

**Metro****AD HOC CONGESTION PRICING COMMITTEE
March 19, 2008****SUBJECT: STATUS REPORT ON LOS ANGELES COUNTY
CONGESTION PRICING INITIATIVES****ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE****RECOMMENDATION**

Receive and file this update on the status of Los Angeles County Congestion Pricing Initiatives, which include the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) Congestion-Reduction Demonstration Initiative and the Los Angeles County Congestion Pricing Operating Plan.

ISSUE

This report outlines the current status of our work on our congestion pricing efforts. At its last meeting, the Ad Hoc Congestion Pricing Committee asked that we return with a status report and discussion of issues.

DISCUSSION

The following provides a review of the current status of our activities related to the Los Angeles County Congestion-Reduction Demonstration Initiative and the Congestion Pricing Operating Plan, as well as a discussion of issues that the Committee has requested.

Status of USDOT Application

During the last week of January 2008, our Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) traveled to Washington, D.C., and had the opportunity to meet with members of the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation, as well as with top USDOT and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) officials. In a meeting with the USDOT Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy and the USDOT Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy, our Board Chair and CEO highlighted the benefits and strengths of our congestion reduction application and discussed its various elements. Although they were not prepared to indicate whether or not the Los Angeles region's application would be selected, the USDOT executives did indicate that our application is being carefully reviewed and that the

Administration would be interested in showcasing the potential of congestion pricing in Los Angeles.

Subsequently, we have learned that the USDOT may internally select finalists by the end of this month, although a public announcement may not occur until April 2008. There is uncertainty about the amount of federal funds that actually could be provided. The USDOT has received over thirty applications. We also have learned that the USDOT already is planning for a third round of grant applications in Fiscal Year 2009 (as early as October 2009), which appears to be supported with \$175 million in the President's Fiscal Year 2009 Budget.

Recent Board Questions Related to USDOT Application

At the last Ad Hoc Congestion Pricing Committee meeting, Board members raised a number of questions regarding our USDOT proposal. Most of these questions were discussed in our response to congressional representatives as shown in attachment A. Board members raised two additional questions related to the USDOT application. The first question refers to the intended use of revenues to be generated from implementing the High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes as proposed in our USDOT application, and the second refers to where else High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes have been converted to HOT lanes.

In response to the first question on the intended use of revenues, we stated in our USDOT application:

- *Toll revenues would be used to cover HOT lane operation expenses and for transit and technology improvements along the HOT lane corridors.*
- *Toll revenues would be used for improvements along that same corridor. These improvements could include, for example, additional transit facilities and service, subsidies for vanpools, and funding for advanced traffic signal timing and arterial capacity improvements.*
- *Toll revenues would be used to cover HOT lane operating costs and improvements along the HOT lane corridors, including, for example, additional transit facilities and service, subsidies for vanpools, and traffic management improvements.*

With respect to the second question on where else HOV-to-HOT lane conversions have been implemented, we can share that similar projects already have been implemented in California and other parts of the country. Similar projects have been implemented and are currently operating along freeway segments in San Diego-California (Interstate 15), Denver-Colorado (Interstate 25), Minneapolis-Minnesota (Interstate 394), and Houston-Texas (Interstate 10 and US 290, respectively). We also know that the Puget Sound Regional Council of Washington State is expected to operate a pilot project that includes conversion of existing HOV lanes to HOT lanes along a segment of State Route 167 from 2008 to 2012. Furthermore, the Florida Department of Transportation received about \$63 million in 2007

from the USDOT's Urban Partnership Agreement Program to implement a HOT lane project that includes the conversion of an existing HOV lane along Interstate 95 in Miami-Dade County. All of these projects have different characteristics, including the operation as reversible lanes (in San Diego and Colorado), the toll structure, and minimum passenger requirements. Other regions in California and the rest of the country are currently studying the feasibility of converting some of their HOV lanes to HOT lanes or expanding their existing HOT lanes, such as Alameda County and San Diego County, respectively.

Status of AB 1467 Application

Since our last report, we have had various discussions with Caltrans and the California Transportation Commission (CTC) staff about the AB 1467 application process. Soon after we submitted our USDOT funding application, we initiated efforts, in cooperation with Caltrans, towards preparing another application that would give us the state authority to develop and operate HOT lanes. We would need to submit the application to the CTC to secure the required legislated authority as one of two Southern California projects that could be approved under AB 1467 for Southern California. The authorization is needed to complement the anticipated USDOT approval for funding that would allow us to implement the HOT lanes projects, as well as transit (including the purchase of buses) and technology improvements, which were proposed in our congestion-reduction demonstration initiative.

