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WASHINGTON TRANSPORTATION  
FUNDING PUBLIC OPINION ASSESSMENT

 **WA RUC**





# Washington Transportation Funding Public Opinion Assessment

**FINAL REPORT OF FINDINGS**

**Prepared for Washington State Transportation Commission  
Road Usage Charge Pilot Project**

**December 2017**

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

DHM Research conducted a multi-phase research program to assess public perceptions of transportation funding and a potential road usage charge. An initial telephone survey assessed public perceptions of transportation funding, views of the gas tax, and familiarity with road usage charges (RUC). The research serves as a baseline measurement of public opinion prior to a pilot project that will launch in early 2018 and will also inform communications for the Road Usage Charge Project.

The telephone survey preceded five focus groups with Washington residents to gauge perceptions about transportation and assess interest in a possible road usage charge. The purpose of the research was to inform communications and recruitment for a road usage charge pilot project.

**Research Methodology:** The telephone survey consisted of 602 Washington residents and took approximately 17 minutes to complete. This is a sufficient sample size to assess opinions generally and to review findings by multiple subgroups, including age, gender, and area of the state.

Respondents were contacted by a live interviewer from a list of registered voters, which included cell phones (29% of participants were reached on cell phones). In gathering responses, a variety of quality control measures were employed, including questionnaire pre-testing and validation. Quotas and weighting were used to ensure that results are representative of the state's population. Results were weighted by age, gender, education, and area of the state. See Appendix A for complete participant demographics.

The five focus groups were held throughout July 2017 in the Tri-Cities, Spokane, Bellingham, Seattle, and Vancouver. Forty-five people participated in the groups. Participants were recruited from a list of registered voters. Efforts were made to ensure diversity by gender, age, income, political ideology, ethnicity, and area of region. See Appendix B for complete participant demographics.

**Statement of Limitations:** Any sampling of opinions or attitudes is subject to a margin of error. The margin of error is a standard statistical calculation that represents differences between the sample and total population at a confidence interval, or probability, calculated to be 95%. This means that there is a 95% probability that the sample taken for this study would fall within the stated margin of error if compared with the results achieved from surveying the entire population. The margin of error for the telephone survey is  $\pm 4.0\%$ .

The focus groups were led by a professional moderator and consisted of both written exercises and group discussions. Although research of this type is not designed to measure with statistical reliability the attitudes of a particular group, it is valuable for giving a sense of the attitudes and opinions of the population from which the sample was drawn.

This report highlights key findings from the focus groups. Each section reviews a major topic from the group discussions and includes representative quotations, as well as evaluative commentary. The quotes and commentary are drawn from both written exercises and transcripts produced from recordings of the group discussions. The referenced appendices provide the complete responses to all written exercises.

**DHM Research:** DHM Research has been providing opinion research and consultation throughout the Pacific Northwest and other regions of the United States for 40 years. The firm is nonpartisan and independent and specializes in research projects to support public policy making.

## 2.0 SUMMARY & OBSERVATIONS

**Transportation is a top-tier priority for many Washingtonians. For those in urban areas, it may be the top priority.**

Transportation is a top concern in the state, followed by education. Concerns about transportation are higher in urban areas, particularly urban areas in Western Washington. Residents see improved transportation—including better quality roads and bridges, congestion relief, and increased access to transit—as a benefit that would improve their quality of life.

**Residents do not know the details of transportation funding, but they believe funding is increasing overall. The road usage charge topic will require an on-going public learning campaign.**

Washington residents seem more aware of the gas tax than is typical in other states. Nearly half (45%) indicate that the current gas tax level is about what they thought they were paying and fewer than two in ten (16%) say they were not aware they were paying a gas tax. Knowledge does not run much deeper than awareness that gas taxes help fund transportation spending. The gas tax is primarily an out of sight, out of mind tax, and residents may like that.

Focus group results suggest most do not know how much they pay per gallon in tax or what their average gas tax bill per year might be. Yet the statewide survey reveals that half of residents (52%) think the gas tax is too much when they are told the actual amount. Awareness that there is a gas tax and a tendency to default to the idea that it is too much (whatever it is) may reflect media attention on this issue following implementation of gas tax increases over the past two years.

**Educational messages about the link between fuel-efficient vehicles and transportation funding are credible and believable.**

Most focus group participants believe transportation funding is increasing because they have heard about increases in the gas tax and registration fees, and because they believe recent population growth has provided a larger tax base. Although most said the dollars that go toward transportation are increasing, many were quick to point out that those dollars may not go as far due to increasing costs. Some skeptics said the state is not good at managing its resources. Residents are not typically making the connection on their own, however, that fuel taxes are decreasing as vehicles become more fuel-efficient.

To combat misconceptions and skepticism, information about the RUC pilot should include simple, informative points about the relationship between gas taxes and fuel-efficient vehicles. Many focus group participants were immediately receptive to this notion, but needed someone to help them connect the dots. Without laying this foundation, the necessity of a state research project may be rejected on the grounds that the government does not need additional funding.

**Even those who support the idea of a road usage charge need additional information about how it would impact their lives. More than half of residents oppose road usage charges.**

In the telephone survey, 58% oppose implementing a road usage charge. The survey format does not provide additional supporting information. Within a larger conversation about transportation funding that took place in the focus groups, most participants either saw it as a viable alternative to the gas tax or were open discussing it further. But even supportive participants needed additional information. Skeptics had

trouble envisioning how a charge would work or thought the cost of creating and administering a road usage charge would exceed the amount of revenue it could raise.

The most critical questions about a road usage charge are about accuracy, how users would report their miles, whether it would replace a gas tax or be levied in addition to it, and whether their personal information would be kept safe and not used for other—primarily commercial—purposes. The answers to these questions could have wide-reaching impacts on public support for a road usage charge, especially when it comes to the reporting methods available and the ability to choose between them.

**Fairness may be a challenging feature of road usage charging to communicate. Ultimately, residents hope any new tax structure will be fair, but each resident defines fairness differently.**

Descriptions of a road usage charge that focused on fairness were well-received by participants. Many had never considered that transportation revenue would decline as cars become more fuel-efficient, but they were receptive to such reasoning. Most, even those who admittedly drove much more than average, thought it was a fair way to tax residents.

However, many participants spoke about other elements of fairness, and not everyone agreed with the true meaning of “fair.” Some thought it would be fair for heavier vehicles to pay more per mile because they have a bigger impact on the roads. Others thought ability to pay should be considered so that a road usage charge does not negatively impact a low-income worker with a long commute or result in a large surprise bill at the end of the month. Those in rural areas thought it would be most fair if transportation funds were spent near where they were collected, at least for projects that sought to add capacity. While fairness itself is an attractive message to many, it is also interpreted in many ways.

**Focus group participants are very interested in providing their feedback on road usage charging as part of a research project and view it as a meaningful way to engage diverse perspectives.**

Nearly all participants said they were somewhat or very interested in joining a research project to test a road usage charge system. These participants saw a pilot project as a way to learn more about potential policy changes and to personally ensure a variety of perspectives were included in the research. Some saw it as a mode of meaningful civic engagement, and others were simply interested in cars, driving, transit options, and the quality of roads.

Participants were clear that many unresolved details would impact their decision whether to join the project. They needed to know how long the project would last, what time commitment would be expected of them, and whether they would need to restrict their transportation behavior in any way. Several participants said they would not want to join a research project if they could not choose their reporting method, primarily citing privacy concerns related to new technology or long waits at the Department of Licensing. Because purchasing a permit for a certain number of miles was far and away the most popular reporting method, additional details about permits during the research pilot may also color residents’ attitudes about joining.

## 3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

**Continue providing information about the pilot, with the understanding that it will be a long-term effort. Showing residents that their feedback is important to guide decisions will build goodwill.**

About half of residents (53%) are familiar with the concept of a road usage charge. Low familiarity shows the need for information; it is also an opportunity to explain the benefits of researching alternatives like road usage charging. A concern for many is that a road usage charge is just another way for Washington government to tax people or that the state is trying to force a new system of taxation on residents. Address this early on: even many of those opposed to a road usage charge program see the value in a thorough research project that represents all viewpoints. When describing the pilot, highlight that no decisions have been made and that participant feedback will have a tangible impact on the decision-making process.

**Start transportation conversations by addressing the public’s values, such as access to the outdoors, time with family, or access to work opportunities. Congestion, safe and quality roads and bridges, and access to transit are top transportation concerns.**

Transportation concerns evoke an emotional reaction. This emotion can drive interest, engagement, and motivation to change behaviors. Residents immediately link their state’s transportation system to their quality of life, especially when it comes to perceived shortcomings. Messages that point to top areas for improvement—better roads and safer bridges, easier access to transit in both urban and rural areas, and reduced traffic—will speak to residents’ values and pique their interest in the pilot program.

**Address fairness in a direct and simple way. Fairness resonates with Washingtonians. Do not make fairness complex by adding details, such as technical details or more numbers.**

Draft communications with an understanding that fairness is a complicated concept that means different things to different residents. Having all drivers share in paying for roads is a concern to Washington residents: if you use it, you help pay for it.

Although the concept of fairness in transportation funding is attractive to residents, they interpret the concept in different ways. If recruiting messages are too complex, residents may get bogged down in details about the program. While communications should be transparent about key elements of the program, a high-level approach may garner the most interest from residents.

**Provide options in the pilot program.**

Focus group participants showed a strong preference for purchasing an annual permit, but had many questions about how many miles they would be able to drive, how much the permit would cost, and what charges or refunds they would incur if they went over or under their miles. If the goal is to elicit resident feedback to guide these decisions, let potential recruits know that. Interested residents will want to be helpful and help shape state policy; the explicit opportunity to do so will be a draw for many. A successful recruit will likely require a choice in reporting method, as some residents value privacy over convenience, while others feel their time is more important.



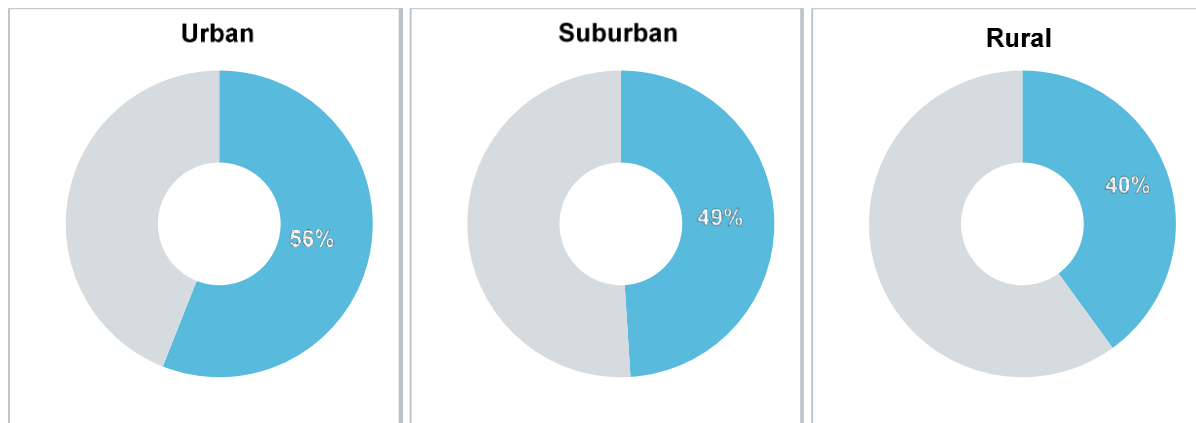
# 4.0 KEY FINDINGS

## 4.1 Community Priorities and Transportation

**A plurality of Washington residents believe the state is going in the right direction.**

More residents thought the state was going in the right direction (47%) rather than headed down the wrong track (40%). One in ten (13%) were unsure. Optimism was higher among urban residents, which is typically found in other surveys as well. Those with higher education were also more optimistic.

**Chart 1. State Moving in the Right Direction**



Source: DHM Research, June 2017

**Transportation is often a top-tier priority for Washington residents.**

When asked in an open-ended question what is the most important issue in Washington that they would like elected official to address, Washingtonians identified transportation (17%) and education (16%) as top priorities. Roads and infrastructure were the most common transportation concern, followed by traffic. Asking the question in an open-ended manner highlighted the issues that were top of mind for Washington residents without any prompting. These results tell us that transportation is an important concern overall.

**Table 1. Important Issues in Washington**

17%	<b>Transportation</b>
16%	<b>Education</b>
9%	<b>Reduce taxes</b>
5%	<b>Healthcare</b>
5%	<b>Homelessness</b>
5%	<b>Political issues</b>

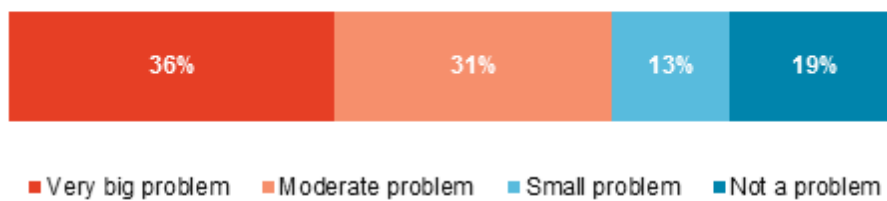
Source: DHM Research,

Focus group discussion validated the telephone survey findings. Participants in the groups also mentioned transportation as a major issue, alongside other issues such as education, housing availability and affordability, homelessness, and proper and effective governance.

**Overall, a majority of Washington residents indicate traffic congestion is a very big or moderate problem in their community, and they link the transportation system to their quality of life.**

Residents will most likely be looking to see solutions: 36% saw traffic congestion as a very big problem, almost double the amount that saw it as not a problem (19%), suggesting strong emotions about the issue.

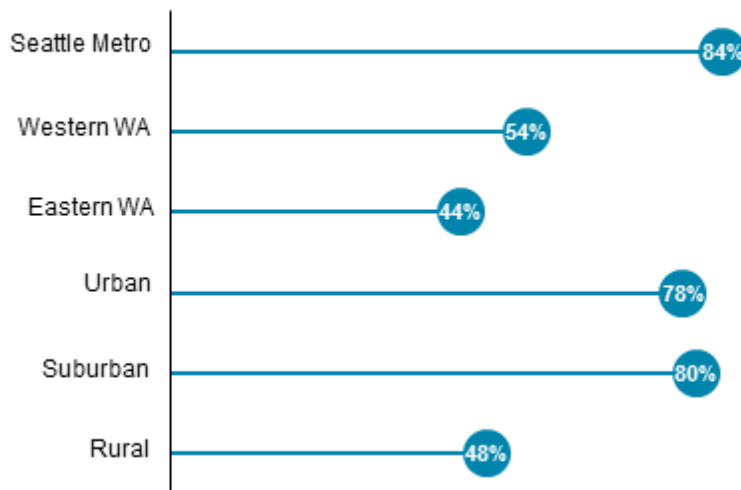
**Chart 2. Traffic Congestion**



Source: DHM Research, June 2017

Public perceptions of the magnitude of problem posed by traffic congestion varied across the state and by the type of region residents lived in. More of those living in the Seattle Metro area felt traffic was a problem; more of those in both urban and suburban communities across the state felt traffic was a problem.

**Chart 3. Congestion is a Very Big / Moderate Problem**



Source: DHM Research, June 2017

Discussions in the focus groups help illustrate the impact of traffic congestion on residents’ daily lives. Traffic was commonly mentioned both in Western and Eastern Washington focus groups.

*"[Traffic] impacts my ability to travel to see family or do business. I would like to see improvements to the infrastructure and perhaps a through-lane."*

*–Bellingham*

*"Compared to when I first got here to now, traffic is horrible any time of the day."*

*–Spokane*

Vancouver participants were the most concerned with transportation overall, citing congestion as their top concern. They discussed the impact traffic has on their ability to get to work, pick up their children from school and activities, and complete errands in the evenings.

*"I know as I kind of look around for work, [I may be] actively passing up jobs that are in Portland. It is just like, 'Well, there are two extra hours onto my workday.' Now, I am going to factor that in, plus the gas, plus just the headache of it. I'm more inclined to look closer to the Vancouver side."*

*–Vancouver*

*"My ability to get across to a lot of the work and job opportunities in Portland. It tacks on an extra hour each way to my work day."*

*–Vancouver*

One participant went beyond congestion to describe how vital transportation is to a healthy economy in Washington, and that, as such, transportation should be a top priority for Washington leaders.

*"[Transportation] needs to be top three [issues for the state]. It needs to be healthcare, education, and roads. Because everything else, you've got to have smart people, you've got to have healthy people, and you've got to have ways to get goods and services moved around the state."*

*–Tri-Cities*

**Six in ten residents think Washington’s state highways are excellent or good, suggesting there will be some challenges in explaining the implications of the transportation funding outlook.**

The majority of residents (64%) felt that state highways in their area were excellent or good. This suggests that they will not necessarily see a strong need for additional funding to maintain the roads. However, this question does not address congestion, which Washingtonians, particularly in urban areas, cited as the biggest transportation challenge.

**Chart 4. Quality of State Highways**



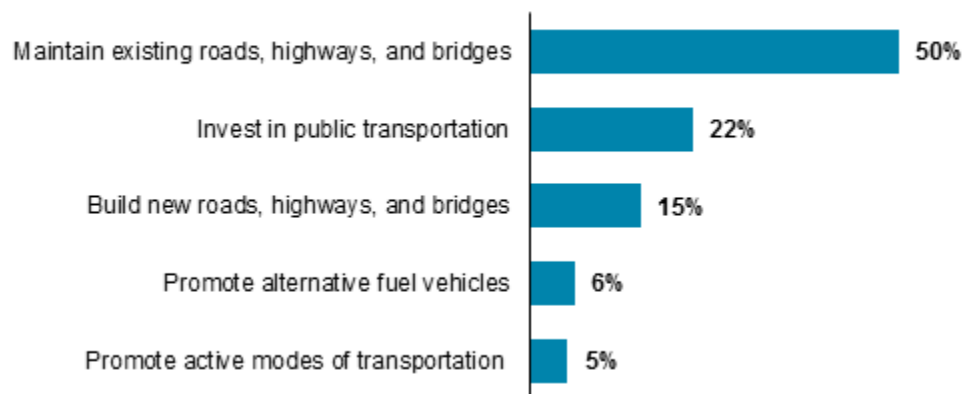
Source: DHM Research, June 2017

## 4.2 Perceptions of Transportation Funding

### Residents prioritize maintenance of existing roads, followed by investing in public transportation.

Residents often prefer that funds go first to maintenance of existing resources, and that is in fact where half of Washington residents would like to see transportation funds directed. Public transportation investment was the second highest priority for residents (22%), which aligns with the funding of recent public transit packages in the Puget Sound area.

**Chart 5. Top Transportation Priority**



Source: DHM Research, June 2017

### When it comes to specific improvements, residents hope to see improved maintenance and an eye toward population growth and road capacity.

When asked specifically about needed transportation improvements in their community, focus group participants expressed a desire for better road and bridge maintenance. Participants focused primarily on local roads and highways, rather than the Interstate (or intercity) highways. The issue of maintenance raised emotions in the group, who cited specific impacts of these perceived inadequacies.

*“[A bridge] just collapsed. It hadn’t been maintained is what they decided. I think that’s really sad. It makes me angry. Why haven’t we kept things going? It’s really important.”*

*–Bellingham*

*“Potholes. Quality of roads. It seems to me like maybe they are using cheaper materials and that’s why we’re having the problems with the potholes.”*

*–Spokane*

Those from Eastern Washington were more likely to mention inequalities between road maintenance in different regions of the state, but even participants in Seattle and Bellingham mentioned these issues. Throughout the groups, some participants continued to express opinions that Eastern Washington was not always treated fairly, that leaders in Western Washington made decisions about other communities rather than the communities themselves, or that transportation funding should be spent locally, where it was raised.

