

Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Policy Advisory Council Equity and Access Subcommittee

March 22, 2024

Agenda Item 4a

Express Lanes STARTSM: Six-Month Pilot Trends

Subject:

Report on trends emerging from Bay Area Infrastructure Financing Authority's (BAIFA's) low-income toll discount pilot on the Interstate 880 (I-880) Express Lanes (named Express Lanes START) after six months of operation.

Background:

In June 2022, BAIFA approved a first-of-its-kind pilot to offer half-price tolls on the I-880 express lanes to Bay Area households with income at or below the 200% federal poverty level and with a FasTrak[®] account. The pilot launched on April 7, 2023. The pilot's goals are to improve access to the I-880 express lanes for low-income drivers, provide a good customer experience, and understand the effect on express lane drivers and operations. While it is too early to draw conclusions, staff will present observations about the pilot experience based on April through September 2023 data. Previously, staff met with this Subcommittee seven times from June 2020 to October 2022 to share information and solicit feedback on pilot design, including pilot concept, corridor selection, stakeholder and customer engagement plan, customer research results, public outreach plan, and pilot evaluation plan.

Next Steps:

Staff will continue the pilot as designed and implemented. Staff will prepare a summary evaluation report after 12 months of pilot operations and recommend future pilot actions, including ending the pilot, changing its design, or expanding it to other BAIFA corridors. Staff will engage with other Bay Area Express Lanes operators as recommendations are prepared. In addition, and on a parallel timeline, staff will complete an internal technical analysis of MTC's means-based programs, such as Express Lanes START and Clipper START, to evaluate the income eligibility threshold, consider new approaches to reach eligible residents, engage the target audience on potential program changes, and explore how to build a single website interface for low-income residents to apply for all of MTC's means-based programs. Staff will continue to seek feedback on key decisions from stakeholders such as this Subcommittee.

Issues:

None identified.

Recommendation:

Information

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Presentation