



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Public Works
Department No.: 054
For Agenda Of: 10/23/07
Placement: Departmental
Estimated Tme: 60 Min Total,
(Staff 20 Minutes)
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Scott D. McGolpin, Director of Public Works, 568-3010
Director(s)
Contact Info: Dace Morgan, Interim Deputy Director Public Works, 568-3064

SUBJECT: **Receive An Update Regarding Progress on the Agricultural Worker
Transportation Program, Adopt a Resolution to Purchase Vans from Kings
County and Approve a Grant Application for Service Implementation Funds;
Fourth and Fifth Supervisorial Districts.**

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence.

As to form: N/A

Other Concurrence: Risk Management

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive an update from Public Works staff regarding the County's Agricultural Worker Transportation Program (AWTP);
2. That the Board of Supervisors authorize the County Purchasing Manager, without requiring a Formal Bid Process, to procure nine (9) GMC fifteen (15) passenger vans from Kings County for a total amount of \$85,530 for the County's AWTP, Fourth and Fifth Supervisorial Districts;
3. Upon approval of Recommendation 2, approve the attached budget revision #20070026 (Attachment 1), for the purchase of the nine (9) GMC fifteen (15) passenger vans; and
4. That the Board of Supervisors approve a Resolution (Attachment 2) regarding the submittal of an application for service implementation funds for the County's AWTP from Caltrans.

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Summary Text:

On July 10, 2007 the Board of Supervisors approved a resolution to receive funding from the Caltrans Agricultural Worker Transportation Program (AWTP) in the sum of \$70,000. The Board also approved a contract for vanpool services with the Santa Maria Organization of Transportation Helpers (SMOOTH). Since that action, work has begun in the Santa Maria Valley to publicize the start of the program and to work with farmworkers and the agricultural industry to educate people about the benefits of the program. Attachment 3 contains a letter of support from the Farm Bureau (9/27/07) and Attachment 4 contains a copy of the program brochure distributed to farmworkers interested in being drivers or passengers.

At the time your Board took action on these items, there was a request for additional information regarding how the program was structured and when this pilot program would sunset. The purpose of the hearing before the Board of Supervisors on October 23, 2007 is to respond to this request for additional information (Please see Attachment 5-- Frequently Asked Questions for more information about the AWTP) and request approval for the purchase of vans from Kings County to implement Santa Barbara County's AWTP. Kings County has pioneered this program and helped lead the effort to lobby the State to provide \$20 million in start-up funding for State-wide pilot programs. Santa Barbara County received \$70,000 from the State in February of 2007. At the hearing of Oct. 23, 2007 the Board will be asked to consider approving a request for service implementation funding from the same Caltrans grant program that provided the County with this initial \$70,000 in start-up funding.

Background:

In response to a series of traffic accidents in the Central Valley involving farmworkers traveling in unsafe vehicles, often without a licensed or insured driver, Kings County embarked on a pilot program to lease 15 passenger vans to farmworkers for work-related transportation. The program has been evolving for the last 5 years and received an award in 2004 from the California State Association of Counties (CSAC). Below is a brief project description from this CSAC award:

“Bureaucratic red tape, hard-to-get insurance coverage for drivers and thorny federal labor laws have made it a challenge for farm workers to find transportation to and from work in Kings County and the Central San Joaquin Valley region. The County is home to one of the largest agricultural workforces in the nation that supports many enterprises, ranging from fieldwork to packinghouses, and safe transportation to and from jobs is an ongoing issue, especially since a collision involving a vehicle killed 13 farm workers in 1999. Utilizing a Federal Job Access Reverse Commute grant, the County developed a vanpool pilot project in Kings and Tulare Counties to counter the problem. Drivers who completed a physical, drug test and had a 10-year driving history were licensed to provide transportation to workers. The Counties also purchased 15 passenger vans with GPS tracking to kick-off the program. Today, more than 80 vans transport 600 farm workers daily, operated by drivers with the means to get themselves and others to work without violating existing laws. Fresno County recently joined the program as well.”

The program now operates over 100 vans and received approximately \$5.0 million in Caltrans AWTP funds to expand their efforts. Staff met with Kings County to review their operation and receive guidance on how to replicate their efforts in Santa Barbara County. In addition, Kings County has offered to assist the County in procuring vans and providing administrative oversight of our efforts.

