

# COMMUTE SEATTLE



LIVE MORE. DRIVE LESS.

Toolkit for Downtown  
Employers

2009



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## Employer Toolkit

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# Welcome to Commute Seattle

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## **What is Commute Seattle?**

Commute Seattle is a commuter service organization designed to provide downtown employers, property owners, and commuters with information and services to improve access to and mobility within downtown. Commute Seattle wants 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?**

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 already on the rise, and a projected increase of 22,000 new commuters into downtown over the next six years, 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 an employee commute program
- Information and services on a variety of commute options all available in one convenient location
- Innovative programs to manage parking and support employee parking needs
- Access to products and incentives that support alternative commute options

## **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, through and from the Center City.

# Commute Trip Reduction

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## **What is the Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Law?**

The CTR Law is a state law that requires employers with 100 or more employees to develop and implement an employee commute program to reduce the number and length of drive-alone commute trips made to their worksite. The goal of the CTR Law is to reduce traffic congestion, air pollution, and fuel consumption in the state by encouraging employees to use alternatives to drive-alone commuting.

## **Background:**

The state Commute Trip Reduction Law was introduced as part of the Washington State Clean Air Act in 1991. The Washington State Legislature passed the CTR Efficiency Act in 2006 and revised the goals for trip reduction; each city and county must reduce drive-alone trips at major worksites by 10 percent from 2007 levels by 2011.

## **How is CTR connected to Commute Seattle?**

Downtown Seattle was designated a “Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center” or GTEC by the state, which evolved into Commute Seattle. Downtown CTR-affected employers already have a strong, proven record in reducing commute trips and promoting alternative commute modes. The goal of Commute Seattle is to extend the current commute services and incentives under CTR Law to all downtown Seattle businesses and commuters.

## **How has the CTR Law improved commuting?**

The CTR law has proven to be successful in reducing drive-alone commutes, easing traffic congestion, and keeping people moving. CTR results for 2005 show:

- 14,200 trips reduced in the central Puget Sound region everyday
- Reduced traffic delay in the central Puget Sound region by 11.6 percent during peak morning travel times
- 5.8 million gallons of fuel saved statewide
- 74,200 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduced statewide
- 27 percent average drive-alone rate for downtown CTR-affected employers verses 44 percent for all downtown commuters

## **CTR-affected Employers:**

Employers are affected by the CTR Law if they have 100 or more full-time employees at a single worksite who begin their workday between 6:00 AM and 9:00 AM at least two days a week. CTR-affected employers are required to:

- Assign a transportation coordinator who is responsible for managing the commute program
- Survey employees every two years to assess progress toward CTR goals
- Submit an Employer Program Report on a regular basis for each affected worksite
- Act in good faith to reduce drive-alone commute trips made to their worksite

# ORCA

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## **Description:**

Transportation agencies in the Central Puget Sound region have collaborated on a simplified fare collection program – using smart card technology – for bus, train, rail and ferry travel in King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties. ORCA (One Regional Card for All) will make travel and fare payment more convenient for tens of thousands of passengers in the Puget Sound Region.

The system is easy and fast. ORCA uses a durable, no-contact microprocessor smart card that automatically calculates any fare due. Passengers will simply “tap” their ORCA Card on target card readers and enjoy their ride. The card will register a valid pass or deduct the appropriate fare from the ORCA card. ORCA cards will be replacing fare mediums like PugetPass and FlexPass throughout the region. Businesses will have more flexibility than ever before when it comes to offering their employees transportation benefits. The ORCA program is administered entirely online; businesses can load monetary value or various transit products for their employees over the Internet. ORCA will be available to businesses in downtown Seattle from King County Metro this summer.

## **How ORCA will help reduce drive-alone commutes among your employees:**

With ORCA, your employees will have multiple transportation options at their fingertips to encourage non-drive alone commutes, whether it is hoping on a bus, joining a vanpool or sailing in a Ferry, ORCA will make riding and paying for transit easier than ever before.

