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16. Abstract <p>This research investigated the potential for a statewide ridesharing and vanpool program for Arizona. By performing a literature review, surveying other state DOTs and conducting a needs assessment, the research investigated the need for, logistics of, and funding options for a statewide ridesharing and vanpooling program. The product of this research is an implementation plan that includes four recommendations for the organization and deployment of ridesharing and vanpooling services in two target areas along with assessments to identify future priority areas and potential roles for AzDOT in fostering statewide services. The implementation plan has four recommendations for AzDOT:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Flagstaff</i> – The team recommends that AzDOT assist with the start-up of a ridesharing initiative in the Flagstaff area. The team recommends that the Chamber of Commerce undertake employer outreach and help coordinate ridesharing services offered by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the local transit authority.</li> <li>2. <i>Kingman/Bullhead City/Lake Havasu City</i> – The team recommends that a more detailed feasibility study be conducted for these three cities in Mohave County. While the need for ridesharing services is fairly apparent, the means to coordinate and provide these services are not.</li> <li>3. <i>Identification of Future Priority Areas</i> – The team recommends periodic assessments be made with local chambers of commerce, key local agencies, and AzDOT district offices to determine if conditions warrant the offering of ridesharing services to address congestion and mobility issues in key corridors or areas.</li> <li>4. <i>Role of AzDOT in Fostering Statewide Services</i> – Several supporting activities are available for AzDOT to undertake to facilitate the growth of carpooling and vanpooling in non-urban areas. First, AzDOT can support a statewide ridematching service similar to that provided by Valley Metro to Tucson and Flagstaff. AzDOT can also assist with new vanpool acquisition. Furthermore, AzDOT can provide technical assistance to areas interested in creating a new ridesharing program with guidance and funding for start-up. AzDOT can also convene ridesharing program managers from around the state for networking, training, and technical assistance.</li> </ol>			
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## SI\* (MODERN METRIC) CONVERSION FACTORS

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fl	foot-Lamberts	3.426	candela/m <sup>2</sup>	cd/m <sup>2</sup>	cd/m <sup>2</sup>	candela/m <sup>2</sup>	0.2919	foot-Lamberts	fl
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lbf/in <sup>2</sup>	poundforce per square inch	6.89	kilopascals	kPa	kPa	kilopascals	0.145	poundforce per square inch	lbf/in <sup>2</sup>

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## GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AzDOT	Arizona Department of Transportation
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CMAQ	Congestion Mitigation Air Quality
CMR	Commonwealth of Massachusetts Regulation
CoDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation
CTE	Center for Transportation and the Environment
CTR	Commute Trip Reduction
DOT	Department of Transportation
ERH	Emergency Ride Home
ESTC	Eric Schreffler, Transportation Consultant
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
HOV	High-Occupancy Vehicle
JARC	Jobs Access Reverse Commute
MEOT	Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation
MiDOT	Michigan Department of Transportation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NAIPTA	Northern Arizona Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority
NAU	Northern Arizona University
NCDOT	North Carolina Department of Transportation
NTD	National Transit Database
OhDOT	Ohio Department of Transportation
RPC	Regional Planning Commission
RTC	Regional Transportation Commission
SPR	State Planning and Research
TDM	Transportation Demand Management
TMA	Transportation Management Association
TMI	Transportation Management Initiative
UTA	Utah Transit Authority
VA	Virginia
VDRPT	Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation
VEDA	Vermont Economic Development Authority

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of *SPR 610 - Implementing a Statewide Rideshare and Vanpool Program in Arizona* is to investigate the potential of a statewide rideshare and vanpool program in Arizona. A team of people from The Center for Transportation and the Environment, Eric N. Schreffler, Transportation Consultant, and Transportation Management Services completed the project for the Arizona Department of Transportation (AzDOT). . The project involved the following task deliverables: a literature review, a survey of state departments of transportation (DOTs), a needs assessment, and an implementation plan.

For the first task, the literature review, the team examined existing information on effective rideshare and vanpool programs, such as incentives to try and to use carpools and vanpools, work hour flexibility for rideshare users, and easy-to-use services to find rideshare partners. The team also examined relevant research on the logistical operations of rideshare and vanpool programs, such as organizational structure, staff roles and responsibilities, and vanpool formation and fares.

Using the information collected in the literature review as a guide, the team then developed and administered a survey to DOT agencies across the country. The survey gathered data on the current role of state DOTs in the implementation and delivery of rideshare programs and services. Nine DOT agencies or similar organizations participated in the survey. The findings revealed that rideshare programs and services are typically funded and managed at the regional or local level and not at the state level. State DOTs that are involved in ridesharing programs largely focus their efforts in several key areas, including: vanpool fleet acquisition or loans, pooled insurance, and statewide contracts; referral of calls to a statewide phone number for an appropriate regional or local program; and integration of ridesharing into state-wide plans or policies.

In the next step, the team gathered information on the need and support for ridesharing and vanpooling services in key areas around the state outside of Maricopa and Pima Counties. After identifying, contacting, and interviewing people in a select number of areas throughout the state, the team identified two target areas—Flagstaff and the Kingman/Bullhead City/Lake Havasu City area—as most suitable for the development and deployment of rideshare and vanpool programs.

The final task was to develop an implementation plan for AzDOT to follow. The plan that was developed has the following four recommendations: :

1. Flagstaff – The team recommends that AzDOT assist with the start-up of a ridesharing initiative in the Flagstaff area. The team recommends that the Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce undertake employer outreach and help coordinate ridesharing services offered by the Flagstaff Metropolitan Planning Organization (FMPO) and the local transit authority. This action will provide the needed marketing for the ridematching system acquired from Valley Metro in Phoenix. The new partnership between the Chamber, the Flagstaff MPO, and

Northern Arizona Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority, (NAIPTA) can also promote and form vanpools for commuters with long distance commutes.

2. Kingman/Bullhead City/Lake Havasu City area – The team recommends that a more detailed feasibility study be conducted for these three cities in Mohave County. While the need for ridesharing services is fairly apparent, the means to coordinate and provide these services are not. Therefore, the team recommends conducting a feasibility study and pilot project to test the demand for commuter services.
3. Identification of Future Priority Areas – The team recommends periodic assessments be made with local chambers of commerce, key local agencies, and AzDOT district offices to determine if conditions warrant the offering of ridesharing services to address congestion and mobility issues in key corridors or areas.
4. Role of AzDOT in Fostering Statewide Services – Several supporting activities are available for AzDOT to undertake to facilitate the growth of carpooling and vanpooling in non-urban areas. First, AzDOT can support a statewide ridematching service similar to that provided by Valley Metro to Tucson and Flagstaff. AzDOT can also assist with new vanpool acquisition. Furthermore, AzDOT can provide technical assistance, guidance and start-up funding to areas interested in creating a new ridesharing program. AzDOT can also convene ridesharing program managers from around the state for networking, training, and technical assistance.

These general recommendations, pilot study, and implementation plan provide AzDOT with a guideline to implement rideshare and vanpool programs in non-metropolitan areas of Arizona as well as engage in new activities to support the implementation of statewide services. With this plan in place, AzDOT should have the proper tools and guidance to increase services to commuters, reduce traffic congestion, and improve air quality in Arizona.



## **CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE**

*SPR 610 - Implementing a Statewide Rideshare and Vanpool Program in Arizona* provides the Arizona Department of Transportation with an implementation plan for a statewide rideshare and vanpool program. The research for this project primarily investigates the potential for a rideshare and vanpool program in the non-metropolitan areas of Arizona where established rideshare programs do not exist. In addition, the research examines the feasibility of a statewide rideshare and vanpool program in Arizona, specifically the demand for services, operation logistics, and funding options.

The need for this research can be attributed to the growing number of commuters in areas outside of Maricopa and Pima counties in Arizona. Their increasing numbers and lengthening of commutes create problems that rideshare and vanpool programs can mitigate. For example, such programs could reduce travel costs for the commuters, decrease congestion on roads not designed for heavy traffic, and offer residents more options for their travel needs.

The project team, consisting of members from The Center for Transportation and the Environment, Eric N. Schreffler, Transportation Consultant, and Transportation Management Services, developed a series of tasks to complete before creating an implementation plan for AzDOT. This report describes these tasks and the products the team generated in doing them.

Its concluding chapter, the Implementation Plan, is organized in four sections: the implementation plan for the Flagstaff area; the pilot for the Kingman/Bullhead City/Lake Havasu City area; the identification of future priority areas; and the role of AzDOT in fostering statewide services.



## CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

### TASK 2 OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY

The project team reviewed the literature to establish what is known about rideshare and vanpool programs and, more importantly, to identify if and what type of additional research may be needed. The literature review primarily focused on the elements of effective ridesharing and vanpool programs, including: incentives to try or to use carpools or vanpools, work hour flexibility for rideshare users, and easy-to-use services for finding rideshare partners. Regarding vanpools specifically, the literature review pointed to using the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Capital Cost of Contracting to reduce vanpool lease costs. Furthermore, the literature review included an examination of a peer program in the State of Washington that funds a Vanpool Investment Program to capitalize new vanpools by transit agencies throughout the state. Washington State also supported the statewide expansion of RideshareOnline.com, a free, statewide service for potential carpools and vanpoolers.<sup>1</sup>

After conducting the literature review, the project team arrived at the following conclusions:

- *Finding:* Rideshare programs have many logistical elements, such as organizational structure, staff roles and responsibilities, and vanpool formation and fare structure.  
*Action:* Develop a comprehensive list of the elements to be considered in implementing a statewide rideshare program and a plan of action for addressing them.
- *Finding:* Vanpooling, specifically, appeals to commuters traveling 15 or more one-way miles to their worksite.  
*Action:* Identify key corridors throughout the state where commuters are likely to travel 15 or more miles to work.
- *Finding:* Existing literature describes four general types of vanpools prevalent in the industry.  
*Action:* Determine which vanpool system, or mixture of systems, is most suitable for AzDOT.
- *Finding:* Many vanpool programs use creative funding sources to supplement more traditional federal government funding.  
*Action:* Determine the funding sources and financing techniques most appropriate for the AzDOT program.
- *Finding:* Existing research points to several important elements critical to program operations from management and staffing to paid media and public relations.  
*Action:* Establish a budget that ensures proper allocation of funds to operate an effective program.
- *Finding:* Financial incentives and disincentives and targeted public education and marketing are important in inducing participation.  
*Action:* Develop a strategy to market the program and encourage ridership through the use of incentives and supporting strategies.

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<sup>1</sup> King County Metro, <http://rideshareonline.com/>, accessed June 10, 2008.

## **Literature Research Methodology**

This literature review is a synthesis of published research studies believed to be most critical to the development of a statewide ridesharing and vanpool program, with particular emphasis on vanpooling. While it is typical for a literature review to evaluate the findings of various authors, this document stops short of providing such an analysis. The focus of the literature review is to underline the logistical and funding elements that need to be included in the ridesharing and vanpool implementation plan and to establish a framework for future research that needs to be conducted to develop the plan. As such, the review examines relevant research on ridesharing, and in particular the different types of vanpools in operation across the country, key elements of notable vanpool programs, potential funding sources and techniques, and the planning, implementation, and coordination questions that must be considered in establishing a program.

## **The Growth and Outlook for Ridesharing and Vanpools**

Offering ridesharing alternatives to commuters is one of many transportation demand strategies. According to the Victoria Transportation Policy Institute's *Online Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Encyclopedia*, "ridesharing is one of the most common and cost-effective alternative modes, particularly in areas that are not well served by public transit." Success is dependent on the number of people participating in the rideshare program—the more people who are registered in the program, the greater the opportunity of finding rideshare partners. In general, rideshare programs typically provide services to find carpool and/or vanpool partners, engage in program marketing, and may also provide incentives.<sup>2</sup>

*Mitigating Traffic Congestion: The Role of Demand-Side Strategies* defines carpooling and vanpooling under mode choices for travelers. According to the publication, carpooling provides the most flexibility of ridesharing options and is more informal than vanpooling. Trips appropriate for carpooling are those that are at least 10 miles or take more than 20-30 minutes. Carpoolers typically travel in privately owned vehicles with two or more passengers who are often family members, friends, or co-workers. Research shows vanpooling generally best serves those with commutes of at least 15 miles. Vanpooling is also an appealing option for trips between suburbs as well as trips with origins and/or destinations in smaller communities that have fewer transportation alternatives because of location or lower density development or both.<sup>3</sup>

## **Types of Vanpool Operations**

Existing literature describes four general types of vanpool operations prevalent in the industry, as outlined below. The pros and cons of each will be important to consider when selecting the most appropriate type of vanpool operation for AzDOT. The project team used the state DOT interviews and the knowledge and experiences they share to

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<sup>2</sup> Victoria Transportation Policy Institute, *On-line TDM Encyclopedia*, Congestion Reduction Strategies (May 2005), Ridesharing (May 2006), <http://www.vtppi.org/tdm/>, accessed April 1, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Association for Commuter Transportation, "Mitigating Traffic Congestion: The Role of Demand-Side Strategies," prepared for FHWA, Report No. FHWA-HOP-05-001, October 2004.

help determine which vanpool system, or mixture of systems, would be most suitable for AzDOT.<sup>4</sup>

1. “Owner/operator – individuals who buy/lease a vehicle for vanpooling. The downsides of this type of operation are issues with affordable insurance and adequate coverage.”
2. “Employer – companies who buy/lease vehicles for use by their employees. The costs associated with employer owned/leased vehicles make this a less attractive option for most employers.”
3. “Private operator – third-party vanpool providers. These are private organizations that operate vanpool services for commuters, companies, and government agencies. The largest of these providers is VPSI with approximately 3,500 vehicles across 60 cities.” Enterprise Rent-A-Car, among others, also operates vanpool services. Valley Metro, in Maricopa County, and the Pima Association of Governments in the Tucson area have arrangements with third party vanpool providers.
4. “Public transit – Transit systems have tried stimulating participation in vanpooling usually by either building their own vanpooling operation or teaming with a private operator.”

### **Vanpool Program Funding and Financing Techniques**

The *TDM Program Comparison Study*<sup>5</sup> (written by a member of the project team) identified several potential funding sources available for Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs, with the most often used being federal funding in the form Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funds. Funding, however, can come from the state, local sources, or the private sector. An example of a program using state money occurs in Phoenix where a portion of Arizona’s State Air Quality Fund is used for TDM activities. State statute Money for the State Air Quality Fund comes from an annual \$1.50 air quality fee charged on all registered vehicles.. Another example included in the literature is the statewide employer-based Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) program in Washington State which includes a rideshare tax credit.<sup>6</sup>

Funding can also come from a local source, like a local sales tax, developer fees or tax increment funding, or a private sector donation. For example, “in Houston, TDM programs are supported by a portion of a local sales tax imposed on the area served by

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<sup>4</sup> Winters, P. and F. Cleland. “Vanpool Pricing and Financing Guide.” Florida Department of Transportation Research Center, 2001.

