

GUIDEBOOK TO IMPLEMENTING AN

# EMPLOYER-BASED COMMUTE OPTIONS PROGRAM



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# Introduction



## What is an employer-based commute options program?

An employer-based commute options program describes a voluntary program aimed at improving employees' commutes while saving money, improving employee satisfaction, recruitment and retention, and reducing environmental impact.

Programs often include a variety of commute options strategies that are tailored towards each organization. Examples include infrastructure that enables an active commute, such as bike racks, and benefits that reduce employee commute expenses.



This guidebook was created to assist employers of all sizes and across Massachusetts to develop and implement commute options programs that address the needs of their employees and make business sense.

*\*These resources are provided as guidance for implementing an employer-based commute options program, and they do not represent a requirement to provide such a program.*

# WHY IMPLEMENT AN EMPLOYER-BASED COMMUTE OPTIONS PROGRAM?

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Employers implement commute options programs for a variety of reasons:

- To provide additional employee benefits
- To address parking shortages and challenges
- To reduce employee vehicle trips to worksites

A well-designed commute options program can accomplish all those goals and more. Best of all, commute options programs can positively impact an employer's bottom line both in the short and long term.

## Staff Recruitment, Retention, and Employee Wellness

Commute options programs can provide employees with improved quality of life, financial savings, reduction in stress, and improved health. As a result, employers typically see improved morale and productivity as well as a reduction in employee absenteeism and late arrivals to the worksite<sup>1</sup>. Programs that encourage biking or walking to work in particular have been shown to increase employees' health and wellness<sup>2</sup>. When recruiting new employees, commute options programs such as teleworking and flexible work arrangements make your benefits package more valuable.

Linking commute options programs to employee wellness and sustainability programs and goals is an effective way of broadening the audience and appeal of those programs.

## Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability

Commute options programs can result in a reduction in the number of trips taken and miles traveled by employees commuting to work. This reduction has direct impacts on air pollution through reduced vehicle emissions, including greenhouse gas emissions, and contributes to reducing traffic congestion around the worksite. It directly reduces a company's environmental impact and showcases an employer's positive contribution to the community.

## Reduced Infrastructure and Real Estate Costs

Real estate costs, such as those related to the worksite and parking, are significant expenses for employers. By implementing programs that shift employees to modes other than driving alone and, if applicable, to telework, an employer can reduce its demand at the worksite and for parking.

## Business Continuity

An important and often overlooked benefit to any employer that implements a commute options program is having support in place for when the unexpected occurs. Employers that provide a variety of programs and incentives to their employees will find themselves prepared in cases where conducting business may be compromised, such as during weather-related emergencies, major special events, and other incidents that greatly impact transportation networks.

<sup>1</sup> <http://actweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/ACT-BWC-Employer-Benchmarking-final-report-without-appendices-2016.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Association between active commuting and incident cardiovascular disease, cancer, and mortality: prospective cohort study, *BMJ* 2017;357:j1456

# Implementing a Commute Options Program

The creation of an effective commute options program requires selecting strategies that are applicable to your workplace, surrounding land use/infrastructure and available transportation options. Sufficient resources must also be available to implement the desired program. The following are the general steps to create a framework for a successful employer commute options program:

<b>Step 1: Identify staff</b>	<p>A critical element of a commute options program is identifying the right person within your organization to lead the planning and implementation process. This role, called employee transportation coordinator, can be part-time or full-time and is most often found in the human resources, facilities, or operations departments or among members of sustainability or green teams. The transportation coordinator will work across departments to gain support for and implement commute options programs. An individual in this role is most effective where transportation coordinator responsibilities are embedded in the person's job description and where strong management support exists.</p>
<b>Step 2: Assess company needs and set goals</b>	<p>In order to guide strategy selection and measure the success of a program, it is important to identify company goals and needs. Your primary goal could be to reduce your parking demand and related cost of constructing or leasing additional parking programs. Or it could be to provide employee benefits that will reduce the cost and stress of commutes and thereby increase employee retention and facilitate recruitment. With multiple possible benefits of commute options programs, they can help address a variety of organizational goals. Goals are typically centered around employee commuting but could also relate to mid-day trips and business travel. Identifying and prioritizing goals will assist your transportation coordinator in developing a plan using the resources in this guidebook.</p> <p>Site assessments and employee surveys are useful tools in identifying a company's needs. Site assessments typically capture existing infrastructure and transportation options and programs available to employees. An employee transportation survey will provide additional information on how your employees currently commute and offers the opportunity to ask a variety of related questions (see the "Surveys" strategy and the sample survey in Appendix 3).</p>
<b>Step 3: Develop plan and select strategies</b>	<p>There is no "one size fits all" approach to commute options programs, as internal and external variables will dictate the strategies that make the most sense and yield the biggest impact for your worksite. This guidebook was designed to help you develop a commute options plan and select strategies that are appropriate for your organization.</p>
<b>Step 4: Implement and market program</b>	<p>Once you have selected your strategies, it is important to think through the implementation steps for each strategy. Consider who needs to be involved in the implementation process, what the internal approval process looks like, how the strategy/program will be marketed to employees and what will constitute success once it has been implemented. The details in the strategy glossary provide steps for implementation, address common considerations, and reference additional resources, such as editable marketing pieces, where available.</p>
<b>Step 5: Measure results</b>	<p>Program evaluation is an important element of your commute options program, as it will allow you to gauge the effectiveness of your strategies, identify refinements and adjustments to your program and report the results internally and externally. The methods used for program evaluation depend on a variety of factors: how success is defined, which strategies have been selected and what data sources and other resources are available for evaluation purposes. Methods include baseline and follow-up employee travel behavior surveys, program participation rates, focus groups, parking utilization, absenteeism rates and job satisfaction surveys.</p>

Term	Definition
<b>Active transportation</b>	Includes walking, bicycling, wheelchairs and other transportation modes that are human-powered, such as skateboards, push scooters, roller skates and unicycles.
<b>Carpooling</b>	A formal or informal arrangement where commuters share a vehicle for trips from either a common origin, destination, or both, reducing the number of vehicles on the road.
<b>Commute options program</b>	A voluntary program implemented by employers that provides transportation resources to employees. These range from information about various ways to get to work to offering financial incentives for employees to carpool or vanpool or investing in infrastructure that encourages employees to commute to work by means other than driving alone.
<b>Micromobility devices</b>	Includes low-speed, small electric or electric-assisted vehicles, such as electric bikes, scooters and hoverboards.
<b>Shared-use mobility</b>	Transportation services and resources that are shared among users, either concurrently or one after the other. This includes taxis, Uber/Lyft or similar on-demand services, bike or scooter sharing, and carsharing.
<b>Single-occupant vehicle (SOV)</b>	A vehicle occupied only by its driver.
<b>Non-SOV transportation</b>	Includes all forms of transportation except driving alone in a motor vehicle, such as carpools, vanpools, public transit, motor scooters, walking, bicycling and micromobility devices.
<b>Ridesharing</b>	Ridesharing is an umbrella term for carpooling and vanpooling. It describes an arrangement where several people voluntarily share a ride to get to their destination.
<b>Ridehailing</b>	Ridehailing describes using an app, calling, or flagging down a taxicab to arrange for a paid ride to one's destination. Organizations that offer ride hailing in Massachusetts include taxi companies and transportation network providers, such as Uber, Lyft and others.
<b>Transportation coordinator</b>	This person is an employee of an organization whose part-time or full-time responsibility it is to plan, implement and evaluate employee transportation programs.
<b>Vanpooling</b>	Typically consists of seven to 15 passengers who share the cost of a van and associated operating expenses and may share the responsibility of driving.

