Analysis And Recommendations For A Regional Commuter Assistance Program

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Analysis and Recommendations for a Regional Commuter Assistance Program

Submitted to:
Florida Department of Transportation
Tampa Bay Commuter Assistance Program (TCAP)

Prepared by:
Center for Urban Transportation Research
University of South Florida

May 1989
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SUMMARY OF TCAP PROGRAM TO DATE

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has contracted with the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) at the University of South Florida to undertake a Tampa Bay Commuter Assistance Program Demonstration Project (TCAP). The purpose of this project is to implement the recommendations of a recently completed evaluation of the State ridesharing program. The study was conducted by a consultant and resulted in a recommendation to create a regional transportation service brokerage agency. This agency will serve as a regional organization and will combine the existing ridesharing services in the Tampa Bay area. The organization will promote the various transportation alternatives available to the single-occupant vehicle. The Department's District Seven region (Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, and Hernando Counties) was selected for this demonstration project as a result of recommendation by district and local ridesharing agencies involved.

A project advisory group was established by FDOT, consisting of representatives from the following:

FDOT, District VII
Hillsborough MPO
Pinellas MPO
Pasco MPO
Hernando County
CUTR

The purpose of this group was to meet on a periodic basis to review and guide the progress of the research conducted by CUTR. The first meeting was held October 7, 1988 to introduce all parties involved and to informally discuss the existing ridesharing programs as well as the proposed TCAP.

The second meeting was held on November 9, 1988 with the purpose being to review the existing ridesharing programs in greater detail and to discuss the various institutional possibilities for implementation of the TCAP project.

A complete review of the existing ridesharing programs is included in Appendix A of this document. A number of implications can be drawn from a consideration of this review. The most prominent is that, even though the county ridesharing programs have not been a high priority, they still have achieved some degree of success. This indicates that a dedicated staff, whose chief responsibility is the implementation of a commuter assistance program, may enjoy considerable success. It is evident from the review that the most effective marketing approach is through direct contact with employers. The first priority should be the establishment of new employer contacts as well as maintaining those contacts already established in the program. At the same time, an innovative marketing campaign should be undertaken to encourage individual interest as well. An employer base has already been developed in Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties which will be very helpful when the regional program is ultimately established. Although somewhat limited, this employer base still provides a starting point from which TCAP can expand.
This review was followed by a discussion of the various institutional possibilities for program implementation. The institutions considered are as follows:

- Each County "Does Its Own Thing" - That is, Hillsborough and Pinellas would continue operating their existing ridesharing programs while Pasco and Hernando would establish their own commuter assistance programs to serve their individual counties. Each program would be a completely separate entity maintaining an office and staff, preparing separate promotional materials, etc.

- "One County Does All" - The regional program would be established specifically within an existing program but that program would now be responsible for providing services to all four counties. This would require interlocal agreements to assure necessary financial support from each of the counties.

- FDOT Commuter Assistance Office - The Florida Department of Transportation would establish a regional commuter assistance program within the District VII office. They would assume total control over the program and would be responsible for serving each of the four participating counties.

- Tampa Bay RPC Commuter Assistance Office - The commuter assistance program would be established within the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council and would assume all functions of the program.

- CUTR Commuter Assistance Office - CUTR would assume full responsibility for the establishment and operation of a regional commuter assistance program.

- HART/PSTA Commuter Services Office - One of the local transit agencies or a combination of the two would expand their services to include those offered by a regional commuter assistance program.

- Private Non-Profit Commuter Assistance Office - A private non-profit organization would be established with the sole purpose being to organize and operate a regional commuter assistance program. Guided by a board of directors consisting of representatives from the public and private sectors, a dedicated staff would implement all functions of the program.

The advantages and disadvantages of each of the seven institutional possibilities were discussed (a listing can be found in Appendix B). There was general agreement that the ultimate institution should be some form of independent regional office. The advantage cited most frequently in favor of this institution was that it would then be established with a single purpose. The consensus decision of the committee at that time was to establish a public/private non-profit organization which would be carefully monitored by a board of directors. This board would be composed of representatives from both the public and
private sectors. The committee decided that CUTR should prepare a description of this potential organization for discussion at the next meeting. CUTR prepared an organizational structure and recommended budget for such a program.

A third meeting was held January 5, 1989 with the intention of reviewing the preliminary organization prepared by CUTR. During the interim period, there was new representation on the advisory committee from Hillsborough. Several reservations were indicated by this new representation as to what institution should ultimately be established. Plans were made to brief the various MPOs on the alternatives examined and to solicit their input on these alternatives. Also at this meeting, a representative from HART indicated that his organization was a supporter of TCAP and would be willing to assist the group in any way possible. Subsequently, Hillsborough County representatives evidenced a strong preference for an existing local agency to operate the program. The MPO briefings were postponed to allow respective staffs to further analyze alternatives. CUTR met separately with Hillsborough County and Hart staff to discuss the various alternatives.

The results of these meetings indicated that additional institutional possibilities should be considered further before making a final decision. Based on various opinions of the organizations involved, it was determined that three institutions should be analyzed more closely. Those selected for further review include:

- Regional Program Housed Within HART/PSTA
- Contract Services Out to a Private Company
- A Private Non-Profit Organization

These institutions shall be carefully reviewed in this document. First, the advantages and disadvantages of each institution will be outlined and discussed. Second, a simple criteria analysis will be conducted to determine which institution is believed to have the greatest overall potential.
AN ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED INSTITUTIONS
FOR THE TAMPA BAY REGIONAL COMMUTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

BACKGROUND

Before analyzing the various institutions under consideration for the regional commuter assistance program, it is important that one has a clear understanding of the characteristics of the service area. The following is a brief description of the service area being considered for the regional program. General characteristics are listed below for the aggregated service area as well as for each of the individual counties participating in the program (Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, Hernando).

Service Area Characteristics (Totals for all four counties)

- Population: Estimated 1986, 1,910,023
- Square Miles: 2548 square miles
- Population Density: 750 persons per square mile
- Employment: Estimated 1987, 910,696
- Number of Political Jurisdictions: 4 counties, 34 cities
  - (Hillsborough-3, Pinellas-24, Pasco-5, Hernando-2)
- Number of Transit Providers: 3 transit agencies

Service Area Characteristics by County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Est. 1986 Population</th>
<th>Square Miles</th>
<th>Density (persons per square mile)</th>
<th>State Rank (Density)</th>
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<td>Pinellas</td>
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<td>Hernando</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,910,023</td>
<td>2,548</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Florida Statistical Abstract 1987
RESPONSIBILITIES OF A COMMUTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The various possible responsibilities of a comprehensive commuter assistance program are listed below and should be reviewed carefully before making a decision as to which institution is best suited to implement them.

