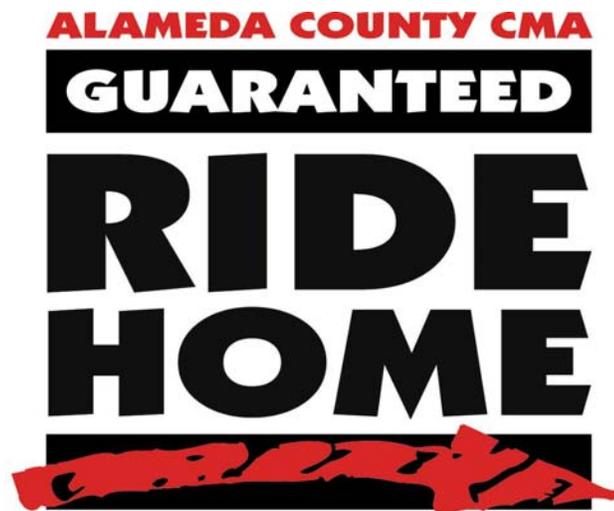


Alameda County
Congestion Management Agency



Program Evaluation 2009

Executive Summary

May 2010

The Alameda County Technical Advisory Committee on May 4, 2010 and the CMA's Plans and Programs Committee on May 10, 2010 recommended that the CMA Board accept the following annual report and recommendations for the Alameda County Guaranteed Ride Home Program. The ACCMA Board accepted the following report and recommendations on May 27, 2010.

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Alameda County Congestion Management Agency (ACCMA) Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Program has been in operation since April 9, 1998. This report presents the results of the 2009 Program Evaluation and covers program operations during the 2009 calendar year including a comparison with previous years. The evaluation provides information about:

1. The effectiveness of the program's administration;
2. Statistics on employer and employee participation and rides taken;
3. The program's success in causing an increase in the use of alternative modes; and
4. The status of Board recommendations made for 2009 and proposed recommendations for 2010.

Program Description

The Alameda County CMA Guaranteed Ride Home Program is sponsored by the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency (ACCMA) and funded with Transportation Funds for Clean Air (TFCA) from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). The GRH Program provides a "guaranteed ride home" to any registered employee working for a participating employer in cases of emergency on days the employee has used an alternative mode of transportation to get to work. Alternative modes include: carpools, vanpools, bus, train, ferry, walking and bicycling. All businesses in Alameda County are eligible to participate in the GRH Program.

The objective of the program is to maximize modal shift from driving alone to commute alternatives including transit, carpools, vanpools, bicycling and walking. Based on this stated objective, the program can be considered a success. Since it began in 1998, the GRH Program has grown into a smoothly operating program with 189 registered employers and over 4,200 registered employees making a commitment to travel to work taking alternative modes to driving alone. This has resulted in a reduction of 3,100 drive alone trips per week. (See Figure ES-1 for highlights over the 12-year course of the Program.) Additionally, in 2009, 35 percent of participants stated they would not use an alternative travel mode or would use one less frequently without the GRH Program and 28% of participants stated that, with the program, they use alternative modes four or more times a week.

Figure ES-1 Guaranteed Ride Home Program Historical Trends

Trend	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Program Participants												
Total Number of Employers	72	100	119	132	127	110	120	131	142	155	188	189
New Employers Registered	72	28	19	13	12	14	16	22	12	18	56	12
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
New Employees Registered	880	794	591	494	525	710	543	603	550	514	722	406
Trip Statistics												
Total Number of Trips Taken	57	156	168	149	145	151	143	87	107	98	119	72
Total Number of Rental Car Trips	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8	10	18	9	18	18	23	13
Total Number of Taxi Trips	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	137	141	125	78	89	80	96	59
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
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
Average Trip Cost	\$54.51	\$65.25	\$70.45	\$84.02	\$88.18	\$93.64	\$80.92	\$87.78	\$89.48	\$86.13	\$90.49	\$69.47
Rental Car Savings	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$421	\$759	\$1,015	\$442	\$1,221	\$1,316	\$1,446	\$998
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
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%
Survey Results												
Number of Surveys Collected	215	350	270	346	517	619	658	716	732	728	822	990
Survey Response Rate	N/A	21%	12%	13%	19%	22%	20%	20%	18%	16%	19%	23%
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%
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%
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

Annual Program Highlights

Registration of employers in the GRH Program in 2009 was affected by two opposing influences—the CMA Board's decision to change the program requirements to allow all businesses to enroll, regardless of size, and the downturn in the economy with businesses closing and employers leaving the county. Prior to 2009, employers were required to have at least 75 employees to enroll in the GRH Program. Figure ES-2 shows the new employers that registered along with those who left the program in 2009.

In 2009, even with the state of the economy, 12 new employers enrolled in the program, bringing the number of registered employers to 189. Of the 12 new employers, six were in companies with less than 75 employees. Enrollment of new employers had peaked in 2008, when 56 new employers registered due to the program's partnership with the Emeryville Transportation Management Association (TMA) and the Downtown Berkeley Association (DBA) as well as record high gas prices, leading to more commuters seeking alternative transportation modes.

In 2009, although 406 new employees registered, this number is 70% less than in 2008 and the lowest number of new registrants since program inception. The decrease in new enrollment can be attributed to the increase in unemployment associated with the recent economic downturn. A larger number of GRH employers than usual have either gone out of business or decided not to participate in the program because their registered employees no longer work for the company or because of limited staff resources to administer the program. See Figure ES-2 for a summary of participant losses in 2009.

Figure ES-2 New Employers (2009 - 2010)

Employer Name	City	Change in # of Employees
New Employers - 2009		
LAVTA Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority	Livermore	10
Social Policy Research Associates	Oakland	25
State of California, Employment Development Department	Oakland	36
Calpine Corporation	Dublin	45
Fluor Enterprises, Inc.	Dublin	50
USCG Civil Engineering Unit Oakland (CEUO)	Oakland	60
Lithium Technologies, Inc.	Emeryville	80
Alameda County Employees Retirement Association	Oakland	93
Gracenote, Inc.	Emeryville	160
Taleo Corporation	Dublin	160
East Bay Regional Park District	Oakland	200
Otis Spunkmeyer, Inc.	San Leandro	250
Employers Who Left GRH Program - 2009		
Kaiser Permanente	Oakland	-200
Farmers Insurance		
AT&T	Pleasanton	-84
Applied Biosystems	Pleasanton	
Employers Leaving GRH Program -2010		
NUMMI - March 2010	Fremont	-268
Cholestech Corporation – March 2010	Hayward	-4
Robert Half International – May 2010 (moving to Contra Costa County)	Pleasanton	-21

Based on the fact that each registered participant may take up to six rides in a one-year period, the rate that guaranteed rides are taken is very low. Most program participants take a guaranteed ride home very infrequently or not at all. For example, at the end of 2009, there were a total of 25,494 potential rides based on a total enrollment of 4,249 employees. However, only 72 rides were actually taken (approximately 0.28% of potential rides).

As shown in Figure ES-1, the total number of rides taken per year can fluctuate significantly. It is unknown why the number of rides taken in 2009 decreased 40%. It could be attributed to the economic downturn and high rates of unemployment in 2009.

Of the 7,427 employees ever registered for the program, at the end of 2009, 6,741 (90%) had never taken a ride. The vast majority of those who have used the program (80%) have only taken one or two rides. This demonstrates that participants see the GRH Program as an “insurance” policy and do not abuse the program or take more rides per year than they need. The program is available if and when an emergency or unscheduled overtime arises and provides participants with peace of mind knowing that even when they do not drive alone, they can get home under unexpected circumstances.

