



Board Report

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PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE FEBRUARY 17, 2016

RECOMMENDATION

Oral Report on **ROAD CHARGE PILOT PROGRAM UPDATE**

RECEIVE oral presentation by **Road Charge Technical Advisory Committee members representing the Los Angeles region.**

DISCUSSION

Senate Bill 1077, enacted September 29, 2014, directs the California Transportation Commission (CTC) to lay the groundwork for future efforts to address a large and growing shortfall in transportation funding needs by convening a Road Charge Technical Advisory Committee (RCTAC). On January 15, 2016 the RCTAC released its recommendations to the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) for the roll-out of a road charge pilot program. This report will guide Caltrans in conducting the pilot program and the state is now underway with the voluntary recruitment of pilot program participants.

There are three RCTAC members who have represented Los Angeles County in the development of the pilot program recommendations, as they live or work in our County:

- Vice-Chair Stephen Finnegan, Automobile Club of Southern California, represents Highway User Groups
- Pam O'Connor, City of Santa Monica, represents Los Angeles County's Regional Transportation Agency
- Martin Wachs, UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs, area of expertise in National Research and Policymaking

All three RCTAC members have been very responsive to Metro staff concerns and brought them forward for RCTAC discussion on multiple occasions. Staff has invited them to the Planning and Programming Committee in February 2016 to share some of their experiences and thoughts regarding the Road Charge Pilot Program as well as highlight the need for Los Angeles County volunteers in the pilot program.

Background

The State is considering a new source of funds for highway maintenance and upgrades. The value of the fixed-amount gas tax erodes with inflation and gas tax revenues are declining as cars become more efficient. As California's highways and streets are fast approaching a condition in which they can no longer be maintained, they instead have to be rebuilt, costing far more taxpayer dollars.

On Friday, January 15, 2016 the California Road Charge Technical Advisory Committee (RCTAC), which is studying road charging as a potential replacement for the gas tax per Senate Bill 1077 (DeSaulnier, 2014), released its final recommendations for the design of a statewide pilot study of road charging. These recommendations follow a yearlong process of studying all aspects of road charging, and soliciting feedback from stakeholders and members of the public. Some of the highlights of the RCTAC's recommendations are that the pilot should:

- Offer drivers a choice in mileage recording methods
- Protect drivers' privacy and personal information through third-party validated protocols
- Determine the impacts of a road charge on various income levels
- Determine the impacts of a road charge on urban and rural drivers
- Seek participation from at least 5,000 vehicles that represent the geographic, demographic and socioeconomic diversity of our state
- Cost drivers nothing to participate

The RCTAC began their monthly meetings in January 2015 to discuss and decide upon various technical recommendations related to the design and implementation of the Road Charge Pilot Program. Over the course of 11 months Metro staff participated at these meetings and coordinated with local and regional transportation agencies to jointly comment on the emerging recommendations. The final RCTAC report can be found at the following link:

http://www.catc.ca.gov/meetings/Committees/Road_Charge/Road_Charge_Pilot_Design_Recommendations_121115.pdf

The California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) will now execute the Road Charge Pilot according to these recommendations. The nine-month pilot will begin this summer and CalSTA has been carrying out efforts to recruit 5,000 volunteer drivers. While 5,000 participants are needed for a successful pilot, tens of thousands of volunteers are needed in order to identify a 5,000 person sample which fairly represents a cross section of people from all walks of life, as well as vehicles of different weights and fuel types. It is very important that public and stakeholder groups in Los Angeles County be aware of the program and are encouraged to volunteer. Volunteering is free and no actual money will be exchanged. Participants will have the choice of submitting mock payments via mail or a secure website for testing purposes. Volunteers can enroll at www.CaliforniaRoadChargePilot.com <<http://www.CaliforniaRoadChargePilot.com>>.

Next Steps

- Summer 2016 - CalSTA implements Statewide Pilot Program
- July 2017 - Outcomes of the Road Charge Pilot Program reported back to the RCTAC
- December 2017 - CTC presents recommendations to Legislature

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