

# CONGESTION PRICING: SAFETY



Congestion pricing is a system where motorists pay a user fee to drive on the city's most congested roadways. Fees, collected through electronic transponders, correspond directly to the level of congestion, and are higher during the most congested times and lower or free during non-peak periods. This strategy has been shown to effectively reduce traffic congestion in San Diego, Minneapolis, Denver, Houston, and in other countries like, Singapore, United Kingdom (London), and Sweden (Stockholm). While this strategy has been proven to provide reliable travel, other potential benefits have yet to be fully studied and evaluated. There is limited data to show the potential impact of congestion pricing on safety.

## I-394 MnPass, Minneapolis, MN

According to the MnPASS Technical Evaluation Final Report (November 2006), in the 2 years preceding the implementation of MnPASS, an average of 414 crashes were observed on I-394— 409 crashes in 2003 and 419 crashes in 2004. During the year following MnPASS deployment, the number of observed crashes fell to 357, a decrease of nearly 14 percent. Speed differential between the general purpose lane and the MnPASS lane was analyzed using speed data collected from the automated detectors in the corridor and revealed that the speed differential decreased in the MnPASS lane. Reduction in speed differentials generally provide a safer driving environment.

## London, the United Kingdom

Transport for London (TfL) estimated that congestion pricing has an impact on the number of road traffic crashes. According to the TfL's Impacts Monitoring – Fourth Annual Report published in June 2006, there was an estimate of between 40 and 70 fewer crashes per year within the charging zone. TfL reasoned that the reduction was most likely due to traffic reduction effect of charging – fewer vehicles circulating within the charging zone translates to less possibility of crashes.