*“The roads in Eastern Washington are not kept up as well as Western Washington or North part of Washington.”*

*–Tri-Cities*

*“Funding should be driven by region. Taxes collected on this side of the state should be used for improvements here.”*

*–Spokane*

Participants from all regions also desired more evidence that their local and state leaders were acknowledging population growth and building additional capacity. As discussed throughout this report, participants believed several entities should be responsible for ensuring such improvements, including developers.

*“Locally, one thing I see is there is a lot of development that happens without infrastructure, roads, that can meet the increased demand of apartments being built.”*

*–Spokane*

*“I think that the builder should take some responsibility when they are making all this money, building these subdivisions. They need to take some responsibility by adding the new roads and the new lights, because it takes the burden off of the rest of the taxpayers in the county, and it improves the quality of life.”*

*–Vancouver*

### **Nonetheless, residents identified specific improvements to the transportation system in Washington.**

Despite the shared belief that there was much work to do, focus group participants from across the state mentioned that some things have improved over the past few years. Some participants spoke positively about improvements that increased capacity and improved traffic flow.

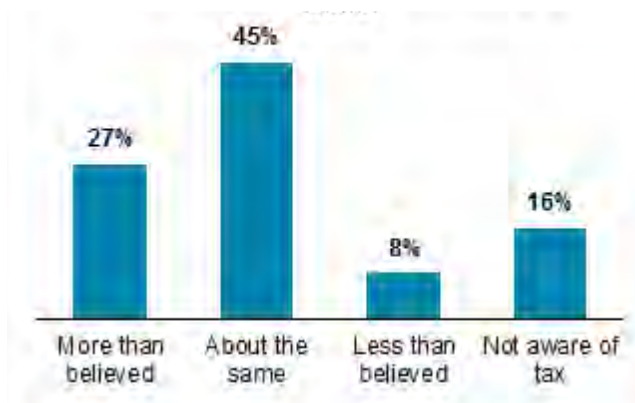
*“Compared to when I was growing up, I remember 395, that’s how you got to Seattle on this two-lane road all the way. Things have improved a lot in the last few years.”*

*–Tri-Cities resident*

### **Over four in ten say the current gas tax (about \$370 per year) is what they thought they were paying; about half say it is too much.**

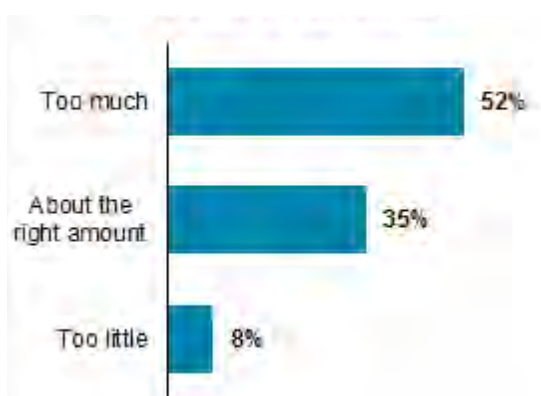
The 45% of Washington residents who said that the current gas tax level is about what they thought they were paying was higher than we have found in some other states. We typically find more people are unaware of the gas tax they are paying. Greater awareness in Washington may reflect media attention in the state following implementation of increases over the past two years. Half (52%) thought the gas tax was too much. This number may also reflect discussions around the state related to the gas tax increase.

**Chart 6. Current Gas Tax Amount: Reality vs. Belief**



Source: DHM Research, June 2017

**Chart 7. Impression of Tax Amount**



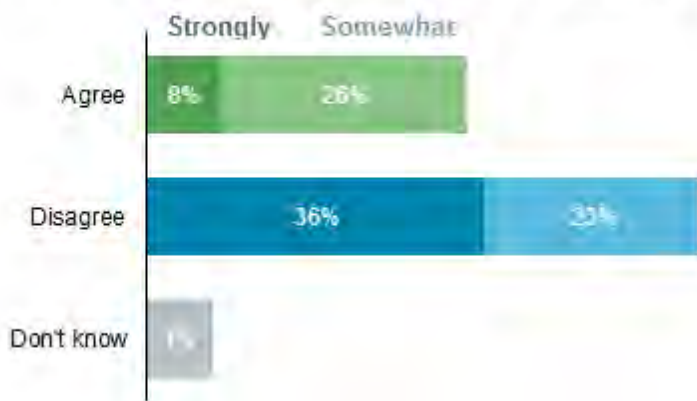
Source: DHM Research, June 2017

When we asked participants in the focus group in a more open-ended question how transportation is funded in the state, most participants identified the gas tax and vehicle registration fees as sources of transportation funding. This validated the level of awareness found in the telephone survey. There were still some possible misperceptions, nonetheless, with a few mentions of property, business and occupation taxes. Although more than half of participants could accurately cite sources of revenue, very few were able to say with certainty how much they paid in gas tax each year. Participants represented a variety of driving habits, but guesses ranged widely from a few hundred dollars per year to \$5,000.

**Skepticism about how well the government manages transportation spending in Washington may pose a challenge for discussion about transportation funding.**

A majority of residents disagreed that government does a good job managing transportation spending in the state of Washington. One in three disagreed strongly, suggesting some difficulty in moving opinion about the importance of a RUC pilot or recruiting participants. However, it may be more possible to impact perceptions among those who somewhat disagree, somewhat agree, or do not know.

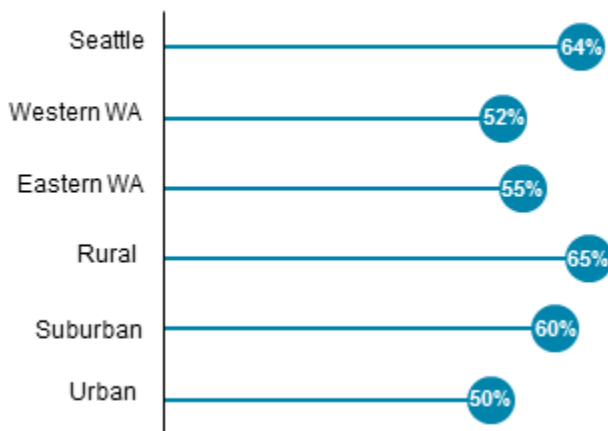
**Chart 8. Government Manages Transportation Spending Well**



Source: DHM Research, June 2017

Disagreement was higher in the Puget Sound area and in rural Washington. We would expect higher disagreement in rural Washington, consistent with the greater numbers of conservative voters in those areas. A recent gas tax increase and a large public transit package underway in the Puget Sound area may have colored residents' attitudes in that region. Opinions in this area may be worth some additional research to probe residents' concerns more fully.

**Chart 9. Disagree: Government Manages Transportation Well**



Source: DHM Research, June 2017

**The vast majority of participants believe that funding for transportation is increasing, but many believe that costs associated with providing services are increasing at a faster rate.**

Focus group discussions brought additional nuance to the overall picture of how Washington residents think about the transportation funding. Overwhelmingly, participants believed that transportation funding in the state is increasing. Participants pointed to two major reasons for this belief: population growth that has provided a larger tax base and increased gas taxes and vehicle registration fees. However, despite the

belief that actual dollars for transportation are increasing, most participants also thought that the cost of projects and transportation needs were increasing at an even faster clip.

*"I said that it was increasing, based on the population increase within the area. The more people paying for gas, the more gas tax, the more funds going into the account."*

–Vancouver

*"I'm assuming that the money going towards it is increasing, but the labor for the work itself being done is increasing at a faster pace. We're paying more into it, but we're getting less."*

–Spokane

Some participants were more skeptical and thought that while funding might be increasing, fewer improvements were being made due to government waste and inefficiency. These skeptics were a minority, but tended to hold the same views throughout the duration of the discussion. One pointed to a project that included an artistic design element as a clear sign of waste, while others were unable to offer specific examples.

On the other hand, some participants thought transportation funding is on the decline, without prompting, due to economic conditions and increased fuel efficiency. One participant specifically noted that the gas tax cannot remain a viable source of revenue for road maintenance in the future.

*"I guess it's decreasing. It's being talked about a lot in the news. Revenue and things, we're having issues and it hasn't caught up."*

–Bellingham

*"I think collection is going down. Just more efficient mileage. I think they are collecting less."*

–Vancouver

*"The gas tax isn't covering what we need to feasibly maintain the roads that we have. It's not working."*

–Spokane

**Many participants, especially from the eastern side of the state, feel strongly that funds collected for transportation should be spent locally.**

Eastern Washington participants felt that leaders in other parts of the state were making decisions for their communities without the knowledge and experience of those living in Eastern Washington. They wanted to ensure that their region received its fair share of funding and they often expressed a desire that funds raised in Eastern Washington be spent locally to achieve that goal.

*"I don't want somebody in Seattle to make decisions for Tri-Cities when they have no idea what's going on here."*

–Tri-Cities

Although these comments came up primarily in Tri-Cities and Spokane, some participants from Western Washington also mentioned the issue, seeking to ensure that all state residents benefit from road maintenance.



*“I drew a distinction between maintenance, which everybody should participate in, versus new roads. Which, if you’re building a new road in Spokane County, people in Spokane County should pay for that road, I think, not people in Jefferson County.”*

–Seattle

**Many participants believe user fees are a fair way to charge motorists for roads, but several recognize that all residents benefit from transportation—even those who do not drive.**

User fees were popular in each group, and participants brought them up frequently as a guiding principle that state leaders should consider in developing funding policies. Participants highlighted that user fees seemed to be a fair way of collecting revenue.

*“I think with transportation it should be the people who use it the most pay for it the most. And I’m not convinced that the trucking industry, for instance, is paying truly their fair share of the cost.”*

–Tri-Cities

*“[User fees] take the burden off of those that really don’t use the highways as much anymore, such as our seniors.”*

–Vancouver

Participants saw links between user fees and public transit. They noted that transit is funded in part through fares, and furthermore, thought a usage-based system of charging drivers could serve as an incentive to get residents out of their cars and help reduce emissions.

Although user fees were viewed positively, many participants did note that even residents who do not drive or spend much time on the roads still benefit from a healthy transportation system. These participants thought such considerations should play a role in determining public policy.

*“You may not use the road a lot, but the ambulance is going to come when you have a heart attack. We need to maintain that. I hear a lot of, that the east side doesn’t want to pay for the west side. Why aren’t we two different states? I understand the mentality. ‘Why are we paying for Seattle?’ The thing is that the pool, when we all work together, is able to work much better.”*

–Bellingham

One participant explained that, regardless of the sources of funding, the state should focus on the end goal: a transportation system that works for everyone and bolsters the state’s economy.

*“I think for principle, the best way to fund it is to find the best way to effectively move people and products on the public roadways.”*

–Spokane

### 4.3 Perceptions of Road Usage Charge

Information is needed to help increase understanding of road usage charging to support recruiting for the pilot.

**Chart 10. Familiarity with Road Use Charge**



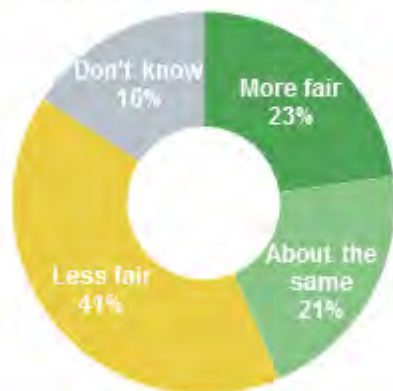
Source: DHM Research, June 2017

About half of residents (53%) were familiar with the concept of road usage charging, with 18% saying they were very familiar. This suggests the need for more information about road usage charging and also points to an opportunity to explain the benefits of researching and piloting an idea like road usage charging.

**Washington residents are somewhat split as to how fair a road usage charge is; four in ten believe it is less fair.**

In this baseline question about how they view a road usage charge, a plurality said it is less fair than a gas tax (41%). Two in ten thought it was about the same (21%) or more fair (23%), meaning 44% overall would view it as the same or better than a gas tax. Sixteen percent were unsure, reinforcing the need for public information about road usage charging.

**Chart 11. Perceived Fairness of RUC**



Source: DHM Research, June 2017

**Positive attitudes in the focus groups coincide with an understanding that all drivers need to chip in for the cost of road maintenance.**

More than half of the 45 participants said their first impression of a road usage charge was either positive (19) or neutral (8). Those with positive impressions seemed to immediately understand the need for all drivers to chip in for the cost of road maintenance, even if their vehicle was especially fuel-efficient.

*“I think it’s positive. I drive a hybrid. That’s on purpose. I feel like the state needs more money. I get that. I’m still using the road, but want them to be maintained. I feel that makes sense to me.”*

–Bellingham

*“One of my first impressions is that I would be paying a lot, which makes sense. Yeah, it’s fair. A lot of people wouldn’t like it very much.”*

–Bellingham

Others had neutral views, and saw it as a good candidate for replacing the gas tax—which they saw as a similar revenue source. Some of these participants thought a road usage charge was even more fair than a gas tax, because of the impact of the gas tax on low-income drivers with older vehicles.

*“I think we already have this. We have this now. We pay 49 cents for gas. The more you drive, the more you’re burning in fuel. It’s like a user fee. It’s kind of the same thing.”*

–Tri-Cities

*“I think the current system is actually quite a bit more unfair because what we have right now with a gas tax is a poor tax.”*

–Spokane

Of course, there were also participants who had negative impressions about a road usage charge (10), or expressed skepticism (8). Some participants believed a road usage charge would be levied in addition to the gas tax, echoing concerns from the quantitative research. Others thought the system sounded too expensive to create and maintain. Others bristled at the idea of charging drivers based on their mileage, considering many people commute long distances to get to their jobs. Participants did not always see a connection between drivers who already pay more in gas tax to commute long distances to their job and a possible road usage charge.

*“They’re not saying to take away the gas tax. They’re just doing this in addition. This is a proposal.”*

–Bellingham

*“I believe that the cost to maintain this [system] outweighs the loss of [gas tax] revenue.”*

–Tri-Cities

*“Absolutely not! Some people commute for their jobs.”*

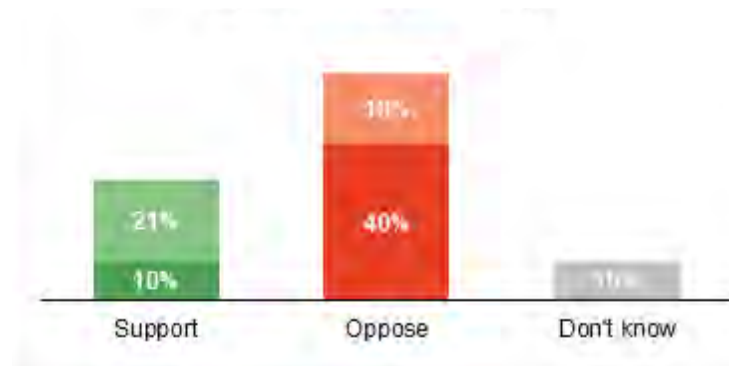
–Seattle

These initial impressions provide helpful guidance, but participants’ questions show that the details of any program will have a marked impact in how they perceive it. Concerns about privacy, government efficiency, and convenience are likely to be the biggest factors in perception.

**Residents have reservations about switching to a road usage charging program.**

A majority of residents (58%) opposed this type of transportation funding in Washington, with 40% strongly opposed.

**Chart 12. Opinion: Road Use Charge**



Source: DHM Research, June 2017

Opposition was higher in rural areas, although similar across Western and Eastern regions generally. Familiarity with road usage charging did not relate to levels of support: those who were familiar with road usage charging were neither more or less likely to support it. Beliefs about government spending were related to level of support. Those who thought they paid more than their fair share for public services more often opposed a road usage charge program, as did those who disagreed that government does a good job managing transportation spending in the State of Washington.

**Residents are concerned about people paying their fair share and only paying one tax.**

When asked what the most important issue was when thinking about paying a road usage charge, residents identified everyone paying their fair share as the most important (28%), followed by assurance that people not pay both a gas tax and per-mile charge (26%). Privacy issues were the third-highest concern (20%).

**Chart 13. RUC: Most Important Issue**



Source: DHM Research, June 2017

**Common concerns from the focus group discussions included how a road usage charge would be monitored, how taxes would be collected, and whether their privacy would be respected.**

Participants in the focus groups were also asked if they thought a road usage charge was a good idea. Of the 45 participants, 21 said that it was, while 16 said it was not. The remaining 8 participants were unsure. Regardless of support, participants had a slew of questions about how road usage charges would work.

Over the years, privacy has typically been a major concern for people learning about the idea of a road usage charge. Washington residents were also concerned about privacy, although concerns seemed slightly diminished. This may be due to rapid advances in technology and GPS-based apps in the last few years.

In fact, some participants thought the added ease of using technology to accurately track their mileage would be a worthwhile benefit. However, not all participants shared this opinion.

*“[Automatic reporting] makes a lot more sense as a choice, but I know a lot of people who would just be up in arms about this if this was mandatory, because it’s a government regulation mandating a device on your vehicle. That’s where it starts to get into iffy territory.”*  
 –Spokane

*“Who is going to allow them to put a GPS on their car?”*  
 –Tri-Cities

Many participants dwelled heavily on the mechanics of a road usage charge, including how mileage would be reported, how often they would be billed, how much the bills might cost, and what would happen in case of inaccuracies. Naturally, participants also wanted to know for certain whether a road usage charge would be in addition to the gas tax, or in lieu of it.

*“It was a little scary at first because the first thing that popped in my head was like, ‘Okay, so how are they going to evaluate that? If it is not going to be considered a toll, then it is going to be per miles.’ Is it going to be treated as a property tax and based off your actual mileage when you report it? Is it done through the DOL? I was just thinking all of these things because I am a working parent, and I drive a lot.”*

–Vancouver

More questions arose as participants mulled over whether a road usage charge was “fair,” a word with different meanings to different participants. Participants considered the impact heavier vehicles have on roads, the affordability of a road usage charge for low-income residents and seniors, and whether it would reduce the incentives for driving a fuel-efficient car.

*“There has to be some kind of way to calculate the weight in there as well.”*

–Bellingham

*“If it is a senior, and their main travel is to and from their doctor’s appointments or something, I think there should be a minimum number of miles that are exempt.”*

–Vancouver

*“Either we want to encourage people to drive hybrid cars or we don’t.”*

–Spokane

One concern that came up time and again regarded residents who drive out of state. Participants did not think it would be appropriate for the state to charge them for the use of roads outside Washington’s boundaries. Additionally, residents wondered about tourists, who purchase gas in the Washington, but would not contribute to a road usage charge if the state switched to that funding mechanism. There were also a few concerns about changes in car ownership and what would happen if a driver lent their car to someone.

*“I was trying to determine, because we are so close to the border of Oregon, how are we going to determine [miles]? I spend half of my time driving in Oregon.”*

–Vancouver

*“I don’t like it. I just don’t think there’s a way to do it equally, fairly for everyone. People coming into the state, I just don’t think there’s a way of doing it fairly.”*

–Tri-Cities

*“My concern is how is going to be reported. Is it even practical at all? What if you, in the middle of the month, sell your car?”*

–Vancouver

In addition to all these questions, some participants also wanted to know more about the context of road usage charging. It may be important to residents to know whether Washington is an innovator on the subject, or whether the method is tried and true.

