Meeting minutes

Metro
600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Meeting: **Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee (TPAC) Workshop**

Date/time: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 | 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Place: Virtual online meeting via Web/Conference call (Zoom)

Members Attending	**Affiliate**
Tom Kloster, Chair	Metro
Karen Buehrig	Clackamas County
Chris Deffebach	Washington County
Lynda David	SW Washington Regional Transportation Council
Eric Hesse	City of Portland
Dayna Webb	City of Oregon City and Cities of Clackamas County
Katherine Kelly	City of Gresham and Cities of Multnomah County
Jeff Owen	TriMet
Lewis Lem	Port of Portland
Glenn Koehrsen	Community Representative
Donovan Smith	Community Representative
Gladys Alvarado	Community Representative
Taren Evans	Community Representative
Jennifer Campos	City of Vancouver, WA

Alternates Attending	**Affiliate**
Allison Boyd	Multnomah County
Erin Wardell	Washington County
Peter Hurley	City of Portland
Jaimie Huff	City of Happy Valley and Cities of Clackamas County
Jay Higgins	City of Gresham and Cities of Multnomah County
Glen Bolen	Oregon Department of Transportation

Members Excused	**Affiliate**
Jessica Berry	Multnomah County
Don Odermott	City of Hillsboro and Cities of Washington County
Mandy Putney	Oregon Department of Transportation
Karen Williams	Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
Laurie Lebowsky	Washington State Department of Transportation
Tyler Bullen	Community Representative
Jessica Stetson	Community Representative
Idris Ibrahim	Community Representative
Yousif Ibrahim	Community Representative
Wilson Munoz	Community Representative
Rachael Tupica	Federal Highway Administration
Rob Klug	Clark County
Shawn M. Donaghy	C-Tran System
Jeremy Borrego	Federal Transit Administration
Cullen Stephenson	Washington Department of Ecology

Guests Attending	Affiliate
Lucinda Broussard	Oregon Department of Transportation
Jennifer Wieland	Nelson/Nyggard
Chris Lepe	Transform
Emma Sagor	City of Portland
Brie Becker	Nelson/Nyggard
Nathaniel Price	Washington County
Mike Sallis	
Mat Dolata	WSP
Gary Albrecht	
Heather Wills	WSP
Michael Espinoza	Portland Bureau of Transportation
Marianna	

Metro Staff Attending

Lake McTighe, Senior Transportation Planner	Kim Ellis, Principal Transportation Planner
John Mermin, Senior Transportation Planner	Tim Collins, Senior Transportation Planner
Ally Holmqvist, Senior Transportation Planner	Matthew Hampton, Senior Transportation Planner
Chris Johnson, Modeling Div. Manager	Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara, Investment Project Manager
Alex Orechak, Associate Transportation Planner	Matt Bihn, Principal Transportation Planner
Molly Cooney-Mesker, Senior Public Affairs	Summer Blackhorse, Program Assistant III
Marie Miller, TPAC Recorder	

1. **Call to Order and Introductions**
   Chairman Tom Kloster called the workshop meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Introductions were made from committee members, alternate members, staff and guests.

2. **Overview of Congestion Pricing and Case Studies (Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara and Jennifer Wieland)**
   Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara provided an overview of the regional congestion pricing study using best practices, concepts and relationship to equity, pricing partner coordination, and input from Metro committees including TPAC on methodology/performance measures, and scenario developments.

   Jennifer Wieland with Nelson/Nygaard referred to the Regional Transportation Plan for congestion pricing as involving the market pricing for use of roads in different times. Congestion studies identify growing population regions with shrinking revenues and aging transportation infrastructure. We are recognizing it's not possible to build our way out, but will need to manage demand with transportation access with limited resources.

   Examples of benefits from congestion studies:
   Congestion pricing fees can vary by time of day to reduce traffic during the busiest times of day. It can benefit many types of travelers and be tailored to target charges to those that can pay.
   - Bus riders benefit from buses moving faster on roads with less traffic
   - Bikers enjoy safer streets with fewer cars
   - People walking enjoy more attractive streets and less air pollution
   - Congestion pricing funds can help pay for more transit service.
   - Emergency vehicles travel without delay
   - People who live near congested roadways benefit from lower traffic and cleaner air

Trucks pay a fee and benefit from on-time deliveries, and ability to make more deliveries
Higher income commuters pay a fee and benefit from less traffic
For-hire vehicles could pay a surcharge in high-traffic areas

Exemptions or discounts can lessen the cost of low-income people or people with disabilities
Exemptions or discounts can lessen the cost for electric vehicles or local residents
Pooled trips can be discounted

Places where congestion pricing studies have been done and implemented was shown. Best practices including building on aggressive transportation demand mangement programs, the intention to reduce congestion and/or emissions as a primary goal, providing a positive revenue stream that funds transportation options and services, and experience increased acceptance post implementation.

