

# Public Perceptions of FEE Lanes

Focus Group Impressions, May 2009

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Minnesota Department of Transportation

*"Our goal is to effectively use every inch of pavement so that we have the most efficient transportation system possible."*

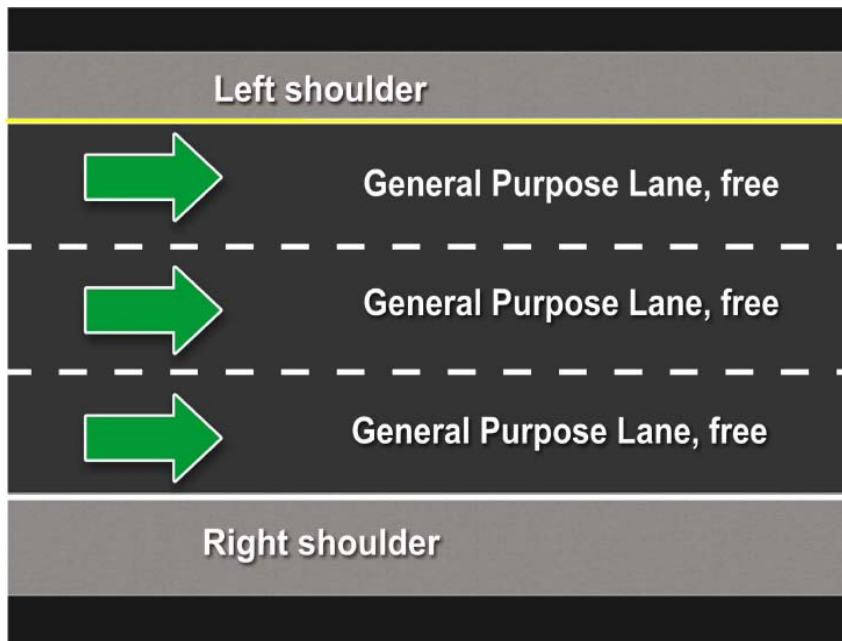
Victor Mendez, Federal Highway Administrator  
September 28, 2009

*"We are going to see a lot more MnPASS lanes in the future"*

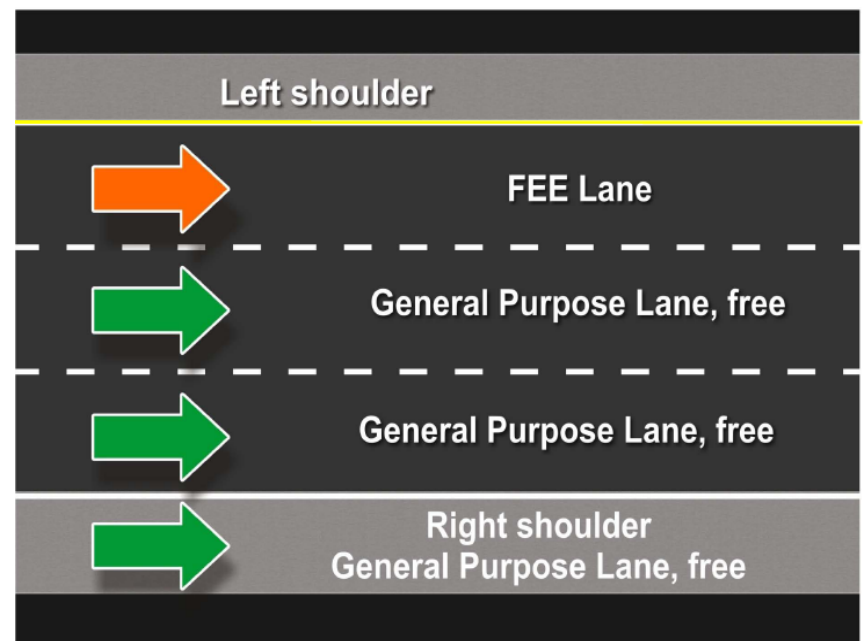
Governor, Tim Pawlenty  
September 28, 2009

# Configuration A

- **Off-Peak Period**



- **Peak Period**



# FEE Lane Configuration A: Likes

- Choice
- Increased throughput
- Using shoulder as a lane
- Concept works in Washington, D.C.

