

# Express Lanes START<sup>SM</sup>: 12-Month Pilot Evaluation

Policy Advisory Council  
Equity and Access Subcommittee  
October 22, 2024



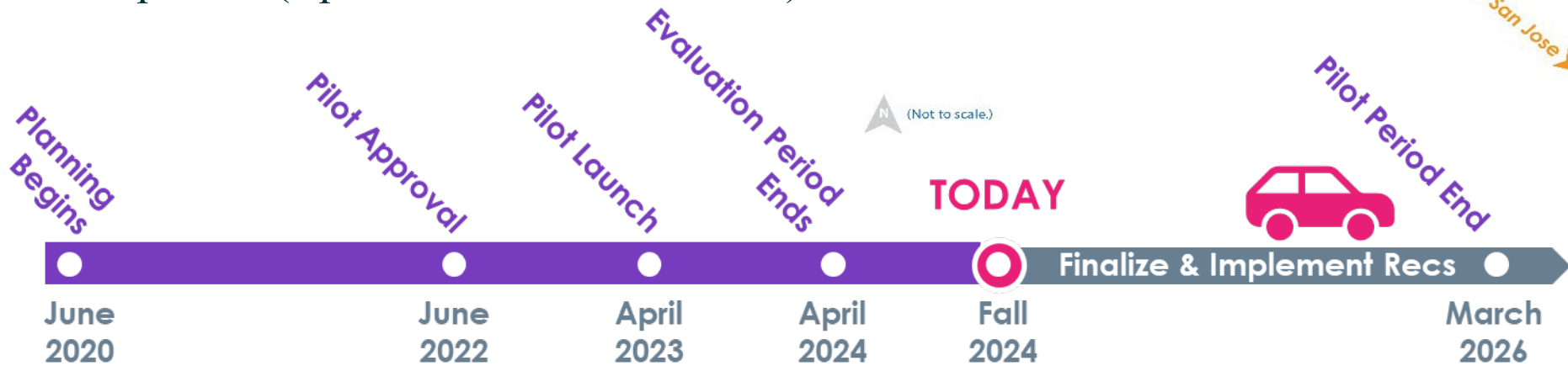
# Pilot Scope

- Concept grew out of I-880 outreach & Policy Advisory Council input
- Toll discount of 50% or more in the I-880 Express Lanes
- Eligibility requirements (same as Clipper<sup>®</sup> START<sup>SM</sup>)
  - Proof of household income at or below 200% Federal poverty level
  - Bay Area mailing address
  - Proof of identity
- Toll discount applied to FasTrak<sup>®</sup> account
- 12-month evaluation period (April 2023 – March 2024)



**One Northbound Express Lane**  
Lane begins at Dixon Landing Road and ends at Leelling Blvd. (~20 miles)

**One Southbound Express Lane**  
Lane begins at Hegenberger Road and ends at Dixon Landing Road (~25 miles)





# Pilot Goals and Target Metrics

## Program Goals

**Increase access to the I-880 express lanes (metrics 1-7)**

**Customers have a good experience - registering and using lanes (metrics 8-10)**

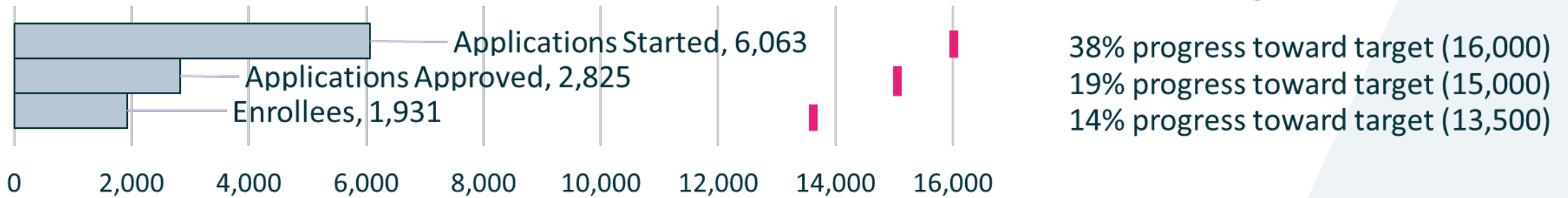
**Maintain operational integrity - speed, reliability, and efficiency (metrics 11-12)**

