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CITY OF BERKELEY LAUNCHES INNOVATIVE “GOBERKELEY” TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

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In partnership with AC Transit, City CarShare, TransForm, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the Federal Highway Administration and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, the goBerkeley pilot program is providing area employees with valuable transit and carsharing incentives.

BERKELEY (June 27, 2013) – In an effort to alleviate traffic congestion, pollution and parking problems, the City of Berkeley, in partnership with AC Transit, City CarShare, TransForm, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the Federal Highway Administration and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) announced the launch of the “goBerkeley” transportation program today. A two-year pilot program, goBerkeley aims to reduce congestion and air pollution by improving parking conditions and promoting travel alternatives in the popular business districts of Downtown, Telegraph/Southside and the Elmwood.

Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates said of the program, “goBerkeley is a cutting-edge program that will provide more travel and parking choices to residents, businesses, and visitors. With our partners, Berkeley is showing that we can protect our climate and strengthen our local economy at the same time.”

The goBerkeley program contains three core elements:

- Transit –AC Transit is providing 1,000 free one-year passes through its EasyPass program to employees of businesses in the three commercial areas. Funded by a BAAQMD Transportation for Clean Air grant, distribution begins today and the passes will be in effect for one year.
- Carsharing –City CarShare is adding more locations and vehicles, and providing up to \$200 in annual discounts to interested businesses and additional incentives for local residents.
- Parking Convenience – The City of Berkeley is implementing better parking management to improve the availability of parking.

AC Transit will administer the distribution of the free one-year EasyPasses. "AC Transit is excited to partner with the City of Berkeley and City CarShare on the goBerkeley program," said AC Transit Board President Greg Harper. "It's a great way for us to provide passes to small businesses that otherwise wouldn't be able to participate in the EasyPass program. By pooling the businesses together, the program is reaching a large percentage of the city's employment base. Berkeley is a great city for the goBerkeley program because it has such excellent bus service. We hope these employees become long-time AC Transit riders."

"Our mission is to take 20,000 cars off of Bay Area roads by 2020. The goBerkeley program supports this goal by providing incentives to businesses and residents to take full advantage of alternative transportation options," said Rick Hutchinson, CEO of City CarShare. "As a partner to the City of Berkeley in providing mobility options for over 10 years, City CarShare is pleased to expand our services and membership in Berkeley while also promoting and encouraging transit, walking and cycling."

The City received grants from MTC's Climate Initiatives Program, the BAAQMD and the Federal Highway Administration to test the combined effects of transit passes, carsharing, demand-responsive parking, and programs to encourage bicycling and walking. Mayor Bates discussed the funding of this program, "Transportation produces over 40 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions in the Bay Area. In response to this, the MTC created the Climate Initiatives Program and the Air District has the Transportation Fund for Clean Air to support innovative efforts like ours to reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution."

At the launch event, some area employees received their transit passes and had an opportunity to see City CarShare's newest electric vehicle and wheelchair accessible "AccessMobile" van.

goBerkeley website: <http://www.goberkeley.info/index.php>

Photo Link - <http://www.goberkeley.info/press-photos.php>

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