Figure ES–3 Summary of 2010 Program Recommendations

Recommendation	Outcome/Status
1. Continue operations and marketing, including maintaining website and conducting employee and employer surveys	GRH staff continually markets the program and updates the website. The employee and employer surveys for the 2009 program evaluation were completed in March 2010. Results are included in Chapters 4 and 5 of this report.
2. Continue monitoring and marketing the 50+ mile car rental requirement	<p>GRH staff continued monitoring and marketing the requirement to take non-emergency rides greater than 50 miles with rental cars. Marketing was focused on informing new employers and employees about the requirement. This included continuing to telephone and e-mail participants who use the program and live over 50 miles from their workplace to remind them of the program requirement and attach reminders to all vouchers about the requirement.</p> <p>In 2009, 13 of the 72 trips taken were by rental car. This represents 18% of all trips taken in 2009. Both the employee and the employer surveys included information about the rental car requirement and questions about this requirement. As a result of these efforts, rental car requirement awareness among employer representatives increased from 49% in 2007 to 69% in 2008 to 72% in 2009.</p> <p>To continue our commitment to increasing awareness, participants living over 50 miles from their workplace who used a taxicab are contacted by telephone and email to remind them of the program requirement once the GRH Program receives their completed ride paperwork.</p>

Recommendation	Outcome/Status
<p>3. Focus on registering businesses in South and Central Alameda County.</p>	<p>Although the program has been broadly marketed to all jurisdictions within Alameda County, the North and East County cities such as Pleasanton, Oakland, Berkeley, and Emeryville represent over 80% of all registered GRH businesses. In order to create more program equity across Alameda County and increase participation in South and Central Alameda County, the GRH Program focused marketing efforts on employers in these areas in 2009. By working with Chambers of Commerce and business associations in South and Central County cities, the GRH Program attempted to increase awareness and participation in these areas. This includes featuring the Guaranteed Ride Home Program in the October Newsletter for the Alameda County Green Business Program, which is sent to businesses throughout the county.</p> <p>Despite the targeted marketing efforts, San Leandro was the only city in South or Central Alameda County to increase GRH enrollment in 2009. Overall, there was minimal growth in registered businesses in Central Alameda County and a decrease in registered businesses in South Alameda County. This may be attributed to a reduction in the GRH marketing budget in 2009 to cover the cost of the comprehensive program evaluation (Eisen/Letunic), combined with a downturn in the economy.</p> <p>This recommendation is recommended to be carried forward in 2010 in order to further promote awareness of the GRH Program in South and Central Alameda County.</p> <p>The marketing budget was cut in 2009 since a portion of the GRH budget was used for the Eisen\Letunic Performance Evaluation Report. In late 2009, the Program Administrator sent letters to the Chamber of Commerce of Newark, San Leandro, Union City, Hayward and Fremont and has been in contact with city staff from Union City and San Leandro. Registered businesses in San Leandro increased from two to three in 2009 (50% increase). The Program Administrator will attend a Clean Commute Transportation Fair in San Leandro on April 19, 2010.</p>

Recommendation	Outcome/Status
<p>4. Implement and Market the Zero Minimum Number of Employees per Employer Requirement.</p>	<p>The Board made the recommendation to eliminate the employer size requirement and open the program to any employer in the county, regardless of size based on the results of the comprehensive program evaluation. The Eisen\Letunic Performance Evaluation Report found that compared to 11 GRH programs nationwide, only the CMA program had a minimum number of employees per employer requirement.</p> <p>The change did not have a large impact on program administration. Furthermore, eliminating the employee requirement did not greatly expand the number of businesses and employees enrolled in the program or the number of rides taken since smaller businesses often are not able to dedicate staff to market and administer the GRH program internally. GRH staff worked with Chambers of Commerce and created press releases to advertise the change in the program and continue to form partnerships with TMAs and business associations to more effectively market the program to all employers regardless of size.</p> <p>In 2009, 12 new employers enrolled in the program. Half of the new registered businesses in 2009 had fewer than 75 employees.</p>
<p>5. Investigate implementing a regional GRH Program with MTC and all nine counties in the region</p>	<p>The CMA Board recommended that the CMA work with MTC to investigate initiating a regionwide GRH program. This has the potential of reducing total indirect costs--such as administration, marketing and overhead--across the merged programs. CMA staff has contacted the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to discuss interest in assuming operations of the GRH Program, and is scheduling to meet with MTC and the Bay Area counties to discuss their interest in this option. Should a regionwide program be developed, the eligibility requirements for rides and reimbursable expenses should be consistent with other GRH programs in the Bay Area.</p>
<p>6. Expand the GRH Program in Alameda County into a comprehensive TDM Program (pending new funding).</p>	<p>Unlike other GRH programs, the CMA GRH Program is the only one that does not include other transportation demand management (TDM) programs. Including the GRH program as part of a comprehensive TDM program would result in economies of scale for marketing and administration. A package of TDM options is being considered as part of the Climate Change efforts the CMA is pursuing to address greenhouse gas emissions requirements through AB 32 and SB 375. The GRH Program, whether in Alameda County or regionwide, should be considered part of these efforts.</p>

Recommendation	Outcome/Status
<p>7. Investigate requiring employers to contribute toward the cost of the GRH Program.</p>	<p>The GRH program has been funded by the Air District TFCA funds since 1998. To diversify program funding and address the CMA Board's concerns about having employers contribute towards the cost of the program to reduce congestion and air emissions, the CMA Board recommended investigating methods of introducing employer contributions into the program.</p> <p>Because the program has been offered without a fee since inception, even a minimal charge to employers could lead to employer attrition in the program. The 2009 employer survey asked whether employers would be willing to contribute financially to the program. Seventy percent of respondents stated that their continued participation would be "very unlikely" or "unlikely" if the program charged a flat rate. Four percent thought that their participation would be "very likely" and 26% responded that their participation would be "likely".</p> <p>A comprehensive memorandum that investigates employer contributions was submitted to the CMA early in 2010 (see Appendix B). It analyzes several strategies that could be utilized to introduce employer contributions for the GRH program</p>

Major Findings of the Evaluation

The program evaluation consisted of an examination of the program's administrative functions, statistics on employer and employee participation and use, data from the surveys of participating employees, and recommendations for program changes and enhancements. The following sections present the major findings from the evaluation.

Program Administration

Program Operating Principles

- The use limitation of six rides per year continues to be appropriate. Very few program participants have reached the limit since the program's inception. No participants in 2009 reached the six trip limit. The highest number of trips taken in 2009 by a single participant was four.
- The rental car demonstration program was successfully implemented in October 2002 in the Tri-Valley area (Dublin, Livermore and Pleasanton), and countywide in April 2004. A new policy went into effect in 2006 requiring participants to use a rental car for any non-emergency trip over 50 miles¹. Rental car use accounted for 18% of all 2009 rides. The program realized an estimated savings of approximately \$1,000 on ride costs in 2009.

Marketing and Promotions

- Approximately 20% of program resources are dedicated to marketing and promotion. This time is spent marketing both to employers and their employees in the form of making calls, distributing flyers, and giving presentations and attending events. The program has sought to leverage 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 that promote commute alternatives such as MTC and local business districts like the Hacienda Business Park.
- In 2009, the program eliminated the eligibility requirement that only employers with 75 or more employees could participant. With this update, all Alameda County employers and employees are now eligible for the program. Marketing materials and the website have been updated to reflect this new requirement. The Program Administrator also sent press releases to the Chamber of Commerce and attended transportation fairs to inform employers about the new program changes in 2009. Furthermore, program staff continued to form partnerships with TMAs and business associations to more effectively market the program to all employers regardless of size. This change in eligibility requirement resulted in the enrollment of six new employers with less than 75 employees.
- In order to create more program equity across Alameda County and increase participation in South and Central Alameda County, the GRH Program focused marketing efforts on employers in these areas in 2009. In 2009, the Program Administrator sent letters to the Chamber of Commerce of Newark, San Leandro, Union City, Hayward, and Fremont and has been in contact with city staff from Union City and San Leandro. Registered businesses in San Leandro increased from two to three in 2009 (50% increase). The Program Administrator attended a Clean Commute Transportation Fair in San Leandro on April 19, 2010.

¹ The requirement to use rental cars for non-emergency trips over 50 miles also takes into consideration that for those who do shift work, the rental car companies close at 6:00 p.m.

In 2008, the GRH Program focused marketing efforts on the Downtown Berkeley Association (DBA) and the Emeryville Transportation Management Association (TMA). Both organizations entered into an informal agreement with the GRH Program to allow all businesses in their jurisdictions to enroll in the program regardless of the number of employees because as a whole, the DBA and Emeryville TMA employ well over the minimum 75 employee requirement. As a result of marketing efforts, 39 new businesses enrolled from these two business districts² and 137 new participants enrolled.

- The availability of the marketing materials in electronic format via the internet or email upon request continues to be a useful and inexpensive tool for promoting the program.
- The website is updated to include changes in the program, such as the rental car program, new eligibility requirements, and to clarify the program, as necessary, such as providing a clear description of the instant enrollment program.

Employer and Employee Participation

Employer and Employee Registrations

- A total of 12 new businesses and 406 employees registered for the program in 2009. Six of the newly registered businesses in 2009 had fewer than 75 employees.
- Despite the enrollment activity, the total number of registered participants in the program decreased by nearly 2% since the previous year. According to employer contacts, the decrease is due to the downturn in the economy and company downsizing.
- Even with following the CMA Board's direction to focus a new marketing effort on south and central Alameda County in 2009, north and east Alameda County continue to be the areas with the most employers enrolled in the program. These areas account for over 80% of all registered businesses. This can be attributed to our partnerships with the Hacienda Business Park in Pleasanton, the Emeryville TMA in Emeryville, and the DBA in Berkeley and the large concentration of employers in Downtown Oakland.

Rides Taken

- From the program's inception in 1998 through 2009, a total of 1,453 rides (1,336 taxi rides and 117 rental car rides) have been taken. A total of 72 rides were taken during the 2009 calendar year for an average of approximately 6 rides per month. In 2009, the lowest number of rides were taken since the program inception in 1998. This could be due to the economy and job losses.
- Ninety percent of the employees enrolled have never taken a trip. This demonstrates the "insurance" nature of the program and shows that participants do not abuse the program. Of the employees who have taken a trip since the program inception (1998), 80% have taken only one or two rides.
- The two most common reasons to take a guaranteed ride home in 2009 were "personal illness" (33% of rides) and "carpool or vanpool driver has to stay later or leave early" (24%).
- Those who carpool or vanpool are more likely to use a guaranteed ride home trip than those who use other alternative commute modes. Sixty-one percent of guaranteed rides home were used by car- and vanpoolers.

² Three businesses have since gone out of business.

- The average trip distance continued to decline in 2009. The average trip distance for all rides in 2009 was 31.5 miles, a 20% mile decrease from last year. The average taxi trip distance declined 28% to 27.5 miles and the average rental car trip distance increased 15% to approximately 52.6 miles. Since car rental trips are a flat fee, their increase in mileage helped to contribute towards cost savings for the program.
- The average taxi trip cost decreased 28% in 2009 to \$71.44. Friendly Cab, serving Oakland, Berkeley, and Emeryville, provides a majority of the GRH rides.
- The cost of a rental car trip is \$55.00. It is estimated that the use of rental cars in 2009 saved \$1,000 in trip costs. Similar to 2008, nearly one out of five trips taken was with a rental car.
- Employee Commute Patterns
- The most common trip-origin cities are Oakland, Pleasanton, and Fremont. The most common trip-destination cities are Oakland, Manteca, and Modesto.
- The most common trip destination county is Alameda County, followed by Contra Costa County and San Joaquin County.

Employee Survey

The 2009 survey was distributed and completed primarily online. We attempted to contact all employer representatives (some were non-responsive despite repeated attempts) to request their assistance with the distribution of the survey. When employers were not available to distribute the survey and by special request, we contacted employees directly with the survey. Of the 4,249 employees currently enrolled in the program, 990 completed the survey, a 23% response rate – the highest from any annual program evaluation to date. Of the surveys, 98.5% were completed online. Survey respondents represent 89 (out of 189) different participating employers.

Use of Alternative Modes

The Guaranteed Ride Home Program continues to be successful in encouraging the use of alternative modes. According to 2009 survey responses:

- When asked how important GRH was in their decision to stop driving alone, 63% of respondents who used to drive alone said that it was at least somewhat important.
- Ninety-one percent of respondents stated that they think that the GRH Program encourages people to use alternative modes more often. Only 53% of respondents, however, stated that the program encourages them personally to use alternative modes more often.
- If the GRH Program were not available, the majority (64%) reported that they would continue to use an alternative mode at the same frequency that they currently do.
- Survey results suggest that the program may have helped encourage participants to try alternative modes and now that they are in the habit of using alternative modes, they would continue using them even if the program became unavailable.
- The survey asked respondents how they traveled to work at present and before they registered for the GRH Program. Both before and after the program, the most common modes were driving alone, BART and bus. Drive alone rides, however, declined over 60% after registering with the GRH Program, while alternative mode use increased.

- Using these survey findings, we were able to extrapolate the impact of the program on travel behavior of all participants. The program reduces an estimated 3,102 single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips per week.

Other Commute Characteristics

- Commute distances of program participants are generally 50 miles or less (91%).
- Most program participants travel to work during the peak commute hours of 7-9 AM in the mornings (68%) and 4-6 PM in the evenings (71%).

Customer Service Ratings

The annual evaluation survey includes two questions to evaluate participant's level of satisfaction with the customer service provided in the program. Additional information on service satisfaction is collected in the survey that participants return after they have taken a ride.

- The administrative functions of the GRH Program continue to receive very high ratings for the quality of customer service, consistent with previous years' evaluations.
- In 2009, 38% of respondents rated Clarity of Information as Excellent and 43% as Good. These numbers were very similar to 2008 results
- Passengers were very positive in their evaluation of the transportation services provided through GRH with 84% of users rating the services as "excellent" or "good".

Program Value

This year's survey asked participants how much they value the GRH Program compared to other transportation benefits they receive.

- Sixty-five percent reported that the program was as valuable as or more valuable than other transportation benefits they receive at work. Twelve percent reported that they receive no other transportation benefits at work. Perceived program value increased by 10% from 2008 to 2009. This may be due to two factors: 1) there was lower staff turnover of the employer representatives that were administering the GRH Program in 2009 than in 2008, therefore, the representatives may have become more familiar with the benefits and the administration of the program than they were in the previous year, and 2) employers may have been more appreciative of GRH in 2009 than the prior year since it is a free commuter benefit offered by the County during an economic downturn.

Employer Survey

In addition to employee participants, employer representatives are also surveyed annually. Of the 189 employers currently enrolled in the program, 62 surveys were completed, resulting in a 33% response rate. New questions were added to the employer survey this year asking how much employers would be willing to pay towards the program and their attitudes toward Transportation Demand Management (TDM) benefits. The results are summarized under "Program Value," below.

Use of Alternative Modes

- The survey asked the employer representatives how important the program is in encouraging employees to use alternative commute modes more often. A large majority

(90%) reported that they feel participation in the program at least somewhat encourages more alternative mode use³.

- The survey asked respondents if their companies offered additional commuter benefits to employees. Most employers (82%) reported that they provide other transportation subsidy programs besides the GRH Program. The most popular benefits were bicycle parking and Commuter Checks.

Program Management

- The survey asked respondents how long they have managed the program for their company. In 2009, 74% of respondents have been with GRH for one or more years, compared to only 57% in 2008. When GRH staff contacted the employer representatives this year, GRH staff did not encounter a large number of employers who had experienced employer representative turnover.
- When asked about the workload that GRH presents, all employers reported that their workload was “manageable” or the program is “not much work”.
- One of the important features of the program is the instant enrollment voucher which allows persons not registered in the program to become instantly enrolled and receive a guaranteed ride home in case of emergencies. Ninety one percent of employer representatives stated that they have never issued an instant enrollment voucher.

Customer Service Ratings

The survey includes two questions to evaluate the employer representatives’ level of satisfaction with the customer service provided in the program in 2009.

- “Clarity of information” provided by program staff received very high ratings, with 88% of respondents stating that information was “excellent” or “good”. This is a slight decrease from 2008 when 94% of employers stated that clarity of information was either excellent or good. The decrease in perceived clarity of information in 2009 could be attributed to the changes in program eligibility requirements.

Rental Car Awareness

Starting in 2007, the annual survey started asking employer representatives about their awareness of the rental car requirement for rides over 50 miles.

- Nearly three fourths (72%) of employer representatives stated that they were aware of the requirement. In 2007, less than half of employer representatives knew about the rental car requirement and in 2008, 69% of employers knew about the requirement. This shows that the marketing outreach for the rental car requirement has worked to increase its awareness.

Program Value

The employer survey asked questions specifically about the value of the program and how much employers would be willing to pay to continue participation in the program.

³ Employers were asked for their opinion regarding if 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.

- Sixty percent of respondents stated that they thought that their employees value the GRH Program as much as or more than other transportation benefits offered by their employer. A quarter of respondents stated that their employer does not offer any other transportation benefits.
- Employer representatives were asked if they were interested in offering Transportation Demand Management (TDM) benefits to their employees. Forty percent of employers stated that they would be interested in offering free or discounted transit passes to their employees. Employer representatives were also interested in offering Commuter Checks and providing their employees with additional information about alternative commute options. However 30% of employer representatives stated that they were not interested in offering other TDM benefits.
- Respondents were asked a set of questions that focused on their company's willingness to pay to participate in the GRH Program if it were incorporated into a countywide TDM Program. Seventy percent of respondents stated that their continued participation would be "very unlikely" or "unlikely" if the program charged a fee. Four percent thought that their participation would be "very likely" and 26% responded that their participation would be "likely".
- Employers were asked if their company paid a fee, would they be more likely to pay a flat annual fee or per registered employer to be part of a countywide TDM program. Of the 30% of employers who stated they were willing to pay a fee for the program, 13% stated they would rather pay a flat annual fee and 17% said they would rather pay a fee per registered employee. The flat annual fee was more popular with larger employers while the pay-per-employee option was more popular with smaller employers with few or zero registrants.
- The lack of willingness to pay an annual fee was mostly attributed by employer representatives to the current state of the economy.