From our recent discussions with Caltrans and the CTC, we have learned that the CTC will be using the services of a consultant for the AB 1467 application review process. The CTC consultant will be expected to help determine whether or not a proposed project meets the intent of the legislation and whether the proposed project adheres to CTC-established guidelines. The CTC will schedule public hearings for those applications that are determined to be in compliance with their applications guidelines. We expect that the CTC could take about three or four months to evaluate applications and conduct its public hearings. The CTC also will forward those applications that meet the AB 1467 evaluation criteria to the State Legislature for future legislative action or vote.

We already have requested Caltrans' support to develop and submit an AB 1467 application. For our application to be accepted, we will need to provide a detailed financial plan for the operations and maintenance of the facility, a funding plan demonstrating that there is financial commitment to implement the facility, a description of the environmental, social, and economic benefits expected as a result of operating the facility, and any negative impact with the anticipated mitigation efforts. We also would have to demonstrate the mobility benefits, public acceptability, and anticipated implementation schedule of the HOT lane system that we are proposing. We are now working with Caltrans on developing our AB 1467 application and expect to submit the application to the CTC in March 2008.

RFP for Professional Services Needed to Develop Congestion Pricing Operating Plan

In response to the June 2007 Board directive, on November 27, 2007, we released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for professional services to develop the Los Angeles County Congestion Pricing Operating Plan. Proposals were received January 15, 2008 and we expect to bring a

contract award recommendation to the Board in April 2008 provided negotiations are completed.

At the September 2007 meeting, we informed the Ad Hoc Congestion Pricing Committee that we needed to procure professional services to assist us in addressing the June 2007 Board directive. We also provided a draft outline of the Scope of Work for the professional services contract at that meeting. Professional services are needed to address the complexity of the analyses to be conducted and to provide the additional expertise that our staff does not have to meet the very aggressive timeframe required to satisfy the Board's directive.

Public Outreach and Communications

On January 9, 2008 we held a briefing for United States Congressional Representatives Xavier Becerra, Lucille Roybal-Allard, and Hilda Solis. The Representatives each raised some concerns about our USDOT application and wanted to know what impacts could be expected on low-income commuters. We have responded to their concerns in a letter, with input from Caltrans as needed (see Attachment A). We also provided their staff with copies of our USDOT application, an Executive Summary of the USDOT application, and other relevant information regarding our congestion-reduction initiative. Most recently, we have contacted legislative aides to provide question and answer documents (in English and Spanish) on our congestion reduction proposal.

During January 2008 we made presentations to our Technical Advisory Committee, the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, and the South Bay Cities Council of Governments. Last month, we presented to the San Gabriel Valley Public Works Technical Advisory Committee, as well as to the legislative staff of federal, state, and local elected officials during our quarterly briefing. These presentations focused on the contents of the Congestion-Reduction Demonstration Initiative proposal that we submitted to the USDOT and also provided an update on the status of the Los Angeles County Congestion Pricing Operating Plan. We emphasized the need for public outreach and welcomed any input from the region's transportation agencies and other stakeholders.

Also in January 2008, the Board Chair's Live Chat provided an opportunity to hear more from the public about our congestion reduction pricing efforts. The Board Chair shared with those listening that we have a website link where information may be found about our congestion pricing efforts, as well as other strategies that we are pursuing to manage traffic congestion in our region. We are continuing to update this website with current reports and information regarding our congestion-reduction initiatives as appropriate. The link is: http://www.metro.net/projects_programs/congestion_reduction/congestion_reduction.htm.

We also held meetings with the Congestion Pricing Communications Task Force that includes representatives from Caltrans and the Southern California Associations of Governments (SCAG). The Task Force is ensuring that there is a consistent message given in developing the congestion-reduction initiative and the Congestion Pricing Operating Plan. To further fulfill the Board's request to initiate public outreach and engage community groups, this Task Force now plans to coordinate and schedule a general stakeholders

meeting within the next two months. We anticipate having the meeting serve as another venue where we can discuss and share information on our region's congestion-reduction efforts with representatives from sub-regional Councils of Governments, cities, and other transportation and public agencies, as well as representatives from various community groups within the region.

Through the Congestion Pricing Communications Task Force, we also have initiated discussions on conducting a Congestion Reduction Choices Workshop with the USDOT that would focus on congestion pricing. The USDOT has encouraged us to work with them in conducting such a workshop here in Los Angeles. We have begun developing an agenda and are working with a tentative April/May 2008 date.

Status of SCAG and Caltrans Funding

We have continued working with Caltrans and SCAG in developing their respective funding agreements for our Congestion Pricing Operating Plan. We anticipate receiving \$300,000 in Fiscal Year 2008 from Caltrans after executing an agreement with them. Caltrans has indicated to us that they may be able to provide an additional \$500,000 in Fiscal Year 2009 for the project. Similarly, SCAG has indicated that their funds will become available in Fiscal Year 2009; therefore, we anticipate that an agreement with them can be completed by June 2008.

