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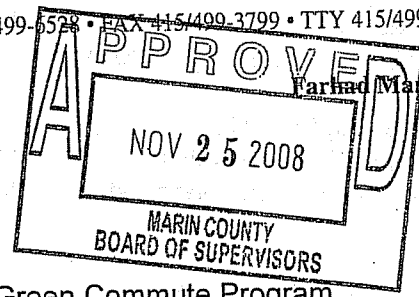
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November 25, 2008

Marin County Board of Supervisors
3501 Civic Center Drive
San Rafael, CA 994903



Farhad Mansourian, RCE
Director

SUBJECT: Report on the one-year pilot Green Commute Program

Dear Board Members:

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Accept report,
2. Recognize award-winning Green Commute employees for the fourth quarter, and
3. Continue the Green Commute Program for calendar year 2009 as a traffic congestion relief measure with a stipend of \$4 per day, up to \$20 per week, with goals as outlined below.

SUMMARY: Marin County's employee commute programs are recognized by the Bay Area's 511 Regional Rideshare Program as a model program and they regularly direct employers to review our materials and results. In addition, the program was recognized by the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) in its 2008 Challenge Awards Program with an honorable mention.

Background

In January, 2001, your Board established the Employee Commute Alternatives Program which is designed to relieve traffic congestion, improve air quality, and provide incentives and strategies to County employees for alternatives to single-occupant vehicles. In 2004, your Board adopted Countywide Goals, and then in 2005 adopted Strategic Objectives supporting the Countywide Goals. One of the goals is Sustainable Communities, with a Strategic Objective to reduce traffic congestion by providing transportation choices. Promotion of use of commute alternatives by employees is consistent with the goals and policies of the County.

On September 11, 2007, your Board approved a one-year pilot program to provide stipends to regular hire employees to promote commute alternatives. The registration for this program, now referred to as the "Green Commute Program", started on September 24, 2007 with the first day of commute reimbursement starting October 7, 2007 and the last day of the pilot being October 4, 2008. The amount of the stipend is \$4 per day with a maximum of \$20 per week, for employees who commute to work by public transit, vanpooling, carpooling, bicycling or walking as opposed to a single occupant motor vehicle. On March 4, 2008, your Board approved one change to the pilot, the inclusion of extra hire employees as eligible participants.

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On September 9, 2008 your Board approved an extension of the stipend for up to two months to allow time for evaluation of the one-year-pilot-results.

The Green Commute Program complements other county programs that provide traffic congestion relief, including telework and alternative work schedules.

One-year pilot results

Following are the results for the first three quarters previously reported, and the fourth quarter from the pay period starting July 13, 2008 to the pay period ending October 4, 2008:

- Number of registrants from regular and extra-hire employees:

1 st quarter	2 nd quarter	3 rd quarter	4 th quarter
419 – 19% of 2,200	498 – 19% of 2,600	635 – 25% of 2,600	719-28% of 2,600

Of the 719 registered employees, 640 are regular hire and 79 are extra hire employees.

- Average number of participants per pay period:

1 st quarter	2 nd quarter	3 rd quarter	4 th quarter
227 - 10% of 2,200	238 – 9% of 2,600	323 – 12% of 2,600	290 – 11% of 2,600

- Average days per week of Green Commuting per participant:

1 st quarter	2 nd quarter	3 rd quarter	4 th quarter
3.0 days	3.3 days	3.2 days	3.1 days

- Total stipend expenses:

1 st quarter	2 nd quarter	3 rd quarter	4 th quarter
\$40,150	\$51,500	\$66,600	\$64,600

- Total CO2 reduction for the year: About 650 tons.

Attached is a chart depicting the registration and participation for each pay period and a chart showing modes of transportation utilized.

Analysis of results

County and 511.org staff conducted an employee survey during a work week in September 2008 (copy attached) as a companion to surveys previously conducted. The survey response rate improved from 43% for the April 2007 survey to 52% for the September 2008 survey. Comparison of the two survey responses shows that:

- Drive alone commuting has decreased by 7%.
- Carpooling has increased by 4%.
- The largest increase in carpooling occurred for those commuters residing 21 or more miles from work.

- About 1/3 of the commuters at the County have 45 minutes or more one-way commutes.
- Convenience and flexibility remain the top influence on mode choice.
- Financial incentives remain the top incentive to use commute alternatives.

