

# WASHINGTON ROAD USAGE CHARGE PILOT PROJECT

## TEST DRIVE THE ROAD AHEAD



Summer 2019

### WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?

The Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC) has been exploring a road usage charge (RUC) as a possible replacement to the gas tax to fund our roads and bridges. In 2018, approximately 2,000 drivers participated in a year-long pilot project testing a RUC system. During this time, participants reported their mileage and provided feedback. The results of the pilot, along with participant input, are currently being processed. The WSTC will issue a final report of findings and recommendations to the Governor, State Legislature, and U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) by January 2020.

### WHAT IS A ROAD USAGE CHARGE?

A road usage charge (RUC) is a per-mile charge drivers would pay based on how many miles they drive, rather than by the gallons of gas they buy. This approach is similar to how people pay for their utilities, including electricity or water.

### WHY CONSIDER A ROAD USAGE CHARGE?

The motor vehicle fuel tax (or gas tax) is our state's primary source of transportation funding, supporting 76% of all state transportation investments. However, it is not sustainable over the long term.

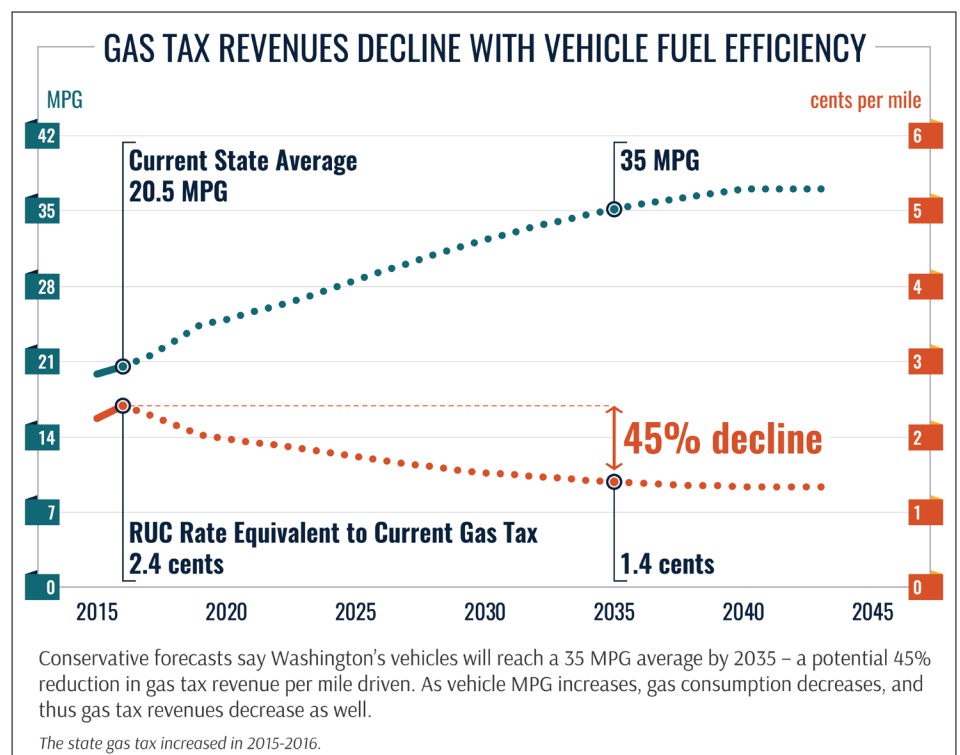
The gas tax:

- Is a flat amount (49.4 cents per gallon) and does not rise and fall with the price of fuel.
- Does not keep pace with inflation.
- Declines on a per-mile basis as vehicles become more fuel-efficient.

Less gas tax revenue means less funding for maintenance and operations of the roadway system. To ensure stable, long-term funding for roads and bridges, we need to change the way we pay for our roads.

### QUESTIONS THE PILOT WILL HELP ANSWER

- How does a road usage charge impact different drivers across the state?
- How do the reporting methods tested in the pilot work for drivers?
- Will a road usage charge be an efficient and sustainable long-term funding source for our transportation system?




# PILOT PROJECT: TEST DRIVING THE ROAD AHEAD


## A diverse participant pool that represents Washington

2,000 drivers from across Washington participated in the pilot project’s test driving phase. The participant pool represents the **state’s geographic population distribution** and reflects the diverse types of drivers in the state, including demographics such as **race, income, age, and gender**. Demographic information for the 2,000 participants can be found below.


