



# ISSUES RESOLUTION

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**TRB Mid-Year Meeting**  
**Joint Subcommittee on Road Pricing**  
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# Background

- **Study: Twin Cities' high-occupancy (HOV) lanes are underutilized**
- **Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is reluctant to allow lanes to be open to all traffic**
- **Legislature authorizes HOV conversion to high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes in MN**
  - Strong bipartisan support



# I-394 Express Lanes Community Task Force

- **22-person group of leaders and citizens appointed by Lt. Gov. Molnau and communities**
- **Bipartisan and diverse make-up**
- **Local representatives**
- **Reviewing express lane issues**
- **Providing input to Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT)**
- **Also seeking input from other interested people and groups**
  - Citizen “Open House” to answer citizen questions and take testimony
  - Focus groups of carpoolers, transit users and solo drivers
  - Meetings with interested groups and public officials



## Lessons Learned from Recent Express Lane Experience

- **Drivers are willing to pay for premium service.**
- **Dynamic pricing is able to regulate demand.**
- **Express lanes can maintain premium speeds.**
- **Speeds on adjacent general-purpose lanes have increased.**
- **Demand for bus and carpool use has increased.**
- **Violation rates have declined.**



## Lessons Learned (Con't)

- **Express facilities can be self-supporting.**
- **Public support is high.**
- **Equity issues can be addressed by:**
  - Allowing use of express lanes on an as-needed basis
  - Improving bus service in the corridor
  - Continuing to provide free, adjacent general purpose lanes



## Why I-394?

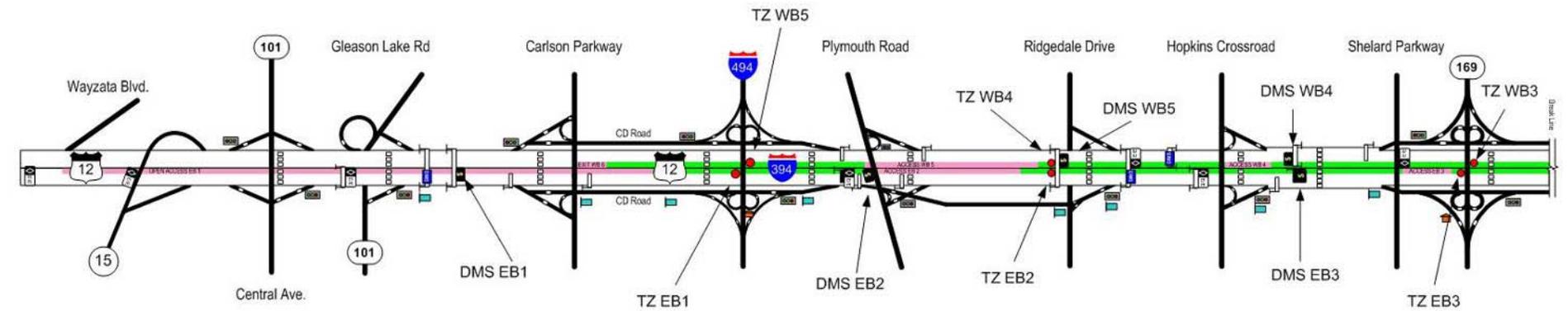
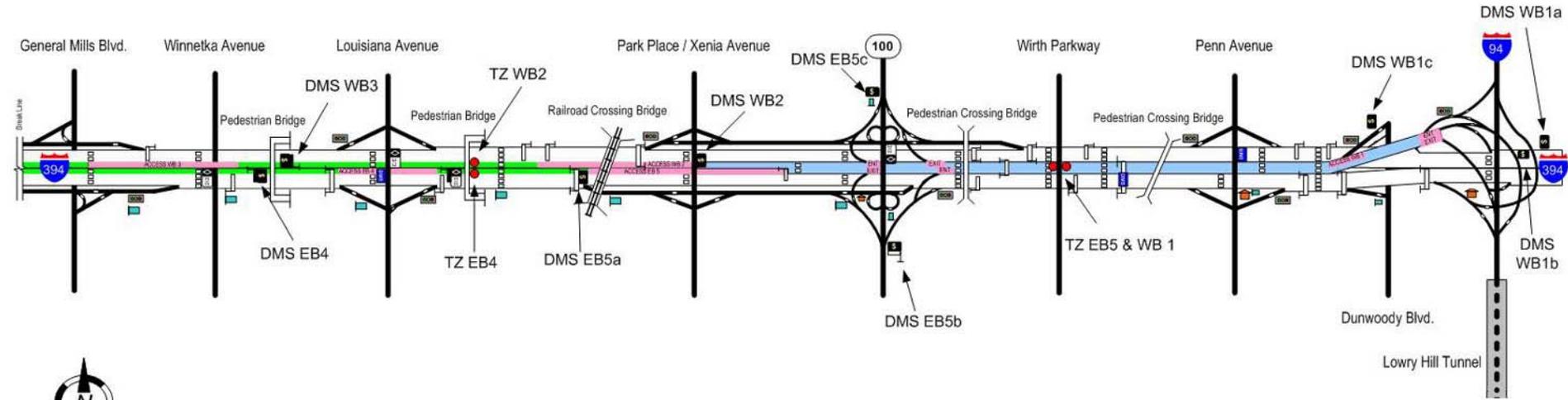
- **General purpose lanes chronically congested during rush periods.**
- **2002 study found HOV lane is underused. FHWA urging changes.**
- **Opening HOV to all traffic is not allowed by FHWA.**



