



# “Cordon Pricing”

**Requested by Councilmember Speake**

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# The Ask

That the City Council provide direction on whether to pursue a feasibility study to look at implementing cordon pricing/tolls on Green River Road/Foothill Parkway.

## Background

### City Councilmember Speake's Request:

- On March 12, 2025, Councilmember Speake requested staff to explore a Cordon Pricing program for the Green River Road/Foothill Parkway corridor
  - Concept: the city would charge a toll to vehicles *entering the city on Green River Road* **and** *exiting on Magnolia, Ontario, or Foothill* within an allotted time frame
  - The purpose would be to reduce the impacts of motorists cutting through Corona to avoid traffic on SR-91/I-15 freeways
  - Suggests that Corona residents receive a 90% discount



# What is Cordon Pricing?

# Cordon Pricing

Is a type of dynamic zone-based pricing implemented during times of heavy vehicle congestion. Any motorist who enters and exits the designated zone must pay a fee.

**Example:** New York City (further explored in presentation)



Image from NYC.gov

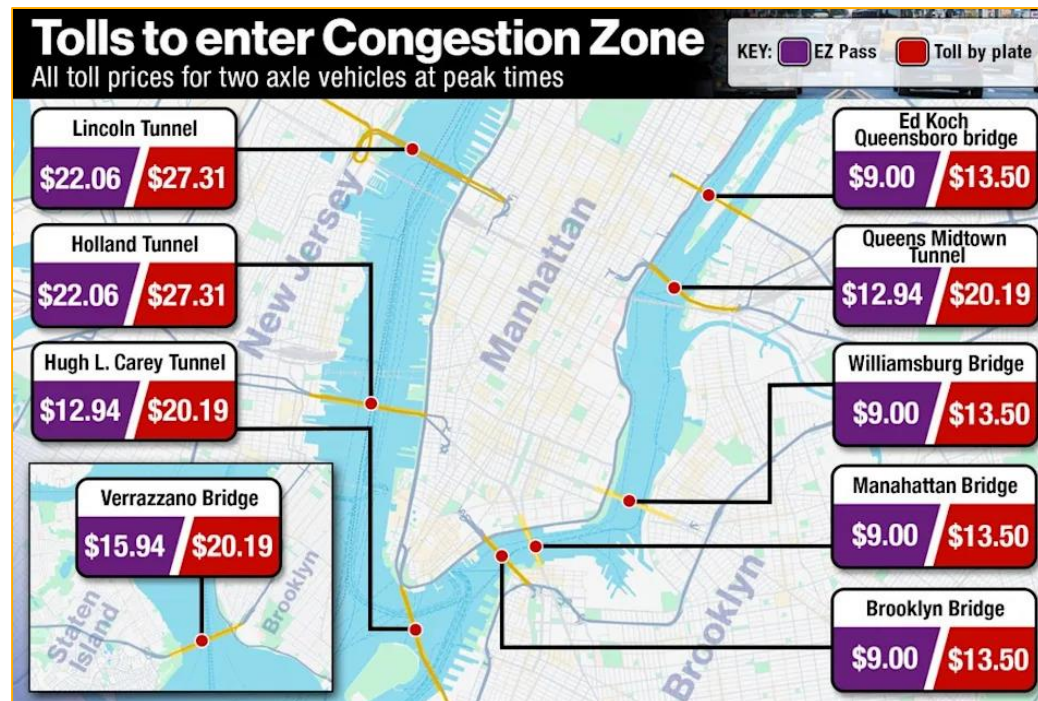


Image from New York Post

# San Francisco

## Study Paused



### Location Concepts

1. Smaller zone in the downtown area (shown in darker shade)
2. Larger zone that adds Mission Bay and northeast neighborhoods (shown in lighter shade)



