



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:** Human Resources  
**Department No.:** 064  
**For Agenda Of:** September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
**Placement:** Departmental  
**Estimated Time:** 30 Minutes  
**Continued Item:** Yes  
**If Yes, date from:** May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
**Vote Required:** 3/5

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Department Maria Elena De Guevara, Human Resources Director  
Director  
Contact Info: 805-568-2817  
**SUBJECT:** County Clean Commute Program

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

NA

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

Yes

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Direct the County Human Resources Director to implement the Clean Commute Program as described.
- b) Approve Budget Revision Request 0006622 to transfer appropriations of \$31,100 from General County Programs General Fund to Human Resources General Fund for Salaries and Employee Benefits (\$28,100) and Services and Supplies (\$3,000) to implement the Clean Commute Program as adopted in the Board adjustments to the FY 2019-20 Budget to expand employee efforts to reduce Greenhouse Gasses (GHGs).
- c) Determine that the recommended actions do not constitute a project and are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(4), finding that the actions are the creation of a governmental funding mechanism or other governmental fiscal activity, which do not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment.

**Summary Text:**

On May 14, 2019 the County Sustainability Division presented options with potential to reduce roadway congestion, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and other air pollutants by incentivizing the County workforce with clean commuter benefits. The recommendation offered was to have the Human Resources Department along with other required County Departments return to the Board with a more thorough assessment of employee clean commuter benefits.

This briefing provides a presentation of an organized set of recommendations under a newly formed and integrated employee Clean Commute Program and offers a status of the Board approved Telework Pilot Program.

Staff seeks Board approval of the presented Clean Commute Program.

**Background:**

The Board of Supervisors instructed County management to return with actions that could be taken to demonstrate leadership in reducing transportation-related GHG emissions. The resulting actions from the Sustainability Committee included conducting and analyzing the 2018 county-wide survey, reviewing feedback from department management, and conducting sessions with Traffic Solutions. Based on this broad data collection, the Sustainability Division identified employer actions that could reduce emissions by the county’s workforce and returned to the Board May 14, 2019 to present options in the following categories:

- Raise Visibility of Current Benefits
- Enhance Current Benefits
- Consider New Benefits

Additionally, the Board of Supervisors authorized the Director of Human Resources to return with a plan that included the following objectives: 1) an emphasis on increased communication of clean commuter benefits, 2) more specific analysis and application of the Sustainability Committee’s identified options in all three categories, and 3) a status report of a Telework Program Pilot.

Following is a description of each of these recommendations:

***I. Increased Communication of Clean Commuter Benefits***

Both the Sustainability Division and Board identified communication of clean commuter benefits to County employees as a priority, and with good reason. Quantitatively and qualitatively it appears that much can be done to improve the dissemination of clean commuter information to County employees. As indicated in Table 1, the percent of employee participation in the County’s current clean commuter benefits is very low. While there may be several factors contributing to low participation among County employees, a good starting point for analysis is to conduct an assessment of existing employee communication channels.

**Table 1. Current Clean Commuter Benefits Employee Participation Levels**

Current Benefit	% Employee Participation (as of Dec, 2018)
1. TDM Vacation Bonus: carpool/transit, 80% clean commuting = 2 days vacation/yr	11%
2. \$10.00 Pre-Tax Contribution: transit	2%
3. Free Parking for RideShare	5%
4. Guaranteed Ride Home	NA
5. Alternate Work Week schedule	35%

6. Telework Arrangement	5%
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Communication Assessment & Strategy

Internal communications are vital to ensure employees are fully informed of benefits and feel connected to the organization. Results of a study by Guardian (2018) showed:

- Employees want to receive benefits communications in a minimum of three ways
- When employees receive benefits communications through their preferred channels (intranet/portal, personal, email), 70% are confident in their benefit selections, compared to 57%.

If reaching employees with a minimum of three employee-preferred channels is a target for the Human Resources Department, then based on evaluation of the current communication touchpoints to County employees, a significant gap exists. The two most utilized channels of communication are the New Employee Welcome Program and the Annual Benefits Fair. The downside to relying on the Welcome presentations for conveying employee benefit information is that often the employee attends the Welcome months after starting employment. Additionally, the structure of the current Welcome session exposes the employee to a plethora of other important but competing County information thus rendering recall of much of the information difficult at best. Lastly, the concern with any annual employee communication is its inability to positively affect employee retention of the information relayed.