NEXT STEPS

We will continue updating Board members on our activities and progress regarding our USDOT application and the development of our AB 1467 application. We also plan to return to the Board with our recommendation for awarding a contract for professional services to help us develop the Los Angeles County Congestion Pricing Operating Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

A. Responses to United States Congressional Representatives

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Responses to United States Congressional Representatives

Congressman Becerra

* What has Metro identified as its preferred alternative?

Metro has identified a preferred alternative for a comprehensive congestion-reduction demonstration initiative in the Los Angeles Region that integrates innovative transit, technology, and direct highway pricing projects. Metro envisions utilizing a systemwide approach that would maximize mobility benefits for the region. The Los Angeles Region has consistently ranked as having the worst traffic conditions in the country.

More specifically, Metro's preferred alternative that was included in the Los Angeles Region Congestion-Reduction Demonstration Initiative application, which was submitted to the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) consists of the following elements:

1. Transit: Purchasing 122 buses; improving major transit centers and park-and-ride facilities (such as El Monte Transit Center and along the Harbor Transitway); improving bus stops; and improving commuter rail service, including track and platform projects, and additional rail car purchases.
2. Technology: Advancing several traffic management projects (bus signal priority, active traffic management, regional integration of intelligent transportation systems, and automated traffic surveillance and control systems); developing traveler information systems (511 system improvements, next bus trip information, changeable message signs, and automatic vehicle location); and implementing fare collection enhancements (integrated mobility account for Universal Fare System, parking, and electronic toll collection).
3. Pricing: Converting existing high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes to high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, as part of the first phase, along Interstate 110 (from Artesia Transit Center to Adams Street in the City of Los Angeles), Interstate 10 (from Interstate 605 to Alameda Street in the City of Los Angeles), and Interstate 210 (from Interstate 605 to State Route 134 near the City of Pasadena); converting existing HOV lanes along the I-210, as well as those HOV facilities along Interstate 10 and State Route 60 that already exist or are currently either under construction or in design, to HOT lanes between Interstate 605 and the San Bernardino County line as part of a second phase; and complementing the pricing element with an Intelligent Parking Management Program for Downtown Los Angeles that will allow for better traffic congestion management at key routes and destinations.

Metro compared the preferred alternative with other options. Among the options considered was converting HOV to HOT lanes along one corridor only. This option was not selected because of its low mobility impacts and because it would not have been competitive under the requirements of the USDOT. Another option that was

considered, which would have likely received priority by the USDOT, was to price more travel lanes along major freeways. This option was not recommended because of its technological and administrative requirements and timeframe for implementation which would not have met the USDOTR requirements.

*** With Metro's plans for Interstate 110, how much outreach to the community has taken place; if none, when?**

With a December 31, 2007 application submittal deadline that the USDOT established, Metro only was able to contact a few agencies and organizations along Interstate 110 and the other proposed corridors. In particular for Interstate 110, Metro contacted the South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) and the City of Los Angeles about the USDOT funding opportunity and our intent to include the HOV lane conversions along the Harbor Transitway to HOT lanes as proposed in our USDOT application. Both the SBCCOG and the City of Los Angeles responded to our notification by submitting a list of projects for inclusion in the Los Angeles Region Congestion-Reduction Demonstration Initiative application. More recently, Metro provided an update to the SBCCOG Board of Directors at their January 2008 meeting on the ongoing congestion-reduction pricing initiatives in the region. The presentation emphasized the need to engage the SBCCOG and its member cities, as well the City of Los Angeles and other of the region's transportation agencies and community groups, in developing a public outreach campaign that will address the concerns of those likely to be impacted by the proposed congestion-reduction projects.

Metro does plan to do more extensive outreach that will include presentations and explanations of the congestion-pricing related initiatives that are currently being considered in the Los Angeles Region. Our planned outreach efforts will engage local communities in more direct discussions about these initiatives. We plan to hold a stakeholder meeting that will solicit input regarding congestion-pricing public outreach efforts for the region. Also, in March 2008, we anticipate our Board of Directors authorizing the award of a contract for developing a Congestion Pricing Operating Plan for Los Angeles County. Once awarded, this 12-month consultant contract will include a task for conducting a public outreach program that will obtain input from communities, local officials, and political leaders. Working with the consultant, we will organize localized community outreach efforts during Summer 2008.

*** Will only those with higher incomes be more readily able to use the HOT lanes at the expense of those with lower incomes or more modest means?**

Not necessarily. According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), survey results from currently operating projects in California and other parts of the country show that drivers of all income levels use priced lanes. Although many low-income users do not choose to use the tolled facility every day, they support having the option. Survey responses for San Diego's HOT lanes indicate that lower income users show a high level of support. Similarly, an evaluation of the State Route 91 Express

Lanes, which surveyed express lane users as well as drivers who choose the parallel free lanes, shows that lower income drivers utilize the priced facilities and are as likely to approve the facilities as drivers with higher incomes. In 1997, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) conducted a study that considered regional market-based transportation pricing in five of the member counties in its region. This study concluded that all income quintiles, including low income groups, would experience a net increase in benefits under pricing.