<sup>5</sup> Center for Transportation and the Environment, “TDM Program Comparison Study.” Georgia Department of Transportation. February 2006.

<sup>6</sup> Commute Trip Reduction Task Force. “CTR Task Force 2005 Report to the Washington State Legislature.” Washington Department of Transportation, Public Transportation and Commute Options Office, February 2006.

the city's transit system." TDM programs in Atlanta and Washington, D.C. receive funding from private client members obtaining services from these programs.<sup>7</sup>

*The Vanpool Pricing and Financing Guide* offers a list of traditional and creative financing techniques to start or expand a vanpool program.<sup>8</sup> The project team explore these techniques, listed below, in more detail in the chapter on the survey of state DOTs and provide guidance on the type of funding and financing structure most suitable for them. A brief description of each is included.

- Capital Cost of Contracting – Federal Transit Administration (FTA) policy that allows for allocation of more federal resources for vanpooling. FTA has specific guidelines and procedures for eligible expenses.
- Capital Leasing – FTA rule whereby “recipients may acquire tangible assets by lease, and all eligible lease costs may be reimbursed as capital expenses.”
- Toll Revenue Credits for Local Match – Provision under TEA-21 that, under specific circumstances, allows transit agencies to use revenue from toll facilities as local match.
- Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Funds – Allows funding for various vanpool-related activities meeting well-defined criteria under CMAQ guidance.
- Conditional Sale – “...transaction where the vehicle provider retains a security interest in the vehicle.”
- Municipal Lease Purchase – “...financing method that allows transit agencies to purchase equipment on an installment basis at tax-exempt interest rates.”
- Take Over Existing Employer-Operated Vanpool Program – Strategy in which a public agency acquires an existing system with an established base of riders.
- Customer Financing – State Tax Incentives: Individual and Employer – Options available at the state level to provide incentives to vanpool riders and/or employers supporting vanpool programs.
- Customer Financing – Federal Tax Incentives: Employer – Internal Revenue Service (IRS) provision (Section 132 (f)) that allows employers to subsidize employees' cost of commuting up to a certain level and allows employees to use pre-tax dollars to cover qualified transportation fringe benefits.
- Advertising Revenue – Vans are “wrapped” by advertisers with fees used to finance a portion of operating expenses.
- Timesharing – Concept of cooperative fleet management to use vehicles during idle times.
- Resource Sharing – Transit agency staff trained to conduct warranty repairs on vehicles.
- Use State Contracts to Purchase – Purchasing off state contracts to save both money and time.
- Financial Matching Program – Leveraging public dollars with private sector subsidies.

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<sup>7</sup> Center for Transportation and the Environment, “TDM Program Comparison Study.” Georgia Department of Transportation. February 2006.

<sup>8</sup> Winters, P. and F. Cleland. “Vanpool Pricing and Financing Guide.” Florida Department of Transportation Research Center, 2001.

- Rent it – Option to rent vehicles if there is a fluctuation in demand.
- Prepayment Inducements – Use of pre-sold passes to maintain costs when vans are trying to find replacement riders.

Once funding is secured, the distribution of the funds across the program becomes an important consideration. Research points to several important elements, from management and staffing to paid media and public relations that should be considered for inclusion in program operations.<sup>9</sup> The following elements and their composition within the overall budget for other ridesharing and vanpool programs are explored in greater detail in the chapter on the state DOT survey.

- Management
- Staffing
- Employer Outreach and Services
- Incentives
- Education
- Paid Media
- Public Relations

### **Important Elements of Successful Rideshare and Vanpool Programs**

Overall, ridesharing programs tend to be most successful when paired with other TDM strategies, such as financial incentives, and when they are widely promoted over larger geographic regions (e.g., a regional program as opposed to an individual worksite or locality).<sup>10</sup> Other strategies often help increase the success of ridesharing as well. The Victoria Transportation Policy Institute’s *Online TDM Encyclopedia*<sup>11</sup> highlights some options to consider:

#### **Incentives**

- Empty seat subsidies;
- Fare subsidies by employers or transit agencies; and
- Other financial rewards for shifting to rideshare.

#### **Other Strategies**

- Increased flexibility (e.g., allow vanpoolers to use the mode 2-3 days a week as opposed to everyday);
- Targeted, direct marketing;
- Premium quality service options (e.g., work stations on vanpools);
- Transfers to transit services;
- HOV priority and preferred parking; and
- Rent cars the same as vanpools are rented.

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<sup>9</sup> Center for Transportation and the Environment, “TDM Program Comparison Study.” Georgia Department of Transportation. February 2006.

<sup>10</sup> Victoria Transportation Policy Institute, *On-line TDM Encyclopedia*, Congestion Reduction Strategies (September 2007), Ridesharing (May 2006), <http://www.vtppi.org/tdm/>, accessed April 1, 2008.

<sup>11</sup> Victoria Transportation Policy Institute, “Ridesharing(May 2006),” *On-line TDM Encyclopedia*, <http://www.vtppi.org/tdm/>, accessed April 1, 2008.

In addition, research highlights the need for well-publicized programs to engage as many commuters as possible in rideshare arrangements.

In relation to vanpooling, *Vanpool Growth in the Atlanta Region: Is There a Secret Recipe?*<sup>12</sup> included in the literature review and written by one of the Project Consulting team members, summarizes four successful vanpool programs across the nation. A summary of some of the more common elements of the programs is included below:

- **Creative funding sources and techniques** to supplement more traditional federal government funding. Reporting vanpool miles to the National Transit Database (NTD) with the purpose of generating significant FTA 5307 revenue for the vanpool subsidies and other purposes. State and local surcharges and taxes to help meet federal match requirements. Use of FTA's Capital Cost of Contracting to help bring down costs.
- **Incentives** to encourage participation, like buying down the cost of vanpool seats and allowing drivers to use vans for personal use and to ride for free.
- **Funding dollars** programmed specifically to promote awareness of the program and to educate potential riders of the benefits.
- **Other supporting strategies** to help sell and promote the program. Supporting strategies can be a significant selling point, and research shows that programs offering at least some additional benefits are oftentimes more successful than those that do not. The *Vanpool Pricing and Financing Guide*<sup>13</sup> includes the following list of strategies:
  - Priority HOV facilities;
  - Preferential parking;
  - Flexible work hours;
  - Guaranteed Ride Home;
  - Reduced parking charges;
  - Insurance (for owner-operators);
  - New start vanpools subsidies; and
  - Employer-subsidies.

Another vanpool program worth noting that was not included in *Vanpool Growth in the Atlanta Region: Is There a Secret Recipe?* is the Vanpool Investment Program administered by the State of Washington. "The program is statewide with a focus on congested corridors and in areas where opportunities for providing roadway capacity are limited and expensive. The funds are for public transit agencies and can be used only for capital costs associated with putting new vans on the road and for incentives for

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<sup>12</sup> ESTC, *Vanpool Growth in the Atlanta Region: Is There a Secret Recipe*, prepared for the Center for Transportation and the Environment. DATE

<sup>13</sup> Winters, P. and F. Cleland. *Vanpool Pricing and Financing Guide*. Florida Department of Transportation Research Center, 2001.



employers to increase employee vanpool use. Transit operators invest in other areas of the program such as public awareness, operational enhancements, customer outreach, and technology enhancements.” The vanpool program is largely funded by the state legislature, which allotted \$30 million to expand vanpooling statewide in the 10-year transportation plan.<sup>14</sup>

An important element of this program was the expansion of RideshareOnline.com, a free statewide service for potential vanpoolers and carpoolers. Targeted financial incentives and employer outreach have also helped to increase the van occupancy rates.

### **Planning, Implementation, and Coordination of Rideshare Programs**

While there are several benefits associated with ridesharing programs, there are many logistical concerns that need to be addressed in program planning and implementation. The review of existing literature brought out many of these issues, which will be investigated in more detail as part of the state DOT interviews.

Rideshare programs can be implemented by a variety of organizational structures, including individual employers, Transportation Management Associations, universities, transit agencies, and transportation agencies.<sup>15</sup> Because of the potential for several players, thoughtful coordination among them is critical to the success of the program. The groups involved must have a plan for leveraging resources to support program elements, such as carpool and vanpool matching services, incentives, and program marketing.

Additional concerns with vanpools include locating a sufficient number of riders and back-up drivers (vanpool formation), setting a fare structure, collecting payments from riders, and establishing a fixed schedule.<sup>16</sup> Below is a list of additional logistical questions that will be important to answer during development of the implementation plan:

- What policies can be implemented to help AZDOT provide statewide ridesharing services and vanpool programs?
- What are the potential sources of funding and funding techniques to support statewide ridesharing services and vanpool programs? How should the funding be programmed and allocated among the various expenditures?
- What is the most efficient type of vanpool operation?
- What should the strategy be to encourage ridesharing and vanpool ridership, including promotion and educating the potential market?

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<sup>14</sup> Commute Trip Reduction Task Force. *CTR Task Force 2005 Report to the Washington State Legislature*. Washington Department of Transportation, Public Transportation and Commute Options Office, February 2006.

<sup>15</sup> Victoria Transportation Policy Institute, *On-line TDM Encyclopedia*, Congestion Reduction Strategies (May 2005), Ridesharing (May 2006), <http://www.vtppi.org/tdm/>, accessed April 1, 2008.

<sup>16</sup> Winters, P. and F. Cleland. *Vanpool Pricing and Financing Guide*. Florida Department of Transportation Research Center, 2001.

- What other services, either existing or proposed, should be provided to help support ridesharing services and vanpool programs?
- How many staff people and hours will be needed to administer the program? What are the staff responsibilities and roles?
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### **The Benefits of Ridesharing and Vanpooling**

While there are many logistical issues associated with establishing a ridesharing and vanpool program, there are also a great number of benefits that can encourage support from funding agencies. For example, the cost per passenger mile is generally lower for ridesharing than any other motorized mode of transportation.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, the literature notes that successful “vanpool programs can attract 5-10% of commute trips of more than 20 miles in length and this mode share can grow to 15-25% if the program receives support from employers, financial incentives, and direct marketing.” There are also individual benefits to be communicated to potential drivers, riders, employers, and the community. The Project Consulting team believes these are important to highlight in the literature review because they help sell the value of establishing a vanpool program, especially when the logistical issues seem overwhelming. Potential benefits include providing transportation to others in the household, providing safe, dependable, and reliable transportation to work, reducing training costs as employers recognize increased employee retention, and reducing wear and tear on infrastructure. Other benefits noted in the *Vanpool Pricing and Financing Guide*<sup>18</sup> for each group are included below:

#### **Vanpool Driver**

- Reduces need to purchase a personal vehicle
- Receives use of vehicle for personal trips
- Obtains lower vehicle insurance rates
- Reduces household’s vehicle maintenance costs
- Requires no long term commitment

#### **Vanpool Rider**

- Reduces stress
- Increases access to job markets
- Saves money on commuting costs, such as gasoline, and wear-and-tear on personal vehicles

#### **Employer**

- Reduces the need for additional parking
- Increases access to labor markets
- Increases productivity, reduces absenteeism and tardiness
- Provides an effective, low-cost recruitment tool

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<sup>17</sup> Victoria Transportation Policy Institute, *On-line TDM Encyclopedia*, Congestion Reduction Strategies (May 2005), Ridesharing (May 2006), <http://www.vtpi.org/tdm/>, accessed April 1, 2008.

<sup>18</sup> Winters, P. and F. Cleland. *Vanpool Pricing and Financing Guide*. Florida Department of Transportation Research Center, 2001.

## **Community**

- Serves communities not served by transit such as bus and rail
- Requires fewer passengers than a bus
- Increases federal and state funds to transit
- Reduces rush-hour congestion
- Improves air quality
- Reduces dependence on fossil fuels

## **Conclusions**

As mentioned previously, an important objective of this initial task was to provide a stepping-stone for more detailed research that needs to be conducted in order to develop an implementation plan for a statewide ridesharing and vanpool program for AzDOT. Specifically, the logistical and funding elements outlined in the previous sections will be used to help guide interviews with state DOTs and key Arizona employers and commuters. It is also the Project Consulting team's goal to use the interviews with state DOTs to gather more information on statewide rideshare activities as the team was unable to identify published feasibility studies to include in this literature review. To that end, the following bullets summarize the Project Consulting team's conclusions from the existing literature and offer topic areas and suggestions for proceeding in the next phase of research.

- *Finding:* Rideshare programs include many logistical elements, such as organizational structure, staff roles and responsibilities, and vanpool formation and fare structure.  
*Action:* Develop a comprehensive list of the elements to be considered in implementing a statewide rideshare program and a plan of action for addressing it.
- *Finding:* Vanpooling, specifically, appeals to commuters traveling 15 or more one-way miles to their worksite.  
*Action:* Identify key corridors throughout the state where commuters are likely to travel 15 or more miles to work.
- *Finding:* Existing literature describes four general types of vanpools prevalent in the industry.  
*Action:* Determine which vanpool system, or mixture of systems, is most suitable for AzDOT.
- *Finding:* Many vanpool programs use creative funding sources to supplement more traditional federal government funding.  
*Action:* Determine the funding sources and financing techniques most appropriate for the AzDOT program.
- *Finding:* Existing research points to several important elements critical to program operations from management and staffing to paid media and public relations.  
*Action:* Establish a budget that ensures proper allocation of funds to operate an effective program.

- *Finding:* Financial incentives and disincentives and targeted public education and marketing are important in inducing participation.  
*Action:* Develop a strategy to market the program and encourage ridership through the use of incentives and supporting strategies.

## **CHAPTER 3 – STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SURVEYS**

### **TASK 3 OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY**

The project team developed a survey in consultation with AzDOT to explore current experience with statewide programs and DOT support for ridesharing and vanpooling. Nine state DOTs participated in the survey. The team selected the DOT agencies to survey based on their knowledge of statewide rideshare programs, responses from the State Planning and Research (SPR) 566 project, and inquiries to national ridesharing resources.

While the state DOT survey did not uncover extensive information on statewide and non-urban programs, it did provide information on the types of activities typically undertaken by state DOTs in the area of rideshare and vanpool support. Furthermore, it should be noted that state DOT involvement in rideshare has diminished in the past 10-20 years as funding has shifted from state control to a more regional focus, especially with Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funding, which supports a majority of ridesharing efforts in the U.S. Many state DOTs, including California and Michigan, which once broadly supported ridesharing, are now largely inactive participants and rely heavily on regional or county level administration of programs.

