

Commute Options Toolkit

CHOOSE YOUR WAY BELLEVUE



01

COMMUTE PROGRAM BASICS

Introduction

Employee Commute Option Programs 101

Starting a Commute Program with Choose Your Way Bellevue
Financial Support

02

TYPES OF COMMUTE PROGRAMS

Regulatory Commute Programs

Subsidy & Reimbursement Programs

Parking Management Strategies

Incentive and Ridematching Programs

Telework and Flexible Scheduling Programs

Bike-Friendly Programs

Emergency Ride Home

03

OUTREACH & AWARENESS

Posting Information

Customized Commute Plans

Promoting Local and Statewide Campaigns

Transportation Fairs



Commuter Program Basics

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Choose Your Way Bellevue Business Services! This toolkit is designed to help Bellevue employers and property managers develop, implement, and enhance sustainable transportation option programs for commuters at their worksites.

You may have heard of the City of Bellevue's Choose Your Way Bellevue program and website that help Bellevue workers and residents use transportation modes other than driving alone. But did you know that the program also helps employers and property managers?

As commuting remains a more stressful, costly, and environmentally damaging part of an employee's workday, businesses are finding ways to increase the number of sustainable transportation options available to employees and tenants.

In addition to boosting employee recruitment and retention and attracting tenants, these efforts go a long way toward relieving stress on the transportation system so we can all get around more easily.

Dozens of Bellevue employers and property managers offer commute benefit programs to employees; yet, tailoring a commute options program for your employees can be daunting.

Through [Choose Your Way Bellevue Business Services](#), the city provides free assistance with developing customized commute benefits programs. Services include this toolkit, consulting services, event support, and more.

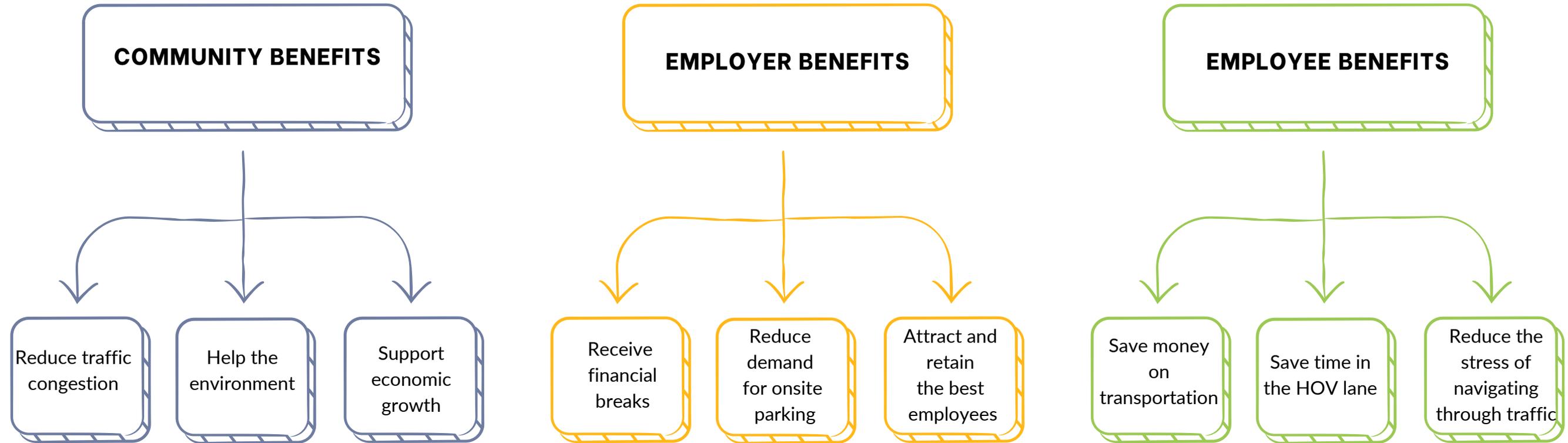
Why have an employee commute program?

Commute programs benefit properties, businesses, employees, our community, and environment. As a business leader, you can help your employees save money and improve mobility in Bellevue and our region and make lasting, positive environmental impact by implementing an employee commute program at your worksite. By encouraging sustainable transportation alternatives to driving alone, such as transit, carpooling, vanpooling, walking, biking, teleworking, and compressed work weeks, you can help keep the city mobile and environmentally friendly in the face of economic growth and development.

What is a Employee Commute Program?

An employee commute program is a suite of subsidies, financial incentives, amenities and cultural supports that increase the viability, cost effectiveness, attractiveness and ease of using modes other than driving alone. Employer and property manager programs can range from ongoing full-value transit and other mode subsidies to capital items such as secure bicycle parking, lockers and showers. Or, employers can simply allow commute expenses as pre-tax dollars and convey information about sustainable travel modes at periodic events. The choice is yours—you can tailor your program to your goals, needs and available budget—or even no budget.

Commute program benefits



STARTING A COMMUTE PROGRAM

Contact us: Our expert staff is here to help you craft a commute program to suit your geographic location, employee or tenant characteristics, and organizational goals. Schedule a meeting and learn how to create a transportation commute benefit program best suited to your business.

info@cywb.org

ETC designation: If possible, designate an “employee transportation coordinator” to be the point person for managing your program and keeping your employees informed. Hiring an external ETC is an option. Locally, [Connect Bellevue](#) (formerly TransManage) provides ETC services.

Go! With our help and resources, create and implement your program.



Business Services Offered by Choose Your Way Bellevue

Consultations

- Review your current employee commute practices and benefits offered
- Assess your worksite's physical transportation characteristics and recommend improvements
- Identify the budget and commute program options best suited to your company and employees
- Recommend a commute program package tailored to your situation (including any financial support the city may provide)

Surveys

- Help you develop and distribute online surveys to collect data on current commute modes and modes employees may be interested in

Implementation

- Assist you with developing and implementing new commute programs

Incentives, Training, & Support

- Provide support and training for the Choose Your Way Bellevue Rewards (RideshareOnline.com) administrator's portal for trip-logging and ridematching

Events

- Help you plan, and potentially staff, a transportation fair to kick-off or promote a program; or assist in a relocation event Note: Employers are limited to one event per year as staff time permits; event services provided to property managers on a case-by-case basis

Materials and Resources

- Help you develop custom materials and resources for your commute program

Recognition and Rewards

- Help you apply for established recognition and awards for transportation programs

Useful resource documents for starting a commute program:



SAMPLE EMPLOYEE COMMUTE SURVEY

Conduct a preliminary survey of your employees to see how they are currently commuting and which programs and modes they would be interested in. Our team can set up and administer the online survey for you and even provide the questions if you'd like to administer it yourself.



