Does Congestion Pricing Work?

"There is a consensus among economists that congestion pricing represents the single most viable and sustainable approach to reducing traffic congestion."

U.S. Department of Transportation / Federal Highway Administration

"In every case, congestion pricing has reduced vehicle trips, reduced CO2 emissions, & lowered travel times."

Seattle Department of Transportation

"Our research has shown that a decongestion charge has worked to reduce congestion in cities around the world"

Vancouver Independent Commission Mobility Study

"Zone pricing very effectively reduced congestion in London, Stockholm and Singapore. It also increased average speeds, spurred increased mass transit use and improved air quality in each city."

Partnership for NYC / HNTB

"Congestion tolls work by charging more for roads in times and places of higher demand — more at 8 a.m. than 8 p.m., more on Monday than Sunday, more on urban freeways than in the urban fringe. When governments price roads properly, traffic flows freely."

UCLA Professor Mike Manville

"There's little doubt that congestion pricing is effective in reducing traffic. A study by Edward Sullivan of Cal Poly San Luis Obispo found that in the year after the opening of the Route 91 toll lanes in 1995, travel time in the afternoon rush hour fell to 30 minutes from 70, and average speed on the free lanes doubled."

Los Angeles Times Business Columnist Michael Hiltzik

"No new tax or fee is politically popular, but if metropolitan Chicago is to keep pace with other industrialized and emerging economies around the world, it should implement congestion pricing, in the near term, on various parts of the network...Transportation experts and economists from across the political spectrum support the institution of congestion pricing."

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

Smarter Tolling / Congestion Pricing in the United States

Of the ten largest regions in the country, Greater Boston is the only one that does not use some form of "time of day" or variable pricing to reduce congestion on its tolled roads.

Pop. Rank	Metropolitan Statistical Area	Smarter Tolling Examples
1	New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA MSA Population: 19,567,410	Peak and off-peak pricing on some bridges and tunnels, including the George Washington Bridge and Lincoln & Holland tunnels. The New York Legislature recently passed "London style" congestion pricing.
2	Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA MSA Population: 12,828,837	Variable-priced tolls roads have existed in Southern California since 1995 (SR-91 in Orange County).
3	Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN-WI MSA Population: 9,461,105	Time-of-day pricing for trucks on the Illinois Tollway interstate system.
4	Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX MSA Population: 6,426,214	Eight major Dallas-Fort Worth corridors feature dynamically-priced toll lanes.
5	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD MSA Population: 5,965,343	Off-peak toll discounts for trucks on Delaware River crossings.
6	Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX MSA Population: 5,920,416	Tolls are based on the time of day and congestion level for each of METRO's HOT Lanes corridors.
7	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV MSA Population: 5,636,232	HOT lanes in-place since 2012. Both Maryland and Virginia have proposed expansion of these lanes.
8	Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL MSA Population: 5,564,635	Dynamic toll rates on Interstate 95 change based on traffic volume in the express lane.
9	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA MSA Population: 5,286,728	HOT lanes on I-75/575. Atlanta is adding more HOT lanes throughout the region.
10	Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH MSA Population: 4,552,402	N/A

Smarter Tolling defined broadly here as any form of "time of day" or variable toll pricing used to influence driving patterns/behavior. Examples are representative to demonstrate existence of smarter tolling in the US's top 10 metropolitan areas, not a comprehensive survey of all smarter tolling.