# MnPass Express Lanes

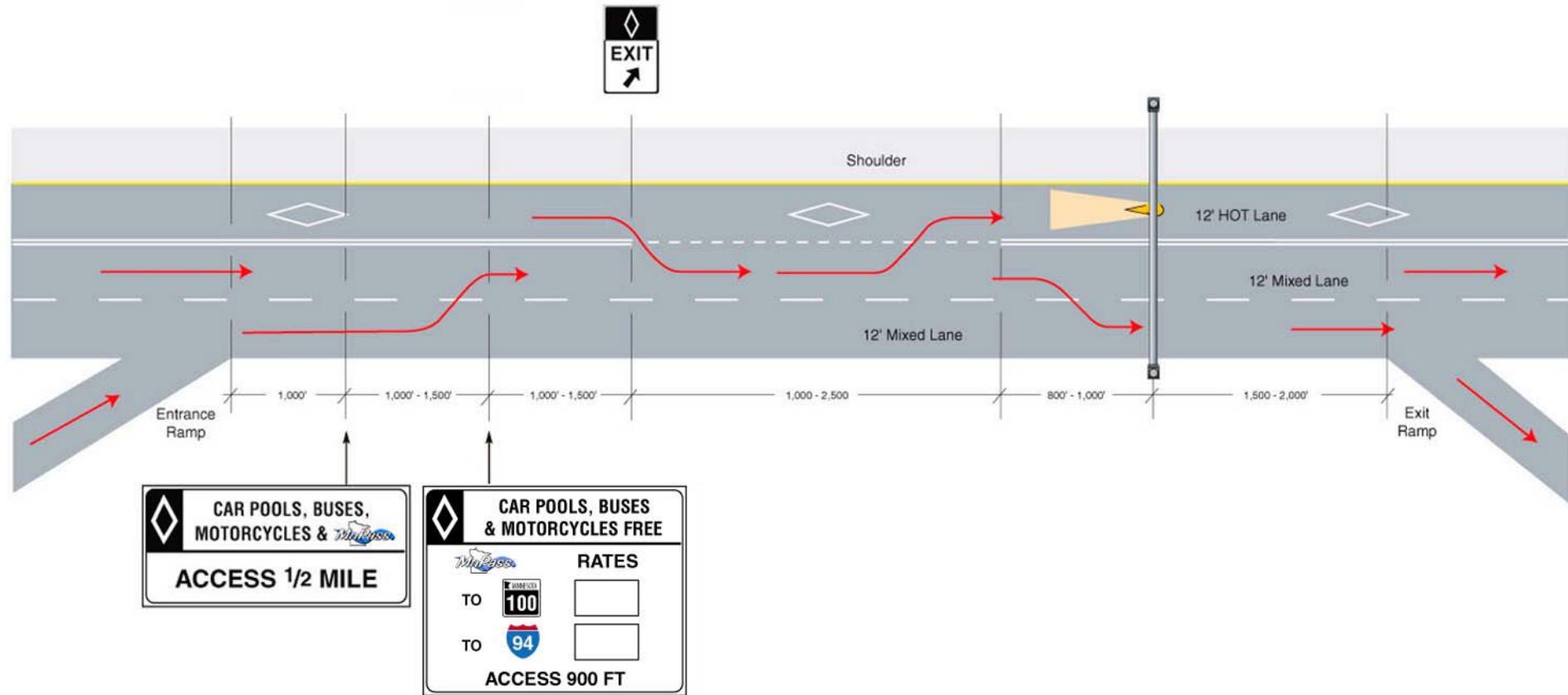


two-lane reversible section  
and one lane per direction,  
diamond lane in middle of  
four-lane freeway  
10-12 miles long  
Approximately five  
intermediate access points in  
diamond section  
No heavy vehicles  
Dynamic pricing  
HOVs and transit free





# HOT Lane Access Points





# MnPass Objectives

- **Improve efficiency of I-394: increase person and vehicle-carrying capabilities of HOV lanes**
- **Maintain free flow speeds for transit and carpools**
- **Improve highway and transit in corridor with revenues generated**



## How will revenues be used?

- **First, to pay the cost of project infrastructure, administration, maintenance and operations**
- **After that, 50% for transit improvements and 50% for corridor improvements (state law).**
- **All improvements must be in I-394 area.**



# Will Minnesotans support them?

- **January 2002 Decision Resources Ltd. survey:**

57% support “having an option of paying a fee to use an uncongested freeway when in a hurry.”

(Support for a gas tax was 51%)

- **January 2004 Star Tribune survey:**

“...69 percent of Minnesota adults like the idea of paying for new highway lanes with tolls collected from drivers who choose to use them.”

(Only 23 percent would prefer an increase in gas tax)



