

I-5 Bridge Bi-State Tolling Subcommittee

June 21, 2024, Meeting 5



Public Comment Instructions

- During the meeting:
 - On the Zoom Webinar, when invited to provide public comment at the end of this meeting, click the 'Raise Hand' icon
 - You will be assigned a number at the front of your name in zoom to identify the order of public commenters
 - When it is close to your turn, a prompt will pop up on screen to accept an invitation to join as a 'panelist'
 - When you are called on, you will be able to provide your 3-minute public comment
 - When you are finished, staff will re-assign you from a 'panelist' to an 'attendee' in the meeting
- Written comments
 - Please submit any written comments to info@bistatesubcommittee.org

Agenda

- Welcome
- Recap IBR partner agency & advisory group feedback
- Level 3 Traffic and Revenue scenario development and discussion
- Upcoming meetings
- Next steps
- Public comment

IBR Program Update


Meghan Hodges



Draft SEIS Timeline

Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

- ▶ **Technical review in progress with FTA/FHWA**
 - Comprehensive review is intended to ensure the accuracy of the Draft SEIS and enable the public to provide comment on the correct information during the public comment period.
- ▶ **Expected release of the Draft SEIS: 2024**
 - 60-day public comment period
- ▶ **Refinements to Draft SEIS addressing public feedback: 2025**
- ▶ **Final SEIS and Record of Decision (ROD): 2025**



Interstate BRIDGE
Replacement Program

The Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) is expected later this year.

Following the release of the Draft SEIS, a 60-day public comment period will open.

This page will provide the information necessary to **learn about the process** and how to **review the document**, as well as when and where to find opportunities to **provide feedback**.

Interstate Bridge Replacement Program

DRAFT
Supplemental
Environmental
Impact Statement
+
DRAFT
Section 4(f)
Evaluation

Produced in partnership with:

Federal Transit Administration | FHWA
Oregon Department of Transportation | Washington State Department of Transportation
TRI-MET | C-TRAN
Metro | FDOT

www.interstatebridge.org/DraftSEIS

Engagement Update



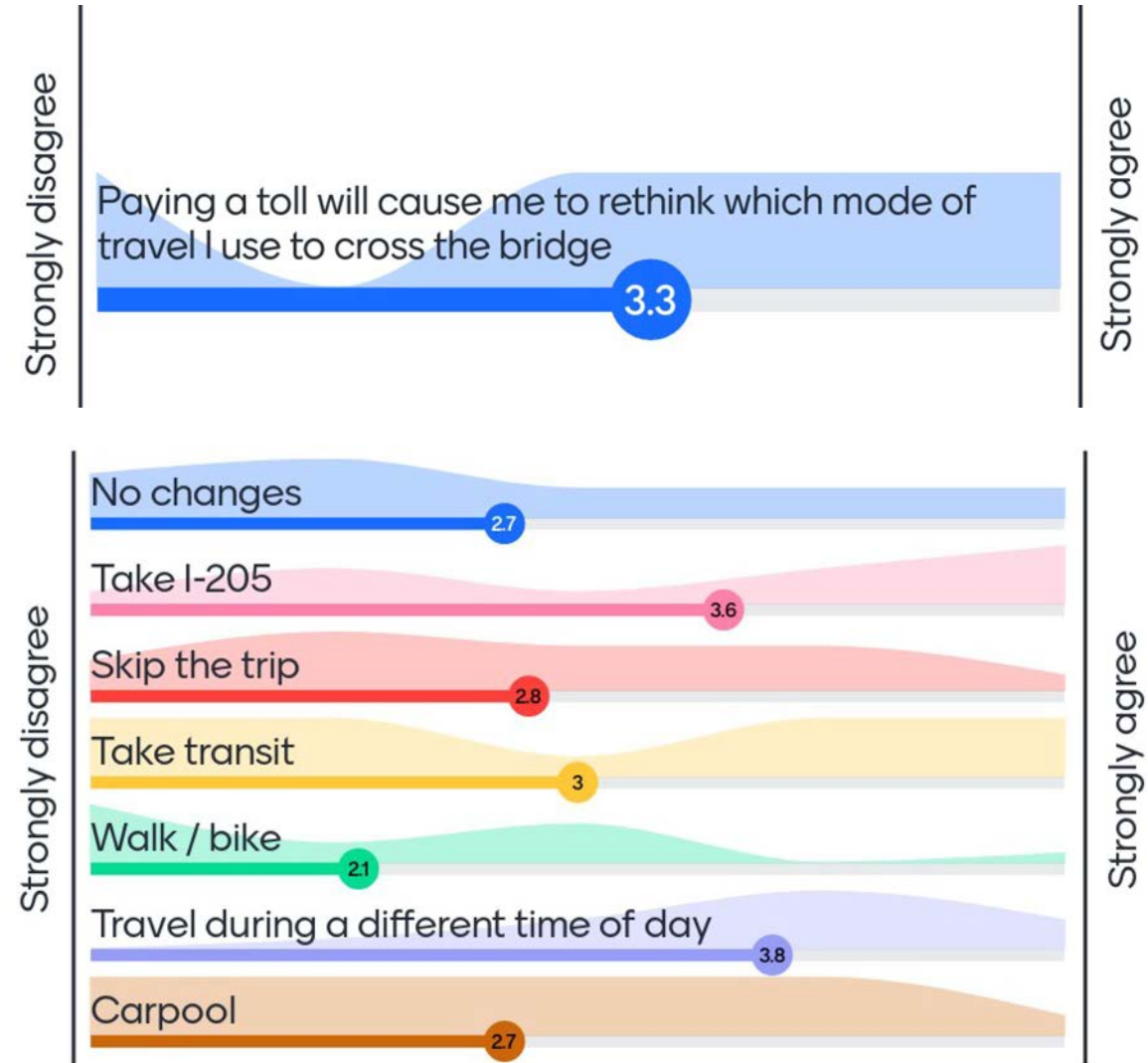
IBR Advisory Group Feedback

- In June, staff from the Washington and Oregon Departments of Transportation and staff from the Washington State Transportation Commission met with the IBR Community and Equity Advisory groups
- **The goal of the meetings was to:**
 - Introduce and discuss tolling considerations for the I-5 Bridge
 - Soliciting feedback on selected policy topics
 - Solicit feedback on future use of the bridge once tolling is implemented.



