Low-Income Toll Program Study for I-405 & SR 167 Express Toll Lanes

May 2021 Washington State Commission Presentation

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May 18th, 2021
Agenda

• High level review of study so far
• Results of quantitative evaluation of final two discount options
• Draft recommendations
• Next steps for Commission
• High level review of study so far
  • Results of quantitative evaluation of final two discount options
  • Draft recommendations
  • Next steps for Commission
• This study evaluates “discounted tolls and other similar programs for low-income drivers” on the I-405 and SR 167 corridors.

• Considers the benefits and detriments of such programs to low-income drivers, other corridors users, other local residents, and the potential implementing agencies of such a program.

• **Value statement:** This study defines the purpose of this program as helping low-income users of the corridor gain more benefit (time savings and reliability) from having the express toll lanes (ETLs) infrastructure available to them.
• Overall, we recommend that the Legislature authorize and fund steps toward creating a low-income tolling program for the I-405 / SR 167 Express Toll Lanes (ETL) corridor

• Advance both discount toll program options for further assessment

• Use Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) eligibility system for enrollment

• Adopt standard program elements for accessibility and feedback

• Recommended next steps:
  • Further outreach
  • Launch pilot program by 2024-2025
  • Take other steps to make transportation system more equitable
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislatively Required Study Elements</th>
<th>Study Metrics Assessment &amp; Further Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The benefits, requirements, and any</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>potential detriments to the users of a</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>program</strong></td>
<td><strong>User Benefit</strong>: assessment of potential user benefits from program.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Final report identifies and recommends additional engagement opportunities.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The most cost-effective way to implement a</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>program given existing financial commitments, shared cost requirements across facilities, and technical requirements to execute and maintain a program</strong></td>
<td><strong>Program Cost</strong>: assessment of program implementation and operations costs.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Final report recommends enrollment mechanism and pilot phasing to minimize costs.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The implications of a program for tolling policies, revenues, costs, operations, and enforcement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Operational Impact</strong>: assessment of impacts on toll rates, travel time and other operational impacts.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Program Costs</strong>: assessment of program implementation and operations costs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Any implications to tolled facilities based on the type of tolling implemented on a particular facility.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Other Feasibility</strong>: includes assessment of program sustainability and stakeholder understanding.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Assessment of final two options included impacts on shared system costs, and capacity to expand program to other facilities.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
National scan – 2 program options

Research and team brainstorming – 19 program options

Stakeholder workshops with WSDOT, DSHS, KC Metro, etc.

5 best options
(2 simplified options from national scan, 3 options from research/brainstorming)

Metric-based scoring of options

Survey of corridor users

2 options selected for detailed quantitative evaluation
Recommendations

Standard Program Components

The Commission selected the following low-income program components for assessment with both selected toll discount program options.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Program Components for Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide a <strong>free Good To Go! pass</strong> to program users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program to have an <strong>advisory panel</strong>, including low-income users of the program, that is diverse with regard to race, geography of residence, age and gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program documentation to be available in all primary languages for the region, with live <strong>translation</strong> available for other languages used in region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program information to be shown in <strong>visual formats</strong> as much as possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The entire enrollment process (physical and remote) to be <strong>accommodating for users with disabilities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical program enrollment locations to be broadly <strong>geographically accessible</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• The Commission selected two discount toll options for the quantitative evaluation paired with the standard program components:

  • **Toll credit equal to the tolls paid by the average ETL user**
    • Highest-scoring option via the scoring metrics
    • Very flexible: allows users choice of whether they would use program for occasional high-cost trips, or a larger number of low-cost trips

  • **10 free ETL trips per month**
    • Most-preferred option in both surveys
    • Program would encourage use of ETLs for infrequent high-value trips (medical, childcare, late to work, etc.)
    • The University of Washington study found that only 3.3% of ETL users used the ETLs more than 10 times per month

A powerful feature of both is that the users can make the decision of when the ETLs are most valuable for them – they know their own lives and needs best
Comparison of score results and survey results for each discount toll option

