

MEMORANDUM

TO: CTIO BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: NICK FARBER, CTIO DIRECTOR, AND SIMON LOGAN, CTIO LIAISON AND PROGRAM COORDINATOR
SUBJECT: CENTRAL 70 GLOBEVILLE & ELYRIA-SWANSEA (GES) TOLLING EQUITY PROGRAM
DATE: MARCH 16, 2022

Purpose:

Provide background information related to the proposed Central 70 GES Low-Income Program.

Action

No action at this time - this memo is Informational only. CTIO¹ staff will seek approval for the program and the Intra Agency Agreement (IAA) between CDOT and CTIO for start-up and admin costs during the April CTIO board meeting.

Background:

The 2017 Record of Decision (ROD) for the Central 70 project included a commitment for CTIO to explore ways to provide discounted access to the Express Lanes for low-income residents of the Globeville-Elyria-Swansea (GES) neighborhoods. As a result, CTIO embarked on a year-long process to comply with this commitment. This effort has included significant engagement with peer agencies nationwide, the GES community, and other local stakeholders.

As a first step, CTIO established a Steering Committee and Stakeholder Advisory Group to guide the process (details on the roles, responsibilities, and makeup of each group can be found in Attachment B). CTIO also conducted a literature review and interviews with other tolling agencies across the nation that have or are in the process of implementing a tolling equity program. See Attachment C for the full report on other national tolling equity/low-income tolling programs.

Numerous meetings were held with the Steering Committee, the Stakeholder Advisory Group, GES residents, and Denver City council members. Two public meetings in the GES community were conducted, and a public survey was circulated to residents to understand community needs and travel patterns. The survey was particularly successful with almost three hundred responses received (Attachment D details key findings from the survey).

Recommended Program Details:

Based on all the feedback received as part of this effort, CTIO staff working under the guidance provided by the Steering Committee developed the following recommendations for the CTIO Board of Directors:

- Recommended Benefit:

¹ The High Performance Transportation Enterprise (HPTE) is now doing business as the Colorado Transportation Investment Office (CTIO). CTIO is how the enterprise refers to itself now and in the future. However, the HPTE name will be used for all legislative, legal, and contractual documents.

- All eligible participants will receive a switchable transponder and promotional credit totaling a monetary value of \$100 when they enroll in the program.
- Additional funds will be available annually for the GES community to decide how to allocate the funds either towards free transit passes or to add credit to the previously enrolled tolling equity Express Lanes accounts after the first year.
- Eligibility:
 - Residents of GES with an annual household income below 200 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL) and households displaced from GES due to eminent domain for the I-70 Central Project with an annual household income below 200 percent of the FPL. CDOT holds a list of these displaced households.
- Budget/Available funds:
 - CTIO will cover the initial cost of the free transponder and promotional credit for all eligible residents.
 - Each subsequent year, 15 percent of net toll revenue from the Central 70 Express Lanes will be allocated to the GES community to pay for the ongoing benefits.

CTIO explored three levels of funding for the program, which were 7.5, 10, and 15 percent of projected net toll revenue based on current Express Lanes toll revenue estimates. In order to provide a significant benefit to GES residents and given the unique nature of the project's impacts on the community, CTIO committed to making 15 percent of annual net toll revenue available for this program. This 15 percent, as currently proposed, doesn't include administrative/start-up costs and is significantly higher than the amount carved out for similar programs in other states.

CTIO and CDOT also explored a possible contribution to the program from CDOT. After discussions with Executive Management Team on the need for toll revenues to be used to provide maximum benefit to the impacted community, CDOT agreed to cover the costs associated with start-up and program administration in the initial years with the funding drawn from the existing Central 70 project contingency fund. The administration costs are estimated at an average of \$100,000 per year over ten years, totaling \$1 million, based on anticipated costs to administer the program by a third-party vendor that is active and trusted by the community.

Key elements of the administration costs include third-party vendor staff time to register eligible residents of GES on the program, marketing, promotion, public outreach, and engagement of GES residents on the distribution of the budget available for free transit passes or to add credit to the previously enrolled low-income Express Lanes accounts after the first year, and periodic program evaluation costs. Small incentives will also be offered to encourage GES residents to complete surveys or engage with other tools to solicit feedback on the program.

Next Steps

The following items will be brought to the Transportation Commission and CTIO Board of Directors during the April 2022 meetings:

- **CTIO Board:** approval of the recommended program, as Central 70 Express Lane toll revenue will be used to pay for program costs.
- **Transportation Commission/CTIO Board:** Execution of an Intra Agency Agreement (IAA) between CDOT and CTIO for start-up/administration costs in the initial years totaling \$1 million. Funds will be drawn from the Central 70 project contingency fund in one lump sum payment.

Attachments

- A. Joint TC/CTIO Board Workshop Presentation: GES Tolling Equity Program (March 16, 2022)
- B. Central 70 GES Tolling Equity Program Development Summary
- C. Report on Toll Agencies with Low-Income Programs
- D. GES residents survey summary report

**Attachment A: Joint TC/CTIO Board
Workshop Presentation: GES Tolling Equity
Program (March 16, 2022)**



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Central 70 Globeville and Elyria-Swansea (GES) Tolling Equity Program Program

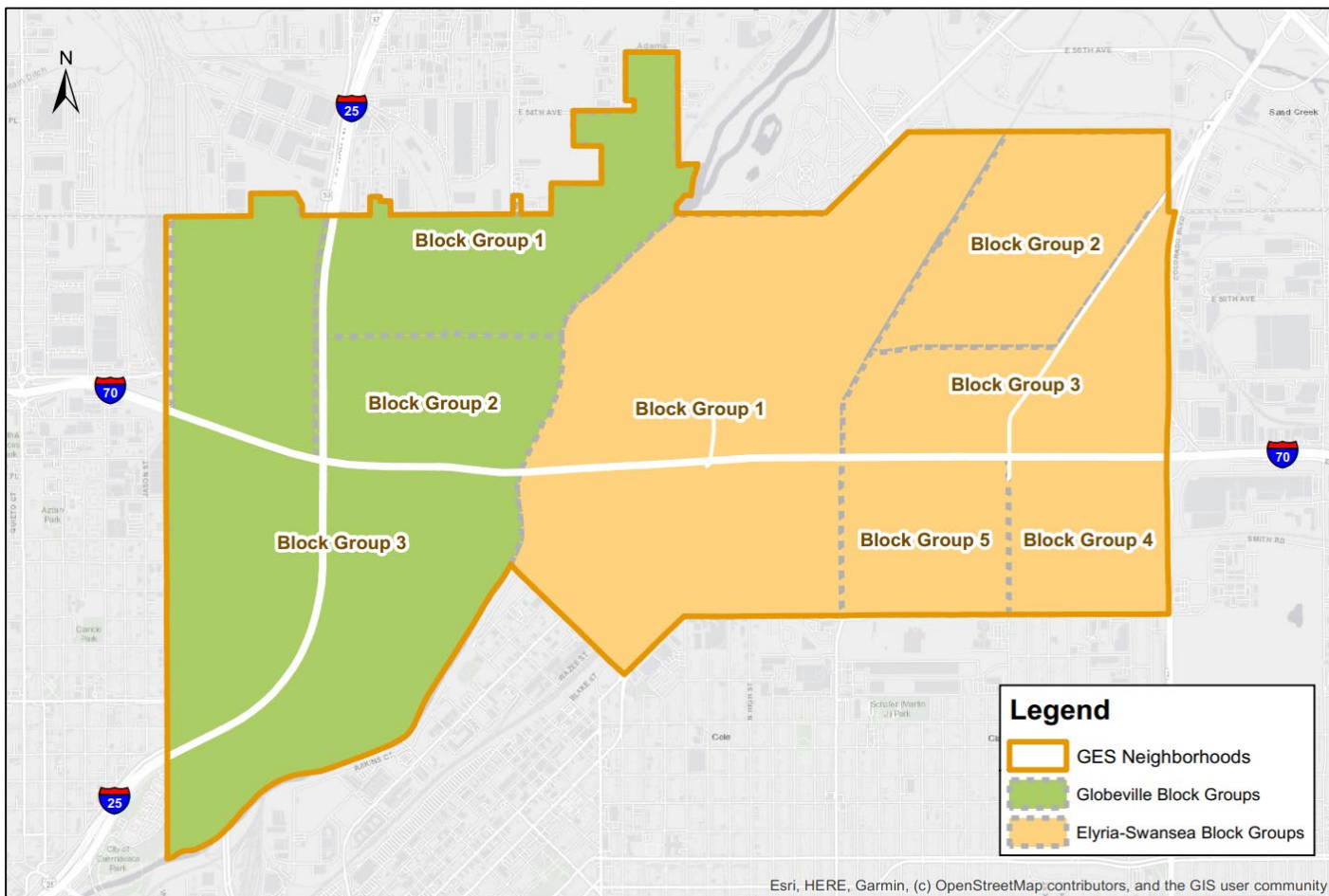
Joint CTIO Board and TC Workshop (March 16, 2022)

Agenda

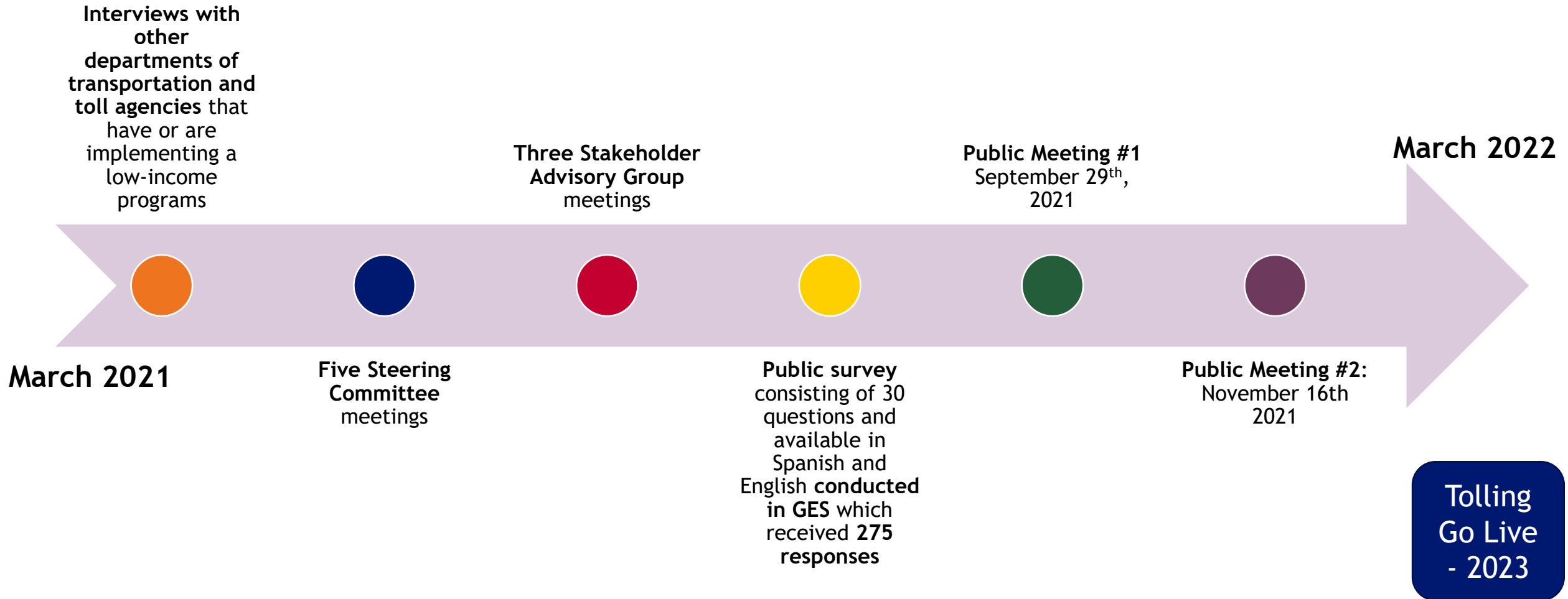
Purpose: Brief CTIO Board and TC members on the steps taken to develop a recommended program option for the Central 70 GES Low-Income Program.

1. Program background
2. Steps we have taken
3. Program selection criteria and considerations
4. Community engagement: survey and public meetings
5. Program budget
6. Recommended program
7. Next steps

Globeville-Elyria-Swansea Neighborhoods



What Steps Have We Taken?



Community Engagement: Public Survey

June/July 2021 (online and hard copy in
Spanish and English)

Responses received: 275

Survey: What Were The Key Takeaways?

