

VIA ROOSEVELT

EMPLOYER TOOLKIT

Commute programs build
better businesses.



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Employer Toolkit

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Welcome to Commute Seattle

What is Commute Seattle?

Commute Seattle is a non-profit commuter service organization designed to provide Downtown Seattle employers, property owners, and commuters with information and services to make commuting Downtown more convenient, affordable, and sustainable. Commute Seattle seeks to keep downtown a vibrant city center that continues to bring customers downtown and attract business. Our goal is to provide a variety of commute options to ensure that people can get to their destination without delay.

Why Commute Seattle?

Commute trends are changing. According to Commute Seattle's 2014 Commuter Mode Split Study, only a minority of downtown commuters (31%) drive alone to work. The majority of your employees get to work by transit, ridesharing, walking and biking. As an employer, you want to make getting to and from your business as easy and convenient as possible for your employees and customers. With traffic congestion and parking shortages on the rise, transportation should be one of your top priorities. Keeping downtown Seattle mobile is critical to its continued economic vitality.

Commute Seattle is here to help you address your needs and concerns as an employer about parking, traffic congestion, and the increasingly high cost of commuting.

What does Commute Seattle offer?

Commute Seattle offers transportation products, services, and incentives that support the goal of reducing drive-alone commutes into the downtown core.

Commute Seattle offers:

- Customized transportation consultations to help create and manage a successful employee commute program
- Information on a variety of commute options, resources and incentives all available in one convenient location
- Innovative programs to manage parking resources and enhance employee transportation options
- Commuter outreach and education services
- ORCA transit pass cost comparisons for your company

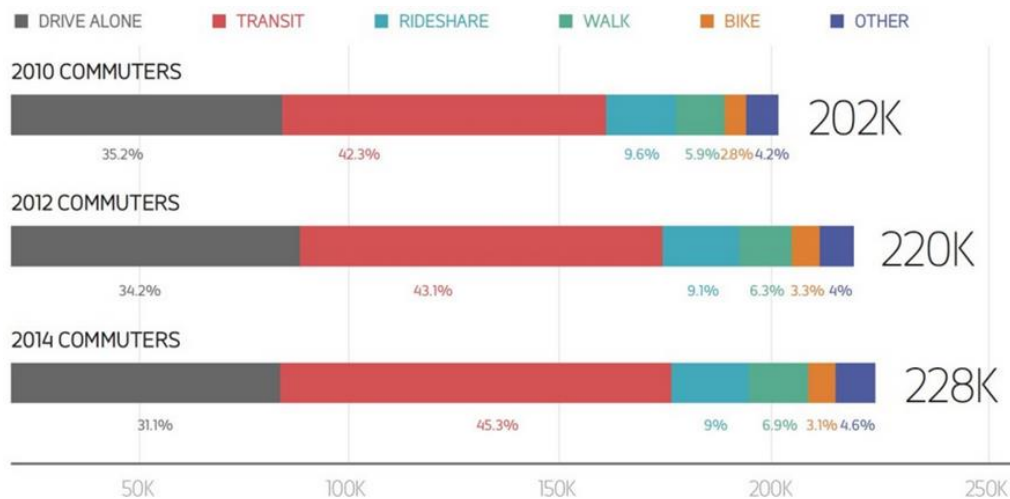
Who is Commute Seattle?

Commute Seattle is an alliance of the Downtown Seattle Association, King County Metro, and the City of Seattle. The partnership was formed to support the growth of downtown and increase access to and mobility within the Center City.

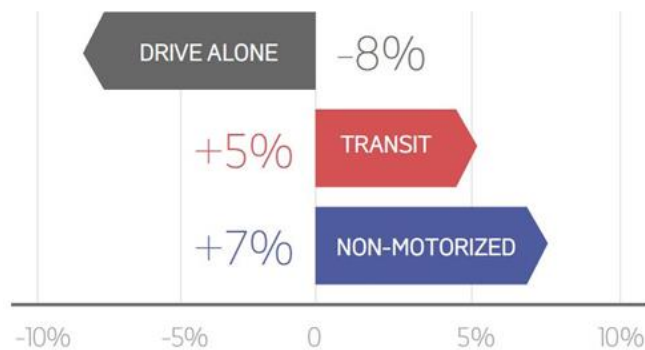
This toolkit is made possible by the products, services and technical assistance provided by:
King County Metro and the City of Seattle.