WORKPLACE AND FACILITIES ASSESMENT

Assess pertinent physical characteristics of your worksite or building to identify any barriers that could be improved upon.



COMMUTE PROGRAM BUDGET WORKSHEET

Estimate the cost of providing a commute program.

These forms are available in Appendix B, and can be downloaded at ChooseYourWayBellevue.org/business/resources (go to "Additional Resources").

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Choose Your Way Bellevue periodically offers programs that provide financial support to foster growth in sustainable transportation across the business community. Below are current or recent examples:

Employer Incentive Programs: The Choose Your Way Bellevue team can help employers set up networks in the RideshareOnline.com trip logging portal, through which employees can find ride matches, log non-drive-alone trips and earn rewards through company drawings or regional campaigns and promotions. Choose Your Way Bellevue may, at times, provide funding assistance for transportation-related incentives.

ORCA Starter Cards: A limited number of ORCA cards with a preloaded round-trip fare may be available to employers and property managers to distribute to employees, so they can try transit.

Mini-Grants: Eligible employers and property managers compete for funding to develop and enhance transportation programs at their worksite.

ORCA Business Passport Rebates: Employers starting a new ORCA Passport program can qualify for rebates while supplies last.

Visit ChooseYourWayBellevue.org/financial-support for further details and to learn about current offerings.



Types of Commute Programs

REGULATORY COMMUTE PROGRAMS

Regulations require certain Bellevue organizations to develop and maintain commute programs. Commute Trip Reduction State regulations apply to some employers, while the Transportation Management Program has City code requirements are put into place as conditions of development and apply to some buildings.

More information, including the resources described here, can be found on the City of Bellevue's Commute Trip Reduction page bellevuewa.gov/CommuteTripReduction.

If your Bellevue worksite falls within the parameters above, you are required to notify the city by calling 425-452-4318 or emailing acrosier@bellevuewa.gov. If affected, your company is required to develop and implement an employee commute program to reduce drive-alone commute trips made to the site.



CTR-affected employers recorded an 18.7 percentage point reduction in driving alone from 1993 to 2021, representing approximately **3,100 vehicles removed from Bellevue roadways daily**. Among downtown employers, the rate of driving alone has decreased by approximately 21.8 percentage points.

[*Transportation Demand Management Progress Report 2022](#)

Commute Trip Reduction for Large Employers

In 1991, the State of Washington adopted the Commute Trip Reduction ("CTR") law for larger employers, which required cities in the most populous counties to implement a CTR program. In 2006, the state CTR law was updated through the Commute Trip Reduction Efficiency Act, which refocuses efforts to cities along congested corridors.

As part of the updated law, the City of Bellevue developed its local [CTR Plan](#) and updated the [Bellevue City Code](#) in early 2008. The most recent [2015-2019 Plan Update](#) (extended by the State to 2023) was adopted in September 2015. The city has also established [Implementation Guidelines](#) with more detailed information about how to implement CTR programs.

Generally affected are all private, public or non-profit employers with 100 or more full-time employees (working at least 35 hours per week for 12 continuous months) at a single worksite who arrive at work between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m. on two or more weekdays per week. For specific requirements, see [Chapter 14.40](#) of the Bellevue City Code.

Transportation Management Programs for Large Buildings

Bellevue's transportation development code requires developers of large real estate projects to establish and maintain "transportation management programs" ("TMPs"). These programs focus on tenant employees and are intended to reduce the ongoing traffic impact associated with commute trips to buildings.

Relevant city code requirements were revised in 2017 ([BCC 14.60.070](#); see also [BCC 20.25J.050B](#) for requirements in the Medical Institution District). [TMP Implementation Guidelines](#) detail options for implementing requirements at buildings and describe monitoring and reporting processes. The city collects information on TMP implementation activities from affected buildings in the fall of every odd-numbered year. The city sponsors a commute mode survey in the fall of every even-numbered year for buildings where data is needed to track progress in meeting performance targets.

More information can be found on the City of Bellevue's Trip Reduction – Large Buildings page (BellevueWA.gov/TripReductionBuildings).

Many property managers choose to work with Bellevue's local transportation management association, [Connect Bellevue](#) (formerly TransManage), to meet TMP requirements. Their team has been implementing TMP programs since 1986.





SUBSIDY & REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAMS

Subsidizing commute options to driving alone provides a strong incentive to employees to try out and continue using these options. In a 2017 analysis conducted by the city, large employers in Bellevue affected by the Commute Trip Reduction law that started a transit subsidy through the ORCA Passport program reduced their drive-alone rate by nearly 12%.*

Employer subsidy programs provide up-front financial support that offsets transportation costs and provides a lifestyle benefit for employees. For consistency, the subsidy amount can be universally applied to all modes of transportation. Often, subsidy programs provide pre-tax benefits that reduce payroll taxes for employers and serve as a tax-free benefit for employees.

Reimbursements are like subsidies, but they require employees to pay for transportation up front, and the employer pays them back. An employee typically submits a cost report with receipts to be reimbursed during the following pay period. Reimbursements can be more time-consuming for larger companies than subsidies and do not include the same tax benefits as subsidy programs.



Transit Programs

Alongside increasing public transit investments across the Puget Sound region, transit is a growing segment of commute trips. Not only can an investment in employee transit passes provide a tremendous return and savings on parking, it is one of the most significant ways to encourage a culture of sustainability at your company and lifestyle benefit for your employees.

As an added perk, the employee fare subsidies can be administered to reduce a tax burden ([see Subsidy & Reimbursement Programs](#))

ORCA BUSINESS PASSPORT

Comprehensive transit pass program: your company must purchase a pass for each full-time benefited employee.

What's Included

- Unlimited rides on all regular bus services on six regional transit agencies (King County Metro, Sound Transit, Community Transit, Pierce Transit, Everett Transit and Kitsap Transit)
- Unlimited rides on Sounder Commuter Rail, Link Light Rail, Seattle Streetcar, King County Water Taxi and Kitsap Foot Ferry and Fast Ferry
- Businesses choose a monthly subsidy toward vanpool and vanship fare on King County Metro, Community Transit, Pierce Transit and Kitsap Transit vans
- “Home Free Guarantee”—eight emergency taxi rides home per year

Cost Information

- The cost is calculated based typical usage at the worksite location and includes every eligible employee at your worksite (for worksite with fewer than 500 employees).
- If your company has over 500 employees, the price is based on your worksite's usage.

ORCA BUSINESS CHOICE

Account-based mechanism available for companies for purchasing and managing employee ORCA cards and various products to be loaded onto them. You can purchase as many or few cards as desired; and can deactivate cards as needed, such as when a cardholder leaves your company.

