

OVERVIEW

Toll lanes are one solution to help with California's traffic and funding problems. In 2015, AB 194 granted Caltrans legislative authority to operate high-occupancy toll lanes, express toll lanes, and toll roads, however, funding is still being identified.

California has eight toll bridges managed by the Bay Area Toll Authority. Local agencies have five toll roads and eight tolled managed lane facilities high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes that carpoolers can use for free and single occupant cars can use for a fee.

COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

- In California local agencies have taken the lead in promoting tolling (due to the transportation funding structure) as a congestion management tool.
- Caltrans works with local agencies as they educate the public and promote congestion management.

ORGANIZATIONAL INTEGRATION

- In hopes of gaining authority to toll, from 2012 to 2015 Caltrans updated its policies on the development and operation of managed lanes and the use of toll revenues.
- There will be more internal growth as Caltrans starts developing toll lanes (when we have funding.)
- Caltrans partners with local agencies to educate the public about the different types of toll lanes and how they benefit the public.

COMMUNICATIONS IMPLEMENTATION

- Tolling agencies create project web pages, informational hand-outs, hold public meetings and educate the media.

Example

- Caltrans, in partnership with the Orange County Transportation Authority, recently agreed to build one multi-use and one toll lane on Interstate 405 – one of the busiest freeways in the country.
- For several years, there was strong opposition to I-405 toll lanes. Outreach started with one-on-one meetings with elected officials to get their buy in.
 - Caltrans met with partners like AAA and the Orange County Business Council.
 - This was followed by strong media outreach, with the local Caltrans District Director doing several in-depth interviews on radio and with newspapers.
 - The District Director also wrote an op-ed in the LA Times.
 - Caltrans and OCTA hosted community Town Hall meetings.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Education and partnerships can help overcome opposition.
- As more local agencies have success with toll lanes, other local agencies are more open to trying it.

Next Steps

- Caltrans has been seeking sustainable transportation funding. The Transportation Package being voted on April 6, includes resources to help fund toll road projects.
- Once the state starts managing toll lanes, law requires Caltrans to use the revenues to first pay off project debt, then maintenance and operation costs. If any revenue remains after those expenses are covered, Caltrans must re-invest revenues into the tolled corridor.
- Caltrans will create a statewide excess toll revenue plan, and submit it to the CTC for approval.