



San Mateo US 101 Express Lanes Community Transportation Benefits Program

An informational presentation to the
North Fair Oaks Community Council
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Agenda

- The Project and the Agency
- Studying Equity
- Implementing the Equity Program



US 101 Express Lanes Project

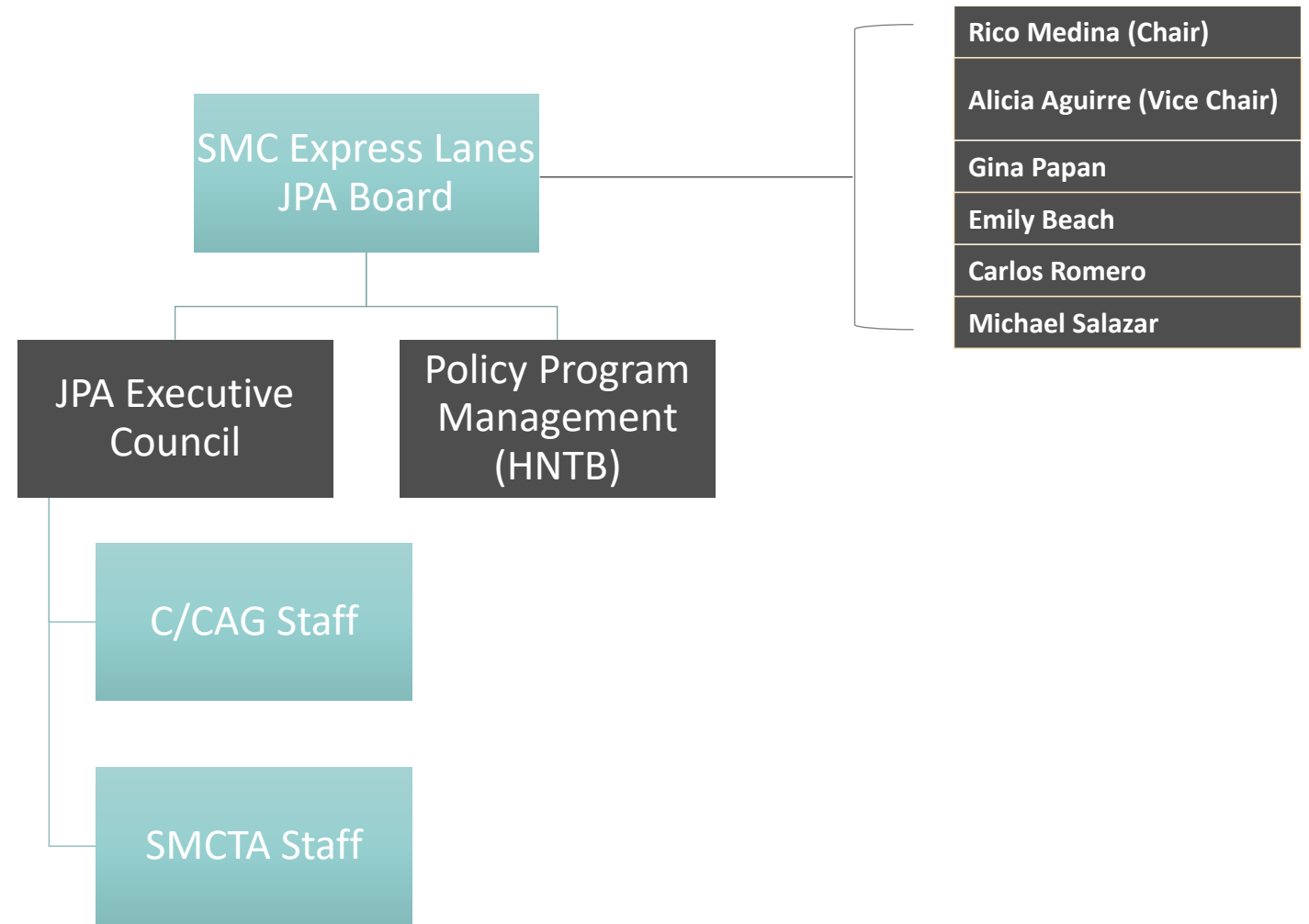
- Multi-year, multi-agency project lead by Caltrans in conjunction C/CAG and SMCTA to **reduce traffic congestion and encourage carpooling and transit use.**
- Creates **22 miles of express lanes** on US 101 from the San Mateo County/Santa Clara County line to I-380 in South San Francisco.
- **Timing-** Opened southern segment (8 miles) in February 2022 and northern segment will open in early 2023.



