

# TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



In 2012, the Joblinks Employment Transportation Center created the first-of-its-kind **“Transportation-to-Work Toolkit for the Business Community.”** Many of the principles included in this first version are still applicable in the 2020s.

The toolkit provides businesses with information to assist their employees in realizing a timely, cost-efficient commute that promotes business productivity while increasing employee job satisfaction. These fact sheets will guide you in implementing solutions that will positively impact your company’s bottom line.

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## About the Toolkit

The Joblinks “Transportation to Work Toolkit for the Business Community” was created with funding from the Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor, through a cooperative agreement between the Community Transportation Association of America and the Federal Transit Administration. The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are solely those of the authors and should not be construed as representing the opinions or policy of any agency of the federal government.

# The Power of Partnerships: Joining Forces to Improve Business and the Environment

Across the United States, employers and transportation providers are partnering to expand shared ride opportunities to work sites and to encourage employees to use such services. As these partnerships increase, employee drive-alone rates decrease—in turn saving money, reducing congestion, and benefiting the environment. A variety of options, both short-term and long-term, are available to employers who partner with other employers and agencies to support productive commuting behavior among their employees.

## Promote Existing Transportation Services

Often, individuals are not familiar with the available transportation services in their communities. To get the word out, transportation agencies and employers can partner to

- Display bus and rail maps, schedules, and phone numbers of transit services in frequently accessed on-site locations, such as employee break rooms, and including such information in new employee orientation packets
- Promote commuting information via company newsletters, e-mails, workplace displays, websites, and hiring materials
- Suggest that public transportation providers exhibit at job fairs where your business is also exhibiting. Providers can identify transit lines that have stops located near your business and others and counsel applicants on the most affordable, time-efficient commute to your site.
- Disseminate information about other private transportation resources, including those offered by you or your business district
- Share lists of transportation providers that can support company employees with disabilities and

how employees can connect to those services<sup>1</sup>

- Encourage participation in new or existing shared ride options, such as carpools and vanpools<sup>2</sup>
- Notify employees about transit route changes impacting your business site and alerting employees in the event of major disruptions to the local transportation network

## Take Steps to Support Your Employees' Commutes<sup>3</sup>

- Implement the Commuter Tax Benefit, formally known as the Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit, for your employees. This federal tax incentive, which can offset some transportation costs, applies to employees who commute to work via vanpool or public transit. Your tax professional or benefit administrators such as WageWorks; TransitCenter, Inc.; and WiredCommute can help you implement and administer such a program.<sup>4</sup>
- Survey employees to learn their commuting patterns and needs and discuss them with your local transportation provider. Because of their familiarity with fixed route, ridesharing, and other options, transportation providers are best able to address the employment transportation needs of most community residents.
- Join with other businesses to co-fund shuttles to your and nearby business sites.
- Designate a company staff member to act as a

1 See Fact Sheet #3: [Transportation for Workers with Disabilities: Widening Your Pool of Potential Talent](#).

2 See Fact Sheet #7: [Strength in Numbers: Why Employers Should Encourage Ridesharing](#).

3 Read Joblinks' [Success Stories of Employer-Sponsored Transportation Programs](#) for additional examples of programs other businesses have implemented.

4 See Fact Sheet #6 [Tax Incentives for Commuters: A Direct Dividend for Business](#).

contact person for employees on commuting issues and as a liaison with your local transportation provider.<sup>5</sup>

- Distribute information about Guaranteed Ride Home programs<sup>6</sup> offered by local agencies to employees. Such programs encourage employees to carpool, use transit, bike, or walk to work by guaranteeing them an emergency ride home at any time when unforeseen circumstances arises.

## Become Part of the Local Transportation Planning Process

Reliable, affordable, and convenient access to goods, services, and jobs is an economic development issue that impacts the business community directly. Businesses have a vested interest in the development of transportation services that support their ability to operate and expand.

Companies such as yours are encouraged to participate in the local transportation planning process to ensure planners know about your current and forecasted needs. For example, you could consider serving as a member of your local

5 See Fact Sheet #4: [Employee Transportation Coordinators: A Best Practice for Addressing Commuters' Needs](#).

6 See Fact Sheet #13: [Guaranteed Ride Home Programs: Good for Employees, Employers, and the Environment](#).

transportation coordinating committee or advisory group.<sup>7</sup>

As an additional benefit, businesses that actively participate in transportation planning forums have the opportunity to network with other businesses and entities that have a stake in the local transportation network. They are also well positioned to voice their priorities in community-wide transportation discussions.

7 Find your local planning partners through the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations [[www.ampco.org](http://www.ampco.org)] for metropolitan areas, the National Association of Development Organizations [[www.nado.org](http://www.nado.org)] for rural areas, or the National Association of Regional Councils [[www.narc.org](http://www.narc.org)] for both rural and metropolitan areas.

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# Employee Commuter Benefits: A Boost to Your Company's Bottom Line

In 2011, 720,000 workers in the United States received employer-provided commuter benefits.<sup>1</sup> Are your employees among them? If the answer is no, your company should consider joining the growing number of employers who are offering such benefits – and reaping the fiscal rewards.

Commuter benefit programs vary in scope, so employers can design programs based on their desired level of involvement and the unique needs of their workforce. Programs can range from informal initiatives that encourage workers to share rides to structured programs managed by designated staff. At any level, offering commuter benefits enables your company to positively influence your employees' travel choices, promote a more productive work environment, improve employee retention, and demonstrate a commitment to cleaner air in the community.

## Save Your Company Money!

- Save thousands of dollars in hiring and training costs by providing a commuter benefit program that helps retain lower wage employees who might be struggling to afford the trip to work. For example, the Society for Human Resource Management estimated it cost over \$32,000 to replace a nurse earning an hourly wage of \$20 (\$40,000/year) when all costs — recruiting, interviewing, hiring, training, reduced

productivity, etc. — were considered.<sup>2</sup>

- Increase employee productivity by promoting commuter habits that reduce employee absenteeism and late arrivals.
- Save on overhead costs associated with maintaining and expanding on-site parking for employees by encouraging shared rides to work.
- Reduce the company's payroll taxes by allowing employees to use pre-tax dollars for transportation through the Commuter Tax Benefit.<sup>3</sup>

## Increase Your Business' Ability to Recruit and Retain Employees

- Compete and win at hiring and retaining the most qualified workers by offering comprehensive benefits, including a commuter benefit program.
- Build a more diversified workforce and create a more positive work environment by attracting workers who otherwise might not be able to commute to your company's facility.
- Present your company as an innovative and proactive workplace.
- Demonstrate your company's support of work-life balance, which is increasingly important to today's workforce.
- Use the Commuter Tax Benefit as an inexpensive way to give employees a net pay increase.
- Reduce employee stress and increase employee

<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics. National Compensation Survey. Employee Benefits Survey: Quality of Life Benefits: Access Data Table, Civilian Workers. March 2011. Represents six percent of all civilian, private industry, and state and local government workers. Federal workers, most of whom receive commuter benefits, are not included. <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ebs/benefits/2011/ownership/civilian/table24a.htm>. Accessed June 21, 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Society for Human Resource Management. Cost of Turnover. SHRM Briefly Stated ROI Series. 2005. [www.shrm.org/Research/Articles/Articles/Pages/ROI\\_20Series\\_20Cost\\_20of\\_20Turnover.aspx](http://www.shrm.org/Research/Articles/Articles/Pages/ROI_20Series_20Cost_20of_20Turnover.aspx). Accessed March 2011.