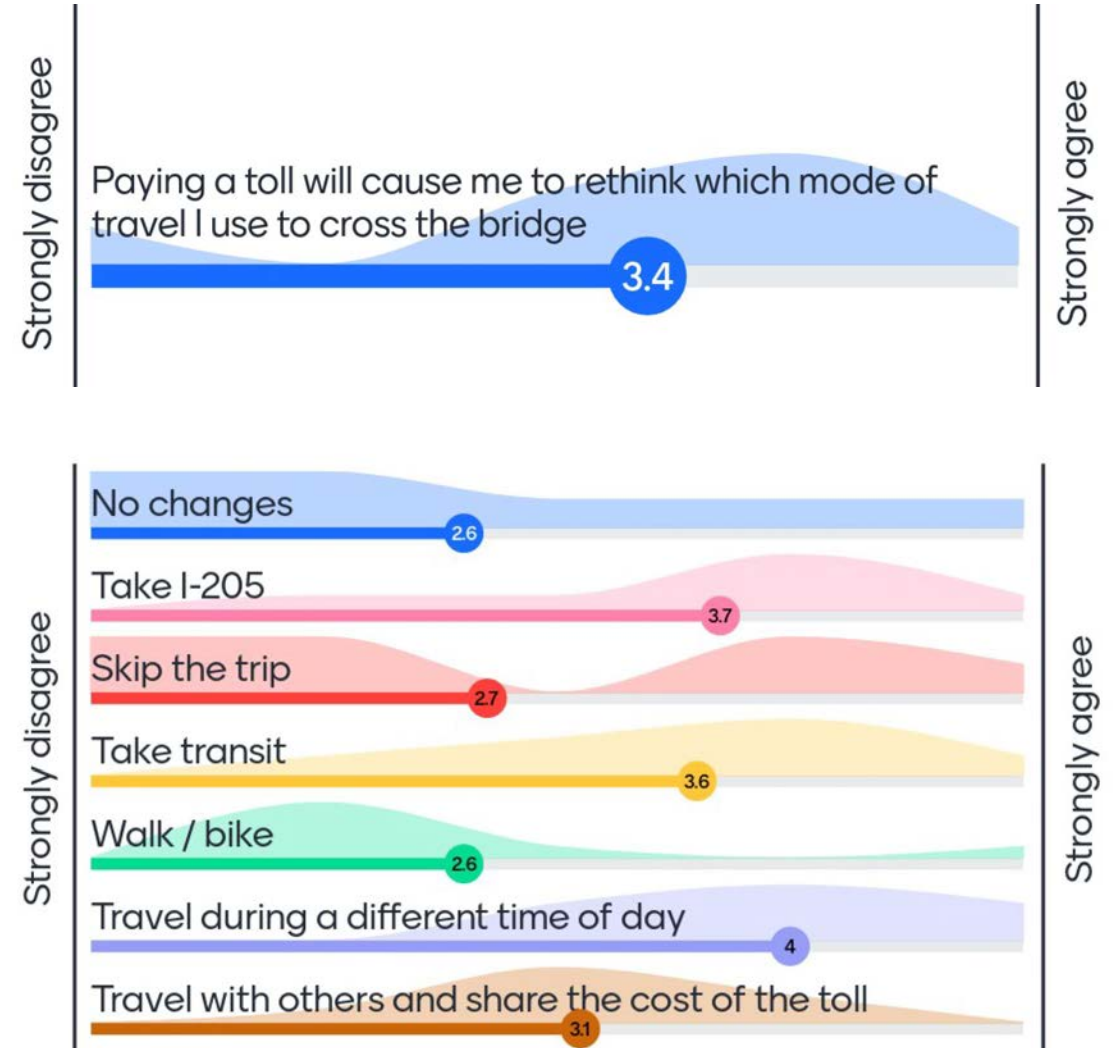
IBR Community Advisory Group Feedback

- In June, WSDOT and ODOT staff and the WSTC staff met with the IBR advisory groups to discuss tolling on the I-5 Bridge and seek feedback.
- **What did we hear?**
 - Safe and efficient mobility is a priority policy consideration.
 - More people agreed that pre-completion toll rates should be similar to what the toll rates will be after the new bridge is opened.
 - Most people agreed paying a toll will cause them to rethink their mode of travel.
 - Several people would likely use I-205 to avoid paying the toll or travel during a different time of day to reduce the toll amount.



IBR Equity Advisory Group Feedback

- In June, WSDOT and ODOT staff and the WSTC staff met with the IBR advisory groups to discuss tolling on the I-5 Bridge and seek feedback.
- **What did we hear?**
 - Equity was the priority policy consideration followed by safe and efficient mobility.
 - More people agreed that pre-completion toll rates should be similar to what the toll rates will be after the new bridge is opened.
 - Most people agreed paying a toll will cause them to rethink their mode of travel.
 - Several people would likely change their travel to a different time of day, take transit, carpool to share the cost of the toll, or divert to I-205.
 - The group discussed the need for a low-income program.