Category	Takeaway
Car ownership	7% do not own a car, 25% have a car-lite household
Preferred alternative mode	27% would not take alternative mode, 26% would use transit (bus and/or light rail)
Travel mode	72% drive alone, 13% use the bus, 4% use light rail
Use of I-70	84% use it at least once a week. 45% use it less than 5 times a week.
Toll Tag	83% do not have an ExpressToll Tag.
Banking	55% do not have a credit card and 30% do not have a bank account

Program Options

Program Considerations

Eligibility

- Residence within a geographic boundary
- Income threshold based on Federal Poverty Guidelines

Enrollment

- Frequency
- In-person or online

Verification

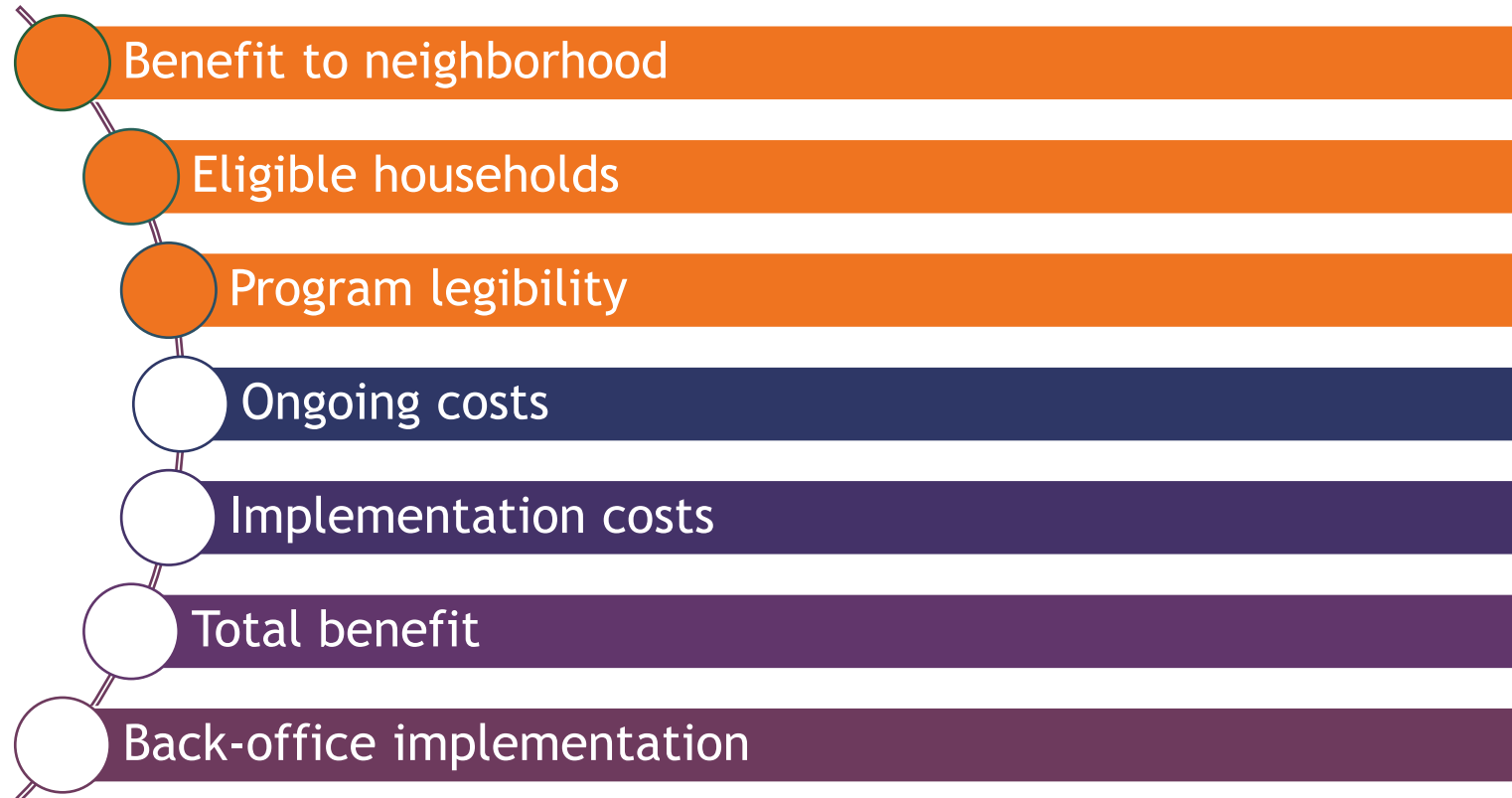
- Enrollment in another program
- Proof of residence and household income
- Concerns for undocumented residents

Accessibility

- Technology
- Banking
- Program awareness

Program Selection Considerations: Steering Committee

Three key areas, highlighted in orange below, were identified as critical to the program



Program Option Categories

1- Flat benefits

2- Neighborhood benefits

3- Frequency-based benefits (retired)

4- Waivers (retired)

5- Caps (retired)

Three Shortlisted Program Options

1.

Identify a popular program in GES expected to end after construction of Central-70 and continue to fund and manage it (e.g. RTD bus passes)

2.

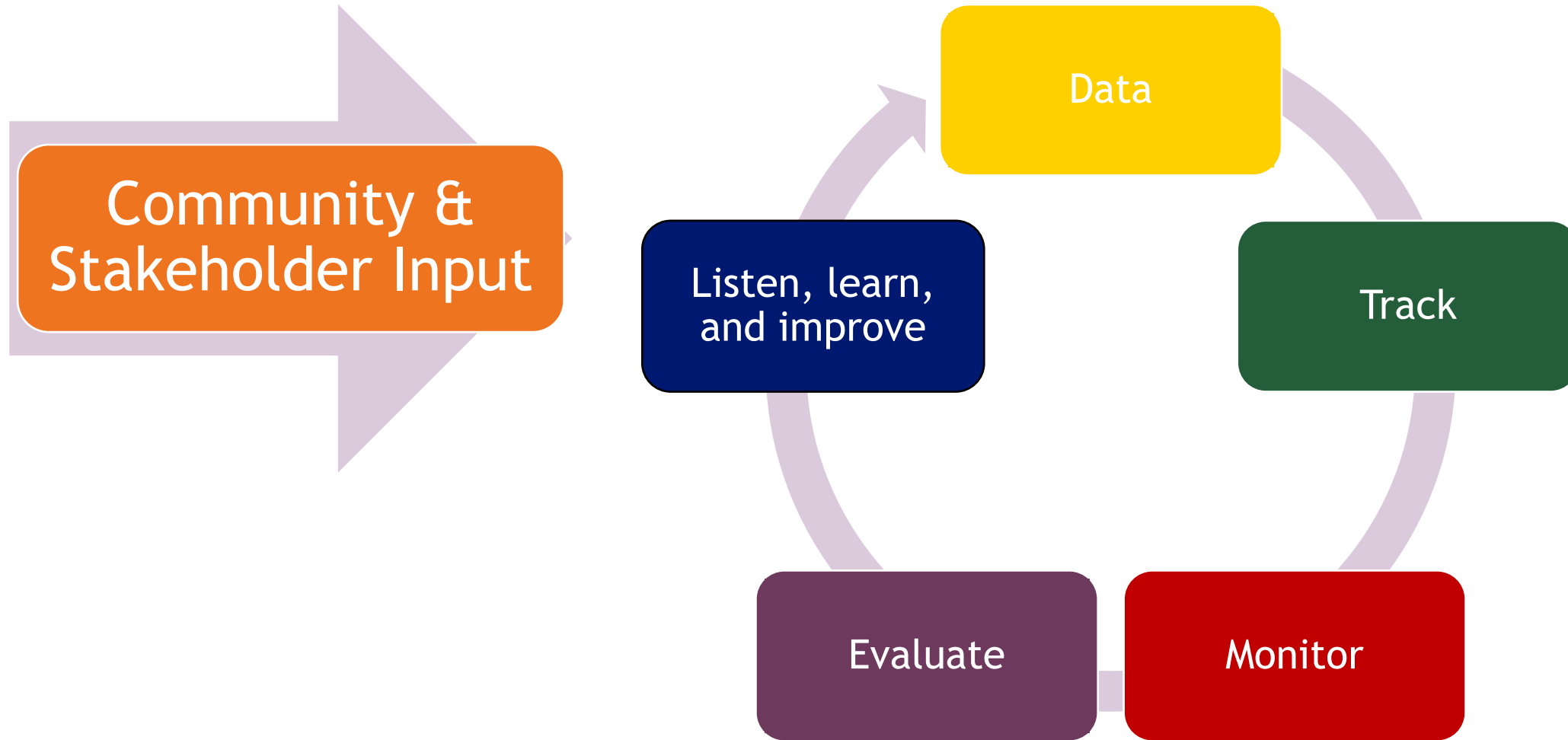
Transponder with an initial balance (amount TBD)

3.

Combination of options 1 & 2

Community Engagement: Public Meetings

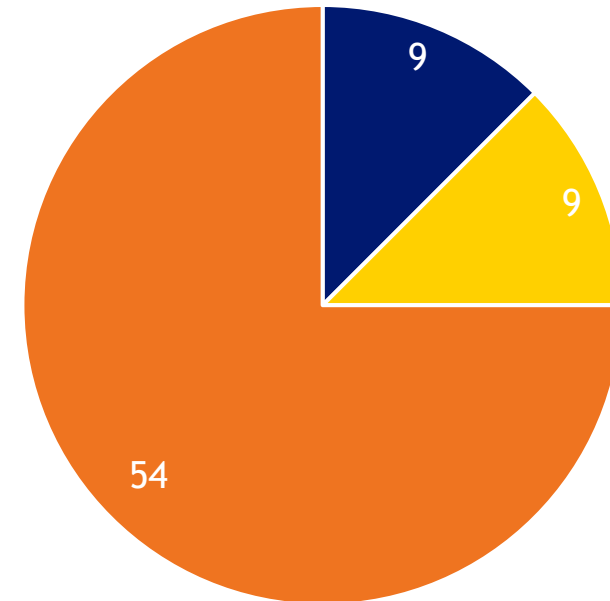
Creating Impact and Accountability



Public Meeting #1 Outcome Summary (29th September, 2021)

- **Location:** Swansea Rec Center + online comment form
- **Attendance:** 25 GES residents, Council members Ortega and CdeBaca, and their staff
- **Program options presented:** Three

Preferred Program Option



- Existing neighborhood program/transit passes
- Free transponder with an initial balance
- Combination of previous two

Public Meeting #2 - How We Adjusted

Federal Poverty level should be higher than 185%

- Ask the community if they would like to increase this to 200%.

Percentage vs. flat amount of revenue from tolls should be allocated to the program

- CTIO is proposing 15 percent net revenue, excluding admin and cost of the transponder/credit.

Community needs to decide how the money is spent

- CTIO offered the opportunity for the community to decide how the funds are spent on transit passes and Express Lanes toll credit beginning in the second year.

Residents who lost their homes through eminent domain should also benefit

- The program will be extended to GES residents that lost their homes through eminent domain and income qualify. This is the only exception to the eligibility criteria.

Public Meeting #2 Program Options Presented

Location: Virtual + online comment form

Attendance: 30 GES

residents and

Councilwoman Ortega

Program options

presented: Two

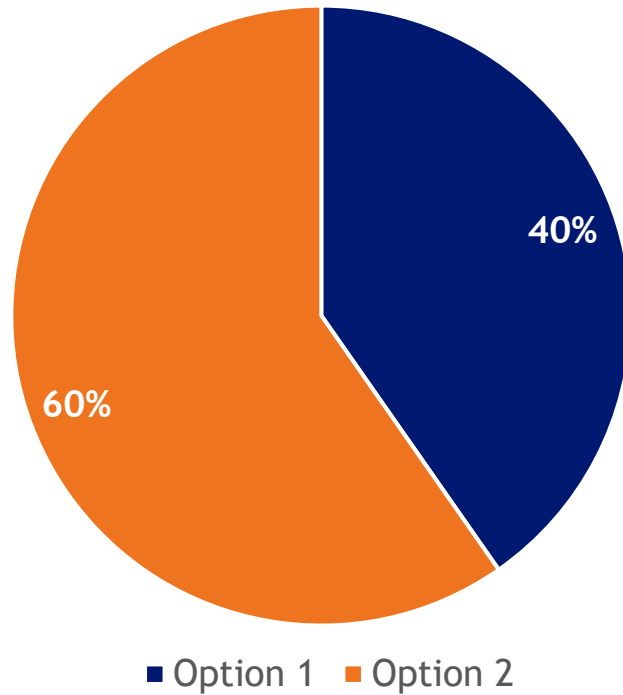
Two options - based on community feedback

Option 1 : A one-time Express Lanes transponder with \$100 credit and additional money would be used for transit passes for GES residents each year.

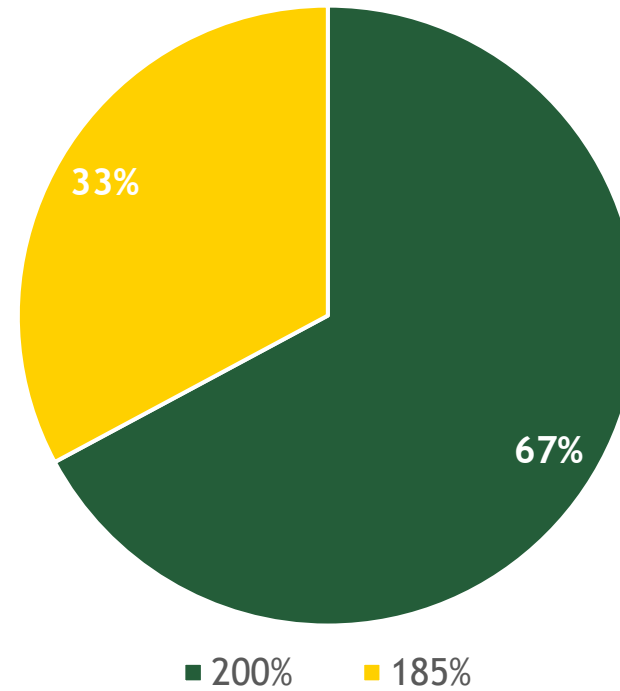
Option 2: A one-time Express Lanes transponder with \$100 credit and GES residents decide to spend the additional money on either transit passes or adding credit to Express Lanes accounts.

Public Meeting #2 Outcome Summary (November 16, 2021)

Preferred Option



Federal Poverty Level Threshold



- 67 responses received - 47 English and 20 in Spanish

Implementation and Recommended Program Option

Implementation of Program Options: Approach approved by the Steering Committee



Recommended Program Option

- Transponder and promotional credit totaling a monetary value of \$100 in the first year.
- 15% of the net toll revenue from Central 70 Express Lanes to provide free transit passes or to add credit to participants' ExpressToll accounts subsequent years
- Split based on input provided by GES residents annually, after the first year.
- **Eligibility:** Resident of GES and below 200% FPL household income threshold; exception is displaced household due to eminent domain for I-70 Central(167 households).

Program Budget

Toll Revenue: What can it be spent on?

