



Commute Benefit Program Guide

Save money and boost retention by improving employee commutes



Get There Portland Metro

Get There Portland Metro is a free program designed to help Portland metro area employers create commute benefit programs that connect employees with safe and easy travel options.¹ We provide tools, resources, and personalized support to reduce drive-alone trips by encouraging carpooling, biking, walking, vanpooling, and public transit.

Get There Portland Metro offers employers free help, either online or by phone, with the following:²

- Planning and setting up commute benefit programs customized for your worksite
- Training your staff on how to start and implement programs
- Connecting you with regional resources, such as TriMet pass programs or available incentive programs
- Providing promotional materials and events to engage your employees

Commutes greatly impact work experiences for employees and employers, affecting retention, satisfaction, productivity, attendance, and overall well-being. Offering inexpensive, sustainable, and reliable commute options can foster a happier, healthier, and more productive workforce.



Work flexibility remains a **highly valued benefit among workers**—better work-life balance, less commute stress, and reduced burnout are rated as top benefits according to a **USA Today Blueprint Study**.

¹ Participation is limited to employers within the **Metro jurisdictional boundary**.

² Some offerings are limited to worksite location and availability of Get There Portland Metro staff and resources.

Get There Portland Metro Partners



Get There Oregon is a statewide program funded by the Oregon Department of Transportation that helps commuters and employers shift travel habits and work practices one trip at a time by connecting them to resources, trip-planning, and incentive programs.



Go Lloyd is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting commute options in the Lloyd District of Portland by assisting employers to implement benefit programs and a variety of services to help commuters find their best way to work.



Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) offers consultations with employers within the City of Portland seeking to boost awareness and use of transit and biking options. PBOT staff provide trip-planning resources and are available to present at company meetings on transit and bike commute solutions.



South Metro Area Regional Transit (SMART) provides free assistance to employers setting up transportation programs in Wilsonville. Employers of all sizes within Wilsonville, are eligible for the transportation programs and incentives.



TriMet is the region's largest public transit agency serving most of the Portland metropolitan area. TriMet provides bus, light rail, and commuter rail services. Employers of all sizes across the Portland region work with TriMet to offer employee transportation programs and incentives.



Westside Transportation Alliance is a nonprofit that provides members, non-member businesses, and employees in Washington County with information and assistance to encourage transit use, carpooling, bicycling, and walking.

For more information about the programs and commute solutions available from these Get There Portland Metro partners, contact us at Info@GetTherePortlandMetro.org.

This guide will walk you through the steps to implement a successful commute benefit program:



Step 1

Assess Your Situation

Conducting a worksite assessment or employee survey will help you understand your current situation and identify what strategies can help employees find their best commute. If you have an existing annual survey about other topics, consider adding the following questions. Otherwise, use the information you already have on file or infer based on what you already know.

A survey can help you answer questions like:

- 1 How far away do your employees live?
- 2 How do employees typically commute to work?
- 3 How often are employees working remotely or how many have hybrid schedules?
- 4 What existing commute benefits do your employees take advantage of?

We can help you **identify existing travel options near your worksite and conduct a survey** to find out how your employees get to work, and which commute options are of interest to them. Visit [GetTherePortlandMetro.org](https://getthereportlandmetro.org) and complete the contact form for assistance.



Note

If your company is subject to **Oregon's ECO (Employee Commute Options) Rule**, an employee survey is required. Your most current ECO survey is the best way to assess how your employees get to work.

Step

2

Explore Solutions & Resources

With the knowledge you've gathered from your worksite assessment or employee survey, head to our website to find solutions and resources appropriate for your situation. Once there, you have two options: you can explore and download ready-made resources on your own right now, or you can get in touch with a Commute Specialist who will develop a Workplace Solutions Kit specific to your needs.



Learn more about regional resources and workplace solutions you can implement at your worksite on **pages 7-13**.

Get There Connect

Get There Connect is a statewide ride-matching, trip-planning, and incentive-delivery tool funded by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). Commuters can use the Get There Connect tool to compare commute options, find a carpool, participate in challenges or reward programs, and track stats like reduced carbon emissions and calories burned.

Employers can use Get There Connect to track organization metrics, offer internal rewards and incentives, and hold challenges to encourage employees to use commute options.