Level 3 Scenario Development

Bi-State Toll Subcommittee Toll Rate & Policy Considerations

In addition to addressing funding requirements and existing laws in each state, the bi-state subcommittee will consider the following in advancing toll rates and policies:

- **Safe and Efficient Mobility:** Improve corridor mobility and efficient operations.
- **Equity:** Minimize effects on vulnerable populations and overburdened communities.
- **Environmental Quality:** Contribute to the reduction of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Economic Vitality:** Support the efficient movement of goods and services across the bridge.

Level 3 Toll Scenario Development Considerations

- ▶ **Provide detailed traffic and revenue projections sufficient to:**
 - Inform toll rate setting by the two Commissions
 - Leverage at least \$1.24 billion in capital funding
 - Meet all financial obligations over the forecast horizon
 - Eventually obtain an “investment-grade” credit rating to secure financing
- ▶ **Narrow consideration to about 3 scenarios to facilitate in-depth analysis**
 - Determine appropriate combinations of rate and policy options as scenario concepts
 - May include forecast stress-tests / risk analyses to address financial planning questions

IBR Level 2 Toll T&R Study | Original & Additional Scenarios

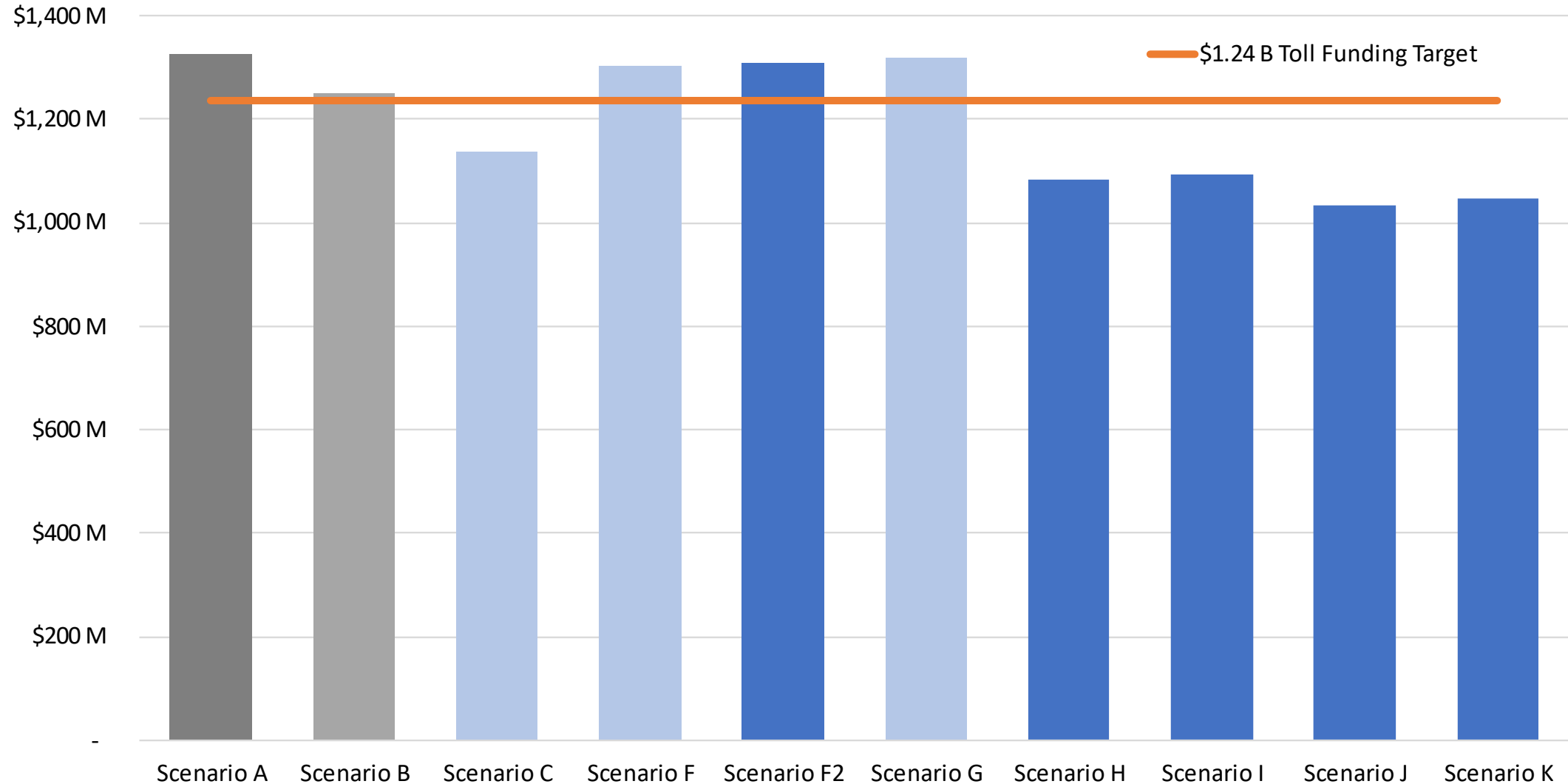
Scenario	Brief Description	Toll Rate & Policy Assumptions					Other Regional Toll Facilities	Toll Administrator	Meets 2023 Financial Plan \$1.24 B Funding Target	Preliminary Traffic & Net Toll Revenue Findings over Forecast Period (% changes relative to Scenario A)
		Min Auto Toll (FY 2026 \$)	Max Auto Toll (FY 2026 \$)	Annual Toll Escalation	Low Income Discount	Medium/ Heavy Truck Tolls				
Scenario A	Base Tolls	\$2.15	\$3.55	2.15%	No	2x / 4x	Abernethy Bridge (I-205 Toll Project)	ODOT	Confirmed	• Preliminary analysis confirmed net toll revenues could provide at least \$1.24 B
Scenario B	Lower Tolls (NEPA)	\$1.50	\$3.15	2.15%	No	2x / 4x	Abernethy Bridge (I-205 Toll Project)	ODOT	Likely	• Traffic increases on average by 5% • Net toll revenue reduced by about 15%
Scenario C	Scenario A + No Toll Escalation	\$2.15	\$3.55	None	No	2x / 4x	Abernethy Bridge (I-205 Toll Project)	ODOT	Further analysis needed	• Traffic increases on average by 9% • Net toll revenue reduced by about 39%
Scenario F	Scenario A + 50% Low Income Discount	\$2.15	\$3.55	2.15%	50%	2x / 4x	Abernethy Bridge (I-205 Toll Project)	ODOT	Likely	• Traffic increases on average by 0.4% • Net toll revenues reduced by about 2%
Scenario F2	Scenario A + 50% Low Income Discount	\$2.15	\$3.55	2.15%	50%	2x / 4x	Abernethy Bridge (I-205 Toll Project)	WSDOT	Likely	• Traffic increases on average by 0.4% • Net toll revenues reduced by about 1.5%
Scenario G	Scenario A + 25% Low Income Discount	\$2.15	\$3.55	2.15%	25%	2x / 4x	Abernethy Bridge (I-205 Toll Project)	ODOT	Likely	• Traffic increases on average by 0.1% • Net toll revenue reduced by less than 1%
Scenario H	Hybrid Tolls / Revised Base Assumptions	\$1.50	\$3.55	2.15%	50%	1.5x / 2x	No Oregon Toll Projects	WSDOT	Unlikely	• Traffic increases on average by 4.1% • Net toll revenues reduced by about 20%
Scenario I	Scenario H w/ I-205 Toll Project	\$1.50	\$3.55	2.15%	50%	1.5x / 2x	Abernethy Bridge (I-205 Toll Project)	WSDOT	Unlikely	• Traffic increases on average by 4.9% • Net toll revenues reduced by about 19%
Scenario J	Scenario H w/lower pre-completion tolls	\$1.50 \$1.50	\$3.15 \$3.55	2.15%	50%	1.5x / 2x	No Oregon Toll Projects	WSDOT	Unlikely	• Traffic increases on average by 4.5% • Net toll revenues reduced by about 20%
Scenario K	Scenario I w/lower pre-completion tolls	\$1.50 \$1.50	\$3.15 \$3.55	2.15%	50%	1.5x / 2x	Abernethy Bridge (I-205 Toll Project)	WSDOT	Unlikely	• Traffic increases on average by 5.2% • Net toll revenues reduced by about 20%