What's Included

- Monthly pass: Pick a level of service depending on the typical cost of an employee's commute for unlimited rides in a month. The monthly pass makes sense if employees use their bus pass over 36 times monthly.
- E-purse: You can load money on an ORCA card to pay for travel on a per-trip basis.

Cost Information

- Having an account is free; products are purchased at full retail price.



ORCA Business Incentive:

- Signing up for the first time? Subsidize your employees' transit passes with ORCA Business Passport and you may be eligible for 50% off your first year, for a savings of up to \$10,000.
- Already a client? Renew your ORCA Business Passport contract for a second year, and you may be eligible for 25% off your renewal contract, for a savings of up to \$5,000.

ORCA Resources

- Contact Choose Your Way Bellevue staff at info@cywb.org or 425-283-1357 for help determining which transit pass program is right for your company.
- [ORCA business account comparison](#)—Compare the different ORCA business programs you can provide to your employees.
- [ORCA business website](#)—Set up an account through ORCA for Business.

Did you know?

Among larger employers*, the average worksite drive-alone rate fell by nearly 7% after introduction of the ORCA Passport or equivalent.**



*Reflects employees affected by the state Commute Trip Reduction law.
**Source: City of Bellevue Workplace Commute Mode Shift with Introduction of Comprehensive Transit Program 2017.
Source located at ChooseYourWayBellevue.org/about under the heading "Research".

Download and print benefit flyers for your employees.



ORCA Business Passport

It's more important than ever to attract (and retain!) great employees with great benefits. Whether your team works on the frontlines, from home or somewhere in-between, ORCA transit benefits offer flexibility, freedom and value.



Total freedom

Business Passport is our most generous plan. With this program, you can provide an unlimited ORCA card to all benefits-eligible employees, for total freedom on transit.

- Provide all eligible employees with an unlimited-use ORCA card.
- Program costs can be charged annually, with no monthly admin duties required.
- Cost is based on your company's location and employee count.
- Employee cost-sharing is available (to cover up to 50% of the unlimited pass cost).
- You and your employees can qualify for tax-free and pre-tax savings.

More than a work benefit

ORCA Business Passport can make a big impact on your employees, your community and your bottom line.

- ORCA cards work aboard all major transit agencies in the Puget Sound region.
- Skip the congestion and relax while someone else does the driving.
- Easily manage your company's transit benefits through our simple online portal.
- You and your employees can qualify for tax-free and pre-tax savings.

Learn more at kingcounty.gov/MetroBusiness



Click image to view and print



ORCA Business Choice

It's more important than ever to attract (and retain!) great employees with great benefits. Whether your team works on the frontlines, from home or somewhere in-between, ORCA transit benefits offer flexibility, freedom and value.



Total freedom

Business Choice is our most flexible plan. With this program, you select which employees receive an ORCA card and assign the value. It's quality benefits with an à la carte approach.

- Purchase ORCA cards and distribute to designated staff.
- Change card values on a month-to-month basis and pay as needed.
- Manually load values (or set up monthly auto-loads) through our simple online portal.
- Employees can add additional value to their ORCA cards.

More than a work benefit

ORCA Business Choice can make a big impact on your employees, your community and your bottom line.

- ORCA cards work aboard all major transit agencies in the Puget Sound region.
- Skip the congestion and relax while someone else does the driving.
- Easily manage your company's transit benefits through our simple online portal.
- You and your employees can qualify for tax-free and pre-tax savings.

Learn more at kingcounty.gov/MetroBusiness



Click image to view and print



Home Free Guarantee

It's hard to plan for the unexpected. Fortunately, Metro's Home Free Guarantee (HFG) program makes sure a workday emergency doesn't keep you stranded.

When can you use HFG?

You've commuted using any transit mode except your own vehicle (by bus, rideshare, walking, biking, etc.). And while at work:

- You or a family member becomes ill.
- There's an issue with childcare.
- You're asked to stay for overtime.
- Your rideshare vehicle left early.
- Your bike (or similar) has a flat/other mechanical issue.

How to get home

1. Request a taxi by calling the HFG dispatch line at 425-450-4555.
2. State your company's name.
3. Explain the emergency.
4. Book a ride home.
5. Ask your taxi driver for a receipt and forward it on to your employer contact.

You are responsible for any driver tips.

Eight free trips are covered under Business Area Passport.

For coverage details under Business Custom Passport and Business Choice, please contact a Metro team member or your work transportation coordinator.

Business Passport team: employer.services@kingcounty.gov
 Business Choice team: business.leadagent@kingcounty.gov
kingcounty.gov/home-free-guarantee



Click image to view and print

Tax Benefit Programs

State and federal tax benefits are available to employers to help offset costs incurred for employee commute benefits. Additionally, pre-tax accounts can save employees money on commute and parking expenses, as well as providing tax savings for employers.

Washington State tax benefits

If your company is providing incentives for employee commute trips, it may be eligible to receive Washington's Commute Trip Reduction Tax Credit.

- Eligible companies and property managers, those paying business and occupation (B&O) or public utilities taxes (PUT), can receive tax credits of up to 50% of the amount paid for each employee's transit, ridesharing, carsharing or non-motorized commuting.
- Up to \$100,000 is available for each company and property manager per fiscal year.
- Tax credits have a cap of \$60 per employee.
- An application must be submitted between January 1 and January 31, following the calendar year in which the applicant made the commute trip reduction incentive payments. The credit is available on a first-come, first-served basis while each year's funding lasts.

More information is available on the Washington State Department of Revenue's [web page](#).



Federal tax benefits

Per the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, employers may still be able to offer their employees a commute benefit free of payroll taxes. Certain rules have changed, such as rules based on employer type and how taxable income is calculated; therefore, it is recommended that employers consult a tax advisor for more information.

Federal tax benefits may apply when the employer, or qualified third party, delivers the commute benefit to the employee in the form of a pass, ticket book or voucher. Depending on who pays for the program, these tax benefits may take the form of a tax-free employer-paid subsidy, a pretax payroll deduction, or a combination of both:

If the employer pays:

- The employee may be able to receive the benefit of the employer-subsidized pass, ticket book or voucher up to \$315* each month, tax free. The employer has a tax-deductible business expense for federal taxes.

If the employee pays:

- The employer may be able to allow the employee to pay up to \$315* (in 2024) for all eligible transportation expenses each month through a pre-tax payroll deduction. The employee saves federal withholding and FICA payroll taxes on the amount deducted. The employer saves paying FICA on the amount deducted.

Tax benefit resources

Benefit services firms can handle the administration of pretax programs. Examples of firms that offer such services include:

- [Edenred Commuter Benefits](#)
- [Benefit Resource](#)
- [Navia Benefit Solutions](#)
- [HealthEquity](#)

For additional information, check out [King County Metro's Commuter Tax Benefit page](#). Employers are also highly encouraged to consult a tax advisor for detailed information regarding the tax implications of commute benefits and incentives.

