

Good evening, I am writing to share my opinion and desires on tolling projects in the Metro Portland area.

I support tolling if it is used to reduce VMT. The money should go towards safe streets. It should be used to build out pedestrian, cycling, and mass transit infrastructure. This money should not be used to expand freeways. It should be used to reduce cars and increase alternative modes of transportation. We have a climate crisis. We need to change the way we do things. A clear way to get people to drive less is to make it harder to drive and easier / safer to do other things. People will bike, walk, or take transit when those modes of transportation are convenient and safe. Use the money from tolling to make those modes of transportation convenient and safe.

If not used carefully, tolls can be another unfair tax on low-income communities. There needs to be clear policies, oversight, and accountability metrics to prevent this. Plans should be made to revenue share some of the money with low-income communities. Using toll money to increase transportation access can help to alleviate this. Transportation access can and should include alternative forms of transportation.

We can use tolling to manage interstate demands and create safe local streets. This is not an either or, but an AND. It can be done, it just requires curiosity and desire. In the end we will have better communities and a more sustainable system if we do.

Thank you for your time

Mike Farrell

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Montavilla Neighborhood