ALAMEDA County Transportation Commission

Alameda County Transportation Commission
GUARANTEED RIDE HOME

GUARANTEED RIDE HOME PROGRAM EVALUATION • 2012

FINAL REPORT

MAY 2013

Bay Area Air Quality

Transportation Fund for Clean Air

NELSON NYGAARD

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: PROGRAM UPDATE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of the 2012 Alameda County Transportation Commission Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Program Evaluation. It provides an analysis of how well the program achieved its goals of reducing the number of drive-alone trips Alameda County commuters took to work in 2012. It also includes a review of the program's operations and compares the results of the program in 2012 to previous years. The evaluation provides information about:

1. The program's success in increasing the use of alternative travel modes
2. GRH program operations and marketing
3. Employer and employee participation and usage
4. The status of the Commission recommendations made for the GRH program in 2012 and proposed recommendations for 2013

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Alameda County Guaranteed Ride Home gives commuters an "insurance policy" against being stranded at work if they need to make an unscheduled return trip home. By providing commuters with assurance that they can get home quickly in an emergency, GRH removes one of the greatest barriers to choosing an alternative to driving alone. GRH addresses concerns such as, "What if I need to get home because my child is sick?" or "What if I have unscheduled overtime and miss my carpool ride home?" In doing so, GRH empowers employees to take alternative modes when they might not otherwise view them as viable options, resulting in less traffic congestion and pollution. GRH also benefits businesses, as it enables stress-free, reliable employee commuting and helps them save money on payroll taxes by deducting the amount employees spend on transit or vanpools from their reported gross salary.

> "For a long while I was taking Wheels Bus express bus between Pleasant Hill BART and California Center in Pleasanton. My shift was changed so the bus is no longer an option. GRH makes taking transit that much better knowing I won't be stranded."
>
> *– Michael Smith, AT&T*

The GRH program is one of many Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs in Alameda County that aim to reduce strains on existing roadway and parking capacity without

engaging in expensive capacity additions. GRH is unique in that it is the only program that provides a vital safety net for other commute alternatives.

The Alameda County GRH program has been in operation since April 9, 1998. Over the last 15 years, the program has matured from a demonstration program with a handful of participating employers to a robust one with 5,104 registered employees and 282 active registered employers throughout Alameda County.

The Alameda County GRH program is administered by the Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC), whose mission is to plan, fund, and deliver a broad spectrum of transportation projects and programs to enhance mobility throughout Alameda County.[1] The GRH program was developed to help reduce the number of single-occupant vehicles on the road and as a means of reducing traffic congestion and improving air quality. The Alameda County GRH program is funded entirely through grants from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA).

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION

The program evaluation consists of an examination of the program's operations and outreach functions, statistics on employer and employee participation and use, data from the surveys of participating employees and employers, and recommendations for program changes and enhancements. For the first time, the GRH recommendations for future years are being developed in conjunction with a proposed Alameda County Comprehensive TDM Strategy. The following sections present the major findings and recommendations from the evaluation.

Employers of all sizes located in Alameda County have been eligible to participate in the GRH program since June 2009. Prior to that time, the GRH program required an employer to have at least 75 employees to register with the program. Opening the eligibility to all employees in Alameda County coincided with an increased number of employees making the commitment to travel to work by alternative modes. The combination resulted in the program's all time highest enrollment of 5,104 employees in 282 businesses in 2012. It has also resulted in a reduction of 335,921 one-way vehicle trips in 2012, or 3,230 vehicle roundtrips per week.[2] During the same year, the number

Category	2012 Savings
Cost per Trip Reduced	$0.33
Drive-alone roundtrips reduced per year	167,961
Drive-alone one-way trips reduced per year	335,921
GRH rides taken in 2012	51
Average commute distance of GRH users	28
Average miles saved per workday	36,176
Annual miles saved per work year	9,044,000
Tons of CO2 not released	1,873
Average U.S. vehicle fuel economy (MPG)	33.8
Average gallons of gas saved per workday	1,070.3
Annual gallons of gas saved per work year	267,574
Average gas price in 2012	$4.03
Average dollars not spent on gas per workday	$4,313
Annual dollars not spent on gas per work year	$1,078,323

[1] The Alameda CTC is a newly formed countywide transportation agency, resulting from a merger of the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency and the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority. The merger was completed in February 2012.
[2] Based on 2012 survey results described in Chapter 4.

of rides that were taken in the program was a record low of 51 rides. This represents less than one percent of eligible rides that employees could have taken. It also illustrates the "insurance" nature of the program. Insurance programs tend to be used infrequently, but they help give users peace of mind. Commuters are often concerned about the perceived inflexibility of alternative modes like transit or carpools and how they would return home if an emergency or if unexpected circumstances arise. The GRH program eases fears about being able to get home by ensuring that the user has a ride home if an emergency were to occur.

Fifteen years of employee and employer surveys of enrolled participants have shown that the availability of a "back-up" way to get home is incentive enough to encourage employees not to drive alone. According to the 2012 survey results:

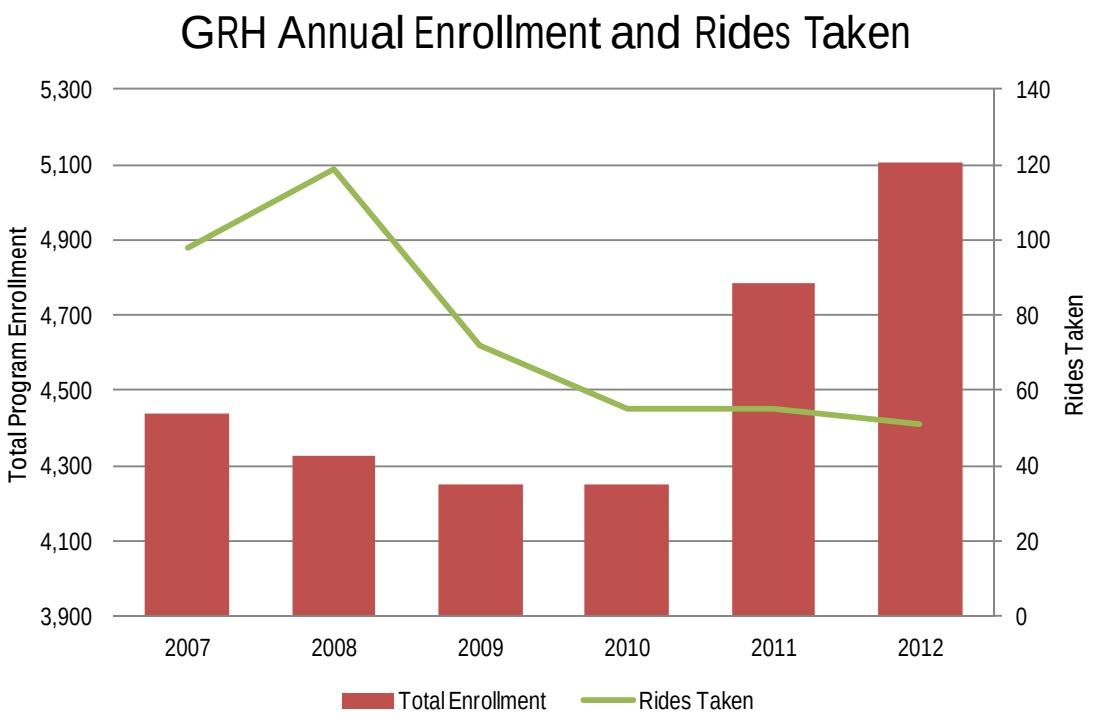
- 34% of participants stated that without the GRH program they would not use an alternative travel mode or would use one less frequently.
- 23% of participants stated that, with the program, they use alternative modes four or more times a week.
- 93% of respondents stated that the GRH program likely encourages participants to use alternative modes more often.
- 59% of respondents stated that the program was at least somewhat important in encouraging them to use alternative modes at least one more day per week.

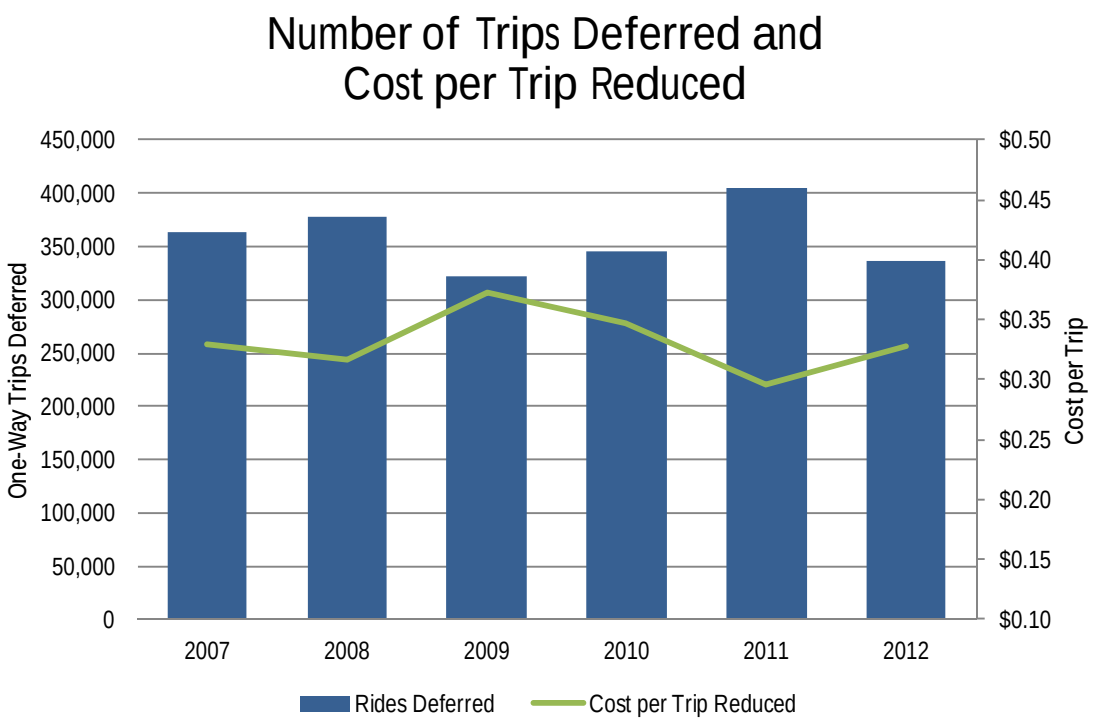
Based on the average reported commute distance by GRH participants and the number of registered participants, the GRH program eliminated approximately 9 million vehicle miles from roadways in 2012.[3] It is estimated that the program saved participants over one million annually on fuel expenses in 2012, which is the equivalent of saving 267,574 gallons of gas or 1,873 tons of CO_2.[4] These goals were accomplished at a cost of 33 cents per trip removed.

> "Fortunately, I have not yet had to use this benefit, but it is VERY important to me to know it is available, if/when I may need it."
>
> *– Safeway Employee*

The charts below show that while program enrollment grew substantially in 2011 and 2012, the number of rides taken has actually decreased. The cost per trip reduced has ranged between $0.37 (2009) to $0.30 (2011).

[3] 3,230 drive alone roundtrips per week = 6,640 one-way trips per week = 1,328 one-way trips per weekday (based on 1,328 reported reduced weekday one-way trips by participants from the annual survey, 250 days in a work year, and the average reported commute distance of 28 miles).
[4] Based on the calculated number of annual miles reduced, the annual US vehicle fuel economy reported by the US Bureau of Transportation Statistics (33.8 MPG), and the average Bay Area fuel price per gallon reported by MTC in 2012 ($4.03). Each gallon of gas produces about 14 pounds of carbon dioxide.


GRH Annual Enrollment and Rides Taken
Total Program Enrollment
Rides Taken
5,300
5,100
4,900
4,700
4,500
4,300
4,100
3,900
140
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
Total Enrollment
Rides Taken


Number of Trips Deferred and Cost per Trip Reduced
One-Way Trips Deferred
Cost per Trip
450,000
400,000
350,000
300,000
250,000
200,000
150,000
100,000
50,000
0
$0.50
$0.45
$0.40
$0.35
$0.30
$0.25
$0.20
$0.15
$0.10
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
Rides Deferred
Cost per Trip Reduced

Program Operating Principles and Outreach

- The Alameda County GRH program assigns a paper voucher to employees that can be redeemed for a ride home using a taxi or rental car. The limitation of six trips per employee per year continues to be appropriate. Very few program participants reach this limit.
- Program literature is available in hard copy and electronic formats. Employees and employers can download registration forms (as PDF files) and other program information from the program's website and employees can register online.
- Program staff participated in information sessions such as employee benefit and transportation fairs in different parts of Alameda County in 2012. These face-to-face opportunities have been successful in spreading the word about the program and encouraging employees and employers to sign up.

Employer and Employee Registration

- In 2012, the program added 491 new employees and 34 new employers. As of December 31, 2012, there were 282 employers and 5,104 employees enrolled in the GRH program.
- Thirty-four new employers enrolled in the GRH program in 2012. This was a slight decrease compared to 2011 (when 49 new employers enrolled), but is in line with historical trends.
- North and East Alameda County continue to be the areas with the greatest number of employers enrolled in the program. Oakland has the most registered employers, followed by Berkeley and Pleasanton.

Trips Taken and Employee Commute Patterns

- In 2012, 51 trips were taken (37 taxicab, 14 rental car). The average trip distance was 30.1 miles and the average trip cost was $70.51.
- "Personal illness" was the most common reason for taking a trip in 2012 (27% of trips) followed by "unscheduled overtime" (18% of trips).
- The most prevalent users of guaranteed rides home are car- and vanpoolers. Historically, people who used these modes accounted for 61% of emergency rides taken.
- In 2012, the most common GRH trip origin cities were Oakland, Pleasanton, and Berkeley. The most common GRH trip destination cities were Antioch, Emeryville, and San Francisco.
- The majority of employee participants live in Alameda and Contra Costa counties. A significant number also live in San Joaquin, San Francisco, Stanislaus, and Solano counties.

Employee Survey

An annual evaluation survey was sent to employees in February 2013. Of the 5,104 active participating employees, 782 surveys were returned, a 15% response rate.[5] According to 2012 survey responses:

- When asked how important GRH was in their decision to stop driving alone, 59% of respondents said that it was at least somewhat important. Most respondents (93%) stated that they thought the program encourages others to use alternative modes more often.
- If the program were not available, 25% of respondents reported they would use an alternative mode, but less frequently than before, and 9% reported that they would stop using an alternative mode and go back to driving alone. This finding illustrates that for some employees GRH is the decisive factor while for others it provides a critical incentive that helps them develop familiarity with and habits around using alternative modes.
- Using the survey findings, impact of the program on travel behavior of all participants was extrapolated. In 2012, approximately 3,230 drive-alone roundtrips or 6,460 drive-alone one-way trips per week were replaced by alternative mode trips by those who are in the program. This is equivalent to 335,921 total drive-alone, one-way trips per year.
- The most common alternative modes for program participants are BART, carpool, or bus. Survey respondents reported driving less by approximately one-third (39%) compared to before they enrolled in the GRH program. All alternative modes experienced an increase after participants joined the GRH program. Vanpooling and commuting on ACE train and ferry experienced the largest increases, according to the survey.

Commuting Behavior

- Survey respondents reported that their commute distances are generally 50 miles or less (84%). Over half (56%) are below 30 miles, and 18% live less than 10 miles from home. The average commute distance for program participants is 28 miles.

Customer Service

- The administrative functions of the GRH program continue to receive very high ratings for the quality of customer service including the telephone hotline and printed materials, consistent with previous years' evaluations. The vast majority of respondents had no opinion about hotline assistance (82%).
- Passengers were very positive in their evaluation of the transportation services provided through GRH. In 2012, the participants reported wait times for a taxi to be on average 15 minutes.

Program Involvement

- Most participants found out about the GRH program through their employer or onsite representative (49%), 11% from an on-site posting, and 16% from a co-worker. This indicates that workplace advertising and an employer representative contact is an effective and important part of the GRH program.

[5] According to the Constant Contact Resource Center, 10-20% is a common survey response rate. It is also worth noting that the survey sample size is roughly 10 times that of the number of people who actually used a ride voucher, indicating that the sample is broadly representative (i.e. those surveyed were not just those who have had occasion to take a ride).

- In 2012, the majority of participants registered for the GRH program online (54%). This number has continued to rise since online registration was introduced in 2010.

Employer Survey

An annual evaluation survey was sent to employers in February 2013. Of the 282 active participating employers, 66 surveys were returned, a 23% response rate. According to the 2012 survey responses:

> "This program has given me the confidence that I can return home quickly in an emergency. My husband has health problems that are sometimes critical, and the thought of being stuck at work when he needs me is very stressful."
>
> *– LLNL Employee*

Alternative Modes

- A large majority (85%) of employer representatives that responded reported that they thought participation in the GRH program is "very important" or "somewhat important" in encouraging employees to commute to work using alternative modes more often.
- Most employers reported that they provide some type of commuter benefits in addition to GRH. The most common transportation benefit was Commuter Checks, now offered by over 50% of employers, which was only offered by one-third of employers in the 2011 survey. Bicycle parking, shower/changing room, and telecommuting also remained among the top benefits provided by employers.

Program Management

- Almost all employer contact respondents stated that their GRH workload is either "manageable" or that they "could do more work if needed."

Customer Service

- The administrative functions of the GRH program received very high ratings for the quality of customer service, which is consistent with the employee survey results. As with employees, most have not used the hotline, and those who have rated it excellent or good.

Outreach and Marketing

- Employer representatives were then asked how they market the GRH program to their employees. The majority (37%) indicated that they make periodic companywide announcements and 24% said they use email "blasts" or include information in company newsletters.
- Twenty-six percent of employer representatives include information on the GRH program as part of their employee benefits orientation for new employees. Thirteen percent of employer representatives said they rely on word of mouth to market the GRH program to their employees.
- In addition, employer contacts were asked if they have used the new GRH website (www.grh.alamedactc.org) for information, and 43% responded that they have used the site recently. Several made comments about the new design:
  - "The new website and marketing materials look great!"

- "The website is thorough and informational. I've not had a need to call the hotline."
- "Really like the new look!"

Program Value

- Program value in the eyes of employer representatives continued to grow considerably. In 2012, 64% stated that they thought that their employees value the GRH program as much as or more than other transportation benefits offered by their employer (an increase from 55% in 2011).
- Thirteen percent of respondents stated that their employer does not offer any other transportation benefits.

GUARANTEED RIDE HOME 2013 RECOMMENDATIONS

Through the Guaranteed Ride Home Program, the Alameda CTC has continued to be successful in changing Alameda County employees' mode choice for work commutes from driving alone to using alternative transportation modes. Data from this year's participant survey indicate that the program is continuing to reduce the number of drive-alone trips made within the county by eliminating one of the significant barriers to alternative mode use – namely, the uncertainty of being unable to return home in the event of an emergency or unplanned overtime.

The 2013 Guaranteed Ride Home recommendations are based on an evaluation of the program issues raised by the Alameda CTC, and the following funding and schedule considerations:

- Current TFCA funding for the GRH program has been approved by the Air District and Alameda CTC through November 2013
- Future TFCA funding for the GRH program for 2013 to 2015 is anticipated to be approved by the Air District and the Alameda CTC;
- The Alameda CTC recently prepared Countywide Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Strategy, which is presented together with this report. The TDM Strategy includes recommendations for the Alameda CTC's role in the Guaranteed Ride Home Program, as well as other countywide TDM strategies that aim to reduce vehicle trips and greenhouse gas emissions, and comply with the Congestion Management Plan, AB32 and SB 375.

The following recommendations for 2013 aim to move the Alameda CTC's GRH program into a new era of more efficient administration, increased ease of use, and higher visibility, and to place it in the context of an overall Comprehensive TDM Strategy.

1. **Investigate feasibility of switching from the current paper voucher system to either an online voucher system or a reimbursement system and implement appropriate solution.**

   Moving from paper vouchers to an online voucher system or a reimbursement system has significant potential to increase ease of use for GRH participants, reduce administrative costs, and improve program tracking and security. Many other GRH programs around the country have made such a switch and realized benefits from doing so. As a first step towards a possible transition, GRH staff performed a peer review of other GRH programs that have switched from paper vendors and contacted software vendors that could support an online voucher system. This investigation identified both online vouchers and a reimbursement based system as possible alternative service delivery models, and identified advantages and disadvantages associated with each. It is recommended that, as

a next step, GRH staff use this information to determine if transitioning to an online or reimbursement system is feasible for the Alameda CTC in light of program budget, legal issues, and possible future regional TDM integration considerations.

An **Online Voucher** system allows registered users to print a voucher on the day when they have an emergency and need a ride home. Users must be registered in the GRH program and create an account prior to using a voucher. Employees (and GRH staff) can track the number of vouchers used (limited to six per calendar year). An online voucher system would require a new database and operating system in order to track use and enrollment and generate a voucher when requested. A **Reimbursement** system allows registered employees to take their ride home whenever they need. This program could be structured to allow employees to use any mode or provider they choose (taxi, car rental, transit, etc.), or could include a set list of transportation providers. Employees would still be required to first register in the GRH program before taking their ride. After they register, if they experience an emergency, they take the ride and then submit their receipt to be reimbursed. Employees could mail, scan/e-mail, or fax a copy of their receipt to the GRH program. The table below summarizes advantages and disadvantages associated with each model.

While both an online voucher system and a reimbursement system seem to hold potential for the Alameda County GRH program, a more detailed feasibility assessment is needed. Such an assessment would estimate the cost implications of a transition including start-up costs, ongoing costs of operating an alternative system (software platform subscription, etc.), and cost savings from reduced administrative activities. A more detailed assessment would also consider any legal issues pertaining to opening up the GRH program to more taxi and rental car companies as part of a switch to an online voucher or reimbursement system. Finally, a more detailed assessment would consider what selection of a particular model means for possible future regional integration of GRH programs. While the Alameda CTC remains committed to operating an Alameda County program for the foreseeable future, there are advantages to leaving the possibility of regional consolidation open given the tendency of GRH trips to cross county lines and possible cost savings from pooling resources between programs.

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Online Voucher System	▪ GRH staff no longer have to assign and mail printed vouchers to employees ▪ Employees have the ability to manage their GRH registration and view information on used vouchers. ▪ Registered participants will be able to print a voucher when an emergency occurs ▪ Significantly reduces the amount of administrative time spent on mailing program materials ▪ Very minimal delay between registration and program use	▪ Requires access to a computer during the time of the emergency ▪ Requires access to a printer to print voucher ▪ Upfront costs to develop database and software platform ▪ Back-up vouchers still have to be provided at worksites without access to computers ▪ Requires contracts with taxi and car rental companies ▪ Still need a signed waiver (can be done online)
Reimbursement System	▪ No need for voucher or printed form during time of emergency ▪ Can use any taxi, car rental, ride-sharing, or transit alternative to get home ▪ Reduces issues with liability and the need for a signed waiver ▪ Consistent with other Bay Area Guaranteed Ride Home programs (San Francisco and Contra Costa) ▪ Significantly reduces the amount of administrative time spent on mailing program materials ▪ Could eliminate the need for contracts with taxi and car rental companies if so desired	▪ People may not have access to a credit card or cash to pay for ride home ▪ Limits the amount that can be reimbursed each year (under $600 per person/calendar year) ▪ People may not like paying up front and submitting a receipt; could be an equity issue ▪ Back-up vouchers may be needed for people who do not have a credit card or cash to pay for the ride home ▪ Upfront costs to develop database and software platform

2. **Explore updating the current Access Database of registered employers and employees to a cloud-based database.**

   The current Access database system is unwieldy, especially in light of the number of participants it is required to handle, and lacks a user-friendly online interface. It is recommended that if a new system is chosen for GRH vouchers (either online voucher system or reimbursement system), the GRH program database be updated to a cloud-based database to allow an improved online user interface for registration and voucher distribution. This would allow greater functionality by enabling employees to log in and update contact information, enhance communication with participants, improve ease of accessing information, and more securely store information as the program grows. The costs of database transition would be largely shared with the costs of transitioning away from the current paper voucher system.

3. **Investigate changing GRH employee enrollment requirements such that being part of an employer with an Employer Representative is recommended but not required, and modify program if appropriate.**

   Currently, employees may only enroll in the GRH program if they belong to a participating employer that has a designated Employer Representative. This requirement adds a barrier to immediate enrollment for any employee whose company is not already

enrolled. It particularly disadvantages smaller employers where it is difficult to find someone willing to serve as an Employer Representative. There may also be geographic equity implications because the larger employers in Alameda County are concentrated in certain parts of the County.

Employer Representatives, while helpful in a variety of ways, are not essential to program operations. As noted throughout this report, Employer Representatives assist the program in a variety of ways. However, Employer Representatives are increasingly optional because of the GRH program's use of social media marketing and the GRH website to reach and maintain contact with employees and answer questions; a switch to online vouchers or a reimbursement system may further diminish the need for Employer Representatives.

It is recommended that GRH staff explore the feasibility of changing program rules and operations such that employees can join GRH even if their employer is not enrolled with a designated Employer Representative and modify the program if it proves to be feasible; such a change should continue to aim to recruit Employer Representatives (even if they are not required). The registration form could have an *optional* field in which the employee can list the name of his or her HR administrator or someone who can be a champion for the GRH program in their workplace. As with a switch away from paper vouchers, the practices of other GRH programs around the region will be considered in such an investigation.

4. **Continue to enhance marketing and outreach through coordination with Alameda CTC for events, print, and social media marketing to promote the GRH program to employers and employees throughout Alameda County.**

An updated Marketing Plan was developed in late 2012 and submitted to the Alameda CTC in January 2013. This plan hinges on the co-marketing opportunities with Alameda CTC in publicizing the GRH program. Coordinating with the ongoing marketing and communications efforts at the Alameda CTC will continue to improve visibility of the GRH program and reduce administrative costs associated with attending outreach events and marketing the program. The Alameda CTC attends hundreds of events each year in Alameda County. The Alameda CTC also has excellent connections with local businesses, chambers of commerce, and transit providers, and will promote the program and coordinate release of information to these outlets, such as program changes and milestones.

A key feature of this marketing plan is the continued development of the GRH Facebook page. Social media tools, such as Facebook, are commonly used by other programs and services in Alameda County, including Alameda County Safe Routes to School Program, Oakland Broadway Shuttle, BART, and Alameda Harbor Bay Ferry. Social media marketing will allow GRH to promote events in Alameda County and stay in communication with major employers and other program partners. The Alameda CTC began tweeting and posting to Facebook about the program in early 2013, including welcoming new employers and employees on a regular basis. Social media marketing is a great means to harness user anecdotes and engender a sense of participants promoting the program to other participants. In addition, social media allows more constant contact and visibility with participants, reminding people in a very unobtrusive way about the opportunity that GRH provides.

5. **Expand the GRH program in Alameda County to include a countywide TDM "One-stop-shop" clearinghouse website and TDM Fact Sheets as part of the proposed Comprehensive TDM Program Approach recommendations.**

   A continued recommendation from previous years is to investigate ways to expand the Alameda CTC's overall TDM portfolio. These evaluation reports recognized that GRH cannot provide its full benefit as a stand-alone program. GRH is a program that makes other TDM options like transit, shuttles, vanpooling, etc. viable, but it is not in and of itself a transportation option. Good alternative transportation options and other supportive incentives to use alternative transportation must be in place before GRH can reach its maximum potential. There are a number of other TDM programs that already exist in Alameda County with a range of providers including the region, cities, and employers. Unfortunately, centralized information about the range of TDM options in Alameda County is not easily available for users. It is recommended that the GRH program be expanded to include a TDM information "0ne-stop-shop" clearinghouse website and TDM Fact Sheets.

   The current GRH program provides a strong foundation for an expanded role for the Alameda CTC in providing TDM information. The GRH hotline has functioned as a general TDM information tool for some time now, albeit on an informal basis. GRH program staff already has strong relationships with many of the large employers in Alameda County and connections with over 5,000 registered employees. Finally, the GRH website currently provides a separate page listing the transportation options in Alameda County. The webpage contains links to various transportation providers (such as ACE Train, AC Transit, BART, Capitol Corridor, WHEELS, Union City Transit, Emery-Go-Round, San Francisco Bay Ferries, Amtrak, VTA, and Dumbarton Express); ridesharing options (511.org and East Bay Casual Carpool); and biking/walking information (East Bay Bicycle Coalition, Walk Oakland Bike Oakland, Alameda County Bicycle and Pedestrian Program). The web presence will be expanded to provide a "one-stop-shop" with additional information for employers and employees. This would include expanding and rebranding the GRH program to contain more information about Alameda County TDM opportunities. New printed materials would be given to people enrolled in GRH that further encourage use of more sustainable modes of transportation. In all of these materials, the GRH program can be emphasized as the "safety net" that makes other commute options work well.

REPORT ORGANIZATION

This report includes the following chapters:

Chapter 1 – Introduction

This chapter looks at the benefits of a Guaranteed Ride Home Program for employees, employers, and the entire county. It provide a context of how the GRH program fits into the Alameda County Transportation Commission's (CTC's) mission to plan, fund, and deliver a broad spectrum of transportation projects and programs to enhance mobility throughout Alameda County.

Chapter 2 – Program Operations and Outreach

This chapter examines administrative functions of the program, including the program's operating principles and marketing and promotions.

Chapter 3 – Employee and Employer Participation

This chapter examines employer and employee participation in the Guaranteed Ride Home Program, including employer and employee registration, and trips taken. Information in this chapter is based on data recorded in the program's database.

Chapter 4 – Employee Survey

This chapter presents the results of the annual survey and ride questionnaires of participating employees in the GRH program. The survey asked questions about employees' use of alternative modes and their opinions about the quality of customer service provided by the program.

Chapter 5 – Employer Survey

This chapter reviews the results from the survey of participating employers in the Guaranteed Ride Home Program. The survey requested employers' opinions on how they feel the program works for employees and their experience with being the contact for GRH.

Chapter 6 – Program Update and Recommendations

This chapter provides a program update on recommendations from the 2011 evaluation report and makes new recommendations for 2013.

1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of the fourteenth annual *Guaranteed Ride Home Program Evaluation*. This evaluation covers the program's operation during the 2012 calendar year and provides information about the effectiveness of program administration, statistics on employer and employee registration and trips taken, program impact on mode choice, and how the program helps achieve the goals of the Alameda County Transportation Commission (CTC). Fluctuations in enrollment and improvements in the program in response to Alameda CTC Board direction and employee and employer input over the course of the last 15 years are identified. Several internal changes were implemented in 2012, helping establish a foundation for continued growth in a changing marketplace. This report describes some of these new initiatives in addition to potential future program partnerships to build upon the foundation of other Alameda CTC programs.

WHAT IS A GUARANTEED RIDE HOME PROGRAM?

A Guaranteed Ride Home program (GRH) provides a "guaranteed ride home" to any registered employee working for a participating employer in Alameda County in cases of emergency on days the employee has used an alternative mode of transportation to get to work. A GRH program can remove the real and perceived barriers for commuters to make the switch to taking transit, biking, or carpooling instead of driving alone. It offers a greater sense of security to employees or commuters who share rides or use other non-SOV travel modes (e.g. transit, vanpool, bike or walk) by providing paid transportation in the event of a personal/family emergency, unplanned overtime, or other authorized reasons.

A GRH program is an important component of ridesharing and alternative transportation programs as the fear of needing a ride home in case of an emergency during the work day is one of the most cited obstacles to ridesharing or transit use. Many commuters say they are much more likely to use alternative transportation if they have access to an emergency ride home. Guaranteed Ride Home programs provide an occasional subsidized ride to commuters who use alternative modes, for example, if a bus rider must return home in an emergency, or a carpooler must stay at work later than expected.

A GRH program typically complements Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies. TDM strategies usually fall under two categories: voluntary, or "soft," strategies— like preferential parking for carpoolers—that aim to lure some to alter their travel behavior in response to voluntary inducements, and "hard" strategies—like increased parking pricing—that shift the behavior of a large number of travelers by changing the price of travel. TDM also can include regulatory strategies, such as regional employer ridesharing mandates. TDM programs are mutually reinforcing. For example, more employees might choose to use a transit subsidy if a guaranteed ride home program were in place in the event of a family emergency or unscheduled overtime. If the employer were to also implement a parking cash out program, the number of transit users would likely increase further. TDM programs are more effective when employees feel

confident that they can get home in a timely fashion in case of an emergency or unforeseen overtime. The presence of a Guaranteed Ride Home program can help to alleviate those concerns.

Effective TDM programs can increase choices for travelers, and reduce per capita non-renewable energy consumption and emissions. When transit use, carpooling, biking, and walking rise, transportation system efficiency tends to increase, bringing many benefits to the region. Thus, these benefits can justify public expenditures on effectively implemented soft TDM programs, including a Guaranteed Ride Home Program.

The Alameda County Guaranteed Ride Home program has been in operation since April 9, 1998. Over the course of the last 15 years, the program has matured from a demonstration program with a handful of participating employers to a robust program with 282 active registered employers and 5,104 registered employees. The Alameda County GRH program is administered by the Alameda County Transportation Commission (CTC) and is funded with Transportation Funds for Clean Air (TFCA) from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD).

The Alameda CTC's mission is to plan, fund, and deliver a broad spectrum of transportation projects and programs to enhance mobility throughout Alameda County. The Alameda County GRH program was developed to help reduce the number of single-occupant vehicles (SOV) on the road and as a means of reducing traffic congestion and improving air quality. As such, the GRH program operates in conjunction with other programs that encourage individuals to travel by a means other than driving alone (e.g., AC Transit EasyPass program, vanpool marketing, Bike to Work Day, etc.). The Alameda County GRH program is also promoted in conjunction with Alameda County's *Ride, Stride, Arrive* initiative which seeks to encourage bicycling and walking in Alameda County.[6]

Since June 2009, all employers in Alameda County are eligible to enroll in the GRH program. Prior to June 2009, all employers had to have 75 or more employees per worksite to be eligible for the GRH program. Participating employees must live within 100 miles of their worksite and be permanently employed part-time or full-time at the company.