<sup>3</sup> See Fact Sheet #6: [Tax Incentives for Commuters: A Direct Dividend for Business](#).

morale and job satisfaction by promoting commute options that are less burdensome.

- Support vanpooling and other forms of ridesharing by teaming with a local agency that offers a Guaranteed Ride Home program.<sup>4</sup> These programs provide a ride home for registered carpoolers and vanpoolers for specified emergencies (e.g., sick child, family emergency) and are usually available at no cost to the user. Knowing this safety net is available encourages workers to consider leaving their car at home.

### Increase Customer Access to Your Business

- Improve customers' access to your business, and ensure a faster delivery of goods and services, by reducing traffic congestion and increasing available on-site parking.
- Expand your business' service hours without significantly increasing costs by allowing employees to work flexible or staggered work hours, thereby providing additional staff coverage and better customer service.

### Support Local Community Development

- Support your local transit system and your

community's economic development goals by encouraging employees to use public transportation.

- Provide workers with more disposable income to spend in their communities by offering access to affordable transportation to work.

### Promote Your Company as Environmentally Responsible

- Have a positive impact on the environment by encouraging employees to use public or shared transportation or walk or bike to work—and thus ease traffic congestion and reduce vehicle-based emissions.<sup>5</sup>
- Don't be shy about marketing your company as environmentally friendly!

4 See Fact Sheet #13: [Guaranteed Ride Home Programs: Good for Employees, Employers, & the Environment](#).

5 See Fact Sheet #14: [Green Transportation: A Smart Business Strategy for Today and Tomorrow](#).

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# Guaranteed Ride Home Programs: Good for Employees, Employers, and the Environment

A fear of not being able to get home in the event of an emergency is a major reason why many employees are reluctant to travel to work in anything other than their own car. But Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) programs can still assuage these fears, providing peace of mind and reassuring commuters that, if needed, a ride home will be available.

GRH programs are generally available to commuters who regularly vanpool, carpool, bike, walk, or take public transit to work. Many commuters who routinely use these alternative modes of transportation would not do so if the GRH program did not exist.

GRH programs can be operated by a variety of organizations, including local transit authorities, councils of government, metropolitan planning organizations, and transportation management associations. They are relatively inexpensive to implement and maintain and provide critical support to all types of commuters, including those transitioning into the workforce from public assistance. Some GRH programs have moved beyond commuter services and address options for individuals with disabilities or older adults who may be using paratransit services for medical appointments and other types of travel.

## Benefits to Business

In many communities, participation in a GRH is free for employers. When businesses participate in GRH programs, they reap the benefits by

- Having a mechanism in place that allows employees to stay later at work, if needed, and not worry about how they will get home
- Cultivating an image as a company that cares about the health and well-being of its employees and the environment

- Having employees arrive at work less stressed and better able to concentrate without having to worry if an emergency arises
- Having more employees commute to work via vanpool or public transportation, and all the benefits that entails, including qualifying the company and employee for the Commuter Tax Benefit program<sup>1</sup>

## How GRH Programs Work

Generally, a GRH's sponsoring agency sets program eligibility criteria, acceptable reasons for use, allowable destinations, service hours, payment method, and membership fees, as well as program policies and procedures.

- Most programs require employees to commute other than by driving their car alone a minimum number of times per week to qualify.
- Many programs allow users to obtain a ride home either by taxi or rental car.
- Either the employees pay for the ride and are reimbursed at a later date for all or part of their costs or the sponsoring agency covers the cost. In some communities, employers pay the transit provider a small annual base rate (determined by the size of the company workforce) to allow their employees to participate in a GRH program.
- Many programs provide vouchers to cover the cost of a ride home, eliminating the need for employees to have cash on hand to pay for the service. Employees receive vouchers either when they first register for the program or on the day a ride home is needed. The vouchers are used to pay for the services, and the program sponsor then reimburses the provider.

<sup>1</sup> For additional information, see Fact Sheet #6: [Tax Incentives for Businesses: A Direct Benefit of Commuter Benefit Programs](#).

# Employer Transportation Consortia: Collaborating to Improve Commutes and Communities

In communities across the United States, employers are finding value in joining forces with other business leaders to form employer transportation consortia. These partnerships are typically based on geographic proximity, industry sector, or a common desire to encourage employees to use public transportation or other shared ride options to commute to and from work.

By teaming with other employers to ensure employees have affordable, reliable, and accessible transportation to work, your company can

- Reduce congestion near your business, thereby making it more accessible to customers and other business partners
- Improve productivity and employee morale
- Recruit and retain a wider pool of potential employees
- Increase parking space capacity for customers and clients
- Reduce overhead costs associated with company parking expenses and mileage reimbursements
- Demonstrate a commitment to improving the well-being of employees and the environment

## Advantages of Joining a Consortium

Members of an employer transportation consortium may be able to access bulk discounts on transportation services or coordinate carpool, vanpool, and shared-shuttle opportunities across several businesses. For example, in North Carolina, the Charlotte Area Hotel Association (CAHA) purchases bus passes on behalf of its business members at a 20 percent discount. The individual hotels then sell the passes to their employees at the reduced price. CAHA coordinates the purchases, distributes the tickets, and manages all related

accounting and administrative activities.<sup>1</sup>

## Turning Ideas into Action

In Fairfax, Virginia, a suburb of Washington, D.C., the Fair Lakes League initiated a shuttle that serves residents and employees of the Fair Lakes area. Members of the league, which include property owners and businesses, subsidize the cost of the service. The shuttle operates Monday to Friday during the morning and evening rush hours, except on national holidays, and transports commuters between the nearest subway station and the Fair Lakes complex.

Small business employers may also consider joining their local transportation management association (TMA) to implement an employee transportation program. TMAs are nonprofit, member-controlled organizations that address transportation issues in a concentrated area such as a commercial district, shopping mall, or industrial park. TMAs can help area businesses identify and promote trip-reduction strategies and can also provide current information about laws and regulations that may impact public transportation in your community. Many TMAs offer resources about these issues.<sup>2</sup> Partnering with TMAs allows smaller employers to provide commute trip-reduction services comparable with those offered by larger companies. What's more, member companies can have a stronger voice in local transportation planning, which can result in improved services for their employees and communities.

<sup>1</sup> More information about this initiative can be reviewed in Joblinks' [Success Stories of Employer Sponsored Transportation Programs](#).

<sup>2</sup> See Fact Sheet # 5: [Transportation Management Associations: Leveraging Resources to Improve Options](#) for additional information.