Term	Definition
<b>Vehicle miles traveled (VMT)</b>	The number of miles traveled by motor vehicles.
<b>Vehicle trips</b>	The number of trips made by motor vehicles. These include passenger vehicles, SUVs, trucks, buses, motorcycles, motor scooters with gasoline powered, electric and hybrid engines. They exclude trips made by bike, push scooter, walking or other human-powered transportation, and micromobility devices.
<b>MBTA</b>	Massachusetts Bay Transportation. The MBTA provides public transit services to the Greater Boston region, including bus transit, commuter rail, and rapid transit. The agency is overseen by a five-member Fiscal and Management Control Board (FMCB).
<b>RTA</b>	Regional Transit Authority. Massachusetts has 15 RTAs providing local transit service across the Commonwealth. (See Appendix 2 for a list).
<b>MassDOT</b>	Massachusetts Department of Transportation. MassDOT is made up of four divisions: Highway, Rail and Transit, Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV), and Aeronautics as well as the office of Transportation Planning and Enterprise Services that supports all the divisions. As the umbrella transportation agency for the Commonwealth, MassDOT also oversees the MBTA. The agency has a Board of Directors, comprising eleven members who are all appointed by the Governor with one designated as the chair. The MassDOT Board serves as the governing authority for the Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

# Identify Your Typology



# IDENTIFY THE TYPOLOGY IN WHICH YOUR WORKSITE IS LOCATED

Which strategies are most appropriate and effective for your workplace depends on several factors, including land-use mix and density, transit access, availability of bike and pedestrian facilities and shared-use mobility providers. In order to find out which strategies are applicable to your organization, review the typologies below and select the one that most closely matches your worksite.



**Urban Core/  
Inner Suburbs**



**Gateway  
City**



**College  
Town**



**Office  
Park**



**Rural**

# Identify Your Typology

Typology Name and Visual Examples	Land Use/ Parking	Transportation Infrastructure/ Service	Cities/Towns with Prevalent Typology*
<p><b>Urban Core/Inner Suburbs</b></p> 	<p>The Urban Core/Inner Suburbs typology features a mix of commercial and residential land uses, a large number of employers and a wide variety of employer types. Parking tends to be expensive and limited, particularly in central business districts.</p>	<p>Multiple forms of frequent transit are available in the urban core and inner suburbs. Sidewalks and pedestrian crossings make it easy to walk. Bike infrastructure features good connectivity and is well utilized. In central business districts, carshare, bikeshare and other shared-use mobility providers offer additional transportation options. Outside of central business districts, shared mobility options are available, but not as widespread.</p>	<p>Boston, Cambridge, Somerville, Quincy, Watertown</p>
<p><b>Gateway City</b></p> 	<p>The Gateway City typology describes mid-size urban centers that anchor the regional economy. They feature a mix of commercial and residential land uses and employer types. Parking is usually free or very inexpensive.</p>	<p>Gateway cities may be serviced by a reliable RTA bus network, but there are fewer routes and service is not as frequent as in the urban core/ inner suburbs. Gateway cities usually have good sidewalk coverage in the city center, but limited bike infrastructure. Carshare and bikeshare may exist, but typically not with wide coverage.</p>	<p>Attleboro, Brockton, Fall River, Fitchburg, Framingham, Haverhill, Lawrence, Lynn, Lowell, New Bedford, Salem, Springfield, Taunton, Worcester</p>

\*The lists of examples are a selection, not a comprehensive list.

# Identify Your Typology

Typology Name and Visual Examples	Land Use/ Parking	Transportation Infrastructure/ Service	Cities/Towns with Prevalent Typology*
<p><b>College Town</b></p> 	<p>This typology describes small to medium-sized towns that are hosts to at least one college or university. They feature a mix of commercial and residential land uses and employer types. Parking is usually free, but can be limited around the college/university.</p>	<p>College towns typically have better bike and pedestrian infrastructure than other towns of the same size. They are served by transit that tends to run relatively infrequently (hourly). In some cases, more frequent transit runs on routes serving the college or university.</p>	<p>Amherst, Northampton, Wellesley, Williamstown</p>
<p><b>Office Park</b></p> 	<p>The office park typology describes a collection of buildings usually occupied by several employers. Land uses are exclusively commercial and dominated by worksites, but can also include retail or industrial/warehousing. There is plenty of free surface parking.</p>	<p>Office parks tend to have good highway or state route access, but transit is often more than one mile away. They typically lack bike and pedestrian infrastructure.</p>	<p>Agawam, Billerica, Canton, Devens, Acushnet/Fairhaven, Fall River, Marlborough, Millford, New Bedford, Pittsfield, Rockland, S. Deerfield, Springfield, Taunton, Waltham</p>
<p><b>Rural</b></p> 	<p>This typology describes employers located in a rural area with no other employers or residential communities nearby. They feature plentiful free surface parking.</p>	<p>There is little or no access to transit and typically no or very limited active transportation options.</p>	<p>Boxborough, Cheshire, Freetown, Halifax</p>

\*The lists of examples are a selection, not a comprehensive list.

# Determine the Strategies That Align With Your Worksite Typology



Now that you have selected the typology most similar to your worksite location, this section will help you identify the commute options strategies that are most applicable to your workplace.

## ORGANIZING BY PRIORITY AREA

Overwhelmed by the list of strategies available to you? We have linked strategies to common corporate goals that might help you identify which could be a good starting point for your organization. These include:



**Base strategy:** Strategies in this category are critical to a commute options program's success and should always be incorporated.



**Employee benefits/cost savings:** If your primary goal is to provide time and/or cost savings to your employees, begin with these strategies.



**Health and wellness:** These strategies encourage the use of active transportation to and from work.



**Improved mobility:** Strategies in this category improve employee mobility by providing additional transportation options.



**Solving parking challenges:** If parking demand is an issue you would like to address, these strategies are a good starting point, as they are effective at reducing parking demand.



**Trip reduction:** These strategies reduce employee commute trips altogether rather than shifting them to a different time or mode.

More information about a strategy, including a description, expected benefits and implementation tips, are included in the next section.

# STRATEGY BREAKDOWN

Even though strategies have been assigned to one category, they are not necessarily exclusive to one category. For example, a strategy can provide health and wellness benefits and employee cost savings. The categories are meant to give you a starting point to help you find the most effective strategies based on your organization's goals and values and to help you prioritize strategies, timelines and dedicated resources. The breakdown of strategies include:



## Base strategy

- Market Transportation Programs to Employees
- Survey
- Site Assessment
- Onboarding Transportation Education
- Relocation Communication



## Employee benefits/cost savings

- Emergency Ride Home Program
- Telework Policy
- Flexible Work Schedules
- Compressed Workweeks
- Transit Subsidies and Allowances



## Health and wellness

- Bike Racks
- Secure Bike Parking and Storage
- Bike Repair Tools/Service
- Showers and Lockers
- Bike Subsidies and Allowances
- Bike Workshops



## Improved mobility

- Carshare/Bikeshare/Scootershare Subsidies
- Careshare Parking



## Solving parking challenges

- Rideshare Incentives
- Parking Cash Out
- Parking Fees



## Trip reduction

- Remote Meetings

# Review Strategy Details to Assess Feasibility and Applicability



This section provides more details for each strategy. Find out more information about what they entail, what benefits your organization can expect to see and how to get started on implementation.

## BASE STRATEGY

# Market Transportation Programs to Employees

Marketing typically ranges from promoting strategies to all employees via online employee portals, newsletters, email communication, printed collateral and display boards or screens to segmented marketing that targets individuals or groups based on their job function, home location and stated commute preferences. Promotions may happen on both an ongoing basis and during particular times of the year to highlight local or regional commute campaigns.

