



I-680 Sunol Southbound Express Lane

SUNOL SMART CARPOOL LANE JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY

I-680

ANNUAL REPORT FY 2018-19

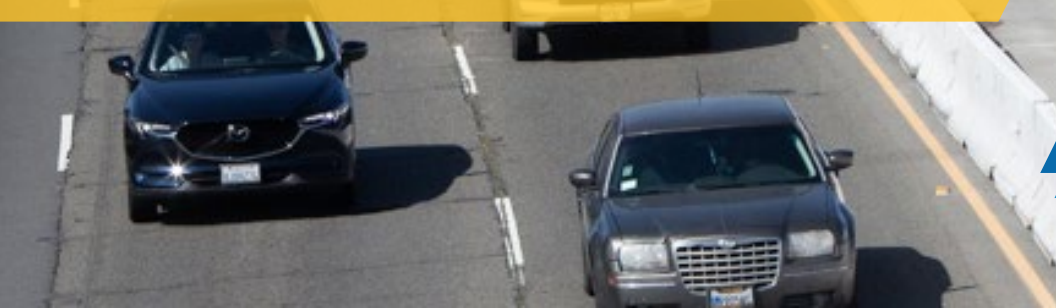




Table of Contents

Chair's Message	
Message	3
The I-680 Sunol Southbound	
Express Lane	4
Express Lane	
Performance	5
Fiscal Year 2018-19	
Financial Information	8
I-680 Sunol Northbound Express Lane	
Coming Soon	9

Chair's Message



September 20, 2019 marked the nine-year anniversary of the first express lane opening in Northern California. Since opening, more than 6.6 million solo drivers have chosen to use the I-680 Sunol Southbound Express Lane, reaching their destinations faster and with more reliable travel times than the general purpose lanes. During fiscal year 2018-19, more than 907,000 vehicles that would have used the general purpose lanes paid a toll to use the express lane, reducing congestion within the corridor while maintaining reliability within the high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane.

The next step in the evolution of the corridor is the implementation of a new northbound express lane parallel to the existing southbound express lane along the Sunol Grade, and conversion of the existing I-680 Sunol Southbound Express Lane to a continuous access system. Construction of these projects began in early 2018, and the first phase will open to traffic in December 2020.

— **Mayor Lily Mei**
*City of Fremont,
Chair, Sunol Smart Carpool
Lane Joint Powers Authority*

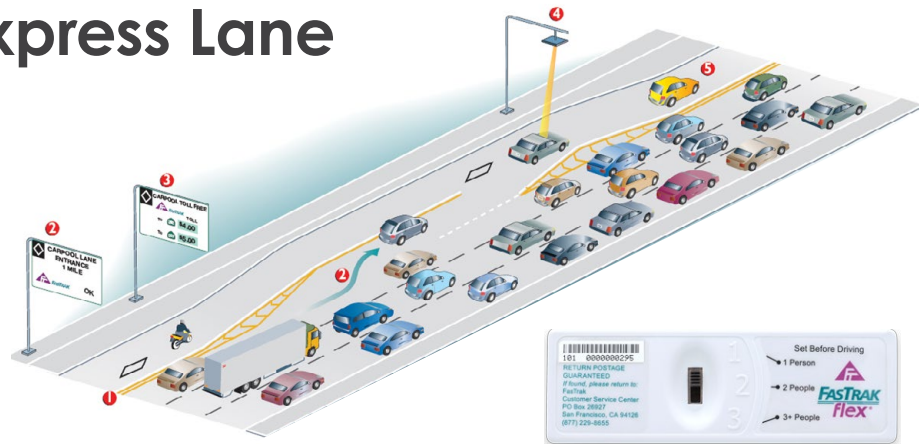
“I-680 is a backbone corridor in the region. The express lane provides more reliable travel times, encourages carpooling, reduces congestion and improves the quality-of-life for the traveling public.”