BENEFITS OF A GUARANTEED RIDE HOME PROGRAM

The GRH program removes the final obstacle for commuters who are on the fence about leaving their car at home. The GRH program provides a wide range of benefits throughout Alameda County, as detailed below.

Commuters

The Alameda County Guaranteed Ride Home gives commuters an "insurance policy" against being stranded at work if they need to make an unscheduled return trip home. While the GRH program is one of many alternative commute programs and options in the county, it is the only program that provides a vital safety net for other commute alternatives. By providing commuters with assurance that they can get home in an emergency, GRH removes one of the greatest barriers to choosing an alternative to driving alone. GRH addresses concerns such as, "What if I need to get home because my child is sick?" or "What if I have unscheduled overtime and miss my carpool ride home?" that cause many employees in Alameda County to rule out options like carpooling or public transit entirely. GRH empowers employees to take alternative modes when they might not

[6] *Ride Stride Arrive is* funded by Measure B, Alameda County's half-cent transportation sales tax, administered by the Alameda County Transportation Commission.

otherwise view them as viable options, resulting in less traffic congestion and pollution. In some cases, having access to a GRH program can influence a family's decision not to purchase a second or third vehicle.

Fourteen years of employee and employer surveys of enrolled participants have shown that knowing they have a back-up way to get home is an incentive to encourage employees not to drive alone. Studies have been completed across the country that have shown that GRH programs promote non-single occupancy vehicle trips including a California study that noted that the existence of a GRH program is among the most important factors in determining the effectiveness of a commute trip reduction program.[7]

Employers

A GRH program can be a key tool used by employers to encourage their employees to share a ride to work or use a more sustainable means of traveling than driving a vehicle alone. Employers have an interest in ensuring workers arrive on time and are healthy and productive during the day. GRH programs support this goal by reducing SOV trips and traffic congestion in addition to enabling employees to work or relax during their commute instead of focusing on the drive.

GRH programs provide a free transportation benefit that employers can offer to their staff. Employees have a stronger incentive to switch to more cost-effective transportation options, saving money that would otherwise go towards fueling and maintaining a vehicle. Furthermore, it enables employers to introduce programs such as preferential carpool/vanpool parking spaces which offer a nominal benefit at almost no cost.

Encouraging fewer employees to drive to work can also have a significant impact on employer capital costs. Providing employee parking (either surface or structured) can be a significant capital cost with little monetary return. Companies that have effective commute programs that rely on alternative modes of transportation can partially unburden themselves from these costs.

Finally, due to the federal Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit program (also known as the Commuter Benefit Program) employers can save money on payroll taxes by deducting the amounts employees use to pay for transit or vanpools from the gross salary amounts on which taxes are deducted. Employers can also choose to pay for workers' commutes (by one of these two modes only) and then deduct their costs as a direct employee benefit. The commuter benefit program expanded from its inception in 2002 until in 2011, when employees could set aside up to $230/month of pre-tax income to pay for transit or vanpooling. In 2013, the amount was expanded to $245/month per employee for all public transportation options (including vanpool) and $49o/month for both public transportation and qualified parking.

Community

Traffic congestion not only hurts businesses but is also harmful to the community and the environment. Traffic congestion worsens road conditions and increases air pollution. As cities and local governments continue to provide better multimodal facilities (walking, biking and transit), a GRH program helps ensure these investments are utilized by encouraging people to walk, bike, and take transit more frequently. This type of modal shift is not only important for traffic congestion but also the general health and well-being of a community.

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[7] Comsis Corporation, "A Survey and Analysis of Employee Responses to Employer-Sponsored Trip Reduction Incentive Programs," California Air Resources Board, 1994

Alameda County Transportation Commission

The Alameda County GRH program is administered by the Alameda CTC. Its mission is to plan, fund, and deliver a broad spectrum of transportation projects and programs to enhance mobility throughout Alameda County. The Alameda CTC's vision supports a multimodal transportation system that promotes sustainability and access. The most recent Countywide Transportation Plan (2012) notes that the county's transportation system will be:[8]

- Multimodal
- Accessible, Affordable, and Equitable for people of all ages, incomes, abilities, and geographies
- Integrated with land use patterns and local decision-making
- Connected across the county, within and across the network of streets, highways, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian routes
- Reliable and Efficient
- Cost Effective
- Well Maintained
- Safe
- Supportive of a Healthy and Clean Environment

The Alameda County GRH program helps address all of these goals. However, it supports four goals most directly in the following ways:

Figure 1-1 Alameda County GRH Program Contribution

Countywide Plan Goal	Alameda County GRH Program Contribution
Multimodal	By promoting and incentivizing walking, biking, transit, vanpools and carpools, the GRH program helps balance the county's mode share.
Cost Effective	In comparison to the cost of building infrastructure, the GRH program focuses on the more efficient use of existing resources and is highly cost-effective at reducing SOV trips.
Supportive of a Healthy and Clean Environment	By reducing SOV trips and replacing them with alternative modes of transportation, the GRH program focuses its resources directly on reducing vehicle emissions and supporting a cleaner environment.
Accessible, Affordable, and Equitable	By reducing barriers to alternative modes of transportation, the GRH program helps provide better access to lower cost options of the transportation system.

[8] 2012 Alameda Countywide Transportation Plan
http://www.alamedactc.org/files/managed/Document/8043/ALAMEDA_CWTP_FINAL.pdf

In addition to the Alameda CTC's role in developing the Countywide Transportation Plan, the CTC also administers the county's Congestion Management Program (CMP). The most recently adopted CMP (2011) describes and encourages Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Programs similar to the GRH program. Specific to the GRH program, the CMP denotes that the Alameda CTC should further support TDM offerings through the following means:[9]

- Provide dedicated funding to the Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program, the Alameda CTC's primary TDM program.
- Develop a comprehensive TDM program in which the Alameda County GRH program is expanded.

These recommendations support the importance and understood benefit of the GRH program to the County's overall transportation goals.

Finally, the outreach and education done around GRH provide significant intangible benefits to the Alameda CTC, as the program serves as a visible reminder that Alameda County sales tax dollars are working to provide the public with transportation choices and solutions.

Transit System

Finally, transit systems benefit because a GRH program is a tool for encouraging passengers to choose public transportation. Increased ridership improves a system's revenue and allows the agency to plan for more services that will benefit even more community members. Increased ridership also improves competitiveness for external funding in an increasingly performance-based transportation finance world. It also helps the Alameda CTC collaborate with local transportation agencies and providers to encourage transit use, as well as other efforts to coordinate local transportation options. In Alameda County this benefits several agencies including AC Transit, BART, County Connection, Union City Transit, and Wheels, among others. The GRH program provides an incentive to make use of these existing transportation investments. This approach focuses on utilizing existing services more efficiently before spending money on new operations or capital projects.

PROGRAM CHANGES

While the GRH program has provided continuous support for Alameda County commuters for the past 15 years, program administrators continue to look at ways to adapt and serve a growing and changing marketplace. In 2012, the GRH program underwent several changes. These include the following:

- **Logo and Rebranding:** To increase program awareness and to ensure consistency with the new Alameda CTC logo and styles, the GRH program developed a new logo and color scheme in 2011. In 2012, this logo was unveiled and applied to existing program materials such as marketing postcards, brochures, and ride vouchers. These materials help ensure that participants associate the program with the Alameda CTC and add a fresh look to all existing program materials.
- **Website Restructuring:** In tandem with redeveloping the GRH logo, a new GRH website was developed. The new website provides a consistent look and feel to the Alameda CTC website while offering information about how to enroll and use the GRH

[9] Alameda County Congestion Management Program (2011). Travel Demand Management Element. http://www.alamedactc.org/files/managed/Document/5246/8_Chapter_5_Travel_Demand_Management_Element.pdf

program. In addition, the new website increases program transparency by providing access to existing GRH Annual Evaluations and GRH marketing materials.

- **Administrative Organization:** To provide program participants improved responsiveness in receiving vouchers and other mailed materials, administrative tasks were reorganized within the GRH team. This administrative organization is intended to improve the overall participant experience while reducing staff resources in conducting physical tasks such as mailings.

Moving forward, it is the intent of the program to continue to evolve to become more cost efficient and better serve existing and future program participants. One continued recommendation as part of the GRH program is to investigate ways to expand the Alameda CTC's overall TDM portfolio. Ideally, the GRH program would be one of a suite of complementary TDM programs that would help incentivize driving alternatives and reduce overall transportation demand in the region. A key recommendation from this program evaluation report is to expand GRH to include a "one-stop-shop" clearinghouse website that emphasizes that GRH is in fact part of a larger universe of TDM programs within Alameda County. Second, as a means to reduce barriers to using the program, the GRH program is investigating alternative means for providing access to rides. Currently, the program is paper voucher based, meaning that individuals can only access the program's services if they have a physical voucher in hand. This creates a challenge for individuals who may have lost or misplaced a voucher. In the future, it is possible to move towards a system that does not require the physical possession of a voucher. Examples that exist elsewhere include reimbursement systems or online vouchers. Initial research has been conducted about these alternative delivery models and their benefits and drawbacks in the Alameda County context.

2 PROGRAM OPERATIONS AND OUTREACH

This chapter examines the administrative functions of the Alameda County CTC Guaranteed Ride Home Program. These include two major categories: 1) the program's operating principles and 2) marketing and promotions.

PROGRAM OPERATING PRINCIPLES

The program's operating principles cover eligibility requirements, allowable uses and limitations, the process for getting a ride, and vendor payment.

Eligibility Requirements

The current eligibility requirements for this program are:

- The employer must be registered with the program (and designate a local employer representative who will have time to dedicate to the program).
- The employee must pre-register as a participant in the program.
- Participants must be permanent part-time or full-time employees with fixed schedules.

An alternative mode must be used on the day the ride is taken. (There is no minimum requirement for regular alternative mode use.) Approved alternative modes include transit (including buses, trains, and ferries), ridesharing (carpool and vanpool), bicycling, and walking. Motorcycles and airplanes are not considered alternative modes.

Eligibility requirements are designed to provide the greatest return on investment. Limiting the program ensures that only those who use alternative modes and who have emergencies will take advantage of the free ride home. Furthermore, requiring employers, as well as employees, to register (and designate an employer contact person) enables the program to more effectively engage employers in actively marketing the program to their employees. Employer contacts also help distribute the annual program evaluation survey to program participants and provide information to the Program Administrator about employees who have left the job or the program and who should be removed from the list of registrants.

Allowable Uses and Limitations

A participating employee may use a guaranteed ride home under the following conditions:

- The employee or immediate family member suffers from an illness or crisis (death in family, break-in, fire, etc.).
- The employee's ridesharing vehicle breaks down or the driver has to stay late or leave early. Commute bicycle break down (that cannot be repaired at work) is also covered.

- The employee must work unscheduled overtime (requires his or her supervisor's signature).

The employee may make an emergency-related side trip on the way home (e.g. picking up a sick child at school, picking up a prescription at a pharmacy). Each employee may take a guaranteed ride home up to twice in any calendar month but no more than six times in one calendar year.

Guaranteed rides home may not be used for:

- Personal errands
- Pre-planned medical appointments
- Ambulance service
- Business-related travel
- Anticipated overtime or working overtime without a supervisor's request
- Non-emergency side trips on the way home
- Instances in which public transit (BART, train, ferry, or bus) is delayed
- Regional emergencies such as earthquakes

Use limitations help manage program resources by ensuring that no one participant takes an excessive number of rides. Restrictions on the number of rides per year or month also help curb potential program abuse.

Most program participants take a guaranteed ride home very infrequently or not at all. Of the 9,200 employees who had registered for the program since program inception through 2012, 8,437 (92%) have never taken a ride. Over the course of the program's history 1,626 rides were taken by 753 different employee participants. Of these 753 participants, approximately 80% have taken only one or two rides. The low number of rides taken demonstrates that participants use GRH for its intended purpose, as an "insurance policy" to ensure a trip home in case of unexpected circumstances or unscheduled overtime.

The use limitation of six rides per calendar year and no more than two rides per calendar month continues to be reasonable based on usage patterns over the past years. During 2012, no participant took the maximum allowable six rides. One employee took five rides and two employees took three rides. The remainder took only one or two rides during the 2012 calendar year. Since program inception, only three participants have reached the maximum allowable rides in a year (less than 0.1% of participants).

Process for Getting a Ride

When employees register with the program, each receives: 1) a serialized, triplicate guaranteed ride home paper voucher, 2) detailed instructions and a list of service providers to contact directly to arrange a ride, and 3) a follow-up questionnaire. Registered employees should have all of the necessary materials at their desks when the need to take a guaranteed ride home arises. The two options for getting a guaranteed ride home are described below.

Taxi Rides

Employees are instructed to follow a six-step process for getting a guaranteed ride home via taxi:

- **Step 1:** Call one of the transportation providers to arrange a ride and inform them that this is an Alameda County Guaranteed Ride Home call.[10]
- **Step 2:** Fill out the employee section of the voucher. Give the voucher to the driver at the beginning of the ride.
- **Step 3:** At the end of the ride, ask the driver to fill out his/her portion of the voucher.
- **Step 4:** Sign the employee section of the voucher. Keep the pink copy and give the other two copies to the driver.
- **Step 5:** Tip the driver (10-15% is customary).
- **Step 6:** Within seven (7) days, fill out the follow-up questionnaire, which asks for feedback about the program, and mail or fax it with the employee copy of the voucher to the GRH program Administrator.

As of 2006, employee participants countywide are required to rent a car for their ride home if they live 50 miles or more from their workplace and meet the following requirements:

- A ride is needed for reasons other than personal illness or crisis (this criterion assumes that a personal illness or crisis would impair someone's driving ability and thus make it unsafe for him or her to rent a car).
- The participant knows how to drive, feels comfortable driving, is age 21 or older, and has a valid California driver's license.
- The ride is requested during Enterprise business hours (hours vary by location but ride requests can generally be made from 7:30 AM – 5:30 PM on Monday through Friday and 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM on Saturday).
- The participant is able to meet the vehicle return requirements (return by 9:30 AM the next morning, including Saturday, either at work or at another location acceptable to the rental car agency).

If a participant does not meet the above requirements, the participant may use a taxicab to get home.

Rental Car Rides

Similar to taxicab rides, employees are instructed to follow a six-step process for their guaranteed ride home via rental car:

- **Step 1:** Call 1-800-RENT-A-CAR. Calls will automatically be routed to the closest Enterprise Rent-A-Car office.[11] Inform the agent that this is an Alameda County CTC Guaranteed Ride Home call and provide the customer number.
- **Step 2:** Enterprise will pick the employee up at their employment location and take them to the nearest branch office.

[10]The GRH program accommodates participants with disabilities. Participants requiring an ADA accessible vehicle must contact Friendly Cab (one of three taxicab companies the program uses) and specify the need for an accessible vehicle, regardless of what city their employer is located in or where their destination is.
[11]Call before 5:00 PM to ensure that a vehicle will be available.

- **Step 3:** Provide the Enterprise agent with a valid California's driver's license, a credit card and sign a rental agreement.[12] Give the voucher to the Enterprise agent. After the agent fills out the service provider section of the voucher, retain the pink copy of the voucher.
- **Step 4:** Participants are required to pay for the gas in the vehicle. Any non-approved vehicle charges (fuel, GPS, vehicle upgrade, use in excess of 24 hours, etc.) will be charged to the participant's credit card.
- **Step 5:** Return the car to the rental office the following morning (including Saturdays) or to another acceptable location arranged with the Enterprise agent.[13]
- **Step 6:** Within seven (7) days, fill out the follow-up questionnaire and mail or fax the pink copy of the voucher along with the completed questionnaire to the GRH program administrator.

The program initiated the rental car service pilot program in 2002 for participants who worked in Livermore, Dublin, and Pleasanton. In April 2004, the rental car program was expanded to include the entire county to reduce program costs by encouraging use of rental cars with a fixed rate regardless of the number of miles traveled.

Instant Enrollment

Periodically, a request is made to enroll an employee of a participating employer in the program on the same day a guaranteed ride home is needed. Contact persons at participating employers are provided with two extra voucher packets, including a registration packet, follow-up questionnaire, and taxi list to use when these cases arise. Employees can contact their employer's GRH representative to register with the program and get a trip voucher and taxi list (or Enterprise Rent-A-Car contact information) for the ride home. However, the employee must complete the registration form and liability waiver and fax them to the GRH program administrator before taking the ride home.

Vendor Payment

Before vendors are paid each month, the GRH Program administrator:

1. Compares the mileage and fare amounts listed on each taxi voucher submitted by the vendor to the mileage estimate and fare shown on the corresponding employee paperwork (follow-up survey and voucher). The Program Administrator also makes sure that the fare is in line with the negotiated rate per mile. For rental car rides, the Program Administrator checks to make sure that the program is charged no more than the negotiated rate per ride of $55.00.
2. Searches the employee database for the employee's record to make sure that the employee is signed up for the program.

Vendors are paid monthly for all approved vouchers in a calendar month. Vouchers that are not approved are reviewed with the service provider within 30 days of receipt. The Alameda CTC is the final appeal for any payment disputes.

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[12] The participant must be 21 years of age or older.
[13] If the employee is prevented from returning the car by 9:30 AM, he or she must call the Enterprise branch to make arrangements.

This vendor payment system has been working well. There have been no payment disputes since program inception.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS

The following section describes the cost-breakdown of the GRH program for all tasks related to administration and operations:

- **20% - Outreach and Promotional Efforts:** One of the main goals of the Alameda County GRH program is to educate and encourage Alameda County employees to share a ride to work or use a more sustainable means of traveling than driving a vehicle alone. It is important to build awareness of the GRH program to encourage commuters to try a commute mode other than a single-occupant vehicle. To the extent possible, the program leverages these resources by relying on participating employers to promote the GRH program internally and by seeking co-marketing opportunities with local transit agencies and with organizations. The following is a list of outreach and promotional efforts performed in 2012:
  - Focused marketing efforts to businesses located along transit corridors in the County, such as International Boulevard, Telegraph Avenue, San Pablo Avenue, Mission Boulevard, and Dublin Boulevard.
  - Worked with business parks throughout the county to promote the program to employers and employees.
  - Worked with 511 Regional Rideshare, Enterprise and VSPI Vanpool programs, Chambers of Commerce, local transit agencies, etc. to help promote the GRH program through partnerships and marketing.
  - Contacted current employer participants to further promote the program to non-participants and distributed brochures to employers.
  - Performed outreach to current employers and employees to encourage the use of rental cars as a more convenient and cost effective alternative to taking a taxicab for longer trips.
  - Attended employer commuter fairs to promote program to employees.
  - Encouraged employers to promote the program using email blast announcements to employees not registered with the program.
- **20% - Administration:** General administrative tasks are required of any program. In the case of GRH, administration includes management of participant database, distribution of trip vouchers, and managing contracts with taxi operators and rental car facilities. Day-to-day administrative tasks performed by GRH staff include:
  - Customer Service: Answering the GRH hotline and responding to messages and emails.
  - Participant Enrollment: Entering new participants into the GRH database, sending all the necessary materials to participants, following up with participants who have provided incomplete information, enrolling new employers.
  - Database Management: Tracking vouchers, updating employee and employer information as needed.
  - Answering Marketing Requests: Responding to requests for additional marketing materials and attending onsite events.

  - Managing Taxicab and Rental Car Contracts: Monitoring taxicab and car rental usage, reviewing all receipts, invoices, and vouchers for taxicab and car rental services, reviewing quality of service, and ensuring payment of service.
- **15% - Direct Expenses:** Includes the cost of all rides taken (taxi and car rental), as well as travel to work sites for community events, printing, office supplies, postage, and telephone costs.
- **15% - Maintenance of Website & Updates to Program Materials:** The GRH website is consistently updated to provide seamless service to GRH employers and employees. The GRH website and program materials were updated in 2012 to include a new logo and look consistent with Alameda CTC's look and branding. The rebranding effort provided GRH staff an opportunity to develop new program materials that will require less paperwork to be sent to program participants. In turn, this will reduce costs and time spent distributing program materials.
- **10% - Annual Employee/Employer Survey:** GRH staff administers the annual survey to all program participants to measure program performance. The goal of the survey is to quantify the benefits of the GRH program such as number of single occupancy vehicles removed from the road, to determine the commute profile of participants, including distance and number of days they would have traveled without the program, and to assess participant satisfaction with the service. The annual survey also offers the opportunity to update the database and update employer and employee information.
- **10% - Draft and Final Annual Evaluation Report:** The annual evaluation is a key element of the GRH program. A thorough evaluation identifies lessons learned over the year and includes recommendations for improving the program and expanding its reach. The evaluation report reviews all program aspects over the calendar year, presents employer and employee survey results, and quantifies program benefits. The Annual Evaluation report is submitted to the Alameda CTC for approval and revised as needed.
- **5% - Monthly Reporting to the Alameda CTC:** Monthly reports are sent to the Alameda CTC detailing program use in the month, updates to recommendations made in the previous calendar year, and any issues or problems encountered.
- **5% - Additional Research and Reporting:** As required. Includes discussions with other county GRH programs and investigation of different types of operating systems (such as online vouchers or reimbursement systems).

OUTREACH AND PROMOTIONS

The GRH program seeks to leverage outreach efforts by working with participating employers to promote the GRH program internally and by seeking co-marketing opportunities with local transit agencies and with organizations such as 511 Rideshare, Enterprise Vanpool, and VPSI Vanpool.

To help increase countywide awareness about the GRH program, GRH staff developed a Marketing Plan that has three focus areas: Companies, Communities, and Creative Outlets. As part of this initiative, staff reached out to various businesses (identified through the East Bay Economic Development Alliance), various Alameda County city staff, and other advocacy and nonprofit groups that are supportive of alternative modes of transportation. Of the three components of this plan, the Communities and Creative Outlets portions had the greatest

successes in terms of feedback and the generation of new ideas. As part of those initiatives, GRH staff reached out to chambers of commerce in Alameda County cities and requested to them to add GRH marketing text to their e-newsletters. In addition, staff reached out to several departments of education as a way to enroll staff in Alameda County schools and higher education institutions.

GRH has also ramped up its efforts for co-marketing with other agencies and groups with similar missions and goals. Co-marketing involves co-promoting organizational missions to the general public at marketing events. GRH expanded co-marketing efforts with the Alameda CTC bicycle and pedestrian program, the Alameda CTC Safe Routes to School (SR2S) Program, and AC Transit EasyPass Program. GRH worked with Alameda CTC's *Ride, Stride, Arrive* initiative to encourage bicycling and walking in Alameda County, and efforts were made to coordinate outreach activities to promote awareness of the GRH program among teachers and staff through the SR2S Program. GRH staff members also worked with AC Transit to provide outreach materials to employers who have enrolled in the AC Transit EasyPass Program. These co-marketing partnerships have not only helped to expand the reach of GRH marketing efforts in a cost-effective manner, they also helped present GRH as a service that complements alternative modes of transportation.

The GRH program employs a number of outreach strategies that are used to market the program to both prospective employers and employees. The program's marketing tools and outreach strategies include the following:

Program Literature

Program literature includes Employer and Employee Guides (brochures) and registration forms, instruction sheets, vouchers, follow-up questionnaires, posters, and flyers. The Employer Guide promotes the benefits of the Guaranteed Ride Home Program to employers, identifies the responsibilities of the CTC in providing the service and of the employer when participating in the program, and explains how the program works. The Employer Guide also includes an employer registration form that all participating employers complete and submit to the GRH program Administrator by fax or mail.

The Employee Guide promotes the idea that, with the Guaranteed Ride Home Program, a participating employee will never be stranded in an emergency. The message in the Employee Guide is that the program is a type of "insurance policy" that eases people's worries about using an alternative transportation mode. It also encourages employees to try an alternative travel mode for the first time. The guide also explains the program's rules and parameters (under what circumstances and how many times per year the program can be used, etc.) and walks the employee step-by-step through the process of getting an emergency ride home. Each Employee Guide contains a registration form, including a liability waiver that employees complete and mail or fax to the Program Administrator. Employees can register via the program's website as well.

All program literature (with the exception of ride vouchers) is available in both electronic and hard copy form. This enables the Program Administrator to respond to requests for program literature within 24 hours (or less) by attaching the electronic files to an email message. Not only do program participants receive information in a timely manner, but the program also saves time and money by not having to assemble and mail hard copy materials. Because both the employer and employee registration forms require a signature, the registration materials must be printed and then mailed or faxed, or scanned and emailed, to the Program Administrator.

After over a decade of using the existing program materials, the GRH program has recently developed a new logo and style guide. This update, which was approved in 2011, was an important step in freshening the program's image and look. In tandem with this change, the GRH team developed new program materials to incorporate the new style elements. A new employee brochure and marketing postcards were launched in 2012. The new branding helped to better integrate the GRH program with Alameda CTC and will show users that GRH is part of a larger countywide transportation agency.

Website

The program's website (www.alamedactc.org/grh or www.grh.alamedactc.org) provides easy access to all program literature (which can be downloaded as PDF files). Keeping pace with a changing online landscape, the GRH website has also undergone numerous changes in the last three years.

In 2010, the GRH website was updated to include:

- Online registration: Both employers and employees can now complete registration entirely online. This eliminates the need to mail or fax in any forms and makes it easier to enroll.
- Employer login: This new feature enables employer representatives to login and view the names of the employees in their company who are currently enrolled in GRH. This feature allows employer representatives to easily update their contact information, as well as the information of enrolled employees (name, email address, employment status, etc.).

When interested employees call the GRH hotline, program staff can refer them to the website for additional program information and registration. This enables the program to reduce the number of hard copy brochures that are mailed and printed, and allows interested employees to obtain detailed information about the program immediately.

In 2011, the GRH program created a new logo and program materials. The previous logo was created during the program's initiation more than 14 years ago. The logo and program materials were approved by Alameda CTC.

In 2012, the GRH program began the process of completely overhauling the website. The previous website was developed years ago and was coded in a language that was essentially obsolete. The website's age and structure prohibited program staff from making timely updates including modifying basic text, uploading files, and changing any component of the site's basic layout. The new website was designed using a nimble WordPress Content Management System (CMS) which is commonly referred to as the industry standard for small to medium sized websites. This platform enables change to be made easily and by any program staff with limited website experience. While the front-end of the site and the content management aspects of the site have been updated, there still is a desire to upgrade the site's backend which communicates with the GRH database.

Social Media

In 2012, GRH staff began planning for the use of social media to help the GRH program stay in touch with businesses and reach out to new users. Social media tools, such as Facebook and Twitter, are commonly used by other programs and services in Alameda County, including Alameda County Safe Routes to School Program, BART, Alameda Harbor Bay Ferry, and most

major employers. GRH staff worked with the Alameda CTC to investigate social media as part of the GRH outreach strategy to promote events in Alameda County and stay in communication with employers and other program partners. Social media marketing allows more constant contact and visibility with participants, reminding people in a very unobtrusive way about the opportunity that GRH provides. A soft-launch for the GRH Facebook Page was initiated in January 2013 and additional outreach will continue in 2013. The social media campaign meets the requirements listed under the Alameda CTC Social Media Policy Guidelines.

Onsite Visits and Events

GRH program staff have taken advantage of opportunities to hold tabling and information sessions and participate in transportation and benefits fairs held at work sites of participating employers and business parks. These face-to-face opportunities have been successful in spreading the word about the program and encouraging employees and new employers to sign up. Program staff participated in various events in 2012, including the following:

- Kaiser Benefits Fair in Oakland
- Alameda Clean Commute Fair
- Healthy Planet Fair hosted by Hines Property Management and the Pleasanton Corporate Commons
- City of Berkeley Benefits Fair
- Santen Health Fair in Emeryville
- Roche Molecular Transportation Fair
- Dublin Corporate Center Transportation Fair
- Commuter Choice Transportation Fair hosted by Hacienda Business Park
- Employee Health Fair hosted by MTC

Additionally, GRH has increased coordination with Alameda CTC staff members who participate in a variety of events in Alameda County. Coordinating with the ongoing marketing and communications efforts at the Alameda CTC helps to improve visibility of the GRH program and reduce administrative costs associated with attending outreach events and marketing the program. The Alameda CTC attends hundreds of events each year in Alameda County and has excellent connections with local businesses, chambers of commerce, and transit providers. Coordination with ongoing Alameda CTC outreach will also enable GRH to achieve better coverage in South and Central County, where the workplaces tend to be smaller and not have as many employer fair events. GRH staff will continue to focus on in-person events that are high attendance, relying on cost-effective social media marketing to supplement.

Direct Outreach to Employers

An important aspect of employer outreach is contacting currently registered employers to renew relationships with employer contacts, update employee lists, and facilitate the functioning of the program with existing enrollees. As part of the annual program evaluation, all employers participating in the program were contacted via mail, email, and/or telephone. All employers who requested information were sent brochures, flyers, and posters.

3 EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION

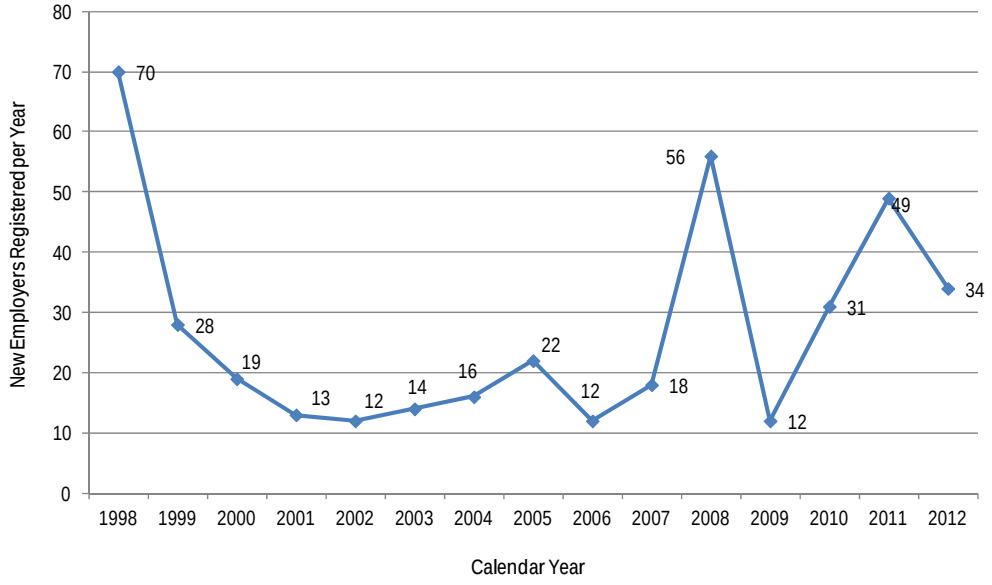
This chapter examines employer and employee participation in the Guaranteed Ride Home Program, including employer and employee registration, trips taken, and employee commute patterns. Information in this chapter is based on information stored in the program's database from enrollment forms and completed vouchers.

EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE REGISTRATION

Number of Employers

As of December 31, 2012, 282 employers were enrolled in the Guaranteed Ride Home Program. Thirty-four new employers were registered in 2012. Figure 3-1 shows the number of new employers registered by year. The largest number of employers enrolled in the first year of the program (70 employers). The second largest peak in new employer enrollment occurred in 2008 when 56 new employers enrolled. This increase was largely due to the informal partnership the GRH program formed with the Downtown Berkeley Association (DBA) and the Emeryville Transportation Management Association (TMA), as well as record high gas prices. The third highest employer enrollment took place in 2011, with 49 new employers. The 34 employers added in 2012 represents one of the better years of program growth over the program's 15 year history.

Figure 3-1 Number of New Employers Registered by Year



Note: Figure 3-1 does not include the employers that have been marked "deleted" or "inactive" in the database since the Program's inception.

Geographic Distribution of Employers

The County is commonly divided into four geographic areas:

- North County, encompassing the cities of Alameda, Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Oakland, and Piedmont.
- Central County, encompassing the cities of Hayward and San Leandro and the unincorporated communities of Ashland, Castro Valley, Cherryland, and San Lorenzo.
- South County, encompassing the cities of Fremont, Newark, and Union City.
- East County beyond the East Bay hills, including the cities of Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton, and the unincorporated communities of Sunol and other smaller communities in the East Bay hills.

Figure 3-2 presents the number of employers enrolled in GRH by location in Alameda County.

North County accounts for 64% of all businesses enrolled in the GRH program. North County includes the two busiest employment hubs in Alameda County — Downtown Oakland and UC Berkeley.[14] North County also has high coverage of rail and high frequency bus lines and a relatively urban form that favors walking and biking, compared to other planning areas. These facts – high concentration of employment and a relatively wide array of alternative commute options – have tended to make North County fruitful for GRH enrollment historically. Within North County, Oakland has the largest number of employers registered for the GRH program with 77 employers, a 20% increase from 2011. Berkeley has the second largest number of registered employers, with 40 businesses.

Employer enrollment in East County increased 10% in 2012, from 57 registered businesses in 2011 to 63 registered businesses in 2012. East County has the lowest population density in Alameda County and the highest concentration of protected agricultural land. The Dublin/Pleasanton BART and West Dublin/Pleasanton BART stations are both located in East County, as are several Altamont Commuter Express Rail Stations. The Dublin/Pleasanton BART station is adjacent to the Hacienda Business Park, which contains many businesses that are active participants of the GRH program. Pleasanton has the third largest concentration of GRH-registered employers with 38 businesses. Enrollment in Dublin increase by 30%, from 10 employers in 2011 to 13 employers in 2012.

South County includes the suburban communities of Fremont, Union City, and Newark. There was a 14% increase in employer enrollment in South County in 2012. Fremont experienced a 20% increase and now has 18 registered businesses. Fremont has historically been a major employment center in the County; however the New United Motor Manufacturing, Inc. (NUMMI) auto manufacturing plant was shut down in 2010. In 2012, Tesla Motors began manufacturing the electric sedan (Model S) out of the former NUMMI plant and has over 850 employees. GRH staff will reach out to the site about possible enrollment in the GRH program.

