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**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT AND AUDIT COMMITTEE
JULY 16, 2009**

SUBJECT: TOLL RATES FOR I-10/I-110 EXPRESSLANES

ACTION: ADOPT TOLL RATES & TOLL POLICY FOR EXPRESSLANES

RECOMMENDATION

- A. Receive results of public hearings held June 13 – June 22, 2009 and additional written public comment received by July 14, 2009 concerning toll rates and toll policy for ExpressLanes (Attachment A)
- B. Adopt the following Toll Rates for the I-10/I-110 ExpressLanes:
 - Minimum Toll per Mile of \$0.25
 - Maximum Toll per Mile of \$1.40
- C. Adopt the ExpressLanes Toll Policy as identified in Attachment B
- D. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to enter into necessary agreements to implement the ExpressLanes Toll Policy, including cooperative agreements, license agreements, user fee processing agreements and such other ancillary documents and agreements deemed necessary or appropriate to implement the adopted Toll Policy for the LA County Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project.

ISSUE

SB1422 (Ridley-Thomas) requires MTA to hold a public hearing 30 days prior to adoption of toll rates for the LA County Congestion Reduction Demonstration (ExpressLanes) Project. MTA held six public hearings between June 13 and June 22 along both the I-10 and I-110 corridors. To encourage further comment, MTA held a live web chat on July 7. Formal written comments were accepted June 13 – July 14. This level of public outreach is consistent with the Board adopted Public Outreach and Communications Plan for this Project which requires providing the public multiple opportunities to review the proposed options, the implications of the options, and alternative implementation approaches for the demonstration project.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The ExpressLanes one-year demonstration project is unique because it offers improved transportation options and the new choice to pay to travel in a carpool lane.

Establishing a toll policy with toll rates and performance measurements represents an important implementation milestone for the ExpressLanes Project. The toll policy will set the framework for the Request for Proposal for the Toll Systems Integrator and be included in the draft environmental document, both of which will be circulated in August 2009.

OPTIONS

The Board may choose to either: 1) modify and adopt any subset of the proposals; or 2) take no action. These options are not recommended as this would delay the circulation of the draft environmental document and delay the schedule for the ExpressLanes Project.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Adoption of toll rates provides the framework for new revenue to be generated. Tolls would go into effect with the opening of the ExpressLanes on December 31, 2010. The annual revenue estimate is \$21 million. SB1422 requires that net toll revenues must be reinvested in the corridor where generated.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

SB1422 (Ridley-Thomas) requires MTA to hold a public hearing 30 days prior to adoption of toll rates for the LA County Congestion Reduction Demonstration (ExpressLanes) Project. MTA held six public hearings between June 13 and June 22 along both the I-10 and I-110 corridors.

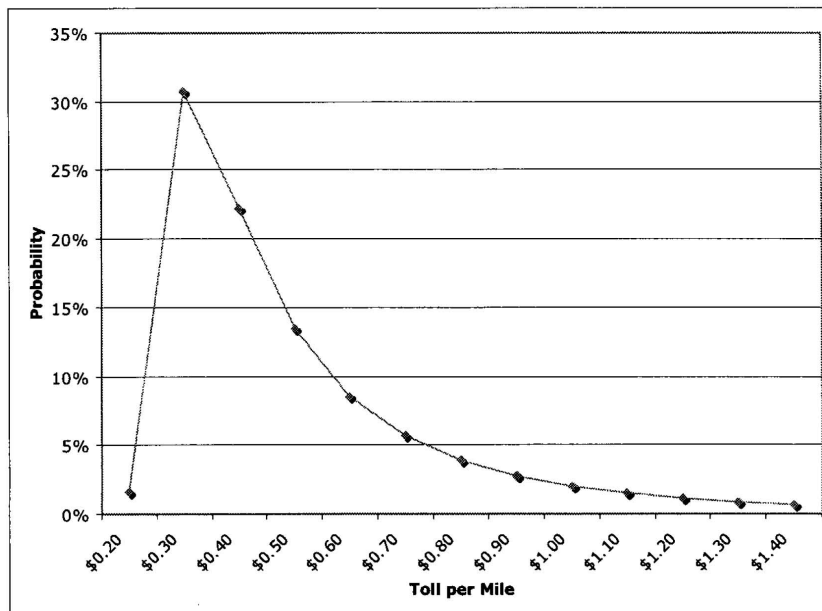
June 13	Public Hearing	MTA	10a-12p
June 15	Public Hearing	Carson	6p-8p
June 18	Public Hearing	Inglewood	6p-8p
June 17	Public Hearing	El Monte	6p-8p
June 20	Public Hearing	West Covina	10a-12p
June 22	Public Hearing	Torrance	6p-8p

Summary of Public Comments

The public was provided multiple opportunities to comment on the preliminary toll policy, performance measures, and rates at a number of venues along the corridor. In addition to the six public hearings above, written comments were accepted via website, fax, mail, and webchat through July 14. CAG meetings were also held June 9-11. Please see Attachment A for a complete summary of comments and staff response.

DRAFT TOLL RATES

The recommended toll range is a minimum toll of \$0.25 per mile and maximum toll of \$1.40 per mile. The toll rate is based on traffic levels in the ExpressLanes to ensure 45mph and will vary within the range based upon demand. Note, the maximum toll is reached only when traffic flow in the ExpressLanes declines to a rate that substantially impacts the flow of traffic for eligible carpools and transit. As a result, the maximum toll represents a price to *discourage* more entry rather than generate additional revenue. The peak-hour toll rate distribution curve below is as follows:



LOW INCOME COMMUTER

The recent RAND report “Equity and Congestion Pricing: A Review of the Evidence” recommends that “a region seeking to implement congestion pricing should look at measuring and assessing equity early in the planning process.” MTA’s tolling authority legislation, SB1422, requires MTA to assess the impacts of the ExpressLanes on “commuters of low income and provide mitigation to those impacted commuters. Mitigation measures may include, but are not limited to, reduced toll charges and toll credits for transit users.” It is important to note that implementation of the ExpressLanes is enabling MTA to access \$210 million in federal funds. 70% of the Project budget will fund expanded transit along the I-10 and I-110 corridors, with benefits accruing to transit-dependent communities along the corridors.

The eligibility requirements in authorizing legislation, recent action by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, MTA’s Rider Relief Program, and examples from other areas were all considered in developing a recommended “low-income” threshold of \$35,000 (in 2009 dollars).

Data analysis and public feedback to date indicate a high percentage of zero-vehicle households in the I-10 and I-110 corridors. As a result, the following program is recommended:

- ExpressLanes Rewards Program – provides a Toll Credit or Transit Credit of \$5 to Frequent Transit Riders on I-10 & I-110. To earn the \$5 Credit, Transit Riders would have to ride 16 round-trips during the peak over a 60 day period. Transit Rider would choose to apply the credit to their toll account or transit fare. \$5 Credit would expire after 60 days in order to encourage the low income commuter to take advantage of the discount. Frequent Transit Rider could earn up to \$60 Toll/Transit Credit over the one-year demo period.
- Rewards Program would apply to all LA County transit lines operating during the peak on the ExpressLanes (i.e. Torrance Transit, Gardena Transit, Foothill Transit, LADOT). ExpressLanes toll revenues would reimburse operators and MTA operations for the \$5 Transit Credit.

The Rewards Program represents one form of mitigation. The low income assessment is ongoing. Data available from surveys and other sources will be used to identify the potential demand for mitigations such as toll credits. A wide range of possible mitigation measures will be surveyed, including enhanced transit investments (to which MTA has already committed), various types of credit schemes including transponders pre-loaded with toll credits for low income commuters, and other strategies. The Assessment will be completed this Fall and reported back to the Board for review and approval.

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

SB1422 also requires MTA and Caltrans to report back to the legislature by December 31, 2012 on the performance of the ExpressLanes. Recommended key performance measures are as follows:

- Arriving at your destination in less time in either the ExpressLanes or general purpose lanes (travel time savings, average vehicle speed)
- Change from driving alone to carpooling, riding transit, and or MTA vanpool (mode shift)
- Increase in efficiency by moving more people on the ExpressLanes in a specified period of time (person throughput)
- Improved transportation access for the low income commuter (public surveys; credit redemption)

WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCE THE TOLL RANGE?

The recommended toll range (min. and max.) is influenced by time period and space availability.

- The I-10 El Monte Freeway general purpose lanes are some of the most congested lanes in the county during peak periods. Additional roadway capacity by restriping the El Monte Busway between I-605 and I-710 will increase demand; and
- Both facilities have high demand for carpools, vanpools, and transit during certain times of the day. As a result, the toll rates must balance supply and demand of toll customers and toll-free customers.

WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCE PERFORMANCE OF EXPRESSLANES?

- The minimum vehicle occupancy requirement (3+ vs 2+) has a significant impact on the performance of the ExpressLanes during the peak. The I-10 ExpressLanes (3+) perform better than the I-110 ExpressLanes (2+) during the peak.
- Violators currently take up to 8% of capacity on the carpool lanes. As a result, the business rules recommend that all vehicles be required to have a transponder to aide enforcement. (Vehicles that already own a FasTrak transponder do not have to get a new transponder.) The business rule would enable the use of video camera enforcement for toll violators.

This business rule is also consistent with the growing public policy trend for ExpressLanes in California, as well as other cities. Specifically, Orange County, Houston, and Miami require a transponder for all vehicles. The Bay Area and San Diego have plans to implement this requirement.

Approval of this business rule will also reduce the capital costs by \$2.6 million because fewer overhead signs would be needed to provide the driver with enough information to make an informed decision on whether to enter the ExpressLanes.

A transponder distribution plan will be developed by the Toll Systems Integrator and reported back to the Board for approval. (see Appendix C)

PROJECT BENEFITS

The ExpressLanes one-year demonstration project is unique because it offers improved transportation options and the new choice to pay to travel in a carpool lane. Although much attention has been and will be focused on the toll component of the ExpressLanes themselves, much of the benefit of the program is to the transit system and its users. The aim of the program is to foster incentives for sustainable change that creates time savings, cost savings, reduces pollution, and effectively manages our current roadway network – basic essential elements of a green corridor.

The ExpressLanes are consistent with the MTA Sustainability Policy of sustaining the environment with efficiency and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Current estimates are an emissions reduction of 15% in the ExpressLanes and 20% in the General Purpose Lanes. Fuel consumption is estimated to improve by 30% in the ExpressLanes and 40% in the General Purpose Lanes. Further program benefits include:

- 57 new clean expansion buses and operating subsidy for the demo period
- El Monte Transit Center Expansion including bike lockers
- New Transit Station at Patsaouras Plaza
- Harbor Transitway Park & Ride Upgrades including bike lockers and a Sheriff Substation
- Metrolink Pomona Station Expansion
- Transit Signal Priority Expanded in Downtown LA
- 100 New MTA Vanpools
- Roadway bottleneck improvements on I-10 and I-110
- ExpressPark

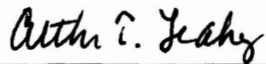
With a project budget of \$290 million, it is estimated that more than 7,800 construction-related jobs are generated by the ExpressLanes.

Prepared by: Stephanie Wiggins
Executive Officer, Congestion Reduction Demo Initiative

Attachment: A. Draft ExpressLanes Toll Policy
B. Summary of Public Comments/Staff Response
C. Use of Transponders



Roger S. Moliere
Chief, Real Property Management & Development



Arthur T. Leahy
Chief Executive Officer

**Will be provided under
separate cover**

LA County Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project
Public Hearing Comments (June 13 - 22, 2009)

Date	Meeting	Name	Comment	Response
13-Jun-09	Downtown L.A.	H. Fung	Is \$1.40/mile the maximum toll?	Yes, the proposed maximum toll per mile is \$1.40. The proposed minimum toll per mile is \$0.25.
15-Jun-09	Carson	J.K. Drummond	The average toll is meaningless for people in South Bay as their trip is usually farther	Because there are many ingress and egress points along the Harbor Transitway, the average toll takes into multiple other origins and destinations.
22-Jun-09	Torrance	No name	How will the toll price be calculated and will a commuter be locked into that price upon entrance into the HOT lane?	Tolls are continually adjusted according to traffic conditions to maintain a free-flowing level of traffic on the HOT lanes. (General purpose lanes are not tolled.) Prices increase when the HOT lanes get relatively full and decrease when the HOT lanes get less full. Yes, the commuter will be locked into that price upon entrance into the HOT lane.
22-Jun-09	Torrance	No name	Metro wants to avoid an unintended consequence - making sure that the cost of transit ride is not more than the cost of a toll. Is there a possibility this could occur if the cost per mile is the minimum - \$.25?	Yes. As a result, the proposed toll policy would require the minimum toll be at least 150% higher than the transit ride during the rush hour.
22-Jun-09	Torrance	No name	I am confused about the pricing. You mentioned that depending on congestion, the price will differ between the range of \$.25-\$1.40/mile. But you also said that this price would differ on the segment of the HOT lane -- more congested segments are more expensive. Therefore, how is the toll calculated?	The toll is calculated based upon the level of congestion on each segment of the HOT lane. The proposal is that the toll rates will range \$.25 - \$1.40 per mile for each of the segments.
22-Jun-09	Torrance	L. Meyers	I feel carpool lanes are very beneficial and that congestion pricing will be beneficial. However, I feel it is unreasonable to charge at this time given the economic situation. People are struggling financially and it's hard enough for them to get to work -- let alone for them to pay to drive.	Tolls would not go into effect for at least another 18 months. Additionally, the ExpressLanes are expand choices for the single driver. General purpose lanes, as well as existing carpools, vanpools, transit and motorcycles, will remain toll-free.

**LA County Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project
Public Hearing Comments (June 13 - 22, 2009)**

Date	Meeting	Name	Comment	Response
22-Jun-09	Torrance	L. Meyers	I think that the improvements are a good thing, but charging is unfair.	The ExpressLanes expanded options for drivers. General purpose lanes, as well as existing carpools, vanpools, transit, and motorcycles, will remain toll-free. Additionally, forecasts call for general purpose lane speeds to improve. Lastly, toll revenues will be reinvested only in the corridor where generated in transit and carpool lane improvements along the ExpressLanes.
22-Jun-09	Torrance	No name	Is there a way to augment the smaller signage to help inform commuters about the cost of each leg of the trip?	There will be changeable message signs throughout which will conform to Caltrans standards and will provide real time information of the HOT lanes. We will evaluate the feasibility of adding the cost of each leg of the trip to the signs.
Business Rules / Goals				
Rewards Program				
13-Jun-09	Downtown L.A.	H. Fung	Would like to see a \$5 reward for frequent users of Metrolink.	The TAP card is the proposed form to track the ExpressLanes \$5 reward. As a result, the focus is on the transit services that operate on the ExpressLanes
13-Jun-09	Downtown L.A.	H. Fung	The low income aspect is convoluted. How will low income people qualify for the rewards program?	The current proposal does not require pre-qualification for the Rewards Program.
15-Jun-09	Carson	J.K. Drummond	How will frequent transit users get their credit? Is credit only for low income?	Every rider, regardless of income, can qualify for the ExpressLanes rewards program by registering for a TAP card. Frequent transit riders of bus lines that operate on the ExpressLanes will receive a \$5 credit towards their TAP account or transponder toll account which will need to be redeemed within a specified time frame.