# Green Transportation:

## A Smart Business Strategy for Today and Tomorrow

Going “green” is not just good for the environment—it’s also good for business. Now more than ever, consumers and employees seek out environmentally friendly companies and products. What’s more, businesses are discovering that going green generates significant cost savings on day-to-day operations.

One simple way businesses can go green is to encourage employees to use public transportation and shared rides to get to and from work.<sup>1</sup> Such efforts not only help the environment, but also enhance company recruitment and retention.

A 2011 survey conducted by Brighter Planet found that 40 percent of responding companies promote energy-efficient commuting options.<sup>2</sup> In a 2008 survey conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management, the promotion of public transit, walking, and biking to work was seen by employees and human resource professionals, respectively, as the 6th and 7th most important “green practice” an employer could implement.<sup>3</sup> The survey’s findings also indicated that environmental sustainability initiatives promoted a strong public image for the company and increased the likelihood that employees will remain at the company.

### Green Strategies in Action

Humana, Inc., headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky, allows employees to ride public transit by simply showing their employee ID. Supporting their employees’ commute helps the company recruit and retain qualified workers. The cost of the transit passes is offset by the reduced parking costs the company has to pay.<sup>4</sup>

In California, the Walt Disney Company designated “green teams” for all segments of company operations, including transportation. In addition to promoting transportation strategies through its Corporate Responsibility division, the company supports pre-tax incentives for employees who routinely use public transit or vanpool to get to work. This effort was so successful that in 2007 alone, employee ridesharing eliminated nine million miles of single-occupancy vehicle trips. The company believes that this effort supports employee retention and attributes its success to strong support from the highest levels of management.

### What Your Company Can Do

Here are some actions your company can take to encourage green transportation:

- Calculate the environmental benefits (e.g., gas savings, reduced emissions) gained when employees commute using alternatives to single occupancy vehicles and disseminate those figures within and outside the company
- Adopt environmental sustainability mission statements and “try transit first” incentive programs
- Promote the use of public transit through employee communication channels

1 Davis T, Hale M. Public Transportation’s Contribution to U.S. Greenhouse Gas Reduction. Science Applications International Corporation, October 2007. Prepared for the American Public Transportation Association. [http://www.apta.com/resources/reportsandpublications/Documents/climate\\_change.pdf](http://www.apta.com/resources/reportsandpublications/Documents/climate_change.pdf)

Hagelin C. “A Shared Vision of Environmentally-Friendly Transit Investment.” CT Magazine. Spring 2008, Vol. 26. No. 3. <http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/articlefiles/df.pdf>.

2 Brighter Planet. “Greening the Workplace: Engaging Employees to Benefit the Planet and the Bottom Line.” December 2011. [http://attachments.brighterplanet.com/press\\_items/local\\_copies/105/original/employee\\_engagement\\_2011.pdf?1322867541](http://attachments.brighterplanet.com/press_items/local_copies/105/original/employee_engagement_2011.pdf?1322867541)

3 See Fact Sheet # 19: Society for Human Resource Management: [Green Workplace](#)

4 See Joblinks’ [Success Stories about Employer Sponsored Transportation Programs](#) to learn more.



- Encourage other shared rides such as vanpools and carpools<sup>5</sup>
- Participate in a Guaranteed Ride Home program for public transit users
- Support bike riders and walkers
- Have company leadership use (and publicize their use) of shared ride options
- fuel and other driving costs
- Tax benefits for your employees and your company
- Increased customer loyalty to your environmentally responsible company
- Points toward LEED certification

By supporting and promoting employee use of public transportation and other ridesharing alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles, your company can position itself at the forefront of national efforts to support environmental sustainability, reduce dependence on foreign oil, reduce traffic congestion, and improve the country's carbon blueprint.

Become “transportation green” and gain

- An enhanced public image
- Expanded opportunities to recruit and keep top quality workers
- Cost savings for employees from reduced use of

<sup>5</sup> See Fact Sheet #7: [Strength in Numbers: Why Employers Should Encourage Ridesharing](#) and Fact Sheet #8: [Investing in Vanpools: A Best Practice for Savvy Employers](#) to learn more.

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# Transportation for Workers with Disabilities:

## Widening Your Pool of Potential Talent

Workers with disabilities are valued employees in businesses across the United States. And in the coming years, the number of businesses benefiting from the skills and abilities of people with disabilities will increase for a variety of reasons:

- **Demographic shifts:** A high rate of workers are expected to retire over the next decade. Recruiting and retaining workers with disabilities is one strategy to counter the effects of an aging and shrinking workforce.
- **Bottom line benefits:** Employing people with disabilities makes good business sense. They are natural problem solvers who help businesses gain a competitive edge through innovative thinking. Furthermore, they mirror an important and increasingly expanding customer base.<sup>1</sup>
- **Social responsibility:** A workplace inclusive of people with disabilities demonstrates a company's commitment to all residents of its community. Furthermore, consumers favor businesses that employ people with disabilities. In fact, 92 percent of consumers surveyed in the National Survey of Consumer Attitudes toward Companies that Hire Individuals with Disabilities felt more favorable toward companies that hire people with disabilities, and 87 percent preferred to give their business to those companies.<sup>2</sup>

### Transportation for Workers with Disabilities

Employees with disabilities often use the same types of transportation options as their non-disabled peers.

1 The Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor [[www.dol.gov/odep](http://www.dol.gov/odep)] supports the development of disability-related policy and practices and addresses transportation issues as part of those policies.

2 Siperstein GN, Romano N, Mohler A, et al. National Survey of Consumer Attitudes Toward Companies that Hire Individuals with Disabilities. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 24: 3-9, 2006

For those who cannot use regularly scheduled transit services, however, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires federally funded transit agencies to provide equivalent type paratransit services that complement those services.

To facilitate the commute of employees with disabilities, companies can

- Encourage ridesharing via carpool or vanpool for employees with disabilities who may not be able to use public transportation or whose work shifts do not correspond with public transportation schedules<sup>3</sup>
- Whenever possible, provide preferential parking, located near entrances served by elevators, for employees with disabilities who share rides to work
- Provide information about ADA complementary paratransit eligibility and local services to employees with disabilities
- Understand the need for flexible work schedules for employees with disabilities who ride ADA complementary paratransit services to work
- Identify options for purchasing, leasing, or retrofitting company vehicles so they can be used by all employees. Some federal tax benefits can help (see below).
- Partner with other local employers to encourage local transportation providers to increase schedules or extend routes that serve your business location<sup>4</sup>

### Helping Employees with Disabilities Use Available Transportation Options

3 See Fact Sheet #7: [Strength in Numbers: Why Employers Should Encourage Ridesharing](#).

4 See Fact Sheet #2: [The Power of Partnerships: Joining Forces to Improve Business and the Environment](#).

Your employees who have a disability may benefit from receiving one-on-one education about how to use existing transit services. This type of training will give them the ability to use transit services with confidence.