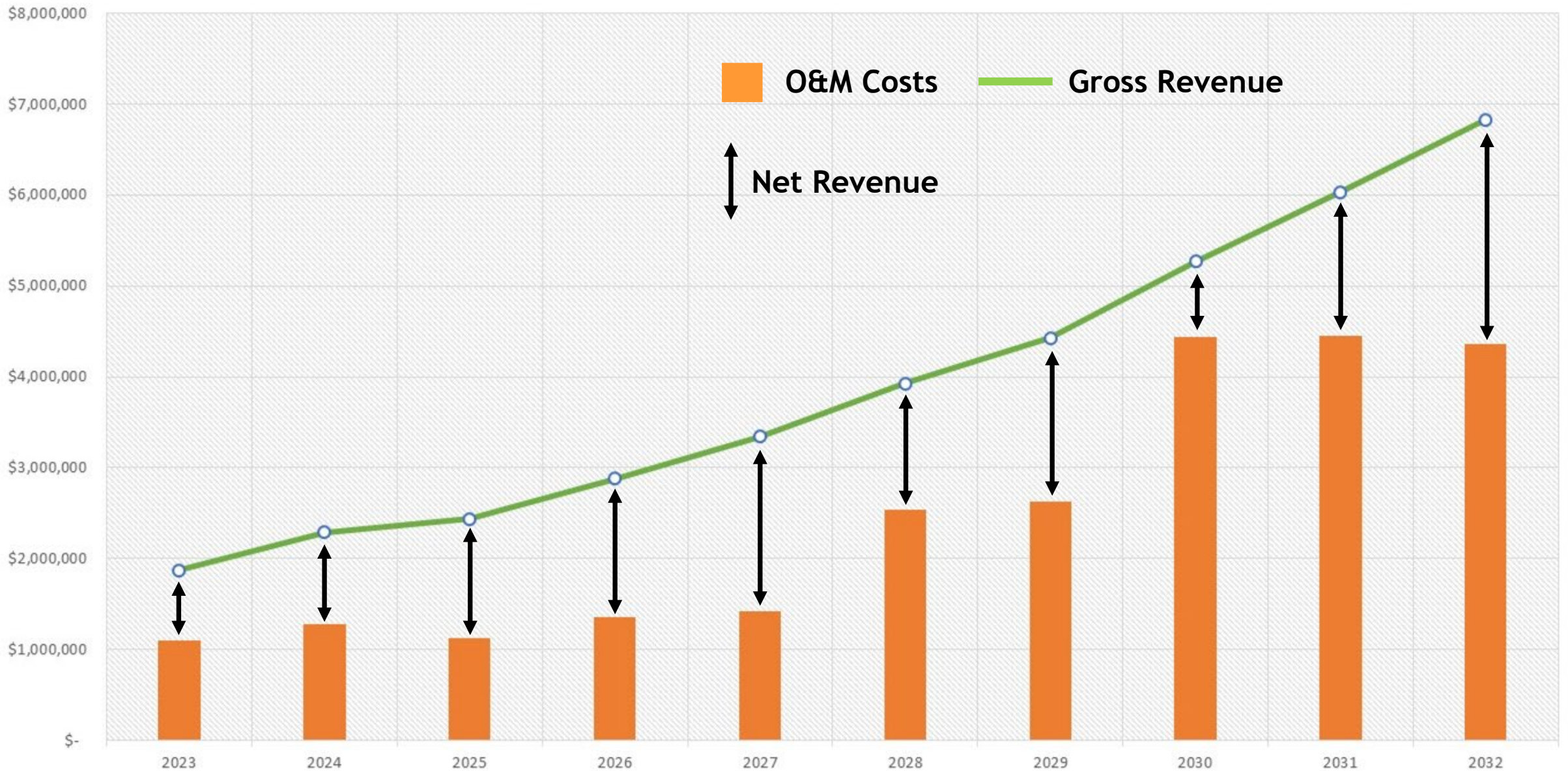
Toll Revenue can only be spent on certain items, per **federal regulations**. They include:

Transit Passes

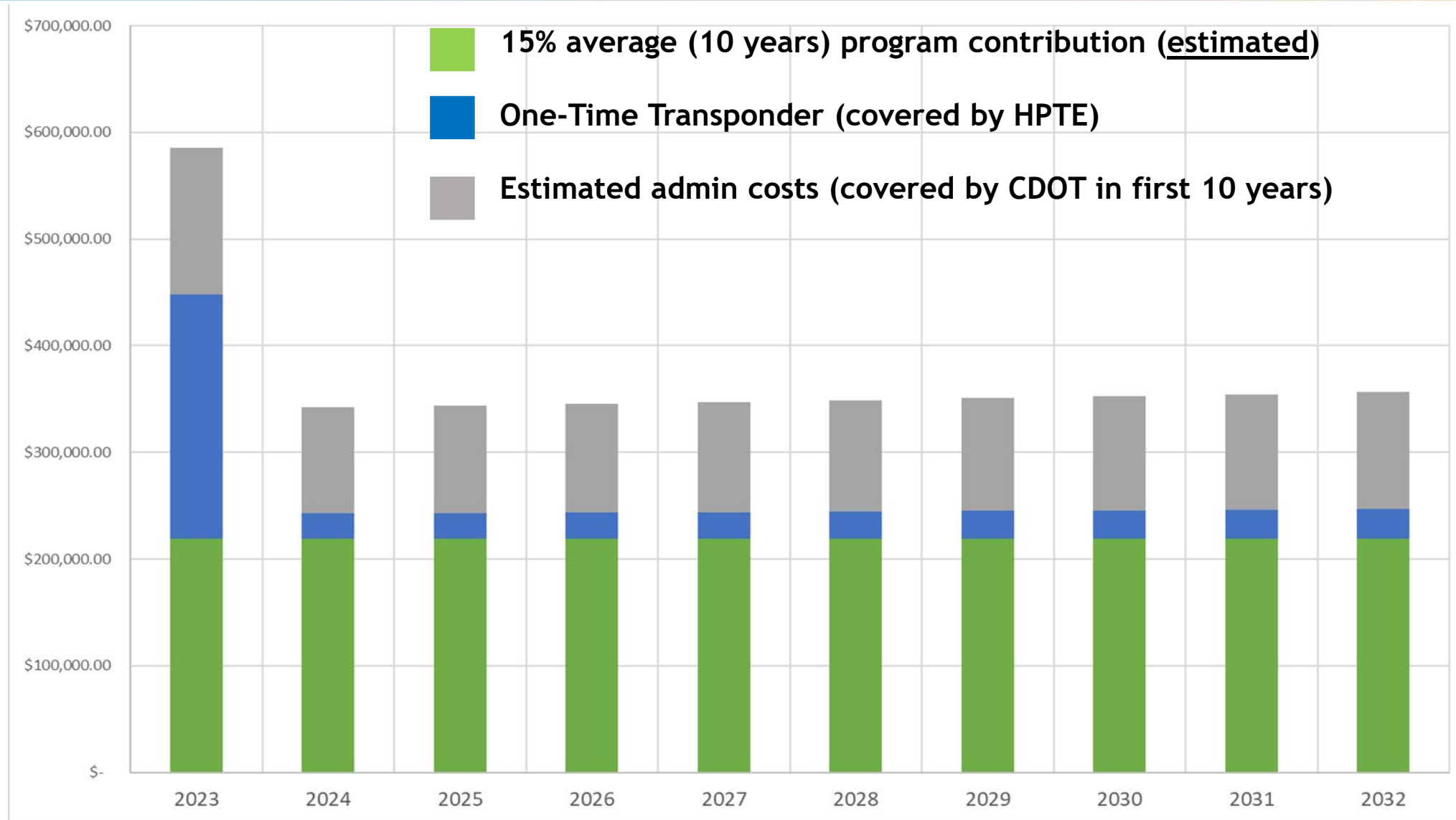
Express Lanes
Transponders
and credit

Administrative
costs

Revenue and Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Costs



Total Program Costs



Next Steps

- Coordination with E-470 on the implementation of the program.
- April 2022: CTIO Board consideration of recommended program option and CDOT consideration of start-up and admin costs (totaling \$1 million) from existing Central 70 project contingency funds.
- April 2022: Joint Steering Committee and Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting (April 2022) to discuss program implementation progress.
- Final public meeting #3 (Date TBD) to promote the program and encourage eligible residents to apply.
- Program go live will align with the Central 70 Express Lanes opening - anticipated in early 2023.

Thank you!

Attachment B: Central 70 GES Tolling Equity Program Development Summary



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Central 70 Globeville and Elyria-Swansea Tolling Equity Program Development Summary

March 2022

Overview

The ongoing construction of Central 70 will redesign ten miles of Interstate 70 (I-70) in Denver, Colorado, from Interstate 25 (I-25) on the west to Chambers Road on the east. The improvements will provide new capacity in the form of one new tolled Express Lane in each direction, with the potential to add a second Express Lane between Brighton Boulevard and I-270 in the future. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) (2016) and the 2017 I-70 East Record of Decision (ROD) for the Central 70 project included an extensive discussion of environmental justice concerns.

One issue identified in that discussion was how the project might impact low-income populations living in the areas adjacent to the project. Low-income community representatives participated extensively in public involvement opportunities expressing their concerns that those with lower incomes would not be able to use the tolled Express Lanes due to affordability issues.

To mitigate this potential equity impact of Express Lanes on low-income populations, the ROD included a commitment for the High Performance Transportation Enterprise (HPTE), now doing business as the Colorado Transportation Investment Office (CTIO), of the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), to explore ways to provide a means for some type of discounted access to the Express Lanes for low-income populations in the Globeville-Elyria-Swansea (GES) neighborhoods.

This document summarizes the process, research, and robust engagement conducted with key stakeholders, council members, and the GES community to identify a recommended program option to be considered by the CTIO Board of Directors for approval in early 2022.

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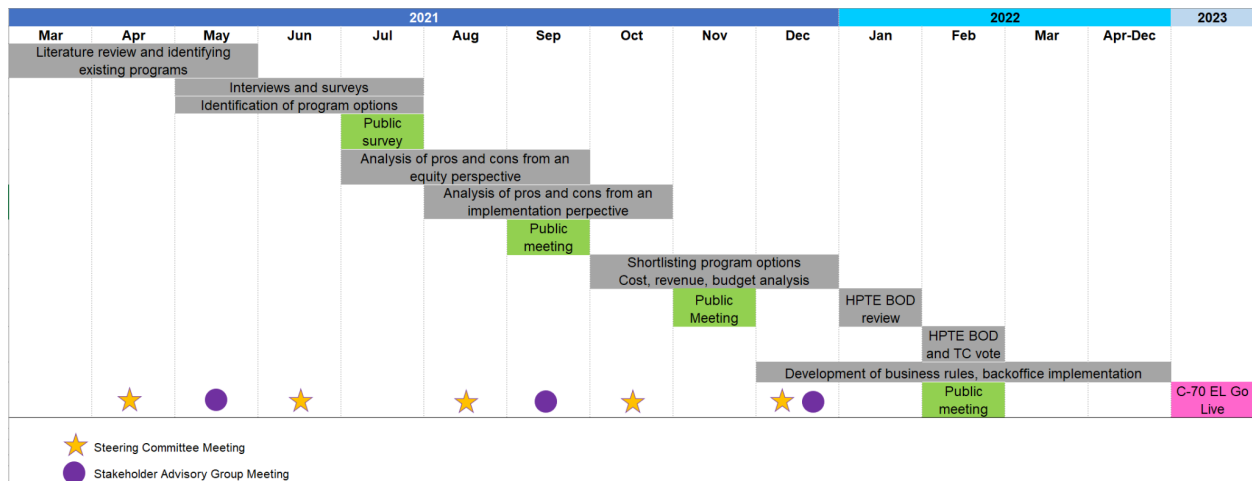
1. Record of Decision (ROD): Addressing Equality Impacts Of Access To The Tolled Express Lanes

The average household incomes of the population living in the GES neighborhoods are lower than those in other parts of the City and County of Denver raising a concern of potential equity impacts of the Central 70 tolled express lanes on these populations. CDOT decided to mitigate those impacts by developing an operational program and policies to enhance access to the Express Lanes for those residents. The program to be developed is outlined in the ROD as follows:

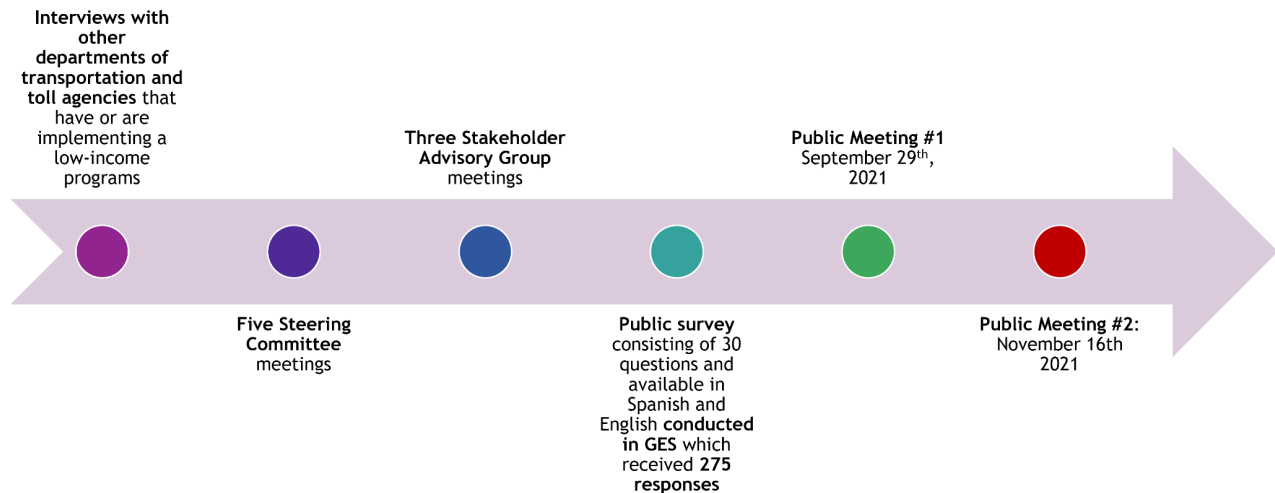
“Equity impacts for the financial burden of access to the tolled Express Lanes will be mitigated by providing to eligible residents of Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea free transponders, pre-loading of tolls or other means determined prior to the opening of the tolled Express Lanes. Eligibility and the duration of the program are expected to be determined based on factors including, but not limited to, residency, financial burden, number of vehicles per resident or household, etc.”

According to the ROD, residence in GES neighborhoods forms the base criterion for eligibility to receive a benefit. Other criteria would be determined as part of the program development process, including inputs from multiple stakeholders and significant community outreach.

2. Schedule



3. Key milestones outline



4. Report on Toll Agencies with Tolling Equity Programs

A literature review and interviews were conducted between May and June 2021 to gather information from other agencies across the nation that are either developing or have developed and implemented a low-income mitigation program. The following paragraphs in this section summarize the key findings of that report.