Downtown Seattle Commute Trends

Commuter Seattle’s 2014 Commuter Mode Split Survey reveals that over two-thirds (69%) of Downtown rush-hour commute trips are taken by modes other than driving alone, up from 66% in 2012 and 65% in 2010. Public transit (45%) remains the most popular commute choice, followed by driving alone (31%), carpool/vanpool (9%), walking (7%), teleworking/flex schedules and other (5%), and bicycling (3%). Non-motorized modes now represent 15% of all Downtown commute trips, and will continue to grow as Downtown’s residential population expands.



Rail, bicycling, walking and teleworking have grown the fastest since 2012, reflecting the success of public investments in transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure, and a continued trend toward mobile workplaces.



Given that the overwhelming majority of your tenants and their employees do not drive to work, meeting their transportation needs is critical to your bottom line. By offering a comprehensive commute program, your building can remain an attractive and competitive place to do business,

Learn more about Commuter Seattle’s 2014 Commuter Mode Split at:

www.commuteseattle.com/2014-modesplit-survey

Start a Commute Program

Description:

An employee commute program is a business tool that can help you make commuting to your worksite more convenient, affordable and sustainable. Starting an employee commute program allows you to offer a broad range of commuting options to your employees and help them choose an option that works best for them.

Commute Seattle's free transportation consultations help you develop and implement a comprehensive commute program that provides valuable employee benefits, achieves your company's commute trip reduction and sustainability goals, and saves money! Commute Seattle can also survey your employees' transportation modes and conduct a site analysis of transportation options in your building or office.

Starting an employee commute program:

Employers should designate a person to be the Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) to share information with employees about available commute options and programs. Commute Seattle representatives can help your ETC design a commute program that is right for your company and provide complimentary transportation seminars for employees.

Employee commute programs can include a variety of options and services, including:

- ORCA transit and vanpool passes
- Commuter pre-tax benefits
- RideshareOnline.com and other carpooling resources
- Reserved parking and other incentives for carpools and vanpools
- Telework or flex schedule options
- Bike racks, lockers, and shower facilities
- Company bike teams and incentives for bike commuters
- Zipcar for Business

Business Benefits:

- Maximize tax benefits and cost savings for both employers and employees
- Reduce parking expenses and manage limited parking resources
- Support corporate sustainability and corporate social responsibility initiatives
- Improve employee morale and retention

Costs:

The costs associated with starting a commute program depend on the number of employees you have and the types of benefits you want to offer. We can help develop the commute program that fits with your goals, company culture, and budget.

[Contact Commute Seattle](#) about state, county and city incentives available to support commute programs.

ORCA Business Accounts

What is ORCA?

ORCA (One Regional Card for All), is a smart card transit pass that is accepted on Community Transit, Everett Transit, King County Metro Transit, Kitsap Transit, Pierce Transit, Sound Transit and Washington State Ferries. With ORCA, individuals or businesses can purchase different monthly regional PugetPasses or load a dollar amount into an “e-purse” debit account. Users then simply tap their card at an ORCA card reader, and their pass product is recognized or the fare is automatically deducted from their e-purse account. ORCA gives your business a convenient way to provide bus, train, ferry, or vanpool benefits to your employees.

There are two ORCA account options available for businesses:

- **ORCA Business Choice-** Business Choice allows employers to load a dollar amount or any PugetPass onto their employees’ ORCA cards at *retail pricing* on a monthly basis. Business choice gives the employer the flexibility to subsidize as much or as little of their employees’ transportation costs as they want, for as few or as many of their employees as they want.
- **ORCA Business Passport-** Business Passport is a *deeply discounted* comprehensive annual transportation pass program for employers with 5 to 499 employees in downtown Seattle. It includes *unlimited* rides on all Metro, Sound Transit, Community, Kitsap, Pierce and Everett transit services (with a ferry add-on option) and 100% vanpool and vanship subsidy. Employers must purchase Passport for all full-time benefited employees, and can cost-share with employees up to 50%.