Target Metrics	Result
1) 16,000 Applications	×
2) 15,000 Approved Applications	×
3) 13,500 Enrolled Households	×
4) Existing FT customers increase use of express lanes 25%	✓
5) New FT customers make 1 or more express lane trips per month	✓
6) All ELS customers average 1 or more express lane trips per month	✓
7) Applicant race & ethnicity aligns with I-880 corridor residents	✓
8) Customers agree or strongly agree that applying for ELS is easy (rank >4)	✓
9) The # of monthly ELS customer calls to the FasTrak CSC ≤ 2% of customers	✓
10) 90% of ELS FasTrak® customer accounts are in “Good Standing”	✓
11) Pilot operating cost is \$500 or less per enrollee	×
12) Express Lane speeds do not fall as a result of the pilot	✓

# Express Lane Access: enrollment and trips

*Lower enrollment than targeted but more trips per user than targeted*

## 12-Month Enrollment

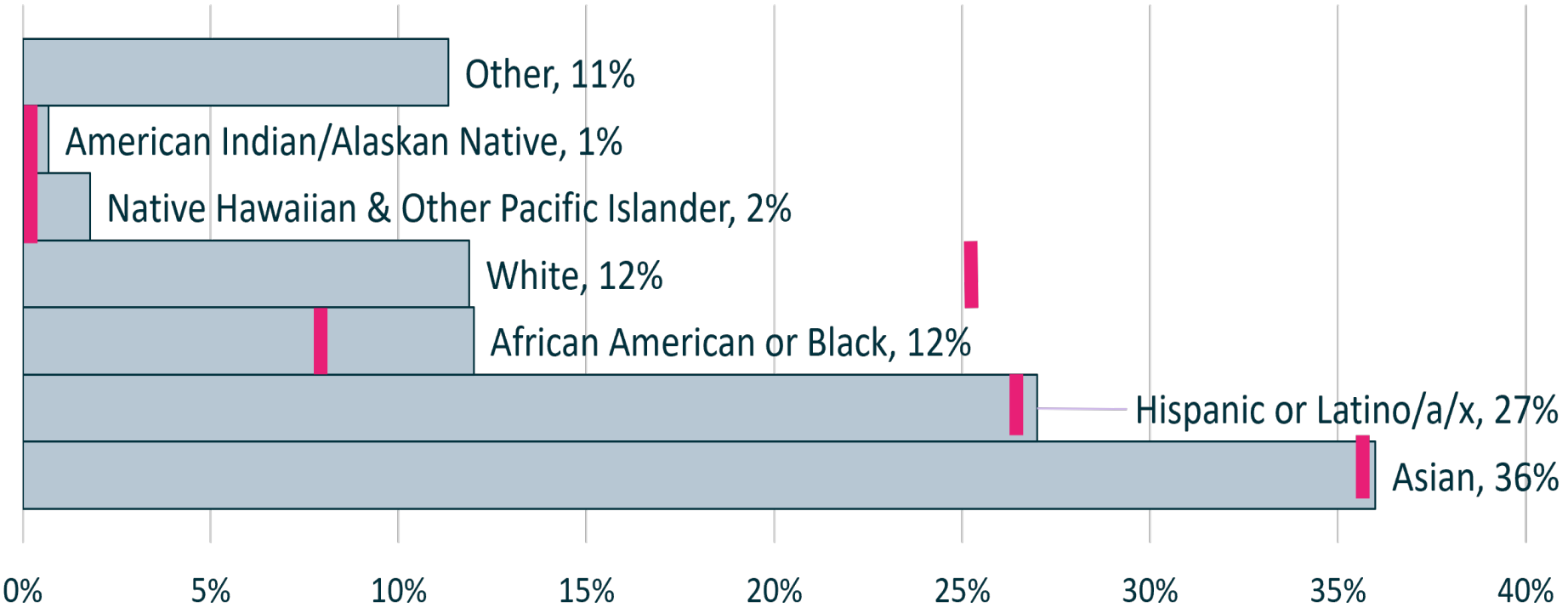


## Trip Making

- ELS participants who were FasTrak customers before joining program increased their paid trips by 33% to 66% per quarter (target: 25%)
- ELS participants who were new FasTrak customers made a median of 4 paid trips / quarter (target: 1 trip)
- 74% of enrollees made an I-880 express lane trip (1,434 of 1,931)
- 49% of enrollees made an I-880 express lane paid trip (966 of 1,931)