Employers are highly encouraged to consult a tax advisor for detailed information regarding the tax implications of commute benefits and incentives for their particular circumstances

*When the employer and employee share the cost of the pass, ticket book or voucher, the total combined tax-free and pre-tax amounts may not exceed \$315 per month (threshold for 2024) per employee.

PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Parking availability and cost directly influence employee decision making on which mode to use for getting to work. A few innovative strategies can provide more options for employees and tenants while still supporting the bottom line of building operations. Flexible commuter parking strategies have been shown to make best use of available parking stalls by encouraging use of non-drive-alone modes when possible, and maximizing the number of people accommodated using the least number of stalls. Consider the strategies in the following table for increasing flexibility.



Strategy	Description	Advantages
<p>Parking access with use of other modes</p>	<p>If your employees currently are required to choose between a transit subsidy and parking access (in other words, are not allowed access to employee parking if they receive a transit benefit), consider allowing them access to parking for occasional use as needed, including evenings and weekends.</p>	<p>Removes this barrier to using a non-drive-alone mode for those who need evening or weekend access.</p>
<p>Free park days</p>	<p>Offer two to three free park days per month, preferably with in-and-out privileges, in order to accommodate commuters' parking needs several times per month for appointments or errands.</p> <p>(Note: In current programs offered by several organizations in Downtown Bellevue, free park days are specifically awarded to employees who commute to work without driving alone for at least four days per week.)</p>	<p>Helps to make it feasible to use a non-drive-alone mode on most days, and thus can result in reduced worksite parking consumption overall.</p>

Strategy	Description	Advantages
<p>Daily parking options</p>	<p>Reasonably priced daily parking with in-and-out privileges allows employees to drive on the days they need a car for appointments or errands, and provides the flexibility to commute without a car on other days.</p> <p>(Examples: Daily parking offered at approximately one-twentieth the monthly rate; daily parking at one-tenth the monthly rate with a cap on the monthly fee after ten days of parking; half-month parking pass.)</p>	<p>Allows employees to make a daily choice of which mode to use without monetary penalty, and thus can increase use of non-drive-alone modes. Parking cost that is “sunk” at the beginning of the month incentivizes driving alone and parking for the remainder of the month.</p>
<p>Carpool/van-pool shared parking with other worksites</p>	<p>Make arrangements with other worksites/buildings to accommodate carpools made up of employees at either worksite/building.</p>	<p>Can increase the pool of potential rideshares for each commuter, thus facilitate the use of these modes for more people.</p>

Other parking management strategies

Parking cashout: If you currently subsidize employee parking but not transit fare, consider “cashing out” your parking subsidy by allowing your employees the option of receiving it as “cash” that they can use for either parking or transit fare (or another non-drive-alone mode). This gives the employee the opportunity to ride the bus if that is their choice, rather than leading to drive alone because parking is all that is subsidized.

- **Discounted carpool/vanpool rates:** Reduced parking rates for carpools and vanpools promote these more space efficient options and potentially free up stalls in your parking lot or garage.
- **Parking stall designation:** A quick capital improvement to your parking lot or garage can accommodate more people with fewer parking stalls.

Consider replacing monthly parking with the following options:

- **Vanpool & carpool parking stalls/preferred parking locations:** High-occupancy vehicles get more people to work for the same amount of space; placing these stalls in preferred locations incentivizes the use of these modes.
- **Carsharing/fleet vehicles:** Keeping vehicles onsite for building tenants makes midday trips easier for non-drivealone commuters.
- **Bicycle parking:** can accommodate significantly more people than the same amount of space used for vehicle parking.



Download and print benefit flyers for your employees.

KING COUNTY METRO BUSINESS PROGRAMS



VANPOOL

Metro Vanpool is a cost-effective, flexible and convenient commuter rideshare program. Vanpool connects commuters to and from work—think carpool, but with Metro vans! Join an existing Vanpool or start a new group. With just three commuters, including a volunteer driver, you can get a Vanpool on the road.

Convenience

- Vanpools are available for any work schedule—full-time, part-time, shift, evening or weekend.
- Especially beneficial for employees commuting long distances and/or when public transit is not an option in their area.
- Newcomers can join one of more than 800 vanpools currently commuting across the region or easily start their own.
- Commutes to work can originate anywhere in the region under a basic rule: the vanpool trip must start or end within King County.

Value

- All-inclusive monthly fare includes the cost of the van, fuel card, tolls, insurance, maintenance, roadside assistance and more!
- Vanpoolers save on fuel costs and wear and tear on their own vehicles.
- Cuts down the need for multiple, expensive parking spots at worksites.

Connection

- Members can form strong communities and friendships.
- Shared commutes mean less stress, more downtime and more joyful employees, on and off the clock.
- Sustainability benefits everyone and unites communities. Ridesharing reduces an individual's—and a company's—emissions footprint.

Vanpool benefits are 100% covered under Business Area Passport.
 For coverage details under Business Custom Passport and Business Choice, please contact a Metro team member or your work transportation coordinator.
 Business Passport team: employer.services@kingcounty.gov
 Business Choice team: business.leadagent@kingcounty.gov

206-625-4500 | vanpool@kingcounty.gov
kingcounty.gov/vanpool



Click image to view and print



VANSHARE

Bridging the gap between home, work and transit

Metro Vanshare is a rideshare program that connects commuters between home, local transit hubs and work. With just five people, including two volunteer drivers, you can get a van on the road.



Convenience

- Vanshares are available for any work schedule—full-time, part-time, shift, evening or weekend.
- Vanshares connect commuters between home, a transit hub and work. Daily commutes must total under 20 miles roundtrip.
- Join one of the existing vans currently commuting across the region or easily start your own.



Value

- A \$200 flat monthly fare is split between five or more commuters and includes the van, gas, tolls, insurance, maintenance, roadside assistance and more!
- Many employers will subsidize some or all of your monthly fare—check with your HR team for more details.



Connection

- Shared commutes mean less stress, more downtime and more fun, on and off the clock.
- Rideshares reduce traffic and your emissions footprint—helping you, your family and your community.
- There is a maximum 20-mile commute and the trip needs to connect with another mode of public transportation.



Get started today!
 206-625-4500 | vanshare@kingcounty.gov
kingcounty.gov/vanshare



Click image to view and print

VanShare-12-12-Final

INCENTIVE AND RIDEMATCHING PROGRAMS

Incentive programs reward employees for using sustainable commute modes other than driving alone and can encourage people to try a new non-drive-alone option. Logging trips by mode is relatively easy through [RideshareOnline](#), a free online tool that helps users find ride matches for carpools and vanpools and enables employers to set up and administer incentives.