### What we heard from drivers




Over **15 million miles** reported and mock-charged at 2.4 cents per-mile




**3 surveys, 6 focus groups**, and the project help desk actively gathered feedback



Over **1,900 emails and phone calls** received from test drivers (67%) and members of the public (33%)



**99.5% accuracy**  
in mileage reporting

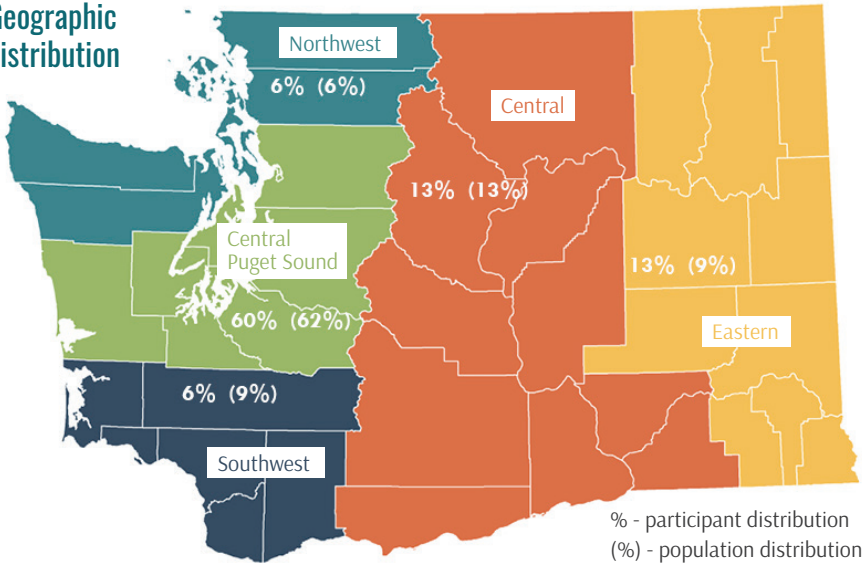


**Top concerns and questions include:**

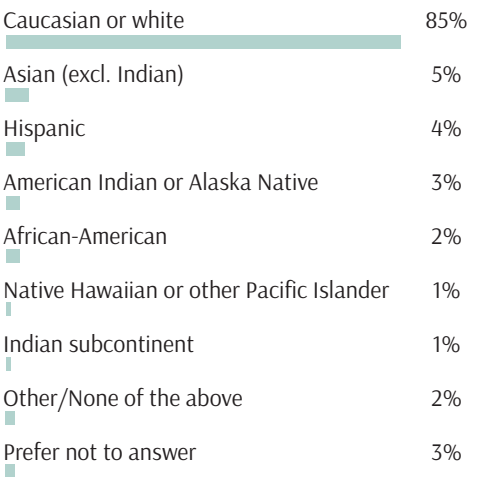
- Privacy and data collection
- Compliance and administration costs
- Fairness and equity
- Travel between states
- Operational viability

### Who participated?\*

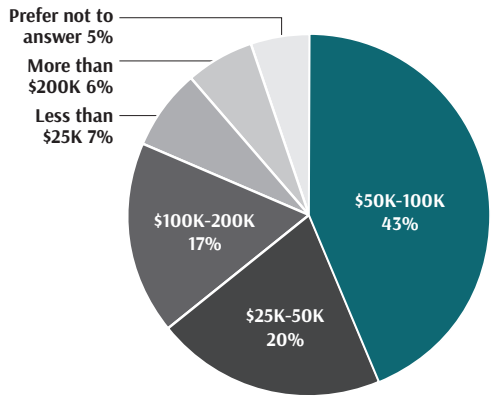
#### Geographic distribution



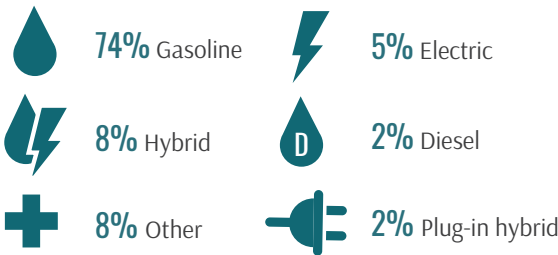
#### Race or ethnicity



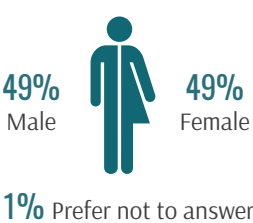
#### Household income



#### Vehicle type



#### Gender



\*Figures are rounded to the nearest whole number and may not add up to 100%

# From no-tech to high-tech: mileage reporting options

The pilot project offered five mileage reporting options for participants to choose from. Participants could also choose from two private sector service providers that collected mileage data and helped us test how third-party entities might partner with the state in a potential future RUC system.