# Express Lane Access

*Approved applicants reflect corridor's ethnic diversity*



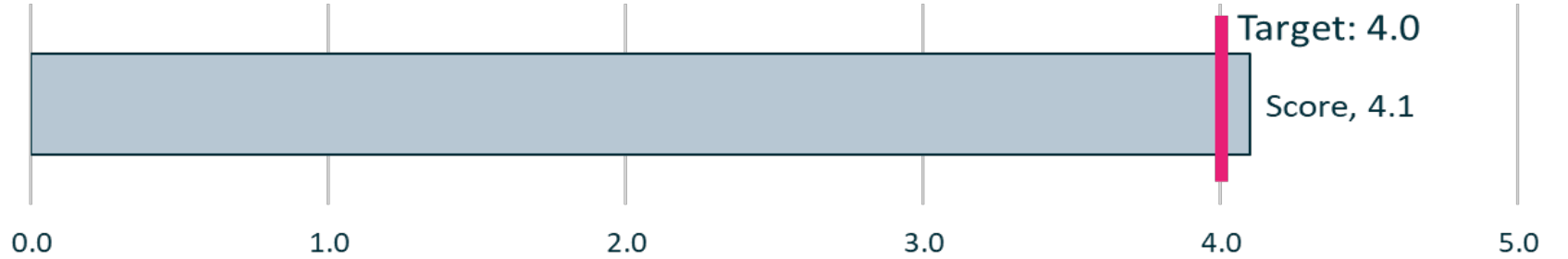
I-880 corridor  
population benchmark

N=2,825

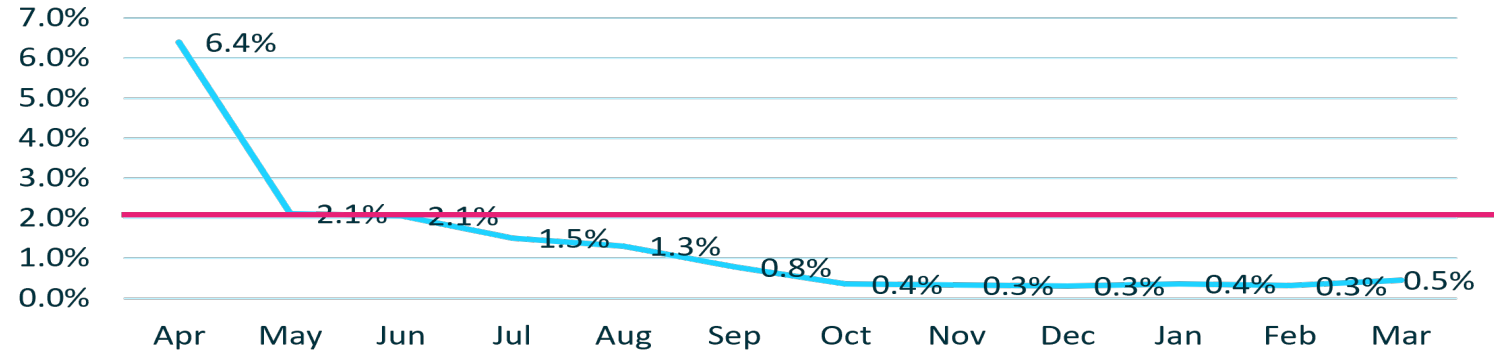
# Customer Experience

All targets were met

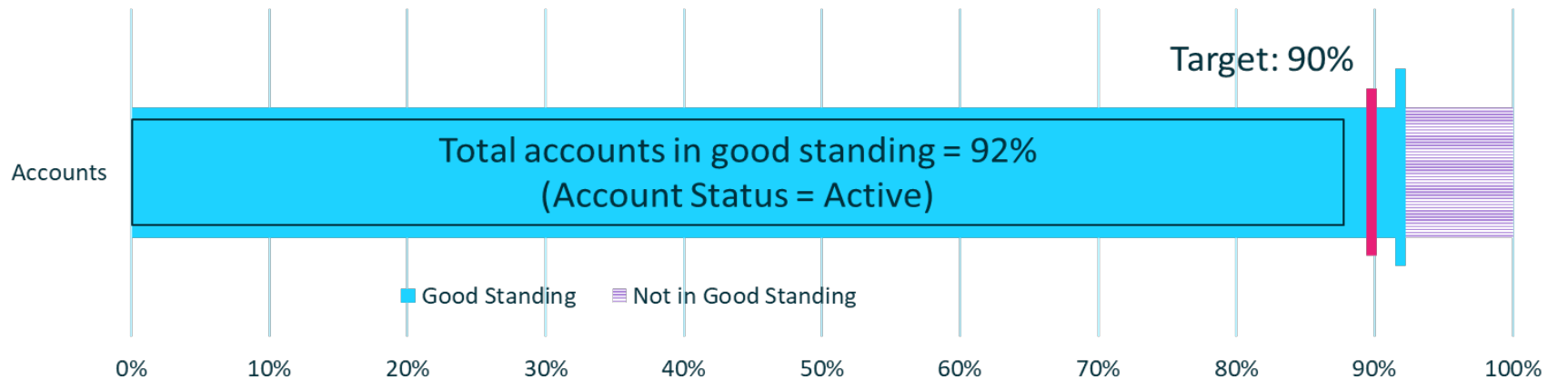
Application Ease Score  
(Target  $\geq$  4.0 on scale of 1 to 5)



