



MOBILITY
INNOVATION
CENTER
at the
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON



Seattle
Department of
Transportation

Contact

Tara Peters
Director of Communications
(206) 613-3233
tarap@commuteseattle.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
April 28, 2025

More people commuting to the office bumps up transit and drive alone trips in 2024

Survey of over 75,000 Seattle workers reveals new insights into evolving travel choices and satisfaction

Seattle, WA — How people travel across Seattle continues to shift with more in-person work in 2024. A new survey from Commute Seattle reveals that while telework remains popular, transit travel and drive-alone trips are on the rise as more people return to the office after years of social and personal change.

The 2024 Seattle Commute Survey — conducted in partnership with Commute Seattle, the Seattle Department of Transportation, and the University of Washington's Mobility Innovation Center — provides insights into the travel habits of more than 75,000 workers and students.

The findings, collected in October 2024, include a new question on satisfaction, revealing that people who bike and walk report the highest satisfaction with their commute. People who drive alone to get to work report the lowest satisfaction.

Key findings:

- **Shift in Work Arrangements:**
 - City-wide, the percentage of people reporting their jobs are fully remote decreased by 8% in 2024 compared to 2022.
 - As more people return to in-person work, transit use increased by 3% for center-city commuters while drive alone trips increased by 6% since 2022, marking the first time in ten years that drive alone commutes have trended upward.
 - Monday and Friday continued to be the most popular weekdays for remote work in 2024, while on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, most surveyed workers commute to a physical workplace.
- **Travel choices and motivation:**
 - People choose how they travel based on time, flexibility, reliability, and affordability.

- The primary reasons people drive alone are that it is faster, they like the convenience, or they have family care obligations.
- The primary reasons people choose not to drive alone are to save money, avoid stress from driving, they don't own a car, want to avoid traffic, and to reduce personal contributions to air pollution from vehicle emissions.
- Transit use was popular across demographics, with the highest usage among people 15-24 years old or people with household incomes below \$60,000.
- Driving alone has decreased for all non-commute trips, including grocery shopping, social and leisure, and exercise and fitness trips.
- **Commute satisfaction:**
 - People who use active travel, like biking and walking, tend to live closer to their workplace and report the highest satisfaction with their commute.
- **Employer incentives:**
 - Commute Trip Reduction-affected employees have a lower drive alone rate than the general workforce – education, incentives, and subsidies work.
 - Respondents identified employer-provided incentives, including shuttles and subsidized transit benefits, along with greater flexibility as effective ways to shift mode choice and improve commute satisfaction.

“As more people return to in-person work, they’re rethinking how they get to the places that matter most,” said **Alex Hudson, Executive Director of Commute Seattle**. “This is a crucial opportunity for employers and the public agencies to invest in sustainable transportation options that meet people’s real needs. Smart choices now can ease commutes and help make Seattle a more livable, connected city.”

The 2024 Seattle Commute Survey captures a moment in time, and trends will continue to change as work arrangements change and new transit options become available, such as light rail.

“As commute patterns shift, it’s clear that people need options that are reliable, flexible, and affordable. This data reinforces the benefit of investing in safe, sustainable ways to get around,” said **Candida Lorenzana, Director of Transit & Mobility, Seattle Department of Transportation**. “By investing in transit, bike, and pedestrian improvements, SDOT is working to make commuting easier and more accessible for everyone traveling to and through Seattle.”

“We are in the midst of a number of significant changes for how people travel in the region,” said **Mobility Innovation Center Director Bart Treece**. “Academia is a strong partner to help us all understand the key insights and clarify policy choices that can make a difference and improve transportation in our region.”

About the Survey

The Seattle Commute Survey leverages Washington State’s Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Law, requiring large employers to measure employees’ commute habits. Since 2010,

Commute Seattle has expanded the survey to include small businesses and, in 2024, further broadened its scope to include college students and employees citywide.

Background

The Seattle Commute Survey has been conducted since 2010 as the Center City Mode Split Study. The survey provides detailed insights into commuter trends for transit, people driving alone, walking, biking, vanpool, carpool, and other modes. The Seattle Department of Transportation and the Washington State Department of Transportation helped with the development of the survey to ensure data produced met commute trip reduction reporting requirements.

For more information and the full report visit commuteseattle.com/2024survey.

###

About Commute Seattle:

Commute Seattle is a non-profit Transportation Management Association (TMA). Our mission is to make it easy for everyone across Puget Sound to walk, ride, or roll to Seattle's opportunities. We envision a region where affordable and sustainable transportation options are the best way for everyone to access opportunities and connect to important places in their lives. Commute Seattle works with businesses, public agencies, community organizations, and other key destinations to connect people and their employers to transportation options and resources. Learn more about our work at commuteseattle.com.

About the Mobility Innovation Center at the University of Washington

A partnership between Challenge Seattle and the University of Washington, the Mobility Innovation Center tackles specific transportation challenges using applied research and experimentation. Housed at CoMotion, University of Washington's collaborative innovation hub, the multi-disciplinary center brings together the region's leading expertise from business, government, and academic sectors to use technology and innovation to find transportation solutions.

University of Washington Department of Urban Design and Planning

A part of the College of the Built Environments, the mission of the Department of Urban Design and Planning is to develop a community of inquiry, learning, and practice that helps urban regions to become more livable, just, economically effective, and environmentally sound through a democratic process of urban design and planning.