

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments  
Joint MTC ABAG Legislation Committee**

**March 11, 2022**

**Agenda Item 3e**

**Senate Bill 1050 (Dodd): Authorization of Tolling on State Route 37 for Interim and  
Ultimate Project**

---

**Subject:**

Establishes the State Route (SR) 37 Tolling Authority, to be administered by the Bay Area Infrastructure Financing Authority, to oversee tolls on SR 37 and sets forth the eligible expenditures for those tolls; requires a low-income tolling discount for residents of Marin, Napa, Solano, and Sonoma counties.

**Overview:**

Senate Bill (SB) 1050 establishes the SR 37 Toll Authority (Authority), to be administered by the Bay Area Infrastructure Financing Authority, to impose and administer tolls on the Sonoma Creek Toll Bridge, which runs on SR 37 from immediately east of the intersection with State Route 121 in Marin County to immediately west of the SR 37 intersection with Walnut Avenue in Solano County. The purpose of the tolls is help fund and serve as a source of matching funds for state and federal grants to complete near-term and long-term improvements in the corridor. The bill places a priority on improvements to the Sonoma Creek Toll Bridge itself and lists out the following eligible expenditures:

- Near-term improvements, known as the Interim Project, from the intersection of State Route 37 with State Route 121 at Sears Point to Mare Island. The goal of the interim project is to improve travel times in the corridor and increase vehicle passenger occupancy by creating a time-savings incentive for carpools, microtransit and bus transit, which does not exist today.
- Long-term improvements, known as the Ultimate Project, as part of the State Route 37 Ultimate Sea Level Rise Adaptation Project, which includes the rebuilding of State Route 37 between U.S. 101 in Novato to I-80 in Vallejo with a multimodal facility to relieve congestion and increase reliability by designing for sea-level rise.

In addition to these key expenditures, the bill authorizes tolls to be spent on numerous other potential purposes in the corridor, including:

- Public access projects, including water trails, observation areas, and San Francisco Bay Trail gap closures.
- Ecological restoration and environmental enhancement in the San Pablo Baylands beyond required mitigation, including land acquisition and design, permitting and construction of restoration and enhancement projects.
- Preparation and implementation of a regional advance mitigation program and regional conservation investment strategy for the Interim and Ultimate Projects

### **Tolling Provisions**

The bill imposes tolls on two-axle vehicles using the Sonoma Creek Bridge in an amount greater than \$1 and not to exceed the rate for two-axle vehicles set by the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA), not including peak period tolls on the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. Tolls may be imposed in both directions, the sum of which cannot exceed the BATA toll rate or be less than \$1. Tolls would not take effect until the Authority adopts a toll schedule on or after January 1, 2026. The bill requires establishment of a discount toll of at least 25 percent and up to a maximum of 50 percent for residents of any of the North Bay Counties who qualify as “low income,” which the bill has not yet defined, subject to advice from MTC given our ongoing work in this area and the desire for the bill to incorporate a definition we support. An additional discount of 50 percent is required for qualifying high-occupancy vehicles and tolls may include premiums and discounts to incentivize off-peak travel. Finally, the bill requires tolls to be removed following repayment of all bonds and related obligations, unless the Authority determines by a two-thirds vote that continued tolling is necessary to reduce vehicle miles traveled and support continued incentives for transit use and carpooling.

### **Recommendation:**

Support (MTC)

**Discussion:**

Travelers in the SR 37 corridor face some of the worst delays in the region, especially during commute hours. Over the long-run, SR 37 is also identified as critically vulnerable to sea level rise. A key goal of the Interim project, which is currently undergoing environmental review to select the preferred alternative, is to improve travel times by adding a carpool lane in each direction to facilitate transit service and carpools. By offering a time savings incentive for those who take transit or carpool, the new lane will increase person throughput in the corridor. Consistent with our 2022 Advocacy Program and Plan Bay Area 2050, which includes both the Interim and the Ultimate Projects, staff recommends we support this critical legislation to help provide a source of matching funds to address the SR 37 corridor's near-term mobility challenges and its long-term resilience needs.

**Known Positions:**

No known positions.

**Attachments:**

- None



Therese W. McMillan