### Project Goals

- Get traffic moving
- Increase safety
- Clean the air
- Advance equity



### Fee Structure Concepts

1. Applied during weekdays 6 AM – 9 AM and 3:30 PM – 6:30 PM
2. Based on the driver's income
3. Applied to enter the zone but not to exit
4. Uber and Lyft rides would be charged to enter the zone and any ride that starts within the zone (income-based discounts would apply)
5. 50% discount for residents within the zone
6. Bridge toll discount for individuals who crossed the bridge to enter the city
7. Expanded Muni discounts for low-income earners



### Additional Items to Note

- Has paused the study "in light of the changing and fluid conditions surrounding traffic conditions and transit use"
- If the program is implemented, a 5-year phased approach to pricing is proposed



## Case Study

# Los Angeles Study in Progress



### Location Concepts

1. Santa Monica Mountains
2. I-10 West
3. Downtown LA



### Project Goals

- Reduce congestion
- Enhance economic opportunity
- Reduce air and climate pollution
- Make roads safer and transit faster
- Reinvest in the communities



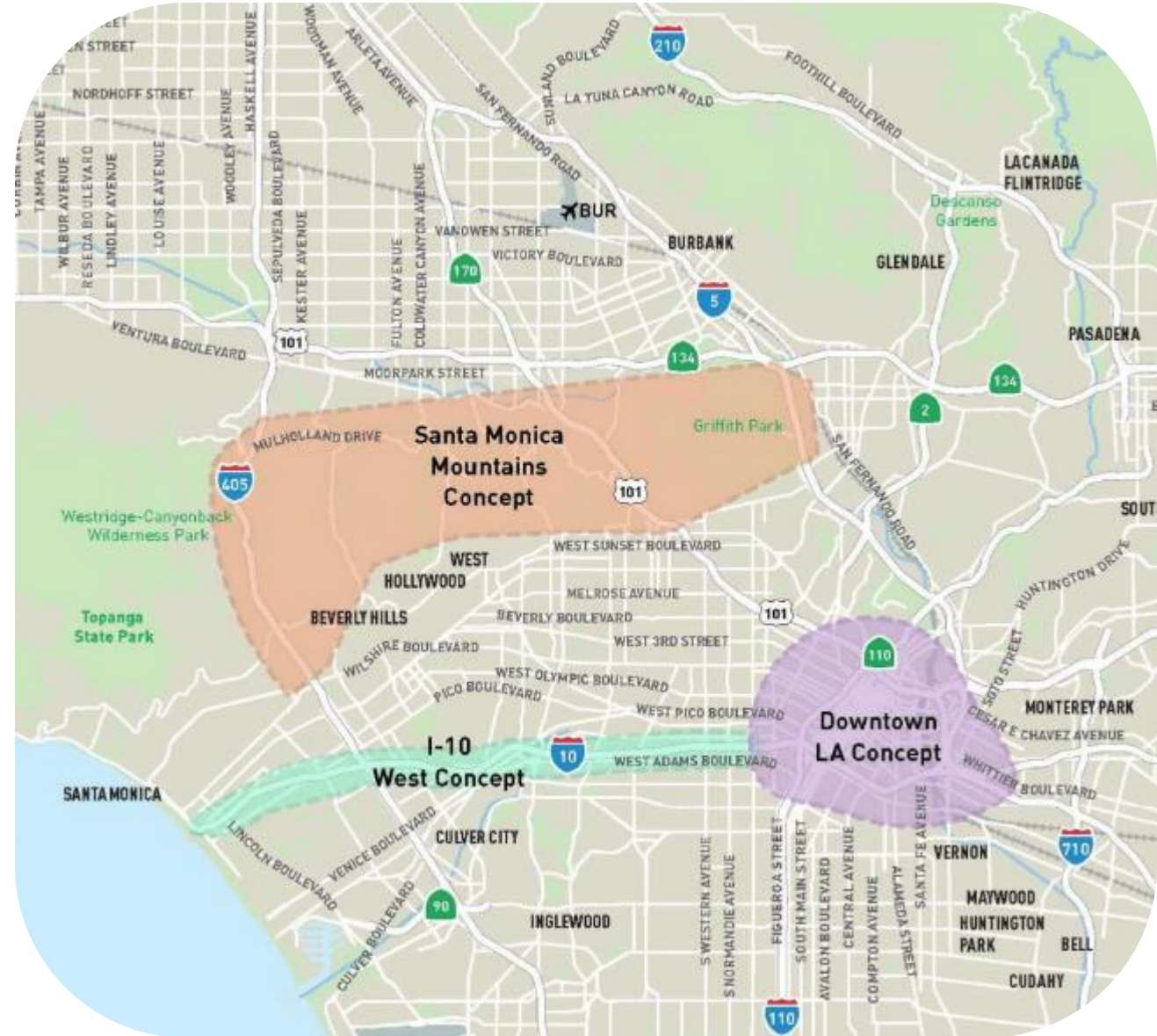
### Fee Structure Concepts

1. Full exceptions for 3 or more passengers or low-income motorists
2. Reduced fee for low-income motorists
3. Transit credit reward program for those who choose alternative transportation options



### Additional Items to Note

- Forecasted to open in 2028
- Currently refining concept designs for potential pricing zones based on modeling results and public feedback



#### Resources:

<https://www.metro.net/projects/trafficreduction/>

## Case Study

# New York Implemented January 2025



### Location

Manhattan Downtown Area



### Project Goals

- Reduce traffic and travel time