SMCEL-JPA Organizational Chart

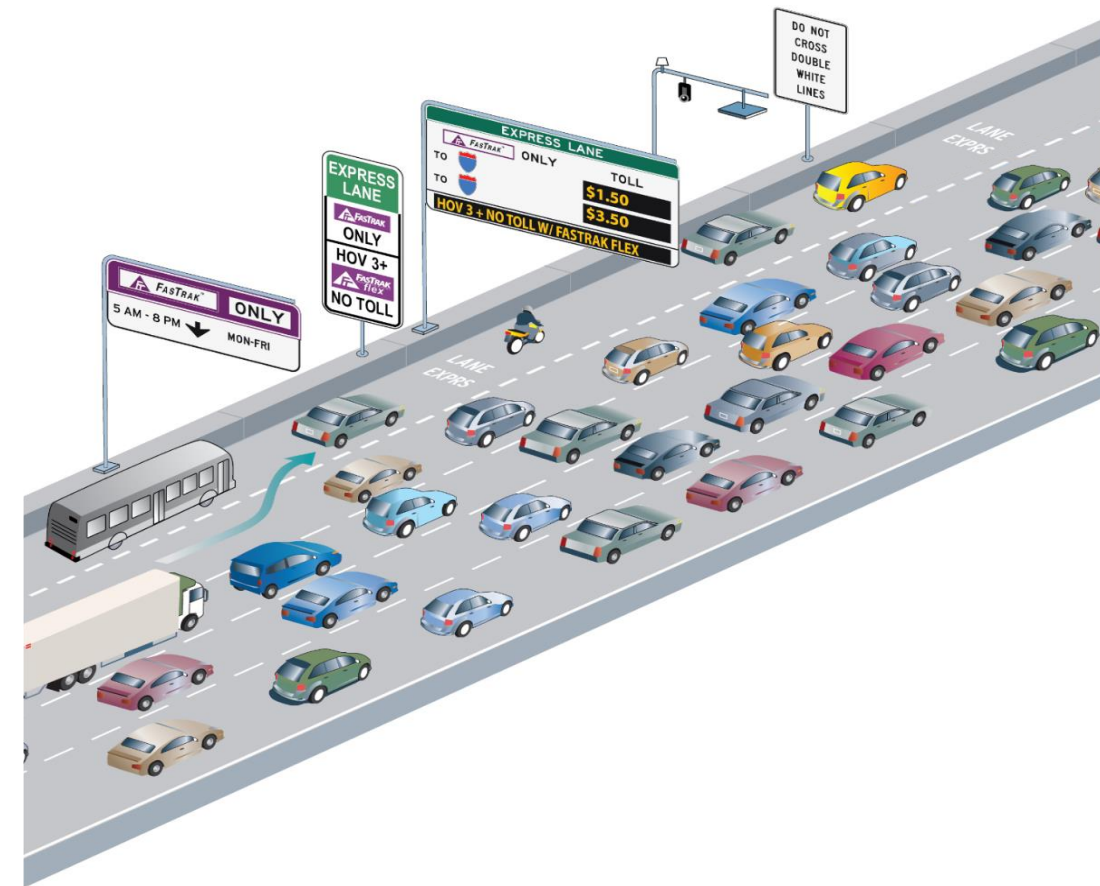
SMCEL-JPA Board of Directors

- 3 Members of the City/County Associations of Governments of San Mateo County Board (C/CAG)
- 3 Members of the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA)



What is an Express Lane?

- Buses, vans and HOV 3+ generally use the lane for free; HOV 2 people in a car receive a discount
- Other drivers can choose to pay
- Toll prices are dynamic to keep the lane free flowing
- Toll prices will be displayed on overhead signs



Get FasTrak to Use the Express Lanes



How many people are in your vehicle?