1. Matching Services
   a. Coding
   b. Key Punching
   c. Editing
   d. Software Installation
   e. Data Entry and Execution
   f. Statistical Update
   g. Hardware Provision

2. Marketing and Promotion
   a. Program Image
   b. Material Preparation
   c. Design
   d. Research
   e. Employer Contact
   f. Employer Follow-Thru
   g. Employer Incentive Provision
   h. Telephone Matching Services
   i. Civic Awareness
   j. Public Awareness

3. Vanpool/Buspool Option
   a. Service Start-Up
   b. Record Keeping/Adm.
   c. Rider/Driver Identification
   d. Vehicle Maintenance
   e. Legal/Insurance Services
   f. Vehicle Records Maintenance
   g. Vehicle Provision
   h. Spare Van Provision
   i. Fare Management
   j. Driver Training
   k. Third Party Providers

4. Transportation Planning Assistance
   a. Flexible Work Hours
   b. Parking Management & Other TSM
   c. Employee Incentives
   d. Traffic Engineering Improvements
   e. Policy Advocacy
   f. Reverse Commuting
   g. Assistance to Planning Agencies
   h. Energy/Air Quality Assistance to Employers
   i. Ridesharing Coordinator Training

5. General Program Adm.
   a. Internal Relations
   b. External Relations
   c. Budget Preparation
   d. Grant Preparation/Adm.
   e. Planning
   f. Staff Performance Monitoring
   g. Library Maintenance
   h. Contract Administration
   i. Auditing
   j. Accounting/Bookkeeping

6. Monitoring/Evaluation
   a. Data Collection
   b. Monitoring Report Preparation
   c. Evaluation
   d. Innovation/Experimentation
   e. Performance Reporting

7. Public Transportation
   a. Transit Information
   b. Transit Improvements
   c. Employer Subsidized Pass Programs

Source: TRB Special Report 193
COMPARISON OF INSTITUTIONS

The analysis below considers three possible institutional frameworks for the proposed Tampa Bay Commuter Assistance Program. They are: (1) An independent program housed within HART/PSTA; (2) Contract program to private company (may or may not be housed within HART/PSTA); (3) An independent private non-profit organization. A summary of each proposed institution is presented followed by a list of advantages and disadvantages.

I. Regional Program Housed Within HART/PSTA

Summary

- The TCAP regional office would be administratively housed within HART/PSTA, but would have a separate identity established.

- A advisory board would be established consisting of representatives from the participating counties (Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, Hernando) as well as representatives from FDOT District VII, CUTR, and the private sector (various major employers to be determined).

- The purpose of the advisory board would be to oversee and guide the activities of the organization. The board would also monitor the progress and performance of the commuter assistance program.

- The advisory board would select an executive director whose sole responsibility will be to direct the TCAP program.

- Despite being housed at HART/PSTA, the executive director would be accountable to the advisory board and would report to them periodically. It is suggested that, in the early stages, the advisory board meet with the executive director on a monthly basis. However, as the program progresses, meeting frequency would likely be reduced to a quarterly basis.

- The executive director would in turn be responsible for the hiring of all staff positions. It is anticipated that the program will achieve greater success if the executive director is permitted to select his/her own staff.

- Interlocal agreements would be established among the four counties and the FDOT in order to ensure that all participants are aware of and support the organizational framework of the program. In particular, these agreements would outline how the counties intended to fund the program. Each of the four counties would participate in the funding process and the interlocal agreements would establish to what extent each county should support the program with funding and/or in kind services.
• All funding would be funneled through the administration process at HART. This includes funding from each of the participating counties as well as any funding from FDOT District VII, other public entities, and even the private sector.

• Probably the most important characteristic of this institution is that it maintain its independence. This would ensure that the sole priority would be transportation commuter assistance and that the program would receive the priority it needs in order to maximize the likelihood for success. Despite being housed within HART/PSTA, it should not be treated as a HART/PSTA program but as an independent entity located within the HART/PSTA administrative structure.

Advantages

• Authority to perform operating functions already exists - HART/PSTA are already established as operating agencies which means that no new organization would need to be established. In the past, rideshare programs have been housed within the Metropolitan Planning Organizations whose specific tasks relate to planning. Being housed within a planning environment has apparently been a major deterrent to the operational success of ridesharing programs.

• Economies of scale - It is apparent that many economies of scale would exist as a result of having many activities that could be carried on in conjunction with the on-going administration of the transit system. If a new organization were established, it would likely contribute to the duplication of efforts in administration, marketing, and the provision of services. For this reason alone, implementation costs could be less than with an independent agency.

• Marketing orientation already exists - The most important task in initiating the regional program is establishing an effective and innovative marketing strategy. The advantage of being housed within HART/PSTA is that a marketing orientation already exists. Therefore, many marketing activities could perhaps be carried on in conjunction with the existing marketing efforts of HART/PSTA.

• Still independent - Despite being housed in the transit agency, it is anticipated that the organization would need to be established in such a way as to maintain a significant degree of independence. This would ensure that the program would continue to be focused on its sole priority--commuter assistance.

• Ensures better coordination of services - By housing TCAP within HART/PSTA, it is anticipated that the overall communication would be much better resulting in a higher level of service for the citizens in the area.
Disadvantages

- **Possible bias in favor of traditional transit solutions** - There are very few success stories where commuter assistance programs have been established within an actual transit agency. Most believe that this is a result of a sense of competitiveness between advocates of transit and advocates of commuter assistance to be offered by the proposed regional program. This is not to say that this institution would not be successful but it does indicate that it would not be an easy task. If all players involved have the positive attitude necessary to achieve success, then the program can work.

- **Perceived difficulty in serving all four counties** - It is anticipated that it would be quite difficult to serve all four counties fairly when the program is housed specifically in a Hillsborough County agency. This is a question that will need to be addressed in the interlocal agreements that are to be established among the four participating counties and FDOT.