- Lead to safer streets and cleaner air
- Reduce emissions
- Improve quality of life
- Raise revenue for public transit improvements



### Fee Structure

- **Time of Day:** 5 AM – 9 PM weekdays, 9 AM – 9 PM weekends
- **Type of Vehicle:** passenger, small commercial vehicles, motorcycles, trucks, buses, taxis, vehicles for hire
- **Crossing Credits:** received if using a valid E-Z Pass during peak times
- **Connecting Between a River Crossing and Excluded Roadway:** no toll applied
- **Discounts and Exemptions:** available for low-income drivers and individuals with disabilities or organizations transporting people with disabilities, emergency vehicles, buses, and specialized government vehicles
- **E-Z Pass and tolls by Mail:** must be paid within 30 days
- **Tolls will be Phased in by 2031**



### Additional Items to Note

- The Federal Government has rescinded its approval of the program; however, the City stands firm on its legality.



### Resources:

- <https://portal.311.nyc.gov/article/?kanumber=KA-03612>
- <https://congestionreliefzone.mta.info/>

# Cordon Pricing

## Case Studies



Study on Pause

Downtown Area

Has paused the study "in light of the changing and fluid conditions surrounding traffic conditions and transit use"

San Francisco



Refining Concepts  
(Not Implemented)

Santa Monica Mountains, I-10 West, Downtown LA

Forecasted to open in 2028

"Metro is refining the concept design for these potential pricing areas based on modeling results and public feedback."

Los Angeles



Implemented  
January 2025

Downtown Area

60,000 fewer vehicles entering zone per day  
\$48 million generated during the project's first month

The Federal Government has rescinded its approval of the program; however, the City stands firm on the legality of the program