Overviews from outcomes and future studies underway were briefly reviewed from London, Stockholm, San Francisco and Seattle. The importance of why a congestion study is needed in the Metro region showed the growth of residents and jobs demanding more capacity on the transportation system.

The tools Metro is exploring with the study focuses on four tools with possible program designs:

- Vehicle miles traveled fee
- Cordon or Area pricing
- Corridor pricing
- Parking pricing

The study is exploring combinations of strategies to maximize goals. The study will provide assessment of overall value, not a recommendation, and recognize that outcomes will be different than other regions. The study timeline was shown, currently in strategy discussions with scenarios that will move toward refinement and testing of different scenarios. The committee is expected to see scenarios analysis later this fall.

3. **Equity and Congestion Pricing: A National Perspective (Chris Lepe)**

Chris Lepe reminded the committee of the importance with flexibility with congestion pricing and how the study can help plan for equitable pricing. An overview of racial injustices that have made the disparities between whites and non-whites so glaring today was presented. These started with displacement and genocide of Native Americans and slavery of Blacks in this country. Transportation and land use systems intentionally included discrimination against non-whites and led to great inequity in benefits of transportation investments and wealth created. Discriminatory practices in the 1960s destroyed non-white neighborhoods to make way for roads and housing. Continuing land use and transportation practices have perpetuated these inequitable policies.

High proportions of non-white people continue to have unequal access to jobs pay higher costs for transportation. Disproportionate health outcome between white people and African Americans were shown. The former approach to planning, do no harm approach, is not working to improve the situation due to the weight of historic systemic discrimination.

Transform has produced a report, Pricing Roads, Advancing Equity that helps communities advance a more equitable and affordable transportation system. Funding that traditionally comes from taxes and

other resources has been directed to roads. Focusing on road expansion favors those that can afford cars. There are opportunities to direct funds to equitable transportation plans.

Examples to improving access to opportunities, increasing affordability, and advancing community health were shown. Low-income assistance plans, express lanes, equity strategies and green zones, and first-last mile partnerships were shown. These examples and ongoing studies and pilot programs are providing strategies for advancing equity and affordability in our transportation planning.

4. **Equity and Congestion Pricing: The Local Context (Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara)**
   An overview of Portland's transportation and equity history was provided. As areas in the Portland area grew in population in white people, indigenous people in communities were displaced. Railroads, shipping lines, streetcars and automobiles in transportation periods created and enforced discrimination with laws and policies that favored white people of wealth and income. In the 1960's and 70's a focus on more livability for affordable housing and access to transportation was planned. However, the plans implemented did not reach the goals for equity or sustainable funding.

   Each phase of the region's transportation system development benefited white people and burdened other races. Inequity was built into our system. Our current transportation system is inequitable. She stated that when introducing a new of way of funding our transportation system, we need to think about how we can avoid the mistakes of the past. This study is to help identify lessons learned and how a new funding strategy –congestion pricing, can help us meet our transportation needs without increasing inequity and potentially building more equity and safety into the system a we address congestion and climate goals.

5. **Discussion: What would it take for congestion pricing to advance equity? What kind of outcomes would it need to achieve? (General Discussion)**
   Comments from the committee:
   - Lewis Lem mentioned that the longer in transportation planning the more complicated it seems, especially in current times with these issues. The significance in addressing equity is important. Two sides of pricing are how the money is spent, and where money comes from for these strategies. Separating neighborhoods between races in the Portland region continues to lead to discriminatory housing affordability and gentrification.

     Ms. Mros-O'Hara acknowledge these important issues, emphasizing the need to build in pricing concepts in designs for equity in multiple places in the system. Strategies must include identifying who pays, and how investments are used as tools to advance equity. Ms. Wieland noted that specific population details with race, income, geographical areas and more are needed to provide overall transportation costs understanding to remove displacement.