Choose Your Way Bellevue, a program of the City of Bellevue, offers a portal to RideshareOnline on our [website](#). All Bellevue workers and residents, including your employees and tenants, may log trips to earn rewards through this portal.

In addition to your employees/tenants being eligible for rewards offered by Choose Your Way Bellevue, King County Metro, and other agencies, your organization can provide rewards through drawings and challenges. Your employees can also use RideshareOnline to find others with similar origins, destinations, and schedules for ride-matching purposes (Note: Users logging on through RideshareOnline and Choose Your Way Bellevue Rewards have the same trip logging and ride-matching features available to them; both programs use the same back-end system.)



How to create an incentive program

Incentive programs are easier to set up than ever before—at no cost to you—through RideshareOnline. Below are general steps you will undertake to set up a program as an administrator. Choose Your Way Bellevue staff can assist you in setting up your program.

1. **Set up your worksite:** Add your worksite in RideshareOnline.
2. **Determine the rewards:** What do the employees receive if they log trips? Check for city or countywide promotions in RideshareOnline.
3. **Determine the parameters:** How many non-drive-alone trips should an employee log to be eligible for the reward? Will you provide a “guaranteed” reward for logging sufficient trips, or conduct a drawing among participants?
4. **Promote Awareness:** Draft monthly or quarterly communications to encourage employees to log trips and include instructions for employees. You can promote either RideshareOnline or the Choose Your Way Bellevue Rewards interface.

Learn more by going to [RideshareOnline](https://www.RideshareOnline.com) and clicking the Employers tab. Choose Your Way Bellevue can help you set up your network—contact us at info@cywb.org for assistance.



TELEWORK AND FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING PROGRAMS

Telework and flexible scheduling constitutes a large part of the workforce since 2020. These options serve as perks to employees while also allowing employers to maximize efficient use of office space.

Options

- **Telework:** Some employees can do all or part of their jobs from home or another remote location. A telework program can increase efficiency of your office space, and can be administered on an as-needed basis depending on the employee's role. Teleworking is not a benefit, but rather a voluntary arrangement between the employer and employee.
- **Compressed work week:** Rather than splitting a 40-hour work week into five eight-hour days, you could allow employees to work four ten-hour days or some other variation that adds up to a full work week. Some examples are listed below:
 - 80 hours over nine days
 - four ten-hour days
 - three 12-hour days
- **Alternate scheduling:** Allowing flexible start and end times can help employees avoid weekday peak-period traffic and align their work schedules with their bus, carpool or vanpool. This flexibility can also reduce stress on roadways, free up parking, reduce emissions, and allow you to maximize your office space potential.
- **Coworking:** To accommodate employees in flexible scheduling programs, employers can provide a shared workspace for multiple employees. Rather than being tied to an individual workspace, employees can take any workstation in the office or other coworking location.

Support

- [WorkSmart](#) is a free King County service that offers consultations and assistance to help employers develop telework and flexible scheduling programs.

BIKE-FRIENDLY PROGRAMS

Improving infrastructure and amenities for cyclists is a relatively low-cost way to support sustainable, active commuters. Bike-friendly programs come in a variety of forms and can include both capital and programmatic elements.

Here are steps you can take to become more bike-friendly:



Options

Budget: Meet with management to discuss your budget and any constraints for a bike program.

Planning: Determine which space in your building can best accommodate bicycle commuters. Easy access to these locations is paramount in promoting a bike-friendly environment at your worksite. Plan for wayfinding signage to help increase ease of use.

Capital improvements: Invest in an upgrade to bicycle facilities and install the improvements. Implement additional programmatic elements such as operation of a bike fleet and on-site repair services.

Awareness and outreach: Promote the upgrades and increase awareness of bike resources by holding an event and distributing information on a regular basis to keep tenants and employees informed.

BIKE PARKING

CAPACITY

Maximize the number of bike stalls for the available space to accommodate more cyclists.

FUNCTIONALITY

Ensure that each rack contains ample space to lock up a full-sized bike, and that your setup leaves maneuvering space for those locking bikes.

LOCATION

Bike parking should be easy to locate and access. It is difficult to haul a bike up a staircase, so use a ramp when possible.

EASE OF USE

Some bike racks better accommodate sturdy bike locks. For enhanced security, consider installing an enclosed bike cage with key fob access.

SECURITY

Some bike racks better accommodate sturdy bike locks. For enhanced security, consider installing an enclosed bike cage with key fob access.

WEATHER PROTECTION

Ensure that your bike parking provides protection from the elements.

PHYSICAL AMENITIES

LOCKERS

Provide lockers to give employees a place to store their bike gear and a change of clothes for the office and to keep them dry for the ride home.

SHOWER FACILITIES

Showers are an important amenity, allowing active commuters to clean up before the work-day begins.

BIKE REPAIR STATION

Install a repair station near your bike parking to help bike commuters change a flat tire or make safety adjustments before they ride.

SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

Help inspire active commuting by making your commuters aware of facilities and amenities, and making them easier to find and more legible to use.

SECURITY

Some bike racks better accommodate sturdy bike locks. For enhanced security, consider installing an enclosed bike cage with key fob access.

WEATHER PROTECTION

Ensure that your bike parking provides protection from the elements.

PROGRAMMATIC AMENITIES

BIKE MECHANIC

Bring a bike mechanic out to your worksite to provide free bike tune ups for employees.

BIKE FLEET

Purchase an onsite bike fleet to provide employees a convenient way to access meetings, appointments or lunchtime errands without a car.



Resources

The Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) produces detailed “best-practice” resources.

- Bicycle Parking Guidelines is a comprehensive document for purchase that describes in detail the elements of a good rack or locker, including specific performance criteria. It also includes maintenance best practices, sample site plans and diagrams to help avoid blunders in rack and locker placement; sample quantity requirements for bicycle parking to meet needs by land use; and a worksheet for programming bicycle parking for a building or cluster of buildings.
- For organizations planning to purchase or install bike parking fixtures on a limited scale, Essentials of Bike Parking is a brief overview of the comprehensive Bicycle Parking Guidelines handbook. It is available for [free download](#).
- The League of American Bicyclists has resources and a recognition program for becoming a bicycle-friendly business. Learn more at www.bikeleague.org/bfa/business.



Kilroy Realty provides a bike room for tenants at Skyline Tower.