## **ORCA options for businesses**

- **ORCA Business Passport-** Business Passport is a comprehensive annual transportation pass program for employers with 5-499 employees in downtown Seattle. It includes unlimited rides on all Metro, Sound, Community, Kitsap, Pierce and Everett transit services (with a ferry add on optional).
- **ORCA Business Choice-** Business Choice allows employers to load a dollar amount or a monthly pass 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 as they want.

## **ORCA pricing:**

ORCA Passport	\$507.13* per pass, per year (for new Passport companies)	Must subsidize at least 50% of cost with employees, annual program administration
ORCA Business Choice	Retail pass pricing	Can subsidize as little or as much as company chooses, monthly administration

\* Prices subject to change

# Home Free Guarantee

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## **Description:**

Home Free Guarantee (HFG) is a taxi program provided by King County Metro for your employees who rideshare or take alternative modes of transportation to work. If an emergency situation arises at work such as an employee or their child gets sick, your employees will not be stranded because they did not drive their car to work that day. Metro will provide them with a FREE cab ride home up to 8 times a year. Home Free Guarantee is already included with the FlexPass or can be arranged as a separate program with your company.

## **How 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:**

Home Free Guarantee will:

- Add a competitive advantage to your business by offering employees a wider range of commute options and transportation benefits
- Reduce demand for employee parking and open up more spaces for customers
- Provide a tax credit for alternative commute subsidies

## **Costs:**

Employers pay less than \$3.00 per employee for businesses with over 100 people for the first six months after signing up. An affordable, fixed rate is applied to firms with less than 100 employees. If your employee usage of the program does not exceed your original investment during the first six months, then there is no additional cost for the rest of the contract year.

## **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 their FlexPass or authorization number and then turn in the receipt to your office staff.

## **Incentives:**

If you start a Home Free Guarantee program in your business King County Metro provide a 50/50 match for the first year, up to \$5,000!
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# Parking Management Made Easy!

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## **Why change your parking benefits?**

Free or cheap 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 parking options, so they will be more likely to think twice about driving alone to work.

## **How parking management will reduce drive-alone commutes among your employees:**

People who get a parking subsidy downtown are half as likely to use transit regularly as those who do not. Making your employees pay parking fees that are closer to their true cost encourages them to try new commute options and leave their cars at home.

## **Parking Management Strategies:**

### Parking Pricing and Subsidies

Employers have a choice between paying high monthly parking fees for employees or other, much less costly commute programs. Taking away parking subsidies and making transit a more cost-effective option for your employees will encourage them to use alternative commute modes. If you do subsidize parking, you should consider only doing it for employees who use non-drive alone commute modes such as carpool or vanpool.

### Parking Cash Out

If you currently pay parking fees for employees, you could offer “parking cash out” where you 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 usually commute on transit the rest of the time.

## **Business Benefits:**

Changing your parking management can provide the following benefits:

- Save your company money on parking that can be used to support other alternative commute modes
- Create more options and incentives for alternative commuting for your employees
- Open up more parking spaces for customers and clients
- Reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and vehicle miles traveled to your business

## **Incentives:**

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Earn up to \$500 in Zipcar credit for implementing one of these parking strategies!</li><li>• Earn up to \$15,000 if you change your current parking policies (for more information contact Commute Seattle)</li></ul> |
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# Center City Parking Program

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## **Description:**

The Center City Parking Program is the City's effort to address changes to on-street parking in the Center City over the next several years with new marketing and way-finding technology. The program goal is to provide easy access to off-street, short-term parking and to help keep downtown moving. The effort responds to the expected loss of short-term, on-street parking and commercial loading spaces in the central waterfront, Pioneer Square, and downtown retail core due to Alaskan Way Viaduct construction.