Some employers choose to have a designated part-time or full-time transportation coordinator, whose responsibility is to market, implement and monitor commute options strategies as part of his or her job description.

### Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town  
Rural

### Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

A commute options program can be promoted using a variety of marketing approaches.

- Provide information via traditional employee communication tools, including employee portal, website, bulletin boards, kiosks and in staff meetings.
- Include program information in new hire orientation packages and presentations.
- Promote national events and challenges, such as Bike to Work Day, Dump the Pump and Earth Day.
- Organize and host workplace events, such as Try It Days (to allow employees to try a new clean commute) or Meet Your Match events (bringing together employees interested in carpooling or vanpooling to meet each other and form carpools or vanpools).



## BENEFITS

Promoting commute options strategies can impact their effectiveness. Consistent and ongoing marketing is required to maintain awareness and educate new employees in order to achieve the desired behavior change.

## RESOURCES

Applicable marketing pieces.

## BASE STRATEGY

# Surveys

Commuter surveys are essential in understanding how employees commute, finding out whether they have the ability to shift to a different commute option, and identifying transportation motivations and barriers.

Along with site assessments, which evaluate transportation access and accommodations and review existing commuter benefits programs, commuter surveys are used to create tailored commute options programs and strategies to effectively support a worksite. Periodic commuter surveys are also used to evaluate the effectiveness of those programs in shifting travel away from driving alone.

### Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town  
Rural

### Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Conduct a baseline employee survey. Data collected should, at a minimum, include commute mode, distance and hours, as well as transportation challenges and barriers. In addition, surveys can be used to get feedback on the overall program or specific strategies, gauge commuter satisfaction, test reactions to potential new strategies and identify the best ways to motivate employees to change behavior.
- Distribute the survey and incentivize participation with prizes to encourage a high response rate. Distribution can be online or on paper depending on what best suits your workforce. Paper surveys require more resources but may be more appropriate in certain contexts, such as manufacturing, distribution or retail.
- Analyze the survey and use results to inform which strategies to implement.
- Conduct follow-up surveys to determine the success and impact of the commute options program.



## BENEFITS

Baseline surveys are an effective way to identify a baseline mode share and collect information to design a tailored commute options program. They can be used to identify the level of interest in specific program offerings by employees. Follow-up surveys measure the magnitude of behavior change and resulting reductions in vehicle trip and vehicle miles traveled, and they can help transportation coordinators identify changes that will improve program effectiveness. Surveys can yield valuable additional data, such as vehicle miles traveled, use of other commute modes and changing attitudes to commuting.

## RESOURCES

Appendix 3: Sample Employee Survey

## BASE STRATEGY

# Site Assessment

A site assessment is an essential prerequisite to creating a successful commute options program. Typically conducted before or at the same time as an employee survey, it provides an overview of the status of a variety of factors at the worksite that affect employee commuting.

### Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town  
Rural

### Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

The following list of questions can be used to get started on a site assessment:

- What transportation services are currently available and how accessible is the employer location using different modes?
  - Is the site served by transit?
  - How many transit routes serve the worksite (with stops within ¼ mile of the site)?
  - What is the frequency of transit service?
  - Are there bike lanes on major roads surrounding the worksite or is it located near a multi-use path?
  - Do the streets surrounding the worksite have sidewalks?
  - Are any of the following available near your worksite: shuttles, bikeshare, scootershare, carshare, ridehailing?
- What infrastructure, policies and programs are currently in place that facilitate employee commuting?
- What major transportation challenges have you identified for your worksite? This could be limited parking capacity, long commutes, and lack of transit access.
- What resources are available to implement a commute options program (staff, funds)?



## BENEFITS

A detailed site assessment provides valuable information about which commute options provide realistic alternatives to driving alone and about the types of strategies and policies that could be successful in encouraging employees to adopt those modes.

## BASE STRATEGY

# Onboarding Transportation Education

New employees should be provided with information on commute options program benefits. Starting a new job is a time when a person is more willing to try new travel options. Taking advantage of this change can increase the rate at which employees bike, walk, carpool and take transit to work.

## Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town  
Rural

## Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

Commute options program information can be provided at any stage of the onboarding process, but it will have greater impact the earlier it is introduced.

- Prepare a package with information about commute options and available programs and incentives. Ideally the information will be tailored to employees based on their home locations, but generalized information is also helpful. Information can include options to find carpools, bus/transit schedules, bike maps and information on employer offered transportation discounts and programs and how to sign up for them. One-time incentives, such as a free transit day pass, can draw the employee's attention.
- Provide materials on the employee's first day or send commute information ahead of time to prompt the employee to think about how to commute prior to arriving at the worksite for the first time.
- Include information during a new hire orientation presentation or video, along with prompts to register for applicable programs.



## BENEFITS

Onboarding transportation education is a cost-effective way to educate new employees and incentivize non-SOV commute options. This in turn leads to reduced parking demand, higher employee satisfaction and retention.

## BASE STRATEGY

# Relocation Communication

There are times when employees are more open to trying new travel options. Because employees are forced to think about the way they will get to their new workplace location, relocations present an opportunity to get employees to consider and try new options before their daily commute has become a habit. Taking advantage of this change can increase the rate at which employees bike, walk, carpool and take transit to work.

### Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town  
Rural

### Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

In the event of a workplace move, make commute options program information part of the overall communications strategy for the relocation.

- Prepare a package with information about commute options available at the new worksite as well as available programs and incentives. Ideally the information will be tailored to employees based on their home locations, but generalized information is also helpful. Information can include options to find carpools, bus/transit schedules, and information on employer offered transportation discounts and programs and how to sign up for them.
- Include special relocation incentives, such as one or several free transit day passes. They can enhance the appeal of the package and increase the likelihood of employees trying a new commute mode.
- Ensure that new commute information and applicable programs are communicated early and incentives are in place for employees to try new transportation options once the move is finalized.



## BENEFITS

Providing commute options program information during workplace relocation is a cost-effective way to incentivize non-SOV commute options. This in turn leads to reduced parking demand and higher employee satisfaction and retention.

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS/COST SAVINGS

# Emergency Ride Home Program

An Emergency Ride Home (ERH) program is “commuter insurance” that supports employees who do not drive alone with a subsidized or free ride home if an unexpected emergency arises. In case of an emergency, such as illness, the need to pick up a sick child from school, or unscheduled overtime, the low-cost program covers the full or partial cost of participants taking a taxi, Lyft/Uber, transit, or a rental car to get home.

### Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town  
Rural

### Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- To set up an ERH program, follow these steps:
  - Set guidelines: consider rules for usage, maximum number of rides per year, reimbursement policies, and limits.
  - Negotiate contracts with providers and provide vouchers for services. The program can be delivered using a voucher or code system that is linked to a corporate account. In this scenario, employees would call the program coordinator, who verifies eligibility and issues a voucher or code to use. The corporate account is then billed for the incurred charges.
  - Alternatively, a reimbursement program can be established. But reimbursements can present a barrier, in particular to low-income workers, as costs have to be covered upfront by the employee.
  - Assign staff to administer.
- Promote ERH program.



## BENEFITS

An ERH provides a solution to a common concern related to not driving to work: the cost of another mode of travel in the event of an emergency.

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS/COST SAVINGS

# Telework Policy

Telework refers to allowing staff to work outside of the worksite some or all of the time. Regular telework is aided by communications technology that allows employees to access files and tools and communicate effectively without being physically present in the worksite. Telework can be performed at an employee's home or another location.

In some cases, companies can benefit from renting space in telework centers, coworking or shared worksite in locations close to where employees live.

### Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town  
Rural

### Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions that do not require physical presence at all times

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

Create a formal policy that allows eligible employees to work from home, a satellite worksite or a telework center closer to home for some or all of their workdays. Employers with informal telework policies may benefit from formalizing the policy for all eligible employees rather than depending on informal manager/employee agreements. The following steps may aid in successful implementation:

- Review any existing policies or informal telework arrangements.
- Develop a pilot telework program for a smaller group of staff to trial policy and implementation.
- Work with human resources and managers/supervisors to determine which job functions are eligible to participate.
- If applicable, discuss the possibility with union representatives and identify how telework can be incorporated into union contracts.
- Work with your information technology (IT) department to ensure that employees have access to technology resources that allow them to perform their duties remotely. These can include phone and video conferencing, instant messaging, laptops, and remote access to files via a virtual private network (VPN) or cloud-based applications.
- Determine whether there is a need to rent space in a telework center, coworking or shared worksite.
- Determine the maximum number of days an employee may telework, establish expectations for availability and communications, and identify situations when telework is not appropriate (for example during an employee's trial period or while an employee is on an employee performance plan).
- Provide in-person training for participating employees and managers.
- Develop best practices for managers to ensure high levels of engagement by remote employees, such as scheduling frequent virtual check-ins and occasional in-person meetings.

## BENEFITS

The partial or full removal of a daily commute allows employees to save time and money. This typically results in improved employee satisfaction and positively affects retention and recruitment. Teleworking also allows companies to reduce current real estate costs or grow without having to purchase or lease additional building space.

## RESOURCES

Flexible and Remote Work Guide

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS/COST SAVINGS

# Flexible Work Schedules

Flexible work schedules allow employees to adjust their work schedules to better match transit schedules and the schedules of carpool partners. The amount of time by which employees may adjust their shift start and end times varies by employer, but typically ranges from 15 minutes to 2 hours.

### Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town  
Rural

### Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions that are not tied to strict shifts

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Work with HR and managers/supervisors to determine which job functions are eligible to participate.
- Consider designating core hours during which all staff must be on premises in order to balance flexibility with the need to schedule meetings.
- Create a policy that allows eligible employees to flex their shift start and end times.
- Train managers and supervisors on the new policy.
- Ensure that both existing and new employees are informed of the policy.



## BENEFITS

Flexible work schedules are associated with reduced stress levels, reduced absenteeism<sup>1</sup> and increased job satisfaction. In addition, flexible schedules make it easier for employees to adjust their schedules to better match transit schedule or find a carpool partner.

## RESOURCES

Flexible and Remote Work Guide

<sup>1</sup>Work-Life Balance and the Economics of Workplace Flexibility, The Council of Economic Advisors, Executive Office of the President of the United States, June 2014

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS/COST SAVINGS

# Compressed Workweeks

Compressed workweeks are an alternative work arrangement where a standard work week is reduced to fewer than five days, and employees make up the full number of hours by working longer hours on the days they are at work. The most common schedules involve working 36 hours in three days per week, 40 hours in four days per week and 80 hours in 9 days over a two-week period.

### Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town  
Rural

### Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions that are not tied to strict shifts.

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Work with HR and managers/supervisors to determine which job functions are eligible to participate.
- Determine schedule options and adjust schedules to ensure adequate coverage at all times.
- Create a policy that sets out the guidelines for compressed workweek schedules.
- Consider trialing a compressed work week with a small group of staff before implementing across the organization.
- Train employees, managers and supervisors on the new policy.



## BENEFITS

Depending on the schedule, compressed workweeks can cut commuting time and costs by 10 to 40 percent<sup>1</sup>, leading to improved employee satisfaction and reduced parking demand at worksites.

## RESOURCES

Flexible and Remote Work Guide

<sup>1</sup> Ten percent reflects the 9/80 schedule, 40 percent reflects a 3/36 schedule.

## TRIP REDUCTION

# Remote Meetings

Remote meetings reduce business travel while increasing and improving interaction with clients and vendors and among employees in different worksite locations as well as teleworkers. They can be conducted using phone and conference calls or using videoconferencing or meeting software that allows for screensharing and other collaborative approaches to meeting facilitation.

## Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town  
Rural

## Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions that do not require physical presence at all times

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Work with your IT support staff to assess current technology and protocols. Examples of technology to support remote meetings include: teleconferencing, videoconferencing and screensharing.
- Identify outstanding needs to support remote meetings. If necessary, work with your IT support staff to select the provider with the features and pricing that will best fit your organization's needs.
  - If new technology is needed, determine the appropriate number of licenses or subscription levels and build a budget.
  - Create training options and protocols for staff to foster successful adoption.
- Establish protocols to offer teleconferencing or videoconferencing options for remote meeting attendees for any in-person meetings you host.
- Promote the use of teleconferencing/ videoconferencing to host both internal and external meetings through policy development and staff training.



## BENEFITS

Remote meetings can lead to a reduction in work related trips and costs. Avoiding travel to local and regional meetings reduces the need for a car at work, thereby making it possible for employees to choose other forms of transportation to commute to work.

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS/COST SAVINGS

# Transit Subsidies and Allowances

Providing free or subsidized transit passes can encourage increased transit ridership and decrease the number of employees driving alone. Transit and vanpool subsidies, similar to parking subsidies, can be provided tax-free to employees up to an IRS-specified monthly limit. Transit subsidies are a supplement to tax-free transit benefits and further reduce the cost of an employee riding transit.

### Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town

### Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Decide whether to administer the transit pass program in-house or through a third-party or payroll service provider.
  - In-house options:
    - Enroll in a program to purchase passes on behalf of your employees from your transit agency. Examples include the Perq for Work Program offered by the MBTA or the employee pass bulk purchase program offered by the Worcester Regional Transit Authority. Appendix 2 lists employer purchase options by RTA as of March 2019. Transit agencies may have minimum order levels and/or provide volume discounts.
    - Reimburse employees for their purchase of a transit pass or vanpool fare through expense reports.
  - Outsourcing:
    - Most payroll service providers are set up to handle commute subsidies.
- Determine the amount of the subsidy or allowance keeping in mind the maximum tax-free amount set by the IRS every year.
- Promote the program to employees. Information about the benefits should also be incorporated into new-employee orientation sessions, company benefits literature and internal communications.

- Enroll employees. Once the benefit is set up and announced with a start date, the employer should be prepared for a large one-time influx of new enrollees.
- Maintain the program. Once the initial enrollment period has passed, employers should ensure that the system continues to operate smoothly including establishing a procedure to reclaim benefits upon employee separation.

## BENEFITS

By shifting people from driving alone transit subsidies decrease parking demand leading to long-term cost savings.

## RESOURCES

Appendix 2: Transit Agency Bulk Purchase Programs.

# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## Bike Racks

Public bike racks near building entrances provide safe and convenient parking and encourage bike use by employees and visitors.

### Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
 Gateway City  
 Office Park  
 College Town

### Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Select a suitable location. Public bike parking is most effective when placed near building entrances in a visible, well-lit location. If space is limited near building entrances, one possibility is to convert nearby on-street or off-street car parking spaces to bike parking—a single car parking space can accommodate up to 10 bikes. Conversion of an on-street parking space will require permission by the city or town and the conversion of off-street parking spaces should be discussed with the property manager.
- Budget for and purchase bike racks. To discourage theft, select a type of rack that allows cyclists to lock the bike frame to the rack with a U-lock and install it in a way that ensures enough room for circulation. Examples of effective types of bike racks (pictured below) include inverted U racks, post and ring racks, wheelwell-secure racks, double-decker racks and vertical racks. Double-decker and vertical racks are most suited for use inside secure bike parking facilities, such as bike rooms or bike cages.

