



MEMORANDUM

TO: Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors
FROM: Matt Ransom, Executive Director 
DATE: December 22, 2017
SUBJECT: **Portland Metro Area Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis – Guest Presentation**

AT A GLANCE

Oregon Department of Transportation project staff will present a detailed briefing regarding the Portland Metro Area Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis at the January 2, 2018 RTC Board meeting.

BACKGROUND

In July 2017, the Oregon State Legislature passed a \$5.3 billion transportation package that included tax increases to fund major interstate expansion projects and authorized a Traffic Congestion Relief Program. The stated purpose of the Traffic Congestion Relief Program (tolling) is to reduce traffic congestion. The legislation directs the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) to seek Federal approval to implement Value Pricing (tolling) on Interstate 5 and Interstate 205, from the Washington state line south to where these roadways intersect. Specific study of Value Pricing concepts is now underway as part of the Portland Metro Area Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis (Feasibility Analysis). That Feasibility Analysis is being carried out by the Oregon Department of Transportation, as authorized by the OTC.

The OTC established a Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) to advise them regarding the type, location, and potential mitigation strategies for value pricing. The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has enlisted a consultant team to facilitate the Feasibility Analysis process and provide technical expertise and analysis to inform the PAC as they develop their recommendation. The PAC is a regional committee and includes three representatives from government entities in Washington State. Those representatives include: Mayor (*elect*) Anne McEnery-Ogle, City of Vancouver; Councilor Eileen Quiring, Clark County; and Kris Strickler, Regional Administrator for Washington State Department of Transportation.

NEXT STEPS

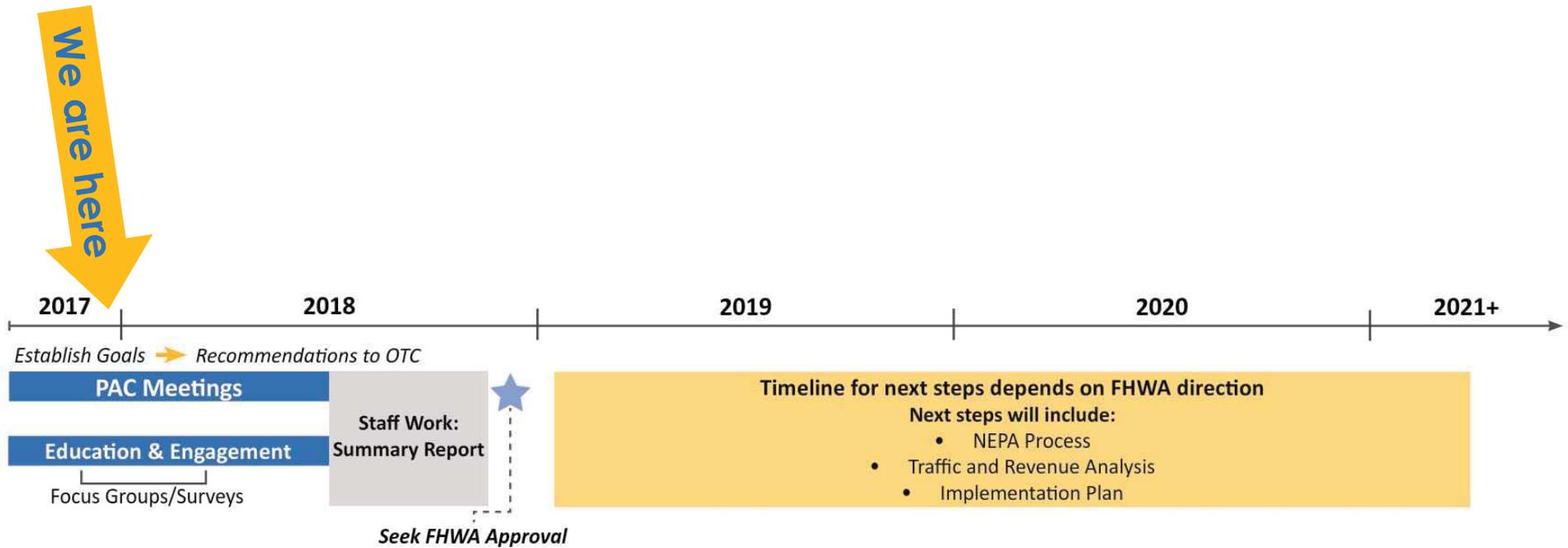
RTC staff will continue to engage in the technical review committee work already underway. Further, RTC staff will schedule RTC Board briefings on policy and substantive issues that could affect the RTC region’s regional transportation system performance.

It is planned that the PAC recommendation(s) will be shared with the RTC Board and that RTC staff will present recommendations for the Board’s consideration for formal input and comment; schedule estimate: May/June 2018 (*subject to ODOT’s study schedule*).

Attachments: Portland Metro Area Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis - SCHEDULE (*as of December 2017*)

Portland Metro Area Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis – FACT SHEET

Value pricing timeline





Portland Metro Area Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis

FACT SHEET

We have a congestion problem

It's not your imagination — more people and merchandise are sitting in Portland-area traffic longer. Buses, bicycles and pedestrians also are affected as the system slows. Regional growth has strained the Portland metro area's six major highways — including I-5 and I-205, the primary north-south routes for the state. Congestion and delays are increasing throughout all hours of the day creating unpredictability, costing people and businesses, and increasing crashes.

Not one single solution

In 2017, the Oregon Legislature authorized funding to substantially improve area highways, transit, biking and walking facilities, and use technology to make the system work better. The Legislature also directed the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) to seek federal approval to implement value pricing on I-5 and I-205 to address the congestion problem.

What is value pricing?