New York

# Cities Around the World

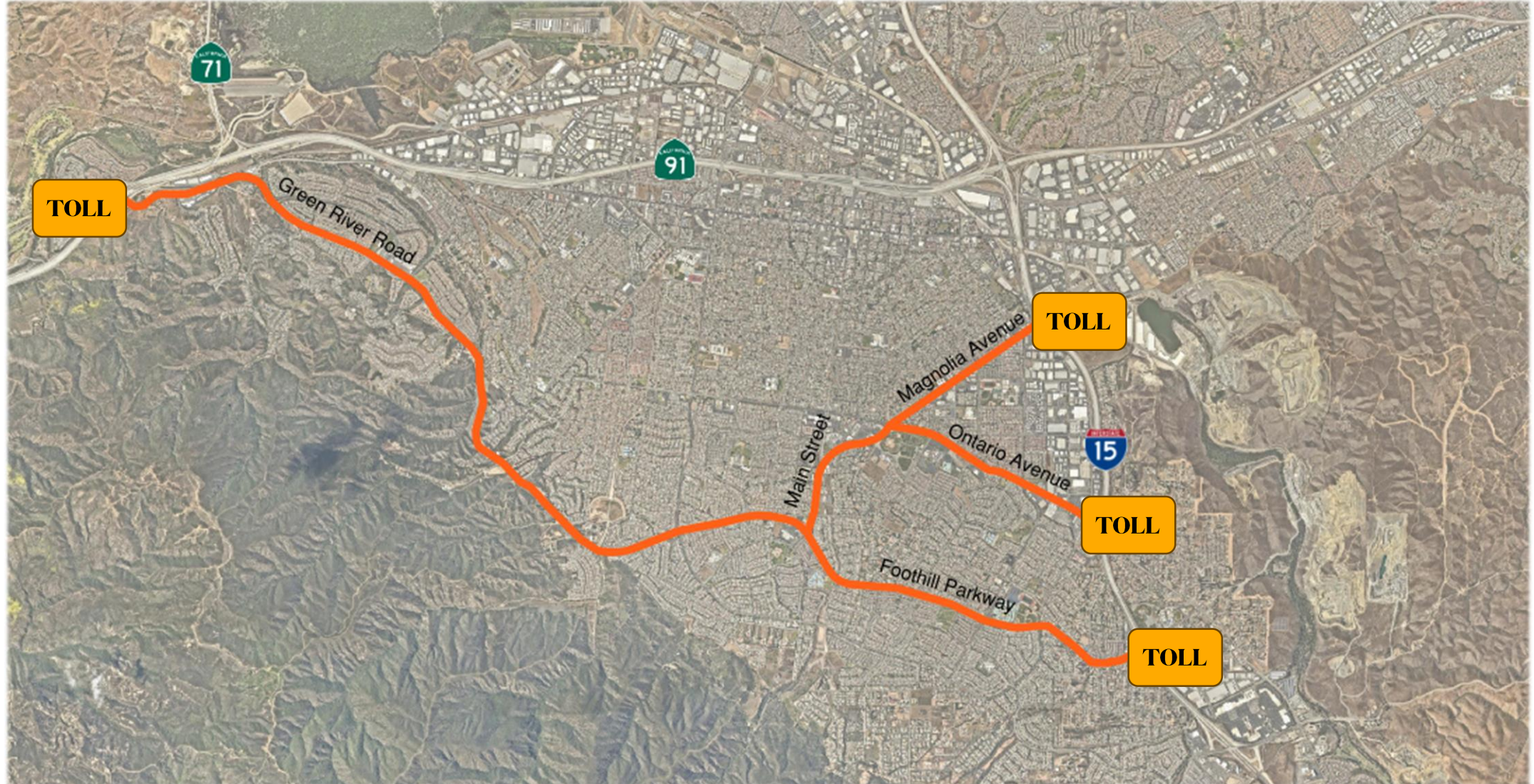


# Cordon Pricing vs. Toll Road

	<b>Cordon Pricing</b>	<b>Toll Roads</b>
<b>Primary Goal</b>	To manage traffic demand and reduce congestion, emissions, and noise in a specific, dense urban area.	To generate revenue for the construction, maintenance, and operation of a specific road, bridge, or tunnel.
<b>Area of Effect</b>	Charges drivers for crossing a defined boundary or “cordon” around a city center or highly congested zone, rather than for using a specific road.	Applies to a specific road. You pay for the privilege of using that particular piece of infrastructure.
<b>Fee Structure</b>	Often a flat daily fee to enter or drive within the zone. Some schemes use variable pricing that changes based on the time of day.	The toll can be a fixed fee or vary by distance traveled, vehicle type, or time of day.
<b>Examples</b>	Systems have been successfully implemented in cities like London, Stockholm, and Singapore.	Found across many highways, bridges, and tunnels worldwide, including the Pennsylvania Turnpike, New Jersey Turnpike, and California’s Toll Roads.
<b>Potential Impacts</b>	Encourages the use of public transit, cycling, and walking within the city center. It can also reduce traffic delays and improve air quality.	Provides a faster travel option for drivers willing to pay and can fund transportation projects without relying solely on general taxation.