**LA County Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project
Public Hearing Comments (June 13 - 22, 2009)**

Date	Meeting Requirement / Distribution	Name	Comment	Response
15-Jun-09	Carson	D. Deming	Cost of transponder should be low cost or no cost and distribution should include employer programs	Metro plans to heavily market the ease and affordability of transponders to everyone, including employers participating in rideshare programs.
15-Jun-09	Carson	D. Walker	Do carpoolers have to buy transponders?	While the deposit amount for the transponder has yet to be determined, many other Fasstrak programs around the state require a refundable deposit on the transponder. That deposit is refunded upon return of a non-damaged transponder upon account closing. This includes San Diego's I-15, TCA's SR-73, SR-241, SR-261, OCTA SR-91 Express Lanes, Golden Gate Bridge, and the Bay Area Toll Authority.
18-Jun-09	Inglewood	C. Simmons	I consider myself knowledgeable but I even am confused about the requirements for the toll roads. If someone is driving and they are not familiar with the requirements how are they supposed to know what to do? It is confusing.	There will be message signs on the freeway that will notify the drivers of the requirements to use the ExpressLanes. Metro is also committed to early marketing and education campaign.
22-Jun-09	Torrance	No name	How does a transponder know whether a commuter is an SOV or HOV?	The transponders will have a button or switch for the driver to indicate how many passengers are traveling in the car.
22-Jun-09	Torrance	No name	I don't work but I carpool into LA when I go. Do I need to get a transponder, too? Who will pay for the transponder? I feel like I'm being penalized.	The proposal is that every vehicle in the ExpressLanes have a transponder. While the deposit amount of the transponder has yet to be determined, many other Fasstrak programs around the state require a refundable deposit on the transponder. That deposit is refunded upon return of a non-damaged transponder upon account closing. This includes San Diego's I-15, TCA's SR-73, SR-241, SR-261, OCTA SR-91 Express Lanes, Golden Gate Bridge, and the Bay Area Toll Authority.

**LA County Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project
Public Hearing Comments (June 13 - 22, 2009)**

Date	Meeting	Name	Comment	Response
22-Jun-09	Torrance	No name	It's going to be difficult to educate the entire city about this program.	We plan to heavily market the ease and affordability of transponders to everyone, including employers participating in rideshare programs. As stated in the presentation, vanpools will play a significant role in this demonstration and we intend to make the transition seamless for rideshare programs.
22-Jun-09	Torrance	No name	What will happen to non-locals, tourists, and visitors who are not familiar with the transponder? I am concerned that out-of-towners will be confused.	Along with additional signs on the freeway that notify drivers of the requirements, Metro will work with rental car companies to distribute transponders.
22-Jun-09	Torrance	No name	My recollection is that my FasTrak transponder was sent to me at no cost, and I am charged on a monthly basis if I do not use it. I think this option is eminently fair.	Metro will also evaluate cost neutral plans for the transponder.
22-Jun-09	Torrance	No name	I have a FasTrak pass. Will I have to change it out to use these HOT lanes?	No.
Enforcement				
15-Jun-09	Carson	D. Walker	How will you enforce against cheaters? Will there be cameras?	In keeping with other Fastrak facilities, we plan to use a combination of CHP patrols and photo enforcement. CHP officers will have the ability to be stationed along portions of the facility to monitor those who either do not meet the minimum person requirement, do not have a transponder, or any other violation. Photo enforcement will be used to identify toll violators.
13-Jun-09	Downtown L.A.	H. Fung	Is there enough space on the I-10 to add another lane and for enforcement; for CHP to pull people over?	Yes. The current plan re-striping the 10 freeway to create a 2nd HOT lane between I-605 and I-710.

**LA County Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project
Public Hearing Comments (June 13 - 22, 2009)**

Date	Meeting	Name	Comment	Response
18-Jun-09	Inglewood	E. Austin	How will it be determined if a driver does something illegal? How will Metro enforce against cheaters? Drivers should have to pay if they break the law.	In keeping with other Fastrak facilities, we plan to use a combination of CHP patrols and photo enforcement. CHP officers will have the ability to be stationed along portions of the facility to monitor those who either do not meet the minimum person requirement, do not have a transponder, or any other violation. Photo enforcement will be used to identify toll violators.
18-Jun-09	Inglewood	E. Austin	If you connect with all dealerships and GPS providers it would save millions of dollars. How? It would beep to the highway patrol showing license plate numbers and deploy the proper authority with a picture. Instead of hiring highway patrol and use our tax dollars use GPS and cameras for enforcement.	Metro will continue to evaluate the use of technology to improve enforcement.
18-Jun-09	Inglewood	A. Bissett	Will the police check for illegal aliens driving with no insurance?	In keeping with other Fastrak facilities, proposal is to use a combination of CHP patrols and photo enforcement. CHP officers will have the ability to be stationed along portions of the facility to monitor those who either do not meet the minimum person requirement, or any other violation. Photo enforcement will be used only to ticket those who users with no transponder or an invalid transponder. Photo enforcement will not be used for minimum person requirements.
Low-Income Commuter				
20-Jun-09	West Covina	M. Brown	It will be difficult for low-income people to absorb the cost of this toll.	The proposed toll policy includes toll credits for low income commuters. In addition, carpools, vanpools, transit, and motorcycles will not be charged a toll.

**LA County Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project
Public Hearing Comments (June 13 - 22, 2009)**

Date	Meeting	Name	Comment	Response
20-Jun-09	West Covina	A. Uquidi	I think this project is discriminatory, particularly against the poor.	The proposed toll policy includes toll credits for low income commuters. In addition, carpools, vanpools, transit, and motorcycles will not be charged a toll. The Project also provides increased transit service and net toll revenues will be reinvested in transit and carpool lane improvements.
15-Jun-09	Carson	JK Drummond	Didn't indicate non-car households in the rest of the I-110 corridor; there are a lot of non-car households in the south	The Harbor Transitway corridor has a higher proportion of transit dependent riders and we plan to significantly improve service along the corridor. The current plan calls for headways of 7.5 to 15 minutes, a significant improvement to the current headway which can fluctuate from 10-60 minutes.
22-Jun-09	Torrance	No name	Why not give transit credits to commuters who drive more miles on the HOT lanes - like those of us coming from San Pedro?	In order to simplify the ExpressLanes Rewards program, credits will be flat rather than distance based.
Other				
13-Jun-09	Downtown L.A.	H. Fung	2 minutes is too short for public comment; prefer prior workshop format to public hearing format	Public comments can also be submitted by mail, e-mail, and fax, with no time limit.
13-Jun-09	Downtown L.A.	H. Fung	Presentation was good should be on-line	The PowerPoint presentation was placed online 6/15/09
15-Jun-09	Carson	JK Drummond	How will local service be impacted? Where will new bus stops be located?	There are no plans to significantly move bus stops. On time performance for local service is expected to improve.
15-Jun-09	Carson	JK Drummond	Will you be putting in a restroom at the Artesia station?	There are no current plans to install a restroom at the Artesia Station.
15-Jun-09	Carson	D. Deming	It would be beneficial to have a connection between the El Monte Transit Center and the El Monte Metrolink station. Is someone looking at this?	This connection was looked at, but it does not seem feasible to provide this connection as the railroad tracks curve in this area.
15-Jun-09	Carson	D. Deming	Will there be financial incentives for new vanpools?	Yes, incentives are offered through the existing Metro Vanpool program.

**LA County Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project
Public Hearing Comments (June 13 - 22, 2009)**

Date	Meeting	Name	Comment	Response
15-Jun-09	Carson	D. Deming	SOVs should be restricted at certain times of the day, will there be signs letting them know when they can't access HOT lanes?	Yes, pricing allows us to manage the demand from a surge of vehicles. There will be changeable message signs throughout which will provide real time information of the HOT lanes.
15-Jun-09	Carson	D. Walker	Supportive but concerned re: implementation; implementation of El Monte busway was a disaster when changed HOV from 2+ to 3+	The minimum person requirements will not change in their respective corridors. I-10 will remain 3+ during peak hour, 2+ all other times, while the I-110 will remain 2+ at all times. Pricing allows us to manage the demand from vehicles that don't meet the occupancy requirement.
15-Jun-09	Carson	D. Walker	If you are driving on the I-105 carpool lane and want to enter HOT lanes on I-110 can you pay as SOV without having to get out and re-enter?	Metro and Caltrans are working to provide this option.
15-Jun-09	Carson	D. Walker	Is there any money to relieve some of the congestion on the Blue Line?	Metro expects many to find the additional bus service on the ExpressLanes as an attractive alternative to the Blue Line.
17-Jun-09	SGV Sector	H. Fung	How much funding is Metro planning to collect from the toll revenues?	Early gross estimates are as high as \$21 million in annual toll revenues, however estimates could be much lower. As required by State law, Metro will reinvest net toll revenues in transit and carpool lane improvements in the corridors where the tolls are generated.
17-Jun-09	SGV Sector	H. Fung	The online comment form was not working on Monday, 6/15 but was working on Tuesday, 6/16.	
17-Jun-09	SGV Sector	H. Fung	The PowerPoint presentation is good and it should be posted online.	The PowerPoint presentation was placed online 6/15/09
17-Jun-09	SGV Sector	H. Fung	I am disappointed that the public doesn't show up for these hearings. Many of the attendees are Metro employees or staff of legislative representatives. Metro has done the media briefing and press release but there must be a problem with outreach.	Metro has provided multiple opportunities for the public to comment on the proposed toll rates and toll policy through six public hearings, a live web chat, and written comments via the web, mail, and fax.

**LA County Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project
Public Hearing Comments (June 13 - 22, 2009)**

Date	Meeting	Name	Comment	Response
17-Jun-09	SGV Sector	H. Fung	I would like to see an expenditure plan and a list of priorities in order. For example, how much will be spent on buses and tolls? I would like to see the allocation of money in percentages and how much is earmarked for drivers, riders, signal synchronization, transit facility improvements, etc.	The ExpressLanes Budget totals \$291 million. 50% will go towards transit facilities including park & ride lot improvements, station expansion, and a new maintenance facility. 20% will go towards transit operations for new buses, BRT, and vanpool programs. 25% will be invested in toll technology & infrastructure, including bottleneck improvements and additional HOT lane capacity. The remaining 5% will go towards a parking management program in downtown Los Angeles.
18-Jun-09	Inglewood	C. Simmons	How many jobs will this project create? Will the employees be local hires? I am concerned because often this community does not receive jobs from projects.	The current estimate is that 7,000 construction related jobs will be created by this project. Some jobs will be local hires.
18-Jun-09	Inglewood	C. Simmons	I am concerned that the Adams and Expo configuration will cause damage to HOV lanes	The plan calls for an additional right lane on the Adams Blvd off-ramp, widening the Adams Blvd bridge, as well as improved pedestrian accessibility around the future Expo station.
18-Jun-09	Inglewood	C. Simmons	You stated that a progress check would occur in two years. Is it possible for this to occur sooner?	Yes, there will be ongoing monitoring of the performance of the project.
18-Jun-09	Inglewood	C. Simmons	At which points will drivers have access to the toll lanes? Will the access be continuous along the lane?	Drivers will have access to the toll lanes from all current entry points. The access will not be continuous along the lane.
18-Jun-09	Inglewood	E. Austin	If this plan will reduce congestion I am all for it.	The plan calls for easing congestion for all commuters in these corridors -- both in the ExpressLanes and general purpose lanes.
18-Jun-09	Inglewood	D. Goodmon	I am glad that Metro recognizes the substantial problems with bottlenecks at Adams and Flower.	
18-Jun-09	Inglewood	D. Goodmon	Adams and Flower lacks the necessary capacity, with the Expo line it will have even less. There are many technical issues with Adams & Flower.	The plan calls for an additional right lane on the Adams Blvd off-ramp, widening the Adams Blvd bridge, as well as improved pedestrian accessibility around the future Expo station.

**LA County Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project
Public Hearing Comments (June 13 - 22, 2009)**

Date	Meeting	Name	Comment	Response
18-Jun-09	Inglewood	D. Goodman	A pedestrian plaza gives the implication that there would be a walkway to the east side of the Expo line tracks; this is problematic because there is no walkway planned for the east side of the tracks.	The pedestrian plaza will be designed to not cross the Expo tracks.
18-Jun-09	Inglewood	D. Goodman	I do not care about the transit way being pretty. I care about local improvements (on Figueroa and Broadway) that support walking, biking, landscaping - that's where you'll get the true mode shift.	The purpose of Transitway improvements are to encourage mode shift along the entire corridor.
18-Jun-09	Inglewood	A. Bissett	Why are we taxed as a community for illegal immigrants? There are 5,000 foster kids in LA. That is where the money should go. The roads and highways would not be congested if we didn't make ourselves a sanctuary for illegal immigrants.	In order to comply for Federal transportation monies, the funding must be invested along the corridors.
20-Jun-09	West Covina	A. Uquidi	Why was the I-10 selected for this project and not the 405?	The 405 does not meet the grant deadline requirements.
20-Jun-09	West Covina	A. Uquidi	I don't care about the buses; I drive my car.	With the combination of improvements slated as part of the ExpressLanes project, forecasts call for travel speeds to improve in the general purpose lanes and for the ExpressLanes to average a minimum of 45mph.
20-Jun-09	West Covina	A. Uquidi	I could never use the HOV lanes anyway; no other freeway has a three person requirement.	The ExpressLanes now give commuters a choice on whether to use these lanes.
20-Jun-09	West Covina	M. Samberg	Many years ago a tax was implemented to build and maintain freeways. That gas tax still remains, and we're still building freeways. But now the bus company is going to charge people for the roads we've already paid for. I think this is just a way for bus companies to maintain their schedules.	Simply put, the gas tax has not generated enough revenue to expand infrastructure, let alone maintain it. The federal gas tax has not been raised in over 15 years despite inflation. The toll is proposed to better manage congestion on the freeways.