Notes:

Updated May 2024

- Weekend toll rates assumed to be constant at the minimum non-zero weekday value.
- Customers without a registered account (pay by mail) are assumed to pay an additional \$2 toll per trip (\$3 for medium & \$4 for heavy trucks in Scenarios H-K).
- The minimum toll is assumed to be \$0 overnight during pre-completion tolling (FYs 2026-33).
- All scenarios assume pre-completion tolling begins on the existing bridge in April 2026.
- Scenarios D and E not shown included the assessment of the effects of ODOT's Regional Mobility Pricing Project (RMPP) plans as of December 2022.
- Abernethy Bridge tolling under the I-205 Toll Project is also combined with Tualatin River Bridge tolls and widening of a two-lane section to three lanes further south by 2045.
- The low-income toll discount scenarios assume eligibility at 200% of the federal poverty level. Actual benefit program details to be jointly determined by OTC and WSTC.

Recap of Level 2 Scenario Preliminary Toll Funding Capacities



What we heard at your last meeting

- ▶ **Escalation** — interest in retaining regular toll escalation in all scenarios
 - Proposal to integrate first 2.15% increase into the rates at start of tolling
- ▶ **Pre- versus post-completion tolls** — interest in having lower tolls, even if only minor
 - Proposal for having differences except possibly for minimum toll (note that annual escalation alone would achieve this on a small scale)
- ▶ **Truck multipliers** — interest in looking at scenarios that trade-off higher truck tolls for lower base tolls
 - Proposal to keep top truck toll at 3x the base auto toll and retain having the Pay By Mail toll increment being subject to the multiplier
- ▶ **Low-income toll program** — interest in including in all scenarios, *as soon as practical*
 - Regardless of feasibility, suggest **modeling** at beginning of pre-completion tolling since any implementation delay would be revenue positive
- ▶ **Higher net revenue scenario** — interest in having a scenario that targets additional funding (e.g., \$1.6 billion)
 - Be able to show high-level differences in diversion and traffic operations

Hybrid and Hybrid + 2.15% Weekday Toll Rates

Passenger vehicles with a *Good To Go!* account at start of tolling in 2026 dollars



Level 3 T&R Study | Key Toll Scenario Attributes

Rate / Policy Setting Levers

Toll rate variability
by time of day / day
of week

Truck toll
multipliers

Toll escalation

Low-income benefit
program / discount
rate / eligibility
threshold

Pre-completion
tolling differences
(rates, hours of
operations)

Outcomes / Objectives

Operating performance objectives

Revenue levels / funding objectives

Toll Rate Variability

▶ Time of day

- Potentially higher in peak periods
 - *Peak periods include mornings and afternoon on weekdays; midday on weekends*
- Lower at peak shoulder and off-peak periods
- Lowest at night, including potentially no toll prior to new bridge completion

▶ Day of week

- Weekday toll variability assumed
- Weekend tolls could be flat or have two or three levels of variability

