Bay Area Express Lanes Strategic Plan

Operations Committee Meeting

April 9, 2021

BAY AREA EXPRESS LANES

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Background: Simultaneous Efforts, in Concert with Partners

Summer 20 | **Fall 20** | **Winter 20** | **Spring 21**

Plan Bay Area 2050

Finalized Network

Strategic Plan

- Express Bus
- Equity
- GHG/VMT Reduction
- Road Pricing Strategies
- Interconnectedness
- Consistent Operating Policies
- Financing Strategies
- Strategic Funding Principles

Equity: BAIFA FasTrak® START pilot

Strategic Plan Adoption

Key Components

Purpose
- Overview
- Background

Network
- Vision
- Process
- Recommendation

Findings
- Achieving Goals
- Building the Network
- Planning for Change

Continuing Work
- Recommendations
- Near-Term Actions

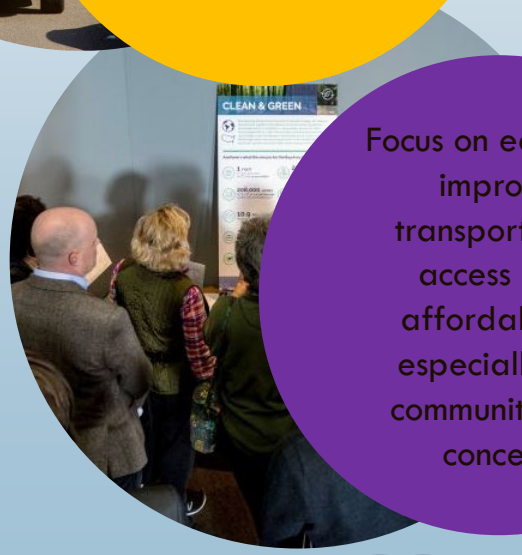
BAY AREA EXPRESS LANES

2: Network

Manage congestion and bring reliability to the traveling public

Increase person throughput by creating a seamless network that incentivizes the use of transit, vanpools, and carpools

Minimize greenhouse gas impacts



Focus on equity to improve transportation access and affordability, especially for communities of concern

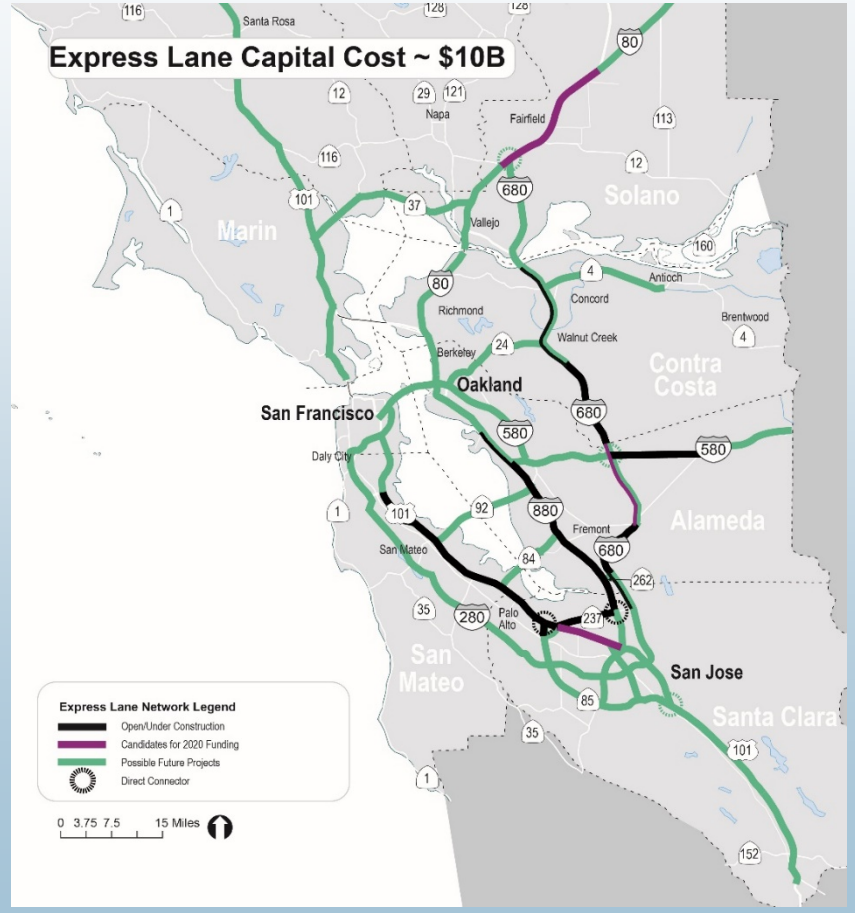
Deliver Bay Area Express Lanes Network in a timely manner