**LA County Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project
Public Hearing Comments (June 13 - 22, 2009)**

Date	Meeting	Name	Comment	Response
20-Jun-09	West Covina	M. Brown	Since we are going to have all of these additional taxes, I believe we are due for a gas tax reduction.	The ExpressLanes are not a tax. The ExpressLanes now give single drivers a choice on whether to use these lanes. Carpools, vanpools, transit, and motorcycles will continue to use the ExpressLanes toll-free.
20-Jun-09	West Covina	M. Brown	You referenced ride-sharing, however it is not easy to find someone - who travels in the same direction as you - to share a ride with. My neighbor, for example, lives in the SGV and works at the Port. It would not be easy for him to find a ride-share partner because most people in West Covina do not commute to the Port. My neighbor drives many hours each day and this is a big expense for him.	Metro will market the expansion of vanpool and carpool use, particularly to encourage employers to help match their employees with similar commute patterns.
20-Jun-09	West Covina	M. Brown	As a bus user, I am concerned about SOVs messing up my commute.	For SOV users, tolls will be adjusted to allow a minimum average free flow speed of 45 MPH. Additionally, net toll revenues will be reinvested within the corridor to provide improved transit service.
20-Jun-09	West Covina	M. Brown	There is extra capacity to add an HOV lane on the El Monte Busway. I think this is a good idea.	
20-Jun-09	West Covina	M. Brown	Why don't the HOV lanes on the I-10 have more exits between Rosemead and the 710?	The original purpose of the El Monte Busway when it opened in 1974 was to provide an express connection for commuters from the El Monte Bus Station.
20-Jun-09	West Covina	M. Brown	Why has the I-10 been selected and not the 210? I live in San Dimas and believe the 210 could benefit from a congestion pricing project.	The 210 does not meet the grant deadline requirements.
22-Jun-09	Torrance	L. Meyers	Where are the carpool lanes going to be located along the I-110? Does Metro have any plans for carpool lanes further south?	The existing carpool lanes between Adams Blvd and the Artesia Transit Center will be converted to high-occupancy toll lanes. There are no current plans to extend carpool lanes further south.

**LA County Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project
Public Hearing Comments (June 13 - 22, 2009)**

Date	Meeting	Name	Comment	Response
22-Jun-09	Torrance	L. Meyers	I wonder if the real purpose of this program is to increase the number of people on public transit.	The purpose of this program is to move more people, not more cars. Increasing ridership on public transit is a key element of the ExpressLanes.
22-Jun-09	Torrance	No name	How many more express transit lines will be available from San Pedro?	In addition to the improved reliability and frequency of Harbor Transitway service via the Silver Line, on time performance for local service is expected to improve as most routes will not continue Downtown and any subsequent delays.
22-Jun-09	Torrance	No name	What about the traffic backed up on the Harbor Transitway near downtown? Has Metro looked at extending the HOV lanes?	Yes. The federal grant also allows for Metro and Caltrans to study extending the HOV lanes on the Harbor Transitway further downtown.
22-Jun-09	Torrance	No name	How long is the HOT lane along the I-110?	The Harbor Transitway is approximately 11 miles.
22-Jun-09	Torrance	No name	I think this program is great, quite frankly. Municipalities all over the country and the world employ congestion pricing. It's about time we're paying for the roads out here. Maybe we will get better transit use.	
22-Jun-09	Torrance	No name	Does Metro have data/statistics on congestion in Los Angeles County?	Yes, we have data and statistics on the Metro website www.metro.net



Helping People,
Building Community

June 22, 2009

Los Angeles County Second District Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
866 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Metro Congestion Reduction Program


Dear Supervisor Ridley-Thomas:

My name is Bill Watanabe, and I am the Executive Director of the Little Tokyo Service Center in downtown Los Angeles. While I am not a traffic expert, I have attended several public meetings recently regarding plans by Metro for congestion reduction on the on the 110-Harbor Freeway and the 10-San Bernardino Freeway. I have attended these meetings due to my concern for overall traffic congestion which impacts our downtown (and Little Tokyo neighborhoods) and also how mitigation plans might affect low-income, immigrant, and other communities of need.

In order to address the congestion problem of our local freeways, Metro has devised some plans for increased buses, park and ride lots, and fee-based access to carpool lanes. While I cannot predict whether these strategies will be the best or most effective, the MTA has done a credible job of attempting to address: concerns of cost for the project, access issues for low income families, and multilingual outreach for non-English speaking residents of impacted areas.

It is my hope that the MTA Commission will be able to develop those strategies which will ultimately reduce the congestion we are now seeing on our freeways, and still be sensitive to the transportation needs of the poor and the non-English speaking sectors of our communities.

Thank you for your consideration.


Bill Watanabe, Executive Director
Little Tokyo Service Center

Cc: Ms. Stephanie Wiggins, Project Manager, Metro Congestion Program ✓
Ms. Roxi Reeves, Lee Andrews Group



June 23, 2009

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Second District, County of Los Angeles
866 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 W. Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project "ExpressLanes"

Dear Supervisor Ridley-Thomas:

As Executive Director of Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative, I am writing in support of the Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project ("ExpressLanes") as a partnership venture of Metro, Caltrans, and other local partners. The proposed plan would reduce congestion and greenhouse gas emissions, increase travel time savings, and improve trip reliability on the heavily-traveled I-110 and I-10 corridors.

Demand-based pricing for express lanes has proven successful in San Diego and Orange Counties. In the Bay Area, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission recently approved express lanes in its long range transportation plan. To keep pace with other California cities, Los Angeles must adopt this innovative plan to mitigate traffic congestion and reduce air pollution.

LANI is a nonprofit organization dedicated to catalytic neighborhood revitalization through public improvement projects and community-driven planning. Founded as a groundbreaking demonstration project to "humanize" transportation in economically challenged communities, pedestrian- and transit-related enhancements have always been a core focus of LANI. As such, LANI supports "ExpressLanes" as part of a comprehensive congestion mitigation plan. Additional investment in transit centers and plazas will improve connectivity between communities and encourage greater pedestrian and bicycle activity. "ExpressLanes" can improve not only traffic and environmental conditions, but also the quality of life in the City of Los Angeles.

LANI encourages you to support this effort.

Sincerely,

Veronica Hahn
Executive Director

Karen Mack
President
LA Commons

Dianna Liu
Vice-President
Triple E Associates

Marian Bell
Treasurer
Bell Development

Allan D. Kotin
Secretary
Allan D. Kotin & Associates

Robert "Bud" Ovrum
Ex Officio Member
Deputy Mayor, City of Los Angeles

Joyce Perkins
LANI Co-founder

Deepak Bahl
University of Southern California
Center for Economic Development

Neal Richman
University of California, Los Angeles
School of Public Affairs

Lupita Sanchez
AEBT

Esther Valadez
Residential Communities, Inc.

Veronica Hahn
Executive Director

900 Wilshire Boulevard
Suite 1120
Los Angeles, CA 90017
Tel: 213.627.1822
Fax: 213.627.1821

www.lani.org



MUSIC CENTER
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

June 24, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

My recent involvement with the Metro's Community Advisory Group has been a very informative and positive experience. The project team leading these meetings has been thoroughly professional and very much accessible to the participants as well as being open and sensitive to the needs and enquiries of the community members in attendance.

Their inclusion of the arts community into their studies is a welcomed foresight of the needs and requirements of the cultural institutions and organizations that make up the city of Los Angeles. Notably, Metro's Express Lanes outreach team has been completely available to members of the arts community for updates, which goes a long way in keeping concerned parties informed on a project that will have a definite impact on the way traffic affects the cultural life in downtown Los Angeles.

It is of special note to commend the CAG for offering multiple opportunities to stakeholders to attend the corridor meetings. This shows a sincere willingness to work with the community and ensures that all parties affected have the opportunity to be heard and contribute. As a result I believe a number of constructive comments and suggestions will be seriously considered as the final program is completed.

With the resurgence of downtown Los Angeles as an entertainment destination, current and projected traffic congestion has encouraged the Music Center and its neighboring cultural institutions to start thinking about alternatives and solutions that would help alleviate congestion. As such, our organization would welcome and endorse projects such as Metro's Express Lanes Congestion Pricing Demonstration Project on the 10 and 110 freeways as a tool to ease traffic congestion in the area.

Sincerely,

Howard Sherman
Vice President of Operations

CENTURY DIVERSIFIED INC.

Engineering and Management Services

June 24, 2009

Board of Directors
Metro
1 Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project

Dear Members of the Board:

I am writing this letter in support of the Fastlane Demonstration Project along State Highways 10 and 110. I am a member of the Corridor Advisory Group and have attended some of the meetings.

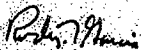
At the meetings the project team has presented various options, the technology, the various fare considerations for low income commuters and other related matters. I have been impressed by the professional manner the meetings have been conducted. I am happy that CAG members have been able to provide input to the project.

In general, I am in favor of the project, although at first a little reserved about a High Occupancy Toll lane. I, like many, Californian resident are used to "free" ways and do not like to pay tolls, especially, if I have to stop in a long line to make payment. The HOT lanes utilize a fare collection technology which eliminates the toll gate. This addresses one of my earlier concerns. As for the toll itself, what I like about the HOT lane is that the use of the lane is optional and only those who wish to pay will do so. If it relieves traffic congestion, it will benefit even those who do not pay the toll. I believe that efforts are being made for the HOT lanes to be more available to low income commuters. It is a demonstration project which will allow the technology and congestion models to be tested. I look forward to positive results.

As a small business advocate, I favor the project as it will provide additional opportunity to the small business community. My only reservation is that it is a design-build project which is not favorable to small business, especially construction contractors who are bid shopped. I would like to take this opportunity to recommend that a DBE goal be placed on the project of 35%.

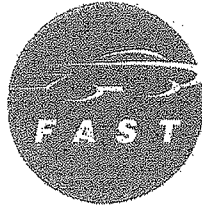
I just want to take a second to thank MTA members who have continued to push for community involvement in its program to rebuild the Los Angeles County transit system. I was born in East Los Angeles in the 40's and have seen the great system we had then disappear and now being rebuilt. I have been blessed to be allowed to work on a few of these projects over the years due to the DBE program.

Sincerely,



Rodrigo T. Garcia, P.E.

1917 Longhill Drive, Monterey Park, CA 91754
Telephone: (323) 265-1443 x16 Fax: (800) 717-7910
Email: cdi@cdi-engr.com Website: www.cdi-engr.com



June 24, 2009

The Honorable Antonio Villaraigosa
Mayor, City of Los Angeles and
Chairman, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority Board
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: SUPPORT for *ExpressLanes* Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project

Dear Mayor Villaraigosa and Metro Board members—

FAST – Fixing Angelenos Stuck in Traffic -- is a non-profit, public-private partnership dedicated toward creating an active countywide coalition to reduce traffic in the short term. As Chairman of the Board of FAST, and a co-sponsor of the RAND Corporation report "Moving Los Angeles: Short-Term Policy Options for Improving Transportation," I am writing in support of the \$210M federal grant for the *ExpressLanes* Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project on the I-10 and I-110 Freeways as an important component to a comprehensive strategy to reduce traffic.

The objective of RAND's "Moving Los Angeles" report was to seek strategies that have been successfully implemented around the world which could be implemented to reduce congestion and improve transportation options in Los Angeles County within five years. One of RAND's 13 strategic recommendations which is supported by FAST, is to "Develop a network of HOT lanes on freeways throughout the county," and apply any net revenue to other traffic mitigation measures.

Aligned with this recommendation, Metro's *ExpressLanes* Project will use its \$210M in USDOT funding to provide an additional 57 transit buses and adopt programs designed increase the use of carpools and vanpools, thereby optimizing the use of the carpool lanes on the I-10 and I-110 freeways. Additionally, with specific legislation by then-State Senator, now Supervisor and Metro Board member Mark Ridley-Thomas to require Metro to report to the California State Legislature by December 12, 2012 as to the impact of the HOT lanes on all riders, but especially low income riders, Metro has stated that it is committed to ensure that this HOT lane program is not a regressive transit program.

Fixing Angelenos Stuck in Traffic

515 South Flower Street • Sixth Floor • Los Angeles, CA 90071 • 213.233.2542 • Fax 213.613.1903

www.FASTLA.org

The Honorable Antonio Villaraigosa
Mayor, City of Los Angeles and
Chairman, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority Board

June 24, 2009

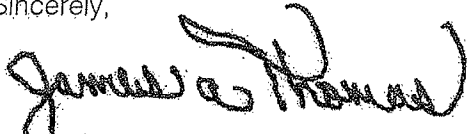
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FAST's Executive Director, Hilary Norton, has attended the Metro/Caltrans press conference announcing the HOT lanes congestion pricing, as well as community meetings on the HOT lanes at Orthopaedic Hospital in Downtown Los Angeles, and at the Civic Center Library in Torrance. Metro's presentations were very clear and informative, the public was given ample time to ask numerous questions, and the experts present gave detailed answers to educate the entire audience.

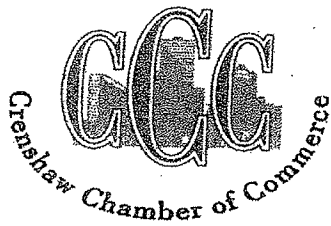
While all of the details regarding the use of transponders, signage and pricing are still being finalized, it is clear that this \$210M demonstration project can be a useful pilot project to reduce traffic on Los Angeles County's gridlocked freeways.

FAST and its members look forward to the *ExpressLanes* Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project being fully implemented in 2010.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James A. Thomas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James A. Thomas
Chairman of the Board
Fixing Angelenos Stuck in Traffic (FAST)



CRENSHAW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Empowering Business and Promoting Commerce Since 1933

June 25, 2009

Executive Board



Michael S. Jones
President and C.E.O.

Dr. Tae Kim
Executive VP

Frank Denkins
VP of Membership

Jerrold T. Smith
VP of Marketing
and Communications

David Miller
VP of
Ways and Means

Craig Hart
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Sergeant Mark Durrell
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Community Policing

Rae Jones
VP of
Publicity

Douglas Nelson
VP of Government
Affairs

Denise Loulendo
VP of
Administration

Ta-lectia Arbor
VP of Special Projects

Stephanie Wiggins
Metro
Executive Officer and Project Manager
Metro Congestion Reduction Program
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

Dear Ms. Wiggins

The Crenshaw Chamber of Commerce supports the Express Lanes Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project. While Los Angeles can revel in the fact that it is number one in basketball, it also leads the country as the urban area with the worst traffic congestion. We need to find ways to explore strategies to mitigate congestion, maximize freeway capacity usage, and fund additional transit alternatives on High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes. In addition, we need to take responsibility for "Mother Earth" by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

As a chamber, we support this investment in transit services that will help Los Angeles to explore the benefits and the impact of new fuel efficient buses, expanded vanpools, enhanced Park & Ride lots, increased local bus access, and traffic management support systems.

Our communities need the Express Lanes Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project that will help Angelinos effectively, efficiently, and environmentally travel from point A to B in the future.

Best regards,

Michael S. Jones, President and C.E.O.

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 8193
Los Angeles, California 90008

Office Address: 3860 Crenshaw Blvd. Suite 226
Los Angeles, California 90008
323-293-2900 office 323-293-2999 fax 323-896-2469 cell

HARBOR ALLIANCE OF NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS

Central San Pedro • Coastal San Pedro • Harbor City • Harbor Gateway North
Harbor Gateway South • Northwest San Pedro • Wilmington

hanc639@yahoo.com

Stephanie Wiggins
Executive Officer
Metro
One Gateway Plaza – MS 99-25-5
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the proposed Express Lanes Project on the 110 Harbor Freeway. The Harbor Alliance of Neighborhood Councils represents the communities of San Pedro, Wilmington, Harbor City, and the Harbor Gateway, all of which are situated beside the 110 Harbor Freeway. Our stakeholders use this Freeway on a regular basis. The Alliance is opposed to ANY TOLL on the 110 Freeway. This FREEway was paid for with taxpayer funds and should remain free. The purpose of creating the HOV lanes was to encourage multi-passenger vehicles by providing for a better flow of traffic than the remaining lanes. Slowing the traffic down by adding toll paying single occupancy vehicles will reduce speed and reduce the incentive for using multi-occupancy vehicles. The MTA should negotiate with the Federal Government to alter the requirements of the grant to eliminate the 110 Freeway or simply return the funds to the Federal Government and seek alternative sources for funding of mass transit.