For example, many local transit agencies provide *travel orientation* for any rider. It is usually delivered in-person and shows riders how to navigate a particular agency's system. It also informs them about any accommodations the system offers. Check with your local transit agency for more information.

*Travel training* is intensive instruction designed to teach people with disabilities to travel safely and independently using public transportation in their community, when appropriate. To locate a travel trainer, contact the Association of Travel Instruction ([www.travelinstruction.org](http://www.travelinstruction.org)). Also note that Easter Seals Project ACTION teaches travel trainers how to train customers as well as other trainers (<http://www.projectaction.org>).

### Tax Incentives for Improving Transportation Access to Your Facility<sup>5</sup>

Two tax incentives assist businesses to adapt their facilities to be more accessible to customers and

<sup>5</sup> Learn more about the tax benefits for businesses who have employees with disabilities from the IRS website. <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=185704,00.html>

workers with disabilities. The Disabled Access Tax Credit allows eligible small businesses (gross receipts of \$1 million or less or having 30 or fewer employees) to deduct up to 50 percent of "eligible access expenditures" (maximum benefit of \$5,000) for a taxable year to remove architectural, communication, physical, or transportation barriers that prevent a business from being accessible to individuals with disabilities.

The Tax Deduction to Remove Architectural and Transportation Barriers to People with Disabilities and Elderly Individuals allows any size business to deduct from taxable income up to \$15,000 for expenditures to make a facility or public transportation vehicle owned or leased in connection with a trade or business more accessible to individuals who have disabilities or are elderly.

Examples of deductions include

- Providing accessible parking spaces, ramps, and curb cuts
- Making telephones, water fountains, and restrooms accessible to people using wheelchairs
- Making walkways at least 48 inches wide
- Providing accessible entrances to buildings, including stairs and floors

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# Strength in Numbers:

## Why Employers Should Encourage Ridesharing

It's easy to understand why ridesharing is increasing in popularity. Whether via a vanpool or carpool, ridesharing can

- Diminish the impact of fluctuating gasoline costs on commuters
- Decrease traffic congestion
- Reduces pollution and greenhouse gas emissions
- Save wear and tear on commuters' vehicles
- Decrease the length of commutes by accessing HOV lanes

Ridesharing can make a long commute interesting, enjoyable, and affordable – all while helping employees arrive at work relaxed and ready to concentrate on the tasks at hand.

Employers also benefit when their employees are able to access rideshare options. Their workers are likely to be more productive, miss fewer hours at work because of traffic delays, and stay on the job longer when they have a predictable, cost-effective means for traveling to work. Having fewer employees drive to work also frees up parking spaces for customers or other visitors.

Your company can encourage employees to commute to work with others by promoting the various ridesharing options available to them and facilitating their participation in those options.

### Carpools

Carpooling is among the easiest and most flexible ways to share a ride to work. Carpoolers either pay a pre-established weekly or monthly fee or share actual costs plus parking fees. Carpool riders typically establish rules and etiquette to sustain the carpool partnership, such as timely notifications of absences

and whether to eat or drink in the car.<sup>1</sup>

Formal arrangements, such as on-line carpool matching services, are available to registered commuters in many metropolitan areas. These services may be organized by state departments of transportation, councils of government, or transportation management associations.<sup>2</sup>

### Vanpools

Vanpools allow groups of 7–15 people to commute to work on a prearranged basis by van, with one of the riders agreeing to be the primary driver and 1–2 others serving as back-up drivers. Vanpools allow commuters to reduce travel time, avoid highway congestion, and split the cost of work trips so that they are more economical.

Vanpool riders may meet at one designated location or at specified pick-up and drop-off stops along the way. The number of passengers, length of trip, insurance, gas, parking fees, and third-party fees, if applicable, will determine the actual cost per passenger. All costs are split equally among riders, but the driver usually travels for free. The group may also allow the driver to use the van for personal reasons after hours. Participants may all work at the same location or at nearby locations. Vanpool riders also agree on a set of rules that govern rider etiquette.

Two types of vanpool arrangements are available to employers that want to offer their employees a vanpooling option: employer-sponsored and operated vanpools or contracted third-party vanpool programs. An employee may also choose to own and operate a vanpool.

1 See Fact Sheet #18: [Ridesharing Etiquette: Tips for Ensuring an Enjoyable Experience](#).

2 See Fact Sheet #5: [Transportation Management Associations: Leveraging Resources to Improve Options](#).

## How Businesses Can Encourage Ridesharing

Many employers encourage commuters with similar commute routes and work hours to share a ride to work. Best Buy, IBM, Nike, and Yahoo currently provide employees with opportunities to participate in carpools, while Sears and Yahoo operate vanpool programs.<sup>3</sup>

Employer activities may include the following:

- Maintaining an on-site ride-matching forum to facilitate the creation of new carpools and vanpools or to fill empty spots on existing carpools and vanpools. This could be as simple as a ridesharing bulletin board, an electronic e-mail or list-serve communication system, the services of an employee transportation coordinator,<sup>4</sup> or a third-party ride-share brokerage.
- Paying part or all of the cost of employees' vanpool expenses and then taking the Commuter Tax Benefit deduction<sup>5</sup>
- Reserving premium parking spaces for carpool and vanpool vehicles
- Posting or distributing information on the benefits of shared ride options, including tax benefits available to employees who ride by vanpool or public transportation
- Sponsoring or co-sponsoring (with other local companies) a shuttle service that brings employees from the closest public transit stop to the workplace
- Offering financial incentives for employees who switch to shared ride options on a trial basis
- Having company leaders use (and publicize their use of) shared ride options

- Connecting with a Guaranteed Ride Home service, which provides employees who carpool, use transit, bike, or walk to work an emergency ride home at any time when unforeseen circumstances arise<sup>6</sup>
- Providing an on-site company vehicle or shared vehicle for employees to use during the day for errands or off-site meetings, thus eliminating the need for the employees to bring their own car to work

Local transit agencies, councils of government, and transportation management associations<sup>7</sup> usually coordinate local carpool and vanpool programs. Find these types of agencies through the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations ([www.ampco.org](http://www.ampco.org)) for metropolitan areas, the National Association of Development Organizations ([www.nado.org](http://www.nado.org)) for rural areas, or the National Association of Regional Councils ([www.narc.org](http://www.narc.org)) for both rural and metropolitan areas.

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<sup>3</sup> See Joblinks' [Success Stories of Employer-Sponsored Transportation Programs](#) to learn more.

<sup>4</sup> See Fact Sheet #4: [Employee Transportation Coordinators: A Best Practice for Addressing Commuters' Needs](#).

<sup>5</sup> See Fact Sheet #6: [Tax Incentives for Businesses: A Direct Dividend of Commuter Benefit Programs](#) and Fact Sheet #8: [Investing in Vanpools: A Best Practice for Savvy Employers](#).

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<sup>6</sup> See Fact Sheet #13: [Guaranteed Ride Home Programs: Good for Employees, Employers, and the Environment](#).