   - Glenn Koehrsen noted not seeing the relationship between tolling projects between I-5 and I-205. It was asked what the overarching goals were regarding raising money and reducing traffic. Only one reference was seen on first mile/last mile connections which are important to senior and those with disabilities. Another issue is how those without smart phones could be tracked in the system.

Chairman Kloster noted the I-5 and I-205 tolling projects would be covered further on the agenda. Ms. Mros-O'Hara noted that the goal of the study was to understand how we can use congestion pricing tools that would not negatively impact equity and safety. This study has multiple goals with the purpose to understand how to reduce congestion through smart investments. The specifics of smart phones for tracking people are not yet defined in the study. Ms. Wieland added that part of the study would include a technical paper that could develop some of these issues.

- Karen Buehrig commented on the complex and dynamic issues brought forward with this study. With the importance of access to transit in order to address equity issues, what level of analysis will be done with the study regarding our transit system? Examples were given with time on transit, trip links and others. It was also asked how the study addresses the increased cost of living in Portland and the population in the region to suburbs using current data to show access to transit with equity concerns.

  Ms. Mros-O'Hara noted the study is using the current travel demand model with assumptions, but assuming more aggressive transit service than exists today (using the 2027 Regional Transportation Plan model assumptions). The findings will consider impacts to equity focus areas that include areas with concentrations of racial minorities, low income, and limited English proficiency. TriMet will be helping to recognize more areas that need transit increases or reliability analysis. The reliability of transit and access to jobs with the equity focus areas was also noted in the study.

- Jeff Owen acknowledged the work on the study with TriMet looking forward to help finding some solutions with congestion pricings that included equity focus. It was noted the study would not make specific recommendations, but identifying types of programs that when implemented could achieve outcomes was significant.
- Eric Hesse commented on the discouragement/encouragement of uncertain power distribution with regional transit and equity. This study is an opportunity to address this and make intentional changes to disparities in the system. A link was shared from the City of Portland on policy within the N/NE Housing strategy: www.portlandoregon.gov/phb/72705
- Chris Deffebach added it would be useful to know what the effect on pricing with business/goods movement has with this study. Ms. Wieland noted the example with Stockholm in the presentation on commodity movement with increased travel time. More US cities can be included in the study on this issues, with the importance of current economic times.
- Glen Bolen noted that with the region's population moving to neighboring areas, it was hoped the modeling to the whole dynamic equity focus areas would be included.

Chairman Kloster acknowledged the comments and presentations, providing the big picture and importance of the study to policy decisions. The committee took a short 5-minute break.

6. Portland Update on Pricing for Equitable Mobility (Emma Sagor)

Emma Sagor provided information on the City of Portland Pricing Options for Equitable Mobility project. With Portland's priority addressing this issue, their Council gave direction to convene a

Community Task Force to explore if and how pricing strategies could be used in Portland to advance their values, and to center focus on transportation justice (racial equity and climate).

The project will explore a range of pricing strategies:
City implementation opportunities – parking prices, variable tolls
Longer-term, regional opportunities – Road usage/VMT based charges
New prices on commercial services and right-of-way access
Cordons and congestion zones

Noted were the types of investments and complimentary strategies

- Transit benefits (infrastructure, service, fares)
- Safety and access improvements (sidewalks, crossings)
- Transportation programs and services (incentives, education)
- Rebates and subsidies (low income exemptions, clean fuel exemptions)
- Other ideas to emerge from the Task Force members

The working draft Equitable Mobility Framework prioritizes extending benefits, reducing disparities and improving safety for Indigenous people and People of color (BIPOC communities). Leading with race, the Framework be used to consider impacts on people with disabilities, low-income individuals, multi-lingual and displaced communities. Ms. Sagor noted that more details on the pricing strategies for equitable mobility can be found on the City of Portland website.

7. **Oregon Department of Transportation Update on I-5 and I-205 Tolling Projects (Lucinda Broussard)**
Lucinda Broussard provided information on ODOT's I-5 and I-205 tolling projects. A slide was shown with the project milestones, noting that the I-205 project planned to be implemented first. August 3 marks the start of the NEPA process.

