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President’s Summer Message

Brian Shaw
President
Association for Commuter Transportation

In my day job as the University of Pennsylvania’s Director of Business Services, one of the areas that will be a component of our efforts to increase ridesharing on campus is vanpooling. As part of our planning for growing vanpools at Penn, we determined our in-house program was not well positioned to meet our goals. As a result, Penn has outsourced its vanpool program. To achieve the goals of our Climate Action Plan, Penn will need to get more of our commuters to campus in ridesharing arrangements like vanpooling. While the Philadelphia region has a great transit network and Penn is well served by it, a growing number of our population live where using transit just isn’t practical or available. We have commuters from as far away as the south Jersey shore, Delaware and beyond. Vanpooling is a great fit for these more distant commuters. It’s been a while since I developed vanpools during my time at Emory University so I need to get up to speed on how vanpooling works today.

Fortunately, this month we bring to you an edition of TDM Review focused on vanpooling today. We have compiled articles from across the country on the newest best practices in vanpooling. From marketing to management and even delving into the tough subject of safety and accidents. While most of us in TDM take vanpooling for granted, perhaps relying on our providers for guidance, we can help ourselves and our industry by learning all that we can about this mode of travel.

Did you know than vanpooling continues to be the safest form of public transport? That vanpool drivers should be screened and have background checks conducted? These are just some of the topics covered in this vanpooling edition of TDM review.

Of course you can learn more about vanpooling and the world of TDM at our annual conference taking place in Chicago in late August. We will also be jointly hosting a parking and TDM summit with our strategic partner, the International Parking Institute, at this year’s conference.

I will conclude with an open invitation to our members to reach out to me or any of the ACT leadership team. We are here to help you grow and prosper as TDM professionals. You can reach me at shawb@upenn.edu.
Investing in Vanpools: A Best Practice for Savvy Employers

Today, more and more smart employers are recognizing company-supported vanpooling as a business best practice. Vanpooling presents a strategic means of recruiting and maintaining the best workforce for one’s company. It also lessens the impact of potential commuting difficulties on employee productivity.

Many employees consider vanpooling a valuable alternative to driving alone, especially with the volatility of fuel costs and worsening traffic congestion. Vanpools can reduce their time spent on the road when they are able to use HOV lanes, make their commutes to work less stressful, and save them money over the cost of driving alone.

However, businesses also reap benefits by actively supporting vanpooling among their employees. Vanpooling:

- Promotes your company as an employee-oriented business: A company that is concerned about its employees’ daily commute options is a more attractive place to work.
- Saves on parking management costs: Reducing the number of employee vehicles parked on-site increases the supply of available parking for customers and other business partners.
- Expands company recruitment options: Businesses that offer transit benefits and incentives are more likely to retain employees and increase recruitment opportunities for individuals who may otherwise not be able to commute to the company’s facility.
- Reduces employee absenteeism and turnover: Many employers have indicated that reliable, affordable ride-sharing opportunities to work improve employee retention and productivity.
- Reduces time spent in training new employees: Particularly in smaller markets, vanpooling increases the commuting options for employees and provides flexibility for commuters traveling during non-peak commute hours, especially in hard-to-reach locations or areas not served by public transportation.
- Offers an innovative way to market products: Company-owned vans provide ad space, serving as “rolling billboards” that can promote your company’s products and services. Company-sponsored bus passes can also serve as a means to advertise.

When supporting employee vanpools, employers can choose their level of financial involvement. Some options are listed below:

- Deduct the cost of vanpool fees from employees’ pre-tax income (up to $230 per month per employee) to reduce their and the company’s overall tax liability.
- Subsidize or fully pay for employees’ participation in an employee-run vanpool through vouchers or other forms of payment and deduct the subsidy as a business expense.
- Purchase or lease vans and administer the vanpool program for employees.
- Contract with a third party to set up and run a vanpool program for employees.

Implementing a Vanpool Program

Three types of vanpool arrangements are available to employers that want to offer their employees a vanpooling option. They are:

- Employer-sponsored or operated vanpool programs in which the employer purchases or leases the vans and is responsible for overall program administration. Insurance is usually obtained through the company’s regular fleet
policy.

- Individually owned and operated vanpools in which the driver owns and maintains the van and coordinates the daily operation of the vanpool; rider fares are used to cover the purchase and maintenance costs.

- Third-party vanpooling programs in which a private company or organization purchases or leases vans and then offers them to vanpooling groups for a fee that covers the cost of program administration, vanpool promotion, and van maintenance.

A company’s human resources department or facilities management office can coordinate the program. Hiring additional staff is not required.

Local vanpool providers, transit agencies, metropolitan planning organizations, city and county transportation agencies, and transportation management associations can provide assistance in starting or joining vanpool programs. The assistance they provide includes help with:

- Recruiting riders
- Approving and training drivers
- Determining routes
- Collecting monthly fees
- Developing tools for marketing, monitoring and maintaining the program

What’s more, employers will qualify for valuable tax savings.

Resource


This article is an excerpt from the Joblinks “Transportation Toolkit for the Business Community was created with funding from the Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor, through a cooperative agreement between the Community Transportation Association of America and the Federal Transit Administration. The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are solely those of the authors and should not be construed as representing the opinions or policy of any agency of the federal government.
The current economic downturn has resulted in a disproportionate loss of jobs in rural communities, necessitating longer work commutes for some rural residents when they do return to work. Moreover, many families are choosing to become no car or one car households. In rural communities where public transportation is limited, these developments present challenges to accessing work and training opportunities.

Despite the gains made in rural transportation, rural communities remain at a disadvantage. They are still challenged to build significant mobility options that provide those going to work with the same choices available in communities with more traditional forms of transit. Vanpools offer a perfect solution—one that benefits commuters and businesses alike. Vanpools offer flexibility, can reduce employee time spent on the road when they are able to use high-occupancy vehicle lanes, make employees’ commute to work less stressful and save employees money relative to the cost of driving alone. By implementing or supporting vanpool programs, employers can ensure their workers have a dependable ride to work and realize significant tax savings through participation in the Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit program under section 132(f) of the Internal Revenue Code. They can also afford riders tax savings and reduce expenses associated with providing employee parking.

Communities across the nation have led the way in pioneering vanpool programs. Innovative programs include ones that are owner-operated, programs sponsored by transit agencies or employers and vanpools administered by third-party operators such as VPSI and 2Plus.

Among the nation’s most innovative vanpool programs are the ones operating in Washington State. This is due, in part, to the enactment of two key pieces of state legislation. In 1991, Washington incorporated the Commute Trip Reduction Law into its Clean Air Act. The law requires each county with a residential population of more than 150,000 and employers with more than 100 employees, as well as each city within those counties containing a major employer with more than 100 employees who must travel during the peak hours of 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., to follow certain mandates. The guidelines stipulate that employers meeting these criteria must have an employee transportation coordinator on site, survey employees biennially and provide options to reduce single-occupant commuting; these options may include the 132(f) transit benefit and priority parking for vanpoolers and carpoolers.

Further action was taken in 2003, when the state implemented a 10-year transportation plan focused on doubling the number of vanpools within that timeframe. The Vanpool Investment Program allocated $30 million in grant funds for public transit agencies to support vanpool programs. Funds must be used for capital costs associated with putting new vans on the road and employer incentives to increase employee vanpool use.

The state Commute Trip Reduction Board, which establishes program guidelines for the state’s Commute Trip Reduction Program, is charged with administering the funds to help transit agencies grow their vanpool programs. Each year the board reviews the size of each agency’s vanpool waiting list, the degree of congestion in the corridors these programs serve, the needs of workers for supplemental transit services and other criteria in allocating funds to agencies for purchasing vans, based on a maximum cost of $26,000 per van. If, through the state contract with vendors or through a competitive bid process, transit agencies can purchase vehicles for less than $26,000, they are allowed to amend their agreement with the state to purchase vehicles beyond the funded equivalent number of vans.
Following are examples of successful vanpool programs serving rural communities or commuters that have incorporated creative approaches to meeting the needs of both providers and participants. Among the elements leading to success are:

- developing innovative partnerships;
- reaching out to and involving area employers;
- understanding the unique needs of individual communities;
- obtaining strong political support from local leaders;
- emphasizing ease of use for businesses by, for example, working with reliable, experienced third-party operators;
- emphasizing ease of use for commuters; and
- ensuring access to a guaranteed ride home.

**Baldwin Rural Area Transit, Baldwin County, Alabama**

Baldwin Rural Area Transit (BRATS) is the public transit provider for Baldwin County, located in rural Alabama. The transit agency overcame several funding and logistical challenges associated with providing transit access from a rural area to an urban area to successfully implement a vanpool program that provides rural workers with access to jobs in the city of Mobile, the county seat and a growing tourist community. Although many county residents routinely travel to jobs in Mobile and need transportation assistance to access employment, implementing a program posed difficulties because program funders wanted to ensure BRATS did not compete with urban transit providers also serving the city. After much negotiation, the transit agency implemented a vanpool program that routinely transports Baldwin County residents to a central location in Mobile, picks up passengers and transports them back to Baldwin.

BRATS owns all the vans and operates three different types of vanpools: those driven by company employees and paid for by riders, those driven by BRATS drivers and billed to employers on a monthly basis and those driven by BRATS drivers with weekly tickets purchased in advance by the passengers. Approximately 10 percent of vanpools are those driven by company employees. Regardless of type, the vanpools have gained employer as well as employee support because of their proven record of getting people to work on time.

In addition to Mobile, service is provided to the county seat, located in the northern part of the county, and to several county employers. BRATS also contracted with larger employers along the east-west corridor of the state, and it currently runs vanpools to those destinations. Another route, serving Gulf Shores, a large tourism area in the extreme southern portion of the county, was recently expanded from summer to year-round service. One of the participating employers in the Gulf Shores area provides transit benefits for vanpool riders via the Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit program.

BRATS now runs 2,000 passenger trips per month during the morning and evening commute. It works closely with area chambers of commerce, as well as with local human service agencies, to develop services. The transit agency established strong working ties with all 13 municipalities located in Baldwin County and the cities of Mobile, Alabama, and Pensacola, Florida. In addition, BRATS’s director of transportation serves on the Envision Coastal Alabama Board for Transit.

For more information, contact Taylor Rider, director of transportation, at 251.990.4636 or btrider@co.baldwin.al.us; or visit http://www.co.baldwin.al.us/Pageview.asp?edit_id=363.

**Coast Transit Authority, Hancock County, Mississippi**

The Coast Transit Authority (CTA) has been providing public transportation services to three coastal Mississippi counties since 1972. CTA’s Coast Commuter program is a three-part work commute program consisting of fixed-route bus service, carpooling and vanpooling.

The vanpool program began operations in December 2006, with one vanpool serving the state’s largest employer, Northrop Grumman. All currently operating vanpools serve the Northrop Grumman shipyard in Pascagoula, Mississippi, and various agencies conducting business at the Stennis Space Center, also
located in this rural area. Of the 30 vanpools in operation, 13 originate in rural communities. Vanpools are available to accommodate all work shifts at these facilities with enough interested commuters to start a pool. In February 2009 alone, vanpools provided more than 7,500 passenger trips.

Prior to implementation, CTA’s executive director met with the mayor of Pascagoula and Northrop Grumman officials to discuss the need for transportation options in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. VPSI, a national vanpool services provider, surveyed the company, reviewed employee commuting habits, mapped out where all employees live and identified distances and clusters of residents. Based on the information gathered, VPSI determined the number of vans needed to transport all participants, and it recruited and trained the drivers from among the potential commuters.

Currently, CTA contracts with VPSI to provide equipment and management services for the vanpool program. CTA pays all management costs for the program and provides a $400 monthly subsidy for each vanpool. Costs associated with the rides depend on the number of passengers and the distance traveled. Vanpool participants are eligible for and receive transit benefits through the federal Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit program.

Residents from Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi currently commute by vanpool to work in Mississippi. CTA is also working with Keesler Air Force Base and the VA Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System, headquartered in Biloxi, to establish programs at these installations. Although local private-sector employers expressed considerable interest in the program when fuel prices were at their peak, interest has diminished somewhat with the recent reduction in gas prices.
Among the elements leading to the program’s success are the ability to contract with an experienced private administrator and Northrop Grumman’s cooperation in designing the program and working out all the bugs. CTA has found that marketing and coordination costs can be expensive and that oversight is labor intensive.

For more information, contact Katy Schmidt at 228.896.8080 x 233 or katy.schmitt@vpsiinc.com.

Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center, Brunswick, Georgia

Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center created a regional vanpool program as part of the coordinated public transportation plan. Although the economic downshift has slowed implementation, employee and employee interest still exists, the program expects to grow as the economy improves. The program will provide a low-cost commute option for employees traveling from outlying areas to work. It grew out of a 2005 needs assessment that identified commuter transportation as a major necessity. The study found that many workers travel from second- and third-tier counties to employment, a trend that is expected to increase as the recession worsens. Currently, more than 230,000 workers cross county lines daily to jobs within the region. The average commute distance is nearly 35 miles.

The vanpool program aims to serve residents of a 10-county area covering the east coast of Georgia between the South Carolina and Florida borders. Costs relating to program implementation and administration are shared across the entire region. The program is supported through state and federal financing streams, including Job Access and Reverse Commute funding, with monthly ridership paid for by both riders and employers; participating regional employers also contribute financially by providing local matching funds. Initially, the Georgia Department of Transportation grant will provide the capital funding for the vans, and each group will be responsible for listing schedules and locations for pick-ups and drop-offs.

Eligible riders are residents living or working within the service area. Vans will be assigned to each group, and one of the employees will be designated as a driver. The employee/driver will have free use of the van for private travel, and the cost of the ride for that individual is free. VPSI is the contract manager.

Regional employers have shown strong support for the program; 74 percent of them have expressed a willingness to review information on vanpools, and nearly 50 percent of them have expressed an interest in promoting vanpooling at their companies. Staff is currently talking with employers about the provision of transportation benefits in conjunction with the program.

For more information, contact Barbara Hurst at 912.262.2800 or bfhurst@coastalgeorgiardc.org

Commuteride, Ada County, Idaho

Commuteride, the oldest multi-employer vanpool program in the nation, was started in 1976 by the Ada County Highway District (ACHD). ACHD encompasses Boise, Eagle, Garden City, Kuna, Meridian and Star as well as the unincorporated areas of Ada County. Currently, more than 900 participants are served by 83 routes. Participation is prearranged, with riders sharing the cost of the vehicle and its operation by paying an equitable monthly fare. Commuteride oversees all maintenance and insurance, and it provides a fuel card to pay for gasoline. Van drivers are members of the vanpool, and many of them ride for free. Vanpool fares, determined by the costs associated with the distance of the particular route, cover the operating costs of the van. These costs include van acquisition, maintenance, insurance, fuel, guaranteed ride home costs, back-up vehicle costs, commute incentives and some administrative fees. Vehicle purchases are financed through vanpool fares and grant opportunities. Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program funds and Section 5309 Earmark transit funds are among the sources used recently to purchase vehicles.

The Commuteride service area includes six counties, but all Commuteride vanpool routes must begin, end or travel through Ada County. Most routes either begin or end in rural communities. New vanpool members ride for free during their first month. Vanpool members are not obligated to continue if they decide not
to do so. Those who do are eligible for a $20 subsidy in the form of a Transi-Chek for each of the first three months following the month they ride for free. Transi-Cheks are provided by Commuteride to area employers at no cost to encourage them to promote vanpooling by their employees. In addition, full-time monthly riders may qualify for a $10-per-month rebate that is awarded quarterly. Some participating employers offer preferential vanpool parking and other incentives to encourage their employees to share rides to work.

Commuteride serves employees on two military installations as well as the Veterans Administration Medical Center in downtown Boise. Many employers in the Boise area pay a portion of the vanpool fares for their workers. Participants’ monthly fares are fully paid by their employers on approximately half of the currently active routes.

Commuteride’s guaranteed ride home program provides vanpool riders with up to six guaranteed rides home per year. Employer assistance representatives work with local employers to encourage their participation in promoting ridesharing.

For more information, contact Cecelia Hockett, vanpool operations coordinator, at 208.387.6164 or chockett@achd.ada.id.us.

**Easy Street, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island**

Easy Street is a regional program operated by Rideshare, a non-profit ridesharing company. Rideshare operates the third largest vanpool network in the nation. Easy Street operates in excess of 300 routes serving 3,000 commuters daily. The program currently serves Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island, with some participants commuting 75 miles each way to work.

The program was initially developed in response to the gas shortages of the 1970s. Early on, program staff discovered that several private employers in the area made company vehicles available for commuter vanpools. However, because participation was limited to company employees, colleagues who lived and/or worked nearby were not able to take advantage of the shared ride opportunity. Rideshare realized that providing vanpool access for commuters living and/or working in close proximity would benefit more people. When the program was first implemented, Rideshare took over many of the company vans. Today, Rideshare purchases vans through other private sources.

East Street passengers have the flexibility to design their pick-up schedules and routes to work. Most pick-ups are at park-and-ride lots. Space permitting, vanpools may offer part-time seating. Passenger fares are based on mileage and support vanpool operations.

Drivers are recruited from among the riders. Drivers of full-size vans (12–15 passengers) ride free and enjoy 140 miles of travel free monthly, while drivers of minivans (up to seven passengers) pay the same fare as riders and receive up to 250 miles of travel free each month. All vans are fully insured, and fares cover the costs of fuel and maintenance. Rideshare is responsible for all vehicle upkeep and maintenance. A guaranteed ride home program provides commuters free transportation in case of family emergencies, illness or unscheduled overtime. Up to four free rides per contract year are available.

Over the years, the program has recruited many loyal riders. Some Easy Street riders have commuted together for 15 years, and the camaraderie among passengers encourages ongoing participation. Many passengers have been known to celebrate birthdays and other occasions with their fellow riders.

In light of fluctuating fuel costs and economic concerns, interest in the program remains strong. Rideshare’s ongoing marketing to employers has increased the number of companies offering transportation benefits to workers who share rides to work.

According to Nanci Fitzgerald, Rideshare’s vice president of business development, the program’s turnkey nature enhances its attractiveness to employers. Because Rideshare is responsible for all program operations, employers find the program easy to use. On-site marketing and educating potential participants about the benefits of vanpooling have also contributed to the program’s growing success.
Innovative Rural Vanpool Programs

George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia

George Mason University (GMU), located in the Washington, D.C., suburbs, implemented a vanpool program in 2004 to transport employees from Luray, Front Royal, Culpepper, Warrenton and Fredericksburg in Virginia and Indian Head Highway and Fort Washington in Maryland to the campus physical plant. The vans provide low-cost transportation to workers, many of whom travel up to 90 minutes one way to work and cannot afford to live in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. The vans also eliminate the need to maintain 50 parking spaces on campus and reduce the number of vehicles on the road.

