

SmartMove...

SUCCESS STORIES FROM THE TOLLING INDUSTRY



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Agency

Metropolitan Transportation Commission, California

Project

Plan Bay Area: Strategy for a Sustainable Region

Purpose

To integrate planning across multiple transportation agencies and set coordinated objectives for transportation, housing, air quality and greenhouse gas reductions.

Vital Stats

- Integrated planning strategy adopted in July 2013 by the Association of Bay Area Governments and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.
- Driven by state mandates to reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions from cars and light-duty trucks by 15 percent by 2035, and house 100 percent of the projected population at all income levels.
- Plan Bay Area goals include a 10 percent reduction in premature deaths from fine particulate emissions, 30 percent reduction in coarse particulate emissions, deeper reductions in communities facing higher impacts and 50 percent reduction in bicycle and pedestrian injuries and deaths.
- Involved close coordination between the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA), which operates the region's bridges, and its sister agency, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, which sets broader transportation and mobility objectives.

History

The San Francisco Bay Area is California's second-largest metropolitan region and the world's 21st-largest economy. Its population is expected to grow from 6.9 to nine million by 2040. Plan Bay Area was to chart a course "for

accommodating this growth while fostering an innovative, prosperous and competitive economy; preserving a healthy and safe environment; and allowing all Bay Area residents to share the benefits of vibrant, sustainable communities connected by an efficient and well-maintained transportation network." The plan includes a preferred land use and transportation investment strategy as a way of prioritizing future activities.

The plan's top 10 transportation projects include two express lane networks and an integrated freeway performance initiative. But the primary objective for tolling in the Bay Area is to reduce congestion, not to generate revenue: since there is no physical space or political support for new highways, it was essential for the region's transportation agencies to build public support for a pricing system designed primarily to limit vehicle miles travelled and reduce carbon pollution.

The region is also investing heavily in the transit network that runs parallel to the bridge and express lane system.

Results

Public perceptions don't change overnight. But there has been very little community pushback against tolls on



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the next round of managed lanes in the Bay Area. This suggests growing recognition that the region's highway system is built out, so that improved traffic flow will depend on effective pricing.

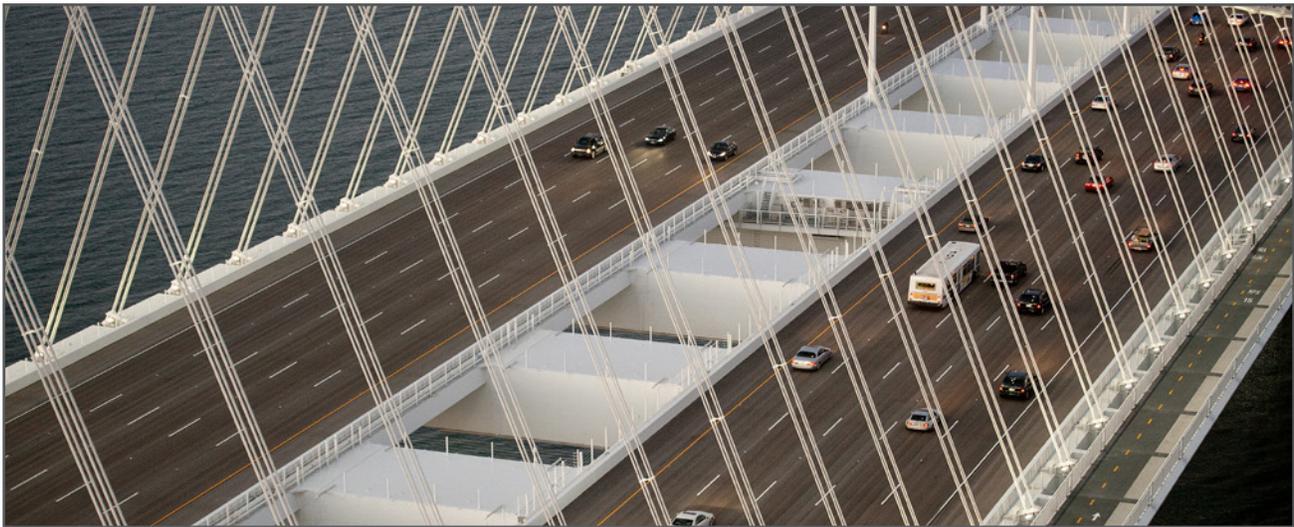
California is seeing similar results farther to the south, where the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) is using pricing as a congestion management tool and using available revenue to further enhance public transit and vanpooling.

By incorporating managed lanes in a broader plan, MTC is connecting the dots between tolling, highway congestion, and regional opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions responsible for global climate change. Plan Bay Area demonstrates the role that tolling can play as part of a broader effort to deliver regional mobility and affordable housing in healthy, equitable, ethnically diverse communities.

Key Success Factors

“With my BATA hat, I want motorists on the bridges to pay the tolls,” said Andrew Fremier, Deputy Executive Director of both the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA) and the region's Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). “With my MTC hat, I want them off the bridges and onto transit. I need to marry those two conversations. Because, in the efficient, convenient movement of goods and people around the Bay Area, you want to maximize both modes to move smoothly. That's the balance we're looking for, maybe at the price of a few toll dollars.”

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