## **Why downtown Seattle needs to focus on parking:**

- Center City is expected to be home to about 50,000 new jobs and over 20,000 new households between 2004 and 2024.
- Seattle is working to decrease greenhouse gas emissions by moving more people with fewer cars by promoting transit, walking, and biking in downtown.
- Major upcoming transportation projects could displace over 1,000 on-street parking spaces for several years.

## **What your business can do to improve parking:**

- Offer alternative commute options and incentives to your employees to reduce monthly and all-day parking
- Reserve parking spaces for employees who carpool or vanpool to work
- Start or enhance your employee commute program to give your employees more alternatives to driving alone and parking

## **Support:**

SDOT will help you make the transition in your parking management by:

- Holding one-on-one meetings in conjunction with Commute Seattle, DSA, and BOMA for planning and consultation
- Providing funding for brochures and marketing materials to help your employees and customers find parking more easily downtown
- Connecting parking facilities to an electronic parking guidance system to help people find parking more quickly and reduce congestion (initial pilot in 2010)

# Zipcar

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## **Description:**

Offer your employees the convenience of having a Zipcar available to them for all their daytime transportation needs. Zipcar is North America's largest car sharing company that operates a self-service fleet of cars, trucks, minivans, and utility vehicles available for your employees 24/7. Many businesses use Zipcars for their own fleet of company vehicles. Zipcar rates include gas, insurance, reserved monthly parking, and 180 FREE miles per day. In addition, businesses are eligible for special rates and discounted membership fees. There are over 50 Zipcars conveniently located in downtown Seattle and more than 250 Zipcars throughout the Seattle area.

## **How Zipcar will reduce drive-alone commutes among your employees:**

A Zipcar membership enables your employees to take an alternative mode of transportation to work and still have a car available at the office for off-site meetings, appointments, and errands.

## **Business Benefits:**

There are lots of business benefits for joining Zipcar:

- Save money on reimbursing employees for parking and mileage
- Reduce or eliminate the need for a company fleet
- Open up more short-term parking spaces for customers and other business needs
- Gain a competitive advantage by offering your employees convenient access to a variety of vehicles during the day

## **Costs:**

Business memberships require a \$25 per driver annual membership with overall lower hourly rates. Hourly rates start at only \$7 and increase based on the type of vehicle and reservation.

## **Support:**

Zipcar offers lots of support to its business members:

- Businesses have access to special 7-to-7 business rates.
- Employers receive online invoices that allow you to view who used each vehicle, when they used it, and how far they traveled.
- Employees have a wide range of vehicles available to suit any of their business needs.
- Employees can reserve a vehicle in seconds through Zipcar's online reservation system.

# RideshareOnline.com

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## **Description:**

RideshareOnline.com is a FREE service that matches up commuters with other people in their area who are looking to share a ride. With over 18,000 registrants and almost 1,000 vanpools in service, it's easy for your employees to find a carpool or VanPool partner.

RideshareOnline.com provides a secure and confidential way for your employees to match up with others close by or even in your building to share the commute.

## **How RideshareOnline.com can reduce drive-alone commutes among your employees:**

RideshareOnline.com is a quick and easy way for your employees to find others to carpool and vanpool with, reducing the number of drive-alone commuters in your company.

## **Business Benefits:**

Encouraging your employees to rideshare provides many benefits for your business and your employees:

- Frees up parking spaces for customers and other business needs
- Increases employee reliability and decreases tardiness
- Reduces employee parking and commute expenses
- Reduces employee vehicle miles traveled and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from commuting

## **Costs:**

RideshareOnline.com is FREE for your employees! Employees go online, complete the application and then they can start finding matches in their area to carpool or vanpool with.

## **Services and Support:**

RideshareOnline.com is a comprehensive website that includes:

- Security and confidentiality for everyone who signs up
- Maps to help your employees locate the most convenient matches
- Flexibility to make changes to RideshareOnline.com profiles whenever needed
- Up-to-date matchlists, where users are asked to update their information if they have not used RideshareOnline.com in over 3 months or they are removed from the database
- Match services to regional events

# VanPool

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## **Description:**

A VanPool is a group of 5-15 people who share a ride to work in a van 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 8, 12, or 15 passengers. Members—usually co-workers or people who work in the same vicinity—share driving responsibilities, keep the van fueled (gas card included), and bring the van in for its scheduled maintenance.