*“I would have to see what other states are doing to fund their roads. It seems very similar to the gas tax in the end.”*

–Vancouver

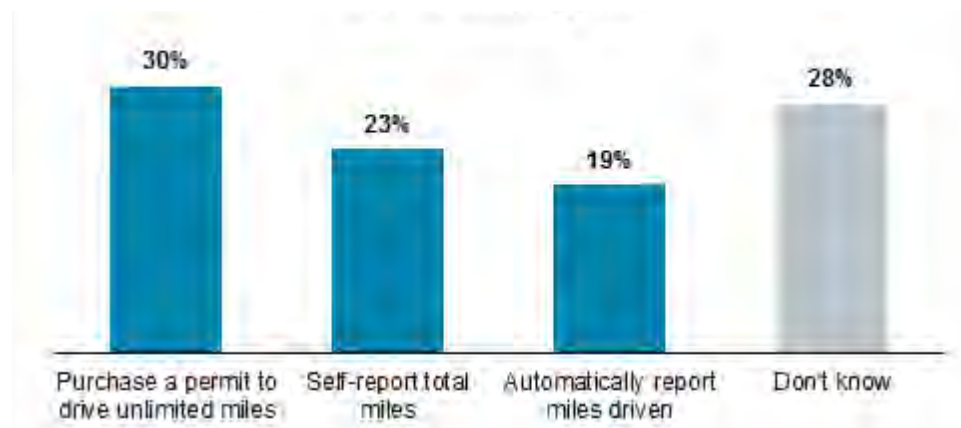
*“If it works really well here, and it is something that we can incorporate nationwide, then that would be a really cool thing for everybody.”*

–Vancouver

**Overall, residents prefer the option of buying an annual permit—but the state’s answers to their questions may shift these opinions.**

In both the survey and the focus groups, an annual permit was the preferred option among three potential methods (annual permit, self-report, automatic report). Preferences may shift substantially once more details about the specifics are known (particularly the price). In the phone survey, for example, nearly as many said they did not know (28%) as picked the annual permit (30%).

**Chart 14. RUC: Preferred Options**



Source: DHM Research, June 2017

Participants in the focus groups were introduced to the three methods of charging and were able to share their questions or concerns for each. Many of these questions echoed those they had asked earlier in the group, before they had information about the mileage reporting methods.

About half of participants indicated a preference for purchasing an annual permit, which they saw as convenient and non-invasive. In addition to price, participants wanted to know whether there would be multiple permits to choose from, each reflecting a different number of miles permitted per year. Additionally, they wanted to know what would happen if they went over or under their allowed mileage, or how a resident might account for loaning their car, or even selling it. Finally, they also wanted to know whether permits were created for individuals or vehicles, whether they would need to purchase one for each of their vehicles, and whether business and personal use would be treated the same.

*“The permits, are they tiered? Scalable? It’s really [like] cellphone questions, right? What about overages? Do I get rollover minutes, if I don’t use all of mine up?”*

–Bellingham

If future participants in a pilot project were offered only one permit—at a large cost that covered mileage much greater than average—this interest is likely to drop significantly.

**Participants are concerned that if they self-reported their mileage they would be charged for miles driven out of state.**

Although miles driven out of state was a significant concern regarding road usage charging generally, it was mentioned frequently in relation to self-reporting mileage. Participants wondered if they would have to manually record when they drove out of state, whether such miles could even be deducted from their charges, and whether their fellow residents would be honest in reporting.

A few participants asked whether they would need to bring each of their vehicles in separately to monitor mileage, which would add to the hassle of reporting. Several commented that spending extra time at the Department of Licensing did not sound appealing.

One candid participant lacked faith the road usage charge could be collected if someone chose to be dishonest.

*“I chose the lazy way, put it in once and forget about it and then just don’t pay it. Trying to cheat the system. What are you going to do to me if I don’t pay? If you don’t pay the gas tax, you run out of gas.”*

–Seattle

**Automatically reporting mileage with the assistance of a device is viewed as convenient—and for many, an invasion of privacy.**

Participants could be split into two camps regarding automatically reporting their miles: those who thought it would be easy, fair, and accurate, and those who were very uncomfortable with the idea. Regardless of their opinions, many had the same questions about how such a system would work and its feasibility.

For example, participants wanted to know if the device would rely on GPS or some other method, and whether the government or a private company would receive and own the data collected. They were curious as to whether the driver would pay for the device or if one would be provided and whether it could be used in older cars or by people without smartphones.

Those opposed were typically emphatic in their opinion that they would not want to engage in mileage tracking this way.

*“If this happens, I would stop driving and sell my car.”*

–Tri-Cities

*“I don’t want that because I don’t want the government putting a little tracker in my car. They’re not just going to put how many miles they’re going.”*

–Bellingham

*“Most fair, but most invasive to personal freedoms.”*

–Tri-Cities



Others were less skeptical, but had a lot of questions about how it would work. For example, they wanted to know if drivers could dodge fees simply by deleting the app or removing it from their vehicle. There were also concerns about accuracy and what recourse would be available in the event mileage was misreported.

*“I wasn’t completely opposed to this. What kind of device is it? Is it GPS? Is it something that plugs into by OBD sensor and logs the miles and pull that out and go to the DMV once a year? I don’t have a problem with that.”*

*–Bellingham*

*“I think with the automatic one, and probably with all of them, how do you dispute it?”*

*–Bellingham*

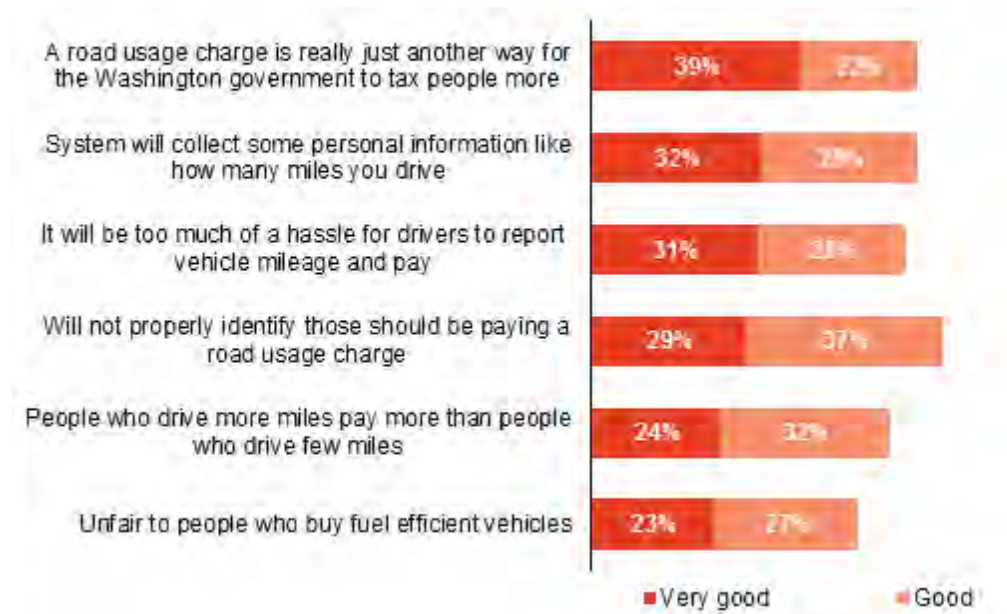
These differences in opinion illuminate the importance of choice for residents in any road usage charge pilot project. Because residents have vastly different opinions, habits, and desires, a variety of options may improve the success of recruitment for a pilot project. Participants discussed these concerns at greater length when they talked about reasons they may not be interested in joining a pilot project. Additional analysis of these comments may be found in **Error! Reference source not found.** Communicating.

## 4.4 Communicating

**Residents find opposing arguments to be good ones—particularly that a road usage charge is just another way for government to tax people.**

Throughout the telephone survey, results suggested residents held some doubt or skepticism about the government in relation to road usage charging. Reinforcing this theme, respondents were most receptive to the argument that *the charge is really just another way for the Washington government to tax people more*—39% stated it was a very good reason to oppose the policy (39%). Although privacy concerns looked to be lower than they have been in previous years elsewhere, nonetheless nearly one in three (32%) found that the *system will collect some personal information* to be a very good reason to oppose the policy as well.

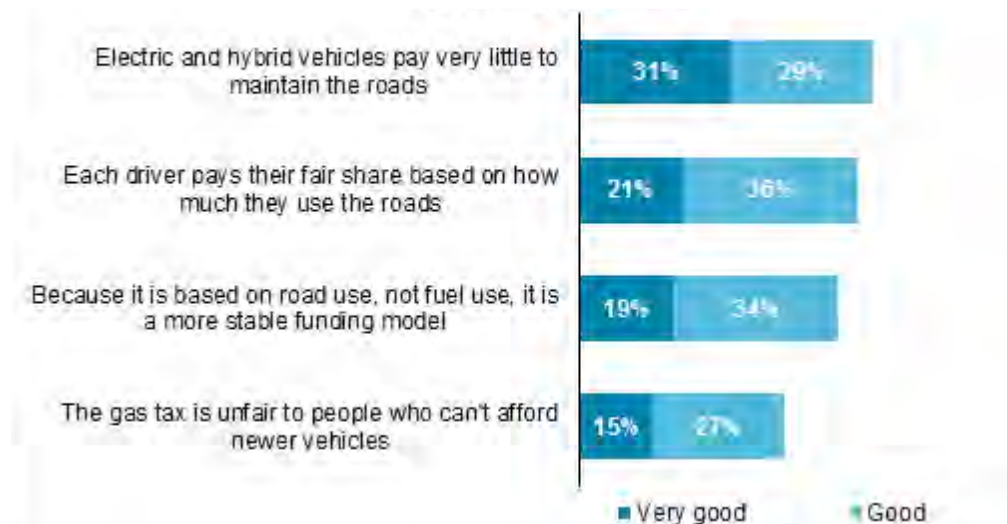
**Chart 15. RUC Opposing Arguments**



Source: DHM Research, June 2017

Residents heard four arguments in support of a road usage charge and indicated how good of a reason each was to support the policy. The idea that *electric and hybrid vehicles pay very little to maintain the roads* was the strongest (31% thought it a very good reason) in the telephone survey. Nonetheless, reasons to support a road usage charge were generally less convincing than reasons to oppose.

**Chart 16. RUC Supporting Arguments**



Source: DHM Research, June 2017

**Fairness is an effective message for garnering support for a road usage charge pilot, but residents rely on different interpretations of what is “fair.”**

Focus group research followed up on the quantitative research results in order to better understand how residents were thinking about this issue. Participants responded to four different reasons to support a road usage charge. Among these, the most compelling reason was that *road usage charges ensure each driver pays their fair share based on how much they use the roads*. This reason earned an average score of 1.9, where 1 is the most compelling reason and 4 is the least compelling.

That this reason was considered the most compelling is unsurprising considering the many comments participants made about the fairness of such a system. As they had already discussed, a road usage charge is rooted in the idea that those who use roads the most pay the most.

Participants talked at some length about the implications for low-income residents, namely that a system based on miles could be fairer than a gas tax because residents would not pay based on their ability to afford newer, fuel-efficient cars. Residents also mentioned that the weight of a vehicle should be considered to ensure a road usage charge was as fair as possible. These discussions show that a message focused on “fairness” may be compelling—but may also spark debate about the details of the policy that may either increase or diminish support among residents.

The second-most compelling reason to support a road usage charge was that *transportation funding is projected to decrease because people are buying less gas due to more fuel-efficient vehicles. A road usage charge would provide a more stable funding stream to maintain our roadways because it is based on usage, not fuel*. This message earned an average rating of 2.2.

As with the first message, the discussion presented pros and cons of such reasoning. Notably, many participants assumed transportation funding was increasing—although most of these participants did recognize that the costs of improvements are also rising. While residents may need additional information about transportation revenue in Washington, they are likely to be receptive to such information and to believe it, so long as they are reminded of the impact of more fuel-efficient vehicles on the road.

*“I hadn’t considered that revenue was dropping because of fuel efficiency with vehicles. That is something that didn’t cross my mind at all until this evening.”*

–Vancouver

The least effective message about road usage charging was *electric and hybrid cars pay very little per mile to maintain the roads because they use less gas, but people with inefficient cars pay lot more per mile because they use more gas. It’s only fair that every driver helps to maintain our roads*. Overall, this message earned a 3.0 rating.

Although this message also calls upon fairness, the highest-rated message was simpler. This message also draws attention to the issue of inefficient cars, but it does not distinguish between low-income residents who drive older cars for financial reasons and residents who may choose to purchase large, inefficient vehicles for other reasons. Rather than framing fairness as something all residents engage in, it singles out electric and hybrid vehicles. These factors are possible reasons participants rated this message as the least compelling.

Future communications about the pilot should inform the public about the cause of declining revenues to demonstrate need and build trust. While fairness is likely a strong motivator for residents, information

should remain simple. Otherwise, they may raise too many questions about details of the program that may distract potential recruits or muddy the waters.

## 4.5 Road Usage Charge Research Project

**Despite questions about the details, nearly all focus group participants expressed interest in participating in a research project on road usage charging.**

Of the 45 participants, 40 said they were very interested (29) or somewhat interested (11) in joining a *research project on road usage charging to test an alternative to the gas tax*. Participants were overwhelmingly interested, despite asking many questions about the research project and how it would be conducted.

Perhaps the most critical question was whether participants would be allowed to choose their reporting method. It was clear from participants' responses that they like to be able to choose the method that best fits their values and lifestyle. The recruitment process for the research project should highlight this option for residents to maximize the number of volunteers.

It was also critical that participants knew up front how much time it would take to participate and whether participation would be in person or online. Residents guessed that they might need to meet quarterly for an hour long, in-person discussion. Others thought they might need to spend a few minutes per week reporting their miles or filling out an online survey.

Some questions considered finer details and reflected earlier questions about road usage charging generally. These questions included whether driving behavior or vehicle ownership would be limited in any way by participating, what would happen in the event of car trouble or the sale of a car, and whether certain cars or participants would be ineligible. Participants also wanted to know how privacy would be protected if they used a device to track their miles.

Other questions were specific to the research project, rather than the concept of road usage charging. Participants' interest was piqued by the mention of an incentive, but they wanted to know specifically what it would be before they were ready to participate. Some participants thought incentives of \$100 per in-person discussion, while others thought they might receive gas cards, reimbursement of gas taxes, or free road usage charge fees in the future.

*"It depends what you get. I'm sorry. How much money, or what is the incentive?"*

*–Seattle*

Participants also wanted to know whether they would pay for a gas tax, road usage charge, or both during the project. It would also be helpful for potential recruits to know exactly how their feedback would be used. Messages that explain the purpose of the project should use the opportunity to inform residents that the state does not have plans to roll out a road usage charge, but is merely studying the issue. This information may build trust among more skeptical residents, who are inclined to believe the state is pushing for a specific policy.

It is also worth noting that focus group participants may have expressed a level of interest in the pilot project that exceeds that of the general public. These participants all share one trait in common: they already chose to spend some of their free time participating in research. Furthermore, when asked to share their interest in participating in a research project about road usage charging, they had already discussed

the issue for over an hour. They may have felt more invested in the concept than the average resident, and they had the benefit of learning additional details that the average resident may not have before them when they learn the state is recruiting participants.

**Participants show interest in a research project because they want to share their experiences and values with state leaders and learn more about road usage charging.**

Although participants cited many reasons for their interest in joining a state-led research project on road usage charging, the most common theme was that they simply wanted to know their opinions mattered to the state in its decision-making.

Of course, there were many nuances to this. Participants spoke about the importance of civic engagement, that it is a prime opportunity to “beta test” the technology before any decisions are made, and that they believed their own experiences could help round out the state’s collection of diverse perspectives.

*“It’s a very interesting subject. It’s just like voting. I mean, you can sit around and complain all you want to, but if you have an opportunity to do something, you should do it.”*

–Seattle

*“It’s important to get as many viewpoints as you can. If it’s talking about guiding the state’s future funding policy, everybody should have a voice. There’s many variables.”*

–Bellingham

Some residents were interested because of their driving behavior and interest in cars and the transportation system. These participants noted that they were heavy users of the roads. In addition to providing feedback from the perspective of someone who drives a lot, they would be able to test a road usage charge for themselves and uncover their preferences before any such system was, if ever, put in place.

*“I think it would be helpful to know what all the options are and how they are going to work beforehand and to be able to get a feel for them.”*

–Spokane

*“I own a lot of vehicles and I drive a lot. Good roads, it’s enough to have an interest in roads being maintained well. I’m interested in it. I’ve followed it in the news. I read about it a little bit when it’s a headline.”*

–Bellingham

At least one participant who balked at the concept of a road usage charge expressed deep interest in a research project.

*“I’m just saying I am highly interested in participating, but for the completely opposite reason. I don’t like the idea of this. It’s more that I want to be convinced as to why this would be a good thing and how it would work because I don’t like it.”*

–Spokane

Meanwhile, others saw transportation funding as reason enough to participate. One participant assumed the road usage charge would benefit all types of transportation funding, spurring interest in the project.

*“The funding for improving our roads that goes to the DOT also goes for public transportation. Presumably, this is all for DOT, not just road maintenance. As a result, having some efficient method for increasing revenue for transportation, period, whether it’s roads or public transportation, mass transit, bikeways. It’s all integrated. That’s why I’m interested in it.”*

*–Bellingham*

Some potential participants may respond well to this notion of multi-modal investment, particularly in urban areas where transit and biking are more common.

**A successful recruit for a research project will almost certainly need the option of choosing their own reporting method.**

Participants were clear from the moment they learned about a road usage charge generally that the reporting method would have a sizable impact on how they viewed the concept. As previously mentioned, there were those who preferred the ease of automatically self-reporting their miles, and those who said privacy was paramount and that they would rather purchase a permit or self-report their miles in person or by photograph.

When participants were presented with the idea of a research project, whether they could choose their method was a top question. Some assumed they would be able to do so; others were less sure and thought that perhaps the state would want an equal number of users for each reporting style and, accordingly, would assign volunteers to a method.

These disparate opinions were borne out in participants’ comments about why they may not want to join a research project. Their comments made clear that the wrong pilot design could immediately kill their interest.

*“I absolutely hate going to the DMV. I hate sitting there for hours for sometimes the simplest of things. This would not have to be like that. If this was like that, forget it.”*

*–Bellingham*

*“Really strong opinions about the power of that information and how terrible our government is about protecting their own and our information. The metadata would be a gold mine if I were a nefarious character.”*

*–Vancouver*

**Interest in a research project could wane if potential recruits are not provided specifics about the required time commitment and incentive.**

Participants also asked repeatedly for how much time the project would take, and the amount and type of the incentive they would receive. These concerns should be addressed in messages attempting to recruit participants. If such details are not revealed until participants have already expressed interest, it could lead to a large gap between those who say they are interested and those who ultimately sign up.

In addition to the time per month it would take to participate, potential recruits will also want to know how long the project lasts, whether they will need to participate in person or online, and whether in-person dates are flexible. For example, letting potential recruits know that in-person events will be planned

months in advance, with several dates to choose from, would go a long way in assuring them that they will remain eligible to participate.

One participant also wanted some assurance that they would be testing the concept of a road usage charge, not testing the device used to track miles.

*“How far along is the development of the device? Are there going to be any glitches with that we’re going to have to work out? I don’t want to be burdened with anything else.”*

*–Bellingham*

### **Recruiting materials should highlight the opportunity for residents to shape policy and the future of the state.**

Participants were provided with a series of messages designed to recruit volunteers to a road usage charge research project. In addition to ranking the messages, participants also pointed to words and phrases they liked, and did not like.

In line with participants’ previous comments about the importance of civic engagement and sharing their opinions, they responded positively to phrases like *shape our state’s future and guide future funding policy*. Some participants appreciated the call-out to *urban, suburban, and rural participants*—a phrase that many Eastern Washingtonians may find encouraging. Several participants also said they liked knowing that *volunteers will receive an incentive*, although the message about incentives was ranked only average overall.

