

GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE, HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

ORDINANCE NO. 2013-001

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE MASTER ORDINANCE
TO ESTABLISH A CARPOOL LANE AT THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE TOLL
PLAZA AND TO ESTABLISH A SPEED LIMIT OF 25 MPH FOR SOUTHBOUND
TRAFFIC AT THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE TOLL PLAZA**

March 22, 2013

THIS ORDINANCE is adopted with reference to the following facts and circumstances which are found and declared by the Board of Directors of the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District:

1. The District's Master Ordinance currently specifies that designated vehicles are eligible for a reduced Carpool toll when travelling through specified toll lanes during the commute hours of 5:00-9:00 am and 4:00-6:00 pm, Mondays through Fridays, except for certain holidays. Presently, the specified lanes include any staffed toll lane.

2. Under All Electronic Tolling, there will be no staffed toll lanes. In order to make the most efficient use of All Electronic Tolling technology and methodology, it is necessary to specify the toll lane(s) to be used by vehicles eligible for the reduced Carpool toll.

3. The District's Master Ordinance defines a 'Carpool' as "any motor-driven vehicle with two axles, four wheels, except a bus, which is occupied by three or more persons" and establishes a reduced toll for such vehicles. Although the District's Master Ordinance uses the term Carpool, the California Vehicle Code and related Caltrans regulations use the term 'High Occupancy Vehicle' (HOV). The reduced toll applies to Carpools as well as motorcycles, buses, and clean air vehicles that bear a DMV-issued white clean air vehicle decal that allows the vehicle to be operated by a single occupant in HOV lanes. For purposes of enforcing Carpool lane violations under the California Vehicle Code, the District has determined that its Carpool toll lane should be established as an HOV toll lane subject to applicable provisions of the California Vehicle Code. HOVs are defined as those vehicles eligible for the District's reduced toll. For purposes of this ordinance the term 'HOV' and 'Carpool' are interchangeable.

4. In keeping with the requirements of California Vehicle Code 21655.5, an independent professional traffic engineer conducted an engineering estimate of the effect of Carpool/HOV lane(s) on safety, congestion, and highway capacity at the Golden Gate Bridge Toll Plaza. The engineering estimate examined the toll lane configuration at the toll plaza and the southbound downstream designations. It determined that only toll lanes 1 or 2—the two toll lanes furthest to the right in the southbound direction-- would even be possible as a dedicated HOV toll lane, given that vehicles using a HOV toll lane must be able to proceed onto Presidio Parkway or onto Veterans Boulevard/ State Route 1 or must be able to turn right onto Merchant Road. In addition, toll lanes 1 and 2 are wider than most other toll lanes, making them usable by buses, which are considered HOVs eligible for the reduced Carpool toll. Consideration was also given to effects of the presence of a bus stop approximately 200 feet south of the toll booths and to the right of toll lane 1.

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5. As between toll lanes 1 and 2, the engineering estimate concluded that the preferred alternative is to establish toll lane 2 for the dedicated use of HOVs during specified commute hours because (a) occasional queuing of buses in toll lane 1 occurs during commute hours, and (b) it allows access to all three southbound designations, including the right turn onto Merchant Road, safely.

6. In keeping with the requirements of California Vehicle Code 21655.5, the independent professional traffic engineer has studied the effect of establishing toll lane 2 as a dedicated HOV toll lane during specified commute hours and has concluded that it will not have an impact on congestion on the Bridge or at the toll plaza because there will be sufficient capacity in the remaining toll lanes to accommodate vehicles that cannot use toll lane 2 as a dedicated HOV toll lane.

7. Additionally, the independent professional traffic engineer has recommended that toll lane 1 be used as a temporary HOV lane, in the event toll lane 2 should become unavailable from time to time as a result of necessary maintenance, repair and related reasons.

8. The independent professional traffic engineer has recommended that signs and pavement striping be placed and maintained to designate toll lane 2 as the HOV toll lane during specified commute hours, and has prepared a plan that specifies the signing and pavement striping required for safe passage of these vehicles through toll lane 2.

9. The independent professional traffic engineer also examined the configuration of southbound lanes immediately north of the toll plaza and determined that safety in this segment of the toll plaza can be expected to improve with the conversion to All Electronic Tolling as congestion at the toll plaza will be reduced by allowing traffic to pass through the toll plaza without stopping. With the reduced congestion, the potential for rear-end and sideswipe collisions is also expected to be reduced. Safety north of the toll plaza also will be enhanced by reason of the existing transitional speed limit of 35 MPH beginning approximately 1,100 feet north of the toll booths, which the consultant has recommended to remain in place.

10. The independent professional traffic engineer also examined the configuration of departure lanes south of the toll booths as it relates to safe flow of traffic south of the toll plaza. In order to ensure continued safe flow of traffic in the departure/south segment of the toll plaza, the engineer has recommended a lane modification that pairs lanes 1 and 2, 3 and 4, 5 and 6, and 7 and 8 such that the paired lanes merge into single lanes approximately 400 feet south of the toll plaza. The engineer considered alternative configurations, including a dedicated departure lane in Lane 8 and merging lanes 1, 2, and 3, and has determined that the paired lane configuration is the best plan for improving merge conditions under the circumstances of All Electronic Tolling. The engineer has concluded that the paired configuration will allow for the safe use of toll lane 2, and temporary use of toll lane 1, by HOVs that are turning right onto Merchant Road. The independent professional traffic engineer has prepared a signing and lane striping plan for the paired configuration of lanes in the departure/south segment of the toll plaza.