<sup>7</sup> Find your local transportation management association (TMA) using Fact Sheet #19: [A National Directory of TMAs](#).



# Investing in Vanpools: A Best Practice for Savvy Employers

Today, more smart employers are recognizing company-supported vanpooling as a business best practice. Vanpooling presents a strategic means of recruiting and maintaining the best workforce for one's company. It also lessens the impact of potential commuting difficulties on employee productivity.

Many employees consider vanpooling a valuable alternative to driving alone, especially with the volatility of fuel costs and worsening traffic congestion. Vanpools can reduce their time spent on the road because vanpools can travel on HOV lanes, make commutes less stressful, and save commuters money over the cost of driving alone.

Businesses also reap benefits by actively supporting vanpooling among their employees by

- Saving on parking management costs. Reducing the number of employee vehicles parked onsite increases the supply of available parking for customers and other business partners.
- Expanding company recruitment options. Businesses that offer transit benefits and incentives are more likely to retain employees and increase recruitment opportunities for individuals who may otherwise not be able to commute to the company's facility.
- Reducing employee absenteeism and turnover. Many employers have indicated that reliable, affordable ride-sharing opportunities to work improve employee retention and productivity.
- Reducing time spent in training new employees. Particularly in smaller markets, vanpooling increases the commuting options for employees and provides flexibility for commuters traveling during non-peak commute hours, especially in hard-to-reach locations or areas not served by public transportation.
- Offering an innovative way to market products:

Company-owned vans provide ad space, serving as "rolling billboards" that can promote your company's products and services. Company-sponsored bus passes can also serve as a means to advertise.

- Promoting your company as an employee-oriented business. A company that is concerned about its employees' daily commute options is a more attractive place to work.

When supporting employee vanpools, employers can choose their level of financial involvement. Some options are listed below:

- Deduct the cost of vanpool fees from employees' pre-tax income (up to \$125 per month per employee) to reduce their and the company's overall tax liability<sup>1</sup>
- Subsidize or fully pay for employees' participation in an employee-run vanpool through vouchers or other forms of payment and deduct the subsidy as a business expense.
- Purchase or lease vans and administer the vanpool program for employees.
- Contract with a third party to set up and run a vanpool program for employees.

## Implementing a Vanpool Program

Three types of vanpool arrangements are available to employers that want to offer their employees a vanpooling option:

- Employer-sponsored or operated vanpool programs in which the employer purchases or leases the vans and is responsible for overall program administration. Insurance is usually obtained through the company's regular fleet

<sup>1</sup> See Fact Sheet # 6: [Tax Incentives for Business: A Direct Dividend of Commuter Benefit Programs](#).

policy.

- Third-party vanpooling programs in which the employer contract with a private company or organization that provides “turn-key” vanpool service, including purchasing or leasing the vans, helping to form vanpooling groups, administering the program, marketing the service, and maintaining the vans.
- Support individually owned and operated vanpools in which an employee owns and maintains the van and coordinates the daily operation of the vanpool; rider fares are used to cover the purchase and maintenance costs.

- Collecting monthly fees
- Developing tools for marketing, monitoring, and maintaining the program

A company’s human resources department or facilities management office can help a company coordinate its vanpool program. Hiring additional staff is not required. Local vanpool providers, transit agencies, metropolitan planning organizations, city and county transportation agencies, and transportation management associations can also provide assistance in starting or joining existing vanpool programs. The assistance they provide includes help with:

- Recruiting riders
- Approving and training drivers
- Determining routes

The Joblinks “Transportation Toolkit for the Business Community” was created with funding from the Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor, through a cooperative agreement between the Community Transportation Association of America and the Federal Transit Administration. The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are solely those of the authors and should not be construed as representing the opinions or policy of any agency of the federal government. January 2012.

The “Transportation Toolkit for the Business Community” gives businesses the information they need now to assist their employees in achieving a timely, cost-efficient commute that promotes their productivity and job satisfaction. View other fact sheets and resources at [www.ctaa.org/transportation\\_to\\_work](http://www.ctaa.org/transportation_to_work) for information on how to access transportation-related tax benefits, partner with local providers to find answers to employees’ and customers’ transportation needs, become part of a transportation management association, and more.

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# Small Towns and Rural Communities: Effective Employee Transportation Strategies

Today, companies located outside of major metropolitan areas are seeking new strategies to help them recruit and retain qualified workers. If your business is in a rural community or small town, here are some ways you can ensure your employees have reliable and affordable transportation to work.

## Educate Employees About Available Public Transportation Services

Commuters accustomed to relying on their cars may not be aware of available transit opportunities. Posting bus and train schedules and encouraging carpooling among staff can influence how workers plan their commutes. Your company could

- Offer workers the opportunity to purchase bus tickets and passes at the work site
- Post relevant transit information in places frequented by employees
- Include information on public transportation options in new employee orientation materials
- Designate a staff person familiar with commuting patterns to serve as an employee transportation coordinator<sup>1</sup> and identify the travel options that best meet employees' needs

## Support the Use of Vanpools and Carpools

Because of their flexible structure, vanpools are a good option for commuters working in hard-to-reach locations, particularly those working night or weekend shifts. Businesses that purchase or lease vehicles recover costs through passenger fares, reduced on-site parking costs, and improved employee productivity. Meanwhile, employees save money on gas, gain more personal or work time, and may qualify for locally supported Guaranteed Ride Home programs. In addition, both employers and employees may be eligible for tax savings when employees

commute to work by vanpool.<sup>2</sup>

You can actively promote a vanpool program by

- Including information on vanpools in new employee orientation materials
- Disseminating information via e-mail and company newsletters
- Sponsoring an event to educate workers about program benefits and encouraging them to sign up
- Structuring shift work so that vanpool riders can travel together
- Considering the use of vans for multiple trips when designating pick-up and drop-off points
- Creating a "Commuter Club" for workers who regularly share rides to work
- Hosting promotional events to encourage employee participation in shared-ride programs

## Consider Express Buses to Transport Employees

Work in partnership with your local transit district to hire coaches to transport workers to your office or facility. The Brazos Transit District in Texas partners with private bus companies to transport employees who must travel long distances to work. Employees pay a set fare for each trip, with participating companies covering the remaining costs.<sup>3</sup>

## Implement a Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program

GRH programs provide commuters who do not drive to work with a reliable ride home in the event of unforeseen circumstances. A GRH program improves commuters' sense of security and flexibility to

<sup>1</sup> See Fact Sheet #4: [Employee Transportation Coordinators: A Best Practice for Addressing Commuters' Needs](#).

<sup>2</sup> See Fact Sheet #6: [Tax Incentives for Business: A Direct Dividend of Commuter Benefit Programs](#).

<sup>3</sup> See Joblinks' [Success Stories of Employer Sponsored Transportation Programs](#) to learn more.

respond to emergencies without relying on their car. In rural communities, most GRH programs are offered in conjunction with local taxi companies, usually through contract agreements.