- Bike parking demand can be determined through employee feedback through surveys and polls.
- Ensure that bike racks are installed according to specifications, keeping in mind the circulation needs of pedestrians and bicyclists.

## BENEFITS

Widely available bike infrastructure supports bicycling as a transportation mode and improves the cycling experience, which results in an increased rate of bicycling.

## RESOURCES

Essentials of Bike Parking Revision 1.0, Association of Pedestrian and Bike Professionals  
[https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.apbp.org/resource/resmgr/Bicycle\\_Parking/EssentialsofBicycleParking\\_FINA.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.apbp.org/resource/resmgr/Bicycle_Parking/EssentialsofBicycleParking_FINA.pdf)



From left: Two versions of U-racks, post-and-ring rack and staggered wheelwell rack

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

# Secure Bike Parking and Storage

Secure bike parking includes all bike storage that protects bikes against theft and inclement weather. Examples include bike lockers and bike cages or rooms with restricted access. Secure bike parking can also mean allowing employees to store their bikes in the worksite.

## Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town

## Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Identify a location that is easily and safely accessible by bike and can accommodate the desired number of bike racks in a bike room or bike cage or with bike lockers. This can be inside the building, a parking garage or a space outside the building.
- Select the most suitable secure bike parking type:
  - Bike rooms/lockers: Secure access to bike rooms or cages requires bicyclists to register in order to obtain an access card, code or key to gain access. Bike rooms or cages typically require less space per bike than lockers and offer the opportunity to add charging facilities for e-bikes or scooters or provide a bike maintenance station with tools. See examples of high-density racks suitable for bike rooms or bike cages below.
  - Bike lockers require more space than bike rooms or bike cages but come with built-in security mechanisms. Some models can be accessed using a phone app.



From left: double-decker rack and vertical rack

- Provide wayfinding signage to highlight the facility and direct employees to it and distribute information to employees on how to gain access.



## BENEFITS

Secure bike facilities can encourage the use of bikes for commuting by removing one often-cited barrier to bike commuting: risk of theft. For this reason, secure bike parking is preferred over public bike racks. This kind of bike parking is also often sheltered from bad weather, encouraging greater use.

## RESOURCES

Essentials of Bike Parking Revision 1.0, Association of Pedestrian and Bike Professionals  
[https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.apbp.org/resource/resmgr/Bicycle\\_Parking/EssentialsofBicycleParking\\_FINA.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.apbp.org/resource/resmgr/Bicycle_Parking/EssentialsofBicycleParking_FINA.pdf)

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

# Bike Repair Tools/ Service

Providing bike repair tools and other options can help keep employees' and visitors' bikes operational by enabling emergency keep repairs.

## Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town

## Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

Offering bike repair services can include the following options:

- Provide an on-site bike stand with tools near bike parking.
- Keep a bike pump and basic repair tools at the front desk to be borrowed by employees.
- Offer discounts or vouchers for repair services to a bike shop that is within walking distance.
- Provide an on-call mechanic, if available in your area.



Self-service bike station

## BENEFITS

Offering bike repair tools or services gives employees peace of mind that they will have the ability to fix minor issues that could affect their bike commute.

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

# Showers and Lockers

Provide access to a changing room, showers and lockers for employees who bike, walk or run to work. This enables employees to enjoy an active commute and maintain a professional appearance upon arrival.

**Applicable to Typology:**

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town

**Applicable Job Functions:**

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

Access to showers and lockers can be provided in several ways:

- If showers and locker facilities are available in your building, determine if they can be made available for active commuters to use.
- Alternatively, it may be possible to negotiate shower-only access with nearby gyms or fitness studios for employees for a small fee, or subsidize a regular gym membership for qualifying employees.
- Consider adding showers, locker rooms and lockers during a major building renovation, when constructing a new building, or during site selection if relocating a worksite.
- Provide detailed information to employees on location, access restrictions and other rules of use.



## BENEFITS

Facilities such as changing rooms, showers and lockers can make it easy and convenient for employees to transition from an active commute to their working day. Showers enable employees to freshen up, and lockers provide space to store a change of clothes, bike helmets, and walking shoes.

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

# Bike Subsidies and Allowances

Bike subsidies typically refer to a monthly financial subsidy that helps bike commuters defray the cost of bike maintenance and accessories, such as gloves, helmets and lights. Bike subsidies can also take the form of discounted bike purchases or an earn-a-bike program that advances employees the cost of a bike and allows them to earn ownership as they bike commute to work.

## Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town

## Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

When implementing a monthly or daily subsidy for employees who commute to work by bike for a specified minimum number of days:

- Determine whether to structure the program as an incentive to bike or as a reimbursement program to defray the cost of bicycling. An incentive would be paid regardless of whether the bicyclist incurs any expenses, while the reimbursement program would pay bicycling-related expenses up to a limit upon submission of receipts.
- Determine eligibility requirements, such as minimum number of days biked per month to qualify. Determine program monitoring structure.
- In the case of an incentive program, design the subsidy to be either based on month-to-month participation or to be paid for every day the employee biked to work. Daily subsidies can also be offered to part-time bike commuters which would require a verification system that could rely on self-reporting or involve showing the bike or bike helmet.

Bike ownership can be subsidized by either offering discount coupons for a bike purchase at a local bike shop or advancing funds to employees to buy a bike.



## BENEFITS

When subsidies for bicycling are offered, employers can see significant savings and benefits from people utilizing active modes of transportation such as improved employee retention and productivity<sup>1</sup>. Subsidies help address the perceived cost barrier of cycling and may be seen as a reward for choosing a cleaner commute mode.

<sup>1</sup> The association between commuter cycling and sickness absence, Preventive Medicine, Volume 51, Issue 2, August 2010.

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

# Bike Workshops

Onsite bike workshops provide a convenient, environment for employees to learn about safe bike commuting, basic bike maintenance, and advanced topics such as winter bike commuting. Classes are tailored towards removing barriers to bike commuting and providing a forum for employees to learn from both experts and fellow bike commuters. Bike workshops are typically classroom based but can also include an on-street component.

### Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town

### Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Determine demand for the different types of bike workshops among staff through a brief survey. Potential topics can include:
  - Route planning and wayfinding
  - Safe cycling: identifying roads with adequate bike infrastructure
- - Bike riding etiquette and laws
  - Basic bike maintenance
  - What to wear for winter bike commuting
- Determine if the workshop is 'hands on' or classroom based.
- Find a convenient time and location for the workshop keeping in mind the topic and space requirements.
- Secure experts to teach the workshop or series of workshops. Local bike shops are often willing to offer bike maintenance classes.
- Promote the event through regular communication channels: e-blasts, newsletters, and posters.



## BENEFITS

Many people do not use bikes for commute purposes because they do not feel safe or lack the confidence to do so. The skills learned in bicycling workshops can increase confidence among the attendees, ideally leading to increased ridership.

## IMPROVED MOBILITY

# Carshare/Bikeshare/ Scootershare Subsidies

Carshare, bikeshare and scootershare programs allow people to rent cars, bikes and scooters for short periods of time and at a low cost. Subsidies can be an effective way to encourage employees to use these services to travel between transit stops and work and to provide employees with ways to get around for mid-day trips on days they choose not to drive to work.

## Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town

## Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Determine which providers are available in your area and work with them to locate carshare parking and bike/scootershare stations or designated parking areas at your worksite. Some operators offer corporate accounts with discounted rates. Large employers or employment centers may be able to attract or contract directly with carshare, bikeshare and scootershare companies.
- Determine eligibility for subsidies or allowance.
- Determine subsidy or allowance amount and mechanism for delivering the subsidy. Options may vary by provider and can include payment through a corporate account or reimbursement of employees for a portion or all of their membership or usage fees.