Agencies with Tolling Equity Programs

A national scan of tolling equity programs for toll lanes indicated that several agencies have or plan to have some form of equity program to benefit low-income or historically disadvantaged users of the tolled Express Lanes/facility. These programs are in various stages of development, with some in the early stages of becoming fully operational. The project team selected five programs and interviewed respective agency representatives, which included:

1. Los Angeles County, California: Low-Income Assistance Plan
2. Virginia DOT: Toll Relief Program, Portsmouth and Norfolk, Virginia
3. San Mateo County, California: SM 101 Toll Equity Program
4. San Francisco Bay Area, California: Means-Based Toll Discount Program
5. Washington State: I-405 and SR 167 Low-Income Toll Program

Key Takeaways

The high-level key takeaways from the report included:

- There is a trade-off between the number of program participants and the amount of the benefit. Given the limited nature of program budgets, an agency can provide a

relatively large benefit to a few people or a small benefit to many more people. CTIO will have to balance both elements to ensure that the final program benefit offered is both meaningful to its recipients and readily accessible to all those who are potentially eligible.

- All agencies implemented or are proposing to implement the program as a pilot when it opens. This alerts the public to expect changes to the program based upon how it performs once actually implemented and also provides the agency some room to modify the program before making it permanent.
- Tapping into systems that are already in place by other agencies cuts program implementation costs and timelines. It also can reduce the barrier to program entry for applicants who already use these other systems. On the other hand, it does potentially limit program flexibility.
- When a program is adopted, a thoughtful communication plan must be implemented to ensure maximum participation of eligible residents.

The report noted that there is no one-size-fits-all approach for developing a tolling equity program for tolled Express Lanes. CTIO must consider its priorities, compliance with the ROD for the program, and the priorities of the GES neighborhoods' residents and then develop a shortlist of program options accordingly.

5. Project Groups

Participating agencies and stakeholders were organized into one of four key groups to provide meaningful involvement in the project and make the best use of participants' time:

- Project Management Team
 - ***Function:*** Oversight of overall project communications, decision-making, and task identification and assignment. Ensure the project remains on schedule and budget, serves as a media contact point, and determines the recommendations and presentation of decision items to the CTIO Board.
- Steering Committee
 - ***Function:*** Integrate various disciplines and perspectives of agencies and stakeholders into the study; make recommendations on critical issues and decisions at project milestones; provide guidance; receive project updates and participate in bi-monthly progress meetings.
- Stakeholder Advisory Committee
 - ***Function:*** Advise and provide recommendations on project activities and plans from a stakeholder perspective, particularly related to implementation and accessibility of benefits to residents; receive project updates at critical milestones.
- GES residents, including Businesses and Special Interests within the community.
 - ***Function:*** Participate at their option in public meetings, provide inputs and concerns during public meetings;

Appendix A summarizes the membership of each of the groups noted above and Appendix B provides a summary of the key stakeholders and GES organizations outreached as part of the community engagement process outlined below.

6. Project Group Meeting Summaries

The Steering Committee met five times between April and December in 2021. The Stakeholder Advisory Group met three times in the same time period. A high-level summary of the key topics of discussion and recommendations (if any) are included below.

In addition to the meetings of these two groups, individual meetings with Councilwoman At-Large Ortega and Councilwoman CdeBaca were held on three occasions in total to solicit their feedback on the progress, program options, and budget. CTIO would like to thank them for their contributions and help in gathering feedback from GES residents that will benefit from the implemented program.

Steering Committee and Stakeholder Advisory Group Meetings

Group	Meeting Number and Date	Key Items Discussed	Outcome/Recommendation
Steering Committee	#1 May 5, 2021	Overview of the program development process and timeline. Presented the findings from the interviews conducted with other agencies across the nation that have implemented or are working on implementing a tolling equity/low-income toll program.	N/A
Stakeholder Advisory Group	#1 June 9, 2021	Discussion on the program development process, schedule, possible program selection criteria, and case studies of other tolling equity/low-income programs implemented or benign implemented by other toll agencies.	N/A
Steering Committee	#2 June 23, 2021	Consider survey questions/outreach, program selection criteria, the income threshold for the program, and the preliminary list of program options.	Set the income threshold to 185% of FPL for household income based on other programs, including RTD, that use this level for low-income residents.
Public Survey - open 25th June - 1st August 2021			
Steering Committee	#3 August 10, 2021	Survey responses discussion and direction on shortlisted program	Three program options were selected to present during

		options for the first public meeting in September.	<p>the first public meeting and included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identity a popular program in GES expected to end after the construction of Central 70 is complete and continue to fund and manage it (e.g. RTD bus passes). 2. Transponder with an initial balance (amount TBD) 3. Combination of options one and two.
Stakeholder Advisory Group	#2 September 17, 2021	Discussion of survey results and responses and program options and eligibility.	<p>The group recommended that participants should not be required to be on RTD's LiVE program as this would create a significant barrier to residents' access to the benefits.</p> <p>The group recommended that the community should help with the distribution of transit passes to make it as easy as possible for eligible residents to access.</p>
Public Meeting #1 - September 29, 2021			
Steering Committee	#4 October 7, 2021	Discuss the public meeting/feedback and consider if/how program options should change.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Let the community decide if the FPL household income level should increase to 200% (the highest of any tolling equity programs across the nation) 2. Reduce the program options from three to two and focus on the combination. 3. Empower the community to decide how the money is spent by providing this as

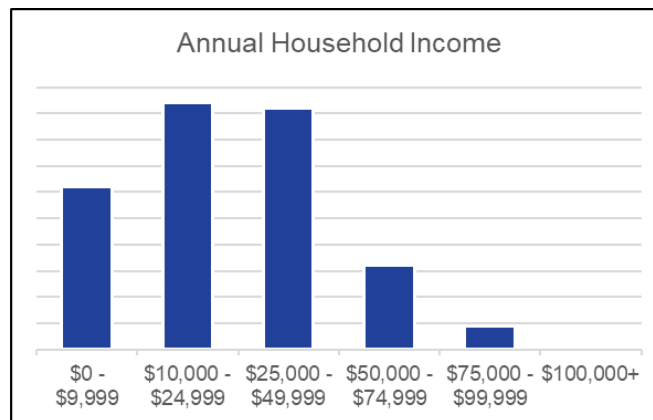
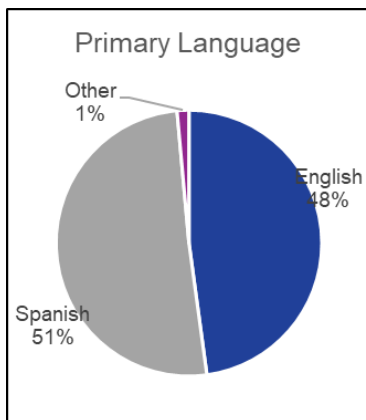
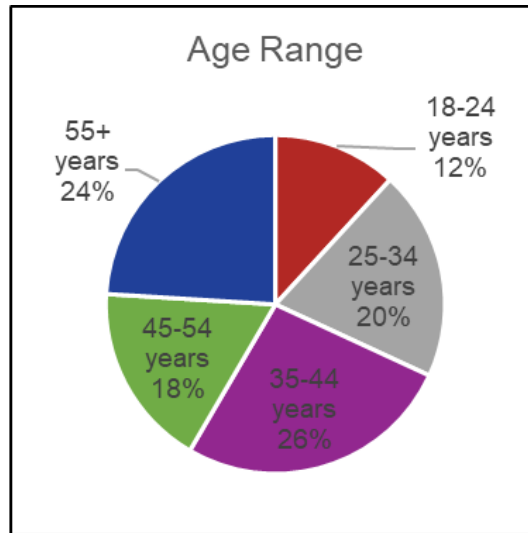
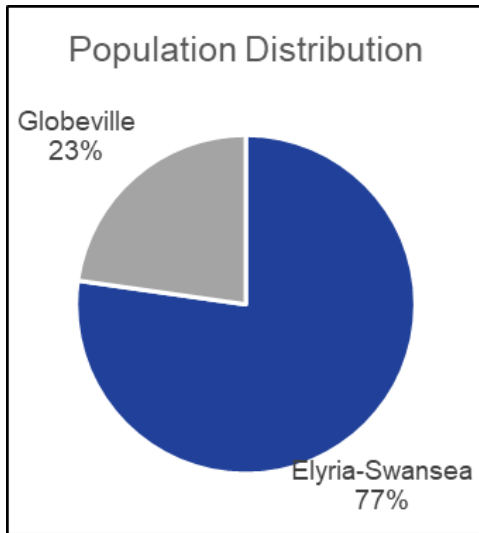
			<p>one of the shortlisted program options.</p> <p>4. Make the program as accessible as possible by considering a contract with a third-party vendor to implement it locally.</p>
CTIO Board of Directors	20th October 2021	Presentation that covered an overview of the process and steps taken to date to develop a program.	N/A
Public Meeting #2 - November 16, 2021			
Steering Committee	#5 December 7, 2021	Discuss the program budget, public meeting #2 feedback, and decide what the provisional preferred program option should be.	<p>Recommended program unanimously agreed by the Steering Committee:</p> <p>Program: Transponder and promotional credit totaling a monetary value of \$100 in the first year. 15% of the net toll revenue from Central 70 Express Lanes to provide free transit passes or to add credit to participants' ExpressToll accounts subsequent years</p> <p>Split based on input provided by GES residents annually, after the first year.</p> <p>Eligibility: Resident of GES and below 200% FPL household income threshold; the exception is displaced household due to eminent domain for I-70 Central(167 households).</p>
Stakeholder Advisory Group	#3 December 14, 2021	Discuss feedback from public meetings #1 and #2, recommended program option, and eligibility	

7. Public Survey

CTIO distributed and promoted a survey targeted at GES residents with the support of North East Transportation Connections (NETC), a traffic demand management organization that has close ties to the GES communities, that identified various events and opportunities to solicit feedback from residents.

To incentivize community members to complete the 30 question survey, five \$50 gift cards were distributed every Friday between June 25th and August 1st, 2021, when the survey was open. This incentive, along with promotion at community events, helped to generate 275 responses from GES residents.

The sample size had a margin of error of plus or minus 5 percent at a 90 percent level of confidence. The responses are reasonably representative of the overall neighborhood in terms of age and language. There was a higher representation of low-income residents, particularly from the Elyria Swansea neighborhood, as demonstrated by the charts below.



Survey Key Takeaways

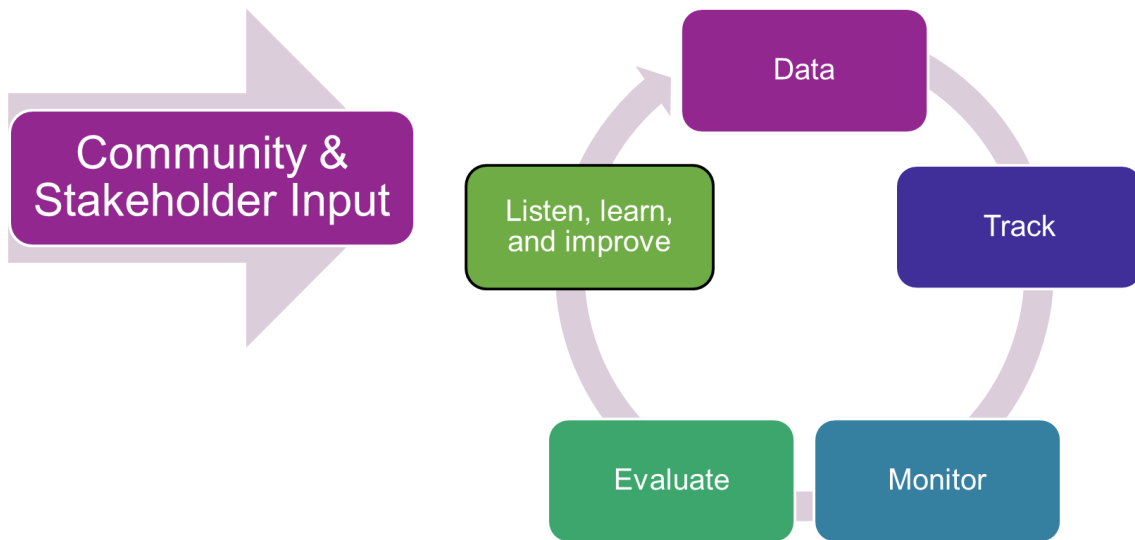
Category	Takeaway
Banking	55% of respondents do not have a credit card and 30% do not have a bank account
Neighborhood programs	65% of respondents do not use any neighborhood transportation programs
Neighborhood residence	Over 60% of respondents have lived in the neighborhood for over 10 years
Car ownership	7% do not own a car, 25% have a car-lite household i.e. fewer cars than the number of drivers in the house
Travel mode	72% drive alone, 13% use the bus, 4% use light rail
Preferred alternative mode	27% would not take an alternative mode (other than drive alone), 26% would use transit (bus and/or light rail)
Use of I-70	84% of respondents use it at least once a week. 45% use it less than 5 times a week.
Meaning of affordability	Over 55% of respondents prefer some form of discount, 24% prefer some free trips a year. Over 70% of current users of EL prefer some form of discount.
Use of C-70 EL	25% of respondents said they would use C-70 occasionally or frequently. 35% of those said they would be in HOV mode occasionally or frequently.
Toll Tag	83% of respondents do not have an ExpressToll Tag.

8. Public Meeting Summaries

Two public meetings were held in 2021. One was on September 29th in the Elyria-Swansea Recreation Center and the second was held on November 16th (virtually). All materials

associated with the meetings were presented in both Spanish and English, and Spanish translation was available at both meetings. CTIO has continued to reshape and adjust the proposed program based on the public comments received.

