

August 16, 2018, John Day, Oregon

The Oregon Transportation Commission held its August meeting on the 16th in scenic John Day at an airport facility funded in part by the Connect Oregon program.

Canyon Creek Fire Response and Recovery Tour



The day started with a tour of sections of US 395 south of John Day, impacted by the Canyon Creek Complex fire in 2015. The Commission received a briefing on ODOT's fire response during and immediately after the Canyon Creek fire. They also viewed a project currently underway in Canyon Creek to address flooding and visited an emergency culvert replacement put in place on Vance Creek in the immediate aftermath of the fire to deal with anticipated debris flows from denuded slopes.

Tolling

The main item of the day was tolling. The Commission received the official [recommendation of the Portland Metro Area Value Pricing Policy Advisory Committee](#) and provided feedback to ODOT Region 1 staff. The OTC accepted the advisory committee's recommendations to seek authority from FHWA to toll I-5 from Multnomah Boulevard to Going Street and I-205 at or near the Abernethy Bridge in order to manage congestion and help fund bottleneck relief projects. ODOT will present this application to FHWA for the OTC's approval on November 16 to meet the statutory deadline to submit it by December 31, 2018.

Consistent with the advisory committee's recommendation to analyze the benefits and impacts of tolling on other roadways, the OTC also provided direction to develop a long-term study of congestion pricing on all Portland metro area freeways including Interstate 84, Interstate 405, U.S. 26 and Oregon 217. ODOT will develop an approach for implementation, including policy review, potential geographic scope, timing, estimates of resource needs, and OTC oversight. ODOT will provide a draft proposal for OTC discussion in November and present a refined proposal for OTC approval before the end of January 2019.

For more on the Commission's direction, see [ODOT's press release](#).

Having provided direction on where to toll, the Commission turned to a [discussion of tolling policy](#). ODOT's tolling program manager, Russ Casler, presented the tolling policy framework provided by federal law, the Oregon Constitution, Oregon Revised Statute, Oregon Administrative Rules, and the Oregon Transportation Plan. Under state law, the OTC is the state's toll authority, with responsibility to designate tollways, set tolling policy, and determine toll rates. Casler walked the Commission through four areas where they will need to set policy as they implement tolling:

- Setting toll rates

- Vehicle class considerations and exemptions
- Equity and mitigation
- Enforcement

Other Activities

The Commission also took up a number of other actions. The Commission:

- Adopted an amendment to the Oregon Transportation Plan that incorporates the Statewide Transportation Strategy: A 2050 Vision for Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction into statewide policy.
- Engaged in discussions with members of the Greater Eastern Oregon and Northeast Oregon Regional Solutions Teams as well as with the South East Area Commission on Transportation.
- Received the monthly update on HB 2017 implementation.