Central County includes the older, inner-ring suburban communities of Hayward, San Leandro, Castro Valley, and San Lorenzo. Central County has the second highest number of BART stations in the county with five stations (San Leandro, Castro Valley, Bayfair, Hayward, and South Hayward). Hayward also has a Capitol Corridor (Amtrak) stop and relatively good AC Transit coverage. Despite the variety of transit options, GRH enrollment has been historically low in Central County, since there are few large employers. Previously, the GRH program was only open

[14] U.S. Census Bureau Longitudinal Employment-Household Dynamics On the Map Tool.

to large employers, and GRH marketing tended to focus on direct outreach at fairs which are easier to host at large workplaces. Central County's enrollment may be catching up following the removal of the minimum employer size requirement in 2009, and the increased use of social media marketing tactics should make it easier to reach employers in Central County. Fifteen employers were registered in Central County as of 2012 (a 25% increase from 2011); eight businesses are located in Hayward and seven in San Leandro.

Figure 3-2 shows that North and East County have the greatest number of enrolled employers and account for over 85% of the total number of businesses enrolled in GRH. Not surprisingly, these two areas of the County also have the largest number of employers and registered business parks. However, South and Central County experienced the highest increase in employer enrollment between 2011 and 2012 (14% and 25%, respectively).

Maps showing the locations of all registered employers in Alameda County can be found in Appendix D.

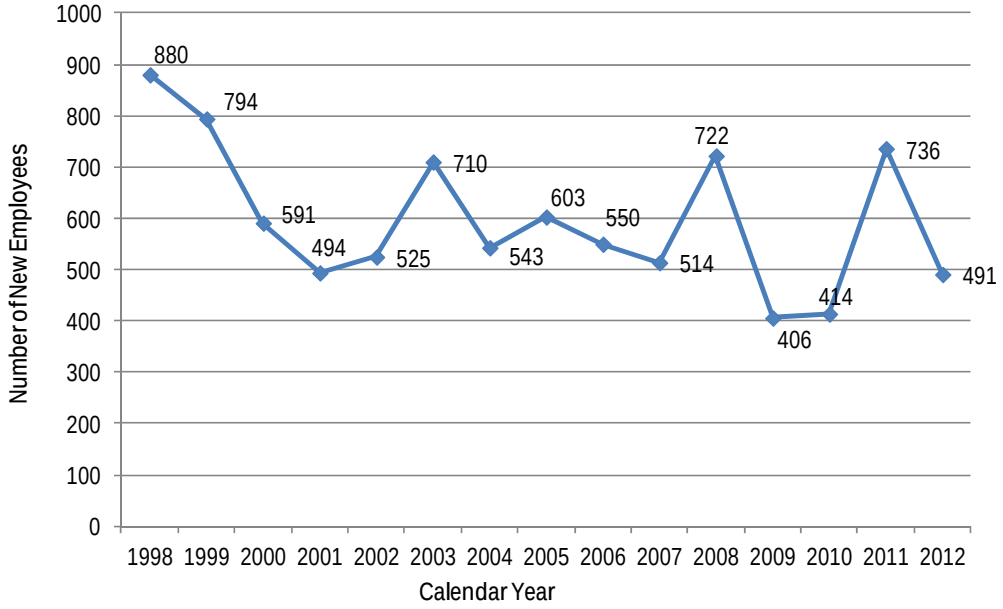
Figure 3-2 Employers by Location

Location	Number of Employers		% Change
	2011	2012	
North	159	179	13%
Alameda	29	32	10%
Berkeley	39	40	3%
Emeryville	27	30	11%
Oakland	64	77	20%
East	57	63	11%
Dublin	10	13	30%
Livermore	11	12	9%
Pleasanton	36	38	6%
South	22	25	14%
Fremont	15	18	20%
Newark	1	1	0%
Union City	6	6	0%
Central	12	15	25%
Hayward	6	8	33%
San Leandro	6	7	17%
Total	250	282	13%

Number of Employees

As of December 31, 2012, 5,104 employees were actively enrolled in the Guaranteed Ride Home Program. In 2012, 491 new employees enrolled in the GRH program. Figure 3-3 shows the number of new employees registered by year. Average annual enrollment is approximately 600 employees. The number of employees added in 2012 was among the lower new registration totals throughout the program's history; however, this is in part attributable to fewer marketing activities as such activities were scaled back to better coordinate with Alameda CTC direct outreach activities and to launch the social media marketing campaign.

Figure 3-3 Number of New Employees Registered by Year



Number of Employees by Employer

Forty employers have 20 or more enrolled employees and 17 companies have over 50 enrolled employees (Figure 3-4). The program has nine employers with 100 or more employees registered. These nine employers represent 60% of all GRH participants and have demonstrated a strong commitment to promoting commute alternatives. This measurement provides additional support to the supposition that marketing efforts are best spent on employers with an active GRH representative who markets the program to employees and actively supports the program; as such, any future restructuring of program guidelines should seek to maintain Employer Representatives whenever possible, even if these are not required. The program also has 164 employers with 1-19 registered employees and 78 employers with zero registered participants. Additional outreach will be made to all employers who do not have any registered participants to help them promote the GRH program to their employees.

Figure 3-4 Employers with Over Fifty Employee Participants

Employer Name	City	# of Employees
Kaiser Permanente	Oakland	1175
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory	Livermore	374
UC Berkeley	Berkeley	276
Alameda County	Oakland	272
Kaiser Oakland Medical Center	Oakland	266
City of Oakland	Oakland	205
State Compensation Insurance Fund	Pleasanton	185
Caltrans - Department of Transportation	Oakland	166
City of Berkeley	Berkeley	100
US Coast Guard	Oakland	98
Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory	Berkeley	97
Alta Bates Summit Medical Center	Oakland	91
Sandia National Laboratories	Livermore	79
Safeway Inc.	Pleasanton	72
Metropolitan Transportation Commission	Oakland	68
Department of Homeland Security (FEMA), Region 9	Oakland	61
Oracle (Peoplesoft)	Pleasanton	44
Western Digital	Fremont	43

In 2012, 23 of the 34 (67%) new employers that registered for the GRH program had fewer than 75 employees. In 2011 and 2010, approximately 2/3 of the new employers had fewer than 75 employees and in 2009, 50% of the new employers had fewer than 75 employees. This increase shows that more small businesses are becoming aware of the GRH program. Often it is difficult to register smaller businesses because they do not have the resources to support the GRH program, particularly given the program's current guidelines which require the workplace to designate an Employer Representative. Participation in the program can be a particularly hard sell if the employer is asked to enroll before employees have specifically requested GRH as a benefit. Larger employers often have transportation managers, transportation coordinators, or persons in charge of employee benefits programs that can easily serve as the GRH contact person and distribute information to employees. Despite these difficulties, the number of smaller employers has grown substantially. The figure below shows all the new businesses that registered in 2012.

Figure 3-5 New Employers (2012)

Employer Name	City	# of Employees	Date Registered
CSU East Bay	Hayward	14,000	9/17/2012
Clorox Services Company	Pleasanton	1,000	5/23/2012
Washington Hospital Healthcare System	Fremont	800	3/23/2012
Bechtel	Hayward	600	4/3/2012
City of Dublin	Dublin	250	6/25/2012
Art.com	Emeryville	200	4/12/2012
Hilton Garden Inn San Francisco/Oakland Bay Bridge	Emeryville	123	4/4/2012
Mobile Modular Management Corp	Livermore	100	9/10/2012
Peerless Coffee & Tea	Oakland	85	5/11/2012
Star Protection Agency CA	Oakland	75	4/25/2012
Alameda County Community Food Bank	Oakland	74	2/29/2012
Hewlett-Packard	Pleasanton	70	5/23/2012
Jacobs	Oakland	70	3/5/2012
Carolina Escobar	Emeryville	65	2/9/2012
Bank Of Alameda	Alameda	63	2/16/2012
SafeAmerica Credit Union	Pleasanton	60	4/13/2012
Kaiser Permanente - Emeryville	Emeryville	55	4/23/2012
GNLD International	Fremont	50	1/11/2012
BB&T/Tanner Insurance Services	Pleasanton	50	2/7/2012
Integral Group	Oakland	41	9/28/2012
Oakland Hebrew Day School	Oakland	41	10/3/2012
Farley's East	Oakland	35	7/16/2012
Alameda County Sheriff's Office Crime Lab	San Leandro	30	1/31/2012
Ben & Nick's Bar & Grill	Oakland	25	3/20/2012
Catos Ale House	Oakland	25	3/20/2012
McCutcheon Construction	Berkeley	24	10/25/2012
Kemtah Group Inc	Livermore	20	12/14/2012
Oakland Public Library	Oakland	20	2/17/2012
Aunt Mary's Café	Oakland	18	4/16/2012
Luso-American Life Insurance Society	Dublin	18	8/8/2012
TRIC Tools, Inc.	Alameda	11	2/1/2012
Liquidity	Alameda	10	8/28/2012
United Lending Partners	Pleasanton	10	1/30/2012
CARD - Collaborating Agencies Respond to Disasters	Oakland	6	7/18/2012

TRIPS TAKEN

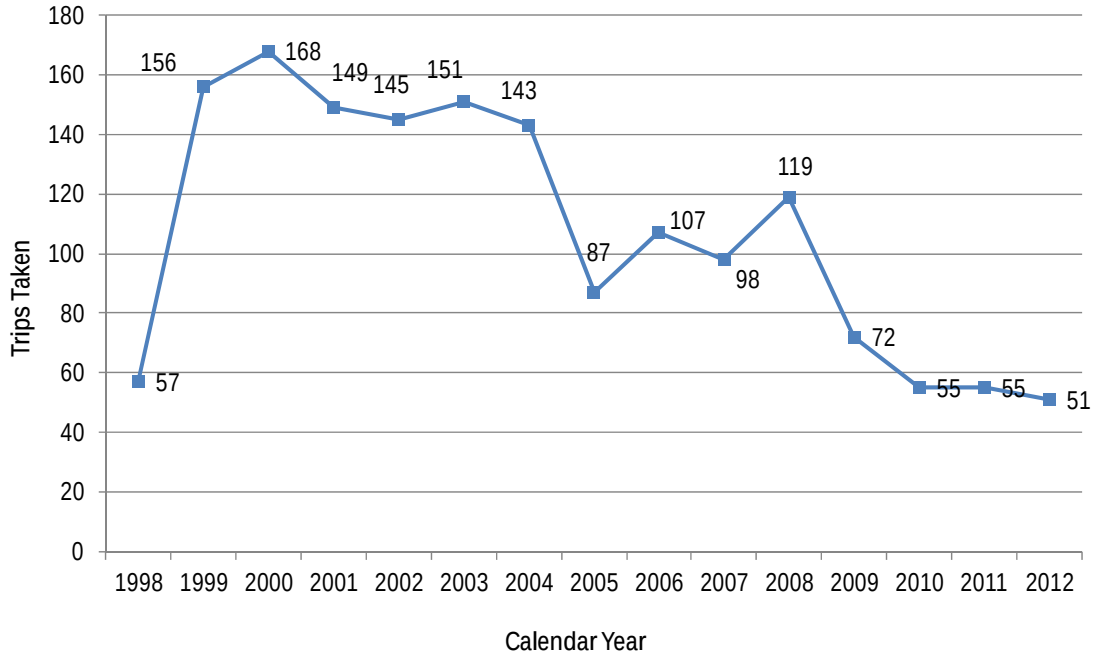
Total Number of Trips

As shown in Figure 3-6, a total of 51 trips were taken in 2012 — approximately 4 trips per month. Despite increased enrollment (the number of employees enrolled in 2012 reached an all-time high), the number of rides taken has not increased.

The decline in trips taken since 2009 could be partly attributable to the closure of the New United Motor Manufacturing, Inc. (NUMMI) plant.[15] Many NUMMI workers used a carpool or vanpool to commute to work from cities in the San Joaquin Valley. Employees who use these types of alternative modes are more likely to need to use their vouchers, given the less flexible nature of their commute options (must rely on a single driver) and the fact that many employees had non-traditional work shifts.

It should be noted that the number of trips taken in 2012 is in line with similar-sized GRH programs. For example, the San Francisco Emergency Ride Home Program currently has 240 registered employers (employees are not enrolled separately), and a total of 60 trips were taken in FY 2011-12.[16]

Figure 3-6 Number of Trips Taken Per Year since Program Inception



Note: Trips recorded in 1998 occurred over a nine-month period, as the program began on April 9, 1998.

[15] Based on GRH staff's observations of past usage.

[16] Conversation with Sue-Ellen Atkinson, Commuter Benefits Ordinance Manager, San Francisco Department of the Environment. May 1, 2013.

Of the total trips taken in 2012, 37 (73%) were via taxi and 14 (27%) were made with rental cars. Each person who registers for the GRH program and lives over 20 miles from their workplace receives a reminder to take a rental car rather than taxi for their guaranteed ride home. All participants who took the 2012 Annual Evaluation Survey were reminded of the rental car requirement. Encouraging the use of rental cars for trips over 20 miles helps to reduce program costs since rental cars charge a fixed rate regardless of the number of miles traveled.

Trips by Employee

Most program participants take a guaranteed ride home very infrequently or not at all. Of the 9,200 employees who had registered for the program since program inception through 2012, 8,437 (92%) have never taken a ride. This demonstrates the "insurance" nature of the Guaranteed Ride Home Program. Commuters are often concerned about the perceived inflexibility of alternative modes like transit or carpools and how they would return home if an emergency or if unexpected circumstances arise. The program provides participants with a free ride home if an emergency or unexpected circumstances arise, thus easing fears about being able to get home and removing one barrier to taking alternative travel modes.

Since the GRH program's inception in 1998 through December 31, 2012, 1,626 rides were taken by 753 different employee participants. Of these 753 participants, approximately 80% have taken only one or two rides. During 2012, no participant took the maximum allowable six rides. One employee took five rides and two employees took three rides. The remainder took only one or two rides during the 2012 calendar year. Since program inception, only three participants have reached the maximum allowable rides in a year (less than 0.1% of participants). The low number of rides taken demonstrates that participants use GRH as an "insurance policy" in case of unexpected circumstances.

Trips by Employer

Figure 3-7 shows the employers with the greatest number of trips taken during 2012. Larger employers tend to have a formal Employee Transportation Coordinator position to help their employees with their commutes. These employers generally have resources to get program information to their employees on a regular basis and have the most employees signed up with the program. Therefore, it is not surprising that the most frequent usage of the program is found with larger employers.

Figure 3-7 Trips Taken by Employer in 2012

Employer Name	Number of Rides
Alta Bates Summit Medical Center	10
Alameda County	3
UC Berkeley	3
Randick, O'Dea, & Tooliatas	3
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory	3

Trip Reasons

The most common reason for using a guaranteed ride home during 2012 was "personal illness" (27%), followed by "unscheduled overtime" (18%) and "personal crisis" (16%). Twenty-four percent of participants did not state a reason for using their ride. Frequent instances of rides taken for unknown reasons have not historically been an issue for the program. GRH staff will monitor this trend, and if trips continue to be taken for unknown reasons at a high rate, staff will consider following up with individuals who took these rides and/or changing program requirements to address this phenomenon.

When comparing recent statistics to program history, more employees currently use their GRH voucher because of personal reasons, such as illness or working overtime, and fewer are currently taking guaranteed rides home because of problems encountered with ridesharing (carpool/vanpool driver had to leave early or work late, breakdown of ridesharing vehicle, or rideshare vehicle not available). This trend could be related to the closure of the NUMMI plant, since many of the NUMMI employees used a carpool or vanpool to commute to work.

Figure 3-8 Trips Taken by Reason

Reason for Ride	2012 Only		1998 through 2012	
	Number of Rides	Percent	Number of Rides	Percent
Personal Illness	14	27%	461	28%
Unscheduled overtime	9	18%	348	21%
Family member illness	3	6%	208	13%
Personal crisis	8	16%	160	10%
Carpool or vanpool driver had to stay late or leave early	3	6%	211	13%
Carpool or vanpool breakdown	2	4%	100	6%
Unknown	12	24%	94	6%
Rideshare vehicle not available	0	0%	38	2%
Other	0	0%	6	0%
Total	51		1626	

Commute Mode and Trips Taken

A majority of Guaranteed Ride Home trips are taken by those using carpools and vanpools. Figure 3-9 shows that over the 15 year life of the program, 61% of guaranteed rides home were used by carpoolers and vanpoolers. Because employees who carpool and vanpool have more limited options for when they can return home, they are more likely to be without a ride when an emergency or other unexpected situation arises. For example, many job locations where people carpool or vanpool are either inaccessible by bus or train or those modes do not operate during alternative shift hours.

In 2012, nearly half of the trips taken were by employees who use a carpool or vanpool to commute to work (47%), followed by a train (BART or other) (22%). Given the less flexible nature of carpooling/vanpooling and trains, it makes sense that people who use these commute options will rely more heavily on the GRH program in times of an emergency. The share of rides taken by carpoolers in 2012 was somewhat lower than it has been historically. This may partly reflect changes in particular large employers with many employees who carpooled. It may also reflect more general shifts in mode shift in Alameda County. According to the the U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey, carpooling in Alameda County went from 14% of work trips in 2000 to just 10% of work trips in 2011. This was the largest change in mode share seen by any mode during this period.

Figure 3-9 Commute Modes Used by Those Using a Guaranteed Ride Home since Program Inception (1998)[17]

Commute Mode	Number of Rides 2012 Only	Percent	Number of Rides 1998 – 2012	Percent
Carpool or vanpool	24	47%	994	61%
Train (BART or Other)	11	22%	338	21%
Bus	5	5%	186	11%
Unknown	9	18%	83	5%
Bicycle	2	4%	21	1%
Ferry	0	0%	1	0%
Walk	0	0%	3	0%
Total	51		1,626	

Rides by Distance

The average GRH trip distance in 2012 was 30.1 miles, a 6% decrease compared to 2011. Figure 3-10 shows the trend in average trip mileage (for taxi and rental car trips combined and each individual mode) for each year of the program's existence. The combined average mileage has decreased since 2005. The introduction of the countywide rental car program in 2004 has led to fewer long distance taxi trips, with the average taxi mileage declining greatly since 2006, though it may be stabilizing in more recent years. Rental cars are more cost-effective for long trips than taxicabs, and increased rental car usage for longer trips led to an overall reduction in trip cost.

The average trip mileage for taxi trips was approximately 24.3 miles in 2012, similar to 2011. Car rental trip distance increased dramatically between 2008 and 2010, and decreased by 35% in 2011. In 2012, the distance increased by 8% to 46.5 miles.

[17] This table represents reported commute mode on the day a GRH was taken. When reporting their commute mode, respondents are allowed to select more than one mode if their commute involved multiple modes of transportation.

Figure 3-10 Trends in Average Trip Mileage (Rental Car and Taxi Trips)

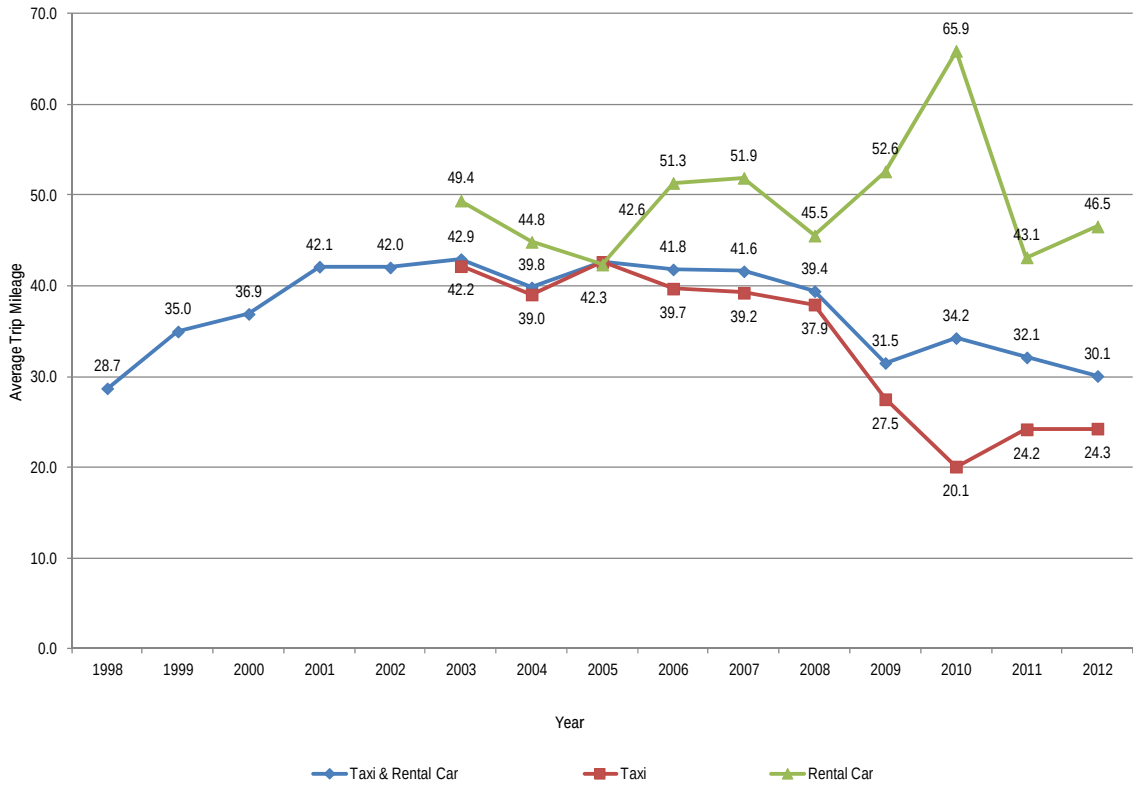
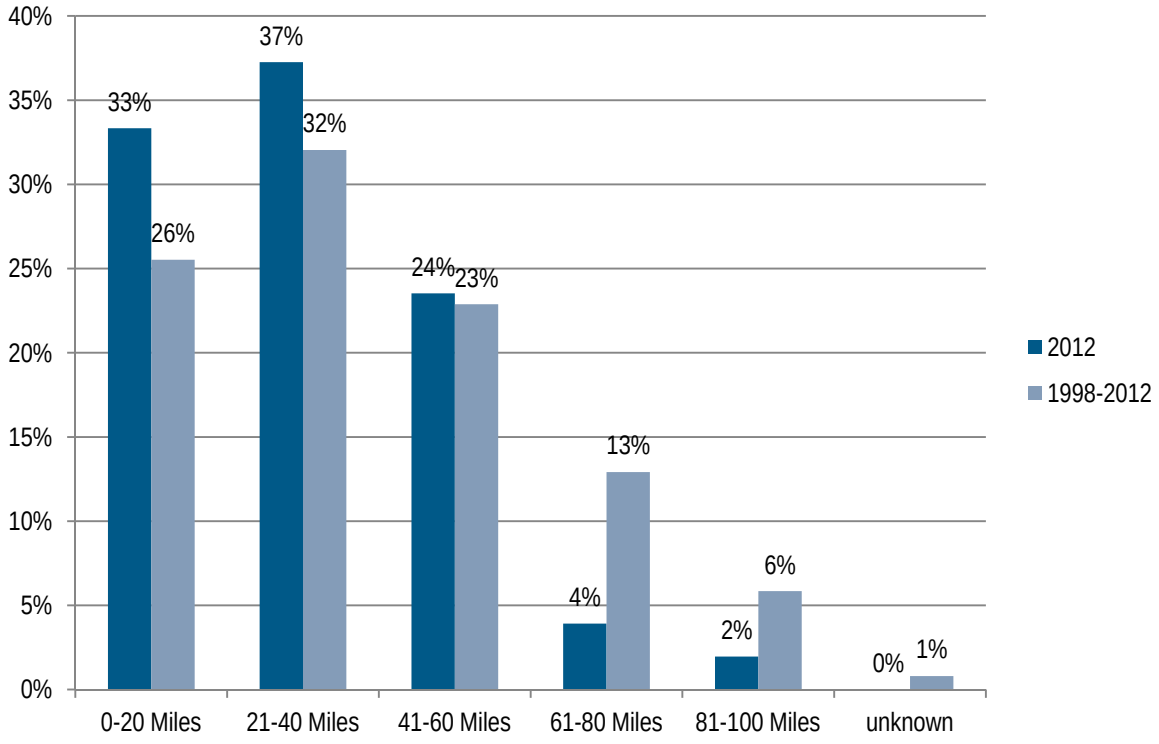


Figure 3-11 shows the number of rides taken by distance (combined taxi and rental car). In 2012, one-third of all trips taken were less than 20 miles in length and 70% of all trips taken were less than 40 miles. As shown below, fewer long distance trips were made in 2012 compared to the programs' 15 year history. A total of 95 rides (approximately 6% of all program trips made through 2012) have been over 80 miles and less than 100 miles long. In general, the distribution of trips was skewed more towards shorter trips in 2012 than it has been over the program's history.

Figure 3-11 Number of Rides Taken by Distance since Program Inception (1998)[18]



Trip Cost

The average trip cost in 2012 was $76.04 (for taxi trips only), a 1.7% decrease from 2011. Fares are calculated at a rate of $2.60 per mile plus wait time (depending on the taxi provider), and include a $3.00 flag rate plus any bridge tolls. Passengers are responsible for gratuities paid to drivers. Figure 3-12 shows the trend in average trip fare for each year of the program's existence. The average combined fare per trip peaked in 2003 at $93.64. The combined average fare in 2012 was $70.51, which is in the middle of the range seen over the program's history.

Rental car rates are fixed at $55.00 per day regardless of mileage. Participants are responsible for the cost of gasoline, and for paying for any additional days they keep the car should they keep it more than one day. The rental car rate includes unlimited mileage, sales tax, vehicle license fee, delivery and pick-up service, collision damage waiver, supplemental liability protection, and personal accident insurance.

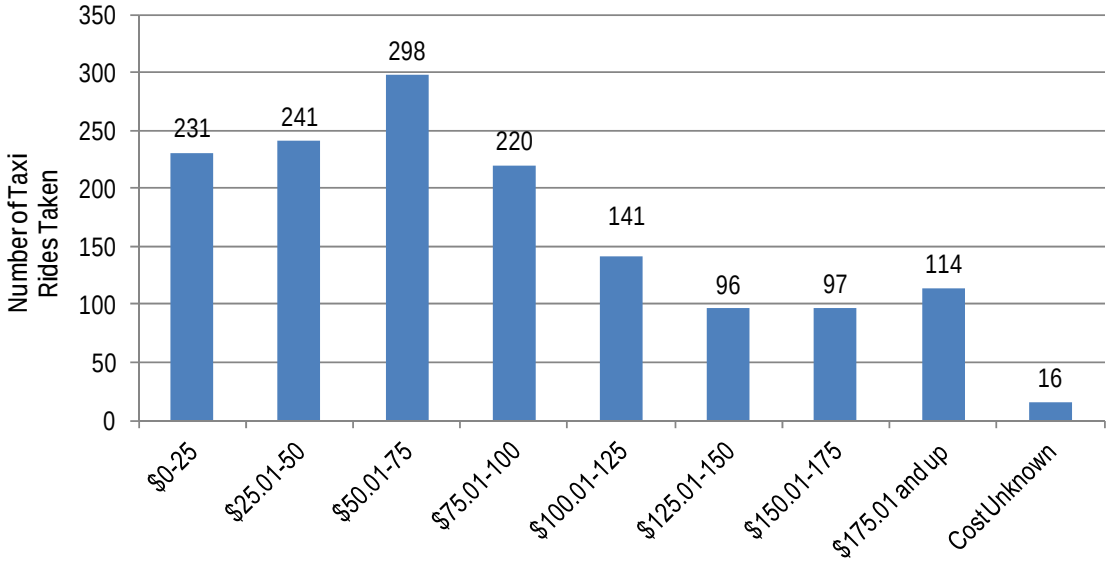
[18] The total ride distance is unknown for approximately 1% of total rides given since 1998. These were for trips used in the first few years of the program where some vouchers or invoices did not include the total trip distance.

Figure 3-12 Trends in Average Fare per Trip

Taxi Rides by Cost

Figure 3-13 shows the number of taxi rides taken in eight cost categories. Of the 1,454 total taxi rides, 770 (54%) cost $75 or less and 990 (69%) cost $100 or less.

Figure 3-13 Number of Taxi Rides Taken by Trip Cost since Program Inception (1998)



Rental Car Savings

Figure 3-14 displays the cost savings associated with the rental car program. Assuming that a ride for which a rental car was used would have cost on average $2.60 per mile plus a $3.00 flag fee, the program saved an estimated $990 in 2012 by using rental cars. For example, a 33-mile trip would cost $88.80 using a taxicab or $57.36 using a rental car (resulting in an estimated savings of $31.44). A total of 14 rental car trips were used in 2012, resulting in an estimated savings of nearly $1,000 in 2012. Rental cars are more cost-effective for long trips than taxicabs.

Figure 3-14 Rental Car Savings in 2012

Mileage	Total Cost	Pick Up City	Taxi Cost per Mile	Taxi Ride Total + $3 Flag	Estimated Savings
47	$54.77	Alameda	$2.60	$125.20	$70.43
33	$57.42	Alameda	$2.60	$88.80	$31.38
40	$57.51	Pleasanton	$2.60	$107.00	$49.49
20	$59.86	Berkeley	$2.60	$55.00	-$4.86
40	$54.36	Berkeley	$2.60	$107.00	$52.64
26	$57.36	Oakland	$2.60	$70.60	$13.24
64	$54.36	Fremont	$2.60	$169.40	$115.04
44	$57.36	Livermore	$2.60	$117.40	$60.04
46	$57.36	Pleasanton	$2.60	$122.60	$65.24
54	$54.36	Oakland	$2.60	$143.40	$89.04
106	$57.36	Livermore	$2.60	$278.60	$221.24
65	$57.36	Fremont	$2.60	$172.00	$114.64
20	$32.61	Berkeley	$2.60	$55.00	$22.39
55	$54.97	Dublin	$2.60	$146.00	$91.03
Total Program Savings					$990.98

EMPLOYEE COMMUTE PATTERNS

Commute Distance and Location

The employees registered with the program work in a wide variety of jobs within a range of industries throughout Alameda County, including healthcare, airplane maintenance, insurance sales, telephone services, hotel and retail, municipal government, and scientific laboratories.

Although employees must work in Alameda County to be eligible for the program, they may live up to 100 miles away from their worksite and live outside of the county. Program enrollment currently includes residents of 19 different counties (Figure 3-15). Thirty-six percent of those enrolled employees (for whom the home county is known) reside in Alameda County. This is roughly consistent with data that show that about half of workers employed in Alameda County

commute from outside the county.[19] The combined enrollment of Contra Costa and San Joaquin Counties nearly equals that of Alameda County.

Figure 3-15 County of Residence for Employees Enrolled in Program

County	Number of Employees Enrolled in Program	Percent of Employees Enrolled in Program
Alameda	1,549	36%
Contra Costa	967	22%
San Joaquin	420	10%
San Francisco	404	9%
Solano	295	7%
Santa Clara	190	4%
San Mateo	162	4%
Stanislaus	160	4%
Sacramento	65	1%
Marin	58	1%
Napa	30	0.7%
Yolo	22	0.5%
Sonoma	18	0.4%
Merced	4	0.1%
Placer	4	0.1%
Calaveras	3	0.1%
Sutter	1	0.02%
Madera	1	0.02%
Nevada	1	0.02%
TOTAL	4,354	
*Unknown**	*750*	
Total Enrollment	*5,104*	

*Before 2002, many participants did not include their home address in their registration and hence their county of origin is unknown.

Origin/Destination Frequency

Figure 3-16 shows the most frequent (fifteen or more trips) origin (work) and destination (home) cities for all the trips taken by employees in the program through 2012. The most common trip pairs were Oakland to Oakland (84 trips), Fremont to Modesto (60 trips), and Oakland to Vacaville (44 trips). The cities with the most trip origins overall are Oakland (459 trips), Pleasanton (311 trips), and Fremont (256 trips). The cities with the most trip destinations are Oakland (184 trips), Manteca (117 trips), Modesto (105 trips), and Tracy (82 trips).

[19] U.S. Census Bureau Longitudinal Employment-Household Dynamics On the Map Tool.

Figure 3-17 shows all of the origin and destination cities for the 51 trips taken in 2012. The most common trip pairs were Berkeley to Emeryville (5 trips), Oakland to Antioch (4 trips), Pleasanton to Antioch (3 trips), and Pleasanton to Walnut Creek (3 trips).

Figure 3-16 Origin and Destination Cities for Trips Taken by Employees since Program Inception (1998)

Origin (Work)	Destination (Home)	Number of Trips
Oakland	Oakland	84
Fremont	Modesto	60
Oakland	Vacaville	44
Pleasanton	Manteca	41
Berkeley	Oakland	37
Oakland	San Francisco	33
Pleasanton	Tracy	32
Oakland	Fairfield	30
Livermore	Oakland	29
Oakland	Manteca	27
Fremont	Manteca	25
Fremont	Fremont	24
Oakland	Vallejo	24
Pleasanton	Modesto	23
Livermore	Manteca	22
Livermore	Tracy	22
Pleasanton	Merced	21
Pleasanton	Rodeo	19
Fremont	Oakland	18
Berkeley	Stockton	17
Oakland	Berkeley	17
Oakland	Walnut Creek	17
Fremont	Tracy	16
Livermore	Stockton	16
Berkeley	Berkeley	15
Pleasanton	Brentwood	15

Figure 3-17 Origin and Destination Cities for Trips Taken by Employees (2012)

Origin (Work)	Destination (Home)	Number of Trips (2012)
Berkeley	Emeryville	5
Oakland	Antioch	4
Pleasanton	Antioch	3
Pleasanton	Walnut Creek	3
Oakland	Berkeley	2
Berkeley	Castro Valley	2
Oakland	Vallejo	2
Oakland	Oakland	2
Pleasanton	Livermore	2
Fremont	Ripon	1
Livermore	Roseville	1
Emeryville	San Francisco	1
Oakland	San Francisco	1
Pleasanton	San Francisco	1
San Leandro	San Francisco	1
Oakland	San Jose	1
Livermore	San Leandro	1
Dublin	San Lorenzo	1

Origin (Work)	Destination (Home)	Number of Trips (2012)
Alameda	San Ramon	1
Livermore	Stockton	1
Pleasanton	Stockton	1
Alameda	Suisun City	1
Oakland	Union City	1
Dublin	Vacaville	1
San Leandro	Alameda	1
Berkeley	Antioch	1
Berkeley	Fairfield	1
Emeryville	Fremont	1
Fremont	Fremont	1
Oakland	Lafayette	1
Pleasanton	Manteca	1
Berkeley	Martinez	1
Livermore	Modesto	1
Alameda	Novato	1
Berkeley	Oakland	1

Destination Counties

Figure 3-18 shows the destination counties for all of the trips taken by employees in the program in 2012 and throughout program history. In 2012, the most common trip destination was Alameda County (39%), followed by Contra Costa County (27%) and Solano County (10%). When comparing recent statistics to program history, it is evident that the share of rides within Alameda County has increased over time. The shares of rides taken to Central Valley counties also appears to have declined. Throughout the life of the program, the most common trip destination was Alameda County (28%), followed by San Joaquin (17%), and Contra Costa (17%).