Green Commute Program for 2009

The steering committee representatives from the Administrator's Office, Auditor Controllers Office, Human Resources, Information Services and Technology and Public Works met to review the one-year pilot program. The steering committee does not recommend any changes to the program at this time. Should the Board determine they wish to make a change to the program, such as increasing or decreasing the stipend amount, the Human Resources Department recommends that direction be provided to give appropriate notice to the unions and employee associations before a final determination is made.

Activities for the upcoming year include:

- Quarterly employee recognition before the Board of Supervisors
- Attendance at departmental, divisional staff meetings for in-depth program presentations; and collect employee feedback.
- Articles in quarterly editions of Frankly Speaking.
- Consistent targeting of registrants and participants via FYI announcements of upcoming events and updates to Green Commute Program MINE site.
- Addition of Green Commute Program "welcome" packets to County's New Hire Orientation folders.
- Seasonal "Commuter Appreciation Weeks" featuring on-location giveaways and detailed information for employees utilizing one of the five alternative modes of transportation.
- Off-campus location 'pop-in visits' to deliver useful, fun green materials and answer specific employees' questions about the program.
- Collaborative promotional efforts with Golden Gate Transit, 511.org, Marin Transit, and outside businesses.
- Short video productions of different aspects of the Green Commute Program by Media Interchange, including employees' testimonials from carpools, the bus, bicycles, and the sidewalk.
- Encourage greater participation through team challenges.
- Informational e-minders and pertinent, timely press articles to be featured on website.
- Encourage employees to participate in the Transit Reimbursement Program and set aside funds (on a pre-tax basis) from their paycheck of up to \$105.00/month for qualified mass transit expenses. Currently 12 employees participate, and about 56 employees are regular transit riders.
- Promote the benefits of carpooling and transit ridership to employees who commute from the north who will receive significant morning time savings with the completion of the Highway 101 carpool lane gap closure project completion early in 2009.
- Conduct other promotions associated with events such as Earth Day, Bike to Work, and the Wellness Fair.

Staff will return to the Board in the Fall of 2009 to review Green Commute Program results and for your Board to determine program parameters for 2010.

Goals for the Green Commute Program

On November 6, 2007, your Board adopted the Countywide Plan with nonbinding indicators, benchmarks and targets. One of those was:

Indicator: Commute modal split by County government employees
 Benchmark: 82% drove alone, 10% carpooled, 5.5% bused and 1% biked in 2003.
 Target: Decrease single-occupancy vehicle share of modal split.

As previously mentioned, County and 511.org staff conducted an employee survey during a work week in September 2008. In 2003 a similar survey was conducted but based on Monday to Friday travel (Table 1 of the 2008 survey is based on Monday to Sunday travel, and is modified here for comparison). The 2008 survey indicated the following:

63% drove alone, 16% carpooled, 4% bused and 3% biked.

These 2008 results show a significant decrease in driving alone from the 2003 benchmark.

The results can also be compared to San Mateo County's program, which provides up to \$20/month for walking, bicycling or carpooling at least 8 days, and up to \$75/month for transit tickets. Their results per mode (attached) show that they have a significantly higher transit participation rate. With Marin's transit incentive rate similar to the San Mateo level, the results are likely attributed more to availability of regular service than to the incentive amount. Marin's higher participation in walking, bicycling, and carpooling is likely a result of the higher incentive rate provided in Marin.

The Green Commute Program can establish annual goals based on the Countywide Plan, to maintain single occupancy vehicle use below the 82% benchmark, and to increase participation in the Green Commute Program for calendar year 2009 to 10% over the pilot program results.

FISCAL IMPACT: The total cost for the just completed one-year pilot program is about \$358,000 (with \$125,000 for DPW program staff, \$222,850 for stipends, and \$10,000 for marketing materials and rewards) or about \$30,000/month. The cost for the balance of 2008 is estimated at \$87,000.

For the 2009 calendar year, we recommend a total budget of \$465,000, based on the following assumptions. For budget purposes, we have assumed that the average participation is 3.2 days per week, and that participation will be 15% of the 2600 total employees, broken down for budget purposes to 12% for miscellaneous employees, 2% for safety employees, and 1% for extra hire.

