

PROPOSAL FOR FORMATION OF A FIVE-COUNTY VALLEY TRANSIT AGENCY TO PROVIDE VANPOOL SERVICES

Introduction

This proposal is being presented to five Valley Councils of Governments (COGs) in Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, and Tulare Counties to recommend formation of a Valley transit agency to provide vanpool services. The proposed concept provides a unique opportunity for five Valley counties to fully represent their constituents and have a voice in the quality and accessibility of vanpool services in their region.



The current vanpool program operated by Kings County Area Public Transit Agency (KCAPTA) in the five Valley counties is receiving State and national recognition and is expected to soon become a successful national model replicated throughout the United

States. The proposed five-county Valley transit agency, if formed, will be the leader and at the forefront of this pioneering vanpool effort.

Background

KCAPTA is a Joint Powers Agency comprised of Kings County and the Cities of Avenal, Lemoore, and Hanford. The Agency is responsible for all transit functions in Kings County, its cities and communities. The Agency also operates route service between Hanford and Visalia, as well as between Hanford and Fresno.

In 2001, KCAPTA initiated its vanpool program with several vanpools transporting State workers to prison facilities in Corcoran and Avenal. The vanpool program expanded in 2002 with the successful



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funding of the Agricultural Industries Transportation Services (AITS) project. This project focused on farm workers and was in cooperation with Tulare County.

KCAPTA was asked by Caltrans to expand the AITS project to include Fresno County. In 2003 an MOU was signed with Fresno County Rural Transit Agency expanding the project. By this time the project had grown to over a 100 vanpools used by both farm workers traveling to the fields and State employees traveling to the prisons in Fresno, Kings, and Kern Counties.

KCAPTA worked with Western Growers and CRLA to establish a \$20 million State grant program to expand and replicate KCAPTA's program in other parts of the



State. These funds were used to expand the project into Kern and Madera Counties. Both entities signed a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) with KCAPTA allowing for the operation in both Counties. Other Agencies received some of the grant funds to start projects in their areas. Currently, 11 other counties are undertaking studies or implementing projects.

KCAPTA is currently assisting Ventura and Monterey Counties in establishing projects in their areas. The goal is to establish these projects as independent operations with local oversight.

Current Vanpool Operations

KCAPTA presently provides between 300 - 350 vanpools to those traveling to or from a five-county project area, including Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, and Tulare Counties. The number of farm worker vanpools varies between 80 and 140 vans throughout the agricultural season. Ridership has continued to grow and has become much more diversified. Riders are comprised of State and federal workers, teachers, college students, and casino workers.

Support is provided through the main office in Hanford. This support consists of 24-hour roadside assistance, vehicle on-site service, a fuel card provided with van, and GPS monitoring. Random spot inspections are performed, as needed, to insure safe conditions and compliance with all rules and regulations. All driver licenses also are pulled and reviewed monthly.

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All vans are insured at \$5 million, with \$1 million uninsured motorist and \$5,000 per person no-fault medical coverage, at a cost of less than \$900 per unit per year. Six years ago the rate was \$4,200 per unit for \$2 million coverage and no rider medical coverage.

Operating funds are comprised of user fees, grant funds, and various passenger subsidies provided by San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) and Fresno Measure C.

To date, there has been no expenditure of funds from any county's general or Local Transportation funds. The only exception to this has been the use of \$25,000 annually in the past three years for promoting vanpooling and ridesharing. These funds were not used for capital or operational purposes.



KCAPTA maintains separate accounts for its vanpool project and its transit operation.

The long-term viability of the vanpool program is insured through the shared use of vans between traditional (i.e., prison) vanpools and AITS vanpools. Vans are initially acquired through a five-year lease/purchase or purchased using AITS grant funds. Traditional vanpools use lease/purchase vans while farm worker vanpools use grant-funded vans. Once lease/purchase vans are paid for, they may be moved to the AITS program for replacement of the grant-funded vans. This flexibility, plus the fact that the vans are estimated to run for 300,000 miles, insures a steady source of replacement vans once AITS grant funds are expended.

Vanpool expenses are billed monthly to the traditional vanpools. Farm worker vanpools pay weekly based on the number of miles driven. Rates are adjusted as necessary to cover costs. All passenger subsidies are used to reduce participant costs and do not generate additional revenue for KCAPTA.

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Future Growth Outlook

What started as a local experiment to see if vanpools could be used by farm workers to travel to and from work, has grown into a successful regional vanpool operation that benefits residents in five Valley counties. Ridership has grown to include all forms of work trips connecting riders of adjoining cities and counties. The only requirement for becoming a vanpool driver is that he/she must be



traveling to or from a member county, have a Class C license, Class B medical exam, clean driving record, and the ability to make payments on time. Who rides, and where and how far they travel is up to the vanpool group.