EMERGENCY RIDE HOME

Sometimes life can be unpredictable for commuters. Through an emergency ride home program, employees who bus, carpool, vanpool, walk or bike to work may apply to receive taxi or ride-hailing fare reimbursement to pay for transportation related to a qualifying circumstance. This program helps provide a backup option for employees when life presents emergencies or unexpected logistical challenges, and encourages non-drive-alone commuting because commuters do not feel “stuck” at work without a car.

Here are steps to setting up an emergency ride home program:

1. Identify a provider option:

There are multiple ways to provide this service:

- Contract with select ride-hailing or taxi services, OR
- Provide the option to take home a company vehicle,

OR

- Develop a reimbursement policy for ridesharing or taxi services, OR
- Acquire the ORCA Business Passport for your worksite to join King County Metro’s “Home Free Guarantee” program.

2. Set up parameters for use of the program:

- Determine the number of reimbursable trips an employee may take annually, as well as what constitutes an emergency.
- Be clear and straightforward when communicating these parameters to employees. Examples include: “Abandoned” by carpool, Unscheduled overtime, Illness at work or in immediate family, Bicycle emergency (unable to bicycle home)

3. Enroll commuters:

- Set up a registration system for your commuters who bike, bus, carpool, vanpool, or walk to work.

4. Process receipts, verify, and reimburse (for reimbursement program):

- If an employee pays for the emergency ride home out-of-pocket, they will need to request a receipt for reimbursement. The receipt should show fare paid, the taxi number, the driver’s name and mileage. The program administrator can verify the employee’s emergency with their supervisor and process the reimbursement.

Resources

If your Bellevue worksite is affected by the Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) law and has been fully onboarded into the CTR program*, you can provide this service to your employees through King County Metro's Home Free Guarantee service for employers. This option offers easy program administration for employers at modest cost. Information is available at King County Metro's Commute Solutions [web page](#)

KING COUNTY METRO BUSINESS PROGRAMS



Home Free Guarantee

It's hard to plan for the unexpected. Fortunately, Metro's Home Free Guarantee (HFG) program makes sure a workday emergency doesn't keep you stranded.

When can you use HFG?

You've commuted using any transit mode except your own vehicle (by bus, rideshare, walking, biking, etc.). And while at work:

- You or a family member becomes ill.
- There's an issue with childcare.
- You're asked to stay for overtime.
- Your rideshare vehicle left early.
- Your bike (or similar) has a flat/other mechanical issue.

How to get home

1. Request a taxi by calling the HFG dispatch line at 425-450-4555.
2. State your company's name.
3. Explain the emergency.
4. Book a ride home.
5. Ask your taxi driver for a receipt and forward it on to your employer contact.

You are responsible for any driver tips.

Eight free trips are covered under Business Area Passport.
For coverage details under Business Custom Passport and Business Choice, please contact a Metro team member or your work transportation coordinator.

Business Passport team: employer.services@kingcounty.gov
Business Choice team: business.leadagent@kingcounty.gov
kingcounty.gov/home-free-guarantee



Click image to view and print

[BACK TO HOME](#)



Outreach and Awareness

POSTING INFORMATION

Keeping your employees/tenants informed regularly: Providing basic information is one of the simplest and most essential actions to help your commuters. Become a champion for sustainable travel options! With your encouragement, subsidies, and flexibility options, your employees or tenants will be empowered to make choices that work best for their health and pocketbooks. The following are examples of how to help people learn about using various commute modes and raise awareness of the viability of using these modes for commuting to your worksite.

- Commuter information boards: Posting information in a visible, high-traffic area of your worksite is a traditional way of sharing important transportation information, transit schedules, program updates, and other resources with your employees.
- Electronic resources for employees: Posting program information online and sharing updates through email are basic yet effective ways to raise awareness. Employers can integrate any updates into existing newsletters or online employee communication hubs. If nothing else, posting a link to ChooseYourWayBellevue.org will encourage employees to explore their options.
- New employee orientation: Engaging with new employees is critical to sustaining commuter transportation programs. Create a transportation benefits guide for new employees to help them prepare for their daily commute. Typically, new employees are more open to trying alternatives to driving alone than longstanding employees who developed their commute habits over time.
- Traffic notifications: Keeping employees informed means providing traffic notifications for their commutes. An administrator or the employee transportation coordinator should subscribe to and share transit agency and traffic alert systems to stay ahead of the news.



CUSTOMIZED COMMUTE PLANS

Making changes easy for employees

Planning a new commute method can be challenging and intimidating. Choose Your Way Bellevue can help—with our commute assistance service! This service reduces anxiety by helping individuals optimize their commute depending on their particular needs, schedules, preferences, and available commute modes. Depending on a variety of factors, employees might prioritize the following:

- Safest trip
- Shortest trip duration
- Shortest walking distance
- Trip start and end times
- Trip cost

To receive assistance, any Bellevue employee or resident can simply click the Commute Assistance Request link at ChooseYourWayBellevue.org. Employers and property managers need only promote this resource at the worksite, especially for new employees who are considering changing their commute mode.

More custom commute planning resources

There are a number of smart phone applications and digital resources to assist in commute planning on the fly:

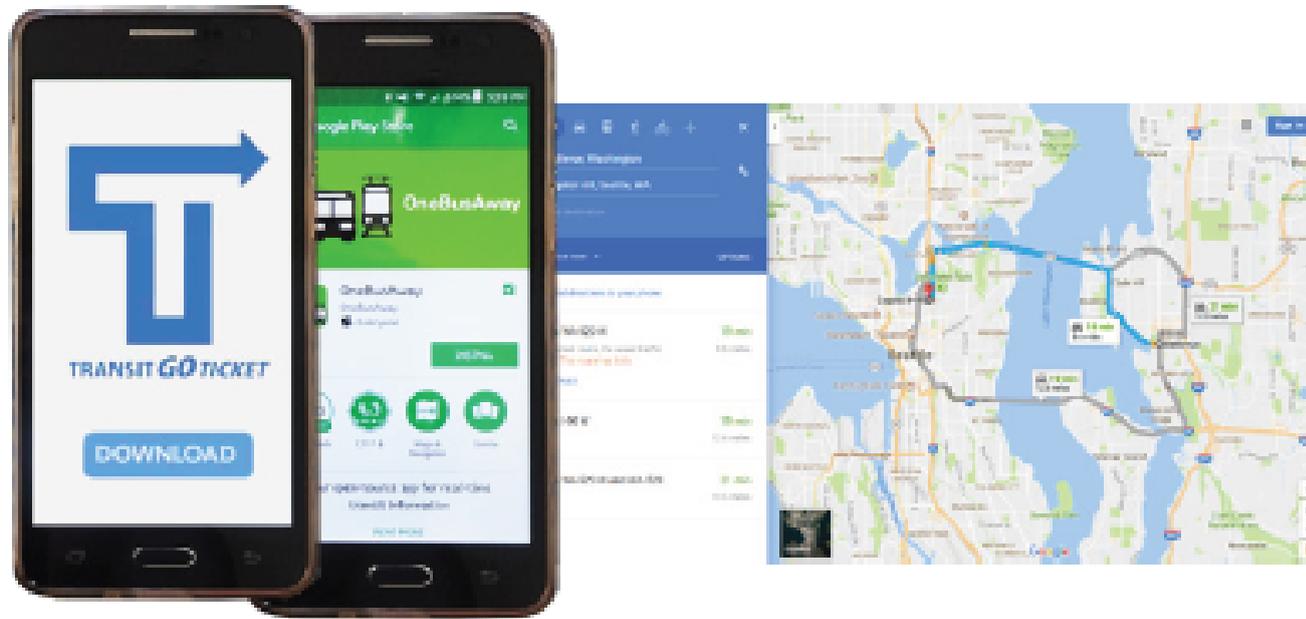
[Google Maps](#) – Transit or King County Metro Trip Planner: Plan your route, estimate your transit fare, and get live traffic updates from your phone. Google Maps also provides trip plans for walking and biking.