- GRH programs increase employee satisfaction, commitment, and retention.
- Offering a GRH program helps position a company as one that cares about the health and well-being of its employees and the environment.<sup>4</sup>

### Provide Parking Benefits

Consider providing free or premium parking for workers who take advantage of shared-ride programs. This may result in tax deductions for the employer, employee, or both.

### Partner with Local Agencies for Solutions

Partnerships are vital to improving service to area employers and their employees, especially when public transportation does not currently serve their work sites. By taking the initiative, businesses can collaborate to close transportation gaps and ensure employees have reliable, affordable options for getting to work.

For some smaller, rural communities, the responsibility for planning transportation services may lie with the state department of transportation. In others, local governments, economic development authorities, or rural planning organizations may be your key contact. The following resources can help you find local transportation services and planning agencies:

- The American Public Transportation Association ([www.apta.com/links/transit\\_by\\_mode](http://www.apta.com/links/transit_by_mode)) has information available for commuters traveling from the city to outlying areas.
- The National Rural Transit Assistance Program can help you find the rural transportation assistance program in your state. <http://www.nationalrtap.org/State.aspx>

- The National Association of Development Organizations ([www.nado.org](http://www.nado.org)) lists regional development organizations in small metropolitan and rural areas.
- The National Association of Regional Councils ([www.narc.org](http://www.narc.org)) builds regional communities through regional collaboration in addressing diverse development challenges in large and small, urban, and rural communities.

Business can work with these transportation providers and planners to design options that best meet the needs of commuters, such as flexible routes, shuttles, and circulators. Small buses or vans may be used in areas that do not require larger capacity buses. They can also collaborate with local transportation providers to implement discount fares or employer fare subsidies.

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<sup>4</sup> See Fact Sheet #13: [Guaranteed Ride Home Programs: Good for Employees, Employers, and the Environment](#).

# Employers in Small and Large Cities: Ideas to Ease the Effects of Commuting on Employees

Even before the current slow-down in the labor market, which has caused workers to look further afield for jobs, employees were commuting longer to work than previous generations, crossing city, county, and even sometimes state boundaries to get there. Employers may have concerns about the impact of long, complicated commutes on on-time arrivals and absenteeism, and secondarily on employee productivity and morale. Furthermore, the potential mismatch between affordable public transit routes and times and the needs of these longer-range commuters can limit company recruitment and retention of lower income workers.

Implementing one or more of the following incentives can help employers recruit and retain valued workers and save money at the same time.

## Promote Ridesharing

Employers can work internally or partner with outside rideshare organizations to establish carpool or vanpool programs for employees. Shared-ride programs (such as carpools and vanpools) work well in settings where workers travel to one destination or a centralized business complex. Employers can implement such options by collaborating with transportation management associations (TMAs), state or local departments of transportation, or local government agencies or business organizations.<sup>1</sup> Combined with a Guaranteed Ride Home program,<sup>2</sup> ridesharing provides workers with an economical, reliable means for getting to work without using their own car.

<sup>1</sup> For information about TMAs, see Fact Sheet #3: [Transportation Management Associations: Leveraging Resources to Improve Options](#). For information about ridesharing and vanpooling, see Fact Sheet #7: [Strength in Numbers: Why Employers Should Encourage Ridesharing](#) and Fact Sheet #8: [Investing in Vanpools: A Best Practice for Savvy Employers](#).

<sup>2</sup> See Fact Sheet #13: [Guaranteed Ride Home Programs: Good for Employees, Employers, and the Environment](#).

Encouraging the use of carpools or vanpools benefits both business and workers. For your company, ridesharing can

- Reduce the need for providing expensive on-site parking
- Reduce absenteeism and late arrivals among employees
- Reduce employee turnover due to a lack of transportation options
- Increase employee productivity and morale by decreasing stressful commutes
- Facilitate employee recruitment and retention

For your workers, ridesharing can result in

- Lower commuting costs by sharing expenses with others
- Less wear and tear on personal vehicles
- Shorter commute time with access to High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes

Encourage employee interest and participation in ridesharing through the following actions:

- Post program information in areas where workers congregate, such as kitchens and break rooms
- Include information in new employee orientation packages
- Publicize programs via the company intranet and newsletters
- Form a “Commuter Club” with incentives and rewards
- Sponsor a kick-off event for new innovative transportation programs
- Designate an on-site employee transportation



coordinator<sup>3</sup>

### Offer Commuter Tax Incentives

Consider implementing a Commuter Tax Benefit program that will benefit both you and your workers. The Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit program benefits employers and employees through tax savings when employees commute by public transportation or vanpool.<sup>4</sup>

### Voice Your Employees' Transportation Needs

Be sure the transportation-related needs of your business and employees are heard. Develop a relationship with your community's public transportation provider and talk with local elected officials to communicate your business's transportation needs. Your input into local transportation planning efforts will be valued by metropolitan planning organizations, councils of governments, or other economic development organizations responsible for planning transportation

services.<sup>5</sup> For example, as a business leader, you can

- Offer to review options such as location-based tax incentives for attracting new business
- Encourage fast-track approval of zoning that supports development with easy transit access. The American Public Transportation Association ([www.apta.com](http://www.apta.com)) provides a guide to transit-oriented development issues that impact economic development.
- Advocate for consideration of transportation options in any land-use planning decisions
- Network with economic development entities to support transportation options

<sup>3</sup> See Fact Sheet #4: [Employee Transportation Coordinators: A Best Practice for Addressing Commuters' Needs](#) for additional information.

<sup>4</sup> See Fact Sheet #6: [Tax Incentives for Businesses: A Direct Dividend of Commuter Benefit Programs](#) for more detailed information.

<sup>5</sup> The Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations [[www.ampo.org](http://www.ampo.org)] and the National Association of Regional Planning Councils [[www.narc.org](http://www.narc.org)] offer information on local transportation planning boards.

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# Shuttles and Route Extensions: Effective Strategies for Improving Business

Savvy employers recognize that the benefits of public transit route extensions and shuttles that increase access to their facilities far outweigh the costs of supporting those options. Increased access to their premises for employees and customers

- Ensures companies can maintain a preferred location
- Saves on costs related to employee parking
- Improves employee recruitment and retention
- Improves employee punctuality
- Enhances a company's image as environmentally conscious

Businesses around the country are adopting innovative approaches to support the implementation of shuttles and extended bus routes. Here's what you can do to advance this trend:

## Communicate the Importance of Services to Transit Agencies

As a business, you can begin discussion with local transit agencies to improve access to regional bus or rail service. By sharing data on employee transit needs, such as where workers travel from and the different shifts they work, you can encourage local transit agencies to adapt services to meet those needs. Providing such information can help increase ridership and make existing services more efficient.

For example, Humana, Inc., a Fortune 500 company located in Louisville, Kentucky, worked with the Transit Authority of River City (TARC) to implement its successful subsidized employee bus pass program. As a result, employee parking needs significantly decreased, as upwards of 600 employees now ride TARC on a regular basis. This transit partnership played a major role in easing downtown traffic congestion.

