



Alameda County Student Transit Pass Program

PROGRAM NEED

The Student Transit Pass Pilot (STPP) Program expands transportation options and makes it easier for Alameda County's middle and high school students to travel to and from school and school-related programs, jobs and other activities. The initial three-year, \$15 million pilot program was identified in the voter-approved 2014 Transportation Expenditure Plan funded by Measure BB and designed to account for geographic differences within the County.

Delivering on our promise to Alameda County voters, the program goals are to:

- Reduce barriers to transportation access to and from schools.
- Improve transportation options for Alameda County's middle and high school students.
- Build support for transit in Alameda County.
- Develop effective three-year pilot programs.
- Create a basis for a countywide student transit pass program (funding permitting).

THREE-YEAR PILOT PROGRAM

The program was implemented from August 2016 through July 2019, and several pilot program models have been tested during this time to evaluate the best future options for Alameda County. In March 2016, the Commission approved a site selection framework and a shortlist of 36 school sites that are eligible during the three-year pilot program. Throughout this process, feedback was solicited from interested stakeholders.



Students boarding a bus in Alameda County.

PROGRAM GOALS

- Reduce transportation access barriers to and from schools.
- Improve transportation options for Alameda County's middle and high school students.
- Build support for transit in Alameda County.
- Develop effective three-year pilot programs.
- Create a framework for a countywide student transit pass program.

THREE-YEAR PILOT PROGRAM

"... The program has helped my family save money."

"... I use UC Transit to get home and AC Transit to go to the mall."

"...It has given me a little more independence ..."

"I was able to get a job, because I have a Clipper card .."



Program Models and Evaluation

PILOT MODELS

Several different models were evaluated during the three-year pilot which account for different transit options, geographies and economic conditions throughout the County. In May 2016, the Commission approved the first year program design. In March 2017, the Commission approved the second year program design. The program design for the third and final year of the pilot was approved by the Commission in February 2018. Two program models (Free/Universal and Free/Means-Based) were being assessed in Year Three.



Students registering for the STPP program in August 2016.

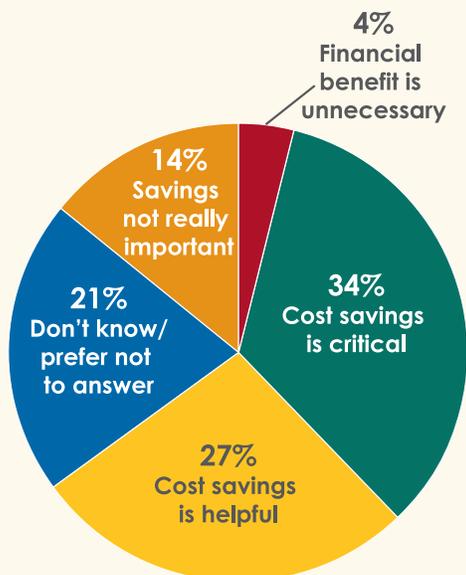


PILOT PROGRAM EVALUATION

- In year three, 21 Alameda County schools in seven school districts participated in the STPP program.
 - 11,100 participants in Year Three.
 - The STPP facilitated nearly 1.2 million trips between August 2018 and July 2019. On average, each participant used transit 10 times per month during the school year from September to May.
 - More than half of participating students indicated that the cost savings provided by the STPP is important to the student and his or her family.

As a result of the effective implementation and evaluation of the STPP, in December 2018, the Alameda CTC approved the continuation and expansion of the program for five years beyond the pilot period, including Phase 1 of the STPP for the 2019/2020 school year. Future phases will be implemented based upon close monitoring of implementation of Phase 1, which tripled the pilot program size.

IMPORTANCE OF BUS PASS COST SAVINGS TO PARTICIPANT FAMILIES



POST-PILOT PROGRAM EXPANSION

Phase 1 of the Student Transit Pass Program was implemented in the summer of 2019 and tripled the number of schools from 21 schools in the last year of the pilot to 62 schools throughout the County. Future phases are expected to begin in fall 2020.



PHASE 1 EXPANSION PROGRAM MODEL

Based on lessons learned from the pilot program, staff recommended a largely Means-based/Free program except for school districts in which a very high percentage of students are eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Meals (FRPM). Eligibility for FRPM is determined based upon household income. Districts where 75 percent or more of students overall are eligible for FRPM qualify for a Free/Universal program, while all other districts qualify for a Means-based/Free program.

Future Phases: The Student Transit Pass Program is undergoing a phased expansion to all middle and high schools in Alameda County with bus service over the next five years. The expansion phasing seeks to balance geographic equity across planning areas in the County. The five year expansion expects to reach over 140 schools, serving nearly 59,000 students.

