

## SAMPLE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR SJSU URBP 298 STUDENTS

*Note: This script modifies one developed by Asha Weinstein and Gian-Claudia Sciara in June 2004.*

Hi, my name is [your name]. I am working for [Company X and Agency Y] on a study of HOT lanes and the equity issues that are sometimes raised in connection with them.

If hunting for the right person: [I'm trying to identify a staff person who would be familiar with [the local project] and could talk a bit with me about it. Do you know who might be the right person for me to contact?] If necessary to explain equity, use description from Question 2.

Once you have the right person: I would like to ask you some questions about the experience you have had. It will probably take about thirty minutes. [Schedule a call, if necessary.]

Discuss right approach here: Before we start, I'd like to say that this interview is intended to gather information and to encourage candid discussion with you about the issues surrounding equity and HOT lanes. We are speaking with a select group of individuals across the country who have valuable, direct experience with planning and implementation of HOT lane or road pricing schemes. We may include some or all of the information you provide into our report to the Santa Clara VTA, and we will include your name and agency at the end of the report in a list of interviewees. Where your comments are especially insightful, we may quote you and identify you by name in the body of the report. We will assume that your comments are on-the-record and that you agree to being quoted, unless you instruct us otherwise. If you wish to share any comments off-the-record, simply let me know, and we will treat that information confidentially. Is that acceptable?

[If objections, offer to identify the agency only.]

Okay...May I begin?

1. Could you please tell me how you have been involved in the HOT lane project?
  - a. E.g., what capacity? For how long?
  
2. We would like to learn how equity concerns have been raised or addressed in relation to this project. We are interested in a broad range of equity concerns. These may include any concern about one group disproportionately paying for, being harmed by or benefitting from the project, or experiencing disproportionate environmental impacts, such as exposure to air pollution or noise. The group may be defined by income group or class status, race, ethnicity, sex, or where they live or work, or some other shared identity. Have I explained this clearly? Would it be helpful if I described equity concerns further?

[If yes, provide some examples of claims of inequity and HOT lanes / pricing, e.g. Lexus Lane critique. (I don't think this biases the interview, as the interviewee is unlikely to fabricate criticisms, especially when we ask for more specifics.)]

During this period, are you aware of anyone raising the concern that HOT lanes are inequitable?

- a. Could you tell me about the individuals or groups who have done so?
  - b. In what forums? (Public meeting, newspaper article, etc.)
  - c. What were/are the specific nature of their concerns?
3. After the issue was initially raised, what was the response from the community? (Elected officials, general public, press)
  4. After the issue was raised, how did the agency in charge of the project respond?
    - a. Ignore the issue? Change the project design? Conduct research to identify possible inequities? Delay or stall the project? Drop the project altogether?
  5. What was the community reaction to these actions [from question 4]?
  6. Based on your experience with this project, what lessons do you feel it offers for other communities concerned about the equity implications of HOT lanes?

Great. We are almost at the end of our interview. Before we finish, I have a few quick follow-up questions.

7. Are there other people who have been involved in the project and the equity debates with whom you recommend that I speak? Any elected officials, other public agencies or local government staff, interest groups, community groups or other local organizations?
8. Are there any documents that you might refer me to, any project memoranda or reports that discuss this issue? Any articles in the local press, etc.?
9. Are you aware of other HOT lane or congestion pricing projects in the U.S. where equity was raised as a central concern?
10. If I have any follow-up questions, may I contact you again later?

We're done. Thank you very much. Our discussion has been very helpful, and I appreciate your willingness to set aside some time to speak with me.

[If respondent asks for a copy of our report, when it is done:]  
"We will be happy to do so." Record mailing information.