Set the switch accordingly

1

Full Price

2

50% Discount

3+

Free

1

50% Discount

2

50% Discount

3+

Free

Full Price

Equity Concerns

- Toll equity concerns
- Un-banked/under-banked
- Technological barriers (toll transponder)
- Potential for more benefits to accrue to higher income drivers

Four Major Equity Program Questions

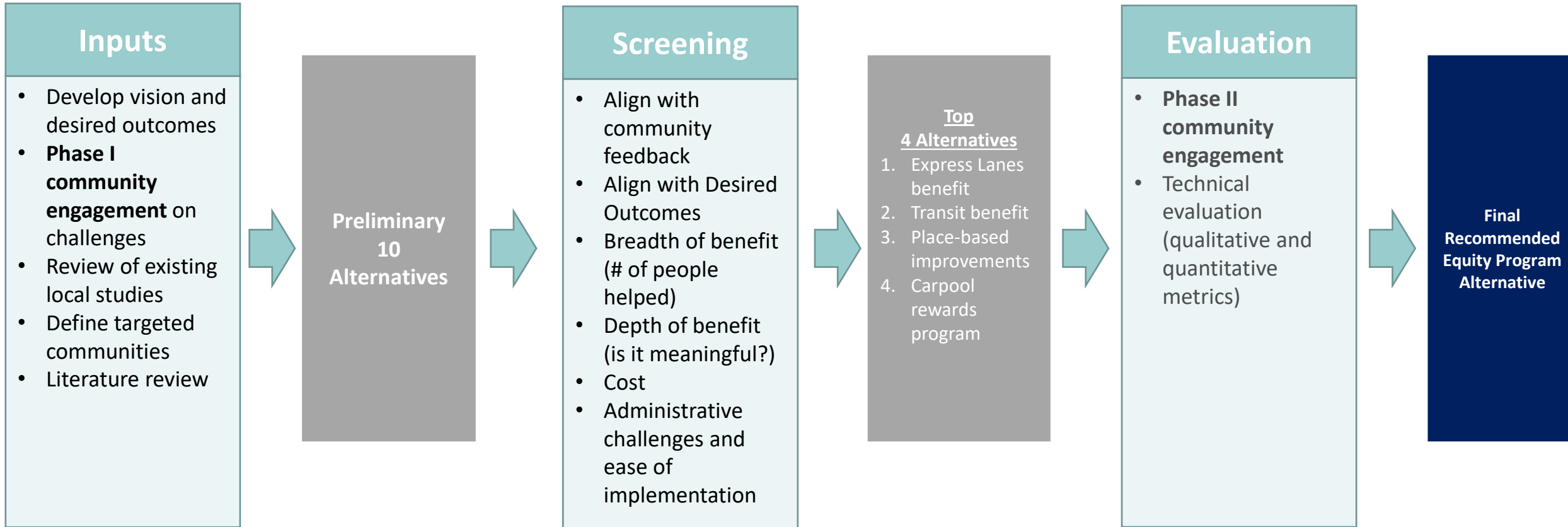
1. How to provide equity?
 - a. Discounted tolls in express lane?
 - b. Equity investments outside of express lane?
2. Who should benefit?
3. How much should they benefit?
4. How to implement program?

Equity Study Overview

Goals:

- Develop a Pilot Equity Program that invests toll revenue in historically underserved communities in San Mateo County
- The Program should be flexible and can evolve over time in response to changing community needs

Equity Study Process



Literature review findings



Congestion pricing can reduce congestion, reduce air pollution, and improve mobility and access for everyone



Congestion pricing can have negative environmental justice impacts if a highway is expanded for a new lane



Congestion pricing schemes are generally more equitable than the status quo of unpriced roads



The evidence does not support claims that traffic will be diverted through nearby communities



Express Lanes generally create fewer equity concerns than other types of congestion pricing schemes



The direct benefits of Express Lanes accrue to higher income groups more than others



Express Lanes are slightly less regressive than other forms of transportation finance



Acceptability after implementation is widespread and all groups make some use of the guaranteed reliable travel times



Revenue redistribution is key to equitable outcomes



Low-income drivers are a small share of peak-period traffic and therefore less likely to pay the highest tolls



It is difficult for Express Lanes to generate enough net revenue to fully fund projects that benefit underserved communities



Our Community Engagement Approach

1. Interview community leaders from across San Mateo County to understand community transportation challenges
2. Implement a Community Partner Program
3. Embark on a community roadshow to present to community groups and have collaborative discussions
4. Hold public meetings
5. Engage an Equity Study Advisory Committee with representatives from local jurisdictions and advocates

Phase I Community Engagement

Purpose	What we heard
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify community challenges• Input on how revenue should be invested	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key challenges include unreliable public transportation, high cost of transportation, too much traffic• Toll subsidies or other programs to help low-income drivers use the lanes• More frequent and reliable public transportation• Improved sidewalk and bicycle infrastructure• Discounted or free transit passes

Phase II Community Engagement

Purpose	What we heard
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Input on four Equity Program alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Express Lanes and Transit Benefit Alternatives received the most support.• Many participants also expressed support for a hybrid of these Alternatives• Stressed need for multilingual, culturally sensitive education on how to use Express Lanes and how to access Equity Program• For cash benefits alternatives some people expressed that \$50 is too low to be a meaningful benefit.