Commute Seattle is available to meet with your company to provide an overview of ORCA business options, run detailed cost comparisons, identify eligible government incentives and tax benefits, and answer any questions you might have about employee transit programs.

Benefits to Employer:

- ORCA transit pass programs are a competitive employee benefit in the Downtown Seattle market that can allow you to attract and retain the best employees.
- ORCA transit pass programs are qualified tax-free federal transportation fringe benefits, and are also eligible for WA State B&O Tax credits. (See page 14 for details)
- ORCA business accounts are easy to administer; businesses can load products or funds, order new cards, and block stolen or lost cards all online
- Providing easy access to transit supports company sustainability goals and helps free up valuable parking availability for customers and clients.

Benefits to Employees:

- Tax-free or company-subsidized transit passes allow employees to get to work affordably, conveniently and sustainably.
- Taking transit saves employees time and allows them to utilize their commute time more effectively by reading or checking email.
- One easy-to-use card provides access to many different modes of transportation.

ORCA Business Passport

Description:

ORCA Business Passport is a comprehensive annual transportation pass program for employers with 5-499 employees. Passport includes unlimited rides on all Metro, Sound, Community, Kitsap, Pierce and Everett transit services, Sounder Train, Link Light Rail, Seattle Streetcar, Vashon and West Seattle Water Taxis, 100% Vanpool and Vanshare subsidies and the Home Free Guarantee emergency taxi service. Washington State Ferry passes can be added on individual employee cards.

Benefits to Employer:

- ORCA Business Passport is deeply discounted from retail pass pricing, and is available only to businesses.
- The average annual cost of a parking spot in downtown Seattle is over \$3,500. Replacing company paid parking with an annual transit pass creates immense savings.
- One pass covers all employees' commute needs, significantly reducing administrative burdens and allowing companies to offer an equitable transportation benefit.
- Companies that participate in the ORCA Business Passport program typically see a 15% increase in transit ridership, supporting company sustainability goals and helping free up valuable parking availability for customers and clients.
- Companies new to the ORCA Passport program are eligible for \$200 in FREE Zipcar credit! (See page 14)

Benefits to Employees:

- Unlimited rides allow employees to get to work conveniently and affordably, and enjoy transportation benefits after-hours and on weekends.
- ORCA Business Passport saves employees thousands of dollars in out-of-pocket transportation expenses.
- ORCA Business Passport includes Home Free Guarantee: Employees can take eight free taxi rides home per year in the event of an unexpected emergency, allowing employees to feel comfortable leaving their car at home. (See page 6)

How does it work?

Cost varies depending on the location of your company's work site. The program requires that a pass be purchased for every benefits-eligible employee. Participating companies can choose to have employees who receive the pass co-pay up to 50% of the cost of an individual pass. Passport is available to individuals only through their participating employer.

ORCA Passport pricing:

The price of ORCA Business Passport varies depending on the location(s) of a company's work site. Passport prices are based on average ridership levels within zone boundaries, and are adjusted every 6 months to reflect fare changes amongst the seven participating transit agencies. For current pricing, details about exact pricing boundaries, and company qualifications, go to www.commuteseattle.com/ORCA or [contact Commute Seattle](#).

Home Free Guarantee

Description:

Home Free Guarantee (HFG) is an emergency taxi program provided by King County Metro for your employees who take alternative modes of transportation to work. If an unexpected situation arises, transit, bike or rideshare commuters will not be stranded. Metro will provide them with a FREE cab ride home up to 8 times a year. Home Free Guarantee is fully included with the ORCA Passport or can be arranged as a separate program with your company.

Service Details:

Home Free Guarantee provides the following benefits and services for your employees:

- If a family crisis, unexpected event, or illness strikes, HFG will allow your employees to get where they need to be if they did not drive that day.
- Eligible employees receive up to 8 FREE cab rides a year, up to 60 miles each time.
- No hassle for your employees, they simply show the cab driver the designated authorization number given to the coordinator over the phone and then turn in the receipt to your office staff.