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SUMMARY OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS:

The following information summarizes the major program elements and includes items such as program protocols, driver screening and prevention of program abuse. The County's program uses many aspects developed in the Kings County effort. This has served to reduce redundancy of effort and has allowed the County to advance its own program based on experience gained in Kings County.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The State's AWTP will expire on June 30, 2010. Six months prior to that event (January 1, 2010), Caltrans will report to the State Legislature on the program's success or failure. In creating the program, the State signaled that if the pilot effort produces safe, reliable, cost-efficient transportation, there may be opportunities for additional funding from the State's budget in the future.

However, the County is under no obligation to continue efforts past June 30, 2010 with any local funds at its discretion, nor is it obligated to request funding from other grant sources which may be in existence at that time. Staff will return to the Board in advance of this sunset date to consider options regarding the program which could include: program termination, selling or other reuse options for the vehicle fleet, increasing passenger fares to cover all operating costs, or other identified options.

With your Board's authorization to purchase vans, the County will pay \$85,530 to Kings County to receive a total of 9 GMC 15 passenger vans to begin Phase I of vehicle procurement. One van would act as a spare in the event of a breakdown, and 8 vans would provide daily transportation for agricultural workers. The vans are outfitted with steel rings to accommodate transport of water jugs and contain an interior steel tool chest to allow the safe transport of sharp metal objects.

As noted in the application for funding from Caltrans approved by your Board on February 6, 2007, the pilot program has a goal of recovering approximately 50% of the program's cost through participant fares by the end of the pilot phase of the State's program. As additional vans are added to the County's program, a greater percentage of the total program costs may be recovered from participant fares due to fixed costs being spread out over a greater number of vans generating income. Monitoring this performance measure will be an important source of information for the County and Caltrans to evaluate the program. Tied closely to this performance measure is the requirement that each van maintain a minimum of approximately 8 passengers for the 15 available seats. Operating vanpools will be asked to return the vans if they are unable to maintain at least 8 passengers on each trip. If ridership within each van continually falls below this number, it will be more difficult to achieve the goal of recovering 50% of the program's cost through participant fares.

The program will utilize the following fare schedule based on the distance traveled each day. For daily mileages above 50/day, the fare will increase approximately \$1.00 to \$2.00 for each additional 10 miles traveled.

Miles/Day	Passenger Fare
15	\$3.00
30	\$4.00
40	\$5.00
50	\$6.00

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Consistent with the procedure in Kings County, each week cash fares are mailed to SMOOTH's administration office by the volunteer driver of the vanpool. The driver does not pay a daily fare but is responsible for maintaining the minimum number of passengers within a vanpool, and coordinating van operation and maintenance activities with SMOOTH staff. Drivers cannot be paid for their services and cannot profit from the operation of the vanpool. The AWTP functions similarly to a carpool or vanpool that County employees might utilize. The driver of a vanpool will coordinate with the vanpool's passengers on how and where passengers are picked up and dropped off each day. The program has a built-in incentive that encourages a central meeting place for convenient and efficient daily passenger pick-ups and drop-offs. A van traveling greater distances will charge a higher daily fare per passenger. Vans which structure the shortest possible travel distance to and from work will enjoy a lower daily fare per passenger.

PREVENTION OF FRAUD AND ABUSE

Passenger fares are collected on a daily basis for a 5 day weekly rate. If the passenger works an additional day on Saturday or Sunday, the ride they take on that extra day requires no additional fare from that passenger. Once a month, a random inspection of the van by SMOOTH staff is conducted to verify the approximate number of participants who are actually riding in the van. This prevents fare fraud where a driver is collecting more money than is being mailed in. Driver and passengers are surveyed separately to ensure all protocols are followed properly and a sticker describing program fares is displayed in the van.

Improper use of a van is prevented by a Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) tracking system installed in each van. Monitored from a computer located in SMOOTH's administration office, staff can monitor the exact speed and location of the van at all times. Vans will be immediately recalled from a driver observed to be traveling at excessive speeds, driving in inappropriate locations or inappropriate times, abusing the fare collection system, or violating other program protocols or local laws. Van usage is also monitored by data received through the mandatory use of fuel cards by the volunteer drivers. Vans will be assigned a number that is clearly displayed along with the program's logo and SMOOTH's phone number. Witnesses to improper van usage will be able to call SMOOTH's office to report incidents.

Vans are to be used in the transportation of driver and passengers to and from work. The ONLY exception would be to take an injured farm worker from the fields to a medical facility for treatment. Vans may not be used for evening errands or on the weekend for non-work purposes. Every 6,000 miles, vans are serviced through a local service shop in the Santa Maria area overseen by SMOOTH staff.