Program Savings

The Guaranteed Ride Home Program's goal is to reduce single occupancy vehicle commute trips through encouraging alternative transportation use. Based on the annual employee survey results, the program eliminated approximately 3,102 single-occupancy vehicle roundtrips per week or 1,241 one-way trips per weekday. Based on the average reported commute distance by GRH participants and the number of registered participants, the GRH Program eliminates approximately 9.5 million vehicle miles from roadways annually⁴. It is estimated that the program saved participants approximately \$1.1 million annually on fuel expenses in 2009.⁵

⁴ Based on 1,241 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 26.3 miles

⁵ Based on the calculated number of annual miles reduced, the annual US vehicle fuel economy reported by the US Bureau of Transportation Statistics (22.6 MPG), and the average Bay Area fuel price per gallon reported by MTC in 2009 (\$2.67)

Figure ES-2 Estimated Program Savings and Highlights

Category	2009 Savings
# of Participants	4,249
Drive Alone Roundtrips Reduced Per Week	3,102
Drive Alone One-Way Trips Reduced Per Week	6,204
Drive Alone Roundtrips Reduced per Weekday	620.4
Drive Alone One-Way Trips Reduced per Weekday	1,241
Total drive-alone roundtrips reduced	161,304
Total drive-alone one-way trips reduced	322,608
Program Enrollment at end of program year	4,249
Guaranteed Ride Home rides taken	72
# of Annual One-Way Trips Saved due to the GRH Program	322,536
Average commute distance of GRH participants	26.30
Annual miles saved per work year (250 days)	8,484,590
Average US vehicle fuel economy (MPG)	22.6
Annual gallons of gas saved per work year (250 days)	375,424
Average gas price	\$2.67
Annual dollars not spent on gas per work year (250 days)	\$1,002,383

Program Update and Recommendations

The Alameda County CMA Guaranteed Ride Home Program has been successful in helping achieve the goal of bringing about a modal shift from driving alone to 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 fear of being unable to return home in the event of an emergency.

Summary of 2009 Evaluation Report Recommendations

Last year, the CMA Board made recommendations (shown in Figure ES-3) for the 2009 GRH Program.

The recommendations for the 2009 GRH Program and their outcomes are presented below.

Figure ES–3 Summary of 2009 Evaluation Report Recommendations

Recommendation	Outcome/Status
1. Continue operations and marketing, including maintaining website and conducting employee and employer surveys	GRH staff continually markets the program and updates the website. The employee and employer surveys for the 2009 program evaluation were completed in March 2010. Results are included in Chapters 4 and 5 of this report.
2. Continue monitoring and marketing the 50+ mile car rental requirement	<p>GRH staff continued monitoring and marketing the requirement to take non-emergency rides greater than 50 miles with rental cars. Marketing was focused on informing new employers and employees about the requirement. This included continuing to telephone and e-mail participants who use the program and live over 50 miles from their workplace to remind them of the program requirement and attach reminders to all vouchers about the requirement.</p> <p>In 2009, 13 of the 72 trips taken were by rental car. This represents 18% of all trips taken in 2009. Both the employee and the employer surveys included information and questions about the rental car requirement. As a result of these efforts, rental car requirement awareness among employer representatives increased from 49% in 2007 to 69% in 2008 to 72% in 2009.</p> <p>To continue our commitment to increasing rental car awareness, participants living over 50 miles from their workplace who used a taxicab are contacted by telephone and email to remind them of the program requirement once the GRH Program receives their completed ride paperwork.</p>

Recommendation	Outcome/Status
<p>3. Focus on registering businesses in South and Central Alameda County.</p>	<p>Although the program has been broadly marketed to all jurisdictions within Alameda County, the North and East County cities such as Pleasanton, Oakland, Berkeley, and Emeryville represent over 80% of all registered GRH businesses. In order to create more program equity across Alameda County and increase participation in South and Central Alameda County, the GRH Program focused marketing efforts on employers in these areas in 2009. By working with Chambers of Commerce and business associations in South and Central County cities, the GRH Program attempted to increase awareness and participation in these areas.</p> <p>The effort to increase marketing in South and Central County coincided with reducing the marketing budget to compensate for the comprehensive Performance Evaluation Report in 2009 and a downturn in the economy. Despite this reduction in the marketing budget for the program, in late 2009, the Program Administrator sent letters to the Chamber of Commerce of Newark, San Leandro, Union City, Hayward, and Fremont and has been in contact with city staff from Union City and San Leandro. Registered businesses in San Leandro increased from two to three in 2009 (50% increase). The Program Administrator attended a Clean Commute Transportation Fair in San Leandro on April 19, 2010.</p>
<p>4. Implement and Market the Zero Minimum Number of Employees per Employer Requirement.</p>	<p>Based on the results of the comprehensive program evaluation (Eisen/Letunic, 2009), which found that the CMA GRH Program was one of 12 nationwide that had a minimum number of employees per employer requirement, the CMA Board recommended eliminating the employer size requirement and opening the program to any employer in the county, regardless of size.</p> <p>GRH staff worked with Chambers of Commerce and created press releases to advertise the change in the program and continue to form partnerships with TMAs and business associations to more effectively market the program to all employers regardless of size.</p> <p>Even with marketing the reduced eligibility requirements for the program, the change did not have a large impact on program administration, enrollment or the number of rides taken. Half of the 12 new businesses enrolled in 2009 had less than 75 employees. The number of rides taken in 2009 is the lowest its been since the program's inception in 1998. This lack of impact on the number of businesses and employees enrolled in the program is likely attributed to the downturn in the economy and the consideration that small businesses often are not able to dedicate staff to market and administer the GRH program internally.</p>

Recommendation	Outcome/Status
<p>5. Investigate implementing a regional GRH Program with MTC and all nine counties in the region</p>	<p>The CMA Board recommended that the CMA work with MTC to investigate initiating a regionwide GRH program. This has the potential of reducing total indirect costs--such as administration, marketing and overhead--across the merged programs. CMA staff contacted the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the Bay Area counties to discuss their interest in this option. This option will continue to be considered while CMA and the region continue to investigate ways to address climate change legislative requirements (SB 375 and AB 32), including a range of countywide or regionwide Transportation Demand Management (TDM) alternatives, including the GRH program.</p>
<p>6. Expand the GRH Program in Alameda County into a comprehensive TDM Program (pending new funding).</p>	<p>Unlike other GRH programs throughout the Bay Area and the U.S., the CMA GRH Program is the only one that does not include other transportation demand management (TDM) programs. Including the GRH program as part of a comprehensive TDM program would result in economies of scale for marketing and administration. A package of TDM options is being considered as part of the Climate Change efforts the CMA is pursuing to address greenhouse gas emissions requirements through AB 32 and SB 375. The GRH Program, whether in Alameda County or regionwide, should be considered part of these efforts.</p>
<p>7. Investigate requiring employers to contribute toward the cost of the GRH Program.</p>	<p>The GRH program has been funded by the Air District TFCA funds since 1998. To diversify program funding and address the CMA Board's concerns about having employers contribute towards the cost of the program to reduce congestion and air emissions, the CMA Board recommended investigating methods of introducing employer contributions into the program.</p> <p>Because the program has been offered without a fee since inception, even a minimal charge to employers could lead to employer attrition in the program. The 2009 employer survey asked whether employers would be willing to contribute financially to the program. Seventy percent of respondents stated that their continued participation would be "very unlikely" or "unlikely" if the program charged a flat rate. Four percent thought that their participation would be "very likely" and 26% responded that their participation would be "likely". This may be attributed to the downturn in the economy.</p> <p>A comprehensive memorandum that investigates employer contributions was submitted to the CMA early in 2010 (see Appendix B). It analyzes several strategies that could be utilized to introduce employer contributions for the GRH program over time.</p>

The following provides a more detailed review of the above recommendations and results.

1. Continue operations and marketing, including maintaining website and conducting employee and employer surveys.

Staff continued to market the program to employees and employers via newsletters, emails, telephone calls, mailers, attendance of employee benefits fairs, etc. Employee and employer surveys are completed annually as part of the annual program evaluation report. The annual surveying effort for 2009 concluded in March 2010.

As a result of marketing, operations, maintaining the website and conducting the annual surveys, the Guaranteed Ride Home program added 12 new employers and 406 new employee participants in 2009. This number of new enrollees is significantly less than it was in 2008, which had 56 new employers and 722 new employees. The large increase in registered businesses and employee participants in 2008 can be attributed to a successful partnership with the Emeryville TMA and Downtown Berkeley Association (DBA) as well as record high gas prices which led to more commuters choosing alternative modes. The average price of gasoline in 2008 was \$3.72 per gallon in the Bay Area. In 2009, gas prices fell significantly and the average price of gasoline was \$2.67 per gallon.⁶ The 2009 recession and reduction in the workforce may have prevented new employers from registering because many businesses do not have the capacity to take on extra work or interest in expanding options for their employees.

2. Continue to monitor and market the 50+ mile car rental requirement.

In order to reduce total funding spent on GRH trips and reduce program costs, the GRH countywide rental car program was launched in 2002. The rental car program requires that registrants who need a guaranteed ride home and who live more than 50 miles from their workplace use a rental car as their guaranteed ride home⁷. Rental car rides can be significantly cheaper for long distance trips because the program is only charged \$55 per ride for the rental car instead of \$2.40-\$2.60 per mile in a taxicab.

As done in 2008, as part of the 2009 evaluation, GRH staff contacted all employers and employees and reminded them of the rental car requirement. Employer contacts were reminded of the rental car requirement as part of the telephone call communication. The 2009 employee and employer surveys were distributed primarily via email and included a brief explanation of the rental car requirement in the email and within the survey. Persons not providing the program with an email address were mailed the survey with a cover letter explaining the rental car requirement. The survey itself asked employer and employee participants questions about rental usage and their understanding of the requirement. The complete results of these questions are presented in Chapters 4 and 5 and a brief summary is provided below.

All program literature has been updated to state that trips of 50 or more miles require the use of a rental car except in case of emergencies. Literature also states that persons living between 21 and 49 miles from their workplace are strongly encouraged to use a rental car. An insert is now included in all new participant packets for persons living more than 20 miles from their workplace, which reinforces the rental car requirement for persons living more than 50 miles from their workplace and encourages use of a rental car use for persons living over 20 miles from their workplace. Participants using their GRH voucher for a taxicab who live over 50 miles from their workplace are now contacted by telephone and email to remind the participant of the program requirement.

⁶ Average Bay Area fuel price per gallon reported by MTC.

⁷ Exceptions apply. See Chapter 2, page 2-3.

As a result of these efforts, the survey showed that rental car requirement awareness among employer representative respondents increased from 69% in 2008 to 72% in 2009. Among registered employees, awareness decreased slightly from 47% in 2008 to 41% in 2009. Rental car usage accounted for 18% of trips, which was within 1% of rental car usage in 2008. Nearly one out of five rides is taken using a rental car.

3. Focus on registering businesses in South and Central Alameda County.

The 2008 Evaluation Report recommended targeting employers located in South and Central Alameda County to increase program equity across the county. By working with Chambers of Commerce and business associations in South and Central County cities, the GRH Program attempted to increase awareness and participation in these areas.

In order to promote the GRH Program to businesses in South and Central Alameda County, the Program Administrator sent letters to the Chamber of Commerce of Newark, San Leandro, Hayward, Union City, and Fremont. GRH staff prepared press releases and newsletter blurbs which were distributed to local businesses through the Chamber of Commerce. GRH staff has also been in contact with city officials from Union City and San Leandro. The Guaranteed Ride Home Program was featured in the October Newsletter for the Alameda County Green Business Program, which is sent to businesses throughout the county.

Despite the targeted marketing efforts, San Leandro was the only city in South or Central Alameda County to increase GRH enrollment in 2009. San Leandro experienced a 50% increase in the number of enrolled businesses in 2009, from two to three registered employers. Overall, there was minimal growth in registered businesses in Central Alameda County and a decrease in registered businesses in South Alameda County. This may be attributed to a reduction in the GRH marketing budget in 2009 to cover the cost of the comprehensive program evaluation (Eisen/Letunic), combined with a downturn in the economy.

This recommendation is recommended to be carried forward in 2010 in order to further promote awareness of the GRH Program in South and Central Alameda County. The Program Administrator attended a Clean Commute Transportation Fair in San Leandro on April 19, 2010. However, despite marketing efforts, it has been difficult to encourage employer participation in South and Central Alameda County. This could be due to the recession or that employees from South and Central County may be commuting from more dispersed locations and do not have immediate access to alternative transportation options. Figure ES-4 presents the number of employers by location in Alameda County in 2009.

Figure ES-4 Number of Employers by City (2009)

Location	Number of Employers
North	107
Alameda	9
Berkeley	35
Emeryville	21
Oakland	42
East	52
Dublin	8
Livermore	10
Pleasanton	34
South	20
Fremont	16
Newark	2
Union City	2
Central	10
Hayward	7
San Leandro	3
Total	189

4. Implement and market the one minimum employee per employer requirement.

In order to offer a program that is inclusive for smaller businesses, the GRH Program eliminated the minimum number of employees per employer requirement in 2009. Of the 11 GRH programs reviewed as part of the comprehensive program evaluation completed in 2009, the Alameda County GRH Program is the only program that has an employee per employer requirement. The Board made the recommendation to eliminate the employer size requirement and open the program to any employer in the county, regardless of size based on the results of the comprehensive program evaluation conducted by Eisen\Letunic.

Based on the program's prior experience in reducing the minimum number of employees requirement from 100 to 75 employees, and a review of other GRH programs with no minimum number of employees requirement, program staff was confident that eliminating the employees per employer requirement would not increase program costs. As expected, the change did not have a large impact on program administration. Furthermore, eliminating the employee requirement did not greatly expand the number of businesses and employees enrolled in the program or the number of rides taken. Smaller businesses often are not able to dedicate staff to market and administer the GRH program internally. Larger employers often have transportation managers, transportation coordinators, or persons in charge of employee benefits programs that can easily be the GRH contact person and distribute information to employees.

In 2009, six new businesses with fewer than 75 employees registered for the GRH Program. Although marketing efforts increased with the implementation of the recommendation, the number of new registered employers may be low due to the current economic recession. Many employers, especially smaller businesses, may not have the capacity to take on extra work and are not interested in expanding options for employees. GRH staff worked with Chambers of Commerce and created press releases to advertise the change in the program and continue to effectively market the program to all employers regardless of size. Chamber contacts were sent information about the program to review and distribute to employers. The GRH website was updated to reflect the new program information about the change in minimum employees per employer requirement.

The figure below shows all businesses that registered in 2009.

Figure ES-5 New Employers (2009)

Employer Name	City	# of Employees	Date Registered
LAVTA Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority	Livermore	10	9/17/2009
Social Policy Research Associates	Oakland	25	11/13/2009
State of California, Employment Development Department	Oakland	36	10/16/2009
Calpine Corporation	Dublin	45	7/6/2009
Fluor Enterprises, Inc.	Dublin	50	3/25/2009
USCG Civil Engineering Unit Oakland (CEUO)	Oakland	60	9/11/2009
Lithium Technologies, Inc.	Emeryville	80	2/12/2009
Alameda County Employees Retirement Association	Oakland	93	12/3/2009
Gracenote, Inc.	Emeryville	160	6/22/2009
Taleo Corporation	Dublin	160	7/24/2009
East Bay Regional Park District	Oakland	200	10/29/2009
Otis Spunkmeyer, Inc.	San Leandro	250	11/18/2009

5. Investigate implementing a regional GRH Program with MTC and all nine counties in the region.

The CMA Board recommended that the CMA work with MTC to investigate initiating a regionwide GRH program. This has the potential of reducing total indirect costs--such as administration, marketing and overhead--across the merged programs. CMA staff met with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC and the Bay Area counties to discuss interest in implementing a regional GRH Program in the Bay Area. At this time, CMA and the region are focusing on a range of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) options, including GRH options, to address recent Climate Action legislation (SB 375 and AB 32).

6. Expand the GRH Program in Alameda County into a comprehensive TDM Program (pending new funding).

A recommendation from the Eisen/Letunic evaluation of the GRH program (2009) was to expand the current GRH program to include a full package of TDM measures. This would be consistent with many other GRH programs nationwide in addition to many other Bay Area counties. Such a move would clearly increase costs and benefits for the program, although it may be an opportunity to leverage financial contributions from private employers. An employer may be more willing and interested to pay a fee if they were receiving a toolbox of transportation benefits. Although, this is not necessarily a new funding option, it could be an intermediary step that could be phased in over time to garner employer contributions in the future.

Including the GRH program as part of a comprehensive TDM program would result in economies of scale for marketing and administration. A package of TDM options is being considered as part of the Climate Change efforts the CMA is pursuing to address greenhouse gas emissions requirements through AB 32 and SB 375. The GRH Program, whether in Alameda County or

regionwide, should be considered part of these efforts. TDM measures could include: ridematching, financial incentives for carpooling and vanpooling, discounted transit passes, personalized transit itineraries, subsidized bicycle parking racks and lockers, bicycle commuting maps and promotions and other marketing strategies.

7. Investigate requiring employers to contribute toward the cost of the GRH Program.

As with other GRH programs in the Bay Area, the ACCMA program relies on TFCA grants to fund program operations. Since its inception twelve years ago, the Alameda County GRH program has been funded exclusively through grants from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's Transportation Fund for Clean Air (BAAQMD-TFCA) and has been free of charge to employers and employees in Alameda County. This continued funding from the TFCA reflects GRH's high level of efficiency in reducing motor vehicle emissions, the primary requirement for the TFCA program. Despite the fact that GRH has been highly competitive in the TFCA program over the past twelve years, being reliant on a sole funding source may not be sustainable, particularly in today's California fiscal climate. For this reason, and to provide a sense of equity of having employers who receive a benefit from the program to contribute towards it, the ACCMA is interested in exploring other funding alternatives to supplement TFCA funding, understanding that GRH is a fundamental component in encouraging many to travel to and from work by alternative modes of transportation.