— **Tess Lengyel**
*Executive Director,
Alameda County
Transportation Commission*



I-680 Sunol Southbound Express Lane

Since it opened in September 2010 as Northern California's first express lane facility, more than 6.6 million solo drivers have chosen to get to their destination faster by using the I-680 Sunol Southbound Express Lane. Located on a 14-mile stretch of southbound Interstate 680 (I-680) from State Route 84 (SR-84) south of Pleasanton to State Route 237 (SR-237) in Milpitas, the express lane was designed to manage growing traffic congestion on I-680 and to provide users with a new commute choice between the East Bay and Silicon Valley. It is governed by the Sunol Smart Carpool Lane Joint Powers



Authority (Sunol JPA). The I-680 Sunol Southbound Express Lane operates Monday through Friday from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. The operation is fully electronic, with no toll booths, so customers do not need to slow down or stop to pay. Solo drivers who want to use the lane need a FasTrak® toll tag (a standard tag or the Flex tag that became available in mid-2015). Each time drivers use the express lane, the toll amount is deducted from their FasTrak account balance. Carpools, motorcycles, transit vehicles, and permitted zero- and low-emission vehicles with HOV-eligible stickers may use the express lane for free without a toll tag, with a standard FasTrak stored in its mylar bag, or with a FasTrak Flex toll tag set to 2 or 3+.

Carpools, vanpools, transit and motorcycle may use the lanes for free, and access to the lane by toll-paying users is at specific points to ensure express lane users enjoy reliable travel times.

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) provides toll enforcement to prevent access and toll violations. In fiscal year (FY) 2018-19, CHP issued more than 1,400 citations for toll evasion violations.

Usage of the express lane has typically increased each year since opening. However, during FY 2018-19, more than 907,000 toll-payers used the express lane, a slight decrease compared to the prior year. Assessed tolls averaged \$3.14 per trip, a slight increase over the prior year. An estimated 28 percent of all express lane users this year were toll-paying.

Express Lane Performance



Daily express lane solo driver usage decreased compared to the prior year, and overall express lane traffic volumes have also decreased. The decrease in express lane volumes is reflective of construction activities along the median of the corridor, reducing shoulder widths adjacent to the express lane and making driving in the express lane less comfortable. Irrespective of this shift in express lane utilization, the express lane met federal and state performance requirements.

Figures 1-4 (following pages) describe and illustrate how the existing I-680 Sunol Southbound Express Lane is performing, where corridor users are going and how much it costs to use the express lane.

The I-680 Sunol Southbound Express Lane is part of the major commute route connecting the Tri-Valley Area (Dublin, Livermore and Pleasanton) in Alameda County with South Bay cities in Santa Clara County and Silicon Valley businesses.

