



Climate benefits	
Employer-based commuter programs	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Parking management	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Public education and marketing	★ ★ ★ ★ ★

These greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategies are an important part of what employers throughout the region are already doing to create healthy communities and provide a strong foundation for meeting state climate goals for 2035. The climate benefits shown represent the relative effectiveness of each strategy.

For more information on greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategies, refer to the Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project website at [www.oregonmetro.gov/climatescenarios](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/climatescenarios).



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### Keys to success

**Manage parking to create a more balanced and efficient transportation system** Strategic pricing and availability of parking in business districts and downtowns lead to significant increases in use of commute options, and savings for employers and employees.

**Encourage business participation in employer outreach programs** Transportation Management Associations assist local employers in commute options programs that increase employee satisfaction, decrease absenteeism and health care costs, and comply with state air quality rules.

**Provide incentives for employees to make more of their trips by biking, walking, ridesharing and transit** Many successful commute option programs encourage employee participation through monetary incentives and reward-based challenges.

**Invest in end-of-trip facilities to encourage greater use of commute options among employees and students** Secure bike parking, showers and changing rooms for employees are a few investments that employers can provide to encourage commuting by biking or walking.

### About Metro

Metro crosses city limits and county lines to build a resilient economy, keep nature close by and respond to a changing climate. Representing a diverse population of 1.5 million people in 25 cities and three counties, Metro's directly elected council gives voters a voice in decisions about how the region grows and communities prosper. Metro works with communities, businesses and residents to make the Portland metropolitan area a great place to live, work and shape the future.

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## SPRING 2013 CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES SCENARIOS PROJECT



### COMMUNITY CASE STUDY SERIES

This case study showcases actions that communities in the Portland metropolitan region are already taking to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions from cars and small trucks.

This is one of eight in a series developed for the Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project.

- Beaverton
- Clackamas County
- Gateway (Portland)
- Hillsboro
- Rockwood (Gresham)
- Wilsonville
- Employer-based commuter programs
- Neighborhood-based travel options



- ### Strategies
- Employer-based commuter programs
  - Parking management
  - Public education and marketing

# Employer-based commuter programs

### Encouraging travel options for the daily commute

Commuters tend to have fixed routes and schedules producing a reliable trip pattern that lends itself to the use of travel options, where available. Reducing commuter drive-alone trips is the primary focus of commute options programs, leading to reduced traffic congestion, lower transportation costs, improved air and water quality, and increased levels of physical activity – all of which help lower greenhouse gas emissions and create healthy communities across the region.

Employer-based commuter programs are a strategic approach to effectively promoting travel options such as biking, walking, transit, and ridesharing to employees in the Portland metropolitan region. Parking management, end of trip facilities and commuter encouragement programs are three strategies that reduce drive-alone commute trips in the region. These programs benefit the employer and the employee through tax and other financial savings, as well as improved employee health and morale.

- ### Key challenges
- Gaps in walking and biking paths and facilities connecting neighborhoods to employment centers make commute options such as walking and biking impractical.
  - Employers are challenged by parking constraints, ongoing costs and the need to free up parking spaces for customers and visitors.
  - Factors such as families with children, non-secure bike parking, long transit times, night and weekend employment shifts not served by transit create challenges to using travel options.



The Oregon Legislature has required the Portland metropolitan region to reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions from cars and small trucks by 2035.



# Creating healthy communities with commuter travel options

TriMet, Wilsonville SMART, Transportation Management Associations, and the City of Portland implement programs that encourage employees to use commute options. These organizations provide information and technical services to employers to make the business case for supporting and rewarding employees who commute using travel options.

The TriMet, Wilsonville SMART, and TMA employer outreach programs have made significant progress with reducing drive-alone trips and increasing the use of commute options in the region. Since 1996, the programs have served businesses of all sizes with transportation program assistance, transit pass programs, and surveys to comply with state air quality rules. These programs are in place for approximately one-third of the region's workforce. Program results show an increase in commute trips (from 26 to 39 percent) by transit, biking, walking, carpool, vanpool, and teleworking.