The top-rated recruitment message was: *“The research project is a unique opportunity for Washington drivers to “test-drive” a road usage charge and share their experiences. Your preferences can help shape future funding policy.”* This message was rated 1.9 on a scale of 1 to 6, where 1 was the most compelling reason to join a research project and 6 was the least compelling. It fared better than other messages about the importance of resident feedback.

Four of the six messages earned average scores of 3.0 to 3.8, although one message fell flat. *The pilot is being sponsored and implemented by the State of Washington* did not entice participants to the recruit. However, as discussed in **Error! Reference source not found.** Final Remarks, some participants made clear that receiving messages from the state about the project would be helpful—it just was not a reason to join the project.

There were only a few questions about these messages. One participant wanted clarity about the meaning of a “pilot”, and a few asked again what incentive the state would provide.

## 4.6 Final Remarks

### **Many residents are responsive to official information from the Department of Transportation or the Department of Licensing, but they do not want to hear about it from politicians.**

Many participants mentioned they would read and respect communications from official state agencies, like DOT and DOL, regarding a road usage charge research project. However, these agencies were not trusted by participants across the board.

*“Department of Licensing I would pay attention to because it has to do with my car.”*

*–Seattle*

*“I like the DOT. Some type of PSA flyer or mailing. Some really good, descriptive flyer that would talk about the research project.”*

*–Bellingham*

Several participants mentioned that they wanted to hear from “customers who have used it” already. If it is possible to incorporate the experiences of users in other states, such messages may be helpful in building confidence among Washingtonians.

Some participants simply listed media outlets such as local papers, news broadcasts, and radio programs as credible sources of information. These avenues provide a good platform for agency leaders or commission members to share information about the program. A question-and-answer format can provide potential recruits with assurances about the purpose of the project, time commitments, and incentives. Based on participant feedback, the spokespeople in the media should be officials—but not politicians.

Universities and other independent research entities were also cited by some participants as a good source of unbiased information. Partnering with such organizations may boost interest during the recruitment phase if the organizations represent both Western and Eastern Washington.

A few participants also expressed concern about the involvement of private businesses, such as the device and app creators, in the process. These concerns related primarily to fears about the use of their data, and whether the motivation for the project would really be to collect data, or to make money from the technology.

*“It would have to be something official, and I’m thinking like an official ‘wa.gov.’ Because, I think if some independent company that I’ve never heard of says, ‘We’re the ones running this test,’ I would kind of go, ‘Who are you, and what is your motive?’ As much as we might doubt the motives of politicians, nevertheless, if it was couched in an official statement or official printed matter, I’d be more likely to trust that.”*

*–Tri-Cities*

*“I’m not sure that I would trust anymore. I’m more likely to trust the state government than the manufacturers of the equipment that are just trying to do something new and make more money on new technology.”*

*–Bellingham*

On the other hand, other participants thought a third-party could ensure an appropriate firewall between personal data and state government. These differing concerns emphasize the opportunity to provide a variety of reporting methods to potential recruits and let them choose their favorite.

*“I think having a third party who is just completely unbiased, there’s no corruption there, no reason to dillydally with the system.”*

*–Seattle*

**Ultimately, participants want to ensure that their state leaders consider all viewpoints when making decisions about revenue so that residents are treated fairly.**

Participants had a lot of advice for state leaders as they move forward in their research about a road usage charge. Many comments related to aspects of fairness—which, again, meant different things to different people. Most comments provided feedback on how an ultimate road usage charge should be implemented,



if at all. For example, one noted that a road usage charge’s billing system should be fair to low-income residents. Another noted that it’s important to retain incentives for people to reduce their carbon footprint.

Others reiterated their concern as to whether a road usage charge would net more revenue than it would cost to implement and maintain or whether it would cost more than the current gas tax.

*“Basically, [I want to know] how the cost of implementing the project and maintaining it would weigh against the monies gained by the project. Would there be incentives for economically disadvantaged individuals, or is it just going to be across the board for everybody?”*

–Spokane

*“I’d like to see a comparison of the gas tax now and about how much you pay per mile with the gas tax the way it is now, and then what it’s going to be. If it’s a little more, it’d be great, but if it’s a lot more, forget it.”*

–Seattle

Some participants used the opportunity to ask questions about the broader goals of a road usage charge, illuminating the importance of information that shows participants exactly what the state is trying to achieve—beyond simply “more revenue.”

*“How does it fit into the larger picture? How does it make Washington more competitive in the national and global stage? How would it improve the quality of life for all residents of Washington? Is it fair? Does it increase or decrease income inequality?”*

–Tri-Cities

In moving forward with communications, it will be a challenge to address all residents’ concerns about fairness at the same time—because residents have unique and nuanced interpretations of fairness. As such, a variety of messages that speak to different elements of fairness may help increase interest during the recruitment phase.

*“It seems like a very fair way to go. It seems those that use the roads should pay to contribute the revenue to maintain it, to improve it. The one thing that did come to mind [is the impact on] low-income households.”*

–Vancouver

*“It’s not about ‘fair.’ Fair is a family being able to cross a bridge without it falling down. Fair is the owner/operator of a semi-trailer getting home on time. Fair is the commuter being safe as they head home. Fair is options for everyone to enjoy the beauty and opportunities in the state. Fair is not making everything equal. Fair is a safer, transparent, and focused vision for transportation.”*

–Bellingham

# 5.0 APPENDICES

## Appendix A. Annotated Phone Survey

### Washington State Transportation Commission Telephone Survey

June 2017

Washington State Residents

N=602; ±4.0% margin of error

17 minutes

DHM Research

Project #00583

#### INTRODUCTION

Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm calling with DHM Research, a public opinion research firm in Oregon. I'm calling about important issues in your community. May I please speak to \_\_\_\_\_ **(Must speak to name on list. If unavailable, schedule call back).**

If necessary: The State of Washington wants to hear from residents; your feedback will help to inform decisions. /DHM has locations in Seattle and Portland.

#### WARM UP

1. Do you feel things in the State of Washington are generally going in the right direction, or do you feel that things are headed down the wrong track?

Response Category	n=602
Right direction	47%
Wrong track	40%
<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Don't know	13%

2. What is the most important issue in Washington that you would like your elected officials to address?  
(OPEN)

Response Category	n=602
Transportation (NET)	17%
Roads/Infrastructure	7%
Traffic	5%
Transportation—general	4%
Rapid transit issues	1%
Education	16%
Reduce taxes	9%
Healthcare	5%
Homelessness	5%
Political issues/Corruption	5%
Affordable housing	4%
Resist Trump	4%
Jobs/Economy	3%
Crime	3%
Environment/Clean energy	3%
Budget/Spending	3%
All other responses	2% or less in each category
Nothing	2%
Don't know/No answer	5%

3. Do you think you pay more than your fair share, less than your fair share, or about the right amount for public services in Washington?

Response Category	n=602
More than my fair share	42%
Less than my fair share	3%
About the right amount	50%
<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Don't know	5%

4. Is traffic congestion in your local community a very big problem, moderate problem, small problem, or not a problem at all?

Response Category	n=602
Very big problem	36%
Moderate problem	31%
Small problem	13%
Not a problem at all	19%
<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Don't know	1%

5. How would you rate the quality of state highways in your area? Are they excellent, good, poor, very poor

Response Category	n=602
Excellent	5%
Good	59%
Poor	26%
Very poor	8%
<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Don't know	2%

6. About how many total miles do you drive each year? (OPEN)

Response Category	n=602
Less than 10,000 miles	41%
10,000-19,999 miles	32%
20,000 or more miles	20%
Mean	12,652
Don't know	7%

7. About what percentage of those miles are driven in Washington? (OPEN)

Response Category	n=602
0%	7%
1-80%	14%
81-90%	18%
91-99%	16%
100%	42%
Don't know	4%

#### TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES AND FUNDING

8. Thinking about transportation improvements in Washington, I'd like to read a list of transportation priorities over the next 10 years. Which one of these options do you think should be the highest priority, second highest, and third highest priority for making improvements in the state?

Response Category	First n=602	Second n=602	Third n=602	Combined n=602
Maintain/Preserve Washington's existing roads, highways, and bridges	50%	26%	11%	87%
Build new roads, highways, and bridges	15%	24%	21%	60%
Promote alternative fuel vehicles like hybrids and electric vehicles	6%	16%	19%	41%
Invest in public transportation, such as transit	22%	23%	22%	67%
Promote active modes of transportation like bicycling or walking	5%	8%	20%	33%
Don't know	2%	3%	7%	2%

In Washington, gasoline taxes are about 49 cents per gallon. At the rate of 49 cents per gallon, a typical driver pays about \$370 per year.

9. Is this tax: More than you thought you were paying, about the amount you thought were paying, less than you thought you were paying, or you were not aware you were paying?

Response Category	n=602
More than thought paying	27%
About the amount thought paying	45%
Less than the amount thought paying	8%
I was not aware I was paying	16%
<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Don't know	4%

10. Is this tax too much, about the right amount, or too little?

Response Category	n=602
Too much	52%
About the right amount	35%
Too little	8%
<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Don't know	6%

11. How familiar are you with the concept of a road usage charge, where drivers pay for the miles they drive? Would you say very familiar, somewhat familiar, not too familiar, or not at all familiar?

Response Category	n=602
Very familiar	18%
Somewhat familiar	35%
Not too familiar	18%
Not at all familiar	28%
<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Don't know	1%

These next few questions are about a potential road charge. In road charging, drivers pay based on the miles driven on Washington roads, instead of paying a gas tax based on how many gallons of gasoline is purchased. A road charge would **replace** a gas tax.

Because of improving fuel efficiency and the increasing number of electric and hybrid vehicles, gasoline consumption is projected to decrease. As a result, revenue generated by the gas tax is also projected to decrease and is already not keeping up with the cost of repairing roads. In addition, some drivers pay far more gas tax for each mile they drive than others do. One idea, to ensure all users help pay for repairs, is to eliminate the gas tax and replace it with an equivalent charge on the number of miles you drive.

12. Do you believe that eliminating the gas tax and paying a road charge based on the number of miles you drive would be: More fair/less fair/about the same/Don't know

Response Category	n=602
More fair	23%
Less fair	41%
About the same	21%
<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Don't know	16%

13. Knowing that gas-tax revenues are projected to fall, do you support or oppose implementing a mileage-based road usage charge program in Washington as a way to fund transportation? Is that strongly or somewhat?

Response Category	n=602
Strongly support	10%
Somewhat support	21%
Somewhat oppose	18%
Strongly oppose	40%
<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Don't know	10%

14. If the state were to consider a road charge, which one of the following three options would you prefer? (Randomize responses)

Response Category	n=602
Purchase a permit to drive unlimited miles up to one year	30%
Self-report total miles driven annually	23%
Automatically report miles driven annually using a smartphone or in-vehicle technology	19%
<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Don't know	28%

15. Thinking about paying a road charge based on the number of miles driven instead of the gas tax, tell me which is the most important issue to you? (Randomize responses)

Response Category	n=602
Ensure that I not pay both a per-mile charge and a gas tax	26%
Having a choice in how I report and pay for miles driven	7%
Protect my personal information	20%
Everyone pays their fair share for road use	28%
Visitors from out of state pay their fair share	8%
<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Don't know	11%

MESSAGING TEST

[ROTATE SUPPORT VS OPPOSE BLOCKS]

Please tell me if you feel each statement is a very good reason, good, poor, or very poor reason to oppose road usage charge? [ROTATE MESSAGES]

Response Category	Very Good	Good	Poor	Very Poor	Don't know
16. People who drive more miles pay more than people who drive few miles with a road usage charge.	24%	32%	26%	10%	7%
17. A road usage charge system will collect some personal information like how many miles you drive. Some people are concerned about protecting their privacy.	32%	29%	22%	10%	6%
18. It will be too much of a hassle for drivers to report vehicle mileage data and pay for road usage.	31%	28%	26%	10%	5%
19. A road usage charge is really just another way for the Washington government to tax people more.	39%	22%	22%	12%	6%
20. The road usage charge will not properly identify those who drive across state borders or drivers from out of state who should be paying a road usage charge	29%	37%	18%	8%	8%
21. Road usage charge is unfair to people who buy fuel efficient vehicles. These people are doing the right thing for the environment and should get a break.	23%	27%	28%	15%	7%

Please tell me if you feel each statement is a very good reason, good, poor, or very poor reason to support road usage charge? [ROTATE MESSAGES]

Response Category	Very Good	Good	Poor	Very Poor	Don't know
22. The gas tax is unfair to people who can't afford newer vehicles. They pay more because they own less fuel efficient vehicles that use more gas.	15%	27%	32%	20%	7%
23. A road usage charge would provide a sustainable and long-term model for transportation funding because it is based on road use, not fuel use. Road use is a more stable funding model.	19%	34%	22%	17%	8%
24. People are driving more fuel efficient vehicles and putting wear and tear on the roads but paying less in gas tax to maintain these roads. Electric and hybrid vehicles pay very little to maintain the roads. It's only fair that every driver helps pay to maintain our roads.	31%	29%	18%	15%	7%
25. With road usage charges each driver pays their fair share based on how much they use the roads and not based on the fuel efficiency of their vehicle.	21%	36%	21%	15%	7%

### ORGANIZATION IMPRESSIONS

26. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Government does a good job managing transportation spending in the state of Washington. Is that strongly or somewhat?

Response Category	n=602
Strongly agree	8%
Somewhat agree	26%
Somewhat disagree	23%
Strongly disagree	36%
<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Don't know	7%



## DEMOGRAPHICS

27. How many people live in your household, including yourself? [OPEN —Record Exact]

Response Category	n=602
1	11%
2	36%
3+	50%
Refused	3%

28. Which of the following best describes your race or ethnicity? (allow for multiple responses)

Response Category	n=602
African American/Black	2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	3%
Hispanic/Latino	3%
Native American/American Indian	2%
White/Caucasian	80%
Other	6%
<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Refused	4%

29. In general, would you describe your political views as very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal or very liberal?

Response Category	n=602
Very conservative	6%
Conservative	22%
Moderate	39%
Liberal	18%
Very liberal	8%
<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Refused	8%

30. Party (RECORD FROM SAMPLE)

Response Category	N=602
Democrat	51%
Republican	34%
Independent	2%
Other	--
Non-affiliated	13%

31. How would you describe the area that you live in?

Response Category	n=602
Rural	36%
Urban	22%
Suburban	39%
<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Don't know	2%

32. Age (punch from sample)

Response Category	n=602
18-24	15%
25-34	15%
35-54	24%
55-64	28%
65+	18%

33. Do you describe your gender as: (PHONEASK)

Response Category	n=602
Male	50%
Female	50%
Non-binary or gender non-conforming	--

34. Zip code (punch from sample)

35. County (punch from sample)

Response Category	n=602
King County/Pierce/Snohomish	52%
Western WA	26%
Eastern WA	22%

36. Which category best describes your 2016 gross household income, before taxes? Remember to include everyone living in your household. Your best estimate will do.

Response Category	n=602
Less than \$25,000	12%
\$25,000 to less than \$50,000	15%
\$50,000 to less than \$75,000	17%
\$75,000 to less than \$100,000	13%
\$100,000 to less than \$150,000	12%
\$150,000 or more	5%
<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Refused	26%

37. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

Response Category	n=602
Less than high school	1%
High school diploma	33%
Some college / 2-year degree	36%
College degree / 4-year degree	21%
Graduate/professional school	9%
<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Refused	--

## Appendix B. Participant Demographics

### WSTC Focus Groups

DHM Research #00582

Group #1: 7/6/16; Tri-Cities; N=10

Group #2: 7/8/16; Spokane; N=10

Group #3: 7/17/17; Bellingham; N=9

Group #4: 7/18/17; Seattle; N=7

Group #5: 7/25/17; Vancouver; N=9

### City and Zip Code

Tri-Cities	Spokane	Bellingham	Seattle	Vancouver
Benton City//99320	Spokane Valley //99206	Bellingham//98225	Bothell//98012	Vancouver//98661
Kennewick//99336	Spokane//99204	Bellingham//98225	Kent//98042	Vancouver//98661
Kennewick//99336	Spokane//99205	Bellingham//98225	Seatac//98198	Vancouver//98662
Kennewick//99337	Spokane//99207	Bellingham//98225	Seattle//98103	Vancouver//98665
Richland//99352	Spokane//99208	Bellingham//98226	Seattle//98104	Vancouver//98665
Richland//99352	Spokane//99216	Bellingham//98226	Seattle//98109	Vancouver//98665
Richland//99354	Spokane//99218	Bellingham//98229	Snohomish//98290	Vancouver//98682
Richland//99354	Spokane//99223	Bellingham//98229		Vancouver//98682
Richland//99354	Spokane//99223	Ferndale//98248		Vancouver//98685
No response//99301	Veradale//99037			

### Where They Live

Response Category	Tri-Cities	Spokane	Bellingham	Seattle	Vancouver
Urban	6	5	4	4	--
Suburban	4	4	3	2	9
Rural	1	1	2	1	--

### Occupation

Tri-Cities	Spokane	Bellingham	Seattle	Vancouver
Admin Assistant	Adult/Child Caregiver	Software Engineer	Bartender/Server	Accounting
Assistant Winemaker	Architect	Help Desk Technician	Distributor (Wristbands)	Accounts Payable
Lab manager	Banking	Life Coach/ Support Staff	Health Ins. Help, PA Referrals	Classification Counselor
Manufacturing Tech	Billing Specialist/ Accounting	Owner, Antique Business	Homemaker	Homemaker
Mechanical Engineer	Billing Supervisor	Production Management	Mobile Phlebotomist	Purchasing Agent
Member Service Representative	Construction Management	Professor	Non-profit Development	RN & Student
Retired Firefighter	CPA	Semi-retired, Self-employed	Sales	Sales
Self-employed Furniture Repair	Entertainment/ Event Planner	Stay-at-home Mom		Sales
Business Owner (House Cleaner)	Registered Nurse	Teacher		Sales Manager
No response	Wave Merchandising			

### Miles Driven in a Year

Response Category	Tri-Cities	Spokane	Bellingham	Seattle	Vancouver
Less than 5K	1	2	2	3	2
5K – under 10K	2	1	5	--	--
10K – under 15K	2	3	1	2	5
15K – under 20K	1	3	--	--	2
20K – under 25K	3	1	--	2	--
25K – under 30K	1	--	--	--	--
30K or more	--	--	1	--	--

### Method of Commute (Multiple responses accepted)

Response Category	Tri-Cities	Spokane	Bellingham	Seattle	Vancouver
Drive	7	10	8	5	9
Walk	1	--	--	1	--
Bike	--	--	--	--	1
Someone else drives me	--	--	--	--	--
Taxi/Uber/Lyft	--	--	--	--	--
Public Transit	1	1	--	1	2
Other: ["Motorcycle"]	1	--	1	--	--
Other: ["Retired"]	1	--	--	--	--
Other: ["Work from home"]	--	--	--	1	--

### Education

Response Category	Tri-Cities	Spokane	Bellingham	Seattle	Vancouver
Less than high school graduate	--	--	1	--	--
High school graduate	1	1	--	--	1
Some college; technical school; community college; 2-year degree	6	4	2	4	2
College degree; 4-year degree	2	4	4	2	4
Graduate degree	1	1	2	1	2
No response	--	--	--	--	--

### Household Income

Response Category	Tri-Cities	Spokane	Bellingham	Seattle	Vancouver
Less than \$25,000	1	2	1	1	1
\$25,000 – \$49,999	2	4	3	3	3
\$50,000 – \$74,999	2	1	3	2	3
\$75,000 – \$99,999	4	1	1	--	2
\$100,000 – \$150,000	1	1	--	--	--
More than \$150,000	--	1	1	1	--
No response	--	--	--	--	--

### Political Party

Response Category	Tri-Cities	Spokane	Bellingham	Seattle	Vancouver
Democrat	2	3	4	4	4
Republican	4	3	2	2	1
Other ["Conservative"]	--	1	--	--	--
Other ["Independent"]	3	--	2	--	--
Other ["Independent, lean Democrat"]	--	1	--	--	--
Other ["Libertarian"]	--	--	1	--	--
Other ["Moderate/Independent"]	1	--	--	--	--
Other ["Unaffiliated/Nonpartisan/ No party"]	--	1	--	--	2
Other [Nothing specified]	--	1	--	1	--

### Age

Response Category	Tri-Cities	Spokane	Bellingham	Seattle	Vancouver
18 – 24	1	--	1	--	--
25 – 34	2	2	1	1	3
35 – 44	1	3	2	1	2
45 – 54	4	--	2	1	2
55 – 64	1	3	1	4	--
65 – 74	1	1	2	--	2
75+	--	--	--	--	--
No response	--	1	--	--	--

### Gender Identity (Multiple responses accepted)

Response Category	Tri-Cities	Spokane	Bellingham	Seattle	Vancouver
Male	4	4	5	2	3
Female	6	6	4	5	6
Non-Binary or Gender Non-Conforming	--	--	--	--	--
Other	--	--	--	--	--

### Race/Ethnicity (Multiple response accepted)

Response Category	Tri-Cities	Spokane	Bellingham	Seattle	Vancouver
White/Caucasian	9	9	8	6	6
Black/African American	--	1	--	2	1
Spanish/Hispanic/Latino	--	--	1	--	2
Asian Pacific Islander	--	--	1	1	--
Native American	1	1	1	1	--
Other:	--	--	1	--	--

## Appendix C. Written Exercise 1

**Make a list of issues in Washington that you would like to see improved. Place a star (\*) by the one that is most important to you**

### Tri-Cities

- \*Agriculture; Employment; Wates; Infrastructure
- \*Cleanup at Hanford; Less division in the state; Politicians more evenly represent the state; Get rid of Bob Ferguson
- \*Education; Homeless; Drug addiction; Social services
- \*Fishing— warm water and walleye, not salmon or trout; Parks; Infrastructure, roads, bridges; Parks
- \*Healthcare; Education; Income inequality; Living wage; Infrastructure
- \*Justice system; Community engagement; Equality of rights; Confidentiality of our personal lives/more open to events
- \*King County not being the deciding factor for eastern Washington or all of Washington total; Wasteful spending (west side); Taxes; Game management
- \*Make a balanced budget that works for everyone. Cut out a lot of the fluff; Don't allow pot stores near schools or parks.
- \*School curriculum; Roads; Education/Resources available to others.
- \*Transportation/roads— fix; Schools— better.

