

AgVan Update

Board of Supervisors Hearing
July 8, 2008

PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

1. Project History-- Public Works
2. Project Overview-- Public Works and SMOOTH
3. Looking Ahead to July 2010-- Public Works
 - Transit Grants
 - Future Projections for Fare Box Revenue
 - Options for Future Van Use
4. SMOOTH Contract Amendment
5. Review of the County's Effort to Date-- Ron Hughes,
Executive Director of Kings Area Rural Transit
6. Recommended Board Actions-- Public Works

PROJECT HISTORY

- Summer 2005 – Santa Maria City Council and S.B. County Board of Supervisors approve a total of \$150k in TDA funding for a pilot farmworker vanpool program.
- Feb. 2007 – County receives \$70k in planning funds from Caltrans AWTP.
- July 10, 2007 – Board approves agreement with SMOOTH to provide vanpool pilot program services for the County.
- Oct. 23, 2007 – Board approves purchase of 9 vans from Kings County and submittal of application of implementation funding from Caltrans AWTP.
- 1st AWTP vanpool enters service on January 2, 2008.
- March 25, 2008 – Board approves purchase of 9 additional vans.
- July 8, 2008 – Board Recommendation: receive progress report and consider approval of contract amendments with SMOOTH.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

AWTP is based on a successful vanpool program developed by Kings County over 6 years ago.

- Purpose is to test if the Kings County vanpool model can be replicated in other areas of the State.
- County AWTP start-up funding came from:
--\$100k S.B. County -- \$50k City of S.M. --\$70k Caltrans
- The County's program is now entirely funded through a \$3.1 million Caltrans grant (expires July 2010). No local public funding is currently being used.

PROJECT OVERVIEW (cont.)

- Benefits of AWTP include:
 - Reducing the number of unlicensed drivers on the road;
 - Reducing the number of uninsured vehicles on the road;
 - Improving air quality; and
 - Using energy more efficiently.
- As with Kings County, vans are used primarily from February through October. As agricultural production declines in the winter months, van usage is also expected to decline.
- To date there have been no accidents or traffic tickets associated with operating the program.