Congresswoman Roybal-Allard

*** Isn't this mostly a way to generate a revenue stream through tolls that could be increased in the future?**

The main objective of any congestion pricing strategy is to improve mobility in a transportation system. Congestion pricing also plays an important role in improving air quality and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. While a pricing system will indeed generate revenues for local transportation investments, establishing a new source of revenue is not the fundamental purpose of congestion pricing. It is a by-product of pricing. Revenues generated by the pricing system, as stated in our USDOT application, will be used to pay for the operations, maintenance, and enforcement of the toll system as well as providing subsidies for various transit programs along those corridors to encourage modal shift. These include paying for transit operating expenses and capital expenditures to provide expanded, more reliable services, and additional choices for commuter of all income groups.

The tolls along the corridors will be set dynamically according to the traffic congestion levels to guarantee a minimum travel speed of 50 miles per hour along the HOT lanes, which is consistent with a level of service C. For now, Metro has not determined the fee that motorists would pay, as this aspect will be analyzed as part of the detailed implementation plan. However, we do expect that the tolls would vary by the travel distance of the vehicle on the priced lanes and the time of the day, with higher fees during peak periods. We also expect that any toll rate increases in the future will depend on the level of traffic demand along the HOT lanes to avoid congested travel conditions. Alternatively, toll rates could decrease if the travel demand along the HOT lanes is below desired levels that maximize vehicle throughput. Currently, fees for accessing the express lanes in Orange County range from \$1.20 to \$10.00. Similarly, fees for accessing the HOT reversible lanes in San Diego County range from \$0.50 to \$8.00. The congestion pricing applications in Orange County, San Diego County, and other parts of the country indicate that the main purpose of HOT lanes is to manage traffic congestion rather than to generate a new revenue stream.

*** Will Metro be working with the cities to synchronize traffic signals, as traffic on/near the on- and off-ramps could create congestion problems along the street system.**

Yes, traffic signal synchronization is an important component of our Los Angeles Region Congestion-Reduction Demonstration Initiative as submitted to the USDOT, and Metro will be working the cities on that component. In our application we describe how we plan to leverage the extensive deployment of intelligent transportation system technologies that have been instituted in Los Angeles County, many of which include traffic signal synchronization. However, regardless of the implementation of the HOT lanes, congested traffic conditions on the county's freeways are already negatively impacting arterials and streets.

Tolls will not be charged at on-ramps or off-ramps and will not require toll booths or plazas that could result in additional traffic congestion with traffic spillover on adjacent arterials. Our USDOT application includes several projects and technologies that will analyze and mitigate any negative traffic impacts from the conversion of HOV lanes to HOT lanes. Among these projects are systemwide adaptive ramp metering and active traffic management for selected freeways and adaptive signal control for major arterials. The Congestion Pricing Operating Plan will analyze in further detail any potential negative impacts from the conversion of HOV lanes to HOT lanes on adjacent arterials and streets.

Moreover, Metro, Caltrans, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (LACDPW) are already working with cities in Los Angeles County to synchronize traffic signals. We partner with the LACDPW to fund and implement traffic signal synchronization projects in the cities and throughout the county. Los Angeles County is among the country's pioneers in traffic synchronization. Since the early 1990's the Board of Directors has provided funding for traffic signal synchronization and other technology related projects through Metro's Countywide Call for Projects (CFP), a competitive funding process. Metro has programmed a total of \$653 million in traffic synchronization projects between 1993 and 2007. To address the needs of local communities for traffic synchronization and related projects, Metro also has created Traffic Forums in the South Bay Cities, Gateway, San Gabriel Valley, and North County sub-regions of Los Angeles County. As we proceed with our proposal, we intend to continue our traffic synchronization efforts.

*** What is the Downtown Los Angeles parking management portion of the proposal?**

The Intelligent Parking Management Program would be implemented in the downtown area of the City of Los Angeles as part of the proposed first phase for converting HOV lanes to HOT lanes. The City of Los Angeles already has approved this project. The project complements the congestion-pricing component that the Los Angeles Region has proposed by linking the proposed HOT lanes along the three east-west corridors to the proposed north-south HOT corridor along the Harbor

Transitway. This project allows for a comprehensive strategy to be implemented to relieve traffic congestion, improve curb access, and better manage traffic demand in the Downtown Los Angeles by applying optimal pricing strategies and operational policies for on-street and off-street parking.