However, the two activities that are still supported by some state DOTs are statewide ridematching or information and vanpool acquisition. In the case of the former activity, some states that support statewide ridematching contract this service to one of the regional programs located in a metropolitan area (e.g., Ohio and North Carolina). Moreover, some still maintain a state-wide toll free phone number and refer these calls to the closest regional program. In the case of vanpools, some states offer interest-free loans (Vermont), vanpool acquisition (Michigan), subsidy program (Virginia), or rural vanpool programs (North Carolina). From the review of the survey findings, the project team determined the current role of state DOTs in ridesharing and vanpooling to be:

- Vanpool fleet acquisition or loans, pooled insurance, and/or subsidies
- Referral of calls to statewide rideshare information number to appropriate region
- Limited coordination and technical assistance among programs within the state
- Integration of ridesharing into statewide policies, plans, and programs

#### **Introduction of the State Department of Transportation (DOT) Survey**

The following sections present the results of surveys conducted with state DOTs and other agencies responsible for implementing ridesharing and/or vanpooling programs. It is the second of a three-step process created by the project team to develop a statewide ridesharing and vanpooling program implementation plan for the State of Arizona.

#### **Methodology**

The project team selected agencies to survey based on its knowledge of statewide rideshare programs, responses from the SPR 566 project, and inquiries to national

ridesharing resources. CTE contacted representatives of each agency requesting that they either complete a telephone or paper survey. All agencies received an electronic version of the survey. Contacts at two states' agencies, Oregon and New Jersey, declined participation in the survey.

<b>State</b>	<b>Organization/ Agency Surveyed</b>	<b>Organization/Agency Description</b>
Colorado	Department of Transportation	Functions as funding pass through agency; review project scopes and budgets (project selection committee member); provides technical support
Massachusetts	MassRIDES	Administers statewide TDM program on behalf of Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation
Michigan	Department of Transportation	Administers statewide vanpool program and other alternative mode programs
New Mexico	Mid-region Council of Governments	Currently working on study to develop a statewide ridesharing program
North Carolina	Department of Transportation	Administers statewide rural vanpool program; manages eight urban TDM programs implemented in service areas throughout the state
Ohio	Mid Ohio Regional Planning Commission	Hosts statewide ridesharing database; administers TDM programs for largest metropolitan planning organization in the state
Utah	Utah Transit Authority	Administers state's TDM programs
Vermont	Vermont Economic Development Authority	Administers statewide interest free loan vanpool program
Virginia	Department of Rails and Public Transportation	Funds statewide vanpool subsidy program and implements Telework!VA

It might be useful to discuss the history of state involvement in ridesharing over the past 30 years to help understand the current role. In 1974, an emergency act of Congress allowed states to use federal-aid funds to finance rideshare programs in response to the oil embargo. As such, state DOTs, which largely controlled federal-aid monies, were instrumental in developing and funding rideshare programs. For example, California DOT (Caltrans) maintained annual contracts with private non-profit organizations across the state to deliver ridesharing services and set performance standards and program targets. Caltrans also developed a standardized method for estimating the impact of programs in terms of commuter placement into ridesharing modes.

However, with the advent of Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) funding in the early 1990s, control of funds available for ridesharing shifted from states to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). Today, most regional ridesharing programs are funded, managed, and/or overseen by the regional MPO or another local agency. In most states, this has resulted in state DOTs reducing the state role in rideshare funding or coordination.

## **Statewide Ridesharing Policies and Programs**

### ***Policies***

Most of the agencies and organizations participating in the survey provide some level of statewide ridesharing and/or vanpooling support. Three respondents cited a specific statewide policy or regulation. In addition, Massachusetts, Virginia, and Utah mentioned the inclusion of ridesharing in their state's Long Range Transportation Plan as a strategy to manage and operate the statewide transportation system more efficiently ().

Of the three respondents citing specific regulations, two said the regulations in their states (Massachusetts and Utah) related to employer based trip reduction programs and have a more urban focus. Regulations in the other (Vermont) are related to providing an economically viable option to transport workers and has a more rural focus. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, through the implementation of Massachusetts Rideshare Regulation (310 CMR 7.6), requires businesses of a certain size to develop plans and evaluate progress on reducing commuter drive-alone trips. Similarly, Utah has implemented a state statute to improve air quality through the reduction of vehicle trips (Utah Code Title 19, Chapter 02). Vermont's ridesharing policy gives the Vermont Economic Development Authority (VEDA) power to facilitate the purchase of vans by private entities for the purpose of ridesharing arrangements (10 V.S.A § 280 g). Eligible groups can purchase the vans using low-interest or interest-free loans provided by VEDA and the Vermont DOT.

The respondents were asked how important ridesharing regulations and inclusion of ridesharing in state transportation plans are to statewide ridesharing program success. States with employer based trip reduction program regulations said that the regulations are not widely enforced. Only a small number of employers are concerned with failing to comply. As a result, the regulations provide little assistance to the organizations working with employers to implement ridesharing programs. States that include ridesharing in state transportation plans believe it can be helpful to establishing statewide support and funding, especially if the plan includes specific and measurable actions to implement ridesharing.

### ***Programs***

As mentioned above, most agencies and organizations participating in the survey provide some level of statewide ridesharing and/or vanpooling assistance. Statewide support largely depends on the funding available, the number of organizations providing transportation demand management (TDM) programs throughout the state, and the desire among the state and TDM organizations to participate in a statewide program. Below are some examples of the varying levels of support that are provided.

**Colorado** – Colorado DOT (CoDOT) does not administer any statewide TDM programs and instead relies on three local MPOs to implement TDM programs. CoDOT functions as the funding pass-through agency and also reviews the project scopes and budgets as a member of the CMAQ funding project selection committee for each MPO. CoDOT also provides technical support to

organizations and individuals across the state regarding TDM activities and strategies. While the MPOs promote programs separately, the vanpool coordinators at each MPO do meet monthly to discuss programs and also participate in joint marketing efforts for vanpooling initiatives when appropriate.

**Massachusetts** - Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation (MEOT) is a strong supporter of a statewide ridesharing and vanpool program. A private contractor implements the statewide program (MassRIDES) on behalf of MEOT. The primary component of the program is employer outreach, with supporting services such as hosting and administering a statewide rideshare database and Emergency Ride Home program. MassRIDES also reaches out to transportation management associations (TMAs) and other organizations that provide ridesharing and vanpooling services throughout the state in an attempt to coordinate programs. However, coordination among the various organizations can be a challenge, given the limited federal and state funding for TDM programs and the varying interests of the groups involved.

**North Carolina** - The North Carolina DOT (NCDOT) rideshare program is another example of a state playing a strong support role for ridesharing services. NCDOT relies on the existing TDM organizations to provide the majority of these services. NCDOT provides statewide support through TDM program start-up funding and management of existing TDM programs across the state. NCDOT also provides funding to a well-established TDM organization to host a statewide rideshare database. NCDOT partners with this organization and other TDM organizations across the state to market statewide online ridesharing services (ShareTheRideNC.org). The website provides seamless marketing and promotion for rideshare programs across the state.

In addition, NCDOT administers a statewide rural vanpool program in conjunction with urban vanpool programs operated by other TDM providers in the state. A private vanpool vendor operates NCDOT's rural vanpool program with non-CMAQ funds (Jobs Access Reverse Commute funds). The TDM providers in other areas of the state use more traditional funding sources to administer the local vanpool programs.

**Michigan** – Several years ago Michigan DOT (MiDOT) supported a more centralized ridesharing program; however, after state reassignments of funding, most of the ridesharing activities are now provided by local rideshare organizations. MiDOT does administer a statewide vanpool program implemented by a private vanpool vendor (with the exception of the Western Corridor of the state - RapidVan Program). MiDOT's vanpool program (MichiVan), which uses CMAQ funds as its primary funding source, focuses on providing vanpool services in the more urbanized areas of the state. While MiDOT does not have a statewide ridesharing program and no real resources to motivate coordination among the various local rideshare organizations, it has maintained a certain level of program unity statewide. MiDOT accomplishes this through its toll free



information line and website, both of which direct interested individuals to the appropriate local rideshare agency in the state. MiDOT also administers a Carpool Parking Lot Program that provides more than 200 carpool parking lots at locations across the state.

**Ohio** – Prior to 2000, Ohio DOT (OhDOT) sponsored a centralized statewide rideshare program. In 2000, OhDOT relinquished administration and oversight of the statewide program to Ohio MPOs. Prior to relinquishing administration and oversight duties, OhDOT played a significant role in overseeing the ridesharing programs throughout the state. OhDOT provided federal funds for the operation of locally directed ridesharing programs and required each to participate in joint marketing of carpool and vanpool services (including the VanOhio Program). Little coordination exists among these groups today. Ride Solutions—the largest local rideshare agency servicing Ohio—does receive CMAQ funding to host the statewide rideshare database, but only a small amount of funding is available to promote it as a statewide resource.

**Utah** - Utah is an example of a state with only one TDM provider – the Utah Transit Authority (UTA). UTA is responsible for administering all ridesharing and vanpooling services in Utah, with very little support from any other agencies. While the programs are considered statewide, the size of the service area for the UTA programs is governed to a great extent by the type of funding used to operate the programs. Moreover, the vanpool program, which is funded by both state and federal resources, is a truly statewide program. However, the ridesharing program, which is primarily funded with federal CMAQ dollars, does not extend beyond the counties eligible to receive CMAQ funding.

### **Non-Metropolitan Focus**

For the most part, the ridesharing and vanpooling services provided by the agencies participating in this survey are available in both urban and non-urban areas. Most agencies allow the market to drive the location and concentration of programs, and, as a result, the majority of programs are concentrated in the more urban areas of their states. The focus of attention for the non-urban programs is more on transporting workers and elderly residents and less on mitigating air pollution and traffic congestion. Three agencies implementing programs in non-urban areas of the state commented that these programs have seen minimal success (Interest Free Vanpool Loan programs in Vermont and Utah, Rural Vanpool Program in North Carolina). The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (RPC), however, has found the rural programs they offer to be particularly successful. The rural programs allow the Mid-Ohio RPC to provide low-income residents access to jobs and to form partnerships with organizations it might not reach otherwise.

### **Program Funding**

Most of the agencies surveyed justify requested ridesharing and vanpool program funding by providing participation information and data on travel and emissions reductions to funding agencies. Consequently, these agencies find it easier to gain funding support. The

primary funding source used to support ridesharing and vanpooling is Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement funding.

Some of the agencies surveyed distinguish between funding sources for urban and non-urban areas. In these cases, CMAQ funds are concentrated in the more urban areas, while other federal, state, and local sources are used to fund the non-urban areas. North Carolina DOT, for example, uses Jobs Access Reverse Commute (JARC) funds matched with state operating funds to pay for its rural vanpool program. The Utah Transit Authority uses local sales tax revenues in conjunction with CMAQ funds to supplement vanpool services in urban areas of the state and provide vanpool services in less urban areas (non-CMAQ eligible areas).

Most survey participants did not have information to share on funding allocations by expenditure type (staffing, incentives, paid media, etc.) For the two agencies providing this information, nearly 60% is allocated to management and staffing (including program administration and staff outreach). Allocation of the remaining funds varied significantly between the two agencies, largely because the services they provide are quite different. For example, Utah's program allocates \$100,000 of its budget to vanpool maintenance. Massachusetts, the other agency that provided funding allocation by expenditure type, does not have a vanpool maintenance budget because it relies on private vanpool vendors to operate vanpools in the state.

### **Ridesharing Support and Coordination**

With the exception of Utah Transit Authority, the state transportation agencies participating in this survey rely heavily on local rideshare or TDM organizations to implement ridesharing and vanpooling programs in local service areas across the state. Employers and other local organizations assist in marketing and promoting ridesharing and vanpool programs. In North Carolina, the statewide vanpool program utilizes the help of local health and human service organizations to market and promote the rural statewide vanpool program. Through the MassRIDES Partnership Program, MEOT encourages employers to provide incentives to employees, such as transit subsidies, preferential parking for high-occupancy vehicles (HOVs), and promotional incentives. Utah Transit Authority credits a large amount of its vanpool program's success to employers providing Commuter Choice subsidies to employees.

The level of support provided by the various agencies and organizations involved varies significantly. Utah Transit Authority employs nine full-time staff to operate its statewide ridesharing and vanpool program (one program director, four rideshare marketing specialists, one carpool/vanpool matching specialist, one vanpool maintenance person, one accounting coordinator, and one safety vehicle coordinator). In Massachusetts, the state has one part-time staff member who manages the statewide program contract, while the private contractor for the statewide program employs 15 full-time staff members.

Michigan DOT employs one full-time staff person, with supplemental support as needed, to manage the statewide vanpool program and other ridesharing support programs. North Carolina DOT has approval to use CMAQ funding to hire one full-time staff person to

manage the various TDM programs across the state; however, the person has not been hired yet. Both believe one staff person is sufficient, given that a private vendor operates their statewide vanpool programs and local rideshare organizations provide outreach for ridesharing and vanpooling programs. The staff at each local rideshare organization varies across both states; some may employ one staff person while other larger programs may employ up to seven staff.

States with multiple rideshare and vanpool service providers try to coordinate activities as much as possible. However, they do find it difficult to consistently coordinate activities because of the varying markets and programs offered. North Carolina and Michigan provide the best examples of seamless statewide ridesharing and vanpooling programs, even though the programs are not offered by one organization statewide.

### ***Role of State in Ridesharing***

As mentioned previously, all the state transportation agencies surveyed provide some level of support for ridesharing and vanpooling programs. The support has become more decentralized over the past several years. For the most part, state transportation agencies rely on local MPOs, transit agencies, and other groups to provide localized ridesharing services. There are primarily three reasons for the decentralization: 1) a lack of state funding or a state funding channel to support a statewide program; 2) MPOs have more direct control over federal funds that can be used for ridesharing; and 3) local agencies, like MPOs, believe they can more effectively develop and implement transportation services in their local service areas.

In areas where state funding is available, state transportation agencies will help promote local area programs. The coordination between the state and local area programs seems to work particularly well in North Carolina and Michigan, and to a lesser extent in Massachusetts. In North Carolina, program success is likely due to the fact that the state plays a key role in funding many of the established local area TDM programs. In fact, North Carolina's reliance on a local TDM organization to administer the statewide database and website and on local TDM organizations to populate the database underscores the importance of local involvement in programs. Michigan does not have a statewide rideshare database; however, Michigan DOT's website and toll free telephone line directs commuters to the appropriate local rideshare agency, giving the appearance of a more seamless program.

MEOT, which administers its own statewide rideshare database, has found it challenging to coordinate resources among the local area TDM programs across the state (including local area support of the statewide database). The lack of support is likely due to the lack of funding provided to local area programs by MEOT.