We have the following additional comments on the specific proposal under consideration:

- The current plan does not seem to have been fully thought through. Given the number of unanswered questions regarding the specifics of this proposal, we request that the date for comments be extended and that additional community meetings be held in the Harbor Area (San Pedro, Wilmington, Harbor City, Harbor Gateway) prior to the close of the comment period.
- The proposed maximum toll of \$1.40 per mile is exorbitant and discriminatory. For those of us coming from the Harbor entering the express lanes at Artesia during peak travel times the cost would be approximately \$28 per day or \$7,000 per year. Although there are exemptions for persons with very low incomes, the majority of the workforce is excluded from these exemptions. Access to the lanes should be based on availability, not ability to pay.

- The proposed average speed of 45 MPH is too low and should be increased. There are two problems with this average speed: 1) It will result in longer commutes than currently for everyone using the "Express" Lanes. 2) If the optimal speed for emissions is 45-55 MPH, an average of 45 MPH will result in less than optimal emissions.
- Going North on the 110 at peak times, traffic currently backs up at the point where the HOV lanes end with one lane exiting onto Adams Blvd and the other lane merging back into the regular congested lanes. This situation poses several problems. 1) If the pilot does proceed, the Express Lanes pilot should not begin on the 110 North until the proposed changes to the Adams off ramp and surrounding surface streets have been completed. Not only is this necessary to improve the flow of traffic, but additional congestion will undoubtedly occur during the time the improvements are being made. 2) Little or no attention has been paid to the problem of the traffic that must merge back into the regular lanes. This congestion will undoubtedly increase as additional traffic is added to the HOV lanes. MTA and CAL TRANS should undertake a full study of options for relieving this congestion. 3) When traffic is backing up into the HOV Lanes, additional single occupant cars should not be allowed to enter the HOV Lanes.
- Carpoolers should not be required to obtain transponders. Requiring that carpools obtain a transponder will act as a further disincentive to carpooling. Furthermore the system will still be relying on the CHP to catch and ticket those individuals who are using the lanes inappropriately. Many Angelenos who use the carpool lane do not do so on a regular basis while others are driving into Los Angeles from Arizona, Nevada, San Diego, and San Francisco, etc. The transponders currently in use for Fast Lanes programs elsewhere in the State do not have the capacity to indicate carpooling and therefore cannot be used for this purpose. An individual who uses a Fast Pass and who also carpools on the Harbor Freeway would need to have two separate transponders.
- Transit service must be improved significantly for individuals who reside in the Harbor Area and who travel into Los Angeles and beyond. The proposed pilot program would significantly improve bus service for people starting their journey at the Artesia facility. It would provide virtually no improvement in service for commuters traveling from San Pedro, Wilmington, and Harbor City for whom there are currently very few rapid transit options. Additional rapid busses need to be added for those longer haul commuters.

This motion was approved by the following Neighborhood Councils: Central San Pedro, Coastal San Pedro, Harbor City, Harbor Gateway North, Harbor Gateway South, and Northwest San Pedro. The Wilmington Neighborhood Council did not have sufficient time to act on this prior to the deadline for comments.

Diana Nave, Secretary

CC: Councilwoman Janice Hahn, Mayor Antonio Villarigoso, Congresswoman Jane Harmon, Assemblywoman Bonnie Lowenthal, State Senator Roderick Wright

July 2009 Response to the Harbor Alliance of Neighborhood Councils

Freeways should remain free.

- The freeways are not free. LA County commuters waste, on average, 70 hours a year stuck in traffic, which translates into more than \$1,000 in excess fuel costs and lost productivity.
- The general purpose lanes are not tolled. The ExpressLanes expand choices for the single driver who does not want to carpool, vanpool, take transit, or ride a motorcycle.
- Travel speeds in the ExpressLanes will be slightly reduced, however, they will still remain higher than the general purpose lanes, therefore the ExpressLanes will continue to be an effective incentive for carpools, vanpools, and transit.

Extend date for public comment and hold additional meetings in the Harbor Area

- Metro has held numerous meetings throughout the County. In the Harbor Area, Metro co-hosted a community workshop at Peck Park last November. Metro also presented to the Harbor Gateway North Neighborhood Council in January. During this specific public comment period multiple opportunities to provide comment have been provided by mail, fax, online, and at six public hearings.
- Additional public hearings are anticipated during October. And Metro remains committed to continued public outreach and receipt of public comment.

The proposed maximum toll of \$1.40 per mile is exorbitant and discriminatory.

- One of the proposed goals is to preserve and protect the traffic flow for carpools, vanpools, and transit – who will continue to have access to the lanes 24/7. Toll rates would vary within \$0.25 per mile to \$1.40 per mile based upon demand. The toll rate is based upon traffic levels in the ExpressLanes to ensure 45 mph.
- The proposed maximum toll of \$1.40 per mile represents a price to discourage more entry by single drivers rather than generate additional revenue. On average, the toll per mile for the ExpressLanes is between \$0.40 and \$0.50. If travel speeds fall below 45 mph for a sustained period of time (more than 10 minutes), then the single driver will not be allowed in to the ExpressLanes until the travel speeds increase above 45 mph.

The proposed average speed of 45 mph is too low and should be increased.

- The proposal is not an average speed of 45 mph. The proposal is to establish a threshold of 45 mph for free flow speeds. 45mph – 55 mph is the optimal speed for emissions.
- Establishing a threshold of 45 mph ensures a more reliable trip for all vehicles in the ExpressLanes. The threshold means that as travel speeds in the ExpressLanes decrease towards 45 mph, the toll rates will increase.

Traffic backs up at Adams Blvd travelling north on I-110

- Metro is proposing to open the I-110 ExpressLanes with the completion of the improvements at the Adams Off-Ramp and surrounding area. It is estimated that these improvements could reduce delay at the off-ramp in half. This should also help reduce the back-up into the general purpose lanes that occurs due to the back up at the off-ramp.

The federal grant also allows Metro and Caltrans to conduct a study of the full options for relieving congestion including extending the Harbor Transitway further north.

Carpoolers should not be required to obtain transponders

- Enforcement is critical if the ExpressLanes are to be successful and effective. The enforcement strategy and the technology implemented must be reliable, highly visible, and one that promotes fairness. Most facilities use visual (manual) enforcement together with some technical support to monitor the ExpressLanes. Recent studies have shown that requiring transponders on all vehicles improves enforcement through the use of visual indicators and/or video image capture of license plates. Requiring transponders in all vehicles provides for easier identification of violators without a transponder.
- In March of this year, more than 60% of current carpoolers (both frequent & infrequent) stated that they would continue to carpool if a transponder was required. An additional 20% stated that they have no opinion. This data shows that it is unlikely that transponders would be a disincentive to carpools. Further, carpoolers indicate that one of their highest concerns is addressing “cheaters” in the HOV/ExpressLanes.
- Per State Law, the current FasTrak transponder must be able to be used on the ExpressLanes. Metro will offer options of a no-cost upgrade to the FasTrak holder if they want an ExpressLanes transponder.
- For infrequent, out of town visitors, who may travel in the ExpressLanes without a transponder, they will have the ability to open a toll account within 72 hours of driving in the ExpressLanes by phone, web, or walk-up. Further, at least two education notices would be issued to the driver before a formal notice of a violation is issued.
- To open a toll account, multiple plans will be provided based upon customer use (cost neutral/rebate or toll credits).

Transit service must be improved significantly for individuals who reside in the Harbor Area.

- Metro is evaluating the need for additional feeder service to the Artesia Transit Center and will continue to work with the municipal bus operators to coordinate services. The operating plan will be available for public review and input next year.

Chat Archive

Tuesday, July 7, 2009

Noon to 1 p.m.

Stephanie Wiggins
Metro Executive Officer for
ExpressLanes Demo Project

Live chat transcript:

Question: Good morning, Stephanie. Thanks for being with us today to explain the ExpressLanes concept. To get started, can you tell us what other cities have ExpressLanes and how they help traffic?

Answer: Good Morning! Lots of other cities are successfully running ExpressLanes, including San Diego, Denver, Miami and Orange County. They reduce traffic for all users by providing the choice to the single driver to shift over to the ExpressLanes. And, many of them do, which frees up the other lanes.

Question: First off, what's up with the Federal Stimulus funds for the Gold Line extension into the San Gabriel Valley? Has this been Green-lit? Next, it is sheer stupidity to put expresslanes on the 10 Freeway. Did anyone think about what will happen to all the traffic backing up to pay tolls? Duh! Yes, it can work but our Freeways don't have enough lanes as it is. This will only aggravate traffic problems and create needless headaches for the CHP (whom we don't have enough of anyway). Tom Cartwright

Answer: Hi Tom. The Gold Line is funded under Measure R, the 1/2 cent sales tax. As for the ExpressLanes, there will not be any toll booths -- this will prevent traffic from backing up to pay tolls. In cooperation with CHP and Caltrans, we will add a second HOT lane on I-10 between I-605 and I-710 in each direction by re-striping the freeway. This will provide much more relief for commuters in the San Gabriel Valley. As for CHP enforcement, they are a partner and we are working with them to provide dedicated enforcement.

Question: 1. Is this different than the carpool lane? 2. There's a fee to ride in the lanes? 3. How many passengers qualify a car being in the lane? Thank you!!! Pamela C Nickson

Answer: Hi Pamela. Great questions! This is different than a carpool lane; however, carpools, vanpools and users of public transit will still be able to access the lanes without paying a toll. The ExpressLanes are unique in that they will allow single drivers to access these lanes for a toll. During peak periods it's toll free for 3+ on the San Bernardino freeway and 2+ on the Harbor Transitway -- same as it is today. No tolls will be charged on the mixed flow lanes

ExpressLanes Live Web Chat

Question: Why must Los Angeles do another TEST for the HOT lanes when Orange County proved they did not work? Robert Leabow

Answer: Robert, actually that's not true. The 91 toll lanes have been quite successful. In fact, they are the best performing HOT lanes in the nation. HOT lanes are operational in other cities, like San Diego, Miami, Houston and Seattle. It's LA County's turn to see if they can work here. Thanks for your question.

Question: Why haven't they made the 91 expressway a toll road for everyone?? This way there would be money generated for the city, county or whomever manages it and it would ease the congestion on the 91 freeway. This should have been done years ago. Cheryl Brown

Answer: Hi Cheryl. The 91 expresslanes were originally built as a toll road to finance the new lanes. The 91 freeway was congested and the region needed to provide more options. HOT lanes were implemented on the 91 as expresslanes to provide a choice -- to travel in the regular lanes or travel in the expresslanes.

Question: I believe this is a great idea. Do you know how many people will benefit out of this proposal? At least I will be one of them. Not only will it help to move the traffic faster but also will help to increase to improve the freeways maintenance. You have my vote and my family as well. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to share my comments. Have a pleasant day! Gloria Medina

Answer: Thank you for appreciating how ExpressLanes will help ease congestion in our region. Everyone who travels on the I-10 and I-110 will benefit from the project since they will have travel time savings on the general purpose lanes and ExpressLanes. Metro and its partners are also increasing transit service and vanpools on both freeways to provide even more travel options.

Question: When does this lane go into effect? Cheryl Simon

Answer: Our target date for the ExpressLanes is December 2010.

Question: Will this project create jobs? How many? Dave

Answer: It's expected to create approximately 7,000 construction-related jobs.

Question: The Media Center in Burbank has no Rapid bus, but employs thousands of people from around the Los Angeles area at Warner Brothers, Disney and Universal. Is there any plan to add one in the future? Thanks in advance for taking my question. Nancy

Answer: Hi Nancy. We continue to evaluate new markets for transit service and we will refer your question to our planning department.

ExpressLanes Live Web Chat

Question: I understand you plan to use a transponder, but how will people pay for using the lanes. Will you bill them monthly? Thank you. Carlos

Answer: Hi Carlos. Users will establish a pre-paid transponder account. You can use cash, credit or check to pay your account in person, by mail or online. The transponder will be placed in your vehicle. As you travel in the ExpressLanes, the toll will be automatically deducted from your transponder account -- there will be no toll booths.

Question: Would Metro view enforcement during the pilot solely as educational only and guide drivers to where they can get a free transponder, or, better still, have unloaded transponders in every CHP vehicle for instant distribution? Bill Orton

Answer: Hi Bill. Enforcement during the pilot is to reduce violators in the ExpressLanes. We understand that there will be a learning curve as people get used to this new and exciting project. Metro and Caltrans will communicate the availability of transponders through various information sources (media, web, 511, advertisements, community events).

Question: Are the toll lanes supposed to get people out of their cars and onto transit? What if transit riders want to drive sometimes? Will they be rewarded for taking transit? Jean A.

Answer: A rewards program has been proposed for Expresslanes to encourage more people to ride transit and to reward existing transit users. Transit riders will earn a \$5 credit each month for frequent rides on any LA County transit line (Metro, Torrance Transit, Gardena Transit, Foothill Transit and LADOT Commuter Express) on the I-10 or I-110 ExpressLanes during peak commute hours. The credit could then be applied to toll accounts or TAP cards.

Question: Have you considered congestion pricing all normal lanes? It could be something cheap like \$.01/mile as a baseline, but as high as \$.10/mile during peak hours. You could charge higher prices for the Express Lanes as well. Phillip Cheung

Answer: Hi Phillip. Transportation professionals have been looking at user based fees throughout the nation. However, this demonstration project is focused only on congestion pricing for the carpool or HOV lanes on I-10 and I-110.

Question: I do not think that commercial vehicles, except buses, should be allowed in the carpool/express lanes at all. They tend to drive recklessly with excessive speeds and tailgating, especially in rainy and foggy conditions. In fact, I believe that they should have to follow the same rules as 18-wheeler trucks. Andrew Lucas

Answer: Hi Andrew. State law generally prohibits any trucks with more than 2 axles from traveling in the carpool lanes. Metro is proposing to also prohibit these trucks from the ExpressLanes.

ExpressLanes Live Web Chat

Question: We may need to double deck the car pool lanes to handle the added traffic to the car pool lanes. Stephen Derry

Answer: Hi Stephen. Under current conditions there is some capacity in the carpool lanes at certain times of the day that provides the opportunity to allow single drivers to access these lanes for a toll. We are also able to use pricing as a way to manage the demand from single drivers. More importantly, our goal is to carry more people through these lanes with less vehicles by providing more express transit and vanpool options.

Question: What's the status of awarding a contract to provide a comprehensive, turnkey toll collection system, field equipment, operations, and maintenance? Wendy Bui

Answer: Hi Wendy. We are in the middle of the procurement process for the turnkey vendor. We have shortlisted the firms and will issue a Request For Proposal in September.

