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Memorandum

TO: BATA Oversight Committee

DATE: March 6, 2013

FR: Executive Director

RE: Bay Bridge Opening Events

Background

At the recommendation of this committee at its February 13th meeting, the full Bay Area Toll Authority on February 27th took up the issue of transportation, operations and public safety funding for public access on Labor Day Weekend 2013 when the new Bay Bridge East Span is scheduled to open. BATA approved toll funding of up to \$5.6 million and placed conditions on this approval in order to share in any excess private revenues generated by the events to help offset public costs. In addition to this action, the Authority asked staff to present this committee additional information related to charging a participation fee for the Bridge Walk event scheduled for Monday, September 2, 2013, and to address potential affordability concerns related to such a fee.

Discussion

The Toll Bridge Program Oversight Committee (TBPOC) — which is party to the memorandum of understanding with the non-profit Bay Bridge Alliance (BBA) that established the public/private partnership through which the opening celebration is being organized — considered the question of a participation fee for the Bridge Walk before approving the opening celebration plan at its November 2012 meeting. TBPOC recommended this event be made free of charge for participants and that remained staff's recommendation to this Committee and to the full Authority. Absent contrary direction from the Authority, BBA intends to charge a fee only for the bicycle and running race events, but not for the Bridge Walk.

As discussed at the Authority meeting last month, event producer Hartmann Studios believes it is feasible to charge a fee for the Bridge Walk. However, the cost of administering a fee of \$5, for example, would be proportionally higher for the Bridge Walk than the bicycle and running events due to the common practice of charging a market rate for those events as opposed to such a nominal fee for a walk. In addition, the inclusion of a discount fee for low-income participants likely would increase the complexity and cost of collecting the fee revenue even higher.

Recommendation

Staff believes that the revenue-sharing arrangement adopted by the Authority is a sufficient mechanism to recoup some of our upfront commitment of toll dollars, while providing BBA with considerable flexibility in how those private revenues are to be generated. Accordingly, we recommend that this committee take no action regarding the imposition of a participation fee for the Bridge Walk.

Steve Heninger