

# MOUNTAIN-PLAINS CONSORTIUM

PROJECT BRIEF | MPC 15-300 | December 2015

## Understanding Public Perceptions of Different Options to Fund the Highway System



### the ISSUE

The purpose of this research was to generate an understanding of the public perceptions of different revenue generation systems that are already in use or that have the potential to be used in the future, and to educate the public on the different revenue generation systems.

### the RESEARCH

The survey was sent to 15,945 people in five states: Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming (Mountain-Plains Consortium states) via mail. Only 1,190 surveys were returned, 27 were eliminated due to various issues, and 1,163 were posted as completed surveys resulting in a response rate of 7.30 %. Data analysis of the results consisted of performing descriptive and inferential statistics and running chi-square tests for correlation analysis.



A University Transportation Center sponsored by the U.S. Department of Transportation serving the Mountain-Plains Region. Consortium members:

Colorado State University  
North Dakota State University  
South Dakota State University

University of Colorado Denver  
University of Denver  
University of Utah

Utah State University  
University of Wyoming



## Lead Investigator

Nasser Albeiruti  
Colorado State University  
nasser.albeiruti@colostate.edu

## Project Title

Understanding Public Perceptions of Different Options to Fund the Highway System

## Co-Investigator(s)

Dr. Mehmet E. Ozbek  
Dr. Rebecca Atadero

## Sponsors | Partners

USDOT, Research and Innovative Technology Administration

## the FINDINGS

Results indicate that the public in Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming selected “increasing the federal gas tax that is collected at the time of purchase” as their first choice of funding option. The support for the use of highway tolling to fund the highway system was somewhat moderate among the population across the five states. The collection of additional sales tax on all goods to fund the highway system was an unpopular funding mechanism among respondents. Similarly, the support for the use of mileage-based user fees was disliked.

## the IMPACT

This research is significant, as few studies have been done on understanding the public perceptions of different options to fund the highway systems. Furthermore the findings of this survey could be used by the law-makers in the five states to make better decisions with respect to the alternative options of funding the highway system in their state-based on the general public’s perceptions. Future research could assess the impact of the utilized option on each state with regard to its social, economic, and behavioral issues that could result from its implementation.

For more information on this project, download the entire report at <http://www.ugpti.org/resources/reports/details.php?id=836>

For more information or additional copies, visit the Web site at [www.mountain-plains.org](http://www.mountain-plains.org), call (701) 231-7938 or write to Mountain-Plains Consortium, Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute, North Dakota State University, Dept. 2880, PO Box 6050, Fargo, ND 58108-6050.



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