Question: Will motorcyclists be allowed to use the HOT lane without charge?

Answer: The proposal is that motorcycles will not be required to pay a toll.

Question: How can transponder use be made more simple for people who may use their cars one day to drive alone and then drive a carpool on other days? Hilary Norton

Answer: Hi Hilary. The proposal is that the transponder will have a switch that allows you to select the number of people in your car each time you drive. That will ensure you get charged the correct toll. This will also help with CHP enforcement.

Question: Hi Ms. Wiggins. Can you speak to the question of installing transponders in cars? Or, how to collect the tolls? Thank You. Thomas Pellegrino

Answer: Hi Thomas. The transponder just sits on the inside of your vehicle. An antenna will read the transponder as you drive by and any toll would be automatically charged to your account. The transponder is also mobile -- so it can be moved from vehicle to vehicle.

Question: I'm leaning towards being in favor of the project but I was wondering if any study has been done to evaluate the impact on local arterial streets? If the purpose of congestion pricing is to alleviate traffic, wouldn't it defeat the purpose if local streets becomes worse?

Answer: As part of the demonstration, the federal government will be evaluating all aspects of the project, including the traffic impact on local arterial streets. However, we anticipate that the traffic on the local streets will NOT become worse because the ExpressLanes allow us to better use the space available on the freeway.

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Question: There are currently a lot of cheaters using the HOV lanes, how will the new HOT lanes be enforced?

Answer: Metro is partnering with CHP for dedicated enforcement. In addition, photo enforcement can be used if all vehicles are required to have a transponder.

Question: Much of the existing transit service on the 110 originates farther south than the Artesia Transit Center. Can some of the additional bus service planned for this project be added to routes beginning further south, such as San Pedro? Thanks - Erin Strelch

Answer: Hi Erin. Yes -- through our community meetings over the last year we've learned that service farther south of Artesia Transit Center is equally important to the South Bay communities. So we propose to use some of the additional new clean fuel buses to provide more feeder service to Artesia Transit Center. In addition, Torrance Transit and Gardena Transit will be providing more commuter express services from the South Bay communities directly to downtown Los Angeles.

Question: What will the policy be regarding low-emissions vehicles?

Answer: The current state law authorizing low-emission vehicles (gas electric hybrids -- yellow sticker vehicles) will expire January 1, 2011 -- exactly when our Project begins. So hybrids will be treated like all other vehicles.

Question: Can you tell me if an express lane is scheduled for the 210 fwy? Thank you.
Thomas Pellegrino

Answer: Hi Thomas. An ExpressLane is not scheduled for the 210 freeway. The demonstration project is focused only on the I-10 and I-110 freeways.

Question: We've heard this is a 1 year demonstration project. What is the likelihood of making this permanent or expanding to other HOV lanes?

Answer: We want to use the demonstration to evaluate how effective congestion pricing is and whether changes need to be made in order for it to work better in LA County. Metro is also looking at the feasibility of introducing HOT lanes on other LA County freeways.

Question: Will these ExpressLanes have a positive or negative impact on the environment?

Answer: The ExpressLanes are expected to have a positive impact on the environment by reducing fuel consumption and vehicle emissions. Also, by increasing the availability of transit service and vanpools, we are striving to move more people in fewer vehicles in the ExpressLanes.

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Question: What happens if you are in the lane without a transponder in your car? Or if the person runs out of money on their pre-paid account, do you bill them? Is there a payment plan to be set up to pay for the transponder or some kind of notification, if funds are low? Mello S.

Answer: If you are in the lane without a transponder in your car, you will be able to call the toll hot line or go on the web and open a toll account within 72 hours of using the Express Lane in order to avoid receiving a violation notice. If the person runs out of money on their pre-paid account we will bill them, however, we will encourage users to replenish their account before the balance reaches \$0 -- there will be multiple payment plans for the user to choose from.

Question: How have the community meetings gone? What kind of questions are coming out of them?

Answer: The community meetings have been very informative. Like today's chat, we've gotten a lot of good questions at the community meetings. We're grateful for the comments and exchange of ideas. Many in the community are enthused about the rapid implementation of this program to relieve congestion and provide a more reliable trip. Questions include use of transponders, enforcement and impacts to low income commuters. There will continue to be significant outreach as the project develops. Please continue to visit our website at metro.net/expresslanes for the latest info on public meetings.

Question: Will there be only one entry and one exit or multiple access points? If there are multiple access points what type of merge zone will be provided? Marshall

Answer: Hi Marshall. All existing access points to the carpool lanes will remain. We will be making some improvements by adding weave lanes or merge lanes at certain access points to improve traffic flow.

Question: Well, Stephanie, that's all the time we have for questions. Any final words on ExpressLanes?

Answer: This has been a productive session. I appreciate all of your questions. The ExpressLanes demonstration project is an opportunity for LA County to ease congestion and provide more travel options for all commuters traveling on the I-10 and I-110 freeways. Your continued public input is critical to ensuring a successful demonstration project. Thank you and we'll chat again!

**Unanswered Questions not Able to Answer within One Hour Timeframe
(Not part of official chat archive)**

Question: With two recent debacles regarding Metro Blue Line and the TAP card, how can one expect Metro to successfully take on a truly huge project such as ExpressLanes? Randall Fleming

Answer: Hi Randall. The ExpressLanes Project is co-managed by Metro and Caltrans. Technical support is provided by a consultant team that has HOT lane experience both in California and other parts of the country.

Question: Hi Stephanie, my question is that if all potential users take advantage of the system, how does this eliminate congestion? It seems as if people will just simply move to a different lane, but it does not eliminate vehicles.

Answer: Actually, by incorporating this type of pricing strategy we hope to encourage more people to use transit, join a vanpool, or carpool. Studies show that if only 5% of drivers change to a different mode or drive when it's less congested, traffic can improve by 15 - 20%. Remember, transit, carpools, and vanpools will have access to the ExpressLanes 24/7. Single drivers will only be able to use those lanes when the travel speeds in the ExpressLanes are above 45 mph. So we believe this demonstration project will accomplish our primary goal to ease congestion by moving more people within the same space, not more vehicles.

Question: Will the express lanes use a transponder option to pay and be billed?

Answer: Yes. Users will establish a pre-paid transponder account. You can use cash, credit or check to pay your account in person, by mail or online. The transponder will be placed in your vehicle. As you travel in the *ExpressLanes*, the toll will be automatically deducted from your transponder account - there will be no toll booths. If you already own a FasTrak transponder, you will not be required to get an ExpressLanes transponder.

Question: How will the system know if you are in a carpool or if you are a single person needing to be charged a toll? What if you only sometimes carry passengers with you so you only sometimes qualify as a carpool?

Answer: To tailor congestion pricing to LA County, a transponder will be used to reflect the flexibility drivers need on the ExpressLanes and the different minimum occupancy requirements on the I-10 and I-110. Vehicles will have a "self-declaration" transponder to indicate the number of passengers in the vehicle. That way, even if you only carpool occasionally, you can indicate this using a manual switch/button on the transponder. The transponder will be mounted in your car, an antenna will read the transponder as you drive by, and any toll will be automatically charged to your account.

Question: Will there be one price or different prices for different times of the day - if I drive alone and want to use the lanes.

Answer: Prices will vary, depending upon the level of congestion in the ExpressLanes - as congestion increases, the price will increase, and as congestion decreases, the price will decrease. If you drive alone and want to use the lanes, signage will inform

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you of approaching access points and will state what the toll will be to travel along the *ExpressLanes*. The rate for the toll will be frozen from the time your vehicle enters the *ExpressLanes* and won't change.

Question: Stephanie, will current HOV users really be required to have a transponder in the vehicle?

Answer: Yes. Currently, we are proposing that all vehicles that travel in the *ExpressLanes* be required to have a transponder. LA County carpoolers indicate that one of their highest concerns is addressing "cheaters" in the *ExpressLanes*. And enforcement is critical if the *ExpressLanes* are to be successful and effective. So, the proposal is to treat all vehicles as customers and require a transponder to provide easier identification of violators in the lanes. The deposit for the transponders will be cost-neutral (i.e. rebate or toll credits). The customer will have multiple plans to choose from and Metro is committed to ensure that drivers are aware of the new rules and have access to the transponders.

Question: Will tolls vary by real time congestion levels? What % increase in speeds do you expect on the adjacent free lanes? Josh W.

Answer: Hi Josh. Prices will vary, depending upon the level of congestion in the *ExpressLanes* – as congestion increases, the price will increase, and as congestion decreases, the price will decrease. The rate for the toll will be frozen from the time the vehicle enters the *ExpressLanes* and won't change. We estimate that speeds in the adjacent general purpose lanes will increase by 25-50% during the rush hour.

Question: Hi Stephanie. Will there ever be a train line (make it the silver line) that goes to Century City or farther to the west side, specifically where the 10 and 405 meet? Mike W.

Answer: Hi Mike. Yes, the Purple Line or "Subway to the Sea" is currently planned for the west side as a result of the passage of Measure R last November.

Question: Have you chosen the technology and contractor to manage the transponders and tolling?

Answer: We are in the middle of the procurement process for the turnkey vendor. We have shortlisted the firms and will issue a Request For Proposal in September 2009.

Question: Can you base the toll on level of service rather than a target mph?

Answer: Yes, in essence, the toll is based on the level of service in the *ExpressLanes*. The goal is to maintain a reliable stable traffic flow. As speeds fall below 45 mph, it is difficult to maintain reliability.

Question: If I just want to go a short way in the Express lane (to get around some blocked traffic in the general lanes), will I have to use a transponder? Are there any free alternatives for solo drivers? John K.

Answer: Hi John. Currently, we are proposing that all vehicles that travel in the *ExpressLanes* be required to have a transponder – no matter what distance you are traveling. The free alternative for solo drivers remains in the general purpose lanes.

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Of course, if there is an accident/SigAlert in the general purpose lanes, the ExpressLanes would be open to all traffic – just like the carpool lanes are today.

Question: Instead of adding a second diamond HOT/HOV lane to Interstate 10 between I-710 and I-605, did you consider widening the Metrolink Right-of-Way and double-tracking the rail line? It would have the ability to move far more people.

Answer: Unfortunately, widening the Metrolink right-of-way and double-tracking the rail line would not meet the timelines prescribed for completion by the grant. Fortunately, adding the second ExpressLane is doable by re-striping the existing freeway lanes within the timeframe prescribed by the grant.

Question: After the construction, will there be more jobs made available?

Answer: Yes. At a minimum, new jobs will be available through staffing the toll operations center, maintenance of the toll equipment, and new bus drivers for the 57 new buses.

Question: Hi Ms. Stephanie Wiggins. I have no problems with driving solo and paying a little fee to be on a ExpressLane. I would like to know how the toll will be collected. Will it be in two ways? 1) Physical Toll Booths 2) FasTrak Passes like they have in San Francisco. Also, will tolls be at certain hours or effective 24/7? Thank you!! R. Milano

Answer: There will not be physical toll booths in the *ExpressLanes*. A transponder – similar to the San Francisco FasTrak Pass – will be placed in your vehicle. As you travel in the *ExpressLanes*, the toll will be automatically deducted from your transponder account. Remember, transit, carpools, and vanpools will have access to the ExpressLanes 24/7. Single drivers will only be able to use those lanes when the travel speeds in the ExpressLanes are above 45 mph.

Question: Can you please explain how the express lanes are going to work in LA County? Jim

Answer: Hi Jim. *ExpressLanes* are a one-year demonstration project/test, during which carpool lanes will be converted to high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes/ExpressLanes. *ExpressLanes* will charge a fee ONLY to solo drivers who choose to use the toll lanes. Buses, motorcycles, vanpoolers and carpoolers who are currently driving in carpool lanes will still be able to use them FOR FREE. It will occur in two places: on the I-10 El Monte Busway, between Alameda Street and the I-605, and on the I-110 Harbor Transitway, between Adams Boulevard and Artesia Transit Center. The general purpose lanes will continue to remain toll-free.

Tolls will vary based upon the travel speeds in the ExpressLanes. However, once the single driver is in the ExpressLanes, their toll amount is fixed. If the travel speeds fall below 45 mph, the single driver will not be able to access the ExpressLanes until the speeds rise above 45 mph.

The proposal is that all vehicles in the ExpressLanes are customers and will need a transponder. Requiring transponders in all vehicles provides for easier identification of violators without a transponder. For infrequent, out of town visitors, who may travel in the ExpressLanes without a transponder, they will have the ability to open a

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toll account within 72 hours of driving the ExpressLanes by phone, web, or in-person.

Question: Sorry, I guess I didn't list my name earlier, and maybe that's why my question wasn't posted. I was wondering how they believe this will eliminate congestion if the same amount of vehicles will still be on the road. What happens when the expresslane reaches capacity? And in an earlier response to Robert's question, you noted that the 91 Hot Lane was quite successful: can you define success here? Is it based on dollars raised or congestion eased?

Answer: We believe this demonstration project will ease congestion by better managing the flow of traffic. Under current conditions, there is some capacity in the carpool lanes at certain times of the day that provides the opportunity to allow single drivers to access these lanes for a toll. To prevent the *ExpressLanes* from becoming crowded, we are able to use pricing as a way to manage the demand from single drivers. If speeds in the *ExpressLanes* dip below 45 mph, then single drivers will not be able to enter until the speeds climb back up. Also, by incorporating this type of pricing strategy we hope to encourage more people to use transit, join a vanpool, carpool or encourage solo drivers to travel at off-peak hours.

Success on the 91 HOT lanes is defined by the amount of congestion eased – not the dollars raised.

Question: Will taxes have to go up to pay for it or has that already happened?

Answer: Actually taxes will not have to go up to pay for *ExpressLanes*. This one-year demonstration project is funded by a special \$210 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Question: How will this affect traffic during construction? How many lanes will be closed to allow for construction of the ExpressLanes? Also, is there a tentative opening date for the Eastside Extension for the Gold Line?

Answer: The contractor will construct during non-rush hour periods, in accordance with Caltrans rules and regulations. The Eastside Extension of the Gold Line is anticipated to open in August 2009.

Question: Is there a proposal to alleviate the humungous truck traffic on the 710 freeway? The interchanges are in need of expansions, especially at 91/710.

Answer: The I-710 Corridor Project EIR/EIS is currently analyzing potential improvements to the I-710 freeway between the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles and SR-60. The purpose of the project is to improve air quality, mobility and safety along this heavily congested corridor. Among the alternatives under study is the addition of a four-lane goods movement corridor that would separate container traffic from the general purpose freeway lanes. For more info visit the website: www.metro.net/710eir

Question: What if I have a transponder with the Toll Roads in Orange County?
Ramon

Answer: Hi Ramon. You will be able to use the same transponder on the *ExpressLanes*. State law requires that if you already have a transponder for another

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toll facility in California, you can use the same transponder for the ExpressLanes. You will also have the option for a no-cost upgrade to the ExpressLanes transponder.