Even if there is no bikeshare or scootershare presence near the worksite, a subsidy might still help some employees who live in the service area bridge the first mile access to transit or a carpool or vanpool meeting location. Demand can be determined by conducting an employee survey and analyzing employee home locations and current travel modes.



## BENEFITS

By providing mid-day and first/last mile travel options, these services allow employees to commute by means other than driving alone, thereby reducing vehicle trips and parking demand. These programs have been shown to decrease private automobile use and ownership while increasing mobility<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Impact of Carsharing on Household Vehicle Holdings. Results from North American Shared-Use Vehicle Survey, Transportation Research Record, Volume 2143, January 2010.

## SOLVING PARKING CHALLENGES

# Rideshare Incentives

Rideshare incentive programs are a way for employers to encourage employees to carpool or vanpool. They typically include a financial incentive in the form of a gas card, a small daily payment for each day people share a ride, reduced parking rates for carpools or a chance to earn incentives or win prizes.

Another common workplace incentive is preferred parking in which the best parking spaces are reserved for carpools. Designated parking spaces should be close to building entrances, covered, or otherwise preferable to encourage employees to carpool and vanpool to the site.

### Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town  
Rural

### Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Determine which type of incentive would be suitable for your workforce. Carpool incentives typically include:
  - Giving an employee an allowance for each day he or she carpools or vanpools. Daily incentives require a tracking mechanism.
  - Offering a one-time incentive for new carpools, such as a gas card or other gift card.
  - Holding regular prize drawings for program participants.
  - Discounted or free parking for carpools and vanpools.
  - Preferential carpool/vanpool parking.
  - Parking permit waitlist priority.
- Determine eligibility and minimum participation requirements.
- Designate using signage nearby, covered or otherwise desirable parking spaces as carpool/vanpool parking.
- Identify tracking and enforcement mechanism, if applicable.

Designate carpool/vanpool parking spots with a specific parking sign. Prioritize these spots so that carpools get the best onsite parking. Evaluate use over time and increase the number of carpool/vanpool spots as demand grows. Parking enforcement may be needed periodically to prevent abuse.



## BENEFITS

When incentives are provided, commuters are more likely to switch to ridesharing. Employee benefits from ridesharing include cost sharing, less wear and tear on vehicles, and the ability to talk, eat, sleep, or read while commuting. The primary employer advantage is the need for fewer parking spaces.

## SOLVING PARKING CHALLENGES

# Carshare Parking

Carshare parking at a workplace makes a highly visible parking space available for a carshare vehicle that is either owned by the employer or a third-party carshare operator.

### Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs  
Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town

### Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Contact local carshare provider(s) to determine the feasibility of adding one or several carshare vehicles at your location.
- Alternatively, designate fleet vehicles as shared vehicles that can be reserved by employees for mid-day trips. Use of fleet vehicles for this purpose may require adjustments to existing fleet management policies.
- Designate highly-visible parking spaces for carshare vehicles at the worksite. Include signage, which may be provided by the carshare operator, and enforce parking rules to ensure the space is exclusively used by carshare vehicles.



## BENEFITS

By providing the parking space, an employer helps make a vehicle available to employees to use during the workday to attend mid-day meetings, which makes it easier for employees to leave their cars at home.

## SOLVING PARKING CHALLENGES

# Parking Cash Out

Employees who choose to give up their employer-provided parking spaces are offered a payment that can be used to pay for transit or vanpool fares, to pay for bike purchases or maintenance, or be kept as cash. This can be an alternative to charging for parking, should that be impractical or infeasible. It makes alternative modes more attractive compared to driving alone and parking.

### Applicable to Typology:

Urban/Inner Suburbs

### Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Assess the current parking conditions and policies including:
  - Determining if parking is leased or owned, if there is a shortage, whether parking access is controlled, and whether there is free parking available in surrounding neighborhoods.
  - Understanding current conditions helps identify potential cost savings, such as preventing the need to build additional parking, and informs successful program design.
- Determine program goals and details, including:
  - Eligibility requirements, including whether employees are allowed to park off-site or are required to use alternative modes to qualify.
  - The amount of the cash out and whether employees give up their parking spot on a monthly or daily basis (or for a different period). Daily cash out requires a tracking and verification mechanism, such as an analysis of employee parking data, or a way for employees to specifically track and report the days they do not park.
  - Accommodations for occasional parking needs.
  - Mechanisms for verifying program adherence.
- Implement a process for employees to sign up and change their election in the future.<sup>1</sup>



## BENEFITS

Parking cash out rewards commuting via alternative modes and provides benefit equity with employees driving alone. This can decrease the demand for employee parking, thereby freeing up parking for customers and visitors or reducing the company's parking costs.

<sup>1</sup>United States Environmental Protection Agency, "Parking Cash Out: Implementing Commuter Benefits as One of the Nation's Best Workplaces for Commuters," [https://www.bestworkplaces.org/pdf/ParkingCashout\\_07.pdf](https://www.bestworkplaces.org/pdf/ParkingCashout_07.pdf).

## SOLVING PARKING CHALLENGES

# Parking Fees

An effective policy for reducing vehicle trips and parking demand maybe to charge employees for parking. Fees can vary based on facility type and parking spot location. Ideally, employees pay a daily rate versus a weekly, monthly or annual rate. Daily rates maximize employee flexibility; they can drive when they need to but save money on parking when they carpool, walk, bike or take transit to work.

### Applicable to Typology:

Gateway City  
Office Park  
College Town

### Applicable Job Functions:

All job functions

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT

- Determine the feasibility of charging for parking. Considerations include the following:
  - Is there free or low-priced parking nearby? If yes, implementing parking charges might lead to spill-over into adjacent streets and neighborhoods.
  - How will parking charges be enforced and what infrastructure will be required? Options include gated parking, metered parking and a permit system with spot checks.
  - What equity impacts will result and how can they be managed? Employee parking charges can be tied to income ranges or discounted or waived for certain employee types or during certain times.
  - Perform a cost/benefit analysis.
  - Where charging for parking is not feasible, parking cash out may be a workable alternative.
- If deemed feasible, determine whether to charge market rate or a subsidized rate and whether employees will be charged daily or monthly. Daily charges provide more of an incentive to drive fewer days per month, but typically require different infrastructure or technology solutions to administer than monthly charges.<sup>1</sup>

- Develop a launch plan, implementation phasing and communications strategy to ensure employees understand the new charges, reasons for them and what commute alternatives they have access to.



## BENEFITS

Paid parking encourages employees to reconsider driving alone and evaluate other commute options based on the increased cost of driving. Paid parking can save employers money regardless of whether they own or lease their parking.

<sup>1</sup> Several case studies have shown a significant decrease in drive alone rates following a switch from monthly to daily rates. This is because once monthly rates are paid, there is no incremental cost to parking additional days. With daily fees, however, the driver incurs a cost every day.

# Appendix 1: Plan Template and Sample



The template in this appendix helps you put together a work plan to implement the strategies you have selected using this guidebook. First, use the template to document current conditions, goals and resources available to implement the program. Then develop an implementation plan for each of the strategies you selected. This includes a strategy-specific goal, tactics that outline your implementation approach, resources required, who needs to be involved and what the deliverables and timeline look like. Last, create a calendar with all activities related to your commute options plan.