### Spokane

- \*Care of homeless; Like to see legislature address issues important to more rural, less populated areas; Minimum wage
- \*Education reform; Health care; Road improvement
- \*Guaranteed maternity leave; Homeless population downtown; Minimum wage hike
- \*Housing availability; Work standards enforcement
- \*Less invasive tax of business; Improved road maintenance program; Fewer government programs
- \*More representation for Eastern Washington (tax revenues etc.); Better funding for education; Better use of tax money; More competition for utilities (Avista)
- \*Stricter punishments for animal abuse; Quality of the roads in the winter; Stricter punishments for DUIs
- \*The treatment of people of color when it comes to law enforcement; Safer communities; More activities for kids in school, after school, trips, etc.
- \*Too many liberals on west side so our votes don't matter; Road conditions in Spokane; Traffic in Seattle
- \*Transportation; Health care (insurance)

### Bellingham

- \*Addressing the homeless/jobs; Healthcare; Infrastructure, bridges taken care of; Housing for young; Families; Support for families
- \*Affordability—cost of living; Population density; Traffic
- \*Education; Public transportation; Cost of Living
- \*Housing; Traffic; Childcare; Healthcare; Education; Homelessness; Health of children (support for children/teens); Global (earth care)

- \*I-5 corridor through Seattle Metro Area; Writing a budget
- \*Incentives for sustainable organizations; Traffic in Seattle; Better mass transit; Homeless resolution
- \*Land use restrictions; Public transportation, especially rural; State budget
- \*Land use; Water rights; Sanctity of life
- \*Thru-trails for non-motorized; Parks/open spaces; Staunch climate change support

### Seattle

- \*Education; Healthcare; Homelessness; Transportation; Budget
- \*Fix congestion/traffic; Lower property taxes; Able to put wells on raw land for personal houses; Get a better mayor.
- \*Gun violence; Homelessness; Housing costs; Schools (more arts/music programs); Rebuild Seattle/plumbing system in schools
- \*Homelessness; Drug epidemic; Mental health; DUII
- \*Less traffic and road construction; Better ways of transportation — like a subway; No tolls/Good to Go!
- \*Roads/freeways; Healthcare; Speed limits upped in some areas
- [No star] Allocation of tax revenue; Crime; Homelessness; Education

### Vancouver

- Dental care availability; Mental healthcare coverage/approach; Sex trafficking
- Healthcare
- \*Increase speed limits
- \*Infrastructure improvement required for further developments; Education funding for K-12; Concentration of family wage jobs
- \*Plans for public transit between Vancouver and Portland. Improve; Homeless children given a place for school; Traffic on freeway, Clark County, especially
- \*Prison reform; Education fully funded; Focus more on environmental issues; Government accountability/transparency
- \*Public transportation; More activities (ex: zoo big attractions); Bike lanes
- \*Traffic; Housing; Meth problem (in Vancouver); I would like to see some of the issues with traffic improved. The bridges into Oregon are too congested.
- \*Traffic; Quality of roads

### Why is this the most important issue to you? How would you like state leaders to address it?

#### Tri-Cities

- [Agriculture] Work in agriculture industry as well as many friends and family. Ensure that there is adequate farmland, keep development at bay. Offer programs that keep ag land competitive with development land.
- [Cleanup at Hanford] I feel the entire area has/is in danger due to the state of Hanford. Thyroid cancer, MS
- [Education] Trying to continue on with my education is impossible at times. I want my son to be able to go to school.



- [Fishing—warm water and walleye, not salmon or trout] Recognize the value of the fishery. Manage to keep the world-class fishery for walleye that we have. Don't just worry about trout and steelhead.
- [Healthcare] Medicare for all, like California; Helps level the playing field.
- [Justice system] I believe the justice system is making it illegal to lie/alternate stores/cases. But will do themselves.
- [King County not being the deciding factor for eastern Washington or all of Washington total] It affects all of us!
- [Make a balanced budget that works for everyone. Cut out a lot of the fluff; Don't allow pot stores near schools or parks] Go through all expenses line by line and eliminate stuff that we don't need or is not beneficial for everyone.
- [School curriculum] Curriculum has been very slow to advance. We should invest in our youth as they are the leaders of tomorrow. Some schools have curriculum from the 1990s. That is too old!
- [Transportation/roads—fix] I travel around the state a lot— would like travel to be easy/safe as possible.

### Spokane

- [Care of homeless] Many of our homeless are there by choice, not wishing to comply with rules associated with certain types of assistance —many have mental health issues which are unaddressed—homeless housing.
- [Education reform] Better pay for educators.
- [Guaranteed maternity leave] Because I intend to start my family soon and leave to start life with children is important for bonding etc. Make some sort of guarantee plan in place.
- [Housing availability] largest and most scarce expense; Public works projects
- [Less invasive tax of business] Growth of jobs
- [More representation for Eastern Washington] I feel like with gas or transportation tax money Western Washington gets most of it. Spokane and areas have street/infrastructure issues.
- [Stricter punishments for animal abuse] Because animals need to be protected
- [The treatment of people of color when it comes to law enforcement] There is always something in the news about the mistreatment of people of color by officers. Some by people that I know.
- [Too many liberals on west side so our votes don't matter] Unfortunately, it is what it is. The only option would be to move to a less liberal state.
- [Transportation] There are several aspects to this: (1) congestion, (2) infrastructure needing repair, (3) coal and oil trains through metro areas, (4) public transportation improvement.

### Bellingham

- [Addressing the homeless/jobs] Homeless situation contributed to the decline of the local businesses in the downtown area. We have services, but it seems like jobs? Mental health services?
- [Affordability—cost of living] Because I am an educated professional that can barely get ahead. I don't know how they can address it.
- [Education] All other issues/problems can be more easily worked on with a well-educated population; Funding, etc.
- [Housing] Prices and space are ridiculous in Washington. Spaces are priced too high for anyone to be able to afford something. I'm not really sure how they could fix it — but lots of ways.

- [I-5 corridor through Seattle Metro Area] It impacts my ability to travel to see family or do business. I would like to see improvements to the infrastructure and perhaps a through-lane
- [Incentives for sustainable organizations] Sustainability encompasses all aspects of society. I don't know how state leaders can address this issue.
- [Land use restrictions] Living in a rural setting and being restricted as to what/when we can build on farmland—state leaders need to visit family farms and understand they can't stay farms forever.
- [Land use rights] More emphasis on owner rights, but with significant effort to encourage farming and ranching.
- [Thru-trails for non-motorized] Ability for non-motorized (cycles, predominantly) to travel through urban and rural areas for recreation and basic transportation will help contribute to greater quality of life and reduced emissions—hence, helping the climate issue.

### Seattle

- [Education] Education is the foundation of a society. It is the way we can address all the other issues.
- [Fix congestion/traffic] Lower the commuter lanes to 2 people with lower costs since lanes are already paid for.
- [Gun violence] We need our children to become productive members of society. Gun buyback programs (no questions asked), perhaps in conjunction with productivity programs.
- [Homelessness] Homelessness affects not only the homeless but others as well. Also trickles down to healthcare.
- [Less traffic and road construction] I'd like state leaders to get rid of toll roads.
- [Roads/freeways] Roads and freeways are too congested. Some roads do not have same speed limit.
- [No star] No response

### Vancouver

- [Dental care availability] Dental coverage/care impacts every area of a person's life! I would like to see the utilization of dental therapists.
- [Healthcare] I have a relative on Medicaid who would not survive without medical coverage. I wonder how many people have no health insurance due to affordability.
- [Increase speed limits] Moved from an area that operated at a faster pace. Wouldn't necessarily want this addressed to state leaders.
- [Infrastructure improvement required for further developments] Traffic nightmares
- [Plans for public transit between Vancouver and Portland. Improve] Very carefully, dates for trail or implementation
- [Prison reform] There are too many people in our prisons who have needs that are not being addressed.
- [Public transportation] Because we should have longer/earlier bus hours, and more places they go. It would be great if we had a tram from Vancouver to Portland
- [Traffic] Commuting; Traveling; Need more access to Interstate and alternate routes
- [Traffic] The traffic affects my time and money and work opportunities.

## Appendix D. Written Exercise 2

**Thinking about roads and transportation issues, what are the most important things that need to be addressed in Washington?**

### Tri-Cities

- Congestion in the Seattle area; Winter road damage; Smoother traffic flow
- Get trucks off the freeway as much as possible. Money spent to properly maintain bridges.
- Keep up on repaving; Stoplights; More lanes in urban areas; Slower speed limits in neighborhood; More public transportation
- Public transportation; Potholes; Road conditions after winter weather; Have sidewalks
- Safety of bridges/infrastructure upkeep; Better public transportation; Bike lanes; Sidewalks
- Salary/payments of workers; Important areas/main areas needing repairs.
- Spending state funding on roads that actually need repair instead of roads that get repaired to spend the budget; Gas prices
- The roads in Eastern Washington are not kept up as well as Western Washington or North part of Washington; Don't like the roundabouts.
- The roads in TriCities are not bad, but the entire Spokane area needs repair. In town and city streets are the worst.
- There are a lot of roads that you can barely drive on because of the potholes. There are also places that some roads are falling apart.

### Spokane

- Actually, same as WE1 [*“Too many liberals on west side so our votes don't matter; Road conditions in Spokane; Traffic in Seattle”*]. The problem in Seattle is with all the bridges. There are no real viable alternatives for where to drive.
- Better maintenance program; Bridge upkeep and repair
- Condition of pavement after winter; De-icing and snow removal; Continued building of swales; Freeway congestion
- Congestion; Infrastructure crumbling; Public transportation improvement; Coal and oil trains through metro areas
- I don't personally have transportation issues here.
- More public transportation—buses and light rail; Update of bridges/freeways
- Quality of roads in winter; Speed of road construction—faster work time
- Road improvement; Expansion of highways
- The fixing of potholes on a much faster timeline; Doing away with some of these huge one-way streets; Quicker service in snow plowing on residential streets
- Train reliability (always late); Bus route design and extended hours; Road safety (bike lanes and potholes); Eco-friendly options?

### Bellingham

- Better control of traffic and road upkeep in some areas; Bridge/road safety; Dumb drivers; Nature overpasses for animals; Too many cars! Carpool!; Other reasons (transportation system); Parking lots/not changing the roads with housing
- Better traffic flow in large cities (Seattle, for example) and safety of roads, bridges, etc.

- I-5 corridor in Seattle/Tacoma/JBLM/Olympia Too many places where an on-ramp turns into an exit.
- Infrastructure—bridge collapsed; Road repair; Snow removal/efficient; Use of resources for energy alternative
- Infrastructure—bridges, pavement, availability; alternative methods that do NOT involve one person/one car; Congestion
- Public transportation—high speed train across the state. East-West, North-South and otherwise, especially the I-90 corridor. AND for trains to accommodate cyclists, have good regular schedules.
- Safe bridges and overpasses; High volume of traffic in metropolitan area.
- Transportation problems on I-5 from Seattle. Massive traffic both ways from 7am to 8pm daily.
- Urban housing plans and sprawl; Proper planning of housing developments and more mass transit options.

### Seattle

- Congestion; Potholes; Toll prices; Light rail
- Carpooling—more bus (transit) availability; Trains/light rail (more) across the state
- Already covered these concerns on page 1 [*Fix congestion/traffic; Lower the commuter lanes to 2 people with lower costs since lanes are already paid for.*]
- Too many roads and congested and backed up. The speed limits should make sense. One neighborhood 20 mph, next on 35 mph. What is up with that??
- Road improvement; Expansion of public transportation
- They keep building more houses, but do nothing about improving the roads. I think taking the bus is too complicated.
- Traffic congestion in Puget Sound; Quality of bridges and highways

### Vancouver

- Better access east and west; Better public transit; Quicker north
- Congestion on the highway, but I don't think anything can be done.
- New roads or improved arterials keeping up with new development
- Road improvements and parkways with fewer lights and more overpasses
- Safer, more environmentally friendly transportation systems
- Speed limits are set too low; Clarify street signs—I just moved here and find the signs unclear
- Traffic congestion is pretty bad along the I-5. Getting into Seattle or across the river to Oregon is really bad.
- Travel ability—road conditions and traffic
- Wider lanes, bigger bridges, possibly create a Max commute to Portland (Cheaper cost, too)

### What about in your area?

#### Tri-Cities

- Bridge from Rd 68 to Edison
- Duportail Bridge to Queensgate area will relieve *a lot* of traffic congestion. Make roundabouts—easier.
- Incentives to use public transportation and car pools

- Potholes are not as bad. Our transportation is getting updated, but we have limited hours of running buses, than other places.
- Public transportation can be expensive. I know that you can get reduced tickets, but if you don't have money to ride the bus, you walk.
- Public transportation options to Hanford area. Train or light rail? Not big route needed, as most population works out there; Slower speed limits near houses.
- Road coming from Prosser to here has the same "bump" signs that they had 30 years ago when I moved here.
- Road control. Needs to be addressed because we have more freedom for pedestrians than drivers. Making it hard to commute on time.
- Same as above [*"Spending state funding on roads that actually need repair instead of roads that get repaired to spend the budget; Gas prices"*]
- There is a lot of "patch" repair here. Several areas, (Steptoe and Keene area) that need to be addressed. Too congested.

### Spokane

- Bus route and design to reach farther in to suburban areas and extend hours so night and swing shifters can still ride.
- Development without infrastructure improvement to meet increased congestion; Fix dilapidated infrastructure (potholes, bridges, etc.); Improve public transport
- Freeway congestion in particular areas; Drivers education; De-icing chemicals contribute to poor water quality
- Potholes in city of Spokane
- Potholes—quality of roads; Better materials so roads don't fall apart in winter; Snow plowing more often
- Potholes; Better light signals
- Potholes; Bus routes
- Road improvement; Better road planning
- The repair of potholes in my area
- We have a HUGE pothole problem We seem unable to patch the holes in a timely manner. By the time they are all fixed, it's winter and we start all over.

### Bellingham

- Alternative methods that do NOT involve one person, one car
- Controlling population density and thinking ahead for planning.
- Guide Meridian at Telegraph; Guide at Cornwall Park
- Likewise, better train (or bus) transportation to more people off the highways and roads. Better meaning, more regular and frequent.
- Mass transit to accommodate growth; Safer merging lanes on the interstate.
- Need public transportation available in county, not just city. People living on farms.
- People need to fill in holes, upkeep!
- Repair of roads and bridges; Flow of traffic/timed lights; Trails/room on road for bicyclists
- Road conditions; Traffic flow; Equality of focus on safety of all (cars, bikes, pedestrians)

### Seattle

- Congestion; Parking prices are expensive; Better transit
- Carpooling. Bus fare decreased or some incentive for people to ride the bus if they buy a yearly pass (major reductions).
- 522 to 405 is a nightmare. Every morning the commuter lanes add into 405 too far south.
- Some roads need expanding to let more cars travel them.
- The same [*Road improvement; Expansion of public transportation*]
- I'd like better public transportation in Snohomish (county)
- Public transit and road upgrades; Moving people efficiently from north to sound, as well as across the lake.

### Vancouver

- Both (3) [Better access east and west; Better public transit; Quicker north]
- Congestion to get downtown; Lack of adequate funding for cleaner streets
- I-5 crossing—Interstate Bridge First!
- More focus on distracted drivers
- More options!
- Portland traffic—getting to the city.
- Road conditions
- School zone safety! The reduced speed limit begins after kids have already started eating breakfast.
- Too many traffic areas with heavy traffic in the afternoon.

## Appendix E. Written Exercise 3

**How are road and highways, and maintenance of those systems, funded in Washington? List all the different sources you are aware of.**

### Tri-Cities

- Each county/cities are budgeting differently. Some wealthy areas fund together a separate bill of repairs for repairs in the future.
- Gas tax; Sales tax?; Car tabs
- Gas taxes, corporate taxes, some federal sources for interstates
- State budgets—how?? Lottery? City budgets??
- Taxes; Grants; Bonds; Private; Levels
- Taxes; Sales tax; Gas tax; Property tax
- Taxes; vehicles tabs
- Taxes: tabs, gas, sales
- The state budget; Gas tax; \$20 license plate add-on
- Tolls; Property taxes; Gas/oil taxes; LIDs; Sales Tax

### Spokane

- Car tabs, federal grants
- Gas tax; Federal funding; License fees
- Gas tax; Sales tax
- Gas tax; Tabs (vehicle registration)
- Gas taxes; License fees—special; Property tax (local); Tolls—west side
- Gas taxes; Sometimes developers; PUDs
- Grants?; Tabs; Taxes
- I don't know besides taxes
- M&O taxes; Sales tax; Special levies; Line items in budget
- Taxpayers; The government budget

### Bellingham

- Federal and state taxes; Lottery?
- Gas tax; Car tabs; Some other sort of revenue??
- Gas tax; Licensing and registration; Vehicle sales; General sales tax
- I'm not really sure, taxpayers? The state? But they get their money from us?
- Just a guess. Gas tax; Property tax, etc.; Depends on what type of road—Interstate, Washington Highway
- Sales tax; Gas tax; Cargo weight; Property tax
- State taxes; Local taxes; Federal grants, etc. (taxes)
- Taxes on gasoline? I am not entirely sure, but definitely taxes. Licenses
- Taxes? Grants? Car tabs?

