

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY BOARD AGENDA LETTER



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

Agenda Number:
Prepared on: 9/25/06
Department Name: Human Resources
Department No.: 064
Agenda Date: 10/03/06
Placement: Administrative
Estimate Time:
Continued Item: NO
If Yes, date from:

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Susan Paul, Assistant CEO/HR Director
568-2817

STAFF CONTACT: Theresa Duer, Deputy HR Director
568-2822

SUBJECT: 101 Traffic Reduction Initiatives

Recommendation(s):

That the Board of Supervisors:

Authorize the funding for a County contribution of \$10.00 per month per employee who participates in the Commuter Choice Tax Benefit Program.

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:

The recommendation(s) are primarily aligned with actions required by business necessity and our organizational values regarding our workforce

Executive Summary and Discussion:

On August 15, 2006, the Board of Supervisors approved recommendations from staff to reduce congestion in Highway 101 and to encourage employees to use public transportation, vanpools, and explore and implement alternative work schedules and telework for County employees. The Board also directed staff to implement a comprehensive communication campaign and the Auditor Controller to enter into an agreement with an appropriate vendor to administer the program.

Included in the August 15, 2006 recommendations was a recommendation from the Auditor-Controller and Assistant CEO/HR Director to authorize funding for a County contribution to encourage employee participation in the Commuter Choice Tax Benefit Program.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the Board asked CEO/Human Resources to provide additional information regarding the impact on employee work commute modes if the County were to offer \$10 per month to employees who use public transportation and vanpools (subject to meet and confer requirements with the employee organizations). More specifically, the Board was interested in knowing if employees would change their commuting habits if the incentive was offered.

According to Santa Barbara County Association of Government, Traffic Solutions, the industry standard is that a 10-15 percent increase in alternative transportation use occurs when an employer funds employees at \$50/month. Based on a CEO/HR survey of approximately 1000 County employees, thirty-four percent of the employees indicated that they would take advantage of a \$10/month benefit. Assuming that not all thirty-four percent will actually use alternative transportation 100 percent of the time, staff and Traffic Solutions estimate that increased usage will be approximately 7 percent. This could potentially assist the County in reaching 101 traffic reduction goals.

It is recommended that the Board approve \$33,600 to provide the \$10 per month to each employee who utilizes the program. CEO/HR will monitor employee usage and report back to the Board on a quarterly basis as to usage and effectiveness.

Mandates and Service Levels:

The Board is under no mandate to provide Commuter Choice Tax Benefit or contributions to encourage employee participation.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Staff estimates the cost of the \$10.00 initiative is approximately \$23,260 for the balance of FY 2006-07 and \$33,600 annually. To the extent possible, if a particular department or departments are unable to afford their proportionate share, we will return to the Board for any needed small contingency transfers.

Cc: County Executive Officer
Auditor-Controller