## Partner to Improve Services

Your business can collaborate with other businesses and the local transit agency to provide transit service to a business hub. Other employers in Louisville also partnered with TARC to develop an express route and local circulator to transport workers to an industrial park. Establishing the bus route simplified the commute for industrial park employees, eliminating the need to make bus transfers. When commuting patterns began to change, and workers needed better alternatives to reach the industrial park, employers again partnered with TARC to expand options for commuters traveling mid-day, late at night, and during weekend hours.

## Facilitate Links to Existing Public Transit Connections

Employers are well-positioned to champion private transit services that help employees link to public transit. In Oregon, the Swan Island Evening Shuttle provides transit connections for swing and graveyard shift employees by supplementing services provided by TriMet, the public transportation provider. Swan Island is a major corporate center and hub for distribution, warehousing, and manufacturing activities, with work shifts occurring around the clock. Understanding the importance of getting their employees to work, Swan Island employers partnered with TriMet, gained union approval, and contracted with a private company to operate the shuttle. The resulting service allows second and third shift workers access to the island during times when TriMet does not operate.

In Texas, the Brazos Transit District contracts with a private bus service to transport nearly 1,500 workers daily from Liberty to the Beaumont/Port Arthur area for training provided by refineries. The project, operating in conjunction the Amalgamated Chemical Workers Union, is supported by a combination of fare box revenues and subsidies from major employers.

### Provide Program Matching Funds

In Davenport, Iowa, a large office furniture manufacturer partnered with River Bend Transit to provide shuttle service for employees traveling more than 35 miles each way to work. The program was supported with a federal Job Access and Reverse Commute grant, with the employer providing the required 50 percent local match. Prior to providing this travel option, the company experienced difficulties with retention, particularly in the face of rising gas prices. Since the program's implementation, the attrition rate has fallen significantly.

### Implement a Company-Supported Shuttle Program

Larger companies such as Google and Apple Computers have developed company-sponsored free shuttles for their employees. Google shuttles nearly one-fourth of the company's San Francisco area employees to and from its Mountain View and San Bruno campuses daily, significantly decreasing the need for employee parking. A team of transportation specialists at company headquarters monitors regional traffic patterns, maps out the residences of new hires, and plots new shuttle routes. Apple Computers' shuttle service incorporates a number of drop-off and pick-up points between the San Francisco area and the company's Cupertino campus.

Smaller businesses without the resources to implement their own shuttle program may consider partnering with neighboring employers to implement one. This type of arrangement works well if your business is located in a mall or industrial center and/or if employees traveling to work live in close proximity and work similar shifts. If considering this option, services must be coordinated around the work shifts and travel needs of all partners.

A number of determining factors will influence your decision to implement a company-sponsored shuttle. Among these are costs related to

- Insurance and regulations
- Vehicle maintenance and upkeep
- Fuel and oil fees
- Vehicle purchase/lease and storage
- Vehicle depreciation and capital reserves
- Equipment and supplies
- Facility rental

If your company decides to contract with a transit provider, keep in mind that most provide services based on cost per trip, per hour, or per mile. Before finalizing any agreement, be sure the provider can operate during the times and in the locations that meet your employees' needs. Review prior performance records and include performance measures such as on-time performance and ride time in any contract or memorandum of understanding. Documents should also address any service exceptions, payment information, and service expectations.

Be sure to read about steps other employers have taken in Joblinks' Success Stories about Employer Sponsored Transportation Programs.

- Administration and overhead
- Driver recruitment and training
- Drug and alcohol testing

# Transportation Vouchers and Transit Passes: A Flexible and Accountable Option for Employers

If you are looking for a way to help employees cover commute costs but want to ensure effectiveness and accountability, transportation vouchers and transit passes may be the perfect solution.

Transportation vouchers are tickets or coupons that eligible riders give to participating transportation providers in exchange for a ride. They may be applied toward fully or partially subsidized rides on public transportation or through a vanpool or carpool. The person or company providing the ride then submits the vouchers back to the employer for payment, allowing the employer to account for all vouchers provided to employees. Vouchers can be numbered for maximum accountability and can be valued in monetary denominations or on a per-trip basis.

Vouchers may also be used in conjunction with Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) programs.<sup>1</sup> Using vouchers eliminates the need for employees to have cash on hand to pay for the service. Employees receive vouchers either when they first register for the program or on the day a ride home is needed. The vouchers are used to pay for the service, and the program sponsor then reimburses the service provider.

Some employers have chosen to provide employees with monthly transit passes, which encourages use of local public transit services and helps to lessen road congestion and air pollution. Transit passes can also be issued on a weekly, yearly, or per-trip basis.

## Benefits to Your Business

Like other means of contributing toward employees' commuting costs, vouchers and passes for transit or vanpools may be treated as an employee benefit and qualify a company for tax incentives through the Commuter Tax Benefit. Businesses can deduct up to

\$125 toward the value of any passes or vouchers they provide or sell them to employees directly or through a pre-tax payroll deduction.<sup>2</sup>

## Vouchers and Passes in Action

Some employers have partnered with local transit agencies to distribute passes to employees instead of providing them directly. For example, in Louisville, KY, Humana, Inc. implemented a pass program for employees as a way to reduce the company's use of limited downtown parking and respond to employees' desires to reduce vehicle emissions and save on gasoline costs. Passes are provided through a partnership with the Transit Authority of River City. Humana's costs are offset by company savings resulting from providing fewer subsidized parking spaces. The company-transit partnership has garnered extensive positive media coverage and enabled Humana to position itself as a leading employer in Louisville and all the markets where it does business.

The Charlotte Area Hotel Association, in partnership with the Charlotte Area Transportation System (CATS), acts as a conduit for member hotels to purchase bulk passes from the transit agency at a discounted rate. Each member hotel then makes the passes available to workers either through payroll deductions or by reselling them at the same discounted rate. Employees can purchase passes for themselves as well as family members.

Other employers have designed programs in partnership with transit agencies that accept employee IDs as passes that can be used not only for travel to work, but also to non-work-related destinations.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Fact Sheet #13: [Guaranteed Ride Home Programs: Good for Employees, Employers, and the Environment](#).

<sup>2</sup> See Fact Sheet #6: [Tax Incentives for Business: A Direct Dividend of Commuter Benefit Programs](#).

<sup>3</sup> See Joblinks' [Success Stories of Employer-Sponsored Transportation Programs](#) for additional information.

# Employee Transportation Coordinators: A Best Practice for Addressing Commuters' Needs

One of the most effective ways to increase employees' knowledge of and access to shared ride options – whether carpool, vanpool, or public transportation – is to designate an employee transportation coordinator (ETC). In fact, some states (Washington and California) and local governments require large businesses to have an ETC on staff to help the company reduce commuter-related congestion and air pollution. Many other companies voluntarily implement such a position to help their employees —and their bottom line.