### **Program Implementation and Delivery**

All but two of the organizations surveyed have been providing ridesharing and/or vanpooling services for 20 years or more. All survey respondents said interest has grown over time, although some mentioned that some programs have been harder to get off the

ground than others. Every agency and organization participating in the survey implements and delivers programs differently.

In North Carolina, local TDM program agencies determine the TDM services provided and set service area boundaries. The local TDM programs across the state promote services differently; however, advertising and marketing is similar. TDM programs near each other periodically meet to coordinate activities. The statewide rural vanpool program is offered in the areas outside the established TDM program service area boundaries to avoid competition with established local TDM programs. NCDOT procures and evaluates the contract for the statewide vanpool program, while the contractor operates, markets, and promotes the program.

In Massachusetts, all implementation and delivery activities of the statewide TDM program are the responsibility of the statewide TDM contractor under the direction of MEOT. Optimizing available transit options, the effectiveness of incentives, and responding to the employee recruiting/retention needs of the business community determine services offered. All travel options programs are available equally to any employer or traveler, regardless of whether the employer/traveler is inside a metropolitan area or not.

MassRIDES attempts to work with other organizations providing TDM services across the state, however, coordination among the groups can be a challenge. MassRIDES is finding greater success working with communities outside established TMA service areas. Ideally, MassRIDES would employ staff in these locations to provide more personalized service and to gain local knowledge and presence, while implementing the statewide program and other programs as needed.

In Michigan, service areas and services offered are determined by the market and the ability to use CMAQ funds. The local rideshare agencies provide ridesharing services, marketing, and incentives in their respective service areas. In Utah, the TDM programs are applied throughout the state, with a focus in urban areas of the state covered by CMAQ funds (five counties). In Virginia, the TDM services offered vary by local needs; all programs are implemented by local TDM agencies except Telework!VA, which is a state program.

### **Encouraging Employer Involvement**

All of the organizations participating in the survey view employer involvement as critical to program success, especially in more urbanized areas. In more urban areas, the messages are focused on traffic congestion issues and employee frustrations with traveling to and from work. In rural areas, the messages often focus on travel to and from work for commuters who may have no other transportation available. For example, the Mid-Ohio RPC believes that working through human resource agencies to reach commuters who might not be able to travel to and from work otherwise and providing retention/relocation guidance to employers are key program elements.

Michigan DOT, North Carolina DOT, UTA, and Mid-Ohio RPC use the Commuter Choice Tax Incentive to encourage employer involvement. Massachusetts creates formal partnerships with employers to promote involvement, recommending the employers provide transit subsidies, preferential parking for HOVs, and other promotional incentives to encourage employee participation. Employer based trip reduction policies in Massachusetts and Utah also help encourage employer involvement to some extent.

### **Marketing and Promotion of Program**

As mentioned previously, local rideshare agencies promote programs locally in Michigan. Michigan supports the local programs through a toll free hotline and website, both of which direct interested individuals to the appropriate local rideshare agency. Michigan has a large transit program, and ridesharing is viewed as an arm of this program. While none of the traditional TDM programs receive public transit funds, they do receive some benefits of the funds through public transit marketing. Public transit agencies use it as an opportunity to market not only transit, but ridesharing and other TDM programs.

Face-to-face outreach and electronic communication are the primary methods of marketing and promotion for many of the organizations participating in the survey. Outreach may take place at an employer worksite event, a transportation fair, or through direct contact with existing rideshare database applicants. Websites, newsletters, and direct email correspondence are the primary means for electronic communications. While only a few of the organizations have funding available for paid media (primarily radio), all market programs through public relations. Utah employs very little marketing, relying on word of mouth and the 410 vans on the road to raise awareness and interest in the program.

### **Most/Least Effective Program Elements**

When asked about the most and least effective program elements, the agencies and organizations participating in the survey offered the following:

#### ***Most effective program elements***

- Employer outreach and employer partnerships
- Customer service
- Employer related tax incentives (Commuter Choice)
- Guaranteed Ride Home/Emergency Ride Home services
- Flat rate structure for vanpool
- Electronic communication (Internet rideshare application submittal, online ridematching, and websites)
- In rural areas specifically, providing low-income residents access to jobs, keeping vanpool rates stable, and forming partnerships with local human resource agencies

### ***Least effective and most challenging program elements***

- Getting policy leaders and business executives to understand the value of TDM programs
- Securing funding and competing for transportation dollars (public transit funding competition specifically)
- Competing with other commute alternatives, like commuter rail lines
- Limited funding available to provide incentives to encourage program use
- Coordination with other TDM providers
- Growing TDM programs in rural areas
- Vanpool formation and maintaining ridership at required levels

### **Vanpooling Programs**

#### ***Operations***

Five state agencies administer statewide vanpooling programs. Two are the sole vanpool provider for the state (Vermont and Utah). Vermont's circumstances are unique in that they operate a vanpool loan program and require the entity purchasing the van (group of private individuals or company/employer) to handle all aspects of vanpool operation. The Utah Transit Authority administers all aspects of the statewide vanpooling program. UTA chooses to run all aspects of the vanpool program because of the capital assets associated with owning the vans. UTA also collects National Transit Data (NTD) reports and annual insurance premiums from riders. However, the funds generated and insurance premiums are placed in UTA's general fund and are typically not used to fund vanpool operations.

The three other state agencies administer vanpool programs in conjunction with other organizations providing vanpooling services in the state. Michigan provides vanpool services statewide with the exception of the Western Corridor of the state (RapidVan Program). Although Massachusetts' program is statewide, other organizations across the state also provide vanpool services within local territories. North Carolina administers a statewide vanpool program in the rural areas of the state, while transit providers in three other service areas operate separate local vanpool programs.

All three agencies rely on private vanpool vendors to administer the program. Two of the states have informal agreements with private vanpool vendors to administer vanpool programs. Each Ohio MPO has a memorandum of understanding with a private vanpool vendor that outlines the relationship of the vanpool vendor and the respective MPO.

In Massachusetts, MassRIDES has established a Vanpool Alliance, an agreement between MassRIDES and the various vanpool vendors across the state. The agreement states that MassRIDES will be a vanpool vendor neutral partner. Primarily through its employer outreach program, MassRIDES promotes vanpooling and coordinates vanpool formation activities with commuters and vendors. MassRIDES provides all employers a one-page description of the various services offered by each vanpool vendor. All vanpoolers are eligible for the state's Emergency Ride Home (ERH) program; the MassRIDES Vanpool Coordinator administers ERH and other vanpool benefits,

including verification for personal automobile insurance discounts. MEOT believes the Vanpool Alliance is the most efficient and effective type of vanpool operation, as it creates a competitive marketplace for vehicle variety and for pricing options.

Michigan DOT and North Carolina DOT have contracts with one private vanpool vendor to operate their statewide vanpool programs. Both DOTs rely on the vanpool vendors' expertise, working closely with the vendors to establish work plans, goals, and planned expenditures. The DOTs believe allowing a private vendor to administer the statewide program is the most efficient and cost effective way to implement the program (decreases administrative cost by avoiding the need to employ a staff person at each location throughout the state). The state DOTs are involved with approving routes, review of invoices, review of ridership, and reviewing monthly reports. The contractor is responsible for the qualification and pricing of routes.

In Virginia, vanpools are formed through the various local agencies providing TDM services. For the exception of one transit agency that administers its own vanpool program, the local agencies refer potential vanpoolers to private vanpool vendors available in the area. Most of the Virginia vanpools are owner/independent – one of the largest such fleets in the nation travels the I-95 corridor. Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) provides assistance through the Vanpool Assistance program (VanSave/VanStart) and is also working to set up a vanpool insurance pool.

### ***Financing Techniques***

The primary funding source used to support vanpooling for the states participating in the survey is CMAQ funding. Other federal sources of funding include Jobs Access Reverse Commute (JARC) funds. North Carolina DOT, for example, uses JARC funds matched with state operating funds to pay for its rural vanpool program. The Utah Transit Authority uses local sales tax revenue in conjunction with CMAQ funds to supplement vanpool services in urban areas of the state and provide vanpool services in less urban areas (non-CMAQ eligible areas).

Some of the agencies surveyed distinguish between urban and non-urban funding sources. In these cases, CMAQ funds are concentrated in the more urban areas, while other state and local sources are used to fund the non-urban areas. North Carolina uses federal JARC funds and state funds to pay for 50% of the costs for its vanpool program. Employer subsidies and rider fares make up the remaining 50% of the cost.

In Ohio and Massachusetts, where the states have a memorandum of understanding with private vanpool vendors, the private vendors finance vanpool operations. The Mid-Ohio RPC and MEOT use a small portion of CMAQ funding to help form and maintain ridership on the vans.

With the exception of Utah Transit Authority, none of the agencies surveyed are using National Transit Database (NTD) funding to support vanpooling; however, several mentioned that they are trying to implement it. Virginia is trying to work out an NTD reporting agreement with the transit agency servicing its area, but is having difficulty

with the transit agency insurance requirements. Virginia wanted to use the NTD reporting to help reduce the costs of vanpooling to riders. When they realized this option may not be feasible, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation began researching the creation of a vanpool insurance pool to offer competition and increase availability of coverage. Another big obstacle for Virginia is the Federal Transit Administration's reluctance to use data from owner/independent vanpools. Hampton Roads Transit does record mileage for NTD and the Greater Richmond Transit Company is doing the same.

### ***Strategies to Encourage Vanpool Formation/Ridership***

The type of incentives and supporting services provided to vanpoolers also varied among those participating in the survey. MassRIDES offers financial incentives that support new vanpool formation, as well as short-term rider referral and new passenger rewards. MassRIDES analyzes travel origins for each worksite and targets vanpooling where density, distance, and schedules make it a viable option ().

Michigan DOT provides assistance through its website and toll free hotline, while the local rideshare agencies provide direct outreach and administer TDM programs. NCDOT meets with employers and has also used home-based outreach to promote the statewide vanpool program but does not directly offer incentives to vanpoolers. NCDOT does not currently use the statewide rideshare database to help form vanpools, as the state is too large to support such an effort. The database would have to see significant growth in order to match potential vanpoolers.

In Utah, UTA takes a more hands-off approach to vanpool formation due to the current high level of interest in the program. Typically, interested commuters call UTA's vanpool program and UTA places them on a waiting list. When UTA sees that enough people could make a possible route, they give the names to the other interested vanpoolers and the potential vanpoolers are responsible for calling each other and creating the vanpool. UTA credits program success to the large number of federal employers who use the Commuter Choice Tax Incentive.

Twenty-two of the 32 vanpools in the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission service area are federal employee vanpools, most of which receive the Commute Choice Tax Benefit Incentive. The large fleet of federal employee vanpools helps in vanpool formation and maintaining ridership. Matchlists and a 3-month referral subsidy (\$50 referral prize) are the primary strategies used by the Mid-Ohio RPC to form and maintain vanpools. The RPC will use other incentives, such as a vanpool subsidy for one month or an empty seat subsidy, as needed ().

The strategies used in Virginia to encourage vanpool ridership vary by market distance to core destination work areas and availability of HOV lanes with adequate park and ride lots. In some cases, private vanpool vendors independently market vanpools in close coordination with local TDM agencies. Incentive programs to form and maintain ridership are also popular (VDRPT VanStart/VanSave program).



### ***Costs to Riders/Fare Structure***

Vanpool fares typically include the lease, maintenance, insurance, and licensing costs of the van. Some vendors set rates per vehicle and others set rates per rider. Most providers vary pricing by days in operation, van capacity, number of riders, and miles traveled. Only one state participating in the survey offers a set fee (flat rate) for vanpoolers; Michigan offers a flat rate structure with three different pricing arrangements.

Some of the programs require riders to pay 100% of costs, while other programs are able to reduce the costs to riders by using available funding sources or by encouraging employers to participate in programs to reduce the costs to riders. For example, vanpoolers participating in the North Carolina statewide rural vanpool program pay a fare ranging from \$3-\$7/day. A large number of employers in Utah and Virginia subsidize the costs of vanpooling for riders by participating in the Commuter Choice Tax Incentive program. Virginia, through its VanStart/VanSave program, is able to temporarily reduce vanpool costs for commuters starting a new vanpool or saving an existing one.

### ***Minimum Number of Riders***

Most agencies have minimum requirements for vanpool ridership, varying by the overall ridership capacity of the van. In most cases, if ridership drops below the vehicle's established ridership, the existing riders may pay higher rates and/or vendors or the sponsoring organization may choose to provide a short-term subsidy. At least one state has a clause in its contract with vanpoolers allowing the vanpool group to withdraw from its contract if the vanpool becomes too expensive due to decreased ridership.

North Carolina has a five rider minimum for its rural vanpools urban area vanpools have a seven rider minimum. After the number drops below the minimum, the route is placed on probation for 60-90 days. If the number of riders does not increase, then the vanpool is dropped. Vanpoolers participating in Michigan's state program have a 30-day grace period to find replacement riders; if they are unable to find riders, they must downsize or terminate the vanpool. Michigan relies on its private vanpool contractor and the riders themselves to find vanpool replacements. Virginia uses the Van Save portion of its statewide incentive program to offer assistance to vanpools that are dropping below minimum ridership levels.

### **Conclusions**

The survey of state DOTs revealed some key trends that might assist Arizona DOT determine the need for and role for the state in ridesharing services for non-urban areas:

- In general, states no longer directly manage and fund ridesharing services as they may have 20 years ago. Funding and management tends to be centralized at the regional level, largely due to CMAQ.
- Few states maintain or manage specific non-urban programs, the exceptions being vanpool acquisition and maintenance of a statewide toll-free number.
- Some states fund activities, such as vanpooling, in non-urbanized areas that are not eligible for CMAQ funding.

- Statewide ridematching services, when offered, are operated by a regional program under contract to the state.
- Therefore, the current role for state DOTs tends to be focused in a few key areas, including:
  - Vanpool fleet acquisition or loans, pooled insurance, and statewide contracts
  - Referral of calls to statewide phone number to appropriate regional program
  - Limited coordination of regional programs, based largely on historical ties
  - Integration of ridesharing into statewide plans or policies.

As such, the current role of state DOTs in ridesharing might best be described as facilitative and supportive, especially in assuring vanpool services are available in all parts of the state.