Home Free Guarantee will reduce drive-alone commutes among your employees:

HFG gives employees greater flexibility to take alternative modes of transportation to work without having to worry about being stranded without a car in the case of an emergency.

Business Benefits:

- Add a competitive advantage to your business by offering employees a wider range of commute options and transportation benefits.
- Ensure that your employees have a reliable way to get home in the case of an unexpected emergency.
- Allow employees to feel comfortable leaving their cars at home.

Costs:

Home Free Guarantee is free for companies participating in the ORCA Business Passport program, or for individuals in a vanpool or vanshare program. Home Free Guarantee is also available to companies with over 100 employees, for less than \$3.00 per employee for the first six months. After the initial six months pricing is recalibrated based on usage.

[Contact Commute Seattle](#) to learn more about Home Free Guarantee.

Parking Management Strategies

Why change your parking benefits?

Free or discounted parking is one of the greatest factors in deciding whether to drive or take an alternative mode of transportation. By implementing new parking management strategies, you can save money and your employees will have more commuting options, so they will be more likely to think twice about driving alone to work.

Parking Management Strategies:

Parking Pricing and Subsidies

Subsidizing employee parking is expensive! According to a 2012 Collier's international study, the median price for monthly parking in Downtown Seattle is \$285 per month. Employers have a choice between paying high monthly parking fees for employee parking or supporting affordable commute alternatives. Replacing monthly parking subsidies with transit benefits can save companies money and encourage employees to use sustainable commute modes. If you do subsidize parking, you should consider only doing so for employees who use non-drive alone commute modes such as carpool or vanpool, or requiring employees to share company subsidized parking spaces throughout the month.

On-Demand Parking Options

Full-month parking passes give employees a financial incentive to drive to work every day, even if an alternative mode might be more convenient and affordable on a given day. Offering on-demand parking options like flexible half-month parking passes, pay-as-you-go parking debit accounts, or ticket books you can allow employees to drive on the days they need to, but have the option of taking transit, carpooling, walking or biking when convenient throughout the month. Ask your property manager about offering on-demand parking options for your employees.

Parking Cash Out

If you currently pay parking fees for employees, you could implement a "parking cash out" policy: offer your employee a portion of the cost of monthly parking you pay to give up his or her parking space. You save the difference!

Park Free Days

Reserve parking spaces for your employees who take transit everyday but might need to drive to work a couple times a month. Allot employees 3-5 days each month where they can drive to work and park for free if they commit to commuting via non-drive-alone modes the rest of the time.

Business Benefits:

- Save your company money on parking expenses
- Create more options and incentives for sustainable employee commuting
- Open up more parking spaces for customers and clients
- Reduce CO₂ emissions and vehicle miles traveled to your business

[Contact Commute Seattle](#) to learn more about parking management strategies.

Bicycling

Why encourage commuting by bicycle?

Recent studies have shown that employees who bicycle commute are a better value: they are out sick less than the average worker and make 14% fewer claims on their health insurance. Bicycle commuting improves workplace morale by fostering feelings of accomplishment and good health in your employees. Bicycling is a non-polluting form of transportation that can help reach sustainability goals.

Cost savings alone make a strong case for getting employees on a bicycle. Compared to a \$285 monthly parking spot for each individual car in downtown Seattle, it takes minor cost and commitment to shift resources to provide bicycle incentives, access to showers, lockers and bicycle parking for bicycle commuters.

In short, bicycling is a smart business strategy. We believe that almost anyone can commute by bicycle either alone or in conjunction with another mode of transit (bus, vanpool, train). With the proper infrastructure, information, and incentives your business and your employees will reap the benefits of bicycle commuting.

Benefits to your employees:

- Bicycle commuting costs much less than driving a car.
- Bicycling is aerobic. Starting the day with exercise and fresh air makes employees more energetic and productive.
- Bicycles require little parking space and bicycle parking is usually free.
- Bicycling is efficient. If your commute is short or in-city, it is probably as fast (or faster!) than traveling by car. Combining bicycling with transit is a fast and convenient option for longer commutes.
- Bicycling is fun!

What steps to take in setting up a bicycle program?