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric Type:</th>
<th>Metric Weight:</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Score Level</th>
<th>Survey Preference</th>
<th>User Benefit</th>
<th>Operational Impact</th>
<th>Other Feasibility</th>
<th>Program Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Program Type</td>
<td>Benefit Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>discount</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fixed discount</td>
<td>Up to $0.50 per trip</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Up to $2.00 per trip</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Up to $5.00 per trip</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fixed toll</td>
<td>50% of avg.</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>credit</td>
<td>100% of avg.</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>150% of avg.</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fixed number</td>
<td>3 per month</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of free toll</td>
<td>10 per month</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>trips</td>
<td>20 per month</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>25% lower</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>maximum toll</td>
<td>50% lower</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>75% lower</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Large</td>
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<td>Medium</td>
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<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
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<tr>
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<td>67%</td>
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<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>150% of avg.</td>
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<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed number of free toll trips</td>
<td>3 per month</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 per month</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 per month</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower maximum toll</td>
<td>25% lower</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50% lower</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75% lower</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Metric: Score Type
- Metric Weight: Score Level
- Comparison results for each discount toll option.
Agenda

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• Draft recommendations
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Analysis Approach – Travel Behavior Analysis

— Used 200% of Federal Poverty Level as low-income threshold for purposes of the travel behavior analysis

— Identified impacts to I-405 / SR 167 Express Toll Lane (ETL) usage, tolls, and travel speeds
  — Paired assessment of existing input data with results of modeling completed for this study
  — Modeled baseline and future year performance of I-405 / SR 167 ETL corridor

— Specific travel behavior topics assessed included:
  — How low-income drivers would use the corridor if all ETL travel was free
  — Travel frequency in the corridor by low-income drivers with and without a low-income toll program
Assessment of Geography & Eligible Users

Percent Share of Low-Income Households by Census Tract (2019)

- Demonstrating density of “low-income” households
- Darker green = census tract has higher share of Low-Income Households

Legend
- Census Tract Boundaries
- Water Bodies
- Major Roadways
- County Boundaries
- Low-Income Share
  - 0.00 to 0.10
  - 0.10 to 0.15
  - 0.15 to 0.25
  - 0.25 to 0.35
  - 0.35 to 0.50
  - 0.50 to 1.00

Legend Key:
- 0 to 5 miles
- 5 to 10 miles
- 10 to 15 miles
Assessment of Geography & Eligible Users

Percent Share of Low-Income Trips on I-405 / SR 167 Express Toll Lanes by Census Tract (2025)

- Demonstrating what percentage of trips from each census tract would use the express toll lane system
- Darker green = larger portion of trips from that census tract use the express toll lanes
Assessment of Geography & Eligible Users

Percent Share of Low-Income Toll-free Trips on I-405 / SR 167 Express Toll Lanes by Census Tract (2025)

• Demonstrating what percentage of trips from each census tract would utilize the express toll lane system if it were toll-free to them
• Darker green = larger portion of trips from that census tract that would use the express lanes
In 2018, almost 92 percent of registered customers made less than 40 trips per year and accounted for 23.5 percent of the total trips.

Only 0.1 percent of the registered customers were in the high frequency category, who made over 600 trips per year.

Data source: September 2019 University of Washington report titled “I-405 Express Toll Lanes – Usage, Benefits and Equity (1)
General Assumptions for Traffic & Revenue Impact Assessment

Program Operations Assumptions
- A trip is assumed to be within an individual facility
- No rollover of unused trips or toll credits per month to the next month
- Assumed 10 free trips for Option 1 / $48 credit per month for Option 2

Participant ETL Use Assumptions
- No mode shift from transit to auto

ETL Performance Assumptions
- A small amount of induced low-income traffic to the ETLs due to the discount programs
- Potential higher tolls in peak periods, peak directions due to more low income (toll free) traffic
Traffic & Revenue Impact Assessment

• Each option was assessed for the magnitude of expected impacts on transactions, tolls, and ETL performance by segment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>BASE CASE (in millions)</th>
<th>Toll Paying Transactions</th>
<th>Toll Free Transactions</th>
<th>Total Transactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 Free ETL trips per month</td>
<td>Toll Credit ($48 per month) - ONLY 41-120 trips per year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTL</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>-4%</td>
<td>-10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTB</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>-4%</td>
<td>-11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR 167</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>-4%</td>
<td>-11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Facilities Total</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>-4%</td>
<td>-11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTL</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTB</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR 167</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Facilities Total</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTL</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTB</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR 167</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Facilities Total</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Traffic & Revenue Impact Assessment

- During the off peak, overnight and weekend time frames, assumed no operational impacts, as there is ample capacity available.
- In shoulder hours around the peak periods, it is assumed no operational impacts as toll rates can be used to control operational performance.
- In peak period, peak direction, we expect the average toll may increase slightly, and some increase in operational impacts at times when the facilities are at their maximum tolls.