- **Difficult to obtain private sector participation** - Being housed within a transit agency, the program will be perceived as being another addition to local government. For that reason alone, private sector involvement will be difficult to obtain.

- **Requires interlocal agreements** - Problems may arise in attempting to establish interlocal agreements suitable to all parties involved.

- **Potential for reduced emphasis if environment changes** - In particular, if the environment changes such that reduced funding and staffing is required, it is anticipated that TCAP would be the first area within HART/PSTA to suffer as a result of the reduced emphasis.

**EXAMPLE**

**Tidewater Regional Transit**
P.O Box 2096
Norfolk, Virginia 23501
(804) 627-9291

**Service Area Characteristics:**

Population: Estimated 1988, 800,000
Square Miles: 1,000 square miles
Population Density: 800 persons per square mile
Number of Political Jurisdictions: 5 cities in Southeastern Virginia
The Tidewater Transportation District Commission (TTDC) is a regional transportation authority. Chartered by the state in 1973, TTDC is responsible for the planning, regulation, construction, acquisition, operation, and provision of transportation services in all five cities. The District does not have taxing authority; it relies on annual contributions from the city, state, and Federal governments to subsidize its operating and capital costs.

One of the major service development goals of Tidewater Transit is to enhance commuter mobility by offering a variety of innovative transportation alternatives. These alternatives include: bus service, trolley and seasonal services, commuter ridesharing, handicapped services, demand responsive services, community based services, ferry service, and other special services. As a multi-service provider of both traditional and innovative transportation services, Tidewater is an excellent example of the institution being considered within HART/PSTA.

II. Contract Services Out to a Private Sector Company

Summary

- All participating counties, FDOT District VII, and CUTR would jointly select a private company to provide all services of a regional commuter assistance program. Under contract, the company could operate an independent office or could operate within an existing public organization such as HART/PSTA.

- Another implementing possibility is that FDOT could contract directly with a private company as was done with Gold Coast Commuter Services located in Broward County.

- Regardless of the operating location, the program would be treated as an independent entity. However, the private company must report to a board of directors on a monthly or quarterly basis.

- The board of directors would be composed of representatives from each of the four counties as well as representatives from FDOT District VII and CUTR. The purpose of the board would be to guide the activities and monitor the performance of the contracted company.

- Interlocal agreements would be established among the participating counties to determine the extent to which each county should be required to finance the operations of the program.

- If housed within an existing agency, all funding would be funneled through the administrative process of that agency. This includes funding from all possible sources (counties, FDOT District VII, other public entities, private sector).
Advantages

- Private company should have unbiased and regional perspective - It is anticipated that the contracting company would serve each of the four counties in an equal and satisfactory manner. Each county would monitor the performance of the organization by having representation on the board of directors.

- All functions would be administered by the private company - The contracting company would handle matching services, marketing and promotion, third party vanpools, transportation systems management, and general program administration.

- Incentive to succeed - As in the private sector, the company must produce results if they intend to continue under contract. This implicitly assumes that an effective performance evaluation system will be implemented along with the program in order to accurately reflect the program's effectiveness. This incentive may not be as evident if the organization were run by or within an existing public organization.

- Marketing likely to be more effective - A successful marketing strategy is the most important element in the development of a successful commuter assistance program. In particular, if a firm were hired that specializes in or is strongly associated with marketing, they would likely have experience in working within a competitive marketing environment. A commuter assistance program, which requires an extremely innovative and sophisticated marketing strategy, could perhaps achieve this through a contracted private company.

- A single purpose organization - This means that the sole purpose of the contracted company would be to further the objectives outlined by the mission statement of TCAP. This has not been the case in the past and, for that reason, attempts at various ridesharing programs have achieved limited success.

- Private firm more flexible - A private firm would be more flexible and more responsive to the constantly changing market demands and needs. This organization would be much more capable of reorganizing its internal structure to adapt to changes in the local economy.

Disadvantages

- Anticipated cost is high - It is anticipated that the cost of hiring a private company under contract would be relatively expensive. If chosen, it is expected that, in return for the relatively high cost, the program would be staffed with quality people and chances for success would be relatively high as well.

- No economies of scale - No economies of scale would exist if the private company established an independent office. However, this disadvantage could be lessened
somewhat if the contracted company were physically housed within an existing agency.

• **Difficult to obtain private sector funding and participation** - It is anticipated that the private sector would be unwilling to provide financial support to another private company (operating for profit) no matter what type of product or service is being offered.

• **Need for interlocal agreements** - Interlocal agreements would have to be developed to specify the funding responsibilities of each of the participating counties.

**EXAMPLE**

**Gold Coast Commuter Services**
6261 Northwest 6th Way, Suite 100
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33309
(305) 525-7433

**Service Area Characteristics:**

- Population: Estimated 1986, 3,677,414
- Square Miles: 5,159 square miles
- Population Density: 713 persons per square mile
- Number of Political Jurisdictions: 3 counties

Gold Coast Commuter Services was established by FDOT in June of 1988 with the purpose being to assist in the provision of various transportation alternatives in the South Florida Area. Gold Coast, which is staffed under contract by ATE Management & Service Company, Inc. and META, Inc., was established to provide a public information and marketing program that will furnish updated information on I-95 construction activities and promote carpooling, vanpooling, public transportation, and alternate roadways as part of the Expansion Project. Because the program has been in existence for less than year, it is difficult to measure its performance with any degree of certainty. However, the program is being represented and marketed well with its current staff.

**III. Private Non-Profit Organization**

**Summary**

- A private non-profit corporation would be established to administer the objectives of TCAP as outlined in the mission statement. This corporation would be established independent of any existing agency and would be housed in a newly-established independent office.
• An advisory group would be established to be composed of representatives from each of the four counties as well as representatives from FDOT District VII and CUTR. The purpose of this group would be to direct the establishment of the new organization. They would be responsible for hiring the executive director of the program as well as selecting those individuals who should serve on the board of directors. This advisory group shall be dissolved as soon as the new organization begins operating.

• A board of directors would be established with their purpose being to direct and monitor the organization. The board of directors would consist of members from both the public and private sectors. It is anticipated that members would include representatives chiefly from the private sector (Transportation Management Associations [TMA's], major employers, etc.). However, it may be determined that representation should also exist from the MPO's, the transit agencies, FDOT District VII, and CUTR. Those representatives from the public sector would perhaps serve as ex-officio board members; their purpose would primarily be that of an advisory capacity. This organization is suggested with the intention that TCAP would eventually become a completely stand alone organization.