- Ask your property manager about bicycle racks, lockers and shower facilities.
- Offer up a tax free incentive of up to \$20 per month to bike commuting employees.
- Promote Bike Month in May and enter a company team in the Group Health Commute Challenge.
- Hire a mobile bike mechanic to visit your office for basic repairs, maintenance, and technical assistance on any bike-related issues.
- Create company-branded jerseys to create highly visible “mobile billboards” that advertise your company’s commitment to health and sustainability.

A good first place to start is to provide your employees with the tools they need to become safe bicycle commuters. Commute Seattle offers transportation consulting services to help employers plan everything from adding bicycle facilities to starting an effective bicycle commuting program. Commute Seattle can provide educational employee seminars on bike commuting, safety and repair, as well as informative transportation fairs highlighting resources for bike commuters.

[Contact Commute Seattle](#) for more information on our consulting and employee outreach services.

Bicycle Sharing

Description: Bicycle sharing is a growing movement in cities of all sizes. A bike sharing system provides a fleet of branded, durable bikes that are locked into docking stations in convenient locations around the city. Pronto is Seattle's only bike sharing provider with hundreds of bikes at 50 stations located across Seattle, and bikes are available for use 24 hours a day, all year round. The station network will provide twice as many docking points as bicycles, assuring that an available dock to return your bike is always nearby.

How Bicycle Sharing can reduce drive-alone commutes among your tenants:

Commuters with access to bike sharing can use the rented bicycles from one station and return them to any station in the system, providing flexibility for short business trips, running errands at lunch or completing the last mile of their daily commute. Bike sharing can help solve a persistent perception that driving is necessary if a tenant has something to do beyond the office.

Pronto's bike sharing system offers 500 bikes and over 50 stations across Seattle.

Benefits for Tenants

- Getting around by bike is fun, this benefit is a good morale booster for employees and residents
- Employees who bike take 15%-50% fewer sick days per year
- Millennials are less likely to own cars, offering non-motorized transit benefits attracts young talent
- Riding a bike saves money, leaving more disposable income for residents and tenants

What Property Managers can do to Encourage Bicycle Sharing

As a Property Manager you can increase bike amenities inside the building as well as provide bike sharing benefits. Steps to support bike sharing

- Sponsor a station on site
- Educate tenants about bike sharing as a commute option
- Provide discounted corporate memberships for your tenants and employees

Costs;

Pronto offers corporate memberships of various commitment levels. You can choose to cover a portion of your tenant's annual membership fee or pay for every individual's membership. This is a very affordable benefit with big payoffs for your tenant's health and convenience. Contact Pronto for more information at corporate@prontocycleshare.com.

Vanpool

Description:

A vanpool is a group of 5-15 people who share a ride to work in a van or Nissan Leaf that is owned, insured and maintained by King County Metro. The group enjoys a low monthly fare and a comfortable commute in a van that seats 7, 12, or 15 passengers. Vanpools with only 5 passengers and a commute distance under 50 miles can share a Nissan Leaf electric vehicle. Vanpool members are usually co-workers or people who work in the same vicinity and share driving responsibilities. Each individual vanpool decides their own schedule, pick up and drop off points based on the group's needs.

How vanpool can reduce drive-alone commutes among your employees:

One vanpool can take as many as 14 vehicles off the road during peak commute hours. The more people who sign up for the program, the fewer drive-alone commute trips contribute to congestion and parking shortages.

Business benefits:

- Provide a valuable transportation benefit for employees who live far away or in areas with lower transit service.
- Reduces employee parking and commute expenses
- Registered Vanpool drivers share 40 miles of personal van use each month. Nissan Leaf Vanpool drivers get unlimited personal use. Use vanpool vehicles for errands after hours or on weekends, meetings or business events.
- Reduces employee vehicle miles traveled and CO₂ emissions from commuting
- Increases employee reliability and decreases tardiness

Costs:

Individual vanpoolers pay a monthly fare that is based on the group's round trip mileage and the number of riders in the group. The vanpool fare includes gas, insurance, maintenance, 24-hour roadside assistance and a guaranteed ride home in case of an emergency or unanticipated overtime. The ORCA Passport Program covers vanpool fares 100%.