▶ Payment Method

- Propose maintaining WSDOT \$2.00 increment (non-escalating) for paying toll by mail, subject to truck toll multipliers

Level 2 toll T&R scenarios have considered time of day variable tolls on weekdays, flat tolls on weekends, and a \$2 Pay By Mail toll increment

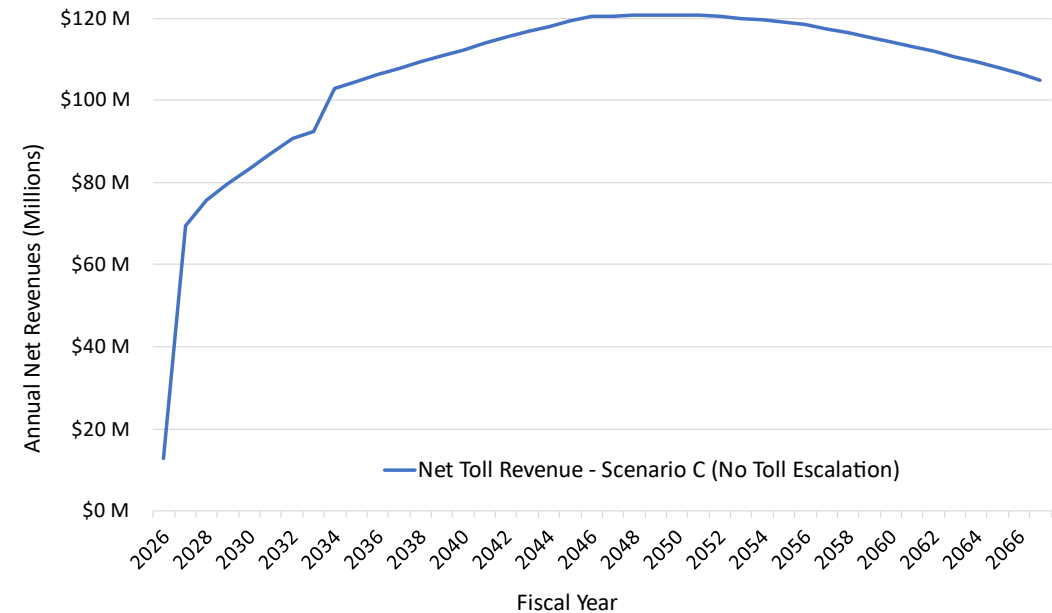
Truck Toll Multipliers

- ▶ Tolls trucks at a multiple of the passenger vehicle toll
- ▶ Modeling tools allow for two categories: “medium” and “heavy”
 - Additional categories could be considered in rate setting
 - Model categories do not consider classification method — by shape or number of axles
 - WSDOT will determine appropriate technology for classifying trucks on this facility
- ▶ Level 2 T&R Study assumed 2.0x for medium and 4.0x for heavy trucks
- ▶ Additional Level 2 scenarios assumed lower multipliers of 1.5x and 2.0x
- ▶ Modeling multipliers of 1.5x and 3.0x closely match WSDOT’s four truck classifications

Raising the “heavy truck” toll multiplier assumption from 2.0x to 3.0x will materially increase toll revenues, helping to keep the base auto tolls lower

Toll Escalation

- ▶ Without regular escalation, toll revenues run the risk of not keeping up with their financial obligations
 - Routine annual operations and maintenance costs (O&M) costs and periodic capital repair and replacement (R&R) costs inflate over time
 - These O&M and R&R costs will be paid from tolls, as well as debt service
- ▶ Toll escalation will help keep the I-5 Bridge sustainable
 - Variable rate tolling allows for higher prices in peak periods, shifting some trips to other times to help avert congestion
 - Without regular escalation, peak period toll rates will become less effective in managing congestion over time



From the May meeting: There appears to be strong interest in regular toll escalation

Low-Income Toll Program Benefit

- ▶ **Benefit as a toll discount can be accommodated in the existing toll collection system as long as participants have a *Good To Go!* account**
- ▶ **Setting the eligibility threshold at 200% of the Federal Poverty Level:**
 - Maximizes the efficiency of participant eligibility confirmation by aligning with other social service programs
 - Minimizes customer enrollment inconvenience
- ▶ **Preliminary work during the Level 2 T&R analysis indicates that discount-eligible trips comprise about 2% of total I-5 Bridge trips**
- ▶ **From the May meeting: A 50% discount appears to have some momentum**
 - Offers a meaningful benefit without giving away a free trip
 - Strikes a balance between encouraging enrollment without over-incentivizing scofflaw behavior

Pre-completion Tolling Differences

- ▶ **Lower pre-completion tolls prior to new bridge completion**
 - Lower by more than the toll escalation factor, possibly excepting the minimum toll
 - Different escalation policy?
- ▶ **Reduced hours of tolling prior to new bridge completion**
 - Exclude tolls during overnight hours (e.g., 11 PM-5 AM) when construction effects and lane closures are more likely

Toll Revenue Levels / Funding Objectives

- ▶ **IBR 2023 Financial Plan identified a \$1.24 B target**
 - Toll funding comes primarily from borrowing against future net toll revenues, augmented by pre-completion net toll revenues used as pay-as-you-go capital funding
- ▶ **Initial net toll revenue levels are the primary determinant of how much toll funding can be generated from borrowing**
 - Higher and/or earlier net toll revenues = more borrowing capacity
- ▶ **Proposal to have one scenario targeting additional funding (e.g., \$1.6 B)**
 - A \$1.6 B target would be consistent with the top end of the range identified in the 2023 financial plan

Level 2 toll T&R scenarios were focused on the \$1.24 B target or testing the sensitivity of variables such as lower truck toll multipliers