To support the new parking project and policies, new parking technology will be deployed to provide motorists with alternative payment options and real-time parking availability information. This real-time information from nearly 17,000 on-street and off-street parking spaces will aid motorists in understanding their parking options and will guide them to available parking, thus eliminating the need to search for parking, which creates additional traffic congestion.

As part of this parking management program, new parking meter technology will be deployed at the approximately 8,000 on-street metered parking spaces in the downtown of the City of Los Angeles. These parking meters will be capable of charging motorists demand-based rates depending on the time of day and traffic congestion levels. These meters also will provide alternative payment options, allowing motorists to pay for parking using their credit card or cell phone and sending a text message to users when their paid parking time is about to expire.

This parking management project is expected to better manage traffic demand in Downtown Los Angeles, which is the major destination for most of the traffic traveling along the corridors that include the HOV lanes proposed for conversion to HOT lanes. Traffic flow is expected to be better regulated, as well as the improved use of both streets and parking facilities, with drivers encouraged to shift discretionary trips from peak-periods to off-peak periods of travel. Also, with transit service improvements and vanpool incentives, eventually more people will be able to enter the city during the day. Other alternatives and/or complementary strategies include eliminating parking subsidies provided by employers to their employees and encouraging parking cash-out programs, among other options.

Congresswoman Solis

* **What can Metro tell her constituents about the impacts that can be expected for those with lower incomes? What studies have been conducted?**

Survey results from projects currently operating in California and other parts of the country show that drivers of all income levels use priced lanes. Although many low-income users do not choose to use the tolled facility every day, they support having the option. For example, responses for a survey for San Diego's HOT lanes that was conducted in the year 2001 indicate that lower income users show a high level of support. Similarly, an evaluation of the State Route 91 Express Lanes, which surveyed express lane users as well as drivers who choose the parallel free lanes, shows that lower income drivers utilize the priced facilities and are as likely to approve the facilities as drivers with higher incomes. In 1997, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) conducted a study (Reduce Emissions and Congestion on Highways –REACH) that considered regional market-based transportation pricing in

five of the member counties in its region. This study concluded that all income quintiles, including low income groups, would experience a net increase in benefits under pricing.

In Los Angeles County, low-income transit riders traveling on buses along the proposed HOT lanes will benefit significantly from toll-financed transit improvements and potentially from credits that could be accumulated from the regular use of transit and later be redeemed for the use of the priced lanes when they stand to benefit the most. For example, the Los Angeles Region Congestion-Reduction Demonstration Initiative that was submitted to the USDOT includes funding for the purchase of 15 commuter rail cars and for 122 buses to provide express service along the priced corridors, encourages the formation of vanpools and provides a monthly subsidy of \$400 per vanpool vehicle, provides credits for regular bus users to redeem for the use of the HOT lanes, and makes several improvements to park and ride facilities and transit stations located along the HOT lanes. Although no decision has been made on the toll amount, we expect to use the net revenues from tolls to pay for the transit operating expenses and transit capital improvements along the HOT lane corridors. Commuters from all income groups will benefit from these improvements, particularly low-income commuters because they are more likely to be transit users and vanpoolers.

The Congestion Pricing Operating Plan that Metro will be developing in the next 12 months, with support from consultants with expertise in the field, will conduct extensive analyses and public outreach to identify and mitigate impacts that could result from the implementation of congestion pricing projects in Los Angeles County. In addition, the one-year, HOV-to-HOT lane conversion demonstration project that was included in our USDOT application will allow us to better assess the use of the roadway facilities by all income groups, as well as impacts.

*** What is the status of proposed improvements to the Interstate 10/Interstate 605 interchange?**

Funding for this project, which is estimated to have a total cost of \$71 million, is in the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) program of Caltrans. The project consists of the construction of a flyover direct connector from southbound Interstate 605 to the eastbound of Interstate 10. The proposed direct connector would replace the existing shared at-grade connector and result in the elimination of the weaving conflict. Caltrans has already submitted this project to the California Transportation Commission for approval. The project is currently in the Environmental Document phase, which Caltrans expects to complete by January 2009. The project will be advertised for construction in March 2011, after plans and funding are in place. Construction then is expected to start in August 2011, with completion by August 2013.

* **What about truck traffic along the corridors?**

Truck traffic and goods movement are expected to grow along the freeway corridors included in the proposal that was submitted to the USDOT. This is not due to the implementation of the HOT lanes, but to the economic activity that extends beyond the boundaries of Los Angeles County. The USDOT recently designated Interstate 10 as one of the country's "Corridors of the Future". By law, trucks are not allowed to use HOV lanes and accordingly, they will not be allowed to use the HOT lanes that were proposed in the USDOT application. Metro and other Los Angeles County agencies are actively involved in developing a regional Multi-County Goods Movement Action Plan that includes the five largest counties in the SCAG region. Metro is seeking to ensure that needed projects to address truck traffic along the corridors are properly identified and readied for future available funding.

