Road traffic is increasing world-wide; Bangaloreans experience it severely every day. While a better transportation infrastructure and road usage are essential to mitigate the problem, they may not be sufficient. This has led cities to impose congestion charges.

We take the view that "the right to congest" can be made into a tradable commodity: those who use the roads at congested times pay those who stay away during such times. This direct transfer of money from the congestor to the decongestor is incentive compatible: the congestor encounters less traffic and the decongestor is adequately compensated.

We describe an experimental program, called INSTANT (for the Infosys-Stanford Traffic program), which has been under way from Oct 6, 2008, at Infosys Technologies. The aim of the project is to incent Infosys commuters to arrive early, leading to: commute times that are shorter by at least 30 mins, reduced fuel consumption, pollution and overall congestion. The program has been successful so far, with over 6000 participants incentivized through weekly monetary rewards.

The talk describes the background, the incentive mechanism and the status of the INSTANT project.