

Date: February 4, 2011

Subject: Seeking ACCT support for funding (\$20,000) of a SchoolPool module for RideshareOnline with 2009-2011 ACCT funds

From: Cathy Silins, Assistant Director
Public Transportation Division

Background

RideshareOnline.com is a resource for commuting options in the Northwest. This regional project is managed by Washington State Department of Transportation and is currently available in Washington, Oregon and Idaho. RideshareOnline.com is a convenient and easy to use tool for the traveling public to help reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and sustain the quality of living in our region. Employers and commuters benefit from this 'best in class' service. RideshareOnline.com is the gateway to free information on travel options and incentive programs for commute and non-commute trips. It also offers tools for employers to implement effective commute reduction programs.

Commuter Assistance: RideshareOnline.com assists commuters by providing free carpool, vanpool and bicycle ridematching services, bus/rail options, and information about the benefits of teleworking from home. Many commuters may be able to access information on their employer's in-house commute program and promotional incentives through RideshareOnline.com.

Employer Services: RideshareOnline.com provides a free, comprehensive online tool to assist employers in managing their employee transportation program. The tool can help them develop and implement a customized employee benefit program that lowers employer costs, increases productivity, distributes incentives online and helps protect the environment.

Proposal Add the School Pool module

One of the many new modules available to enhance RideshareOnline is SchoolPool, a carpooling program for parents, students and schools. This feature will save time, money and worry and help kids make new friends. By school pooling, our communities will conserve energy and reduce carbon emissions. Parents will be able to form carpools, walk pools, or bike trains--a great way of building goodwill and supporting alternative transportation options.

The SchoolPool module provides a secure network and coordinates sites customized for public and private schools. The module will provide a range of easy-to-use features that make creating and maintaining carpools, walk pools, and bike trains fun, easy and safe for children.

In Denver Colorado, a school pool program is currently providing matches to more than 13,000 elementary and secondary school families. In King County and Idaho, there are several school pool pilot projects in both public and private schools.

The SchoolPool module for RideshareOnline will contain unique properties to ensure protection for the children and parents, give parents the power to limit/expand the rideshare options for their children, and provide the school a tool that can be used to communicate with parents throughout the year that have common interests and needs for student transportation. SchoolPool could be used for afterschool transportation for children as well as for children that are not eligible for school bus services.

Denver has already paid a portion of the cost to develop this module. The Washington state share is \$20,000.