## **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, which improves the ability for many Washington businesses to move their products on increasingly congested roadways, and for customers to get downtown for business or shopping. The more people who sign up for the program, the fewer drive-alone commutes there are into the downtown area that currently contribute to congestion and parking shortages.

## **Business Benefits:**

VanPool provides many benefits for your business and your employees:

- Frees up parking spaces for customers and other business needs
- Reduces employee parking and commute expenses
- Reduces employee vehicle miles traveled and CO<sub>2</sub> 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 through Home Free Guarantee in case of an emergency or unanticipated overtime.

## **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 FlexPass or pre-tax payroll deductions.

## **Incentives:**

If you add a VanPool subsidy or increase it by \$10/employee for a year, King County Metro will offer a 50/50 match up to \$5,000!
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# VanShare

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## **Description:**

Do you have employees who want to use transit but the bus or railway does not fully connect to their 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 at any Park & Ride lot, rail station, ferry terminal or work place, and use it again for their return trip home.

## **How VanShare will 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:**

Vanshare offers many benefits to your business by:

- Adding a competitive advantage by offering more transportation options to employees
- Reducing employee drive-alone commutes and vehicle miles traveled
- Freeing up parking spaces for customers or other business needs

## **Costs:**

VanShare groups start at 5 and go up to 15 people. Riders split a monthly fare and fuel costs. The low monthly fare includes maintenance, insurance, and 24-hour roadside assistance provided by King County Metro. If your company offers FlexPass, employees get \$20 per pass to go towards the monthly vanshare fare. You could also subsidize part or all of the monthly fare for vanshares in your company with pre-tax payroll deductions.

## **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; or
- Subsidize vanshare fares for their employees through FlexPass or pre-tax payroll deductions.

## **Incentives:**

<p>If you add a Vanshare subsidy or increase it by \$10/employee for a year, King County Metro will offer a 50/50 match up to \$5,000!</p>
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# Flex Schedules

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## **Description:**

Alternative work schedules such as flex-time or compressed work weeks can reduce commute trips during peak hours or take commuters off the road during the work week.

## Flex-time

Flex-time allows your employees to come to work during non-peak hours of traffic, making their commute quicker and less stressful, and reducing traffic congestion at the same time.

## Compressed Work Week

Compressed work week schedules allow employees to work the same number of hours each week but longer hours each day, allowing employees to take a day off each week or every other week. Two options for compressed work weeks are:

1. Four 10-hour days a week with three days off, or
2. Four 9-hour days and one 8-hour day the first week, then four 9-hour days the second week with the 5<sup>th</sup> day off.

## **How Flex Schedules will reduce drive-alone commutes among your employees:**

With Flextime, your employees will have more transportation options available to them through increased flexibility in work start and end times. Compressed work weeks take commuters off the road altogether, reducing the number of drive-alone commutes in your company.

## **Business Benefits:**

Research has shown that working non-traditional hours can enhance an employee's level of productivity and increase morale, which is good for your business! Other benefits of flex schedules include:

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

## **Costs:**

Out-of-pocket expenses for implementing flex schedules 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.

## **Incentives:**

Earn up to \$5,000 from King County Metro for implementing a new Flex Schedule policy in your company! More details on page 16.

Earn \$500 in Zipcar drive credit for implementing a Flex Schedule policy

# Telework

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## **Description:**

Telework policies give eligible employees the option of working from home at least one day a week, which can provide many benefits for both employers and employees. Good telework policies include agreements between employers and teleworkers on responsibilities, obligations, and reporting requirements.

