
  - Minimize diversion to local streets
- The top concern among White/Caucasian respondents, older adults, and people with incomes greater than \$90,000 per year was minimizing negative diversion to local streets. All other racial groups and people experiencing low income were much less concerned with diversion. Respondents experiencing low income, respondents of color and respondents younger than 35 said “provide alternative non-tolled driving routes” and “minimize impacts to low income communities” as top concerns more frequently.
  - The more than 300 respondents who submitted surveys in another language expressed much less concern with minimizing negative diversion to local streets compared to all respondents. “Providing alternative, non-tolled driving routes” was the concern identified most frequently by those completing the survey in another language, and “reducing traffic congestion” was the second most frequently selected concern.
  - Of all open-ended comments received from all demographics, about 1,700 mentioned rerouting or diversion, which ranks second for the frequency of all topic themes. In addition, safety was mentioned in about 180 comments. Public health and environmental impacts were mentioned in more than 300 comments.
  - General comments from Black, Indigenous, and People of Color respondents, Slavic respondents, older adults, and people experiencing low income were similar across demographic groups and included the following comments specifically related to neighborhood health and safety:
    - Concern about increased congestion in local communities, including Oregon City and West Linn.
    - Concerns about rising costs of living in the Project area.

### **Community Input**

Below are the comment themes from all demographics related to neighborhood health and safety.

#### **IMPACTS TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND STREETS NEAR I-205:**

- Many respondents said that increased traffic on local streets would create additional inconveniences for residents accessing schools, shops, jobs, and medical facilities.
- Several respondents said that increased traffic on local streets would create additional safety risks for pedestrians and bicycles, as well as slower response times for emergency services.
- A few respondents said that additional vehicles rerouting and diverting through their community will decrease property values.

**TRAFFIC CONGESTION AND ROAD CONDITION OBSERVATIONS ON ALTERNATIVE ROUTES:**

- Several respondents said that alternative routes are already congested, especially during rush hour, and cited specific streets.
- Some respondents said that many of the alternative routes do not have the capacity and/or are in need of repair and improvements, so additional rerouting and diversion will exacerbate these issues.

**ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION OF IMPACTS CAUSED BY REROUTING AND DIVERSION:**

- A few respondents said that rerouting and diversion and the subsequent impacts to local communities needs to be analyzed thoroughly in the environmental analysis.
- A few respondents said that the Project should incorporate mechanisms to limit access to local streets from I-205 or implement measures that discourage drivers from rerouting and diversion.

**SAFETY FROM REROUTING EFFECTS**

- Many respondents expressed general concern for how diverted traffic due to tolls will lead to increased congestion, travel speeds, and collisions on neighborhood roadways.
- Some respondents expressed concern about the potential for diverted traffic to cause an increase in vehicle-pedestrian accidents.
- A few respondents said that traffic from diversion will cause safety issues with emergency vehicle transport or personal travel for emergencies.
- A few respondents noted that increased traffic will deteriorate the quality of neighborhood roadways, further contributing to safety concerns. A few comments noted that this causes an increased financial burden on local municipalities.

**PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS FROM INCREASED TRAFFIC AND CONGESTION:**

- A few respondents said that tolling would move traffic off I-205 and closer to nearby sensitive receptors (that is, daycares, schools, elderly housing, hospitals, etc.).
- A few respondents said that congestion in general poses a public health concern due to increased and concentrated vehicle pollution.