DRIVER SCREENING

Protocols for driver eligibility are duplicated from the Kings County program. Their program has operated for approximately 5 years and has not had a single injury accident in the history of their program. By utilizing their protocols and their insurer, Scottsdale Insurance, the County can receive as competitive rate as possible for insuring this program. Risk Management is in concurrence with this strategy.

For a driver to be eligible to operate a vanpool van, they must receive and pass a physical exam based on the requirements established by the State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for a Class C California Driver's License. SMOOTH staff would request the driving record for the prior 10 years from the DMV. Existing violations such as wreckless driving or driving under the influence would eliminate the

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driver's eligibility from the program. Finally, the driver must take and pass the driver exam for Class C license.

INSURANCE PROVISIONS

Program insurance is being developed in partnership with County staff from Public Works and Risk Management, the County's insurance broker Alliant Insurance Services, and SMOOTH. This group is evaluating policy options that would provide the County with liability coverage of approximately \$2 million. The insurance provider, Scottsdale Insurance Company, is the same provider utilized by Kings County. They are familiar with the unique aspects of this program and the safeguards used to limit risk associated with driver screening and training, choice of rolling stock and maintenance schedules. County Risk Management has concurred with the strategy of using a third party insurance provider to limit County exposure to risk and liability associated with this effort. The application for insurance has been submitted to the insurance underwriter and we anticipate a premium quote from the insurance carrier soon. We will present the cost of insurance at the Oct. 23, 2007 Board hearing.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Fiscal Analysis:

<u>Funding Sources</u>	<u>Current FY Cost:</u>	<u>Annualized On-going Cost:</u>	<u>Total One-Time Project Cost</u>
TDA-- County Retained Earnings	\$55,040		\$55,040
TDA-- City of Santa Maria	\$30,490		\$30,490
State			
Federal			
Fees			
Total	\$85,530		\$85,530

Narrative:

With Board approval of recommended action Number 2, \$85,530.00 will be used to procure nine (9) GMC fifteen (15) passenger vans from Kings County. This amount is budgeted in Fund 1935/Accounts 9600 Retained Earnings.

Staffing Impacts:

None

Legal Positions:

FTEs:

Special Instructions:

Please provide for pick up to the attention of Kathleen Dowd, Public Works Traffic Section, the following documents:

1. a certified stamped minute order approving these actions; and
2. a copy of the executed Resolution.

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Attachments: Attachment 1-- Budget Revision #20070026
Attachment 2-- Resolution Approving Submittal of Application for AWTP Funds
Attachment 3-- Letter of Support from Farm Bureau
Attachment 4-- Program Brochure
Attachment 5-- Frequently Asked Questions

Authored by: Matt Dobberteen, Alternative Transportation Manager, 568-3576
Charlie W. Ebeling, Traffic Section Manager, 568-3232

c: Ray Aromatorio, County Risk Management
Jim Talbott, Executive Director, SMOOTH

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ATTACHMENT 2

**IN THE MATTER OF APPROVING AND)
AUTHORIZING THE SUBMITTAL OF A)
GRANT APPLICATION TO CALTRANS) RESOLUTION NO. _____
FOR FUNDING OF A GRANT FROM THE)
AGRICULTURAL WORKERS)
TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (AWTP))**

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 1135 established the AWTP on January 1, 2007; and

WHEREAS, AWTP has received a one-time appropriation of \$20 million from the Public Transportation Account available for 3 years; and

WHEREAS, the intent of the AWTP is to provide safe, efficient, reliable and affordable transportation services to agricultural workers commuting to and from worksites in rural areas in the state; and

WHEREAS, planning and service implementation projects are eligible to receive grant funding; and

WHEREAS, Caltrans is responsible for the administration of the program, and setting up necessary procedures governing application by local governments and their subdivisions under the program; and

WHEREAS, said procedures established by Caltrans require the applicant to authorize, by resolution, submittal of the application and acceptance of any resulting grant award before submission of said application.

NOW, THEREFORE the Board of Supervisors does resolve as follows:

1. Authorizes and directs staff to submit an application for grant funds to Caltrans for the AWTP.
2. The Public Works Director or his designee is hereby authorized and empowered to execute in the name of the County of Santa Barbara all the necessary applications, contracts, agreements, amendments, and payment requests hereto for the purposes of securing grant funds and to implement and carry out the purposes specified in the grant application.