Question: Pending the success of the HOT lanes on the 110 and 10 freeways, are you targeting other freeways in Los Angeles which you would attempt HOT lanes? If so, what is the timetable for additional corridors? Thanks, Herbert H.

Answer: Hi Herbert. Currently we do not have a timetable for implementation on additional corridors. However, Metro is looking at the feasibility of HOT lanes on other LA County freeways. This feasibility study should be completed later this year.

Question: The cost of transponders will represent a major sticking point to a lot of people. I would highly recommend that Metro make transponders available at no cost to any driver and make them available in the widest possible distribution.

Answer: While the amount of the deposit is not yet determined, Metro is currently anticipating a cost-neutral transponder (i.e. rebate or applied as toll credit). A transponder distribution plan will be presented to the Board for approval with the goal of ensuring accessible and affordable transponders.

Question: On the 10 fwy, where is the pilot test zone? Between what streets and how long will the express lane be when completed? Thank you. Thomas Pellegrino

Answer: Hi Thomas. ExpressLanes on the I-10 El Monte Busway will be between Alameda Street and the I-605 – approximately 14 lane miles in length.

Question: How does Metro plan on disseminating the transponders in an equitable manner? Miguel Martinez

Answer: Hi Miguel. While the amount of the deposit is not yet determined, Metro is currently anticipating a cost-neutral transponder (i.e. rebate or applied as toll credit). A transponder distribution plan will be presented to the Board for approval with the goal of ensuring accessible and affordable transponders.

Question: I'll try this one more time: Can you describe what happens if an Express Lane reaches capacity? Will drivers receive their fee back or have it reduced? Is the fee based on congestion in the regular lanes, or does it also take into account congestion in the express lane? When responding to an earlier post by Robert, you noted that the 91 HOT lane was the most successful, can you please define success here? Does it mean it generates lots of funds, or that it reduces congestion? Thanks, Lane

Answer: If an ExpressLane reaches capacity, single drivers will not be able to access the ExpressLanes until the travel speeds climb above 45 mph. If a single driver is in the ExpressLanes and the travel speeds fall below 45mph for a sustained period of time (ie. 10 minutes), a toll credit will be applied to their account. The toll rate is based upon congestion in the ExpressLanes.

Regarding the 91 HOT lane, success is defined as reducing congestion.

Question: Will motorcyclists be able to use the HOT lanes without charge?

Answer: Yes. Motorcyclists will not be charged a toll to use the lanes.

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Question: Is there any way the TAP card could be integrated into this? Could Metro offer a transponder into which we could insert our TAP card so that we only had to have one account and could add money at any farebox or Ticket Vending Machine?

Answer: During the one-year demonstration project the *ExpressLanes* transponder accounts will be kept separate from the TAP card accounts. However, Metro is considering this option for the future.

Question: I agree with your logic of getting people out of their cars and onto transit, but I don't think your method is the best. It seems to me that the carpooler is being punished by having single-driver vehicles enter their carpool lane, and lower-income drivers are being punished by being priced out of certain lanes. This seems especially unfair when transit is still too infrequent or slow to be a viable option, as it is for me. I hate to sound rude because I am a huge supporter of public transit, but how will this project help low income people whom transit doesn't serve effectively? Ryan K.

Answer: Hi Ryan. This project provides opportunities for individuals to choose better transportation alternatives by increasing the availability of transit service, carpools, and vanpools in the corridors regardless of income. Remember, carpools, vanpools, and transit will not be charged a toll. Toll credits will also be available to the low income single driver.

Question: What is the expected individual product cost of a transponder? and does staff have a proposed rate -- I suggest "free" -- for drivers to get one?

Answer: While the amount of the deposit for the transponder has not been determined, the goal is to offer a cost-neutral transponder (i.e. rebate for return of the transponder or toll credits).

Question: What is the charge for the transponder itself, and what if it gets stolen or broken, say in an accident? Thanks - Erin Strellich

Answer: Hi Erin. While the amount of the deposit for the transponder has not been determined, the goal is to offer a cost-neutral transponder (i.e. rebate for return of the transponder or toll credits).

If a transponder is stolen or broken, it can be replaced for a fee.

Question: Have amounts for fees and charges been set? If a transponder is lost, damaged or stolen will the amount loaded be forwarded to the new unit?

Answer: While the amount of the deposit for the transponder has not been determined, the goal is to offer a cost-neutral transponder (i.e. rebate for return of the transponder or toll credits).

If a transponder is lost, damaged or stolen, the amount loaded will be forwarded to the new transponder.

Question: How much is the project going to cost? Mello S.

Answer: Hi Mello. Funding for the \$291 million demonstration project is as follows: 50% transit facility improvements, 20% transit operations, 5% Express Park parking management program, 25% toll technology and roadway improvements.

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Question: Is the transponder a large item to be installed, or is it something that can be moved from car to car? Mello S

Answer: The transponder is a small device that can easily be mounted inside your car. Transponders will be portable and can be moved from one vehicle to another.

Question: What happens to carpools without transponders? Can they still travel in the lane?

Answer: Currently, the proposal is that all vehicles in the ExpressLanes are customers and will need a transponder. Requiring transponders in all vehicles provides for easier identification of violators without a transponder. For infrequent, out of town visitors, who may travel in the ExpressLanes without a transponder, they will have the ability to open a toll account within 72 hours of driving the ExpressLanes by phone, web, or in-person.

Question: Is Metro considering making transponders available at no cost to all interested drivers? Will Metro take the widest possible approach to getting transponders into people's hands by making them available at post offices, grocery stores, gas stations, car washes, and other high-traffic locations? Will Metro make it possible for drivers to apply online for a transponder? or to activate a transponder picked up at a public distribution site like a gas station, bank, post office, grocery market or auto parts store? Bill O.

Answer: Hi Bill. Metro is currently considering transponder deposit and distribution. While the amount of the deposit for the transponder has not been determined, the goal is to offer a cost-neutral transponder (i.e. rebate for return of the transponder or toll credits).

And, yes, users will be able to establish a pre-paid transponder account online, by phone, fax, mail, or walk-up. A formal transponder distribution plan will be presented to the Board in a few months.

Date Rec'd	First Initial and Last Name	Written Comment (Webpage, Email, Fax)	Response
6/25/2009	A. Speriglio	How can you charge a toll on a freeway that we have paid taxes on for years? Why can't you have a car pool lane that doesn't require a tracking device? Unfair to those who have tried to do good, why is this now 24/7 for car pool or fast trac?	The gas tax has not generated enough revenue to expand infrastructure or maintain it. The federal gas tax has not been raised in over 15 years despite inflation. Unfortunately, there is not enough room to add a separate lane for carpool users. A transponder will improve enforcement. The demonstration is for 24/7. Carpools, vanpools, transit, and motorcycles will not be charged a toll.
Business Rules / Goals			
Enforcement			
16-Jun-09	D. Walker	Metro's own survey showed that a many carpools would not acquire a transponder, if required, and therefore will not (legally) use the Expresslanes. Requiring carpool transponders will reduce Expresslane ridership. How will Metro/Caltrans use photo enforcement camera / transponder technology to help verify carpools and ticket cheaters?	The survey actually shows that over 60% of existing carpools were not opposed to getting a transponder. Photo enforcement will reduce the number of unnecessary stops since the transponder technology will allow the driver to indicate how many people are in the vehicle.
Other			
16-Jun-09	D. Walker	Metro / Caltrans should perform alternatives analysis to extend the northern terminus of the 110 HOV lanes / Expresslanes into downtown LA. The proposed I-110 Adams/Figueroa Flyover Study and Adams Blvd Street Widening will provide some help for the serious congestion problems the current HOV lanes have at the northern 110 HOV terminus. However, the current HOV lanes are routinely congested as carpools queue up to re-enter the general purpose northbound 110 freeway lanes near Adams. A new 110 Expresslanes elevated structure to downtown LA would really help improve performance. Metro / Caltrans should study extending the Expressway to at least the Convention Center / Staples Center area. A longer extension thru downtown to Union Station with a direct link I-10 El Monte Busway would be more expensive but would really improve connectivity and regional mobility in both corridors.	Yes, this project also funds a study to extend the I-110 HOV/Expresslanes into Downtown LA. Metro anticipates that improvements to Adams Boulevard along with the Flyover will help alleviate the queuing that occurs in the existing carpool lanes on the I-110 Freeway
16-Jun-09	D. Walker	Management of the rules for using the lanes should be flexible to avoid the disaster of El Monte Busway HOV-3 to HOV-2 conversion in year 2000 via SB 63.	The current HOV-2 and HOV-3 requirements that are in place now will continue to stay in place during the demonstration period. Pricing will allow us to manage the demand from the vehicles that do not meet the occupancy requirements.

Date Rec'd	First Initial and Last Name	Written Comment (Webpage, Email, Fax)	Response
16-Jun-09	D. Barboza	I tentatively support the idea of high occupancy toll lanes. The key is to use the excess revenue to pay for something good. Not more freeways! We need more transit, more dense and mixed-use development around transit hubs and corridors, and more emphasis on basic pedestrian and bike infrastructure. This policy could be a force for sustainability and a green transportation revolution or it could be a force for the "car is king" status quo.	State law for the ExpressLanes requires that any excess revenues be invested in transit and carpool lane improvements. The project will add 57 new clean-fuel buses along the I-10 and I-110 corridors and upgrade transit stations.
16-Jun-09	D. Walker	We generally support the ExpressLanes Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project. The additional federal funding for added buses and security along the I-110 and I-10 El Monte Busway is a good start and should help reduce congestion, air pollution, and fuel consumption a little. However, we have some concerns / questions we hope Metro /Caltrans will address soon: The I-110 freeway expresslane single occupancy users should be able to exit the I-110 Expressway southbound to the 105 freeway using the HOV connectors (with permission from Consent Decree Judge).	Metro and Caltrans are evaluating this option so that SOVs will be able to use the ExpressLanes onto the I-105 but will then immediately exit the carpool lane once they are on the I-105
16-Jun-09	D. Walker	The 110 Expresslanes should have a safe, convenient connection to the new Expo Light Rail line. Expo stations near the ExpressLanes will include USC / Expo Park, Jefferson, and 23rd St.	The plan calls for an additional right lane on the Adams Blvd off-ramp, widening the Adams Blvd bridge, as well as improved pedestrian accessibility around the future Expo station.
16-Jun-09	M. Browne	I am against the tolling of express lanes. You will vote for this measure but I would still like to share my feelings on this matter anyway. You have huge traffic issues in this area and HOV lanes are a great way to give cars with more than one person inside a benefit against the thousands of SOV drivers that do not want to give up their 'freedom and right' to use a car and instead use Public Transit or share their car with others. When you gave SOV hybrids a permit to use HOV lanes that was the first step in diluting the efficiency of the HOV lanes. Hybrids will be the norm in a few years and you gave up the road space in the car pool lanes for SOV drivers. NOW you are going to do the same thing and allow SOV drivers, if they have the money or have a company that will pay the expense, to use the HOV lanes which will further dilute the HOV lanes for people that are really using the Car pool lane as originally intended. I know that Metro has to do this demonstration project to receive more Federal or State funding so it will happen anyway but I would like to say it is a disgrace and a shame that you are	The tolling facilities are optional for drivers to participate in. General purpose lanes, as well as existing carpool users, will remain toll-free. Additionally, forecasts call for general purpose lane speeds to improve. Lastly, toll revenues will be reinvested only in the corridor, a significant portion going towards frequent and express transit service along the HOT lanes. This project will provide benefits for every commuter, regardless of income.

Date Rec'd	First Initial and Last Name	Written Comment (Webpage, Email, Fax)	Response
		<p>destroying the flow of car pool lanes for HOV users to make a few bucks. It happened with Hybrid cars and now these express lanes. You might as well not have the HOV lanes anymore. Why not put more money into the public transit system to increase frequency and service coverage in this underserved community and give people a decent alternative to the car, which unfortunately is king in this region? Alternatively raise fuel taxes, which I know everyone is very resistant to do and use this extra money generated to specifically spend on Public Transit issues? We need a way to raise fuel prices so people will think twice when they drive their car. When gas prices were over \$4 there were fewer trucks on the road and fewer cars on the road and more people riding buses/trains. Please stop giving away fuel at cheap prices and go European with huge gas prices</p>	<p>70% of the \$291 million project budget will be used for transit improvements - both bus operations (purchasing 57 new clean-fuel buses and upgrading transit stations along I-10 and I-110. State law requires that net toll revenues be reinvested in transit and carpool lane improvements in the corridor where the toll is generated.</p>
17-Jun-09	D. Smith	<p>I am all for generating toll lanes for single drivers willing to pay for a quicker route to work and to help free up the traffic in the regular lanes (IF the Lanes are expanded). But do not penalize those of us who have been doing the right thing (by carpooling for years/decades). Keep the same rules that apply to the I-10 Carpool today, (Riders with 3 or More passengers during rush hour times) should be able to take these lanes for free. Especially those of us in Vanpools (That occupy 8-12 people, taking that many vehicles off of the road). Thank you for your consideration.</p>	<p>The proposal is that the same rules apply for carpools, vanpools, transit, and motorcycles -- not tolls.</p>
17-Jun-09	R. Jaramillo	<p>I oppose any more funds for freeways or roads. The cost of transportation, including fuel, by auto keeps growing and the problems also keep growing. Conventional/High-Speed Rail IS an alternative. In most cases, each psngr. on a train = 1 less car on the road. Railroads are already in place in many parts of the city and county. More roads/lanes make the problem bigger.</p>	<p>70% of the \$291 million project budget will be used for transit improvements - both bus operations (purchasing 57 new clean-fuel buses and upgrading transit stations along I-10 and I-110. State law requires that net toll revenues be reinvested in transit and carpool lane improvements in the corridor where the toll is generated.</p>
17-Jun-09	R. Quinn	<p>Allowing people to pay to use diamond lanes will have a terrible public relations effect. One more way the rich get benefits denied to the rest of us! Those in the non-diamond lanes will actually benefit from some moving out of their lanes, but most will have the previously expressed attitude.</p>	<p>The tolling facilities are optional for drivers to participate in. General purpose lanes, as well as existing carpool users, will remain toll-free. The proposal includes a Rewards Program that would provide toll credits to improve access to all commuters.</p>

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17-Jun-09	W. Smith	We would like a presentation for our stakeholders regarding Metro public hearings for the ExpressLanes Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project. We are in the 90043 zip code.	Thank you for contacting Metro about the Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project. Metro Staff would like to give a presentation on the project to the Park Mesa Heights Community Council at your convenience. Please contact me, Bronwen Trice, at (213) 922-4465 or triceb@metro.net as soon as possible and I will coordinate with you and Metro staff. .
17-Jun-09	M. Bisaha	Since motorcycles are allowed to use HOV lanes, I hope and expect they will be allowed to use the HOT lanes without charge.	The proposal is to allow motorcycles to use the ExpressLanes without having to pay a toll.
17-Jun-09	T. Panlilio	Please avoid setting up toll lanes in Freeway # 10.	The tolling facilities will allow single occupant vehicles with a choice to enter the ExpressLanes and pay a toll or continue to use the general purpose lanes and not pay a toll. Existing carpool and vanpool users as well as transit riders will continue to be able to use the ExpressLanes as they do now without having to pay a toll. Additionally, forecasts call for general purpose lane speeds to improve so all commuters should benefit from the ExpressLanes. Any excess toll revenues will be reinvested along the I-10 and I-110 freeways, a significant portion going towards improved transit service in the ExpressLanes.
18-Jun-09	S. Rangel	I disapprove of this project. We are cash strapped citizens, and we do not need another tax items to be burden with. We get to work in 30 min via vanpool and we are doing fine. Encourage others to take carpool.	Existing carpool and vanpool users as well as transit riders will continue to be able to use the ExpressLanes as they do now without having to pay a toll. ExpressLanes are designed to improve travel choices for all commuters and encourage more ridesharing and transit ridership.