Employees	% Participation			Stipend (\$4/day)	Retirement 32.83% Safety 25.75% Miscellaneous	Total
	Misc.	Safety	Extra Hire			
2,600	12	2	1	\$259,584	\$64,837	\$324,421

The DPW program administration requires 1 FTE employee with a full compensation cost of \$88,170 per year, 15% Senior Civil Engineer, and 5% Assistant Director, for a total staff cost of \$125,000 per year. A \$10,000 budget for marketing materials and awards would also be extended.

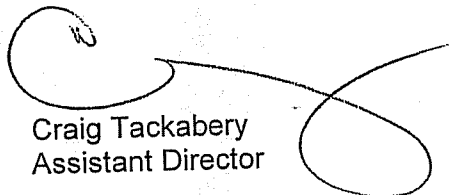
Administrative duties for the stipend are handled by Public Works Accounting Division. Each pay period about 20 employees (who don't have access to the internet) submit paper reimbursement forms for entry. In addition, about 20-25 corrections or late submittals are processed. At this time this amounts to only a few hours per pay period. DPW will continue to monitor this and work with the Administrator's Office to address any issues that may arise.

The Transit Reimbursement Program has a current administrative fee of \$60/person per year, and the County's annual \$300 enrollment fee with Employment Benefit Services. Currently 12 employees participate in this program. If the participation increases to 50 employees, the annual cost to the county would be \$3,300.

Funds are available for the above expense in this year's budget in account number 9000018100.

REVIEWED BY:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Auditor Controller	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	County Counsel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Human Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A