* **What would be the process/steps for getting input included into the planning process and to get feedback on the possibility of potential stations in South El Monte and Whittier for the proposed Gold Line Extension Phase II?**

Metro has initiated an Alternatives Analysis process for the Metro Eastside Extension Phase II Transit Corridor project, which extends from East Los Angeles to Whittier. Input may be provided directly to our Project Manager, Kimberly Yu, at (213) 922-7910, or to Diego Cardoso, Executive Officer, Countywide Planning and Development, at (213) 922-3076.

* **How do we plan on changing the 72% single driver behavior?**

Changing the travel behavior of solo drivers in the Los Angeles region has been an ongoing challenge that Metro hopes to achieve through a comprehensive strategy that integrates innovative technology, transit, and telecommuting strategies. Metro has invested considerably during the past decade in our Travel Demand Management (TDM) Program, which incorporates several applications of these strategies with the goal of getting people out of their cars by modifying their travel behavior. TDM strategies provide low-cost travel solutions that reduce or eliminate demand on roads and freeways. We have programmed over \$90 million for TDM projects through our Countywide Call for Projects (CFP) between 1993 and 2007. Some of TDM projects that we have funded are those that: (1) improve the efficiency of existing transportation infrastructure by increasing the use of high occupancy vehicles (transit, vanpools, carpools); (2) eliminate trips or combine trips through telecommuting, modified work schedules, and ridesharing; and (3) apply new technologies that support or enhance transit uses, such as smart cards, real time traffic and transit information, among others.

In addition to implementing TDM projects through our CFP process, changing the driver behavior of solo drivers in Los Angeles County will require more reliable travel choices or alternatives that are as efficient as the automobile. To make these alternatives more competitive, the external cost of driving alone needs to be internalized. Congestion pricing is one TDM strategy that could trigger changes in the travel behavior of solo drivers by internalizing driving costs to them. The Los

Angeles Region Congestion-Reduction Demonstration Initiative application that we submitted to the USDOT lays out our plans for implementing a congestion pricing strategy.

*** What kind of outreach program targeted at solo drivers as well as the Latino and Asian communities will be undertaken by Metro?**

Community outreach is a critical element for initiating an education program in the region that will allow for informed public participation and input. As part of the public outreach program, Metro will form advisory groups to engage representatives of local cities, local governments, private and public agencies, as well as the community. Initially, surveys will be conducted and the data analyzed to assess the public perception on key issues related to congestion-reduction, including pricing. These surveys will provide further guidance for conducting public outreach in Los Angeles County via community meetings, focus groups, workshops, and media.

Encouraging solo drivers to change their current travel behavior will be a key challenge that could be achieved if viable travel choices are provided throughout the region. This requires implementing a comprehensive strategy that integrates technology, transit, telecommuting, and pricing. Outreach programs will be developed and conducted in coordination with local communities, community groups, and employers. Solo drivers and drivers in general, are expected to be represented in the Community Advisory Group that will be formed by us and our regional partners as part of a public outreach program to address any concerns from the implementation on congestion pricing related projects.

A similar outreach program will be tailored for the Latino and Asian communities in the region. The objective is to address the perception that low and moderate income drivers within Latino and Asian communities would be adversely and/or disproportionately impacted by the implementation of congestion pricing applications, such as HOT lanes. Outreach efforts would be appropriately tailored to educate these two groups about potential impacts, proposed mitigations, and the range of viable travel choices available in the region. Workshops and community forums will be conducted, including providing appropriate language translation. In addition, we intend to use a diversified media program, rich in graphics with the opportunity for broad distribution through DVDs, electronic media, and through the multi-ethnic media venues of publications, cable television and public affairs programs. The outreach program for the Latino and Asian communities would have to create a win-win objective to open the minds of the population to support the concept of congestion reduction pricing. The baseline message to all community groups is that this travel demand strategy must work and provide benefits for everyone. This message will remain consistent from development through delivery. Mindful of imposing meetings on busy schedules, we will seek to conduct outreach meetings in “piggyback” fashion on other meetings already part of the community calendar to guarantee more successful public input.

As part of the outreach program, a communications network will be established to issue electronic and/or printed bulletins as frequently as weekly or bi-weekly to provide updates and seek input regarding the potential of implementing congestion pricing in the region. These bulletins will establish a flow of information that is topic-specific and create a timely dissemination of information to assist cities, agencies, and stakeholder organizations to remain in the communications loop. We have already established a bilingual website on congestion reduction choices that allows feedback, and links the Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library for subject guides regarding congestion reduction choices, studies, and data in Los Angeles County and elsewhere. Concurrently, the outreach program will include local elected officials. The district offices of elected officials will be engaged in the outreach efforts and provided with timely briefings and communication materials.