Figure 3-18 Destination Counties for Trips Taken since Program Inception (1998)

County	Number of Rides (2012)	Percent	Number of Rides (1998 - 2012)	Percent
Alameda	20	39%	449	28%
San Joaquin	4	8%	282	17%
Contra Costa	14	27%	272	17%
Stanislaus	1	2%	150	9%
Solano	5	10%	148	9%
San Francisco	4	8%	70	4%
Santa Clara	1	2%	63	4%
Merced	0	0%	42	3%
Sacramento	0	0%	19	1%
Marin	1	2%	19	1%
Yolo	0	0%	18	1%
San Mateo	0	0%	4	0%
Sonoma	0	0%	3	0%
Napa	0	0%	3	0%
Placer	1	2%	2	0%
Calaveras	0	0%	1	0%
Unknown	0	0%	81	5%
Total	51		1,626	

4 EMPLOYEE SURVEY

This chapter presents the methodology and results of the data collected in February and March 2013 as part of the annual Guaranteed Ride Home Program participant survey.

METHODOLOGY

On February 21, 2013, GRH staff sent an email to all employees enrolled in the program asking them to complete an annual evaluation survey of the GRH program. As with the past few years, surveys were electronically distributed to employees through *Survey Monkey*, an online survey service. Employer representatives were informed that GRH staff would be sending all registered employees a link to an online survey. Alternative formats of the survey (electronic or paper copy) were available upon request. A hard copy survey was not mailed to any participants this year due to the very low response rate of paper surveys in years past and the high costs associated with mailings. All of the 782 surveys received were completed online. The survey was closed to responses on March 17, 2012.

The objective of the survey was to solicit participants' opinions about the quality of customer service they had received and to determine how the program impacted their transportation mode choices. Although the program regularly collects this information from participants who take taxi or rental car rides, the annual survey allows and encourages input from all program participants, regardless of whether or not they have used the service.

New and updated questions covered a range of topics and included questions asking participants how valuable they feel the GRH program is compared to other commuter benefits they receive, if they believe that the GRH program encourages participants to frequently use alternative modes, how they found out about the program, and what the perceived value of the program is and different ways to market it. As part of implementing a recommendation from the 2012 GRH Annual Report to investigate options for transitioning from paper to online vouchers, new questions were added to gauge interest and potential barriers to such a service. Participants were also asked if they have visited the new GRH program website, which was launched in the second half of 2012. All new and updated employee participant survey responses to these questions are included in this chapter.

> "I have not needed to use the GRH but being at a location where there is no public transportation mid-day or after 6PM or so, it is nice to have the program in case it is ever needed."
>
> *-Law Office of Steven A. Booska*

Appendix A displays the updated paper version of the survey.

SURVEY RESPONSE

> "It's like life insurance; you hope you never need it but it's a comfort to know it's there if needed."
>
> *- Kaiser Permanente Employee, Oakland*

The annual program evaluation effort provides the additional benefit of clearing names from the database of employees who may have left their employers or no longer wish to be enrolled in the program. Of the 5,104 employee registrants currently in the database who should have received a survey, 782 were completed, resulting in a 15% response rate. This is a 4% decrease in the response rate from 2011 (19%) and about on par with the 2010 response rate (14%). This year's survey reached a broad sample of employer sites; employees from 150 registered companies responded to the survey.

It should be noted that the number of respondents who took the survey is more than 10 times the number of GRH enrollees that took a ride in 2012, and more than twice the number of GRH enrollees who took a ride over the last 5 years combined. It can therefore safely be concluded that a good number of the survey responses are from people enrolled in the GRH program who have never actually had to take a guaranteed ride, and whose opinions regarding the program are not shaped one way or another by the fact that they have been helped in a situation of need by the program.

Responses to the survey questions are summarized in the following sections. It should be noted that the number of respondents who answered each survey question varied, and that results reported in percentages show the percent of respondents who answered the question rather than the total number of surveys received. Comparisons are made with the results of previous years' surveys when differences are notable. Responses are organized into seven sections:

1. Program Effectiveness
2. Other Commute Characteristics
3. Customer Service Ratings and Program Value
4. Program Involvement
5. Rental Car Program Awareness
6. Online Interactions
7. Voucher Use and Interest in Online Voucher

This chapter also includes quotations and personal anecdotes from employees who completed the survey. Several open-ended questions were used to gather feedback to help better understand how employees view the Guaranteed Ride Home Program.

PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

The purpose of this section is to gauge the impact of the GRH program on reducing drive-alone trips based on survey responses. The survey included several questions intended to measure this indicator, including how respondents traveled before GRH and after registering with the GRH program, and a brief analysis of the total positive impact of the program.

Encouraging Alternative Mode Use

In order to make sure users understand the purpose of the Guaranteed Ride Home Program, employees were asked if they were aware the GRH program is intended for commuters who take alternative modes of transportation (e.g., carpool/vanpool, transit, bike, or walk) as their primary method of getting to/from work.

The next set of questions asked respondents directly how important GRH is in fostering their use of an alternative commute mode. The survey asked employees who used to drive alone before registering for GRH how important the GRH program was in their decision to make a change in their commute mode. As shown in Figure 4-1, 59% of respondents reported that GRH was at least somewhat important in their decision to stop driving alone. This is a two percentage point increase from last year.

> "I haven't needed to use the program yet myself, although I consider it an important part of my safety net in case I get injured on my way to work, or need to get to my daughter's daycare. It is one of the significant factors in allowing me to live car free."
>
> *- California State Coastal " Conservancy Employee, Oakland*

Figure 4-1 Influence of GRH on Positive Modal Shift

If you drove alone before joining GRH, how important was the GRH program in your decision to begin ridesharing, riding transit, bicycling, and walking for your commute to work?

	Responses	Percentage
Very important (It was the main reason for my switch)	99	16%
Important (It was an important part of my decision)	151	25%
Somewhat important (It had some influence)	104	17%
Not important (I began using alternative modes for other reasons)	247	41%
Total Respondents	601	

The survey asked respondents if they agreed with the following statement: "The GRH program encourages employees registered in the program to rideshare, ride transit, bicycle, or walk more often than they would otherwise." The vast majority (93%) of respondents stated that they at least somewhat agree with the statement. The intent of this question was to focus on employees' personal, not generalized, mode shifts. The results suggest that respondents think the program encourages others to take alternative modes more often.

Figure 4-2 Influence of GRH on Increasing Alternative Mode Days

Do you agree with the following statement: The GRH program encourages employees registered in the program to rideshare, ride transit, bicycle, or walk MORE OFTEN than they would otherwise?

	Responses	Percentage
Agree strongly	328	46%
Agree somewhat	334	47%
Do not agree	49	7%
Total	711	

Survey respondents were asked if they would continue to use alternative modes if the GRH program was not available and at what frequency they would use alternative modes compared to their current use. Approximately two-thirds of respondents (66%) reported that they would continue to use an alternative mode even if the GRH program were not available. This is a two percentage point decrease from last year, when 68% of respondents stated that they would continue to use alternative modes at the same frequency if the program were not available.

Based on these survey findings, the GRH program appears to encourage some increase in the use of alternative modes. Respondents indicated that the program positively influences their commute decisions. Similarly, they indicated that the program helps them to continue to reduce their dependence on their cars by providing participants with "peace of mind." The program gives participants a fast and convenient ride home in case of emergencies when they use alternative modes, easing worries that a participant would be "stuck" at work if an emergency arose and the participant did not have their own personal automobile at work.

> "It's a great program and one of the first ones our company implemented when going green. We even reserved carpool parking spots to further encourage rideshare, with successful results. My experience using the taxi cab was excellent and I am very appreciative of having this option."
>
> *- E&E Co. Ltd. Employee, Fremont*

If the program were not available, 25% of respondents reported they would use an alternative mode, but less frequently than before, and 9% reported that they would stop using an alternative mode and go back to driving alone.

Figure 4-3 Influence of GRH on Sustaining Alternative Mode Use

If the Guaranteed Ride Home Program were not available would you… (check one)

	Responses	Percentage
Stop ridesharing (driving with one or more other people in the car carpooling or vanpooling), riding transit (ferry, bus, train, BART, ACE Train, or shuttle), bicycling, or walking and go back to driving alone	60	9%
Continue ridesharing (driving with one or more other people in the car carpooling or vanpooling), riding transit (ferry, bus, train, BART, ACE Train, or shuttle), bicycling, or walking but less frequently than before	174	25%
Continue ridesharing (driving with one or more other people in the car carpooling or vanpooling), riding transit (ferry, bus, train, BART, ACE Train, or shuttle), bicycling, or walking at the same frequency as before	461	66%
Total Respondents	695	

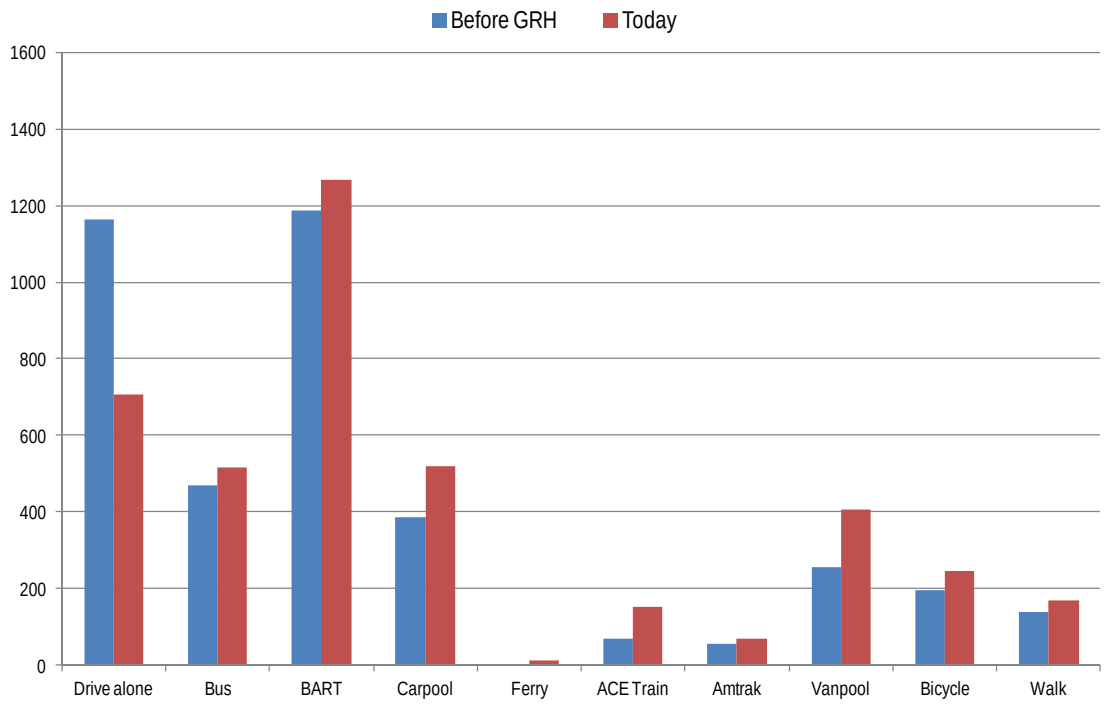
Commute Mode Before and After Joining the GRH Program

In order to gain more understanding of how respondents have (or have not) changed commute modes since joining the Guaranteed Ride Home Program, the survey asked respondents how many days they traveled by each mode during a typical week before joining the program and how they get to work during a typical week now. Figure 4-4 displays a comparison of the results.

"I've never had to use it, but I carry my voucher in my bike bag and like knowing it's there for me."

- City of Oakland Employee, Oakland.

Figure 4-4 Comparison of Commute Mode Days per Week Before and After Joining the GRH Program *(Each respondent could answer up to 5 days for each mode)*



The most common alternative modes for program participants are BART, carpool, or bus. Survey respondents reported driving less by nearly 40% compared to before they enrolled in the GRH program. All alternative modes experienced an increase after the commuter joined the GRH program. Vanpooling and commuting on ACE Train and ferry experienced the largest percentage increases, according to the survey. The number of commute trips taken by ferry and ACE Train more than doubled (500% and 115%, respectively) and commuters using vanpool increased by 60% after joining the program.

> "This is really for shift workers who can accept unscheduled overtime at the last minute and are willing to use a rental car to get home and back. It's a great program!"
>
> *- Port of Oakland Employee, Oakland.*

Figure 4-5 displays the number of days per week that respondents use alternative modes now and before registering for the GRH program. As shown below, after registering for the GRH program, the share of respondents who drive alone 5 days per week declined by over 50%.

> "I joined the program about 10 years ago and fortunately haven't had to use it, but it is important to know it's an option for emergencies."
>
> *-California Department of Justice Employee, Berkeley.*

Figure 4-5 Comparison of Respondent Days per Week Using SOV Commute Modes Now and Before Joining the GRH Program

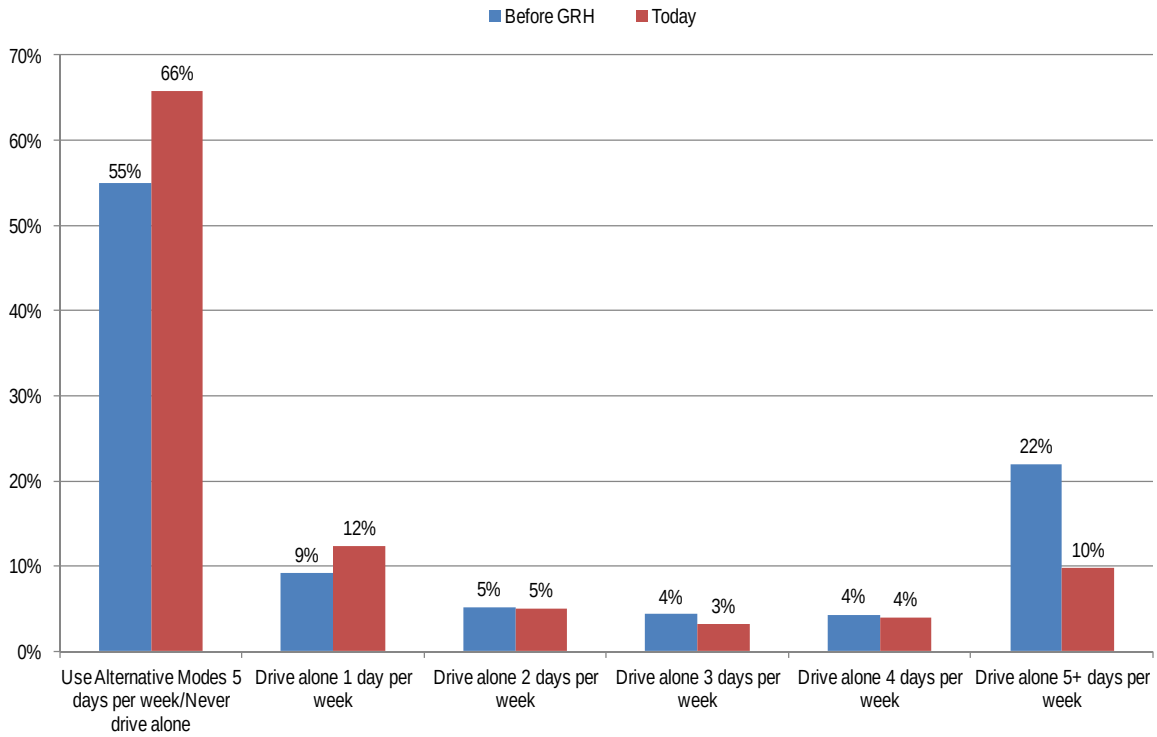
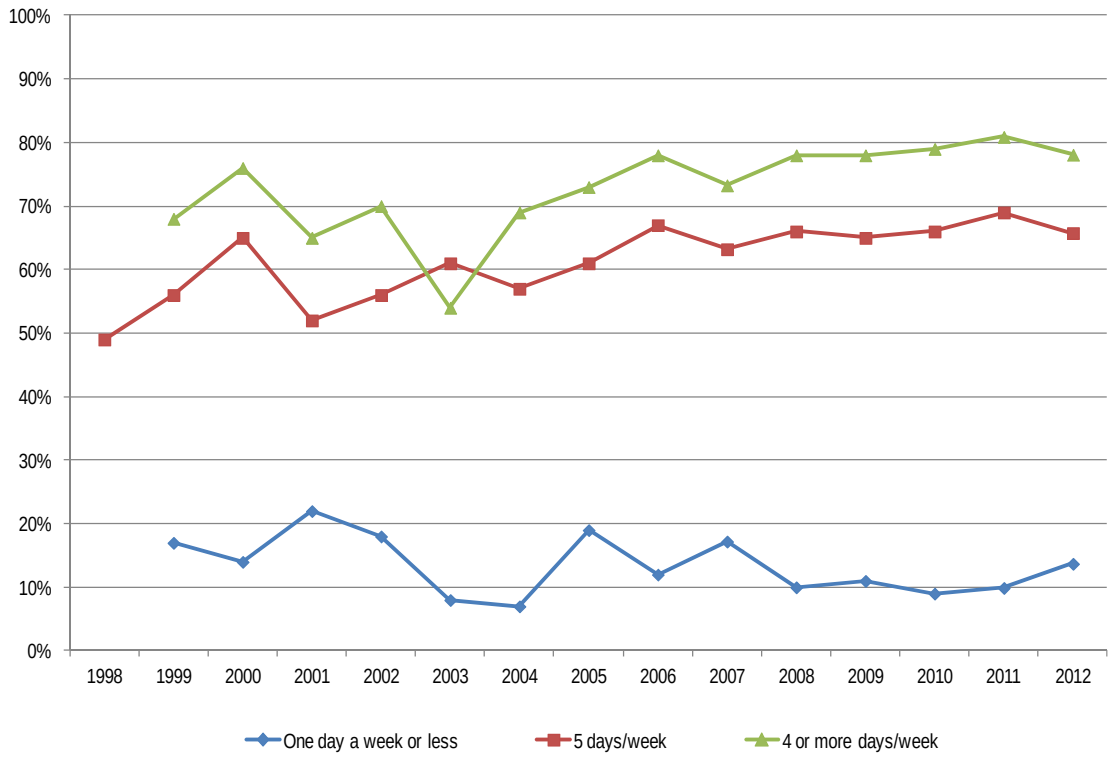


Figure 4-6 shows the trends of respondents' alternative mode use since the inception of the program. In 2012, 78% of respondents commuted via alternative modes at least four days per week. This number is down slightly from 2011, but is consistent with the upward trend for the program in the past five years. Those who use an alternative mode five days per week decreased to 66%. However, those using alternative modes one day a week or less increased from 10% in 2011 to 14% in 2012.

Figure 4-6 Frequency of Alternative Mode Use After Joining the GRH Program – Response Trends



Total Number of Drive-Alone Trips Reduced

Using the data gathered on the frequency of alternative mode use, an estimate can be generated for the total number of drive-alone trips replaced by alternative mode trips every week for those enrolled in the Guaranteed Ride Home Program. Figure 4-7 shows the percentage of respondents for each frequency category before and after joining the program. The total number of people in each category is then extrapolated based on the total 2012 program enrollment of 5,104 people. The number of roundtrips per week is calculated using the frequency and number of people in each category.

> "GRH is a refreshing step in the right direction, to encourage wider daily use of public transportation, walking and bicycling to work by giving commuters an emergency facility to reach their family in special circumstances."
>
> *- Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Berkeley*

In 2012, approximately 3,230 drive-alone roundtrips or 6,640 drive-alone one-way trips per week were replaced by alternative mode trips by those who are in the program. This is equivalent to 335,921 total drive-alone, one-way trips per year.[20]

[20] This is based on the program enrollment as of December 2012 and 52 weeks per year.

Figure 4-7 Total Drive Alone Trips Before and After Joining the GRH Program

	Before Joining Program			After Joining Program			
Frequency	Percentage of Respondents	Number of People[1]	Total Drive Alone Roundtrips	Percentage of Respondents	Number of People[1]	Total Drive Alone Roundtrips	Roundtrip Increase or Decrease
Never drive alone	55%	2,807	0	66%	3,356	0	0
Drive alone 1 day/week	9%	468	468	12%	629	629	161
Drive alone 2 days/week	5%	262	525	5%	259	517	-7
Drive alone 3 days/week	4%	227	681	3%	161	482	-198
Drive alone 4 days/week	4%	220	879	4%	203	811	-68
Drive alone 5 days/week	22%	1,120	5,600	10%	496	2,482	-3,118
Total	100%	5,104	8,152	100%	5,104	4,922	-3,230

[1] Extrapolation of percentages of respondents to the total program enrollment of 5,104 (total enrollment as of Dec. 2012)

OTHER COMMUTE CHARACTERISTICS

In order to learn more about the types of commute trips GRH is influencing, we asked a series of specific questions about people's commutes: distance, arrival and departure time, and access mode.

Distance Between Work and Home

The average commute distance for program participants is 28 miles, a 2.2 mile decrease from last year. As shown in Figure 4-8, 56% of participant commute distances were less than 30 miles. Eighty-four percent of commutes are less than 50 miles, while 18% of participants live nine or fewer miles from their workplace. Only 1% of participants commute more than 100 miles from their workplace. In general, people with longer distance commutes are more likely to find that ridesharing works best for them because convenient transit options are usually limited and typically require transferring. These are also the people for whom having a guaranteed ride home can be most influential in encouraging mode shift due to the uncertainty non-drive-alone commuters may experience in finding a ride home in an emergency.

> "I live 70 mile away so I would try to carpool no matter what. However, it is very comforting to know I have a program like GRH in case of an emergency and I don't have to make all my carpool partners leave as well."
>
> *- County of Alameda Employee, Oakland.*

Figure 4-8 Distance Between Work and Home

What is the approximate one-way distance between your work and home?

	Responses	Percentage
0 to 9 miles	135	18%
10 to 19 miles	136	19%
20 to 29 miles	140	19%
30 to 39 miles	117	16%
40 to 49 miles	91	12%
50 to 99 miles	105	14%
More than 100 miles	10	1%
Total Respondents	734	

Work Arrival Times

Arrival and departure times provide some important information on the impact of the program on congestion and air quality. Roadway congestion is highest during commute times in the morning and afternoons because most employees have similar work start and end times. Peak commute times are also when the highest levels of vehicle emissions are released into the atmosphere due to the high number of vehicles traveling. Figures 4-9 and 4-10 display the percent of respondents by arrival and departure time. The most common start time is the hour between 7:30 and 8:29 AM, with over a third of all participants (38%). Only 12% start after 9:00 AM, and 22% before 7:00 AM.

Figure 4-9 Work Arrival Times of Participating Employees

On a typical day, about what time do you arrive at work?

	Responses	Percentage
Before 6 AM	28	4%
6-6:29 AM	55	7%
6:30-6:59 AM	78	11%
7-7:29 AM	115	16%
7:30-7:59 AM	121	16%
8-8:29 AM	153	21%
8:30-8:59 AM	92	13%
9-9:29 AM	59	8%
9:30-9:59 AM	16	2%
10 AM or later	18	2%
Total Respondents	735	

Work Departure Times

As shown in Figure 4-10, almost half of GRH participants leave work in the one hour period between 4:30 PM and 5:29 PM (45%), which is more condensed than work arrival times. Sixteen percent leave earlier than 4:00 PM, and 11% after 6:00 PM. These commute times are consistent with standard rush hours when the highways are most congested and a reduction in cars on the roads has the highest impact on congestion and air quality.

Figure 4-10 Work Departure Times of Participating Employees

On a typical day, about what time do you leave work?

	Responses	Percentage
Before 3 PM	23	3%
3-3:29 PM	31	4%
3:30-3:59 PM	66	9%
4-4:29 PM	99	14%
4:30-4:59 PM	147	20%
5-5:29 PM	182	25%
5:30-5:59 PM	85	12%
6-6:29 PM	53	7%
6:30-6:59 PM	17	2%
7 PM or later	18	2%
Total Respondents	721	

Driving Alone to Access Alternative Modes

Another important component of an individual's commute is how they access their carpool, vanpool, or public transportation option. Given that most of the air pollution emitted from a car occurs when it undergoes a "cold start" (which occurs after the car has been off for several hours), and given concerns about transit station parking capacity issues, this question provides additional information on the impact of the program. As with previous years, respondents were nearly evenly split between those who drive to access their alternative mode and those who do not. A very slight majority, 43%, drive alone to access their primary commute mode. An additional 15% responded "not applicable," likely indicating that they do not use those commute modes and instead bicycle or walk to work.

Figure 4-11 Access Mode

Do you drive alone in order to get to a bus stop, carpool, vanpool, ferry, BART, or ACE station?

	Responses	Percentage
Yes	314	43%
No	304	42%
N/A	110	15%
Total Respondents	728	

CUSTOMER SERVICE RATINGS AND PROGRAM VALUE

In the customer service section of the survey, participants were asked about the quality of customer service provided by the administrative functions of the GRH program. Information about the quality of taxi and rental car providers' services was obtained from the ride questionnaires completed by participants who used either a taxi or rental car.

Customer Service Ratings for Administrative Functions

The 2012 survey included two questions on the quality of customer service:

1. Clarity of the information provided
2. Hotline assistance

GRH administrative staff answers the Hotline, 510-433-0320, when they are available during regular business hours and returns all voice messages left when the line is not staffed. The Hotline is used to answer any questions GRH participants and non-participants have about the program. Employees and employers can also sign up for the program via telephone and GRH staff can put participants in touch with a taxicab company or Enterprise Rent-a-Car via the hotline. The Hotline is not intended to provide emergency assistance to callers nor be a 24-hour service.

As shown in Figure 4-12, customer service ratings were high in both categories for respondents who had an opinion. "Excellent" and "Good" were the two most common answers (with the exception of "don't know" regarding Hotline assistance). The vast majority of respondents had no

opinion about Hotline assistance (82%), likely because they have not had to use this service. This is consistent with anecdotal feedback from participants. People understand the program after reviewing the literature, and participants who call the Hotline do so because they are unclear on the parameters of the program and usually have a very specific question about the program or to request a new voucher/verify their enrollment.

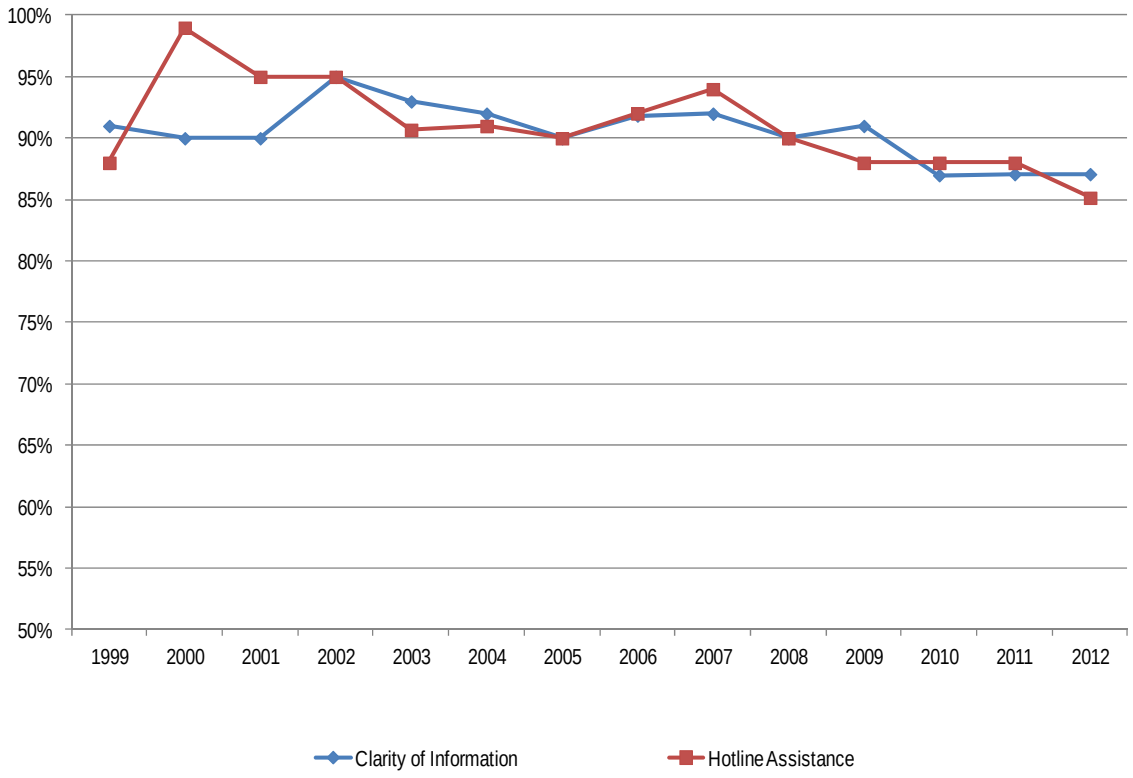
Figure 4-12 Customer Service Ratings for Administrative Functions

Please rate the quality of customer service you have received:

	n=	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't know
Clarity of Information	741	26%	41%	8%	2%	24%
Hotline Assistance	731	8%	7%	2%	0%	82%

Figure 4-13 is a graphic comparison of survey results from every year since the program's inception. Of those respondents who had an opinion, clarity of information received a combined "excellent" or "good" rating of 87% and Hotline assistance received a combined "excellent" or "good" rating of 85%. The results declined slightly from the 2011 survey.

Figure 4-13 Trends in Customer Service Ratings for Administrative Functions – *percent "good" or "excellent" of respondents with an opinion*



Note: This table is based on only "good" or "excellent" responses for the combined administrative functions shown above in Figure 4-12.

Customer Service Ratings for Transportation Services

The Guaranteed Ride Home Program has contracts with three taxi companies and one rental car company to provide transportation service for the program:[21]

1. Friendly Cab — Albany, Oakland, Berkeley, Piedmont, Emeryville, Alameda, and San Leandro
2. American Cab[22]— Castro Valley, Fremont, Newark, Union City, and Hayward
3. Tri City Cab — Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton
4. Enterprise Rent-A-Car — All of Alameda County

During 2012, 51 total rides were taken by 41 employee participants. Thirty-seven taxicab rides were taken in 2012 (73%). Taxicab rides were divided between Friendly Cab (25 rides) and Tri-City Cab (12 rides). A rental car was used for 14 of the rides by 13 different employee participants.

Most of the participants who completed the ride questionnaire rated their overall program experience and taxi or rental car service quality as either good or excellent. The large majority also reported that taxi drivers and rental car agents were friendly and helpful and that vehicles were clean. Over three-fourths of taxi passengers reported a wait time of 15 minutes or less. Only 18% waited between 15 and 30 minutes and one respondent noted that they had to wait more than 30 minutes. In 2012, the average wait time was fifteen minutes. Overall, program participants appear to be receiving reliable and acceptable service from all three taxi providers and overall on-time performance and customer service improved.

PROGRAM VALUE

GRH participants were asked how valuable the GRH program is, compared to other benefits they receive from their employer. Sixty-eight percent commented that it was more valuable than or as valuable as most other benefits they receive, and 11% of participants do not receive any other benefits and responded that the GRH program is the only transportation benefit they receive.

Figure 4-14 Program Value Compared to Other Benefits

Compared to any other transportation benefits you receive from your employer how valuable is the GRH program to you?

	Responses	Percentage
More valuable than most	134	19%
As valuable as most	350	49%
Less valuable than most	150	21%
N/A (GRH program is the only transportation benefit I receive)	80	11%
Total Respondents	714	

[21]The GRH Program accommodates participants with disabilities. Participants requiring an ADA accessible vehicle must contact Friendly Cab and specify the need for an accessible vehicle, regardless of what Alameda County city their employer is located or where their destination is located.
[22] Formerly Netcab.com and Fremont City Cab

RENTAL CAR PROGRAM AWARENESS

In addition to the questions asked every year as part of the annual evaluation, GRH staff added questions to gauge awareness of the rental car requirement in 2008. Program rules state that participants living 20 miles or more from their workplace must use a rental car as their guaranteed ride home in non-emergency situations. A rental car is also strongly encouraged for participants living 21 to 49 miles from their workplace. At distances greater than 20 miles, rental cars are more cost effective for the program than taxicabs.

GRH staff did not conduct as much outreach in 2012 as in 2011 to increase awareness of the rental car requirement. The annual survey did include a short explanation of the rental car requirement and all program mailings highlight this requirement, as does the website. Additionally, questions in the survey asked participants if they were aware of the rental car requirement before taking the annual survey and other questions related to program usage.

The survey asked participants if they were aware of the rental car requirement in the annual survey. Of those responding, 58% were aware of the rental car requirement. In 2009, only 41% of participants were aware of the requirement and in 2011, 58% were aware of this requirement. While some participants still do not seem aware of the rental car requirement, it may be because it does not apply to their commute, as 37% of participants live less than 20 miles from their place of work, and only 15% live over 50 miles from their place of work and would be required to use a rental car.

Figure 4-15 Rental Car Requirement Awareness

Before today, were you aware that participants who live 50 miles or more from their workplace are required to use a rental car as their guaranteed ride home and that participants living 20-49 miles from their workplace are strongly encouraged to use a rental car?