• The executive director would be responsible for hiring all supporting staff, for the on-going operations of the organization, and for reporting periodically to the board of directors regarding the performance of the program.

• The private non-profit corporation would involve both the public and private sectors in actively seeking innovative solutions to transportation problems in the area. Funding would be provided by the public sector, the private sector, and some additional funding through contracting out of services.

Advantages

• Program flexibility in meeting and adapting to market needs - By establishing a completely independent organization, the program would be free to change with the market demands and needs. This flexibility is not so evident in the public working environment. This ability to adapt could play an extremely important role in the early operational success of the commuter assistance program.

• Strong integration of private sector - The private sector (employers, individuals, etc.) would be much more likely to get involved with a private non-profit corporation than a company operating for profit or an organization with strong ties to an existing public agency. For example, Commuter Computer, a private non-profit commuter assistance program in California, enjoys widespread private sector participation on its Board of Directors. These individuals represent the private sector by participating in the direction and funding of the program. Funding may include financial assistance as well as any in-kind services that may be offered. It would also be much easier for the organization to accept private sector donations.
Single purpose organization - A newly-established organization with a single purpose would have much greater opportunity for success. Why? All efforts would be directed toward one objective--improving commuter mobility. It has been shown in the past that, if these programs are housed in multi purpose organizations, they have generally achieved limited success. This has been true because these types of programs have not typically been considered a priority and, therefore, have not received the attention required to achieve success.

Characterized by an unbiased and regional perspective - That is, after the independent program is ultimately established, its single purpose would be to serve the area outlined in its by-laws. This area includes Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, and Hernando Counties. All counties should be adequately served by an independent organization and it is not expected that any county would be provided a higher level of service than is indicated by their respective contributions to the program.

Strong marketing orientation - An independent single purpose organization can focus marketing and promotions on its specific services. In fact, marketing would be one of the more time-consuming efforts of the staff making it an essential activity for the program to achieve success. Despite focusing marketing activities on the program's specific services, it will obviously be helpful to market transit in the process. By the same token, the local transit agency should not hesitate in promoting the transportation alternatives offered by TCAP.

History lends itself to this institutional framework - One of the most successful commuter assistance organizations in the country was established under an institution very similar to the one discussed here.

Disadvantages

Creates another transportation organization in the area - The establishment of an additional organization with new transportation programs may cause conflict with existing agencies. It is not certain whether the new organization and existing agencies would work together to achieve their similar goals.

Need to create a completely new organization - The administrative responsibilities associated with establishing an new, independent organization are much greater than is associated with the other institutions under consideration. In addition, legal assistance will need to be sought in order to establish the private non-profit corporation.

Relies on private sector funding to some extent - Funding from the private sector would not be easy to obtain to begin with and, when obtained, it would not be a very reliable source for the future.
EXAMPLE

Commuter Transportation Services (CTS or Commuter Computer)
3550 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 300
Los Angeles, California 90010
(213) 380-7750

Service Area Characteristics:

Service Area Population: 9,834,000
Square Miles: 8,926
Number of Political Jurisdictions: 4 counties

Commuter Computer is a private, non-profit corporation established in 1974 and funded primarily by the Federal Highway Administration, Caltrans, and the county transportation commissions of Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, Ventura, and Orange Counties. In addition, Commuter Computer has sought a close relationship with the private sector. CTS is a regional example of a public sector/private sector partnership which currently maintains three offices and 120 employees.

CTS has a Board of Directors which serves to focuses upon the needs of clients, funders, and other players in the business community. The 45 member Board represents government, business, and various interest groups from all five counties of Southern California. The Board meets as a group twice annually. The Board members volunteer their time and services to participate on various committees including the Public Policy, Audit, Nominating, Human Resources, and Marketing Review Committees.

With a budget of $5,761,700 for fiscal year 1986-87, CTS met the majority of its performance standards as prescribed by the funding contract. Some these standards achieved included placing over 35,000 individuals into carpooling, vanpooling, mass transit or other forms of shared transportation. Others include serving over 132 new client worksites, updating 2,631 existing client worksites, producing 175,518 matchlists to client companies and forming 155 vanpools.
A CRITERIA ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSED TCAP INSTITUTIONS

This section conducts a relatively simple criteria analysis of the proposed TCAP institutions. Based on the advantages and disadvantages listed previously for each institution, comments are put forth concerning six basic criteria. These criteria are:

1. Ease of Implementation
2. Cost of Implementation
3. Effectiveness
4. Equity (Fairness)
5. Private Sector Participation
6. Overall Assessment

It is important that these criteria are clearly defined in order to bring about a clear understanding of the analysis. The first criterion under consideration is ease of implementation. This criterion refers to the relative ease of actually forming the particular institution under consideration. Components of this criterion include establishing interlocal agreements, legal assistance, etc. all of which would contribute to additional administrative activities.

Cost of implementation is the second criterion under consideration and its meaning is self-explanatory. That institution with the least implementation cost would be considered to best fulfill this criterion.

Effectiveness refers to the relative degree of success of the institutional alternatives in terms of meeting the objectives of TCAP. It is anticipated that there will be a tradeoff between effectiveness and cost of implementation which will require value judgments as to what the optimum combination would be.

A fourth criterion is equity. The term equity refers to fairness in the distribution of welfare and/or services. In the context of this analysis, this relates to which institutional framework provides an equitable level of service to each participating county based on their contribution to the program. Although fairness is ultimately a value judgement, it still remains an important factor in any policy action.

Private sector participation is the fifth criterion and refers to the relative degree of success in achieving involvement from the private sector, i.e. business, individuals, and other private organizations.

The sixth and final criterion is termed overall assessment. An overall assessment will be provided based on the analysis of the five previous criteria. That institution receiving the highest overall assessment shall be recommended for implementation.
Each institution shall be given a rating for each criterion under consideration. These ratings, although somewhat subjective, shall serve as a guide for the recommendations to be made by CUTR. Ratings for the overall assessment criterion are excluded because it is recognized that individuals may place varying degrees of significance on the respective criteria involved in the analysis.