Operating Performance Measures

- ▶ **Regular reporting back to the Bi-State Tolling Subcommittee and full Commissions on I-5 and I-205 Bridge performance**
 - Model predicted performance, pre- and post-completion
 - Actual performance once operational

Conceptual Scenario Attribute Values

- ▶ Key rate and policy variables and proposed value ranges (updated)
- ▶ May subcommittee input removed the variables covered with an “X”

Weekday Toll Rates & Hours (2026 \$)		Weekend Toll Rates & Hours (2026 \$)	Truck Toll Multipliers	Toll Escalation	Low-Income Toll Program
Pre-Completion	Post Completion				
Lower + 2.15% \$1.55 - 3.20	Lower + 2.15% \$1.55 - 3.20	Minimum Weekday Toll	1.5x / 2.0x	None	50% Discount <i>as soon as practical</i>
Hybrid + 2.15% \$1.55 - 3.65	Hybrid + 2.15% \$1.55 - 3.65	Two Step (Min/Midday)	1.5x / 3.0x	2.15% Annually Post Completion	50% Discount when New Bridge Opens
Hybrid + 10% \$1.65 - 3.90	Hybrid + 10% \$1.65 - 3.90			2.15% Annually Pre-Comp Only	25% Discount
Base + 2.15% \$2.20 - 3.65	Base + 2.15% \$2.20 - 3.65	Three Step (Min/Mid/Peak)	2.0x / 4.0x	5% Every 3 Years	25% Discount when New Bridge Opens
Hybrid + 32% \$2.00 - \$4.70	Hybrid + 32% \$2.00 - \$4.70			2.15% Annually	No Discount

Toll Funding Generally Increases →

June 21 Conceptual Scenarios for Toll Funding Target

1

Weekday Toll Rates & Hours (2026 \$)		Weekend Toll Rates & Hours (2026 \$)	Truck Toll Multipliers	Toll Escalation	Low-Income Toll Program
Pre-Completion	Post Completion				
Lower + 2.15% \$1.55 - 3.20	Hybrid + 2.15% \$1.55 - 3.65	Two Step (Min/Midday)	2.0x / 4.0x	2.15% Annually	50% Discount when New Bridge Opens

2

Weekday Toll Rates & Hours (2026 \$)		Weekend Toll Rates & Hours (2026 \$)	Truck Toll Multipliers	Toll Escalation	Low-Income Toll Program
Pre-Completion	Post Completion				
Hybrid + 2.15% \$1.55 - 3.65	Hybrid + 10% \$1.65 - 3.90	Three Step (Min/Mid/Peak)	1.5x / 3.0x	2.15% Annually	50% Discount when New Bridge Opens

3

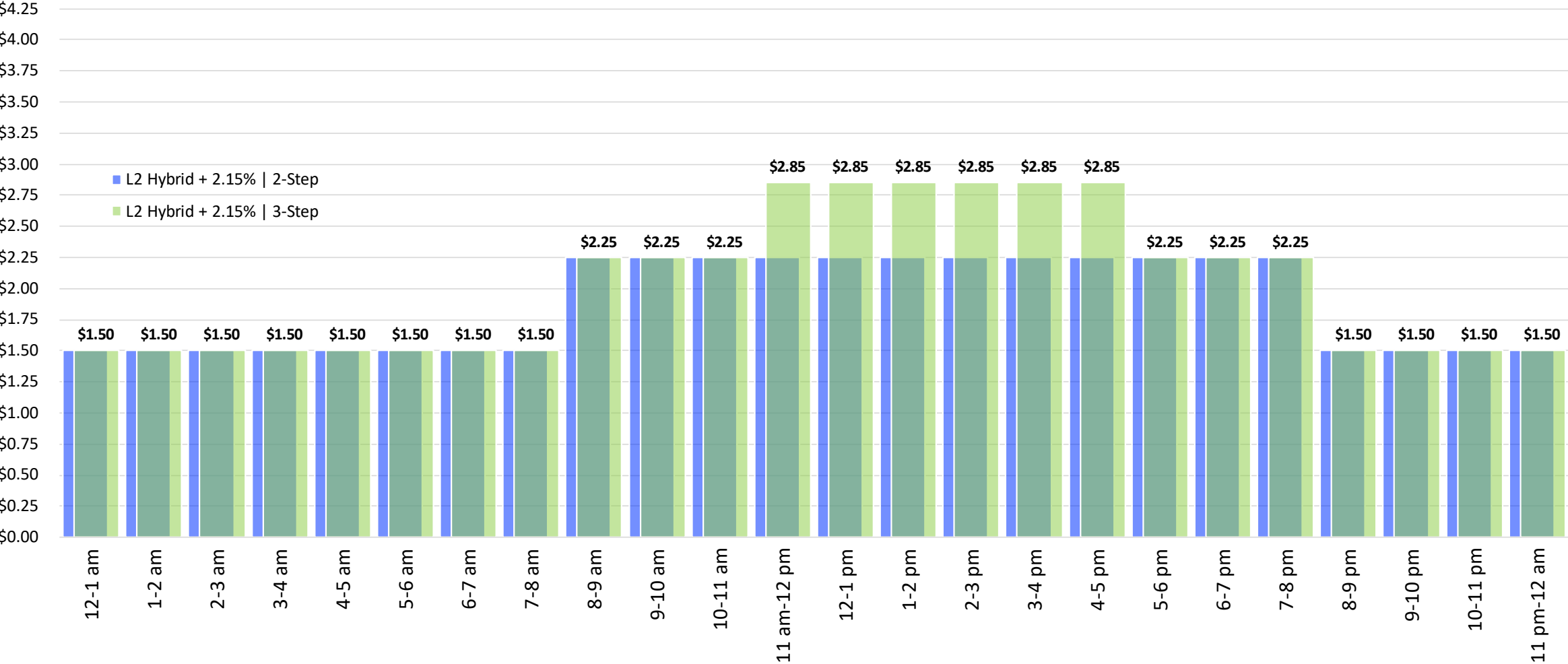
Weekday Toll Rates & Hours (2026 \$)		Weekend Toll Rates & Hours (2026 \$)	Truck Toll Multipliers	Toll Escalation	Low-Income Toll Program
Pre-Completion	Post Completion				
Hybrid + 10% \$1.65 - 3.90	Hybrid + 10% \$1.65 - 3.90	Two Step (Min/Midday)	1.5x / 3.0x	2.15% Annually	50% Discount <i>as soon as practical</i>