Currently, eight vanpools transport 57 riders. Vans are parked nightly at various park-and-ride facilities or public lots where employees meet each morning for the drive to work. The vans are owned by the state and operated by GMU, and GMU is responsible for maintenance and insurance-related expenses. Average costs for riders are calculated to keep participants within the $230 Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit program limit.

As the state fleet of vans ages and the cost to replace them is more than the budget allows, some of the vanpools may become private. Currently, one vanpool is privately operated. Commuters using private vanpool vendors are able to use their Commonwealth Choice commuter benefits to cover some if not all of their vanpool costs. The state pays the entire benefit (up to $230). The only out-of-pocket expense to riders is the costs in excess of the allowable maximum amount.

For more information, contact Bob Tennant, transportation coordinator, at 703.993.9530 or rt Tennant@gmu.edu.

Job Lift, Clallam County, Washington

Olympic Community Action Programs (OlyCAP), in partnership with Clallam Transit System (CTS), administers the Job Lift program. In operation for nearly nine years, Job Lift manages three fixed-route vanpools and provides access to jobs and training for low-wage workers living in the remote community. OlyCAP initiated the program, which was the outgrowth of a collaboration among several agencies brought together by the Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation. OlyCAP partnered with CTS to develop the vanpool network, and it received Job Access and Reverse Commute funds to implement the program. CTS assisted with vehicle purchase and offered to provide driver training. The vans are registered with CTS, and the agency manages and maintains the vehicles. Pierce Transit also provided significant assistance to OlyCAP with program administration, the implementation of various operating systems and the design of forms to capture data needed for reporting.

One vanpool travels to and from the Hoh Reservation, located about 50 miles from Forks, transporting people to and from work in the city. The second vanpool takes workers to and from La Push, about 15 miles from Forks. Both vanpools operate five days per week. The third vanpool travels different routes, including transporting season (summer) youth workers to job sites seven days per week, transporting employment and training program participants to Port Townsend once per month and transporting college students to job skills training classes. In many cases, the vanpools are the only transportation option to work available to riders in the remote location of west Clallam County. Consequently, employers work very closely with OlyCAP to set work schedules that accommodate the riders getting their children to day care and home again.

OlyCAP actively promotes the Job Lift program throughout the community and assists with driver recruitment. Staff members work with employers to promote ridership at the employment sites. In addition, staff members receive and screen all rider applications and conduct the training for each rider once the trip has been established.

The most significant challenge to date has been the establishment of routes serving the West End area of the county because of the needed follow-up with customers. The program’s successes are largely due to collaboration with various agencies.
among the partners, each of which is willing to provide the support needed to establish new routes. The high quality of available drivers also plays a significant role, as many are willing to act as back-up drivers when needed. Program operators take pride in knowing that the vanpools play a significant part in helping clients who are transitioning from welfare to work achieve long-term employment or needed training.

For more information, contact Rita Houston, co-director of community support services, Olympic Community Action Programs, at 360.452.4726, ext. 6216, or RHouston@olympcap.org

JobJet, Carroll, Iowa

JobJet, is a regional vanpool program serving six rural Iowa counties: Audubon, Carroll, Crawford, Greene, Guthrie and Sac. The program grew from a concept suggested by two local employers, Tyson’s Food and Farmland Foods, and is marketed as one that supports local economic development in conjunction with providing transportation access to work.

The program, expected to be operational by June 2009, is organized and managed by the Region XII Council of Governments (COG). COG operates the local public transit system and strongly promotes regional economic and workforce development.

JobJet, modeled on similar vanpool programs in Des Moines and other municipalities in the state, is the first vanpool program to serve rural residents. The program coordinates work schedules and locations to arrange workers into groups of 4 to 10 people for each of the six vanpools. Vanpool members live in close proximity to one another, work in the same general location and have similar work hours. Riders meet at a central location and travel to and from work together, or set a route and time schedule. The driver is responsible for collecting fares and seeing that the vanpool runs smoothly. JobJet owns and maintains the vans.

Region XII staff trains drivers from among the participants in each group. Drivers ride free of charge and keep the vans at their home before collecting riders. They are allowed 100 miles of personal vehicle use each month, most likely for side trips in conjunction with their trip to work. If they exceed that limit, they are charged for additional miles on a per-mile basis. Program funding support includes an initial amount of $146,000 from Iowa’s Congestion Management and Air Quality Improvement Program funds and the Iowa Department of Transportation.

For more information, contact Chris Whitaker, transportation planner, at 712.725.7811 or cwhitaker@region12cog.org

Kings Area Rural Transit, Kings County, California

Kings Area Rural Transit (KART) operates a comprehensive vanpool program with two distinct components. KART is a Joint Powers Agency, composed of Hanford, Lemoore, and Avenal Cities and Kings County. KART provides vanpool opportunities for residents of the southern Joaquin Valley needing to travel to work sites such as correctional facilities and employers located in rural communities throughout the county. These vanpools effectively address the challenges of limited public transit options for work trips, varied work sites and nontraditional work shifts. Currently, more than 300 vanpools operate in eight counties.

In some instances, the vanpools provide transit for workers commuting more than 45 miles from the nearest transit center. Depending on the size of each vanpool and the distance of the trip, monthly fees for riders range from $29 to $137. Vanpool participants receive insurance coverage for up to $5,000 in medical costs in case of an accident, at a cost of less than $900 per van, per year. In addition to vanpool revenue, funding to support the various programs is provided by Measure C funds that promote vanpooling in Fresno County, Congestion Management and Air Quality Improvement Program funds and the Tulare County of Governments. State employees participating in vanpools...
qualify for a monthly reimbursement of $65 toward vanpool-related expenses. Other vanpool participants are eligible for and receive tax benefits through the federal Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit program.

KART also manages the Agricultural Industries Transportation Services (AITS) program, which was developed in response to farm worker van accidents in 1999 that killed or injured more than 25 people within a two-month period. AITS was initiated in July 2001 with funding from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and U.S. Department of Transportation (Job Access and Reverse Commute funds) to address the persistent absence of safe and viable options for traveling to and from agricultural work sites for thousands of agricultural workers in the state. Two of the counties in the initial pilot program partnered with KART to provide services, while Kern County opted to expand its fixed-route services. The program for Kings, Fresno and Tulare Counties initially hoped to establish a for-profit model, using 15 vans to transport riders. However, because of regulatory issues, the program was redesigned to operate as a nonprofit.

The program began operations with 123 vans in 2002 in Kings, Fresno and Tulare Counties. By summer 2009, 140 vanpools will be in operation. As with other vanpool programs, van drivers are the workers, themselves, and service is designed to meet the unique travel, time, and logistical requirements of this segment of the workforce. The drivers are volunteers, but they are required to have a Class C license, pass a required physical exam and provide proof of a clean driving record. Each van has a Geographic Information System, first aid kit, fire extinguisher and roadside safety items. Each driver is responsible for recruiting passengers and collecting fees from riders. Fees are based on distance traveled and vary from $25 to $40 per week. Riders pay a modest fee to participate that covers the cost of maintaining and insuring the vans. At the end of each farming season, some of the vans are returned to AITS, but more than 75 percent remain in operation year-round.

Legislation passed in late 2006 resulted in Caltrans’ Agricultural Worker Transportation Program (AWTP), which provides $20 million in grants for the formation of agriculture-related vanpool programs. As a result, vanpool service has expanded to Kern, Madera, Ventura, Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz Counties. AWTP sunsets January 1, 2011.

Recently, the San Joaquin Control District passed legislation requiring businesses with 100 or more employees to have a ride reduction plan in place by December 2009. KART will work with employers to facilitate the development of vanpools as needed.

For more information, contact Ronald Hughes at 559.582.3211, ext. 696, or Ron.Hughes@co.kings.ca.us.

Mason County Transportation Authority, Shelton, Washington

The Mason Transit Authority (MTA) owns, maintains, manages, insures and licenses a fleet of passenger vans assigned to commuter groups and driven by volunteers who share the commute. It is based in Shelton, the western most city on Puget Sound. MTA started the vanpool program in 2003. At that time, 11 vanpool groups commuted to the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard (PSNS).

Mason County is not obligated to meet the mandates of the state’s Commuter Reduction Act, which are tied to population size and the number of employers with 100 or more employees, so its residents do not qualify for the same benefits as Commute Trip Reduction-eligible county residents. However, PSNS employees receive a voucher for $110 each month to cover transportation-related expenses. Passengers are responsible for the balance. New vanpools have up to three months to recruit enough riders to meet minimum travel expenses. If they cannot do so, individuals may be transferred to existing vanpools with available seats or required to cover the cost of any expenses not covered by the voucher allocations. The Washington Department of Corrections, located in Olympia, pays $40 to $60 per rider per month to support vanpools traveling to its facility.

Currently, 22 vanpools transport workers from this predominantly rural community to the shipyard and other job sites.

For more information, contact Athena Green, vanpool
The Missoula Ravalli Transportation Management Association (MRTMA) is the only Transport Management Association (TMA) in Montana and is unique because it serves significantly fewer residents than most TMA regions. Working with the Montana Department of Transportation, MRTRA provides transportation choices for citizens of Missoula, Ravalli, Lake, Flathead and Mineral Counties. It now runs three vanpools supported by local employers. MRTMA provides free matching services, and staff works with employers to help coordinate services.

MRTMA has nine, 13-passenger vans in operation on a regular basis. Riders work at 84 different work sites around the region. MRTMA purchased vehicles with federal Section 5309 Bus and 5311 Rural and Small Urban Areas funds. It solicits bids to maintain its vans, but each pool is expected to have its own alternate plan in case of breakdowns or other periods of unavailability. Fuel is purchased at the state rate at commercial service stations using program credit cards. Drivers ride free in exchange for managing the vanpool (e.g., collecting fees and cleaning the vehicle). A guaranteed ride home program provides rides home in case of emergency. MRTMA has a prepaid account with a local taxi company and rural transit providers to provide this service.

Unlike most vanpool programs, MRTMA accepts occasional riders if space is available. The fare structure is designed to accommodate this service, with fees for full participation as well as fees for one, two or three rides per week. Commuters needing a ride a given day will be referred to a vanpool driver if space is available.

MRTMA partnered with two local employers to design vanpool options specifically geared to each company’s needs. One vanpool program serves GlaxoSmithKline shift work employees who are scheduled on rotating days during a two-week period. The 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. shift shares a one 13-passenger van; in addition, several employees participate in another vanpool. Recently workers approached management about sponsoring a vanpool for the 12-hour shift workers who were carpooling. As a result, GlaxoSmithKline added two vanpools, bringing the total vanpools to 3: one for the 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. workforce and two for the 12-hour shift workers. Funding for the latter two vanpools is 80% from Congestion Management and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ)/Section 5311 funds, with 73% of the 20% required match provided by GlaxoSmithKline, so riders pay a much reduced fare. During 2007, the company implemented an aggressive marketing campaign and succeeded in adding 300 workers to the vanpool program. TMA staff worked with GlaxoSmithKline management on discerning the benefits of the vanpool program to the employees and employer. However, during the economic downturn one route has been discontinued because of employee layoffs. Due to the success of the first vanpool, remaining employees have requested the second route be restarted. However, due to a lack of rolling stock MRTMA has not been able to accommodate the request.

A second vanpool program serves Smurfit Stone Container Corporation employees. Workers approached management about providing a vanpool as an employee benefit. A member of the management team serves on the local Health Air Quality Board and was very supportive of the idea. Smurfit Stone Container agreed to assign vanpoolers to the same shifts. A second vanpool was added in 2006. Employees who participate in the vanpools live up to 50 miles from their worksite. The vanpools are funded through 80% CMAQ money with 85% of 20% match provided by Smurfit Stone Container Corporation, so riders pay a much reduced fare.

A third employer sponsored vanpool was started in the fall of 2006. Again, employees approached management about providing this benefit to them. The first vanpool was for workers living north of the Yellow Bay Biological Center located on Flathead Lake. A second vanpool was started for employees living south of the center. The vanpools are funded through 80% CMAQ money with 100% of the 20% match provided by the University of Montana Foundation, so riders pay no fares.

For more information, contact Lyn Hellegaard, executive director, at mrtma2@montana.com.
NJ TRANSIT Vanpool Sponsorship Program, New Jersey

NJ TRANSIT offers a statewide vanpool sponsorship program, which provides a financial incentive for vanpooling in areas where public transportation is neither available nor feasible. The program has been in operation since January 2008 and grew out of the transit agency’s desire to provide transit support for commuters along with incentives to cut dependency on single-occupant vehicles. As of April 2009, 185 vanpools carry more than 1,600 passengers. Fluctuating fuel costs have peaked commuter interest in the program.

Each vanpool group is eligible for $175 per month of sponsorship support. Support increases to $325 per month if the vanpool travels on New Jersey’s high-occupancy vehicle lanes on the New Jersey Turnpike. New Jersey’s vanpool program requires applicants to work through a local Transportation Management Association to complete funding requests.

NJ TRANSIT sets sponsorship amounts and requires reapplication annually. The application process, along with other minimal reporting requirements, ensures each vanpool meets eligibility requirements. It also provides summary data that helps New Jersey quantify the travel, congestion and air pollution benefits that vanpools are providing.

All vanpools are required to operate as a voluntary commuter rideshare arrangement, providing transportation to passengers traveling directly from home to the same geographical area. Each vanpool has the flexibility to incorporate activities that best meet the needs of its participants. For example, some accommodate riders who drive to a central location and meet. Others depart from locations routinely served by public transit. In one instance, the vanpool also transported children to an employer-sponsored day care program.

Vans must be obtained from a participating vanpool provider on a month-to-month driver agreement basis, with the provider being responsible for vehicle maintenance and insurance. Vans cannot exceed five years of age or 120,000 miles of operation and cannot duplicate existing public transit service routes. VPSI, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) and Archbald VP are the three current participating vendors. Vanpools generally have one dedicated driver in the group, usually with one or two volunteer back-ups. Passengers share the monthly cost of the van, which is based on travel distance and van luxury. Participants may qualify for and receive benefits under the Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit program.

In some instances, if the vanpools lose riders, Transportation Management Associations offer temporary empty-seat subsidies to support vanpool continuation until new riders are recruited. Others offer incentives such as a guaranteed ride home. NJDOT has a statewide ride-matching service available to help create the vanpools and find replacement riders. A factor contributing to the program’s success, to date, is its flexibility in the design of vanpools.

For more information, contact Sally Stocker, at 973.491.7774 or sstocker@njtransit.com.

rabbittransit, York, Pennsylvania

rabbittransit is located in York County, Pennsylvania, in the south central part of the state, about 120 miles from Philadelphia. The county of about 900 square miles is predominantly rural. In February 2008, rabbittransit, Commuter Services of Pennsylvania and VPSI formed two vanpools that travel daily from York County to Fort Meade, Maryland. Interest in creating the vanpools peaked after a proposed express bus route, which did not travel the entire route, was introduced. Area residents contacted Commuter Services and proposed the idea.

Commuter Services is a non-profit organization committed to reducing traffic congestion by helping commuters find alternatives to driving alone to work and by working with employers to identify viable options that reduce costs for commuters and help employers attract qualified employees. Commuter Services partnered with rabbittransit – one of its board members – to create the vanpools. Vehicles are leased through VPSI.

Riders meet at a central location, usually a park-and-ride facility. Passengers who are federal government employees can participate...
in the Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit program. Some participating federal agencies provide riders with subsidies in addition to those offered through the fringe benefit program. In addition, rabbittransit provides a $200 per month subsidy per vanpool for vans that originate from York County, and Commuter Services provides reimbursements for the related emergency ride home program and ride-matching assistance.

Payment is based on a 30-day, flexible pay-as-you-go agreement, which covers the cost of a van, a comprehensive insurance and maintenance package, 24-hour roadside assistance, access to loaner vans, an optional fuel card program and emergency rides home. Drivers are recruited from among the passengers and trained by VPSI. At present, no plans exist to increase the number of vans traveling to Fort Meade; however, if a group of commuters did express interest, the program partners would work with them to provide vanpool services.

Brandy Heilman, director of Commuter Services, attributes the success of vanpools to the cost savings generated for riders and the ease of program implementation. Commuter Services hopes to further increase interest in vanpools by implementing targeted marketing campaigns later this year.

For more information, contact Brandy Heilman, director, at 717.718.0015 or brandy_heilman@PaCommuterServices.com; or call 1.866.579.RIDE.

**RideFinders, Richmond, Virginia**

RideFinders is a division of the GRTC Transit system. The program, initially established in 1981 as Compool, began operating as RideFinders in 1985, and it was officially renamed RideFinders in July 1998 through a merger with GRTC Transit. RideFinders provides financial and marketing support for transit services and programs, vanpool formation and carpool matching and maintenance services, telework consulting and support services, an emergency ride home program, park-and-ride lot information, employee trip reduction program development assistance, employer relocation and site analysis and bike and pedestrian commuter services. It also participates in a regional planning process, operates a commuter store and conducts ongoing Clean Air Act campaigns.

The program works with potential participants and employers to develop and market vanpools. Currently, six vanpools provide services from outlying areas to the city of Richmond. Program operations are supported with Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program funds, some of which are allocated to the Virginia VanStart and VanSave programs. RideFinders is also supported with small grants from local jurisdictions.

Two third-party vendors, VPSI and K&K, lease the vehicles, recruit and train vanpool drivers from among the passengers and provide insurance and maintenance. Individual vanpools set their own routes and schedules, based on member needs. Although most riders meet their rides at park-and-ride lots, some vanpools may have several pick-up points. The price to participate covers the cost of the vehicle, maintenance, insurance, gas, parking, applicable sales tax and tolls. Costs vary depending on the size of each group and the distance of the commute.

Riders are required to make a 30-day commitment and must give a month’s notice before leaving the vanpool. Companies that participate as employee transportation coordinators or provide commuter benefits routinely receive recruitment notices. RideFinders may also subsidize seats to get the vanpool up and running. RideFinders attributes its longevity to strong customer service commitments; hands-on, personalized treatment; and excellent working relationships with vendors.