# FEE Lane Configuration A: Concerns

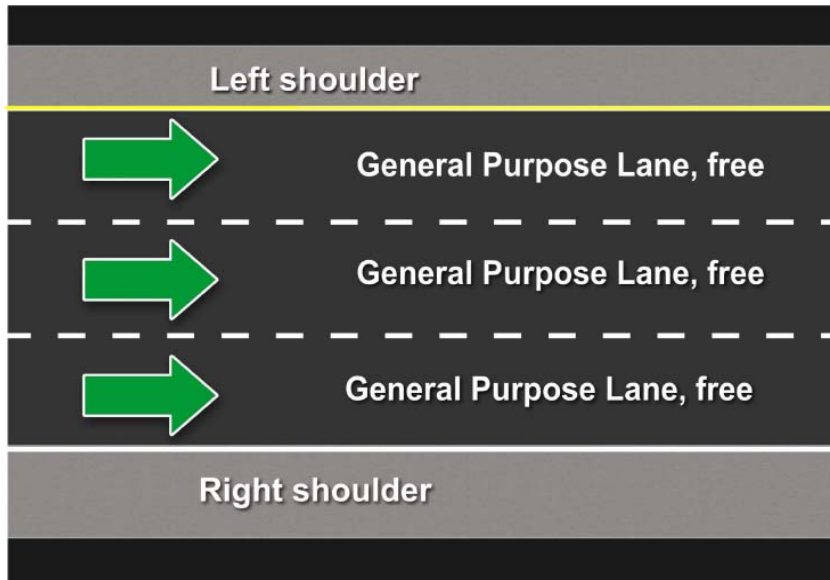
- Safety
- Unfair to carpoolers
- Lack of understandable system
- Managing accidents and breakdowns
- Enforcement challenges
- Merging and exiting
- Driver confusion in off-peak
- Snow removal and storage
- Need to weave across several lanes to access FEE Lanes
- FEE Lanes may be under used
- Traffic would move faster if all lanes were free

# FEE Lane Configuration A: Suggestions

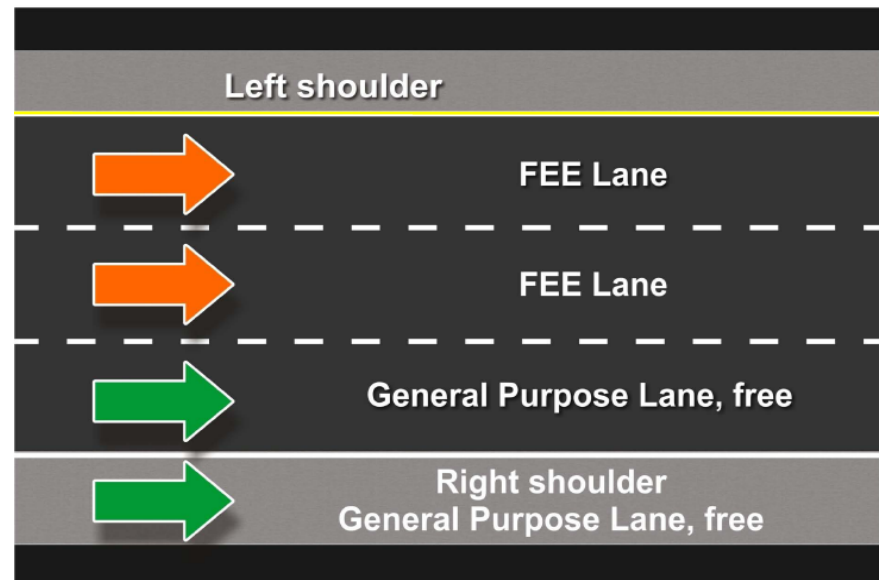
- Enforcement, use metal arms
- Implement on all highways at same time
- There should be a “Fast” guarantee in FEE Lane
- Using left shoulder for extra lane may work better
- Should be used for longer distance travel

# Configuration B

- **Off Peak**



- **Peak Period**



# FEE Lane Configuration B: Likes

- Choice
- Enhancement of HOT concept
- Credits allow for less out-of-pocket expenses
- FEE Lane would be available to service vehicles.