CRITERIA ANALYSIS

I. Regional Program Within HART/PSTA

Ease of Implementation: A regional commuter assistance program within HART/PSTA would be relatively easy to establish. Interlocal agreements would be required but these would probably be required regardless of the institution chosen for implementation. Being housed within an existing organization would eliminate the need to establish a new, independent transportation organization. Rating: A

Cost of Implementation: It is believed that this institution would be the least expensive of those institutions under consideration. The economies of scale that would be inherent if established within an existing organization should cause operating costs to be less as many functions could be carried on in conjunction with the on-going administration of the transit system. Rating: A

Effectiveness: There are several disadvantages listed earlier that may hinder the effectiveness of the program if housed within HART/PSTA. Ideally, all transportation alternatives should be treated as possible solutions to transportation problems in the area. However, in the past, there has been a perceived bias in favor of traditional transit solutions. Another problem arises from the political aspects associated with the transit system. The potential for reduced emphasis is evident if TCAP were to become politically unpopular. It is not certain whether this institution would permit TCAP to enjoy the independence necessary to be effective. Rating: C

Equity: One of the disadvantages listed earlier included a perceived inability for this particular institution to distribute its services in a fair and equitable manner. This perception is mostly due to the proposal that TCAP be housed within HART/PSTA which is almost strictly a Hillsborough County agency. Although this could perhaps be resolved with interlocal agreements, the perception may still remain. Rating: B

Private Sector Participation: It will likely be somewhat difficult to obtain private sector participation within TCAP when it is housed within an existing transit agency. Because it may be perceived as being another addition to the local bureaucracy, the private sector would hesitate to get involved with TCAP, particularly in the form of funding and/or in-
kind services. If private sector participation is determined to be one of the goals of TCAP, then this disadvantage will need to be considered more closely. Rating: C

Overall Assessment: The majority of commuter assistance programs housed within existing transit agencies have achieved little success. Most believe this is due to a competitive environment between advocates of public transportation and advocates of other commuter assistance activities. Despite this tendency, there have been some success stories. In particular, Tidewater Regional Transit in Norfolk, Virginia is an excellent example of a transit agency that has become a multi-service provider of transportation alternatives. They operate everything from conventional transit services to comprehensive ridesharing services to high occupancy vehicle lanes (HOV) lanes. Why has this particular transit agency been successful in combining these services? Does an institution within HART/PSTA have the potential to achieve similar success? The atmosphere at Tidewater Transit is characterized by a strong belief in all transportation alternatives. They believe it is necessary to complement conventional transit with other alternatives such as ridesharing, vanpooling, etc. All of these are considered viable solutions to transportation problems. The question remains as to whether HART/PSTA would provide a dedicated implementing atmosphere for TCAP. It is argued that this potential institution provides a degree of independence for the program which would prevent any hindrances from surfacing due to outside interference. Many questions remain after consideration of this institution.

II. Contract Services Out to a Private Sector Company

Ease of Implementation: This institution would likely require a greater effort to implement due to the process of selecting an outside provider for this program. A private firm would be jointly hired by the participating counties and FDOT. It is not certain whether this selection process would be a lengthy one or not. For that reason, a conservative estimate of effort involved in implementation would surely be greater than that estimated for the previous institution considered (within HART). Rating: B

Cost of Implementation: The cost of contracting these services to the private sector is perceived as being the most expensive of the remaining alternatives under consideration. The services to be offered by the proposed TCAP organization are not services that can be provided with the expectation of a profit (at least not at the present). For that reason, all costs plus the private firm’s reasonable profit would be borne by the public organizations involved. Rating: C

Effectiveness: There are advantages regarding the anticipated effectiveness of the program if implemented by a private firm under contract. First, the fact that commuter assistance as outlined by the project advisory group would be the single purpose of the institution
indicates that it is more likely to be effective. In addition, the private firm would have the incentive to achieve results if their intention is to continue under contract in the years to come. **Rating: A**

**Equity:** A private company would likely have an unbiased and regional perspective, more so than the other institutional considerations. Because they are jointly hired by all participating counties, they would also report to each of these counties periodically which means they would have an incentive to provide services to each county based on their contribution to the program. **Rating: A**

**Private Sector Participation:** It is anticipated that acquiring private sector participation in the form of funding and/or in-kind services would be quite difficult. This would be due to the unwillingness of the private sector to support what they see as another private for profit company which happens to be providing these commuter services. **Rating: C**

**Overall Assessment:** The anticipated effectiveness of this institutional alternative is relatively high but so is the anticipated cost of implementation. This institution is currently being used at Gold Coast Commuter Services in Southeast Florida. FDOT has contracted this commuter assistance program to a private company and, although in service less than a year, it appears to be achieving some success already. This private company could be housed within HART or the firm could provide its own office space as part of the contract.

### III. Private Non-Profit Organization

**Ease of Implementation:** This institutional alternative would be the most difficult to establish because a completely new transportation organization would need to be created. This would require extensive efforts by all parties involved as well as legal assistance to establish the non-profit corporation. **Rating: C**

**Cost of Implementation:** The cost of implementing this institution would likely be somewhere between the one housed within HART/PSTA and the private contracted firm. It is anticipated that a private non-profit organization would have the greatest opportunity to solicit funding and in-kind services from the private sector. This would help in defraying many of the day-to-day operational expenses of the program. However, it would still be more expensive than establishing an organization within HART as new office space would need to be acquired and many administrative functions, that could otherwise be carried on in conjunction with HART/PSTA, would now be duplicated. **Rating: B**
Effectiveness: It is anticipated that the private non-profit institution would be effective because it would have a staff dedicated to a single purpose within an organization which has that same single purpose. In addition, the program could be established at a lower cost than if the organization were contracted out to a private company. The flexibility that this institution offers is also a contributing factor to its perceived effectiveness. Rating: A

Equity: A private non-profit organization would also have an unbiased and regional perspective when providing services to each of the participating counties. All counties would participate in the hiring of the executive director who in turn would be responsible for serving all four counties. The director would also be accountable for the program's performance in each of the counties. This regional perspective indicates a program that would be perceived as being fair. Rating: A

Private Sector Participation: It is believed that the opportunity for inducing private sector participation is greatest with the private non-profit organization. This is mostly due to its non-profit and independent status which is designed more to encourage private sector participation. In particular, the board of directors would be composed of various public officials as well as significant representation from the private sector. By giving the private sector representation in determining the direction and policies of the program, it encourages them to participate in other aspects of the program as well (financial assistance, in-kind services, donation of time to special committees, etc.). Rating: A

Overall Assessment: One of the most successful commuter assistance organizations in the country is Commuter Transportation Services, Inc. (Commuter Computer) in Los Angeles, California. Commuter Computer was established in 1974 as a private non-profit organization. The above criteria indicate that this institution could be quite successful in the Tampa Bay area as well. However, it should be recognized that the political structures and environment are extremely different in the Tampa area when compared with the Los Angeles area. Much of the private sector participation is a result of air quality standards and trip reduction ordinances enforced by various governments and public agencies in the L.A. area.