Because the program has been offered without a fee since inception, even a minimal charge to employers could lead to employer attrition in the program. The 2009 employer survey asked whether employers would be willing to contribute financially to the program. Seventy percent of respondents stated that their continued participation would be "very unlikely" or "unlikely" if the program charged a flat rate. Four percent thought that their participation would be "very likely" and 26% responded that their participation would be "likely". In 2008, when employers were asked about their likely continued participation if charged an annual flat fee, 83% stated "unlikely" or "very unlikely". The results from the 2009 survey show that employers may be more willing to pay for GRH when it is incorporated into a countywide TDM Program. Additional education and outreach efforts may be necessary to inform employers about the value of a TDM benefits program.

A comprehensive memo that investigates employer contribution into the program was submitted to the CMA early 2010 (see Appendix B). The memo analyzed several strategies that could be utilized to introduce employer contributions for the GRH program (summarized in Figure ES-6). Based on an analysis of current employer contribution methods, GRH Staff determined that a per-trip fee would be the most effective means of implementing a compulsory employer contribution. However, implementation of such a program could significantly reduce program participation. Program participants should first be surveyed on this potential option to garner their reaction to such a structure. More importantly, economic conditions at this time do not support the introduction of a fee on businesses to support the Guaranteed Ride Home Program. Thus, an employer contribution proposal should be deferred until economic conditions improve.

In summary, the following recommendations were offered for introducing employer contributions for the GRH program:

- Further investigate a per-trip basis employer contribution for those enrolled in the GRH program by adding questions/language on the 2010 GRH Survey;

- Establish goals for employer contributions implementation, these goals could include – maintaining program participation, establishing funding equity, and improving administration efficiency;
- Establish goals for revenues from employer contributions, such as a percentage of reimbursement for rides, similar to other GRH programs, and
- Defer implementation until economic conditions improve

Concurrently, the ACCMA should consider other long-term options with regard to fulfilling its goals of reducing transportation congestion. This could include other potential TDM programs in addition to GRH that can offer employers additional value in terms of transportation benefits, thus warranting further contribution. This recommendation compliments and supports recommendation number 6 above.

Figure ES-6 Various Employer Financial Contribution Strategies

	Flat Fee	Based on Employer Size	Based on Trip Usage
Advantages	Straightforward administration costs High revenue potential	More accurately reflects operational costs	Costs can be tied directly to program usage Less administration costs as compared to "employer size"
Disadvantages	Not responsive to different levels of program usage/different employer size Could result in significant loss in participation	Administrative bookkeeping could be time-consuming Does not accurately capture costs based on actual operating costs (per trip)	Would require additional invoicing / administration to bill individual trips, could be done on a semi-annual or quarterly basis

2010 Recommendations

Based on this evaluation report and the comprehensive program evaluation completed in February 2010, CMA staff recommends the following course of action for 2010:

Recommendations for 2010

1. Continue operations and marketing, including maintaining website and conducting employee and employer surveys.

Operations of the GRH program should continue in 2010 including database maintenance, general marketing, and maintaining the website. Employee and employer surveys should be completed annually as part of the annual program evaluation report. The surveys for the 2010 evaluation should be scheduled for late January/early February 2011.

2. Continue to monitor and market the 50+ mile car rental requirement.

GRH staff should continue monitoring and marketing the requirement to take non-emergency rides greater than 50 miles with rental cars. Marketing should be focused on informing new employers and employees about the requirement. This effort should include continuing to telephone and e-mail participants who used the program for non-emergency rides and live over 50 miles from their workplace to remind the participant of the program requirement and attach reminders to all vouchers about the requirement.

3. Continue to focus on registering businesses in South and Central Alameda County.

Although the program has been broadly marketed to all jurisdictions within Alameda County, staff should continue a targeted marketing effort to enroll businesses in South and Central Alameda County.

Of the 189 businesses registered in the GRH Program, the North and East County cities such as Pleasanton, Oakland, Berkeley, and Emeryville represent over 80% of the businesses. In order to create more program equity across Alameda County and increase participation in South and Central Alameda County, the GRH Program should continue marketing efforts on employers in these areas in 2010. Additional efforts should also be made to reach out to employers in the unincorporated areas of Alameda County. By working with Chambers of Commerce, attending transportation fairs and forming relationships business associations in South and Central County cities, the GRH Program should attempt to increase awareness and participation in these areas.

4. Continue to market the reduced minimum employee per employer requirement.

In February 2009, The CMA Board recommended eliminating the employer size requirement and opening the program to any employer in the county, regardless of size. The recommendation was based on the results of the comprehensive program evaluation which found that of 11 GRH programs nationwide, only the CMA program had a minimum number of employees per employer requirement. Eliminating the minimum number of employees per employer requirement did not greatly expand the number of businesses and employees enrolled in the program or the number of rides taken since smaller businesses often are not able to dedicate staff to market and administer the GRH program internally. However, it is important to increase program awareness among smaller businesses in Alameda County in order to further encourage mode shifts from driving alone to alternative forms of transportation. This recommendation can be combined with recommendation 5, below.

5. Implement new program-wide marketing strategies.

GRH staff should continue to work with Chambers of Commerce and create press releases to advertise the change in the program and continue to form partnerships with TMAs and business associations to more effectively market the program to all employers regardless of size. However, additional outreach and marketing is needed to reach out to new potential employers throughout Alameda County, regardless of size or location. Some new marketing strategies can include: local newspapers, newsletters, magazines, radio ads, and community fairs. There is great potential to partner with 511 and other commute alternative partners (VSPI, Enterprise, AC Transit, and LAVTA) to help get a foot hold into businesses and encourage participation.

6. Create a new GRH database with information stored on-line instead of in Access Database.

This recommendation is intended to reduce the administrative time associated with running the GRH Program. GRH currently utilizes Access database to store and analyze information. While this system has worked fine in the past, the size of the database is causing some performance issues. When the current database was created, its size was 10 megabytes. With the continuous growth of the program over the years, the database has grown to 115 megabytes. In order to avoid problems with crashing and slow response time, it may be necessary to upgrade the database.

The current database system GRH utilizes could be much more efficient. In order to enter a new employee or employer into the database, the employee/employer must first submit all information by fax, mail, or e-mail. Once this information is received, a GRH staff member can then enter the information manually into the database. Even if an employee submits their registration materials on-line, information must still be re-entered into the database. Employees must also fax or mail a waiver to complete their application. It is very common to receive incomplete applications that do not contain a signed waiver. GRH staff must then follow up with each person and send them a PDF version of the liability form for them to fax or mail it in. This system is very time consuming, wastes paper, and leaves much room for error.

Current technology exists to interface the on-line registration form with an updated on-line database. Once an employee or employer fills out the registration form on-line, it will be automatically entered into the GRH database in real time – eliminating the need to re-enter the same information. This will not only save staff time, but it will also allow new registrants to be enrolled in the system more easily and efficiently. An automatic e-mail can then be sent to each new registrant, directing them to the liability waiver form. Once more staff time is freed up from mundane data entry, more time can be spent on marketing and customer service.

7. Continue to investigate implementing a regional GRH Program with MTC and all nine counties in the region.

As part of CMA's efforts to be responsive to Climate Action legislation, the CMA should continue to investigate a package of TDM alternatives countywide or as part of a regionwide partnership, or both. This could include initiating a regionwide GRH program. This has the potential of reducing total indirect costs--such as administration, marketing and overhead--across the merged programs. In 2010, CMA staff met with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to discuss interest in assuming operations of the GRH Program. Should a regionwide program be developed, the eligibility requirements for rides and reimbursable expenses should be consistent with other GRH programs in the Bay Area.

8. Continue research /planning to expand the GRH Program in Alameda County into a comprehensive TDM Program.

Including the GRH program as part of a comprehensive TDM program would result in economies of scale for marketing and administration. A package of TDM options is being considered as part of the Climate Change efforts the CMA is pursuing to address greenhouse gas emissions requirements through AB 32 and SB 375. This could also be a factor in Alameda County's Climate Action Plan and can position the county to receive new funding when it becomes available at a future date.

The GRH Program, whether in Alameda County or regionwide, should be considered part of these efforts. TDM measures could include: ridematching, financial incentives for carpooling and vanpooling, discounted transit passes, personalized transit itineraries, subsidized bicycle parking racks and lockers, bicycle commuting maps and promotions and other marketing strategies. An employer may be more willing and interested to pay a fee if they were receiving a toolbox of transportation benefits. Although, this is not necessarily a new funding option, it could be an intermediary step that could be phased in over time to garner employer contributions in the future. The next step could be to conduct focus group meetings with employers to get more detailed information on their transportation needs and interest in a comprehensive TDM Program.