Accountability and adjustment process for program development



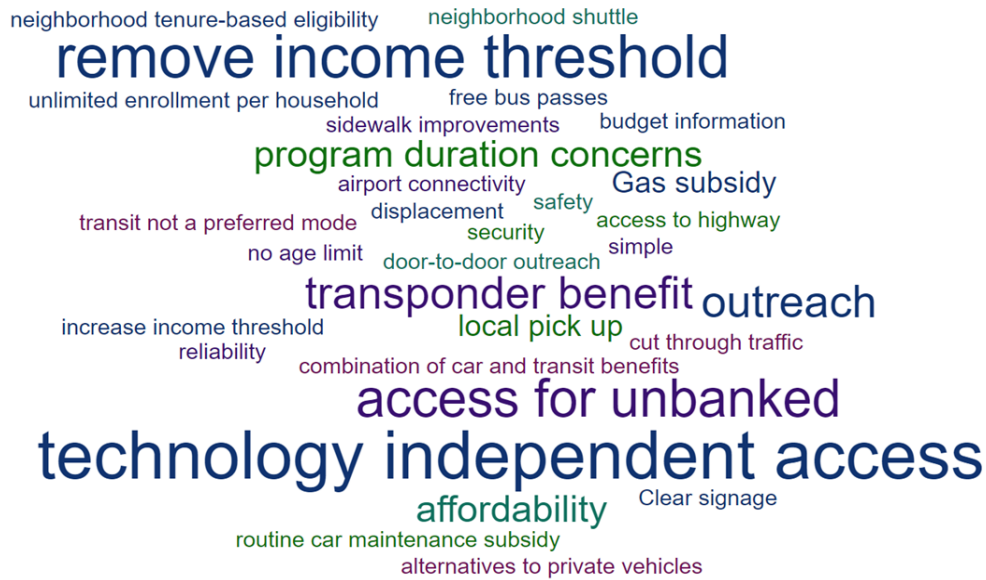
Public Meeting #1: September 29, 2021

The first meeting was focused on providing an overview of the process to develop a program for GES residents to access the tolled Express Lanes for a discounted rate and the key highlights from the public survey that received 275 responses from GES residents. Three program options, informed by the survey and input from the Steering Committee, were presented to the estimated 30 residents that participated, including Councilwoman At Large Ortega and Councilwoman CdeBaca, which included:

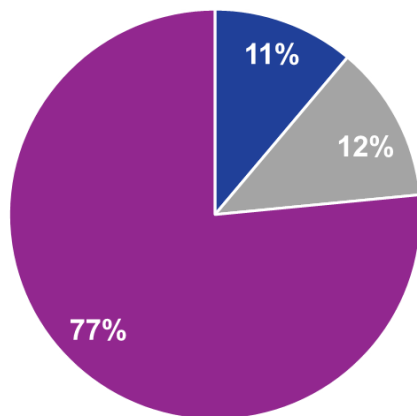
1. Identify a popular program in GES expected to end after the construction of Central 70 is complete and continue to fund and manage it (e.g., RTD bus passes).
2. Transponder with an initial balance (amount TBD)
3. Combination of options one and two.

For residents who could not participate in person, online comment and feedback forms were made available for two weeks after the meeting in Spanish and English to gather as much feedback as possible. GES residents that participated in this meeting and those that responded to the comment form provided a range of comments and feedback. The below word cloud highlights the key items that were raised. The larger the word(s), the more times it was mentioned.

Education



The comment form’s main purpose was to gather feedback on which of the three program options residents felt were a better fit for the community and to gather any additional feedback or comments they had. The comment form received 80 responses and the vast majority of community members preferred the third combination option, as demonstrated by the pie chart below.



- Identify a popular program in the neighborhood and continue to fund it (for example, free RTD passes)
- Provide a free transponder with an initial balance (amount to be decided later)
- Combination of above two

Public Meeting #2: November 16, 2021

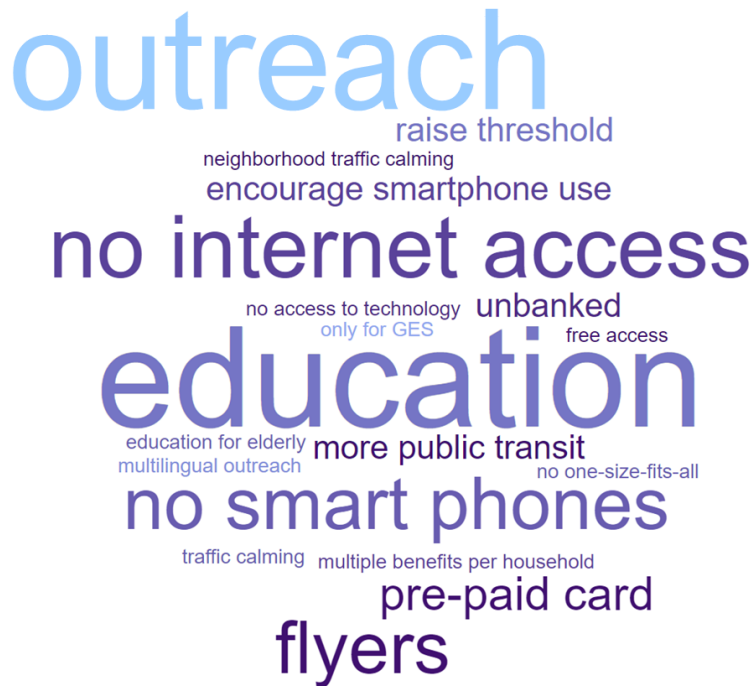
The second public meeting was held virtually at the request of Councilwoman CdeBaca and Councilwoman At-Large Ortega. The focus of the meeting was on the proposed budget for the program, how CTIO adjusted the possible program based on feedback from the first meeting (highlighted in the below diagram), including increasing the income threshold for eligibility and reducing the program options from three to two. Both of the options presented to the community related to a combination, which was the most popular choice during the first meeting, and included:

1. A one-time Express Lanes transponder and credit totaling \$100 and any additional money available would be used for transit passes for GES residents each year.
2. A one-time Express Lanes transponder and credit totaling \$100 and GES residents deciding annually to spend the additional money on either transit passes or adding credit to Express Lanes accounts.

Listening, Learning, and Improving: How CTIO Adapted Based on Public Meeting #1 Feedback

Federal Poverty level should be higher than 185%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask the community if they would like to increase this to 200%.
Percentage vs. flat amount of revenue from tolls should be allocated to the program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CTIO is proposing 15 percent net revenue, excluding admin and cost of the transponder/credit.
Community needs to decide how the money is spent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CTIO offered the opportunity for the community to decide how the funds are spent on transit passes and Express Lanes toll credit beginning in the second year.
Residents who lost their homes through eminent domain should also benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The program will be extended to GES residents that lost their homes through eminent domain and income qualify. This is the only exception to the eligibility criteria.

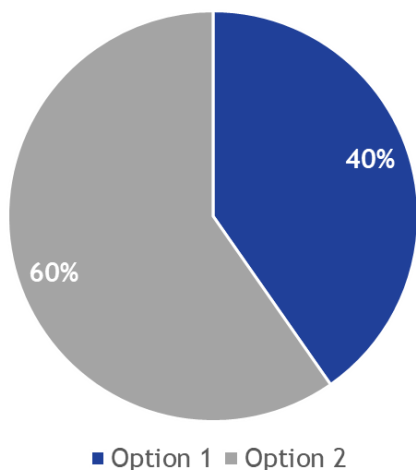
GES residents that participated in this meeting and those that responded to the online comment form (available for two weeks after the meeting) provided a range of comments and feedback. The below word cloud highlights the key items that were raised. The larger the word(s), the more times it was mentioned.



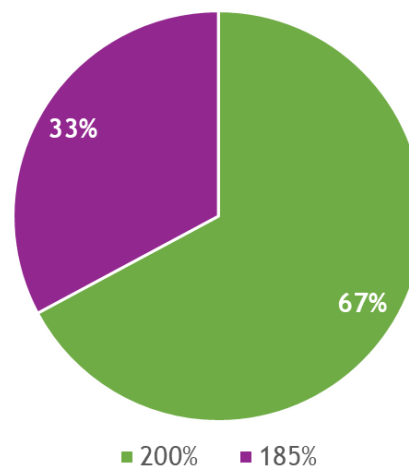
Almost seventy GES residents provided feedback via the comment form which was available in both English and Spanish. There were two critical questions raised in the comment form. The first was which of the two program options the community preferred, and the second was if the income threshold should be increased to 200% or remain at 185% - an estimated increase of 10% or 1000 residents if the higher percentage was chosen.

Respondents clearly indicated that their preference was for the program to follow option two (one-time transponder with \$100 credit and GES residents to annually decide how to spend the additional money on eligible items i.e., transit passes and toll credit) and to increase the income threshold to 200% of the FPL for household income. The transit passes are particularly helpful to residents who do not own a car or cannot drive, while the toll credit only benefits residents who own vehicles.

Preferred Option



Federal Poverty Level Threshold



At the time of writing, the third and final public meeting, which will be used to promote the program and educate GES residents on how to access the benefits, is yet to be scheduled but is anticipated to be held in the summer or fall of 2022.

9. Program Budget

Per federal regulations ([23 USC 129: Toll roads, bridges, tunnels, and ferries](#)) and confirmation from FHWA staff, toll revenue in the context of this program can only be spent on the following:

1. Administration of the program.
2. Transit passes.
3. Transponders and toll credit.

Budget rationale

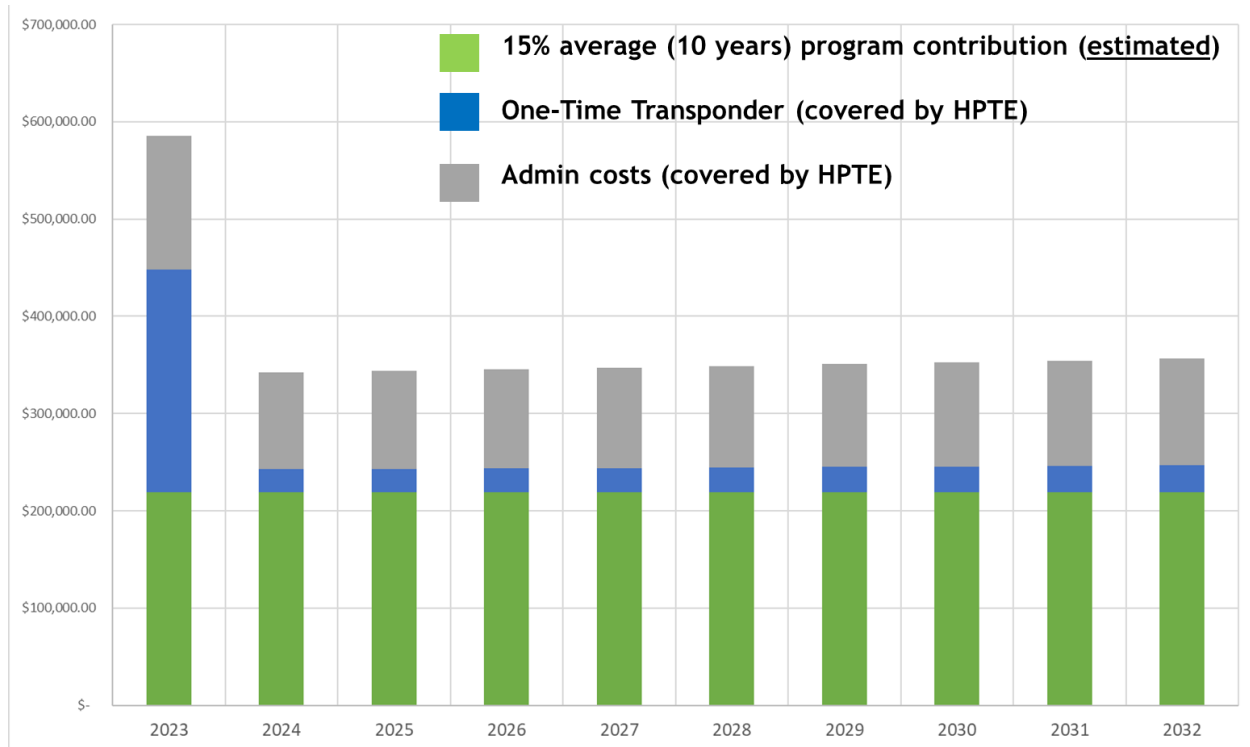
CTIO explored three levels of funding for the program - 7.5, 10, and 15 percent of anticipated net revenue based on current Express Lanes toll revenue estimates. In order to provide a significant benefit to GES residents, CTIO determined to make 15 percent of net revenue available for this program using a projected 10-year average. This equates to an estimated \$220,000 in the first year and would provide 7,800 local ten-ride RTD passes based on current projections.

The 15 percent calculation was based on a CTIO evaluation of other possible uses of the Central-70 revenues for other projects, including I-270. This 15 percent figure is significantly higher than the level of funds allocated to similar programs in other states.

In addition, based on the number of GES residents that are anticipated to sign up for the program in the first year, CTIO will contribute up to 100% of net revenue in this start-up year to ensure that everyone that is eligible for the benefits receives them.

It is important to note that while the benefit received by the community is 15% of net revenue, the actual overall percentage of revenue budgeted for the program is higher. It is closer to 25% when you take into account the administrative costs associated with operating the program, which CDOT will cover in the initial years, and that CTIO will cover the initial costs of the transponder and credit (\$100 per recipient), as demonstrated by the below chart.

Total Program Costs



The budget was presented to GES residents during the second public meeting in November 2021. CTIO did not receive any feedback during that meeting or in the comment form, which was open to all GES residents for two weeks after the meeting, that either questioned the rationale for the budget or indicated the percentage should be higher. The discussions centered around the implementation of the program.

At the time of writing, there are several factors to keep in mind related to the budget:

1. The CTIO Board of Directors still needs to consider the program and approve the budget at a formal meeting in early 2022.
2. The current budget is based on toll revenue estimates, but real-time data, collected once the Express Lanes are open, will be used to determine the budget for the community after the first year.
3. A review of the net revenue provided for the program will be included in the periodic evaluation criteria to see if the goals of the program are met.

10. Program Option Selection Process

CTIO followed a rigorous process to evaluate the possible program options. The steering committee and stakeholder advisory group's input in this process were key criteria to aid in reaching a shortlist of options to bring to the public meetings to solicit feedback from GES residents.

In addition, the input from GES residents was also vital to identifying the best possible program fit for the community. Empowering the residents to make decisions at key stages was not only a goal of this effort, it was also invaluable to moving it forward.

Key program selection metrics considered included:

- Program legibility: is the program easy to understand?
- The number of eligible households: does the eligibility criteria ensure that maximum number of low-income families will be eligible?
- The benefit to neighborhood: Does the selected program enhance the value of the neighborhood in general and not just residents?
- Back-office implementation feasibility: Can the program be implemented given the existing back-office structure?
- Implementation cost: Can the program be implemented at a reasonable cost?
- Ongoing costs: What will ongoing costs for the program look like?
- Impact on Express Lane performance: Will the program result in more traffic congestion in the Express Lanes?