For more information, contact Von Tisdale, executive director, at 804.643.7433 or vtisdale@ridefinders.com.

**RideShare, Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority, Des Moines, Iowa**

The Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) offers a complete family of transportation services to fulfill its commitment to providing access to jobs, schools and the greater Des Moines community. It is the largest transit system in the state, providing more than 15,000 trips per day. DART’s service area includes all of Polk County.

The transit agency has independent tax levy-
ing authority within the entire county and the city boundaries of all 19 communities in the area, and the revenue helps support its various transit services. Vanpool services are available for Des Moines area employees commuting into and out of the DART service area, and a carpool matching service is provided for all of central Iowa.

DART’s RideShare assists commuters in organizing groups, providing vans and maintaining vanpools. The program began in 1995, with five vanpools. Most of the 97 vanpools currently in operation travel from rural areas of Iowa to the urban Des Moines metropolitan area, transporting nearly 900 commuters daily. DART owns and maintains all the vehicles.

In response to increased fuel prices, many employers now subsidize workers who travel to work via vanpools. For example, the Principal Financial Group Inc., provides a monthly subsidy for the nearly 300 participants in its vanpool program. Wells Fargo participates in the Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit program, enabling employees to pay for public transportation using pretax dollars, and internally promotes the use of DART’s RideShare. Other participating employers include Blue Cross Blue Shield. Many participating employers routinely post information about RideShare on company intranet sites or invite transit agency staff to discuss the program with new hires during orientations.

DART attributes much of the program’s success to a strong customer focus. In the past, local political support for the vanpool program has been limited, but changing economic times and heightening environmental concerns have resulted in growing recognition of the program’s benefits to the community.

For more information, contact Rebecca Lovig, RideShare program manager, at 515.283.5000 or rlovig@ridedart.com.

**Rideshare Program/MassRides Vanpool Alliance, Massachusetts**

More than 30 years ago, the Massachusetts Highway Department – which is now known as the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation (MEOT) – implemented the Rideshare program, a statewide air quality regulation that is part of the commonwealth’s efforts to reduce air pollution by encouraging a reduction in drive-alone commute trips. The program encourages all businesses to promote commuting options such as carpooling, vanpooling, public transit, bicycling and walking.

Businesses with 250 or more employees that have an air operating permit—or businesses and educational facilities with 1,000 or more students and employees or applicable commuters combined—are required to develop plans and set goals for reducing the number of times commuters drive alone to work or school by 25 percent. Applicable commuters are defined under the Massachusetts Rideshare Regulation 310 CMR 7.16 as employees who work 17 hours or more per week for 20 or more weeks per year and who commute to work between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. and use their vehicle for work purposes during work hours fewer than five times per month.

MEOT has provided vanpooling and other travel option services for more than 30 years. Its current program is known as MassRides. A primary program component is employer outreach. Supporting services include administering a statewide rideshare database and the MassRides Emergency Ride Home program. MassRides also reaches out to Transit Management Associations and other organizations that provide ridesharing and vanpooling services throughout the state to coordinate programs.

MassRides established a Vanpool Alliance, an agreement between MassRides and vanpool vendors across the state that promotes vanpooling to employers. The fleet’s average round-trip distance exceeds 100 miles. Currently, 7 of the 60 MassRides vanpools travel from communities characterized as rural in the 2000 census.

The alliance, which includes five vendors, offers travelers a choice in vehicle size, type, insurance, maintenance policies and pricing. Each vendor provides leased vehicles and manages the fleet. Drivers are chosen from among the passengers and must meet certain requirements before being approved to drive. MassRides conducts employer and traveler outreach to form new routes and refer riders to available seats in existing vanpools.
MassRIDES provides all employers and interested commuters with a one-page description of the various services offered by vanpool vendors. Periodic incentive programs have included financial support for newly forming groups as well as for filling empty seats in existing vanpools. All vanpoolers are eligible for the state’s Emergency Ride Home (ERH) program. The MassRIDES vanpool coordinator administers ERH and other vanpool benefits. Each vanpool sets its own route and schedule based on the needs of its members. In most cases, vanpoolers meet their rides at a central location, such as park-and-ride lots.

Donna Smallwood, MassRIDES program operations manager, attributes the popularity of vanpools as a commute alternative to their cost-effectiveness. Other key elements of success include taking a proactive approach to employer outreach, strong support from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and the ongoing collaboration with the vanpool vendors.

For more information on MEOT, contact Gail Costelas, at 617.292.5663 or gail.costelas@state.ma.us. For more information on Mass RIDES, contact Donna Smallwood, program operations manager, at 617.892.6087 or Donna.Smallwood@eot.state.ma.us.

The Ride Solution, Northeast Florida Van Pool Program

The Ride Solution Van Pool program began in 1994 as a program designed to transport commuters to Palatka on a bus returning from a fixed route that transported rural patients to health care facilities in Gainesville. Today, it transports workers from Gainesville, Jacksonville and St. Augustine to the St. Johns River Water Management District in Palatka. The facility employees highly specialized staff, many of whom commute from larger population centers surrounding Palatka. Riders travel between 40-65 miles each way. Currently, 5 vans serve about 40 Gainesville commuters travelling to 3 different locations. The vans operate on 4 different schedules, allowing some staff to commute in on one vanpool and out on another in order to accommodate longer workdays. Ten other participants travel from Jacksonville and St. Augustine to Palatka.

Although the facility does not support the program directly, they encourage employee participation through provision of the commuter tax benefit. Vanpool rider fees cover half of the costs, with the remainder supported by the Florida State DOT. VPSI vans transport program participants, along with services provided by Ride Solution and the Jacksonville Transit Authority.

For additional information, contact Bill Van Sickle at 386-329-4580 or BVanSickle@sjrwmd.com or Myra Strange at ridesol_ms@bellsouth.net.


Sportworks Northwest, Inc., located in Woodinville, Washington, manufactures bike racks that are found on thousands of transit agency buses throughout North America, providing bicycle access to public transit and increasing multi-modal trips and transit ridership. The company implemented its Right to Ride VanPool program in 2006 and currently sponsors three vanpools with 19 participants; the number of vanpools is significant given the company employs fewer than 70 employees. The program promotes the company’s culture and desire to participate in comprehensive transportation programs to reduce single-occupant vehicle commute trips and provide a cost-effective commuting benefit to its employees.

The vanpools are operated under a Flex-Pass Agreement with King County Metro Transit and Sound Transit located in Seattle. As a Flex-Pass holder, vanpool participants receive a subsidy of $75 per month, which is applied to a monthly fare schedule based on the number of round-trip commute miles driven. In addition to the monthly vanpool subsidy, Flex-Pass holders benefit from the use of all other modes of public transportation offered by King County Metro and Sound Transit.

For more information, visit www.sportworks.com or contact John Nelson, vice president/ finance/human resources, at 425.483.7000, ext. 39, or johnn@sportworks.com; or Beatea Zayas, customer service/VanPool coordinator, at 425.483.7000, ext. 12, or beataz@sportworks.com. For more information on the Metro VanPool Program, King County, see http://transit.metrokc.gov/tops/van-car/vanpool.html.
Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments, Sumter, South Carolina

The Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments (SLRCOG), the designated Regional Transit Management Agency (RTMA) for Clarendon, Kershaw, Lee and Sumter Counties, provides planning, management services, projects and technical assistance for improving transportation coordination in the region. SLRCOG, in partnership with the Santee Wateree Regional Transportation Authority, AlterNetRides, VPSI, and local employers, recently implemented a rideshare program that serves rural commuters traveling within and outside the region. SLRCOG was able develop and implement the program in less than a year for a start-up cost of only $2,500. Funds were provided by the local transit provider. The program is hosted through AlterNetRides, an online matching system. Santee Wateree Regional Transportation pays for access to AlterNetRides. Employers who participate in the online matching system pay fees to the Santee Wateree Regional Transportation Authority, which helps offset administrative expenses for the rideshare program. VPSI will administer the vanpools, conduct geographic analyses to determine which areas work best for vanpools, supply the vans and recruit and train the drivers.

A number of variables precipitated the programs’ development. Thirty per cent of residents in three counties served by SLRCOG do not have access to an automobile, limiting their ability to access employment. SLRCOG and its partners understood the importance of the Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit to both commuters, many of whom are low-wage earners, and to local employers and wanted to encourage its use. The agencies were inspired by similar programs currently operating in North Carolina, and local employers supported vanpools because they reduced traffic congestion and encouraged environmental conservation. The SLRCOG took a proactive role in recruiting local employers by partnering with the local development board. With the board’s endorsement, letters of introduction were distributed to local industry representatives inviting them to introductory meetings where an overview of the program was presented. Although the current economic situation has put some companies on hold regarding participation, others such as BD, Central Carolina Technical College, Dorn Veterans Administration Hospital, University of South Carolina, and Invista, have initiated components of the rideshare program for their employees. Currently, one vanpool, operated by the public transit agency, is in operation.

Vanpool / transit riders who qualify for and receive benefits under the Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit program could have their costs fully covered. Currently, only one employer offers the benefit, but the SLRCOG periodically updates others via email. SLRCOG is committed to growing the program, and will continue to engage local employers as the economy improves. These activities inspired another Council of Government, the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments, to implement a similar program.

For more information, contact Orlando J. (O.J.) Papucci, Transportation Coordinator, at 803.775.7381, ext. 379, or sltransit@slcog.org.

State Vanpool/Rideshare Program, Wisconsin

Wisconsin’s State Vanpool/Rideshare program currently has 73 active vanpools. The program evolved from a demonstration project initiated in July 1978, when approximately 100 commuters began riding to and from work in eight vans. It was originally developed mostly to encourage energy conservation. The state owns and operates all the vans, and program operations are fully self-funded by the riders per State Statute 16.82.

Although the program is structured to serve state employees, riders do not have to be state employees to participate. However, each vanpool is required to have at least one state employee as part of the pool. Currently, about 1,000 individuals participate, with most traveling from outlying areas to the city of Madison. Approximately 25 percent of current vanpool participants commute to work with private employers. The average round-trip commute is 100 miles.

Participating federal and state employees are eligible for benefits under the Qualified Trans-
portation Fringe Benefit program. Federal employees receive the full benefit; state employees qualify for a partial benefit. Many participating employers also offer the benefit, along with flextime for vanpool participants.

Individual vanpool rates vary according to the number of paying riders, total daily average round-trip miles and driver/coordinator discounts, if any. Fares are periodically reviewed and adjustments are made as the number of riders, discounts or commute mileage changes. The fares collected cover all administrative, purchasing, fuel, insurance, parking and maintenance of the vans. All drivers, primary and back-up, must participate in a defensive driving course. Drivers are required to meet an active driver requirement. If this rule is not met, then refresher training is mandatory. Drivers are eligible for discounts and can use the van for limited personal use at a reimbursement cost per mile to the state.

A guaranteed ride home is offered in conjunction with the program. Vanpool participants qualify for up to three rides annually at no charge. Rides are provided by a local cab company.

The vanpool program is marketed via the state of Wisconsin’s website (www.doa.state.wi.us/vanpool), through the local Metropolitan Planning Organization and by the state university system.

Interest in the program continues to grow with expanded waiting lists. Because the program is state-sponsored, it has faced some funding limitations, which has made expansion difficult. However, the upcoming state budget, if approved, does incorporate support for expansion.

For more information, contact Brian Luther, at 608.266.5612 or brian.luther@wisconsin.gov.

**TCAT, Inc., Ithaca, New York**

TCAT, Inc. (Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, Inc.) is a non-profit corporation that provides public transportation for Tompkins County, New York, and portions of Tioga County, where many residents commute up to 90 minutes each way to work.

TCAT introduced the idea of a vanpool to support commuters who work or live in Tompkins County in 2008. It is the only vanpool program sponsored by a public transit agency in New York State. Vanpool programs that serve downstate residents are actually sponsored by transit agencies in neighboring jurisdictions. To implement the program, the agency had to address insurance issues specific to the state of New York.

TCAT partnered with VPSI to implement a vanpool program that meets state requirements. The program is also supported through a partnership with Cornell University. Cornell is the largest employer in the area, and a large number of faculty, staff and students traveling to the university commute from rural or remote metropolitan areas.

The university is providing start-up funding to market and operate vanpools outside fixed-route areas where no specific operating authority is required. Approximately $700 per van is allocated, lowering the costs per participant. The program should be operational by October 2009.

For more information, contact Joe Turcotte, general manager, at Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, 607.277.9388, ext. 444, or jt1@tcatmail.com.

**Vanpool Assistance Program, Virginia**

In Virginia, 1.2 million people travel one way to work via vanpool annually. In central Virginia alone, that accounts for 400 vanpools, many of which travel across rural communities, transporting commuters to jobs in larger metropolitan areas. More than 20 years ago, the state implemented a program specifically designed to support vanpool development.

The Virginia Vanpool Assistance Program, sponsored by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, provides financial support for new or existing vanpools experiencing a loss of passengers. The program has two distinct components: VanStart, which funds empty seats during the crucial start-up phase of new vanpools, and VanSave, which provides support for existing vanpools that are experiencing problems in their passenger levels due to the
loss of riders. VanStart is the more commonly used component.

Non-profit vanpool operators in Virginia are eligible if they operate vanpools with a seating capacity of between 6 and 14 riders (excluding the driver), are insured and registered with the local jurisdiction’s rideshare agency. The amount of funding provided is based on the average cost per seat of the vanpool and the average cost per seat of similar vanpools traveling under comparable distance and market parameters.

For VanStart, vanpool owners/operators must register with their local rideshare agency and apply for assistance within the first three months of operation. Vanpools must have a 50 percent minimum occupancy to qualify. Applicants for assistance from VanSave must have been in operation for a minimum of six months prior to applying for assistance and not have received any other state assistance funds in the past 12 months. Multiple van owner/operators may apply for assistance for a maximum of five vans, once every 12 months per van. In addition, they must have a minimum paying passenger vacancy rate.

Diana Utz, GWRideConnect director with the George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC), attributes the vanpool program’s success to two factors. The first is a statewide vanpool insurance program known as AdVANTage. The insurance program is offered through a partnership involving GWRC’s GWRideConnect program, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation and the Virginia Department of the Treasury’s Division of Risk Management. AdVANTage provides liability and damage insurance for registered and licensed vanpools in the state. Fees, paid by vanpool riders, are used to self-insure member vanpools. The fees are based on factors such as vehicle age and how many passengers the vans carry.

The second factor contributing to the program’s success is the vanpools’ departure from several strategically located commuter lots, where riders meet for daily pick-up. In most cases, the vans are parked overnight at the lots. Particularly in rural communities, using a central staging area alleviates the necessity of vanpools traveling long distances to meet individual riders.

For more information, contact Diana Utz, GWRideConnect director, at 540.373.2890 or utz@gwregion.org.

Vanpool/Vanshare, Hytek Finishes Company, Washington

Hytek Finishes Company is located in Kent Valley near the city of Seattle. The company currently operates on multiple work shifts. Its innovative vanpool program, in operation since 2007, is one that rural employers could replicate.

Although not located in a rural community, the area has very limited transit services. Service to and from the transit center is only available during peak hours, leaving workers whose shifts occur during other times no access. To address this gap in service, the company, with assistance from King County Metro, implemented a strong, heavily subsidized Vanpool/Vanshare program that provides access to the facility when public transit is not available. Currently, three vanshare groups participate and one vanpool serves the 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. shift. The vanshares operate during hours when train service is available. King County Metro’s VanShare Program enables Hytek employees to take the commuter train to Kent station and then vanshare from the station to work. The vehicle is parked at the station overnight, ready for the group when it arrives each morning. Currently, most of the 36 participants travel from rural communities in Puyallup, Orting Graham and Bonney Lake; a few commute from Tacoma.

Hytek added the FlexPass program to its company benefits package in 2008. As a result, single-occupancy vehicle travel among Commute Trip Reduction-affected employees declined by more than 50 percent. The passes were free.
to employees for the first year of the program. This year all participating employees continue to use the FlexPass, though they are required to pay half the yearly cost. King County Metro coordinated the purchase contract, provided vanpool/vanshare presentations to Hytek employees and supports the work done by Hytek’s employee transportation coordinator. Hytek also offers vanpool subsidies and preferred parking for high-occupancy vehicles. The program’s success is credited, in part, to strong employee support and a strong working relationship with King County Metro.

For more information, contact Mika Imori, King County Metro, at 206.684.1527 or mika.imori@kingcounty.gov.

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The 2011 ACT International Conference will be held in Chicago, Ill. August 27 – 31 at the Hyatt Regency Chicago.

Stay tuned to www.actweb.com for details and updates throughout the year!
A Collection of Vanpool Resources

Click on any link highlighted in gold to point your web browser to the resource.

General Vanpool Information and Implementation Resources

- **Employer Investments in Vanpooling - The Other Transit Service (PDF) (128 KB)**. Prepared by Cynthia Fondriest Capelli of the National Transit Benefit Association for the Community Transportation Association of America Joblinks Program. Updated April 2008. **Description:** This brief describes the value of implementing vanpools to fill transportation gaps, the role for that employers play and how to apply the IRS Section 132(f) Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit for vanpool participants.

- **Employment Transportation Coordinator Handbook**, Washington State Department of Transportation. **Description:** The handbook on commute reduction strategies discusses vanpools in the section on Commute Alternatives. Although developed for use by Employment Transportation Coordinators, the chapter outlines the steps needed to form a vanpool and provides answers to commonly asked questions about vanpools.

- **Let's Ride, Austin**, Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO), Commute Solutions of Central Texas. **Description:** The online handbook includes a general section on vanpooling within the section entitled Solutions. A listing of resources, forms, templates and case studies are also included.

- **State of Wisconsin Vanpool Program**, State of Wisconsin Department of Administration. **Description:** An online resource highlighting the vanpool rideshare program in Wisconsin. Includes a general overview, and links to Frequently Asked Questions, Assistance in Locating Vanpools, Policies and Procedures (along with sample forms), and a listing of vanpools serving Madison from outlying areas.

- **Successful Employment Transportation Partnerships**, Community Transportation Association of America. **Description:** This presentation, given as part of the Joblinks Employment Transportation Conference, Communities Collaborating for Economic Success, June 2008, includes an overview of partnerships between the Missoula Ravalli Transportation Management Association and local employers to use vanpools to meet the reverse commute needs of workers in a rural community.