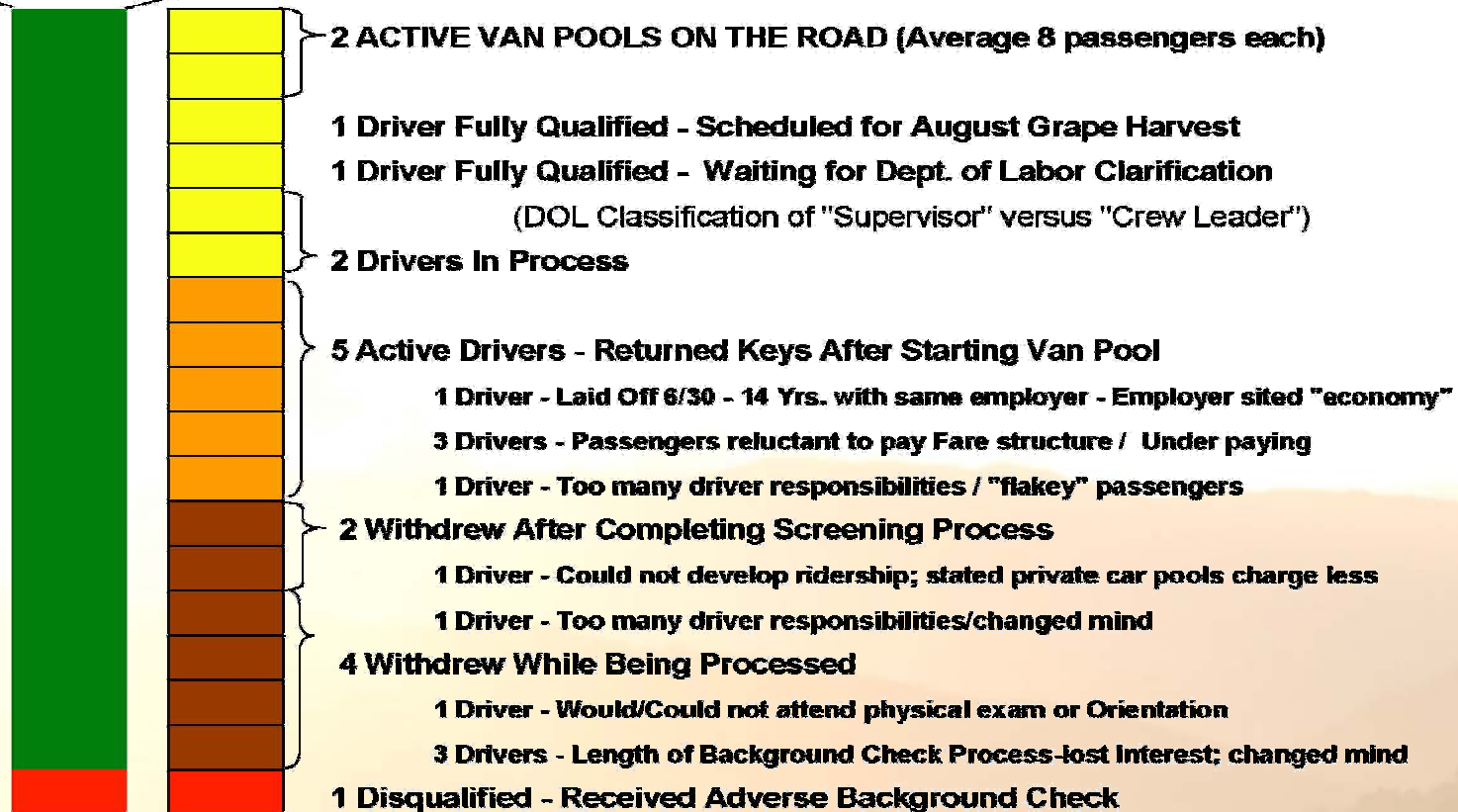
DRIVER REQUIREMENTS

Driver eligibility determined by:

- Possession of a valid CA Drivers License
- Clean driving record through a Motor Vehicle Report
- Criminal background check
- Physical exam
- 2-3 hour training and orientation

ELIGIBLE DRIVER RECRUITMENT STATUS

18 Eligible Drivers Recruited



Agricultural Worker Transportation Program



SUMMARY OF SMOOTH OUTREACH EFFORTS

- Over 7,400 brochures / fliers distributed
- Media Exposure - 11 Radio and Television Stations
- Continued Participation with Civic and Service Organizations
 - Santa Maria Chamber
 - Latino Business Community Council
 - Guelaguetza Festival
 - Fiestas Patrias
 - Pueblo
 - Frente Ingigena de Organizaciones Binacionales
- Industry Contacts
 - 27 Growers Contacted
 - Santa Barbara Farm Bureau
 - Grower Shipper Vegetable Association
- Public Agency Contacts
 - Employment Development Dept.
 - California Highway Patrol

PRELIMINARY FARE BOX REVENUE PROJECTIONS IN JULY 2010

Assumptions:

- Each van contains 8 passengers paying a \$6 fare during 20 days each month; and
- Gas will cost \$5.50/gallon

With between 15 and 25 vanpools in operation, passenger fares may pay for approximately 50% of the program expenses.

Revenues and expenses may be impacted by a decline in activity during the winter months.

If the program achieves a 50% fare box recovery ratio, it may be possible to continue some type of vanpool efforts in the future.

TRANSIT GRANTS

- Existing State/Federal transit funding sources for ongoing capital and operations costs often require a local match
- The Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) program helps fund transit for low income individuals to travel to jobs in suburban or rural areas in the State.
- It will provide up to 80% of the funding needed for capital expenses and up to 50% of the costs associated with operating a transit system.

OPTIONS FOR FUTURE VAN USE

- Local jurisdictions are NOT forced into a permanent commitment to farm worker vanpools.
- If feasible at a certain scale, jurisdictions would be encouraged to try and maintain the program
- Caltrans staff would assist the County in obtaining State/Federal transit funds to help pay for ongoing capital and operating costs.

OPTIONS FOR FUTURE VAN USE (cont.)

- If the AWTP was discontinued, jurisdictions are encouraged to evaluate other transportation needs and to use the vans purchased through the State's AWTP for those purposes.
- Caltrans staff would assist the County in obtaining State/Federal transit funds to help pay for ongoing capital and operating costs for any vanpool program.

OPTIONS FOR FUTURE VAN USE (cont.)

Examples of Potential Local Uses:

- Santa Maria and Santa Barbara medical facilities;
- North County commuters traveling to job centers in the South Coast. Example: alleviate overcrowding on Lompoc to Goleta/S.B. CAE routes.
- Capacity relief for the Guadalupe Flyer which has had 90-100 new passengers/day for the last 2 months.

SMOOTH CONTRACT AMENDMENT

- Revise end date of contract to June 30, 2010
- Increase amount of contract by \$800,000 for services, supplies, materials and equipment provided by SMOOTH
- Defines ownership of equipment



REVIEW OF COUNTY'S EFFORTS TO DATE

- Ron Hughes – Kings Area Rural Transit Executive Director
- Report Card on SB County's efforts to date
- Future funding sources for Santa Barbara and Kings County programs

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Receive a progress report from Public Works staff regarding the County's Agricultural Worker Transportation Program (AWTP).

- B. Authorize the Chair to execute Amendment No. 1, for time extension and fee schedule amendments to the existing agreement with the Santa Maria Organization of Transportation Helpers (SMOOTH) for Agricultural Worker Transportation Program (AWTP) services in the Santa Maria Valley, County Project No. 830713.

Agricultural Worker Transportation Program



Thank You