4

Weekday Toll Rates & Hours (2026 \$)		Weekend Toll Rates & Hours (2026 \$)	Truck Toll Multipliers	Toll Escalation	Low-Income Toll Program
Pre-Completion	Post Completion				
Hybrid + 32% \$2.00 - \$4.70	Hybrid + 32% \$2.00 - \$4.70	Three Step (Min/Mid/Peak)	1.5x / 3.0x	2.15% Annually	50% Discount <i>as soon as practical</i>

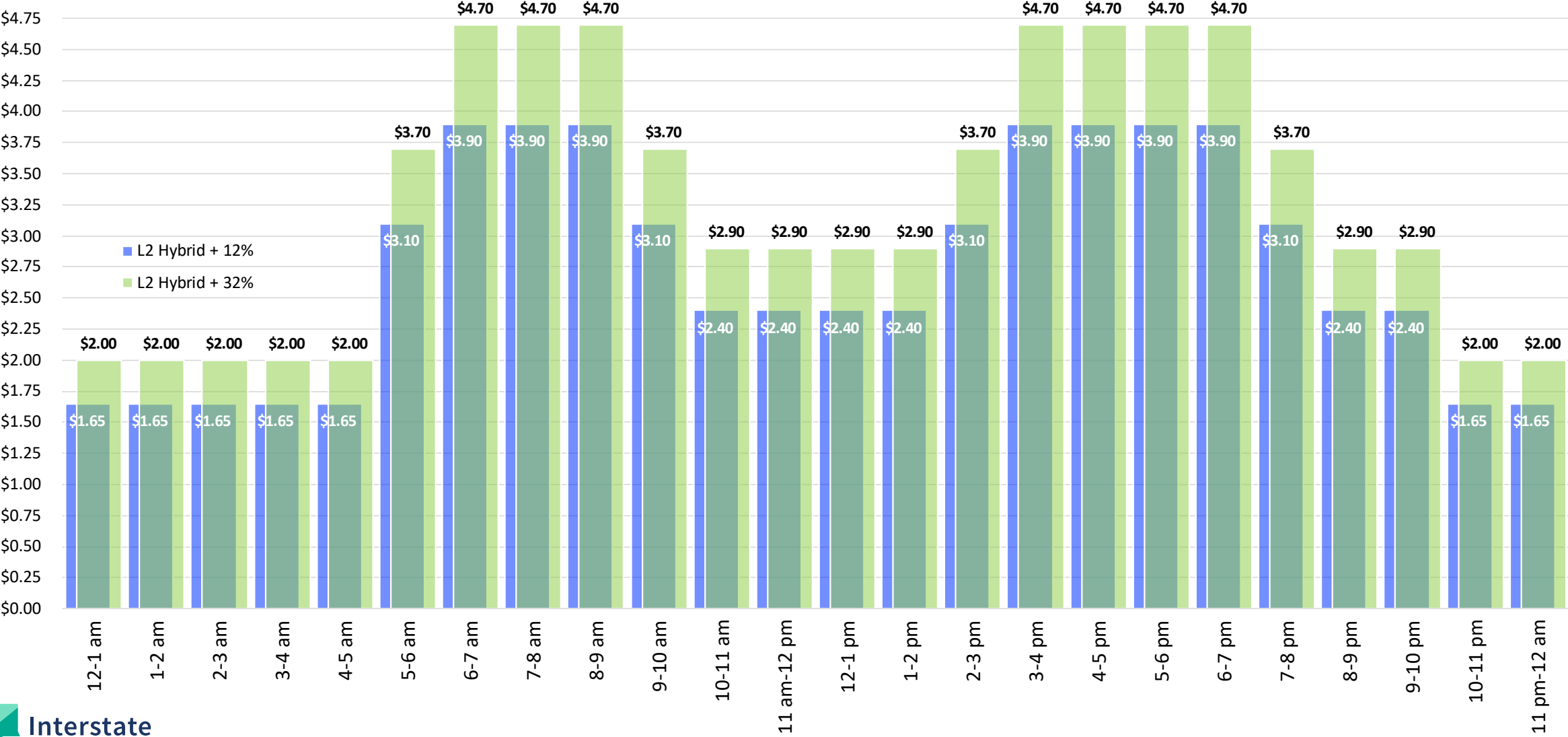
Hybrid + 2.15% Weekend Toll Rates Options

Passenger vehicles with a *Good To Go!* account at start of tolling in 2026 dollars



Hybrid + 10% and Hybrid + 32% Weekday Toll Rates

Passenger vehicles with a *Good To Go!* account at start of tolling in 2026 dollars



Other Level 3 T&R Study Considerations

- ▶ **Civil penalty adjudication process and revenue / fee recovery**
 - Bi-state reciprocity agreements
- ▶ **Refinement of potential Low-Income Toll Program administrative costs**
- ▶ **Refine assumptions and cost for temporary or permanent walk-in customer service centers**
- ▶ **Estimates for bridge insurance premiums**