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20-Jun-09	O. Gasparini	<p>I can not and will not support or use any project that has any kind of "Toll" on our "FREE WAY SYSTEM"!!! We in California pay a "VERY HIGH TAX" to Maintain, Construct, and Design our Free Way System Every Time We Put Gasoline in the gas tank in our cars, buy Tires, Maintain our cars, and pay for many other taxes that I may not be aware of yet. This same kind of gamble and waste of tax payer dollars was implemented in Orange County 91 FWY and it was a first class "FIASCO" the Tax payer paid for it, had to subsidize it, and when it fail completely because no one wanted to pay the "TOLL", the TAX PAYER had to pay again to buy a losing scheme. I would like to know what happens to my tax dollars that you are recieving now, what happen to the bonds that you asked for sold and recieved the cash, what happen with the federal stimulus funds that you are to recieve to improve the Free Way System??? Futhermore, As I recall we voted against this very kind of thing before. I will vote NO on any project that includes any kind of a TOLL on it.</p>	<p>Simply put, freeways are not free. The gas tax has not generated enough revenue to expand infrastructure, let alone maintain it. The federal gas tax has not been raised in over 15 years despite inflation. ExpressLanes offer a choice to single drivers. Existing carpools, vanpools, transit, and motorcycles will continue to use the ExpressLanes without having to pay a toll. The general purpose lanes will not be tolled.</p>
9-Jun-09	J. Vogt	<p>Charging toll for the HOV lanes will only increase congestion in the other lanes of traffic. People driving into downtown LA from points east are already paying high gas prices, paying for parking downtown and many will not be willing or be able to afford the additional toll . Charging tolls defeats the original idea of the HOV lanes and is not a solution to the problem. Why not just open all lanes to everyone, thereby, adding an additional lane of traffic?</p>	<p>The ExpressLanes will offer a choice to commuters along the I-10 and I-110 freeways by allowing single occupant vehicles to access the ExpressLanes and pay a toll or continue to drive alone in the general purpose lanes and not pay a toll. In addition, we will also be expanding transit and increasing vanpools along both of these freeways to offer commuters more commuting options than currently exist for them today. With the increased transit and vanpool option as well as allowing single drivers into the Expresslanes we are expecting that congestion will actually decrease in both the general purpose and ExpressLanes on both of these freeways.</p>
24-Jun-09	J.P. Drayer	<p>I have a hybrid car with a HOV lane sticker. Los Angeles Times article did not mention what would happen to us. Please allow alternative fuel cars to ride solo in the HOV lanes for free, if the state continues the program.</p>	<p>The current state law authorizing low-emission vehicles (hybrids - yellow stickers) will expire January 1, 2011 -- exactly when our Project begins. So hybrids will be treated like all other vehicles choosing to access the ExpressLanes.</p>

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26-Jun-09	L. Hodges	Will Hybrid vehicles with stickers still qualify to ride in the carpool lane free of charge?	The current state law authorizing low-emission vehicles (hybrids - yellow stickers) will expire January 1, 2011 -- exactly when our Project begins. So hybrids will be treated like all other vehicles choosing to access the ExpressLanes.
30-Jun-09	L. Foster	We are in support of HOV lanes used with a fee. Pay as you go fees for high carbon activities is a good way to regulate and reduce people's carbon footprint. In a world where we are already seeing the effects of global warming in more fires and drought in the LA region, we believe support measures to reduce emissions and waste. In particular, we are in support of fees on these practices to help pay for clean up and other environmental damage.	
30-Jun-09	S. Kinsey	THE CONGESTION REDUCTION DEMONSTRATION PROJECT I think this is a great idea. Go for it.	
30-Jun-09	E. Fein	I support the Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project as outlined at the metro.net website.	
30-Jun-09	D. Brooks	Don't like the idea. I don't travel those roads for work, but I do travel the 405. Seems that single occupants are being penalized. I don't care for the carpool lane anyway due to the speed drivers travel and the mishaps that can happen in that lane like center divider accidents and when it rains, water splashes up and blinds you in that lane from the traffic going in the other direction. So I would vote No. Thank you.	The ExpressLanes will offer a choice to commuters along the I-10 and I-110 freeways by allowing single occupant vehicles to access the ExpressLanes and pay a toll or continue to drive alone in the general purpose lanes and not pay a toll. In addition, we will also be expanding transit and increasing vanpools along both of these freeways to offer commuters more commuting options than currently exist for them today. With the increased transit and vanpool option as well as allowing single drivers into the Expresslanes we are expecting that congestion will actually decrease in both the general purpose and ExpressLanes on both of these freeways.

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30-Jun-09	J. Tucker	Bad idea. The car pool lanes slow down to a crawl during peak hours anyway. Having single occupancy vehicles there will make them as bad as the parking lot lanes next to them LEAVE OUR CAR POOL LANES ALONE! Live within your budget, just like the citizens you are suppose to be serving have to.	The ExpressLanes will offer a choice to commuters along the I-10 and I-110 freeways by allowing single occupant vehicles to access the ExpressLanes and pay a toll or continue to drive alone in the general purpose lanes and not pay a toll. In addition, we will also be expanding transit and increasing vanpools along both of these freeways to offer commuters more commuting options than currently exist for them today. With the increased transit and vanpool option, roadway improvements, as well as allowing single drivers into the Expresslanes we are expecting that congestion will actually decrease in both the general purpose and ExpressLanes on both of these freeways.
30-Jun-09	J. Smith	Great idea, let's start ASAP. It both generates needed revenue and corrals the bandits that are ignoring the law.	
30-Jun-09	W. Jackson	It appears that a pre conceived conclusion has been made here; Think about this: 1.) The car pool lanes on the 110 are now crowded; 2.) Stopping cars to collect a toll would back up traffic; 3.) Peak times in LA are the problem; 4.) The best traffic window on the 10 and 110 are between 10am - 2pm. when traffic flows; 5.) A mass transit for both of these areas 110 and 10 would work, albeit expensive; 6.) A mass transit would relieve traffic on these road ways; 7.) Houston has a excellent way of moving business traffic from bedroom communities home to downtown, this should be studied; 8.) The Bay Area moves mass transit along the major freeways and underground where its best. There is more I would share but the DEMO Project is not the answer.	There will be no toll booths on the freeways -- it will be electronic tolling. Roadway improvements are planned on both of the freeways to help ease congestion as well. The project also includes 57 new clean-fuel buses to increase transit service on both of these corridors. The Bay Area has a proposal to implement HOT lanes as well.
30-Jun-09	V. Chatman	I truly have to read more about Hon. Mark Ridley-Thomas' Pilot Program about the above. Even so I have these beginning comments to respectfully share: If more "people" other than more "cars" are the focus for best commuting and less time in traffic congestion, perhaps this can be a doable pilot program. Also I read briefly that a given commuter will have the "option" of the toll fees way and I have yet to contemplate the fees. This is only due to the current state of our economic climate but again moving more "people" versus just cars may be beneficial to those still with jobs and others seeking gainful employment with the current layoffs, etc. God speed and thanks for contacting me.	This project is designed to move more people, with less vehicles. Metro expects to see a mode shift from single drivers to more efficient alternatives like carpools, vanpools to transit. The tolls would not go into effect for at least another 18 months.

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30-Jun-09	E. Nakano	<p>What will the projected traffic speed be in the HOT lanes under this new proposal? This could be calculated by looking at vehicle densities in other nearby toll roads, such as in Orange County, and then determining what impact that kind of density, added to the existing carpool densities, would have on speed. If it would result in much lower speeds, this could DISCOURAGE carpooling, which would defeat at least the environmental purpose of this proposal (because it would put carpoolers back into single occupant vehicles), and if enough carpoolers went back into single occupant vehicles, any positive effect on reducing congestion may be neutralized.</p>	<p>Traffic speeds will be between 45mph and 55 mph. Single drivers will not be allowed into the lanes if the travel speeds fall below 45 mph for a sustained period of time.</p>
30-Jun-09	T. Morrison	<p>Nothing beats a failure but a try. I don't see any other viable choices on the table</p>	
30-Jun-09	citizen	<p>I do not drive the proposed segments, but I think it is a reprehensible idea. We all paid for the HOV lane through our gas taxes and now you want the drivers to pay a second time for the right to use it. Applying this principle to education, we would all have to pay tuition to use public schools after we paid for it with our taxes.</p>	<p>Simply put, the gas tax has not generated enough revenue to expand infrastructure, let alone maintain it. The federal gas tax has not been raised in over 15 years despite inflation.</p>
30-Jun-09	L. Willard	<p>Creating toll lanes is not a good idea for LA County because we are not used to them and your plan involves a narrow use of them. The idea of a diamond lane was to encourage car pooling. If this is not working on certain freeways, then eliminate the Diamond lane and let any and all use the extra lane. Raising money through taxation type remedies is NOT THE SOLUTION TO THE COUNTY'S FINANCIAL PROBLEMS. The solution lies in reduced spending. Cut into the discretionary funds each supervisor has, eliminate some County credit cards, cut administrative staffs. Do this for a year or two, until we can again afford these extravagances. If a new broom sweeps clean, then my new County Supervisor should move in the direction I have outlined above.</p>	<p>The ExpressLanes will offer a choice to commuters along the I-10 and I-110 freeways by allowing single occupant vehicles to access the ExpressLanes and pay a toll or continue to drive alone in the general purpose lanes and not pay a toll. In addition, we will also be expanding transit and increasing vanpools along both of these freeways to offer commuters more commuting options than currently exist for them today. With the increased transit and vanpool option as well as allowing single drivers into the Expresslanes we are expecting that congestion will actually decrease in both the general purpose and ExpressLanes on both of these freeways.</p>

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30-Jun-09	ontargettv	<p>You're already thinking about something I had pondered, and that's to charge drivers on freeways. I hadn't thought out how it would work, but I was thinking beyond the car-pool lanes. Fees would decrease the number of freeway drivers. Expanding the one-way streets to more communities will help. I think the downtown system works well. I don't like the idea of a bus lane on Crenshaw. Not enough room. Synchronizing lights will continue to ease the traffic problem. The same needs to happen on La Brea and La Cienega. No bus lanes, but lights that allow left turns for longer periods. Just wending this today, because when first received from you, I could not read your Project text. Today, I received the complete e-mail. I'm on point, and think the Project makes sense.</p>	
30-Jun-09	N. Dickey	<p>I think that the carpool lanes get congested enough with two or more persons each car, and this potential solution of making the carpool toll for single users may not be the best option to reduce congestion.</p>	<p>We are adding capacity along the I-10 and I-110 corridor and we will allow single drivers into the ExpressLanes only as space is available. Additionally, we will be making improvements to encourage transit, carpool, and vanpool use.</p>
30-Jun-09	T. Harrison	<p>Nash, C. (2007). Developments in transport policy. Road pricing in Britain. Journal of Transport Economics and Policy, 41, 135-147. In 2003, The Mayor of London implemented a policy of road pricing, also known as "congestion pricing" in order to reduce traffic congestion in central London. The policy consisted of a mandatory flat charge of \$8 for vehicles entering central London between the hours of 7:00a.m. and 6:30p.m. Drivers liable for the charge had to pay the same day they incurred the charge. Area residents were entitled to a 90% discount and buses, taxis and motorcycles were exempt. Automatic license plate recognition technology was utilized to track violating vehicles and collect unpaid charges. In London, the majority of commuters use public transit, and a minority drive private automobiles. In the first year of implementation, 14% fewer vehicles entered the congestion pricing zone. In 2005, the charge was increased to \$13 and further decreases in traffic followed. Use of public transit increased and a reduction in emissions and vehicle-related accidents occurred.</p> <p>London's geographic area is smaller than Los Angeles, 1,580 square kilometers vs. 4,319. This article relates to the Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project in Los Angeles as it describes a policy which has successfully reduced traffic congestion.</p>	

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30-Jun-09	M. Hessman	I think this latest "hot lane" effort is just one more in a long line of stop-gap measures to try and improve a system that I believe is a failure, the so-called "HOV" and/or "Carpool Lanes". The 14 Fwy is a perfect example of taking away much needed lane space and creating HOV lanes instead. The 14 is also not being maintained properly and regularly. Lane stripping worn out for miles, reflectors, "Bots-Dots", and markings not maintained, with the Pearblossom exit from the Northbound 14 being a very good example. I am seriously considering a statewide ballot initiative to force the State to abandon HOV-carpool lanes and systems completely and return all the freeways to normal, functioning roadways again. I have been driving in California since 1967. HOV-Carpool lanes are a gross waste of taxpayer funds and it has to stop. Part of this initiative will also be provisions forcing the State and County Governments to properly, adequately, and promptly maintain all roadways known as "freeways" in California.	The ExpressLanes will offer a choice to commuters along the I-10 and I-110 freeways by allowing single occupant vehicles to access the ExpressLanes and pay a toll or continue to drive alone in the general purpose lanes and not pay a toll. In addition, we will also be expanding transit and increasing vanpools along both of these freeways to offer commuters more commuting options than currently exist for them today. With the increased transit and vanpool option as well as allowing single drivers into the Expresslanes we are expecting that congestion will actually decrease in both the general purpose and ExpressLanes on both of these freeways.
30-Jun-09	C. Mayeda	By law, isn't the number of cars regulated in as far as the number cars that can use the car pool lane? How many regular cars can purchase express lane access? Will there be special rules as is used for the Fastrak and toll roads for handicapped etc?	Access is dynamic and based upon the amount of congestion in the ExpressLanes at any given time. The proposal does not include special rules for the handicapped.
30-Jun-09	B. Poush	Bad idea. This was created to encourage car pooling. Keep it that way.	This project is designed to move more people, not more cars. Metro expects to see a mode shift from single drivers to more efficient alternatives which includes not only carpooling, but increased vanpooling and more transit usage.
30-Jun-09	E. Austin	Thanks to your ENTIRE STAFF AND ASSOCIATES, I just Love this idea the Supervisor and his team came up with the idea will work better than the Car Pool Lane I believe. I am so Happy I could be a Big Part of this team. Please don't forget me on the next phase. Thanks Supervisor and Staff for all of the hard work and time you put into this Project.	

