

# Memo



**Metro**

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Date: Thursday, September 17, 2020  
To: Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation and Interested Parties  
From: Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara, Investment Areas Project Manager  
Subject: Updates on Regional Congestion Pricing Study (RCPS) led by Metro and the I-5 and I-205 Tolling Project led by ODOT

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## **Purpose**

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update and an overview of the Regional Congestion Pricing Study (RCPS) led by Metro, and provide JPACT information about RCPS coordination with the Pricing Options for Equitable Mobility (POEM) project led by the City of Portland, and the ODOT I-5 and I-205 Tolling Project led by ODOT in preparation for the September JPACT meeting. ODOT will provide an update on its I-5 and I-205 Tolling Project at the September JPACT meeting, as well.

## **RCPS Goal and Scope of Work**

The 2018 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) identified a comprehensive regional study of congestion pricing as one of the near-term next steps in implementing the plan leading to the RCPS.

### Study Goal

The Regional Congestion Pricing Study's goal is to better understand how the region could benefit from using congestion pricing to manage traffic demand and meet the region's climate goals in a manner that doesn't adversely impact and potentially improves safety and equity.

### Scope of Work

The Regional Congestion Pricing Study is a technical exploration of how different pricing tools could help achieve transportation regional priorities identified in the 2018 RTP. It will analyze different pricing concepts by testing a series of scenarios using the regional transportation model and other tools, supplemented by research, technical papers, and feedback from experts in the field. The study will test the ability of the congestion pricing tools to help our region realize the four primary transportation regional priorities: addressing climate, managing congestion, getting to Vision Zero (safety), and reducing racial and other disparities (equity).

The study primarily focuses on evaluating different pricing concepts as well as mitigation options that address equity and safety issues that may emerge or potentially be exacerbated by pricing.

Pricing concepts being assessed are:

- Cordon or Area: vehicles pay to enter and/or travel in a congested area
- Vehicle Miles Traveled/Road User Charge: a charge based on how many miles are traveled
- Roadway: a direct charge to use a specific roadway or specific roadways
- Parking: charges to park in specific areas

The Regional Congestion Pricing Study outcomes will be findings that inform future discussions around the potential to implement congestion pricing for demand management purposes in our region. Findings will inform future policy recommendations and outline next steps for further study. Metro does not anticipate significant public outreach or convening of a project stakeholder committee for the work at this time.

**Attachment 1** provides an at-a-glance summary of the work plan for the Regional Congestion Pricing Study. **Attachment 2 provides** a summary of the Regional Congestion Pricing Study and how the three different pricing efforts in our region have been coordinating while still pursuing separate outcomes.

### **RCPS Updates and Coordination with POEM and the I-5 and I-205 Tolling Project**

Since our last presentation to JPACT in April, the RCPS project team has continued technical analysis, continued engaging TPAC as our technical committee, and presented to other interested groups such as Clackamas TAC and Washington County TAC. On July 22, 2020, Metro staff and the consultant team conducted a TPAC Workshop focusing on the project context, performance measures, and model scenarios designed to test the congestion pricing tools. In addition, staff have continued to meet regularly with the POEM and I-5 and I-205 Tolling Project teams to share information.

### **Next Steps**

Metro RCPS staff will continue to coordinate with the City of Portland POEM and the ODOT I-5 and I-205 Tolling project staff. Staff will also continue to engage equity experts for input on project themes such as performance measures and methods such as Metro's Committee on Racial Equity (CORE), ODOT's Equitable Mobility Action Committee (EMAC), and a subcommittee of POEM's task force.

A second TPAC Workshop will occur in October 2020 to review early findings and receive regional input. Based on TPAC input, the team will continue to test scenarios and summarize findings.

This winter, Metro staff will present findings and draft summaries to TPAC, JPACT, and Metro Council. These will demonstrate what we've learned about different congestion pricing tools' ability to help us meet our goals and areas that will likely need further study. Metro staff will then engage a panel of Congestion Pricing Experts for feedback on findings based on their knowledge and experience of how pricing has performed elsewhere. JPACT and Metro Council will be invited to attend the panel discussion.

### **Attachments**

- **Attachment 1:** At-a-Glance Work Plan for the Regional Congestion Pricing Study
- **Attachment 2:** Regional Congestion Pricing Study Project Summary