### Seattle

- Gas tax; Sales tax; Lottery; Fees; Federal government
- Taxes; Tolls; Good to Go! Pass
- Taxes; Levies and bonds
- Gas tax; Property tax?; Sales tax?; B&O tax?
- Taxes—state and local; Property taxes?
- Our tax money; drivers license fees; traffic tickets
- Tolls; Taxes; DOL fees

### Vancouver

- Gas tax; General fund; Construction tax
- Gas tax; Sales tax; Car registration
- Gas taxes; taxes
- Gas taxes; Vehicle license fees; Property taxes
- I am not sure
- I would assume they are funded through taxes, and/or government
- Taxes; Tolls; Tickets
- Taxes? Not sure which ones specifically; Vehicle licensing
- Voter referendum; Taxes, county; City taxes; Licenses and impri nt fees

### Is funding for roads and highways increasing, staying the same, or decreasing?

Response Category	Tri-Cities	Spokane	Bellingham	Seattle	Vancouver	Total
Increasing	5	4	4	5	5	<b>23</b>
Staying the same	1	1	1	--	1	<b>4</b>
Decreasing	2	1	1	--	1	<b>5</b>
Other	--	1	--	1	--	<b>2</b>
Don't know	2	3	3	1	2	<b>11</b>

### Comments

#### Tri-Cities

- [Increasing] \$20 license plate add on.
- [Increasing] Gas tax goes up; Car tabs go up.
- [Increasing] I believe increasing. Taxes are higher and seeing the road work being done.
- [Increasing] Increasing in some areas, mostly staying the same. More tolls in Western Washington, not so many here.
- [Increasing] Tabs go up. Taxes go up.
- [Staying the same] Taxes are going up, but not necessarily enough to cover increased costs — staying the same. Why? We don't always see results.
- [Decreasing] Increasing, but decreasing as a percentage of the budget. Why? Corporate tax cuts: Boeing, Microsoft, Amazon, Starbucks
- [Decreasing] Not following the economy curve = decreasing ÷ staying. I don't know. Prices of things are costing more, but budgets seem to not change much.
- [Don't know] Gas tax—higher?
- [Don't know] Hard to say with the fact that they are separated out in each area.



### Spokane

- [Increasing] Funding increasing in overall dollars but likely decreasing per number of cars and drivers.
- [Increasing] Higher gas tax etc.! But is it being used in the most efficient way.
- [Increasing] Higher licensing fees, higher gas tax
- [Increasing] I would assume increasing, but the market price of the work is increasing faster.
- [Staying the same] I don't know but probably saying the same since we seem to have less money to spend but maybe it's just we have more roads to divide money between.
- [Decreasing] Remember hearing on the news that the city was over budget in repair money.
- [Other] Increasing per gallon; Decreasing by miles per gallon by cars
- [Don't know] I haven't watched those numbers. When I was younger the places I lived in Washington seemed more likely to vote for taxes paying for road maintenance.
- [Don't know] No comment
- [Don't know] No idea

### Bellingham

- [Increasing] I'm guessing it's increasing to maintain population density, but don't know
- [Increasing] Only way to maintain our aging roads that see more and more use is to increase maintenance.
- [Increasing] Probably increasing, but enough to keep up needs. Why? Conflating needs for tax money.
- [Increasing] Taxes get higher. It's like death, a sure thing.
- [Staying the same] Focus is on large projects, so funding may increase, but that just means more projects or bigger ones.
- [Decreasing] I'd guess its decreasing relative to the population growth, but I don't know why. Just assuming because revenue for road improvements is in the news more and more.
- [Don't know] I don't know, but it's probably increasing—so where's our money going?
- [Don't know] No idea
- [Don't know] Not sure

### Seattle

- [Increasing] Increasing in Seattle—cost of digging the tunnel
- [Increasing] Inflation
- [Increasing] Taxes have gone up but roads have not improved.
- [Increasing] the cost of living always keeps going up.
- [Increasing] Toll prices are increasing.
- [Other] It should be increasing when gas is more expensive. Saying the same or decreasing when gas price is down.
- [Don't know] Have not been here long enough to make a decision.

### Vancouver

- [Increasing] Because with more people moving to the area there are more funds being used.
- [Increasing] I would have to guess it's increasing due to more people. Should equal more tax dollars.
- [Increasing] Increasing—gas and property tax

- [Increasing] Increasing, but I don't actually know, I just see some improvements.
- [Increasing] More work on streets and highways and increase exits and entrances to freeways
- [Staying the same] No comment
- [Decreasing] Cheaper fuel costs and more efficient mileage or alternative fuel vehicles.
- [Don't know] Not sure
- [Don't know] Student/mom brain :)

## Appendix F. Written Exercise 4

### What guiding principles should state leaders consider when developing policies to fund transportation

#### Tri-Cities

- Assess need, assess timeline, assess money needed, tax/budget enough to cover it. Make sure we are staying ahead and not falling behind.
- Does it really need done? Are there other areas of need greater? Life safety.
- I think a specific fund shouldn't be separate. All funds for Washington State should be together.
- Impact on everyone; Actual budget
- Needs of all communities
- Population; Public transportation vs. commuters; Where the main sources of jobs are located.
- Safety; Access; Population size
- The committee that they live in, or that will be affected by it, or by the people who will be affected.
- Those who use it the most—or who make a profit by using state highways—should pay the most.
- What the people in the area want. What is best for the area. Budget for project.

#### Spokane

- Areas not served currently by public transportation; Seasonal effects and conditions vs. safety; enforcement of approved traction device usage period
- Funding should be driven by region. Taxes collected on this side of the state should be used for improvements here.
- I don't feel qualified to address this.
- Is it going to help the big picture congestion? Worth it? Is it going to affect the average person's budget too much?
- Long-term solutions; Cost vs. benefit; Equitable disbursement to different areas of the state; fix the bridges/roads that have deteriorated the most
- Look at the census in how many people use public transportation, buses and trains.
- Traffic in that area; Previous costs to maintain roads; Congestion; Cost of tabs
- What is the best way to effectively move people and products on the public roadways.
- Who is mainly using the road (local vs. statewide like I-90); What roads have most impact on flow and level of traffic
- No response

#### Bellingham

- Cost vs. Value; Best practice; Sustainability
- Costs and where funds come from, who uses transit the most. Disruption to current transportation or roads.
- Everyone benefits from road and transportation whether they use it or not.
- I don't know?
- Moving toward mass public transit in order to retire use of cars and decrease carbon emissions. How to support efficient and carbon-less auto use, or non-use while somehow getting revenue. Return the higher car tab money for newer cars, higher carbon-use cars.
- Population density; Growth rate; Recent building; How many people use the roads/buses; Flow of traffic safety; Tax—property? Reward for using lighter impact

- The more you use it, the more you pay; Reward people that drive smaller, eco-friendly vehicles.
- Users pay; All benefit so all should pay.
- Where is the demand/growth?; Expense; How it will benefit the state/community, and perhaps who it will benefit.

### Seattle

- What do the voters want?
- The median income of the population; Our state budget weighed against other necessities
- The principals of honesty—use the money collected for exactly what it was proposed for, not to line some person’s pockets.
- Use the money they get more wisely; Gas tax for roads; Don’t rob Peter to pay Paul; Use tax; No tolls
- The amount of growth expected for a particular area; Who will be affected most by construction
- I think they should use the money that they take from taxes for what they say they’re going to use it for—no mismanaging money (taxes)
- Use; Safety; Economics (moving freight); Population (focus on larger metros)

### Vancouver

- ?
- Current taxes; Comparative states; Growth; Environment
- Don’t cut from necessary programs that benefit the community such as education systems.
- Focus more on user-type fees, funding for mass transit.
- Funding should be divided exactly to county projects that are important to growth and transformation. Contractors and building
- Guiding principles: The population and the anticipated growth and development in the current area; Fund: Average income of most working-class workers
- Is the portion of those benefiting from transit resources paying the most, or the best fair share?
- Personal incomes due to taxes and increases
- Reduction in congestion; Reducing the impact on the environment; Cost benefit analysis; How many jobs will be created?

### Who should pay for road maintenance? // What about new roads?

#### Tri-Cities

- City = city roads; State = Highways/freeways; Cities/Communities should fund their new roads. Maintenance and new roads.
- Counties should pay for their own maintenance. The state, if Interstate. The county is local.
- Everyone and every business
- Everyone—traffic fines, etc.
- Everyone. Maybe proportionally more for those who drive/use it more. Incentive for people to use public transport.
- Everyone. Roads for new development should be paid for in part by developers.
- I believe any/every registered owner of a vehicle (current) should be able to see a deduction in registering a car in Washington.
- Maintenance—Washington State residents // New roads: same.

- New: state; Counties: main (combination)
- Trucks—they do the most damage // Who will benefit from them?

### Spokane

- 50/50 state and public // State
- All people // Those that benefit the most—developers should play a significant role; All people should play a smaller role
- All users, heavy use/commercial=higher percentage, out of state visitor/tourist through sales/other tax // % of taxes statewide, % from municipality benefitting most
- Citizen taxes and/or city budget // Government
- Citizens who use roads // New roads for local developments, the developers through fees on property sold and generally cities how use roads.
- Everyone—even people who ride buses use the road // Drivers can pay a bit more in gas tax/tab costs
- Some of our taxes and our city funding budget // Some of our taxes and our city funding budget
- Taxes—community members taxes need to be for that purpose // Grants—state allowance
- The city/state by means of taxes. Should plan/pay for road maintenance and new roads.
- The state should pay for road maintenance, as well as local government with tax money // New roads should be at least partly paid by developers—Regal corridor for examples.

### Bellingham

- >50% by already present folks // 50% by those who will be moving in to use. Depends on type of road: Interstate, Washington Highway, city streets.
- All citizens through taxes // Developers
- All taxpayers // All taxpayers
- Everyone should pitch in; Who uses the roads the most? // Semi companies should pay, NOT the driver
- Taxpayers; People who use the roads in part; State // Taxpayers; State-funded from federal
- The folks that partake in the use of said roads should help fund maintenance and new roads.
- The people who use the roads the most. So a per-mile tax in addition to a basic tax on fuel?
- Those that use them, commercial traffic should pay more; heavier vehicles // the communities they serve.
- Those who use them the most, i.e. tolls. New roads—everyone (taxes)

### Seattle

- Everyone that lives here in Washington.
- I think that instead of using all this money for their political campaign they should use it for roads.
- Money from state road fund // State, county, and city—individually or possibly combined depending on where the road is.
- Taxpayers
- Taxpayers—need transportation // Same—split up the funds. Reserves (if any)
- The state // Business owners who tend to make money from new roads.
- Users statewide // Users in that area

## Vancouver

- All should pay, but heavy vehicles and/or high-density travel pay a bit more.
- City budget (both)
- Counties/cities (taxes) // State (taxes)
- Department of Transportation // Companies building new roads for access
- Drivers via taxes
- Governments // Taxes
- People who use roads statewide for both
- State government department of Transportation; Contractors who build new subdivisions; County taxes
- State Highway: Others; City Streets: city // Highway: state; City streets: Cities

## Appendix G. Written Exercise 5

The Washington fuel tax is 49 cents per gallon and is the primary funding source for our roads. Motorists are switching to more fuel-efficient vehicles, which means the amount of fuel it takes to drive a mile is dropping. This is projected to cause a decrease in the funds available to repair and maintain our roads or build new roads.

The State of Washington has considered changes to the way transportation is funded in the state that reduces reliance on the gas tax. It is researching many ideas, one of which is a “road usage charge,” which is a system where all drivers pay to maintain roads based on the miles they drive, rather than how much gas their vehicle uses.

### What is your first impression of a road usage charge?

Positive impressions	
<b>Tri-Cities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall a good idea, some questions below. Need to balance with gas tax because I like the incentives to carpool and get more fuel-efficient cars.</li> <li>Fairer if it takes into account the wear and tear of the load hauled.</li> <li>I personally <i>like</i> it. You don't want to pay for something you're not using.</li> <li>In theory, I think it sounds like a good, fair idea.</li> </ul>
<b>Spokane</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better system because it would focus more on your local roads and not the ones that you don't use.</li> <li>First impression is that it sounds ideal/fair except the feasibility of it is not realistic at first glance.</li> <li>I like the idea but who's to say that the person will be honest in their reporting how much they truly pay.</li> <li>It sounds good in theory.</li> <li>Logical—the number of miles driven and the impact of the vehicle type on the road surface are important factors in cost of maintenance.</li> </ul>
<b>Bellingham</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I agree</li> <li>I think it is a step in the right direction.</li> <li>Makes sense as long as it is really appropriate to the user. I would likely cycle to work more often to avoid charge.</li> <li>My first impression is that it sounds more fair. Gas usage doesn't make sense for primary funding.</li> <li>My first impression is, “damn, I'd spend a lot.” But it makes sense.</li> <li>People will bike more! Makes sense to switch given the need; People with short commute; Disincentive for people to use hybrid vehicles?</li> <li>Sounds good to me, but is it a sustainable model for the long term?</li> </ul>
<b>Seattle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There could be a charge for electric vehicles too. Not all vehicles use gas, so I think a road usage charge is a good idea.</li> </ul>
<b>Vancouver</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interesting idea. Seems to make sense, but I have questions.</li> <li>Would be fair.</li> </ul>
Neutral impressions	
<b>Tri-Cities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depending how many miles per year driven</li> </ul>
<b>Spokane</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Could be an okay idea, how will it be implemented?</li> <li>I could see it as another source of tax dollars in conjunction with the gas tax.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It would depend on how much the charge is. It's feasible. I don't drive much so it wouldn't impact me as much.</li> </ul>
<b>Bellingham</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possibly good idea—not certain.</li> </ul>
<b>Seattle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That would be something I'd have to think about for a while.</li> </ul>
<b>Vancouver</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It seems the exact same results as the gas tax, more or less</li> <li>Toll fees instead of proper use of funding</li> </ul>

Negative impressions	
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<b>Tri-Cities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highly disagree. The public roads in city limits don't get/need maintenance as much as highways/freeways, which are used more by bigger company vehicles.</li> <li>Something to think about, but doubt it's the answer</li> <li>I believe that the cost to maintain this outweighs the loss of revenue that is lost.</li> <li>Terrible</li> </ul>
<b>Spokane &amp; Bellingham</b>	[No responses]
<b>Seattle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unfair</li> <li>Don't like it? Would they still keep the 49 cents per gallon for roads and add a "Road usage charge?" That would not be fair.</li> <li>Unfair/too diverse, not enough consistency. Should be straightforward.</li> <li>Absolutely not! Some people commute for their jobs.</li> </ul>
<b>Vancouver</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not fair to low-income families</li> <li>Unfair and unnecessary</li> </ul>

Skeptical impressions	
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<b>Tri-Cities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seems fair at first. But does not address higher fees for heavier/more damaging vehicles, and does not account for full benefits users derive from road usage</li> </ul>
<b>Spokane</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weight would be a concern. Passengers? Hauling?</li> <li>What about out-of-state miles? What system will track miles that is not invasive of privacy? How to bill—monthly, yearly, etc.?</li> </ul>
<b>Bellingham</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it replace the gas tax? i.e. gas tax is eliminated.</li> </ul>
<b>Seattle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good idea, impractical to enforce</li> </ul>
<b>Vancouver</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>OMG—How would they determine that and when would it be paid?</li> <li>Unsure of how practical</li> <li>What is the formula used to develop this tax and increases?</li> </ul>

### What questions do you have about a road usage charge?

#### Tri-Cities

- [Positive] Do we know the way it will be monitored? How much will it be? Will it be \$/mile, or what?
- [Positive] How do you enforce or track the usage? How is it paid/collected?
- [Positive] How to keep people honest about it? Do we have to take car in to record mileage? Can't do it on calculated miles to work because you might carpool, or drive less depending on the time of year.
- [Positive] How would road usage be monitored? Who would monitor? Are private citizens, businesses and corporate America all equal?



- [Neutral] The smaller business owners who drive more than others, but won't really make money to cover it.
- [Negative] At what rate? Rural areas the same? How will it be monitored?
- [Negative] How will they do this that guarantees equality?
- [Negative] If drivers are being charged just to commute, do big vehicle drivers get the same, less, or more charges.
- [Negative] Impedes innovation. Unfairly punishes workers who can't afford to live near where they work.
- [Skeptical] See above [*“Seems fair at first. But does not address higher fees for heavier/more damaging vehicles, and does not account for full benefits users derive from road usage.”*] How does it account for weight of vehicle?

### Spokane

- [Positive] How can the state truly know if the driver is reporting his yearly mileage truthfully to pay less of a road usage charge?
- [Positive] How is this implemented?
- [Positive] How would the funds be delegated?
- [Positive] How would you tally how much people drive? How to keep people honest? What about people that have multiple car changes through the year and multiple drivers in household, kids, etc.
- [Positive] Will there be a simultaneous reduction in gas tax? How will this be reported and paid? Some form of limited state tax? Honor system?
- [Neutral] Does the amount of mileage of person/vehicle drives translate into the amount of impact a vehicle has on the roads it is using? Is a semi-truck the same as a mini?
- [Neutral] How are the miles tracked? Will this encourage people to drive less (bus, trains) and will that still cause a drop in revenue? Will DOT enforce (Have employees check when people come in to renew?)
- [Neutral] How much will it be? How often will it increase? How will they track it?
- [Skeptical] See above [*What about out-of-state miles? What system will track miles that is not invasive of privacy? How to bill—monthly, yearly, etc.?*]
- [Skeptical] When/how is it collected? Will new infrastructure be needed?

### Bellingham

- [Positive] But heavy trucks, bigger vehicles, should pay a higher amount, both in the per-mile as well as a weight surcharge. How to calculate? Especially for older vehicles. How to make equal between low-impact, like motorcycles and smaller cars vs. big SUVs or trucks?
- [Positive] Different for different vehicles? Do out-of-state drivers pay? Will other mass transit options be available? Are we paying two taxes then? Will tolls go away?
- [Positive] How is it calculated. And how do you report your usage?
- [Positive] How will this be determined? Honor system? Why not just use tolls? Tier structure based on vehicle weight light-use, commercial, commuter. Why not increase the gas tax?
- [Positive] How would they keep track of our miles? Would we be required to legally track and report them? Meters on the road? Vehicles?
- [Positive] So, same charge for one driver/car vs. someone who carpools with more than two people? Is it fair for those who are rural vs. urban?
- [Positive] What mechanism? Tollways work, but cause delays. How to avoid them?

- [Neutral] How will lawmakers influence people’s choices if these are equity?
- [Skeptical] How much does it cost to administer? Would a new bureaucracy be created? When would it be collected?

### Seattle

- [Positive] How much would a road usage charge be?
- [Neutral] How would it be figured out to be fair?
- [Negative] Do people that commute for their job get a tax break?
- [Negative] For work, recreation? Do we have a choice? A lot of people would stop driving or set gauge back in their car.
- [Negative] How much? Will it keep rising or have a limit? How do they know how much you drive ?
- [Negative] Who oversees the disbursement of the revenue from these charges?
- [Skeptical] How? How will usage be determined, how will it be billed, how will it be enforced, what are non-compliance penalties?