[Transit Go Ticket](#): Purchase and redeem transit passes on your smartphone device.

[One Bus Away](#): Real time bus arrivals and departures at your fingertips.

[City of Bellevue Bike Map](#): Use this map, located on the ChooseYourWayBellevue.org/bike page, to locate bike facilities and identify roadway characteristics.

Additional apps and technology tools are described on the “Apps & Technology” sections of ChooseYourWayBellevue.org on the “Walk”, “Bike”, “Transit” and “Share the Ride” pages.



PROMOTING LOCAL AND STATEWIDE CAMPAIGNS

The City of Bellevue, King County Metro and Washington State conduct campaigns that promote non-drive-alone modes. Promoting these campaigns is a great chance to build support and energy around your commute trip reduction program and tap into public resources at your worksite.

Examples of local and Statewide campaigns:

- New Year, New to Bellevue-January
- Bike Month – Month of May
- Ride Transit Month – Month of June
- Back to School, Back to Work, Back to Bellevue- August
- TDM Week-September
- Week Without Driving- September
- Switch Your Trips-October
- Bellevue, After Dark- November

TRANSPORTATION FAIRS

One of the best ways to introduce your employees to a new program element is to host a transportation fair. A fair can be as simple as talking with people and sharing information at a table during a lunch hour in a common meeting place. Or, it can be as big as a lobby “bash” in which you invite transportation service vendors to attend, provide a catered lunch and hold a drawing for a compelling prize.

To help you put on your event, Choose Your Way Bellevue staff can offer periodic coordination assistance, depending on availability. Employer event assistance will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis. If staff isn't available for your event, Choose Your Way Bellevue can recommend current vendors and transit agency representatives in the area. (Property managers may be eligible to receive event coordination assistance from Choose Your Way Bellevue on a case-by-case basis.)

The following tips can help your transportation fair be successful:

- If budget allows, provide food! Your colleagues will be more interested in attending if you provide food and beverages.
- Hold a drawing for a grand prize—a new tablet, bike helmet, lunch with the boss, or paid vacation day. Anyone who participates in your program, agrees to try transit or stops by the table can be entered to win!
- Create a “call to action” for your event—a challenge, sign-up form, or pledge to try a new commute mode—so employees are encouraged to start something new after the event.
- Encourage as many vendors to come as possible—the more, the merrier.
- Contact Choose Your Way Bellevue staff for transit and rideshare materials, bike maps, downtown pedestrian guides and more; our team will be happy to set up your team for success.



For companies new to Bellevue or relocating a worksite, Choose Your Way Bellevue is with you every step of the way. Our team can meet with your employees before the move to provide on-site custom commute planning assistance, coordinate and host a transportation fair upon move-in and tailor transit or other materials to your business location, as staff time allows. If your company is moving, contact Choose Your Way Bellevue staff at info@cywb.org for a pre-move consultation. There may also be a limited number of starter ORCA cards available to encourage your employees to try transit.

APPENDIX A

USEFUL LINKS

The following are links to additional resources that may be helpful in developing your program:

- [Association for Commuter Transportation \(ACT\)](#) – An international trade association and leading advocate for commuter transportation and transportation demand management, (TDM).
- [Best Workplaces for Commuters](#) – An innovative membership program that provides qualified employers with national recognition and an elite designation for offering outstanding commuter benefits.
- [Cascade Bicycle Club](#) – The nation's largest statewide bicycle organization, this organization is powered by 17,000 members and serves bike riders of all ages and abilities throughout the Puget Sound region and across Washington state.
- [City of Bellevue Transportation Department](#)
- [Commute Program Budget Worksheet](#) – Estimate the cost of providing a commute program.
- [Connect Bellevue](#) (formerly TransManage)– A service of the Bellevue Downtown Association, Bellevue's local transportation management association and the expert consultant and program support staff behind all Choose Your Way Bellevue programs.
- [King County Metro Commuter Tax Benefit page](#) – Learn about state and federal tax benefits that are available to your company for offering non-drive alone commute options to your employees.
- [King County Metro Home-Free Guarantee](#) – Set up a way for employees to get home in case of emergency when they don't have their personal vehicles at work.
- [King County Jobs Access Reverse Commute Transportation Program](#)
- [King County Metro For Employers page](#) – Support for employers large and small.
- [ORCA Business Account Comparison](#) – Learn more about employer transit pass programs.
- [Sample Employee Commute Survey](#) – Use this set of survey questions to conduct a preliminary survey of your employees to see how they are currently commuting and which programs and modes they would be interested in.
- [Share the Ride Page](#) – Utilize business partnerships with carpooling app providers to set up ridematching at your company, either internal or community-wide. Go to our Share the Ride page and look for the apps that indicate “business partnership available.”
- [Washington Bikes](#) – Washington Bikes advocates for bicyclists and a more bicycle-friendly Washington.
- [Washington State Department of Transportation](#)
- [Washington State Ridesharing Organization \(WSRO\)](#) – A group of ridesharing professionals in Washington state whose mission is to encourage policy makers, employers and commuters to support the use of transportation alternatives to driving alone.
- [Workplace & Facilities Assessment Checklist](#) – Assess pertinent physical characteristics of your worksite or building to identify any barriers that could be improved upon.

