



## Board Report

File #: 2024-0165, File Type: Agreement

Agenda Number: 5.

### PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE MAY 15, 2024

**SUBJECT: COMMUTER OPTIONS AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE SUPPORT - REGIONAL RIDESHARE SOFTWARE AGREEMENT**

**ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

AUTHORIZE the Chief Executive Officer to execute a five-year Regional Rideshare Software Partnership Funding Agreement (Agreement) with the five bordering County Transportation Commissions for an estimated average annual budget of \$224,798 per year, or a total not to exceed five-year amount of \$1,123,986.

#### **ISSUE**

Metro's Commuter Options and Regulatory Compliance Support program is currently utilizing Regional Rideshare software to provide carpoolers and vanpools with a ride matching function. The software is shared and obtained through a cooperative regional rideshare agreement arranged by the five bordering County Transportation Commissions (CTC): Metro, Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA), Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), and Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC). The database associated with the software contains potential carpool and vanpool commuter profiles from all five counties and provides an inter-county ride matching function.

The current Agreement is a regional rideshare software partnership covenant between the CTC members, expiring on June 30, 2024. To maintain access to the software and assist Employee Transportation Coordinators (ETC) and commuters throughout LA County, staff is recommending the execution of the proposed five-county regional rideshare software partnership agreement. The function of the software will also provide support for the compliance service component to the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (AQMD) Rule 2202; city congestion reduction mandates; Transportation Management/Organizations (TMA/O) initiatives; and vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) reduction and tracking initiative.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Metro Commuter Options and Regulatory Compliance Support team is a one-stop multifaceted Transportation Demand Management (TDM) resource for LA County employer ETCs, TMA/Os as well as individual commuters who are interested in reducing VMT, easing commute time and costs,

and improving air quality by decreasing single-occupancy vehicles (SOV). The TDM team also promotes Commuter Tax Benefits, flex/tiered work schedules, employer-based transit subsidies, Metro's vanpool subsidy program, and incentive/rewards programs, such as Metro Rideshare Rewards and Go Metro to Work Free for new hires.

This software and database management service is wide-ranging. It is a tool used to assist employers and their employees in developing transit ridership strategies, finding a carpool partner, joining and/or forming a vanpool, or planning bike and walk routes as alternate commute options. Access to the software also ensures that Metro has the capability of assisting LA-based ETCs to comply with South Coast AQMD's Rule 2202, which includes the required submittal of their annual Trip Reduction Plan (TRP) and Average Vehicle Ridership (AVR) statistics. The software also assists employers with VMT reduction requirements mandated by local/city congestion management ordinances.

Metro has partnered with the adjoining CTCs throughout the tenure of the regional rideshare program. The core aspect that brands Metro's partnership as seamless, comprehensive, and robust is our cooperative relationship in retaining and operating within the same ridesharing software platform, allowing for cross-regional ride matching, air quality compliance, and congestion management support services.

In 2002, RCTC launched a ride matching software pilot program, which was subsequently proposed to the CTCs as an idea to become a multiregional partnership. The benefits of this arrangement were realized, and the CTCs agreed to move forward. The CTCs' members from all five counties entered the first software partnership agreement in 2003, hosted by RCTC, and operated through June 2013. Starting in July 2013, the alliance converted to a tri-regional agreement between Metro, OCTA, and VCTC, which was hosted by Metro through June 2021. SBCTA and RCTC left the partnership and began operating under a different ride matching software platform during those eight years.

In 2020, SBCTA and RCTC reached out to Metro and asked to rejoin the multiregional relationship with Metro, OCTA, and VCTC under a mutually beneficial five-counties software agreement to begin in FY2022. The request was reviewed and subsequently approved by all five CTC members as it was seen as mutually beneficial for all CTCs, the air quality and congestion management agencies, ETCs, TMA/Os, and multiregional commuter ride matching efforts throughout all five counties.

The current software partnership agreement was under a three-year term and hosted by SBCTA from July 2021 through June 2024. Each CTC's shared cost was calculated according to the 2010 Census population data for each county. The host agency will maintain a contract with the software provider for the upcoming five years. It will cover all the expenses upfront to compensate for the software product and services. The partnering CTCs will then reimburse the host agency for their portion of expenses, which have been calculated according to the latest 2020 Census population data.

## **DISCUSSION**

The CTCs referenced in this report consist of TDM industry-leading professionals focused on providing air quality regulatory compliance support and VMT reduction strategies to ETCs, TMA/Os, and commuters within each respective jurisdiction. TDM support includes assisting employers

mandated by local jurisdictions' traffic congestion reduction ordinances as well as individual commuters seeking rideshare options. Commuters often travel through their county basin and into adjacent regions. Therefore, working with a shared multiregional ridesharing software platform gives CTCs the ability to ensure our individual and collective successes.

The proposed upcoming Agreement will continue to be hosted by SBCTA under a five-year term, beginning July 2024 and through June 2029, and has a total budget of \$2,355,826 for all CTC combined. The total amount for five years of expenses for Metro is a not to exceed amount of \$1,123,986. The table below illustrates the breakdown of each year's cost estimates for the Agreement. Under this Agreement, Metro will see 25% to 30% price savings across the five-year agreement, compared to Metro procuring the software contract independently instead of under the partnership agreement. The table below illustrates the total cost of the contract and the Metro portion cost of the contract.

Regional Rideshare Software Budget (July 2024 to June 2029)		
Annual Cost Estimate	Total Value of the Agreement	Metro Portion
Year 1 Maintenance Costs	\$ 366,329.00	\$ 190,463.00
Year 1 Estimated Contingency	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 16,250.00
<b>Year 1 Total Cost</b>	<b>\$ 436,329.00</b>	<b>\$ 206,713.00</b>
Year 2 Maintenance Costs	\$ 382,902.00	\$ 199,063.00
Year 2 Estimated Contingency	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 16,250.00
<b>Year 2 Total Cost</b>	<b>\$ 452,902.00</b>	<b>\$ 215,313.00</b>
Year 3 Maintenance Costs	\$ 400,294.00	\$ 208,088.00
Year 3 Estimated Contingency	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 16,250.00
<b>Year 3 Total Cost</b>	<b>\$ 470,294.00</b>	<b>\$ 224,338.00</b>
Year 4 Maintenance Costs	\$ 418,561.00	\$ 217,565.00
Year 4 Estimated Contingency	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 16,250.00
<b>Year 4 Total Cost</b>	<b>\$ 488,561.00</b>	<b>\$ 233,815.00</b>
Year 5 Maintenance Costs	\$ 437,740.00	\$ 227,557.00
Year 5 Estimated Contingency	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 16,250.00
<b>Year 5 Total Cost</b>	<b>\$ 507,740.00</b>	<b>\$ 243,807.00</b>
<b>Total Agreement Value (Not to Exceed)</b>	<b>\$ 2,355,826.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,123,986.00</b>

One of the most effective components of this dynamic partnership is utilizing a congruent regional ride matching software platform. The shared ambition of the partnership also gives the CTC a bargaining advantage in securing regional ridesharing software at a financially reduced cost when purchased under one collective agreement. Operating from the same platform also allows for the merging of ridesharing database records for all CTCs, which enables carpool and vanpool matches to be formed more effectively for inter-county commuting. As a multiregional team, the CTCs have collectively secured tailor-made upgrades to the ridesharing software, which enhances the effectiveness of each CTC's TDM program. During FY23, Metro's Commuter Options and Regulatory Compliance Support department tracked and logged the reduction of over 26 million VMTs,

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supported 35,526 registered carpoolers and 5,091 vanpoolers, and registered 543 ETCs for the Guaranteed Ride Home program, all administrated through the software system. We have distributed over 19,000 RideGuides (a proprietary designed TDM tool promoting various commuter options) and have access to over 439,000 commuter profiles for ride matching purposes.

Executing the requested regional ridesharing software agreement allows the CTCs to access over 17 primary software and database functions, as well as multiple secondary functions. Some of the top-tier functions include RidePro AVR collection, processing/reporting, South Coast AQMD VMT reduction reporting, personalized carpool and vanpool ride matching, mobile-friendly surveying, and the ability for ETCs and commuters to set up online profiles.

The California Department of Motor Vehicles estimates that there are more than 12 million licensed drivers in Southern California, and the Southern California Association of Governments reports that Southern California drivers average more than 21 miles driven each day, often alone. Opting for transit use, carpooling, and vanpooling can contribute to beneficial solutions to help mitigate the stress of commuting and further enhance VMT reduction. Our established relationship brands all CTCs as strong and effective in supporting the common goal of reducing VMT and improving air quality throughout the Southern California region. Employers and commuters will benefit from utilizing the ridesharing software when planning alternate modes and further creating carpools and vanpools to reduce SOV driving to their destinations.

### **DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT**

Executing the software partnership agreement will not have any safety impacts.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Year one of the Agreement expenses are budgeted through the FY25 proposed budget process under cost center 4320, Project 405547 Rideshare Services Task 01.10, Professional Services. The cost center manager and the Chief Planning Officer in charge of the Regional TDM cost center will be responsible for budgeting in future years. No additional budget appropriation is requested.

### **Impact to Budget**

The source of funds for this action is Proposition C 25% Streets and Highway, which is not eligible to fund bus and rail operating and capital expenditures.

### **EQUITY PLATFORM**

Metro's Commuter Options and Regulatory Compliance Support program provides essential services to employers and commuters throughout LA County, including commuters from Equity Focus Communities (EFC). The ridesharing software platform and partnership with neighboring CTCs enable Metro to provide sustainable transportation options more effectively across county lines and support employers and their commuters who may be subject to local congestion management reduction mandates. Our services are free of charge on all levels, which makes them accessible to all interested parties (employers/businesses, cities, and commuters).

Continuing use of the five-county software partnership with our regional CTCs helps to improve transportation equity by:

- Reducing VMTs and improving air quality will provide health benefits for all, especially for EFCs that are disproportionately impacted by poor air quality.
- Support small employers within or having employees living in EFC communities by providing various commute options and or benefits.

The overall function of the software is to collect data for employers regulated by South Coast AQMD's Rule 2202. One significant function is determining an employer's AVR, which requires tracking each employee's mode of commuting details to and from work. Due to a confidentiality agreement, Metro is limited as to the personal information that can be requested and, additionally, cannot share this data outside the department except with the employer. Although Metro does not ask for information such as sex, race, age, and income, Metro does require a general residential location, which includes their zip code. Given that zip codes can correspond with EFC locations, we will explore opportunities to work with employers who may have an interest in designing transit-related programs and promotional outreach that can benefit these communities. Additionally, Metro is currently working with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to create heat and/or density maps that will indicate which employers and their corresponding employees are located in EFCs. The objective of this analysis is to provide opportunities to promote and request marketing materials specifically geared around all-encompassing alternative commute options for these communities.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

The recommendation supports the following Strategic Plan goals:

1. Provide high-quality mobility options that enable people to spend less time traveling.
2. Deliver outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system; and
3. Enhance communities and lives through mobility and access to opportunity.

### **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

The Board can choose not to approve this Agreement. However, this is not recommended as the regional rideshare software provides commuter assistance programs for LA County employers and employees, as well as supports the reduction of VMT across the five-county region. In addition, if the Agreement is not awarded, Metro can no longer provide critical South Coast AQMD Rule 2202 AVR and VMT reporting. It will also discontinue the carpooling and vanpool ride matching formation functions for all LA County residents. Additionally, the multiregional partnership between OCTA, RCTC, SBCTA, and VCTC would be negatively impacted.

### **NEXT STEPS**

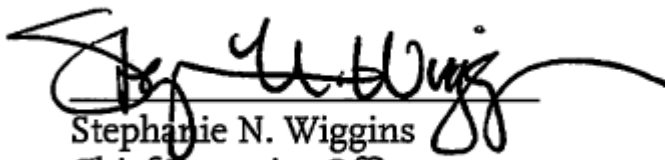
Upon approval by the Board, staff will execute a five-year Regional Rideshare Software Partnership Funding Agreement (Agreement) for the Commuter Options & Regulatory Compliance Support Program, which will reside under Regional TDM Programs and Policy.

**ATTACHMENTS**

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Stephanie N. Wiggins  
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# Commuter Options & Regulatory Compliance Support

Planning & Programming Committee  
May 15, 2024  
Legistar #2024-0165





# Recommendation:

## Action

- Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to execute a five-year **Regional Rideshare Software Partnership Funding Agreement (Agreement)** with the five bordering County Transportation Commissions (CTCs)
- Five-year not-to-exceed price structure
- \$1,123,986 (Average = \$224k per fiscal year)



## Background

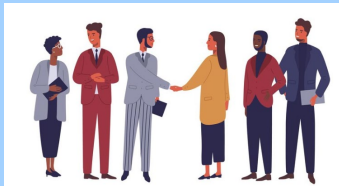
Access to the software ensures that Metro can assist LA-based Employee Transportation Coordinators (ETCs) in complying with South Coast AQMD's Rule 2202, which includes the required submittal of their annual Trip Reduction Plan, Average Vehicle Ridership (AVR), and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) statistics.

Program services are wide-ranging and are used to assist employers, employees, and general commuters in developing transit ridership strategies, finding a carpool partner, joining or forming a vanpool, and planning bike and walk routes as alternate commute options.



# Software Partnership Benefits:

- SCAG reports that Southern California drivers average more than 21 miles driven each day, often alone.
- Transit use, carpooling, and vanpooling can be beneficial solutions for mitigating the cost and stress of drive-alone commuting.
- Our established relationship brands all CTCs as strong and effective in supporting the common goal of reducing traffic and improving air quality throughout the Southern California region.
- Employers benefit from utilizing regulatory compliance and ridesharing software when responding to air quality mandates by promoting and implementing alternate modes of travel for their employees.
- Over 20 years of a working partnership between Metro and the transportation authorities in Orange County, San Bernardino County, Riverside County, and Ventura County.
- Partnership provides a 25% to 30% cost savings.



# Software & Database Program Services:

Access to 17 primary and multiple secondary program functions. Several of the top-tier utilities are:

- AVR survey, collection and reporting.
- VMT tracking, calculations, and reporting.
- Employer and South Coast AQMD Annual Employee Commute Reduction Program plan submittals.
- Personalized cross-regional carpool and vanpool matching database consisting of over 400,000 commuters.
- Multiregional Park & Ride updates and platform.
- Customized RideGuides.
- Mobile-friendly option.
- ETC and commuter online profile capability.



# Equity:

Continuing use of the five-county software partnership with our regional CTCs helps to improve transportation equity across all regions by:

- Reducing VMTs and improving air quality, providing health benefits for all, especially for Equity Focused Communities (EFC) that are disproportionately impacted by poor air quality.
- Supporting small employers within or having employees living in EFC communities by providing various commute options and benefits.
- Program services are available to all employers and commuters at no cost.
- Resources are offered in both English and Spanish.

## Next Steps

Upon approval by the Board, staff will execute a five-year **Regional Rideshare Software Partnership Funding Agreement (Agreement)** for the Commuter Options & Regulatory Compliance Support Program, which will reside under Regional Transportation Demand Management Programs and Policy.