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30-Jun-09	V. Jackson	<p>You need money for Los Angeles....Well here is the answer that can create millions in much needed revenue for our city. We all know that immigration is out of control. We the legal citizens have slowly watched our city become overcrowded and virtually become bankrupt because we cannot keep up with the demand of illegal immigrants claim to free programs available for low income. It is our leaders fault for not foreseeing this. However...now...we watch them set up illegal food carts, store fronts in their front yards, illegal carts in downtown LA and just about every corner in Los Angeles, except Beverly Hills or wealthy areas. They are not paying any city business revenue taxes on those illegal stands. That is much needed revenue we can use. In my area alone (King & Western) I have watched 10 taco stands set up in front on liquor stores. They are making a killing off our dumb asses. I asked the owner about it. He said (From Mexico) Americans are stupid, they are so lazy and would allow anything to happen because they don't want to do the work to stop us. This is easy free money! Start doing ser and jobs out here. Lets see what our so call senators and politicians feel</p>	
30-Jun-09	S. Laqueta	<p>I like the idea and I would be willing to pay; however, what I don't like is the access points for the freeway. In the Bay Area, it is not necessary to wait for specific entry points to get in the lane, this arrangement makes it much easier to get on and get off at specific points. I find that even with a passenger there are times I will not use the express lane as I don't want to miss my exit.</p>	<p>There are no plans to change the ingress/egress points on either the I-110 or the I-10 freeways for the demonstration project.</p>
20-Jun-09	P. Emerson	<p>I appreciate new and flexible thinking on transportation. If it is tried, however it needs to be monitored to see how it works out.. Will people simply avoid those lanes, and congest the freeway? Will it act as a regressive tax? pPlease keep records and make them public. Thank you.</p>	<p>State law requires performance measurements and monitoring of the project that will be reported to the public.</p>

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30-Jun-09	M. Wynn	The timing is questionable and this sounds like just another tax being level on the drivers	The tolling for ExpressLanes would not be implemented for at least another 18 months. ExpressLanes provides a choice for single drivers to access these lanes.
2-Jul-09	M. Hadley	Since they put in two mostly empty carpool lanes on the 110 freeway ,it would be a good idea to let those who can afford to pay use them. Then they would not be a total waste of tax payer dollars	
7-Jul-09	M. Axeen	Currently motorcycles are allowed in the carpool lanes. Under the proposed system, would they qualify for "no charge" access or would they be charged as a Single Occupant Vehicle?	The proposal is to allow motorcycles to use the ExpressLanes without having to pay a toll.
7-Jul-09	J. Lin	Please put the map in gif format which may save space and download time and of course the traffic.	Thank you for your comment. We will check with our webmaster to see if this is possible.
8-Jul-09	N. Marino	I have already sent a reply via the Metro website link, but since this is your proposal I thought I would respond to you directly as well. Allowing Single Occupancy Vehicles in the HOV lanes is a terrible idea! The purpose of the carpool lanes is to reduce the number of vehicles on the road, easing both traffic and pollution, by reducing commute times for those who become part of the solution. Many HOV lanes are already losing their incentive to carpools because they are seriously congested during rush hours and do not offer a faster alternative to the regular freeway lanes. Dual HOV lanes are what is needed, to encourage more single commuters to buddy up, since the risk of getting stuck in an HOV lane has grown with their success, making the limited-access to them a liability in case of a mishap or slowdown. What is your rationale for inviting additional congestion into the HOV lanes that will further exacerbate carpools' commute times? I predict that you will get only a small number of SOV toll-payers--just enough to render the HOV lanes completely useless or counter-productive--	We are adding capacity along the I-10 corridor and we will allow single drivers into the ExpressLanes only as space is available. In addition, we will also be expanding transit and increasing vanpools along both of these freeways to offer commuters more commuting options than currently exist for them today. With the increased transit and vanpool option as well as allowing single drivers into the Expresslanes we are expecting that congestion will actually decrease in both the general purpose and ExpressLanes on both of these freeways. Rigorous monitoring of the project's performance will take place during the demonstration period and reported to the public.
		and the funds collected will be insufficient to effect any other transportation solution to the successful one that would be destroyed. Please reconsider this proposal. I believe it will worsen the County's budget as well as traffic woes.	

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14-Jul-09	J. Ming	How do you sign up to be part of the pilot program?	Participation in the ExpressLanes demonstration project can occur in many ways: you can sign up for a vanpool that utilizes the I-10 or I-110 freeways; you can open a toll account via cash, check, or credit card, or you can use transit and register your TAP card if you wish to participate in our proposed Rewards program that would be made available for frequent transit users. Please visit our project website regularly for updates on the transponders, rewards program and other aspects of the project.
14-Jul-09	A. Moore	Based on Reason Foundation's years of research on the use of express lanes, I offer a few observations about what other places in the United States have learned from using express lanes. 1. Express Lanes work. There are currently express lanes in operation in Orange County, California, San Diego, Houston, Denver, Salt Lake City, and Minneapolis. More are planned in Miami, the Capital Beltway (Washington D.C. and Northern Virginia), Seattle, Maryland (on I-95), Austin, Dallas, Atlanta, the San Francisco Bay Area, Raleigh-Durham, and Portland, OR. 2. Express lanes benefit everyone. Free-flowing lanes give every motorist "congestion insurance"—an alternative to gridlocked freeways for those times when you really need it—to pick the kids up at daycare, make it to their soccer game, or catch a flight. Unlike traditional freeway lanes and many HOV lanes, HOT lanes will not become congested over time. Variable pricing allows roadway managers to change the price to ensure sustainable congestion-free travel over the long term. By using a price to discourage some people from traveling in peak hours,	

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		<p>HOT lanes actually provide more mobility. A free-flowing freeway lane has much higher throughput per hour than a congested freeway lane—about 50% more. Orange County's HOT Lanes represent just one-third of the highway's lanes but carry half of all traffic during rush hour. 3. That includes all income levels. In 2005, there were over 12 million trips on Orange County's HOT Lanes. Over a decade of data is available from the 91 Express Lanes in Orange County and the HOT lanes on I-15 in San Diego. It indicates that the vast majority of drivers—high and low income—use the HOT lanes only on occasion, instead of every day. While studies of the 91 Express Lanes indicate that use increases slightly with income group, 19% of the users have an annual household income of less than \$40,000, and another 23% have household incomes between \$40,000 and \$60,000. A 2001 telephone survey of San Diego I-15 Express Lane users revealed that 80% of the lowest income motorists (<\$40,000 annual household income) in the corridor agreed that "People who drive alone should be able to use the I-15 Express Lanes for a fee." In fact, they were more likely to agree with that statement than the highest income users. 4. Express lanes benefit transit. Because HOT lanes operate uncongested at high speeds, even during the busiest rush hours, they can provide a reliable, high-speed path for express bus service (sometimes known as Bus Rapid Transit). Transit agencies would ideally like to operate Bus Rapid Transit on exclusive busway lanes, but few can afford the cost of building new lanes just for buses. Value pricing keeps HOT lanes uncongested and free-flowing, making them the virtual equivalent of exclusive busways, from the transit agency's perspective. Both Houston and San Diego are planning expanded express bus service on HOT lanes. 5. The broader public will embrace express lanes. There were 12 million trips on Orange County's HOT lanes in 2005. In a 2001 survey of San Diego's I-15 Express Lanes users, 89% of customers surveyed supported extension of the HOT lanes, and 66% of non-users supported the HOT lanes. Surveys in several states including Washington, Minnesota, and Florida show that a majority of drivers in areas with high levels of congestion would be willing to pay to avoid it.</p>	

Date Rec'd	First Initial and Last Name	Written Comment (Webpage, Email, Fax)	Response
14-Jul-09	N. Marino	<p>Allowing single occupancy Vehicles in the HOV lanes is an utterly repugnant idea, and contrary to the very concept of HOV lanes. Their appeal is that they move faster than the regular lanes of the freeway, so people are MOTIVATED TO CARPOOL. If you allow these lanes to become more congested with SOV's, you will discourage carpooling. This is a terrible idea! It will not result in better transportation solutions because it will only provide funds to provide some other transportation solution to replace HOV's. Many of the carpool lanes are even now seriously congested. What we need are additional HOV lanes -- for HOV cars only.</p>	<p>We are adding capacity along the I-10 corridor and we will allow single drivers into the ExpressLanes only as space is available. In addition, we will also be expanding transit and increasing vanpools along both of these freeways to offer commuters more commuting options than currently exist for them today. With the increased transit and vanpool option as well as allowing single drivers into the Expresslanes we are expecting that congestion will actually decrease in both the general purpose and ExpressLanes on both of these freeways.</p>
14-Jul-09	C. Simmons	<p>The one year demonstration project of converting High Occupancy Vehicles (HOV) on the I-110 (Harbor Freeway) appears to be another project that will pass through South Central Los Angeles yet not mutually benefiting the residents of that area as it would benefit residents of the South Bay. The project extends from Adams Blvd to the Artesia Transit Center with there being only two entrance and exit points in South Central. (1) Going south at Adams and 39th Streets, exiting between Manchester and Florence. (2) Northbound, entering between Manchester and Florence, exiting at Adams. Exiting the HOV at Adams presents additional traffic problems with the proposed Expo Light Rail passing through the intersection of Adams and Flower. Automobiles will need to stop for Light Rail trains that will be crossing the intersection about every three minutes or less. I can foresee a large backup of traffic entering or exiting at the Adams location. Finally, what job opportunities will be available for residents of South Central Los Angeles?</p>	<p>There are no plans to change entrance and exit locations to the ExpressLanes. They will stay as they currently are for the HOV lanes. We recognize the congestion that is currently occurring at Adams Blvd. With this project we are planning improvements to the Adams Blvd off-ramp and will also be funding a study to extend the I-110 HOV/ExpressLanes into Downtown LA. We think the improvements to Adams Boulevard along with the Flyover will help alleviate the queuing that occurs in the existing carpool lanes on the I-110 Freeway.</p>
	S. Prichard	<p>For the record , I am totally against what METRO is trying to do on the 110. Please ask the powers to be to stop wasting their time on this proposal. It makes no sense to let a single-person in a car drive in the HOV lane. It is NOT LOGICAL and it will just add to the current congestion.</p>	

EXPRESSLANES TOLL POLICY

Goals

- Provide a safe, reliable, predictable commute for the ExpressLanes
- Reinforce the MTA's ongoing efforts to increase vehicle occupancy rates and transit ridership
- Optimize vehicle throughput at free flow speeds through dynamic pricing
- Generate sufficient revenue to sustain the financial viability of the ExpressLanes

Business Rules

- Toll free travel for vehicles that meet minimum vehicle occupancy requirement, motorcycles, and privately operated buses; all existing carpools would continue to be able to access the lanes without charge.
- Trucks are not allowed (other than 2-axle)
- Minimum peak tolls shall be no less than 150% of MTA transit fare on the ExpressLanes
- Every vehicle is a customer. All vehicles are required to have a transponder.
- Toll/Transit Credits available to frequent ExpressLanes transit riders
- Tolling will shutdown (i.e. no toll users will be permitted to enter the ExpressLanes) when travel speeds fall below 45 mph for more than 10 minutes.
- Emergency vehicles may use the ExpressLanes when responding to incidents.

Key Performance Measures

- Arriving at your destination in less time in either the ExpressLanes or general purpose lanes (travel time savings, average vehicle speed)
- Change from driving alone to car pooling, riding transit, and or MTA vanpool (mode shift)
- Increase in efficiency by moving more people on the ExpressLanes in a specified period of time (person throughput)
- Improved transportation access for the low income commuter (public surveys; credit redemption)

The Use of Transponders in the ExpressLanes

Why require transponders?

Requiring transponders for all users will have a number of benefits, including: improved efficiency through a reduction in violations and being able to accurately measure performance of the lanes.

If all vehicles have transponders, an automated enforcement system would be installed that would capture the license plate of vehicles not equipped with transponders. The license plate information would be used to send a payment or violation notice to the registered owner of the vehicle.

Do other toll systems require transponders?

Virtually all toll systems, including those that have been in place for decades, include transponders as a means of payment, and often incentivize drivers to obtain and use them. New systems typically require them. SR-91 requires all users to have transponders and the major new HOT lane project being developed in the Bay Area is moving toward a requirement that all users have transponders.

What happens if not everyone is required to have a transponder?

Given the physical limitations of the corridor, there is no way to incorporate traditional/cash tollbooths. Accordingly, anyone required to pay a toll must do so through a transponder.

Not requiring transponders for all non-toll users will complicate enforcement, reduce the effectiveness of video surveillance, and increase the capital costs because of the need for additional signage.

How much do transponders cost?

There are two separate questions: what it will cost Metro to purchase transponders, and what it will cost customers to obtain transponders.

The cost to Metro will depend on a number of factors, including the number of transponders purchased. At this point, cost estimates are approximately \$20-25 per transponder. The Bay Area MTC is moving forward with a HOT lane program at the same time as Metro – discussions are underway between Metro and MTC to determine the feasibility of a pooled purchase, which could have significant cost benefits.

Typically, toll system operators minimize the effective cost of transponders for customers through a variety of means, including subsidization, and crediting the cost of purchasing a transponder against actual usage, or collecting payment as a deposit. Staff is proposing a rebate/deposit program where a deposit is collected and returned to the customer once the transponder is returned – resulting in a cost-neutral transaction.

Is the technology proven?

Absolutely. Transponders similar to those that will be used in Los Angeles are in use throughout the United States. California has legal (“Title 21”) standards for transponders, ensuring that they meet functional requirements, and are interoperable – that is, a transponder obtained for Los Angeles could be used on any toll facility in California.

How will transponders be distributed?

Metro will require that the selected toll technology vendor provide a variety of means of informing the public about the transponders, making them available to the public, and maintaining accounts. Using proven methods, Metro’s goal will be to make transponders widely available, including: internet orders; storefront distribution centers; commercial outlets (e.g., SR-91 transponders can be bought at Costco); and Metro facilities.

Would ExpressLanes transponders be compatible with other toll systems?

Yes. Under Title 21 requirements, all toll transponders in California must be interoperable. So, a Los Angeles resident would be able to access toll facilities when driving to San Diego, Orange County, or the Bay Area.

If I already own a transponder, do I have to get another one for the ExpressLanes?

No. Metro is required to design the ExpressLanes technology so that it will read your existing transponder.

What happens if someone’s in the ExpressLanes without a transponder?

Under the proposed policy, being in the ExpressLanes without a transponder would be a violation. Enforcement is determined by policy and would include “grace” or amnesty provisions to allow drivers the chance to obtain a transponder before paying a fine.

Can people share the same transponder?

Yes. Transponders can be registered to more than one vehicle (license plate), and moved from vehicle to vehicle.

How will people pay their bills?

There are a variety of means. For regular toll payers, the best option likely would be to set up an account in which a balance is replenished automatically via credit card. Occasional users may prefer to add value to the transponder directly, at storefront locations, over phone, or via internet.

How is a customer protected against someone using their transponder without their permission?

Because transponders are specifically registered to license plates, unauthorized use would be captured through video surveillance.