# HOW TO DEVELOP YOUR PROGRAM PLAN

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Identify the type of worksite you have



Determine the strategies that align with your worksite type



Review strategy details to assess feasibility/applicability



Create a plan based on selected strategies

# WORKPLACE COMMUTE OPTIONS WORKPLAN 20\_\_

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**Employee Transportation Coordinator:**

**Typology:**

## **Current Situation**

Number of Employees:

Current Modal Split (see sample survey in Appendix 3):

Identified Transportation Challenges:

Identified Transportation Opportunities:

Available Resources:

Available Staff Capacity:

Goals:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## **Workplace Strategies**

Based on workplace situation, goals and capacity, use the information in this guidebook to identify a maximum of four key strategies in addition to the base strategies to deploy at your workplace:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

### **Strategy 1**

Goal:

Tactics:

Resources Required:

Who needs to be involved:

Deliverables and Timeline:

### **Strategy 2**

Goal:

Tactics:

Resources Required:

Who needs to be involved:

Deliverables and Timeline:

### **Strategy 3**

Goal:

Tactics:

Resources Required:

Who needs to be involved:

Deliverables and Timeline:

### **Strategy 4**

Goal:

Tactics:

Resources Required:

Who needs to be involved:

Deliverables and Timeline:

# YOUR 20\_\_ COMMUTE OPTIONS ACTIVITY CALENDAR

---

January

February

March

April

May

June

July

August

September

October

November

December

# WORK PLAN EXAMPLE

# AMAZING WIDGETS

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Amazing Widgets is a medium-sized company that distributes widgets. Its worksite and distribution warehouse are located in an office park about half a mile from the closest town, a quarter mile from a commuter rail station and three miles from a larger city. Many warehouse workers cannot rely on the bus due to a limited schedule. The office park has internal sidewalks and there is a sidewalk along the road to the commuter rail station and connecting to town. There are no multi-use paths, bike lanes or shoulders that connect to town or the next largest city. Local traffic can back up, particularly during peak hours due to employees arriving at similar times through traffic on the adjacent road, as well as high truck volumes serving Amazing Widgets and other companies in the business park.

## Workplace Commute Options Workplan 2019

**Employee Transportation Coordinator: To Be Named**  
**Typology: Office Park**

### Current Situation

Number of Employees: 240

Current Modal Split: 85% drive alone, 6% carpool, 4% transit, 3% work from home, 1% walk, 1% bike.

Identified Transportation Challenges:

- Long commutes due to peak hour congestion
- The only transit near the site is commuter rail. Trains run hourly, schedules don't match work schedules and commuter rail is expensive.
- There is no bike and pedestrian infrastructure connecting the office park to the next closest city
- There are currently no shared mobility providers active in the area

Identified Transportation Opportunities:

- Amazing Widgets already conducted an employee commute survey and completed a site assessment
- Commuter rail station is within easy walking distance
- Many employees are unsatisfied with their current commute
- Ten percent of employees who currently drive indicated that they would consider taking commuter rail if there was a subsidy
- Ten percent of employees who currently drive indicated that they would be open to carpooling or vanpooling to work if incentives were in place.

Available Resources

- Management is open to funding programs, if a business case can be made

Available Staff Capacity

- 25% FTE in Human Resources
- 8 intern hours/week

Goals:

1. Make it easier for employees to take commuter rail or carpool
2. Reduce barriers to using alternative transportation
3. Improve commute satisfaction before it affects job satisfaction, retention and recruitment

# Strategies

## Workplace Strategies

Based on workplace situation, goals and capacity a maximum of four key strategies in addition to the base strategies can be deployed:

1. Flexible work schedules
2. Transit subsidies and allowances
3. Rideshare incentives
4. Emergency Ride Home program

## Onboarding Transportation Education (Base Strategy)

Goal: Ensure that new employees are aware of commute options programs before they commute in for the first time.

Tactics:

- Prepare a package with information about commute options programs and incentives. Information can include options to find carpools, bus/transit schedules, bike maps and information on employer offered transportation discounts and how to sign up for them. One-time incentives, such as a free transit day pass, can draw the employee's attention.
- Provide materials on the employee's first day or send commute information ahead of time to prompt the employee to think about how to commute prior to arriving at the worksite for the first time.
- Include information during a new hire orientation presentation or video along with prompts to register for applicable programs.

Resources Required:

- Staff time: 60 hours plus 8 hours/month

Who needs to be involved:

- Director of HR (Staff)
- VP of Operations (Staff)
- Marketing/Internal communications team (Staff)

Deliverables and Timeline

- Design program: April – May 2019
- Produce marketing materials: June – July 2019
- Launch program: August 2019

## **Strategy 1: Flexible work schedules**

Goal: Provide employees with flexibility to alter their start and end time. Flexibility would allow employees to match their schedule to that of commuter rail or a carpool or vanpool.

Tactics:

- Work with HR and managers/supervisors to determine which job functions are eligible to participate and how such schedules can be incorporated into the workforce.
- Consider designating core hours during which all staff must be on premises in order to balance flexibility with the need to schedule meetings.
- Create a policy that allows eligible employees to flex their shift start and end times.
- Train managers and supervisors on the new policy.
- Ensure that both existing and new employees are informed of the policy.

Resources Required:

- Staff time – 80 hours

Who needs to be involved:

- Director of HR (Staff)
- Managers/supervisor (All)
- VP of Operations (Staff)
- Marketing/Internal communications team (Staff)

Deliverables and Timeline

- Focus groups with managers/supervisors: April 2019
- Draft policy: May 2019
- Review and revisions: June 2019
- Final policy: July 2019
- Creation of launch materials and trainings: August 2019
- Official launch: September 1, 2019

## **Strategy 2: Transit Subsidies and Allowances**

Goal: Reduce commute costs for transit riders, increase number of employees who take commuter rail to work.

Tactics:

- Determine the amount of the subsidy or allowance keeping in mind the maximum tax-free amount set by the IRS every year.
- Enroll in the MBTA's Perq for Work Program to purchase employee transit passes in bulk.
- Promote the program to employees. Information about the benefits should also be incorporated into new employee orientation sessions, company benefits literature and internal communications.
- Enroll employees. Once the benefit is set up and announced with a start date, the employer should be prepared for a large one-time influx of new enrollees. This may require in-person staff engagement through a series of outreach events.
- Maintain the program. Once the initial enrollment period has passed, employers should ensure that the system continues to operate smoothly including establishing a procedure to reclaim benefits upon employee separation.

#### Resources Required:

- Staff time to administer and promote program, purchase and distribute passes – 12 hours/month
- Funding to pay for passes for up to 10 percent of employees (maximum of \$76,320/year)

#### Who needs to be involved:

- Director of HR (Staff)
- VP of Operations (Staff)
- Marketing/Internal communications team (Staff)

#### Deliverables and Timeline

- Set subsidies and enroll in MBTA program: June - July 2019
- Actively promote program to employees and enroll them: August 2019
- Purchase and distribute passes: ongoing monthly

### **Strategy 3: Rideshare Incentives**

Provide incentives for employees to form carpools and help defray the cost of commuting.

#### Tactics:

- Determine which type of incentive would be suitable out of the following options:
  - Giving an employee an allowance for each day he or she carpools or vanpools.
  - Daily incentives require a tracking mechanism.
  - Offering a one-time incentive for new carpools, such as a gas or other gift card.
  - Holding regular prize drawings for program participants.
  - Discounted or free parking for carpools and vanpools.
  - Preferential carpool/vanpool parking.
  - Parking permit waitlist priority.
- Determine eligibility and minimum participation requirements.
- Designate nearby, covered or otherwise desirable parking spaces as carpool/vanpool parking using signage.
- Identify tracking and enforcement mechanism.

#### Resources Required:

- Staff time: 80 hours plus 10 hours per month
- Funds for financial incentives: TBD
- Space for preferential carpool/vanpool parking: 20 – 25 parking spaces

#### Who needs to be involved:

- Director of HR (staff)
- Facilities/Parking/Transportation Director (David Lee)
- VP of Operations (Jennifer Goodman)
- Marketing/Internal communications (Sarah Jones)

#### Deliverables and Timeline

- Decide which incentives to include: March 2019
- Develop an enrollment and monitoring/enforcement system: April – May 2019
- Design marketing and communications materials: April - June 2019
- Launch program: August 2019

## Strategy 4: Emergency Ride Home Program

Goal: Provide assurance to employees that they will have a way to cover the cost of getting home in an emergency.