## **How telework will reduce drive-alone commutes among your employees:**

Employees who telework will make at least one less commute trip each week, reducing traffic congestion, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and fuel use, while saving time and money. Having employees telework will also open up more parking spaces for other employees or customers.

## **Benefits:**

Telework policies will:

- Give your employees a “pay raise” by reducing their commuting costs
- Enhance employee recruitment and retention
- Increase employee productivity and morale
- Decrease employee absenteeism and overhead expenses
- Reduce your City of Seattle "commuter head tax" costs
- Add a competitive advantage to your business by offering employees the option to work from home and have a more flexible schedule

## **Costs:**

Implementing a telework policy at your business is as simple as creating the policy and then promoting it among eligible employees. Some expenses may include providing proper equipment for employees who are eligible to telework, but in the long run, teleworking can save your business money in real estate and parking expenses!

## **Incentives:**

Earn up to \$5,000 from King County Metro for implementing a new telework policy in your company! More details on page 18.

Earn \$500 in Zipcar drive credit for implementing a Telework policy

# New Policy Incentives

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**King County Metro is offering money and Zipcar rewards for implementing new policies!**

## **Telework Policy:**

Potential Reward: \$5,000 - based on number of employees who telework in first 3 months of program

Policy: Implement a new telework policy for your employees.

Benefits: Your employees will be happy with the new option to telework, which will reduce traffic congestion, save time, and help your business achieve its CTR goal.

## **Flexible Start Time Policy**

Potential Reward: \$5,000 - based on company size

Policy: Implement a flexible start time policy for your employees who use transit, carpool or VanPool to work.

Benefits: Giving your employees up to 30 minutes of flexibility in getting to work will allow them to take advantage of more transportation options.

## **100% FlexPass Distribution Policy**

Potential Reward: \$10,000 - your business will receive a 10% discount on FlexPass from your annual total

Policy: Change your current FlexPass policy and distribute Flexpasses to ALL your employees.

Benefits: By giving all your employees FlexPasses, you're providing them more transportation alternatives and they will be more likely to try them out in the future even if they currently do not use FlexPass and drive to work.

## **Parking Policy**

Potential Reward: up to \$15,000 – based on company size and change in parking policy

Policy: Change your current parking policies and stop subsidizing 100% of parking or offering free parking in the company lot.

Benefits: By offering to subsidize non-drive alone commute options, your employees can save money and be released from the stress of traffic congestion during the commute.

**Earn \$500 in Zipcar credit for implementing one of these policies!**

# Way to Go, Seattle!

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Get your employees involved with these incentive programs from the City of Seattle. Way to Go, Seattle! is the City's umbrella for all of its various, coordinated efforts to increase walking, biking, transit use, carpooling, and other eco-friendly ways to get around downtown.

## **Programs and Incentives:**

### One Less Car Challenge

If your employees have thought about shedding their car or wish they could try it for awhile to see how it goes, the One Less Car Challenge will provide them with support and incentives as they learn to live without their car for a month or even a year!

- Level 1: *One-month trial separation*
  - Employees commit to not drive their car for a month and earn incentives such as a \$20 Commuter Voucher to use towards a bus pass or biking and walking gear at REI, and a reduced membership fee to the Cascade Bicycle Club.
- Level 2: *Break up with your car!*
  - Employees commit to selling their car and not replacing it for a year and earn even bigger incentives such as a \$200 Commuter Voucher, \$50 off a Zipcar membership, \$100 off a subscription to Tiny's Organic, free membership to the Cascade Bicycle Club and free membership to the Bicycle Alliance of Washington.

### Commuter Cash

If your employees currently drive alone to work, they could earn up to \$150 by switching to a non-drive alone commute mode (bus, bike, walk, carpool, etc.).

- If they currently drive alone to work 2 or more times a week, they could earn up to \$150 by switching to an alternative mode of commuting for one year.
- If they already use a non-drive alone commute mode, they could earn \$20 by referring a friend to the program.