## PLUG-IN DEVICES (WITH OR WITHOUT GPS)

- Automated mileage meter with GPS and non-GPS options
- Plugs into OBD-II ports in vehicles 1996 or newer
- GPS-enabled devices automatically deduct out-of-state miles



## ODOMETER READING

- Post-pay for miles reported quarterly
- Report miles either electronically or in person



## MILEMAPPER™ SMARTPHONE APP

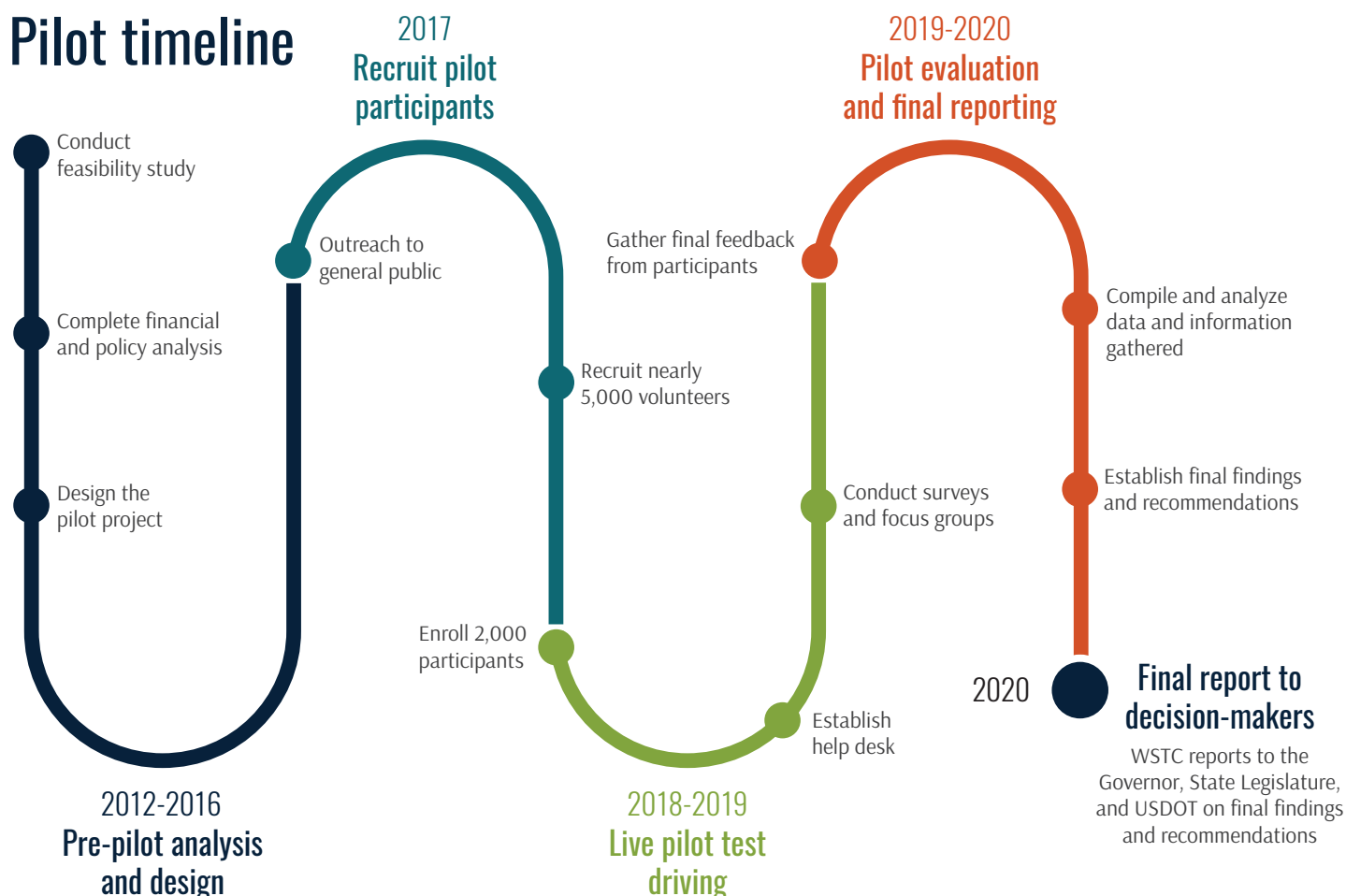
- Records miles using a smartphone
- Works with all vehicles
- Navigational GPS can be turned on/off
- Available only on iPhone iOS