## 1 Managing parking

Creating a parking pricing and management strategy is a highly effective method for reducing the number of automobile trips coming into downtowns and centers. The Lloyd District and downtown Portland have low drive-alone rates and high transit mode shares due largely to comprehensive policies that support the area's transportation investments. Drive-alone trips to the Lloyd District decreased from 60 percent in 1997 to 41 percent in 2011, a 32 percent decrease over 15 years, and transit trips make up nearly 45 percent of all commute trips into downtown Portland. Managing parking pricing and availability, combined with promoting commute options such as biking, walking, transit and ridesharing, have increased the use of these travel options to these areas. Districts that manage parking help businesses save money on parking costs and free up parking for customers. Encouraging employees to use commute options reduces ongoing lease or maintenance costs and addresses parking constraints.

## 2 Making commute trips easier

Another aspect of employer-based commuter programs is working with businesses to provide facilities that make employee work trips more attractive. For example, secure bicycle parking, showers, and changing

facilities encourage biking and walking. Businesses invest in these facilities to reduce drive-alone commute trips, free up parking spaces for customers, improve health outcomes for their employees, and foster safe and convenient biking environments. End-of-trip facilities also offer important linkages between biking and public transportation infrastructure. The close proximity of secure bicycle parking to transit stops and stations is valued by bicycle commuters.

## 3 Encouraging commute options

Programs that provide incentives, distribute information, and promote workplace competitions are effective at reducing drive-alone trips. TriMet's Universal Annual Pass Program is one example that has helped increase transit commute trips. Employers purchase annual passes at a lower rate based on employee ridership – a proven incentive for employees to take transit. Another technique that has been implemented by the City of Portland and TMAs is employer individualized marketing. These programs provide employees with maps, trip planning services, incentives, and personalized assistance for using commute options. Several examples include the City of Portland's Downtown SmartTrips, Swan Island's Going to the Island, and the Lloyd Links program. Other encouragement programs for commuters that have yielded positive results are the Bicycle Transportation Alliance Bike Commute Challenge and the Carefree Commuter Challenge.

## By the numbers

### 248,000

One-third of the workforce, or approximately 248,000 employees, is reached by commuter programs.

### 39 percent

Employee trips using commute options rose from 26% in 1996 to 39% in 2011 among employers with commuter programs.

### 11,745

Close to 12,000 Bike Commute Challenge participants bicycled 1.3 million miles in September 2012.

### 2.1 million

Westside Transportation Alliance programs reduced the total miles driven by 2.1 million in 2011.

### 418,090

In 2012, there were 418,090 boardings on TriMet's WES Commuter Rail.

### 4.5 million

Lloyd TMA programs reduced total miles driven by 4.5 million in 2012.

### 29,125

Since 2006, the Portland SmartTrips Business program served 1,140 businesses, delivered 11,821 employee commute kits, and distributed 29,125 bike/walk maps.

## Employer-based commuter programs



Commuter program investments to date reach one-third of the region's workforce, increasing transit, bike, carpool and other non-drive-alone trips.



## Timeline

1974-1979	1995-1997	2001	2004-2009	2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TriMet rideshare project begins during fuel crisis</li> <li>Carpool signs placed along regional freeways and major arterials</li> <li>Downtown Portland Carpool Parking Permit Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BTA Bike Commute Challenge</li> <li>Lloyd and Westside Transportation Alliance TMAs form</li> <li>ECO rules established</li> <li>TriMet Universal Pass Program piloted</li> <li>Tualatin Shuttle begins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Cycling Center Create a Commuter program initiated</li> <li>Swan Island Evening Shuttle service begins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City of Portland Bike Parking Fund established</li> <li>Carefree Commuter Challenge</li> <li>Portland SmartTrips Downtown</li> <li>TriMet WES Commuter Rail opens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drive Less Connect online</li> <li>TriMet Map Trip Planner (multimodal) launched</li> </ul>