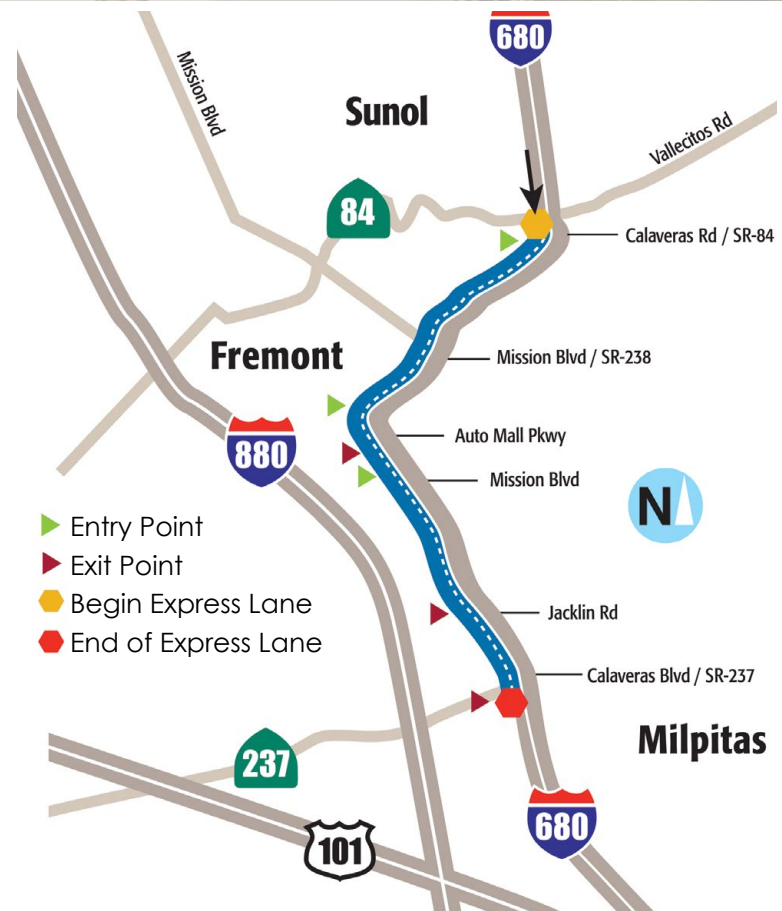


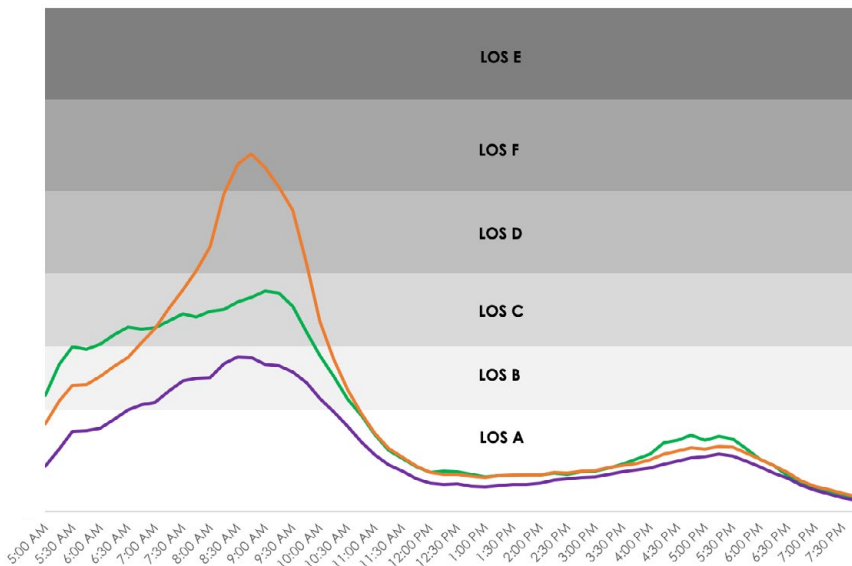
Figure 1

Speed, Volume, and Level of Service Charts – Monitoring the Corridor

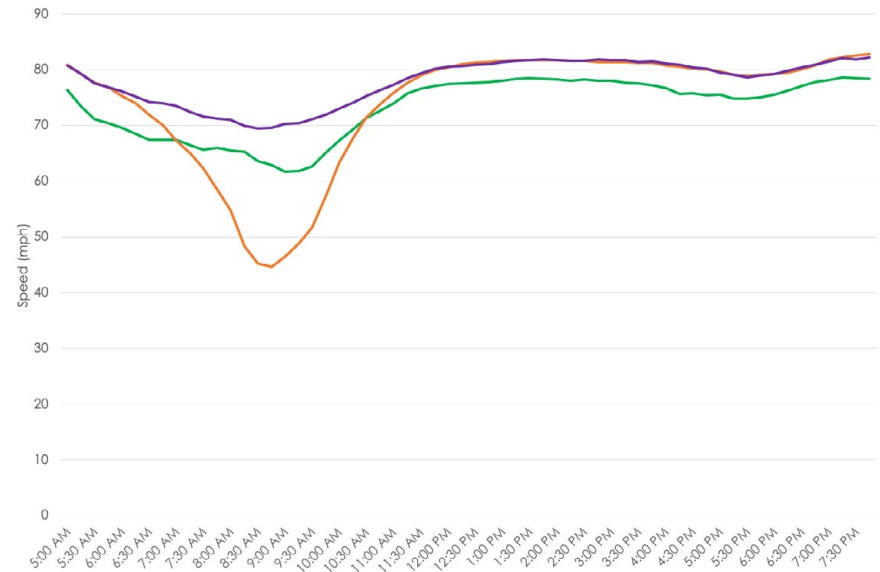
These charts show the average speeds, volumes and Level of Service (LOS) at the three toll points in the express lane throughout the day: just south of Andrade Road, south of Washington Avenue, and just north of Mission Boulevard (SR-262). LOS is a measure of freeway performance based on vehicle maneuverability and driver comfort levels, graded on a scale of A (best) through F (worst). Average speeds at the express lane toll points ranged from 45 to 70 mph during the morning commute hours (5-11 a.m.) with lower speeds occurring in the vicinity of Washington Boulevard; average speeds throughout the rest of the day exceeded 70 mph. The express lane operated at LOS C or better at all times except during the peak period in between Washington Boulevard and Auto Mall Parkway where average LOS D and E were observed. The slower speeds at the Washington toll point are attributed to the sharp curve in the freeway immediately preceding the toll point that causes all users to slow down even in moderately heavy traffic conditions.



