

Priority: Vibrant Communities

Lead Agency: County Management

Program Offer Type: Existing Operating

Program Contact: Mindy Harris

Related Programs:

Program Characteristics:

Executive Summary

Program assists County with satisfaction of Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Employee Commute Option (ECO) mandate via the TriMet Passport Program. The program encourages employee use of alternative transportation for daily commuting and workday travel between work locations. Eligible County employees receive an annual transit pass for bus, light rail, and streetcar transit in the TriMet service areas, which is subsidized by the County.

Program Description

Program provides management of County's transit pass program, including coordination of a required bi-annual DEQ transportation survey of employees, oversight of inter-governmental contract with TriMet, and creation, distribution, collection of individual annual transit passes to eligible County employees (all regular full/part time employees are eligible for a transit pass) throughout the year. This transit subsidy program is Multnomah County's primary contribution to satisfaction of DEQ's Employee Commute Options trip reduction goals. Other County supported options include compressed work week and secure bicycle parking. Combined, employer incentives must have the potential to reduce commute trips to the worksite by 10% within 3 years. The bi-annual DEQ employee transportation survey measures progress toward this goal.

Program Justification

Program supports County's sustainability goals and Vibrant Communities priority to protect the environment, reduce air/noise pollution, and conserve natural resources by supporting the use of mass transit for both daily work commute and workday travel between worksites. DEQ reports motor vehicles are largest single source of air pollution in Portland area. Local employers must provide commute alternatives designed to reduce the number of cars driven to work. This is one of several strategies in a federally-required plan to keep Portland's air clean. Program provides DEQ with proof of County's commitment to reaching the annual trip reduction goals, frees limited on-site parking for customers/citizens, provides employees with a safe, affordable, environmentally sound transportation option, and directly supports the region's mass transit infrastructure. Program indirectly contributes to Accountability priority by helping attract/retain well-trained employees, allows County to manage resources effectively and provide subsidized transportation at the lowest available cost to the County, and reduce use of fleet vehicles.

Performance Measures

Measure Type	Primary Measure	Previous Year Actual (FY05-06)	Current Year Purchased (FY06-07)	Current Year Estimate (FY06-07)	Next Year Offer (FY07-08)
Output	Percent of eligible employees carrying passes	75.0%	81.0%	75.0%	80.0%
Outcome	County worksites meeting DEQ requirement for employee trip reduction goals	72.0%	85.0%	80.0%	85.0%
Outcome	Number of annual drive alone commuter trips	394,628	355,165	355,000	350,000
Outcome	Percent of commute trips using public transport	0.0%	0.0%	48.0%	52.0%

Performance Measure - Description

Output: Previously reported number of passes issued. Measure changed to report percent of eligible employees with pass because number of passes issued is relative to employee population.

Outcome 1 and 2: DEQ survey occurs every other year - no new data until June 07 survey results available.

Outcome 3 (New): In response to FY07 budget note, County employees with an issued bus pass were surveyed in Oct 07 - seeking more specific usage information than is collect in the DEQ survey. 49% of surveyed employees responded. Complete results will be delivered to the Board. This outcome is the result of data collected in this survey. Reduction in commute trips made by car result in reduction of green house gas emissions and air pollution. Estimated tail pipe emission reductions: 4 million pounds carbon dioxide, 200,862 pounds carbon monoxide, 25,584 pounds nitrous oxide, 544 pounds small particulate matter.

Legal/Contractual Obligation

1. Labor contracts require Transit Pass benefit. 2. OAR, Chapter 340, Div 12 requires employers to make a good faith effort to provide incentives for employees to potentially reduce commute trips to worksites by 10% within 3 years. To meet this requirement, County assists DEQ with their bi-annually survey to determine current commmute methods, then follows DEQ approved plan to meet target reductions. Compliance is based on submission/implementation of a sufficient plan and on whether employer made good faith effort to achieve the target. Failure to comply is a Class II environmental violation carrying penalties ranging from \$500-\$2000 per day of violation.

Revenue/Expense Detail

	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds
Program Expenses	2007	2007	2008	2008
Materials & Supplies	\$0	\$913,830	\$0	\$942,482
Subtotal: Direct Exps:	\$0	\$913,830	\$0	\$942,482
Administration	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Program Support	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal: Other Exps:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total GF/non-GF:	\$0	\$913,830	\$0	\$942,482
Program Total:	\$913,830		\$942,482	
Program FTE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Program Revenues				
Fees, Permits & Charges	\$0	\$913,830	\$0	\$942,482
Program Revenue for Admin	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Revenue:	\$0	\$913,830	\$0	\$942,482

Explanation of Revenues

Program is funded via the benefits administration charge to departments. County pays cost of program at onset of transit pass year (September) in order to receive a 5% discount (\$46K) on the annual program cost.

Significant Program Changes

Last year this program was:

Last year this was Program Offer #72009. Summer 2006 County employees residing in Washington State were surveyed to determine whether they would purchase a C-Tran pass if that option were provided by County on a pre-tax basis. 457 surveys were sent, 101 responses returned (22%). 5% of responders would be interested in purchasing a pass through the County, if that option were available. County has elected not to pursue this option for such a small group - it is not cost effective.