What could Cordon Pricing  
/Toll Road look like Corona?

# Green River Road/Foothill Parkway



# Factors to Consider

Cities with existing/proposed Cordon Pricing have:	Corona Comparison: Green River Road/Foothill Parkway
1. Legislation allows applying fees to publicly funded and maintained roadways.	Green River Road/Foothill Parkway was built utilizing public funds and will need to consider <b>legality and possible legislation</b> to allow this.
2. A strong public transportation system.	Public buses and bike lanes are currently provided along the study corridor. Corona falls short of the <b>scaled public transportation infrastructure</b> found in other cities.
3. Robust toll collection technology.	A toll collection company with technology to <b>easily identify vehicles that enter and exit the corridor</b> and verify who qualifies for a discount is needed. Information should be reviewed regularly to adjust for changing patterns.
4. Easily identified and controlled entrance and exit locations for a specified zone.	Location is more of a corridor ( <b>like a toll road</b> ) than a zone, providing a clear message to people about which entrance and exit points trigger a fee may be a challenge. An analysis of which locations will and will not trigger a fee will need to be carefully strategized since there are many access points along the corridor and <b>negative impacts to adjacent roadways may occur</b> .

# Factors to Consider

Cities with existing/proposed Cordon Pricing have the following	Corona Comparison: Green River Road/Foothill Parkway
5. Visitors who travel to the zone for various attractions such as shopping and dining (typically a downtown area).	Case studies are mostly in downtown areas with attraction to a "zone" <b>not for pass by or cut-through traffic</b> . Implementation may be a deterrent for non-residents who may frequent businesses or establishments within the city.
6. A pricing schedule that advances equity while balancing operation costs and financial objectives to raise revenue for public improvements.	Per Councilmember Speake's vision, a 90% discount would be applied to Corona residents, however, other city's use a 50% or less discount only for zone residents. With a 90% discount applied to all Corona residents, the <b>program may struggle to self support</b> .
7. Close relationship with neighboring agencies.	Coordination with <b>Caltrans</b> is required for the location of license plate readers at SR-91/I-15 on/off ramps. Also, neighboring agencies should be included in the discussion since SR-91/I-15 access could lead to additional strain on their current infrastructure.

# Options

## A

### Do not Proceed

Keep the status quo.

**Pros:**

- No additional resources and funding required.

**Cons:**

- Congestion on Green River Road/Foothill Parkway continues due to cut-through traffic.
- Maintenance costs continue to increase due to traffic volume.

## B

### Wait and Observe

Observe how other programs are progressing. Present an update to the City Council in 5-7 years and revisit potential implementation in Corona.

**Pros:**

- City can analyze lessons learned from other cities that have implemented the program.
- Observe if upcoming RCTC/Caltrans projects positively address congestion in the city.

**Cons:**

- Congestion & maintenance costs on Green River Road/Foothill Parkway may continue due to cut-through traffic.

## C

### Prepare Focused Case Study

Procure a consultant to prepare a preliminary feasibility study to determine legal feasibility, constructability and Cordon pricing strategy and bring back to Council with some options.

**Pros:**

- Will determine if Cordon pricing works in Corona
- A holistic understanding of congestion data collected as part of the study

**Cons:**

- Study cost from \$300K-\$600K (not budgeted)
- Study would reduce available funding for other projects

# The Ask

That the City Council provide direction on whether to pursue a feasibility study to look at implementing cordon pricing/tolls on Green River Road/Foothill Parkway.

# Cordon Pricing

AKA: Congestion Pricing



Image from New York Case Study