

Fair and Equitable Tolling Study

Goal: A study to understand the financial and other impacts of tolling, and barriers to the benefits of tolling on frontline communities.

Study scope

- **Current state of tolling in Washington.** Who uses tolled lanes and facilities? Where and when are they traveling? What is their race and socio-economic status? Who pays using what methods? How are tolling revenues currently used?
- **Impacts analysis.** What are the burdens and impacts of tolling?
- **Feasibility.** Financial analysis. What are existing comparable mitigation and low-income programs at other DOTs and transit agencies? (i.e., low-income eligibility, rates, refunds, outreach, and more)
- **Next steps.** Recommendations to address barriers, mitigate impacts, improve access, and create equitable use of revenue

Study outline

Lead. WSDOT, WSTC, DOL, and a consultant with experience in racial and social equity analysis

Outreach. Agencies, stakeholders (including local neighborhoods, low-income users and potential users, those with limited English proficiency, those with visual impairments and other disabilities, immigrants and refugees)

Timing. 6-12 months. Report back during next session in 2020

Impacts to analyze

- **Financial impacts (toll and enforcement fines)** on low-income individuals including enforcement fines. Disparities between cash and Good2Go users. Barriers to Good2Go adoption (i.e., language, cultural, digital, lack of outreach, privacy/resident status, geographic)
- **Time impacts** on those who cannot afford to use toll lanes or facilities and who are stuck in traffic or use longer routes
- **Barriers to use.** Who does not benefit from the lanes because they do not understand how to use them?
- **Pollution and safety impacts** from diversion. When vehicles use local routes to avoid tolls, do they increase pollutants and traffic speeding in vulnerable neighborhoods?
- **Current outreach processes.** Who is engaging in outreach? How do we do targeted outreach and who can do that outreach?
- **Facility disparities.** Are different facilities or types of facilities more burdensome than others?
- **Potential costs** to implement recommendations
- **Possible impacts** to High-Occupancy Toll (HOT) or Express Toll Lane (ETL) performance

Study recommendations

- Low-income toll rates or other subsidy for low-income users
- Improved equitable outreach process and other improvements to information sharing
- Enforcement and citations process
- Possible funding sources for subsidies (amount and from where)
- Further data needed
- Recommendations for a pilot or program
- Improved governance/stakeholder considerations
- Use of tolling revenue