Pricing strategies have been used successfully for years by utilities, sporting events and movie theaters. The cost is determined by how many users want to use a limited service.

Value pricing is a proven tool resulting in faster, more reliable and predictable trips. It has been implemented with success in the United States and around the world.

Value pricing uses fees or tolls to manage congestion. During more congested times of the

day a higher fee is charged, encouraging some drivers to consider other travel options such as alternate routes, carpools, transit or travel at less congested times. This improves mobility for all drivers who pay the fee, and potentially for the entire system. Fees are collected electronically so drivers do not have to stop at toll booths.

The main types of value pricing strategies that will be considered include:

- **Priced lanes**, which give drivers a choice to pay to use the lane to save time or to use the adjacent, unpriced lanes.
- **Priced roadways**, a concept under which all lanes would be priced.

Both types of value pricing tools could be applied to the entire highway or to specific highway segments, which could include bridges.

Implementation of priced lanes in the Portland metro area requires a decision about whether to construct new lanes or convert general travel lanes.

+30,761
MORE PEOPLE

Portland area
population growth
2014 - 2015

+13.6%
MORE CONGESTION

Hours of weekday congestion
in the Portland area
2013 - 2015

+22.6%
MORE TRAFFIC DELAYS

In the Portland
metro region
2013 - 2015

BENEFITS OF VALUE PRICING

FOR SAFETY

Reducing congestion, particularly at bottlenecks, smooths and steadies traffic flow, and reduces the opportunity for rear-end crashes.

FOR COMMUTERS

Improvement in travel time reliability and efficiency for priced lane users.

FOR FREIGHT

Congestion relief through value pricing allows businesses to reduce travel time which saves costs and reduces truck trips.

Value pricing: A tool to reduce congestion in the Portland metro area

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is conducting a feasibility analysis to determine if value pricing could improve mobility by allowing people to choose to pay a fee to get a more reliable and predictable trip on I-5 or I-205 during peak travel times. Those who do not want to pay a fee may choose to travel during off-peak hours and pay a lower fee, or choose other modes of transportation. Some may not make the trip at all. There are many ways value pricing could be applied.

The Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) has directed a public input process and technical analysis of potential value pricing options.

Any proposal will reflect our values

To make sure that any proposal reflects our values around fairness and equity, OTC created a Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) so diverse perspectives can inform a final proposal. The PAC will consider

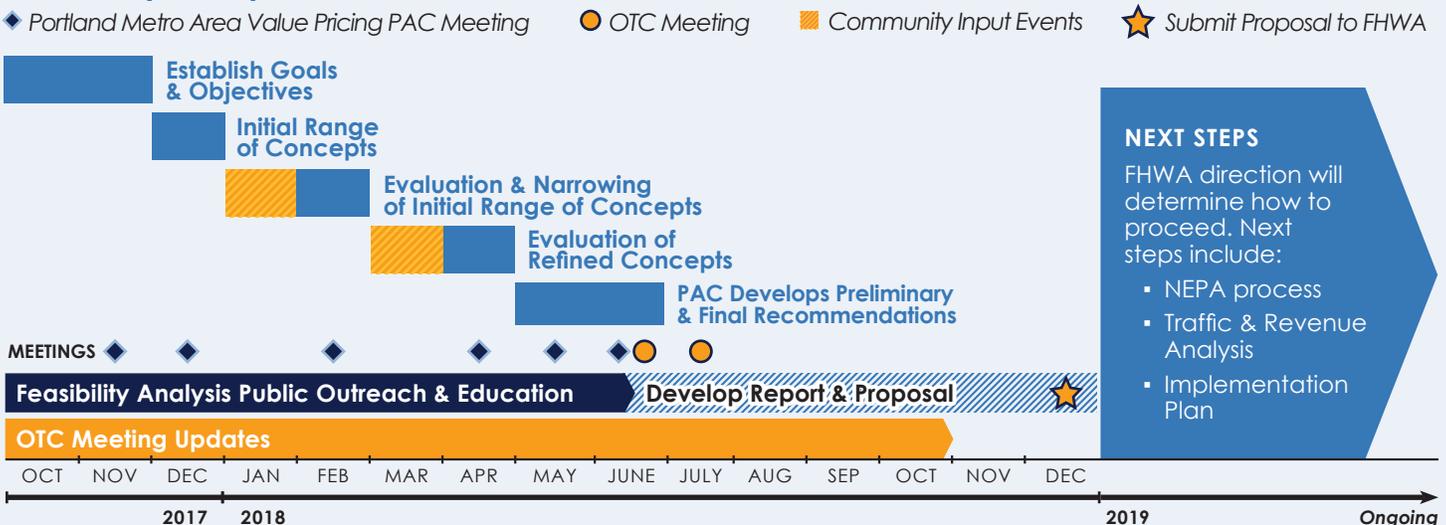
the benefits to congested corridors and effects to travelers and adjacent neighborhoods. The PAC will recommend to the OTC the best location and type of value pricing for the region. The OTC is the tolling authority in the state and will submit its proposal to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) by the end of December 2018. Next steps include additional public outreach; environmental, traffic, and revenue analysis; and a tolling agreement.

Make your voice heard

Public review and input on value pricing is essential to help fully evaluate value pricing to determine how best to implement it.

- **Ask a question or provide a comment:**
ValuePricingInfo@odot.state.or.us
- **Provide input to the Policy Advisory Committee:**
ValuePricingPAC@odot.state.or.us
- **Learn more:**
www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Pages/Value-Pricing.aspx

Feasibility Analysis Schedule



For Americans with Disabilities Act or Civil Rights Title VI accommodations, translation/interpretation services, or more information call 503-731-4128, TTY (800) 735-2900 or Oregon Relay Service 7-1-1.