Final Equity Program



1. Clipper Card with a value of \$100; or
2. FasTrak[®] Flex toll tag/transponder with value of \$100)

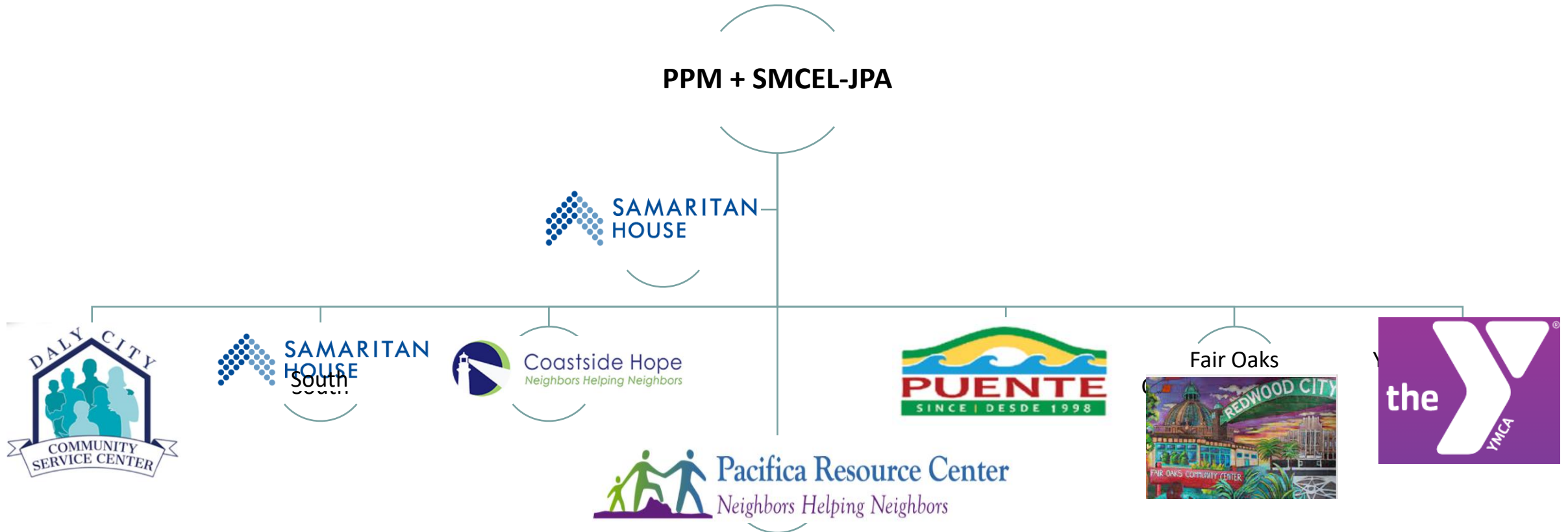


*First year budget: \$1,400,000; \$600,000 annually after that.

Program Eligibility

- Resident of San Mateo County;
- and age 18 or older;
- **Individual Income** at or below 60% of the county AMI - \$83,640 for 2022; or
- Eligible to receive at least one benefit provided through the Core Service Agencies Network

