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## **April 2024 Bi-State Tolling Subcommittee Notes – April 19, 2024**

**Location: Virtual**

**Meeting Recording**

### **Attendees**

#### **Bi-State Tolling Subcommittee Members**

Lee Beyer (OTC, Vice-Chair); Jim Restucci (WSTC, Vice-Chair).  
Alicia Chapman (OTC, Member); Roy Jennings (WSTC, Member)

#### **Staff / Other Presenters**

Travis Brouwer (ODOT); Reema Griffith (WSTC); Carl See (WSTC); Ryan LeProwse (IBR); Brent Baker (IBR); Meghan Hodges (IBR); Ed Barry (WSDOT); Jennifer Charlebois (WSDOT)

### **Existing Bridge User Travel Data and Forecasting Considerations – Ryan LeProwse & Brent Baker**

Ryan LeProwse, IBR Traffic Lead, provided an overview of existing travel patterns and conditions across the I-5 Bridge Over the Columbia River (I-5 Bridge) and in the region. Vehicle count data from 2022 shows that I-5 traffic volumes within the IBR program area is at about 95% of pre-pandemic (2019) levels, while I-205's traffic volume is about 94%. Transit volumes in the same area are recovering at a slower rate. This data also showed that the I-205 Glenn Jackson Bridge carries more vehicles than the I-5 Bridge, but truck traffic favors the I-5 Bridge. Data on origin-destination patterns showed that 86% of southbound I-5 vehicles during the AM peak period enter and/or exit using an interchange within the 5-mile IBR program area. Similarly, 77% of northbound I-5 vehicles during the PM peak period enter and/or exit within the IBR program area.

Brent Baker, IBR Financial Structures Lead, expanded on how traffic data affects traffic and revenue forecasts. He described the difference between how the traffic forecasts would be adjusted for financial planning purposes compared to for environmental analysis and design considerations. Brent shared an updated Level 2 Traffic and Revenue Study scenario matrix and walked through the changes. He also shared information about how potential diversion had been considered in analysis completed so far, and shared information about what refinements would be made to data before the program completes a Level 3 Traffic & Revenue Study.

### **Discussion**

A follow-up question was asked on what trends would be showing for 2023 and if those trends would continue. Ryan noted the initial data shows similar volumes to 2022 but they have grown, and those trends are expected to continue.

Clarifying questions were asked about the scenarios and differences in forecasts between I-5 and I-205. Brent explained which scenarios included lower tolls during pre-completion tolling and noted all scenarios included pre-completion tolling. He also noted the Level 3 Traffic and Revenue Study will get into more specifics around the traffic data.

### **Review Washington State's Standardized Toll Policies and Fees – Ed Barry, Jennifer Charlebois, & Carl See**

Ed Barry, WSDOT Toll Division Director, reviewed how WSDOT operates toll facilities including details on roles and responsibilities between WSDOT, WSTC, the legislature, and the Office of the State Treasurer. Jennifer Charlebois, WSDOT Toll Division Deputy Director, walked through the specific statutes WSDOT follows and shared details about the Notice of Civil Penalty process including lessons learned.

Carl See, WSTC Deputy Director, shared details on WSTC's role and responsibility to set toll rates and exemptions. He noted that they strive to keep the policies consistent between all facilities while toll rates can vary.

### **Discussion**

A question was asked about how the civil penalty process works with out-of-state residents. Jennifer shared how WSDOT issues bills and civil penalties to both Washington and out-of-state residents and reiterated that 97% of tolls are paid before a civil penalty is issued.

### **IBR Advisory Group Structure – Meghan Hodges**

Meghan Hodges, IBR Community and Government Relations Manager, provided an overview of IBR's advisory groups for the subcommittee to consider for future engagement opportunities. IBR's advisory groups provide insight and guidance from a variety of agencies, community members, and experts. Meghan went into detail about the Community Advisory Group (CAG) and Equity Advisory Group's (EAG) members, how these advisory groups were filled, and work these advisory groups have completed to identify values to guide their feedback to the program.

Carl See added if Commissioners are interested in speaking with these groups or having staff coordinate with these groups, to let staff know.

### **Discussion**

A comment was made noting that the Oregon toll program did extensive outreach to address equity concerns and that one of the OTC Commissioners was very involved in those efforts. A comment was made about looking into incorporating a process to address equity concerns in the bi-state process. Another comment was made that more discussions about operational details are needed before determining a process to address this.

### **Upcoming Meetings and Tasks – Carl See**

Carl See shared an updated work plan and noted how some meeting topics moved from one meeting to the next based on available analysis.

### **Discussion**

The group discussed the upcoming May meeting and the timing given the desire to meet in person. All the Commissioners expressed support for an in-person meeting on May 23. Carl See asked the Commissioners to consider a three-hour meeting and will work with staff on the meeting's timing.

### **Next Steps – Commissioner Lee Beyer**

Vice-Chair Beyer asked the group to share any comments or outstanding questions. Commissioners thanked staff for the presentation.

**Public Comment**

Vice-Chair Beyer noted for the record that the Subcommittee received three written comments. There were no other public comments.