



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

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Senator Lee Beyer, Co-Chair
Representative David Gomberg, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development

Dear Co-Chairs Beyer and Gomberg, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before your committee and provide information about ODOT's budget and programs. The committee raised a few questions during the informational presentations on March 15th and 17th; please see below for responses and further information.

Monday, March 15th

Why does ODOT's Customer Satisfaction KPM remain relatively high, given the struggles experienced by DMV recently?

ODOT's Customer Service KPM follows statewide guidance, and is reported on a biennial basis during ODOT's budget development process. The data included in ODOT's budget presentation included information collected for state fiscal year 2020, ending June 2020. As DMV's field office closures and pandemic-related customer service impacts began in March 2020, there is only ~2.5 months overlap between this KPM reporting timeframe and the customer service disruptions.

Does ODOT offer its Customer Satisfaction Survey in languages other than English?

ODOT's Customer Satisfaction KPM is measured through three primary, customer-facing channels: the DMV, ODOT's Commerce & Compliance division (CCD), and AskODOT (our customer hotline). The DMV customer service survey is offered in both English and Spanish. The CCD and AskODOT customer service surveys are only offered in English.

How does ODOT's Urban Mobility Office relate to the Delivery and Operations Division's Region 1 office?

The Region 1 office of the Delivery and Operations Division covers most of Clackamas, Hood River, Multnomah, and Washington Counties, and serves as the primary office tasked with delivering transportation projects and performing maintenance activities in this region. The Urban Mobility Office was established to develop and deliver a comprehensive congestion management plan to reduce congestion in the Portland metro region as envisioned in HB 2017. This plan includes establishment of a system-wide toll program to manage congestion and generate revenue, as well as strategic project investments to improve safety and operations, and reduce congestion and greenhouse gas emissions. Though currently focused on the Portland metro region, the tools and comprehensive approach established by the Urban Mobility Office will inform future work across the state as ODOT builds a modern transportation system that supports Oregonians and the economic health of our state and region.

The implementation of tolling in the Portland metro region will disproportionately impact lower-income Oregonians. How does ODOT plan to address this issue?

As we strive to build an equitable toll program, ODOT assembled the Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee (EMAC) to advise ODOT and the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) on how tolls, and other demand management strategies, can and will impact Oregon's unserved and underserved communities (including economically disadvantaged communities and individuals). The EMAC will recommend to ODOT specific strategies to mitigate the impact of tolls on low income Oregonians, including rate setting. Specific recommendations will be provided to the OTC in 2022.

Wednesday, March 15th

Assuming Oregon were to receive a sizeable investment from the Federal government for its bridge program, how many bridge projects do we have that are “shovel-ready?” Is ODOT prepared, from a staffing perspective, to handle a large increase in bridge funding? What actions would ODOT take to ramp up its bridge program to accommodate any potential influx of funding?

ODOT currently has 11 bridge replacement projects that are shovel-ready (10 of which are currently funded and scheduled to go to bid in February of 2022, and 1 that has been “shelved” until sufficient construction funds are identified). If a sizeable federal investment is made in ODOT’s bridge program, ODOT is prepared to expand its list of projects through either in-house design or outsourcing. In addition to these 11 identified replacement projects, ODOT maintains a list of other important bridge maintenance projects that could be brought to construction.

Depending on the size and requirements of any potential federal investment, ODOT is prepared to make adjustments to its bridge program to reprioritize existing work to accommodate an increase in design work for bridge replacements (either in-house or outsourced) over other bridge-related work.

ODOT is prepared to use several strategies to accommodate a potential increase in bridge funding, including: 1) adjustments to our workforce to accommodate this increase, depending on the size and requirements of the federal investment; and 2) utilizing alternative contracting methods that can help accelerate the design and construction process.

What does it cost the State to provide passenger rail service? What is the fare amount for someone to travel between Eugene and Portland?

ODOT’s passenger rail service had operating costs of \$13,261,721 in state fiscal year 2019. Current funding for this service is provided by ticket revenue and revenue generated from custom vehicle license plates and ODOT’s Transportation Operating Fund.

How does the cost to the State compare between the Eugene/Portland segment and the Portland/Seattle segment?

Oregon’s subsidy for passenger rail service between Eugene and Portland was \$112 for state fiscal year 2019. This “fully loaded” rate includes all capital, operating, and administrative expenses.

To compare these two segments, Oregon’s fully loaded rate would need to be converted to the “fare box recovery”¹ method, the method used by Washington to calculate its subsidy. Oregon’s fare box recovery in state fiscal year 2019 was 18% (for the Oregon segment), and Washington’s fare box recovery in state fiscal year 2019 was 59.8% (for the segment north of Portland). Oregon has recently completed a Corridor Investment Plan, which details specific investments necessary between now and 2035 to improve ridership and on-time performance on the Eugene-Portland segment. If completed, these investments are anticipated to increase Oregon’s fare box recovery significantly.

¹ Fare box recovery is a measurement of the percentage of cost recovered by ticket prices, and does not include capital investments.