Program Administration Structure



Benefits Distributed: April – December 2023



260

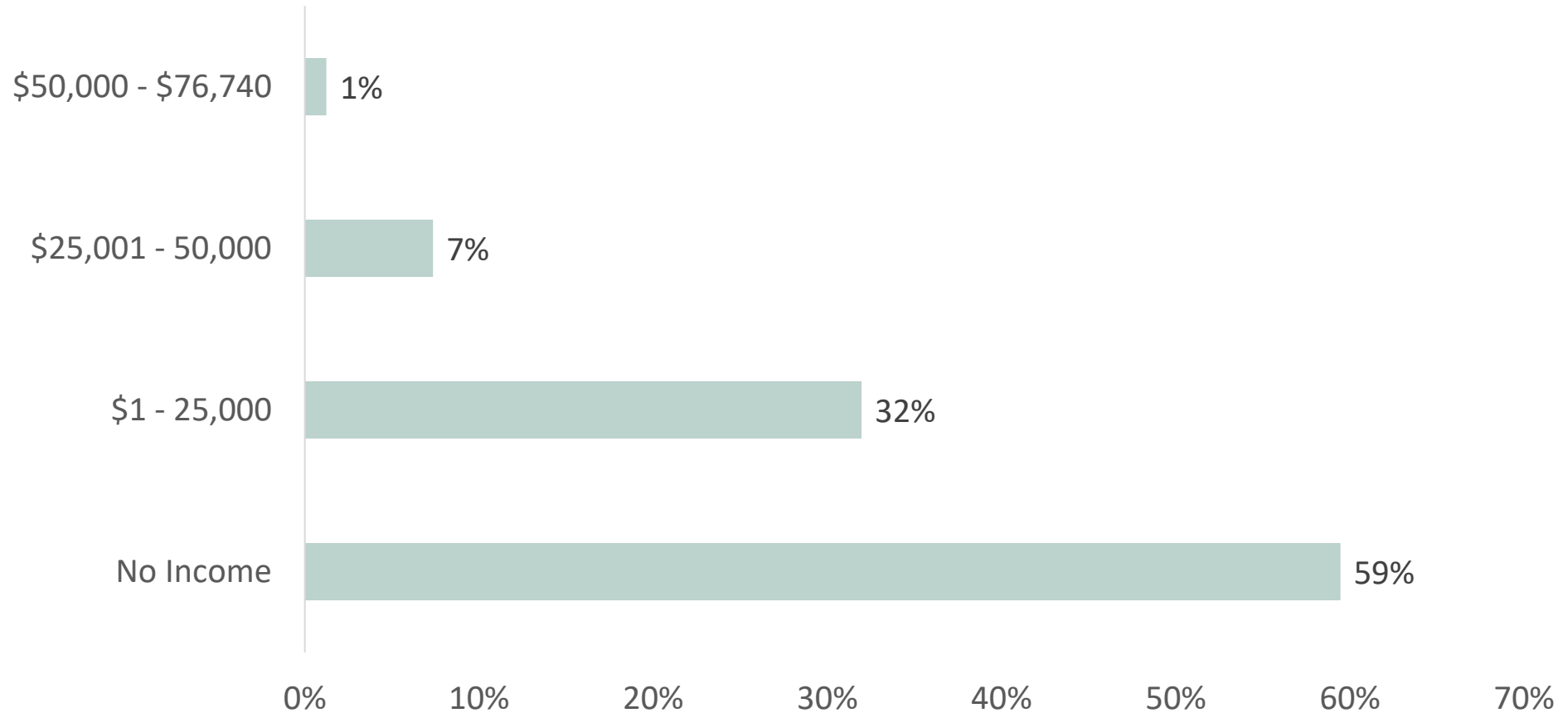
