Flexible Car Pooling
(to reduce vehicle counts)

Think: “slug lines that SOV drivers use for rides and riders”

Our ride sharing technologies enable a new era of transportation that maximises Vehicle Occupancy while minimising Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT). With a ‘Ride Sharer ID Card’ your car or van poolers are good to go with any participating driver. With a ‘Ride Sharer Transceiver’ your car or van pool drivers get credit for the rides they provide. The transceiver captures trip details based on an infrared message from the ID Card (like your TV remote) and sends them to a software system that processes the details according to your business rules.

Flexible Car Pooling builds on the concept of the slug lines in Northern Virginia/Washington DC, which provides over 2 million trips per year in the I 95 and I 66 corridors, and saves about 2 million gallons of gasoline per year for the region as well as the associated green house gases and other pollution. It works like a taxi stand for car poolers.

The biggest barrier to greater levels of car pooling is the need for flexibility of travel times. These days schedules need to be flexible. Traditionally car pools are not seen as flexible. People do not like to be tied to other people’s schedules, nor do they like to let other people down. So they decide to drive alone.

Flexible car pooling solves this problem. Flexible car poolers share rides in the order they arrive at a meeting place. Each meeting place is dedicated to a single destination, created in our system in advance as a ‘route’. Routes are established in response to demand, or based on demand predicted by an origin and destination analysis of the traffic on your congested corridors. Each route is expected to reduce over 40,000 trips per year.

Flexible car pooling is a low cost approach to making better use of your community’s investment in cars and roads, and a way for authorities and commuters to save money, reduce VMT, increase energy security, and reduce CO₂ emissions.
Flexible Van Pooling
(to reduce vehicle counts)

Think: “flexibly fill the empty seats in every vanpool”

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Flexible Van Pooling already operates in some locations, though the riders are referred to as ‘casual riders’. The need for casual riders arises when a van has empty seats, sometimes because regular riders are away on leave, or because the full number of seats have yet to be filled by the driver or the organising entity. The usual approach to van pooling is to have regular riders who do the same trip each day.

Van poolers often meet at a van pooling location, and they travel a known route to a pre-determined destination, often the work site of a single employer, though also sometimes a business park or down-town involving several employers.

Vans are the most energy efficient form of public transport as long as they travel full in both directions. On a ‘fuel consumed per passenger mile’ basis they outperform cars (because they have greater rider capacity) and buses (because buses have larger engines, and often do empty return trips to get more passengers). The challenge is to keep the vans full all the time.

Use of the ride sharing technologies in van pooling is a low cost way to enable simple record keeping and payment for the members who van pooled each day, as well as enabling easy data capture and payment mechanisms for casual van poolers who might be picked up from transit stops or other locations.

For More Information Please Contact Paul Minett at Trip Convergence Ltd (paulminett@tripconvergence.co.nz)
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Occupancy Verification is a critical part of a managed lane implementation. With a reliable way to know how many people are in each car, the cost of enforcement can be significantly reduced. Combined with a regime of charging all vehicles the toll, and simultaneously creating a ‘toll credit’ based on the number of people in the car, the use of the ride sharing technologies enables a wider range of toll adjustments for different rider configurations. In a 2+ HOT environment, for example, a full toll credit could be given for the driver and one rider, while a bonus credit (as a discount against a future toll when driving SOV could be given for each additional rider.

Reliable occupancy verification, combined with tolling all vehicles, automatically reduces violation to nil and enables the California Highway Patrol to focus on highway safety. Should the Highway Patrol wish to confirm the claimed occupancy status, a hand-held trigger and reader can be used to expose the occupancy status claimed while travelling at speed on the highway.

Increased revenues and lower costs lead to more successful outcomes for the managed lane facility. Greater rewards for higher vehicle occupancy leads to less demand for additional highway facilities and better travel times. This low cost solution makes everyone a winner.
Car Pool Parking Monitoring and Management (to reward carpoolers)

Think: “a better audit trail for car pooling incentives”

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Providing benefits to people who take alternative forms of transport (avoiding single occupant vehicle travel) is a key strategy of Travel Demand Management. These benefits range from preferential parking arrangements to small incentive payments to additional leave days and prize draws. A key issue for organisers when the alternative is car pooling is that there is a poor quality audit trail to prove that the alternative was used. The record is usually a trip diary completed by the person involved.

While there are congestion busting benefits from encouraging people to share rides, there are also tangible benefits for employers when they do. Lower demand for owned parking spaces can enable redevelopment to use the land in more productive ways. Less need for rented spaces can directly save money.

Using the ride sharing technology to track car pool participation at the parking location is a low cost way to get a better audit trail and reduce administration costs for incentive programs that involve car pooling. The reader can be installed indoors or out, and can capture details of car pooling activity by each employee. Used for a single employer, or a group of employers nearby, the tools enable day to day management and monitoring of dedicated car pool parking as well as highly reliable weekly or monthly reporting of car pooling activity.

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