Tactics:

- Set guidelines: consider rules for usage, maximum number of rides per year, reimbursement policies, and limits.
- Negotiate contracts with taxi and rental car providers and provide vouchers for services. The program can be delivered using a voucher or code system that is linked to a corporate account. In this scenario, employees would call the program coordinator, who verifies eligibility and issues a voucher or code to use. The corporate account is then billed for the incurred charges.
- Assign staff to administer and promote program.

Resources Required:

- Staff time: 20 hours plus 4 hours/month
- Funding: \$1,000

Who needs to be involved:

- HR (Staff)
- Leadership (Staff)
- Internal communications team (Staff)

Deliverables and Timeline

- Design program: May – June 2019
- Produce marketing materials: June – July 2019
- Launch program: August 2019

# AMAZING WIDGETS 2019 COMMUTE OPTIONS ACTIVITY CALENDAR

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**January**

**February**

**March**

**April**

Earth Day Fair – announce upcoming new programs

**May**

**June**

**July**

**August**

Launch new commute options program

**September**

**October**

National Rideshare Week – promote carpooling and vanpooling

**November**

**December**

# Appendix 2: Transit Agency Bulk Purchase Programs



Transit Agency	Monthly Pass Bulk Purchase Program	Other	Website	Phone Number
MBTA	Yes		<a href="https://passprogram.mbta.com/Public/ppinfo.aspx?p=c2">https://passprogram.mbta.com/Public/ppinfo.aspx?p=c2</a>	617-222-3200
BAT		BAT has worked with employers to offer transit benefits in the past.	<a href="http://www.ridebat.com/">http://www.ridebat.com/</a>	508-588-1000
BRTA	Yes		<a href="https://berkshirerta.com/">https://berkshirerta.com/</a>	800-292-2782
CATA			<a href="http://www.canntran.com/">http://www.canntran.com/</a>	978 283 7916
CCRTA	Yes		<a href="http://www.capecodrta.org/">http://www.capecodrta.org/</a>	800-352-7155
FRTA	Yes		<a href="http://www.frta.org/">http://www.frta.org/</a>	413-773-8090
GATRA	Yes		<a href="http://www.gatra.org/">http://www.gatra.org/</a>	800-483-2500
LRTA	Yes		<a href="http://lrta.com/">http://lrta.com/</a>	978-459-0164
MART	Student discounts and bulk purchasing. No experience working with employers.		<a href="http://www.mrta.us/mart">http://www.mrta.us/mart</a>	800-922-5636
MVRTA		Monthly passes can be purchased at farebox, bulk program does not seem to be available.	<a href="http://www.mvrta.com/">http://www.mvrta.com/</a>	978-469-6878

Transit Agency	Monthly Pass Bulk Purchase Program	Other	Website	Phone Number
MWRTA		No monthly or weekly passes available. Can get Charlie Cards sent to employer to add fares onto.	<a href="http://www.mwrta.com/">http://www.mwrta.com/</a>	508-935-2222
NRTA		Monthly passes can only be purchased at NRTA worksite.	<a href="http://www.nrtawave.com/">http://www.nrtawave.com/</a>	508-325-9571
PVTA	Yes		<a href="http://www.pvta.com/">http://www.pvta.com/</a>	877-779-7882
SRTA	Yes		<a href="http://www.srtabus.com/">http://www.srtabus.com/</a>	508-999-5211
VTA	Yes. Employers can get new cards for their employees every month.		<a href="http://www.vineyardtransit.com/Pages/index">http://www.vineyardtransit.com/Pages/index</a>	508-693-9440
WRTA	Yes. A few companies, agencies and schools already buy passes every month.		<a href="https://www.therta.com/fare/">https://www.therta.com/fare/</a>	508-791-9782

# Appendix 3: Sample Employee Survey



1. How do you travel to work during a typical week? If you use more than one travel mode on a single day (such as walking to the bus stop and then taking the bus), report the travel mode you use for the longest distance of your trip.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Drive alone							
Transit							
Bike							
Walk							
Carpool							
Vanpool							
Motorcycle/scooter							
Telework							
Other							

2. Do you change how you get to work based on the season? For example, you may bike to work in the summer but drive the rest of the year.

- Yes
- No

3. How does your commute change based on season?

In warmer months I typically use this mode: \_\_\_\_\_.

In colder months I typically use this mode: \_\_\_\_\_.

4. About how many miles do you travel from home to work (one way)?

5. What time do you typically arrive at work?

- Before 6:00 a.m.
- 6:00 – 6:59 a.m.
- 7:00 a.m. – 7:59 a.m.
- 8:00 a.m. – 8:59 a.m.
- 9:00 a.m. – 9:59 a.m.
- 10:00 a.m. or later
- My start time varies

**5. What time do you typically leave work?**

- Before 3:00 p.m.
- 3:00 p.m. – 3:59 p.m.
- 4:00 p.m. – 4:59 p.m.
- 5:00 p.m. – 5:59 p.m.
- 6:00 p.m. – 6:59 p.m.
- 7:00 p.m. or later
- My end time varies

**7. Below is a list of commute options programs and incentives. How likely is it that the programs and incentives would cause you to drive alone to work less than you do now?**

	1 = Not likely to drive to work less	2	3	4	5 = Very likely to drive to work less
Help paying for bike expenses, such as lights, helmets, etc.					
Discounts on transit passes					
Assistance finding a vanpool (vanpools are groups of 7 to 15 people who commute together in a van)					
Opportunity to earn points toward various prizes when you carpool, bus, walk, bike to work, or telework					
Ability to slightly modify your work schedule so that it matches a transit, carpool, or vanpool schedule					
Priority parking if you carpool or vanpool to work that is closer to entrances or protected from the weather					
Discounts for stores, events, and restaurants if you carpool, bus, walk, bike to work, or telework					
A free ride home if you don't drive to work but need to leave for an emergency or sickness or have to work unscheduled overtime.					
A program that lets you work 40 hours in 4 days or 80 hours in 9 days so that you can commute fewer days.					
Free or discounted Uber/Lyft rides to help you get to or from transit stations.					

8. Below is a list of statements. Read each statement and use the scale to describe how much you agree or disagree with each one.

	1 = Strongly disagree	2	3	4	5 = Strongly agree
I wouldn't mind riding the bus or train with other people.					
I enjoy driving to work.					
If driving is more expensive than other options (bus, carpool, walk, bike) I would still prefer to drive.					
I am willing to take transit on a regular basis, if I can get things done while riding (work, reading, phone calls).					
Driving to work is faster than taking the bus or train.					
Riding a bike or walking to work is a healthy alternative to driving.					
I am willing to carpool with someone I don't know, if I can save money or time.					
I have a car, so I don't want to spend additional money riding the bus or taking a train to work.					

9. How long have you worked at this worksite?

- Less than 3 months
- 3 to 5 months
- 6 months to 1 year
- More than 1 year

10. Have you recently moved or are you considering moving to a new home/apartment?

- I moved in the last 3 months
- I am considering a move in the near future
- Neither of these apply to me

11. Which of the following best describes your position?

- Customize for your organization

12. What is your home address? (We will use this information to determine what commute options are generally available to you and your coworkers. Your address information is confidential)

Street \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_ (Required)

13. Please provide your contact information if you would like to be enrolled in our prize drawing!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_