



City of Bellevue
Choose Your Way Bellevue Employer/Property Manager
Mini-Grant Program
Program Materials and Application Packet – 2024

Would you like to reduce drive-alone commute trips to your worksite or building as workers return to the office post-COVID-19?

If you answered “Yes!” you may be able to receive up to \$10,000 from Choose Your Way Bellevue to help!

OVERVIEW

Choose Your Way Bellevue has a new round of mini-grant funding available that will be distributed through a scored application process to help support employers and property managers develop new or improve existing commute programs to reduce drive-alone commuting at their Bellevue worksites, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mini-grant funds can be used for one-time projects or items to implement or enhance commuter parking and trip reduction programs through supporting parking management changes and installing or improving infrastructure. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Applications that meet the scoring threshold will be awarded funding within per-grant monetary limits, on a first-come, first-served while funding lasts.

Employers and property managers are encouraged to take advantage of this funding to help make adjustments to their worksite commute programs, parking management structures including daily parking, worksite amenities and/or site infrastructure to help avoid or mitigate increased drive-alone commuting associated with employees returning to the office following COVID-19.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicable Project Types:

Funds are intended to provide support or enhancement toward projects or items already under way, or to make projects or items possible that organizations cannot normally offer. Although there is no minimum size/employee count requirement, evaluation criteria are designed to emphasize sites that will reach the most people or have the most impact. Grant projects may take the form of:



- Support for changing parking management practices to encourage non-drive-alone commuting
- Supporting infrastructure for non-drive-alone commuting (such as bike racks, carpool/vanpool parking signage or other onsite improvements).
- In limited cases, software expenses or services may be eligible purchases if used specifically to enable non-drive alone trips to/from the worksite, such as parking management software.
- If (and only if) a project includes capital components, equipment, or software tools, additional expenses to promote the new items are eligible; these expenses may include event expenses, promotional materials, student encouragement items, or other campaign- or event-related expenses (but not including food or refreshments).

Program Limitations and Project Requirements:

- Available to worksites in Bellevue.
- The per-project grant amount limit is \$10,000 per worksite
- Only one application per worksite per five-year period, based on application submittal date.
- Funds must be used solely for projects that increase viability or awareness of non-drivealone commuting at Bellevue worksites.
- Only projects that provide a public benefit by reducing drive-alone commuting to the worksite will be selected for funding. Businesses may not profit monetarily from the minigrant funds.
- Mini-grant funds will be provided on a reimbursement basis: Employers/property managers selected for mini-grants are required to complete and submit a project evaluation form and receipts/documentation of expenses at the completion of the mini-grant in order to be eligible for reimbursement.
- Funding amount will be based on project cost estimates and scope set forth in a funding agreement to be executed between the city and the employer/property manager following notice of mini-grant award. Reimbursement may not exceed the approved grant allocation.
- The City of Bellevue does not guarantee that a project application will be funded and reserves the right to determine which applications are funded and to what degree.
- Limit one grant application per worksite. Applications may include multiple components (such as new bicycle amenities plus a promotional campaign to market the new amenities to employees and/or encourage/incentivize their use).
- Funding through this program may not be used to offset costs of activities required by existing agreements or regulation, including those identified in a building Transportation Management Program agreement or employer Commute Trip Reduction program required by state law or city ordinance.



- Funds are intended to support projects or items that employers or property managers are not already providing, or to enhance current activities to reduce drive-alone commuting.
- Funds may not be used for direct ongoing non-drive-alone commute subsidies for employees, with a potential exception granted if such subsidies are demonstrated to be necessary to the success of a limited-time daily parking pricing pilot.
- Funds may not be used solely for a campaign/promotional activity to raise awareness of the benefits of non-drive alone commuting. Instead, any campaign/promotional activity paid for with this grant must be related to a project or item that is being funded by this grant.
- Expenses must be specific to supporting this objective and not for items that are general in nature.

EXAMPLES OF ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

- Costs associated with implementing daily commuter parking pricing – to be eligible, the project and project expenses must meet the following parameters:
 - o **Expenses associated with offering commuters a daily choice to pay for parking**, instead of spending a “sunk” monthly rate that covers parking cost for the entire month. The mini-grant project may take the form of a “pilot” to test a daily parking pricing concept at the worksite, to aid your organization in determining whether daily parking pricing is viable at your worksite. So that there is relative parity between daily and monthly parking pricing, the daily parking price must be no more than 20% higher than monthly cost when all days of the month are totaled. Applications must include full in-and-out privileges must be provided for daily parkers for the project, OR include a valid explanation as to why in-and-out privileges are not feasible. Daily parking pricing mini-grant projects may or may not include item 2 below, “enhanced parking or commute options software/hardware,” depending on the conditions/needs of the worksite.
 - o **Enhanced parking or commute options software/hardware** – Expenses associated with implementing specialized software/hardware at your worksite to manage your parking supply, commute incentives, etc. This allows your organization to provide incentives and track commute mode data and/or encourage non-drive-alone commuting through incentives, parking access for high-occupancy vehicles, daily parking pricing, etc.
 - o **Can include expenses for conducting a commute program event/campaign to raise awareness** and/or encourage employees to try the commuter parking pricing program or parking or commute options software/hardware. Note: Food and gift card incentives are not eligible for funding due to the program funding source.