Average Weekday Express Lane Level of Service



Average Weekday Express Lane Speed



Average Weekday Express Lane Volume

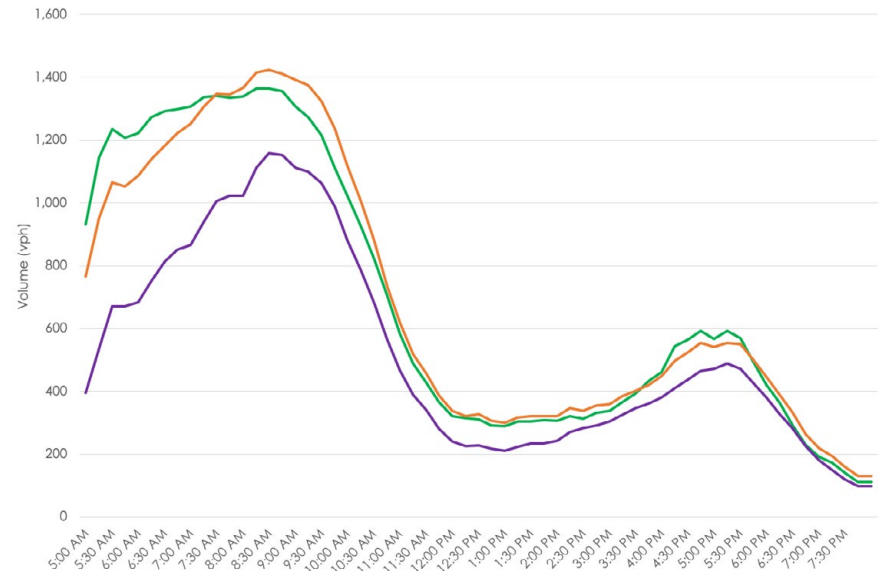
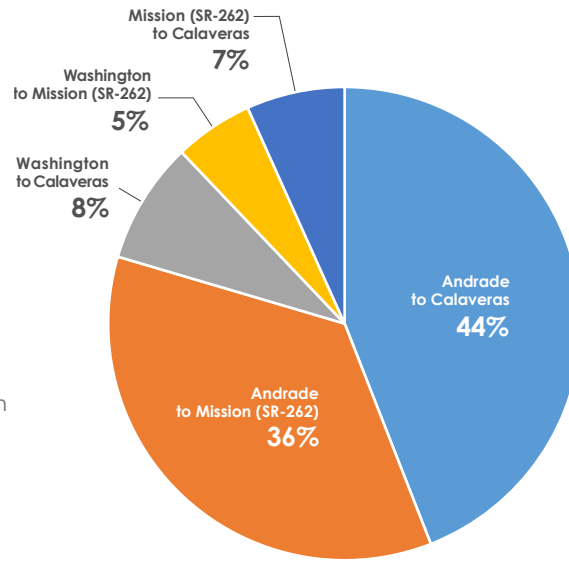


Figure 2

Destination Chart – Evaluating Express Lane Usage

Approximately 44 percent of toll-paying users within the corridor traveled the entire length of the express lane from Andrade Road to Calaveras Boulevard, and 80 percent originated at the start of the express lane. Almost 93 percent traveled the segment between Washington Boulevard and Mission Boulevard, making it the most utilized, and generally most congested, segment within the corridor.



Between Washington Boulevard and Mission Boulevard is the most utilized, and generally most congested, segment within the corridor.

