

NORTH BAYSHORE

CONGESTION PRICING FEASIBILITY STUDY

What is this study?

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, traffic congestion in the North Bayshore district was an ongoing challenge, with thousands of vehicles clogging the three gateways daily. The City of Mountain View set two goals to allow the district to grow, but also reduce congestion and its negative impacts:

- No more than **18,850 total AM peak period vehicle trips** into North Bayshore entering at the three gateways, with trips measured in the peak hour at each gateway
- No more than **45% of daily trips** into North Bayshore made by single-occupancy vehicle

More and better travel services are planned and efforts to encourage commutes by transit, biking, and walking have helped reduce congestion. North Bayshore has not met its goals, however, and planned development threatens to exacerbate congestion problems.

The long-term impacts of COVID-19 remain unknown but now is the time to plan for return of a “new normal.” All potential tools need to be explored. The North Bayshore Congestion Pricing Feasibility Study will assess congestion pricing’s potential role in reducing traffic.

What are the different types of congestion pricing?

Congestion pricing can take different forms. Some common forms of congestion pricing are:

- **Cordon pricing:** Vehicles pay a fee when they cross a boundary into a specific zone. This type of pricing is used in Stockholm, Sweden.
- **Area pricing:** Vehicles pay a fee for driving inside a specific zone. This type of pricing is used in London, England.
- **Corridor pricing:** Vehicles pay a fee when they use a certain stretch of roadway, such as a major arterial or freeway. This type of pricing is already used in the Bay Area on the I-580, I-680, and SR-237 Express Lanes.
- **Fleet pricing:** Certain vehicle types, such as ride-hailing vehicles, pay a fee to drive in a specific zone. This type of pricing is used in Seattle, WA.
- **VMT pricing:** Vehicles pay a fee based on the distance they travel (measured in vehicle miles traveled, or VMT) in a certain zone. This type of pricing has been piloted in California at the state level.

What is congestion pricing?

Congestion pricing typically establishes **a fee for driving into or within specific areas during peak congestion**. Congestion pricing has been implemented throughout the world and is being studied in major metro areas throughout the U.S., including New York, Seattle, Washington D.C., and San Francisco.

What are the benefits of congestion pricing?

Congestion pricing, when paired with improved transit and non-auto mobility options, can reduce traffic. Other common benefits include:

- **Faster transit:** As traffic is reduced, buses move more quickly, making transit more attractive and competitive with driving.
- **Reduced pollution:** When traffic is reduced, so are the emissions and noise produced by vehicles.
- **Increased revenue:** Net revenue from congestion pricing can be (re)invested in all types of improvements, including public transit, bike lanes, sidewalks, and road repairs.
- **Safer roads:** Some studies have shown that congestion pricing reduces crashes in the priced area.



What are the challenges of congestion pricing?

- **Privacy:** Congestion pricing may involve a combination of cameras and technology to read license plates and transponders. Any program that collects this type of data, such as the Bay Area's Express Lanes and bridge tolls, require careful safeguarding of personal information.
- **Equity:** Congestion pricing should be designed in an equitable fashion to avoid disproportionate and inequitable outcomes for disadvantaged community members.
- **Technology:** Developing an advanced, resilient, and interoperable congestion pricing system is challenging and requires good planning, engineering, and government cooperation.

What is the study area?

Congestion pricing is being considered for the North Bayshore area in Mountain View, which is shown in the map below.



What is the project timeline?

This study began in January of 2021 and is expected to be completed in fall of 2021. If congestion pricing is determined to be feasible, additional planning and legislative action will need to occur after this study is completed.