- o Funds may not be used solely for a campaign/promotional activity to raise awareness of the benefits of non-drive alone commuting. Instead, any campaign/promotional activity paid for with this grant must be related to a project or item that is being funded by this grant.
- Real-time transit Information provided to employees via a lobby information screen or mobile software tool that indicates real-time transit arrival data, real-time or location data for other non-drive-alone options, service alerts, etc.
- Capital improvements such as full or partial funding of new or upgraded showers/lockers, secure bike parking, wayfinding/signage for users of non-drive-alone modes, HOV parking signage, bike fleets, etc.
 - o Can include expenses for conducting an event/campaign to raise awareness and/or encourage employees to use the capital improvement installation. Note: Food and gift card incentives are not eligible for funding due to the program funding source.
 - o Funds may not be used solely for a campaign/promotional activity to raise awareness of the benefits of non-drive alone commuting. Instead, any campaign/promotional activity paid for with this grant must be related to a project or item that is being funded by this grant.

Do you have another idea?

We're excited to hear about it! Email or call Choose Your Way Bellevue staff at info@CYWB.org or 425-283-1356 to discuss your proposal.

EXAMPLES OF NON-ELIGIBLE PROJECTS/EXPENSES

- Projects that solely entail commute mode subsidies for employees
- Projects that entail activities that the company is already doing
- Expenses that have broad application to areas other than employee commute options (such as software that is not commute-specific)
- Telework hardware/software acquisition or other expenses. However, note that employers in King County can receive free expert consulting assistance with starting a telework program through King County's WorkSmart program (<https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/transportation/metro/employerprograms/telework/worksmart.aspx>).
- Campaign/promotional activity to raise awareness of the benefits of non-drive alone commuting as a stand-alone project



- Campaign rewards in the form of cash or gift cards are not eligible (although one-time incentive rewards may include small transportation safety items or monetary contribution toward commuting expenses).
- Food and beverages are not eligible.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Step 1 (optional but recommended): Talk with a Choose Your Way Bellevue representative about your project idea. Send an email to info@CYWB.org or call 425-283-1356. Representatives are available to help you develop a project.

Step 2: Obtain necessary approvals from your organization's management to participate in the mini-grant program.

Note: The program requires your organization to expend the funds first and then submit an itemized invoice with original receipts, together with a project evaluation, for reimbursement.

Step 3: Submit a streamlined [grant application](#).

ONCE I APPLY, THEN WHAT?

For applicants and projects that meet requirements stated above, Choose Your Way Bellevue will evaluate applications against the following criteria:

General Project Criteria – All Projects

1. Number of persons (employees/tenants) who will have access to the enhancement supported by the project, in proportion to requested funding amount (if fewer than 20, unlikely to receive any points) 34 points)
2. Extent to which the project overcomes an initial barrier, fills a gap and/or creates a new opportunity in your organization's program for reducing commute trips (20 points)
3. Extent to which the project will reduce drive-alone commute trips, both near- and longterm, including the robustness of the basis for assessing or measuring this impact (20 points)



4. Likelihood that project will continue to have a positive impact on commute trip reduction beyond the activity (10 points)
5. Is the project fully developed, including a plan for administering and completing the project? Are adequate details about the project's development, promotion, and expected performance provided? (10 points)
6. Quality and completeness of application (6 points)

Total possible points for General Project Criteria: 100

Specialized Criteria for Daily Parking Pricing Projects – All “General Parking Criteria” above, plus the following as demonstrated in the application form:

- a. If a parking application entails solely adjusting parking pricing from monthly to daily—with parity of pricing, garage access, and in-and-out privileges—AND the parking program is open to all employees previously eligible for monthly parking—the proposal will receive a 10-point bonus.
- b. Parking program should accommodate in-and-out privileges for those choosing the daily parking pricing option; if this criterion cannot be met, the applicant is required to include an explanation of why it cannot be met.
- c. Parking program must be available to at least 70% of employees at the worksite who have the option of monthly parking.
- d. Parking program must consist of daily parking pricing for employees on par with monthly pricing; or daily parking must be no more costly than 20% higher than the monthly parking price. An equivalent daily price is calculated as $\text{monthly price} \times 12 / 235$ (assumed number of working days in a year). For example, if the existing monthly parking rate is \$100, the equivalent daily rate is $(\$100 \times 12) / 235 = \5.11 per day. In this example, the allowed daily rate can be no more than \$6.13. Required number of points for grant award: 75

Selection Process and Timeline:

Choose Your Way Bellevue staff will review applications as they are received based on the above criteria, awarding grants on a first-come, first-served basis, while funding lasts. Choose Your Way Bellevue will provide notice to applicants on whether or not they have been awarded a mini-grant within 60 days of their application submittal date.

Reimbursement Process and Timeline:

Deadline for completion of project implementation and submittal to City of Bellevue of itemized invoice, original receipts, and completed project evaluation form is October 31 of the year



following application submittal. Mini-grant funds to be provided 60 days following submittal of the above items to the satisfaction of the City of Bellevue.

For more information, please contact your CYWB representative:
Mackenzie Macdonald at info@CYWB.org or 425-283-1356