The recommendation to the Board is to establish a communication strategy that is specific to the new Clean Commute Program for the county workforce by taking the following steps:

1. Redesign an integrated internet and intranet site specific to the Clean Commute Program that is comprehensive and well-organized.
2. Plan a Clean Commute Program kick-off with on-going after-event communication throughout the year.
3. Establish material to include in the re-designed New Employee Welcome Program and the newly created monthly Benefits Orientations, utilizing technology wherever possible.
4. Implement special activities: monthly or quarterly, county-wide or departmental events that focus on commuter activities (Cycle-mania, etc.)
5. Utilize social media to communicate the County’s culture that supports clean commuters.

Implementation of the Clean Commute Program Communication Strategy will achieve the following objectives: 1) increase visibility of employee commuter benefits to raise employee awareness of the value of a clean commute to the environment, 2) improve participation levels, 3) meet the Board’s and the Sustainability Committee’s interests, and 4) create an organizational culture that supports the reduction of stress related commutes among our employees and raises employee engagement and retention.

***II. Clean Commute Program***

Human Resources established a Clean Commute Project Team to analyze the options proposed to the Board in May 2019. The Project Team recommends a program (Table 2) that collects all the existing pieces of commuter benefits, organizes it under one umbrella with easy access for employees, expands a few benefits and offers others. The goal of the Clean Commute Program is to promote alternative and/or public transportation commute options to reduce traffic congestion, parking demand, and lower GHG

emissions while lowering employee costs and related stress and increasing employee engagement and retention. The new incentives are highlighted below.

**Table 2. Components of 2019-20 Clean Commute Program**

1. Re-designed Internet, Intranet, Portal sites (new)
2. TDM Vacation Bonus: Expanded eligibility to <u>all forms of clean commuting (new)</u> . Retain the 80% level of clean commuting and retain the 2 days of vacations per year.
3. Updated and automated commuter forms.(new)
4. \$10 Pre-Tax Contribution: Expanded eligibility to include <u>train and carpools (new)</u>
5. Free Parking for RideShare
6. Guaranteed Ride Home.
7. Retain existing process and types of Alternative Work schedules.
8. Offer zero emission vehicle and E-bicycle employee discounts through the establishment of a County Employee Discount Program. (new)
9. Create a Telework Pilot in two departments to evaluate the existing policy as well as management and employee sentiment. (new)
10. Study/implement new vanpool/carpool and zero emission vehicle parking at County facilities.

The additional cost of implementing the Clean Commute Program communication strategy, the new program elements, as described above, and the requisite personnel for program oversight is estimated at \$50,000.

**III. Telework Pilot Program**

The Board approved for the Community Services Department to engage in a pilot program of the existing County Telework Policy. The operational definition of teleworking is the ability to conduct regular work away from the regular worksite. Research indicates that a strong management sponsored telework program offers effective work-life balance and improves employee engagement. The Clean Commute Project Team is interested in a thorough assessment of the existing telework policy and has established pilot program parameters (Table 3) so that at the completion of the pilot there is sufficient data to make managing a telework program efficient and effective for County managers and employees.

**TABLE 3. 2019-2020 Telework Program Criteria**

1. Two Departments
2. Pre and Post Surveys
3. 2 to 3 days of Telework

4. Runs for Six months
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Establishing the pilot program will allow the Clean Commute Project Team to evaluate each component (application form, agreement, policy) from the vantage point of both the employee and the manager. The Community Service and the General Services Departments volunteered to participate in the six-month pilot program which kicks off September 1, 2019. The pilot will consist of a Pre and Post survey and the findings will be summarized for the Board upon the completion of the six month pilot. There is minimal cost for implementing the pilot at this stage.

**Performance Measure:**

The Human Resources Department is committed to measuring the efficacy of the Clean Commute Program and its communication strategy. As Table 4 indicates, we expect increases in employee participation levels to be a significant performance indicator as well as customer satisfaction.

