

Summary of Express Lanes START Marketing and Outreach

In early 2023, MTC began marketing and outreach activities to promote the Express Lanes START program. The approach prioritized community-based outreach and partnerships to meet potential participants where they are (especially for communities that prefer their information in non-English languages) and utilized paid advertising to increase reach and frequency for awareness and prompting action. This summary describes efforts through June 2024. Since then, the marketing team has been working to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies listed here and refine our approach in preparation for the next wave of outreach in 2025.

Marketing Activities

- **Pilot Launch**—Held a media event and hosted ten outlets representing English, Spanish and Chinese-language media:
 - TV: Univision, Telemundo, KTSF, NBC Bay Area, KTVU, ABC7 (KGO-TV)
 - Radio: KCBS
 - Print: Oakland Post, Sing Tao Daily, La Opinion de la Bahia
 - Social: Univision Facebook Live
- **Paid Advertising**—All advertising and collateral was produced and placed in English, Spanish, Chinese and Vietnamese.
 - Paid advertising happened in two flights:
 - April – August 2023 to generate high awareness of the pilot at its launch
 - January – June 2024 because the program team saw a drop in applications after the launch advertising ended.
 - Media strategy focused on drivers in the I-880 corridor. The mix included:
 - Eleven billboards located throughout the 880 Express Lanes corridor
 - Gas pump topper signs at ten gas stations in Equity Priority Communities in Oakland, San Leandro, San Lorenzo, Union City, Hayward, Fremont
 - Video ads on televisions at DMV offices in Hayward, Fremont, and Oakland-C Claremont

- Print ads in Chinese, Spanish, Vietnamese and English publications
 1. Chinese: Sing Tao, World Journal
 2. Spanish: La Opinion de la Bahia, El Observador
 3. Vietnamese: Thang Mo, Calitoday
 4. English: The Oakland Post (the largest African-American weekly newspaper in Northern California)
- Cross-platform digital display banners
- Paid ads on Facebook, Instagram, and NextDoor
- 70,000 direct mail pieces through USPS's Every Door Direct Mail Program
 - Mailers went out in October 2023 and May 2024
 - Selected routes based on input from the community hub partners and MTC's Equity Priority Communities map/data: Oakland, Alameda, San Leandro, Union City, Milpitas, Hayward, San Jose, Santa Clara, Alum Rock and Fremont
- **Social Media**
- Organic posts from Bay Area FasTrak's Facebook and Twitter accounts
 - Social media toolkits developed and provided to partner agencies

Outreach Activities

- **Community Hubs**—MTC contracted with community-based organizations in Oakland, Fremont, and San Jose to generate awareness in the communities they serve and to provide support/assistance with the application
 - Fremont Family Resource Center put up posters at their site, distributed brochures about the pilot, promoted the pilot in 16 editions of their e-newsletter and through their Facebook page.
 - East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC) put up posters in the common areas at their Lions Crossings property and distributed brochures to all EBALDC sites.

- Roots Community Health Center in East Oakland promoted Express Lanes START at their Welcome Wednesday and pop-up events, as well as through door-to-door outreach by their street teams; Roots was more involved in outreach and also conducted outreach to other community-based organizations in their service area.
- The Vietnamese Voluntary Foundation (VIVO) promoted the pilot at their classes, workshops, and events, as well as digitally through their e-newsletter, their own Facebook page, and on other San Jose-area Vietnamese-affiliated Facebook groups.
- **Community Colleges**—MTC partnered with student groups at Laney College, Berkeley City College and San Jose City College to conduct local outreach on campus and in their communities; students distributed hundreds of brochures and hundreds of posters.
- **Labor Unions**—12 labor unions were personally contacted and encouraged to promote the program among their members.
- **Direct CBO Outreach**—370 CBOs were personally contacted:
 - A total of 48 responded with some level of action
 - 78 CBOs were in the area served by Roots Community Health Center
 - 108 were faith-based and three responded: Catholic Charities of the East Bay, Catholic Charities of Santa Clara, and Chabad Center for Jewish life.
 - It seemed as if quite a few CBOs had shuttered, probably due to the COVID shutdown.