Support for employees:

Employers can help encourage their employees to join a vanpool by offering support and incentives. Employers could:

- Provide free, discounted or reserved parking for vanpools
- Provide incentives for forming vanpools among employees
- Subsidize vanpool fares for their employees through ORCA Passport or pre-tax payroll deductions.
- Encourage employees to register at RideshareOnline.com to find an existing vanpool or commuters looking to start a new group.

Incentives:

[Contact Commute Seattle](#) to learn about current incentives for Vanpool riders, drivers and bookkeepers.

Vanshare

Description:

Do you have employees who want to use transit but the bus, ferry or train does not fully connect to their home or work destination? Vanshare will bridge the gap by providing a way to connect your employees from home to a nearby transportation hub or from the hub to work. With vanshare, a group can park a van in a reserved parking space at any Park & Ride lot, rail station, or ferry terminal and use it again for their return trip home.

How vanshare can reduce drive-alone commutes among your employees:

Vanshare gives your employees greater flexibility to take alternative modes of transportation to work so they do not have to make the commute trip alone.

Business benefits:

- Allow employees living in areas with lower transit service to connect to public transportation networks.
- Allow employees to easily connect to your worksite from train stations or ferry terminals.
- Ensure that employees can utilize Park & Ride lots that fill up early.

Costs:

Vanshare groups start at 5 and go up to 15 people. Riders split a monthly fare that includes fuel, maintenance, insurance and 24-hour roadside assistance and a guaranteed ride home in case of emergency of unanticipated overtime. The ORCA Passport program covers vanshare fares 100%.

Support for employees:

Employers can encourage their employees to join a vanshare by offering support and incentives. Employers could:

- Provide free, discounted or reserved parking for vanshares
- Provide incentives for forming vanshares among employees
- Subsidize vanshare fares for their employees through ORCA Passport or monthly subsidies.
- Encourage employees to register at RideshareOnline.com to find an existing vanshare or commuters looking to start a new group

Incentives:

[Contact Commute Seattle](#) to learn about current incentives for Vanshare riders, drivers and bookkeepers.

RideshareOnline.com

Description:

RideshareOnline.com is a FREE service that matches commuters with other people in their area who are looking to share a ride. It provides a secure and confidential way for your employees to match up with others in your building or in nearby offices to share the commute. RideshareOnline.com makes it easy for your employees to find a carpool, vanpool or bicycling partner.

How Rideshare Online can reduce drive-alone commutes among your employees:

RideshareOnline.com is a great resource for promoting and supporting alternatives to driving and commuting alone. Companies can create a RideshareOnline.com employer network in order to manage commute programs, track and report employees commute modes and CO₂ emissions over time, and incentivize specific transportation modes.

Services and support:

RideshareOnline.com is a comprehensive commute management website that includes:

- Security and confidentiality for everyone who signs up
- Interactive maps to help your employees locate the most convenient matches
- A commute trip calculator for instant feedback on financial and environmental savings
- A trip calendar that encourages participants to log their commutes for incentives and rewards
- Ride-matching services for regional events

Business benefits:

- A powerful tool for managing commute programs, incentives and communications
- Allows companies to track employee's commute choices and provide targeted incentives that encourage specific transportation modes
- Gives employees access to state, county and city commuter incentive programs
- Allows employers to monitor and report CO₂ emission savings from commute trip reduction efforts.

Costs:

RideshareOnline.com is FREE for your employees! Employees go online, complete the registration and then start finding matches in their area to start a carpool or vanpool. To create a RideshareOnline.com employer network, contact Tom Devlin at Tom.Devlin@kingcounty.gov

WorkSmart

Description:

Businesses can benefit from increased worker productivity, improved business continuity, and increased employee morale by offering telework, flexible schedules, or compressed work week (CWW) programs. WorkSmart provides tools to help businesses set up programs that meet the needs of the company, the managers, and the employees.

Telework: Telework programs allow eligible employees to work from home, providing benefits to both the company and the employee. Good telework policies include agreements on responsibilities, obligations, and reporting requirements.