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA
PAGE TWO

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County Santa, State of California, on this _____ day of _____, 2007 by the following vote:

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

ATTEST:
MICHAEL F. BROWN
CLERK OF THE BOARD

ACCEPTED AND AGREED:
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

By: _____
Deputy

By: _____
Chair, Board of Supervisors

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
STEPHEN SHANE STARK,
COUNTY COUNSEL

APPROVED AS TO ACCOUNTING
FORM:
ROBERT W. GEIS,
AUDITOR CONTROLLER

By: _____
Deputy County Counsel

By: _____

kd



Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau

Affiliated with the California Farm Bureau Federation and the American Farm Bureau Federation

September 27, 2007

Matt Dobberteen,
Alternative Transportation Manager
Department of Public Works Transportation Division
123 E. Anapamu Street, 2nd Floor
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Dear Mr. Dobberteen,

On September 11, 2007, the Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau met with Jim Talbott, Executive Director of Smooth Inc. and Rosemary Luque, Vanpool Project Manager regarding the Ag Van Program. During our meeting Mr. Talbott explained in detail the advantages the program would provide the agricultural population and the growers in our communities. In view that the program would reduce traffic accidents, unlicensed drivers traveling on the highways, help the environment by reducing emissions and provide safe and reliable transportation to farm workers, the Farm Bureau offers its support.

In addition, this alternative method of transporting farm workers to their worksites benefits growers by reducing absence and increases productivity. This program supports growers, farm workers and communities collectively.

Taking into consideration the positive effects the program will have in our county, The Farm Bureau recommends the implementation of the Agricultural Vanpool.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas N. Gibbons'.

Thomas N. Gibbons
President

Trabajando Juntos...

General Information

Vanpool programs are helping to decrease traffic congestion. The Vanpool program provides safe, reliable, and lower cost transportation utilizing alternatives to work-sites throughout the Central Coast.

How Do You Benefit?

Safety

Each Vanpool driver is licensed and insured. All vans are serviced monthly. All vehicles are equipped with Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and first aid kits.

Reliability

Vanpool riders set the schedule. Employers know a vanpool program results in decreased absence resulting in an overall increase in productivity and profitability.

Lower Costs

Vanpool riders share the cost of the ride to work. Weekly fees cover the cost of the van use, fuel, maintenance and insurance. Volunteer vanpool drivers are exempt from the weekly fee.

Información General

El programa de Vanpool se ha establecido para ofrecer un transporte seguro, confiable y más económico, utilizando vans para viajes compartidos hacia lugares de trabajos agrícolas.

¿En Que se Beneficia Usted?

Seguridad

Cada conductor de Vanpool tiene licencia y está asegurado. Todos los vans reciben mantenimiento mensual. Todos los vehículos están equipados con el sistema de posición geográfico (GPS) y cajas de primeros auxilios.

Confiable

Las pasajeros del Vanpool ponen el horario. El programa disminuye la ausencia del trabajador y aumenta la productividad y capacidad en la ganancia general.

Económico

Las pasajeros del Vanpool comparten el costo modesto del viaje cada semana. El costo cubre el uso del van, el combustible, mantenimiento y seguro. Al ofrecer su tiempo de manera voluntaria, los conductores están exonerados del pago semanal.

Registration (Inscripción)

Registration is free and easy. To sign up, start by filling out the application included in this brochure. Please mail to: 509 West Morrison Avenue, Suite A Santa Maria, California 93458 or you may fax your application to: (805) 928-3846

In order to qualify as a driver, you must have a Class C Driver License and a clean driving record. A physical is also required of all drivers. Vehicles are insured through the Vanpool program. Training and physicals are provided by the company free of charge.

La inscripción es fácil y gratis. Empiece sencillamente con completar la solicitud incluida en este folleto. Mande su solicitud a: 509 West Morrison Avenue, Suite A Santa Maria, California 93458 o mande por fax a: (805) 928-3846

Para calificar como chofer, usted debe tener una licencia de conducir Clase C y un record limpio. Un examen físico es necesario. Los camiones estan asegurados con la compañía. Entrenamiento y físicos son gratis.

Application (Aplicación)

Please provide us with some information about yourself so that you may become registered for a Vanpool. (Por favor provéamos alguna información sobre usted indicando su interés en el vanpool.)