1. Continue operations and marketing, including maintaining website and conducting employee and employer surveys.

Staff continued to market the program to employees and employers via newsletters, emails, telephone calls, mailers, attendance of employee benefits fairs, etc. Employee and employer surveys are completed annually as part of the annual program evaluation report. The annual surveying effort for 2009 concluded in March 2010.

As a result of marketing, operations, maintaining the website and conducting the annual surveys, the Guaranteed Ride Home program added 12 new employers and 406 new employee participants in 2009. This number of new enrollees is significantly less than it was in 2008, which had 56 new employers and 722 new employees. The large increase in registered businesses and employee participants in 2008 can be attributed to a successful partnership with the Emeryville TMA and Downtown Berkeley Association (DBA) as well as record high gas prices which led to more commuters choosing alternative modes. The average price of gasoline in 2008 was \$3.72 per gallon in the Bay Area. In 2009, gas prices fell significantly and the average price of gasoline was \$2.67 per gallon.⁸ The 2009 recession and reduction in the workforce may have prevented new employers from registering because many businesses do not having the capacity to take on extra work or interest in expanding options for their employees.

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As done in 2008, as part of the 2009 evaluation, GRH staff contacted all employers and employees and reminded them of the rental car requirement. Employer contacts were reminded of the rental car requirement as part of the telephone call communication. The 2009 employee and employer surveys were distributed primarily via email and included a brief explanation of the rental car requirement in the email and within the survey. Persons not providing the program with an email address were mailed the survey with a cover letter explaining the rental car requirement. The survey itself asked employer and employee participants questions about rental usage and their understanding of the requirement. The complete results of these questions are presented in Chapters 4 and 5 and a brief summary is provided below.

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As a result of these efforts, the survey showed that rental car requirement awareness among employer representative respondents increased from 69% in 2008 to 72% in 2009. Among registered employees, awareness decreased slightly from 47% in 2008 to 41% in 2009. Rental car usage accounted for 18% of trips, which was within 1% of rental car usage in 2008. Nearly one out of five rides is taken using a rental car.

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In order to promote the GRH Program to businesses in South and Central Alameda County, the Program Administrator sent letters to the Chamber of Commerce of Newark, San Leandro, Hayward, Union City, and Fremont. GRH staff prepared press releases and newsletter blurbs which were distributed to local businesses through the Chamber of Commerce. GRH staff has also been in contact with city officials from Union City and San Leandro. The Guaranteed Ride Home Program was featured in the October Newsletter for the Alameda County Green Business Program, which is sent to businesses throughout the county.

Despite the targeted marketing efforts, San Leandro was the only city in South or Central Alameda County to increase GRH enrollment in 2009. San Leandro experienced a 50% increase in the number of enrolled businesses in 2009, from two to three registered employers. Overall, there was minimal growth in registered businesses in Central Alameda County and a decrease in registered businesses in South Alameda County. This may be attributed to a reduction in the GRH marketing budget in 2009 to cover the cost of the comprehensive program evaluation (Eisen/Letunic), combined with a downturn in the economy.

Figure ES-7 Number of Employers by City (2009)

Location	Number of Employers
North	107
Alameda	9
Berkeley	35
Emeryville	21
Oakland	42
East	52
Dublin	8
Livermore	10
Pleasanton	34
South	20
Fremont	16
Newark	2
Union City	2
Central	10
Hayward	7
San Leandro	3
Total	189

This recommendation is recommended to be carried forward in 2010 in order to further promote awareness of the GRH Program in South and Central Alameda County. The Program Administrator attended a Clean Commute Transportation Fair in San Leandro on April 19, 2010. However, despite marketing efforts, it has been difficult to encourage employer participation in South and Central Alameda County. This could be due to the recession or that employees from South and Central County may be commuting from more dispersed locations and do not have immediate access to alternative transportation options. Figure ES-4 presents the number of employers by location in Alameda County in 2009.

4. Implement and market the one minimum employee per employer requirement.

In order to offer a program that is inclusive for smaller businesses, the GRH Program eliminated the minimum number of employees per employer requirement in 2009. Of the 11 GRH programs reviewed as part of the comprehensive program evaluation completed in 2009, the Alameda County GRH Program is the only program that has an employee per employer requirement. The Board made the recommendation to eliminate the employer size requirement and open the program to any employer in the county, regardless of size based on the results of the comprehensive program evaluation conducted by Eisen\Letunic.

Based on the program's prior experience in reducing the minimum number of employees requirement from 100 to 75 employees, and a review of other GRH programs with no minimum number of employees requirement, program staff was confident that eliminating the employees per employer requirement would not increase program costs. As expected, the change did not have a large impact on program administration. Furthermore, eliminating the employee requirement did not greatly expand the number of businesses and employees enrolled in the program or the number of rides taken. Smaller businesses often are not able to dedicate staff to market and administer the GRH program internally. Larger employers often have transportation managers, transportation coordinators, or persons in charge of employee benefits programs that can easily be the GRH contact person and distribute information to employees.

In 2009, six new businesses with fewer than 75 employees registered for the GRH Program. Although marketing efforts increased with the implementation of the recommendation, the number of new registered employers may be low due to the current economic recession. Many employers, especially smaller businesses, may not have the capacity to take on extra work and are not interested in expanding options for employees. GRH staff worked with Chambers of Commerce and created press releases to advertise the change in the program and continue to effectively market the program to all employers regardless of size. Chamber contacts were sent information about the program to review and distribute to employers. The GRH website was updated to reflect the new program information about the change in minimum employees per employer requirement.

The figure below shows all businesses that registered in 2009.

Figure ES-8 New Employers (2009)

Employer Name	City	# of Employees	Date Registered
LAVTA Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority	Livermore	10	9/17/2009
Social Policy Research Associates	Oakland	25	11/13/2009
State of California, Employment Development Department	Oakland	36	10/16/2009
Calpine Corporation	Dublin	45	7/6/2009
Fluor Enterprises, Inc.	Dublin	50	3/25/2009
USCG Civil Engineering Unit Oakland (CEUO)	Oakland	60	9/11/2009
Lithium Technologies, Inc.	Emeryville	80	2/12/2009
Alameda County Employees Retirement Association	Oakland	93	12/3/2009
Gracernote, Inc.	Emeryville	160	6/22/2009
Taleo Corporation	Dublin	160	7/24/2009
East Bay Regional Park District	Oakland	200	10/29/2009
Otis Spunkmeyer, Inc.	San Leandro	250	11/18/2009

5. Investigate implementing a regional GRH Program with MTC and all nine counties in the region.

The CMA Board recommended that the CMA work with MTC to investigate initiating a regionwide GRH program. This has the potential of reducing total indirect costs--such as administration, marketing and overhead--across the merged programs. CMA staff met with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC and the Bay Area counties to discuss interest in implementing a regional GRH Program in the Bay Area. At this time, CMA and the region are focusing on a range of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) options, including GRH options, to address recent Climate Action legislation (SB 375 and AB 32).

6. Expand the GRH Program in Alameda County into a comprehensive TDM Program (pending new funding).

A recommendation from the Eisen/Letunic evaluation of the GRH program (2009) was to expand the current GRH program to include a full package of TDM measures. This would be consistent with many other GRH programs nationwide in addition to many other Bay Area counties. Such a move would clearly increase costs and benefits for the program, although it may be an opportunity to leverage financial contributions from private employers. An employer may be more willing and interested to pay a fee if they were receiving a toolbox of transportation benefits. Although, this is not necessarily a new funding option, it could be an intermediary step that could be phased in over time to garner employer contributions in the future.

Including the GRH program as part of a comprehensive TDM program would result in economies of scale for marketing and administration. A package of TDM options is being considered as part of the Climate Change efforts the CMA is pursuing to address greenhouse gas emissions requirements through AB 32 and SB 375. The GRH Program, whether in Alameda County or

regionwide, should be considered part of these efforts. TDM measures could include: ridematching, financial incentives for carpooling and vanpooling, discounted transit passes, personalized transit itineraries, subsidized bicycle parking racks and lockers, bicycle commuting maps and promotions and other marketing strategies.

7. Investigate requiring employers to contribute toward the cost of the GRH Program.

As with other GRH programs in the Bay Area, the ACCMA program relies on TFCA grants to fund program operations. Since its inception twelve years ago, the Alameda County GRH program has been funded exclusively through grants from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's Transportation Fund for Clean Air (BAAQMD-TFCA) and has been free of charge to employers and employees in Alameda County. This continued funding from the TFCA reflects GRH's high level of efficiency in reducing motor vehicle emissions, the primary requirement for the TFCA program. Despite the fact that GRH has been highly competitive in the TFCA program over the past twelve years, being reliant on a sole funding source may not be sustainable, particularly in today's California fiscal climate. For this reason, and to provide a sense of equity of having employers who receive a benefit from the program to contribute towards it, the ACCMA is interested in exploring other funding alternatives to supplement TFCA funding, understanding that GRH is a fundamental component in encouraging many to travel to and from work by alternative modes of transportation.

