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## What MCAT supports in a tolling program:

MCAT recognizes that tolling is only one part of a complex system of transportation funding. With a specific focus on tolling, these are principles that will contribute to an improved and cleaner transportation system.

1. **Tolling must reduce vehicle-miles-traveled (VMT).** Meeting or exceeding our state climate goals for reduction of greenhouse pollution must be a primary goal of tolling.
2. **Congestion pricing is the most effective form of tolling to accomplish these goals.** For example, driving behavior patterns would be improved by a larger toll at the highest volume times and a smaller toll or no toll during low volume times. This encourages shifting time of travel for those who can, and shifting mode of travel to carpooling, transit or active transportation for others.
3. **Broaden investments for alternatives to cars to address climate, congestion and equity.** While tolling will help finance large projects (such as the I-5 Bridge Replacement across the Columbia River) and will alleviate fiscal deficits of the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), there must be an equal focus on the twin goals of improving climate and increasing equity. Thus, the tolling income should support frequent Vancouver to Portland bus service and the extended light-rail line across the bridge. We applaud ODOT's stated intention to focus on these climate and equity goals and we look forward to their effective implementation.
4. **A cost abatement, i.e. low-income discount, program must be a central feature of the tolling program to avoid it acting as a regressive tax.** This should include consideration of need and income such as for low-income people with disabilities or those with specific work requirements that necessitate using a vehicle and should provide upfront cost offsets rather than later reimbursements. This program can be guided by the Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee's July 2022 Recommendations to the Oregon Transportation Commission (see link below).
5. **A tolling program must be designed as an integral part of a robust system of public transit and active transportation across our region.** This is how we will help to meet our climate goals, alleviate highway congestion, reduce commuting time, improve equity and improve health of communities adjacent to highways. This should include incentives for businesses to place jobs near housing to reduce commuting distances and to promote carpooling, as well as efforts to increase safety and attractiveness of public transit so as to augment ridership.
6. **A tolling program should minimize diversion to local streets.** This is necessary to avoid worsening traffic injuries and deaths and avoid worsening noise and pollution in affected neighborhoods. Minimizing diversion requires, at an early stage, bolstering other modes of travel (instead of private vehicles), such as transit, micromobility and active transportation.
7. **A tolling program must be transparent and verifiable.** Publicly available metrics must be established at the beginning of the program and reported regularly.
8. **Tolls should be instituted simultaneously across both I-5 and I-205 Columbia River bridges.** This will avoid predicted massive shifts of traffic from tolled to untolled roads with worsening travel times, increased carbon emissions and vehicular pollution.

9. **Implementation of tolling across the I-5 and I-205 Columbia River bridges should begin soon.** This is so that accurate traffic volumes over the I-5 bridge will determine appropriate size of the I-5 bridge replacement, rather than overbuilding with resultant induced demand of traffic flow causing worsening of GHG emissions.
10. **It is necessary to revise the State Highway Fund (ORS 366.505),** to allow more flexible use of tolling and other road user fees in support of multimodal transportation.

## References

1. **ODOT pages on tolling:** <https://www.oregon.gov/odot/tolling/Pages/About.aspx>
2. **US DOT FHA on Congestion Pricing:**  
<https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/congestionpricing/sec2.htm>
3. **Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee Recommendations to the OTC:**  
<https://www.oregon.gov/odot/tolling/Documents/EMAC%20Recommendations%20to%20Oregon%20Transportation%20Commission.pdf>
4. **Just Solutions Collective: The Road to Equity:** <https://justsolutionscollective.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/The-Road-to-Equity-Concerns-and-Analysis-of-RUC-Pricing-Mechanisms.pdf>
5. **Transportation for America: Gas Tax Alternatives:** <https://t4america.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Gas-tax-alternatives-policy-evaluation-framework-final.pdf>
6. <https://www.koin.com/news/oregon/odot-asks-for-feedback-on-3-potential-tolling-options-on-i-5-i-205/>
7. <https://www.kgw.com/article/news/politics/oregon-governor-kotek-pauses-tolling/283-2812876e-2a6b-4260-8c91-388425773762>
8. <https://oeconline.org/why-does-congestion-pricing-matter/>
9. <https://oeconline.org/tolling-in-oregon/>
10. <https://www.ucsusa.org/resources/low-and-zero-emissions-zones#read-online-content>