	Responses	Percentage
Yes	428	58%
No	307	42%
Total Respondents	735	

Participants who have used a guaranteed ride home were asked if they used a taxicab or a rental car. A large majority, 70%, used a taxicab, down from 72% in 2011. Participants who used a taxicab were asked an additional question pertaining to why they used a taxicab instead of a rental car.

The largest number of participants responded by stating they live less than 20 miles from their workplace(40%), which is consistent with the prior question about commute distance. Ten percent were too ill to drive and only 7% were unaware of the requirement.

Figure 4-16 Reasons for Using a Taxicab Instead of a Rental Car

If you live more than 20 miles away from your workplace and have used a taxi for a guaranteed ride home, why didn't you use a rental car?

	Responses	Percentage
I live less than 20 miles from my workplace	23	40%
Unaware of the requirement	4	7%
Enterprise Rent-A-Car was closed for the day	3	5%
Taxi is more convenient than rental car	2	3%
Uncomfortable driving	3	5%
Too ill to drive	6	10%
Not sure how I would receive and return the rental car	3	5%
Other (please specify)	14	24%
Total Respondents	58	

PROGRAM INVOLVEMENT

In addition to questions regarding program effectiveness, commute characteristics, customer service, and the rental car requirement, questions were asked about how long the participant has been registered in the GRH program and where the participant found out about the program.

The survey shows a strong range of participant longevity in the program. While a majority of respondents have been registered for the GRH program for more than two years (63%), another 20% of participants signed up within the last year of the program.

Figure 4-17 Participant Duration

How long have you been participating in the Guaranteed Ride Home program?

	Responses	Percentage
Less than 6 months	71	10%
6 months to 1 year	73	10%
1 to 2 years	136	18%
2 to 5 years	247	34%
5 to 10 years	161	22%
More than 10 years	49	7%
Total Respondents	737	

When asked where they found out about the GRH program, 49% stated that they found out about the program through their employer or onsite representative. This highlights the value of our

onsite contacts and how effective they are at disseminating program information and promoting the program. Sixteen percent found out about the program through co-workers and another 11% found out through information posted at their workplace.

Figure 4-18 How did you find out about the GRH program?

How did you find out about the GRH program?

Answer Options	Responses	Percentage
Employer or onsite representative	441	49%
Co-worker	147	16%
Carpool or vanpool partner(s)	79	9%
Commuter/employee benefits fair	58	6%
Media	17	2%
Information posted at your workplace	95	11%
Other	58	6%
Total Respondents	895*	

*Note: Multiple responses were permitted to this question, resulting in a total number higher than the number of surveys received.

In 2010, GRH staff added a question to ask participants how they signed up for the GRH program. Since the redesign of the GRH database, online registration is now available and participants no longer have to mail or fax in any forms. In 2012, results remained consistent with the 2011 survey, and the majority of participants registered for the GRH program online (54%, from 53% in 2011). Another 31% mailed or faxed in their application, and 4% signed up in person at a transportation fair/event, although it is important to remember that this includes a large number of participants who signed up before online registration was an option (2010). The most common response from those who marked "other" was that they do not remember how they signed up.

Figure 4-19 How did you sign up for the GRH program?

How did you sign up for the Guaranteed Ride Home program?

	Responses	Percentage
Online (through the GRH website)	396	54%
Mailed in my application	150	21%
Faxed in my application	71	10%
In person at a transportation fair	31	4%
Other (please specify)	82	11%
Total Respondents	730	

OUTREACH EFFECTIVENESS AND STRATEGIES

Survey respondents were asked what resources they use if they have a question about the GRH program. The majority (71%) stated that they use the GRH website either on their personal computer (66%) or through their mobile phone (5%). Twenty-one percent said they call the Hotline first, and 8% go to their Employer Representative. The majority of employees say they would use the website or Hotline to answer questions about the program than ask their Employer Representative.

Figure 4-20 How do you obtain information about the GRH program?

If you had a question about the program, what tool would you most likely use to find the answer?

	Responses	Percentage
Call the Hotline (phone)	147	21%
Website (via personal computer)	460	66%
Website (via mobile phone)	37	5%
Ask my Employer Representative	54	8%
Total Respondents	698	

The survey also asked participants if they were aware of and had visited the new GRH program website. The vast majority (92%) have not visited the website as of this survey. While this percentage is low, this may simply reflect that participants have not had a question regarding program operations that they need an answer to.

Figure 4-21 Have you visited the new GRH website recently?

Have you visited the new GRH website recently?

	Responses	Percentage
Yes	54	8%
No	660	92%
Total Respondents	714	

When asked if they were aware that instructions for using GRH are available on the website, about half of the respondents said they were aware (48%) and half said they were not aware (52%).

Figure 4-22 Were you aware that you can access instructions on how to use the GRH program through the GRH website?

Were you aware that you can access instructions on how to use the GRH program through the GRH website?

	Responses	Percentage
Yes	345	48%
No	368	52%
Total Respondents	713	

VOUCHER USE AND POTENTIAL CHANGES

The 2011 GRH Annual Evaluation Report recommended that the Alameda CTC explore options for transitioning away from paper vouchers to an online format. As such, the employee survey in 2012 included questions regarding how participants currently use paper vouchers and gauging interest and potential barriers to an online system.

When asked if they had ever used their voucher, only 11% of respondents stated that they had. This is consistent, if not slightly higher than, the rate of usage experienced during the program year.

Figure 4-23 Have you ever used your voucher?

Have you ever used your issued GRH voucher?

	Responses	Percentage
Yes	82	11%
No	653	89%
Total Respondents	735	

The program is interested in better understanding if and why participants do not have a voucher on hand when one is needed. When asked if they have been in a situation where they needed a voucher but did not have one, 92% of respondents said that they had not experienced this situation. This indicates that a small group of participants experience an issue with the current system. While 2% were able to use an instant enrollment voucher from their Employer Representative, another 6% were not able to use the program when they needed to. A review of the "other" responses shows that most made a comment about how they have not needed to use the program, yet a few were unclear about the program rules or did not know what to do, and several found an alternative way to get home, such as public transportation or a ride from a co-worker or family member.

Figure 4-24 Have you been in a situation when you needed a voucher but did not have one?

Have you been in a situation where you needed to use a GRH voucher, but did not have one in hand? If so, what was the resolution?

	Responses	Percentage
I have not experienced this situation	648	92%
I used an instant enrollment voucher	12	2%
I was unable to use the GRH program	42	6%
Other	44	6%
Total Respondents	702	

Employees were asked if they would be interested in an online voucher system. Most participants said yes (72%) or were unsure (20%), while only 8% said no. Three quarters of respondents expressed interest and about one-third of the 69 comments on this question were positive responses about how an online voucher would improve or enhance their experience of the program (the other two-thirds of comments were either neutral or voiced concerns about an unnecessary extra step, access to a printer, or having to remember yet another password and log-in).

Figure 4-25 Would you be interested in using an online voucher system?

Would you be interested in using an online voucher system? (there would be a required log-in and password for each user)

	Responses	Percentage
Yes	515	72%
No	57	8%
Unsure	142	20%
Total Respondents	714	

Participants were then asked if they would be willing to pay a small convenience fee for the online voucher. While 60% responded that they would not be willing to pay a fee, another 15% said yes and 25% were unsure. This question did not state whether the fee would be per use or administered monthly/annually, and many comments mentioned this confusion. Other concerns were the amount of the fee being greater than the cost of transit. Many seemed to feel that it would be unreasonable to start charging for a program that is currently free. Some expressed that a small fee is reasonable per use of the program, but did not understand the connection of that fee to the use of an online voucher, and did not feel that it should be greater than the average cost of a bus ride. There was also some concern about exchanging money/bank information over the internet.

Figure 4-26 Convenience fee

Would you be willing to pay a small convenience fee (less than $5) to have access to your GRH voucher online?

	Responses	Percentage
Yes	110	15%
No	428	60%
Unsure	175	25%
Total Respondents	713	

Participants were then asked if they have access to a printer at work. An online voucher system would require some method to print or display the voucher to the taxi/rental car clerk. Most GRH participants do have access to a computer and printer at work (96%).

Figure 4-27 Printer access at work

Do you have access to a computer at your work to print a ride voucher?

	Responses	Percentage
Yes	689	96%
No	25	4%
Total Respondents	714	

In lieu of or in addition to a printer, the online voucher system may be able to function with the use of a smart phone. When GRH participants were asked if they have access to a smart phone, over half (64%) said that they do, while 36% do not have access to a smart phone.

Figure 4-28 Smart phone access

Do you have access to a smart phone that could be used to display a ride voucher?

	Responses	Percentage
Yes	457	64%
No	257	36%
Total Respondents	714	

5 EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVE SURVEY

In addition to surveying registered participants in the Guaranteed Ride Home Program, employer representatives were also solicited for their opinions on the service.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

> "The new website and marketing materials look great!"
>
> *-Alameda County Medical Center Employee*

The employer representative survey was available on *Survey Monkey*, an online survey service, and the link to the survey was emailed to all employer contacts. Unlike prior years, the survey was only available in electronic version unless a hard copy was requested. This is due to this extremely low rate of return for hard copy surveys and the cost associated with mailings. The survey period lasted from February 20, 2013 to March 19, 2013.

The program regularly collects input from participants to determine how the program may have impacted their transportation choices. The objective of the employer survey is to obtain employer opinions about the quality of customer service Employer Representatives received in the past year and to get feedback regarding the overall operation of the program.

This year, the employer survey contained several questions about the perceived value of the program and solicited employer feedback on different ways to market the program. In addition, new questions were added on how the Employer Representative markets the program to new and current employees, and interactions with the new website and marketing materials downloadable on the website.

OVERALL SURVEY RESULTS[23]

Of the 282 active participating employers, 66 surveys were returned, resulting in a 23% response rate. Employer contact information was updated during an initial phone call.

Responses to the questions are summarized in the following sections. It should be noted that the number of respondents who answered each survey question varied, and that results reported in percentages show the percent of respondents who answered the question rather than the total number of surveys received.

[23] Each survey chart shows the number of respondents noted above the chart as "n=##". The sample size is noted to provide context for each chart.

Responses are organized into five sections:

1. Alternative Mode
2. Program Management
3. Customer Service Ratings
4. Rental Car Requirement
5. GRH Marketing and Website
6. Program Value

USE OF ALTERNATIVE MODE

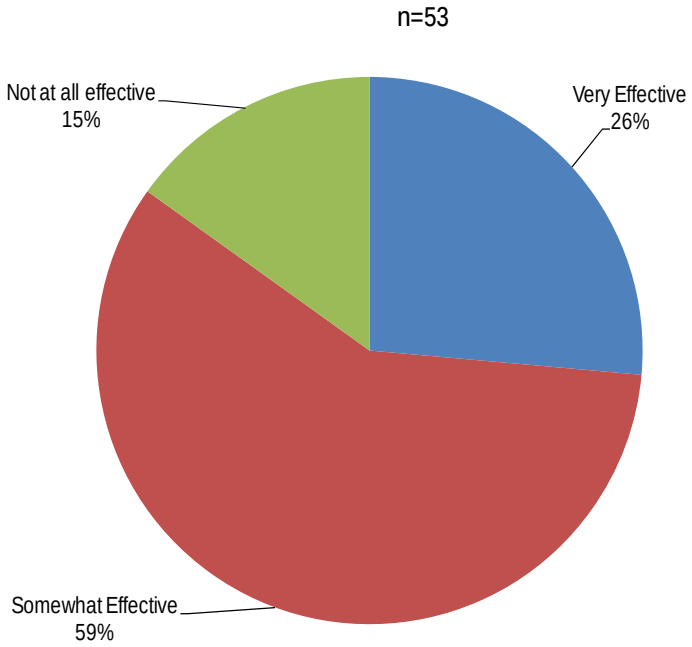
This section of the survey asked employer respondents whether the Guaranteed Ride Home Program makes a difference in employees' commute mode decisions and what other factors may influence participants commuting choices.

Encouraging Alternative Mode Use

The survey asked the employer representatives their opinion on how effective the program is in encouraging employees to use alternative commute modes more often than driving alone. As shown in Figure 5-1, a large majority, 85%, reported that they feel participation in the program is at least somewhat effective in encouraging more alternative mode use.[24] This represents a 1% increase from last year.

Figure 5-1 Influence of GRH on Use of Alternative Modes

In your opinion, how effective is the GRH program in encouraging employees to commute to work using alternative modes of transportation?



[24] Employers were asked for their opinion about whether the GRH program encourages employees to use alternative commute modes more often. Employers did not take a poll or individual survey of their registered employees.

Commuter Benefit Programs

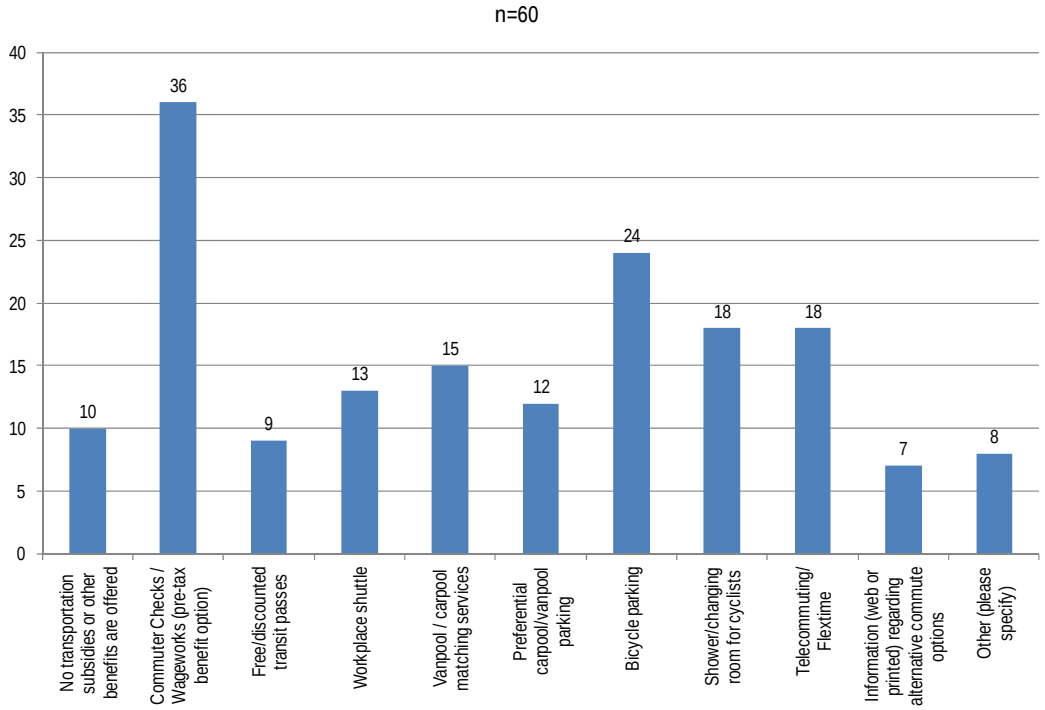
In order to gain more understanding about the level of influence the GRH program has in changing commute patterns, the survey asked respondents if their company provided additional commuter benefits to their employees, if there has been a reduction in benefits over the past year, and if free parking is available on-site to employees.

> "As far as I know we have not had the opportunity to use the program during the last year but we are very happy that it is an option for our employees who commute."
>
> *- Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. (WJE)*

Respondents were presented with a list of transportation benefits and were asked to check all of the benefits they offer in addition to the GRH program. The most common transportation benefit was Commuter Checks, now offered by over 50% of employers, which was only offered by one-third of employers in the 2011 survey. Bicycle parking, shower/changing room, and telecommuting also remained among the top benefits provided by employers. Sixteen percent (down from 18% in 2011) of employers do not offer their employees any other transportation benefits besides the GRH program. Some of the other responses employers provided include cash incentive, transit subsidy, and fleet vehicles for employee carpools.

Figure 5-2 Participation in Commuter Benefit Programs

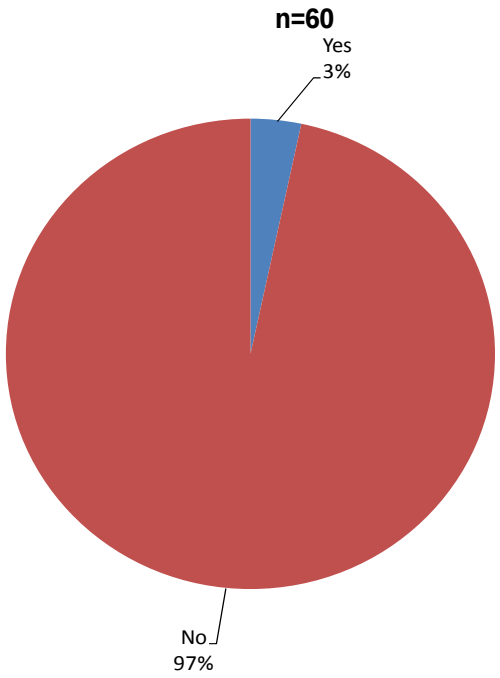
Does your company/organization provide any transportation subsidies or other benefits to employees to encourage the use of transit, carpools, vanpools, or walking/biking?



*Note: Multiple responses were permitted to this question, resulting in a total number higher than the number of surveys received.

Figure 5-3 Change in Transportation Benefits

Did your organization eliminate any transportation subsidies or benefits to employees in the last year?

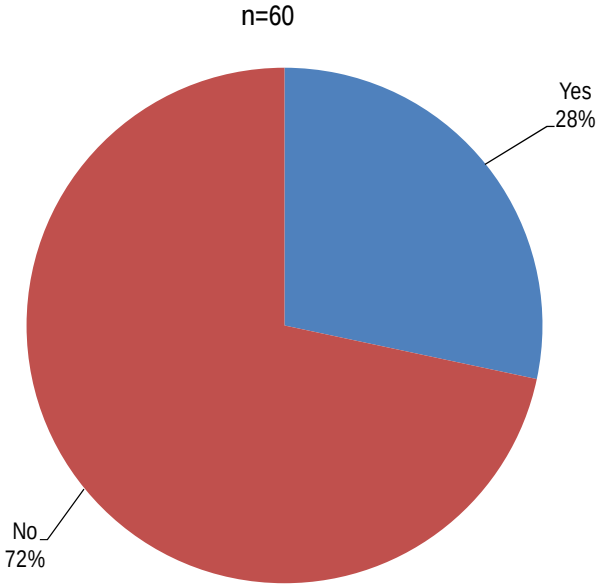


The survey also asked employers if their organization eliminated any transportation subsidies or benefits to employees in the last year. Two employers (3%) indicated that they reduced some benefits in the last year.

Figure 5-4 Parking Benefit

Do employees pay for parking at your organization's place of work?

When asked if the employer provides free parking for employees, 72% responded that employees do not have to pay for parking at their worksite, while 28% of sites have only paid parking available to employees. The majority of employers' workers do not pay for parking, although over parking must be paid for at a quarter of workplaces. Employees who must pay for parking are likely more incentivized to use alternative modes and rely on the GRH program.



PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

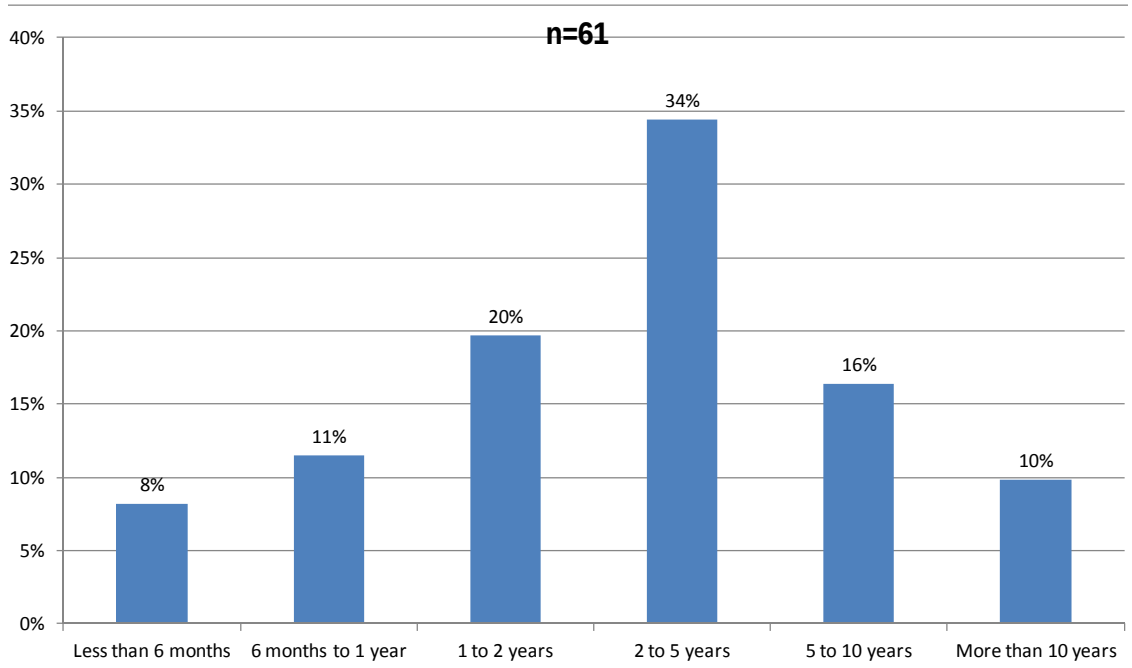
The survey asked employer contacts information about their experience with the program. Respondents answered questions regarding their tenure as Employer Representative of the program, the amount of time they spend administering the GRH program, and the instant enrollment voucher process.

Tenure with the Program

The survey asked the respondents how long they have managed the program for their company. In this review period (for 2012), 80% of respondents have been with GRH for a year or more, while 20% joined in the last year. As an indication of the longevity of this program, over a quarter of the employers responding to this survey have been with the program for over five years.

Figure 5-5 Employer Representative's Tenure with the Program

How long have you been the Guaranteed Ride Home Employer Representative for your company/organization?

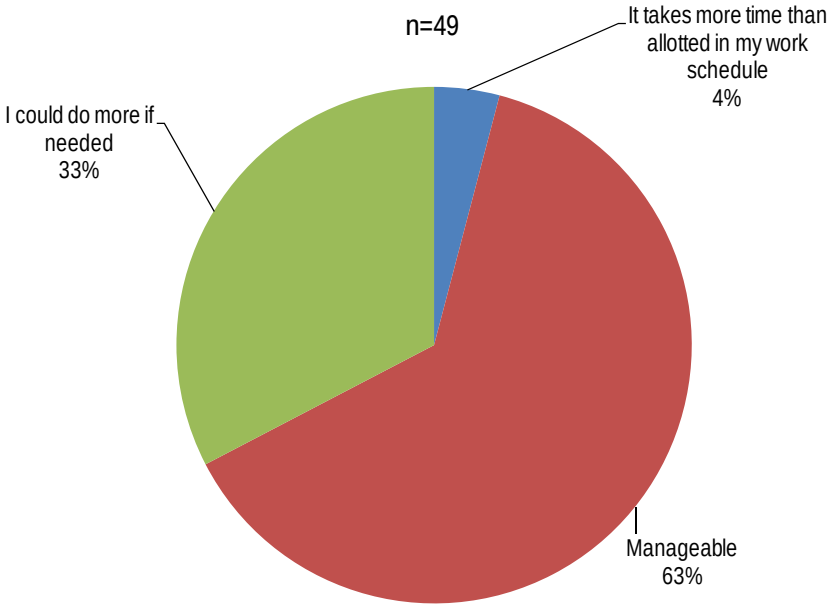


Amount of Time Spent Administering GRH

The survey asked the employer contacts to describe their GRH workload. Sixty-three percent (up from 56% in 2011) of the respondents reported that the program is "manageable" and 33% stated that they "could do more if needed." These results are helpful in marketing the program to prospective employers as the findings show that the program administration for employers is minimal. Since a third of respondents reported they could do more work if needed, GRH staff will continue to work with Employer Representatives for additional marketing opportunities.

Figure 5-6 Time Spent Administering the GRH program

How would you describe the amount of work you spend administering the GRH program?

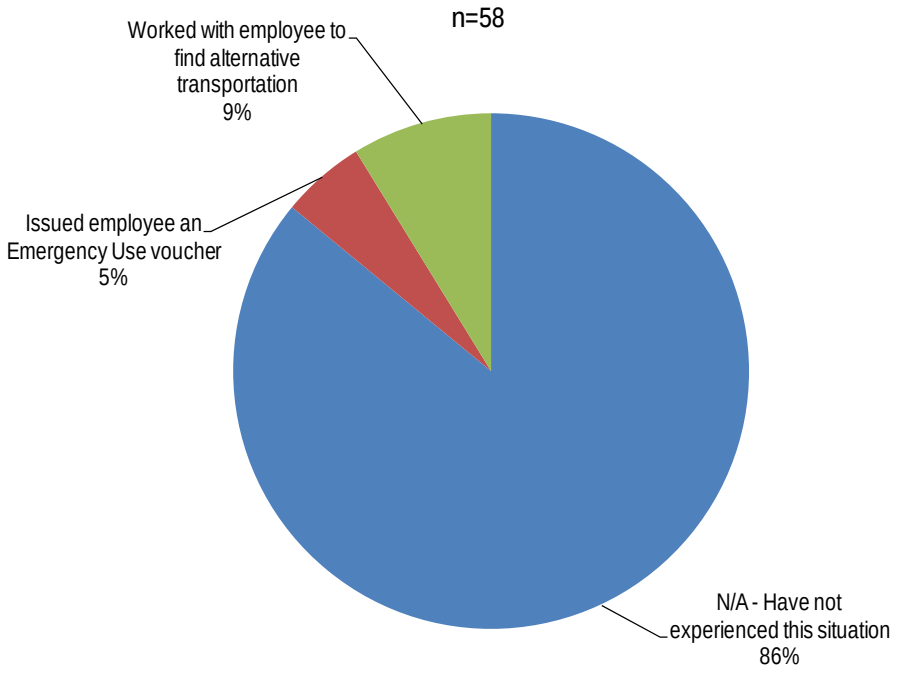


Instant Enrollment Process

An instant enrollment voucher allows employer representatives to issue a voucher instantly for those employees who are not registered with GRH but took an alternative mode to work that day and have a personal emergency. All employer contacts should have two instant enrollment vouchers on hand at all times and can issue one to an employee who meets the GRH requirements. Issuing an instant enrollment to an employee is one of the most important responsibilities of the Employer Representative, and being familiar with the process is crucial. The survey asked if they had ever encountered an employee that did not have a GRH voucher available to them and what the response was in that situation. Eighty-six percent of the respondents had never experienced this situation. Five percent issued an employee Emergency Use voucher and 9% worked with the employee to find alternative transportation. This suggests that non-participants are aware of the instant enrollment vouchers and that Employer Representatives are letting their employees know about the instant enrollment voucher and the GRH program, and that these Employer Representatives are a knowledgeable transportation resource for employees.

Figure 5-7 Use of the Instant Enrollment Voucher

Have you ever encountered an employee that did not have a GRH voucher available to them? If yes, what was your response?

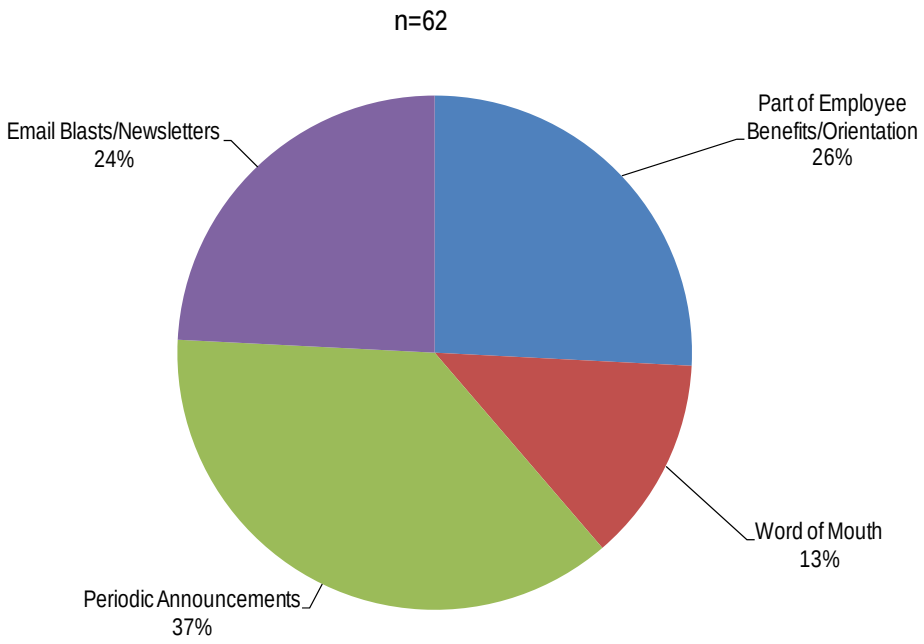


Informing Employees

Because the GRH program can be a useful benefit to all employees and can help increase mode shift to alternative transportation options, GRH staff encourages employer contacts to inform new and current employees about the GRH program. The survey asked respondents how they currently market the GRH program to their employees as an employee benefit. Employer representatives make periodic announcements (37%) and include GRH information as part of the benefits orientation package (26%). Another quarter of employers send email blasts/newsletters that include GRH information. In addition to providing general information about the program, the survey also asked how employer representatives marketed the program to new versus existing employees. These results can be found in Figures 5-10 and 5-11.

Figure 5-8 Marketing the GRH Program as an Employee Benefit

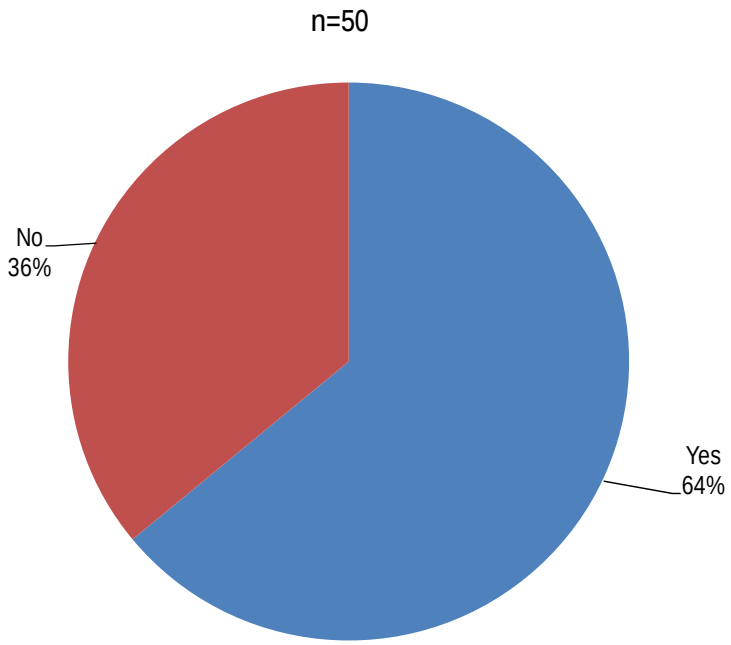
How do you market the GRH program to your employees?



Employer Representatives can play an important role answering questions about how to use the program and holding and distributing emergency ride vouchers. The majority (64%) of Employer Representatives feel that employees at their company know they are the GRH representative. In the comments section, many said they let employees know through the methods mentioned above: email and orientation, in addition to intranet website and because of their job title.

Figure 5-9 Awareness of GRH Employer Representative

Do employees at your company know you are the GRH Employer Representative? If yes, please describe how you let them know.



The overwhelming majority of Employer Representatives introduce the GRH program to their new employees. Ninety-two percent (47 of 51) of representatives said that they do inform new employees about the GRH program. The most common methods are as part of an orientation and by word of mouth, such as a conversation with the employee about the program.

Most Employer Representatives also market the program to current employees, though a smaller percentage than those marketing to new employees. Twenty-seven percent (14 of 52) of respondents said they do not remind current employees. Methods for marketing to current employees include email announcements, word of mouth, and flyers. GRH staff will explore ways to increase the practice of Employer Representatives marketing to current employees. Employees' situations and receptiveness to commuting by alternative modes change over time, and employers who only inform their employees about GRH during initial employee benefits enrollment may miss opportunities to recruit employees to the program.

Figure 5-10 Inform New Employees

How do you inform new employees about the GRH program?