Because the program has been offered without a fee since inception, even a minimal charge to employers could lead to employer attrition in the program. The 2009 employer survey asked whether employers would be willing to contribute financially to the program. Seventy percent of respondents stated that their continued participation would be "very unlikely" or "unlikely" if the program charged a flat rate. Four percent thought that their participation would be "very likely" and 26% responded that their participation would be "likely". In 2008, when employers were asked about their likely continued participation if charged an annual flat fee, 83% stated "unlikely" or "very unlikely". The results from the 2009 survey show that employers may be more willing to pay for GRH when it is incorporated into a countywide TDM Program. Additional education and outreach efforts may be necessary to inform employers about the value of a TDM benefits program.

A comprehensive memo that investigates employer contribution into the program was submitted to the CMA early 2010 (see Appendix B). The memo analyzed several strategies that could be utilized to introduce employer contributions for the GRH program (summarized in Figure ES-6). Based on an analysis of current employer contribution methods, GRH Staff determined that a per-trip fee would be the most effective means of implementing a compulsory employer contribution. However, implementation of such a program could significantly reduce program participation. Program participants should first be surveyed on this potential option to garner their reaction to such a structure. More importantly, economic conditions at this time do not support the introduction of a fee on businesses to support the Guaranteed Ride Home Program. Thus, an employer contribution proposal should be deferred until economic conditions improve.

In summary, the following recommendations were offered for introducing employer contributions for the GRH program:

- Further investigate a per-trip basis employer contribution for those enrolled in the GRH program by adding questions/language on the 2010 GRH Survey;

- Establish goals for employer contributions implementation, these goals could include – maintaining program participation, establishing funding equity, and improving administration efficiency;
- Establish goals for revenues from employer contributions, such as a percentage of reimbursement for rides, similar to other GRH programs, and
- Defer implementation until economic conditions improve

Concurrently, the ACCMA should consider other long-term options with regard to fulfilling its goals of reducing transportation congestion. This could include other potential TDM programs in addition to GRH that can offer employers additional value in terms of transportation benefits, thus warranting further contribution. This recommendation compliments and supports recommendation number 6 above.

Figure ES–9 Various Employer Financial Contribution Strategies

	Flat Fee	Based on Employer Size	Based on Trip Usage
Advantages	Straightforward administration costs High revenue potential	More accurately reflects operational costs	Costs can be tied directly to program usage Less administration costs as compared to "employer size"
Disadvantages	Not responsive to different levels of program usage/different employer size Could result in significant loss in participation	Administrative bookkeeping could be time-consuming Does not accurately capture costs based on actual operating costs (per trip)	Would require additional invoicing / administration to bill individual trips, could be done on a semi-annual or quarterly basis

2010 Recommendations

Based on this evaluation report and the comprehensive program evaluation completed in February 2010, CMA staff recommends the following course of action for 2010:

Recommendations for 2010

1. Continue operations and marketing, including maintaining website and conducting employee and employer surveys.

Operations of the GRH program should continue in 2010 including database maintenance, general marketing, and maintaining the website. Employee and employer surveys should be completed annually as part of the annual program evaluation report. The surveys for the 2010 evaluation should be scheduled for late January/early February 2011.

2. Continue to monitor and market the 50+ mile car rental requirement.

GRH staff should continue monitoring and marketing the requirement to take non-emergency rides greater than 50 miles with rental cars. Marketing should be focused on informing new employers and employees about the requirement. This effort should include continuing to telephone and e-mail participants who used the program for non-emergency rides and live over 50 miles from their workplace to remind the participant of the program requirement and attach reminders to all vouchers about the requirement.

3. Continue to focus on registering businesses in South and Central Alameda County.

Although the program has been broadly marketed to all jurisdictions within Alameda County, staff should continue a targeted marketing effort to enroll businesses in South and Central Alameda County.

Of the 189 businesses registered in the GRH Program, the North and East County cities such as Pleasanton, Oakland, Berkeley, and Emeryville represent over 80% of the businesses. In order to create more program equity across Alameda County and increase participation in South and Central Alameda County, the GRH Program should continue marketing efforts on employers in these areas in 2010. Additional efforts should also be made to reach out to employers in the unincorporated areas of Alameda County. By working with Chambers of Commerce, attending transportation fairs and forming relationships business associations in South and Central County cities, the GRH Program should attempt to increase awareness and participation in these areas.

4. Continue to market the reduced minimum employee per employer requirement.

In February 2009, The CMA Board recommended eliminating the employer size requirement and opening the program to any employer in the county, regardless of size. The recommendation was based on the results of the comprehensive program evaluation which found that of 11 GRH programs nationwide, only the CMA program had a minimum number of employees per employer requirement. Eliminating the minimum number of employees per employer requirement did not greatly expand the number of businesses and employees enrolled in the program or the number of rides taken since smaller businesses often are not able to dedicate staff to market and administer the GRH program internally. However, it is important to increase program awareness among smaller businesses in Alameda County in order to further encourage mode shifts from driving alone to alternative forms of transportation. This recommendation can be combined with recommendation 5, below.

5. Implement new program-wide marketing strategies.

GRH staff should continue to work with Chambers of Commerce and create press releases to advertise the change in the program and continue to form partnerships with TMAs and business associations to more effectively market the program to all employers regardless of size. However, additional outreach and marketing is needed to reach out to new potential employers throughout Alameda County, regardless of size or location. Some new marketing strategies can include: local newspapers, newsletters, magazines, radio ads, and community fairs. There is great potential to partner with 511 and other commute alternative partners (VSPI, Enterprise, AC Transit, and LAVTA) to help get a foot hold into businesses and encourage participation.

6. Create a new GRH database with information stored on-line instead of in Access Database.

This recommendation is intended to reduce the administrative time associated with running the GRH Program. GRH currently utilizes Access database to store and analyze information. While this system has worked fine in the past, the size of the database is causing some performance issues. When the current database was created, its size was 10 megabytes. With the continuous growth of the program over the years, the database has grown to 115 megabytes. In order to avoid problems with crashing and slow response time, it may be necessary to upgrade the database.

The current database system GRH utilizes could be much more efficient. In order to enter a new employee or employer into the database, the employee/employer must first submit all information by fax, mail, or e-mail. Once this information is received, a GRH staff member can then enter the information manually into the database. Even if an employee submits their registration materials on-line, information must still be re-entered into the database. Employees must also fax or mail a waiver to complete their application. It is very common to receive incomplete applications that do not contain a signed waiver. GRH staff must then follow up with each person and send them a PDF version of the liability form for them to fax or mail it in. This system is very time consuming, wastes paper, and leaves much room for error.

Current technology exists to interface the on-line registration form with an updated on-line database. Once an employee or employer fills out the registration form on-line, it will be automatically entered into the GRH database in real time – eliminating the need to re-enter the same information. This will not only save staff time, but it will also allow new registrants to be enrolled in the system more easily and efficiently. An automatic e-mail can then be sent to each new registrant, directing them to the liability waiver form. Once more staff time is freed up from mundane data entry, more time can be spent on marketing and customer service.

7. Continue to investigate implementing a regional GRH Program with MTC and all nine counties in the region.

As part of CMA's efforts to be responsive to Climate Action legislation, the CMA should continue to investigate a package of TDM alternatives countywide or as part of a regionwide partnership, or both. This could include initiating a regionwide GRH program. This has the potential of reducing total indirect costs--such as administration, marketing and overhead--across the merged programs. In 2010, CMA staff met with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to discuss interest in assuming operations of the GRH Program. Should a regionwide program be developed, the eligibility requirements for rides and reimbursable expenses should be consistent with other GRH programs in the Bay Area.

8. Continue research /planning to expand the GRH Program in Alameda County into a comprehensive TDM Program.

Including the GRH program as part of a comprehensive TDM program would result in economies of scale for marketing and administration. A package of TDM options is being considered as part of the Climate Change efforts the CMA is pursuing to address greenhouse gas emissions requirements through AB 32 and SB 375. This could also be a factor in Alameda County's Climate Action Plan and can position the county to receive new funding when it becomes available at a future date.

The GRH Program, whether in Alameda County or regionwide, should be considered part of these efforts. TDM measures could include: ridematching, financial incentives for carpooling and vanpooling, discounted transit passes, personalized transit itineraries, subsidized bicycle parking racks and lockers, bicycle commuting maps and promotions and other marketing strategies. An employer may be more willing and interested to pay a fee if they were receiving a toolbox of transportation benefits. Although, this is not necessarily a new funding option, it could be an intermediary step that could be phased in over time to garner employer contributions in the future. The next step could be to conduct focus group meetings with employers to get more detailed information on their transportation needs and interest in a comprehensive TDM Program.