EXPANSION PRINCIPLES

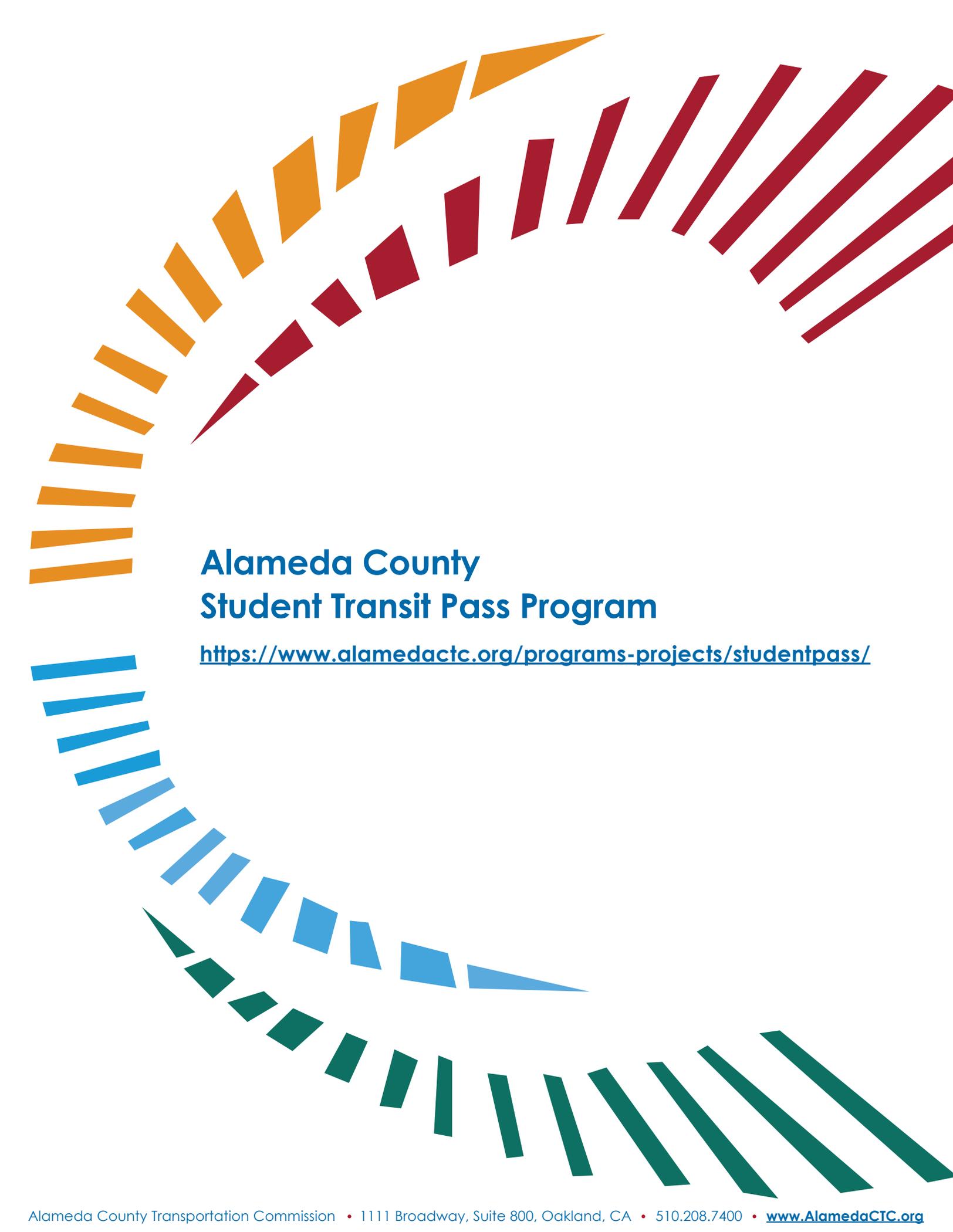
- Maintain financial need as a key criteria for expansion.
- Continue the program in all currently participating schools.
- Focus on students at schools with transit services.
- Perform district-based expansion.
- Phase expansion over time.

PROGRAM EXPANSION COMPONENTS

Phase 1 of the STPP provides free Youth Clipper cards to eligible middle and high school students, which can be used for unlimited free bus rides in their area (on AC Transit, Union City Transit or LAVTA Wheels), as well as a 50 percent discount on BART trips and youth discounts on other transit systems.

TRANSIT PARTNERS



A decorative graphic consisting of a semi-circle of colored bars. The bars are arranged in a semi-circle, with colors transitioning from orange at the top left, through red, to blue, and finally to green at the bottom right. The bars vary in length and are slightly tilted.

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<https://www.alamedactc.org/programs-projects/studentpass/>