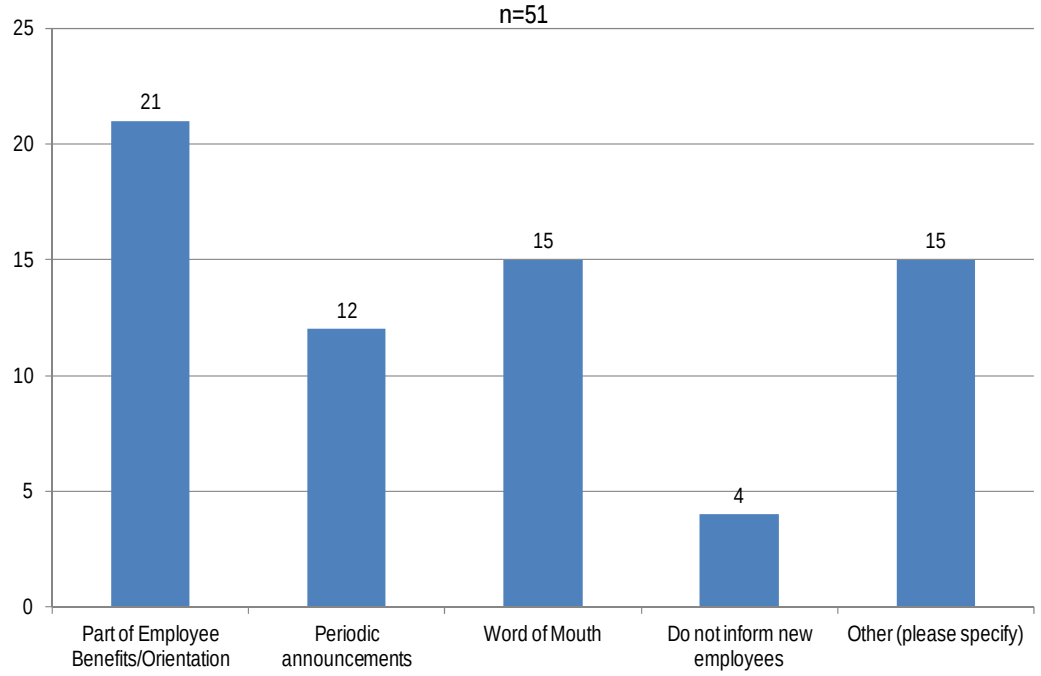
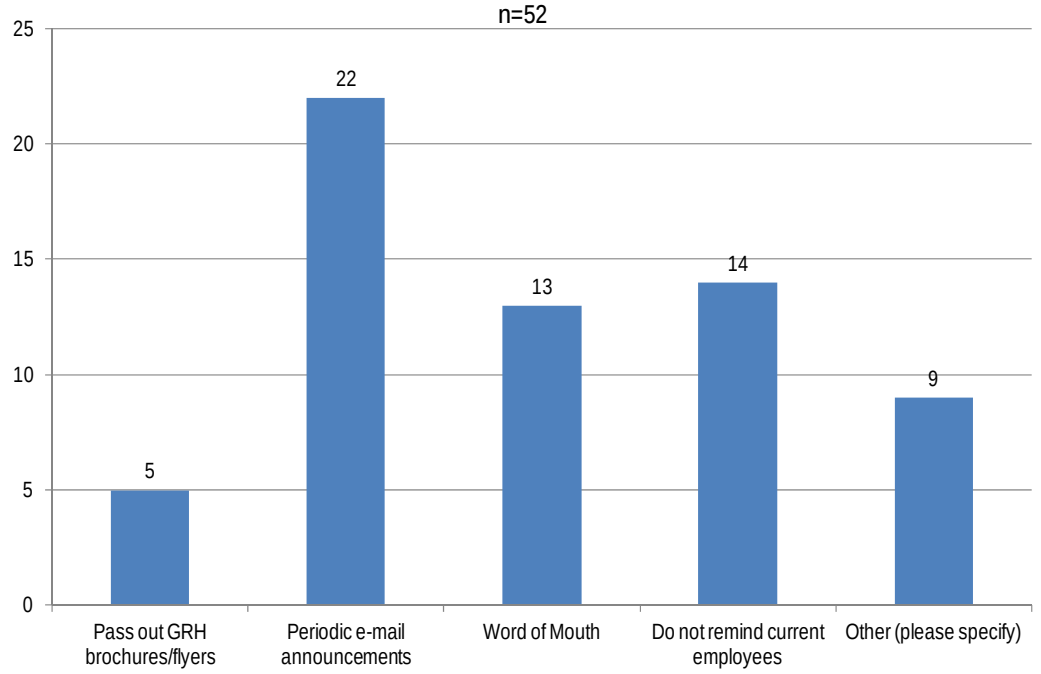


Figure 5-11 Remind Current Employees

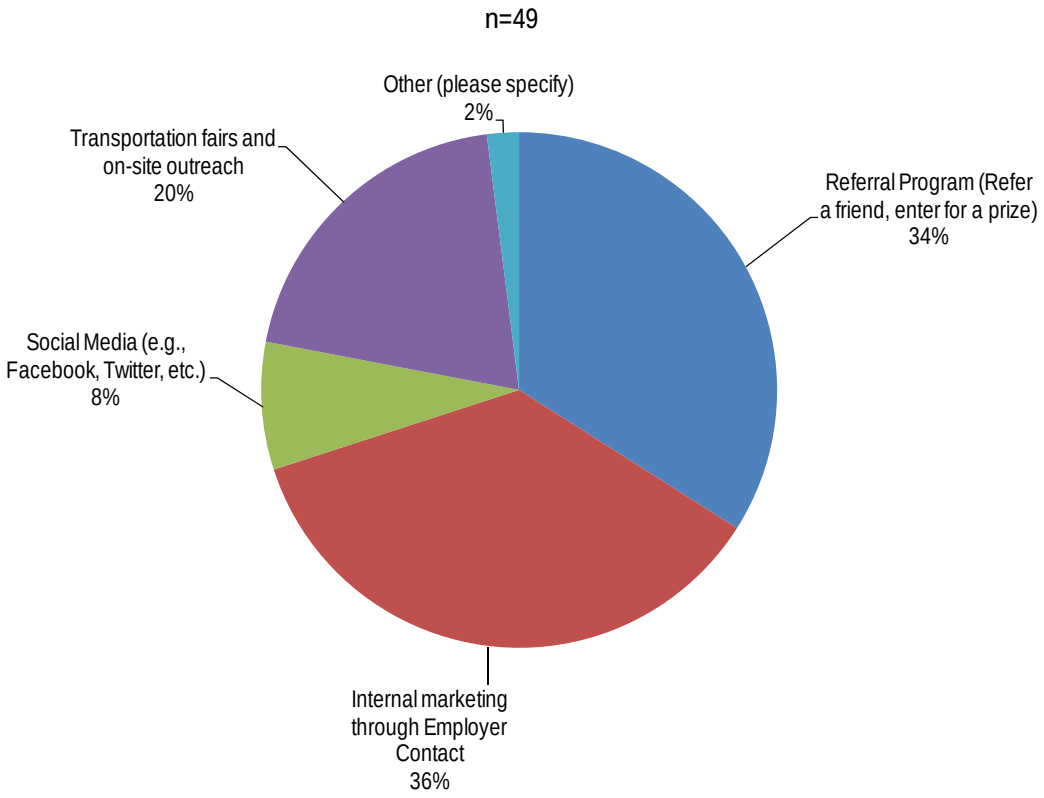
How do you remind current employees about the GRH program?



Employer Representatives were also asked what they thought the most effective marketing strategy for the GRH program would be. The majority (36%) felt that internal marketing through the employer contact is the most effective marketing strategy. Over a third of respondents felt that a referral program (refer a friend, enter for a prize) can help market the GRH program to new participants. Twenty percent of respondents felt that transportation fairs and onsite outreach were the best forms of marketing, and 8% thought social media (Facebook, Twitter) could be useful for informing employees about the GRH program.

Figure 5-12 Most Effective Marketing Strategy

In your opinion, what strategy would be the most effective in marketing the program to new participants?



CUSTOMER SERVICE RATINGS

In the customer service section of the employer survey, employer participants were asked about the quality of customer service they received from the GRH administrative staff in 2012.

The survey included two questions on the quality of customer service that the employers received: the clarity of information provided about the program and prompt and knowledgeable assistance when calling the GRH Hotline. As shown in Figure 5-13, the customer service ratings were high. Sixty-eight percent of respondents stated that the clarity of information is either "excellent" or "good." The high number of "don't know" responses regarding the GRH Hotline (64%) may indicate that these representatives have not had to use the Hotline; this may be an indicator that the informational materials provided to Employer Representatives answer the majority of their questions.[25] Of those who have used the GRH Hotline, almost all respondents stated that the service they received was "excellent" or "good" (one respondent stated "fair").

Figure 5-13 Customer Service Ratings for Administrative Functions

Please rate the quality of customer service you have received:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know	n=
Clarity of information provided about how the program works (brochures, instructions, website, etc.).	37%	31%	6%	2%	25%	65
Response time and information received when calling the GRH Hotline.	16%	19%	2%	0%	64%	64

[25] GRH staff operates a telephone hotline weekdays from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM in order to provide information about the program to current and prospective employees and employers and to answer questions about the program. The hotline is not intended to respond to participant emergencies nor provide 24-hour assistance.

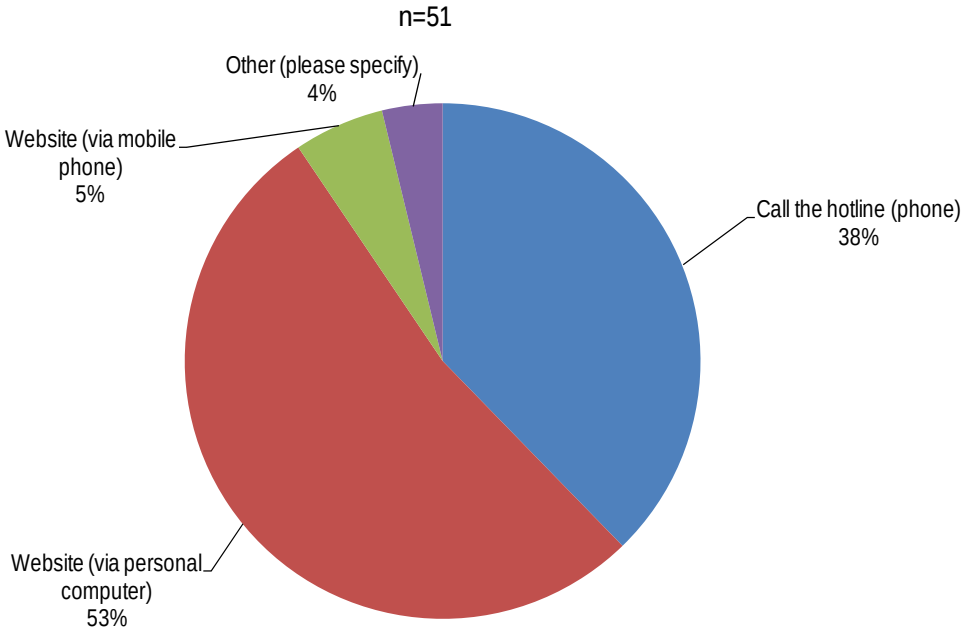
GRH MARKETING AND WEBSITE

In 2010, new features were added to the GRH website, including online registration and employer login access. Additional outreach efforts were made in 2011 to inform Employer Representatives about the new changes to the GRH website, and complete new branding was fully launched in late 2012.

When asked how employers find answers to questions they may have, 58% indicated they use the GRH website (53% on their computer, 5% on their phone). Thirty-eight percent (up from 21% in 2011) said they call the GRH Hotline.

Figure 5-14 Questions about the GRH Program

If you had a question about the program, what tool would you most likely use to find the answer?



In addition, employer contacts were asked if they have used the new GRH website (www.grh.alamedactc.org) for information, and 43% responded that they have used the site. Several made comments about the new design:

- "The new website and marketing materials look great!"
- "The website is thorough and informational. I've not had a need to call the Hotline."
- "Really like the new look!"

While there were no negative comments, there were several comments requesting missing information or expressing that the representative had not yet had a chance to use the program, and some indication that he/she may not fully understand the rules of the program. GRH program staff have also worked to make materials available on the GRH website, and although these changes were introduced in late 2012, this question was included to raise awareness of the

presence of marketing materials on the website. One-third of respondents confirmed that they were aware of these materials on the new website.

Figure 5-15 New GRH Website

Have you visited the new GRH program website?

n=51

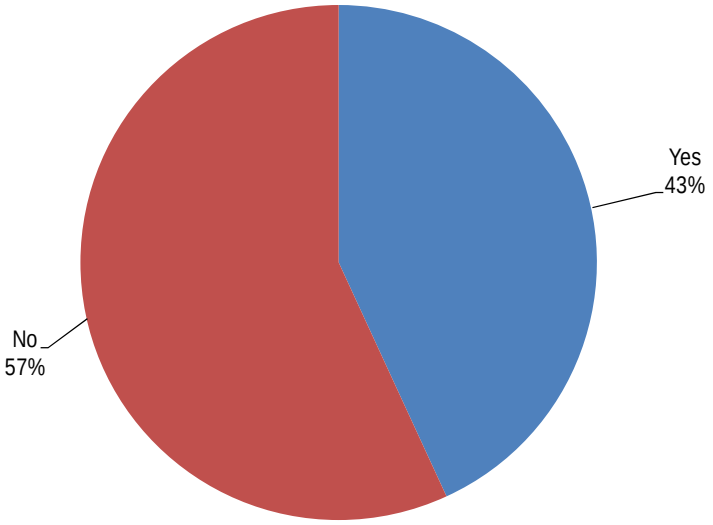
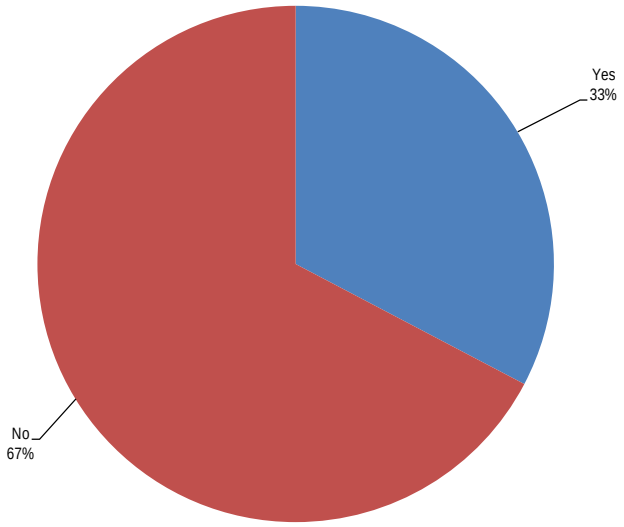


Figure 5-16 Electronic Marketing Materials

Were you aware that you can download marketing materials from the website?

n=52



"Really like the new look!"

-Alameda County Medical Center

To gauge the number of new materials needed, respondents were able to request the type and number of materials they need, including: brochures, electronic ride voucher (if the current vouchers have been used or were lost), flyers, and text for a new email blast. Almost 6,000 brochures were requested by 32 employer representatives responding to this question. These material requests will be responded to separately to assess needs at each site and ensure that adequate outreach is occurring for each employer.

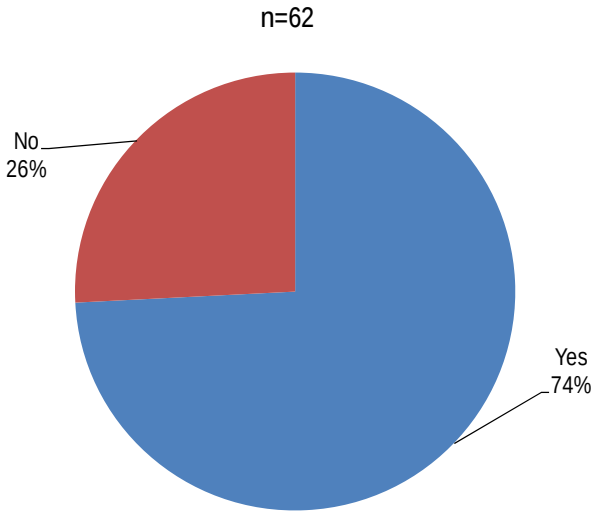
RENTAL CAR REQUIREMENT

In an effort to increase Employer Representatives' awareness, all Employer Representatives were reminded of the rental car requirement when they were contacted to update their contact information and to notify them of the employee and employer evaluation survey. As with the 2010 and 2011 surveys, a brief explanation of the rental car requirement was included in the email and cover letter accompanying the employer survey as well as in the survey itself. To increase rental car awareness, the GRH staff contacted the employers with the most participants and worked with them to increase their awareness of the rental car requirement as well as awareness among employee participants.

When asked if the employer representative was aware of the rental car requirement before being contacted about the survey, over three-quarters (74%) stated that they were aware of the requirement. Last year, 81% of Employer Representatives knew about the rental car requirement; in 2010, 79% of the employers knew about the requirement; in 2009, 72% of employers knew about the requirement; and in 2008, 69% of employers knew about the requirement. It appears that the number of employers who are aware of this requirement has plateaued, and additional targeted research may be necessary to increase the rate of awareness.

Figure 5-17 Were you aware of the GRH rental car requirement?

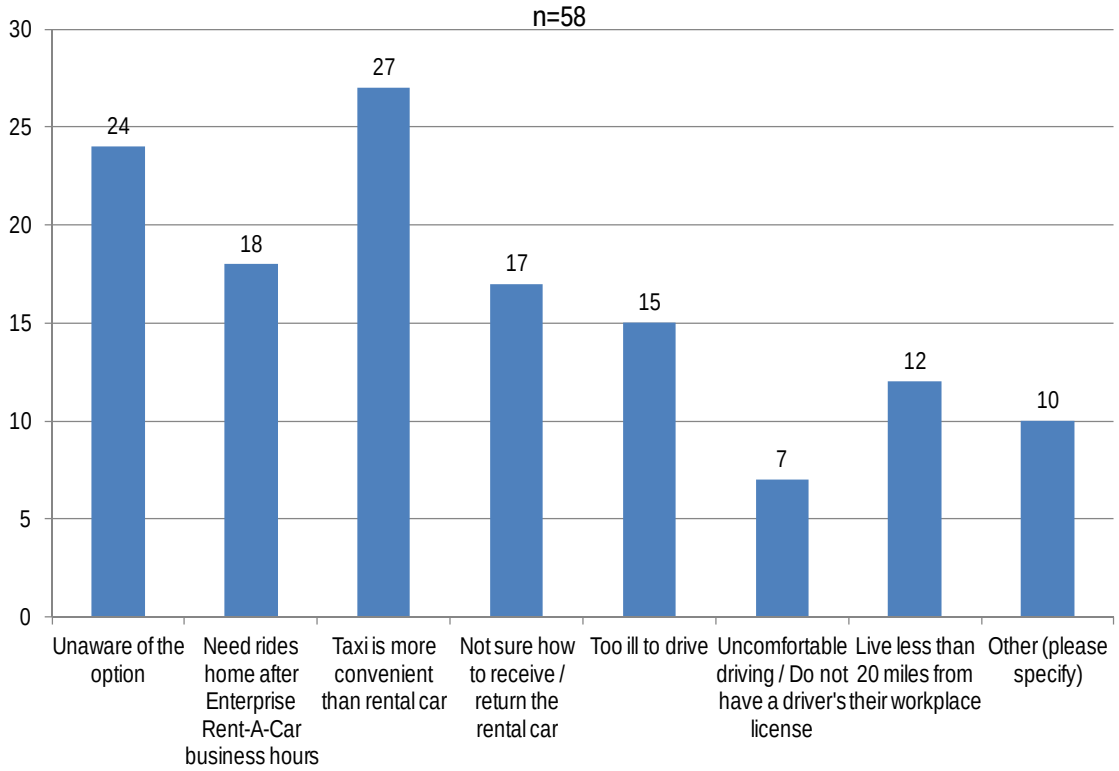
Before being contacted to update your contact information, were you aware of the rental car requirement for persons living more than 50 miles from their workplace and the strong recommendation for persons living 21-49 miles from their workplace?



When Employer Representatives were asked why they think participants do not use the rental car option more often, the most common response was that "taxi is more convenient than rental car (46%, up from 18% in 2011) and that they were "unaware of the option" (41%, up from 24% in 2011) followed by representatives who thought that "the participant needed the ride outside of normal Enterprise Rent-A-Car business hours" (31%). This differs from employee participant responses. The largest number of participants responded by stating they live less than 20 miles from their workplace (40%) or they were too ill/unable to drive (10%). Only 7% stated that they were unaware of the rental car option.

Figure 5-18 Why do you think participants do not use the rental car option more often?

Because rental cars are less expensive than taxis for longer trips, the program is trying to increase rental car usage. Why do you think participants do not use the rental car option more often?



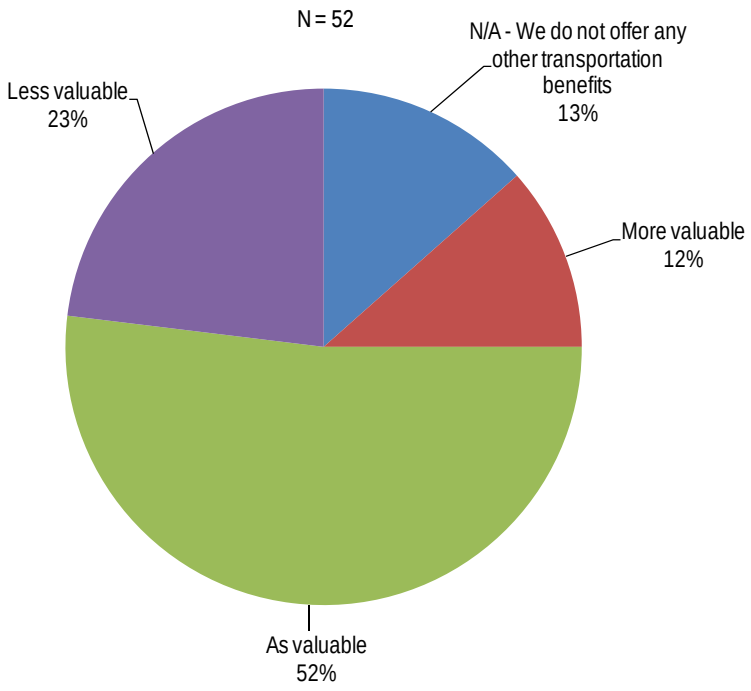
*Note: Multiple responses were permitted to this question, resulting in a total number higher than the number of surveys received.

PROGRAM VALUE

Employer Representatives were asked their opinions about the perceived value of the GRH program to registrants. This information is intended to add another way that the survey can determine the program value to employers. To help determine the value of the program, employer representatives were asked their opinion on how much their registered employees value the GRH program compared to other transportation benefits offered at their workplace. Almost two-thirds of respondents (64%) stated that they thought their employees valued the GRH program at least as much as other transportation benefits offered through the workplace. This is up from 55% in 2011. Twenty-three percent thought that their employees value the program less than other transportation benefits offered, and 13% do not offer their employees any other transportation benefits. In general, the trend is that this program is viewed with increasing value by Employer Representatives, with 12% finding it to be more valuable than any other transportation benefit offered to employees at their site.

Figure 5-19 Perceived Employee Value of the GRH Program

How valuable do you think the GRH program is to your employees compared to any other transportation benefits your firm provides?



6 PROGRAM UPDATE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Alameda County Transportation Commission (CTC) has been successful in bringing about a modal shift from driving alone to alternative transportation modes for commuting, and the GRH program is an important element of this success. Data from this year's participant survey indicate that the program is continuing to reduce drive-alone trips by eliminating one of the significant barriers to alternative mode use — namely, the fear of being unable to return home in the event of an emergency.

2012 RECOMMENDATION STATUS AND PROGRAM UPDATE

Last year, Alameda CTC Board made recommendations for the 2012 GRH program based on an evaluation of the program. The Alameda CTC Board raised concerns regarding administrative costs and overall program effectiveness. In addition, issues were raised regarding the future of the GRH program and how the program should continue to operate within the larger framework of county transportation operations. The following provides a more detailed review of the 2012 recommendations and outcomes:

1. **Initiate new program efficiencies, such as updating website to include links to alternative travel modes, establishing online ride vouchers, and using social media.**

   In 2012, the GRH program began the process of completely overhauling the website. The previous website was developed 15 years ago and was coded in a language that was essentially obsolete. The website's age and structure prohibited program staff from making timely updates including modifying basic text, uploading files, and changing any component of the site's basic layout. The new website was designed using a nimble WordPress Content Management System (CMS) which is commonly referred to as the industry standard for small to medium sized websites. This platform enables change to be made easily and by any program staff with limited website experience.

   The front-end[26] of the website has a new look and feel that more consistent with the Alameda CTC website. A consistent look and feel has better integrated the GRH program with Alameda CTC and shows users that GRH is part of a larger countywide transportation agency. The updated website contains a new GRH logo that was developed in 2011 and applied to all marketing materials in 2012. The rebranding effort provided GRH staff an opportunity to develop new program materials that require less paperwork to be sent to program participants. In turn, this has slightly reduced costs and time spent distributing program materials. The website also contains links so employers

[26] Front end refers to the visual interface of the website, which is accessible by everyone. Back end is the part of the website which users don't see and is where the processing and coding is done.

and employees can download all GRH marketing materials and program information. This new feature has also reduced the amount of materials that are sent to Employer Representatives.

In addition, the GRH website contains a list of links to qualified Guaranteed Ride Home transportation options such as transit, carpooling, vanpooling, biking and walking (http://grh.alamedactc.org/sustainable-transportation-options/).[27] This page informs employers and employees of the range of alternative commuting options available in Alameda County. Providing this information helps present the GRH program as a complementary program for commuting alternatives, rather than just a standalone program in Alameda County.

In 2012, GRH staff performed exploratory analysis of online ride vouchers including a peer review and discussions with software vendors that would be needed to implement such a system. Recommendation 1 and Appendix B discuss this work in more detail.

In 2012, GRH staff also began planning for the use of social media to help the GRH program stay in touch with businesses and reach out to new users. Websites such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are commonly used by other programs and services in Alameda County, including Safe Routes to School Alameda County, the Oakland Broadway Shuttle, BART, and Alameda Harbor Bay Ferry. In addition, many large and small employers use social media to make announcements to their employees and to announce community events, such as Transportation and Health Fairs. In January 2013, GRH staff met with Alameda CTC to discuss the Alameda CTC Social Media Policy and better understand the policies and guidelines for posting on social media sites, such as Facebook. A soft launch of the GRH Facebook page was initiated in early 2013 and will be examined in next year's annual evaluation report.

2. **Focus new marketing on increasing awareness of the availability of the GRH Program to all employers in Alameda County, regardless of size; and continue to expand the program's reach to underserved areas, such as South and Central County. This includes using creative outreach and education strategies, such as co-marketing.**

   In order to offer a program that is inclusive for smaller businesses, the GRH program eliminated the minimum employer size requirement in 2009. The recommendation was based on the results of the comprehensive program evaluation which found that of 12 GRH programs nationwide, only the Alameda County GRH program had this requirement.

   In 2012, GRH staff worked with chambers of commerce and created press releases to effectively market the program throughout the county to all employers regardless of size. Chamber contacts were sent information about the program to review and distribute to employers. As a result, employer enrollment increased in both South and Central County. In Central Alameda County, enrollment increased by 25%, from 12 employers to 15 employers. New employers in Hayward and San Leandro enrolled in the GRH Program. In South County, employer enrollment increased by 14%, from 22 employers to 25 employers. There was a 20% increase in employer registration in Fremont, which currently has 18 enrolled businesses.

[27] It is noted that the GRH website is not affiliated with any of the agencies provided on the Transportation Options page; they are provided as a resource only.

GRH staff also investigated co-marketing and social media marketing to reach out to new potential employers throughout Alameda County. A co-marketing strategy was used to work with other agencies and groups who have similar missions and goals. In 2012, GRH continued working with the Alameda CTC bicycle and pedestrian program to encourage bicycling and walking in Alameda County. GRH staff members have distributed *Ride, Stride, Arrive* rulers to employee participants at marketing events and Alameda CTC staff members have distributed GRH brochures at different marketing events. In addition, GRH staff members have worked with AC Transit to provide outreach materials to employers who have enrolled in the AC Transit EasyPass Program. The AC Transit EasyPass program provides discounted bus passes, valid at any time on all AC Transit local and transbay buses, to employers with 100 or more employees. These co-marketing partnerships have not only helped to expand the reach of GRH marketing efforts in a cost-effective manner, they also helped present GRH as a service that complements alternative modes of transportation.

3. **Continue to manage the existing program, provide customer support and services, and monitor and report program use and effectiveness.**

   Staff continued to market the program to employees and employers via emails, telephone calls, and attendance of employee benefits fairs. Operations of the GRH program continued in 2012 including database maintenance, monitoring the car rental requirement, and updating/maintaining the website. As a result, the Guaranteed Ride Home program added 34 new employers and 491 new employee participants in 2012. Employee and employer surveys are completed annually as part of the annual program evaluation report. The annual surveying effort for 2012 concluded in March 2013.

4. **Submit recommendations for next steps for the GRH program, subject to approval by Board.**

   The 2011 Annual Evaluation Report presented four options for the GRH program for the 2013-2015 TFCA funding cycle:

   1. Continue the GRH program with cost efficiencies.
   2. Include the GRH program as part of a countywide Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program.
   3. Consolidate the program into a regional program or combine with other counties, subject to interest and funding of regional or countywide agencies.
   4. Phase out the GRH program and discontinue it.

   The GRH staff and Alameda CTC staff jointly determined that implementing the GRH program as part of a more comprehensive TDM approach is the best near-term option for the Alameda County GRH program. The Alameda County GRH program is a well-subscribed program, and the only program that fills the role of providing a safety net for commuters who use alternative modes. Yet, this program is unique among GRH programs in the rest of the Bay Area and the U.S. in that it is not operated alongside other TDM programs (such as telecommuting, parking cash out, etc.) and as such does not receive the benefits of mutual reinforcement from other programs.

   The Alameda CTC initiated work on a Comprehensive TDM Approach in late 2012. This Comprehensive Approach points out new directions for the Alameda CTC with regards to TDM, and identifies a role for the GRH program. This Comprehensive Approach is discussed below in Recommendation 5.

GUARANTEED RIDE HOME 2013 RECOMMENDATIONS

Through the Guaranteed Ride Home Program, the Alameda CTC has continued to be successful in changing Alameda County employees' mode choice for work commutes from driving alone to using alternative transportation modes. Data from this year's participant survey indicate that the program is continuing to reduce the number of drive-alone trips made within the county by eliminating one of the significant barriers to alternative mode use – namely, the uncertainty of being able to return home in the event of an emergency or unplanned overtime.

The 2013 Guaranteed Ride Home recommendations are based on an evaluation of the program issues raised by the Alameda CTC, and the following funding and schedule considerations:

- Current TFCA funding for the GRH program has been approved by the Air District and Alameda CTC through November 2013.
- Future TFCA funding for the GRH program for 2013 to 2015 is anticipated to be approved by the Air District and the Alameda CTC.
- The Alameda CTC recently prepared Countywide Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Strategy, which is presented together with this report. The TDM Strategy includes recommendations for the Alameda CTC's role in the Guaranteed Ride Home Program, as well as other countywide TDM strategies that aim to reduce vehicle trips and greenhouse gas emissions, and comply with the Congestion Management Plan, AB32 and SB 375.

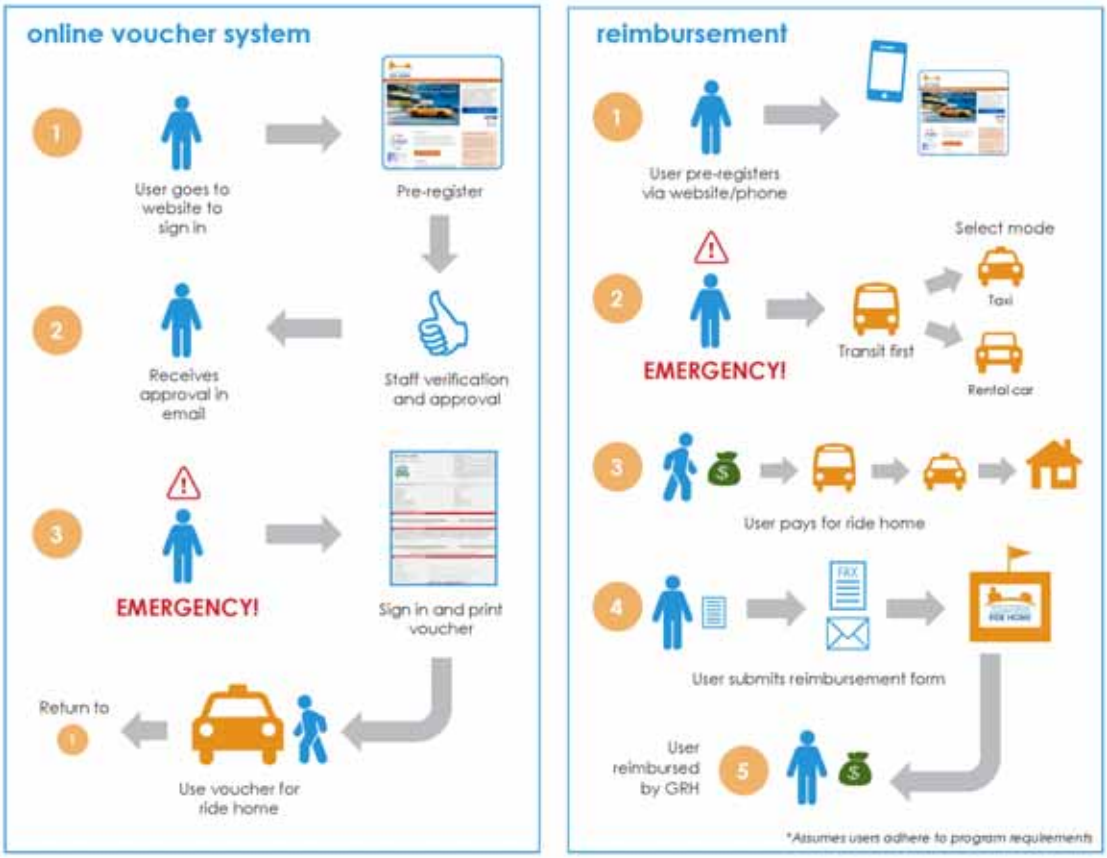
The following recommendations for 2013 aim to move the Alameda CTC's GRH program into a new era of more efficient administration, increased ease of use, and higher visibility, and to place it in the context of an overall Comprehensive TDM Strategy.

1. **Investigate feasibility of switching from the current paper voucher system to either an online voucher system or a reimbursement system and implement appropriate solution.**

   Moving from paper vouchers to an online voucher system or a reimbursement system has significant potential to increase ease of use for GRH participants, reduce administrative costs, and improve program tracking and security. Many other GRH programs around the country have made such a switch and realized benefits from doing so. As a first step towards a possible transition, GRH staff performed a peer review of other GRH programs that have switched from paper vendors and contacted software vendors that could support an online voucher system. This investigation identified both online vouchers and a reimbursement-based system as possible alternative service delivery models, and identified advantages and disadvantages associated with each. It is recommended that, as a next step, GRH staff use this information to determine if transitioning to an online or reimbursement system is feasible for the Alameda CTC in light of program budget, legal issues, and possible future regional TDM integration considerations.