Upcoming Meetings Work Plan

Carl See



I-5 Bridge Bi-State Tolling Subcommittee Milestones

Milestones completed to date

- **January 2024:** Full Commissions agreed to I-5 Bi-State Tolling Agreement & appointed subcommittee members
- **February 2024:** First meeting of the I-5 Bi-State Tolling Subcommittee

Remaining milestones

- **March – September 2024:** Develop and recommend Level 3 toll rate scenarios
 - Full Commissions to select Level 3 toll rate scenarios at bi-state Commission meeting on October 1, 2024, for further analysis
- **Winter 2024 – Spring 2025:** Develop and recommend toll rate scenarios for public input for approval by the full Commissions
- **Spring – Summer 2025:** Recommend final toll rates and policy for adoption by the full Commissions

I-5 Bridge Bi-State Tolling Subcommittee: June & July 2024

Proposed Meeting Tasks

June - Major Tasks

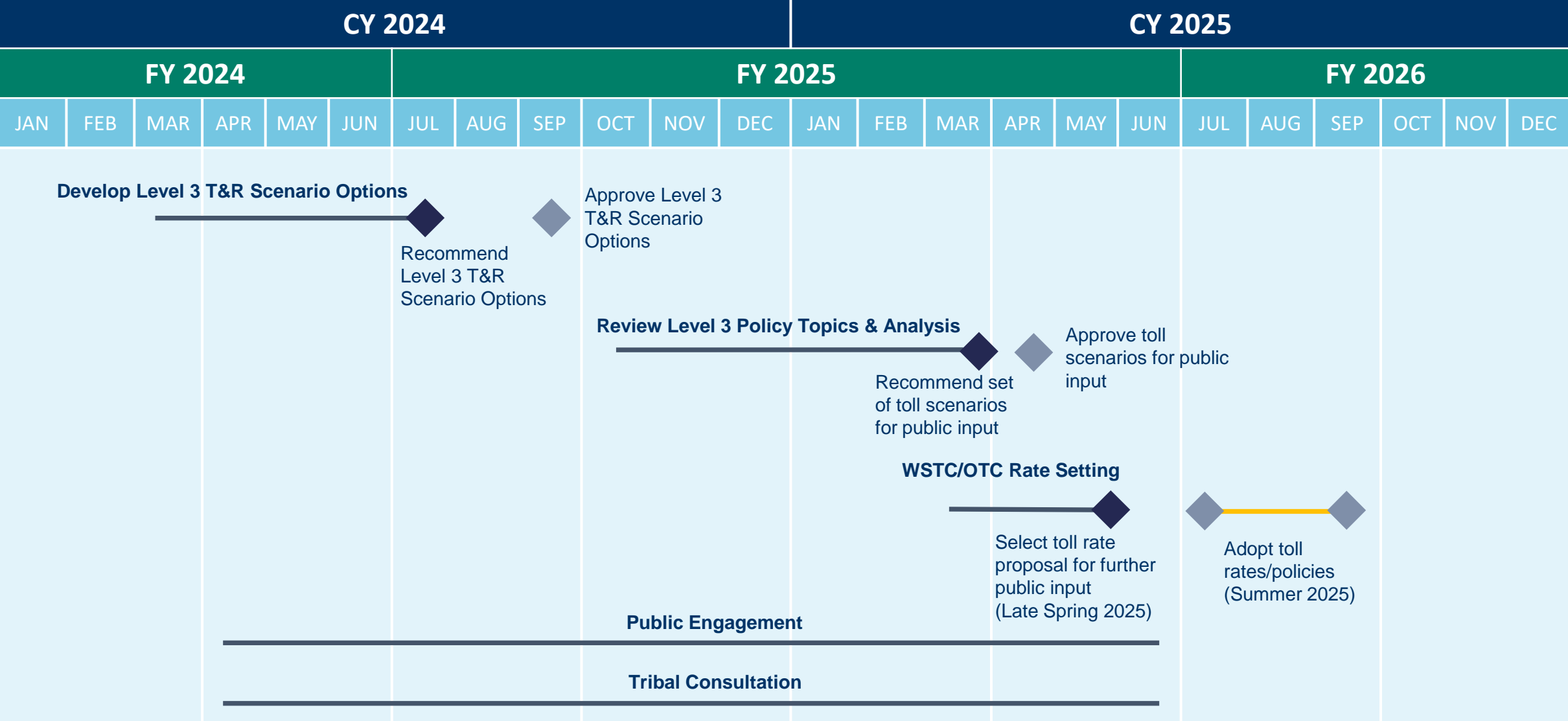
- Relevant IBR & state tolling updates
- Policy Discussions
- Level 3 Scenario Development
 - Identify and possibly recommend level 3 T&R scenarios for full commissions endorsement in Sept. 2024
- Discussion on engagement plans / update on engagement activities

July* - Major Tasks


- Relevant IBR & state tolling updates
- Level 3 Scenario Development
 - Recommend level 3 T&R scenarios for adoption by full Commissions in September 2024
- Discussion on engagement plans / update on engagement activities


**Proposed hybrid meeting in Vancouver / Portland*

I-5 Bridge Rate Setting Schedule



Legend

Subcommittee action 

Full Commission action 

Next Steps and Public Comment



Next Steps

Future meetings:

- July 19, 1 pm – 3 pm
- October 1, time TBD

Subcommittee websites:

- Washington: <https://wstc.wa.gov/programs/tolling/i-5-bridge-over-the-columbia-river/>
- Oregon: <https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Get-Involved/Pages/Bistate-toll-commission.aspx>

To receive future meeting updates: Email info@bistatesubcommittee.org to sign up

Public Comment

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