



Staff Report – Meeting Item

I-205 Toll Project Participation

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INTRODUCTION: Oregon House Bill 2017 directed the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) to seek approval from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to develop a congestion relief fund and implement tolling (also referred to as value pricing or congestion pricing) on the Interstate 5 (I-5) and Interstate 205 (I-205) corridors to reduce traffic congestion in the Portland metro area.

In 2018, the OTC and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) recommended implementing tolls on all lanes of I-205 on or near the Abernethy Bridge as a potential funding strategy and for congestion management. The purpose of the I-205 Toll Project is to manage congestion on I-205 between Stafford Road and Oregon Route 213 (OR 213) and raise revenue to fund congestion relief projects through the application of variable-rate tolls. In January 2019, FHWA provided guidance to move into the next phase of evaluation and study.

The Project is entering the environmental review phase. FHWA and ODOT are in the process of preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) consistent with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations for a proposed tolling project on I-205 and they will be requesting input and review from area agencies and Tribes. Agency, Tribal, and public input will help to finalize the range of alternatives and the areas of concern to be studied in the EA. Resources potentially affected during construction or operation include traffic, air quality, economics, energy, environmental justice populations, noise, social and community resources, visual quality, and others.

The attached letter dated August 3, 2020 from FHWA to Council Member Smith invites the City of Camas to be a "Participating Agency" in the EA process. Participating Agencies are responsible for identifying issues of concern regarding the Project's potential environmental, social, or economic impacts that could substantially delay or prevent an agency from granting a permit or other approval that is needed for the Project. The intent is to ensure that agencies are fully engaged in the development of the Project and that the decisions regarding alternatives are evaluated in detail.

Staff has been following the Toll Project in general and has reviewed the attached information provided with the August 3 letter. The proposed alternatives are south on I-205 over 14 miles

from the Columbia River and out of the City's jurisdictional authority (i.e. Camas has no permit authority). Additionally, the Regional Transportation Council and Clark County will both be Participating Agencies. For these reasons, staff does not believe we can add much value to the EA process. However, we will continue coordinating and tracking the project and assisting ODOT to keep Camas residents updated. Also, the City is still able to submit comments throughout the process and citizens are also still able to comment and participate.

Action Requested: Staff recommends the City Council discuss the information provided and provide staff with direction on the level of participation in the I-205 Toll Project.