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Golden Gate Bridge 'congestion toll' scrapped

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Transportation officials said Tuesday they have canceled plans for what critics labeled a North Coast commuter tax on the Golden Gate Bridge.



Drivers on Doyle Drive PD FILE

Instead of collecting up to \$1 more from southbound motorists at certain times of the day, officials are moving toward a system of parking meters and traffic signal upgrades on San Francisco's busy streets meant to improve traffic flow.

"The main news is that after a protracted period of discussion, we've come to an agreement ... on a slightly different approach," said Jose Luis Moscovich, executive director of the San Francisco Transportation Authority. **"We're no longer pursuing congestion tolling."**

Moscovich said federal Transportation Department officials and local officials differed over the amount of the toll and ultimately agreed to withdraw the proposal.

Adopting the toll had been a condition of a \$158 million federal transportation grant that included money to renovate Doyle Drive, the southern approach to the famous span.

With the change, local agencies will receive some money but the exact amount is unclear.

It is expected to pay for new parking meters that encourage people to use garages instead of cruising for spaces, clogging traffic, Moscovich said.

It may also pay for “intelligent” traffic signals that will improve flow, although federal officials have not yet agreed to the funding, he said.

The congestion pricing scheme would have increased tolls to up to \$7 at peak commute hours and during certain weekend hours. Bridge officials were expecting to consider adoption of the tolls this fall.

The toll is now \$5 but is set to increase to \$6 on Sept. 2.