The vanpool operation continues to grow and

is now seen as a key part of the Valley's effort in meeting future air quality emissions reduction requirements. In its present structure, the entire operation is managed and directed by the five-member KCAPTA board. This board is charged with representing citizens of Kings County and its cities, not residents of four other counties in which the vanpool project operates.

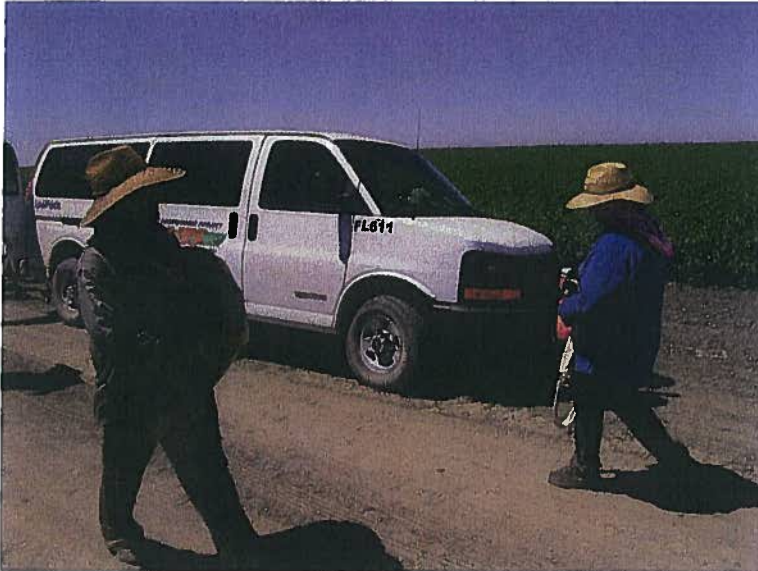
For future stability and representation of all participants, it is recommended that the present vanpool operation be transitioned to a new joint powers agency with representation from each of the five counties served by the project. This new formation would not require but would provide for representation by those agencies interested in insuring that the vanpool program continues. Since Councils of Governments (COGs) represent both counties and cities, it is suggested that a COG representative serve as a member of the new joint powers agency.

The current vanpool program does not require outside funding for its operation; and it is not anticipated that any member agency would be obligated to provide funding to the new agency. This would not prevent an agency, however, from providing support if they so chose. An example of this is the Council of Fresno County Governments' Measure C support of vanpools originating in Fresno County, or the Tulare County Association of Governments' annual contribution to promote ridesharing. In addition, KCAPTA staff has secured San Joaquin Valley

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Air District grants, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality grants, and Job Access and Reverse Commute grants.

The recent passage of California's AB 32 and SB 375 to limit greenhouse gases, the San Joaquin Valley APCD's forthcoming requirement that employers of more



than 100 employees to reduce the number of single vehicle trips, and rising fuel costs, will only result in more demand for Valley-wide rideshare services. The current vanpool program therefore has the potential of doubling over the next several years. To provide a vanpool program that meets this growth in a cost-effective manner will

require the cooperation of each Valley COG.

Future Timeline

During April and May 2009, KCAPTA staff will present the idea of forming a new joint powers agency before each of the five Valley COG Boards. Based on feedback from each COG, KCAPTA staff will then present the concept to a number of cities in each county seeking further support of the proposal. Staff then proposes to evaluate and incorporate all outreach findings; present the proposal to the Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, and Tulare COG Boards this fall; and develop an acceptable JPA with those agencies interested in moving forward with formation of a new five-county transit entity to provide vanpool services. Formal adoption of an agreement would occur in November or December 2009. Official start-up of the new agency would be initiated July 1, 2010.

KCAPTA staff does not anticipate substantial operational changes occurring with the establishment of a new agency. The vanpool program would continue to be operated at the existing facility with current staff. Where staff functions are shared between the new agency and KCAPTA, costs will be fully allocated. Following the formation of the new agency, a new manager would be hired to assume the responsibilities of operating KCAPTA. Three to four current employees would remain as direct employees of KCAPTA; the remaining employees would work for the new agency.