To learn more about using Get There Connect, check out the **Get There Employer Guidebook**.



Employee Transportation Coordinators

The key to a successful commute benefit program is a well-equipped internal team, including a designated Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC). Get There Portland Metro partners have resources to ensure your ETC has ongoing support. To learn more about ETC roles and responsibilities, and guidance for program support, check out the **Employee Transportation Coordinator Toolkit**.



Workplace Solutions

This section highlights effective workplace solutions you can implement at your organization. For customized resources and recommendations tailored to your worksite, please complete the Contact Form at [GetTherePortlandMetro.org](https://getthereportlandmetro.org).



Rewards & Incentives

Reward employees for using transportation options.

Solution	Description	For More Info
Reward/incentive program	Offer rewards through raffle drawings, milestone-based incentives, or special events for those who do not drive alone to work. Trip tracking and rewards can be fully implemented in the Get There Connect platform.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ See pages 7 and 8 of the Get There Employer Guidebook for program ideas.■ Visit GetTherePortlandMetro.org and fill out the contact form if you are interested in starting an incentive program.



Solution in Action

- Bob's Red Mill rewards employees who do not drive alone, or who drive electric vehicles at least eight times a month, with a monetary incentive.



Parking

Manage increased parking demand and make transportation options more appealing to employees.

Solution	Description	For More Info
Daily parking charges	Require employees to pay for parking daily instead of monthly or annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Visit GetTherePortlandMetro.org and fill out the contact form if you're interested in learning about setting up daily parking charges.
Parking cash-outs	Offer employees the option to accept taxable cash income instead of a free or subsidized parking space at work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Parking Cash-out Guide



Transit

Reduce the cost of using transit to make it easier for employees.

Solution	Description	For More Info
Tax benefits	Cover part or all of your employees' transit passes and save money on FICA taxes. With a pre-tax payroll deduction, your employees can save too.	■ TriMet Employers Page
TriMet pass programs	Offer annual, monthly, or daily transit passes to employees to attract and retain employees. TriMet staff can help you find the pass program that's right for you.	■ TriMet Employers Page



Biking

Provide amenities and benefits to make biking a comfortable and viable option.

Solution	Description	For More Info
Secure bike parking	Provide secure bike parking options, such as bike lockers, indoor bike parking, or covered bike racks.	■ Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals' Essentials of Bike Parking ■ Check with your local jurisdiction about guidance/requirements for bike parking.



Solution in Action

- Go Lloyd offers corporate memberships to the Lloyd Cycle Station. Employers in the Lloyd District can provide secure bike parking for their employees as a workplace benefit.



Remote Work & Flexible Schedules

Improve productivity and performance with teleworking and flexible schedules.

Solution	Description	For More Info
Teleworking policy	Revise your telework policy and establish a plan for effective teamwork and productivity in a remote work environment.	■ Remote and Teleworking Toolkit
Flexible schedules	Allow flexible work schedules—those which differ from the typical 9-to-5 schedule—including compressed work weeks, nonstandard hours, and working from home.	■ Office of Human Resources Management's Alternative Work Schedules



Solution in Action

- Siemens in Wilsonville has allowed for all of their 1,115 employees to work remotely, although they're encouraged to come to the office once a week.
- Some employers in Oregon (e.g., City of Tigard, ODOT, DEQ) allow their employees to work a 4/10 schedule, which consists of four 10-hour workdays and three days off each week.





Carpool/Vanpool

Encourage employees with similar work schedules to share rides to work.

Solution	Description	For More Info
Carpool incentives (parking priority)	Create dedicated parking spots for carpoolers or vanpoolers in a premium location.	■ RideAmigos' Employee Carpool Programs
Vanpool	Help employees connect with others to join and start vanpools. Commute with Enterprise offers vanpool setup and vehicle rental services.	■ Vanpool Coordination Handbook



Solution in Action

- Providence Portland Medical Center reserves close-in preferential parking spots for carpoolers.



Emergency Ride Home

For employees who arrive to work without a car, provide a way to get home quickly in case of emergencies.





