

**PROPOSAL FOR
FORMATION OF A MULTI-COUNTY TRANSIT AGENCY TO
PROVIDE VANPOOL SERVICES
April 2010**

Introduction

Your Organization is one of several that have approved the formation of a public agency which will continue the operation of an existing vanpool program being operated in your county. The program is presently operated by Kings County Area Public Transit Agency (KCAPTA) and will be transitioned in to the California Vanpool Authority (CalVans). CalVans will provide a unique opportunity for agencies to fully represent their constituents and have a voice in the quality and accessibility of vanpool services in their region.

As CalVans, the agency will continue KCAPTA goal of providing vanpools to those rural areas of the state at the lowest possible cost. This has been achieved by extending the usable life of the vehicles while leveraging available local, state and federal. This practice has provided residents of California with public transit that meets their needs no matter who they are or where live.

Your participation in this program will afford you the ability to guide CalVans as it grows and expands in your jurisdiction. CalVans staff will take care of the day to day activities, but will look to your representative for direction on long term growth.

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 funding of the Agricultural Industries Transportation Services (AITS) project. This project focused on farm workers and was undertaken 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 Kings Counties.

The project was expanded to include the Counties of Madera and Kern with a successful grant application by KCAPTA farm worker grant funds established to expand and promote the KCAPTA model. This expansion complimented the existing program and afforded farm workers in these areas with more transportation options.

In 2006 KCAPTA was asked to assist both the City of Greenfield and the Ventura Council of Government in implementing farm worker grants that they were awarded. Agreements were signed with both agencies implementing KCAPTA's program in both areas. The Greenfield Project has expanded to include residents of Monterey.

In late 2010 Sacramento Council of Governments signed an agreement with KCAPTA for the purpose expanding it project to farm workers in Sacramento, Yuba, Sutter and Yolo Counties. This project has focused on getting the word spread to farm workers in the area.

In addition to the above, KCAPTA has assisted others in establishing projects in Santa Barbara, Napa, San Luis Obispo, and Mendocino Counties. Projects in these areas are administered by representatives of these agencies.

Current Vanpool Operations

KCAPTA now provides between 300 - 350 vanpools. In the San Joaquin Valley, vans travel between multiple counties, including Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Tulare, Monterey, San Benito, Ventura, Santa Cruz and the Sacramento area. The number of farm worker vanpools varies between 90 and 170 vans throughout the agricultural season. This represents a ridership of 1,000 to 1,900 agricultural workers. The average farm worker vanpool travels approximately 85 miles a day. The remaining vanpools are comprised primarily of State and federal workers, teachers, college students, casino workers and.

Support is provided through the main office in Hanford or one of the three outlying offices in Ventura, Greenfield and Woodland. This support consists of 24-hour roadside assistance, vehicle on-site service, a fuel card provided with van, GPS monitoring, and an emergency ride home program. 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.

All vans are insured at \$10 million, with \$1 million uninsured motorist and \$5,000 per person no-fault medical coverage, at a cost of less than \$1,400 per unit per year. Six years ago the rate was \$4,200 per unit for \$2 million coverage and no rider medical coverage.

The staff, and vanpool vehicles will be transferred to the CalVans organization. This will not require a move or major change in the existing organizational structure as costs and duties are already pretty much separated. Those employees whose work is related to the vanpool project will be rehired as CalVans employees on July 1, 2011. CalVans will continue to occupy the offices in Hanford.

Funding

Operating funds are comprised of user fees; grant funds, and various passenger subsidies provided by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD), Monterey Air Pollution Control District, and Fresno Measure C. To date, there has been no expenditure of funds from any county's general fund or Local Transportation Funds. KCAPTA maintains separate accounts for its vanpool project and its transit operation. CalVans will not have transit funds to worry about, but will continue separating expenses and revenues between general and farm worker vanpools.

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 it so chooses.

User fees make up the major source of funding while grants for establishing and expanding the farm worker vanpool program make up a large part of the State funds. This funding source will no longer be available after May 1st of this year. This will impact the outlying offices where the project is growing and still getting established. It is anticipated that the proceeds from the sale of older vehicles will be used in the short term to provide staff support as projects in these areas establish themselves. The sale of older equipment is expected to produce \$500,000, which is made possible through the acquisition of newer vehicles through grant funds targeted for these areas. In either case, operational expense will be reduced or expanded to match revenues from those using the vanpool program.

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. Examples of these are:

Air District Incentives for new riders	\$350/month for one year
JARC (Job Access and Reverse Commute)	50% of monthly cost for one year
Fresno Measure C Program (General Riders)	\$350/month for one year
Fresno Measure C Program (Farm workers)	\$40/month for farm workers

In addition, those operating a van that has been paid for receive a reduction in their monthly bill of up to \$585 per month as long as the van remains operational. These “paid for vans” are utilized by those going to then colleges to keep their monthly bill as low as possible.

KCAPTA has received Federal 5307 funds to purchase new vans for the program. This fund resulted from the recording of passenger information through the NTD (National Transit Database) reporting system for small urban areas. Over \$600,000 was received through the Hanford urban area. Future 5307 funds will be generated in both small and large urban areas as CalVans reports passenger data for all areas in which vanpools operate. It is estimated that the total generated could exceed 2 million annually.

The above funding programs assist in expanding the program and securing additional vehicles but not the daily operating funds. These will continue to come from the riders themselves. However, CalVans staff will work to reduce these fares as it minimizes it operating expense by extending the life of its vehicles, leveraging outside funds and coordinating it management structure.

Ultimate success in an area will depend on the ability of CalVans Staff as well as local representatives to get the word out about the program and demonstrate its value to those that might take advantage of it. Lack of demand for services in an area could result in the agency representing that area leaving CalVans.

Future Growth Outlook

Multi-County Benefits

Increases in fuel prices, coupled with enforcement by the State and Federal Departments of labor, will continue to drive workers to seek affordable and legal means to get to work. CalVans goal of providing legal and affordable transit options to rural California residents will go along way in providing the transit options people seek. The only requirement for becoming a vanpool driver is will be 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. Most trips end up outside the county of origin.

Future Funding

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

Traffic Congestion Relief and Air-Quality Benefits

The ability to track vanpool trips, passengers and destination will provide emission benefits that can be used by member agencies in their efforts to comply with AB 32 and SB 276. The annual reduction of 1,800 tons of CO₂, 75 million vehicle miles and over half a million trips will be reported by county of origin apportioned to member agencies based on the vanpool groups traveling from their areas. CalVans operation will continue to grow and be seen as a key part of the San Joaquin Valley's effort to reduce single-occupancy vehicles and traffic congestion, and to meet future air quality emissions reduction requirements.

Present Actions

Each Agency is being asked to nominate a CalVans primary and backup representative. The first meeting will be held following the selection of Board members and the recording of the signed JPA with the Secretary of State. The first will be held at the Hanford office, all subsequent meeting will be electronically so as to minimize the need for Board members to make the trip to Hanford. Meeting will be held on an as needed basis and/or as determined by the Board members.

Assets and Staff will be transferred over on July 1st following action by the KCAPTA Board. Prior to that time staff will be establishing the framework for CalVans. The biggest issue will be establishing the new agency with Calipers and CSAC. Present KCAPTA Staff is available to answer any questions or make presentations at meetings.

Attachments and References:

- A. KCAPTA FY 09/10 Comprehensive Financial Report.
- B. Prototype Organizational Chart of New Rideshare Entity