

BAY AREA TOLL AUTHORITY (BATA)
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

November 9, 2011

MINUTES

ADRIENNE J. TISSIER, CHAIR
San Mateo CountyAMY REIN WORTH, VICE CHAIR
Cities of Contra Costa CountyTOM AZUMBRADO
U.S. Department of Housing
and Urban DevelopmentTOM BATES
Cities of Alameda CountyDAVID CAMPOS
City and County of San FranciscoDAVE CORTESE
Santa Clara CountyBILL DODD
Napa County and CitiesDORENE M. GIACOPINI
U.S. Department of TransportationFEDERAL D. GLOVER
Contra Costa CountyMARK GREEN
Association of Bay Area GovernmentsSCOTT HAGGERTY
Alameda CountyANNE W. HALSTED
San Francisco Bay Conservation
and Development CommissionSTEVE KINSEY
Marin County and CitiesSAM LICCARDO
Cities of Santa Clara CountyJAKE MACKENZIE
Sonoma County and CitiesKEVIN MULLIN
Cities of San Mateo CountyBIJAN SARTIPI
State Business, Transportation
and Housing AgencyJAMES P. SPERING
Solano County and CitiesSCOTT WIENER
San Francisco Mayor's AppointeeSTEVE HEMINGER
Executive DirectorANDREW B. PREMIER
Deputy Executive DirectorAttendance

BATA Chair Bill Dodd, convened the meeting at 9:35 a.m. In addition to Chair Dodd, the following Committee members were in attendance: Vice Chair Tom Bates, David Campos, Dave Cortese, Federal Glover, Steve Kinsey, and Scott Weiner.

Also present were Ex-Officio voting members Adrienne Tissier and Amy Rein Worth. Other Commissioners in attendance as ad hoc non-voting members: Dorene Giacopini, Anne Halsted, Mark Green, Scott Haggerty, Jake Mackenzie, and Jim Spering.

Consent Calendar

Upon the motion of Commissioner Dave Cortese and the second from Commissioner Federal Glover the Committee unanimously approved the following five consent items:

- Minutes of the October 12, 2011 meeting
- BATA Financial Statements – September 2011
- Contract Amendment – San Francisco Oakland Bay Bridge Toll Plaza Renovation: PB Americas
- Purchase Order – Advanced Toll Collection and Accounting Systems (ATCAS) Software Maintenance: Provista
- Purchase Order – Advanced Toll collection and Accounting System (ATCAS) Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) Hardware: Hewlett Packard

Final Report on Impacts of July 2010 Toll Increase on State-owned Bridges

Ms. Linda Lee, BATA Staff, presented to the Committee for its information the final report on impacts of the July 2010 Toll Increase on State-owned Bridges and mentioned that a UC Berkeley research team was contracted to conduct a one-year independent study on the impacts the new toll changes may have had on traffic. Dr. Karen Frick of UC Berkeley and UC Transportation Center was here to present the final results.

Per Dr. Karen Frick, a mixed-methods approach was used to conduct the study, including travel data, surveys, focus groups with members of the public, and interviews with key stakeholders. Key challenges of the analysis were determining the external factors within the system, such as economic change, rising gas prices, and regular changes in day-to-day lives of commuters, which all affect the way commuters make travel choices.

Trip cost is an important consideration when making travel choices. While there was a \$2.00 toll increase during the peak period, this is a relatively small increase when compared to the total trip cost per day, which could range from \$15 to \$30 (auto

operating cost of gas, insurance, and depreciation). In addition to these costs, there is also the cost of parking.

The study showed there were changes in average daily travel across the Bay Bridge: a slight increase in the cash/FasTrak[®] lanes and a significant decrease in the number of vehicles using the carpool lanes. However, overall, the traffic volumes have held steady.

Historical data (past two years) indicate that carpool volume had started to decline before the July 2010 toll increase – most likely due to the economy. Peak period vehicles have increased slightly in recent months. Drive-alone travel has shifted to off-peak periods (just before the time the toll changes to save \$2) or has shifted to BART. Some drive-alone travelers have also started sharing rides in 2- or 3-person carpools, while others are just enjoying a faster trip. There was a 21% increase in commuters that are beating the 5:00 a.m. toll of \$6.00 by leaving earlier to arrive at the bridge between 4:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. This shows that congestion pricing is working, as people choose to travel during different times of the day.

There have been travel time savings, depending on the corridor, of about 11 minutes if using the cash/FasTrak[®] lanes. For example, trips have gone from 40 minutes down to 30 minutes, or from 30 minutes down to 20 minutes. In the FasTrak[®]-only lanes, there have been travel time savings in the afternoon peak hours, but travel time increases in the morning peak – most likely due to more FasTrak[®] usage. Due to daily travel time variability in individual corridors, some people are noticing the savings and others are not. Based on survey results, about 50% of those surveyed said their commute varied by about 20 minutes from day to day.

BART data indicate there has been an 8% increase in the morning peak – most likely due to shifting from drive-alone travel or from carpooling. Usage in the carpool lanes is down by about 4,300 vehicles, which could equate to about 13,000 drive-alone vehicles. However, since there are only 3,300 additional vehicles in the cash/FasTrak[®] lanes, this suggests that not all carpoolers switched to drive-alone travel. Surveys, focus groups, and special traffic models indicate some travelers have switched to BART, some became 2-person carpoolers, some travel in the off-peak period, and some were carpooler “cheaters” who no longer use the carpool lanes. The analysis indicated that about 50% of the decline in carpool usage was due to the presence of the carpool toll. Other reasons for a decline in vehicles in the carpool lanes include shifts to BART, unemployment, gas prices, and other factors. Focus group surveys indicate a major change in social dynamics of casual carpooling, as it relates to splitting the toll between driver and passengers. The toll amount offered to the driver varies by location or from car to car.

External factors affecting non-carpool travel in the Bay Bridge corridor include gas prices, economic conditions, and personal circumstances. Based on focus groups,

parking is a key factor in people's commute decisions and about 60% of those surveyed have access to free or subsidized parking in San Francisco.

Estimates of toll revenue tracked well against actual toll revenues collected. To assess whether congestion pricing had any impacts on major San Francisco employers, interviews were conducted with businesses and business organizations. It was determined that the business impacts were minimal.

To summarize: 1) peak period pricing has led to less congestion on the Bay Bridge approaches; 2) the net change in traffic volumes was minimal; 3) the number of vehicles using the carpool lanes has dropped by 26%; and 4) some travelers switched to transit, others to off-peak periods, others changed their destinations, and others switched to 2-person carpooling.

Toll Bridge Seismic Retrofit Program (SRP) and Regional Measure 1 (RM 1)
Program Progress Report

Mr. Peter Lee, BATA staff, provided an update on the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge Self Anchored Suspension (SAS) Project.

Commissioner Steve Kinsey asked when the Bay Bridge demolition would commence and if an outside contractor would be used. Peter Lee answered the bridge would be demolished soon after the new bridge is opened under a new to be determined contractor.

Other Business/Public Comment/Next Meeting/Adjournment

There being no further business or public comment, the meeting was adjourned at 10:04 a.m.