Be responsible in the use of public funds

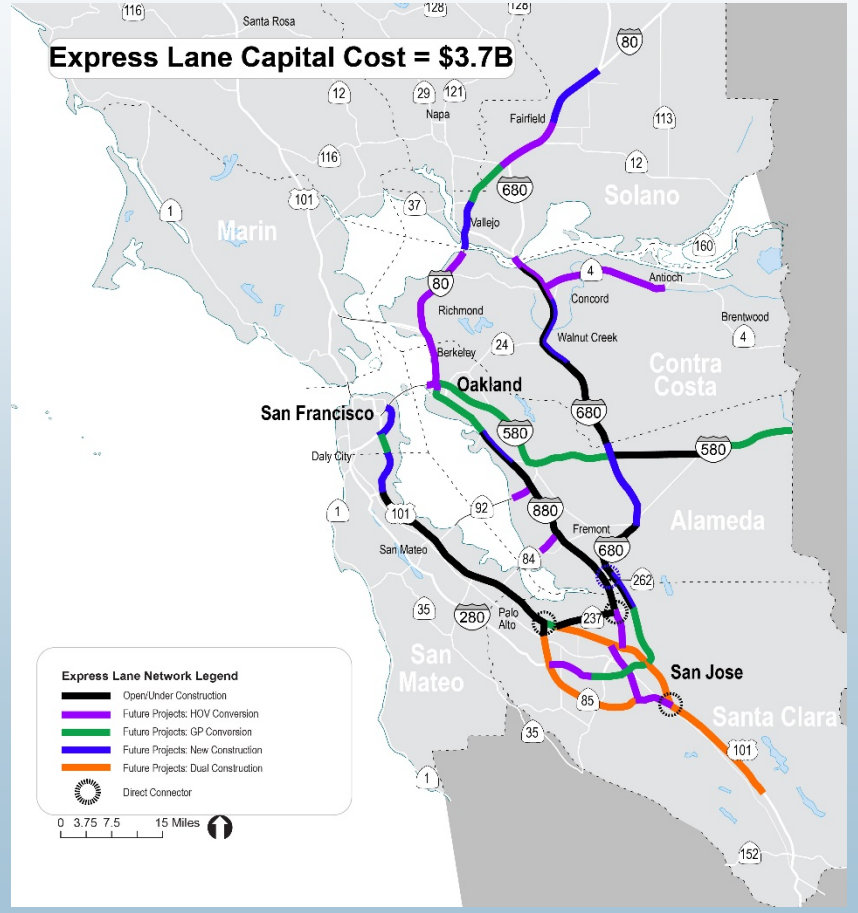
BAY AREA **EXPRESS LANES**

2: Network

Vision



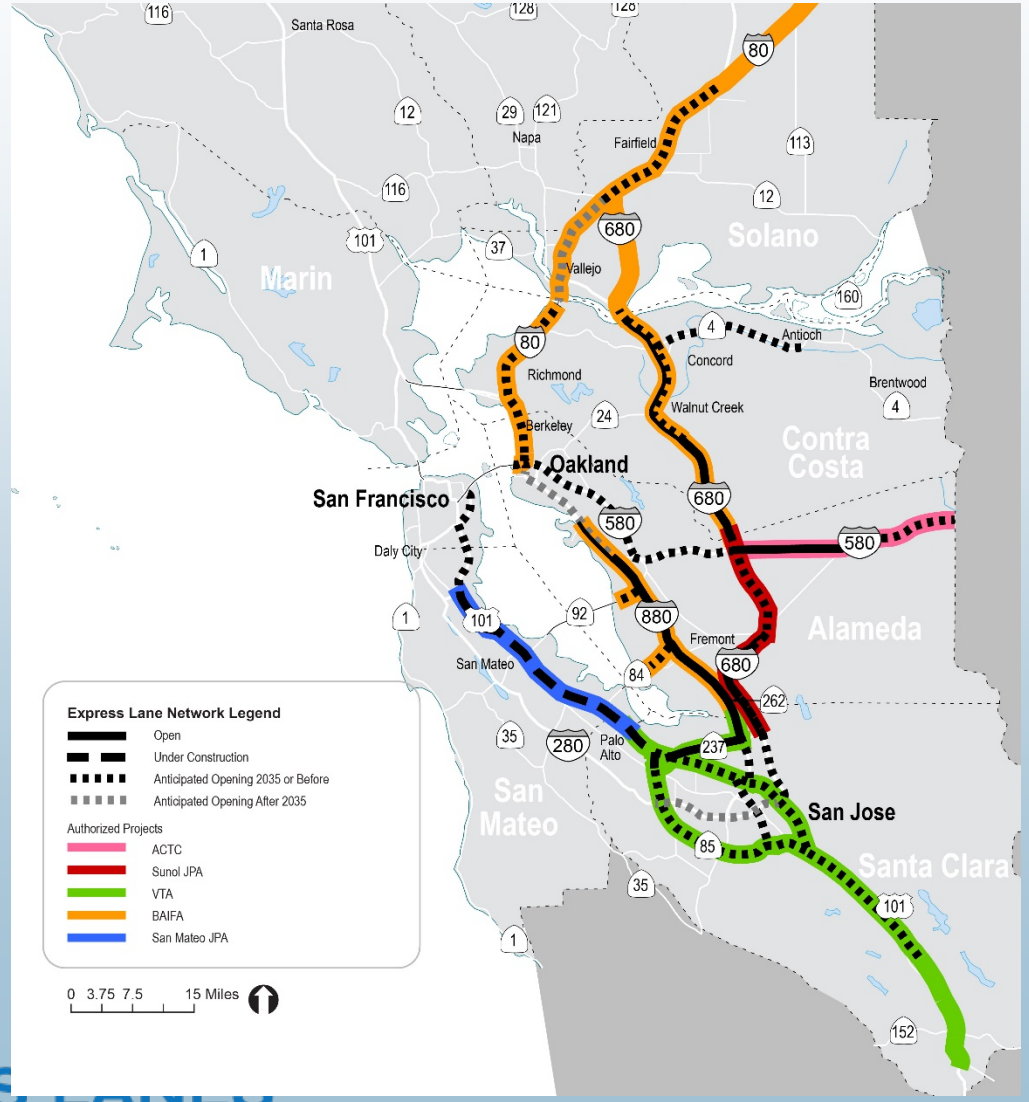
Plan Bay Area 2050 Network



PBA 2050 Network Stats:

- ~750 lane-miles
  - By stage:
    - 130 in operation
    - 70 under construction
    - 250 in environmental/design
    - 130 in planning
    - 170 remaining
  - By type:
    - 290 HOV Conversion
    - 140 GP Conversion
    - 140 New Lane
    - 170 Dual Lane

2: Network by Agency and Timing



BAY AREA EXPRESS LANES

3: Findings

Achieving Goals

- Express Bus & Transit
- Equity
- GHG/VMT Reduction
- Strategic Investment Principles

Building the Network

- Interconnectedness
- Consistent Operating Policies
- Enforcement
- Funding & Financing

Planning for Change

- COVID Long-Term Impacts
- Road Pricing & GHG/VMT Reduction
- Clean Air Vehicles

3: Findings – Express Bus and Transit

Achieving Goals

- Express Bus & Transit
- Equity
- GHG/VMT Reduction
- Strategic Investment Principles