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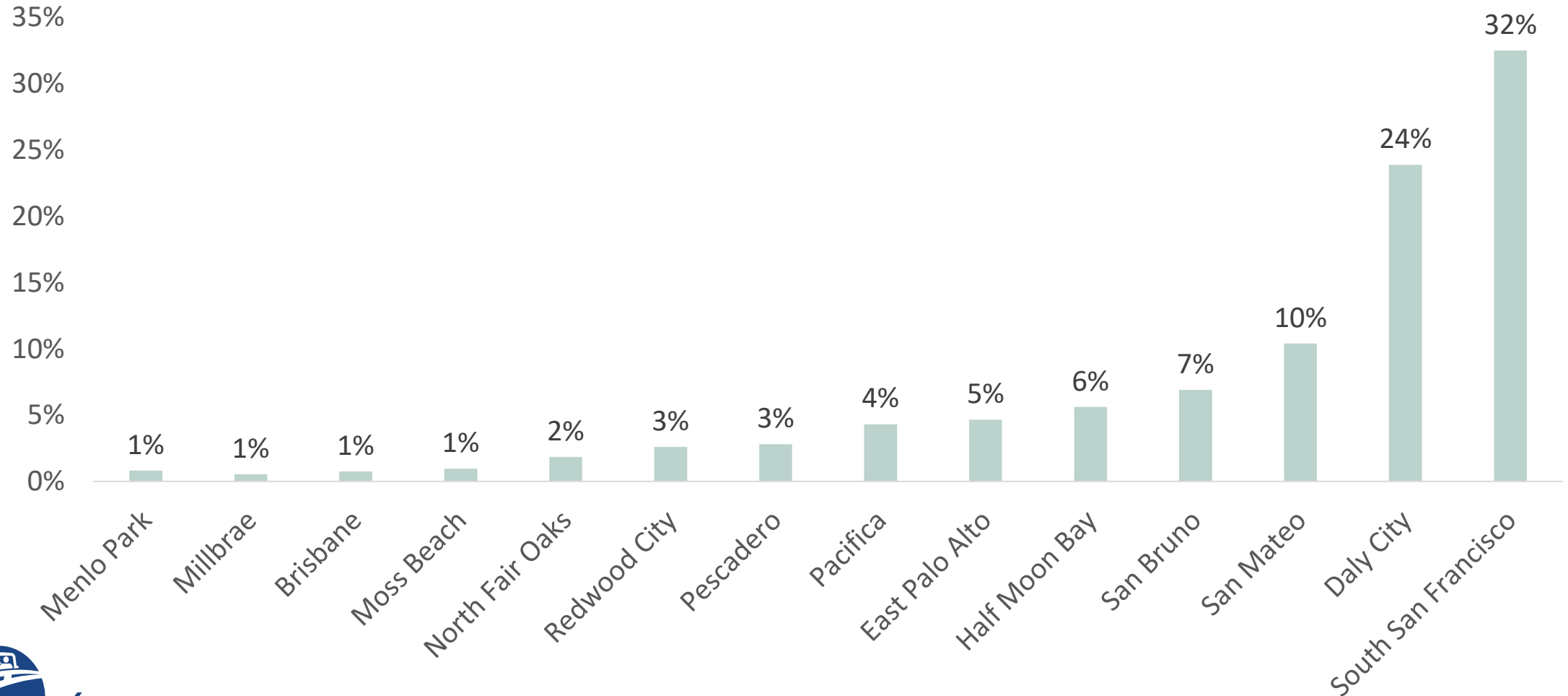
1,207