Figure 3

Static Time-of-Day Pricing

While the I-680 Northbound Express Lane is under construction, the existing I-680 Southbound lane is expected to remain in operation, but some lane shifts will be required. In anticipation of construction impacts, the existing southbound express lane deployed static time-of-day pricing in July 2017 and will use this pricing method until the new northbound express lane begins operations. Pricing was adjusted in July 2018. The scheduled toll rates to travel the entire length of the express lane are shown in the step-chart in Figure 3, and lower tolls are posted for shorter trips. The maximum toll rate to travel the entire length of the corridor in FY 2018-19 was \$9.50.

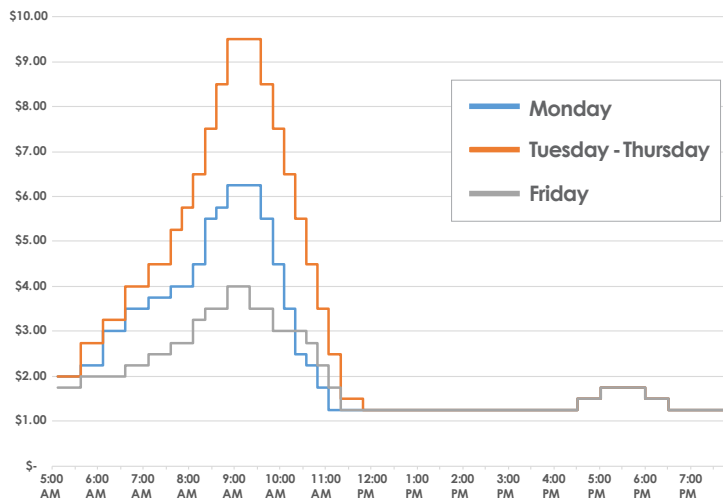
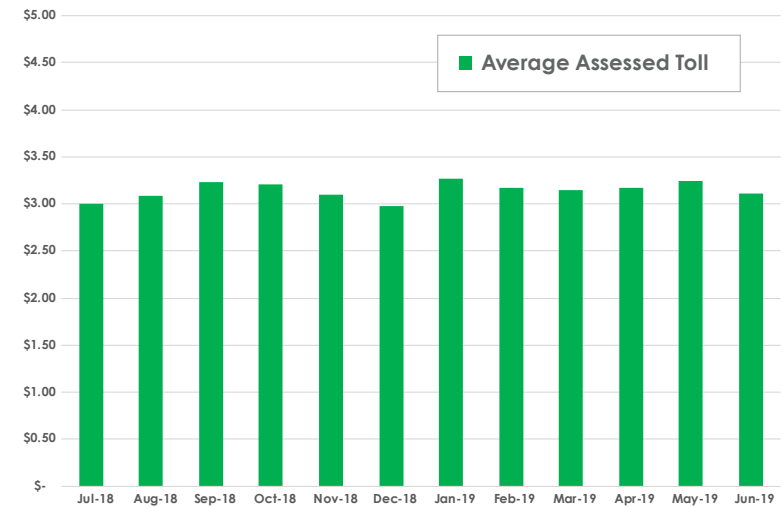


Figure 4

Toll Rates – Keeping Express Lanes Flowing

During FY 2018-19, the average peak-period (5-11 a.m.) posted toll rate to travel the entire corridor was \$4.59, and to travel just the central segment from Washington Boulevard to Mission Boulevard (SR-262) was \$2.46. The average assessed toll for all tolled trips ranged from \$2.97 to \$3.27, depending on the month.



Financial Information

When the Sunol JPA was formed in 2010, it agreed to reinvest the net revenues derived from the express lanes directly back into the project corridor. Toll revenues are used to first pay for operating and maintaining the I-680 Express Lane, and then to fund additional transit and transportation projects in the corridor.

- Total net position increased by \$0.79 million or 13.2 percent from \$5.93 million to \$6.72 million as of June 30, 2019, compared to June 30, 2018. This increase is mostly due to toll revenues outpacing operations and maintenance expenses as a result of operating efficiencies implemented during the prior fiscal year. Capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation, comprised \$0.86 million or 12.7 percent of the total net position at June 30, 2019.
- For the year that ended June 30, 2019, cash and cash equivalents increased by \$1.52 million or 32.3 percent from \$4.72 million to \$6.24 million compared to June 30, 2018. This increase is mostly related to toll revenue collections which were significantly more than operating expenses paid during the fiscal year.

