



***EXPRESS YOURSELF!***

**I-25**



**EXPRESS  
LANES**

**Helping Coloradans Express Themselves**  
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**Colorado Department of Transportation**  
**May 2007**

## History

1999 Legislation required the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to convert an existing high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane to a high occupancy toll (HOT) lane

### 2000 Express Lanes Feasibility Study

Existing I-25 high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes

- GP lanes: 1870 people per hour, 240,000 vehicles a day
- HOV lanes: 2050 people per hour, 10,000 vehicles a day

2002 Legislation established the Colorado Tolling Enterprise, a division within CDOT



## The I-25 HOV/Express Lanes Project

- Opened June 2006
- Approximately 7 miles, reversible and barrier separated.
- I-25 from US 36 to downtown Denver
- Vehicles with only one occupant can use the I-25 HOV/Express Lanes if they pay a toll
  - Buses, carpoolers and motorcycles continue to use the lanes for free
- Purpose is to maximize the highway by allowing solo drivers access to the lanes



## Project Partners

- Regional Transportation District
- City and County of Denver
- Denver Regional Council of Governments
- Federal Transit Administration
- Federal Highway Administration
- Colorado State Patrol
- E-470 Public Highway Authority
- Colorado Department of Transportation
- Colorado Tolling Enterprise

## I-25 HOV/Express Lanes Project



## Drivers Can Use Any Lane, Except at the Clearly Marked Toll Collection Zone

- Solo drivers and HOV vehicles can use either the *Express Lane* or the HOV Lane, except when passing through the toll collection zone.
- At that point, solo drivers must be in the *Express Lane* so their transponders are charged, and HOV vehicles must be in the HOV Lane.
- Signs designate appropriate lane for HOVs and toll-paying vehicles.

## Toll Collection

- Electronic toll collection only
  - No stopping; no tollbooth congestion; and no change
- EXpressToll® Transponder
  - Same transponder used on E-470 and Northwest Parkway
  - Active accounts can use the HOV/Express Lanes immediately
- Only solo drivers required to have a transponder

## Traffic and Congestion is Managed

- Prices for Express Lanes change based on time of the day. The varying toll rate manages traffic such that the HOV/ *Express Lanes* never become congested.
- Hierarchy of Users
- *Pilot project will be evaluated, adjusted and improved as needed to ensure convenient, efficient and easy use of lanes*

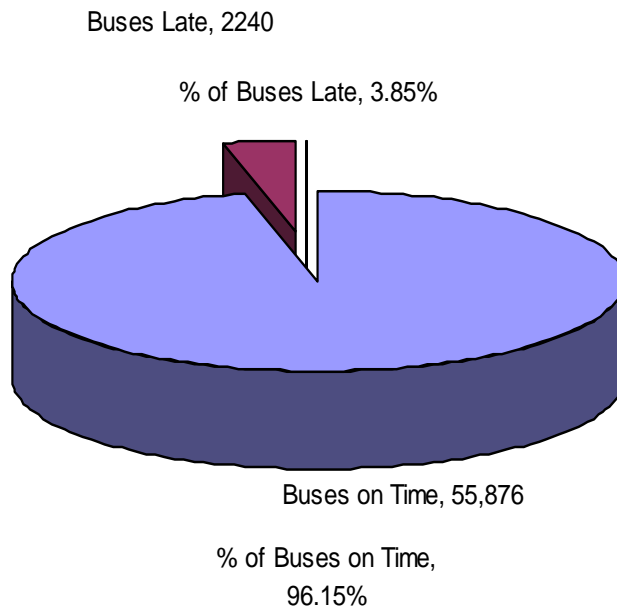
## Initial Toll Rate Schedule\*

AM		PM	
5:00 – 6:00	\$0.50	Noon- 3:00	\$0.50
6:00 – 6:45	\$1.75	3:00 – 3:30	\$1.50
6:45 – 7:15	\$2.75	3:30 – 4:30	\$2.00
7:15 – 8:15	\$3.25	4:30 – 6:00	\$3.25
8:15 – 8:45	\$2.75	6:00 – 7:00	\$1.50
8:45 – 10:00	\$1.25	7:00 – 3:00a	\$0.50

\*Schedule may change to maximize congestion-reducing power of lanes. Commercial vehicles over three axles will be assessed an \$18 fee in addition to base toll rate.