*** What demographic information on Metrolink ridership can be provided?**

The Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) completed a study in 2007 that includes some demographic information of their Metrolink ridership. Attached are charts that show Metrolink's ridership by ethnicity, median household income, age, place of residence and work, and trip purpose. Also included are tables showing daily ridership for the year 2006 for each one of Metrolink's seven lines (including projections through the year 2030) and corresponding percentages of trips by county of residence and work trip destination.

The composition of Metrolink's ridership has changed considerably by ethnic group, as shown by data available for the period 1993-2007. In the year 2003, Caucasians made 67 percent of the total number of Metrolink riders. However, by the year 2007 their share gradually decreased to about 40 percent, while the Metrolink ridership of other ethnic groups increased to about 60 percent. Currently, the Hispanic group represents the largest ethnic group among minorities using Metrolink, with a share estimated at about 25 percent of the total number of trips. We have more details of ethnic information by Metrolink line if needed.

All Members

*** What analyses/studies can be provided that can show how the number of people traveling on HOV lanes can be increased, without diminishing general purpose lanes?**

General purpose lanes along the proposed HOT lanes are already operating at congested conditions well below design standards. Consistent with traffic flow theory, maximum vehicle throughput (about 1650 vehicles per hour) per freeway lane is achieved at a travel speed that ranges between 45 and 50 miles per hour. Current travel speeds along both freeway general purpose lanes and HOV lanes during the peak periods of travel are much lower than this desired travel speed. Projections show that the HOV lanes that are proposed to be converted to HOT lanes will be operating at the same travel speed of the parallel general purpose lanes in the next few years. The result from this lower speed is lower vehicle throughput, and consequently,

lower number of people moving on the HOV and general purpose lanes. For example, one lane of the Express Lanes along State Route 91 in Orange County carries twice as many vehicles per hour than a parallel general purpose lane, and consequently, a higher number of people.

Our goal is to provide a win-win situation for those travelers that choose to use either the HOT lanes or the general purpose lanes. Congestion pricing is one potential tool to achieve this objective. However, toll rates cannot be set too high or too low, so as to better manage travel demand and traffic congestion levels. The REACH study that SCAG conducted in 1997 for Los Angeles County concluded that average travel speeds on priced and non-priced road facilities are sensitive to congestion pricing. More balanced pricing rates were found to improve the travel speeds on both the priced and non-priced road facilities.

Although, additional analysis needs to be conducted before implementing the proposed HOT lanes, the concept is workable as other demonstrations of congestion pricing have been successful. The HOT lanes that are proposed in Los Angeles County will allow moving, not only more vehicles and at higher speeds, but also more people. The conversion of HOV lanes to HOT lanes along some of the freeway corridors in the region will be accompanied by increased efficiency in the freeway mainline system, expansion of transit capacity, and continued availability of free travel for vanpools. Drivers not willing to pay the tolls or not meeting the minimum vehicle passenger requirements to use the HOT lane without paying a fee will benefit from this expanded transit service by shifting modes or changing travel times. Those that choose to continue driving along the general purpose lanes could eventually benefit from the operation of the HOT lanes from the mode shifts by other drivers. This could also be achieved by shifts in the time of the day where trips are made along the general purpose lanes by shifting discretionary trips from peak to off-peak periods of travel.

National surveys show that between 50 and 75 percent of the trips during the morning and afternoon peak periods of travel are indeed discretionary trips. Thus, the operation of the HOT lanes will provide an incentive for travelers to use transit, form vanpools and/or carpools, and eliminate unnecessary discretionary travel from peak periods, which will eventually improve the operational efficiency of the general purpose lanes and the HOT lanes and will increase the overall throughput of both vehicles and people.

As we complete our analyses, we will be briefing all interested stakeholders of the additional benefits or impacts related to the proposed HOT lanes.