Flex-Schedule: Flex-Schedule allows your employees to come to work during non-peak hours of traffic, making their commute quicker and less stressful while reducing traffic congestion.

Compressed Work Week: Compressed Work Week schedules allow employees to work the same hours each week but longer hours each day, allowing a day off each week or every other week.

How WorkSmart will reduce drive-alone commutes among your employees:

WorkSmart programs allow employees more flexibility in their commutes. Telework and CWW eliminate trips completely, reducing traffic congestion, CO₂ emissions, and fuel use, while saving time and money. With Flex-Schedule, your employees will have more transportation options available to them through increased flexibility in work start and end times.

Business Benefits:

Research has shown that WorkSmart programs can enhance an employee's level of productivity and increase morale, which is good for your business! Other benefits of WorkSmart programs include:

- Adding a competitive advantage to your business when recruiting employees
- Reducing demand for employee parking and freeing up more customer parking
- Reducing employee absenteeism and improving morale
- Improving customer and business services through extended work hours

Costs:

Businesses starting a telework program may need to invest in upgraded technology or equipment, but overall the costs are small. Out-of-pocket expenses for implementing flex schedules and CWW are usually minimal. If alternative work schedules result in extended business hours, ongoing costs such as utilities, security, or maintenance are small. These costs may even be offset by financial gains from client transactions conducted during longer hours or by making long distance calls or faxes at lower-cost times.

To learn more about the WorkSmart program, visit:

www.kingcounty.gov/transportation/kcdot/MetroTransit/Telework

Carsharing

Description:

Offer your tenants the convenience of having car sharing vehicles available for all of their transportation needs. Car sharing services like Zipcar and Car2Go offer affordable rental rates by the hour or by the minute for cars conveniently located throughout Downtown Seattle. Car sharing allows employees to reserve a vehicle online or by phone and drive away, 24 hours a day. Whether for a 10-minute hop across town, a 3-hour client meeting, or a commute alternative, car sharing services provide tenants with the flexibility to leave their own vehicle at home. Businesses are increasingly using car sharing services to provide mid-day transportation options for employees, or to replace their own fleet of company vehicles.

Zipcar is Seattle's first car sharing service, and is optimized for round-trips of 1-24 hours. ZipCar provides guaranteed parking and a wide selection of new vehicles from which to choose. From luxury cars to Priuses to cargo vans, ZipCar has got you covered. Hundreds of vehicles are currently available in Seattle, Bellevue, Redmond, and Tacoma. Businesses are eligible for special rates and discounted membership fees.

Car2Go is the newest car sharing service in Seattle, bringing its fleet of 430 Smart ForTwo cars to Seattle in December 2012. Car2Go charges just 41¢ per minute and encourages one-way trips anywhere within its Seattle Home Area. At the end of your trip you can leave your car2go in any approved street parking space inside the home area.

How car sharing will reduce drive-alone commutes among your tenants:

Providing onsite car sharing vehicles and discount car sharing membership options to tenants enables them to leave their car at home and still have a vehicle available at the office for off-site meetings, appointments, and errands.

Benefits:

- Gain a competitive advantage by offering your tenants convenient access to a variety of vehicles during the day.
- Allow tenants to save money by replacing their company fleet with car sharing vehicles.
- Support Commute Trip Reduction efforts by enabling commuters to bus, bike or vanpool to work and still have a car available at the office.

Contact Commute Seattle to learn more about integrating car sharing into your building's commute program.

Commuter Tax Benefits

Description:

Offer commute options to your employees and take advantage of federal and state commuter tax benefits. The IRS and State of Washington offer tax benefits to support employee commute programs.

Washington State B&O Tax Credit

Employers who provide commute trip reduction incentives to their employees are eligible for a credit against their business and occupation (B&O) or public utility tax (PUT) liability. The credit is equal to 50% of benefit costs, up to \$60 per employee per year. No employer may receive more than \$200,000 of credit per fiscal year. Applications for the tax credit must be received between January 1st-31st each year.