Conclusion: As stated previously, there is an obvious tradeoff between relative cost and relative effectiveness. This tradeoff must be considered closely when ultimately choosing the institutional alternative. A summary of the criteria analysis is presented in the table below:
It is also clear that staff and organizational commitment are the most important factors in program success. This could be accomplished under any of the alternatives examined.

The simple criteria analysis suggests that the private non-profit organization rates highest in effectiveness, equity, and private participation. Therefore, CUTR recommends this institutional alternative for implementation. It is believed that this institution has the greatest opportunity for achieving the objectives of the TCAP program. However, CUTR does recognize that any of the proposed institutions can be successful. The positive participation and cooperation of all public agencies and the private sector is essential to the success of any commuter assistance program. Therefore, the preference of each of the participants should also be taken into consideration when making the final decision.
APPENDIX A

REVIEW OF EXISTING RIDESHARING PROGRAMS IN THE TAMPA BAY AREA

The purpose of this review is to identify the current roles of ridesharing programs in the Tampa Bay area. The four counties to be included in this discussion are Hillsborough, Pinellas, Hernando, and Pasco. These counties have been chosen to participate in the Tampa Bay Commuter Assistance Demonstration Project. After discussing the existing program in each county, the review will conclude with a consideration of implications that these programs may have on the Commuter Assistance Project.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

The SAVE (Share A Vehicle Everyday) Program in Hillsborough County was originally conceived to achieve a number of objectives:

(1) to reduce auto emissions;
(2) to minimize the disruption that any future fuel shortage might have on residents;
(3) to provide a ready alternative in the event of a transit strike;
(4) to provide economic relief to citizens in need of a reduction in expenses related to their journey to work;
(5) to conserve scarce petroleum reserves;
(6) to ease traffic congestion during rush hours;
(7) to reduce the parking requirements, especially in high employment areas;
(8) to utilize microcomputer technology in ridesharing data processing.

Coordinated by the Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization, a pilot program was initiated with City and County employees to determine the significance that ridesharing may have in helping to achieve the stated objectives. Evaluation of this program indicated that its affects were significant enough to offer SAVE to the general public. A task force was created to assist in establishing guidelines for the program. Members were selected from the private and political sectors. The committee met a number of times and made various recommendations that were useful in the initial program implementation. This group is no longer active with the SAVE program. The service was made available in 1983 and is still in existence today. The following paragraphs summarize the current roles of SAVE in Hillsborough County at the present time.
Scope of Activities

The strength of the existing program can be seen when one considers its outreach to employers in the area. At the present time, SAVE has 165 transportation coordinators (TC) who represent various major employers and are trained to facilitate the formation of ridesharing arrangements by making fellow employees more aware of transportation alternatives. These alternatives include car and vanpools, bus services, bicycling, and walking. In most cases, there is more than one TC per employer. In fact, SAVE recommends one TC for every 35 to 50 employees in order to encourage personal contact and improve the effectiveness of the program. However, the optimal number of TC’s varies depending on the structure of each organization.

The major role of SAVE is to generate interest in the program through various marketing techniques. The most effective technique has been the oral presentation to employers because interest seems to be generated much more effectively with personal contact. It is also effective because the presentation is made to employees at one work destination assuring compatibility of one of the major ridesharing variables. After an organization agrees to initiate a program, SAVE provides training and advisory assistance to the selected coordinators. Together, the TC’s and SAVE staff work to provide each registrant with as many matches as possible. Registrants are not limited to those working for employers that participate in the program. Individuals may also register and will receive those matches that the computer will generate as well. Other marketing techniques include radio advertising and public service announcements, slide presentations to civic organizations, billboards, roadside signs and sunshades. These other techniques have had some limited success but this success is normally enjoyed for only a short time.

SAVE presents information not only on carpooling but also on vanpooling and bus services as well. The vanpool program presented to employers is basically an explanation of the services offered by Van Pool Services, Inc. (VPSI), a privately-owned business firm which leases vans to those interested in forming vanpools. SAVE also presents a special bus pass program which has been developed through an informal agreement with HARTLINE. This program stipulates that if the employer provides 10 percent of the cost of a monthly pass, then HARTLINE will provide 10 percent as well. Therefore, employees can purchase a monthly pass, which consists of forty rides, for approximately $19.40 as opposed to the normal rate of $24.00.

SAVE also publishes a monthly newsletter which is distributed to all organizations participating in the program. The monthly newsletter emphasizes one of six central themes: (1) congestion, (2) parking, (3) conservation, (4) economy, (5) pollution, (6) safety. Each newsletter highlights the benefits associated with the theme chosen for that month. All of the above themes are featured in the newsletter twice a year.

Matching Mechanism and Purging of Files

The computer programs used to match potential poolers were written by the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization. The match consists of two parts: the
geographic match and the time match. 1/2 mile x 1/2 mile grids are used in the
determination of the geographic match. In a normal batch run, the number of grids
considered for possible matches at the residency varies depending on the length of the work
trip under consideration. The following table explains this principle further:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Trip</th>
<th># of Grids</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 10 miles</td>
<td>1 Grid + 1 Ring (3 x 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 15 miles</td>
<td>1 Grid + 3 Rings (7 x 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 - 20 miles</td>
<td>1 Grid + 5 Rings (11 x 11)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table indicates that as the length of the work trip increases, the number of grids
considered for matching also increases. However, the match for the work destination
considers one grid plus one ring regardless of the length of the work trip. After the
geographic matches have been determined, a time match is performed on each of the
geographic matches. A time match is found when the starting and ending times of
prospective poolers are within +/- 15 minutes of each other.