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Work with transit planners and operators to enhance transit priority and improve accessibility to the express lanes for express buses and other high-occupancy modes
2. Since express buses will not perform well everywhere, work with partners on criteria and performance metrics to prioritize investments
3. Advocate for transit operators and planners to increase connectivity and communication of transit services
4. Identify opportunities to link transit and transit demand management (TDM) investments with SB-743 mitigation strategies while acknowledging operations funding challenges

3: Findings - Equity

Achieving Goals

- Express Bus & Transit
- Equity
- GHG/VMT Reduction
- Strategic Investment Principles

QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED IN ONGOING WORK:

- What does equity mean for the Bay Area?
- How else is transportation equity being addressed in the Bay Area?
- What Express Lanes equity work is being undertaken in the Bay Area, including BATA review of FasTrak policies (violations and others), and how is outreach being performed?
- Where has equity also been considered in other topics?

3: Findings – GHG/VMT Reduction

Achieving Goals

- Express Bus & Transit
- Equity
- GHG/VMT Reduction
- Strategic Investment Principles

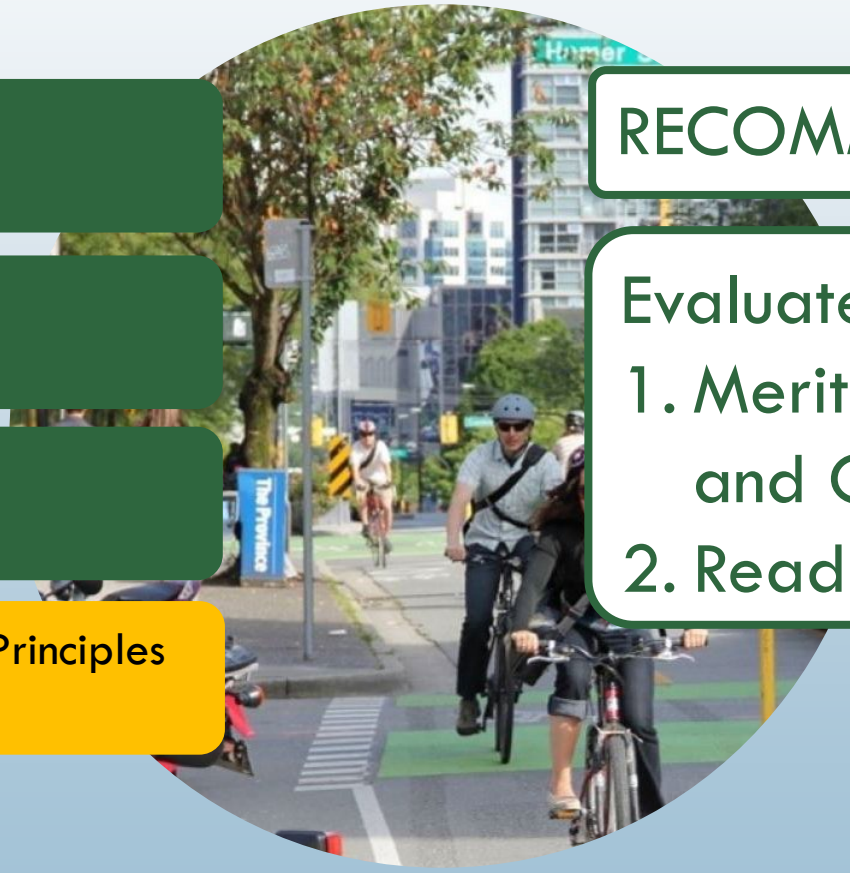
RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Participate with partners to promote regional- and county-level mitigation solutions
2. Advocate for legislation to allow General Purpose (GP) to Express Lane (EL) conversion pilots

3: Findings – Strategic Investment Principles

Achieving Goals

- Express Bus & Transit
- Equity
- GHG/VMT Reduction
- Strategic Investment Principles



RECOMMENDATIONS:

Evaluate projects for future funding by:

1. Merit (Connected Mobility, Benefits and Costs, Equity)
2. Readiness

3: Findings – Interconnectedness

Building the Network

- Interconnectedness
- Consistent Operating Policies
- Enforcement
- Funding & Financing