CTIO identified twenty potential program options for the Steering Committee and Stakeholder Advisory Group to consider. The twenty program options were generally classified into the following five categories:

1. Flat Benefits: Programs that do not require residents to spend money upfront to obtain a benefit. For example, free transit passes, or free transponders with credit.
2. Neighborhood Benefits: Programs that add value to the neighborhood and enhance the sense of living of all residents. For example, adding bicycle lanes and sidewalks, providing bus shelters, and making other infrastructural upgrades
3. Frequency-Based Benefits: Programs that incentivize participants to use the Express Lanes or transit buses a certain number of times before they receive any benefits. This category of program options posed a huge barrier to benefit and was discarded from consideration. It would also require significant changes to the back-office structure to implement such benefits, substantially raising implementation costs.
4. Waivers: These programs do not provide a direct benefit, however, they waive fines or fees associated with the transponder account such as waiving minimum balance requirements or ExpressLane penalties or interest on penalties. These programs will not be feasible to implement since they go against CTIO's contractual requirements with E-470.
5. Caps: These programs cap the total amount that a participant spends paying tolls per day or per month. Such programs also pose a large barrier to access the benefit as they require the participant to spend some money each day/month before receiving any benefits.

Of the twenty options that were selected, twelve options in the frequency-based benefit,

waivers, and caps were ruled out, either because they could not be implemented using the current CTIO back office or they posed a large barrier to the benefit and were not relevant to this particular program.

That left eight options under the flat and neighborhood benefits categories for the Steering Committee and Stakeholder Advisory Group to provide feedback on during meetings held in August and September 2021. It was decided that the eight options should be consolidated, where possible, to provide the maximum flexibility to the community to decide how funds are spent. Following this direction, three options were selected and presented during the first public meeting held in September 2021:

1. Identify a popular program in GES expected to end after the construction of Central 70 is complete and continue to fund and manage it (e.g. RTD bus passes).
2. Transponder with an initial balance (amount TBD)
3. Combination of options one and two.

The overwhelming majority of respondents, around 80%, preferred the combination option and there was significant feedback that giving the community the power to decide how the money was spent would be well received. Following a review of the possible options based on this feedback, the three options were narrowed down to two for the second public meeting held in November 2021:

1. A one-time Express Lanes transponder with \$100 credit and additional money would be used for transit passes for GES residents each year.
2. A one-time Express Lanes transponder with \$100 credit and GES residents decide to spend the additional money on either transit passes or adding credit to Express Lanes accounts.

Again the majority, around 60%, of respondents preferred the second program option for the community to decide how the money is spent on transit passes or toll revenue in addition to the one-time transponder/credit.

During Steering Committee meeting #5, this option was recommended by CTIO staff to move forward for implementation, review, and approval by the CTIO Board of Directors in early 2022. The Steering Committee unanimously agreed with the recommendation as did the Stakeholder Advisory Group, which includes two GES community representatives.

11. Recommendation

Over the space of the past year, CTIO conducted a literature review and interviews with other agencies across the nation that have implemented or are implementing a tolling equity program, held numerous meetings with key stakeholders, GES residents, and council members, conducted two public meetings in the GES community, and completed a public survey that received almost three hundred responses. Based on all the feedback received as part of this process CTIO staff concluded, based on a recommendation from the Steering Committee established to guide program development, that the following program should be recommended to the CTIO Board of Directors for consideration in March/April 2022:

- Recommended Benefit:
 - All eligible participants will receive a switchable transponder and promotional credit totaling a monetary value of \$100 when they enroll in the program.
 - Additional funds will be available annually for the GES community to decide how to allocate the funds either towards free transit passes or to add credit to the previously enrolled tolling equity Express Lanes accounts after the first year.
- Eligibility:
 - Residents of GES with an annual household income below 200 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL) and households displaced from GES due to eminent domain for the I-70 Central Project with an annual household income below 200 percent of the FPL. CDOT holds a list of these displaced households.
- Budget/Available funds:
 - Each year, 15 percent of projected net toll revenue from the Central 70 Express Lanes will be allocated to the GES community to pay for the benefits. This excludes program administration costs and the cost of the initial free transponder and promotional credit which will be funded from other sources.

Appendix A: Table 1: Project Groups Membership

Function	Agencies/Businesses	Participant
Project Management Team		
Oversight of overall project communications, decision-making, and task identification and assignment. Ensure the project remains on schedule and budget, serve as a contact point for media, ultimately determine the recommendations and presentation of decision items to the CTIO Board	CTIO Atkins North America, Inc. (Atkins)	Simon Logan Rami Harb, Rinal Chheda, and Ben Stein
Steering Committee		
Integrate various disciplines and perspectives of agencies into the study; make recommendations on key issues and decisions at project milestones; provide guidance; receive project updates and participate in bi-monthly progress meetings.	CTIO CDOT Region 1 Central 70 Project CDOT Department of Transportation Development Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) CTIO BOD Representative E-470 North East Transportation Connections (NETC) Communication Infrastructure Group (CIG)	Simon Logan, Nick Farber, Piper Darlington, Kelly Brown, Maria Johnson Tim Hoover, Vanessa Henderson Stacia Sellers, Bob Hayes Rebecca White Monica Pavlik, Shaun Cutting Alvan-Bidal Sanchez Karen Stuart, CTIO Vice-Chair Jessica Carson Angie Malpiede, Lacey Champion Kristi Estes

	Atkins	Rami Harb, Rinal Chheda, Ben Stein
Stakeholder Advisory Group		
Advise and provide recommendations on project activities and plans from a stakeholder perspective; receive project updates at key milestones	City and County of Denver (CCD) Denver Public Schools Globeville Resident Elyria-Swansea Resident NETC Atkins	Tim Sandos, Shannon Gifford Vanessa Trussell Anthony Garcia Anthony Maes Angie Malpiede, Lacey Champion Rami Harb, Rinal Chheda, Ben Stein
Special Interest Groups		
Participate at their option in public meetings, provide inputs and concerns during public meetings; a personalized public meeting invitation will be sent to this group to encourage their attendance	Councilwoman Debbie Ortega’s Office Councilwoman Candi CdeBaca’s Office Clayton United Cross Community Coalition Elyria Swansea Neighborhood Association Focus Points Globeville Elyria Swansea Livewell Groundwork Denver North Area Transportation Alliance Northeast Transportation Connections GES Coalition Smart Commute Metro North United Community Action Network of Metro Denver	

Appendix B: Summary of stakeholders and GES organizations outreached

Public communication on aspects of the program was distributed through the following outlets:

- Call for Community Representatives on Stakeholder Group (June 2021)
- Baseline Survey for Program Recommendation (July 2021)
- Public Meeting Sept 29th (Aug/Sept 2021)
- Community Feedback Survey 1 (Sept/October 2021)
- Public Meeting November 16th (November 2021)
- Community Feedback Survey 2 (November 2021)

Organizations contacted with information blasts:

- Birdseed Collective/Globeville Recreation Center
- Swansea Recreation Center
- Johnson Recreation Center
- 5090 Broadway Recreation Center
- C70 Public Information Office
- GES Coalition
- Swansea Elementary
- Garden Place Academy
- Focus Points
- GrowHaus
- Tepeyac Community Health
- UCAN
- EGS and Partners
- Elyria-Swansea RNO
- Globeville First
- Valdez-Perry Library
- Councilwoman Ortega's Office
- Councilwoman CdeBaca's Office

Flyers to promote public meetings, comment forms, and the surveys were distributed through:

- Food boxes at Birdseed Collective (100) and Growhaus (400): each information blast
- Garden Place Virtual folders and Swansea Elementary Friday Folders (450): first public meeting and on.
- Email blast to email lists and text blast to phone numbers collected from the July survey: first public meeting and on.

- Swansea Elementary YMCA Summer Program: baseline survey
- Garden Place Elementary YMCA Summer Program: baseline survey

Information and surveys were also physically and verbally distributed at the following locations/Events:

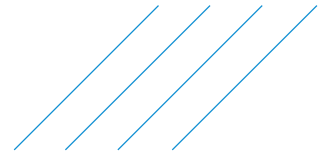
- NETC community office hours
- Food Distributions at Globeville Recreation Center
- We Don't Waste Event at Focus Points
- Globeville Rec grand opening
- Washington St CAG public open house
- Community Partner Meetings
- Tacos El Huequito
- Targeted Facebook Ads for 80216 zip code
Valdez Perry Library
- Focus Points

Misc:

The project survey information also went out to every single household in 80216 via a mailed newsletter in June to ask for community representatives (with compensation mentioned) which included information on what the program is about and to encourage GES residents to complete the community survey.

Incentives to fill out the public survey (30 winners- each winning \$50 gift card), both public comment forms following the public meetings (drawing for \$50 gift card), and community representatives (\$250 each) were provided to help encourage engagement.

Attachment C: Report on Toll Agencies with Low-Income Programs



Memorandum

To:	Simon Logan, HPTE		
From:	Rinal Chheda, Atkins	Email:	rinal.chheda@atkinsglobal.com
Date:	June 21, 2021	Phone:	720-258-0163
Ref:	Central 70 Globeville/Elyria-Swansea Low-Income Program Study	cc:	Rami Harb, Atkins Ben Stein, Atkins
Subject:	Report on Toll Agencies with Low-Income Programs		

1. Introduction

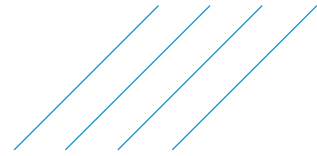
The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is currently reconstructing Interstate 70 (I-70) between Tower Road and Interstate 25 (I-25). A key element of this reconstructed portion of the interstate is the addition of a tolled express lane in both directions. The project’s Record of Decision from the Federal Highway Administration required CDOT’s High Performance Transportation Enterprise (HPTE) to explore options to mitigate the financial burden of access to the tolled express lanes for the low-income residents of the Globeville and Elyria-Swansea (GES) neighborhoods, through which the project area runs.

HPTE has tasked Atkins North America, Inc. (Atkins) with the development, analyses, and provision of recommendations of potential low-income program mitigation options for Central 70 Express Lanes. As part of this task, Atkins completed a literature review, gathering information from other agencies across the nation that are either developing or have developed and implemented a low-income mitigation program as part of their toll lane implementation plan. This memorandum summarizes those low-income mitigation programs, looking primarily at key program aspects such as eligibility, accessibility, public outreach, costs, funding, and program development challenges.

Section 2 of this memorandum discusses in detail each of the five low-income mitigation programs that were selected from across the nation. Section 3 provides a comparison of various program elements among the five programs. Section 4 discusses the key lessons learned from these programs, which will be considered in the development of the Central 70 GES low-income mitigation program options.

2. Agencies with Low-Income Programs for Toll Lanes

A national scan of low-income programs for toll lanes indicated that several agencies have or plan to have some form of equity program to benefit low income or historically disadvantaged users of the tolled lanes/facility. These programs are in various stages of development, with some in the early stages of becoming fully operational. For the purposes of this memorandum, the project team



selected five low-income programs and interviewed respective agency representatives. The following subsections describe in detail key program elements and implementation challenges.

2.1. Low-Income Assistance Plan, Los Angeles County, California

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro)'s low-income program is called the Low-Income Assistance Plan (LIAP). It was implemented in 2012 and was the first program of this type implemented in the United States. The impetus for this program's creation was a state law (Senate Bill [SB] 1422, 2008) that required Metro to analyze the impact of converting existing carpool lanes on Interstate 10 (I-10) and Interstate 110 (I-110) to high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes. These lanes are called ExpressLanes. FasTrak is the provider of the electronic toll collection system and toll tags (transponders) for these lanes.

Program Description: Qualifying Los Angeles County residents receive a one-time \$25 credit when they first set up their FasTrak account. The \$25 credit can be applied to either the transponder deposit or used as a pre-paid toll deposit. The credit does not expire, but it is not convertible to cash. It can only be used to offset tolls. This discount is restricted to one transponder/account per household. The FasTrak transponders can be used to pay tolls on Metro ExpressLanes toll facilities and any California toll facility bearing the FasTrak logo. Thus, the \$25 credit can be spent on any FasTrak facility within California. In addition, the \$1 monthly account maintenance fee FasTrak normally charges its customers is waived under the LIAP.

The program was first implemented as a year-long pilot and subsequently has been implemented permanently. Of the 500,000 Metro ExpressLanes FasTrak accounts, 16,670 (3.3 percent) are LIAP accounts.

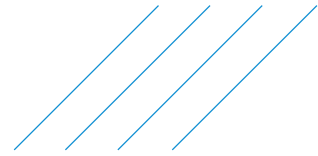
Transit Rewards Program: In addition to the LIAP, Metro also has implemented a Transit Rewards Program for all users of the I-10 and I-110 HOT lanes. Transit riders can link their transit card to their FasTrak toll accounts. Frequent transit riders who are FasTrak account holders earn a \$5 toll credit each month toward use on the I-10 and I-110 Metro ExpressLanes. Initially, to receive toll credit, transit riders had to use their registered transit card for 32 one-way trips during peak hours along the I-10 El Monte Busway or I-110 Harbor Transitway. These are the bus services that operate via the Metro ExpressLanes. In 2019, this threshold was reduced from 32 to 16 one-way trips.

Approximately 18,380 accounts were enrolled in the Transit Rewards Program as of June 2018. On an average, the program pays out \$20,000 in benefits annually.

Eligibility and Verification: Participants in the LIAP must be residents of Los Angeles County and must have an income level lower than 200 percent of the federal poverty level. To verify income, participants can present a paycheck stub, current tax return, or proof of enrollment in MediCal, Lifeline, Public Benefit, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Lunch Program, or Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) for Food Stamps. Participants are encouraged to enroll in person. For those enrolling by phone, a proof of income and residency must be submitted for the account to become active.

Enrollment, eligibility verification, and back office services are provided by a third party. Metro does not reverify LIAP accounts after enrollment, since the credit is a one-time incentive. However, in 2020, all participants were audited to ensure they are still LA county residents. Those who were no longer in LA County lost the monthly charge waiver and access to the Transit Reward Program.

Payment Options and Accessibility: LIAP provides an option for unbanked or underbanked residents to open a cash/check account with manual payments. The minimum pre-payment amount for cash/check accounts is \$50 plus the transponder deposit. These accounts are required to have a minimum balance of \$25. Subsequent manual payments for account replenishment are required



to be at least \$50. In comparison, debit/credit card accounts have a lower initial pre-payment amount of \$40 with no transponder deposit required. The minimum balance requirement for these accounts is \$10, and a minimum replenishment of \$40 occurs automatically when the minimum account balance is reached. Of all the LIAP accounts, 9.5 percent are cash/check accounts with manual replenishment.