# Performance Monitoring

### Average Weekday Bus Performance June through March



TOLL  
LANE  
ONLY

HOV 2+  
ONLY

## Enforcement and Violations

- Visual on-site inspection with law enforcement will determine vehicle occupancy
- If any vehicle without a transponder passes through the *Express Lane*, a license plate photo will be taken and a citation will be sent by mail
- Toll evasion violation is \$70
- HOV lane fine is \$65 for the first and second offense and \$125 thereafter

## Unique Challenges

- Colorado was the 4<sup>th</sup> state in the nation to implement an HOT lanes project.
  - Projects vary from state to state
  - No cookie cutter approach
- Tolling in itself can be controversial
  - Extremely complicated project



## Implementation Overview

- Infrastructure Construction, Tolling Equipment Installation and Software
- Policy Development
- Violation Processing and Courts
- Outreach and Marketing
- Incident Management Plan
- Intergovernmental Agreements and Contracting
- Customer Service



## Launch Communications Strategy

**Research** via focus groups, statistically valid surveys, public meetings, interviews with stakeholders, and traffic and revenue forecasts

**Awareness Building** via media relations; paid media (radio spots, print ads and mobile billboards)

**Targeted Communications** to current transponder owners and early adopters; outreach presentations to local governments, other transportation and public policy entities, and interested community groups; print collateral; an informational video; online communications via the CDOT Web site and reciprocal links; and a VIP grand opening event

## Launch Communications Strategy (Cont.)

**Education** via the same tactics outlined in the Awareness Building section to explain key reasons to use the new *Express Lane* (daycare, deadline deliveries, late for an appointment or work, etc.), how to acquire a transponder and access the *Express Lane*, and how HOV lane usage will change

**Advance Solicitation** via pre-launch communications with current transponder owners to generate immediate users among people who understand and are comfortable with tolling in general

## Brand Strategy

Everyone has been stuck in traffic at one time or another, and everyone has verbalized frustration about it. To capitalize on that shared experience, the brand concept theme “Express Yourself” was developed for the launch of the new tolled *Express Lanes*.

- Developed after conducting focus groups
- Umbrella versus project specific

## Selling Proposition and Key Messages

All I-25 HOV/tolled *Express Lanes* communications stems from the unique selling proposition:

*More Choice, Less Congestion, Better Quality of Life*

- Flexible, Reliable Choices Open to More People
- High-Performance Alternative to Congestion
- Pilot Project with a Grace Period
- Drivers Can Use Any Lane, Except at the Toll Collection Zone
- Environmentally Responsible
- Highways Improved Without Increased Highway Funding
- Sustainable Transportation System

I-25



COLORADO TOLLING ENTERPRISE

**EXPRESS YOURSELF!**

## Mobile Billboard and Promotional Item

express toll.com.'"/>

**I-25**  
**EXPRESS LANES**

**TOLL LANE ONLY**  
**HOV 2+ ONLY**

Someplace you'd rather be?  
**EXPRESS YOURSELF!**

Beginning June 2, solo drivers can pay to use the I-25/HOV Express Lanes.

Get a transponder at [express toll.com](http://express toll.com).

## Performance

Far exceeding both usage and revenue projections.

Projected: 500 toll payers in peak hour

Actual: More than 1,400 toll payers in peak hour

Month	Toll	HOV
June	21,551	204,189
July	31,467	221,918
August	45,121	234,972
September	56,339	211,875
October	63,519	197,092
November	63,575	207,270
December	52,477	181,582
January	71,858	187,064
February	74,545	191,279
March	80,665	214,658

# Revenues