### Gross Potential Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>BASE CASE (in millions)</th>
<th>10 Free ETL trips per month</th>
<th>Toll Credit ($48 per month) - ONLY 41-120 trips per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BTL</td>
<td>$37.8</td>
<td>Low: -2% Medium: -6% High: -13%</td>
<td>Low: 0% Medium: -3% High: -8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTB</td>
<td>$29.6</td>
<td>Low: -1% Medium: -4% High: -11%</td>
<td>Low: 0% Medium: -3% High: -10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR 167</td>
<td>$19.8</td>
<td>Low: -2% Medium: -7% High: -15%</td>
<td>Low: -1% Medium: -4% High: -10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Facilities Total</td>
<td>$87.2</td>
<td>Low: -2% Medium: -6% High: -13%</td>
<td>Low: 0% Medium: -3% High: -9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adjusted Gross Toll Revenue Analysis

— After accounting for leakage and fees the variance in adjusted gross toll revenue compared to the baseline is similar to revenue potential

— Reduced leakage attributed to unidentifiable vehicle owner and unpaid toll bills as the program leads to an increase in the Good To Go! Transponder Accounts

— Slight increase in overall HOV Carpool violation leakage rates from 3.8% to 4% to account for increase in declarable Flex Pass

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Base Case (2025$ millions)</th>
<th>10 Free ETL trips per month</th>
<th>Toll Credit ($48 per month)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue Potential</td>
<td>$87.2</td>
<td>-2% -6% -13%</td>
<td>0% -3% -9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTL</td>
<td>$34.7</td>
<td>-2% -6% -14%</td>
<td>0% -3% -9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTB</td>
<td>$26.6</td>
<td>-1% -5% -11%</td>
<td>-1% -4% -10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR 167</td>
<td>$18.0</td>
<td>-2% -7% -15%</td>
<td>-1% -4% -10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted Rev. Total</td>
<td>$79.3</td>
<td>-2% -6% -13%</td>
<td>0% -3% -9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preliminary Net Revenue Analysis – Program Implementation

**Note: Cost estimates are preliminary pending further WSDOT review**

Based on the assumed timing of program implementation the following initial start-up costs are anticipated for both options.

- **Back-office system (BOS) setup: $1-$3 million**
  - Assumed integration with Phase 2 BOS implementation

- **DSHS lookup tool integration: $0.5-$2 million**
  - Assumed system enhancement costs for both WSDOT and DSHS to allow for integration

- **Customer service center training (language/translation services): $0-$2 million**
  - Depends whether identified translation service requirements could already be addressed by existing staff or require additional recruitment and outreach

- **Marketing and program promotion: $0.5-$1.5 million**
  - Depends on what could be integrated into DSHS outreach and other existing programs focused on low-income communities along the I-405/SR 167 corridor

- **Initial Flex Pass transponder distribution: $0.1-$0.8 million**
  - Varies from the low to high case based on assumed initial program participation
Preliminary Net Revenue Analysis – Ongoing Operations

Note: Cost estimates are preliminary pending further WSDOT review

Based on the assumed timing of program implementation the following on-going operations costs are anticipated for both options:

- **Customer service center incremental time for operations and account administrative expenses**: $0-$0.2 million per year
  - Depends on complexity of eligibility lookup tool and account set-up the incremental cost for customer service center operations could be marginal

- **WSDOT staff auditing and oversight**: $0.3-$0.6 million per year
  - Based on 1.5-4 FTEs that will be dependent on program participation levels and selected scenario and would include:
    - accounting auditing support,
    - data collection and analysis,
    - vendor oversight and program management,
    - marketing,
    - incremental transponder inventory management, and
    - coordination with other agencies

- **Annual Flex Pass transponder distribution**: $0.01-$0.2 million
  - Varies from the low to high case based on assumed initial program participation
Preliminary Net Revenue Analysis - Cost Allocation