   An **Online Voucher** system allows registered users to print a voucher on the day when they have an emergency and need a ride home. Users must be registered in the GRH program and create an account prior to using a voucher. Employees (and GRH staff) can track the number of vouchers used (limited to six per calendar year). An online voucher system would require a new database and operating system in order to track use and enrollment and generate a voucher when requested. A **Reimbursement** system allows registered employees to take their ride home whenever they need. This program could be structured to allow employees to use any mode or provider they choose (taxi, car rental,

transit, etc.), or could include a set list of transportation providers. Employees would still be required to first register in the GRH program before taking their ride. After they register, if they experience an emergency, they take the ride and then submit their receipt to be reimbursed. Employees could mail, scan/e-mail, or fax a copy of their receipt to the GRH program. The diagram below shows how an online voucher and reimbursement system work from a user's perspective.



While both an online voucher system and a reimbursement system seem to hold potential for the Alameda County GRH program, a more detailed feasibility assessment is needed. Such an assessment would estimate the cost implications of a transition including start-up costs, ongoing costs of operating an alternative system (software platform subscription, etc.), and cost savings from reduced administrative activities. A more detailed assessment would also consider any legal issues pertaining to opening up the GRH program to more taxi and rental car companies as part of a switch to an online voucher or reimbursement system. Finally, a more detailed assessment would consider what selection of a particular model means for possible future regional integration of GRH programs. While the Alameda CTC remains committed to operating an Alameda County program for the foreseeable future, there are advantages to leaving the possibility of regional consolidation open given the tendency of GRH trips to cross county lines and possible cost savings from pooling resources between programs. The table below summarizes advantages and disadvantages associated with each model.

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Online Voucher System	▪ GRH staff no longer have to assign and mail printed vouchers to employees ▪ Employees have the ability to manage their GRH registration and view information on used vouchers ▪ Registered participants will be able to print a voucher when an emergency occurs ▪ Significantly reduces the amount of administrative time spent on mailing program materials ▪ Very minimal delay between registration and program use	▪ Requires access to a computer during the time of the emergency ▪ Requires access to a printer to print voucher ▪ Upfront costs to develop database and software platform ▪ Back-up vouchers still have to be provided at worksites without access to computers ▪ Requires contracts with taxi and car rental companies ▪ Still need a signed waiver (can be done online)
Reimbursement System	▪ No need for voucher or printed form during time of emergency ▪ Can use any taxi, car rental, ride-sharing, or transit alternative to get home ▪ Reduces issues with liability and the need for a signed waiver ▪ Consistent with other Bay Area Guaranteed Ride Home programs (San Francisco and Contra Costa) ▪ Significantly reduces the amount of administrative time spent on mailing program materials ▪ Could eliminate the need for contracts with taxi and car rental companies, if so desired	▪ People may not have access to a credit card or cash to pay for ride home ▪ Limits the amount that can be reimbursed each year (under $600 per person/calendar year) ▪ People may not like paying up front and submitting a receipt; could be an equity issue ▪ Back-up vouchers may be needed for people who do not have a credit card or cash to pay for the ride home ▪ Upfront costs to develop database and software platform

2. **Explore updating the current Access Database of registered employers and employees to a cloud-based database.**

   The current Access database system is unwieldy, especially in light of the number of participants it is required to handle, and lacks a user-friendly online interface. It is recommended that if a new system is chosen for GRH vouchers (either online voucher system or reimbursement system), the GRH program database be updated to a cloud-based database to allow an improved online user interface for registration and voucher distribution. This would allow greater functionality by enabling employees to log in and update contact information, enhance communication with participants, improve ease of accessing information, and more securely store information as the program grows. The costs of database transition would be largely shared with the costs of transitioning away from the current paper voucher system.

3. **Investigate changing GRH employee enrollment requirements such that being part of an employer with an Employer Representative is recommended but not required, and modify program if appropriate.**

   Currently, employees may only enroll in the GRH program if they belong to a participating employer that has a designated Employer Representative. This requirement adds a barrier to immediate enrollment for any employee whose company is not already

enrolled. It particularly disadvantages smaller employers where it is difficult to find someone willing to serve as an Employer Representative. There may also be geographic equity implications because the larger employers in Alameda County are concentrated in certain parts of the County.

Employer Representatives, while helpful in a variety of ways, are not essential to program operations. As noted throughout this report, Employer Representatives assist the program in a variety of ways. However, Employer Representatives are increasingly optional because of the GRH program's use of social media marketing and the GRH website to reach and maintain contact with employees and answer questions; a switch to online vouchers or a reimbursement system may further diminish the need for Employer Representatives.

It is recommended that GRH staff explore the feasibility of changing program rules and operations such that employees can join GRH even if their employer is not enrolled with a designated Employer Representative and modify the program if it proves to be feasible; such a change should continue to aim to recruit Employer Representatives (even if they are not required). The registration form could have an *optional* field in which the employee can list the name of his or her HR administrator or someone who can be a champion for the GRH program in their workplace. As with a switch away from paper vouchers, the practices of other GRH programs around the region will be considered in such an investigation.

4. **Continue to enhance marketing and outreach through coordination with Alameda CTC for events, print, and social media marketing to promote the GRH program to employers and employees throughout Alameda County.**

An updated Marketing Plan was developed in late 2012 and submitted to the Alameda CTC in January 2013. This plan hinges on the co-marketing opportunities with Alameda CTC in publicizing the GRH program. Coordinating with the ongoing marketing and communications efforts at the Alameda CTC will continue to improve visibility of the GRH program and reduce administrative costs associated with attending outreach events and marketing the program. The Alameda CTC attends hundreds of events each year in Alameda County. The Alameda CTC also has excellent connections with local businesses, chambers of commerce, and transit providers, and will promote the program and coordinate release of information to these outlets, such as program changes and milestones.

A key feature of this marketing plan is the continued development of the GRH Facebook page. Social media tools, such as Facebook, are commonly used by other programs and services in Alameda County, including Alameda County Safe Routes to School Program, Oakland Broadway Shuttle, BART, and Alameda Harbor Bay Ferry. Social media marketing will allow GRH to promote events in Alameda County and stay in communication with major employers and other program partners. The Alameda CTC began tweeting and posting to Facebook about the program in early 2013, including welcoming new employers and employees on a regular basis. Social media marketing is a great means to harness user anecdotes and engender a sense of participants promoting the program to other participants. In addition, social media allows more constant contact and visibility with participants, reminding people in a very unobtrusive way about the opportunity that GRH provides.

5. **Expand the GRH program in Alameda County to include a countywide TDM "one-stop-shop" clearinghouse website and TDM Fact Sheets as part of the proposed Comprehensive TDM Program Approach recommendations.**

   A continued recommendation from previous years is to investigate ways to expand the Alameda CTC's overall TDM portfolio. These evaluation reports recognized that GRH cannot provide its full benefit as a stand-alone program. GRH is a program that makes other TDM options like transit, shuttles, vanpooling, etc. viable, but it is not in and of itself a transportation option. Good alternative transportation options and other supportive incentives to use alternative transportation must be in place before GRH can reach its maximum potential. There are a number of other TDM programs that already exist in Alameda County with a range of providers including the region, cities, and employers. Unfortunately, centralized information about the range of TDM options in Alameda County is not easily available for users. It is recommended that the GRH program be expanded to include a TDM information "0ne-stop-shop" clearinghouse website and TDM Fact Sheets.

   The current GRH program provides a strong foundation for an expanded role for the Alameda CTC in providing TDM information. The GRH Hotline has functioned as a general TDM information tool for some time now, albeit on an informal basis. GRH program staff already has strong relationships with many of the large employers in Alameda County and connections with over 5,000 registered employees. Finally, the GRH website currently provides a separate page listing the transportation options in Alameda County. The webpage contains links to various transportation providers (such as ACE Train, AC Transit, BART, Capitol Corridor, WHEELS, Union City Transit, Emery-Go-Round, San Francisco Bay Ferries, Amtrak, VTA, and Dumbarton Express); ridesharing options (511.org and East Bay Casual Carpool); and biking/walking information (East Bay Bicycle Coalition, Walk Oakland Bike Oakland, Alameda County Bicycle and Pedestrian Program). The web presence will be expanded to provide a "one-stop-shop" with additional information for employers and employees. This would include expanding and rebranding the GRH program to contain more information about Alameda County TDM opportunities. New printed materials would be given to people enrolled in GRH that further encourage use of more sustainable modes of transportation. In all of these materials, the GRH program can be emphasized as the "safety net" that makes other commute options work well.

Appendix A

2012 Employee and Employer Survey

Alameda County Transportation Commission
GUARANTEED RIDE HOME

EMPLOYEE SURVEY

PLEASE RETURN BY MARCH 13, 2013

Thank you for participating in the Alameda County CTC Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Program.
This annual evaluation is a necessary part of maintaining funding for the program.

Survey available online at: **www.grh.alamedactc.org**

Employer Name: _____ **Your Name (optional):** _____

1. Please rate the quality of customer service you have received in 2012:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know
Clarity of information provided about how the program works (brochures, instructions, website, etc.).					
Response time and information received when calling the GRH hotline					

2. How did you find out about the Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Program?

- ❑ Employer or on-site representative, during benefits enrollment
- ❑ Employer or on-site representative, other
- ❑ Co-worker
- ❑ Carpool/vanpool partner(s)
- ❑ Commuter/employee benefits fair
- ❑ Information posted at your worksite
- ❑ Online search
- ❑ Other (please specify)_____

3. How long have you been participating in the Guaranteed Ride Home Program?

❑ Less than 6 months ❑ 1 to 2 years ❑ 5 to 10 years
❑ 6 months to 1 year ❑ 2 to 5 years ❑ 10+ years

4. How did you sign up for the GRH Program?

- ❑ Online (through the GRH website)
- ❑ Mailed in my application
- ❑ Faxed in my application
- ❑ In person at a transportation fair
- ❑ Other (please specify)_____

5. Have you ever used your issued GRH voucher?

❑ Yes ❑ No

If yes, how many times in the past year have you used a voucher? _____

6. Have you been in a situation where you needed to use a GRH voucher, but did not have one in hand? If so, what was the resolution?

- ❑ I have not experienced this situation
- ❑ I used an instant enrollment voucher provided by my employer contact
- ❑ I was unable to use the GRH program
- ❑ Other:_____

7. When you used your <u>most recent</u> voucher, did you use a taxi cab or a rental car?

❑ Taxicab ❑ Rental Car ❑ N/A – Never taken a ride

8. Before today, were you aware of the rental car requirement for persons living more than 20 miles from their workplace?

❑ Yes ❑ No

9. If you live more than 20 miles away from your workplace and <u>have used a taxi</u> for a guaranteed ride home, describe why you chose a taxi instead of a rental car?

- ❑ Unaware of the requirement
- ❑ Enterprise Rent-A-Car was closed for the day
- ❑ More convenient than a rental car
- ❑ Uncomfortable driving
- ❑ Too ill to drive/unable to drive
- ❑ Not sure how I would receive/return rental car
- ❑ I live less than 20 miles from my workplace
- ❑ Other:_____

10. What is the approximate <u>one-way</u> distance between your work and home? _____ miles

11. If you had a question about the GRH Program, what tool would you most likely used to find the answer?

- ❑ Call the GRH Hotline (phone)
- ❑ Website (via personal computer)
- ❑ Website (via mobile phone)
- ❑ Ask my Employer Representative
- ❑ Other:_____

12. On a typical day…

About what time do you arrive at work?

❑ Before 6 AM ❑ 6-6:29 AM ❑ 6:30-6:59 AM
❑ 7-7:29 AM ❑ 7:30-7:59 AM ❑ 8-8:29 AM
❑ 8:30-8:59AM ❑ 9-9:29 AM ❑ 9:30-9:59 AM
❑ 10 AM or later

About what time do you leave work?

❑ Before 3 PM ❑ 3-3:29 PM ❑ 3:30-3:59 PM
❑ 4-4:29 PM ❑ 4:30-4:59 PM ❑ 5-5:29 PM
❑ 5:30-5:59 PM ❑ 6-6:29 PM ❑ 6:30-6:59 PM
❑ 7 PM or later

13. In a typical week, how many days per week do you travel to work by each commute mode listed below? For each day, consider the mode on which you spend most of your time.

<u>PRIMARY</u> MODE OF TRANSPORTATION

Please enter number of days per week in the space below

_____ Drive Alone	_____ Vanpool
_____ Bus	_____ ACE/Amtrak
_____ Ferry	_____ Bicycle
_____ BART	_____ Walk
_____ Carpool (driving or getting a ride with one or more other people in the car)	
_____ TOTAL DAYS YOU COMMUTE TO WORK PER WEEK	

14. Do you drive alone in order to get to a bus stop, carpool, vanpool, ferry, BART or ACE station?

❑ Ye ❑ No ❑ N/A

15. BEFORE joining the GRH program, how many days per week did you travel to work by each mode listed below in a typical week? For each day, consider the mode on which you spend most of your time.

PRIMARY MODE OF TRANSPORTATION

Please enter number of days per week in the space below

_____ Drive Alone	_____ Vanpool
_____ Bus	_____ ACE/Amtrak
_____ Ferry	_____ Bicycle
_____ BART	_____ Walk
_____ Carpool (driving or getting a ride with one or more other people in the car)	
_____ TOTAL DAYS YOU COMMUTE TO WORK PER WEEK	

16. If you drove alone BEFORE you joined the GRH program, how important was the Guaranteed Ride Home Program in your decision to BEGIN ridesharing[1], riding transit[2], bicycling or walking for your commute to work?

❑ Very important. (It was the main reason for my switch.)
❑ Important. (It was an important part of my decision.)
❑ Somewhat Important. (It had some influence.)
❑ Not Important. (I began using alternative modes for other reasons.)

17. If the Guaranteed Ride Home Program were not available, would you: *(check one)*

❑ **Stop** ridesharing[1], riding transit[2], bicycling, or walking, and drive alone.
❑ Continue ridesharing[1], riding transit[2], bicycling, or walking, but **less frequently** than before.
❑ Continue ridesharing[1], riding transit[2], bicycling, or walking **at the same frequency** as before.

18. Do you agree with the following statement: "The GRH program encourages employees registered in the program to rideshare, ride transit, bicycle, or walk MORE OFTEN than they would otherwise?"

❑ Agree strongly
❑ Agree somewhat
❑ Do not agree

Please comment. _____

_____

19. Compared to any other transportation benefits you receive from your employer, how valuable is the GRH program to you? (Examples of other commuter benefits include Commuter Checks, free/discounted transit passes, preferential parking for carpools/vanpools, bicycle parking, etc.)

❑ More valuable than most
❑ As valuable as most
❑ Less valuable than most
❑ N/A (GRH program is the only transportation benefit)

20. Have you visited the new GRH website? *(www.grh.alamedactc.org)*

❑ Yes ❑ No

21. Were you aware that you can access instructions on how to use GRH Program through the GRH website? *(http://grh.alamedactc.org/using-the-program/)*

❑ Yes ❑ No

22. Would you be interested in using an online voucher system[3] (there would be a required login and password for your account)?

❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ Unsure

23. Would you be willing to pay a small convenience fee (less than $5) to have access to your GRH voucher online?

❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ Unsure

Why or why not? _____

24. Do you have access to a computer at your work to print a ride voucher?

❑ Yes ❑ No

25. Do you have access to a smart phone that could be used to display a ride voucher?

❑ Yes ❑ No

26. We welcome your feedback! Please let us know how the GRH Program has helped you. _____

_____

_____

_____

27. Please provide any comments or suggestions you have concerning the GRH program: _____

_____

_____

_____

28. If you would like to complete this survey online in the future, please provide your current email address:

_____

Thank you for completing the 2012 GRH Survey!

The Survey can also be completed online at: *www.grh.alamedactc.org*

Once complete – please send or fax to the following address. Thank you for your continued participation in the program!

Mailing Address:
Alameda County Guaranteed Ride Home Program
116 New Montgomery Street, Suite 500
San Francisco, CA 94105

Fax Number: 415-284-1554
Phone Number: 510-433-0320

[1] *Ridesharing includes driving with two or more people in the car (including the driver), carpooling and vanpooling.*
[2] *Transit includes ferry, bus, train, BART, ACE Train, and shuttle.*

[3] *An online voucher system would allow users to access a voucher electronically. Users must be able to print the voucher in order to redeem for a taxi or rental-car ride home.*

Alameda County Transportation Commission
GUARANTEED RIDE HOME

EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVE SURVEY

PLEASE RETURN BY MARCH 13, 2013

Thank you for participating in the Alameda County CTC Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Program.
This annual evaluation is a necessary part of maintaining funding for the program.

Survey available online at: **www.grh.alamedactc.org**

Employer Name _____

Employer City _____

1. **Please rate the quality of customer service you received in 2012:**

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know
Clarity of information provided about how the program works (brochures, instructions, website, etc.).					
Response time and information received when calling the GRH hotline.					

2. **How long have you been the Guaranteed Ride Home employer representative for your company/organization?**

❑ Less than 6 months ❑ 1 to 2 years ❑ 5 to 10 years
❑ 6 months to 1 year ❑ 2 to 5 years ❑ More than 10 years

3. **Before today, were you aware of the rental car requirement for persons living more than 20 miles from their workplace?**

❑ Yes ❑ No

4. **Because rental cars are less expensive than taxis for longer trips, the program is trying to increase rental car usage. In your opinion, why do participants not use the rental car option more often?** (Check all that apply)

❑ Unaware of the option
❑ Need rides home after Enterprise Rent-A-Car business hours
❑ Taxi is more convenient than rental car
❑ Not sure how to receive/return rental car
❑ Too ill to drive
❑ Uncomfortable driving/ do not have a license
❑ Live within 20 miles of their workplace
❑ Other: _____

5. **Have you ever encountered an employee that did not have a GRH voucher available to them? If Yes, what was your response?**

❑ Have not experienced this situation
❑ Issued employee an Instant Enrollment voucher
❑ Worked with employee to find alternative transportation
❑ Other: _____

6. **Does your company/organization provide any transportation subsidies or benefits to employees to encourage the use of transit, carpools, vanpools or walking/biking? If so, *check all that currently apply.***

❑ Commuter Checks/ Wageworks (pre-tax benefit option)
❑ Free/discounted transit passes
❑ Workplace shuttle
❑ Vanpool/carpool matching services
❑ Preferential carpool/vanpool parking
❑ Bicycle parking
❑ Shower/changing room for cyclists
❑ Telecommuting/ Flextime
❑ Information (web or printed) regarding alternative commute options
❑ Other (please specify):_____

7. **In the last year, has your organization eliminated any transportation benefits?**

❑ Yes ❑ No If yes, please describe _____

8. **Do employees pay for parking at your organization's place of work?**

❑ Yes ❑ No

9. **How would you describe the amount of work you spend administering the GRH program?**

   _____ It takes more time than allotted in my work schedule
   _____ Manageable
   _____ I could do more if needed

10. **Do employees at your company know you are the GRH Employer Representative? If yes, please describe how you let them know.**

    ❑ Yes ❑ No Please describe._____

11. **How do you inform new employees about the GRH Program?**

    ❑ Part of Employee Benefits/Orientation ❑ Periodic announcements
    ❑ Word of Mouth ❑ Other

    Please describe._____

12. **How do you remind current employees about the GRH Program?**

    ❑ Pass out GRH brochures/flyers ❑ Periodic e-mail announcements
    ❑ Word of Mouth ❑ Other

    Please describe._____

13. **How valuable do you think the GRH program is to your employees compared to any other transportation benefits your firm provides?**
    ❑ N/A - We do not provide other transportation benefits
    ❑ More valuable
    ❑ As valuable
    ❑ Less valuable

14. **In your opinion, how effective is the GRH program in encouraging employees to commute to work using alternative modes of transportation?**

    ❑ Very effective
    ❑ Somewhat effective
    ❑ Not at all effective

15. **If you had a question about the program, what tool would you most likely use to find the answer?**

    ❑ Call the hotline (phone)
    ❑ Website (via personal computer)
    ❑ Website (via mobile phone)
    ❑ Other _____

16. **Have you visited the new GRH website?** *(www.grh.alamedactc.org)*

    ❑ Yes ❑ No

17. **Were you aware that you can download marketing materials from the GRH website?** *(http://grh.alamedactc.org/marketing-materials/)*

    ❑ Yes ❑ No If yes, was it useful? _____ _____

18. **In your opinion, what strategy would be the most effective in marketing the program to new participants?**

    ❑ Referral Program (Refer a friend, enter for a prize)
    ❑ Internal marketing through Employer Contact
    ❑ Social Media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
    ❑ Transportation fairs and on-site outreach
    ❑ Other (please specify) _____

19. **If you would like additional marketing materials, what would you like sent to you?**

    ❑ Brochures (Quantity:_____)
    ❑ Flyer (Quantity:_____)
    ❑ Text for a newsletter/email blast
    ❑ New instant enrollment voucher (only if misplaced original)
    ❑ Other (please specify) _____

20. **Additional Comments:**

    _____

    _____

Please send or fax to the address below

Thank you for your continued participation in the program!

Mailing Address: Alameda County Guaranteed Ride Home Program
116 New Montgomery Street, Suite 500
San Francisco, CA 94105

Fax Number: 415-284-1554 **Phone Number:** 510-433-0320

APPENDIX B

Online Voucher Peer Review

NELSON
NYGAARD

MEMORANDUM

To: Matthew Bomberg, Alameda CTC

From: Nelson\Nygaard

Date: May 2, 2013

Subject: Online Voucher System Review

A wide variety of Guaranteed Ride Home (also called Emergency Ride Home) programs operate around the United States to provide commuters with the comfort and security of a quick and easy ride home in case of an emergency. The details of these programs vary greatly in their rules for a qualifying event, requirements to participate, and administration procedures. One of the most critical factors of a GRH program is the method of pre- or post-trip authorization to take an emergency ride. For the length of the Alameda County Guaranteed Ride Home program (GRH program), which has been in operation for 15 years, participants have been required to have a paper voucher in hand before taking a ride. This voucher can only be mailed to the participant when they pre-register for the program. To assist with immediate ride needs, the program also provides two additional "instant enrollment" vouchers to each employment site via an Employer Representative. While this system has functioned well for over a decade, there are numerous issues with this program model. The most prominent concerns for the existing paper voucher system are:

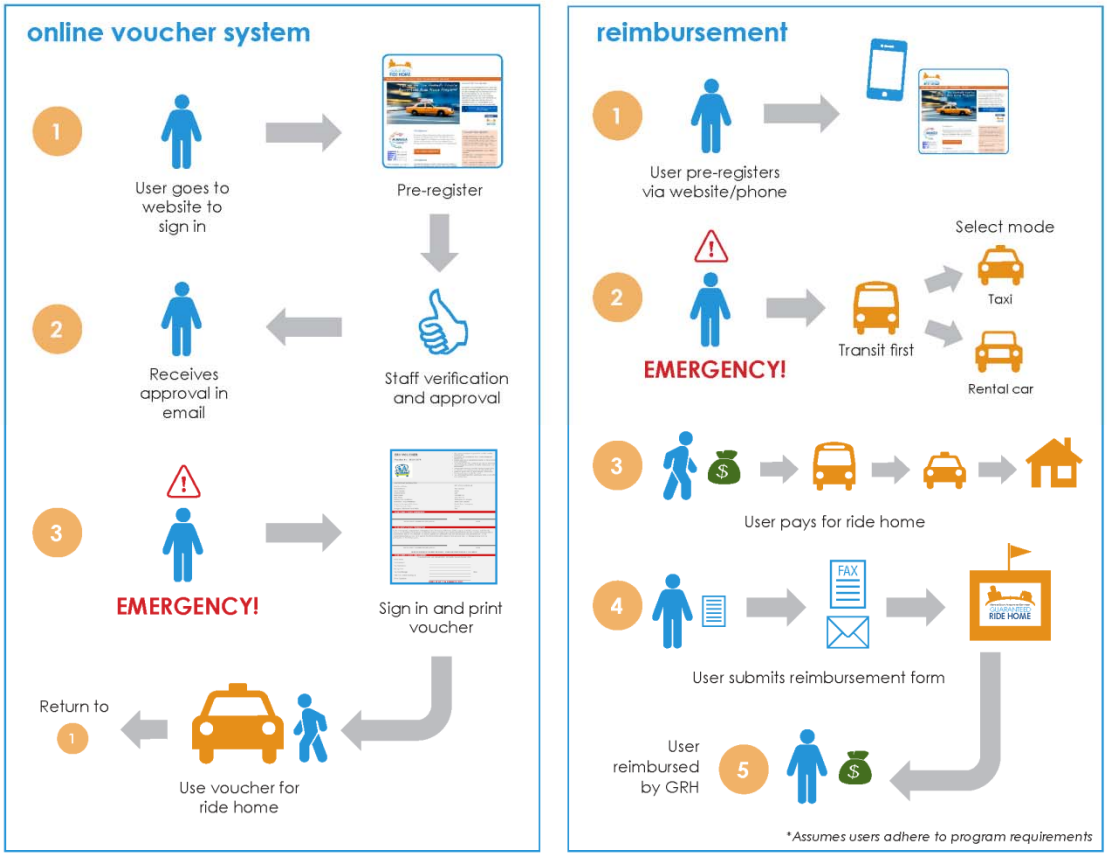
- Inability to provide participant a ride on the day needed if the participant has lost or misplaced their voucher.
- If the participant does not return a copy of the voucher, we do not know a ride was taken until the bill is received from the taxi or rental car company, which may be up to two months later.
- Significant confusion by participants about whom to contact and how to request a new voucher.
- Significant administrative time investment to distribute vouchers.
- Challenge to track and manage paper vouchers. It is estimated that there are currently around 7,000 vouchers assigned to employees or employer representatives that have not yet been used. This presents a risk for the program.
- By only requiring participants to interact with the program by paper (mail and fax), we have less reliable email addresses for participants, which reduces our ability to share program changes and maintain good contact with participants.
- Currently the assigned paper vouchers do not expire and cannot be recalled by the program for any reason (abuse, knowledge from an employer that the employee no longer works there, etc).
- The program is viewed by some as onerous and outdated due to the paper vouchers.

116 NEW MONTGOMERY STREET, SUITE 500 SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105 415-284-1544 FAX 415-284-1554
www.nelsonnygaard.com

In light of these issues, the Alameda County GRH program is currently investigating an online voucher distribution model and a reimbursement system.[1] Both options will reduce many of the administrative costs and barriers to use described above. This memo focuses only on the online voucher model through a peer review of three other programs currently using an online voucher system and a preliminary review of three available vendor systems that offer online voucher systems. The memo then addresses the applicability of these peers and vendor options to the Alameda County GRH program, incorporating results from the 2012 Annual Member survey, which contained three questions pertaining to use of an online voucher. This memo concludes with recommendations for the GRH program.

Figure 1 below illustrates how online voucher and reimbursement systems works for users.

Figure 1 Online Voucher and Reimbursement System User Perspective



Peer Review

The peer GRH programs surveyed in this review were as follows:

- iCommute Guaranteed Ride Home program, San Diego Association of Governments, San Diego, California

[1] A reimbursement program requires that participants must pay for their ride and then submit a receipt for the cost of their approved ride. The original scope of work for this task was to investigate on-line voucher systems only, but a reimbursement system is also considered as option for the GRH program.

- A Better City Transportation Management Association (ABC TMA) Guaranteed Ride Home program, Boston, Massachusetts
- Point2Point Emergency Ride Home program, Lane County Oregon

These programs each guarantee rides for participants with a system for **pre-approving** ride costs and require participants to interface with the program online in some form before taking a ride. The topics discussed with program managers were as follows:[2]

- Operational model
- Impact of transition from paper
- Barriers to use
- Database management/website integration
- Administrative costs, tasks, and responsibilities
- Monitoring and dealing with misuse
- Post-ride survey distribution
- Lessons learned

iCommute

Overview

The San Diego Guaranteed Ride Home program is one element of the iCommute regional Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program, which includes programs for carpool, vanpool, schoolpool, transit, biking, and telework. The program is managed by SANDAG, the San Diego Association of Governments, with a service area of 18 cities and counties. The iCommute regional TDM program is entirely contained on the iCarpool platform. iCarpool will be discussed further in the Vendor Review section. It is also important to note that iCommute was the first program in the country to use the iCarpool software (in 2008), and that both the software and the program grew together, likely giving the program managers at SANDAG a unique experience of this software.

The iCommute GRH program is available to users of the system who register and then navigate within the platform suite to sign-up for GRH. Participants who need a ride will login to the system that day and complete a trip calendar for their alternate mode use, which unlocks a ride voucher. The ride voucher can be printed and used on that same day only. Participants must have computer access. Based on the ride length, the system will default to a taxi ride for trips under 12 miles, and a rental car for trips over 12 miles. However, the system does permit an override, after giving a warning, in case an extenuating circumstance would prevent the user from driving a rental car. SANDAG requires that users must pay a $3 fee each time they use a voucher. The fee is paid directly to the taxi or rental company when the ride is taken and is not part of the iCarpool platform. Users of the San Diego Guaranteed Ride Home Program can take up to three rides per year.

When a ride is taken, program staff are alerted, however there is no post-ride survey for participants. If the participant does not have computer access, an employer representative has administrative privileges and can print a voucher on a user's behalf. Program staff have also used

[2] While these topics were addressed, not all programs felt comfortable providing or had readily available all information.

the system to print and fax a voucher to a participant when needed. Due to the way their system was set up, vouchers cannot be printed for a future date. Program staff can also use the system to email all participants and run basic reports.

Findings

The iCommute GRH program experienced a drop in enrollment after switching to the online system in 2008. Prior to the switch, the program had 2,400 participants, and the new system resulted in a large drop in participants, since each registration had to be redone. Some of the loss may have been due to normal attrition that was "hidden" by the program's management system, which allowed people to remain in the program without taking action year over year. Four years after switching, the program reached 2,400 participants again. As of today, there are 2,800 participants. In FY 2012, there were 145 rides taken, and the program spent an average of $33.00/ride. Administrative costs have decreased significantly since transitioning to online vouchers. Previously, administrative costs accounted for 20% of the program budget; today they account for approximately 5% of total costs.

Program staff acknowledged several issues with the iCarpool system. Once a voucher is assigned, it cannot be returned to the system and must be voided by program staff. In addition, the database reports are limited, and the system does not have full flexibility on the types of alerts for administrators, such as new registrants and rides taken. In addition, when the program resets the number of vouchers used by participants, the database clears the information about those prior rides, rather than maintaining a cumulative record of rides taken. This was one of the biggest issues with the iCarpool platform raised by SANDAG.

ABC TMA

Overview

A Better City TMA operates in Boston, Massachusetts, and provides a paperless voucher Guaranteed Ride Home program open to all businesses and agencies that are members of the TMA. The program provides rides exclusively through PlanetTran, a livery service. A qualified employee must register in the program— online or on paper— and be approved by program staff before they can start using the program. Once approved, the participant is issued a voucher number in an email along with program instructions. When the participant needs to take a ride, they call PlanetTran and provide the voucher number, which is verified as active in an online shared database system between ABC TMA and PlanetTran. PlanetTran dispatches a vehicle to provide the ride, or contacts a secondary cab company if necessary.

PlanetTran constructed an online database system exclusively for the TMA and this program. They maintain a 24/7 phone line and offer some customer service for program questions. PlanetTran charges ABC TMA $30/month in administrative fees for this service. Participants can take up to six rides per year. There is no cost to the employee or employer, because it is included in the TMA membership fee.

Before switching to the PlanetTran paperless voucher system, the program used paper vouchers and spent about $10,000/year on administrative costs. After the program change, administrative costs are minimal. There are 4o employer members in the TMA, with about 90,000 employees. Of this potential pool of participants, about 2,800 people are registered. In 2012 the program gave 120 rides, with an average cost of $80/ride. Since the program must exclusively use a livery

service to provide rides, the costs are higher, as PlanetTran is more expensive than taxis inside the city of Boston. For trips outside the city, costs are comparable with taxis.

Findings

The ABC TMA GRH program is less complex than other programs and offers fewer options to participants due to the limited pool of potential participants and the exclusive use of one transportation provider. By having only one provider, the TMA is able to have better control over the biggest variable and challenge of managing a GRH program, which is the management of utilization of rides and communication with employees, employers, and transportation providers. While this system is appealing, it was built specifically for ABC TMA and would be difficult to establish a similar system in Alameda County. PlanetTran recently began operating in the San Francisco Bay Area, and primarily serves the Oakland, San Jose, and San Francisco airports.

Point2Point

Overview

Point2Point is a countywide TDM program in Lane County, Oregon that includes carpool, schoolpool, and emergency ride home. The program is affiliated with the statewide vanpool and carpool program, Drive Less Connect, which uses iCarpool to host its ridematch and Emergency Ride Home (ERH) programs. This software is at the statewide level, and as such, Point2Point does not pay for the service directly.

Participants must first register on Drive Less Connect and then can enroll in the Point2Point ERH program if they are employed at a registered employer in Lane County. There are currently 130 work sites enrolled in the program. When participants need to take a ride, they login, request a voucher, answer a few questions about their emergency, and print up the voucher. The program does not use rental cars, so the voucher automatically defaults to taxi. When program administrators receive a taxi bill, they email a survey to the participants who took rides and issue a new voucher. For sites without access to a computer, there are paper vouchers available.

Findings

The program transitioned from a paper voucher system where the employer representative kept vouchers on hand and distributed them to employees as needed. The program administrator at Point2Point noted that during the transition, which occurred in 2011, the process of moving the database was time consuming and did result in a small loss of participants. The program is very small, with only 1 ride in 2012, 6 rides in 2011, and 11 in 2010.

Other issues with the iCarpool system may be due to the recent transition. Users have rated the system as simple or very simple to use. They are able to produce limited reports, but go outside of the system to send follow-up survey emails to users. Point2Point did not report having any issues with the iCarpool platform clearing used vouchers, as SANDAG reported. However, since they are still in their first year of using the program, they have not yet encounter the need to reset voucher numbers.