A complete network is key to growing express lane service and achieving strategic goals

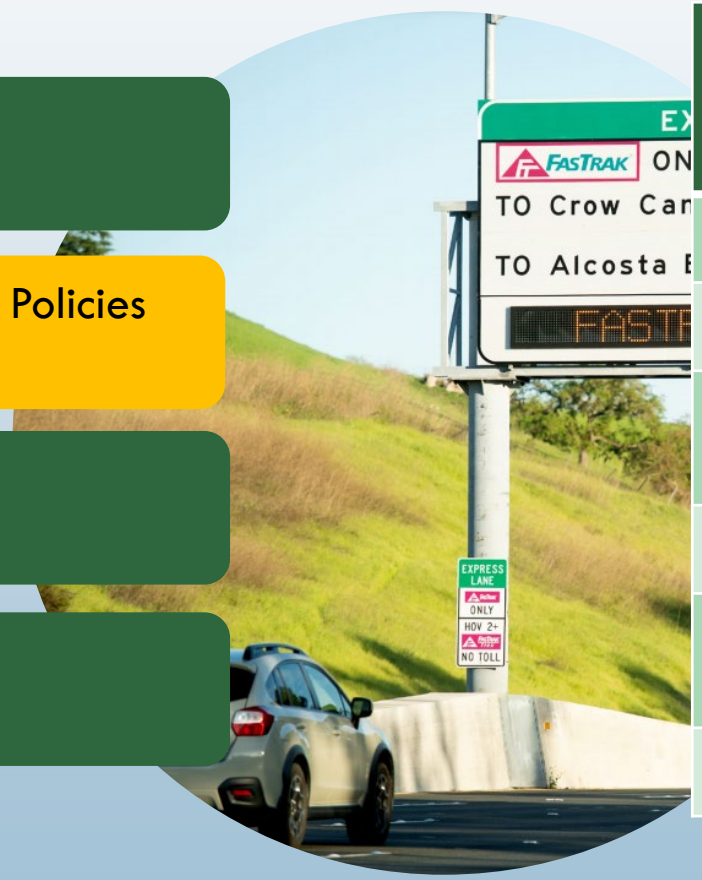
To complete the network, some exceptions or additional considerations on strategies to achieve regional goals may be needed to foster greater interconnectedness

Project plans need to consider impacts on adjoining facilities, including impacts and opportunities for transit, access considerations, and up-/downstream impacts

3: Findings – Consistent Operating Policies

Building the Network

- Interconnectedness
- Consistent Operating Policies
- Enforcement
- Funding & Financing



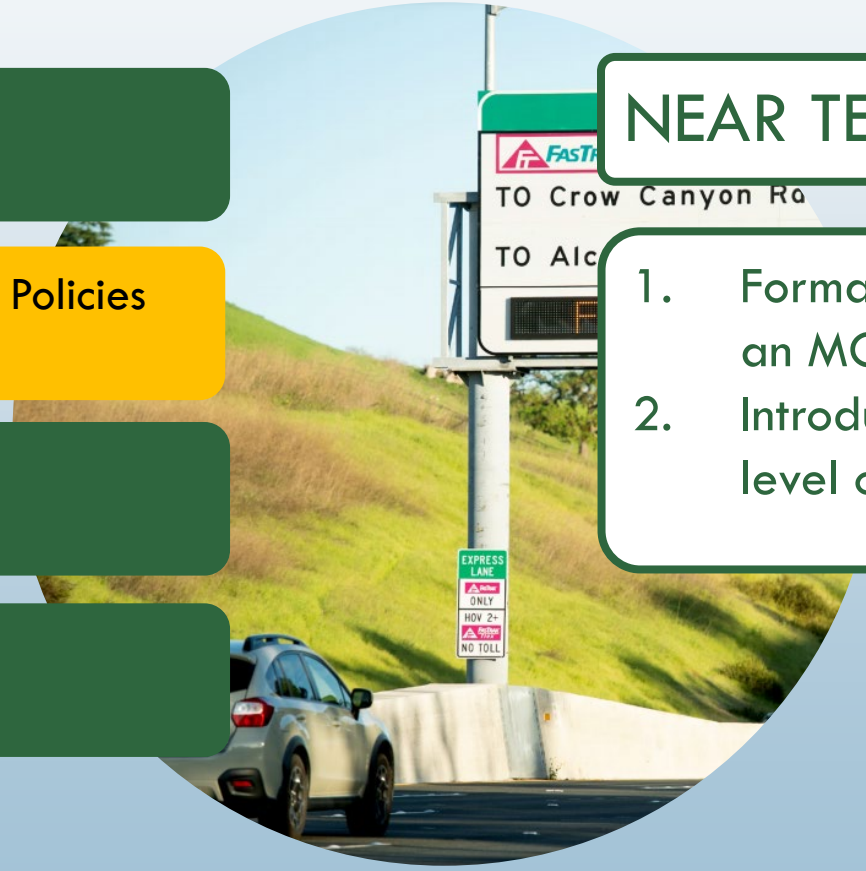
Operations Policy	Consistent? (Adopted Operator Policies)*
Hours of Operation**	✓
HOV Occupancy***	✓
Toll Discounts (HOV/Clean Air Vehicles)	✓
Violation Penalties/Fees	✓
Automated Occupancy Enforcement	Future Policy
Equity Programs	Future Policy