- **Vanpool Driver Handbook**, Triangle Transit, North Carolina, 2008. **Description:** The handbook provides an overview of the agency’s vanpool leasing program. Included is information relating to driver responsibilities, setting fares, vehicle maintenance, emergency and accident procedures, vanpool etiquette and terminating a rider.

- **Vanpool Guide**, Ride Arrangers, Denver Regional Council of Governments, 2008. **Description:** This guidebook is directed at vanpool riders and drivers. It provides an overview for potential program participants and addresses the benefits of vanpools, how to start a program, marketing and passenger recruitment, building ridership, fares and payment, Guaranteed Ride Home, safety check and accident procedures.

Implementing Vanpool Programs

- **Community Transportation and Commuter Vanpooling**, Community Transportation Association of America. **Description:** This website introduces a new partnership between VPSI Inc., the nation’s largest provider of public vanpool services and CTAA, offering CTAA members and their constituents a new option for the ex-
pansion of cost-effective commuter services.

- **Development of an NTD Tool for Vanpool Services, Final Report.** National Center for Transit Research, University of South Florida, Modified 2/09. **Description:** The report provides guidance to help providers of vanpool services better meet the requirements of the National Transit Database (NTD). Eligibility for the Federal Urbanized Area Grant program (FTA Section 5307) requires vanpool program operators to report data on services provided and consumed on an annual basis, and this report facilitates providers in meeting reporting requirements through use of a specifically prepared spreadsheet template.

- **Ridesharing Etiquette: Tips for Ensuring an Enjoyable Experience.** Community Transportation Association of America. (PDF) (184 KB). **Description:** Taken from the Transportation Toolkit for the Business Community, this resource presents a number of considerations needed to ensure a carpool or vanpool experience is a positive one for all participants.

- **Transit’s Role in Forging Partnerships with Business.** Community Transportation Association of America. **Description:** This presentation, given as part of the Joblinks Employment Transportation Conference, Communities Collaborating for Economic Success, September 2009, focuses on transportation as the connector between business and workforce development and includes an overview of vanpool programs operated by Pace Bus. Pace serves as the vanpool system for the Chicago metropolitan area and operates over 700 vans daily.

- **Vanpooling - A Handbook to Help You Set Up A Program at Your Company, National Transportation Research Library, 1993.** **Description:** The handbook discusses vanpooling as a trip reduction strategy and includes information on program design and implementation procedures for commuters, employers and Employment Transportation Coordinators, and includes a number of forms that can be adapted to meet specific program needs.

- **Vanpooling: A Promising Transportation Option for People with Disabilities.** Webinar and Supporting Documents, August 11, 2010. **Description:** The webinar addresses the ways in which public and private vanpool providers serve riders with disabilities, not only meeting both the letter and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), but also fulfilling the aim to provide services to all members of the community.

**Funding and Sustaining Vanpool Programs**

- **The Commuter Tax Benefit: A Federal Incentive for Vanpool Riders and Their Employers.** Webinar Recording and Supporting Documents, February 18, 2010. **Description:** Employers around the country have created incentive programs to support employees who ride vanpools to work. From offering preferential parking to providing tax incentive to actively encourage vanpool creation, there are many ways to encourage employees to vanpool instead of driving alone to work. The federal Commuter Tax Benefit (formally known as the Qualified Transportation Tax Fringe Benefit or Section 132(f)) enables employers to offer pre-tax deductions of up to $230 per month to pay for qualified vanpool costs. This webinar explains how the benefit works and how it can be administered. Speakers offer examples of how to support vanpooling and discuss how offering 132(f) benefits helped to build their programs.

- **Starting and Growing Rural Vanpool Programs: From Financing to Vehicle Procurement.** Webinar Recording and Supporting Documents, March 23, 2010. **Description:** Vanpool program operators are using creative funding and partnership-building strategies to build their vanpool programs. This webinar assists in thinking broadly about how to develop and sustain vanpooling within local communities. Speakers offer examples of how federal, state and local funds and tax benefits can be packaged to support rural vanpools. Speakers also share ways to obtain vehicles.

- **Vanpool Pricing and Financing Guide.**
Vanpool Supporting Legislation

- **Commuter Benefit Ordinance Fact Sheet Description:** Prepared by San Francisco’s Department of Environment, the fact sheet provides an overview of the law’s requirements along with links to additional information and answers to commonly asked questions about the law.

- **Rule 2202 – On Road Motor Vehicle Mitigation Options, Employee Commute Reduction Guidelines**. South Coast Air Quality Management District, February 2004. **Description:** This document is designed to assist employers in implementing the requirements of an employee commute reduction program in accordance with the requirements of California’s Rule 2202.

- **San Francisco Ordinance No. 199-08 Description:** On August 12, 2008, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors approved Ordinance No, 199-08, adding an employer mandate to the San Francisco Environmental Code. Effective as of January 19, 2009, the ordinance requires private sector employers with an average of 20 or more employees per week, to provide incentives for their employees to commute using public transportation. Employers can choose from one of three transit options: allowing employees to make pretax contributions to pay for mass transit expenses, directly paying employees for using mass transit or providing transportation by setting up employee vanpools.

- **South Coast Air Quality Management District, Rule 2202, Air Quality Investment Program**. **Description:** Implemented in 1998, Rule 2202 requires employers in Southern California with 250 or more employees to adopt air-quality measures that include trip-reduction programs. It provides employers with a menu of options to reduce emissions generated from employee commutes, including parking cash-out programs, carpooling, vanpooling, telecommuting, compressed workweeks and encouraging employees to take public transit to work.

- **Washington State Commuter Trip Reduction Law (RCW 7094.521)**. **Description:** Adopted by the State Legislature in 1991 and incorporated into the Washington Clean Air Act, the law seeks to reduce traffic congestion, minimize energy consumption and improve air quality by promoting alternatives to traveling to work via single occupancy vehicles. The law requires counties with a residential population of more than 150,000 and employers with more than 100 employees, as well as each city within those counties containing a major employer with more than 100 employees who must travel during the peak hours of 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., to follow certain mandates. Requirements include having an employee transportation coordinator on site, surveying...
employees biennially and providing options to reduce single-occupant commuting. In 2006, the law was modified and adopted as the Commuter Trip Reduction (CTR) Efficiency Act. The CTR Efficiency Act seeks to improve the efficiency of the overall transportation system in the state by requiring jurisdictions to decrease drive-along rates by 10 percent and vehicle miles traveled by 13 percent by 2011.

- **Washington State Vanpool Investment Program** [http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/2008CAT/docs/IWG/tran/tran_VMT04_ClimateVanpoolBriefing_V08.pdf](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/2008CAT/docs/IWG/tran/tran_VMT04_ClimateVanpoolBriefing_V08.pdf) **Description**: Developed by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WDOT) in 2003 in cooperation with vanpool operators, the Vanpool Investment Program is designed to increase the number of vanpools in the state over a ten year period. The program allocated $30 million in grant funds for public transit agencies to support vanpooling. Funds must be used for capital costs associated with putting new vans on the road and employer incentives to increase employee van use. The state Commute Trip Reduction Board administers the funds. The board reviews the size of each agency’s vanpool waiting list, the degree of congestion in the corridors the programs serve, the needs of workers for supplemental transit services and other criteria on an annual basis, and allocates funds based on a maximum cost of $26,000 per van.

**Vanpool Profiles**

- **Agricultural Worker Transportation**. The Rural-Urban Connections Strategy (RUCS) Wiki, Sacramento Council of Governments. **Description**: The wiki includes a case study of the Agricultural Industries Transportation Services (AITS) program managed by Kings Area Rural Transit (KART) in Kings County, California. The program provides safe, affordable and reliable transportation designed to meet the unique travel, time and logistical requirements of agricultural workers. View a presentation about AITS by Ron Hughes given during the Joblinks Employment Transportation Conference, September, 2009.

- **Rural Vanpooling: Highlights from Three Communities**, Webinar Recording and Supporting Documents, January 19, 2010. **Description**: Rural communities are often challenged to provide workers with shared-ride commuting options and an increasing number of communities are looking to vanpools. Vanpooling offers a flexible and cost-effective solution for these smaller, more widely dispersed communities, and is an option that benefits commuters and businesses alike. Three program operators, representing distinct rural communities discuss why and how their vanpool programs were created and offer insights into funding and sustainability.

- **Rural Wisconsin Transportation**

**Toolkit**. Developed by North Country Independent Living and The Center for Independent Living for Western Wisconsin, 2006. **Description**: The toolkit discusses vanpools as part of overall transportation solution options. To obtain a copy, contact Bob Olsgard

- **Toolkit for Rural Community Coordinated Transportation Services**, TCRP Report # 101, Federal Transit Administration, 2004 [http://books.google.com/books?id=A43G4Mos6VkC&pg=PT7&lpg=PT7&dq=vanpool,+toolkits&source=web&ots=X1tkKkbrsO&sig=eLyF8R51_EitAWSUwEsCNlchvhQ&hl=en&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=10&ct=result] **Description**: While it does not specifically address vanpool operations, this toolkit provides rural transportation system planners, operators and funders with information, instructions and examples taken from implementation experiences.
Profiles of Employer-Sponsored Transportation Programs

Apple Inc.
Project name: Apple Commute Alternatives Program
Partners involved: Apple Inc.
Funding source: Apple Inc.
Location: Corporate headquarters, Cupertino, CA
Contact: 408-862-7433; commute@apple.com

Program Description

Apple Inc. has supported commuter choice for more than 10 years. At its campus headquarters in Cupertino, California, the company pays $100 per month of personnel bus, train, light rail, vanpool, and other transit costs through its Commute Alternatives Program. Apple supports employees who bicycle, walk or run to work by providing lockers and showers. Apple maintains a web database of addresses and work schedules for those interested in ridesharing. Apple also connects to regional transit providers: Caltrain, ACE train and VTA light rail with 16 passenger shuttles, further extending the regions transit network.

In 2007, the company implemented a shuttle service for its employees to transport workers between strategic points in the Bay Area and the Cupertino, CA campus. The shuttle service includes 12 stops in the city of San Francisco and 14 additional stops at points around the Bay Area including: Santa Cruz, Berkeley, Oakland, Pleasanton, Fremont and Gilroy. Each of the buses provides a limited number of power connectors and wireless internet connectivity.

Results

In addition to supporting commuter choice through the Commute Alternatives Program, Apple implemented commuter shuttle service to transport personnel between strategic points in the Bay Area and its Cupertino campus.

Barnes Jewish and St. Louis Children’s Hospital
Project name: Transit Tax Benefit Program
Partners involved: Barnes Jewish and St. Louis Children’s Hospital, St. Louis Regional Transit (Metro)
Funding source: Barnes Jewish and St. Louis Children’s Hospital
Location: St. Louis, MO
Contact: Taryn Prince
Parking & Valet Supervisor
(314)-454-5253; tnp9380@bjc.org

Program Description

Since initiating its transit pass subsidy program in 2006, Barnes Jewish and St. Louis Children’s Hospital has seen an increase in sales of the passes of over 900 percent onsite. The passes provide unlimited travel for hospital employees commuting to work via MetroBus or MetroLink during the month of purchase. Offered through the IRS Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit, the hospital pays $20 per pass per month, with employees paying the difference through a pre-tax pay deduction. Currently over 50 percent of employees participate in the transit pass program. Included among these are employees traveling to work from rural communities outside of the St. Louis area. The location of a Metro hub in the center of campus enhances the program’s popularity.

Additional benefits for participating employees include a Guaranteed Ride Home if emergencies arise, a shuttle system that travels from local transit stations to the campus, ridehsharing matches, secure bicycle parking and showers, and access to a number of on-site amenities. The shuttles cover six different routes, traveling from assigned parking areas to the main campus. One shuttle is dedicated to transporting patient families to and from the hospital.

Employees learn of the various benefits by attending transit fairs, offered twice annually, at the hospital. Metro vendors are on hand to present information and provide current information and provide current information and provide current information.
tion about upcoming transit-sponsored events, schedule changes, etc.

Results

Increased participation in the transit subsidy program has lessened the need to provide additional employee parking. The installation of a transit hub on the campus showcases the hospital as an attractive place to work, which has positively impacted recruitment and retention efforts.

Best Buy Co., Inc.

Project name: Best Buy’s Minnesota Commuter Program

Partners involved: Best Buy

Funding source: Best Buy

Location: Corporate headquarters, Richfield, MN

Contact: Liz Beckius

Creation of New Transportation Programs
liz.beckius@bestbuy.com

Lisa Rasmussen

Maintenance of Current Support Infrastructure
lisa.rasmussen@bestbuy.com

Program Description

Best Buy’s corporate campus in Minnesota is designed to maximize the flow of traffic into and out of the facility and bordering freeways, and to discourage the use of neighborhood streets for commuter traffic. Company headquarters are located in the southwest quadrant of the Twin Cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul, at the intersection of two very busy highways. The company developed a Travel Demand Management (TDM) Plan designed to reduce the number of single-occupancy vehicles during peak travel periods.

Best Buy has 5,000 employees and another 1,300 contract workers based at corporate headquarters. To encourage employees to use shared rides to work, the Best Buy campus incorporates transit-friendly design features, including: covered bicycle spaces and employee showers, a bus shelter and transportation kiosk, building exits near bus stops, flex hours and schedules to alleviate peak-period travel, and preferential parking for carpools. On-site amenities include a pharmacy, fitness center and on-site childcare. The site also employs a campus transportation coordinator.

The company offers interested new employees bus passes for their first week of employment. For employees who continue to ride the bus to work for a minimum of three days a week, the bus passes are subsidized at 100 percent of transportation cost. Best Buy has offered vanpool subsidies since 2002. Metro passes, carpooling and preferred parking have been offered since 2003. Staff participation in the shared rides program continues to increase. Best Buy is currently reviewing the provision of a pre-tax commuter benefit as well as negotiating a bicycle purchase program for its employees. Best Buy is a 2008 recipient of the U.S. Department of Labor’s New Freedom Initiative Award.

Results

Best Buy implemented a Travel Demand Management Plan to address congestion concerns, encouraging workers to use shared rides to work by offering a number of on-site amenities, including on-site childcare. Building exits are located close to bus stops. Carpooling and vanpooling are subsidized, and new employees receive bus passes for use during their first week of work. Best Buy also employs a campus transportation coordinator.

Bluegrass Industrial Park

Program name: Bluegrass Industrial Park Transportation Options

Partners involved: Bluegrass Industrial Park employers, Kentuckiana Regional Planning & Development Agency (KIPDA), Transit Authority of River City (TARC, Louisville)

Funding source: TARC, Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)

Location: Louisville, KY

Contact: Janene Grantz
502-561-5112; jgrantz@ridetarc.org

Program Description

A number of employers in Louisville, Kentucky, partnered with KIPDA and TARC to develop an express route, supported with JARC funding, as well as a local circulator route to transport workers from west Louisville to the Bluegrass Industrial Park. Establishing the bus route eliminated the necessity to make three bus transfers in order to reach the area from the city.
Brochures publicizing the routes were distributed to employers, and TARC held meetings with community agencies, workforce board members and employers in the industrial park to encourage referrals. The express route now operates during peak hours, and the circulator operates about 12 hours a day.

When commuting patterns began to change and workers traveling from Louisville’s central business district and west Louisville needed better alternatives to reach the park, TARC worked with industrial park employers to expand a core route to service the south end of the park. These changes provided new opportunities for commuters traveling mid-day, late night and during weekend hours to access the industrial park. The route operates about 18 hours a day, making 65 trips.

The express service now includes 10 runs from the central business district. In addition, two local circulators operate within the industrial park, and workers can use a free transfer from the express route to ride them. The shuttle makes routine trips from one central location to multiple stops within the park.

Results

TARC used JARC funding to develop an express route that allowed workers traveling from the city to reach the industrial park without making multiple transfers. TARC also developed a circulator route that serves the south end of the park. Both changes provided new opportunities for commuters traveling mid-day, late night and during weekend hours to access the industrial park.

**Brazos Transit District Commuter Programs**

**Program name:** Commuter Programs for Tyson Foods and Beaumont Refineries

**Partners involved:** Brazos Transit District, Tyson Foods, Beaumont/Port Arthur area refineries, Coach America

**Funding source:** Private employers and Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)

**Location:** Central, Beaumont/Port Arthur, TX

**Contact:** John McBeth
(979)-778-0607; john@btd.org

**Program Description**

Brazos Transit District, the largest rural transit agency in the state of Texas, has implemented a number of successful programs to transport workers to jobs. Currently, the transit district is partnering with Tyson Foods and refineries in the Beaumont/Port Arthur area to transport workers to jobs they might otherwise not be able to access.

The Tyson Food’s project transports workers to the company poultry processing plant. Transportation is provided via a contract with Coach America, and will use 55 passenger coaches to carry commuters traveling from Louisiana to Central Texas. Between 200 and 250 workers are expected to ride the coaches on a daily basis. Tyson Foods will cover all operating costs remaining after fares are deducted. Pending approval by the Texas Department of Transportation, JARC funds will cover a portion of the fares for the first two years of the program, setting the cost of a daily round trip at $6 for the first year and $8 for the second year. Otherwise, trips will cost $10 a day. Coach America has obtained the appropriate permits to allow for the interstate service. Similar programs offered by other area poultry processing plants in the past found that providing transportation benefits to potential workers improved recruitment efforts.

The second project operates in conjunction with the Amalgamated Chemical Workers Union. Major refineries on the Gulf Coast that provide worker training for about 1,500 employees a day, traveling from a park and ride facility in Liberty, Texas, to the Beaumont/Port Arthur area are participating. Fares will be set at $10 a day. This project is also supported with a combination of fare box revenues and subsidies from the major employers involved.

**Results**

The transit agency is partnering with private employers, union representatives and a bus company to provide affordable transit options for workers traveling interstate. The partnership will expand recruitment options and provide workers with access to training they may otherwise not have been able to reach.

**CALIBRE**

**Project name:** CALIBRE’s Transportation Benefit Program
Partners involved: CALIBRE
Funding source: CALIBRE
Location: Alexandria, VA
Contact: Eileen Messenger
(703)-797-8500; eileen.messenger@calibresys.com

Program Description

CALIBRE is an employee-owned management services company headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia. All employees in the national capital area receive subsidized parking or participate in the SmartBenefits or Metrochek program, both of which are operated by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). CALIBRE provides these benefits as part of the Internal Revenue Service Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit. CALIBRE pays the full benefit, and the SmartBenefits program gives the benefit amount to the employee through a SmarTrip card, which can be used on the Metro and all commuter buses. Metrochek provides vouchers for approved transit costs that can be applied to most forms of public transportation. Parking cash-out options are also available for employees who opt out of their parking space and use shared rides to commute to work. CALIBRE also supports flextime and telecommuting for employees.