It is important to purge matching files frequently in order to effectively implement the
ridesharing program and to accurately reflect rideshare statistics. SAVE purges employer
files comprehensively once a year. However, TC's are encouraged to gather updated
information on participating employees throughout the year. The comprehensive purging
of employer files is carried out by sending a special memorandum to each organization and
asking them to collect updated information on all participating employees. Individual
ridesharing files are purged approximately four times per year by sending letters to all those
on file. Telephone calls are also made to those suspected of no longer participating in the
program. Although the response of individuals is very poor, it is still helpful in eliminating
many unnecessary files.

**Funding and Staff**

The following table indicates the amount of funds allocated to ridesharing in Hillsborough
County. The source of all ridesharing assistance is the state of Florida. However, all state
funds listed in the table below must be matched locally.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Programmed</th>
<th>Received</th>
<th>Additional Funds</th>
<th>Local Match</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY 1988</td>
<td>$ 80,000</td>
<td>$ 43,250</td>
<td>$ 43,250</td>
<td>$ 86,500</td>
<td>$ 173,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 1989</td>
<td>113,000</td>
<td>43,000</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>43,000</td>
<td>86,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table indicates that, from the State, the Share-A-Ride program received $86,500 in fiscal year 1988 and $43,000 in fiscal year 1989. Many times, funds distributed throughout the State are not used for their initial allocation. SAVE was able to obtain a portion of these unused funds during fiscal year 1988. This portion amounted to $43,250 and is shown in the table under Additional Funds. The total budget including the local match amounted to $173,000 in fiscal year 1988 and $86,000 in fiscal year 1989. The fiscal year 1989 budget may also be increased if SAVE can obtain additional state funding. The local match is predominantly a soft match, comprised of in-kind services of SAVE staff and TC’s.

**Evaluation**

A major problem exists with the evaluation program in Hillsborough County. The matching programs have already been rewritten to better accommodate the needs of the ridesharing system. However, the evaluation program has not yet been rewritten and, therefore, is not useful at this time because it is not compatible with the matching programs. Despite this problem, some very approximate evaluation estimates have been compiled and are listed below:

- 70 - 80 calls per month
- 20 applications per month
- currently 400 - 500 active carpoolers in the system
- estimated cost/benefit factor = 8 - 12 : 1

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) also requires a quarterly evaluation report to be prepared. This report basically summarizes the accomplishments and problems of the previous quarter and also sets new objectives for the coming quarter. The evaluation
for the second quarter of 1988 indicates that SAVE continued extensive support of USAA by providing a match run for 150 new registrants. Revisions were made on more than 150 previous registrants as well. SAVE also provided rideshare assistance to two other major employers in addition to the extensive assistance to USAA. In summary, 130 individual calls were handled and over 500 USAA employees received matchlists. Records indicate that there are now over 100 carpoolers and over 150 vanpoolers at USAA alone. The report also indicates that many of the stated objectives of the previous evaluation report were not reached because of the limited staff available.
PINELLAS COUNTY

The Pinellas County Share-A-Ride program was first implemented in September of 1984. It has been coordinated by the Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization since its inception. This ridesharing program was established to achieve the following objectives:

(1) reduce energy consumption;
(2) reduce traffic congestion;
(3) reduce pollution;
(4) reduce the need for additional parking spaces;
(5) reduce transportation costs for residents of Pinellas County.

The following paragraphs identify the current roles of the Share-A-Ride program in Pinellas County.

Scope of Activities

At the present time, the Share-A-Ride program has been focusing largely on six major areas. All efforts have been directed toward tasks within these areas. However, in recent months, there has been little or no staff to implement these tasks indicating that the program has been unable to attain the majority of its objectives. In other words, a framework of activities has been developed but has not been fully implemented due to the lack of human resources. The six focus areas are described below:

(1) The major efforts of the program are to be directed towards the initiation of a Pinellas County Government employee ridesharing program. Plans were made to insert letters with salary stubs explaining a program where employees could obtain preferential parking places if three or more employees carpooled to work. This program is in the process of being implemented at this time.

(2) The Share-A-Ride program uses the same computer matching program as in Hillsborough County. It is believed that the program is very effective in generating matchlists for those names entered. It is also capable of generating letters which indicate the cost savings of ridesharing as well as other advantages.

(3) Current marketing techniques include roadway signs, radio announcements, sunshades, and some billboards. However, it is believed that the use of billboards is not a cost effective method of promotion. As in Hillsborough County, the most effective method of promoting the program is with face-to-face presentations to employers and other civic organizations in the county.

(4) The greatest success has been achieved through the coordination of activities with major employers in the area. However, there has not been a sufficient staff to maintain a consistent and on-going relationship with those interested in starting their own program.
(5) It has been determined that the Share-A-Ride program should work closely with PSTA concerning Park N’Ride lots in order to encourage commuters to leave their vehicles at home.

(6) The Share-A-Ride staff is also expected to encourage the formation of vanpools when they are making presentations to various organizations around the county.

Matching Mechanism and Purging of Files

As stated previously, the program uses computer software provided to them by the Hillsborough SAVE program. It is believed that this software is designed for easy data inputting and processing. It provides matches for those names entered and also performs a variety of other tasks including the estimation of cost savings and program evaluation. However, the files created in this program have not been purged for some time which indicates that much of the information may not be accurate at the present time.

Funding and Staff

The following table indicates the amount and source of funds allocated to the ridesharing program in Pinellas County. The figures are taken from the current Joint Participation Agreement.(June 9, 1988) Just as in Hillsborough County, all assistance is from the state and must be matched locally.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>State Allocation</th>
<th>Local Match</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY 1988</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td>$80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 1989</td>
<td>46,500</td>
<td>46,500</td>
<td>93,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table indicates that the total budget was $80,000 for fiscal year 1988 and $93,000 for fiscal year 1989. These funds were allocated with the expectation that one and one-half persons would be working with the program. However, there has been very little or no staff working in ridesharing in recent months.
Evaluation

Some statistics which summarize the effectiveness of the Share-A-Ride program are listed below:

- 700 rideshare requests on file,
- 250 - 300 matches made since program began,
- 2-3 calls per week at present time (However, when active marketing campaigns have been implemented, the number of calls per week have been much higher.)