- Operating revenue was \$2.85 million during FY 2018-19, a slight decrease of \$0.03 million or 0.9 percent from FY 2017-18.
- The Sunol JPA's total operating expenses including depreciation were \$1.69 million during FY 2018-19, an increase of \$0.03 million or 2.0 percent over FY 2017-18. This increase is attributed to slight increases in various operations and maintenance expense line items. Operating expenses of \$1.69 million for FY 2018-19 were primarily comprised of program operations and maintenance costs.

Toll revenues are used to first pay for operating and maintaining the I-680 Express Lane, and then to fund additional transit and transportation projects in the corridor.



Coming Soon: I-680 Sunol Northbound Express Lane

The I-680 Sunol Express Lane is part of the growing Bay Area Express Lanes Network. On completion, the Bay Area will have over 700 miles of express lanes operated by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority and the Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC). These agencies, as well as the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, the Solano Transportation Authority, the San Mateo County Express Lanes Joint Powers Authority, and the San Francisco County Transportation Authority are working together to close gaps in the Express Lanes Network.



Construction of the Sunol JPA's northbound I-680 Sunol Express Lane from Mission Boulevard (SR-262) to Vallecitos Road (SR-84) began in early 2018.

Construction of the northbound I-680 Sunol Express Lane from Mission Boulevard (SR-262) to Vallecitos Road (SR-84) began in early 2018. The existing southbound lane will concurrently be converted from a restricted access to a continuous access facility, allowing for more users to take advantage of express lane benefits. The new northbound and southbound express lanes will open to traffic in late 2020 as a single I-680 Express Lanes toll system. The next project to improve the I-680 corridor is the I-680/SR-84 Interchange and SR-84 Project, which is in the design phase. The project will improve regional and interregional connectivity, relieve congestion and improve safety. Following this project will be the I-680 Express Lanes

from SR-84 to Alcosta Boulevard, which is currently in the environmental phase. This project will close the gap between the existing express lanes in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties.



For more information about the I-680 Express Lane and future express lane projects, visit www.alamedactc.org/expresslanes.

Visit www.bayareaexpresslanes.org for more information about the envisioned regionwide Express Lanes Network.

Sunol Smart Carpool Lane Joint Powers Authority

The Sunol JPA is an independent joint powers authority created to operate the I-680 Express Lane. Its board of directors consists of five elected officials, four voting members from Alameda County and one voting member from Santa Clara County. Voting rights were determined based on each county's share of road miles within the corridor when the JPA was first established.

The Sunol JPA meetings are open to the public. Meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the Alameda CTC website at www.alamedactc.org/all-meetings.

Partnerships

The Alameda County Transportation Commission, the California Department of Transportation and the California Highway Patrol provide services to the Sunol JPA contractually. For toll collection, the Sunol JPA has an agreement with the Bay Area Toll Authority to use its FasTrak® electronic toll-collection system.

Sunol JPA Members

- Chair:** **Lily Mei**, *City of Fremont Mayor, Alameda CTC Commissioner*
- Vice Chair:** **David Haubert**, *City of Dublin Mayor, Alameda CTC Commissioner*
- Members:** **Lan Diep**, *City of San Jose Councilmember, VTA Board Member (partial term served)*
- Rich Tran**, *City of Milpitas Mayor, VTA Board Member (partial term served)*
- Scott Haggerty**, *Alameda County Supervisor, District 1, Alameda CTC Commissioner*
- Jerry Thorne**, *City of Pleasanton Mayor, Alameda CTC Commissioner*
- Staff Liaisons:** **Tess Lengyel**, *Alameda CTC Executive Director*
- Gary Huisingsh**, *Alameda CTC Deputy Executive Director of Projects*
- Liz Rutman**, *Alameda CTC Director of Express Lane Implementation and Operations*

A decorative graphic consisting of a semi-circle of colored bars. The bars are arranged in a semi-circle, with colors transitioning from orange at the top left, through red, blue, and finally green at the bottom right. The bars vary in length and are slightly tilted.

Alameda County Transportation Commission
Sunol Smart Carpool Lane Joint Powers Authority
1111 Broadway, Suite 800
Oakland, CA 94607

www.AlamedaCTC.org/680ExpressLanes

www.BayAreaExpressLanes.org

www.facebook.com/AlamedaCountyExpressLanes

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