Employees learn about the various transportation benefits available during the interview process. Once hired, they attend a new hire orientation where the transportation benefits program is reintroduced. In addition, program information is available on the company Intranet. The Benefits Specialist at CALIBRE works with the local ride share agency to host transportation and telecommuting information sessions at the office and includes information on the various benefits and related events in the company newsletter.

Results

CALIBRE’s Benefits Specialist, in partnership with the local rideshare agency, routinely promotes the company’s various transportation benefits. Company participation in the Internal Revenue Service Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit program ensures that all employees receive transportation benefits. Concerted efforts are made to encourage new employees to take full advantage of the benefits offered.

The Calvert Group

Project name: The Calvert Group’s Transportation Benefit Program
Partners involved: The Calvert Group
Funding source: The Calvert Group
Location: Bethesda, Maryland
Contact: Lauren Lefkowitz
(301)-657-7010; Lauren.Lefkowitz@calvert.com

Program Description

The Calvert Group has been a leader in socially responsible investing for over 30 years. Calvert’s commitment to social responsibility is reflected in the benefits offered to its employees. The firm, located in the Washington DC suburbs, reimburses commuters using any form of public transportation to work at 100 percent of cost, including parking fees. Those who walk to work are reimbursed up to $120 for a new pair of walking shoes each year, and bicycle commuters receive $500 toward the purchase of a bike. Those who drive alone receive a partial parking subsidy covering more than 50 percent of the cost of garage parking.

Begun as a recruitment and retention tool, the benefits program has definitely paid off. Today, all 200 company employees participate in either a telecommuting arrangement or the transportation program to some extent. In 2007, Calvert’s employee retention rate was over 90 percent. The company also participates in the Maryland Commuter Tax Credit program, which offers Maryland employers a credit for 50 percent of the eligible costs of providing commuter benefits, up to a maximum of $50 per participating employee. The tax credit can be taken against the State income tax, personal income tax or insurance premium tax. The credit may apply to expenses related to the costs of employee passes, providing financial support or administering a company vanpool, administering a Guaranteed Ride Home program, or administering a parking cash-out program.

Calvert is currently piloting a hybrid car reimbursement program, which reimburses drivers who either lease or purchase a hybrid vehicle. Lauren Lefkowitz, HR Consultant for the company, stressed the growing importance of these
benefits, stating that new recruits are looking beyond traditional salary and benefits for innovative “soft benefits” offered by companies today.

**Results**

Calvert achieved an employee retention rate of over 90 percent in 2007. All company employees participate to some degree in the company’s transportation benefits program, and Calvert is piloting additional benefit options.

**Charlotte Area Hotel Association**

*Project name:* Discounted Bus Pass Program  
*Partners involved:* Charlotte Area Hotel Association (CAHA) members and Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS)  
*Funding source:* CAHA member hotels  
*Location:* Charlotte, NC  
*Contact:* Sid Smith  
CAHA Executive Director  
(704)-588-3255; charlottehotels@aol.com

**Program Description**

CAHA represents some of the largest hotels doing business in the city of Charlotte, North Carolina. CAHA was created in 2002, partly in response to an invitation to participate in a program sponsored by CATS. The Employment Transportation Coordinator (ETC) program allows eligible hotels to purchase and provide bus passes to their employees at a 25 percent discount. CAHA is the conduit for the program, purchasing bus passes from CATS as an entity itself and distributing them to the hotels, which in turn make them available to their employees. Purchases made by CAHA generate approximately $6,000 a month in savings for between 530 and 550 hotel employees. CAHA coordinates monthly purchases for participating hotels, distributes the passes directly to HR staff at each hotel, and manages all the accounting and administration activities, saving the hotels valuable staff time and money. Each hotel then makes the passes available to workers, either through payroll deductions or by reselling them at the discounted rate. Offering the passes further connects the employees to the hotel where they are employed, enhancing employee retention. Because employees generally have to interact with their hotel’s HR department to pick the passes up, the department has the opportunity to talk with workers about other issues. Access to the passes ensures that employees have a safe and reliable way to get to work. In return, employees receive a substantial discount on transportation costs; can purchase the same discounted passes for other family members; and save money on operating, maintaining and parking a vehicle.

Upon a recommendation from CAHA, CATS developed a bilingual wall poster for the hotels to mount in employee lounges. The poster encourages employees to look into participating in the bus pass program by stating that discount bus passes are available via the hotel’s HR Department, and includes information on the amount of the discount. CATS also supplies updated route maps and other promotional materials for the hotels to distribute along with the passes each month.

**Results**

CAHA became the entity that allowed smaller hotels in Charlotte to purchase discount bus passes from the local transit provider and in turn, pass the savings onto workers and their families. CAHA manages all administrative functions, saving individual hotel members staff time and expense. Access to the benefit enhances employee loyalty, and improves employee retention rates.

**Chevron**

*Project name:* Chevron’s Commuter Benefits Program  
*Partners involved:* Chevron  
*Funding source:* Chevron  
*Location:* San Ramon, CA  
*Contact:* Jackson Dinh  
Vanpool Coordinator  
(925)-842-5243; vanpools@chevron.com

A CATS representative routinely attends CAHA meetings to update members on changes in mass transit and other ETC-related issues. The briefings also provide an opportunity to make suggestions and address any questions hotel management may have about the ETC program. In addition, CATS staff often reference and/or bring literature that can be distributed to employees.
**Program Description**

Chevron has an outstanding vanpool program, with nearly 170 vans helping employees make the commute to workplaces in San Ramon, Concord and Richmond, California. The company offers shuttle bus service between its San Ramon facility and BART stations in Dublin and Walnut Creek, California. In addition, Chevron provides preferred parking for vanpoolers and onsite amenities such as bicycle lockers and showers. Chevron employees in Texas and Louisiana also have access to vanpool opportunities. The company is currently exploring offering tax benefits (such as the Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit) for employees who routinely use ridesharing to commute to work.

**Results**

Success of the vanpool program in California resulted in its expansion to sites in Texas and Louisiana, and the company is now considering offering tax benefits to workers who use ridesharing to commute.

**Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center**

*Project name:* Smart Commuter  
*Partners involved:* Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC), Cincinnati Metro, Transit Authority of North Kentucky (TANK), Rideshare Ohio and Chard Snyder  
*Funding source:* Administrative fees funded by CCHMC

*Location:* Cincinnati, OH  
*Contact:* Robert Baer  
Director of Parking and Transportation  
(513) 636-8734; Robert.Baer@cchmc.org

**Program Description**

Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC) is a non-profit hospital, research and teaching center. The hospital’s staff has increased by over 700 employees per year for the past eight years, and continues to grow at a consistent level. To address the impact of such large staff increases on the need for additional parking, the hospital partnered with the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (Metro), TANK, Rideshare Ohio and Chard Snyder and Associates, an employee benefits administrator, to provide Smart Commuter, a pre-tax transit benefit program. The program allows qualifying employees to set aside up to $230 per month in pre-tax pay deductions for transit passes, bus fares and rideshare expenses reducing their taxable income and the hospital’s payroll taxes. The program is sponsored by CCHMC and administered by Chard Snyder. Smart Commuter was launched in April, 2009 and is building slowly through monthly Lunch and Learn sessions and other marketing methods.

In addition, the hospital operates a shuttle system that travels between campuses, to off site parking and into downtown Cincinnati, connecting with a major public transportation hub. Currently, daily ridership from the transit hub is averaging 90-100 riders daily. The hospital’s goal is to enroll 1,000 daily commuters who previously drove their vehicle to work.

Although the shuttles are designated to serve employees, riders sometimes include families of patients and faculty candidates traveling to the hospital from the city center, negating their need for parking. Employees are encouraged to register for the program via the hospital’s Intranet site, where they can obtain extensive information about the Smart Commuter program, carpooling and ridesharing. They are then encouraged to purchase their transit passes via the internet at the respective sites of the partners.

All administrative work relating to the Smart Commuter program is managed by Chard Snyder and Associates in conjunction with the hospitals benefits department. To further publicize the program, the hospital sponsors monthly “Lunch and Learn” activities that bring together representatives from Metro, Chard Syder, the Transit Authority of North Kentucky and Rideshare to educate new employees about the program and expedite applications.

**Results**

Cost savings realized from the reduced need for parking can be substantial. The Smart Commuter program costs the hospital $12,000 annually in administrative fees, approximately the cost to build one new parking space. In addition to the tax savings realized by reduced payroll taxes, the hospital gained recognition among its em-
ployees as an employer concerned about meeting the transportation needs of its workers.

Cornell University
*Project name(s):* OmniRide, RideShare, and Ithaca CarShare

*Partners involved:* Cornell University, Ithaca College, City of Ithaca, Metropolitan Planning Organization, local public transit, Ithaca CarShare

*Funding source:* Cornell University, New York State Department of Transportation

*Location:* Ithaca, NY

*Contact:* David Lieb
(607)-255-4628; djl5@cornell.edu

**Program Description**

Cornell University, the largest employer in the Ithaca, New York area, has been providing commuter benefits for over 18 years through a variety of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs. Currently, over one-third of faculty and staff commute via means other than single-occupancy vehicle, a number that has remained fairly consistent for the past 17 years. Among the various benefits offered are: free public transportation on campus for those with appropriate ID, paid for by Cornell; unlimited transit seven days a week with OmniRide, which provides passes for any campus city or county bus in Tompkins County any time the buses run; discounted, free or rebated parking for RideShare carpool participants; and an Emergency Ride Home service. The success of RideShare’s permit-based parking program has generated interest among other local entities, including the City of Ithaca.

Cornell estimates that through its commuter benefits program it has been able to reduce employee parking requirements by approximately 2,200 parking spaces. In addition to saving on parking construction and maintenance, Cornell notes that employees drive about 10 million miles less each year, generating important air quality benefits and significantly reducing traffic congestion on and around campus. In addition, traffic congestion through adjacent neighborhoods and municipalities has been reduced, and the university has benefited from improved community relations. The university estimates that these programs have saved more than $40 million in net costs.

The university has aided in the launch of a local, community-based, non-profit car-sharing program designed to serve the campus and surrounding communities. Ithaca CarShare, supported with seed money from Cornell, became operational in late June 2008. Additional support for the program is provided by a New York State Department of Transportation cost-shared agreement administered by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority and Ithaca College. It is the first program of this type to be implemented in an area of this size. Ithaca’s county (Tompkins County) has a population of 100,000, of which 35,000 are students, faculty and staff affiliated with Cornell or Ithaca College. Cornell and Ithaca College each serve as bulk customers providing discounted memberships for their campus communities. Cars are available to drivers as young as 18 years old, if covered by their parents’ insurance. Future plans for CarShare include its replication elsewhere in New York State, and the development of reciprocal agreements among those other communities, as well as with other independent car shares all around the country.

The university is dedicated to encouraging greater participation in TDM efforts throughout the community. Staff is currently working with local municipalities to develop park-and-ride lots on the periphery of the urban core that will make use of existing parking lots in 5-6 key locations. Cornell is partnering with Ithaca College, the City of Ithaca, the Metropolitan Planning Organization and local public transit to develop a vanpool program to serve the many staff and students who commute from as far out as 60-80 miles (or given the volatility of gas prices as close as 20-30 miles), as well as other commuters to the city. Implemented in fall 2008, the program is the first state effort outside of New York City.

**Results**

Campus parking needs reduced by over 2,000 spaces; employees drive an estimated 10 million miles a year less. Overall benefits include reduced congestion and $40 million in net savings, increased municipal interest in permit-based parking, vanpool access to community for staff and students with very long commutes and a car-sharing program that serves the entire
CVS

*Project name:* CVS
*Partners involved:* CVS, Workforce Investment Boards, One-stop Centers
*Funding source:* CVS
*Location:* Nationwide
*Contact:* Ernie Dupont (518)-383-4517 x 8029; EEDupont@cvs.com

**Program Description**

CVS, which has hired over 60,000 former welfare recipients nationwide, provides transportation assistance to its employees on an ad hoc basis, working with human service agencies and non-profit service providers to recruit new employees, and assisting them in identifying transportation to work options. Among the employees taking advantage of the various transportation assistance options offered by the company are workers with disabilities.

While in training, workers are placed in a store closest to where they live. CVS tries to identify the appropriate agency at the state or local level to assist with commuting challenges and refers workers as needed. For example, employees who commute to company distribution centers are referred to local transportation providers for assistance in planning their travel.

CVS also sponsors an internship program geared to inner-city youth which introduces them to various career options at various store locations within a given geographic area. The company partners with local Workforce Investment Boards to help participants obtain vouchers and bus passes to cut travel expenses for these young people.

Another program, geared toward recruiting disabled workers, partners with local agencies, non-profits and the American Association for the Advancement of Science to help meet the travel needs of college students who are accepted into the program. Company staff works local Workforce Investment Boards to assist disabled employees with any transportation considerations, usually partnering with local agencies that handle those situations. CVS has a history of effectively working with disabled employees. In 2006, the company received the Secretary of Labor’s New Freedom Initiative Award for exemplary and innovative efforts in furthering the employment and workplace environment for people with disabilities. CVS was a 2006 recipient of the U.S. Department of Labor’s New Freedom Initiative Award.

**Results**

CVS built strong partnerships with local Workforce Investment Boards and human service providers to ensure that low-income employees and individuals with disabilities can easily access training programs.

**Duke Energy**

*Project name:* Duke Energy’s Transit Subsidy Program
*Partners involved:* Duke Energy, Charlotte Area Transit System
*Funding source:* Duke Energy
*Locations:* Charlotte, NC, Cincinnati, OH and Houston, TX
*Contact:* Lisa Rhyne (704)-382-8357; lisa.rhyne@duke-energy.com
Philip Beard (704)-382-5900; philip.beard@duke-energy.com

**Program Description**

Through participation in the Internal Revenue Service Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit program, Duke offers transportation subsidies for qualifying employees. The subsidies are provided in addition to salary. Duke Energy’s Transit Subsidy Program changed the way employees view alternative transportation. The program is representative of the company’s overall commitment to environmental stewardship and its focus on reducing ozone-related emissions as well as its long-term commitment towards a national sustainable energy efficiency and conservation effort.

Many of Duke Energy’s employees average a 40-60 mile daily commute to work. Prior to providing Charlotte area employees a transportation subsidy, about 100 of the nearly 2,500 employees at the Charlotte Uptown location used the Charlotte Areas Transit System (CATS) to commute to work. At that time, Duke Energy purchased 15 monthly bus passes and 300 10-Ride Bus Passes for employees each month. That changed in August 2006, when the
company announced a $50 monthly subsidy towards the purchase of CATS transit services (i.e., buses or vanpools). By the end of 2006, participation increased to 225 employees, using 167 monthly bus passes and 182 10-ride bus passes. The program continued to grow. As of February 2008, nearly 384 employees, or 16 percent of eligible Charlotte Uptown employees, participated.

Duke Energy began to fully subsidize CATS bus passes and vanpool costs for employees in June, 2007. By the end of the year, Charlotte area participation increased to 360 employees, using 283 monthly bus passes and 418 10-ride bus passes. In December 2007, the CATS light rail system opened and is now included in Duke Energy’s transit subsidy program. Employee feedback was so positive that Duke Energy expanded the program to employees in Cincinnati, Ohio; and in Houston, Texas. For the Cincinnati area, of the 1,262 employees eligible to obtain free bus transit passes, 376 employees, approximately 30 percent, received monthly bus passes. When employee feedback indicated that their need to drive their vehicles a few days a month to meet personal commitments was a deterrent to using CATS, the company decided to offer two free parking passes each month in addition to the 100 percent transit subsidy for monthly bus passes, light rail passes or vanpools. Duke Energy’s commitment to alternative transportation extends beyond its participation in the Charlotte Area Transit System. The company provides complimentary parking for vanpools and to carpools that meet certain criteria. New bike stanchions have been installed in uptown facility locations with accommodations for up to 20 bicycles, and employees who commute via bicycle have access to shower facilities and lockers. In addition, the company created an internal web resource in which employees can review Transit Subsidy Program guidelines or updates, ridesharing opportunities and links to other Clean Air initiatives.

Duke Energy has been named a “Best Workplace for Commuters” (BWC) by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Transportation, and has been awarded the “Clean Air Champion Award” by the Regional Air Quality Board.

Results

As the company subsidy for transit use increased, so did employee usage. Employee feedback was so positive that Duke Energy expanded the program to employees in Cincinnati, Ohio; and in Houston, Texas. To encourage greater participation, Duke now offers a number of amenities.

Georgia Power

**Project name:** SmartRide  
**Partners involved:** Georgia Power  
**Funding source:** Georgia Power  
**Location:** Atlanta, GA  
**Contact:** Jane Franklin  
(404)-506-1967; jffrankl@southernco.com

**Program Description**

The SmartRide program has been in operation since 1994, and currently 46 percent of company employees participate. Initially, SmartRide was only available at the downtown Georgia Power facility but the program expanded to include regional offices in 1999, with union approval. The vanpool program is one of the commuting benefits offered to the company’s 5,500 Atlanta-based employees. Approximately 400 regional employees, many of whom commute up to 100 miles a day, now travel to and from the Atlanta location via vanpool. Provided as part of the Internal Revenue Service Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit program, the company incurs all related expenses upfront; employees have no out-of-pocket expenses. Additional commute options include subsidies for transit tokens, flextime, telecommute and free parking for all ridesharing commuters. An onsite coordinator oversees all aspects of the program.

In 1998, the program was enhanced by a web-based program so that all employees could report their participation. Employees who use alternative transportation are also able to participate in a Guaranteed Ride Home program, providing access to a free ride home in case of emergency or unplanned overtime. Daily shuttle service between two downtown company locations and the closest transit stop is available free of charge. Shuttles run every 10 minutes between the hours of 6 a.m. and 8 p.m. Employees at the downtown facility also have access
to fleet vehicles, operated on ethanol, to run errands or attend meetings during work hours. Support for SmartRide is so strong that regional facilities now prefer to bid on work opportunities that have vanpools or carpools in place. New company hires are routinely directed to the SmartRide office to obtain information on the various commute options available to them. Ridesharing is also marketed through email.

Prior to May 1 of each year, employees receive a notice regarding smog alerts in the region, again encouraging the use of alternative transportation to work.

