

## Commute Trip Reduction Expansion: Mobility Coalitions

The TDM Executive Board and Technical Committees and WSDOT are developing recommendations for the legislature to expand commute trip reduction. At the next TDM Technical Committee Meeting, members will discuss increased investments in the current commute trip reduction program and investments in a new program that might better meet previously established emphasis areas, which include disadvantaged populations, rural communities, and non-commute travel. WSDOT staff were asked to draft a new program to enable these discussions.

### **New program proposal: Mobility Coalitions**

Create and support 30-40 mobility coalitions who deliver mobility solutions to disadvantaged populations and rural communities. Local Mobility Coalitions may be comprised of public and private entities who together engage their communities to identify mobility gaps, develop plans to address the gaps, deliver projects to address the gaps, and measure and report performance results. In coordination they support equity by delivering mobility solutions to disadvantaged and transit dependent populations and rural communities.

Mobility solutions emphasize the use of transportation demand management and the development of new solutions for places and populations that lack transportation options, e.g. multimodal deserts, rural and other low-population-density areas, cross-county, and shift workers.

Transportation demand management focuses on increased use of existing non-drive-alone transportation services and facilities and expanded non-drive-alone services for locations and markets where they are inadequate.

These solutions support broader transportation goals, including greenhouse gas emission reduction, health, safety, resiliency, and accessibility.

### **How would it work?**

The state provides funds and technical assistance to local organizations who want to form coalitions that address otherwise unmet transportation needs. Local coalitions engage their communities to identify mobility gaps, develop plans to address the gaps, deliver projects to address the gaps, and measure and report performance results. The program involves a mix of ongoing formula funding and competitive funding for pilot and start up projects.

### **Why is this a good idea?**

Mobility coalitions are well positioned to know the needs of a community and the solutions that would work for a community.

- Provide fast, local, and more equitable solutions for people that need access to health care, jobs, education, food, medicine, and family.
- Create local capacity to develop mobility solutions:
  - for populations that are otherwise deprioritized due to lack of resources
  - that fall into the void between commute trip reduction, transit, rural, and special needs transportation

- Complements existing federal and state programs (e.g. Rural Mobility, Commute Trip Reduction, Regional Mobility Grants, Transit Tier List, FTA 5310, FTA 5311, CMAQ) and increases local capacity to use these programs.

The concept is proven in our state and elsewhere in the country. The handful of mobility coalitions in Washington have developed and delivered mobility services in otherwise underserved areas. They must compete for funding and, as a result, their future is uncertain. This same fate previously befell Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers and Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation local coalitions. In these examples, local coalitions proved that they are well positioned to understand the needs of a community and deliver solutions that work. The gap: funding to sustain the organizations.

**What resources would be necessary?**

\$25M/biennium, operating funds

- \$6M formula funds to local grantees to establish and maintain mobility coalitions, develop and deliver mobility plans and projects, measure and report performance.
- \$14M competitive funds to local grantees to start up mobility projects.
- \$5M for state administration (1FTE) and technical assistance. Technical assistance could be provided by state staff (7 FTEs) or contracted out. Technical assistance would support the development of coalitions, mobility plans, implementation and performance reporting.

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