— Overall state costs increases but allocation decreases to I-405 / SR 167

Baseline
- TNB 19%
- SR 520 33%
- SR 99 19%
- RTB 8%
- SR 167 6%
- BTL 15%
- I-405 Total $3.1 M (29%)

Medium
- TNB 19%
- SR 520 33%
- SR 99 19%
- RTB 8%
- SR 167 6%
- BTL 15%
- I-405 Total $3.1 M (28%)

High
- TNB 20%
- SR 520 34%
- SR 99 19%
- RTB 7%
- SR 167 5%
- BTL 14%
- I-405 Total $2.9 M (27%)

— Back-office systems costs are maintained but allocation increases to I-405 / SR 167

Baseline
- TNB 13%
- SR 520 29%
- SR 99 17%
- RTB 13%
- SR 167 9%
- BTL 20%
- I-405 Total $1.24 M (41.3%)

Medium
- TNB 13%
- SR 520 29%
- SR 99 17%
- RTB 13%
- SR 167 9%
- BTL 20%
- I-405 Total $1.25 M (41.6%)

High
- TNB 13%
- SR 520 29%
- SR 99 17%
- RTB 13%
- SR 167 9%
- BTL 20%
- I-405 Total $1.26 M (42.0%)
Preliminary Net Revenue Analysis - Results

— Both options result in reduced net revenues for I-405 / SR 167 ETLs
  • Increased toll collection costs are greater than projected increases to gross toll revenues
    — Reductions in costs, including credit card fees and toll bill processing, based on the lower toll transactions, is not anticipated to offset the ongoing cost of program oversight and operations
  • Fixed costs including toll equipment and roadway maintenance are assumed to be unchanged

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Base Case (2025$ millions)</th>
<th>Net Toll Revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted Revenue</td>
<td>$79.3</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTL</td>
<td>$24.0</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTB</td>
<td>$18.9</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR 167</td>
<td>$12.8</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Revenue Total</td>
<td>$55.7</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preliminary Net Revenue Analysis - Results

- Reductions in net revenue from the Base Case are similar for both scenario options with participation being a key variable assumption in overall impact to net revenue.

- The slightly higher net revenue variance in the toll credit scenario is primarily attributed to the variance in initial gross toll revenue potential.
Preliminary Net Revenue Analysis - Other Facilities

— The primary impact of the low-income program on other facilities is attributed to increases in system costs combined with reduced allocation of costs to I-405 / SR 167 ETLs

— If the program is expanded to include other facilities, those with lower toll rates, such as SR 99 tunnel, would see greater impacts on net toll revenues than facilities with higher toll rates such as the SR 520 bridge and the Tacoma Narrows Bridge

— Impacts on net toll revenues would result from changes in the expected proportion of allocated system costs for each facility

— I-405 / SR 167 ETLs would likely have the largest impact on changes in the distribution of system cost between facilities

— Results from expected largest gross toll revenue impacts with the highest peak hour rates and has the largest expected base of potential eligible users
• High level review of study so far
• Results of quantitative evaluation of final two discount options
• Draft recommendations
• Next steps for Commission
• Overall, **we recommend that the Legislature authorize and fund steps toward creating a low-income tolling program on the I-405 / SR 167 ETL Corridor**

  • ETLs provide significant value to users of the corridor by providing a travel choice alternative that allows them to make a predictable and quicker trip should they need it at the moment
  
  • We believe sharing this benefit more broadly is important and valuable, which drives the rest of our recommendations

• Stakeholders also emphasized:

  • Equity is the defining economic issue of this generation, needing careful and sustained attention, with a focus on the broader societal context
  
  • This proposed program only addresses a small piece of the grand equity puzzle in Washington State, but that is still a worthwhile and valuable piece to address
• **Recommendation: Advance both** discount toll program options for further assessment

• We believe both program options are feasible to implement, valuable to users, and similarly challenging from a cost and operational perspective

• Both options scored highly in providing benefits to program users, being relatively easy to implement, being relatively low-cost to implementing agencies, and being simple to understand and use for program users

• Both options behave relatively similarly
  • Not anticipated to result in concerns on meeting financial commitments
  • Some additional pressure on meeting existing facility performance requirements in the peak periods
  • Outcomes very dependent on enrollment

• Differences in outcomes for each option minor but driven by enrollment dynamics, specifics of program features, and eventual benefit level.
Recommendation: Program implementation should include the following elements to support a cost effective, accessible, and informed low-income discount program

- Use existing Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) system to verify user eligibility and for enrollment
  - Value: cost effectiveness and program access
- Provide for the entire enrollment process (physical and remote) to be accommodating for users with disabilities
  - Value: program access
- Physical program enrollment locations (as available) being broadly geographically accessible
  - Value: program access
Recommendation: Program implementation should include the following elements to support a cost effective, accessible, and informed low-income discount program (cont.)