**Table 4. Clean Commute Performance Metrics**

<b>Benefit</b>	<b>% (Dec, 2018)</b>	<b>Target % (Dec, 2020)</b>
1. Re-designed Internet, Intranet, Portal sites Satisfaction	NA	Receive an overall satisfaction rating of at least 4 out 5 from 90% of respondents
2. TDM Vacation Bonus: carpool/transit, 80% level of clean commuting = 2 days vacation/year	11% Participation	22% Participation
3. Automated forms satisfaction	NA	Receive an overall satisfaction rating of at least 4 out 5 from 90% of respondents
4. \$10.00 Pre-Tax Contribution: transit	2% Participation	10% Participation
5. Free Parking for RideShare	5% Participation	10% Participation
6. Guaranteed Ride Home	NA	Receive an overall satisfaction rating of at least 4 out 5 from 90% of respondents
7. Alternate Work Week schedule	35% Participation	40% Participation
8. Telework Arrangement	5% Participation	8% Participation
a. Policy satisfaction	NA	
b. Forms satisfaction	NA	
9. Zero emission vehicle and E-bicycle employee discounts through a County Employee Discount Program Satisfaction	NA	Receive an overall satisfaction rating of at least 4 out 5 from 90% of respondents
10. Health Fair Satisfaction	NA	Receive an overall satisfaction rating of at least 4 out 5 from 90% of respondents

11. Commuter Events Satisfaction	NA	Receive an overall satisfaction rating of at least 4 out of 5 from 90% of respondents
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**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Budgeted: Yes the Board allocated \$50,000 in the FY 2019-20 Budget in one-time funding for expanding employee efforts to reduce GHGs.

**Fiscal Analysis:**

- 1) **TDM: 2 days of vacation for any type of clean commuting at least 80%:** Since vacation accrual maximums are not being increased, accruals will continue to be capped for any accrual maximums. In other words, an employee cannot accrue more than what is allowed for their years of service based on existing policy.
- 2) **\$10 Pre Tax Contribution: for carpool, train and vanpool:** There are currently 72 employees participating in the Commuter Flex benefit, representing approximately 2% of 3,944 County Employees. The total cost across all 22 County Departments is approximately \$8,500. A 100% increase in the number of participating employees would result in an additional \$8,500 County-wide cost increase. By the end of Fiscal Year 2019-20, County Human Resources’ target is to increase employee participation to 10% of the workforce or approximately 400 County Employees resulting in a cost increase of approximately \$39,500 annually across all County Departments. As the enrollment of new participants would be on-going and could occur throughout the year, the estimated cost increase for the remainder of FY 2019-20 is \$18,900. The balance of funds awarded by the Board for the Clean Commute Program will be available to departments to offset this cost increase should they require it.
- 3) **Clean Commute Program Costs:** In order to facilitate the execution of the program including: coordination and implementation of the new communication strategy, intranet/internet content management, and program evaluation and analysis, a part time Extra Help Program Coordinator will be required: \$28,100.
- 4) **Additional Miscellaneous Program Costs:** County Human Resources may incur additional costs for marketing and advertising, pursuing options to increase vanpool/carpool and zero emission vehicle capacity at County parking lots: \$3,000. This funding is likely not sufficient to provide additional program elements which were part of the original budget enhancement request for \$100,000.

County Human Resources will evaluate the program budget needs this fiscal year and return to the Board during the budget process for further funding as necessary.

<b><u>Funding Sources</u></b>	<b><u>Current FY Cost:</u></b>	<b><u>Annualized On-going Cost:</u></b>	<b><u>Total One-Time Project Cost</u></b>
General Fund	\$ 50,000.00	\$ -	\$ 50,000.00

**Narrative:** The Board of Supervisors adopted \$50,000 of one-time funds to be applied to an Alternative Commute (Clean Commute) program as a Board adjustment to the FY 2019-20 Adopted Budget. Human Resources has been designated as the lead agency for this program and is asking the Board to approve a Clean Commute program utilizing these funds for the purposes of:

- Marketing and advertising of the new Clean Commute Program.
- Staffing a part-time program coordinator to implement the Clean Commute Program.

- Pursuing options to increase vanpool/carpool and zero emission vehicle capacity at County parking lots.

**Authored by:** Maria Elena De Guevara, Human Resources Director