

As part of the Oregon Coastal Caucus Economic Summit on August 27th, a panel was asked to respond to several questions about the challenges facing Oregon with respect to funding transportation.

Across Oregon, there is tremendous support for transportation and infrastructure investments. Our “system” is in trouble. So why is formulating a “package” so controversial?

Here are some of the issues that I believe complicate the debate:

- To toll or not?
- To track vehicles for congestion pricing (OreGo)
- Too much debt at ODOT?
- Or “pay as we go”
- Blend of fuels
- Studded snow tires or not
- Our relationships with the feds
- To dredge or not dredge
- Nature of commodities transported
- Noise and land use
- R&D on new technology (Daimler/OSU partnership)
- Standing in lawsuits
- Drones (privacy/safety) Integration into our national airspace
- Call on existing gas tax (cities and county) to fund DMV computer upgrade
- Breathtaking cost of projects and all the contributing factors
 - o Environmental regulations
 - o Litigation
 - o Project complexity
 - o Community acceptance
 - o Loss of parking
 - o Environmental appeals
- New kinds of vehicles and how they pay their share
- Accommodation for bikes and pedestrian – pay nothing and use the system
- Movement and handling of containers
- Social engineering of transportation planning (compact communities around light-rail)
- Multi-state cooperation or failure of cooperation (CRC)
- ODOT in house design or “design/build”
- Congestion pricing
- Cooperation of the major railroads for freight handling
- Security (train in Europe) TSA
- Transit and an aging population
- Urban congestion and additional capacity
- “ownership” of the system (jurisdictional transfers)
- Leverage of federal funds
- Local municipal initiatives (local gas tax or street fees?)
- Commercial air service statewide/subsidies?
- Consumers tolerance for gas tax
- Self service fuel?