**Results**

Approximately 400 regionally based employees, many of whom commute up to 100 miles a day, participate in the vanpool program. Currently, there are 61 vanpools operating, with another 5 pending. Support for SmartRide is so strong that regional facilities now prefer to bid on work opportunities that have vanpools or carpools in place. SmartRide eliminates 1.3 million single occupancy vehicles per month, 0.5 million of which are attributable to the vanpool program.

**Google**

*Project name:* Google Shuttle Bus Program  
*Partners involved:* Google  
*Funding source:* Google  
*Location:* Mountain View and San Bruno, CA  
*Contact:* Kevin Mathy  
(650)-253-0000; mathy@google.com

**Program Description**

Google offers about 170 bus runs daily across the San Francisco Bay Area, to and from its Mountain View and San Bruno California campuses. The company ferries over 1,500 employees to and from Google daily—nearly one-fourth of its local work force—aboard 50 shuttle buses equipped with leather seats and wireless Internet access. Bicycles are allowed on exterior racks, or in the baggage bins of the larger buses. There are also dedicated shuttles for those who like to bring their dog to work. Riders can sign up to receive alerts on their computers and cell phones when buses run late. The shuttles run on biodiesel and are free. Most shuttles can carry up to 37 passengers each with others carrying up to 52 passengers, running trips every day to some 45 pickup and drop-off locations in more than a dozen cities, crisscrossing six counties in the San Francisco Bay Area and logging some 4,800 miles a day. The system’s routes cover in excess of 230 miles of freeways. Morning service starts on some routes as early as 5:05 a.m. The last pickup is at 10:40 a.m. Evening service runs from 3:40 p.m. to 10:05 p.m. During peak times, pickups can be as frequent as every 5 minutes. A team of transportation specialists at company headquarters monitors regional traffic patterns, maps out the residences of new hires and plots new routes to keep up with ever-surgent demand. Google also offers a parking subsidy for employees who choose to drive and park onsite.

**Results**

Approximately one quarter of the company’s more than 6,000 employees ride company-sponsored shuttles to work. Shuttle service incorporates stops in over a dozen cities and six counties. Shuttle hours of operation allow employees more flexible work hours.

**Half Off Transit (HOT) Pass**

*Project name:* HOT Pass  
*Partners involved:* City of Savannah, Chatham Area Transit  
*Funding source:* City of Savannah  
*Location:* Savannah, GA  
*Contact:* Rachel Smithson  
Management Analyst  
(912)-651-6420 x 1781; Rachel_Smithson@savannahga.gov  
Sean Brandon  
Director of Parking & Mobility Services  
(912)-651-6470; sbrandon@savannahga.gov

**Program Description**

The Half Off Transit (HOT) Pass program was recently implemented by city of Savannah Georgia in partnership with Chatham Area Transit (CAT). The employee discount program strives to encourage the use of public transit while reducing fuel and travel expenses for city employees. The HOT Pass offer is part of the City’s larger Thrive initiative, a plan that aims to reduce City Government’s carbon footprint 15 percent by the year 2020. While the concept of subsidizing bus passes for City employees
has been around for several years, the spike in gas prices this past summer, formally committing to reducing the government’s carbon footprint, and the recent economic downturn provided the momentum necessary to get the project finalized.

A major goal of the Thrive initiative is to identify issues that promote environmental sustainability and improve the quality of life for City employees and the community as a whole. In an effort to create measurable carbon reduction targets, City staff used special software to measure its carbon footprint. Data obtained helped the City target which sectors, such as vehicle fleet, employee commute or waste, need the most attention.

Two subgroups within the Thrive Committee are working to specifically address transportation: the Employee Committee subgroup and the Vehicle Fleet subgroup. The Employee Commute subgroup assisted with the HOT Pass program and is also looking at ways the City can provide incentives for employees who bike and carpool to work. They also worked to include the City in the Coastal Commuters rideshare program; a program that facilitates carpooling around the region. The Thrive Committee continues to work on other initiatives designed to encourage environmental sustainability efforts that both citizens and the business community can implement.

Through the HOT Pass program, the City of Savannah pays for half the cost ($22.50) of a monthly CAT bus pass for City employees. The $22.50 employee share is automatically deducted pre-tax from the employee’s paycheck. Employees can use the passes after hours and on weekends to any destination that CAT serves. Employees were first notified about the program in a flyer attached to their paychecks. Email blasts, and Intranet notices followed. The HOT Pass program was also highlighted in an article published in the Savannah Morning News. The program, which began on January 1, 2009, currently has 19 participants. The city hopes to expand that number to over 100 in the coming months. In addition, the Vehicle Fleet subgroup drafted an anti-idling policy for City vehicles and is working on the possible establishment of a comprehensive green fleet policy that will require trip consolidation, fleet downsizing, and the use of alternative modes of transportation (including public transit and bicycles). The Vehicle Fleet subgroup has piloted a City Hall bicycle program, through which City purchased two bicycles. The bikes are stored in City Hall and are available for employee use for business as an alternative to using city motor pool vehicles.

Results

Chatham Area Transit officials hope to use the HOT Pass program as a model for other large employers in the Savannah area.

Humana, Inc.

Project name: Humana Inc.

Partners involved: Humana, Transit Authority of River City (TARC, Louisville)

Funding source: Humana, Inc.

Location: Louisville, KY

Contact: Brian Moore

bmoore2@humana.com

Program Description

In 2007, Humana’s Human Resources department developed a way to ease a parking shortage, reduce air pollution, and provide staff (known as associates) with an excellent benefit. Humana partnered with Louisville Kentucky’s Transit Authority of River City (TARC) to allow associates to ride city buses and trolleys at any time and place at no cost to them. The program was launched in June 2007. Since then, an increasing number of associates have made TARC their regular method of transportation to and from work. The partnership has helped reduce the parking crunch that comes with 9,000 associates working within five blocks in downtown Louisville. View a testimonial by Humana’s Director of Workforce Solutions (www.ridetarc.org/employerprograms.asp?mid=2)

About 600 associates now ride TARC regularly, an increase from the approximately 125 associates who rode TARC prior to the program’s inception. More impressive than the number of riders, is the number of rides taken by associates. During the first seven months of the program, Humana associates used the bus for a total of more than 150,000 rides, meaning that for 150,000 trips from June to December 2007, an associate was on a bus instead of driving his
Humana pays TARC an upfront premium, and in return all Humana associates ride for free by simply showing the driver their company ID. To break even, the company needed to get 60 associates to give up their parking card in favor of riding TARC full-time; that number has been far surpassed.

Throughout the year Humana conducts various promotional activities designed to increase ridership. The program is promoted via Humana’s internal communications tools (daily Intranet newsletter, and plasma screen message boards). Associates are also provided the opportunity to use cost-savings calculators, have access to a trip-planning tool, instructions on how to utilize mass transit, how to park-and-ride from suburban locations, how to ride bikes to a bus stop and mount them on the bus, etc.

Humana also holds periodic transit fairs in high-traffic areas of the downtown facilities, allowing associates to meet TARC representatives, pick up information and ask questions about riding TARC. In March 2008, the company promoted the first “Humana TARC Challenge” on St. Patrick’s Day, which encouraged associates to Go Green and ride the bus that day, resulting in a 32 percent increase in ridership on that day. First-time riders indicated that they enjoyed the experience and would do it again.

TARC provides Humana with monthly program usage information, allowing Humana to track trends in usage and make improvements where needed. Additionally, the program has stimulated a dialogue between Humana and TARC to explore enhancing routes, schedules and amenities for the rides. One improvement made several months into the partnership was the addition of a trolley shuttle specifically for the 4,000-plus associates at the Waterside Building. Many of the Waterside associates who drive into downtown park three to four blocks from the building. As winter approached, Humana worked with TARC to add a trolley line that picks up associates at larger lots within a few blocks of Waterside. This service has proven very popular, as associates enjoy the luxury of a ride to the building and the security of not having to walk in the darkness to and from their cars. Associates also travel to lunch and between buildings on TARC’s downtown trolleys. Real-time arrival screens are located near the entrances to four of Humana’s buildings.

The benefits to Humana associates are many, including a substantial savings on gasoline and auto maintenance, and stress-free commuting. Benefits to Humana include having to fund and maintain fewer parking spaces. Associate communications professionals report that articles and announcements about the TARC program tend to attract a much higher number of responses from associates than other topics. Humana promotes its transportation benefits—along with its comprehensive benefits package—in recruiting talent to the organization. In addition to the TARC benefit, Humana developed the Freewheelin’ bike sharing program as a component to its transportation benefits program. Associates are issued a card that can be used to check out a bike from any of three downtown stations. Bikes are primarily used to ride over lunch hour and to and from home.

**Results**

Humana designed its program in partnership with Transit Authority of River City whereby Associates can ride for free by simply showing the driver their company ID. Between June and December of 2007, that amounted to 150,000 trips on public transit as opposed to driving. Employee participation in the program has steadily increased, encouraging Humana and TARC to explore route and scheduling enhancements. Anecdotal information indicates that articles and announcements about the program tend to attract a much higher number of responses from employees than other topics.

**IBM**

*Project name:* IBM NuRide Program  
*Partners involved:* IBM; MetroPool, Inc.  
*Funding source:* IBM  
*Location:* Westchester County, NY  
*Contact:* Ralph Harkins  
(914)-499-2540; ralph@us.ibm.com  
Mid-Atlantic, HQ and US Environmental Management Services, IBM Somers

**Program Description**

IBM has a robust commuter choice program that balances the needs of the company with the
work-life needs of its employees, while limiting impacts on the environment. The company makes various commute options available to employees in Westchester County, New York (including Corporate Headquarters, Somers and North Castle locations, comprised of an employee population of approximately 5,100). The three work locations were designed with the environment in mind and provide a number of services to employees that allow them to remain on site, thus eliminating unnecessary single-occupant vehicle trips during the business day. Services include a cafeteria, ATMs and sundry shops. Car-pooling, and telecommuting are key components of IBM’s comprehensive commuter choice program.

In partnership with MetroPool, Inc., a transportation management company, IBM developed NuRide, an internet-based ridesharing system, at the Westchester locations. IBM has about 100 employees signed up as carpoolers and they receive preferred parking. IBM also operates a shuttle service at the Armonk Learning Center, providing overnight guests with transportation between (3) Armonk buildings free of charge, eliminating the need for single-occupancy vehicle trips during the workday. In addition to participation in NuRide and Carpooling programs, approximately thirty percent of employees take advantage of telecommuting opportunities.

Integrated Science Solutions, Inc. (ISSi)  
Project name: ISSi Commuter Benefits Program  
Partners involved: Integrated Science Solutions, Inc.  
Funding source: Integrated Science Solutions, Inc.  
Location: Walnut Creek, CA  
Contact: Kristina Johnson (925)-979-1535 x160; kjohnson@issi-net.com

Program Description

Issi is a small, woman-owned science and engineering company providing cost-effective professional services to a variety of federal, state and private customers. To help improve environmental quality and public health near its offices, located in California, ISSi provides employees with a variety of commuter benefits, including up to $60 per month in transit subsidies, flexible work schedules and telecommuting opportunities. An emergency ride home benefit is also provided for employees who use public transportation and/or carpooling. The company is currently exploring offering carpool benefits as well.

Results

Currently 188 employees have enrolled in the NuRide program. An additional 95 employees from Somers and North Castle location participate through a carpool program that predates NuRide. Each location now offers a number of amenities, reducing the need for single-occupancy vehicle trips during the workday. In addition to participation in NuRide and Carpooling programs, approximately thirty percent of employees take advantage of telecommuting opportunities.

Lockheed Martin Corporation (LMC)  
Project name: Lockheed Martin Corporation  
Partners involved: Lockheed Martin Corporation, North Bethesda Traffic Management District (NBTMD)  
Funding source: Lockheed Martin Corporation  
Location: Bethesda, MD  
Contact: Randy Huff (301)-897-6204; randy.c.huff@lmco.com

Program Description

The Bethesda, Maryland, campus of Lockheed Martin Corporation (LMC) encompasses approximately 850 employees spread over four different locations. The company provides a number of transportation benefits for its workers through a partnership with the North Bethesda Traffic Management District (NBTMD). Among the benefits offered are Metrocheck (reimbursement of the costs of public transportation to employees), Commuter Connection, Guaranteed Ride Home, ridesharing, use of shuttles for on-site training, reserved vanpool...
parking and transportation tax benefits. Metrochek is offered in conjunction with the Internal Revenue Service Qualified Tax Fringe Benefit program. LMC pays the full amount of the benefit for qualifying employees. Sheltered parking is available for all employees, and approximately 30 employees have taken advantage of flextime and telecommuting opportunities. Currently, many employees who commute from the further out suburbs take advantage of shuttle services provided by public transportation. In addition, NBTMD sponsors an annual seminar, offered on site, to discuss transportation options with interested employees. LMC maintains a display rack, including local transportation brochures, information on mass transit routes, maps and other information of interest to employees. Lockheed Martin Corporation is a 2008 recipient of the U.S. Department of Labor’s New Freedom Initiative Award.

Results

LMC partnered with the local Transportation Management District to develop a comprehensive program designed to benefit all employees. Benefits include subsidies offered through the Qualified Tax Fringe Benefit program for those who use public transportation to commute, sheltered parking, flextime, telecommuting and company shuttles to transport workers to on-site training. Anecdotal information suggests that the provision of these programs has positively impacted employee retention for the company.

**Merck and Company, Inc.**

*Project name:* Merck’s Commuter Choice Program  
*Partners involved:* Merck & Co., Inc., Meadowlink Commuter Services (New Jersey site), Medical Area Services Company Commuter Works (Boston site)  
*Funding source:* Merck & Co., Inc.  
*Location:* Boston, MA; Rahway, NJ  
*Contact:* Mary Ann Puskarik (New Jersey site) (732)-594-4942; mary_puskarik@merck.com  
Christine Kostecki (Boston site) (617)-992-2083; Christine_Kostecki@merck.com

**Program Description**

In addition to contributing to employee satisfaction and reducing the stress level associated with commuting for company employees, Merck’s Commuter Choice program has been found to contribute to worker retention within the company. The program varies slightly at various company locations.

Merck’s New Jersey site (Rahway) offers those who vanpool or use New Jersey Transit a subsidy. Vanpoolers receive a subsidy of up to $50 per person a month from the company; transit users receive up to $40 per person, if their monthly ticket is $80 or more. If the ticket is $79 or less, commuters are reimbursed for half the cost. The Rahway location does not sell transit tickets on site; riders must purchase them on their own. Employees are also encouraged to organize carpooling opportunities and do so on their own.

In addition, the Employee Transportation Coordinator works in partnership with Meadowlink Commuter Services, which offers Emergency Ride Home options for transit and pool users. Merck pays an annual membership of $3,000, which entitles commuters to register with Meadowlink. Meadowlink maintains a contract with a taxi service in the Rahway area so that the need for a ride is met in a matter of minutes should it arise. Meadowlink representatives are invited to the Rahway site twice a year to meet with and respond to employee questions related to carpool, vanpool and transit options. Although the Rahway site does not offer preferential parking, vanpool vehicles are parked on site, and company security services offer commuters access to free shuttle services to and from the Rahway train station during peak commuting hours. Handicapped parking is available on site and in the parking garages and spaces, which are located in front of the elevators on each level.

Sixty percent of employees at Merck’s Boston site use mass transit to commute to work. Employees who commute via subway or city bus are subsidized with funds raised from on-site garage parking fees. Subsidies cover the entire cost of commuting. These efforts are supported by MASCO’s (Medical Area Services Company) Commuter Works program. The program offers participants access to Emergency Ride Home, Zipcars at reduced rates and other benefits. Merck and Company is a 2005 recipient of
the U.S. Department of Labor’s New Freedom Initiative Award.

**Results**

Merck designed a program in conjunction with local transit agencies that can be adapted to the specific needs of commuters at various company locations. The program has been found to contribute to worker retention.

**Microsoft Corporation**

*Project name:* Microsoft Corporation Transportation Benefits and Connector Program  
*Partners involved:* Microsoft Corporation  
*Funding source:* Microsoft Corporation  
*Location:* Corporate headquarters, Redmond, WA  
*Contact:* Megan G. Manazir  
(425)-638-7000; meganm@wagged.com

**Program Description**

Microsoft has provided employee transportation benefits for over 10 years. The company began providing free transit passes in 1994. Participating employees qualify for the Qualified Transportation Tax benefit of up to $230 per month per employee on a pre-tax basis.

Microsoft implemented the Connector program in September 2007. Currently, 48 Connector buses provide transportation to and from work for over 3,000 riders each day. The coaches are equipped with Wi-Fi and power outlets and have become very popular among the employee base. So much so, that the program has grown in size multiple times and routes are often completely booked.

Another transportation option available to employees is a free ORCA (One Regional Card for All) card. The cards, purchased from King County Metro, provide unlimited rides on 7 regional transit agencies at no cost to the cardholder. Upon signing a terms and conditions form, employees obtain the card from the company receptionist.

**Results**

Based on figures from fiscal year 2008, 38 percent of employees use alternative transportation to commute to work. Two percent bike to work as their primary form of transportation. Furthermore, service provided by the Connector alone has reduced single occupancy commuter traffic by over 500,000 trips and more than 8 million miles. Anecdotal information indicates that Microsoft’s transportation benefits play a pivotal role in the company’s ability to attract and retain the best talent in the industry.

**Nike**

*Project name:* Travel Responsibly, Accept the Challenge (TRAC)  
*Partners involved:* Nike  
*Funding source:* Nike  
*Location:* Corporate headquarters, Beaverton, OR  
*Contact:* Charles George Facilities Operations and Property Manager  
(503)-671-2060

**Program Description**

Nike offers monthly prizes and incentives to employees at its World Headquarters and surrounding areas in Portland, Oregon, who commute to work by eliminating the use of a gasoline or diesel-powered vehicle. The company’s commuter benefits program, Travel Responsibly, Accept the Challenge (TRAC), has been recognized by the Environmental Protection Agency as a model program. TRAC is staffed by a full-time transportation coordinator who manages information about the program on the company Intranet. The TRAC website offers tips and resources on alternative commuting—everything from public transportation access to bike routes, or how to organize a carpool with Nike employees or others in the area. Employees register on the website each week for the number of alternative commutes they take the week before. Incentives include annual public transportation passes from TriMet for $25, reserved carpool parking, and a shuttle system that connects the World Headquarters with nearby leased buildings and the nearest light rail station. On-site amenities include two fitness centers, a daycare center and a learning center for children of employees, a hair salon, two sundry stores, ATM machines and two cafeterias.