APPENDIX B
RESOURCE DOCUMENTS

WORKSITE FACILITIES & ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

This assessment evaluates the physical characteristics of a building or work area to gauge the potential for each commute program strategy. It also provides the information needed for possible improvements to the worksite. Here are the key factors a company will need to look at:

Sample Worksite & Facilities Assessment Checklist

Name of Company/Worksite: _____

Person conducting worksite analysis: _____

Date analysis was conducted: _____

Worksite Location

Address: _____

Worksite/Building Description

Buildings at Worksite: _____

Approximate Acreage: _____

Managing Company (if applicable): _____

Parking Availability

Total # of on-site spaces: _____

Company lease/owned off-site spaces _____

Other available off-street spaces: _____

Cost per parking space, for leases: _____

Preferential parking spaces for:

Carpool (#of spaces) _____

Vanpool (#of spaces) _____

Do you charge employees to park?

Yes _____ \$ _____ /emp./mo.

No _____

Is there an abundance of free parking nearby?

Yes _____

No _____

Do you provide cash subsidies for employee parking?

Yes _____ \$ _____ /emp./mo.

No _____

Freeway and Street Access

Closest Freeways:

1) _____ Off-ramp #: _____ Distance from worksite: _____

2) _____ Off-ramp #: _____ Distance from worksite: _____

Major Arterials:

North-south: 1) _____ 2) _____

East-west: 1) _____ 2) _____

Transit Access

Routes Serving Area:

Bus #: _____ Origin/Destination: _____ Frequency: _____

Bicycle Facilities

Check whether available or not available at the worksite:

	Available	Unavailable	Amount	Capacity
1) Bicycle racks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
2) Clothes lockers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
3) Showers for cyclists	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
4) Bicycle path/lanes to site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____

Pedestrian Facilities

Describe pedestrian access to the worksite:

Please describe any additional site characteristics that are relevant to developing a commute program strategy (e.g. sidewalks, lighting, traffic, safety, crosswalks, signals, on-site amenities):

COMMUTE PROGRAM BUDGET WORKSHEET

Use the worksheet below as a guide to create an effective commute program for your employees. Check the program options that interest you, calculate the total costs and contact a Choose Your Way Bellevue representative to get started.

Programs and Options

Commute Advantage Tools

		# of Units	Cost Per Unit	Total
	Employee Transportation Event		\$*	\$*
	Employee Transportation Survey		FREE	FREE
	Employer Administrative Access to Rideshare Online		FREE	FREE
			Subtotal	\$

Transit

			Estimate Req.	\$
	Transit Pass			
	ORCA Business Passport (5 to 499 employees) Annual discounted pass includes 100% fare for all transit, rail, vanpool, vanshare; home-free guarantee program			
	ORCA Business Passport (500 or more employees) Annual discounted pass includes 100% fare for transit and rail. Option for vanpool and vanshare fare & home-free guarantee program			
	ORCA Business Choice Monthly passes at retail prices for bus, train, ferry & Metro vanpool			
			Subtotal	\$

Carpool

	Monthly Carpool Incentive (choose amount per employee)		\$	\$
	Ridematching Assistance		FREE	FREE
			Subtotal	\$

Vanpool

	Monthly Vanpool Subsidy (choose amount per employee)		\$	\$
	Monthly VanShare Subsidy (choose amount per employee)		\$	\$
	Ridematching Assistance		FREE	FREE
	Emergency Ride Home Program		\$**	\$**
			Subtotal	\$

Bike/Walk

	Bike/Walk Incentive (choose amount per employee)		\$	\$
	Bike Parking (racks, lockers, fencing)		Estimate Req.	\$
			Subtotal	\$

Design My Own Program

			\$	\$
			\$	\$
			Subtotal	\$

Total

Total Program Budget				\$
-----------------------------	--	--	--	----

* Limited event services may be available for free; contact Choose Your Way Bellevue for more information.

** May be included in vanpool fare; contact Choose Your Way Bellevue for more information.

SAMPLE EMPLOYEE COMMUTE SURVEY

To properly assess how employees travel to and from work and what commute program elements will work best at their company, an employer should have employees complete a transportation survey. The purpose of the survey is to assess:

- How employees travel to and from work
- How long and far their commutes are
- What they know about their commute alternatives
- What are the benefits of their current commute mode and the possible benefits of an alternative commute mode
- What alternatives might they consider
- What incentives/subsidies they might find valuable
- What concerns/questions they have about using commute alternatives



Below is a sample survey. The survey is a useful tool for identifying the most effective commute program for your company and the possible challenges you may face when promoting alternative commute modes. Additionally, the survey can act as a baseline—a starting point from which to base future program evaluations with additional surveys or participation tracking.

This sample survey can be easily adapted into an electronic survey. If your company is interested in this option, contact a Choose Your Way Bellevue representative for assistance.

Sample Commute Survey

Name: _____ Email: _____

Home address: _____

City/State: _____ Zip: _____

1) What is your typical work schedule?

Arrive:

Monday _____

Tuesday _____

Wednesday _____

Thursday _____

Friday _____

Saturday _____

Sunday _____

Depart:

Monday _____

Tuesday _____

Wednesday _____

Thursday _____

Friday _____

Saturday _____

Sunday _____

2) How did you usually get to work LAST WEEK? If you usually used more than one method of transportation during the trip, mark the box of the one used for most of the distance.

Drive Alone

Carpool (# of members)

Bus

Vanpool (# of members)

Train

Walking

Light Rail

Other:

Bicycle

3) Do you pick up or drop off children/family members on your commute?

Yes: _____ No: _____

4) What alternative commute modes, besides driving alone, would most appeal to you?

(Choose all that apply)

Drive Alone

Carpool (# of members)

Bus

Vanpool (# of members)

Train

Walking

Light Rail

Other: _____

Bicycle

5) If you normally use an alternative commute mode, what motivates you to do so? (Choose up to 3)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost savings | <input type="checkbox"/> Save wear and tear on personal vehicle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stress reduction | <input type="checkbox"/> Subsidy from employer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Time savings | <input type="checkbox"/> Other cash incentives or tax savings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Convenience | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improve air quality/environmental reasons | |

6) If you normally drive alone to work, what are your main reasons for driving alone? (Choose up to 3)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Need car at work for company | <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot get home in an emergency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No reasonable transit option | <input type="checkbox"/> Need car to run errands |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor bicycle and pedestrian access | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't like to depend on others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Need car at work for personal use | <input type="checkbox"/> Need to transport my children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't have anyone to ride with | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer to drive my own car |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parking is free or inexpensive | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

7) What would encourage you to use an alternative commute mode to driving alone? (Choose up to 3)

- Company subsidy for transit
- Company subsidy for vanpool
- Company subsidy for bike/walk
- Lower parking rates for carpools
- Reserved parking close to building for carpools
- Help finding a transit or bike route

- Help finding a carpool/vanpool partner
- More flexible work hours
- Ride home in case of emergency
- Prizes, drawings, contents
- Occasional free park days
- Other: _____
- None

Additional comments: