

Transportation for the Business Community

by Scott Bogren

Today, a confluence of events is prompting Americans to change the way they think about transportation. Fluctuating gasoline prices, heightened environmental awareness, and the economic downturn have all triggered an increased interest in alternatives to reliance on single-occupancy vehicles for daily transportation needs. Last summer, ridership on transportation systems of all sizes dramatically increased as fuel prices topped \$4-per-gallon. Since then — even as fuel prices have decreased, ridership has retained much

of last summer's demand.

Employment transportation — commuting — is a critical component in this growth. First and foremost among many Americans' daily transportation needs is getting to and from work. Accessible, reliable, and affordable transportation is key to maintaining employment and thus a critical component of America's economic recovery. Furthermore, for members of the community with specialized transit needs, such as people with disabilities, older workers, youth, and low-income earners, such transportation

is the link that actually makes employment possible.

America's employers have the power to play an important role in further advancing support for alternative transportation options. By implementing job-related transportation benefits and services, they can help their employees, community and environment. What's more, they can realize bottom-line benefits through direct cost savings and an improved public image — all while opening doors to employment for a wider segment of their communities.



Supporting Employees with Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act and the New Freedom

Recruiting employees with disabilities has become commonplace for many employers, especially as the number of retiring baby boomers rise. However, some employers may hesitate to actively recruit people with disabilities for fear that difficulties in traveling to and from work may affect their reliability. Don't let this be a deterrent. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has significantly expanded access to service on publicly funded transit and rail systems for people with disabilities, making it easier for travelers with a disability to access work and related destinations.

The ADA includes guidelines for non-transportation services, but also transportation for other equipment.

ADA complementary paratransit service response services (trips the customer advance and taken by transit-age contracted vehicles). To use them, ADA eligibility criteria, including regularly scheduled bus or rail service, their disability. The ADA gives flexibility as to exactly when off ADA passengers, as long as window either side of the set

Easter Seals Project ACTION cost-recovery model (Page 5) paratransit services for

The New Freedom Pro

The New Freedom program created by the Safe, Efficient Transportation Users (SAFE-T)-LII

The "Transportation" gives businesses & employees in each state a fact sheet and a work for parent tax benefits, as well as a transportation

This toolkit is an initiative to

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Employee Commuter Benefits: A Boost to Your Bottom Line

Currently, 7.6 million workers in the United States receive employer-provided commuter benefits. 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 arrange shared ride options to highly 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 for employees, many of whom may struggle with rising transportation costs. One study found that, on average, it costs a firm 25 percent of a position's annual salary plus 25 percent of the cost of benefits to replace an employee.¹ Furthermore, when considering the indirect expenses of advertising, recruitment, and new employee training, not to mention lost productivity, it can cost a company up to 150 percent of an employee's annual salary to replace him or her.²
- Increase employee productivity by promoting commuter habits that reduce employee commute times and late arrivals.

- Save on overhead costs associated with maintaining on-site parking lots and garages and adding more parking spaces to keep up with a growing workforce by encouraging shared rides to work.
- Reduce payroll taxes by allowing employees to use pre-tax dollars for transportation (See Fact Sheet #6.)

Increase Your Business's 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 might otherwise 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.

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, 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.



Supporting Employee Transportation Benefits

Providing employee transportation benefits for their workers have a number of options. They can:

- Designate a program, they can:
- Offer transit or vanpool costs or by subsidizing the cost for their workers and an employee benefit
- Partner with providers to educate employees about alternative transportation options to work
- Form a transportation management association, a nonprofit membership organization and business leaders seeking to ease traffic congestion and
- Offer employees by sponsoring carpools, vanpools, or shuttles
- Form an Employee Transportation Coordinator
- Offer transit passes for employees
- Form a transportation consortium and jointly support shared
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options can be found in the fact sheets and other materials

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For all these reasons, the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) charged the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) with developing and disseminating the *Transportation Toolkit for the Business Community*, a collection of informational resources designed to help employers understand the benefits of job-related transportation benefits and services as well as sources of assistance for implementing them.

"What we've developed is a practical set of materials that can help transit systems of all sizes and serving all areas of the country to work directly with local employers to help them develop commuting services for their employees," says CTAA's Joblinks Director Carolyn Jeskey. "And all

of these resources are conveniently housed at our new web address: www.ctaa.org/transportation_to_work.

Among the topics covered by the new employer transportation toolkit are:

- How transportation programs and benefits can boost a business's bottom line
- Powerful transit-business partnerships
- Employment transportation strategies for people with disabilities
- Employee transportation program coordinators
- Transportation Management Associations
- Transportation tax incentives for business
- Ridesharing strategies and best practices for employers

- How to launch vanpool programs
- Transportation passes and voucher programs
- Effective employment transportation strategies for rural and smaller communities
- Urban employment transportation innovations
- Employer transportation consortiums and partnerships
- Guaranteed Ride Home programs
- How employment transportation programs can help companies with "green" commitments

The employer transportation toolkit, and all of its resources, will be shared with employers and human resource organizations around the nation in the coming

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service is expected to be underway by late 2009. An additional expansion is under consideration to reach the state's border at Westerly, with additional stops in Cranston, East Greenwich, Kingston and Pawtucket.

"We continue to seek out new ways to expand service while also improving our current operations," says Moscola. "It's a process that we see as unending."

A Sense of Ownership

After salvaging the remnants

of Rhode Island's transit history more than four decades ago, RIPTA and its menu of mobility options is now seamlessly interwoven in the state's identity. As it strives towards its goal of serving every Rhode Island resident with constantly-improving transit service, RIPTA has established a proven and responsive blueprint for its own future.

"Our citizens have a sense of ownership in this system," Moscola says proudly. "It's truly Rhode Island's transit system."

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months as the Community Transportation Association and its partners undertake a strategic marketing effort to ensure this vital information in shared nationwide.

"We encourage all transit systems to take and use what they need in the toolkit and to let us know what they're hearing in response from their local business community," says Jeskey. "The Toolkit is not a static resource, but a dynamic one that we hope we can tailor to best meet the needs of employers nationwide."

All attendees at the 2009 Community Transportation EXPO in Providence, Rhode Island have the complete set of employer transportation toolkit documents on their conference information memory sticks.

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