

Operation Free Flow

Frequently Asked Questions

Developed by Councilmember Steve Adams, City of Riverside, California

1. Q: What is Operation Free Flow?

A: Operation Free Flow is the City of Riverside's supported goods movement program to relieve traffic, create jobs, and improve air quality in Southern California. Operation Free Flow is being developed by Riverside City Councilmember Steve Adams.

2. Q: Why do we need Operation Free Flow?

A: Our region is in a crisis caused by traffic congestion and air pollution challenges that have an adverse affect on all residents. Operation Free Flow offers a four part solution to help solve the region's transportation emergency, improve air quality and keep our region's economy moving in the right direction.

3. Q: How will Operation Free Flow solve the region's congestion?

A: Operation Free Flow offers four solutions to help solve the region's transportation crisis:

- Establish a voluntary industry-supported container premium to fund transportation projects
- Utilize future growth in U.S. Customs revenue
- Adopt the "1984 LA Olympics Model" to take trucks off the road during peak hours and improve on time delivery of goods.
- Create remote inland truck ports to ultimately replace all interstate truck trips with clean-burning trains

4. Q: How much money will be raised by implementing Operation Free Flow?

A: Some estimates show that by adopting the solution that are part of Operation Free Flow including establishing a voluntary container premium and utilizing U.S. Customs revenue nearly \$80 billion would be raised in 10 years. Without using or increasing taxes and would generate \$300 billion in 20 years.

5. Q: How will relieving traffic congestion improve air quality?

A: In Riverside, for example, idling vehicles stopped at rail crossings generate an additional 50 tons of harmful air particulates per year. Studies show there is an 8 to 1 ratio of idling vehicles vs. moving ones in our region. Making transportation improvements will get traffic moving which will lower the amount of harmful air particulates emitted into the air.

6. Q: How will improving traffic congestion lead to job creation?

A: Imports to Southern California ports are expected to triple over the next 15 years. If timely movement of those goods can be ensured nearly 1 million new jobs will be created to accommodate this growth.

7. Q: Why would manufacturers agree to voluntarily pay a container premium?

A: Goods will travel from the port to the shelf faster and the money the shippers save make this a premium and not an extra tax. This industry has already agreed to pay voluntary premium in two separate programs:

- Alameda Corridor - Money has gone to improve and expand rail service out of the immediate port area
- PierPass - Money is spent to compensate off-peak time operations in the ports, in an effort to shift more traffic away from rush hours.

8. Q: What is the 1984 LA Olympics model?

A: During the 1984 LA Olympics operating hours at ports and warehouses were extended to 24 hours a day, taking trucks off the road to relieve traffic congestion. To implement the program trucks would deliver goods during off-peak hours. A challenge that must be overcome are many city's with noise ordinances do not allow truck traffic during off-peak hours. If implemented today, some estimates show that if half of the truckers followed this model it would save shippers nearly \$7 million everyday.

9. Q: How much money could a container premium raise?

A: Some estimates show that a \$10 premium would generate \$140 million in the first year alone and a total of \$8 billion over the next 25 years.

10. Q: How do we convince Congress to give us a bigger share of Customs Revenue?

A: By working with New York, Massachusetts, Washington, Florida, Texas, South Carolina, Louisiana, and other major port cities, a national coalition of Congressional members could lobby to have more federal dollars originating from trade spent on alleviating trade impacts.

We have to reach out to all states and educate them about how the reallocation benefits them.

Reallocating only an increment of the growth in Customs Revenue would mean that programs nationwide currently funded through these fees would not be lost or lose money.

11. Q: What are remote island truck ports and how will they help relieve congestion?

A: A remote island truck port is a depot where trucks pick up and drop off goods from trains and deliver them to national destinations. The establishment of remote inland truck ports serviced by short-haul rail could eliminate long haul truck traffic through Southern California entirely.

For More Information on Operation FreeFlow:

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