



Agenda Item No. 7

METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

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Memorandum

TO: Minority Citizens Advisory Committee

DATE: December 9, 2008

FR: Jennifer Yeaman and Alea Gage

W.I. 1114

RE: Low-Income Transit Fare Discount Survey Results

In July 2008, MTC established guidelines for an estimated \$75 million in funding for the second cycle of the Lifeline Transportation Program for FY2009–FY2011. Under the guidelines, MTC reserved \$1.5 million in Tier II Lifeline funds to facilitate a means-based transit fare discount pilot program with a transit operator/operators to be determined. The purpose of a pilot program is to test various approaches for providing transit fare discounts to low-income people.

Federal regulations require transit operators to provide discounted fares for seniors and people with disabilities, but there is no requirement to offer discounted fares to other groups, including low-income patrons. In the Bay Area, only San Francisco's Municipal Transportation Authority (Muni) offers a fare discount targeting low-income patrons through its Lifeline Fast Pass. However, elsewhere in the region social service agencies and non-profits provide free or discounted transit tickets or passes to their clients in need, through various individual arrangements with transit operators.

At a preliminary meeting on the pilot program's development held in July 2008 at MTC, staff from several transit agencies suggested conducting a survey of transit operators to assess the extent of current discounts targeting low-income people. To gather this information, MTC staff conducted an online survey in early fall of the region's transit operators, and a total of 16 agencies participated. An overview of the survey results is attached for your information.

Staff will be at your December 9 meeting to provide an informational summary of the findings and answer any questions.

Next Steps

Staff is currently preparing a white paper in consultation with a broad range of stakeholders intended to provide background and a recommended framework for a means-based fare discount pilot program to be implemented next year. A draft of the white paper is expected to be available in January 2009.

January 2009	Draft white paper available
Spring 2009	Pilot Program Development
Summer 2009	Anticipated call for proposals for means-based fare discount pilot program