Cash/check accounts can be reloaded at the two Metro customer service centers near each corridor (I-10 and I-110). In addition, customers can reload their accounts with PayNearMe, an electronic billing and payment platform, at any 7-11 store. PayNearMe charges a \$1.99 fee for each cash replenishment transaction.

Cash/check accounts that are not replenished after the minimum balance is reached receive a reminder to replenish within a 15-day period. When an account owes more than \$14.99, it is cancelled.

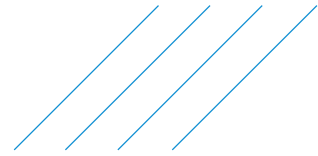
Public Outreach: Metro promotes these two programs by advertising on billboards, bus backs, and running videos at gas stations and McDonald's restaurants, and through online ads. Metro ExpressLanes also provides outreach at different community events, festivals, and transportation workshops throughout the year to promote the plan. In fact, Metro spends more each year on marketing the program and doing public outreach than on actual benefits.

Costs and Funding: Metro was unable to provide the total cost of the program, including program administration costs and cost of benefits. Metro budgets for marketing of the programs each year but not for the costs of administering the program. It uses toll revenues to fund the program.

Program Evaluation Metrics: During the pilot year (2012 to 2013), Metro considered using the following performance measures to evaluate the LIAP and Transit Rewards Program:

- Number of low-income commuters who signed up for a transponder
- Number of peak-period low-income users of HOT lanes (and percentage of overall HOT lane users)
- Usage of HOT lane credits for low-income drivers (credit redemptions)
- Mode choice of low-income drivers (carpool vs. single-occupant vehicle), compared with mode choice before the project was implemented
- Performance of transit service in the ExpressLanes corridors during the pilot period
- General-purpose lane speeds during the pilot period
- Account balance problems of low-income commuters compared with non-low-income commuters
- Share of time savings by low-income ExpressLanes drivers in comparison with the share of tolls and transponder costs they pay.
- Trends in trip distance and trip time by low-income commuters compared with non-low-income commuters
- Toll revenue reinvestment

Program Challenges and Lessons Learned: The largest challenge Metro ExpressLanes continues to face is marketing the program effectively. Initial surveys indicated that very few residents knew about the existence of the LIAP and Transit Rewards Program. They have since increased their marketing efforts and budget, but it remains a concern.



2.2. VDOT Toll Relief Program, Portsmouth and Norfolk, Virginia

The Elizabeth River Midtown and Downtown tunnels are all lanes tolled tunnels which connect the cities of Portsmouth and Norfolk in Virginia. The construction of these tunnels was completed through a full concession Public-Private Partnership (P3) contract with Elizabeth River Crossings, LLC (ERC). When the tunnels opened to the public in 2016, there were initial setbacks with operating the tolls, including a large backlog of transactions. To make up for these initial operating issues and as a gesture of goodwill, ERC now provides \$500,000 in funds per year for a 10-year toll relief program. In 2020, ERC extended the funding for Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Toll Relief by another 10 years. The total program funding is \$10 million for 20 years. The program is administered by VDOT and was first executed as a year-long pilot before being fully implemented. EZPass operates the toll accounts and electronic toll collection system.

Program Description: Program participants receive a \$0.75 refund credited to their EZPass account for each trip after they record eight or more trips through the Elizabeth River Tunnels in a month. They also must have an EZPass transponder to participate in the program. This discount is equivalent to 32 percent during the peak period and 40 percent during the off-peak period.

The main goal of this program is to encourage low-income residents to purchase and set up an EZPass transponder account. License plate toll rates are much higher than EZPass rates. About 70 percent of all users pay the EZPass rates, and the remaining 30 percent pay the license plate toll rates.

In the past, VDOT experimented with increasing the refund to \$1 but doing so resulted in the toll discounts exceeding the \$500,000 annual allowance. As toll rates increase each year, VDOT re-examines the need to adjust either the income qualification criterion or the value of the toll discount so as not to exceed the available funding.

Typically, between 2,000 and 2,300 low-income users register for the program each year, approximately 1.5 percent of all users. VDOT had a decline in registrations in 2021 due to COVID-19 with only 1,500 low-income users enrolling.

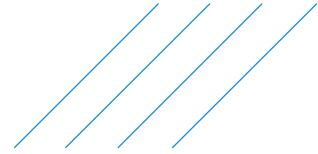
Eligibility and Verification: Participants must enroll in person each year to receive program benefits. The enrollment period begins in December and runs through mid-February. The toll relief benefit year runs from March 1 to February 28. To qualify for Toll Relief, participants must: (1) Reside in Norfolk or Portsmouth, (2) earn \$30,000 or less per year, (3) have or obtain a Virginia EZPass transponder and registered account, and (4) record eight trips or more during a calendar month through the Downtown or Midtown tunnels. Individuals who do not have a Virginia EZPass account can open one with \$20, all of which goes to the payment of tolls. The transponder is free. On closing the account, they are required to return the transponder or are charged a \$10 fee. VDOT uses standard transponders and doesn't have sticker transponders.

Qualifying participants receive a toll relief number at enrollment. They must then register this toll relief number with the EZPass office to link it to their transponder.

There is no cap on the number of qualified people who can participate. Often there are multiple individuals per household. Each person within the household has his or her own toll relief number and qualifies individually. VDOT verifies the individual's income and not that of the household.

During the enrollment window, the back office dedicates two to three employees to the Toll Relief Program enrollment. VDOT also has a toll-free number where people can get information about the program.

Payment Options and Accessibility: Application must be done in person at either the Norfolk or Portsmouth EZPass Customer Service Centers. The centers are open on weekdays and Saturdays, from 8:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Both centers are along bus lines and have transit connectivity. During



2021, VDOT allowed repeat applicants to enroll remotely and mail their documentation due to COVID-19 restrictions. Between 35 percent and 40 percent of applicants chose that option. First-time applicants were still required to enroll in person.

EZPass accounts can be replenished online through credit card, by phone, in person, or by mailing payment to the EZPass Customer Service Centers. Minimum replenishment amount for general accounts is \$35. Minimum replenishment amount may be adjusted to accommodate a person's average toll usage and minimize the number of times he or she needs to replenish the account. All EZPass users have the option of using cash to purchase a reload card with the reloaded cash value. Each reload card transaction has a fee of \$1.50.

EZPass requires a minimum account balance of \$10. This minimum amount is waived for Toll Relief accounts as long as the balance is not negative. If the account balance is zero or negative during a trip, that trip is not counted toward the eight trips required to claim the discount.

Program Development: A steering committee was formed to guide the development of the program. The committee members were designated by the Governor and the committee was headed by the deputy secretary of transportation. The steering committee had members from area social services agencies, local college graduates, business representatives, military representatives, and local government officials. VDOT enlisted consultant help for modeling, analysis, and quantifying expenses, number of trips, and people benefitted by the Toll Relief Program.

Public Outreach: The Toll Relief Program was not a high-profile public project. Since program administration costs are an overhead expense for VDOT, it does not run many paid promotions. The program is marketed through social media promotion, limited advertisements on TV channels, and emailing existing customers to re-enroll. ERC likes to highlight the program and it actively promotes it on its social media. Overall, the program has not received any negative feedback from the public.

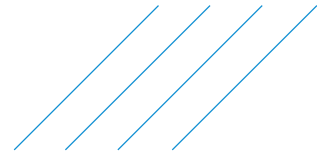
Costs and Funding: The budget for program benefits is \$500,000 per year, paid by ERC. If the whole budget is not spent in one year, the balance rolls over. The program administration cost is borne by VDOT. Administration costs during the first year were close to \$100,000. In subsequent years, the annual program administration cost has been between \$55,000 and \$70,000.

On a typical day, 120,000 trips are made through the Elizabeth River Tunnels. The toll revenue generated per month is between \$3.5 million and \$4 million.

Program Evaluation Metrics: VDOT evaluates the program based on two main metrics: (1) number of people enrolled each year, and (2) amount of money distributed as a Toll Relief benefit.

Program Challenges and Lessons Learned:

- **Program expansion:** Some low-income people who would qualify based on their income live in neighboring cities. However, VDOT does not intend to expand the program because it would be a trade-off between giving many people a small benefit or giving fewer people a more meaningful benefit. Currently participants receive an average of \$28 per month in toll relief.
- **Participant audit:** VDOT does a cursory audit of Toll Relief applicants. They typically find only three to four cases of fraudulent documentation each year. As a result, VDOT does not spend funds on doing more-detailed audits.
- **Exception to the enrollment window:** Since a large portion of the population of Portsmouth is military, VDOT allows military personnel to enroll in the program at any time of the year if they were out on deployment during the enrollment window.



- Partnerships with other agencies: VDOT noted that it has considered partnering with other local agencies for enrollment and verification purposes. However, the other local agencies were understaffed or did not have the workforce to do so. Currently, VDOT's perspective is that running it in-house gives VDOT better control over program operations.

2.3. SM 101 Toll Equity Program, San Mateo, California

The San Mateo (SM) 101 Express Lanes in San Mateo County are managed and operated by the San Mateo County Express Lanes Joint Powers Authority (SMCEL JPA). The SMCEL JPA board consists of three San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA) Board members and three City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG) Board members. The board adopted the toll equity program for SM 101 in May 2021 and will implement it in 2022 after the construction of SM 101 Express Lanes is complete. The toll equity program was developed voluntarily by SMCEL JPA and there were no legal requirements to do so. FasTrak operates the toll accounts and electronic toll collection system.

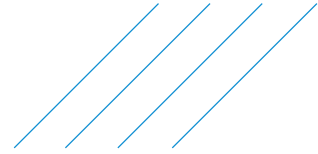
Program Description: The toll equity program will pay for the \$20 transponder deposit and provide preloaded \$50 toll tags as a one-time benefit for all qualifying participants. In addition, participants can also receive a \$50 credit annually loaded on their regional transit card as an ongoing benefit. As part of the program, SMCEL JPA will assist qualifying participants in enrolling for the ClipperSTART (Bay Area low-income transit program) and FasTrak START (Bay Area low-income toll program) programs offered by Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) for ease of regional travel and to reduce any barriers of entry into these programs. A part of the funding will be reserved to run program awareness and education campaigns and to conduct enrollment drives.

Eligibility and Verification: SMCEL JPA will largely rely on existing regional systems for determining program eligibility, enrolling residents, and for eligibility verification. The regional standard for income eligibility is 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

Payment Options and Accessibility: For payments, SMCEL JPA will also tap into existing payment infrastructure. Several accessibility aspects of the program, such as minimum account balance, minimum replenishment, and options for cash accounts, will be dependent on FasTrak's existing capabilities and so SMCEL JPA's flexibility is quite limited.

Program Development: SMCEL JPA started with 10 program options and shortlisted four options for consideration for the toll equity program. These included (1) providing a one-time \$50 preloaded toll tag, (2) providing a \$50 credit on the regional transit card, (3) funding place-based infrastructural improvements in disadvantaged neighborhoods, and (4) providing carpool benefits of \$50 per year to qualifying participants. The last two options were rejected because these were already being addressed by other agencies or other programs in San Mateo County. In California, a \$20 toll tag deposit is required for all cash-based accounts, which is a barrier to entry for unbanked residents. Hence, providing a free toll tag to program applicants was a popular aspect of the first option. The benefit amount was developed based on high-level technical analysis, but it may be adjusted in subsequent years.

Public Outreach: SMCEL JPA involved local community-based organizations in the process of identifying a preferred option via a Stakeholder Advisory Committee. The committee was tasked with understanding what equity meant for the local communities. Based on input received from its discussions, a list of 10 initial program options was developed. A subsequent shortlist of four program options was developed based on additional committee meetings and, from there, two programs options were selected for adoption—providing free toll tags with a preloaded credit and providing an annual transit credit to qualifying participants. During the program development, SMCEL JPA also interviewed community leaders to obtain their input.



SMCEL JPA noted that the Bay Area has a very engaged and articulate public and that it has received positive feedback on the toll equity study so far. There is a push from the public to ensure local agencies focus on equity.

For marketing the adopted program to the public, SMCEL JPA will conduct a separate standalone campaign.

Costs and Funding: The program will have \$1 million available in funding in the first year and \$600,000 annually thereafter. The budgetary source for these funds is toll revenues. SMCEL JPA also will be using toll revenues to repay loans it received to construct the lanes and to cover the costs for the monthly operations and maintenance of the facility. However, it indicated that funding the toll equity program was a high priority and came before loan repayment on their funding waterfall.

Program Evaluation Metrics: During the initial years of the program, SMCEL JPA will evaluate the program based on number of people enrolled, the amount of benefits given, and managing program costs.

Program Challenges and Lessons Learned: SMCEL JPA expects that one of the larger challenges of providing benefits for using the toll lanes will be managing the level of operations in the lanes. Clean air vehicles (CAVs) receive a discount in the express lanes, and over the last three years, CAVs have been the largest selling vehicles in the county. In a dynamic pricing regime, this could disproportionately impact other users of the express lanes who will have to make up for those discounted rides by paying higher tolls.

Most of the analysis for development of the program was high level and not accurate, given the lack of data. SMCEL JPA has been clear in their communication to the political leadership and the public that the program will be adopted as a pilot and will undergo changes. One of the lessons learned is to make additive changes only to avoid the need to remove any benefits when the program is implemented.

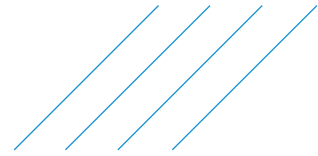
2.4. Means-Based Toll Discount Program, San Francisco Bay Area, California

Given the focus on equity in the state of California, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is developing a means-based toll discount program for residents of the San Francisco Bay area. The program will be implemented as an 18-month pilot for the Interstate 680 (I-680) and Interstate 880 (I-880) express lanes starting in 2022. The pilot is intended as a feasible near-term action to address equity issues for express lane access. It will leverage the enrollment, verification, and other systems developed for Clipper® START program. Clipper® START is the means-based transit discount program launched by MTC in summer of 2020. In addition, MTC has contracted with FasTrak to provide electronic toll collection systems, back-office services, and toll tags for the Bay area express lanes and has to work within FasTrak's policies and rules to develop the means-based toll discount program.