Respectfully submitted,

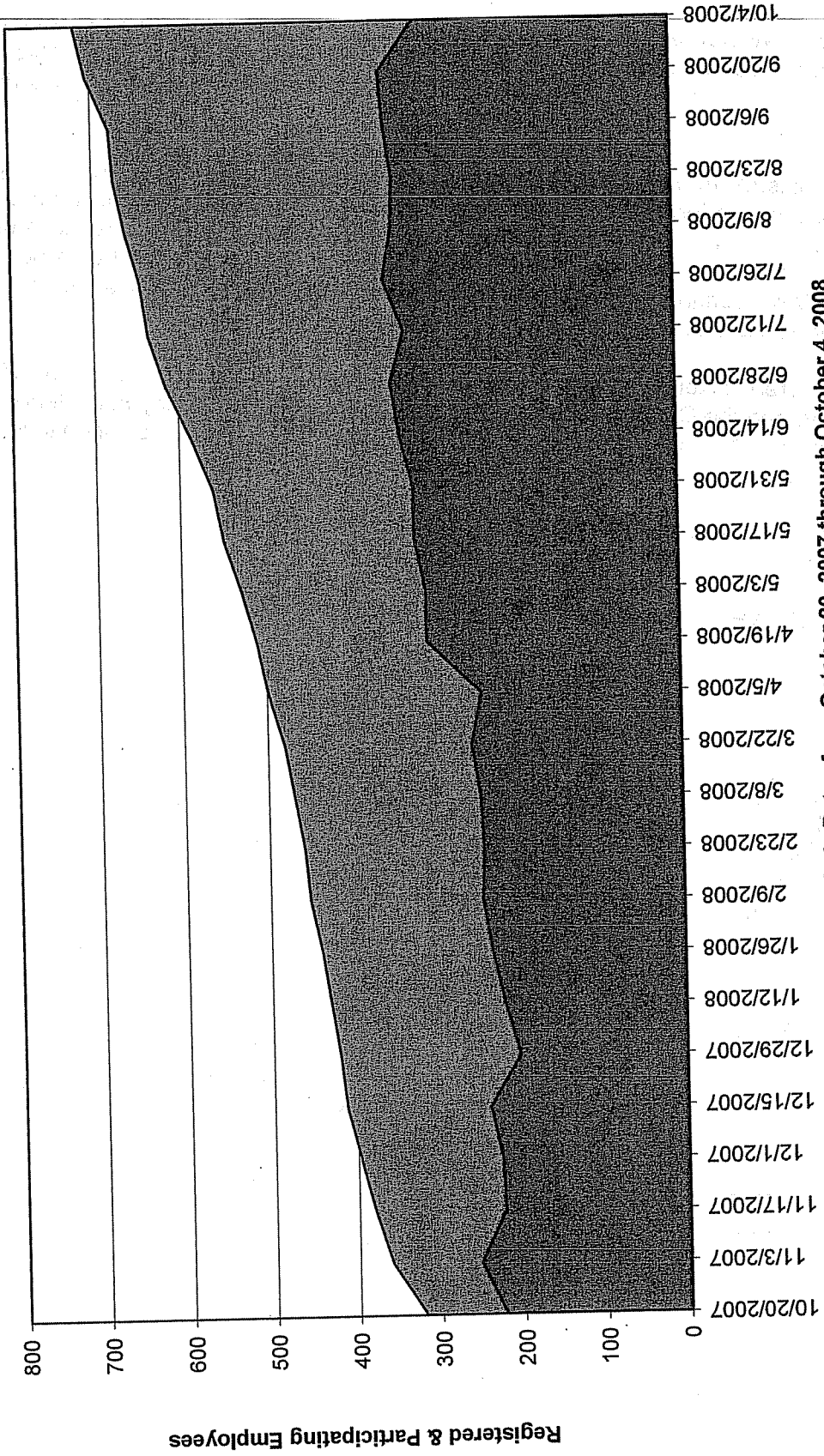

Craig Tackabery
Assistant Director

Attachments: Chart Registration & Participation
Chart Modes of Transportation
Chart of San Mateo County Commute Alternatives
County of Marin Employee Transportation Survey Results:
September 2008

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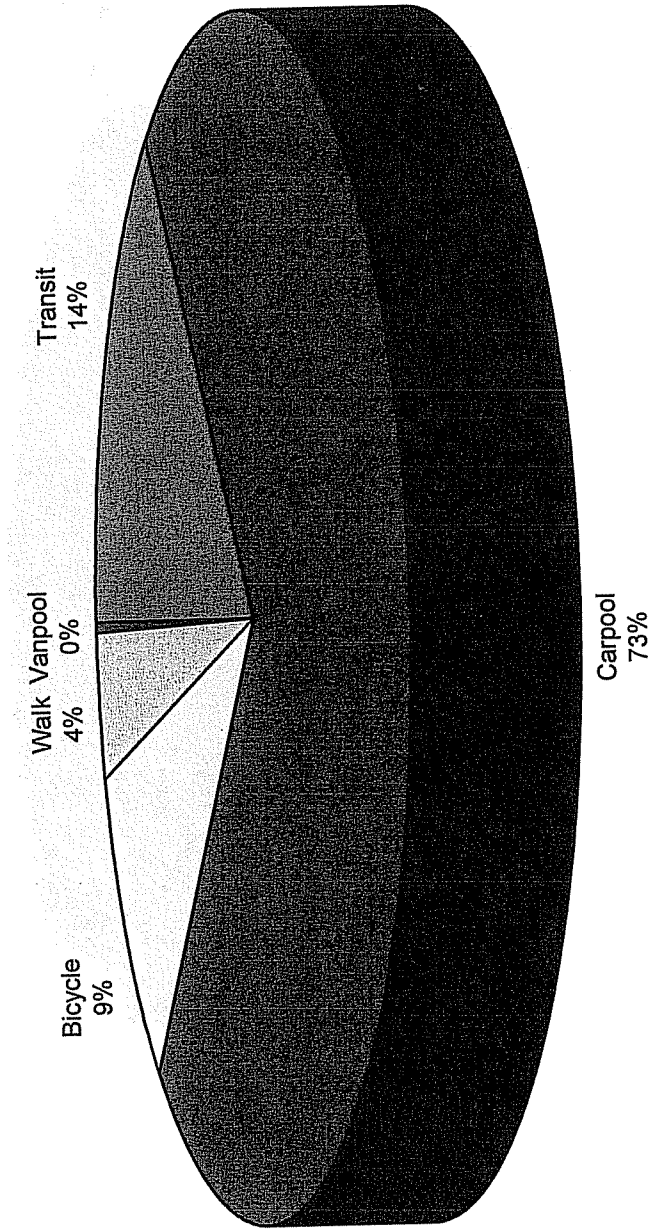
Green Commute Program 2007-2008

Registrants
 Participants



Ending Pay Periods Dates from October 20, 2007 through October 4, 2008

2007-2008 Green Commute Program
Transportation Mode
% by Commute Day



Legend: Transit Carpool Bicycle Walk Vanpool

2006-2007 San Mateo County Commute Alternative Program Mode Use