ODOT has formed an Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee that represent a variety of equity and mobility interests and perspectives in the Portland metro area and Southwest Washington. Their purpose is to:

- Advise on how tolling, in combination with other strategies, can benefit historically underserved and underrepresented populations
- Consider needs and opportunities for achieving community mobility and equity
- Provide input to the Oregon Transportation Commission and ODOT on how to implement tolling on I-5 and I-205

The advisory committee work runs alongside the NEPA process, and was noted for upcoming meetings. Ms. Broussard reported an intern has been added to the project working with PSU on equity analysis. The framework of the project will study the toll programs as a whole. When asked how congestion pricing and toll projects were applied related to traffic directed to avoid paying tolls, Ms. Broussard reported ODOT was looking at diversion issues as well. Ms. Mros-O'Hara noted that while all three projects presented had different outcomes and strategies, they were coordinated using the Regional Demand Model and shared learning from each project.

8. **Metro Regional Congestion Pricing Study (Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara and Matt Bihn)**
Ms. Mros-O'Hara noted the Regional Congestion Pricing Study scope that would explore and evaluate technical feasibility and performance of 4/5 different pricing tools. Congestion pricing scenarios will be measured against the Region's 4 Priorities (RTP 2018); congestion, safety, climate smart and equity.

Findings from the study will inform future discussions on implementing congestion pricing and policy recommendations, and outline next steps for evaluation and further study.

The performance measures with expected outcomes was noted on congestion, safety, climate smart and equity. A brief review of the different pricing scenarios was provided before turning to the tools Metro is exploring for the study.

Mr. Bihn provided an overview of the tools Metro is exploring for the different pricing scenarios. The baseline scenario works from the 2018 RTP 2027 Financially Constrained network, assumes no tolls, and estimated auto operating cost at .211 per mile. The scenarios developed were intended to help us understand how the different tools could perform given our transportation and land use system. The choices of inputs and assumptions for the scenarios will be refined as we run the model to better understand how the pricing tools could perform. If policy makers and implementers choose to move forward with a pricing project, the scenarios and their underlying assumptions will be tailored for that effort.

The different scenarios were defined.
Cordon Scenario:

- Defined as downtown Portland area
- Vehicles pay to enter; no toll to exit
- no charge for travel within define area
- Modeled as $5.63 (2010 $, or $7 (2020$) – based on high end of range of cordon prices in other cities

Area Scenario:

- Replicates Cordon Scenario geography
- Vehicle pay per-mile charge on links within the area ($5/mile)
- Charge approximates cost of driving across the area under Cordon Scenario (Burnside from Willamette to NW 23rd Ave)

VMT Scenario:

- Per-mile charge for traveling all roads in the region
- Represented as auto operating cost increase
- Run 1: OReGO gas tax replacement ($0.216/mile – 2010$)
- Run 2: $0.343/mile

Roadway Scenario:

- Per-mile toll charged on selected roads
- Run 1: all freeways in the region, equivalent to VMT2 scenario
- Additional runs will double, triple Roadway 1 charge

Parking Scenario:

- Doubled 2040 RTP FC short and long-term parking costs across the region
- Generally in more dense areas and high capacity transit station areas

Ms. Mros-O'Hara noted the study is currently making first runs with the scenarios. Elements of program design were reviewed. Ms. Mros-O'Hara noted that the scenarios discussed will be run through the model and tested for how they perform. The project team will likely test other versions of these scenarios that could cover other geographies for adding parking prices or cordons, or other streets for tolls to better understand how the tools could perform.