## MILEAGE PERMIT

- Pre-select a block of miles (1,000, 5,000, 10,000)
- Report odometer either electronically or in person every three months
- Obtain additional miles as needed to keep mileage permit valid

## Pilot timeline



## STEERING COMMITTEE WORK

Beginning in 2012, the Legislature directed the WSTC to work with a diverse Steering Committee to examine the feasibility of transitioning from the gas tax to a road usage charge. The committee has since explored policy issues, evaluated the business case of a RUC, and explored options for potential implementation.

Some topics the Committee has explored include:

- Privacy and data security
- Reporting options and accuracy
- Equity
- Compliance and administration costs
- Education and communication
- Revenue requirements
- Interoperability with other states

## NEXT STOP: FINAL REPORT

- The test-driving phase of the 12-month pilot project ended in January 2019. Now that this critical phase of the WA RUC assessment is complete, we are compiling and analyzing all of the data and information collected during the pilot to establish findings.
- Feedback provided through surveys, focus groups, emails, and phone calls is being reviewed and incorporated into the findings.
- The WSTC will issue a final report of findings and recommendations to the Governor, State Legislature, and USDOT by January 2020.

## MORE INFORMATION

The Transportation Commission's reports to the Legislature on road usage charging as well as background materials can be found at [waroadusagecharge.org](http://waroadusagecharge.org)

Washington State Transportation Commission |

[transc@wstc.wa.gov](mailto:transc@wstc.wa.gov)

360-705-7070

WA RUC Help Desk |

[info@waroadusagecharge.org](mailto:info@waroadusagecharge.org)

833-927-4782

## 2019 STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

NAME AND AFFILIATION	REPRESENTING
Joe Tortorelli, <i>Steering Committee Chairman, WSTC Commissioner</i>	Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC)
Hester Serebrin, <i>WSTC Commissioner</i>	WSTC
Roy Jennings, <i>WSTC Commissioner</i>	WSTC
Representative Jake Fey, <i>Tacoma (D) 27th District</i>	Washington State House of Representatives
Senator Steve Hobbs, <i>Lake Stevens (D) 44th District</i>	Washington State Senate
Senator Curtis King, <i>Yakima (R) 14th District</i>	Washington State Senate
Representative Andrew Barkis, <i>Olympia (R) 2nd District</i>	Washington State House of Representatives
Representative Ed Orcutt, <i>Kalama (R) 20th District</i>	Washington State House of Representatives
Senator Rebecca Saldaña, <i>Seattle (D) 37th District</i>	Washington State Senate
Senator Phil Fortunato, <i>Auburn (R) 31st District</i>	Washington State Senate
Representative Bill Ramos, <i>Issaquah (D) 5th District</i>	Washington State House of Representatives
Jason Richter, <i>Deputy Treasurer</i>	Office of the State Treasurer
VACANT, <i>Community Transit Association of the NW</i>	Specialized transportation needs
Curt Augustine, <i>Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers</i>	Auto and light truck manufacturers
David Burnett, <i>Chehalis Tribe</i>	Tribes
Chris Herman, <i>Washington Public Ports Association</i>	Ports
Tom Hingson, <i>Everett Transit</i>	Public transportation
Rick Olson, <i>Director of Gov Relations &amp; Communications</i>	Puget Sound Regional Council
Meg McCann, <i>Deputy Director</i>	Department of Licensing
John Koster, <i>Executive Director, County Road Administration Board</i>	Counties
Mayor Mary Lou Pauly, <i>City of Issaquah</i>	Cities
Sharon Nelson, <i>Consumer Representative</i>	Consumer/Public
Bryce Yadon, <i>Futurewise</i>	Environmental
Tom Walrath, <i>T.E. Trucking, Inc.</i>	Trucking Industry
Doug Vaughn, <i>CFO, Strategic Planning &amp; Finance</i>	WSDOT
Janet Ray, <i>AAA Washington</i>	Motoring public
Neil Strege, <i>Washington Roundtable</i>	Business
Ted Trepanier, <i>INRIX</i>	User fee technology
Brian Ziegler, <i>Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board</i>	Freight infrastructure
Judy Clibborn, <i>Former Legislator</i>	Committee member since 2012