- Provide **program documentation in all primary languages** for the region, with live translation available for other languages used
  - Value: program access
- Program information to be shown in **visual formats** as much as possible
  - Value: program access
- Provide a **free Good to Go! flex pass** to program users
  - Value: program access and user benefit
- Implement an **advisory panel for the program**, including low-income users of the program, that is diverse with regard to race, geography of residence, age and gender
  - Value: informed program development and operations
• **Recommendations**

**Additional Considerations / Recommendations:**

**Tolling Operations:** Support increased access to toll system, particularly for unbanked and underbanked individuals

- Enabling more and cheaper opportunities to use cash on the toll system
- Lowering requirements for account minimums and having cards on file
- Lowering the size of automated account reloading events
- Considering further changes to application of civil penalty charges

**Tolling Policy / Funding:** Broaden use of toll funds in support of transportation equity

- Doing more for transit and transit users in a tolling context
- Funding of multi-modal mobility projects and other community programs within a few miles of the tolled highway corridor

**Transportation System Policy:** Increase the centrality of equity in transportation planning, funding, and operations.

- Consideration of a I-405 / SR 167 ETL low-income tolling program should be within context of supporting a more equitable tolling system and transportation system as a whole.
Recommendations

Recommended Next Steps for Program Implementation

- **Launching a pilot** version by 2024-2025 of the low-income tolling program, which can be iterated through feedback coordinated by an advisory council until it is functioning well enough to become a permanent program.

- Conducting more **outreach** to potential program users before and as a part of the pilot.

- Taking further steps outside of this program to make the State’s **transportation system more equitable**.
• **Recommended next steps – pilot** (timing: 2024-2025 for launch, preparation in years prior)

  • Rollout of the new back office tolling system would cost-effectively allow for modifications including the proposed low-income toll program by 2024-2025

  • Recommend 2-5 years of pilot – program to iterate on at-least-annual feedback from the advisory panel

  • Becomes permanent once the program is successful and stable

  • Planning must start sooner, since the mechanism for the low-income toll program must be included in the structure of the second phase of the new back office system
• **Recommended next steps – Outreach (FY 2023-24)**

  • Critically important, to conduct further outreach that is:
    • Diverse and inclusive regarding geography, age, ethnicity, race, language spoken and preferred method of communication
    • Conducted at least partially in-person, perhaps including focus groups
    • Advertised in ethnic media and/or physically in-communities
    • To learn from the program users who know their own lives and needs best
    • Answer questions regarding preferred methods of enrollment
    • Lays the groundwork for what works for driving enrollment

  • Funding necessary to support all outreach efforts.
• **Recommended next steps - Outreach (FY 2023-24)**

• **Launch 405/167 ETL low income toll program advisory council (FY 2023-2024)**
  • Implement in advance of a pilot project to inform project design and to support involvement
  • Include low-income users of the ETLs, and ensure it is diverse with regard to race, geography of residence, age and gender
  • Provide recommendations and conduct informal outreach on
    • The most critical and effective steps to provide value from an I-405 / 167 ETL low-income program
    • Steps to address transportation equity issues within the I-405 / 167 ETL corridor, inclusive how an I-405 / 167 ETL low-income program could support such efforts.
  • Recommendations should be within the context of how to support addressing equity issues across the Washington State tolling system, and within the state transportation system as a whole.
• High level review of study so far
• Results of quantitative evaluation of final two discount options
• Draft recommendations
• Next steps for Commission
Next Steps: Final Report Progress

- Complete Commission feedback on final recommendations
- Review and Comment on DRAFT Final Report
  - May 21st: Comments due on initial draft of report and recommendations
  - June 1st: Comments due on draft final version of report
- Upcoming Milestones
  - June 15: Present final report and final recommendations at June Commission meeting.
  - June 30 (or sooner): Commission submits report to Legislature.
Thank you!

WSP USA