Share of ELS Customers Who  
Called FasTrak CSC  
(Target =  $<$ 2% of ELS Customers)



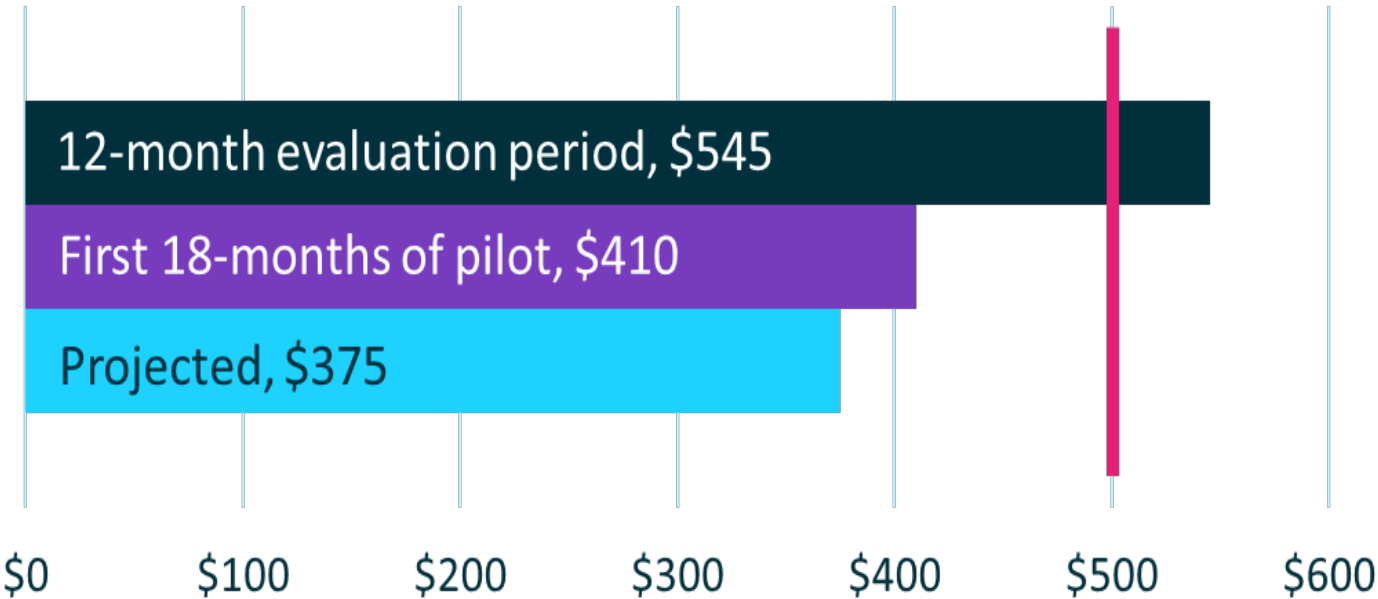
Accounts in Good Standing  
(Target = 90%)