11. The independent professional traffic engineer also conducted an engineering investigation as to the maximum safe speed for southbound traffic approaching and passing through the toll plaza at the Golden Gate Bridge in an All Electronic Tolling environment, and has also prepared an Engineering and Traffic Survey of traffic flow at the toll plaza. The engineering

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investigation considered the lane configuration at the toll plaza, narrow widths of the toll gateways, close proximity of fixed objects of the toll gateways and booths, historical data of traffic speed, drivers' behavior at the toll plaza, collision history, the location of the recommended designated HOV toll lane, as well as FHWA recommendations and Caltrans practice regarding speeds through designated electronic toll collection lanes. Based on these considerations, the independent professional traffic engineer has recommended that the District establish a speed limit of 25 miles per hour for southbound traffic passing through the toll plaza at the Golden Gate Bridge.

12. The independent professional traffic engineer also examined the existing transitional 35 miles per hour speed limit that begins approximately 1,100 feet north of the toll booths. This 35 mile per hour speed limit is transitional from the 45 mile per hour limit that is in effect on the Bridge structures, as set forth in the District's Master Ordinance. After considering higher and lower speeds, the engineering investigation recommended that this transitional speed zone of 35 miles per hour be retained.

13. The District Engineer has reviewed the independent professional traffic engineer's Engineering and Traffic Survey, the engineering estimate related to HOV toll lane, the engineering investigation related to speed limit, and the proposed signing and lane striping plan, and has consulted with the District's Engineering and Bridge Operations staff. After review of these materials and consultations with the District's staff, the District Engineer concurs with the determination to establish an HOV toll lane in toll lane 2 for the dedicated use by Carpools, motorcycles, buses, and DMV-certified clean air vehicles during designated commute hours. The District Engineer further concurs with the determination that toll lane 1 be used as a temporary HOV toll lane, in the event toll lane 2 should become unavailable from time to time as a result of necessary maintenance, repair and related reasons. The District Engineer further concurs with the recommendation to establish a speed limit of 25 miles per hour for southbound traffic passing through the toll plaza at the Golden Gate Bridge, as well as with the recommendation to retain a transitional speed limit of 35 miles per hour beginning approximately 1,100 feet north of the toll booths. The District Engineer also concurs with the recommended signing and striping plan as being safe and appropriate. The District's Engineering and Bridge Operations staff also concur with the above recommendations.

14. The District conducted a properly noticed public hearing on March 21, 2013 to receive public comments on the setting of a maximum speed at the toll plaza.

15. The District's Master Ordinance currently specifies that speed for southbound traffic approaching and passing through the toll plaza shall not exceed 15 miles per hour. The Master Ordinance should be amended to specify a maximum speed limit of 25 miles per hour for southbound traffic passing through the toll plaza and for retaining a transitional 35 miles per hour speed limit zone.

16. The Master Ordinance should also be amended to establish toll lane 2 as an HOV toll lane for the exclusive use of Carpool/HOV vehicles during specified commute hours.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Directors of the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District as follows:

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Section 1. Section II, "Golden Gate Bridge and Approaches," Subsection G, "Traffic Rules and Regulations", is amended by revising paragraph 1.c, "Speed" as follows:

1. c. For southbound traffic passing through the Toll Plaza, such speed shall not exceed twenty-five miles per hour. The transitional speed beginning 1,100 north of the toll booths shall not exceed thirty-five miles per hour.

Section 2. Section II, "Golden Gate Bridge and Approaches," Subsection G, "Traffic Rules and Regulations", is amended by adding new paragraph 13 titled CARPOOL LANE:

13. CARPOOL LANE

During the hours when the reduced toll for designated vehicles is in effect pursuant to Section II.B.2, toll lane #2 is established as a 'Carpool' or 'High-Occupancy Vehicle' toll lane, in accordance with applicable California Vehicle Code provisions, for the exclusive use of those vehicles eligible for the reduced FasTrak toll. Such vehicles are two-axle vehicles with three or more passengers, motorcycles, buses, and clean air vehicles that bear a DMV-issued white clean air vehicle decal that allows the vehicle to be operated by a single occupant in high occupancy vehicle lanes. In the event that toll lane #2 is not available, toll lane #1 may be used temporarily as a 'Carpool' or 'High-Occupancy Vehicle' toll lane.

Section 3. The signing and striping plan prepared by the independent professional traffic engineer to effect the 25 miles per hour speed limit at the Toll Plaza, paired realignment of lanes for merging immediately south of the Toll Plaza, and to establish the Carpool/HOV toll lane at the Toll Plaza, is hereby adopted by the Board of Directors.

Section 4. The effective date of this Ordinance shall be March 27, 2013.

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ADOPTED this 22nd day of March 2013, by the following vote of the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District Board of Directors:

- AYES (16):** Directors Arnold, Belforte, Breed, Campos, Cochran, Fredericks, Pahre, Rabbitt, Sears, Snyder, Sobel, Theriault, Wiener and Yee; Second Vice President Stroeh; President Eddie
- NOES (0):** None
- ABSENT (3):** Directors Moylan and Reilly; First Vice President Grosboll



James C. Eddie
President, Board of Directors

ATTEST:



Janet S. Tarantino
Secretary of the District