### Cut a Couple Car Trips

Tell your employees to take the pledge and sign up to reduce their driving by two trips per week, then report their saved car trips and they could win great prizes!

- Sign up and take the pledge to reduce 2 car trips a week for 10 weeks.
- Way to Go, Seattle! will help them along the way by sending emails with tips for driving less and program news and updates.
- Active participants will be entered in monthly drawings to win great prizes like \$50 gift certificates to buy bus passes or walking and biking gear at REI.

# Tax Benefits

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## **Description:**

Get tax benefits by offering commute options to your employees! The State of Washington and City of Seattle offer tax benefits for employers through tax credits and tax exemptions.

## **How tax benefits can reduce drive-alone commutes among your employees:**

Taking advantage of commuter tax benefits will add an extra incentive for you to start or expand your employee commute program. By offering more commute options to your employees, they will have greater flexibility and be more likely to take non-drive alone modes of transportation to work.

## **Tax Benefits:**

### Washington State 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.

### City of Seattle "Head Tax"

The Employee Hours Tax or 'head tax' became effective July 1, 2007, and will tax your company \$25 for each employee or FTE working in the City of Seattle that drives to work. The City will bill employers for the tax in December with Business & Occupation taxes. Businesses may claim a tax exemption for each employee who commutes by non-drive alone modes 80 percent of the time.

### 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 \$115 per employee per month for a transit pass (2008 tax year)
- Allowing employees to use pre-tax income to purchase transit passes
- Allowing employers and employees to split the cost of the transit pass using employer tax-free subsidies for a portion and employee pre-tax income for the remainder
- Saving on FICA payroll taxes when employers and employees use pre-tax income for transit passes

## **Support Services:**

- Metro provides transit passes and FlexPasses that employers can purchase as employee commute subsidies to receive tax benefits.

# Bicycling

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## **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. Workplace morale is bound to be more robust, with feelings of accomplishment and good health emanating from your employees.

Cost savings alone make a strong case for getting employees on a bicycle. Compared to a \$300 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 good 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 an efficient and non-polluting form of transportation.
- Bicycling is aerobic. Starting the day with exercise makes you more energetic (and even more productive).
- Bicycles require little parking space. Bicycle parking is usually free!
- Bicycling is efficient. If your commute is short or in-city, it is probably as fast (or faster!) than by car or bus.

## **What steps to take in setting up a bicycle program?**

A good first place to start is to give your employees the tools they need to become safe bicycle commuters. Cascade Bicycle Club offers Corporate Consulting Services to help employers plan everything from adding bicycle facilities to starting an effective bicycle commuting program. Cascade Bicycle Club also offers Bicycle Commuter Classes to help prepare employees for bicycle commuting, including professional instruction, class materials, and maps.

# Starting a Commute Program

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## **Description:**

An employee commute program is a business tool that can help you manage your business resources and give your employees more choices for getting to work. Starting an employee commute program allows you to offer a broad range of commuting options to your employees and help them choose and use an option that works best for them. Your company can also achieve its CTR goals and reduce its carbon footprint at the same time!

## **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.

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

- FlexPass and ORCA coming in 2009
- Zipcar
- Pre-tax benefits
- Transit pass subsidies
- Commute options kiosk board for employees
- Telework or flex schedule options
- Reserved parking for carpools and vanpools
- Bike and shower facilities

## **Business Benefits:**

Employee commute programs provide many benefits to employers and businesses including:

- Tax savings for both employers and employees
- Reduced parking and work site traffic problems
- Enhanced corporate image
- Reduced drive-alone commute trips among employees to help achieve CTR goals

## **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 them. Employers can also allow employees to use pre-tax income dollars to reduce the cost of employee paid transit passes.

## **Resources and Support:**

Resources are available to help you start or enhance your employee commute program:

- Commute Seattle will contract with you to provide commute options and services to your employees
- Commute Solutions through King County Metro can survey your employees or do a site analysis of transportation options around your building.

# Contact Information

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