Last Name (Apellido)

First Name (Nombre)

Street Address (Dirección de la calle)

City (Ciudad)

Zip Code (Código Postal)

Phone Number (Número de teléfono)

Miles traveled one way (Millas de ida)

Please circle how you would like to participate:

Por favor ponga un círculo como usted quisiera participar:

Passenger
Pasajero

Driver
Chofer

Both
Ambos

Please list the names and phone numbers of others who may be interested in participating:

Por favor escriba otros nombres y números de teléfono de personas que estarían interesadas en participar:

Last Name (Apellido)

First Name (Nombre)

Phone Number (Número de teléfono)

Last Name (Apellido)

First Name (Nombre)

Phone Number (Número de teléfono)



509 West Morrison Avenue, Suite A
Santa Maria, California 93458

Phone: (805) 922-8476

Fax: (805) 928-3846

E-mail: smoothinclr@hotmail.com

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Santa Barbara County Agricultural Worker Transportation Program

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

October 23, 2007

1. What sort of outreach has been done to identify passengers and drivers for the vans? There has been a concentrated effort to create awareness in the community regarding the program. Several advertising and marketing efforts have proven to be highly effective. We have involved the community by holding local meetings at various halls where farm workers reside. The media, Radio Ranchito and La Preciosa, has provided air time and daily announcements informing the general public about the benefits of participating. Various churches have offered their support by allowing fliers to be handed out after their services. They have also added information in their newsletters and provided contact names and numbers with a brief description outlining the benefits for passengers and drivers. Local businesses in Santa Maria continually distribute fliers, and the Hispanic Chamber along with the local business owners have offered their support. On September 16, 2007 a traditional celebration was held in Santa Maria where hundreds of farm workers attended, over 700 fliers were distributed. Many commented they had heard the radio announcement and had a general understanding of the program.
2. Has anyone signed up? Until the vans actually arrive, there is little incentive to formally create lists of passengers. However, farmworkers are enthusiastic about wanting to use the vans and the need for safe, reliable and affordable transportation.
3. Do you have drivers? Currently, we have secured nine prospective drivers through our advertising efforts. These drivers currently have valid driver licenses and are insurable. Prospective drivers are aware of additional driver training that will be conducted to ensure safety and reduce risk.
4. How much will you charge passengers? The program will utilize the following fare schedule based on the distance traveled each day. For daily mileages above 50/day, the fare will increase approximately \$1.00 to \$2.00 for each additional 10 miles traveled.

Miles/Day	Passenger Fare
15	\$3.00
30	\$4.00
40	\$5.00
50	\$6.00

5. How much will you pay drivers of the vans? The drivers will NOT be paid. The drivers will be volunteers and will ride for free in exchange for

organizing the vanpool and interacting as the point of contact with SMOOTH's (Santa Maria of Organization of Transportation Helpers) office. This is a key reason why the program does NOT fall under regulations pertaining to Farm Labor Transportation. The program instead is treated as a simple vanpool and not a commercial operation with a paid driver.

6. How will the farmworkers be picked up? The program functions similarly to a carpool or vanpool that County employees might utilize. The driver of a vanpool will coordinate with the vanpool's passengers on how and where passengers are picked up and dropped off each day. The program has a built-in incentive that encourages a central meeting place for convenient and efficient daily passenger pick-ups and drop-offs. A van traveling greater distances will charge a higher daily fare per passenger. Vans which structure the shortest possible travel distance to and from work will enjoy a lower daily fare per passenger.
7. Won't the growers in the Santa Maria Valley incur increased liability or other costs due to this program? Local growers in no way will incur increased liability or other costs due to this program. Growers are not being asked to fund this program. Growers are not being asked to pay drivers of vans. Growers will benefit due to the fact that farmworkers using the vans will arrive in transportation that is driven by a licensed driver, in an insured vehicle that is reliable, safe and maintained according all specified maintenance schedules dictated by the manufacturer; GMC.
8. What is the anticipated fare box recovery ratio for this program? The program has been structured so that within 3 years, the goal will be to recover approximately 50% of the operational costs through passenger fares. For comparison, the BREEZE Inter-Regional bus service currently operates with a fare box recovery approaching 20%, and the City of Santa Maria's urban transit service (Santa Maria Area Transit—SMAT) operates with a fare box recovery ratio of approximately 21%.
9. A very similar program appears to operate successfully in Kings County. Why does the County think it will work here in Santa Barbara County?
 - Geographically speaking, S.B. County is a more compact region than the Central Valley. The program will be easier and more efficient to manage.
 - Shorter travel distances reduce overhead costs associated with activities such as community outreach and van inspections.
 - Vans do not require remote servicing and can be worked on in a shop centrally located in the City of Santa Maria.
 - As fuel prices increase, gas will be less of a factor in escalating overall program costs.