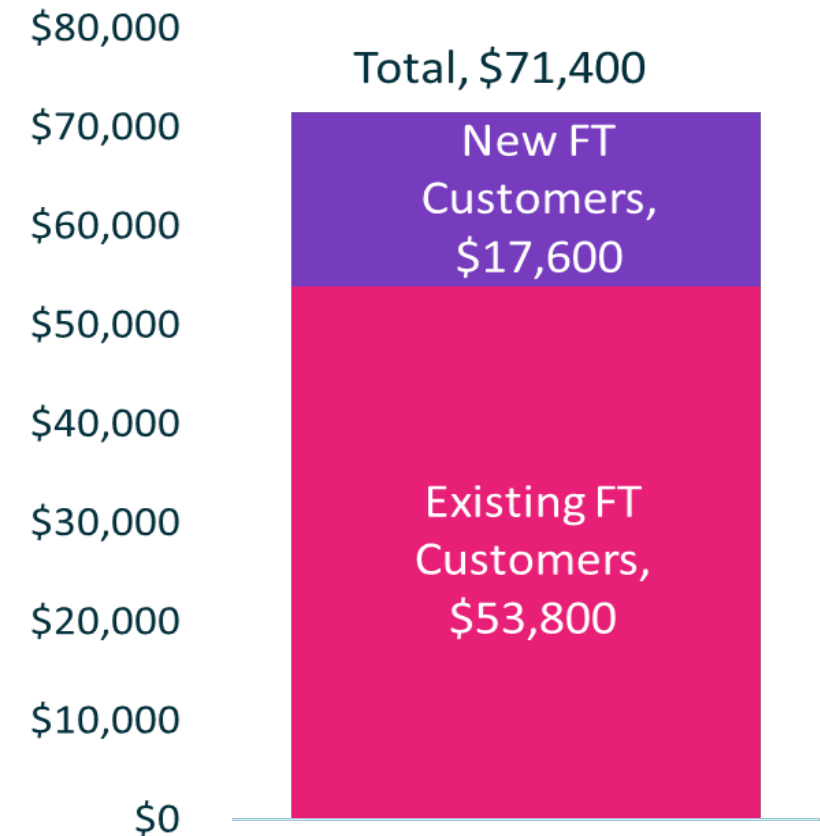
# Express Lane Operations

*Operating costs met expectations; express lane operations unaffected*

Annual Operating Cost Per Enrollee (Target = \$500)



Total Participant Toll Savings Over First 12 Months



Lane Speeds & Tolls Unaffected by ELS

# What else have we learned so far?



Potential customers are a smaller group than expected

- Regular I-880 drivers with express lane use-cases (e.g., in a rush)
- Willing to spend money instead of using free adjacent lane
- Willing to get and manage a FasTrak account

FasTrak could be a barrier for the potential customer base

- Some approved applicants did not take final step to enroll & link FasTrak
- Possible concerns over privacy and/or account management

Preliminary evidence that program may help reduce violation rate

- For participants who had FasTrak before the pilot, 22% fewer incurred I-880 express lane violations in the pilot year than in the prior year



# Did we meet the pilot goals?

## INCREASED ACCESS?

- Yes, for those who joined
- Yes, program design lowers the bar to express lane entry for targeted group
- No, for low-income households broadly

## GOOD EXPERIENCE?

- Yes, participants found program valuable and easy to use
- No, two-step process & FasTrak account concerns contribute to low enrollment
- Yes, program enrollment decreased the rate of customer violations

## OPERATIONAL INTEGRITY?

- Mixed, operating costs are falling but cost to provide benefit will remain higher than the benefit for the next year and likely beyond.
- Yes, traffic operations were not negatively affected

# Aligning our strategy with other agency and regional efforts

- MTC's Means-Based Collaborative will make recommendations winter 2024-2025 for Clipper START, EL START, & future SR-37 pilots
  - Options to extend enrollment to more eligible participants
  - Improvements to operations processes
- Changes to make FasTrak more accessible and attractive
  - Regional effort to encourage uptake for all tolled facilities
- Coordination with partners & stakeholders will continue
  - Gather input when implementing policy changes & any expansion
  - Begin discussion of whether/how to expand beyond I-880
  - Ensure equity efforts continue to complement one another

# During the remaining 18 months of the pilot, how can we improve the program to increase uptake and meet our goals?

Options Being Considered	Access	Experience	Integrity
Expand program reach to meet the untapped opportunity at the current threshold (per Means-Based Collaborative effort)	✓	✓	✓
Work with Bay Area partners on potential approach to rolling out benefit to other express lanes in the region	✓		
Expand & coordinate marketing efforts	✓	✓	
Coordinate with agency-wide efforts to improve access to FasTrak and help customers address violations	✓	✓	✓
Improve customer reminders about FasTrak registration & account linking process; explore option to require FasTrak first	✓	✓	✓

Please direct comments and feedback to:  
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