



Contra
Costa
County

To: Board of Supervisors
From: John Kopchik, Director, Conservation & Development Department
Date: February 4, 2020

Subject: ACCEPT report on Employee Commute Survey, as Recommended by the Sustainability Committee

RECOMMENDATION(S):

ACCEPT report on Employee Commute Survey, as Recommended by the Sustainability Committee, and CONSIDER establishing a process to address how the County can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and congestion from employee commutes, and other alternatives to help the County achieve its climate goals.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Establishing a process to address how the County can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and congestion from employee commutes, and other alternatives, will require time from County employees. The exact time commitment is not known at this time.

BACKGROUND:

As part of the ongoing Climate Action Plan Update, staff worked with 511 Contra Costa to conduct a survey of County employees regarding how they travel to and from work. This survey was conducted in July and August 2019. The survey found that most employees drive alone and are spending 40-45 minutes on average commuting each day. Two-thirds of County employees would consider alternatives for their work commute, particularly telecommuting and carpools. Primary factors that inform current commute choices are travel time, cost, and flexibility. While a small percentage

APPROVE OTHER
 RECOMMENDATION OF CNTY ADMINISTRATOR RECOMMENDATION OF BOARD COMMITTEE

Action of Board On: **02/04/2020** APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED OTHER

Clerks Notes:

VOTE OF SUPERVISORS

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: February 4, 2020

Contact: Jody London,
925-674-7871

David J. Twa, County Administrator and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

By: , Deputy

cc:

BACKGROUND: (CONT'D)

of County employees taking the survey drive electric vehicles currently, over half are considering purchasing an electric vehicle, and 75 percent would like the County to install electric vehicle chargers at County facilities. The survey report is attached.

The survey finds that County employees, although supportive of adopting alternative commute modes, are not committing to these options because they are not as convenient as driving alone to and from work. In the comments portion of the survey, many respondents indicated that they would be interested in telecommuting options and carpool options. Such programs would be effective ways for the County to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from employee commute trips, the largest source of emissions from County operations. The report suggests that the County may want to explore options for telecommuting and workplace electric vehicle charging, as well as provide more information at the department level on commute alternative modes and incentives. The County policy on telecommuting was last updated in 1993. The report suggests the County may wish to revisit this policy in light of the survey results and current technological options.

The report also identifies areas for future research. The report suggests the County could further examine the data pertaining to electric vehicles, including perceived costs, range anxiety, adequate charging infrastructure, and other factors. Next steps may also include a cost-benefit analysis to compare the costs of electric vehicles or alternative commute modes to the drive-alone trips currently made by the majority of employees. This information could be used to help educate employees on the long-term cost and benefits of EV ownership or alternative commute modes.

The report also suggests the County could research opportunities for shuttles and other options that would facilitate employees using public transit. This research should include collaboration with other large employers in Martinez, such as Kaiser Permanente and the U.S. Veterans Administration Medical Center. Additional surveys, specific to the Martinez sites where the majority of County employees work, may be needed.

The Sustainability Committee discussed the Employee Commute Survey at its December 9, 2019 meeting. The Committee discussed some of the challenges it perceives with telecommuting, including that not all jobs lend themselves to telecommuting, and telecommuting policies would have to be negotiated with bargaining units. The Committee voted to forward the report to the Board for acceptance with a recommendation that the Board consider establishing a process to address how the County can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and congestion from employee commutes, and other alternatives to help the County achieve its climate goals.

CONSEQUENCE OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

The Employee Commute Survey provides insight into why County employees overwhelmingly choose to drive alone to and from work, the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions from County operations. The Board can take steps to reduce these emissions by accepting the report and establishing a process to address how the County can reduce emissions and congestion from employee commutes.

CHILDREN'S IMPACT STATEMENT:

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions will lead to cleaner air, which has a positive impact on children's health.

ATTACHMENTS

2019 Employee Commute Survey