# FEE Lane Configuration B: Concerns

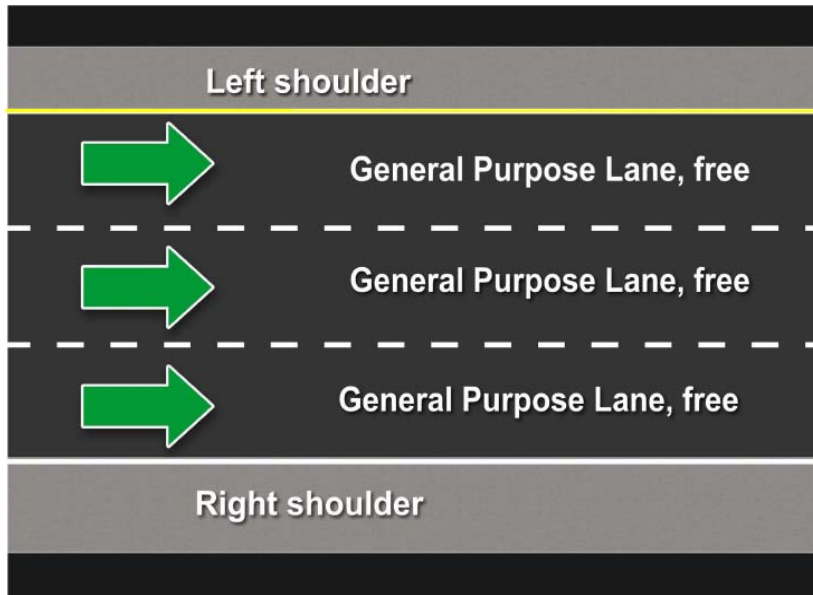
- Equity – for carpoolers, for low-income drivers; taxes already paid for highways
- Complexity of credit system and fair distribution
- People would not use the FEE Lanes
- Not enough time saving to justify paying
- FEE Lanes will cause congestion in free lanes
- Transit will get overcrowded because people will use credits to ride bus
- Government will raise taxes to give away credits
- Drivers in free lanes may not let FEE Lane drivers merge into and out of FEE Lanes

# FEE Lane Configuration B: Suggestions

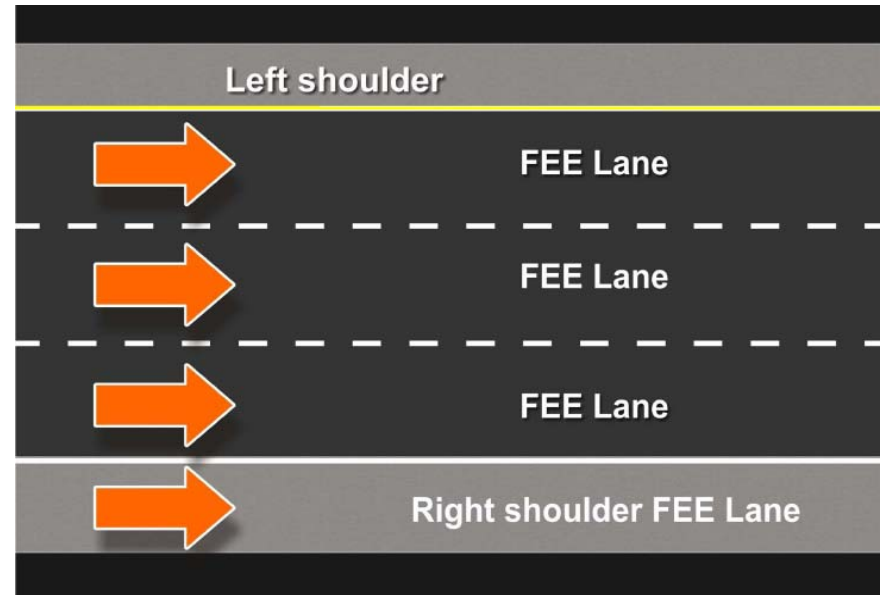
- Need more information on credit system
- Logistics of FEE Lanes (how they operate)
- Carpools should be free
- More flexibility with credits
- Open shoulder for special events
- Build transponder into license plate

# Configuration C

- **Off Peak**



- **Peak Period**



# FEE Lane Configuration C: Likes

- Understandable
- Inevitable
- Equality – all lanes are tolled
- After drivers get used to it they won't think it is a bad idea
- Need a trial like Stockholm
- OK if government lightens taxes
- Would be great for commercial businesses

# FEE Lane Configuration C: Concerns

- No choice
- Unfair
- Credit system
- Logistics (how they operate)
- Resistance to fees, public will hate idea
- Diversion to local roads
- Where do credits come from?
- Where does revenue go?
- Need new bureaucracy to manage
- Would kill business
- Would require work schedule changes
- How will traffic improve if everyone has credits?
- The road is paid for already
- Confusion for travelers from outside area

# FEE Lane Configuration C: Suggestions

- Credit system improvements
- Business could cover fees through surcharges
- Receive credits when you renew license tabs or toll tags
- Don't give credits to drivers who don't have cars

# Closing Observations

- Public resistance to HOT lane concepts is diminishing
- Expectation for better use of highway footprint is growing
- FEE Lane Config. A is preferred
  - Fairness to carpools is a concern
  - Credit logistics is big concern
- Config. A and B offer free peak period alternatives
- Config. C imposes tolls on everyone in peak period, however fees and charging period may be reduced
- Credit system needs definition
- DOTs must clearly define the problem these solutions address
- Extensive education and marketing is necessary