### Vancouver

- [Positive] How would it be determine, measured?
- [Positive] What about public transportation use? How will this be measured? Self-reporting, cameras?; What about those who work longer distances because there aren’t jobs close by?
- [Neutral] How is this monitored? What would it be? Comparable to gas tax?
- [Neutral] What would prevent these charges from being used elsewhere? Mileage vs. Weight; What happens to jobs in trucking? Would jobs be lost due to charge?
- [Negative] How would it be implemented/broken down in fees? How would this be collected/tracked? Would extra equipment be necessary—if so, who pays? Would this be a private company like the toll roads in Southern California?
- [Negative] How would it work to help?
- [Skeptical] How will this funding increase road maintenance in the future?
- [Skeptical] How would they determine that and when would it be paid? How much per mile would you be charging?
- [Skeptical] Same charge per mile on all vehicles or all locations?

## Appendix H. Written Exercise 6

**Do you believe a road usage charge is a very good idea, good, poor, or very poor idea to fund transportation improvements in the state?**

Response Category	Tri-Cities	Spokane	Bellingham	Seattle	Vancouver	Total
Very good	--	1	1	--	--	<b>2</b>
Good	6	6	3	2	2	<b>19</b>
Poor	1	1	2	2	1	<b>7</b>
Very poor	3	--	1	3	2	<b>9</b>
Don't know	--	2	2	--	4	<b>8</b>

### Comments:

Very good; Total n=2	
Spokane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One factor not mentioned is out of state/tourist impact. How this is implemented should address ALL drivers.</li> </ul>
Bellingham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sure makes it difficult for people who have to live further away from their jobs because of the cost of living where jobs tend to be, so they get dinged for living where they can afford, but have to work further.</li> </ul>
Tri-Cities, Seattle, and Vancouver	[No responses]
Good; Total n=19	
Tri-Cities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Again, need a good way to monitor mileage and need to keep incentivizing using roads less.</li> <li>How do you figure it to make it fair for all? No breaks for business.</li> <li>I would like more detail before standing firm.</li> <li>It could affect small business owners negatively</li> <li>Step in the right direction, but more details needed.</li> <li>You use it, you pay for it. You get what you pay for.</li> </ul>
Spokane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depending on how it would be implemented.</li> <li>Good but doesn't see easily executable. Fair though.</li> <li>I feel there are many variables that would need to be accounted for.</li> <li>I think it might be a good supplement, but not as a total replacement of a gas tax. The combination of the two would be better.</li> <li>Only if each person is honest in reporting their mileage.</li> <li>The people who use the roadways would be responsible for maintaining them.</li> </ul>
Bellingham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good, maybe very good, better than having a Washington state income tax.</li> <li>Have not heard details, so unfamiliar with pros and cons.</li> <li>No comment</li> </ul>
Seattle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No comment</li> <li>No comment</li> </ul>
Vancouver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I think it would be the fairest way to collect revenue for roads.</li> <li>I would have to see what other states are doing to fund their roads. It seems very similar to the gas tax in the end.</li> </ul>

Poor; Total n=7	
Tri-Cities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GPS?</li> </ul>
Spokane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It depends on how much it will cost.</li> </ul>
Bellingham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I worry about the implementation of the tax; adding another tax burden, more red tape, more burden on drivers.</li> <li>It would be difficult to track each person's usage of the road.</li> </ul>
Seattle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drivers shouldn't</li> <li>Some people drive a lot for work. They may have to use their own car. That would not be fair.</li> </ul>
Vancouver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some will pay while others won't be able to due to income</li> </ul>
Very poor; Total n=9	
Tri-Cities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With all the tax, gas, oil changes as is, I believe the companies that deploy big vehicles should take that responsibility.</li> <li>The cost of record keeping is expensive. No way for accuracy.</li> <li>Innovation; Climate change; Reliance on foreign fuel</li> </ul>
Spokane	[No responses]
Bellingham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will potentially increase funding for roads/bridges and make our state better. Create a new paradigm for tax.</li> </ul>
Seattle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can't enforce it or enact it.</li> <li>See page 5 [Unfair/too diverse, not enough consistency]</li> <li>Unfair for those that commute during their job.</li> </ul>
Vancouver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If raising the fuel tax does not increase funds for maintenance/build new road after an audit of how funds are used, there is a bigger problem.</li> <li>No comment</li> </ul>
Don't know; Total n=8	
Tri-Cities and Seattle	[No responses]
Spokane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depends on implementation, lots of questions on how it will play out.</li> <li>Need details.</li> </ul>
Bellingham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I'm not sure. It's a decent idea, but I want more info on how they think they're going to track "us" or "miles" and monitor said usage charge first.</li> <li>Would need more details on how it would be implemented.</li> </ul>
Vancouver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depends on how it is structured. Is there a basic number of miles/year at no charge (for retirees, etc.)?</li> <li>How will this affect transportation in the next 20 years when auto driving (driverless)? The future of roads impacted.</li> <li>I feel indifferently about it because I would assume you'd have to pay a one-lump sum fee like state taxes for property and that scares me.</li> <li>I need more information about the specifics of this method</li> </ul>

## Appendix I. Written Exercise 7

There are many different ways to charge drivers for the miles they drive. Three possible ways are described below. Below each, write down any questions you might have about such a method. Put a star (\*) next to your preferred method.

Response Category	Tri-Cities	Spokane	Bellingham	Seattle	Vancouver	Total
Purchase permit	6	2	5	4	5	<b>22</b>
Self-report	2	4	4	1	2	<b>13</b>
Automatically report	1	3	--	2	--	<b>6</b>
No response	1	1	--	--	2	<b>4</b>

### Purchase an annual permit

*Drivers who choose this method would pay an annual fee for a permit. Permits could be purchased online.*

#### Tri-Cities

- \$/mile or straight fee across the board? How to monitor, how many miles it goes off?
- Cost; How many miles driven; Average cost
- Could this be included into registering a vehicle?
- Could this be sold like tabs?
- Covers all miles? License fee changes? Ends gas tax?
- Fixed? More than one car? Like car tabs, (Hahaha)
- How does this monitor miles driven? What are consequences if no permit?
- How much per mile/how is mileage determined, how are rates set. One size fits all? Consequences?
- People who drive more pay the same as people who don't
- No response

#### Spokane

- Basis for permit fee.
- Fee structure tiered based on number of miles driven? Penalty reward for over/under purchased miles? How are miles tracked?
- How would it be tracked? Is there a penalty for overages? What if you drive less?
- How would this work? What if you go over your allotted miles?
- Is the permit based on something other than just mileage (like car type) which impacts roads?
- Pre-paid? Good for state, bad for people. "Forever stamps" scam.
- What about people with multiple vehicles or kids? Can the permit be used for various vehicles? Penalty for going over? Tier structure?
- Would there be a tiered pricing structure depending on range of miles driven? What if you go over? Who monitors?
- Would there be different levels? i.e. 0-1000, 2000-3000
- No response

## Bellingham

- Are the permits tired or scalable? What about averages? How to police? Rollover minutes?
- Assume high enough tax not encourage everyone to use.
- Based on estimated miles—daily commute? How much is the annual permit? Is there a discount for fuel-efficient vehicles? Transfer with driver?
- How is the cost of the permit determined? Require some sticker, or other such ID?
- How much? How does this equal gas tax?
- How much? Unlimited miles per car?
- If you go more than XX miles, an annual fee would be worth it, but what if you went less? Maybe get some money back at the end of the year? Because they're still not going by miles. A permit. But I'd want it to be very well calculated to know I'm paying a fair amount. How much? Refund? Miles limit? Maybe a different price? Or self-report? But need info. What if someone else uses your car? Town miles vs. Freeway miles?
- Seems least costly/logistical. Costs? How many allowable miles? What if you use more or less than the allowable miles? Different cost for state roads vs. city or county?
- Would the permit cost the same for everyone?

## Seattle

- Honestly forecasting miles?
- Would it be similar to tabs/you'd have to renew your permit annually?
- The cost. What the formula would be.
- How much? How would be price compare to using gas?
- How much would it cost? How would the cost be determined?
- Cost—parameters/rules of declaring mileage
- Cost; Is there a mileage limit?

## Vancouver

- Depends on miles permitted and permit fee
- How about poor people?
- How equitable would that be? How is fee determined?
- How much would this permit? Is there a certain amount of mileage per permit?
- How much?
- Limitation on miles/cap with the permit
- Mile limits? Different levels? (Standard vs. premium)
- Permit cost/per yearly miles
- What prevents excessive mileage and cost balance

## Self-report total miles driven

*Drivers would be responsible for periodically reporting the number of miles they drove. They could do this by taking a photo of their odometer with their smartphone, or by having the Department of Licensing record their odometer reading at a local office. Drivers would receive a bill for the miles driven.*

### Tri-Cities

- DOL could do this each year for tab renewal
- Hard to track honest with smartphone option
- How do we prevent fraud? What if you can't pay the bill?
- How would this be monitored fairly?
- Odometer fraud, out of state miles, out of state workers.
- Out of state cars
- Out of state driving? Pictures not honest. Can be Photoshopped.
- Out of state miles? Out of state drivers? Commercial vehicles?
- Self-reporting is totally a terrible idea. I would be honest.
- Some odometers don't work

### Spokane

- Again, multiple vehicles, bring them all at once?
- How would they know the photo is of your car's odometer? Is a mile a mile?
- No response
- What about miles driven outside of WA? How would we charge vehicles driven here from outside the state?
- What about miles driven outside the state?
- What about odometer fraud? How do you know when they took the picture if done themselves?
- What about out-of-state miles? Sounds pretty easy to manipulate.
- Who do you prevent Photoshop/old photos
- Would be more accurate using a log book to track areas of use for interstate and intrastate miles.
- Would there be a disadvantage to lower-income individuals?

### Bellingham

- Are all miles equal in impact? What if odometer is broken or inaccurate? (e.g. tire size)
- Big Brother!
- How do you know that is their car? What if I loan my car to someone? What if I drive out of state?
- How much per mile? How does this compare to the gas tax? Who collects the data? And who pays for the system to collect and track data?
- How would I? Why couldn't pay?
- If it takes 30 minutes to do something at the DOL, how could this be done quickly? How to police? Avoid fraud?
- Lots of ways for people to cheat the system. Takes more time, more steps for error.
- People less than XXX miles. How would they really monitor this?
- Who polices this? Is this trustworthy? People might hack/or do work arounds. Local office option could be very costly to run, so defeats the purpose.

### Seattle

- Ethical
- How do they monitor the odometer matches the right vehicle? What if you have multiple cars?
- I'm sure there would be a way to cheat this. Not saying I would, but others might.
- Isn't this too unorganized? Should it be a clear system that is the same for everyone?

- It might be easier to pay for if they did this every six month? How much would they charge per mile?
- Penalty? Nightmare of Department of Licensing enforcement?
- This would have lots of people trying to figure out how to make those miles less. Honesty of people—probably lots of fraud.

#### **Vancouver**

- Are there discounts if under certain milage ?
- Honesty issues. It would be very easy to cheat. I don't want to be at the DMV for another reason
- How do they determine the miles were driven in Washington?
- How do you know the odometer is mine? (Picture method)
- How often and what if you refused to pay?
- How often? Any exempting? Out-of-state travel?
- How to determine out-of-state miles?
- Impact could cause jobs to be lost. What is to stop it?
- Who will be honest?

#### **Automatically report miles driven using smartphone or in-vehicle technology**

*Drivers could install a small device in their vehicle that automatically reports the number of miles they drive, or they could use an app on their smartphone to keep track of how many miles they drive. Drivers would receive a bill for miles driven.*

#### **Tri-Cities**

- “Invasion of privacy”
- Again, don't trust accuracy of a smartphone app.
- Bill how often? GPS? Again, out of state miles?
- GPS? App can just be turned off.
- How would these not be fudged? (Honesty) Out of state drivers?
- I don't believe it would be convenient. Some may forget when and how to start it.
- If this happens, I would stop driving and sell my car.
- Most fair, but most invasive to personal freedoms? Again, what if you can't pay the bill?
- Privacy!!!
- No questions

#### **Spokane**

- Certainly feasible. Again, out-of-state miles.
- How is it billed?
- I actually have an in-vehicle device through my insurance company.
- Privacy, would there be protection on that information?
- Same issues as above [*“What about miles driven outside of WA? How would we charge vehicles driven here from outside the state?”*]. Also sounds a little too “Big Brother.”
- States/police authority to use data?
- Tech could solve all of these issues by tracking fuel usage, vehicle impact on road surface, areas of miles traveled inter/intrastate.
- What about older cars? What about miles out of state?



- What if you don't have a smartphone?
- Would this geo track? If so, stop at state line?

### **Bellingham**

- Avoid fraud? How to police? How do you dispute? Hacking?
- Bigger Brother!
- Drive out of state?
- GPS? How does it communicate?
- How much per mile? Who pays for the device and data collection
- How to implement on old cars?
- Not everyone has a smartphone. Another way to make us all puppets and on our phones all the time? Just another way to control us and what we do in our vehicles?
- Small device that tracks you is like Big Brother. Not everyone has a smartphone.
- Who pays for in-vehicle device? Can one use one device across all vehicles? What if smartphone doesn't have service? Cost of two or three devices?

### **Seattle**

- Ethical
- How often? How high could bill get at one billing time? People will forget. I would not like to— maybe too complicated for older person.
- Isn't there room for error? Some people (seniors etc.) may not be able to do that.
- Multiple cars?
- Seems like this infringes on privacy.
- These are available already. Tech challenged...
- What if they refuse? Or don't pay?

### **Vancouver**

- Accuracy? Honesty?
- How invasive would the app/in-vehicle technology be?
- How much? Out of state miles?
- If it can be installed, it can be uninstalled. What prevents it and does it prevent the ability to track it?
- Information protection. Security is already a big issue and this would be worth a fortune.
- Is this a track on location?
- Not all have smartphones. Cost of device?
- Not good for travelers
- Who would pay for device? Does everyone have a smartphone?

### **Do you have other ideas about how you might like to keep track of the miles you drive?**

#### **Tri-Cities**

- [No responses]

#### **Spokane**

- Cars have a yearly reset on the odometer— so mileage can be calculated.
- It was mentioned earlier—toll roads. This would be simplest, least invasive, keep local.

- Record them when paying for tabs.

**Bellingham**

- Like new toll system, computer tracking.

**Seattle**

- GPS tracking device.
- I don't want a new tax. Instead add to a current tax.
- New/used car dealers must install automatic devices in vehicle.
- When tabs are purchased or perhaps at emissions reporting testing—would be every other year.
- Why don't they use the miles driven reported on your taxes?

**Vancouver**

- Increase fuel tax and tab fees?
- Monthly permit?
- No clue
- None
- Purchase a permit

## Appendix J. Written Exercise 8

Below are several reasons some people might support a road usage charge. Rank the reasons from 1 to 4, where 1 is the most compelling reason to support a road usage charge, and 4 is the least compelling reason to support it.

Response Category	Mean Tri-Cities	Mean Spokane	Mean Bellingham	Mean Seattle	Mean Vancouver	Mean Total
Road usage charges ensure each driver pays their fair share based on how much they use the roads.	1.8	2.3	1.7	2.0	1.9	<b>1.9</b>
Electric and hybrid cars pay very little per mile to maintain the roads because they use less gas, but people with inefficient cars pay a lot more per mile because they use more gas. It's only fair that every driver helps pay to maintain our roads	3.2	3.3	2.8	3.4	2.6	<b>3.0</b>
It's not fair that people who can afford new cars and trucks with better gas mileage get to pay less in gas tax, while low-income residents pay more in gas tax if they drive an older, less efficient vehicle. A road usage charge means everyone pays the same for what they use.	2.9	2.8	3.2	2.1	2.8	<b>2.8</b>
Transportation funding is projected to decrease because people are buying less gas due to more fuel-efficient vehicles. A road usage charge would provide a more stable funding stream to maintain our roadways because it is based on road usage, not fuel.	2.1	1.6	2.3	2.4	2.8	<b>2.2</b>

## Appendix K. Written Exercise 9

The State of Washington will soon begin a research project on road usage charging. The project will recruit volunteers from all over Washington to test an alternative to the gas tax. Volunteers will select a mileage-reporting method (annual permit, self-report, or use technology), report their mileage for one year, and participate in surveys and focus groups to provide feedback about their experiences. Volunteering in the research project will not cost any money, and volunteers will receive incentives for providing feedback.

Response Category	Tri-Cities	Spokane	Bellingham	Seattle	Vancouver	Total
Very interested	8	9	5	3	4	29
Somewhat interested	1	1	2	3	4	11
Not too interested	--	--	1	--	1	2
Not at all interested	--	--	--	1	--	1
Unsure	1	--	1	--	--	2

### What questions do you have about the research project?

#### Tri-Cities

- [Very interested] Would volunteers select their method?
- [Very interested] Would I be disqualified if I had a sudden car issue? Having to change to public transportation, or even other means of transportation. What if life changes occur that would make forfeiting an option?
- [Very interested] Why have incentive if it is by volunteer? How will the volunteers be monitored? What about out-of-state drivers?
- [Very interested] How would they conduct it? What's the process?
- [Very interested] How would privacy be protected by using tracking devices? How would it be conducted?
- [Very interested] How much time would it take? How would they results be used?
- [Very interested] How much time does it involve?
- [Very interested] How much is the incentive? LOL. Can I try to "defeat" the system to help identity fraud? How do you guarantee a good cross-section of inputs from volunteers?
- [Somewhat interested] Report how often? Time commitment? What are incentives?
- [Unsure] What incentives?

#### Spokane

- [Very interested] How long is the program; Do you get to choose test method? What is incentive?
- [Very interested] How much time is involved?
- [Very interested] How much time will it take?
- [Very interested] How often meeting? Incentives?
- [Very interested] Would there be restrictions on various things such as # miles projected driving, age of vehicle?
- [Very interested] No comment [x4]
- [Somewhat interested] How often would the focus groups meet?

## Bellingham

- [Very interested] How often and how much time would be need to be committed to the research?
- [Very interested] How time consuming will it be to participate?
- [Very interested] No comment
- [Very interested] Tracking per vehicle, or across all vehicles owned? What about rental car use? (In state); Project focus groups, where located.
- [Very interested] Where to I sign up?
- [Somewhat interested] Do I need a smartphone? Am I compensated for the extra time required of me?
- [Somewhat interested] Do we pick the method? Are the groups close, or need to drive?
- [Not too interested] No comment
- [Unsure] No comment

## Seattle

- [Very interested] How will my feedback impact overall and truly make a difference? (which would be my goal in helping with the project)
- [Very interested] What are the incentives and what is the length?
- [Very interested] What method would be used? The annual permit, self report, or use technology? How would they choose who participates in this research project? Would I still have to pay gas tax? How involved would I have to be in this project?
- [Somewhat interested] Do we still have to pay the gas tax also? How much time would it take?
- [Somewhat interested] No comment
- [Somewhat interested] When would it start?
- [Not at all interested] No comment

## Vancouver

- [Very interested] No comment
- [Very interested] How is reporting conducted?
- [Very interested] How much time would this require daily, weekly, monthly?
- [Very interested] What are the incentives and who would pay and receive the information collected?
- [Somewhat interested] Information security?
- [Somewhat interested] None
- [Somewhat interested] Would you get to choose what method?
- [Somewhat interested] How often report system is required?
- [Not too interested] No comment

## Appendix L. Written Exercise 10

**List any reasons you may be interested in volunteering for the research project.**

### **Tri-Cities**

- A chance to provide input; An opportunity to educate myself about the issue; Providing a service to my community.
- Curiosity; Possible benefits for myself; Insights from others; Knowing what could hit the market before it's just put right out
- Curious about the results
- Desire to participate in the decision process; Curiosity; Incentive
- I enjoy learning and participating in new projects/ideas; I am a "sponge" for new information
- Interested in project; Find ways for improvement; Be kept current/informed
- Know the process
- Learn more about it. Have input.
- Like sharing; Like being involved; Like helping in research; Science background so I believe all research is good no matter what the outcome; Incentive
- To get a better understanding of the process

### **Spokane**

- Better understand options and program.
- Help determine outcome; Can see what works best for me before program goes into place.
- Helping move my community forward; Kickback incentive
- I am slightly against the idea of a road usage fee. So I want to be convinced as to why it might be a good idea and how feasible it might be.
- I like to participate in research projects and be a part of decisions. I like my opinion to matter.
- I think it would be interesting to be part of a solution to the dilemma of transportation funding.
- I would like to participate to understand better how they propose to structure and implement this program; to be aware of the possibilities of the implementation of, restrictions, other specific considerations whether or not this will be imposed or voted on.
- Like to participate in focus groups as long as there is enough incentive.
- So this would help in developing a fair way of deciding on the fee to charge in our [unintelligible] if this becomes a mandatory law.
- Would be interesting to follow this through and discover exactly how much we are driving and what these new structures would look and feel like; It's a good idea and I think once kinks are worked out it will be good for our state; Job satisfaction so to speak. I like the idea of contributing to something more, offer diverse perspective.