Figure 1: Metrolink Ridership Demographics for 2007

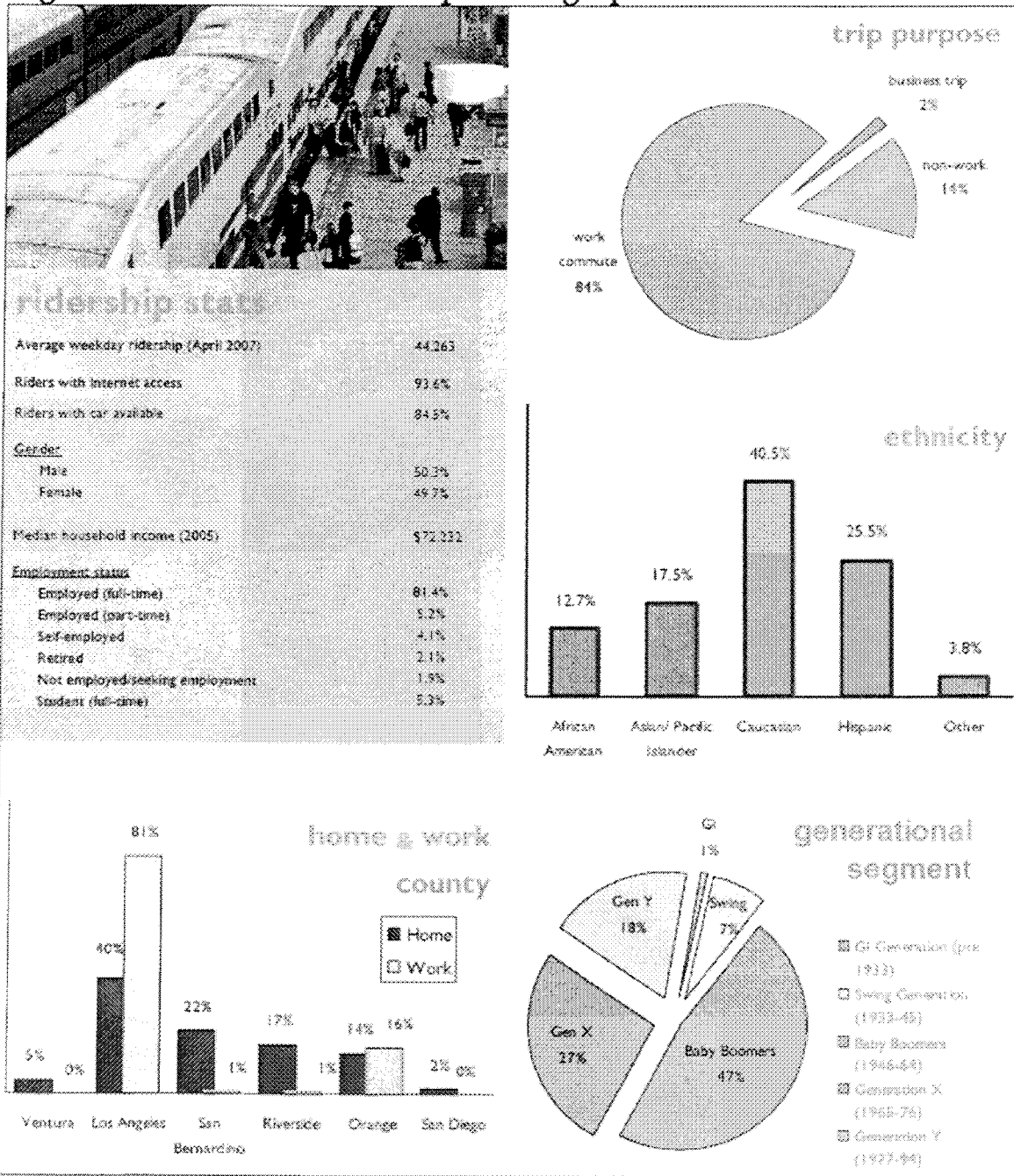


Table 1: Daily Ridership by Line (2006-2030)

	San Bernardino Line	Ventura County Line	Antelope Valley Line	Riverside Line	Orange County Line	IEOC Line	91 Line	TOTAL
2006	5,780	1,940	3,713	2,283	3,481	2,221	1,125	20,546
2010	6,868	2,321	4,802	2,461	4,792	2,678	1,733	25,673
2020	12,529	3,637	11,504	7,433	6,402	2,977	3,914	43,395
2030	20,773	5,743	16,395	10,918	12,678	5,888	5,857	78,251

Table 2: Residents by County by Metrolink Line (2006)

Line	County					
	Los Angeles	Ventura	San Bernardino	Riverside	Orange	San Diego
Ventura County Line	49%	45%	1%	1%	4%	0%
Antelope Valley Line	95%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%
San Bernardino Line	36%	0%	58%	5%	0%	0%
Riverside Line	42%	0%	27%	30%	1%	0%
Orange County Line	20%	0%	0%	2%	67%	11%
IEOC Line	1%		16%	74%	5%	3%
91 Line	15%	1%	2%	57%	24%	1%
Burbank	48%		23%	6%	24%	1%
System	40%	5%	22%	17%	14%	2%

Table 3: Work Trip Destinations by Line and County (2006)

Line	County					
	Los Angeles	Ventura	San Bernardino	Riverside	Orange	San Diego
Ventura County Line	94%	2%			4%	
Antelope Valley Line	99%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
San Bernardino Line	96%	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%
Riverside Line	98%		1%	1%	0%	0%
Orange County Line	72%	0%		0%	27%	1%
IEOC Line	2%		0%	2%	95%	0%
91 Line	80%	0%	0%	5%	15%	0%
Burbank	95%			1%	4%	0%
System	81%	0%	1%	1%	16%	0%

Figure 2: Composition of Metrolink Ridership by Ethnic Group (1993-2004)