An ETC oversees the design, implementation, and administration of programs that encourage shared-ride commutes to and from work. They also serve as the liaison among the company, its employees, and local transportation providers and planners. Many companies – CVS, Merck, Apple, Best Buy, Georgia Power, Google, Duke Energy, and Nike, to name just a few – have ETCs.<sup>1</sup>

Key activities of an ETC may include

- Encouraging and facilitating employee use of commute options available at their work site
- Providing commuting information to co-workers via newsletters, e-mails, workplace displays, websites, and hiring materials, as well as through orientations and other in-person meetings
- Facilitating transportation needs of people with disabilities or employees with limited English proficiency
- Coordinating ridesharing services such as carpools and vanpools or company car-sharing programs
- Managing a Guaranteed Ride Home program, which provides employees who do not drive to work with an emergency ride home when

unforeseen circumstances arise<sup>2</sup>

- Providing information on other commute options, such as walking, biking, or alternative work schedules
- Updating local transportation providers about how the company can be better served
- Coordinating with transportation providers to market their services at the work site
- Facilitating the purchasing and distribution of bus passes, vouchers, etc.

## Establishing an ETC in Your Company

Designating a staff member to serve as an ETC does not necessarily require the creation of a new position. In many companies, employee assistance professionals assume this role. An ETC's responsibilities may be able to be folded into the existing responsibilities of your company's human resources or accounting departments. Others may carry out their ETC responsibilities in addition to related work, such as managing employee parking or the company vehicle fleet.

## Benefits to Your Company

ETCs can take the lead in investigating the costs and benefits of alternative trip reduction programs, interviewing company employees and key executives to determine the viability of various shared-ride options, and educating employees about specific ride-sharing programs the company has chosen to support. They may also administer employee surveys to better determine the programs and services that best meet the company's needs.

An ETC can play a significant part in ensuring that both employees' and customers' transportation needs are met. Improved access to a business' facility can

<sup>1</sup> See Joblinks' [Success Stories of Employer Sponsored Transportation Programs](#) to learn more.

<sup>2</sup> See Fact Sheet #13: [Guaranteed Ride Home Programs: Good for Employees, Employers, and the Environment](#).



- Provide access to a wider pool of job applicants with reliable transportation to work
- Facilitate employees arriving in a consistent, timely, and often stress-free manner
- Help ensure that no employee resigns because he/she can no longer afford the commute to work
- Open up a business to more customers

### ETC Training

Many ETCs work in partnership with local transportation management associations or organizations. These entities often provide training to educate ETCs about commuter choice programs and keep them up-to-date on regional transportation developments and activities.<sup>3</sup>

In 1991, Washington state incorporated the Commute Trip Reduction Law into its Clean Air Act. This law requires all employers with more than 100 full-time workers who begin work between 6:00 and 9:00 a.m. at least two days a week to designate an ETC. The law applies to employers in counties with populations of 150,000 or above. To help companies comply with the law, counties impacted by the Commute Trip

Reduction Law provide ETC training.<sup>4</sup> In California, ETCs may receive training through local [Air Quality Management Districts](#).

3 See Fact Sheet #5: [Transportation Management Associations: Leveraging Resources to Improve Options](#).

4 For additional information on the Washington State Commute Trip Reduction Law, refer to pages 12-14 of the [Employee Transportation Coordinator Handbook](#). Additional information about the role of an ETC can be found on pages 24-27.

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# Transportation Management Associations: Leveraging Resources to Improve Options

As an employer, you can significantly improve the transportation options available to your employees, customers, and community by joining a transportation management association (TMA).<sup>1</sup>

TMA's are public-private partnerships that draw their membership from local employers, public sector representatives, transportation providers, and others interested in working together to address transportation issues and improve air quality and traffic. Through TMA's, the public and private sectors join forces to address transportation issues and encourage the use of alternative transportation options such as shuttles, vanpools, carpools, and public transit. TMA's are usually found in larger communities and focus their efforts in a particular area, such as commercial districts, shopping centers, or industrial parks.

Employers interested in providing commuter benefits for their workers can expand the scope of benefits offered by joining a TMA. Many offer discounted rides to commuters if their employer is a member.

## How TMA's Can Benefit Your Company

- TMA's often serve as a clearinghouse for marketing, managing, and implementing programs as well as providing employers and commuters with information on local regulations and the availability of local transportation services.
- TMA's can also provide commuter financial incentives and promotional materials for use by members as well as transportation access guides for the general public. Many include general information about local bus routes on

their websites, or have designed manuals that employers can use in implementing and managing transportation programs and services.

- Some TMA's serve as transportation brokers, working through employers, developers, or local governments to match individual customers to available transportation options. For example, in New Jersey, the Greater Mercer TMA administers a corporate shuttle for one large employer.<sup>2</sup>

## TMA's may also

- Partner with local planning agencies to promote public transit and ridesharing, particularly in areas with congested traffic conditions, and play a significant role in raising awareness about congestion mitigation.
- Provide rideshare-matching services
- Sponsor vanpools
- Administer guaranteed ride home programs that support using these shared-ride options

## How to Start a TMA in Your Community

In 2001, the Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) developed the [TMA Handbook: A Guide to Successful Transportation Management Associations](#), [need link] which discusses the formation, operation, and ongoing development of formally structured

<sup>1</sup> A transportation management organization (TMO) is a similar type of organization.

<sup>2</sup> This shuttle service runs from the closest rail station to the company's corporate office. The company partners with a third party to operate the service. The TMA provides customer service, monitoring of service, and weekly ridership reports for the shuttle. It also adjusts the schedule as needed if there are changes in the rail schedule. The service carries on average 300 passenger trips per day (150 people). More information is available at <http://www.gmtma.org>.

TMA (i.e., those that have incorporated as private nonprofit organizations). The handbook addresses the more complex organizational issues experienced by legally incorporated TMAs; however, it is also useful and relevant to TMAs of other organizational types. (Although a dated publication, this document still provides useful guidance to entities wishing to form a TMA).

The [Directory of Transportation Management Associations](#), recently updated by ACT, contains a list of contact information for most TMAs located throughout the United States.

An additional resource is the online TDM Encyclopedia (<http://www.vtppi.org/tdm>). This resource, developed by the Victoria Transport Policy Institute in Canada, lists programs in England and Canada based on the type of activities they are implementing.

The Joblinks “Transportation Toolkit for the Business Community” was created with funding from the Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor, through a cooperative agreement between the Community Transportation Association of America and the Federal Transit Administration. The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are solely those of the authors and should not be construed as representing the opinions or policy of any agency of the federal government. January 2012.



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The “Transportation Toolkit for the Business Community” gives businesses the information they need now to assist their employees in achieving a timely, cost-efficient commute that promotes their productivity and job satisfaction. View other fact sheets and resources at [www.ctaa.org/transportation\\_to\\_work](http://www.ctaa.org/transportation_to_work) for information on how to access transportation-related tax benefits, partner with local providers to find answers to employees’ and customers’ transportation needs, become part of a transportation management association, and more.

This toolkit was created by the Community Transportation Association of America’s Joblinks Employment Transportation Initiative—serving communities since 1993 in solving employment transportation issues.