**Other Contacts**

Massachusetts

Vanpool Alliance  
 Martin Murphy  
 (617) 892-6084

Vermont

Vermont Agency of Transportation  
 Karen Songhurst  
 (808) 828-1078

North Carolina

Rural Statewide Vanpool Program  
 Byron York, President of 2Plus, Inc.  
 (919) 363-0021

Virginia

Commuter Connections  
 Nicholas Ramfos  
 (202) 962-3313

Triangle Transit Authority  
 John Tallmadge  
 (919) 485-7430

## **CHAPTER 4 – INFORMATION GATHERING AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT IN ARIZONA**

### **TASK 4 OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY**

The next step involved an assessment of the need for ridesharing and vanpool services in key corridors and communities throughout Arizona. Overall, the Project Consulting team aimed to develop a prioritized list of communities that might have a need for these services and be interested in helping facilitate needed services. More specifically, the team worked to identify, contact, and interview representatives from a select number of areas within the state.

The steps undertaken to locate these prioritized areas were:

1. Sent a “qualifying” questionnaire of need and interest to a list of chambers of commerce provided by AzDOT.
2. From the six responses to this questionnaire, conducted follow-up telephone interviews with five chambers (Flagstaff, Kingman, Bullhead City, Lake Havasu and Copper Basin). All except the Copper Basin chamber, perceived real and immediate problems with traffic and mobility that ridesharing and vanpooling services might help solve.
3. From these two sets of inquiries, recommended two priority areas to AzDOT for future assessment: a) Flagstaff (Coconino County) and b) the Kingman/Bullhead City/Lake Havasu City area (Mohave County).
4. Held in-person meetings with chamber staff and local agencies in Bullhead City and Flagstaff to elicit a more detailed discussion on the need for, interest in, and support for ridesharing and vanpooling services.

After the needs assessment was conducted, the project team concluded that two areas – Flagstaff and the Kingman/Bullhead City/Lake Havasu City area – exhibited similar characteristics and needs:

- Both have traffic congestion on local and regional roads, especially during peak commute times and when large numbers of visitors travel into the areas.
- Both areas have growing commute-related issues as both affordable housing and employment locate further from each city’s core area.
- Both areas have transit services that provide a basic level of service for residents, commuters, and visitors. Unmet needs include some travel by the elderly, residents with cars that transit cannot conveniently serve, and some commuter services, like that to employment centers outside the core cities.

- Both areas have contemplated ridesharing services in the past, either in terms of vanpool opportunities (Mojave County) or ridematching (Northern Arizona Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority, NAIPTA).
- Both have been working with AzDOT to explore mobility issues: the tri-city Mohave area in terms of coordinated transit services and Flagstaff in terms of access to statewide ridematching services.
- Both areas voiced considerable need for and interest in offering ridesharing services. The need in the tri-city Mohave area seems to be for the coordination of new and existing services between the cities that might be consolidated with a ridesharing program. The need in the Flagstaff area seems to be the organization of employers and marketing efforts for existing and new services.

After the needs of Arizona were assessed and the target areas identified, the recommendation of the project team was to develop implementation plans for each area (Flagstaff and the Kingman/Bullhead City/Lake Havasu City area) for the development and deployment of ridesharing and vanpooling services.

## **TASK 4 DELIVERABLE**

### **Introduction**

The overall purpose of this research is to investigate the potential for a statewide ridesharing and vanpool program for Arizona, specifically in non-metropolitan areas where established ridesharing programs don't already exist.

This research will investigate the need for, logistics of, and funding options for a statewide ridesharing and vanpooling program. The final product of this research is an Implementation Plan that includes key corridors, start-up considerations, staffing, and operational guidelines, as well as funding options for capitalizing the statewide program.

Task 4 involved five steps intended to gather information on the need and support for ridesharing and vanpooling services in key areas around the state (outside of Maricopa and Pima Counties). This task involved the identifying, contacting, and interviewing people in a select number of areas in the state. Each step is enumerated below and described in more detail in the remainder of this chapter. The chapter concludes with some overall findings and preliminary recommendations for the implementation plan.

- Step 4.1      Qualifying Potential Contacts
- Step 4.2      Screening Contacts
- Step 4.3      Short-list of Prospects
- Step 4.4      Site Interviews with Prospects
- Step 4.5      Summary of Findings from Prospects

#### ***Step 4.1 – Qualifying Potential Contacts***

The AzDOT research and transit staff serving on the projects' Technical Advisory Committee provided the project team with a list of chambers of commerce in key corridors and in non-metropolitan areas that might have a need for rideshare and vanpool services. The list of chambers and contacts is included in Appendix A.

From this list, a brief qualifying questionnaire (Appendix B) was sent in November 2006 via e-mail to the list of chambers of commerce for which valid contacts were available. The questionnaire was sent by AzDOT in order to maximize the response rate. The questionnaire included 10 questions to assess perceptions, needs, and funding possibilities.

#### ***Step 4.2 – Screening Contacts***

The following six chambers of commerce responded to the initial qualifying survey:

- Flagstaff
- Kingman
- Bullhead City
- Lake Havasu
- Eloy
- Copper Basin

A set of questions (Appendix C) to assess the need for and disposition toward rideshare and vanpool services was sent in January 2007 to the six contacts that responded to the initial inquiry. These questions were sent to help in conducting telephone interviews with the parties in AzDOT's research into rideshare service needs. The questions probed local issues and characteristics, such as: 1) the perceived severity of traffic congestion and commute issues, 2) the need for ridesharing services and the potential role of area employers, 3) past efforts to address commuting and mobility issues, and 4) potential forums and partners to support ridesharing and vanpooling services.

Interviews were conducted with representatives of five of the chambers of commerce. The original contact for Eloy's chamber was no longer employed there and a referral was not available. A representative of the Copper Basin Chamber of Commerce stated in a telephone interview that there were not really any traffic problems in the area and it had an insufficient number of large employers to warrant ridesharing and vanpooling services except perhaps for the correction facility in nearby Florence.

#### ***Step 4.3 - Short-List of Prospects***

The responses received from the four areas made two things apparent. First, real congestion and mobility problems exist in these areas and ridesharing was favorably perceived as one solution. Second, commonality of issues and contiguousness of the three cities in Mojave County warranted their being considered together.

In assessing whether sufficient need and interest existed to go the next step and warrant face-to-face interviews, the following criteria were considered to assess the need for transportation management partnerships:<sup>19</sup>

- Sufficient population and density
- Presence and nature of congestion
- Well-defined geographic area
- Growth in population and employment
- Accessibility to transit, parking and other mobility options
- Existence of a “champion” to spearhead the effort
- Existence of a core group or existing organization to undertake effort
- History of public/private partnerships to tackle area issues
- Commitment to provide human and financial resources

Based on the responses to the questionnaire and consideration of the above criteria, the project team recommended to AzDOT that Flagstaff and the Kingman/Bullhead City/Lake Havasu City area be studied further.

#### ***Step 4.4 - Site Interviews***

Upon approval by AzDOT for further study of these two target areas, the consulting team set up face-to-face meetings in Bullhead City and Flagstaff in March 2007. Staff from the Bullhead City and Flagstaff chambers organized each meeting.

The meeting in Bullhead City included representatives from Kingman, Bullhead City, Lake Havasu City and Laughlin, Nevada. Representatives from each of the chambers in the tri-city area, as well as representatives from the county and from transit service providers attended the meeting. Appendix D is a summary of this meeting, including results from preceding telephone contacts and a list of attendees.

Growth in Mojave County and travel in and between these three cities and to Laughlin have clearly created some substantial mobility needs that are not being fully met with existing transit services. The current closing of the roads across the Hoover and Davis dams exacerbates this problem. Perhaps the greatest unmet need is for non-commute trips that cannot be conveniently served with transit. Participants in the meetings were enthusiastic about the prospects for a coordinated approach to shared rides for all three cities. However, the nature and specifics of those shared ride services clearly needs more definition.

The meeting in Flagstaff included representatives from the chamber and from the Northern Arizona Intergovernmental Public Transit Authority. Appendix E is a summary of this meeting, including findings from the telephone interview with the Flagstaff chamber and a list of attendees.

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<sup>19</sup> ESTC, TMS, *et al*, “Research and Recommendations on ARC Support to Local Transportation Management Programs: Part 1 Study Report,” prepared for the Atlanta Regional Commission, September, 2001.

The situation in Flagstaff was somewhat different in that commuting issues were a greater impetus for this community. Employers in the region have some difficulty recruiting employees who face long-distance commutes to affordable housing areas, including on the Navajo Nation. Likewise, city employees park on-street downtown, taking parking spaces from visitors and shoppers. Efforts are already underway to procure and install a ridematching system, but the marketing and support for that service has not been arranged. A partnership of key private and public interests to support ridesharing and vanpooling seems ripe in Flagstaff.

The Governor's executive order ordering AZDOT to study Arizona's mass transportation options<sup>20</sup> was discussed at both meetings to provide clarification between the two efforts. Some confusion existed due to the convening of meetings on that initiative at about the same time as the meetings for this project were held. Contact was made with the consultant who was conducting the meetings regarding the executive order to clarify the purpose of each effort.

The summary of each group interview was circulated to the meeting organizers (Bullhead City and Flagstaff chambers) for comments. No substantive comments or corrections were received.

#### ***Step 4.5 - Summary of Finding***

The interviews with interested parties in Bullhead City (tri-city area?) and Flagstaff were very informative in helping assess the need and potential support for ridesharing and vanpooling services in each area. Several commonalities exist between the two areas:

- Both experience traffic congestion on local and regional roads, especially during peak commute times and when large numbers of visitors travel into the areas.
- Both areas are experiencing growing commute-related issues as both affordable housing and employment locate further from each city's core area.
- Both areas have transit services that provide a basic level of service for residents, commuters, and visitors. Unmet needs include some travel by the elderly and those with cars that transit cannot conveniently serve and for some commuter services, like that to employment centers outside the core cities.
- Both areas have contemplated ridesharing services in the past, either in terms of vanpool opportunities (Mojave County) or ridematching (NAIPTA).
- Both have been working with AZDOT to explore mobility issues: the tri-city area in terms of coordinated transit services and Flagstaff in terms of access to statewide ridematching services.

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<sup>20</sup> "Executive Order 2007-02: Expanding Arizona's Transportation Options." Arizona Administrative Register 13(4):212-213, January 26, 2007.

- Both areas voiced considerable need for and interest in offering ridesharing services. The need in the tri-city area seems to focus on the coordination of new and existing services between the cities that might be consolidated with a ridesharing program. The need in the Flagstaff area seems to be organizing employers and marketing existing and new services.
- The project team senses that the Flagstaff area is slightly more ready to take on ridesharing and vanpooling services. However, the Implementation Plan, which is the final chapter of this study, includes specific recommendations for each of the two areas. Chapter 5 has implementation plans for both areas (pending approval by AzDOT) to include detailed start-up activities for Flagstaff comprised of: 1) demand for rideshare and vanpool services 2) identification of needed services, 3) start-up considerations, 4) staffing and funding needs, and 5) operational guidelines as well as developmental activities for the Kingman/Bullhead City/Lake Havasu area.



## CHAPTER 5 – IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

### TASK 5 OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY

After conducting background research and a needs assessment, the project team developed four recommendations for AzDOT. The broad recommendations are presented first, followed by a more detailed explanation and guidelines for each recommendation. The recommendations are as follows:

1. Flagstaff – The team recommends that AzDOT assist with the start-up of a ridesharing initiative in the Flagstaff area. The team recommends that the Chamber of Commerce undertake employer outreach and help coordinate ridesharing services offered by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the local transit authority. This action will provide the needed marketing for the new ridematching system acquired from Valley Metro in Phoenix. The new partnership between the Flagstaff Chamber, the Flagstaff MPO, and NAIPTA can also promote and form vanpools for commuters with long distance commutes.
2. Kingman/Bullhead City/Lake Havasu City area – The team recommends that a more detailed feasibility study be conducted for the three cities in Mohave County. While the need for ridesharing services is fairly apparent, the means to coordinate and provide these services are not. Therefore, the team recommends conducting a feasibility study and pilot project to test the demand for commuter services.
3. Identification of Future Priority Areas – The team recommends periodic assessments be made with local chambers of commerce, key local agencies, and AzDOT district offices to determine if conditions warrant the offering of ridesharing services to address congestion and mobility issues in key corridors or areas.
4. Role of AzDOT in Fostering Statewide Services – AzDOT can undertake several supporting activities to facilitate the growth of carpooling and vanpooling in non-urban areas. First, AzDOT can support a statewide ridematching service similar to that provided by Valley Metro to Tucson and Flagstaff. AzDOT can also assist with new vanpool acquisition. Furthermore, AzDOT can provide technical assistance to areas interested in creating a new ridesharing program with guidance and funding for start-up. AzDOT can also convene ridesharing program managers from around the state for networking, training, and technical assistance.

A detailed explanation of each recommendation is the focus of the remaining sections of this report. The first recommendation outlines an implementation plan for Flagstaff. Second, the process for undertaking a more detailed feasibility study and pilot in Mohave County is presented. The final section outlines the activities that AzDOT can do to identify future areas that have potential for successful ridesharing programs as well as provide support to ridesharing services statewide.

## **TASK 5 DELIVERABLE**

### **1. Implementation Plan – Flagstaff Area**

As noted earlier in response to the needs assessment conducted, Flagstaff appears to be poised for the implementation of a ridesharing and vanpool program. Some activities have already taken place. The Flagstaff MPO has noted the need for ridesharing and NAIPTA is negotiating an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with AzDOT and Valley Metro to acquire access to an online ridematching database. The Chamber noted the need to link employers and workers, including government and university worksites and outlying private employers such as Nestle, WL Gore, and the Walgreen Distribution Center. Vanpooling options for long-distance commuters from Winslow and the Navajo Nation may also be an opportunity area.

The team recommends the start-up of a “transportation management initiative.” Such an initiative is not a formal, new organization, such as a Transportation Management Association; rather it is a collaborative program among existing public and private organizations. The key is providing a tangible link between commuters and other travelers, such as visitors, and mobility options. The Chamber can provide the conduit to employers and NAIPTA can provide needed services, including ridematching, vanpool acquisition, and transit information. NAIPTA has the services to offer and needs new avenues to market those services, while the Chamber has existing relationships with employers and can champion the cause.

This implementation plan includes:

- Structure of transportation management initiative and staffing
- Services to be provided
- Other activities to be undertaken
- Roles and responsibilities
- Work plan outline
- Budget and funding sources
- Benefits of implementation
- Schedule

#### ***Structure of the Flagstaff Initiative***

The team recommends the formation of an informal public/private alliance for the specific purpose of coordinating, marketing, and providing rideshare and vanpool services. This “transportation management initiative” (TMI) should be an alliance between the Flagstaff Chamber, representing employers and commuters and NAIPTA, which provides commuter options, including the new online ridematching software. The formation of transportation management initiatives has been successfully used by Florida DOT to foster new partnerships without forming new organizations.