9. **Discussion: Questions? Where should the project team consider analyzing priced parking, cordons, corridors and/or tolls in the Portland Metro Region? (Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara)**
   Comments from the committee:
   - Karen Buehrig asked if freeway meant I-205, I-5, 217, 26 or other roadways. Mr. Bihn confirmed the freeways and highways would be included and a map designed to show all. Ms. Buehrig noted that goals to reduce congestion involved different approaches to goals, and how these goals would be used with the different scenarios. Ms. Mros-O'Hara noted that as results from the models provide effects of reaching these goals, a summary will be reported on them.
   - Jeff Owen noted another way to phrase the question on how to get to the outcomes expected was to ask what types of packages are necessary to achieve our mode-share targets that already exist in the 2018 RTP. It was noted that this could be included in the framework further into scenarios when testing mode-share goals. Ms. Mros-O'Hara noted that comparisons on each of the scenarios was planned with the study.
   - Lewis Lem asked if this was assuming changes to people's travel costs for auto/vehicle only, or did it include bike/ped mode as well. It was confirmed only vehicle mode. Asked if there could be a way to differentiate between single occupancy and multiple occupancy travel, the modeling could be a way to get to this information. It was noted that the modeling tools have not been used for congestion pricing the same way as other measures, which is part of the learning process with the study.
   - Jay Higgins asked if the model would show areas of diversion, or need to be tested additionally. It was confirmed diversion was part of the model, with the regional model showing the big picture, and deeper study on specific roadways needed for a more exact understanding of travelers diverting onto other streets. Regarding regional VMT, would a small area neighborhood concept approach be provided that shows regional travel with pricing across different areas? Chris Johnson confirmed this could be modeled with congestion pricing.
   - Chris Deffebach noted that the maps shown were helpful, but small. To clarify, in cordon areas when entering roads travelers were charged a fee, but leaving them were not charged? What were the principals when developing routes? Are there no exemptions for residency? It was confirmed that travelers entering a cordon would pay a charge, but leaving the cordon they would not pay. Routes can be taken that go through downtown Portland without fees. More specifics will be learned from the scenario comparisons.
   - Donovan Smith noted the preference policy implemented by the City of Portland in 2014 or 2015 that redlined housing areas, removing historical areas of black neighborhoods and businesses. The policy awarded points to applicants for new housing based on certain lengths of residency in zip codes. It was asked if something similar would be used in modeling congestion pricing where tolling might mitigate effects on disproportionate elements, and address restorative policy consideration.

     Chris Lepe noted this would be a good opportunity to "connect the dots" in which to provide strategies to lessen displacements. It was noted that while transportation planning worked to provide benefits to low income housing and transit, often it resulted in higher property assessments and displacement areas with non-equity considerations. More explicit and transparent planning needs to be done. It was suggested that revenues from congestion pricing strategies could help address this issue. Ms. Mros O'Hara noted that the policy strategy papers and anticipating a technical paper around equity issues would include these considerations.

- Eric Hesse asked if the pricing unit cost mentioned in the packet memo was a daily cost. This was confirmed by Mr. Bihn for both short-term and long-term parking with daily usage. The housing and transportation impacts with this study will help inform decision makers on policy for pricing and investment plans, and should include the risks to affordability and support to negate displacement in the region. It was encouraged to model single occupancy vehicle vs higher occupancy in the study.
- Glen Bolen noted that in the scenario modeling, issues that are beyond our control, such as COVID-19 and lost revenues for transportation planning, may need to be incorporated. With multiple goals for tolls and other pricing strategies, changes to potential revenues need to be transparent.

10. Schedule and Next Steps (Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara)

Ms. Mros-O'Hara noted that the project team would review the feedback given and continue to develop the analysis plans for the study. Refining scenarios and testing will continue and more off-model analysis to understand performance will be taken. The project team will return to TPAC this fall to share finding and get further input. The discussion at this workshop was valuable and appreciated. TPAC members were encouraged to contact staff for more information and with questions.

Following the workshop the links shared in the chat area were sent to committee members.

11. Adjourn

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned by Chairman Kloster at 11:45 am.
Respectfully submitted,

Marie Miller

Marie Miller, TPAC Recorder

Attachments to the Public Record, TPAC meeting, July 22, 2020

Item	Document Type	Document Date	Document Description	Document No.
1	Agenda	07/22/2020	07/22/2020 TPAC Workshop Agenda	072220T-01
2	Memo	07/22/2020	TO: TPAC and interested parties From: Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara, RCPS Project Manager RE: Regional Congestion Pricing Study – Workshop Summary	072220T-02
3	Report	July 2020	METRO REGIONAL CONGESTION PRICING STUDY: EXPLORING CONGESTION PRICING FOR THE REGION	072220T-03
4	Report	January 2019	Transform: A Report and Toolkit to Help Communities Advance a More Equitable and Affordable Transportation System, PRICING ROADS, ADVANCING EQUITY	072220T-04
5	Presentation	07/22/2020	Regional Congestion Pricing Study	072220T-05
6	Email communication	07/22/2020	Follow up links from TPAC Regional Congestion Pricing Study Workshop	072220T-06