Program Description: MTC is in the early stages of program development and no options have been shortlisted yet.

Eligibility and Verification: The current scope envisions using all the systems developed for the Clipper® START program as the basis for the means-based toll discount program including third-party customer service and eligibility verification services. Bay area residents with a household income under 200 percent of the federal poverty level will be eligible to apply. Participants' eligibility will be reverified every two years.

Payment Options and Accessibility: Procedures surrounding payment options for underbanked and unbanked users and improving accessibility for the means-based program are largely controlled by FasTrak policies. MTC is working with FasTrak to develop a more accessible toll



system and a discounted fee structure for low-income communities. FasTrak also has the authority to put drivers' vehicle registrations on hold for failure to pay violation penalties on time. Such policies impact low-income users disproportionately as they tend to have a higher delinquency rate.

Public Outreach: MTC will have a public engagement plan in place before the pilot is launched. It will conduct telephone townhalls and public meetings to gather public opinion about the program.

MTC has also involved regional stakeholders in the program development process through an advisory committee. These stakeholders include bridge operators and other express lane operators in the region. MTC also has an equity and access subcommittee as part of the advisory committee. This subcommittee is comprised of various regional advocacy organizations.

Costs and Funding: MTC has approved \$3 million for the pilot including cost of benefits, back-office costs, payments to third-party services for enrollment and verification, and other administrative costs. The pilot will be funded using toll revenues.

Program Evaluation Metrics: Some of the metrics MTC is considering for evaluation include performance of the express lanes, administrative difficulty of program implementation and operation, improvements to toll lane accessibility, and program awareness. It will develop a comprehensive evaluation plan before the pilot is launched.

Program Challenges: There are four express lane operating agencies in the Bay area. One of the biggest program challenges for MTC will be to ensure consistency of rules across regional low-income toll discount programs and increasing program awareness. The Clipper® START transit discount program provides two levels of discounts (20 percent or 50 percent) across various transit agencies within the region, depending on each transit agency's budget. Such inconsistency can result in low enrollment and user confusion.

Another challenge will be working with FasTrak to ensure any policies changes occur in time for the pilot launch to provide maximum benefit to low-income participants.

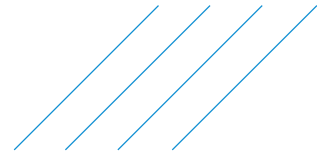
2.5. I-405 and SR 167 Low-Income Toll Program, Washington State

In 2019, the Washington State Legislature directed the Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC) to develop a low-income toll program for Washington (WA) state residents. The mandate also included a requirement to study the feasibility of implementing the recommended program. This process is now well underway with a final recommendation will planned for July 2021. The program will be implemented on the Interstate 405 (I-405) and State Route 147 (SR 147) Express Lanes. Tolls are paid on these roads through the use of the GoodToGo! pass. The pass is linked to a GoodToGo! account which is managed by Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT).

Program Description: WSTC has two program options under consideration.

The first option entails providing a toll credit equal to the tolls paid by the average express lane user. This option is flexible as it allows users choice of whether they would use the credit for the occasional high-cost trip or a large number of low-cost trips.

The second option includes providing ten free express lane trips per month to qualifying users. This option would encourage the use of express lanes for infrequent high-value trips. Additionally, WSTC has identified several standard program components which will be part of whichever Low-Income Toll Program it adopts. These include providing a free GoodToGo! Flex Pass to program users; recommending an advisory panel comprised of low-income and diverse community members to evaluate the pilot program; providing program information in visual formats when possible; providing program documentation in all the primary languages used in the region; and requiring readily accessible physical program enrollment locations.



The program will start as a two-to-five year pilot with evaluation and iteration on an annual basis. A permanent program will be implemented only if it is determined to be financially sustainable. The recommended timeline for the launch of the pilot program is 2024-2025.

Eligibility and Verification: All Washington state residents with a household income lower than 200 percent of the federal poverty level will be eligible. The study recommends that program enrollment and verification of documentation be done using Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)'s eligibility system for cost effectiveness and to increase program access. Since the department of transportation has a biennial budget, WSTC anticipates that reverification of participants will occur on a biennial basis.

Payment Options and Accessibility: Study recommendations for improving program accessibility for low-income unbanked and underbanked users include enabling more and cheaper opportunities to use cash to reload toll accounts, lowering requirements for account minimums and having cards on file, lowering the size of automated account reloading amounts, and considering changes to application of civil penalty charges.

Program Development: The study team completed a national scan of other toll discount programs in the country and developed an initial list of twenty program options for consideration. It conducted extensive workshops with stakeholder groups including with WSDOT, DSHS, and Kings County Metro to shortlist five options. These were scored based on metrics such as benefit to users, operational impact on the express lanes, feasibility constraints with program implementation, and program costs. Additionally, the team conducted a survey of I-405 and SR 147 corridor users to evaluate their preference for the five options. Results of the survey preferences and metric-based scores were used to select two options described earlier. These options are being analyzed in detail to determine high-level program costs and impacts.

Public Outreach: The primary mode of outreach for the study is the monthly public commission meeting. These are shown on television channels and available through Zoom links. All presentations for the low-income program study made to WSTC are available on the internet for review. The study team reached out to community-based organizations and held discussions with service providers to understand perception of low-income communities towards the program options. The team conducted two surveys targeting low-income residents in the larger Seattle metro area.

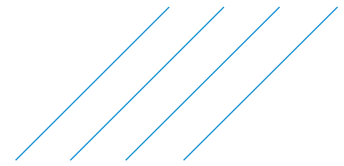
WSTC's recommendation from this study is to conduct further public outreach to potential program users before and as part of the pilot.

Costs and Funding: Preliminary cost estimates from the study indicate a total program cost between \$3-9 million. It includes back-office system costs (\$1-3 million), DSHS enrollment and verification tool integration costs (\$0.5-2 million), customer service center training and translation services (\$0-2 million), marketing and program promotion costs (\$0.5-1.5 million), initial flex pass distribution cost (\$0.1-\$0.8 million) and other administrative and oversight costs.

Funding sources for implementing the low-income program have not been identified yet. WSTC's study recommends using toll revenues as a source of funding.

Program Evaluation Metrics: WSTC recommends further study of the two shortlisted program options. Program evaluation metrics will be developed as part of the future study before the pilot program is implemented.

Program Challenges: WSTC anticipates that effective public outreach and marketing will be one of the most challenging aspects. The other challenge will be developing a legible and well-defined program so that there is no confusion among the corridor users. For example, from a driver's perspective, a trip is a point-to-point journey from the origin to their destination even if they use multiple express lanes along the way. For a tolling agency, each segment of the express lane and each express lane facility can be defined as an individual trip.



3. Comparison Summary of Program Elements

Table 1 through Table 5 show a comparison summary of key program elements for each of the agencies.

Table 1. Comparison of Program Benefits

Agency	Benefit
Metro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-time \$25 credit • Monthly account maintenance fee of \$1 waived • Limited to one person per household • Transit users earn a \$5 credit for taking 16 one-way transit trips along Express Lanes routes during peak hours
VDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$0.75 discount per transaction after the 8th transaction in a month
SMCEL JPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide one-time benefit through preloaded \$50 toll tags and \$20 transponder deposit • Provide cash value of \$50 on regional transit card as an annual ongoing benefit • Enroll eligible users in regional low-income transit and toll programs
MTC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under development, will be launched as an 18-month pilot
WSTC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free switchable transponder • Provide toll credit of \$48 (equal to the tolls paid by the average Express lane user, use it or lose it) OR 10 free trips per month

Table 2. Comparison of Program Eligibility

Agency	Eligibility
Metro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200% of federal poverty level • Los Angeles County residents
VDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual annual income less than \$30,000 (equivalent to 140% of federal poverty level for a three-person household) • Norfolk or Portsmouth residents only • Have a Virginia EZpass transponder
SMCEL JPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200% of federal poverty level (same as other regional agencies) • San Mateo County residents
MTC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200% of federal poverty level (same as other partnering agencies) • Bay Area residents
WSTC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200% of federal poverty level • Washington state residents

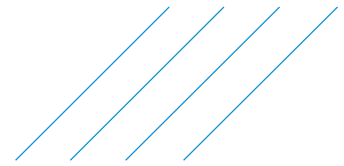


Table 3. Comparison of Program Enrollment

Agency	Enrollment & Accessibility for Unbanked/Underbanked
Metro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users can enroll through phone or at customer service center • Cash loading of transponder at customer service center and all 7-11 stores through PayNearMe with \$1.99 transaction fee • 16,670 active accounts
VDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants must reapply each year in person at customer service centers—one in each town (COVID exception) • Limited enrollment period of 2.5 months • No minimum balance required for participants • 2,200 average annual participants
SMCEL JPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study recently completed. • Program will tap into MTC systems as much as possible, highly dependent on FasTrak policies
MTC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program under development
WSTC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study recently completed. Recommendations include enabling opportunities to use cash to reload toll accounts, lowering account minimums and removing need for having cards on file, lowering the amount of automated account reloading, changes to application of civil penalty charges.

Table 4. Comparison of Applicant (Re)Verification Process

Agency	Applicant (Re)Verification
Metro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verify income and residency once at customer service center • Does not reverify
VDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants must reapply each year in person at customer service centers—one in each town (COVID exception)
SMCEL JPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize MTC's verification system to reduce costs and minimize barriers to entry
MTC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will leverage other systems for verification • Considering reverification every 2 years
WSTC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use existing WA Department of Social and Health Services infrastructure to enroll and verify users • Considering reverification every 2 years (biennial budget)

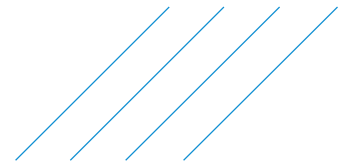


Table 5. Comparison of Program Costs and Funding

Agency	Program Costs and Funding
Metro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$300,000 in benefits paid from toll revenues • \$20,000 in benefits for the transit reward program • Funds from Express Lane revenues
VDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$500,000 in benefits provided by P3 concessionaire • \$70,000 cost for administering the program by VDOT, overhead cost
SMCEL JPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgeted cost of \$1 million in the first year and \$600,000 annually in the subsequent years paid from express lane revenues
MTC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot will cost \$3 million, including benefits and back-office costs paid by MTC toll funds
WSTC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$250,000 for program development study, implementation costs estimated between \$3 million and \$9 million • Have not identified funding sources for implementation yet

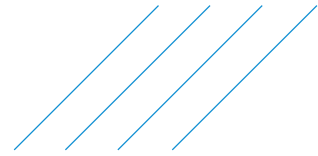
4. Key Takeaways

Some key takeaways from discussions with each agency are summarized below:

- There is a trade-off between the number of program participants and the amount of the benefit. Given the limited nature of program budgets, an agency can provide a relatively large benefit to a few people or a small benefit to many more people. HPTE will have to balance both elements to ensure that the final program benefit offered is both meaningful to its recipients and readily accessible to all those who are potentially eligible.
- All agencies implemented or are proposing to implement the program as a pilot when it opens. This alerts the public to expect changes to the program and also provides the agency some room to modify the program before making it permanent.
- Tapping into systems that are already in place by other agencies cuts program implementation costs and timelines. It also can reduce the barrier to program entry for applicants who already use these other systems. On the other hand, it does potentially limit program flexibility.
- When a program is adopted, a thoughtful communication plan must be implemented to ensure maximum participation of eligible residents.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach for developing a low-income program for toll lanes. HPTE must consider its priorities for the program and the priorities of the GES neighborhoods' residents and then develop a shortlist of program options accordingly.

**Attachment D: GES residents survey
summary report**



Central 70 GES Tolling Equity Study Summary of Public Survey Responses

The survey was open from June 25th to August 1st. 275 relevant responses were received. The sample size has a margin of error of plus or minus 5 percent at a 90 percent level of confidence.

The responses are representative to the overall neighborhood in terms of age and language. There is a higher representation of low income residents, particularly from the Elyria Swansea neighborhood.

Demographic information:

Approximately 77% of the respondents were from Elyria Swansea and the remaining 23% were from Globeville.

75% of the respondents had an annual household income lower than \$50,000.

51% respondents speak Spanish as their primary language at home, and 48% speak English as their primary language at home. Swahili and Persian/Farsi/Turkish speaking respondents also completed the survey.

30% of the respondents do not have a bank account and 55% do not have a credit card account.

60% of the respondents have lived in the neighborhood for 10+ years.

43% of the respondents depend on Medicaid, 27% depend on food stamps, 11% receive Low Income Energy Assistance benefits, 5% are enrolled in the Denver Property Tax Relief program, and 2% are enrolled in RTD LiVE program.

Neighborhood programs: 65% of the respondents indicated they do not use any of the neighborhood programs or did not know these existed. 11% of the respondents benefit from monthly bus passes, 7% use the free grocery shuttle, 7% use one way bus passes.

Travel Information:

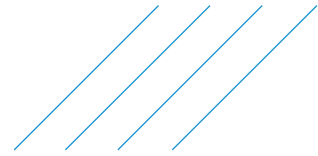
72% of the respondents drive alone to work. 13% use the local/regional bus service, 4% use the light rail.

7% of the respondents do not own a car. 25% of the respondents live in a “car-lite” household (i.e. not all adult drivers own a car).

A majority of the respondents work within 3 miles of the GES neighborhood (including in Montbello, Elyria Swansea, downtown Denver, Commerce City).

45% of the respondents use I-70 less than 5 times a week for work/school commute. 12% of the respondents use I-70 more than 14 times a week for commuting to work/school.

27% of the respondents indicated that would not use an alternative non-car mode of travel. 26% of the respondents indicated their preferred alternative mode of travel is the bus or light rail system. The remaining respondents selected multiple preferred alternatives including a combination walking, bicycling, carpooling, taking transit.



Familiarity with Express Lanes:

83% of the respondents have never owned an ExpressTolls pass.

7% of the respondents have used Express Lanes at least 5 times in June 2021.

55% of the respondents said they are little of not at all familiar with the use of Express Lanes in Colorado.

Respondents were asked what would make toll lanes more affordable for them. 24% of the respondents preferred a few free trips each year. 23% of the respondents preferred a discount for using the toll lanes. 15% of the respondents preferred discounts during the peak hours. 17% of the respondents preferred a frequent use-based discount.