* San Mateo JPA has yet to adopt policies
** Determined by Caltrans
*** Based on corridor traffic

3: Findings – Consistent Operating Policies

Building the Network

- Interconnectedness
- Consistent Operating Policies
- Enforcement
- Funding & Financing



NEAR TERM ACTIONS:

1. Formalize a consensus-building process through an MOU
2. Introduce a framework to help understand what level of consistency makes sense for each policy

3: Findings – Expectations for Upcoming Disruptions

Planning for Change

- COVID Long-Term Impacts
- Road Pricing & GHG/VMT Reduction
- Clean Air Vehicles

- Reduced transit and carpool ridership, at least temporarily
- Sustained increase in remote work, which reduces revenue

Key express lanes questions for road pricing study:

1. How will congestion be impacted?
2. What are possible operational changes for express lanes?
3. How will debt obligations be satisfied?
4. How will express lane and road pricing policies be administered?

- SB 743 developments
- Possible Plan Bay Area 2050 demand management strategies: speed limit decreases, remote working
- Possible Federal climate initiatives

4: Continuing and Future Work

Recommendations

GHG/VMT Reduction

1. Promote regional- & county-level mitigation solutions (All Partners)
2. Advocate for legislation to allow General Purpose to Express Lane conversion pilots (CTAs & MTC)

Funding and Financing Strategies

1. Advocate and seek opportunities for state and federal funding (All Partners)
2. Monitor future regional funding initiatives (All Partners)

Express Bus & Transit

1. Work with transit planners and operators to enhance transit priority and improve accessibility to the express lanes for express buses and other high-occupancy modes (All Partners)
2. Since express buses will not perform well everywhere, establish criteria and performance metrics to prioritize investments (TBD)
3. Advocate for operators and planners to increase connectivity and communication (All Partners)
4. Identify opportunities to link transit & TDM investments with SB-743 mitigation strategies while acknowledging operations funding challenges (All Partners)

Strategic Investment Principles

Evaluate projects for future funding by:

1. Merit (Connected Mobility, Benefits and Costs, Equity)
2. Readiness

(MTC)

4: Continuing and Future Work

Near-Term Actions (led by MTC except as indicated)

*Estimated dates are subject to resource availability

5: Continuing and Future Work

Closing Thoughts

1. Express lanes provide a much needed benefit to help Bay Area residents make transportation choices that will help achieve our regional goals.
2. We can overcome challenges by continuing to work together collaboratively as a region.
3. Even with uncertainty in the future, the region is committed to the Express Lanes being a tool to help:
    1. Reduce regional GHG impacts from transportation
    2. Provide priority to transit and carpools
    3. Promote equity in the region

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