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the chamber, NAIPTA, and AzDOT would suffice to clarify roles, responsibilities, services, and resource allocation. The Chamber can also convene an advisory group to oversee and advise the initiative and

provide some buy-in from key stakeholders. A work plan can be developed to guide the first year start-up activities, outreach, and service delivery. A more marketable name for the program can be developed in the first year as well. Afterward, presuming a successful start-up, annual work plans, staffing requirements, and budgets can be developed.

### ***Staffing***

Staffing would be shared between the Chamber and NAIPTA, but the team recommends that the “face” to the employer, commuter, resident, and visitor be the Chamber Coordinator, with referral to services from NAIPTA and others. The Flagstaff TMI staff would report to the Chamber’s Executive Director and its transportation committee or government affairs director. A close working relationship would be formed between TMI staff at the Chamber and NAIPTA staff responsible for transit information and two new services, ridesharing matching and vanpool provision. The start-up and initial service provision will require a half-time position at the Chamber and staffing equivalent to one day per week at NAIPTA.

### ***Services to be Provided***

The Flagstaff TMI would provide the following services to employers (public, private, and educational), commuters, residents, and visitors:

- Employer outreach (contacting and educating employers)
- Employer services (information for employers to provide employees)
- Carpool and vanpool formation (identifying potential groups)
- Parking information for downtown Flagstaff
- Visitor information (how to get around without a car)
- Commuter ridematching (online ridematching)
- Transit information
- Vanpool acquisition

While the last three services would be provided by NAIPTA, the Flagstaff TMI would coordinate all activities and services so that information is seamless to the requestor and user.

### ***Other Activities***

The new alliance could also serve as a voice for transportation demand management solutions in transportation and growth plans, new development site plan review, transportation projects, and transit service planning. Given the tie of the Flagstaff TMI to the end traveler, this could provide a unique and helpful perspective on the ability to increase vehicle occupancy or avoid travel at the most congested times and places.

### ***Roles and Responsibilities***

As noted above, the two key players in this new initiative are the Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce and NAIPTA. It might be useful to think of the Chamber as the coordinator and “retail” outlet for information and services, much of which will be provided by NAIPTA. The Chamber can provide in-kind resources in the form of office space, clerical support, and staff coordination. The Chamber can also conduct employer

outreach with its members and others and coordinate with other chambers through the Northern Arizona Chamber Coalition.

NAIPTA can host the ridematching service, provide transit services in the region, and acquire vans for vanpool groups. A MOU can define these roles and specific responsibilities during start-up and initial service delivery.

The two other key organizations are the Flagstaff MPO, (which, along with the City of Flagstaff, has considered the need for a ridesharing program for several years) and AzDOT Public Transportation Division. The FMPO can assess the integration of ridesharing and vanpooling into future transportation plans and AzDOT can provide technical assistance and start-up funding.

### ***Work Plan Outline***

The start-up work plan for the Flagstaff TMI should be developed in concert with the MOU between the Chamber and NAIPTA and any funding agreements with AzDOT or others.

The elements of the start-up work plan should include:

- Program structure and coordination (MOU)
- Program identity and branding
- Program start-up tasks and schedule
- Program staffing responsibilities
- Marketing and promotion
- Employer outreach
- Commuter services
- Reporting and oversight
- Outline of three-year business plan

Assistance with the work plan and TMI organization can be found in the national *TMA Handbook*, available from the Association for Commuter Transportation.<sup>21</sup>

### ***Budget and Funding Sources***

Three key budget elements for the Flagstaff TMI and the services it promotes should be considered: staffing, marketing, and service acquisition.

Staffing for the first 6-12 months, as stated earlier, would likely require a half-time position at the Flagstaff Chamber and about 8-10 hours per week of staff time at NAIPTA to coordinate ridesharing service delivery. The cost of these labor resources is locality specific, but nationally, start-up labor costs might be \$35,000 (half time including fringe benefits). The cost of the additional staff time at NAIPTA could easily be

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<sup>21</sup> CUTR, TMA Handbook: A Guide to Successful Transportation Management Associations, Association for Commuter Transportation, 2001. <http://www.nctr.usf.edu/clearinghouse/tmas.htm>, accessed April 1, 2008.

obtained from that agency, but assuming a one-quarter time position, the cost would be about \$20,000, including fringe benefits. Finally, management time for the Chamber and NAIPTA staff responsible for these positions could total another \$20,000 for coordination and management. In total, the first year labor costs would approximate to \$75,000.

Marketing, not including staff time, includes creative work for a new program on written materials, web-design, and materials production. The costs for these activities will be highest in the first year of start-up and will be far less in additional years. The first year costs are estimated to be \$50,000.

Finally, service acquisition includes procurement of the ridematching system and vanpool vehicles. If NAIPTA is a qualifying agency, then it can use the FTA's Capital Cost of Contracting provisions to lease the vans and, more importantly, count vanpool miles in Sec. 5307 NTD reporting. The ridematching system has already been obtained, but vanpool acquisition might need some state seed funding before the 5307 revenue is realized.

Therefore, first year labor costs are approximately \$125,000. Vanpool acquisition is an additional cost. In most urban areas, CMAQ funds are used to fund ridesharing activities. However, in other areas that are not eligible for CMAQ, more traditional highway and transit funds are used. For Flagstaff, sources of funding might include:

- Federal or state highway funds (e.g., Surface Transportation Program)
- AzDOT transit funding
- Local funds from the FMPO, NAIPTA, the city
- In-kind resources from the Chamber, including office space, equipment, and clerical support

### ***Benefits of Implementation***

The benefits of the proposed Flagstaff Transportation Management Initiative are several, and include:

- Addresses growth concerns about traffic and quality of life issues
- Provides a service to residents, workers, and visitors
- Addresses unmet transit needs to outlying areas
- Helps reduce parking demand in downtown Flagstaff and at Northern Arizona University (NAU)
- Reduces the cost of meeting growth in travel demand with new or enhanced road capacity
- Provides AzDOT with a pilot process for fostering other initiatives in the state

While these benefits are rather difficult to quantify, the cost effectiveness of demand management solutions, when compared to other techniques, is generally very favorable.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> ESTC, Alternative Modes as an Air Quality Strategy, prepared for ADOT, Final Report 566, June 2004.

### *Schedule*

The general schedule for the first year can be divided into four quarters, once adequate resources are identified and committed:

#### First Quarter

- Develop generalized program description and roles
- Develop and seek approval of MOU
- Assemble advisory committee
- Hire and train part-time staff at chamber
- Develop first year work plan

#### Second Quarter

- Develop program identity and branding concept
- Publicize program to other stakeholders, employers, and the community
- Initiate employer outreach activities

#### Third Quarter

- Initiate marketing and promotion of program and ridematching
- Initiate specific events at worksites
- Draft three-year business plan and funding options

#### Fourth Quarter

- Intensify vanpool formation activities
- Develop specific marketing materials (e.g., downtown parking)
- Prepare first year annual report

## **2. Coordination Study and Pilot – Kingman, Bullhead City, and Lake Havasu City area**

While the need for transportation management services for commuters, residents, and visitors was apparent from the needs assessment, the means for coordinating and providing needed services were less obvious in Mohave County. The two, main, unmet needs are for commuters that are traveling to large employment centers in Kingman and Laughlin, Nevada, and for resident trips to medical institutions, retail centers, courthouses, and other destinations that cannot be conveniently served with existing public transit.

The large size of the service area and the multiple jurisdictions and service providers involved make coordination both necessary and somewhat problematic. The discussions held in Bullhead City formed a consensus on the need for services and for some centralized coordination and marketing, but a logical focal point or champion did not emerge.

The region is already exploring the need for transit coordination and ways to satisfy unmet transit needs.<sup>23</sup> These needs might be partially resolved by some ridesharing and vanpool recommendations as well. At a minimum, the need for rideshare and vanpool services needs to be assessed in light of the intercity transit pilot recommended for the three cities as part of the Rural Transit Needs Study.

Therefore, the team recommends that in lieu of an integrated service delivery arrangement, as is being recommended for Flagstaff, two key activities take place as next steps for the Kingman/Bullhead City/Lake Havasu City area. These activities include a more detailed Mobility Service Coordination study and a pilot commuter services project for employees in neighboring Laughlin, Nevada.

### ***Pilot Project***

First, with regard to the pilot project, the need for commuter services for the gaming and related worksites in Laughlin seems very apparent. As most of the casino workers live in Arizona, the impact on traffic across the Laughlin Bridge, on Topock-Davis Dam Road, and the regional road system is significant. A commuter services program targeted to casino workers could have a measurable impact on these roads around shift changes. Representatives from Bullhead City and the Southern Nevada Transit Coalition cited the potential for working with casinos in a collaborative fashion. This collaboration would also assist these employers to recruit and retain employees and, perhaps, reduce tardiness due to traffic congestion.

The pilot would test the willingness of employers and employees to use commute management services as well as the ability for the cities and transportation providers to coordinate projects. Experience from a successful pilot project could be applied to other large employers (e.g., Wal-Mart, Sterilite, the Duval Mine, the private correctional facility) and employment centers (e.g., hospital complexes, the community college and county administrative center and courts). The pilot could also be a precursor to or part of any mitigation efforts associated with the Laughlin Bullhead City Bridge Project.

The pilot project could be funded with a challenge grant from AzDOT to match funds allocated by local partners (including Laughlin, the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Southern Nevada, and Nevada DOT, and the casinos) or become part of the mitigation efforts associated with the new bridge project, thus being eligible for the use of federal funds.

### ***Coordination Study***

A more detailed feasibility study focused on coordination mechanisms for Mobility Services in Mohave County could be undertaken concurrent with or after the commuter services pilot project. The coordination study would explore the activities that need to be coordinated to offer mobility services within and between the three cities. Data collected in a central database could prove valuable in coordinating rides between the three cities

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<sup>23</sup> The Regional Connector study, Tri-City Transit Implementation Plan, and the ongoing Rural Transit Needs Study

for work travel and other group rides. More importantly, it would assess the various mechanisms for coordinating these services. Coordination activities would include:

- Commuter services (ridematching, vanpooling, and transit)
- Resident mobility services (shopping, medical, other)
- Information services (on-line, telephone)
- Marketing and outreach activities (including program branding)
- Administration and reporting

Coordination mechanisms worth consideration include: a) one city, chamber, or transit provider coordinating services, b) a program operated by the county, c) a collaborative program with shared staff, but seamless service delivery, d) creation of a new entity to coordinate and provide services, or e) use of a contractor to manage the program.

The Mobility Services Coordination study should result in a recommendation and preliminary work plan for the creation of a coordinated Mobility Services program for the three cities. The work plan would include similar information to that in the Flagstaff TMI implementation plan found in the preceding section.

The coordination study would cost approximately \$50,000 if performed by a consultant and should be undertaken by someone familiar with the existing entities and needs in the region. This study could be funded with traditional planning funds. The coordination study could also be conducted by an ad hoc group of affected chambers and public entities with some technical assistance from AzDOT or from other commute management organizations in the state (at Valley Metro and the Pima Association of Governments). The benefits of undertaking the pilot and the coordination study would be to: 1) mitigate the impact of commuter traffic generated by the Laughlin gaming and related worksites, and 2) refine the process for identifying and planning for rideshare and vanpool programs in non-metropolitan areas of Arizona.

### **ENHANCED ROLE FOR AZDOT TO SUPPORT PROGRAMS**

Two other key recommendations are offered by the project team to support and encourage rideshare and vanpool programs in non-metropolitan areas in Arizona that are experiencing growth and its negative impacts on traffic, air quality, energy, the environment, and quality of life. The first recommendation is to conduct periodic surveys of local stakeholders in other areas (other than Mohave and Coconino counties) to assess the changing needs for these services and the conditions that warrant their consideration. The second recommendation is to provide some statewide support services to foster and maintain effective ridesharing and vanpooling services throughout Arizona.

### **3. Identification of Future Priority Areas**

AzDOT might consider replicating the initial survey that was used in the needs assessment section of this study. That survey was administered via e-mail to Chambers of Commerce of smaller cities throughout the state. The same survey could also be sent to cities, planning organizations, and transit operators. The team recommends the survey be repeated approximately three to five years from now (2009-2011) to gauge interest



and need in areas other than Maricopa, Pima, Mohave, or Coconino Counties. These areas might include the cities of Yuma, Gila Bend, Prescott, Green Valley, the US 89 corridor through the Navajo Nation, State Route 82 in the southeast, and the Copper Basin in Pinal County.

As provided in the needs assessment the conditions under which these rideshare and vanpool programs tend to be successfully initiated include:

- Sufficient population and density
- Presence and nature of congestion
- Well-defined geographic area
- Growth in population and employment
- Accessibility to transit, parking, and other mobility options
- Existence of a “champion” to spearhead the effort
- Existence of a core group or existing organization to undertake the effort
- History of public/private partnerships to tackle area issues
- Commitment to provide human and financial resources

While these factors are currently present in the Flagstaff and the Kingman/Bullhead City/Lake Havasu City area, the population, employment, and traffic growth in Arizona will likely lead to other area candidates in the near future.

#### **4. Role of AzDOT in Fostering Statewide Services**

Finally, AzDOT can further support these emerging programs and existing Travel Reduction Programs by considering several new or enhanced activities:

- AzDOT could help expand a *statewide, on-line ridematching system* by supporting its acquisition and implementation in other urban areas and by supporting requests for information and matches from areas not covered by two existing programs. AzDOT could undertake support and maintenance itself or allow an existing program, such as Valley Metro, to maintain the statewide database.
- Second, AzDOT can assist new programs in *acquiring vans* for vanpools. Several states have created pooled leasing programs that are reimbursed through user fares and Section 5307 monies generated with vanpool miles. Alternatively, AzDOT can provide technical assistance to local programs to help in vanpool lease arrangements by educating them on lease options and funding sources.
- Next, AzDOT can provide *technical and financial assistance* in program start-up and pilot projects. AzDOT staff and its on-call contractors can provide technical assistance. Financial assistance might be in the form of formation grants or challenge grants that require a match and diminish in value during each phase of start-up and implementation. Many states have provided such start-up grants for studies and initial organizational tasks.

- Finally, AzDOT could provide for statewide *networking* among rideshare and vanpool programs. Periodic meetings could be held among program managers in person or virtually. The meetings would be an opportunity to provide training and information, but more importantly, would allow for focused networking among those involved in ridesharing across the state. Additionally, AzDOT could create a website or webpage on its existing site with general information on rideshare programs around the state, including statewide ridematching. A successful example includes the Florida DOT, as it sponsors such a website ([www.commuterservices.com](http://www.commuterservices.com)) that is maintained by a university transportation program.<sup>24</sup>

### **Conclusions**

The final report presents the research conducted by the project team to investigate the potential for a statewide rideshare and vanpool program in Arizona. In order to conduct this research, the Project Consulting team developed and completed a series of task deliverables, which included a literature review, survey of state DOTs, needs assessment, and implementation plan.

