

## **Focus Group with TDM Professionals**

SACOG, October 21, 2009

Conducted by Nancy Kays of MIG and Tad Widby of HNTB.

### **Those Present:**

1. Marilyn Bryant, Sacramento Transportation Management Assoc.
2. Becky Heieck, North Natomas Transportation Management Assoc.
3. Sue Schooley, City of Roseville
4. Solvi Sabol, Placer County Transportation Planning Agency
5. AJ Tendick, SACOG

The meeting started with a basic overview of HOT lanes and the different forms they can take, given by Tad Widby. He then led the group through a series of probing questions.

### **What experiences have you had with tolling?**

- Bay Area bridges
- Midwest tollways, with limited entrances and exits
- No (or very little) experiences with HOT lanes

### **Concerns/Thoughts about the HOT lane concept**

- Need to make sure that HOVs are accommodated
- It potentially reduces the incentive to use transit, carpool
- HOV lanes can back up
- Purposes – revenue generation?
- Who has authority? There's a transparency issue. Will authority be taken away?
- It's good that it's multi-use, open to HOVs (not a regular toll road)
- The next plan will be important, i.e., what happens when the lane fills up?
- What about enforcement? [Answer: it depends on the system]
- What is the political climate for HOT lanes in other areas? [Tad – In the Bay Area, favorable under certain circumstances. Slight skew towards higher income users.]

### **Use of revenues**

- Are there rules on HOT lane revenue use? [Answer: there needs to be a nexus between toll revenues and uses]
- Would like to see revenue used for transit
- The use of revenues is the most important question
- Skeptical about the use of revenues (the state could take them)
- HOT concept as presented is fine – extra revenues should go to transit

- Skeptical about revenue generation motive [Tad – not ever the primary goal for HOT lanes]

### **Connection to Transportation Demand Management (TDM)**

- HOV formation relies on promotion!
- TDM needs to get something out of it – an incentive or reward for HOVs, motorcycles

### **Equity**

- What is the effect on “have nots”? Concern that they can’t use the lanes
- On the other hand, it’s an option to use it or not
- Use “cost points” important
- “Have nots” could carpool

### **Drive-alones Versus HOVs**

- Not so concerned with drive-alones – TDM professionals are trying to convert them to alternative modes, give them information.
- Speaking as a TDM professional, HOT lanes for SOVs is counterproductive. [Tad – MTC goal is to minimize travel times for all travelers]
- TDM is also about avoiding gridlock
- But more HOVs is important!  
→ *Internal conflict within TDM goals*

### **HOV reactions to HOT Lanes**

- Sacramento TMA on-line poll: users don’t like them (see results)
- Discussion of perceptions of carpoolers

### **Variable Tolling**

- Struggling with not knowing the toll in advance
- How variable is variable?
- Sticker shock can be good

### **Who else should be consulted?**

- What about truckers? [Answer: not allowed in the lanes]
- What about the impacts on truckers?

### **Do you support HOT lanes, as a TDM Professional?**

- Yes and No
- Put revenues towards overall good
- Revenues need to benefit TDM
- Will work towards revenues going to TDM
- HOT lanes are inevitable
- HOT lanes are not inevitable
- Trend is towards less money available, more congestion