### **Bellingham**

- Curious to see how it works; Want to see first-hand benefits/detractors; Like the idea of experiencing a different way for what we do now.
- Generally, I am a curious person; My participation could be valuable to all of us.
- Helping the community; Interested in the process; Improving before rollout

- I find this topic incredibly important for the state of Washington, because the maintenance and development of our roads is critical, as is the development of major transportation options as a result of the new funding.
- None.
- Research is a valuable tool to determine. Feasibility of new systems.
- Sounds interesting and driving is something I am passionate about and pay a lot of attention to.
- To get an insight on how it would be done; See the mile reports and make a logical choice for yourself when you have to pay for it.
- To help in coming up with a new type of fund/revenue stream

#### **Seattle**

- Curious to see outcomes
- I already keep track of my mileage for my own business so it would be easier for me to help gather the info than someone who doesn't keep track.
- I am a driver and should be part of the decision-making process.
- I'd be interested because I like to be a part of new changes that are being made in my community; I like to volunteer and give back to my community.
- Incentives; Money for doing it
- Your input could affect the outcome of the study.
- No response

#### **Vancouver**

- Curiosity; Participation and understanding of this method; Better understand how I feel/think about it
- Finding new ways to source needed funding and comparisons
- Get an advanced idea of monthly/annual cash flow expense; Curious to see how this idea could work.
- I think it would be interesting to know how much one spends driving and the costs
- I travel Washington State Roads a lot during the spring and summer months; It sounds interesting; I drive a hybrid vehicle
- I would like to see if this is a feasible plan to increase funds to repair roads.
- It could be helpful to work out the kinks and troubleshoot
- My current job involves extensive driving, so I am very interested in seeing how, as a person who drives more than the norm would be affected.
- No response

#### **List any reasons you may not be interested in volunteering.**

#### **Tri-Cities**

- Amount of time involved; Dates of meetings
- Excessive time commitment.
- If it took too much time
- If possible, could be time consuming
- Liberal state, government is going to do what they want regardless.
- None
- Possibly time consuming

- Time consuming; Worth the payment; Possible personal invasion
- Too much time/hassle
- No response

### Spokane

- If it would take too much time or insufficient incentive.
- May not get to choose method.
- None
- Time commitment
- Time constraints depending on how intrusive it is.
- Too much time; Do we get to pick our own tracking reporting method or is it assigned?
- Would need advance notice for meetings due to work constraints, Need to have enough notice to switch shifts at work if necessary, etc.
- No response [x3]

### Bellingham

- Difficulty/time consuming.
- How much time outside of my “normal” life will be required for the surveys and focus groups.
- Impacting my lifestyle; Intrusive; Time and effort
- None.
- None.
- Not wanting to spend my free time on a project of this scope.
- Too much effort for something experimental?
- Where it meets, how often, time. How it tracks.
- No response

### Seattle

- Don’t have the time with zero incentive to participate—free gas for a year?
- If I have to self-report, I want to ensure I don’t forget.
- Privacy; I feel like I’d be tracked wherever I drove.
- Time consuming? Maybe...Would be compensated?
- Will it take a lot of time? If so I may not have that time. Do you get restrictions put on you when you do this?
- N/A
- None.

### Vancouver

- Concern about forgetting (ha ha)
- If my name and address/family members would be disclosed to the wrong people. Confidentiality.
- Information security for digital options. Hassle to report if it is time consuming
- My spouse would be unhappy about personal information given
- Not convenient in tracking and/or reporting
- Takes too much time for my schedule with reporting, compared to compensation
- Time it takes to report and I wouldn’t want to be monitored with a type of device.
- Too much effort
- Too much reporting; Having to attend meetings



## Appendix M. Written Exercise 11

Below are several reasons someone might want to volunteer for the road usage charge research project. Rank the reasons from 1 to 6, where 1 is the most compelling reason to volunteer and 6 is the least compelling reason.

As you read each message, circle any words or phrases you like. Cross out any words or phrases you don't like.

Response Category	Mean Tri-Cities	Mean Spokane	Mean Bellingham	Mean Seattle	Mean Vancouver	Mean Total
All participants will receive an incentive in appreciation for their time. The incentives will be timely and easy to redeem	4.2	2.9	3.9	2.3	3.4	3.7
The research project is a unique opportunity for Washington drivers to “test-drive” a road usage charge and share their experiences. Your preferences can help shape future funding policy.	2.1	1.6	1.4	2.9	2.8	1.9
We need people from all across Washington to help us test a road usage charge. The experiences of all types of drivers—urban, suburban, and rural—are important to help guide future funding policy.	2.7	3.7	3.4	3.7	2.7	3.1
The pilot is being sponsored and implemented by the State of Washington.	5.2	6.0	5.3	5.4	5.0	5.4
Volunteers in the research project have flexibility. They will get to choose how to report their miles each month for the duration of the test—an electronic mileage meter, a smartphone app, or the readings from their own odometer	4.2	3.5	3.4	3.4	4.1	3.8
Volunteers in the research project are providing a public service. The feedback from participants in this research project will help shape our state's future.	2.6	3.3	3.4	3.3	2.6	3.0

### Words or phrases liked

#### Tri-Cities

- Incentive; unique opportunity; share their experience; preferences can help shape future funding policy; flexibility; public service
- Participants will receive; preferences can; from all across Washington

#### Spokane

- “Test-drive”; shape future funding policy; flexibility; shape our state's future
- Incentive; easy to redeem; help shape future funding policy; help guide future funding policy; flexibility; choose; providing a public service; the feedback from participants in this research project will help shape our state's future

- Incentive; for their time; timely; easy to redeem; “test-drive” a road usage charge; your preferences can help shape future funding policy; all types of drivers—urban, suburban, and rural; guide future funding policy; flexibility; choose how to report their miles; providing a public service; shape our state’s future
- Your preferences can help shape future funding policy

### **Bellingham**

- All participants will receive an incentive in appreciation for their time; Your preferences can help shape future funding policy.
- Help shape future funding policy; urban, suburban and rural; sponsored; implemented; by the State of Washington; flexibility; providing a public service.
- Incentive in appreciation for their time
- Unique opportunity; experiences; future funding policy; state’s future

### **Seattle**

- Appreciation; timely; easy to redeem; unique opportunity; “test-drive”; share their experiences; shape future funding policy; we need people from all across Washington to help us; all types of drivers—urban, suburban, and rural; State of Washington; they will get to choose how to report their miles; Volunteers in the research project are providing a public service.
- Incentive; shape future funding policy; need; important; guide; flexibility; providing a public service; shape our state’s future
- Share their experiences; types of drivers; pilot is being sponsored; flexibility; public service

### **Vancouver**

- [No responses]

### **Words or phrases disliked**

#### **Tri-Cities**

- Urban, suburban and rural
- No response [x9]

#### **Groups 2, 3 & 5**

- No responses

#### **Seattle**

- An incentive [comment: “state what it is”]
- Pilot [comment: “what do you mean pilot?”]

## Appendix N. Written Exercise 12

### What sources of information would you trust to learn more about a road usage charge research project?

#### Tri-Cities

- A state poll from peers
- Family and friends; Statistics from the Department of Transportation; Truckers
- News; State website; Independent research (nonpartisan)
- Nonpartisan, non-government related person
- Official website; official person explaining details; official written materials
- Peers vs. politician
- Peers; Friends; Family
- State, city, county employees—actual workers; The school doing the research
- The people who actually did [...]
- WSDOT; WSU/UW/CWU; PBS; Independent bipartisan commission

#### Spokane

- Department of transportation personnel perhaps; People without an agenda other than fairness, equality, and quality of transportation; Perhaps legislators who are wrestling with this
- DOT; Newspaper; Newscast; Public forum
- From customers who have used it. Non-biased, state citizens
- Good question! With the current political climate, it has become very difficult to trust anything you hear or read in the media. For example, I wouldn't trust anything Jay Inslee said.
- Government pamphlets and websites; Local and state leaders
- Independent consulting firm; University-based research team
- Local community members; City planners; Local representatives; Other states that have implemented it
- Someone who would be monitoring the organization who is developing this program.
- The people running the project; State of Washington
- WA DOT—they are the most knowledgeable and most directly involved; Universities

#### Bellingham

- DOT; State of Washington; Oil companies
- Flyer/report/PSA from state DOT; Washington State Legislature?
- Local news (paper, radio, TV); Washington Government site (DOL/DOT, Sunshine committee); Local reps
- Logical statistics; I'm not sure
- People who have used it; Would be interested in seeing data about where the state is with current sales tax paradigm and how this is going to bring more funding to work and how much. And report independent; Has this been done in other states? To what success?
- *Properly* vetted independent agent; Bipartisan folk from Olympia
- State of Washington—as project sponsor. Governor? Representatives? DOT head. Project facilitator, with backing of Washington.
- Trust state department to inform; Results of project—I want to hear debate—pros/cons, issues I have not considered.

- WSDOT; Local news

#### Seattle

- DOT
- DOT; State government in charge of planning and maintaining roads
- I like organizations like the Young Turks because they are unbiased and unaffiliated with mainstream media; A notice in the mail—it's legit and office; DOT or DOL; A website
- Notice in mail; Flier/billboards (on this they could have a phone number to call in questions, or call in if interested. Or an address to write into); A pullout of your own in the paper; Department of Transportation or State Planning Department
- Reps from states that already have this or something similar.
- State of Washington officials appointed to comprise this project.
- Wash DOT Q&As

#### Vancouver

- A state ombudsman or the Secretary of State
- Department of Motor Vehicles
- State government website; Mailer; DMV
- State sponsored website such as Washington Department of Transportation
- The state of Washington; Local government
- Third party; Multiple
- University policy study groups if NOT paid for study
- What formula is used to determine and track project? Data; Research; Past history; How this system has benefited the residents
- Who is in charge of conducting it? Who is our information shared with? Will this be public information?

#### What sources of information would you not trust to learn more?

##### Tri-Cities

- Anybody who didn't know anything about how it's done, or only care about the money we pay
- Corporate interests; Lobbying groups
- Hearsay from peers
- Local news channels
- Media
- Politician
- Politicians
- Politicians, state workers
- Politicians; King County; West side
- The news station or newspapers

##### Spokane

- Facebook; News; Car manufacturers
- I would take anyone's info (besides researchers) with a grain of salt because everyone has their own agendas and biases.

- Mainstream media
- PACs or people with vested interests or agenda
- Politically motivated entities; Standard news sources; Blogs or general internet
- Politicians
- Politicians and people trying to implement it. Government officials
- Politicians; Anyone that could personally gain from the change
- State DMV or other agency
- The people doing this study

### **Bellingham**

- Executive branch of the US Government.
- Facebook; Private for-profit companies
- Manufacturer of devices.
- Mystery independent agent. ?DOT?
- National news; Oil company, third party backed; Renewable resources; Environmental advocates; Anyone from California
- Oil companies, sponsored by Exxon Mobile; Anyone who could benefit other than the state of Washington
- Oil companies; Car makers
- Politicians
- The workers who would directly benefit from the road usage charge; Whoever those “leaders” are; Some random third party

### **Seattle**

- Mainstream media; Trump
- Oil companies/auto industry
- People not associated with the project, but who want to give their opinion
- Politician article in the newspaper
- Politicians
- State government or lobbyists
- The mayor

### **Vancouver**

- Advertisements
- Any groups tied to fuel industries, auto manufacturers, politicians
- Basic search engines/random sites. Certain news outlets.
- Insurance companies
- Media; Local government
- Most everything else
- None, I want to know as much as I can
- No response [x2]

## Appendix O. Written Exercise 13

**What message or advice would you give leaders in Washington as they research road usage charging to improve roads in the state?**

### Tri-Cities

- Be honest about how you are researching. Do not use it as a way to keep taxing Washington residents to put the money elsewhere. Try to make it as fool/fudge-proof as possible.
- Be honest; Be accurate; Be fair; Use money for transportation purposes only; Research fully and completely; How to handle tourists/truckers/folks in rural areas; Use company that is in the forefront of the public for accuracy and honesty; Independent company; Don't use 'use it or lose it'; I drive a hybrid because I wanted to help the environment.
- Don't use this just to make new taxes without removing others; Don't use revenue for something else; Don't waste funds on non-essential projects.
- Fix the budget instead of adding more crap. Use the budget's money for its intended purpose
- Focus on people who do or don't use it as often, or more often; Use the funds available in each household as a primary factor.
- How does it fit into the larger picture? How does it make Washington more competitive in the national and global stage? How would it improve the quality of life for all residents of Washington? Is it fair? Does it increase or decrease income inequality?
- I would suggest to think about everybody who it could potentially affect negatively or positively. There are other people.
- Make sure it truly is fair for all state residents. No input from "special interests." Maintain transparency.
- Please be honest/transparent with us about how/why you are spending our tax dollars. Quit "shuffling" money to other areas that we were told was for roads. Be honest!
- To me, the gas tax works, so make sure this is researched and studied thoroughly. Make sure it makes sense and really good sense at that. People hate seeing a new tax, even if it is for the better.

### Spokane

- Budgets for creation of new roads, maintenance of current road surfaces, and other expenses should be drawn from regional use instead of a general state fund parceled out inequitably by population density.
- How would the funds be delegated, locally or statewide? How would the costs of implementing the project and maintaining it weight against the moneys gained? Would there be incentives for economically disadvantaged individuals? It should be voted on.
- It needs to be tested on all different community members. All discussed concerns need to be addressed. It needs to remain fair and not based on greed. Both sides of the state need to be treated fairly in terms of disbursement.
- It seems to me that you are on the right track by including volunteers in the testing to make sure whatever option is ultimately chosen is implemented correctly; Charging truckers and other heavier users more makes sense.
- It should be a plan that ensures honesty from drivers; It should not punish lower-income drivers or hybrid/electric drivers unfairly; Get input from all areas of the state
- Keep the public informed; No surprises; Provide regular updates as information is accumulated

- Listen to their constituents; Work towards quality and fairness of our transportation policy; Recognize we have a problem that we have to solve —so be a part of a solution regardless of politics; Don't kick the can down the road for future legislators
- Make sure the funding/details stay transparent to the public. People want facts, not rhetoric.
- Really look at comparable gains from gas tax vs. road usage charge so that the difference in type of payment isn't that much. For instance, relatively same amount of money for average gas user to road user, that way the average person is going to be okay with the new charge and not feel like they are losing.
- To take the time to look at all the data and information turned in to make and implement fair road usage charges across the board. Even looking at the demographics so low-income commuters would be charged fairly. So the charge wouldn't be a burden to them and cause them to use the buses and park their cars.

### Bellingham

- Be sure to maintain an incentive for people to buy cars that produce less of a carbon footprint; Use the money to think beyond maintain and thinking ahead to what our state would benefit from decades from now. Solar panel roads? We need long-term answers.
- Don't make the permit out of reach for low-income people as some need to be able to commute more miles. Maybe a different "permit price" that allow different mile ranges; Care fully structure how to track those miles; Make it fair; I kind of think they'd screw low-income people, because I pay my tax in gas.
- If it's implemented, it can't be more of a hassle than the present system; Must be as fair as possible; No Big Brother data collection/data mining. i.e. earn the trust of the public.
- Improve on existing system. Find a solution that has the highest cost vs value —within existing system. Take some of the funds from marijuana tax.
- It's not about fair, fair is a family being able to cross a bridge without it falling down. Fair is the owner/operator of a semi-trailer getting home on time. Fair is the commuter being safe as they head home. Fair is options for everyone to enjoy the beauty and opportunities in the state. Fair is not making everything equal. Fair is a safer, transparent and focused vision for transportation.
- Keep it simple—the more steps involved, the more margin for error. Listen to the people who use the roads. Keep your budget reasonable, hire a few people to make this work, as necessary.
- Make it fair for all involved. If people are charged the same they should receive the same benefits. Likewise, those that use it more should pay more. Keep the money for all transportation needs.
- The transportation issues the state of Washington faces encompasses so much more than roads, I think. Assuming that by replacing the gas tax, which funds public transportation, ferries, roads, bikeways, currently—a new road usage charging program would and should go to improve roads, but our Washington leaders need to think forward, always, to further down the line what our transportation needs are.; Charges to visitors who use roads? RVs, Trailers, hmmm.
- Very complicated new idea. Provide us with pros/cons. Concerned about wasting limited government funds. Important things need attention, so I want to know there is a real benefit and minimal drawbacks.

## Seattle

- Please take public opinions and feedback. There needs to be transparency with how money is spent and what changes are made.
- Median income > “actuary tables” on who is already paying for fees —i.e. driving records—high level of traffic/parking tickets. Perhaps a penalty for those folks who may abuse driving privileges.
- Look into alternative road base that allows water to go through it and the roads last longer (like the ones in England) And they don’t puddle, causing hydroplaning during the rainy season. As far as charging people for road usage, find some way to make it fair and valuable so everyone is willing.
- I really don’t like a new tax. But I would like to see the comparison of current system we pay (gas tax) vs. the mileage price I’d have to pay. Depending how much more it is, would depend whether I’d be for or against it. See that the implementation is honest, and money used appropriately.
- I think they should choose one or the other: gas tax or road usage change. Both are too much. Also what charges would bicyclists pay? They use the roads too. There should be break for low -income families.
- Not to leave any stone unturned when considering this. Gather as much information as possible from all sources available.
- Make it simple to implement; make it completely transparent and fair; enforce it strongly, and evenly across the state; get the rate high enough to *eliminate* the gas tax.

## Vancouver

- Be proactive in the causes of road usage and destructive and determine the amount it will cost annually. Then, be mindful of the fees and how you develop the program.
- Consider all levels of income; Consider builders and heavy freight trucks; Consider all roads of usage
- Consider the following: City community; Rural community; Poor community; Vehicles/commercial; Implementation
- Do not implement an expense that would be difficult for low-income households to pay in lump sums. Do not mandate GPS-style technology for mileage reporting purposes.
- Don’t bow to partisan pressure or special interests. This issue has to do with PUBLIC infrastructure. Do NOT let our roads and bridges be privatized.
- Is there a better way to improve our current situation? Is there a way to add this road usage charge to our current system to reduce the impact to residents?
- Make it fair, base off employment types and income ratio. Provide flexible payment option and/or incentives to the residents.
- Privacy and equality are important. Transparency re: the process and who’s getting the information is highly important.
- Provide better security for our information if a digital option is available; How much is this going to cost to implement?