**Results**

Since its inception in 1992, the program has reduced the company’s average drive-alone rate from 98 percent to 84 percent. In fiscal
year 2007 (ending May 31, 2007), based on an average round trip commute of 17.8 miles, Nike employees saved approximately 594,591 vehicle miles traveled by using alternative commute modes.

**REI**

*Project name:* Transit Subsidy Program; Van-Pool Program  
*Partners involved:* REI, local transit agencies  
*Funding source:* REI  
*Location:* Corporate headquarters, Kent, WA and other store locations  
*Contact:* Megan Behrbaum  
Public Affairs Manager  
(253)-437-7736; mbehrba@rei.com

**Program Description**

REI is the nation’s largest consumer cooperative. The company sells a wide variety of gear and apparel for human-powered outdoor recreation, including activities such as camping, hiking, cycling and snow sports. REI provides a number of transportation benefits for its more than 10,000 employees. The company’s full- and part-time employees helped to shape the comprehensive benefits provided. At its headquarters in Kent, Washington, the company is piloting a customized work environment program that offers flexible work hours and telecommuting.

REI’s Transit Subsidy program reimburses employees who commute to work via public transit. The benefit amount does not have a set limit, and covers commuting via bus, train, ferry and vanpool. The company vanpool program is the most popular shared ride option among employees working at company headquarters. Currently, 23 vanpools, operated by four transit agencies in the Puget Sound (Seattle) area carry employees to and from work. A VanShare program complements the VanPool program. Participants connect to one of three vans from the regional train station. The vans pick up and drop off commuters at staggered hours, providing flexible work hours for employees. Vanpool parking areas are located closest to the building, and disabled parking is located in front of all buildings. Employees who cycle to work have access to lockers and showers at all locations (stores, distribution centers and headquarters), with some locations also offering towel service.

**Results**

REI believes that the comprehensive nature of benefits offered its employees helps with staff retention, as evidenced by a 10-year low for REI in turnover. Participation in the company’s vanpool program expanded to the point where a full-time position was created to coordinate its operation and to encourage the use of other alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle use.

**Rejuvenation**

*Project name:* Re-Cycle  
*Partners involved:* Rejuvenation, the Bike Gallery, Gregg’s Cycles  
*Funding source:* Rejuvenation, the Bike Gallery, Gregg’s Cycles  
*Location:* Portland, OR, Seattle, WA  
*Contact:* Nicole Curcio  
Retail Marketing Specialist  
(503)-230-2644; ncurcio@rejuvenation.com

**Program Description**

Rejuvenation has been in business for over 30 years and has taken a proactive stance on environmental issues since its beginning. The company has retail stores in Portland, Oregon; and Seattle, Washington, as well as an 87,000 square-foot factory located in Portland. All locations are easily accessed by public transportation. In January 2008, as part of an effort to reduce its carbon footprint, Rejuvenation decided to supplement its alternative commuting programs by further encouraging employees to bike to work. During the year-long program, the company partnered with local bicycle retailers in Portland and Seattle to implement the Re-Cycle program. Interested employees were encouraged to enter a monthly raffle. The winner received a gift certificate valued at $440 for the purchase of a bike and other equipment from either the Bike Gallery in Portland or Gregg’s Cycles in Seattle (for employees working in that city). Bike owners who would commute to work via bike more frequently if they had additional equipment were also eligible to participate. Winners were required commit to biking to and from work for an average of once a week.
throughout the year. Winners who already biked to work are asked to increase their biking commute by one additional day per week. Some chose to ride more frequently during good weather and less frequently during bad, but all averaged at least 52 per trips per year.

Those who could not meet the commitment gave their bikes to another employee. Only one winner declined the prize because he would have to bike to work from too far a distance. Participants were supported by a group of mentors who mapped out travel routes for the riders. They also accompanied new cyclists until they became comfortable with their ride. Re-Cycle was offered in addition to a variety of other alternative commute benefits provided by the company. Rejuvenation provides an annual bus pass, free of charge, for all employees working in Oregon. Employees working elsewhere receive a 50 percent subsidy to cover the cost of an annual pass. Employees who bike to work for a minimum of 14 days a month receive a $20 bonus each month.

Rejuvenation also supports carpooling and walking. Carpools of two or more employees who park on the street for a minimum of 14 days a month also receive the bonus. Carpools of three or more may also have access to free parking in the company parking lot. Company bikes are also made available for use to travel to meetings or run errands during working hours.

Results

Re-cycle was specifically designed to be a year-long incentive. The program had 12 winners committed to decreasing the number of trips made to work by car. The successful bike to work program was implemented in partnership with two local bike retailers. Rejuvenation continues to explore innovative solutions to reducing its environmental impact. Currently, 25 percent of employees use alternative commuting methods to travel to work. Anecdotal evidence indicates that the alternative commuting programs offered by the company are a source of pride for employees, and Rejuvenation has seen an improvement in recruitment efforts because of the various programs offered.

Sears

Project name: Prairie Stone Business Park Commuter Program

Partners involved: Prairie Stone Business Park employers, Pace Bus, Prairie Stone Transportation Management Association, WageWorks

Funding source: Prairie Stone Business Park employers, Pace Bus

Location: Corporate headquarters, Hoffman Estates, IL

Contact: Barbara Hayskar
Prairie Stone TMA
(847)-838-3291; barbarahayskar@PrairieStone.com

Program Description

Sears Headquarters, located in suburban Chicago, has nine fixed-route buses and 30 vanpools traveling to the property daily. Pace, the suburban bus division of the Regional Transportation Authority in Chicago, in partnership with the Prairie Stone Transportation Management Association (TMA), provides the bus and vanpool services from various locations throughout the Chicago Metropolitan Area to the business park where headquarters is located. Sears also offers employees access to a Guaranteed Ride Home program. In addition, Sears partners with WageWorks and Pace to manage and monitor the company’s participation in the federal Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit program. Costs are deducted from payroll on a pre-tax basis. Employees enroll through WageWorks.

Among other benefits offered in partnership with the Prairie Stone TMA are “Demand Management” techniques such as variable work hours, telecommuting, ridesharing and parking management, implemented in the business park. Augmenting the employer-controlled programs are various public transit services, including subscription buses, vanpools and fixed-route service, to and from bus and train stations, and park-and-ride operations.

Results

Sears partnered with a local Transportation Management Association and a local transit provider to offer comprehensive transportation benefits to employees traveling to its headquarters building in suburban Chicago. The program’s success is attributed to a cohesive and
focused effort, achieved through the TMA. All subsequent owners and developers within the business park become paid members.

**Texas Instruments**

*Project name:* Commute Solutions  
*Partners involved:* Texas Instruments, Dallas Area Rapid Transit System  
*Funding source:* Texas Instruments  
*Location:* Dallas/Ft. Worth, TX, Manchester, NH  
*Contact:* Lara Wallentine Hussain  
Director Sustainability Stakeholder Relations  
(214)-480-6720; lara@ti.com

**Program Description**

Texas Instruments (TI) has promoted alternative commute programs among its employees since the 1970’s, initially by providing on-site shuttles and employee vanpools. When the Dallas/Ft. Worth area was designated a non-attainment region in the early 1990’s, the company expanded its transportation benefits program into what has become the Commute Solutions program. A major component of the program is a partnership with the Dallas Area Rapid Transit System (DART) to provide Gold passes for employees based in the Dallas metropolitan area. The passes provide unlimited local and express service on buses, trains and the Trinity Railway Express. More than 1,200 employees in the Dallas area participate in the program. TI began subsidizing the passes for employees in 2004, helping keep hundreds of cars off the roads every day. TI also provides free shuttles between the LBJ/Central Expressway and Parker Rd DART stations and TI campuses.

TI’s transportation benefits are managed by the company’s Commute Solutions team. The team works to improve the employee trip reduction program through various incentives and educational activities. The team also hosts special events, such as “bike to work day” and maintains an employee trip reduction website. The Commute Solutions Team is based in Dallas. Commute coordinators work are at various other sites throughout the U.S., including Manchester, New Hampshire. Their role is to build awareness of and coordinate Commute Solutions programs. Increasingly, global sites are also participating in commute solutions programs.

Texas Instruments also promotes carpooling and vanpooling among its employees provides shuttle services between rail stations and company worksites. More than 725 employees currently commute via carpool or vanpool in North Texas alone. Vanpools are entitled to preferred parking at TI sites. The company offers other incentives to encourage participation. In addition, 1,200 people take advantage of the free on-site shuttles on a daily basis. The shuttles transport employees between buildings at company headquarters during the workday.

Additional incentives that support use of public transit and ridesharing include on-site concierge service that handles errands like picking up tickets to sporting events, and flex-time work schedules that allow for telecommuting. An internal Commute Solutions web site allows employees to exchange information about ridesharing and other commuting alternatives.

**Results**

In 2008 over 1,200 employees used public transit on a daily basis to commute to work. Another 725 participated in vanpools or carpools. Combined, these activities result in nearly 58,000 total travel miles averted every day in the Dallas area alone.

**Walgreens**

*Program name:* Walgreens Distribution Center  
*Partners involved:* Walgreens, Anderson County Disabilities & Special Needs Board, South Carolina Department of Vocational Rehabilitation,  
*Funding:* South Carolina General Assembly  
*Location:* Anderson, SC, Windsor, CT  
*Contact:* Deb Russell  
Manager Outreach and Employee Services  
(847)-914-5385; deb.russell@walgreens.com

**Program Description**

Over 37 percent of Walgreens employees working in the Anderson, South Carolina, distribution center are workers who have identified that they have a disability. The center, designed with a goal of recruiting these employees, is the brainchild of Randy Lewis, a senior vice president of distribution and logistics with the company. The concept grew out of a need to address
a personal concern. As the father of a teenage son with autism, he was aware of the challenges faced by adults with disabilities who wanted to work. Mr. Lewis recognized that emerging technologies made it possible to employ people with disabilities without negatively impacting costs or efficiency. Accommodations such as touch screens, flexible work stations and wheelchair ramps were installed at the facility. In addition, all managers and workers at the site receive disability awareness training. After the Anderson facility opened, Walgreens management discovered that although the technology helped with the employment goals, it was not a necessary element of being able to have an inclusive workplace.

Walgreens worked in conjunction with the Anderson County Disabilities Board and the state department of Vocational Rehabilitation to train its workers. A training center, outfitted with the same equipment used in the distribution center was built by the agencies. It has since been moved to the distribution center to streamline the training process. Once hired, workers are paid on a scale equal to their co-workers who do not have disabilities. They receive the same pay and benefits, and are held to the same performance expectations as employees who do not have disabilities.

By emphasizing the important role that access to transportation plays in providing employment access for distribution center employees, Walgreens encouraged Anderson County to arrange transportation to work for those employees in need of assistance.

Walgreens opened a similar facility in Connecticut in late 2008. Walgreens partnered with area transportation planners in Connecticut to ensure that local mass transit providers are aware of shift times and related travel information that impact employee commuting needs.

Results

In South Carolina, the Anderson County Disabilities and Special Needs Board purchased four passenger buses, used to transport workers with disabilities to the Walgreens facility, with funds provided by the South Carolina General Assembly. Additional funds were also granted to pay for two of the four drivers. The Board provided the funds needed to pay the remaining two drivers.

Yahoo!

Project name: Yahoo’s Commute Alternative Program
Partners involved: Yahoo
Funding source: Yahoo
Location: Corporate headquarters, Sunnyvale, CA
Contact: Danielle Bricker
(408)-349-4729; dbricker@yahoo-inc.com

Program Description

Yahoo’s Commute Alternative Program offers employees a number of on-site amenities (bicycle repair, dry cleaning, oil changes, carwash, haircuts, dental services, a cafeteria, mailing and shipping services, convenience store and gift shop and ATM access) in addition to a shuttle service to nearby transit hubs and subsidized vanpools. Among the benefits offered are free rides on Santa Clara County California, local transit agency vehicles and commuter tax benefits through the Federal Qualified Transportation Benefit program. Employees also receive a 25 percent discount on other transit and vanpool costs. Employees who use an alternative to riding alone also receive “commuter bucks” rewards, earning them free lunches, movie tickets and massages. Yahoo! also provides a $115 monthly vanpool subsidy. The transit subsidy goes towards the pre-tax monthly cap, and employees can use pre-tax deductions to cover any remainder, up to $115 per month. Free shuttles, equipped with Wi-Fi from the San Francisco, Oakland and TriValley areas as well as interoffice shuttle service throughout the workday, are also provided. Carpooling is encouraged through an internal matching program as well as a regional matching program. Carpools and vanpools have access to preferred parking. The company also sponsors periodic events designed to connect employees with local transit agencies.

Results

Currently, about 20-25 percent of Yahoo! employees routinely use alternative transportation to travel to work.
Long before the term mobility manager became fashionable, Ed Frost and Dave Rodrick of Ben Franklin Transit (BFT) in the Tri-Cities area of Washington State were putting that concept into practice. To them, every customer need is one that they will do everything they can to meet. Nowhere is this can-do attitude more prevalent than in the agency’s innovative rural vanpool program.

Ben Franklin Transit’s fixed-route and demand-response service operates throughout largely rural Benton and Franklin Counties—hence the system’s name, Ben Franklin Transit—in south central Washington State, with service stretching into three neighboring counties as well. The main economic corridor in the system’s service area is located along the Columbia River, and is centered around the Tri-Cities area—Kennewick, Pasco, and Richland. The vanpool program almost doubles the agency’s operational area, traveling in two states—Washington and Oregon—eight counties, and 12 cities.

The region’s most notable employment center is the 586-square-mile Department of Energy Hanford site in the north end of the county—a weapons-grade plutonium-producing plant created as part of the Manhattan Project in 1943 that is now an EPA Superfund site. At its peak, the Hanford site employed 20,000 people and produced weapons-grade plutonium; it is now the work destination for 5,000 employees. Other major county employers include the McNary Dam and four other dams along the Columbia River, several agricultural operations and wineries, the Washington State Penitentiary, and the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility just across the border in Oregon.

The Washington State Department of Transportation entered the vanpool arena in the early 1980s, when all states received compensation from lawsuits against the oil companies for overcharging consumers for fuel. The state decided that it would return the money to residents by improving transportation services, particularly in the congested Puget Sound area that was facing air quality and other environmental challenges. In 1982, the state chose to use some of that funding to seed vanpool programs across the state. Seattle’s King County Metro was one of the first transit agencies in the nation to begin a vanpooling operation. The King County program was first funded directly by the county and then expanded with state support into the largest program in Washington, and then the largest publicly operated vanpool program in the United States.

“Initially there was resistance to including vanpools as a full third leg of transit service, in addition to fixed-route and demand-response service. However, I wanted to move the agency beyond offering traditional bus-only operations.
into the business of moving people, with no bias as to the type of mode,” says Frost.

One of the greatest needs for transportation in the Tri Cities area was an economical means of moving hundreds of workers to the major industrial employment sites located within a 150-mile radius of the area. The dispersed nature of the businesses and a lack of DOE permits to many areas on the secured Hanford site ruled out commuter bus service.

“The smaller, flexible, more cost-effective, employee-operated vanpools were exactly the answer the region needed,” says Frost.

In 2003, the Washington State Legislature, recognizing the impact local vanpooling programs were making in their region, approved a 10-year program to assist agencies in expanding their programs. Through this arrangement, the state supports the cost of vans to transit agencies and retains ownership of the vans. The transit agencies then put the vans in operation, recovering costs through fares and federal funding, returning a 25 percent match to the state over a five-year period. The state also gives transit agencies the option to spend the 25 percent match in support of their vanpooling operations – for example, marketing the vanpool service locally or statewide or developing local park-and-ride lots. At the end of the 5-year period, the agencies either own the vehicles outright or do so after paying some residual capital costs.

The state Commute Trip Reduction Board is charged with administering the funds to help transit agencies grow their vanpool programs. Each year the board looks at the size of each agency’s vanpool waiting list, the degree of congestion in the corridors they serve, the needs of workers for supplemental transit services, and other criteria in allocating funds to agencies for purchasing vans, based on a maximum cost of $26,000 per van. If agencies – through the state contract with vendors or through a competitive bid process – can purchase vehicles for less than $26,000, they are allowed to amend their agreement with the state to purchase vehicles beyond the funded-equivalent number of vans.

This state funding can be used to expand fleets only, and is not to replace older vans. From the beginning of the program, the state established the policy that transit agencies should plan to generate enough revenue over the life of a van to fund its replacement. At Ben Franklin Transit, vanpool fares cover some of the capital

South Cental Washington Vanpools

Vanpool Operators

Vanpools being Operated by Transit District

- Ben Franklin Transit
- Yakima County
- Columbia County

Vanpool Routes

- Ben Franklin Transit
- Yakima County
- Columbia County

Vanpool Operators

Vanpools being Operated by Transit District

- No Vanpools
- 2 - 12
- 13 - 54
- 55 - 118
- 119 - 262
- 263 - 937

Vanpool Routes

- Ben Franklin Transit
- Yakima County
- Columbia County

Vanpool Operators

Vanpools being Operated by Transit District

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- 55 - 118
- 119 - 262
- 263 - 937

Vanpool Routes

- Ben Franklin Transit
- Yakima County
- Columbia County
costs, plus insurance and operating costs, but not administrative costs. About one-third of the system’s federal funding pot is used in the vanpool program as well.

**Phenomenal Growth**

By 1985, when Dave Rodrick took over as the Rideshare Supervisor, BFT’s fleet had grown to 32 vehicles, one full-time coordinator, and another staff member contributing several hours of her time daily. The main clients were still the federal government sites: the Hanford facility, the dams, and the state penitentiary.

A Decade later, in 1995, the DOE ceased offering bus service for its employees, who immediately began searching for a new affordable, shared-ride alternative. Using leased vans, Ben Franklin Transit quickly increased its fleet to accommodate the need, and eventually purchased 38 new vans.

The program came across a significant opportunity in 2004 when Bechtel opened a new vitrification plant with several hundred employees. Once again BFT ramped up its program, renting and leasing additional vans to accommodate the need. However, in August 2005, this portion of the vanpooling program hit a bump in the road that shook up the agency’s vanpool operation. Bechtel announced that it would have to significantly reduce staffing at the plant for six months to a year to perform additional seismic studies. At the same time, Bechtel lost engineers who moved to jobs in New Orleans to help redesign that city’s canal system after Hurricane Katrina. This meant that about 45 new vanpool groups no longer needed vans, leaving BFT without users for half of its total vanpool fleet.