Solution	Description	For More Info
Emergency Ride Home Program	Join a program to provide employees with a free ride home in case of an emergency.	■ Emergency Ride Home Programs (ERH) provide a limited set of free taxi rides if an employee has an emergency or gets sick during the workday and is employed with a TriMet pass program or SMART ERH-registered business. Contact TriMet for more information, or Wilsonville employers can contact SMART .




Employee Resources



Travel Resources

Portland metro area employees have options for getting to work. The table below outlines existing services and programs in the region that you can offer and promote to your employees.

Travel Mode	Service/ Program	Service Area	Description
 Transit	TriMet	Portland metro area	TriMet provides bus, light rail, and commuter rail service in the Portland region. Plan trips using the Trip Planner.
 Transit	SMART	Wilsonville and surrounding areas, including Canby, Salem, and the south end of Portland (Barbur Transit Center)	SMART is a full-service, public transit system offering a convenient and easy way to travel by bus.
 Transit	Ride Clackamas	Clackamas County and surrounding areas	Ride Clackamas is a collective group of Clackamas County transit agencies providing bus service in Clackamas County and beyond.
 Carpool	Get There Oregon	Oregon	Get There Connect is a free online trip-planning, ride-matching, and metrics-tracking tool.
 Bikeshare	BIKETOWN for Business	Portland (see BIKETOWN service area map for details)	Workplaces across Portland offer subsidized annual memberships to employees as a wellness, transportation, or recreation benefit.

Travel Mode	Service/ Program	Service Area	Description
 Vanpool	Commute with Enterprise	Oregon	Enterprise's vanpool program helps commuters set up or join a vanpool, provides resources and information about available subsidies, and assists with recruiting riders when needed.
 Shuttle	Clackamas County Connects	Oregon City, Clackamas Industrial Area	The free shuttle service provides a vital connection to rural communities and critical, last-mile connections between services provided by regional transit.
 Shuttle	Community Connectors, Ride Connection	Rural Washington County, Forest Grove, Tualatin, King City, and North Hillsboro	Free fixed-route shuttles connect residents to grocery stores, community hubs, and transportation stations.

Step 3 Make a Plan

Now that you've assessed your situation and explored potential solutions and resources, it's time to create a detailed plan to guide your commute benefit program. Your plan may include the following elements:

Goals & objectives	Timeline
Budget allocation	Data collection & evaluation

The Get There Portland Metro team and our regional partners can help you develop a plan and deliver a program that works for your business. We can provide you with:

- Training opportunities to create and improve your program, including webinars, office hours, or workshops
- Promotional materials and event support to engage your employees
- On going support to help you problem-solve and adjust your program to meet the changing needs of your employees

Fill out the contact form at GetTherePortlandMetro.org for additional resources and support.



Step 4

Implement & Communicate

After you've created a plan for your new commute benefit program, the next step is to launch the program and promote it to your employees.

Here are some things to consider as you prepare to launch your program:



Timing

Consider launching your program to align with existing regional efforts or relevant seasonal events, including:



You may also consider promoting pre-tax travel benefits during your company's open enrollment period.



Communications

Help create buzz and interest by creating simple marketing materials and using existing employee communications channels to spread the word about:

- Your new commute benefit program
- Employee travel options

Use a variety of channels to maximize reach, including:

- Brochures
- Posters
- Emails
- Internal website
- Employee events

Get There Oregon's **Commute Solutions Toolkit** includes ready-to-use employee materials and digital content to promote commute options and services. Many of the materials can be co-branded and customized for your workplace using your logo, Get There Connect employer network URL, or QR code.



Support

Commute benefit programs will be most successful when more than one person supports implementation and communication within a workplace.

Identify internal champions who can help you deliver and promote programming. See our [Commute Ambassadors Guide](#) for more information.





Assess & Adapt

After implementing your commute benefit program, regularly assess its effectiveness and make adjustments as needed. Key areas to assess may include:



Participation rates

Track how many employees are using the program and determine which elements are the most popular.



Environmental impact

Use Get There Connect data to gather information on CO₂ reductions within your company's network.



Employee feedback

Collect feedback from participating employees to understand their experience with the program.



Cost savings

Track any reductions in parking costs or other related expenses. Use Get There Connect to gather information on health and cost savings within your company's network.

Get There Portland Metro is here to guide you every step of the way. Fill out the contact form at GetTherePortlandMetro.org for your free consultation.