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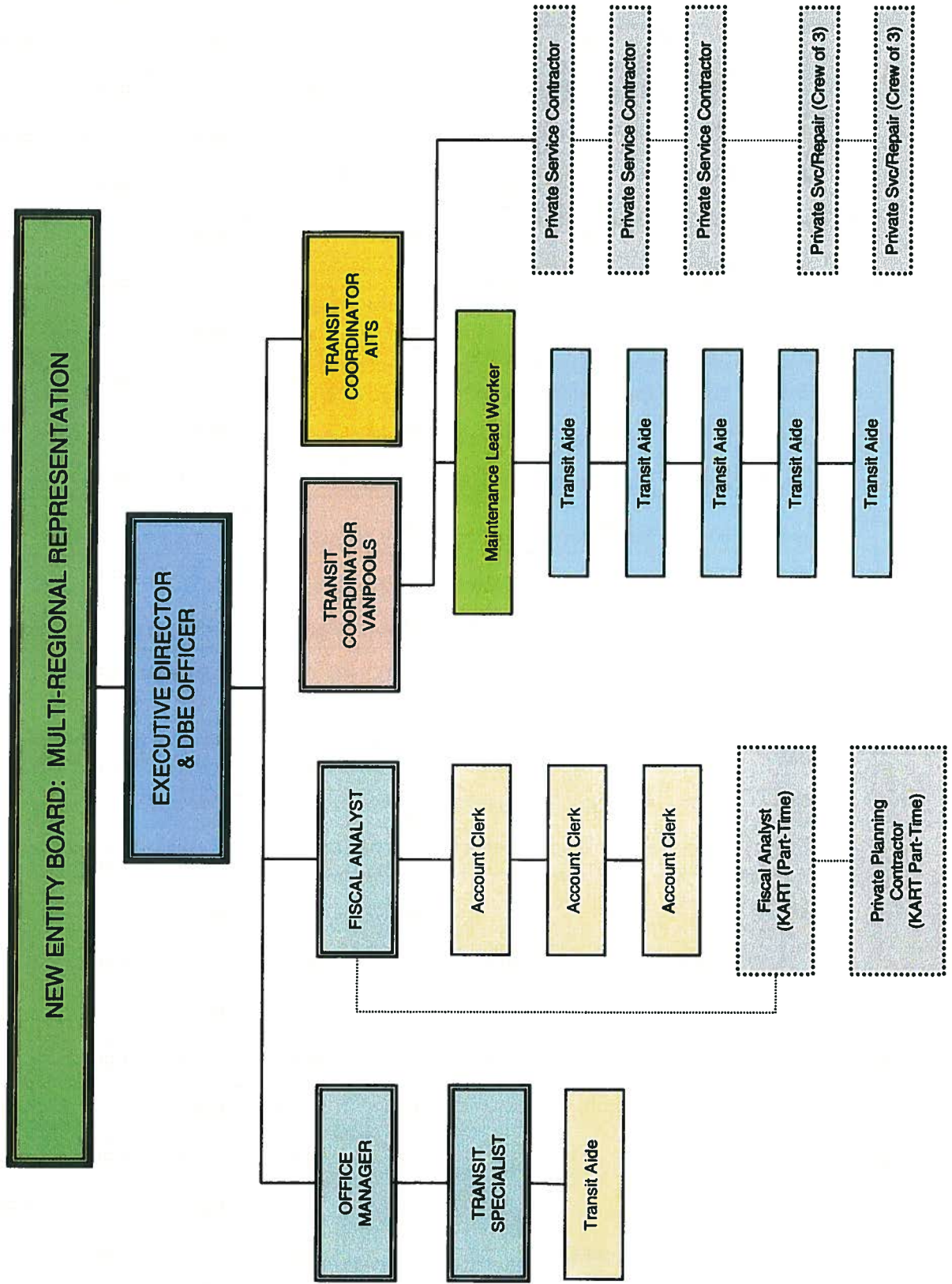
Recommendation:

It is recommended that this proposal be discussed with your respective county or city agency and staff; that presentations by KCAPTA staff be scheduled; and that each agency review a draft JPA to be distributed in September 2009 for final consideration at a November or December 2009 meeting.

Attachments:

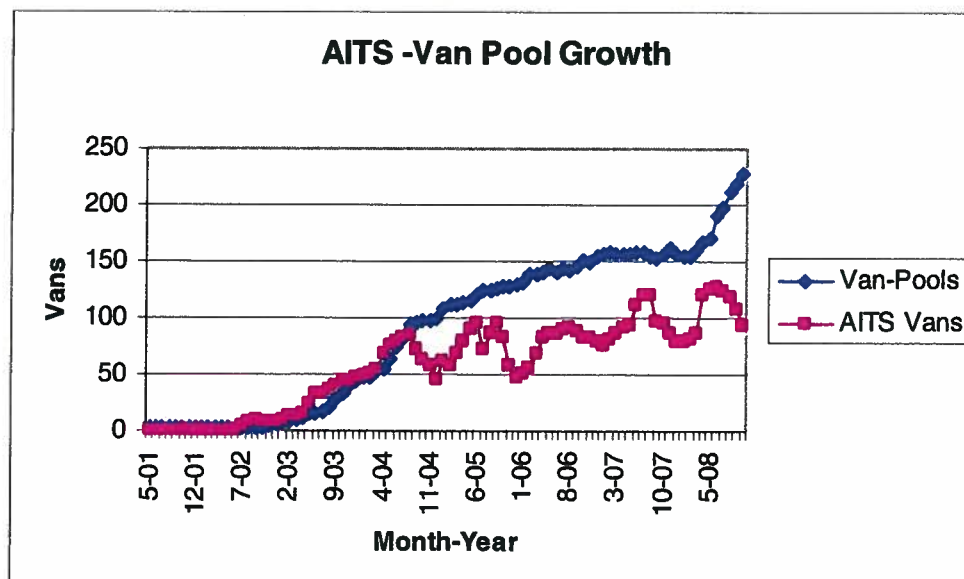
- A. Historical Timeline of KCAPTA Vanpool Activities
- B. KCAPTA Vanpool Program Origins & Destinations – Counties
- C. KCAPTA Vanpool & AITS Budget for FY2008/2009
- D. Prototype Organizational Chart of New Rideshare Entity
- E. AITS "Roadway to Employment" Video

PROTOTYPE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART NEW RIDESHARE ENTITY
(VANPOOL & AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES TRANSPORTATION SERVICES/AITS)



Historical Timeline of KCAPTA Vanpool Activities

Jun -	1998	Provided Route Bus between Avenal and Paramount Farms.
Sep -	1999	Keenan Farms requested vanpool for farmworkers traveling from Avenal.
Jan -	2001	Provided vanpool for Corrections staff traveling between Visalia and Corcoran.
Nov -	2001	Received \$2 million grant to establish program (AIMS) for farmworkers.
Nov -	2001	Purchased 48, 15-passenger GMC vans.
Jan -	2002	Expanded AITS Program to include Tulare County.
Jul -	2002	Provided Vanpools to farmworkers traveling from Avenal to Paramount Farms.
May -	2003	Received \$2.9 million to expand AITS project to include Fresno County.
Jun -	2003	Purchased 75, 15-passenger vans for expanded program.
July -	2003	Signed MOU with FCRTA for operation in Fresno County.
Oct -	2005	Established South Valley Ride Share as website with support of VCC.
??? -	2006	Asked to submit application for Measure C funds.
Nov -	2006	\$20 million in statewide funds established to implement or expand other programs.
Apr -	2007	Received \$5 million to expand project in existing three-county area.
Apr -	2007	Purchased 66, 15-passenger GMC vans.
Jan -	2008	Received \$2.5 million to expand project into Kern and Madera counties.
Sep -	2008	Asked to take over projects in Ventura, Santa Barbara and Monterey counties.
Dec -	2008	Establish agreements with Ventura and Monterey counties to expand project.



KCAPTA VANPOOL & AITS BUDGET
FY2008-09

BUDGET ITEM	VANPOOL	AITS	TOTAL
EXPENDITURES			
Salaries & Employee Benefits			
Salaries	165,009	256,211	421,220
Employee Benefits	67,515	108,776	176,291
Total Salaries & Employee Benefits	232,524	364,987	597,511
Services & Supplies			
Communications	65,000	120,000	185,000
Insurance	315,000	376,000	691,000
Maintenance - Equipment	420,000	530,000	950,000
Fuel & Oil	995,000	895,000	1,890,000
Rents & Leases - Equipment	941,000	584,000	1,525,000
Professional & Special Services	37,000	96,200	133,200
Outreaching & Advertising	10,000	300,000	310,000
Administrative	161,000	157,674	318,674
Other - Miscellaneous	56,222	154,000	210,222
Total Services & Supplies	3,000,222	3,212,874	6,213,096
Fixed Assets			
Computers (5)	2,000	0	2,000
Total Fixed Assets	2,000	0	2,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	3,234,746	3,577,861	6,812,607
REVENUES			
State Grant - AWTP	0	1,872,113	1,872,113
Passenger Fees - AIT	0	1,510,948	1,510,948
Vanpool Fees - AIT	3,017,000	0	3,017,000
Other (CMAQ, TCAG, etc.)	217,746	194,800	412,546
TOTAL REVENUES	3,234,746	3,577,861	6,812,607

**KCAPTA VANPOOL PROGRAM
ORIGINS & DESTINATIONS - COUNTIES
(Vans as of October 2008)**

COUNTY	ORIGINS	DESTINATIONS
Kings	88	116
Fresno	100	93
Tulare	99	16
Kern	7	61
Madera	10	23
Merced	3	1
San Luis Obispo	2	1
Stanislaus	2	0
Total	311	311