IRS Commuter Benefits

Federal law allows employers to reduce the cost of commuting for their employees via public transportation including: bus, ferry, rail and vanpool by:

- Providing employees with a tax-exempt benefit of up to \$130 per employee per month for a transit or vanpool pass (2014 tax year)
- Allowing employees to set aside up to \$130 of pre-tax income to purchase transit passes
- Allowing employers and employees to split the cost of the transit pass by using up to \$130 of a combination of pre-tax employee funds and tax-exempt employer spending.

Bicycle Commuter Benefit

The IRS allows employers to offer a tax-exempt benefit up to \$20 per month to employees who are bicycle commuters and do not receive other tax-exempt transportation benefits. The benefit may be offered to employees that use bicycle commuting for a substantial portion of the travel between the residence and place of work for bicycle equipment, maintenance, repairs or storage.

Business Benefits

- Offer a valuable and competitive employee benefit
- Reduce employee income taxes and out of pocket transportation expenses
- Reduce employer FICA taxes and B&O taxes
- Support company sustainability and corporate social responsibility initiatives
- Reduce congestion and free up parking for customers and clients

Support Services:

Commute Seattle offers employers free tax benefit consultations. Our tools and expertise can help you crunch the numbers and take advantage of tax benefits and other incentives. [Contact Commute Seattle](#) for more details.

Commuter Outreach Services

Description:

Hosting a transportation fair, commuter seminar or other employee outreach event is an easy and effective way to keep your employees informed on transportation options, resources and incentives. Commute Seattle's commuter outreach services can help you highlight your company's transportation benefit, policies, and sustainability initiatives, promote what might be your best kept secrets (bike facilities, nearby Zipcars, etc.), comply with your Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) regulations. Outreach services can be adapted to meet your needs at staff meetings, brown-bag info-sessions, educational symposiums, and corporate events.

Transportation Fairs

Commute Seattle is available to provide turn-key fairs and tabling events that inform employees about multi-modal transportation resources, current events and issues that affect downtown commuters. Focus on your core business and let us drive the commuter fair!

Our knowledgeable outreach staff will:

- Distribute informative maps, brochures and fun promotional giveaways;
- Answer questions about tolling and construction projects, new transportation resources, transit service changes and local government incentive programs;
- Offer trip-planning assistance and online transportation app demos; and
- Highlight your company's transportation benefits and policies.

Transportation fairs include an inviting looking Commute Seattle draped table with banners and one staff person for two hours. Commute Seattle can coordinate the participation of a mobile bike mechanic as well as other transportation experts including King County Metro, Sound Transit, WA-DOT, Zipcar, Feet First, and Cascade Bike Club and more. Commute Seattle offers customized communication templates that can include your logo.

Transportation Seminars

Commute Seattle can educate and encourage your employees with one-hour seminars on Downtown transit options, telework tools, bike commuting 101, winter bike commuting, commuter web resources and more. Let our experts help guide your employees to a convenient, sustainable and affordable commute.

A Commute Seattle representative will give an hour-long presentation and Q&A session on a topic of your choosing at your worksite and prepare info packets to distribute to attendees. This will be open to employees to attend, learn, ask questions and receive material applicable to the event.

[Contact Commute Seattle](#) to learn more about commuter outreach services.

Contact Information

Commute Seattle is available to you and your business as a one-stop-resource for sustainable transportation products, services, and incentives in downtown Seattle.

Whatever your motivation, we hope these ideas, products and services help improve your employees' experience getting to and from your work place, mitigate congestion, reduce the impact of conventional transportation on the environment, and save you money.

Commute Seattle Staff:

Jessica Szilag
Executive Director

jessicas@commuteseattle.com

Danielle Abbott
Program Manager

Daniellea@commuteseattle.com

Joe Bellanca
CTR Coordinator

josephb@commuteseattle.com

Brendan Lemkin
Parking Outreach Manager

brendanl@commuteseattle.com

Heidi Speight
Marketing and Events Specialist

heidis@commuteseattle.com

Mike Rimoin
Business Development Manager

miker@commuteseattle.com

Matthew Trecha
ORCA Passport Sales

matthewt@commuteseattle.com

Office Location:

1809 7th Ave, Suite 900
Seattle, Washington 98101

Phone: 206-613-3131

Fax: 206-625-9940

Website: www.commuteseattle.com



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