## ANALYSIS OF TRAVEL PATTERNS ON I-205

### Results from the I-205 Corridor User Analysis

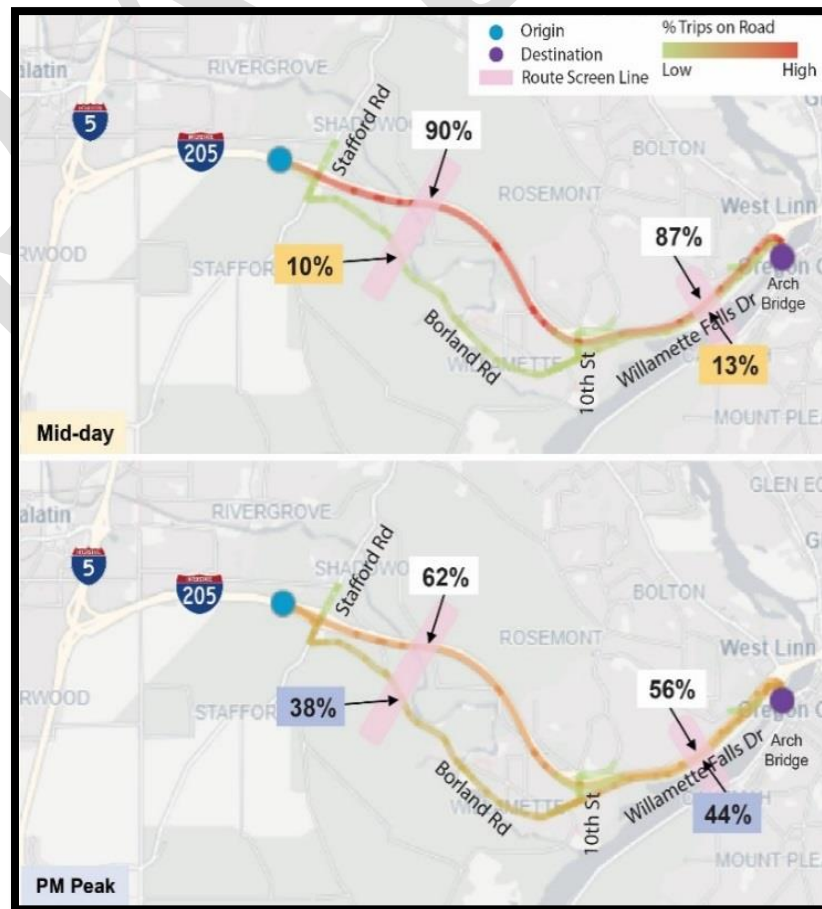
An [I-205 Corridor User Analysis](#) was prepared to better understand the travel patterns of current users of I-205 near the Abernethy Bridge. We will use this information to inform the development and analysis of options for the I-205 Toll Project. This analysis used StreetLight Data Inc.'s mobility platform as a primary tool along with the Regional Travel Demand Model (RTDM) and the Oregon Statewide Integrated Model. A few key findings are included below. Read the full [I-205 Corridor User Analysis](#) for more in-depth information, maps and other graphics.

#### 3 in 4 trips are made locally

While trips using the I-205 Abernethy Bridge come from throughout the Portland metropolitan region and beyond, about 75% of all the trips access I-205 locally — meaning that users enter or exit I-205 at one of the five interchanges in a seven mile segment of the highway near the bridge. Most users come from nearby areas such as West Linn, Oregon City, Gladstone, and Clackamas. Fewer travelers come from areas farther away, including 3% from Clark County, Washington.

#### Congestion is creating diversion today

Our analysis of travel patterns shows drivers exit or avoid I-205 during higher demand periods when traffic congestion is present. For example, in the afternoon rush, 20% to 30% more travelers heading north on I-205 to the Oregon City Arch Bridge exit to use Borland Road or Willamette Falls Drive compared to midday. The I-205 Toll Project is analyzing if drivers that currently avoid I-205 during peak hours would return to the highway if it were less congested and knew how long the trip would take.



Source: StreetLight Insight Platform

## **PROCESS FOR ODOT'S COMMITMENTS TO ADDRESS NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH AND SAFETY**

We are at the start of an environmental review and public engagement process that will continue for multiple years (ending in 2023 or 2024). Key decision points along the way for neighborhood health and safety options will occur.

### **Essential next steps**

The following tasks will be initiated or information will be developed by ODOT in coordination with EMAC following the EMAC's discussions in June and July, 2021:

- Additional feedback from Equity Framework-identified communities
- Additional cost and implementation information
- Better understanding from ODOT about the range of funding that would be available for neighborhood health and safety investment, and how ODOT could deliver on commitments to services or programs with respect to the Oregon constitutional restriction or in Washington
- Describe the process within ODOT or in coordination with partners to deliver investments that advance equity that are not directly funded by toll revenue
- Technical modeling and analysis from ODOT about tolling benefits and burdens on Equity Framework-identified communities and how policies and strategies could address impacts and advance equity (early 2022 for I-205 Toll Project and early 2023 for the Regional Mobility Pricing Project)
- Technical and financial analysis that would identify how much funding is available for neighborhood health and safety investments (early 2023 for I-205 Toll Project and early 2024 for the Regional Mobility Pricing Project)