Based on these statistics as well the other information in this review, it is apparent that the program has basically been at a standstill due to the lack of human resources available. It is for this reason that, although many plans have been made, very few have actually been implemented. However, the results of the limited efforts indicate that a program implemented on a large scale could possibly be very successful in Pinellas County.
HERNANDO COUNTY

There is no existing ridesharing program in Hernando County. Those representing Hernando County are very supportive of a Regional Commuter Assistance Program and have indicated that they are willing to assist in the implementation of such a program. The Hernando County representative to the advisory group indicated that support from Hernando County Commissioners looks promising particularly because three new commissioners have been elected all of whom were running on platforms strongly emphasizing transportation issues.

PASCO COUNTY

There is currently no ridesharing program in Pasco County. However, representatives of Pasco have indicated that they are willing to assist the Commuter Assistance Program in any way they can as well. A representative of the Pasco County Metropolitan Planning Organization, indicated that Pasco citizens and officials are not fully aware of formalized ridesharing services as an option. Based on past experience, it may be somewhat difficult to obtain support and funding from the County Commission.

IMPLICATIONS

A number of conclusions can be drawn after consideration of the review. The most prominent is that, even though the county ridesharing programs have not been a high priority, they still have achieved some degree of success. This indicates that a dedicated staff, whose chief responsibility is the implementation of a ridesharing program, may enjoy considerable success.

It is evident from the review that the most effective marketing approach is through direct contact with employers. The first priority should be the establishment of new employer contacts as well as maintaining those contacts already established in the program. At the same time, a colorful and creative marketing campaign should be undertaken to encourage individual interest as well.

An employer base has already been developed in Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties which will be very helpful if a regional program is established. Although this base is somewhat limited, it still provides a starting point from which the program can begin expansion. To be successful, the program will require extensive time and effort regardless of the institution chosen for implementation and even then, if the program is not maintained as a priority, it will have no chance of continuing with this success.
APPENDIX B

COMPARISON OF INSTITUTIONAL MODELS
FOR THE TAMPA BAY COMMUTER ASSISTANCE OFFICE

ALTERNATIVE 1: Each County "Does Its Own Thing"

DESCRIPTION: Hillsborough and Pinellas would continue operating their existing programs. Pasco and Hernando would establish commuter assistance offices on their own. Each county would maintain its own telephone information line, prepare separate promotional materials, and maintain its own office and staff.

ADVANTAGES:

- Each county maintains total control over its own program.
- Ease of legal implementation.

DISADVANTAGES

- No economies of scale.
- Duplication of fixed expenses.
- MPOs are not normally implementors.
- Difficulty serving multi-county trips.
- Private sector participation likely to be limited.
- Conflicting local agency priorities.
- Lack of marketing orientation.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES:

- Substantial duplication of efforts.
- Difficulty in serving multi-county clientele.
ALTERNATIVE 2: "One County Does All"

DESCRIPTION: A regional commuter assistance office would be established in one county, to provide service to all four counties. Interlocal agreements would be signed to assure necessary financial support of the office by each of the counties. Although the functions would be administratively housed within one county, the staff would be tasked with being responsive to the needs of all.

ADVANTAGES:

• Economies of scale can be achieved.

DISADVANTAGES:

• Not a proper long term MPO role.
• Ability for regional perspective is subject to doubt.
• Private sector participation likely to be limited.
• Need for interagency agreements.
• Marketing orientation likely to be somewhat limited.
• Subject to conflicting agency priorities.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES:

• Regional perspective subject to question.
ALTERNATIVE 3: FDOT Commuter Assistance Office

DESCRIPTION: Florida DOT would establish an operations office within the District to serve as the regional commuter assistance office. FDOT would assume total control for the operations of the program and would make operating decisions regarding the service based on its statutory responsibilities.

ADVANTAGES:

- Ease of implementation.
- Legal basis already exists.
- Economies of scale realized.
- Regional perspective.

DISADVANTAGES:

- Conflicting priorities a possibility.
- Integration of private sector may be limited.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES:

- Centralized control.
- Ease of implementation.
ALTERNATIVE 4: Tampa Bay RPC Commuter Assistance Office

DESCRIPTION: A regional commuter assistance office would be established at the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council.

ADVANTAGES:

- Economies of scale.
- Regional in outlook.

DISADVANTAGES:

- Private sector support highly unlikely.
- Operations not in the normal purview of an RPC.
- Need for interlocal agreements.
- TBRPC area larger than District VII.
- Lack of TBRPC credibility in transportation.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES:

- Difficulty in getting private sector support.
- Lack of TBRPC transportation capability.
ALTERNATIVE 5: CUTR Commuter Assistance Office

DESCRIPTION: A regional commuter assistance office would be established and operated by CUTR.

ADVANTAGES:

- Economies of scale.
- No appearance of bias to any one jurisdiction.
- Possible instructional value.

DISADVANTAGES:

- Not part of CUTR’s mainstream mission.
- Need for interlocal agreements.
- Difficulty in implementing day to day operational activities.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES:

- Day to day operational difficulties.
- Possibly a positive public association with the University.
ALTERNATIVE 6: HART/PSTA Commuter Services Office

DESCRIPTION: Either HART, PSTA, or a combination of both, would operate a regional commuter assistance office. They would continue to promote traditional mass transit services, but would expand their interests to include vanpooling, carpooling, flextime, TMAs, etc.

ADVANTAGES:

- Authority to perform operating functions exists.
- Marketing orientation already exists.
- Economies of scale.

DISADVANTAGES:

- Possible bias toward traditional bus transit solutions.
- Perceived difficulty in serving all four counties.
- Integration of private sector probably difficult.
- Requires interlocal agreements.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES:

- Marketing orientation.
- Possible bus bias.
ALTERNATIVE 7: Private Non-Profit Commuter Assistance Office

DESCRIPTION: A new special-purpose private non-profit organization would be established. A board of directors, comprised of private and public representatives would be appointed. A dedicated staff would be retained, to include management, database operation, marketing and promotion, and planning support responsibilities.

ADVANTAGES:

- Strong marketing orientation.
- Strong integration of private sector.
- Single purpose.
- Strong advocacy role.
- Private status facilitates operations implementation.
- Economies of scale.
- Regional perspective.

DISADVANTAGES:

- Need to create a totally new organization.
- Substantial legal assistance required.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES:

- Most aggressive organizational form.
- Most difficult to establish.