Guaranteed Ride Home Program
Annual Evaluation and Recommendations

Presentation to Planning, Policy and Legislation Committee
June 11, 2012

Guaranteed Ride Home Program (GRH)
Information

- Initiated in 1998 to encourage people working in Alameda County to reduce vehicle trips and travel to work using alternative modes
- Reduces traffic congestion and air emissions
- Employees registered in program:
  - agree to travel to work by alternative modes, such as carpool, vanpool, bus, train, bike, walk, and
  - are eligible for a free ride home for emergencies or unscheduled overtime (maximum 6 rides per employee per year)
GRH Program Funding

- Funded solely by TFCA
- Current funding approved by TFCA and Alameda CTC through November 2013
- Next TFCA funding cycle 2013-2015

GRH Program Helps Alameda CTC Meet Legislative Requirements

- Congestion Management Program (CMP) Transportation Demand Management requirements and
- SB 375 and AB 32 greenhouse gas emissions reductions
GRH Program Goals Reached in 2011

- Based on 4,784 Alameda County employees and 250 employers enrolled, the GRH Program:
  - Reduced 405,496 one-way car trips*
  - Saved 11.7 million miles of driving
  - Saved 348,372 gallons of gas from being burned
  - Reduced 3,300 tons of CO₂ from being emitted into the air

* Number of reduced trips based on calculations submitted annually per TFCA requirements.

GRH in 2011

- Highest total and new enrollment in 14 years
  - 4,784 employees, including 736 new employees in 2011
- Lowest number of rides per year – 55
- Program cost reduced by 12% annually in 2012 due to cost efficiencies such as online registration and use of rental cars for rides
Alameda CTC Concerns about GRH Program

1. Administrative costs comprise too large a portion of the program budget
2. Employers or employees should pay a fee to use the Program
3. Demonstrate that the program is being used appropriately
4. Continue to increase registration in South and Central County

1. Administrative Costs

- GRH program funding is focused on encouraging changes in travel behavior
- GRH funding is used to:
  - Serve existing membership – 20%
  - Encourage and educate new members – 35%
  - Monitor program use and effectiveness – 30%
  - Reimburse direct costs, including providing rides as an alternative travel incentive – 15%
2. Employer or Employee Fees

Employer Fee Option

• 250 employers, with varying number of employees, each with a voluntary liaison
• Employer attrition is expected with a fee, based on results of annual surveys
• Over 14 years, 92% of employees never take a ride
• GRH is not part of a comprehensive TDM Program (like San Francisco & San Mateo who have fees)
• Program is not required by an ordinance (like San Francisco)

Employee Fee Option

• New member fee option
  – Estimated to generate $4,000 and cost $4,000 in annual administrative fees – zero net revenue
• New ride voucher fee for new enrollees and those who have used a ride voucher option
  – Estimated to generate $4,750, annual cost $5,940 – $1,190 net loss
• Expected attrition in enrollment based on annual surveys = 30%
3. Appropriate Use of Program

- 4,784 employees are registered in GRH Program
- Each is eligible to take up to 6 rides/year
- 55 rides were taken – less than 1% of eligible rides
  - 9 employees took 2 rides, the remainder took 1 ride
- All rides were documented emergency rides or unplanned overtime, as eligible in the Program

4. Target Outreach to Central and South County

- GRH Program is marketed throughout Alameda County
- Majority of registered employers are in North, then East County
- Targeted program marketing in South and Central County marketing resulted in:
  - 33% increase in employers in Central County
  - 16% increase in employers in South County
ACTAC Comments

- More employees should know about program & how it works – need more outreach for existing and new employees
- Balance keeping costs down while increasing outreach
- Re-think new ways to promote program
- Should be major part of TDM Plan
- Before considering joining another county program, analyze costs and benefits
- Consider allowing all employees in registered company to be automatically enrolled

Recommendations

For current TFCA-funded GRH Program through November 2013:

- Operate the program with cost efficiencies, such as updating website to include links to alternative travel modes, initiating online ride vouchers, using social media;
- Educate and encourage use of the GRH program throughout the County, with extra focus on South and Central County; and
- Monitor and evaluate effectiveness of program and appropriate usage.
Recommendations

- Amend contract to extend date and allow use of additional, approved funds for program to operate smoothly while issuing an RFP
- Issue an RFP for November 2012-November 2013 with approved TFCA funds
- Authorize Executive Director to negotiate and execute professional services agreement with selected consultant

Recommendations

Prior to submitting an application for 2013-2015 TFCA funding, recommend one or more next steps to Board:

- Continue the GRH program with cost efficiencies;
- Include the GRH program in a countywide Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program coordinated with recommendations in upcoming TDM Plan (expected to be completed 2014);
- Consolidate into a regional program or multi-county program, or
- Phase out the program.