Through a literature review and survey of DOTs across the nation, the team was able to identify the role of current DOT agencies and similar organizations with rideshare and vanpool programs. This research showed that the focus of such programs has moved away from the state level and to a more regional or local level. However, the literature review did show that many state DOTs still maintain some level of statewide ridematching and vanpool acquisition.

After the background research was conducted, the team performed a needs assessment to identify any areas in Arizona that may be in need of a rideshare and vanpool program. The project team administered a survey to local Chamber of Commerce offices, and followed through with an interview of the responding Chambers. From this assessment, two areas, Flagstaff and the Kingman/Bullhead City/Lake Havasu City area, were identified as targets for potential development of rideshare and vanpool services.

The team then developed specific implementation plans for the development and deployment of ridesharing and vanpooling services in the two target areas, as well as general recommendations to support and encourage ridesharing and vanpooling in growing non-metropolitan areas. For Flagstaff, the team developed a detailed plan for AzDOT to begin the implementation of a rideshare and vanpool program. As the needs and coordination means were not as apparent in the other target area, the team suggested that AzDOT conduct a pilot project and feasibility study to measure the acceptance and use of rideshare and vanpool services by the population as well as the ability of the cities to coordinate such programs. The final recommendations for AzDOT included a periodic assessment to identify any future target areas for program implementation and activities to support the growth of such programs in non-metropolitan areas of Arizona.

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<sup>24</sup> Center for Urban Transportation Research, University of South Florida – <http://www.cutr.usf.edu/index2.htm>, accessed April 1, 2008.

## **APPENDIX A – LIST OF CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE**

### **1. I-17 Corridor from Camp Verde Area North toward Sedona and Flagstaff**

Camp Verde Chamber of Commerce

385 S. Main St.

Camp Verde, AZ 86322

(928) 567-9294

<http://www.campverde.org/>

[info@campverde.org](mailto:info@campverde.org)

Cottonwood Chamber of Commerce

1010 S. Main St.

Junction 89A & 260

Cottonwood, AZ 86326

(928) 634-7593

<http://www.cottonwood.verdevalley.com/>

[cottonwoodchamber@verdeonline.com](mailto:cottonwoodchamber@verdeonline.com)

Sedona Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 478

Sedona, AZ 86339

(928) 204-1123

<http://www.sedonachamber.com/>

[admin@sedonachamber.com](mailto:admin@sedonachamber.com)

Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce

101 W. Route 66

Flagstaff, AZ 86001-5598

(928) 774-4505

[www.flagstaffchamber.com](http://www.flagstaffchamber.com)

[info@flagstaffchamber.com](mailto:info@flagstaffchamber.com)

### **2. Prescott, Prescott Valley, Chino Valley Area East towards Dewey/Humboldt**

Prescott Chamber of Commerce

117 W. Goodwin St.

PO Box 1147

Prescott, AZ 86302-1147

(928) 445-2000

<http://www.prescott.org/index.html>

Prescott Valley Chamber of Commerce

3001 N. Main St., Suite 2A

Prescott Valley, AZ 86314

(928) 772-8857

<http://pvchamber.org/>

[info@pvchamber.org](mailto:info@pvchamber.org)

Chino Valley Area Chamber of Commerce  
864 N. U.S. Highway 89  
Chino Valley, AZ 86323-5950  
(928) 636-2493  
<http://www.chinovalley.org/>  
[chamber@chinovalley.org](mailto:chamber@chinovalley.org)

Agua Fria Chamber of Commerce (Dewey - Humboldt)  
PO Box 940  
Dewey, AZ 86329-0940  
(928) 772-7111  
<http://www.aguafria.cc/index.html>  
[info@AguaFria.cc](mailto:info@AguaFria.cc)

**3. I-10 Corridor South toward Tucson (Casa Grande, Eloy, Coolidge, Florence, Marana)**

Greater Casa Grande Chamber of Commerce  
575 N. Marshall St.  
Casa Grande, AZ  
(520) 836-2125  
<http://www.casagrandechamber.org/index.htm>  
[chamber@cgmailbox.com](mailto:chamber@cgmailbox.com)

Eloy Chamber of Commerce  
305 N. Stuart Blvd.  
Eloy, AZ 85231  
(520) 466-3411  
<http://www.elaychamber.com>  
[info@elaychamber.com](mailto:info@elaychamber.com)

Coolidge Chamber of Commerce  
no info available

Florence Chamber of Commerce  
website under construction  
<http://www.florenceaz.org/>

Marana Chamber of Commerce  
13881 N. Casa Grande Highway  
Marana, AZ 85653  
(520) 682-4314  
<http://www.maranachamber.com/>  
[maranachamber@comcast.net](mailto:maranachamber@comcast.net)

Northern Pima County Chamber of Commerce  
200 W. Magee Road, Suite 120  
Tucson, AZ 85704  
(520) 297-2191  
admin@the-chamber.com

#### **4. Oracle Area Going Southwest into Tucson**

Town of Oracle  
<http://www.oracletown.com/>  
[webmaster@oracletown.com](mailto:webmaster@oracletown.com)

Tucson Chamber of Commerce  
PO Box 991  
465 W. St. Mary's Road  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
(520) 792-1212  
<http://www.tucsonchamber.org/>

#### **5. Hayden/Winkelman/Kearney/San Manuel Mining District**

Copper Basin Chamber of Commerce  
355 Alden Road  
PO Box 206  
Kearny, Arizona 85237  
(520) 363-7607  
<http://www.copperbasinaz.com/>  
[cbc@copperbasinaz.com](mailto:cbc@copperbasinaz.com)

#### **6. I-19 Corridor from Tucson to Nogales, Sierra Vista, Fort Huachuca**

Tucson Chamber of Commerce  
P.O. Box 991  
465 W. St. Mary's Road  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
(520) 792-1212  
<http://www.tucsonchamber.org/>

Nogales-Santa Cruz County Chamber of Commerce  
123 W. Kino Park Way  
Nogales, AZ 85621  
(520) 287-3685  
<http://www.nogaleschamber.com/>  
[info@nogaleschamber.com](mailto:info@nogaleschamber.com)

Greater Sierra Vista Area Chamber of Commerce  
21 E. Wilcox Dr.  
Sierra Vista, AZ 85635  
(520) 458-6940  
<http://www.sierravistachamber.org/welcome.htm>  
[info@sierravistachamber.org](mailto:info@sierravistachamber.org)

**7. Yuma-Somerton-Gadsden--San Luis-Fortuna-Wellton Area**

Yuma County Chamber of Commerce  
180 W. 1st St., Suite A  
Yuma Arizona 85364  
(928) 782-2567  
<http://www.yumachamber.org/>  
[info@yumachamber.org](mailto:info@yumachamber.org)

**8. Gila Bend-Ajo Area**

Gila Bend Chamber of Commerce  
644 W. Pima Street  
PO Box A  
Gila Bend, AZ 85337  
(928) 683-2255  
[www.gilabendaz.org](http://www.gilabendaz.org)

Ajo Chamber of Commerce  
Silvia Howard - Executive Director  
400 Taladro St.  
Ajo, AZ 85321  
(520) 387-7742  
<http://www.ajochamber.com/>  
[ajocofc@tabletoptelephone.com](mailto:ajocofc@tabletoptelephone.com)

**9. Kingman-Golden Valley Area**

Kingman Area Chamber of Commerce  
120 W. Andy Devine  
PO Box 1150  
Kingman, AZ 86402-1150  
(928) 753-6253  
<http://www.kingmanchamber.org/>  
[kgmncofc@ctaz.com](mailto:kgmncofc@ctaz.com)

**10. Grand Canyon (State Highway 64 from Williams to GC or Flagstaff to GC)**

Grand Canyon Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 3007

Grand Canyon, AZ 86023

(928) 638-2901

[http://www.grandcanyonchamber.org/\\_vti\\_bin/shtml.exe/index.html](http://www.grandcanyonchamber.org/_vti_bin/shtml.exe/index.html)

[info@grandcanyonchamber.org](mailto:info@grandcanyonchamber.org)

Williams Chamber of Commerce

Website under construction

<http://www.williamschamber.com/>

**11. Williams-Flagstaff I-40 Corridor**

Williams Chamber of Commerce

Website under construction

<http://www.williamschamber.com/>

Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce

101 W. Route 66

Flagstaff, AZ 86001-5598

(928) 774-4505

[www.flagstaffchamber.com](http://www.flagstaffchamber.com)

[info@flagstaffchamber.com](mailto:info@flagstaffchamber.com)

**12. Page-Lake Powell-Flagstaff**

Page-Lake Powell Chamber of Commerce

608 Elm St., Suite C

PO Box 727

Page, AZ 86040

(928) 645-2741

<http://www.pagelakepowellchamber.org/default.htm>

[chamber@pagelakepowellchamber.org](mailto:chamber@pagelakepowellchamber.org)

Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce

101 W. Route 66

Flagstaff, AZ 86001-5598

(928) 774-4505

[www.flagstaffchamber.com](http://www.flagstaffchamber.com)

[info@flagstaffchamber.com](mailto:info@flagstaffchamber.com)

**13. Colorado River Strip from Parker-Lake Havasu City-Bullhead City**

City of Parker

1314 11th St.

Parker, AZ 85344

(928) 669-9265

<http://www.ci.parker.az.us/>

Lake Havasu Area Chamber of Commerce  
314 London Bridge Road  
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86403  
(928) 855-4115  
<http://www.havasuchamber.com/>  
[kathyt@havasuchamber.com](mailto:kathyt@havasuchamber.com)

Bullhead Area Chamber of Commerce  
1251 Highway 95  
Bullhead City, AZ 86429  
(928) 754-4121  
<http://www.bullheadchamber.com/>  
[info@bullheadchamber.com](mailto:info@bullheadchamber.com)



## APPENDIX B – PRELIMINARY SURVEY

### Arizona Department of Transportation Survey of Potential for Ridesharing in Your Area

The *Arizona Department of Transportation* is exploring the potential for establishing a service to assist local agencies in implementing a ridesharing program. Ridesharing programs help commuters find alternatives to driving alone to work and include programs that assist people in finding carpool partners or forming and maintaining vanpools.

Your response to the following questions will help in assessing prospects for providing rideshare services in your area.

*Could you please pass this questionnaire onto the person that is best prepared to answer questions regarding ridesharing in your area if that is not you?*

Person completing survey: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency \_----\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions regarding completion of this survey,  
please contact Marc Pearsall (phone: 602 712-8871) or e-mail [mpearsall@azdot.gov](mailto:mpearsall@azdot.gov)

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1. What is your perception of a commuter rideshare program?

2. Do you think there is a need for developing a ridesharing program in your region?

\_\_\_\_ Yes      \_\_\_\_ No

If yes, please respond as best you can to the remaining questions.

3. Please briefly describe the conditions or factors you think demonstrate the need for ridesharing in your region.

4. What expectations would you have from a ridesharing program? What benefits would you expect?

5. What efforts do you think would be necessary to establish a viable ridesharing program in your region? Funding? State assistance for ride matching? Other?

6. What roadways, routes or areas do you think should be served by a ridesharing program?

7. Do you think your community would help contribute funding to develop a formal ridesharing program?

8. Do you think commuters in your area would be willing to pay fares for vanpools that recapture costs?

9. What would it take to establish a successful commuter rideshare program and how do you think it could be funded?

10. Do you have any other thoughts about commuter ridesharing?

*Thank you for your assistance!*

## **APPENDIX C – FOLLOW-UP CONTACT**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ (To be Addressed to Contact)

This letter is a follow up to your response a few months ago to the Arizona Department of Transportation (AzDOT) inquiry about ridesharing services in your community.

Our firm, **Transportation Management Services (TMS)**, is assisting AzDOT in developing techniques to deliver rideshare services in non-metropolitan areas of Arizona. To do so, we need to better understand your community's commute travel needs to determine if rideshare services would be beneficial and the extent of assistance that could be provided to make the delivery of rideshare services successful.

I would like to schedule a time for interviewing you (or the person in your organization with most knowledge of transportation matters) regarding how ridesharing services might help commuters in your community. If you are willing to participate, could you please provide your name and contact information (name, telephone number, and email address) or the contact information for the person that I should be interviewing?

I've provided a list of questions I'd like to explore during the call to help you prepare for the interview.

Could you please indicate your interest in participating by responding to this email message? I would appreciate a response by January XX. You can contact me at [valk@tms85.com](mailto:valk@tms85.com) with any questions. I look forward to talking with you soon. Your involvement in this effort is most appreciated.

Sincerely,

**TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

Peter Valk  
President

## Commute Transportation Conditions

### Community Profile

Population: \_\_\_\_\_

Employment: \_\_\_\_\_

Square Miles: \_\_\_\_\_

### Significance of Commute Related Problems

1. Is your community affected by commute-related traffic problems? How significant is the problem? Which routes/corridors are affected?
2. Which commute problems affect your community and how seriously?  
(1 = Very serious; 2 = Affects most, but not serious; 3 = Not significant)
  - \_\_\_ Local/in-town congestion
  - \_\_\_ Congestion on regional roads or highways
  - \_\_\_ Mobility (difficulty in getting to desired destinations)
  - \_\_\_ Long commutes (time and/or distance) to or from jobs
  - \_\_\_ No alternatives to driving to work alone
  - \_\_\_ Effect on air quality
  - \_\_\_ Cost of travel (fuel, etc)
  - \_\_\_ Other - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_ Other - \_\_\_\_\_
3. How much worse have problems become in last 5 years?
4. Is the need for rideshare services more for residents or commuters traveling into the area?
5. Are employers in your community concerned about commute-related issues such as congestion, long distance commutes, parking?
6. When or where do most employees start and end their trips? Are there commute patterns that are more prominent than others?
7. What rideshare services would help commuters most in your area?
8. Do commuters and/or employers have a resource to turn to for help with commute travel problems? If so, where or whom?
9. What, if any, previous efforts have been taken to provide commuters with assistance in finding alternative ways to travel to work?
10. Are there commuters in your community that could benefit from ridesharing services that inform them about and use transportation services, such as carpooling and vanpooling, to travel to/from work?

11. Are commute concerns significant enough that your community would help support a ridesharing program financially? If so, what actions would your community be willing to undertake to support local rideshare activities?
- Provide financial support
  - Dedicate staff to organize local activities
  - Offer office space and other overhead services
  - Develop support among community organizations
  - Establish contact with employers
  - Stage meeting to introduce rideshare to community organizations and employers
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
12. Is there a history of involvement in addressing transportation concerns in your community?
13. What other organizations have been involved in addressing transportation and traffic concerns?
14. Are there other key contacts we should be making in your community to investigate the need and prospects for commuter services in your area?