Vendor Review

While the iCarpool suite is the only software utilized by peers in this review, two other vendors were also researched to gain a better understanding of the available features of GRH programs

and online vouchers. The two other vendors researched were RidePro and RideShark. Other vendors that are known to provide TDM program software were considered and eliminated when it was determined that they do not offer a GRH component. One commonality among all three vendors reviewed is that the GRH program is typically included as a module within a larger TDM program suite. All three vendors felt that it would be possible to provide a standalone GRH system. This section compares vendors on dimensions including:

- Description of application
- Database management and integration
- Cost to implement and maintain
- Availability of ongoing support

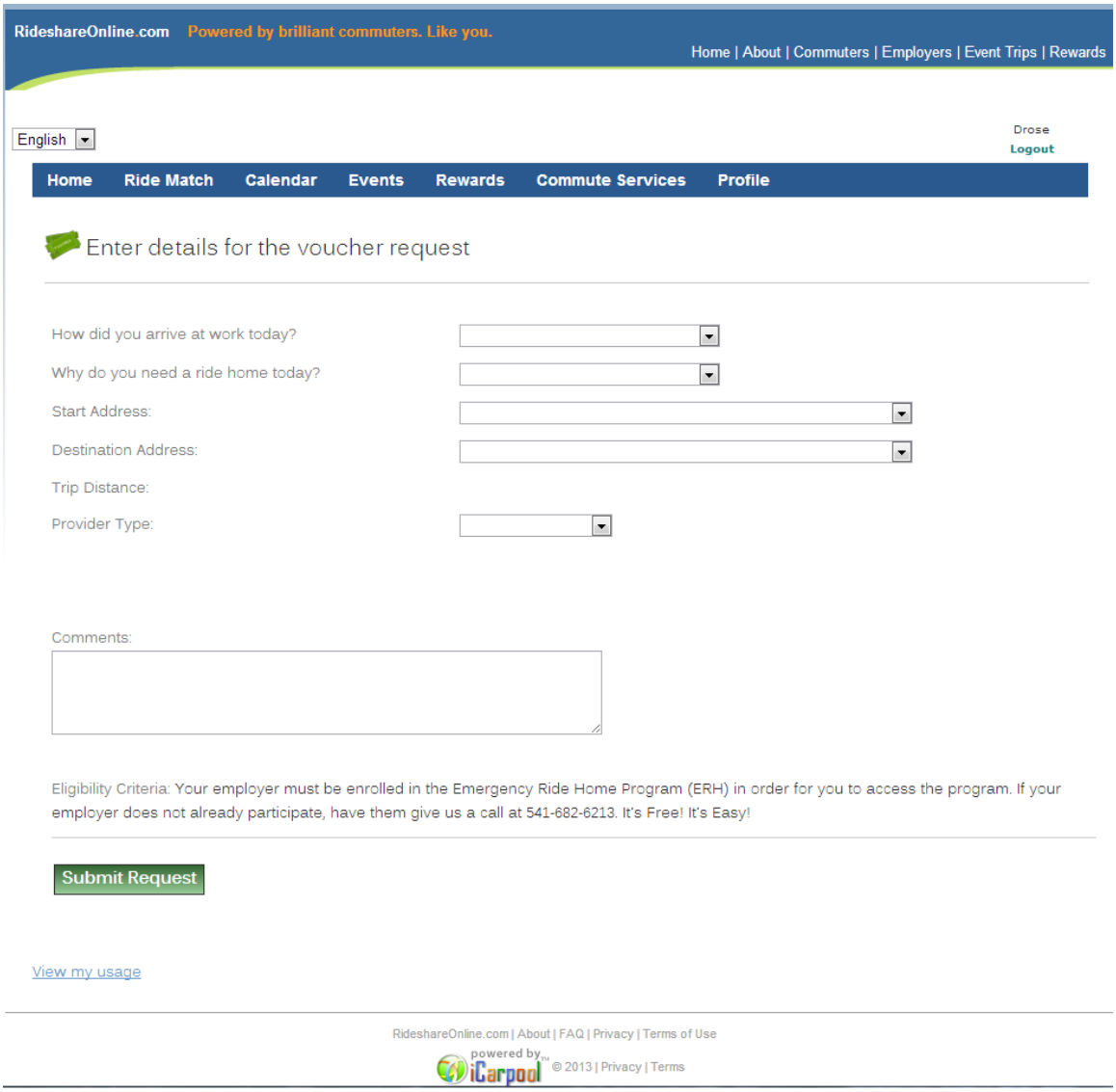
iCarpool

iCarpool (http://www.icarpool.com/) is the most well-known and widely used TDM user interface and back-end database software platform on the market today. The system offers a wide variety of modules that can be activated depending on the specific program. The ridematching platform has a mobile and web application, and now includes real time ridesharing capabilities. The software also includes calendar trip logging, incentive management, GIS data, vanpool management, guaranteed ride home, and outreach components.

A sales representative informed GRH staff that the iCarpool platform could be modified to just include the GRH program element. The entire database would be hosted in the cloud, and the website would "plug-in" to the registration/login buttons on the existing grh.alamedactc.org website. The application would retain GRH branding, but would be hosted and managed by iCarpool. GRH staff and Alameda CTC staff would have administrative login capabilities, which allow for management, reporting, and outreach/email contact functions.

The platform can be assembled to meet the needs of the GRH program, such as the employee registration approval process, voucher mode criteria, and number of vouchers generated in a year. Users create an account with a unique login or can use their Facebook account to sign up and login for the program. iCarpool is currently developing a mobile application, but it is unclear how taxi and rental car companies would feel about accepting a mobile version of the voucher. The mobile application would require further investigation and development. The system cannot accept payments yet, but that feature may be developed over the next few years. Individual employers also have the option of adding their own network to the system, linking to employer-based vanpool and carpool programs.

Figure 2 iCarpool Screenshot from Point2Point ERH program



Rideshark

Rideshark (http://www.rideshark.com/) is a ridematching and TDM software for the public and private sector which includes a similar module-based suite of products, include ridematching services, commute tracking, emergency ride home, emissions and cost savings calculator, carpool parking management systems, and commute surveys.

Rideshark can be modified to just offer a GRH interface and database, including distribution of an electronic voucher to be printed out for use in an emergency. The system can be customized to meet the needs of the GRH program, including length of voucher validity once it is printed, how often and when vouchers can be printed, and the types of questions asked of participants at registration and before using a voucher.

Like iCarpool, the Rideshark platform would "plug in" to the existing GRH website, where participants would have to register with a user name and password, and the branding would

match the existing GRH brand. Each registration can remain pending until an administrator approves it. The program can also customize how the employer is involved in the registration of employees. Post-ride surveys can be mailed directly through the database. Rideshark can produce canned and custom reports, and the database can be exported at any time. Program administrators would have full access to the data, and full ability to email participants and employers through the system.

Figure 3 Rideshark Screenshot from Jacksonville, Florida ERH program

ERH VOUCHER

Voucher # : 2013-5174

- This voucher is assigned to you and is invalid if used by someone else.
- Print neatly and complete the form. Check mileage and reported fare.
- Present your ERH ID card and this voucher to the taxi driver or car rental agent.
- Taxi driver tip (10-15%), rental car gas, late car return fee, excess mileage fee, and fines for traffic violations are your responsibility.
- Transportation service is provided Monday through Friday.
- To schedule a car rental you must call before 5:00 PM.
- Friday car rentals must be return Saturday before Noon.
- We only authorize a one (1) day rental.
- Taxi will transport you from work to your home or car with no intermediate stops.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Date/Time Of Ride:	04/11/2012 11:00:00 AM
Particiant Name:	Tom Lewinson
UserID Number:	64089
Employer Name:	IBM
Home Phone:	555-444-3333
Work Phone:	111-111-1111
Starting / Pick-Up Address:	56 Magnolia St, Arlington
Destination / Drop-Off Address:	100 E 2nd St, Boston
Reason for Emergency Ride Home:	Family illness / emergency
To Work Commute Mode:	Carpool
Emergency Ride Home Travel Mode:	Taxi

TO BE COMPLETED BY SUPERVISOR

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE (REQUIRED) DATE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARTICIPANT

I, the undersigned, recognize that participation in the Emergency Ride Home (ERH) program is strictly voluntary, and I hereby release, waive and forever discharge Cool to Pool Rideshare Program provided by the North Florida TPO and all local transportation organizations, and /or my employer, its officers, agents and employees from any and all claims and demands that I or my representatives have or may have against the aforementioned by reason of any personal injury or damage arising from my participation in the ERH program.

PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE (REQUIRED) DATE

VOUCHER MUST BE SIGNED BY PARTICIPANT AND SUPERVISOR TO BE VALID

TO BE COMPLETED BY TAXI COMPANY

To schedule your taxi ride call (904) 355-8294, Account Number 9009

Driver Name _____

Taxi License # _____

Trip Destination: _____

Pick Up Time _____

Trip Total Mileage _____ Miles

Total Fare (meter reading) $ _____

Driver Signature _____

DUPLICATION PROHIBITED

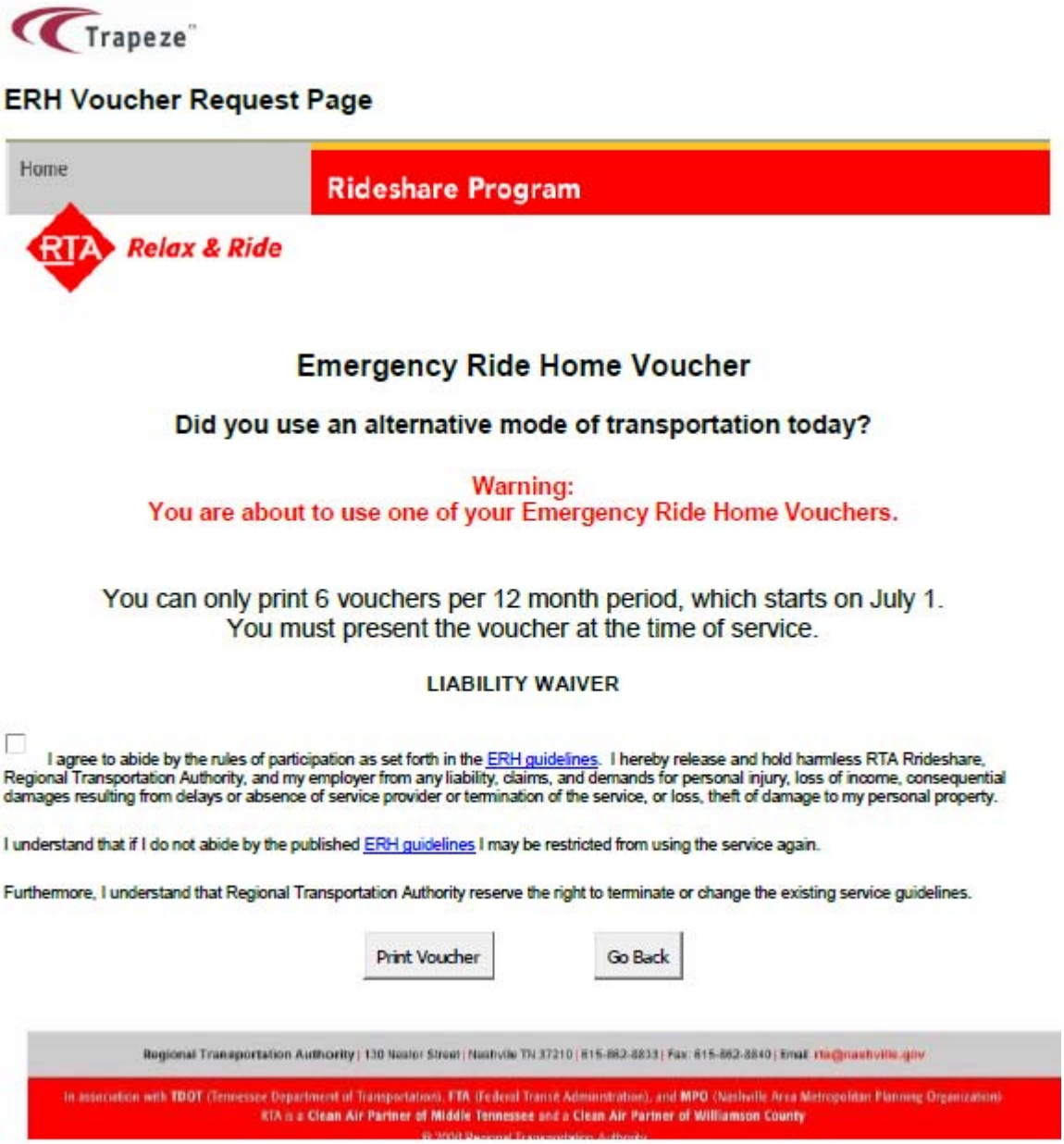
RidePro

RidePro (http://www.trapezegroup.com/ridepro) is a ridesharing and GRH platform created by the Trapeze group, which offers numerous ITS services for transit operators and educational and medical facilities in addition to RidePro TDM ridematch and GRH platform. As with the other software providers, RidePro can be customized to only show the GRH program to the user and with the same basic flexibility as the Rideshark and iCarpool platforms. When an individual registers for the program, they would login and complete a registration form. One unique feature is that RidePro automatically calculates commute distance, so the program would not need to rely on an employee to provide this critical information.

The employee record remains tied to all vouchers and surveys, as well as any other information collected by the program. The system also provides full functionality to send custom branded emails to all or a specific group of participants. The program can be set up to send an email out to a user who has requested a voucher after a specified number of days. RidePro also can include a survey tool within the platform itself, a unique characteristic among the three platforms. These surveys remain linked to the employee database record for ease of reporting and analysis.

Employer interface with the system can be personalized to the GRH program through an additional module, where employers can register a work site, view enrolled employees, and run reports on their employees if desired. The RidePro database can be hosted on RidePro servers or by the GRH program, and all database contents would always remain the property of the program.

Figure 4 RidePro Screenshot from the Nashville RTA ERH program



The table below summarizes the key features and capabilities of each potential online voucher platform reviewed in this memo.

Figure 5 Comparison of Potential Online Voucher Platform

Features	RidePro	iCarpool	RideShark
Guaranteed Ride Home Platform	x	x	x
Landing page	x	x	x
Creating an account	x	x	x
Register with unique name and password	x	x	x
Access online voucher	x	x	x
Customize criteria	x	x	x
Ability to edit/archive accounts (records)	x		x
Comprehensive reporting	x	x	x
Web analytics	x		x
Email communications	x	limited	limited
Social media	x	Facebook only	
Mobile apps		not customized	
Ridematching capability	x	x	x
Surveying capability	x		
Implementation cost	high	high	low
Annual cost	high	medium	medium

Considerations for Alameda County

Due to the unique nature of the Alameda County GRH program as a standalone TDM program, finding the right platform to host this program is an important consideration, as is the experience of peer programs that currently use an online voucher system. Other considerations are the impact of this transition on existing users and the cost to transition, revise marketing materials, and support a new software program.

Usage

As of December 2012, there were 5,104 Alameda County employees actively enrolled in the program and 282 employers. Based on the experiences of SANDAG and Lane County, it is very likely that a number of these participants and employers would be lost in the switch to an online voucher. We estimate that there would be a 10-20% loss in enrollment (approximately 500 – 1,000 participants).

While peer programs expressed that the transition period can be challenging, with high staff investment and potential for loss of participants, all noted that the administrative costs dropped sharply (20-40%) once the program was up and running and that participation rates did rebound after the switch. In addition, none of the peers experienced a sharp increase in the number of rides taken or other indicators of system abuse. If anything, they felt that the program is easier to manage and that oversight is more thorough with online tracking and distribution of vouchers.

Some participants will be unwilling to use a computer to interact with this program, but surveys and anecdotal information show that this is a small and ever-decreasing group. In the 2012 member survey, currently enrolled employees were asked if they would be interested in switching to an online voucher. Most participants said yes (72%) or were unsure (20%), while only 8% said no. There were numerous comments that voiced strong support for changing the program in this way. Only one-third of the comments expressed a negative sentiment about online vouchers, voicing concerns about an unnecessary extra step, access to a printer, or having to remember yet another password and log-in. iCarpool is the only platform that also allows use of Facebook for login, but it is not clear if that would be a significant advantage to participants.

When asked if they needed a voucher but did not have one on hand, 6% of respondents said that this had happened to them and that they were unable to use the program. While most participants do not ever need to use the program, of those who need it and don't have a voucher, quite a few are not getting that ride home. While some may have found an alternate way home, this type of negative experience of the program may have made them feel that they do not actually have the commute protection needed to make them feel comfortable enough to use an alternative mode.

As employees currently aren't required to access the internet or use a printer to take an emergency ride home, the online survey asked questions to gauge the availability of these technologies. The survey found that 96% of participants have access to a computer and a printer at work, and as such this does not appear to be a barrier.

Costs

Currently, program administration accounts for 20% of the overall budget. Program administration includes management of our participant database, distribution of trip vouchers, and managing contracts with taxi operators and rental car facilities. Additional administrative costs include printing vouchers and program materials, generating monthly reports on rides and number of enrollees, and maintaining the program website. Day-to-day administrative tasks performed by GRH staff include:

- Customer Service: Answering the GRH Hotline and responding to messages and emails.
- Participant Enrollment: Entering new participants into the GRH database, sending all the necessary materials to participants, following up with participants who have provided incomplete information, and enrolling new employers.
- Database Management: Tracking vouchers and updating employee and employer information as needed.
- Answering Marketing Requests: Responding to requests for additional marketing materials and attending onsite events.
- Managing Taxicab and Rental Car Contracts: Monitoring taxi cab and car rental usage, reviewing all receipts, invoices, and vouchers for taxicab and car rental services, reviewing quality of service, and ensuring payment of service.

With the current voucher system, the only way to know if an employee has left the employer they signed up with is if the employer logs in to the system and deletes the record, or if program staff get a call or email from the employee or employer. In an online system, participants could be required to confirm their enrollment on an annual basis, and can be cleared from the system if they do not respond.

The actual cost of transitioning to the system would include the one-time cost of purchasing the platform, the annual usage cost, and increased staff time to modify materials and physically transition the existing database. Depending on the type of platform chosen and amount of administrative time required to transition to a new system, the annual costs can range from $20,000 to $100,000 for the first year. A potential new form of income could be charging a usage fee of participants. Currently, the available online systems do not have a way to collect money from participants. However, the SANDAG program charges a usage surcharge payable directly to the taxi or rental car agency ($3.00). This cost then reduces the overall ride costs to the program and creates a small barrier to use for participants, perhaps just enough to prevent abuse, but not too much that it couldn't be borrowed from a co-worker if needed.

Respondents in the 2012 member survey were asked if they would be willing to pay a small convenience fee for the online voucher. While 60% responded that they would not be willing to pay a fee, another 15% said yes and 25% were unsure. This question did not state whether the fee would be per-use or administered monthly/annually, and many comments mentioned this confusion. Other concerns were the amount of the fee being greater than the cost of transit. Many seemed to feel that it would be unreasonable to start charging for a program that is currently free. Some expressed that a small fee is reasonable per use of the program, but did not understand the connection of that fee to the use of an online voucher, and did not feel that it should be greater than the average cost of a bus ride. There was also some concern about exchanging money/bank information over the internet.

Recommendations

GRH program staff recommend converting to an integrated online database with electronic voucher distribution capabilities, because it would have many benefits for the Alameda County GRH program. The GRH staff recommend adopting an online voucher system, as it will:

- Give users an online interface, which will help remind them of the program, and will help us keep in touch with users, to alert them of changes, events, and program rules.
- Decrease administrative costs associated with mailings and reporting by automating these features.
- Improve outreach/email and follow-up survey distribution to participants and employers.
- Help participants determine when to take a taxi or rental car, thus improving rental car usage rates and reducing average ride costs.
- Provide an opportunity to evaluate other elements of the program. For example, switching to a reimbursement based system, expanding to include other rental car and taxi providers, eliminating the requirement for employer pre-enrollment, and charging a small "per-use" fee to participants to offset costs and discourage abuse.
- Provide a flexible platform that could be expanded to include other TDM programs, like ridematch, as needed in the future, and ensure that a database of users is already available to take advantage of new programs as they are rolled out.

APPENDIX C

Guaranteed Ride Home Program
Historical Trends

Guaranteed Ride Home Program Historical Trends

Trend	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Program Participants															
Total Number of Employers	72	100	119	132	127	110	120	131	142	155	188	189	206	250	282
New Employers Registered	72	28	19	13	12	14	16	22	12	18	56	12	31	49	34
Total Number of Employees	880	1,674	2,265	2,759	2,664	2,785	3,268	3,638	4,107	4,437	4,327	4,249	4,253	4,784	5,104
New Employees Registered	880	794	591	494	525	710	543	603	550	514	722	406	414	736	491
Trip Statistics															
Total Number of Trips Taken	57	156	168	149	145	151	143	87	107	98	119	72	55	55	51
Total Number of Rental Car Trips	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8	10	18	9	18	18	23	13	17	23	14
Total Number of Taxi Trips	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	137	141	125	78	89	80	96	59	38	32	37
Average Trips per Month	6.3	13	14	12.3	12	12.4	11.8	6.8	8.9	8.2	9.9	6.0	4.6	4.6	4.3
Average Trip Distance (miles)	28.7	34.96	36.9	42.1	42.02	42.9	39.8	42.6	41.8	41.6	39.4	31.5	34.2	32.1	30.1
Average Trip Cost[1]	$54.51	$65.25	$70.45	$84.02	$88.18	$93.64	$80.92	$87.78	$89.48	$86.13	$90.49	$69.47	$54.85	$68.84	$70.51
Rental Car Savings	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	$421	$759	$1,015	$442	$1,221	$1,316	$1,446	$998	$1,778	$1,337	$991
Number of Potential Trips per Year	5,280	10,044	13,590	16,554	15,984	16,710	19,608	21,828	24,642	26,622	25,962	25,494	25,518	28,704	30,624
Percent of Potential Trips Taken Each Year	1.08%	1.55%	1.24%	0.90%	0.91%	0.90%	0.73%	0.40%	0.43%	0.37%	0.46%	0.28%	0.22%	0.19%	0.17%
Survey Results															
Number of Employee Surveys Collected	215	350	270	346	517	619	658	716	732	728	822	990	590	918	782
Survey Response Rate	N/A	21%	12%	13%	19%	22%	20%	20%	18%	16%	19%	23%	14%	19%	15%
Percent Who Would Not Use an Alternative Mode or Would Use Less Frequently without GRH	15%	16%	19%	19%	34%	41%	47%	46%	40%	41%	35%	35%	38%	33%	34%
Increase in the Percent of Those Using Alternative Modes Four or More Times a Week	N/A	10%	15%	8%	15%	17%	14%	21%	19%	18%	28%	28%	28%	29%	23%
Number of Single Occupancy Vehicle Trips Reduced per Week	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,768	3,946	3,774	3,318	3,709	3,499	3,635	3,102	3,330	3,899	3,230

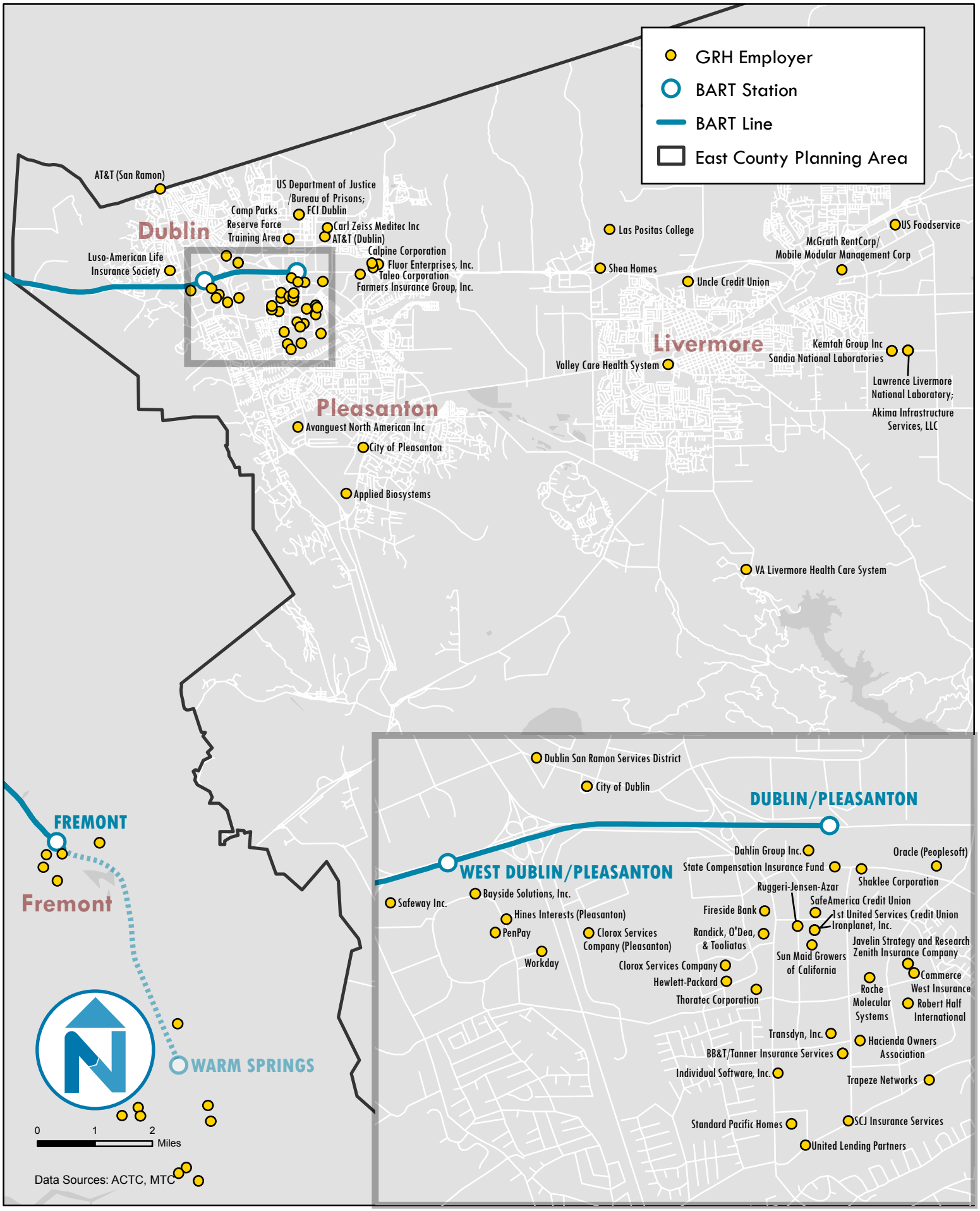
[1] A combined average of car rental and taxi costs.

Appendix D

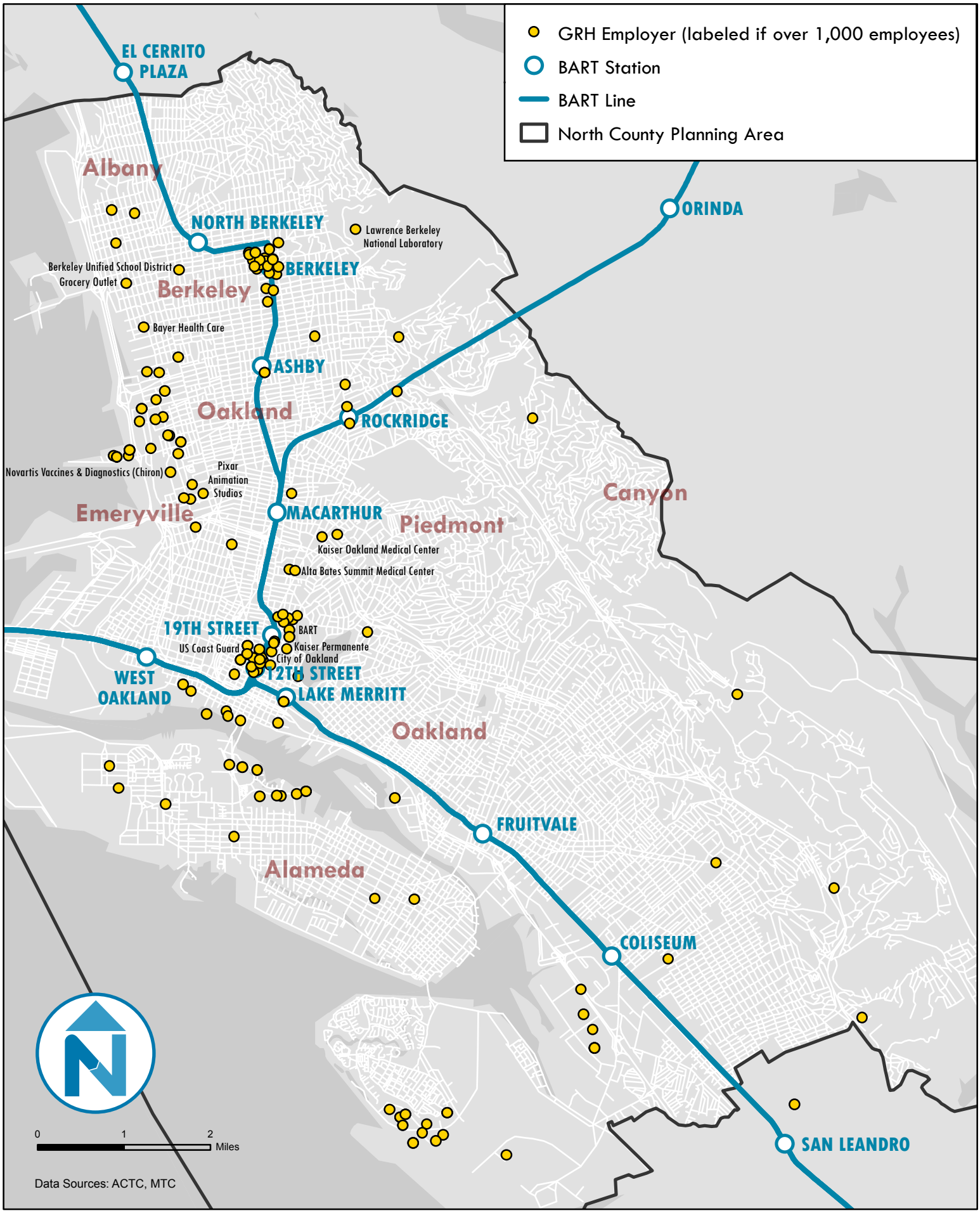
Maps of Registered Alameda County Employers

Central Alameda County GRH Employers

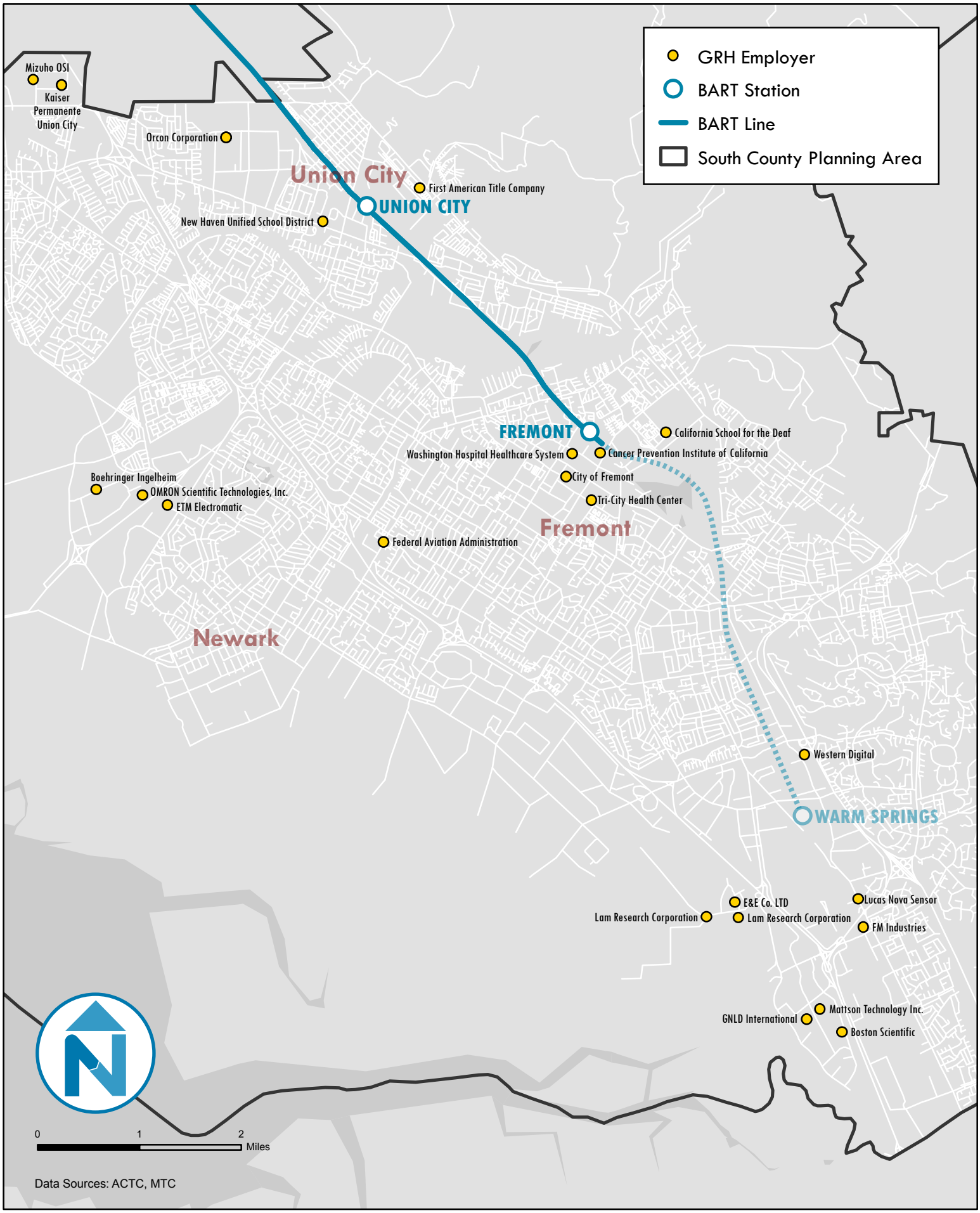
East Alameda County GRH Employers



North Alameda County GRH Employers



South Alameda County GRH Employers



Data Sources: ACTC, MTC