# Issues

- **Access Limitation**
- **HOV/Transit Impact**
- **Hours of Operation**
- **Toll Rates**
- **Dynamic Message Signs**
- **Enforcement**
- **Transponder Charge**



# Issues

- **Access Limitation**
  - Limited to six entry/exit points
  - Weaving and safety issue
  - Location and length of opening
- **HOV/Transit Impact**
  - No access limitation for transit
  - HOV's access at limited locations



# Issues

- **Hours of Operation**
  - **24/7 proposed**
  - **Issue of takeaway**
  - **Role of dynamic tolling**
- **Toll Rates**
  - **Maximim**
  - **Typical**
  - **Toll segments**



# Issues

- **Dynamic Message Signs**
  - Complexity
  - Length of message

**CAR POOLS, BUSES  
& MOTORCYCLES FREE**

*MnPass* **RATES**

TO  TO 

**ACCESS 900 FT**



# Issues

- **Enforcement**
  - Visual
  - Enforcement transponder
  - Mobile enforcement readers
  - Overhead light
  - Stopping violators
- **Transponder Charge**
  - Sell to subscribers
  - Lease to subscribers
  - Charge monthly fee



# Schedule

- **2003-2004 – Community input**
- **January 5, 2004 – Project began**
- **July 1, 2004 – Design is completed**
- **April 2005 – Operation begins**  
**(Changed from December 31, 2004)**



## Additional Information

- <http://www.mnpass.org>
- <http://www.valuepricing.org>  
(“Minnesota Project Update” section)



THANK YOU