Rodrick, far from panicking, came to see a new opportunity in this unforeseen development. He instructed his staff to go out far and wide and speak to the many area employers that were not being served by the vanpool program. And reach out they did—to the state prison, the wineries, the orchards, and many other sites. By the end of 2006, all those 45 vans were back in circulation and, by late 2007, a waiting list for vans had formed among riders who had heard about the program and wanted to participate. A more rural program emerged.

Since that time when Ben Franklin Transit’s vanpool program was fortuitously pushed toward diversification, it has blossomed into the fourth largest vanpool program in the state. In 2007, BFT’s vans traveled 3 million miles and generated $1.2 million in fare box revenue. The precipitous rise in gasoline prices from 2006 to today has made the low cost of the vanpool option stand out even more starkly in comparison to drive-alone costs.

The agency currently has a waitlist of 224— not individuals, but groups— for its vans. To increase its fleet, Rodrick recently instructed his staff to comb the state and other vanpool programs for additional surplus vans that it could lease. The agency located a handful of these vans from a large-urban program, refurbished them, and put them on the road. It is now negotiating the purchase of those vans to permanently add them to its fleet.

Ben Franklin Transit was also able to acquire 102 new vans in September and is in the processing of contacting the thrilled waitlist members, some who have been on the list for seven-to-nine months. These vehicles will be added to the agency’s current stock of 302 vans. The state has allocated an additional eight vans in 2009. Newer vans are given to vanpool groups based on seniority, with the older vehicles being given to the new groups, and the oldest vehicles being auctioned.

**How It Works**

Vanpool drivers’ employment and driving histories are checked at their initial enrollment in the program, and their driving records are rechecked each year. All new drivers must attend a driver’s workshop, which covers defensive driving with hands-on practice, maintenance, accident procedures, and more. Veteran drivers are invited to attend a refresher course every three years. Vanpool drivers and coordinators ride the vans for free; however, in some vans the drivers choose to contribute to the costs as a way of keeping the fares lower for all riders.

Most of the van drivers park the vans at home overnight, whereas others take advantage of the park-and-ride lot across from the system’s headquarters. Personal use of the van by drivers is not permitted. About one-third of the vanpool groups fuel at the system’s on-site fuel depot, and
the others receive gas cards for fuel – drivers are encouraged to use Ben Franklin Transit’s fuel to keep costs down.

Riders are billed monthly for a base cost plus per-mile rate. They are not required to remain in a vanpool for any minimum amount of time, but experience has shown that most who begin with a vanpool are committed to its success given the significant cost and time savings that accrue to them. After participating in the vanpool program for six consecutive months, passengers are qualified to take or save one free week of vacation credit so that they do not lose their spot on the van during personal travel. The system also offers a guaranteed ride home program to all vanpool customers. Vanpools can even request a bicycle rack to be installed on their vans.

Fares cover capital costs, insurance, maintenance, the cost of a guaranteed ride home program, and fuel. Fees are charged as a fixed cost plus per-mile rate that varies by the size of the vehicle and number of days the van operates per year. For example, the rate for a 15-passenger van traveling 100 miles a day is $826.10 a month – or an average of $59.00 per month when divided by 14 passengers.

In an area as rural as many parts of southeast Washington State, commuting by vanpool is often the only cost-efficient mode. The system’s vans travel to destinations as far as Umatilla, Ore. – a 150-mile round trip – and Walla Walla, Wash., a 90-mile round-trip. One 12-passenger van of teachers who travel 140 miles round-trip pay $135.25 for 21 days, the price of gas alone for a single vehicle round trip along this same route would cost $19 or $399 each 21-day month.

Some employers help to subsidize the vanpool costs for their employees. For example, because of the limited parking within its secured site, Bechtel promotes vanpooling by subsidizing all vans for $300 per month, leaving employees to pay approximately $24 per rider each month. About 90 vans travel to Bechtel’s vitrification plant – a specialized facility that converts dangerous waste to glass – and that number is expected to grow in the next two years. McNary Dam was the first area employer to pay the maximum commuter benefit allowed by federal law (currently $115/month) for its vanpooling employees, and the U.S. Army does the same for workers traveling to its Yakima Firing Center.

“Without Good Customer Service, We Would Not Exist”

What makes Ben Franklin Transit unique? An answer to this question must start with the way Frost and Rodrick approach to business.

“Customer service is not a buzz word, it is a truthful passion. It’s easy to sell the vanpooling concept in congested areas. But we’re in the desert. So we’ve got to live and breathe customer service,” says Rodrick. “We’re in the business of integrity. These customers who pay us in advance for their ride expect us to be there. They don’t want to be bothered with the agency’s problems. If we develop a history of poor or no service, then we have lost our integrity, people stop believing in us and our service, and we lose our service. Our goal is to get the people moving as quickly as we can. We sell this self-service product in advance by the month, so it’s got to work.”

And the results are clear: in a recent customer-satisfaction survey on the vanpooling program, customers awarded the program a 98 percent approval rating.

The agency’s staff is innovative in their approach to challenges that arise and attention to individual customers is always expected. When the vanpool program was in its early stages, the staff would even assist in cleaning the vans!

Rodrick and Frost made choices early on to make the vanpool program as responsive to customers as possible. For example, when selecting the vehicle type to replace the original vanpool
vehicle, Rodrick invited the manufacturers to drive their vans to the system’s site and then had passengers view them and choose which they preferred. The vanpool customers made some surprising choices. Rodrick and Frost were sure that cup holders would be an essential feature on the vans, as they envisioned customers drinking morning coffee while they read newspapers and traded news. However, when they pointed out this feature to one of their long-time customers, she looked at them and asked, “What do we need cup holders for? We all sleep!”

Vanpool customers also value the flexibility that the vanpools give them; for example, a group can choose to stop at a donut shop every Friday morning or to all work late at crunch times.

When Frost heard that local seasonal employees, working in the vineyard and orchards were paying $5 each way to travel to-and-from work, he sought and received a grant from the state to subsidize Ben Franklin Transit’s MegaVan holds up to 25 passengers.

In 1995, after the DOE ceased supporting the Hanford site with bus service, four groups of commuters approached the BFT board to ask them to take over the route. Frost and Rodrick developed four scenarios for self-sustaining operations to present to the customers. When it was clear that commuter bus service would be one of the most expensive options, the customers and BFT began looking at vanpooling. However the customers, used to a large bus, did not want to ride in a 12- or 15-passenger van. Frost and Rodrick had heard about the MegaVan and thought it might be the answer, particularly if the capital cost was amortized over 10 years and the users supplied their own CDL-licensed driver. The commuters liked the idea of the MegaVan and showed their commitment by immediately writing checks to cover the first month of operation. Rodrick located a MegaVan that had been used by a New Jersey transit pilot operation and, following board approval, put it on the road in 1996. The service has been successful from day one.

The MegaVan

In response to the high demand for vanpool services, in 1996 BFT experimented by purchasing the MegaVan – a body-on-chassis vehicle that is now the envy of vanpoolers in the region. As a 25-seater, the van is the most roomy and cost-efficient for the riders.

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The MegaVan carries employees of Fluor Hanford and contractors from the Tri-Cities area to the Hanford site each day. Because it provides cost-effective, efficient, comfortable service, turnover in MegaVan passengers is rare; in fact, three of the passengers are original riders. Currently there is a 20-person waitlist to join the van, which is completely full an average of four days a week. On days when there are spots available, the van takes on day riders, who pay $3 each way, at the last local stop in Richland before traveling to the Hanford site. This practice led to another shared-ride opportunity for three daily riders who eventually decided to begin carpooling together.

Pam Doran, a Fluor Hanford employee and a rider who serves as the vanpool coordinator, manages the list of riders, collects payments, and schedules the drivers. She submits a list of riders’ names and payments each month to Ben Franklin Transit with their checks. Pam says she is happy to spend the approximate three hours per month it
takes to administer the service, using her personal
time to do so.

Many other agencies have approached Frost
and Rodrick about their MegaVan component,
but not many have added a similar vehicle to
their fleet. The main challenges to doing so seem
to be the requirement for a CDL-certified driver
– the system requires the MegaVan to have four
identified drivers – which necessitates significant
training and drug and alcohol testing.

The Sit-n-Lift Minivan

Another innovation with the Ben Franklin
Transit’s vanpool program is its Sit-n-Lift minivan
used by the Kadlec Medical Center to transport
employees to work and to move employees and
patients throughout the center’s extensive campus.
This lift-equipped, seven-passenger minivan has
a swing-out seat that can be used to transfer non-
ambulatory patients between buildings but can
also serve as a regular seat. The van is driven
by hospital employees, who are trained by the
transit system as drivers and by Kadlec to provide
medical services.

The van also promotes shared ride modes
among medical center employees, as it provides an
alternative means for employees traveling around
campus, thus eliminating the need for them to
drive their own vehicle to work. Finally, the van
functions as a vanpool to-and-from work, with
commuters’ fares covering the capital cost of the
van as well as insurance and maintenance costs;
Kadlec pays for the all operating costs. The van
has 18,000 boardings per year.

Finding Partners

In 2001, Ben Franklin Transit expected a sig-
nificant decrease in its state funding when voters
chose to reduce license plate fees, thus cutting
transit investment by one-third. Frost and Rodrick
saw this loss of funding as a threat to the level of
service they could provide to not only fixed-route
customers but also to people with disabilities.
Working closely with The ARC of the Tri-Cities
and the three major destinations for people with
disabilities—Goodwill, Columbia Industries, and
Adult Day Services – the transit system was able
to develop a hybrid vanpool-lease program oper-
ated by The ARC to fill the gap. To facilitate the
arrangement, Frost was able to broker a deal with
BFT’s bus drivers’ union by demonstrating to the
union that the deal would not cost the drivers any
jobs and giving the union the right to come back
and reclaim control over the service if it chose to
do so in the future.

Under the arrangement, the ARC leases and
operates vans from Ben Franklin Transit and
serves as a paratransit contractor. The ARC leases
two high-top lift vans and 18 cutaway lift vans
and pays insurance and a per-mile cost on them;
BFT continues to provide the maintenance. The
ARC then charges the system a set per-boarding
cost. With the service, Ben Franklin Transit is able
to save about $800,000 in projected paratransit
operational costs, savings that are used to expand
its ADA-complementary paratransit service.

All told, these vehicles transport more than 300
people on a regular basis. Supplemental vehicles
needed to accommodate the ARC’s Partners and
Pals summer camp for adults with disabilities are
taken from the system’s fleet, the need for which
is slightly reduced over the summer months.
Drivers are employees of The ARC, trained by
BFT and CDL licensed. The best part of the deal
is that drivers, some who are also counselors, are
truly caregivers who exhibit a passion for their
customers.

Overcoming Challenges

The largest challenge faced by Ben Franklin
Transit, and indeed, statewide, is the limited
number of vans available.

Economic conditions in 2008 have made it
difficult for the state to appropriate enough funds
to keep up with demand. As a result, it will be
able to meet only about one-third of the statewide
demand for additional vans.

The stock of American-produced vans is also
diminishing, which presents severe difficulties
to vanpool operators in a time of significantly
increasing demand. To cope with high gasoline
prices and air quality problems, programs are also
investigating vehicle options that are dually fueled
by gas/electric or hydrogen-based fuel cells.

Rodrick recognizes that a successful vanpooling
program needs a champion within the sponsoring
agency. He is quick to point out that the
vanpool program could never have attained the
success it has without the help of Vanpool Fleet Coordinators Kitte Bassett, Vicky Pacheco, and Terry DeJuan. These three assistants are empowered to make decisions—such as terminating drivers or opening new vanpool groups—in an operation where safety is a huge concern. They also provide the mandatory training for all drivers.

One of Ben Franklin Transit’s greatest assets is the relationship-building approach Rodrick and Frost bring to every aspect of the programs. For example, they have cultivated a supportive relationship with the unions and system management.

“It takes a lot of work at the ground level to create relationships in-house to make things happen on the street,” says Rodrick.

Frost echoes this emphasis on building partnerships, this time with regard to relationships with the local human service agencies.

“As transit providers, we should try to look at the services we provide through the eyes of the agencies who need the transportation. Spending time with those agencies gives us the opportunity to understand how they are seeing things and what challenges their service populations face, and also gives us a forum to explain our own challenges,” says Frost. “Human service agencies can be a transit operation’s strongest ally. These partnerships can be best built when we see these agencies as fellow community members who have a mission to fulfill for the citizens of the community.”

Relationships are equally important with customers. Rodrick recommends that even for programs that have grown as rapidly as Ben Franklin Transit’s, that staff maintain a customer service attitude. Frost also encourages transit agencies to put the customer’s needs first and have no bias as to the mode through which they deliver services.

“Our job is to give the customer options, whether that means safe walking or biking paths, carpools or vanpools, bus service or contract service,” says Frost.

Yet, the Ben Franklin Transit program does not hesitate to embrace change either. In fact, at a recent meeting of vanpooling operators, Rodrick was the first to encourage his colleagues to use new technologies to improve their operations.

This article originally appeared in Community Transportation Magazine in Summer, 2008 and is reprinted here with permission.
Intercity Transit’s Vanpool Program: Accessibility is Key

While accessible features make it possible for many people with limited mobility to use regular vans, incorporating a passenger using a wheelchair can reduce the number of riders in the vanpool, thus increasing costs for each participant. To address that issue, Carolyn Newsome, Vanpool Supervisor for Intercity Transit, provides vanpools that include riders using wheelchairs with larger vans. The increased size allows for more riders, making up for the seat(s) lost to accommodate a wheelchair. Newsome also arranges to have designated individuals available at pick-up and drop-off points to assist with securing the passenger in their seat and helping them exit the vehicle. Experience has shown that once other passengers become familiar and comfortable with the process, they willingly take on those activities. Newsome’s efforts have been so successful that she now serves as a resource on how to effectively address accessibility in vanpools. Under her stewardship, the program has grown from 17 to 200 vanpools, providing 682,000 passenger trips in 2009.

Intercity’s vanpool services address accessibility not only by responding to the needs of riders with disabilities, but from the perspective of providing vanpool access to the entire community. In addition to traditional vanpool service, the agency supports two other programs, Connectivity Vans and Village Vans. These programs provide access to employment and community services for populations that may otherwise lack affordable transportation options.

Carolyn and her staff routinely attend various business and community sponsored activities to promote vanpooling. Staff make a concerted effort to market the vanpools as accessible and work with customers to provide accessible vehicles if needed. Vanpools are marketed so as not to compete with other transit services offered by the agency. Emphasis is placed on the “green” benefits of vanpools and their relevance to the community regardless of the current economic situation. For example, during boom times, interest in starting new vanpools was so great that the agency was unable to meet the demand and referred customers to programs operated by neighboring transit agencies. When budget constraints necessitated cutting bus service in some rural communities subsidized van trips replaced these cuts. Van trips starting and stopping within the county received a 50 percent subsidy, supported with local transit agency funds. Support for the vanpools was so strong that even when the subsidy was no longer available, ridership levels were maintained.

Fare box recovery funds support all direct operating costs associated with the vanpool program. Additional support from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) in the form of a 25 percent match pays for the cost of each van within five years. If needed, new vanpools are also supported with a 3/2/1 seat subsidy provided by Intercity. During the first month of operation, up to three empty seats of an eight-passenger van are subsidized. Two empty seats are subsidized during the second month and one during the third month of operation. Currently, 10 percent of the vanpools in operation are subsidized by employers, with...
two percent receiving a full employer subsidy.

Newsome’s efforts to incorporate an accessibility component into the vanpool program grew from a question raised during a national vanpool conference. At question was the impact of providing wheelchair access on the cost of operating an affordable vanpool. While accessible features make it possible for many people with limited mobility to use regular vans, incorporating a passenger using a wheelchair can reduce the number of riders in the vanpool, thus increasing costs for each participant. To address that issue, Carolyn provides vanpools that include riders using wheelchairs with larger vans. The increased size allows for more riders, making up for the seat(s) lost to accommodate a wheelchair. Newsome also arranges to have designated individuals available at pick-up and drop-off points to assist with securing the passenger in their seat and helping them exit the vehicle. Experience has shown that once other passengers become familiar and comfortable with the process, they willingly take on those activities. Newsome’s efforts have been so successful that she now serves as a resource on how to effectively address accessibility in vanpools.

In addition to traditional vanpools, Intercity operates the Community Van program, providing retired vans to human services organizations and government agencies located in the transit service area for their use to transport workers, volunteers and customers. Organizations are required to sign a contract, also recruiting volunteer drivers. Intercity approves trains and certifies the drivers free-of-charge, and maintains and insures the vehicles. Agencies call in advance to reserve a vehicle and pay a fee of $.68 per mile for each trip. Trips must originate within Intercity’s service area and cannot travel in excess of 150 miles of that area.

Intercity Transit also operates a grant program, offering surplus vans to nonprofit groups in their service area. Organizations/agencies completing an application process are granted vans. The grantees must report to the transit agency for one year and then the vehicle belongs to the group. Groups must provide proof they have the ability to pay for the operation of the van and provide insurance.

Another program, Village Vans, assists low income citizens with transportation to jobs or job search locations. Village Vans is supported with funding from the Job Access Reverse Commute program and includes accessible vehicles. Participation is open to any low-income resident actively looking for work or beginning a new job. The vans transport qualified customers to local destinations to attend education and training, pick up job applications, go to interviews or begin new jobs. Trips to child care, and clothing and food banks may also be included. Drivers are recruited from several employment support programs, such as WorkFirst and the Senior Community Service Employment Program at Goodwill of Tacoma. Drivers receive training, work experience and job search coaching. To date, more than 90 percent have found employment while in the program. Currently, Intercity Transit has hired six drivers from the program to drive buses for their own operation. The program recently celebrated its eighth anniversary, having provided more than 42,000 trips and placed 73 individuals. In 2009, Village Vans provided 6,373 trips, a 40 percent increase over the previous year. Village Van Supervisor Ann Bridges manages the Village Van program for Intercity Transit.

Since 2006, vanpool ridership increased by nearly 80 percent. In 2009, Intercity was named the best transit system in the nation in its size category by the American Public Transportation Association.

For additional information, visit http://www.intercitytransit.com, or contact Carolyn Newsome at 360-705-5829.

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