Please contact:

Peter Valk  
Transportation Management Services  
626-796-3384 x238  
[valk@tms85.com](mailto:valk@tms85.com)

## **APPENDIX D – SUMMARY OF FACT FINDING MEETING (BULLHEAD CITY, LAKE HAVASU, AND KINGMAN)**

### **IMPLEMENTING A STATEWIDE RIDESHARE PROGRAM AzDOT Project SPR 610 Summary of Fact Finding Meeting Bullhead City, Lake Havasu, and Kingman Tuesday, March 20, 2007**

#### **Purpose**

After introductions, the consulting team provides some background on the AzDOT Statewide Ridesharing Study and the purpose of the meeting as a fact-finding session. The study is designed to assess the need for ridesharing and vanpooling services in non-urban areas of Arizona. Ridesharing services were defined as providing options to travelers as an alternative to driving alone, including carpooling, vanpooling, transit, etc. Services are traditionally made available to commuters, but can also assist students, seniors, and others with mobility needs. The consulting team also acknowledged the concurrent activities and meetings related to the Governor's Executive Order to Expand Arizona's Transportation Options. Based on a review of relevant literature, a survey of other states, and discussions with selected areas in Arizona, the consultant study will provide an assessment of potential need for ridesharing services in one or more areas of the state. This assessment will be the outcome of this research process and does not imply future funding, projects or support for these services.

#### **Contacts with Chambers**

After sending an e-mail survey to chambers of commerce throughout the state, responses from Bullhead City, Lake Havasu and Kingman prompted a joint meeting to discuss potential needs in Mojave County and surrounding areas. Telephone interviews were conducted with each chamber and the findings from those interviews are attached. Based on these interviews, and others like it, fact finding meetings were scheduled in Bullhead City and Flagstaff.

The fact finding meeting explored three topics:

1. The nature and severity of transportation problems
2. The potential applicability of ridesharing
3. Local interest in implementing a program

#### **Nature of Transportation Problems**

One current problem that is impacting the region concerns the security-imposed restrictions on roads crossing Hoover and Davis dams and limited capacity on the connection between Bullhead City and Laughlin, NV. Even without the restrictions

feeding more trucks onto the region's roads (such as US 95), significant congestion occurs when the casinos have shift changes, as the majority of casino employees live on the Arizona side of the Colorado River.

Other commuters in the region and other travelers have very limited alternatives to driving, beyond transit service provided in each community. In fact, one main mobility issue is the lack of connections between the three cities and to growing areas, such as Golden Valley. These areas are requesting mobility services and these needs will grow as these new areas are developed. Lake Havasu was characterized as totally auto-dependent with no other options for intercity travel.

### **Potential for Ridesharing**

There is some experience with considering ridesharing demand. The County contracts with Enterprise to provide pool vehicles and has looked into the interest among groups of employees for vanpooling. So Cal Edison previously operated vanpools in Mojave County. However, no formal ridesharing services have been offered in the region. Some informal park-and-ride arrangements have been noticed, but no formal lots have been established by the state.

Several large employers have workers who have long commutes and might benefit from ridesharing services, including a three Wal-Mart locations, the Laughlin casinos, Sterilite, the privately-operated prison (who already have vanpools), the community college, hospital in Kingman and county offices/courts.

Perhaps as great a need is for travel options for non-commute trips, especially those that cannot be served by conventional transit. Shared rides for medical, court and shopping trips could greatly benefit from formal and informal ridesharing, according to the assembled participants. The Area Agency on Aging, staffed by the Western Arizona Council of Governments, is attempting to initiate a volunteer transit service with mileage reimbursement.

Connections between the three cities have been the subject of a proposal to AzDOT to study and establish a Regional Connector with three routes to help meet this need. This proposal has not been acted upon since the election.

### **Local Interest**

There appears to be significant local interest in some type of coordinated, regional program to arrange shared rides in carpools and vanpools. This could fill some of unmet needs of the localized transit services operated by each city. Coordination seems to be the key in marketing a public/private ridesharing program and its services. Such a program would need a regional brand, but with local identity for each participating city. A coordinated program would provide visibility to these services, provide a source for outreach to employers and individual travelers, and elicit incentives to use these services. Services can be communicated through existing channels, such as the employee newsletters published for casino employees. Key stakeholders in such a coordinated effort should include the city transit operators, the county, the COG, employers,

transportation operators and chambers of commerce. If these services are perceived as reliable and safe for commuting, they will likely be viewed as such for non-commute trips for medical, shopping, and other trips.

### **Telephone Interviews (prior to meeting)**

#### **Bullhead City Chamber– Mike Conner**

- Transportation is a major issue (one of top 5 Chamber issues):
  - In-town congestion due to Insufficient roadway capacity (only one major N/S roadway); extensive truck traffic got worse with closure of Hoover dam route to trucks after 9/11
  - Employees using bridge to Laughlin (9 casinos drawing 1,800 employees with most living in AZ – 75% live in BHC and 20% live in Kingman – significant congestion at shift changes;
  - Trips to Needles;
- Major employers: City, Hospitals, Casinos and a few big box retailers
- 50% split on internal and external work trips
- Focus of rideshare needs: South valley to BHC and BHC to Laughlin
- Chamber willing to call forum of members, meet with neighboring chambers/cities to discuss needs and actions; communicate with members; Would make conference center available for meetings

#### **Kingman Chamber– Laura Henry**

- Areas affected by traffic: Kingman Airport (employment) & Stockton Hill (employment & commercial)
- Key transportation issues:
  - Local/in-town congestion
  - No alternatives to driving to work alone
  - Long commutes to or from jobs
  - Golden Valley has no coordinated transportation services for their residents that have mobility issues – low income/low vehicle accessibility – many travel to BHC
  - Potential issue: Wal-Mart Distribution Center is planned between Kingman & Lake Havasu
- Kingman has approximately 22 organizations with a workforce of more than 100 employees with Mohave County with 1,147 employees
- Rideshare services would help commuters in our area especially those with minimum wage salaries that are transit dependent



- The Kingman Area Regional Transit (KART) was started in 2003 to provide “mobility for residents” in the City of Kingman & Butler area
- City/KARTS would consider:
  - Dedicating staff to organize local rideshare activities
  - Offering office space and other overhead services
  - Developing support among community organizations
  - Establishing contact with employers
  - Staging meetings to introduce rideshare to community organizations and employers
- Sees rideshare as complimenting transit by serving areas KART can not serve
- Limited resources for outreach
- Chamber may be willing to call forum of members, meet with neighboring chambers/cities to discuss needs and actions; communicate with members

### **Lake Havasu Chamber – Lisa Kruger**

- Works with Bullhead and Kingman on many issues as part of Regional Coalition of Chambers
- Strong economic ties among neighboring jurisdictions especially banking and residential
  - Prison in Kingman draws employees from all three cities as do the casinos in Laughlin
- Employers are dependent on reliability of low wage employees getting to work; Employees are willing to miss work if problems with not being able to drive to work
- Weekend workers have problems if using transit since there isn’t any bus service on Sundays
- Other needs: mobility impaired (Seniors, households distant to City center) – maybe have shared ride services for seniors
- Transit service - Just converted from demand responsive to fixed route; Rideshare services could help get the message out
- Route 95 very congested
- Most issues are not pressing or a priority
- Long time residents perceive problems more significantly
- Need for rideshare services among long distance commuters especially persons living in LH and working elsewhere (example: Parker, CA that does not have sufficient employee housing)
- Only a handful of larger employers: Sterilite – plastics mfg.(3 shifts); Government (City) and hospitals

- Most resident live and work in LH
- Large sector of employment focused on tourism
- Need to make sure tourists are not put off by traffic
- No existing rideshare resource
- Rideshare services for commuters needed on targeted market basis
- Chamber willing to call forum of members, meet with neighboring chambers/cities to discuss needs and actions; communicate with members

**Meeting Attendees**<sup>25</sup>

Mike Conner	Bullhead City Chamber	<a href="mailto:mconner@bullheadchamber.com">mconner@bullheadchamber.com</a>
Jack Kramer	City of Kingman	<a href="mailto:jkramer@cityofkingman.gov">jkramer@cityofkingman.gov</a>
Larry Wiemken	B.A.T.S	<a href="mailto:lar24@npgcable.com">lar24@npgcable.com</a>
Gary Parsons	Havasu Area Transit	<a href="mailto:parsonsg@lhcaz.gov">parsonsg@lhcaz.gov</a>
Lisa Kruger	Lake Havasu Chamber	<a href="mailto:lisak@havasuchamber.com">lisak@havasuchamber.com</a>
M.E. “Gene” Hepler	Mohave County OMB	<a href="mailto:gene.hepler@co.mohave.az.us">gene.hepler@co.mohave.az.us</a>
Rob Lafontaine	City of Bullhead City	<a href="mailto:rlafontaine@bullheadcity.com">rlafontaine@bullheadcity.com</a>
Emily Bailey	So. Nevada Transit Coalition	<a href="mailto:sntced@cmaaccess.com">sntced@cmaaccess.com</a>
Deb Dauenhauer	So. Nevada Transit Coalition	<a href="mailto:sntced@cmaaccess.com">sntced@cmaaccess.com</a>
Eric Schreffler	ESTC	<a href="mailto:estc@san.rr.com">estc@san.rr.com</a>
Peter Valk	TMS	<a href="mailto:valk@tms85.com">valk@tms85.com</a>

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<sup>25</sup> Comments on the findings and recommendations were also received from David Barber of the Western Arizona Council of Governments and incorporated herein.

## **APPENDIX E – SUMMARY OF FACT FINDING MEETING (FLAGSTAFF)**

### **IMPLEMENTING A STATEWIDE RIDESHARE PROGRAM**

#### **AzDOT Project SPR 610**

#### **Summary of Fact Finding Meeting**

#### **Flagstaff**

**Wednesday, March 21, 2007**

#### **Purpose**

After introductions, the consulting team provides some background on the AzDOT Statewide Ridesharing Study and the purpose of the meeting as a fact-finding session. The study is designed to assess the need for ridesharing and vanpooling services in non-urban areas of Arizona. Ridesharing services were defined as providing options to travelers as an alternative to driving alone, including carpooling, vanpooling, transit, etc. Services are traditionally made available to commuters, but can also assist students, seniors, and others with mobility needs. The consulting team also acknowledged the concurrent activities and meetings related to the Governor's Executive Order to Expand Arizona's Transportation Options. Based on a review of relevant literature, a survey of other states, and discussions with selected areas in Arizona, the consultant study will provide an assessment of potential need for ridesharing services in one or more areas of the state. This assessment will be the outcome of this research process and does not imply future funding, projects or support for these services.

#### **Contacts with Chambers**

After sending an e-mail survey to chambers of commerce throughout the state, a response from the Flagstaff chamber prompted a joint meeting to discuss potential needs in Flagstaff and the surrounding areas. Telephone interviews were conducted with each chamber and the findings from those interviews are attached. Based on these interviews, and others like it, fact-finding meetings were scheduled in Bullhead City and Flagstaff.

The fact-finding meeting explored three topics:

1. The nature and severity of transportation problems
2. The potential applicability of ridesharing
3. Local interest in implementing a program

#### **Nature of Transportation Problems**

Increased traffic is a concern in the area as it experiences growth. Downtown parking issues are one manifestation of this problem and are the subject of a current initiative. City employees park on-street and this reduces the availability for visitors and shoppers.

There are several major employers that could benefit from commuter assistance, including: the City/County, W.L. Gore, Nestle, the hospital and Wal-Mart's Distribution center, and Northern Arizona University (NAU). NAU has just lost parking due to the construction of a conference center and hotel and is planning to build a new parking

structure. Gore may already provide a transportation stipend to recruit employees, but not tied to rideshare incentives.

Employers are facing significant problems in recruiting employees, given the cost of living in Flagstaff. Commute benefits could help ameliorate this issue, including assistance with forming carpools and vanpools, especially from outlying areas such as Winslow and the Navajo Nation. Some NPS employees who work at the Grand Canyon commute from Flagstaff.

Thus, the problem may be economic development as much as mobility in the Flagstaff area.

#### Potential for Ridesharing

There is already some activity towards establishing ridesharing services. NAIPTA is working with AzDOT and Valley Metro in Phoenix on an IGA to acquire access to a statewide ridematching program. There are, however, no current plans on how to market and support the ridematching service.

The city is already offering almost 800 employees an Eco-pass for unlimited annual access to transit. The county is considering following suit. However, a significant expansion of transit is unlikely, given the rejection of a transit sales tax initiative. A Bike-to-Work week is already popular and includes a worksite challenge and is run by the Flagstaff Biking Organization.

Some information on travel patterns and existing levels of ridesharing might be revealed from the current travel diary project being undertaken by Martin Ince at the Flagstaff MPO.

Vanpooling seems to have some potential, given the long commutes to outlying areas, such as Bellemont and Tuba City, if there were some support on acquiring the vans.

#### **Local Interest**

There is a sense that area employers, public agencies, and the private organizations (including the Northern Arizona Chamber Coalition) would have considerable interest in facilitating a coordinated ridesharing effort. Potential partners in this effort were identified as the Chamber, NAIPTA, the city and FMPO, and NAU. Some other major employers might also be interested.

#### **Follow-Up**

One suggestion that emerged from the meeting was the need to elicit input from more area stakeholders, especially employers and the FMPO. This additional input will be used in the needs assessment provided to AzDOT. This input could be gained either by circulating this summary, and eliciting comments, or by assembling key stakeholders via conference call with the consulting team.

## **Telephone Interviews (prior to meeting)**

### **Flagstaff**

- Many tourist trips due to being a gateway for tourism to northern Arizona; mixes with commute traffic; adds to congestion
- Government (City, County, and No. AZ University) are largest employers; all in same area; parking problems; start/stop surges
- Other large employers (private sector) are in less congested areas; Nestle, WL Gore, Walgreen Distribution Center – have housing issues; Downtown employee work for small businesses
- Rideshare services may be valued in residential areas in:
  - Growing Coconino County area – sprawled along perimeter of city towards SE, S and W
  - Doney Park – along Route 66/Hwy 89
  - Kachina Village – along I-17
- Short commutes unless living outside city
- Bike and walk friendly streets
- Chamber recently held forum on transportation issues on I-17
- Chamber willing to call forum of members, meet with neighboring chambers/cities to discuss needs and actions; communicate with members

### Meeting Attendees

Julie Pastrick	Flagstaff Chamber	jpastrick@flagstaffchamber.com
Jim Tuck	NAIPTA	jtuck@naipta.az.gov
Eric Schreffler	ESTC	estc@san.rr.com
Peter Valk	TMS	valk@tms85.com