(82%)

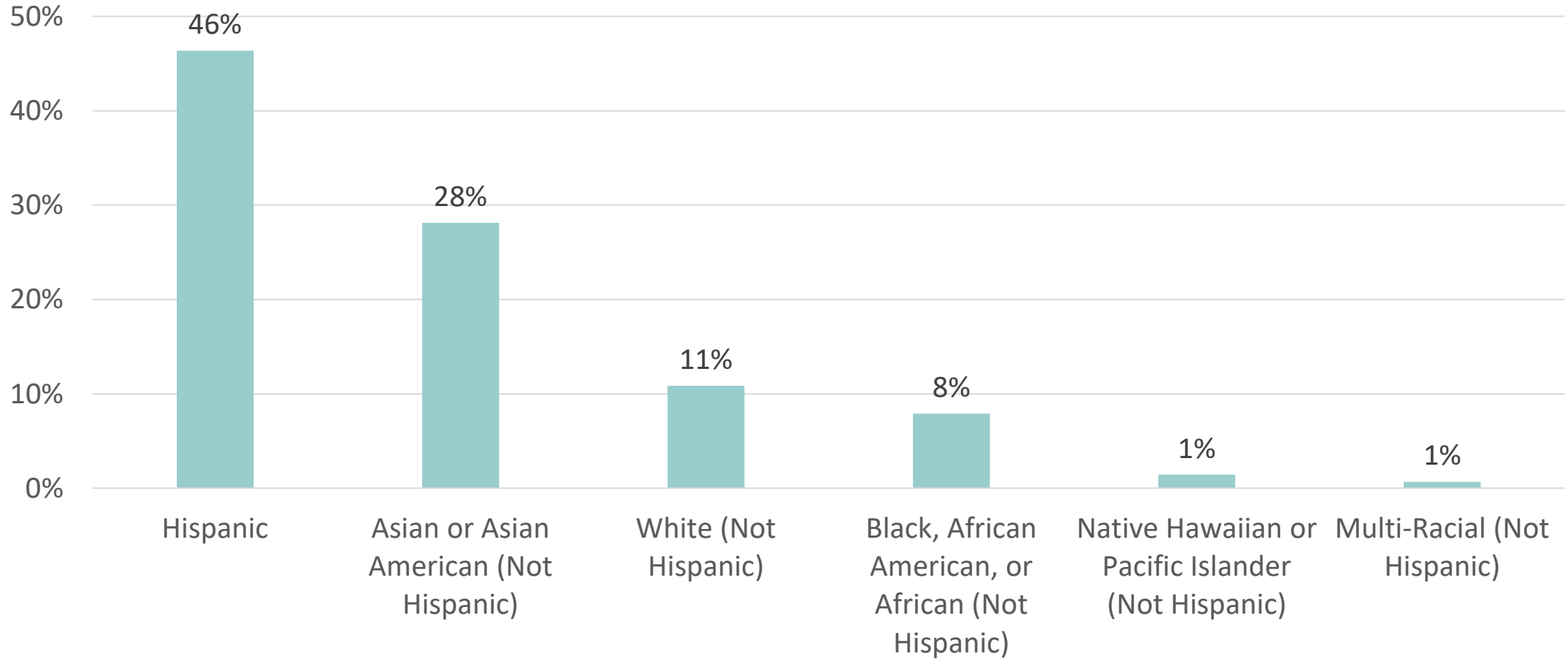
Income Level of Program Participants



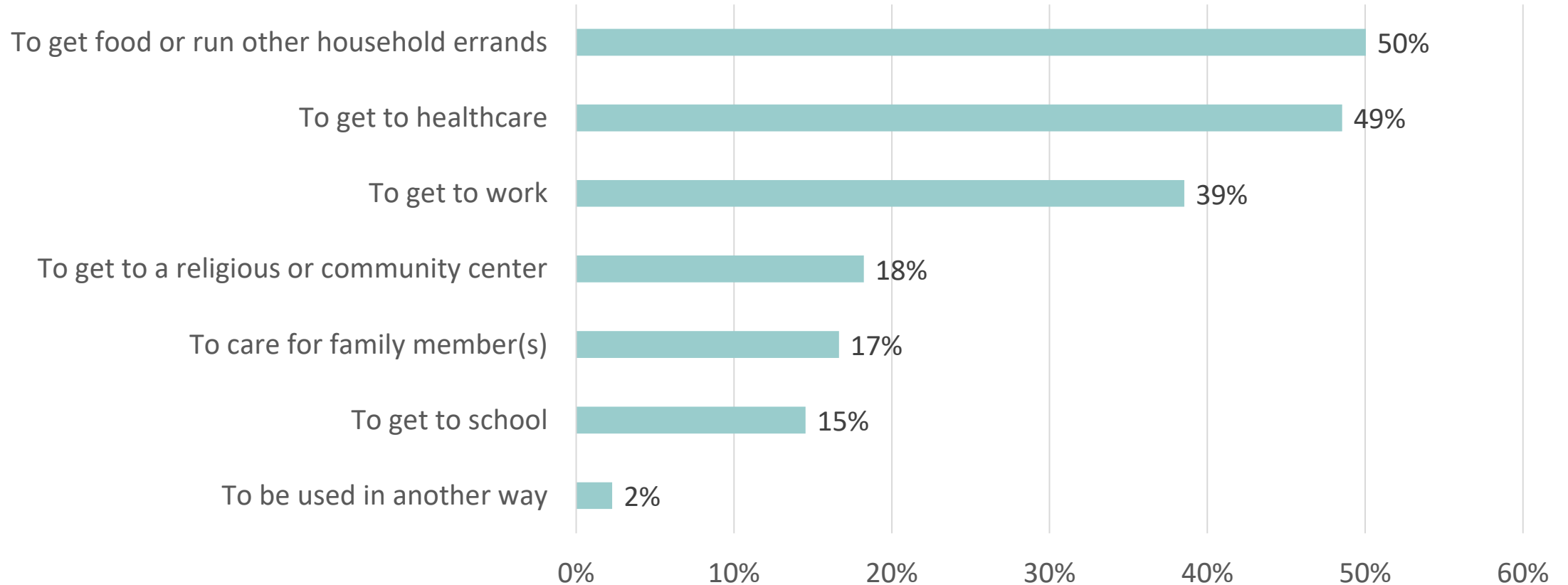
Where Program Participants Live



Program Participants' Race and Ethnicity



How Program Participants Say They Will Use the Benefit





Questions?

www.smcepresslanes.org

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