



Citizens for Modern Transit
COMMUTER CHOICE
TOOLKIT
FOR EMPLOYERS



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WORK
Play
EVERYDAY
TAKE TRANSIT TO GO YOUR WAY



ABOUT CITIZENS FOR MODERN TRANSIT

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CITIZENS FOR MODERN TRANSIT (CMT)

is a member supported organization that began its mission to introduce MetroLink to the St. Louis metropolitan area in 1985. Since its inception, three decades ago, we have seen the opening of more than 46 miles of MetroLink with 37 stations.

What's more, MetroLink's integration with the bus system gives St. Louisans a public transit system that is competitive with automobile travel. Ninety-five percent of all jobs in St. Louis city and county are accessible by transit.

Beyond the debate to expand MetroLink, CMT works to rebuild St. Louis City, County, and Illinois neighborhoods by investing in transit. Transit is more than a way to move from point A to B. It is a means to energize and revitalize existing communities, and to provide access to jobs, education and healthcare.

CMT leads efforts for an integrated, affordable, and convenient public transportation system with light rail expansion as the critical component that will drive economic growth to improve quality of life in the St. Louis region.



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LOCAL COMPANIES LEADING THE WAY

BJC HealthCare; Washington University; The Lawrence Group; Urban Strategies, Inc.; Boeing; McCormack Baron Salazar Companies; Arcturis; St. Louis Regional Chamber of Commerce; The History Museum; UMSL and the St. Louis Zoo; St. Louis Community College.



REASONS TO OFFER COMMUTERS A CHOICE

Did you know? More than 76% of the region drives to work alone every day when more than 200,000 people work within a half mile of a MetroLink Station and 95% of jobs in the region are accessible via transit.



Individuals who ride public transportation instead of driving will save, on average, more than \$781 this month, and \$9,370 annually in 2015 – APTA, October 2015 Transit Savings Report.



The Business Case for Transit

- › Transit benefits improve your bottom line
- › Every \$1 invested in transit provides a \$4 return to the region
- › Spurs economic growth and development
- › Helps attract and retain top talent – younger generations don't want to drive
- › Creates jobs

Commuter Choice Program Benefits

- › Most benefits are free to offer and implement.
- › Can be used as a business expense, saving \$ in tax related expenses.
- › Enhances employee benefit packages.
- › Gives employees travel options and the possibility of earning cash in addition to their regular salary.
- › Demonstrates the company's investment in its workforce.
- › Demonstrates company's leadership in the community.
- › Reduces parking structure costs.
- › Reduces fleet costs.
- › Can reduce payroll taxes.
- › Improves employee attendance and retention.
- › Promotes healthy lifestyles.
- › Improves employee morale.





TRANSIT SUBSIDY PROGRAMS

- ▶ An employer may provide a transit/vanpool benefit in addition to an employee's current salary. The benefit would be free of all payroll and income taxes to the employee, and the employer would deduct the cost from their business income taxes. This is considered a transit subsidy.
- ▶ An employer may permit employees to set aside (in lieu of) some of their pre-tax income to pay for transit or vanpools. Employees would not pay income or payroll taxes on the benefit amount, and employers would not pay payroll taxes because the pass is seen as a benefit and not taxable salary. This is considered a pre-payroll tax deduction.
- ▶ An employer may share the cost of commuting with the employee. Employers may give their employees part of the commuting expense tax free in addition to their compensation and allow the employees to set aside part of their gross income to pay the remaining amount, up to the limit of \$130/month.
- ▶ These benefits are not permitted to be part of "Cafeteria" plans or flexible spending accounts.
- ▶ Local employers already utilizing this service. Washington University; Arcturis; Boeing; The Lawrence Group; Urban Strategies, Inc.; McCormack Baron Salazar Companies; St. Louis Regional Chamber; The History Museum; St. Louis Zoo; UMSL. Others offering partial subsidies include BJC HealthCare (\$20) and St. Luke's Hospital.



A Department of Transportation (DOT) survey of employers offering a transit subsidy program in the New York and Philadelphia areas found overwhelming positive responses from employers and employees: More than 70 percent of program participants developed more positive opinions of their employers because of the program. Favorable comments from respondents included that the program gave transit a favorable image, increased their usage of transit, was simple and easy to use, and helped to defray transit costs and fare increases.

http://www.bestworkplaces.org/pdf/transitvan_07.pdf



CASH OUT PARKING

Do you currently offer fully subsidized or free parking to your employees?

- ▶ Give employees the option to cash out the value of the employer-provided parking space and receive the taxable cash value of the parking or a tax-free transit/vanpool benefit.

How It Works

Instead of charging your employees for their parking space, a company can encourage employees to choose from the following options:

- ▶ Allow them to continue paying for the parking space.
- ▶ Invite them to give up the parking space and receive the amount paid as extra salary each month.
- ▶ Give them the equivalent parking space fee as a reimbursement for transit or vanpool expenses.

Local Example

- ▶ A local law office in St. Louis has offered a \$90 employee transportation allowance a month which puts alternative modes on equal footing with driving. Those who participated could receive a transit pass of \$78/month and pocket the remaining \$12 of disposable income a month!



The average annual cost per parking space varies between \$360 and \$2,600 a year. Across the country, employers provide approximately 85 million free parking spaces for commuters, nearly \$31.5 billion dollars of parking nationwide. How much would your company save?

http://www.bestworkplaces.org/pdf/ParkingCashout_07.pdf

FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES

Sitting in traffic costs employees time, money, and energy. A few of the following options could be offered to help alleviate these concerns.

› Flextime

Allowing employees to adjust their work hours to begin either earlier or later in the day to stagger traffic in and out of the workplace. The same number of hours are worked, they just begin and end at different times.

› Compressed Work Weeks

Gives employees the ability to work more hours on some days and fewer hours on others. The time in the office is the same, it's just distributed differently throughout the week. Compressed work weeks have been shown to reduce tardiness and absenteeism as well as to increase productivity and morale.

› Job Sharing

This approach involves two employees sharing responsibilities for one position. Essentially each employee works a part-time schedule. In such a case, there is no need to redefine the position, but it is necessary to clearly allocate responsibilities and maintain good communication between job share partners. This alternative commute arrangement requires more time to set up but can be as successful as other alternative commute programs.

› Telecommuting

Telecommuting refers to the performance of work at a location other than the company's traditional office site. Depending on the specific arrangement with an employee, this option can practically eliminate an employee's commute or at least limit the number of commutes per week.



If 10-20% of the workforce would telecommute, it would save 3.1 billion hours of personal time and 3.5 billion gallons of gasoline. Telecommuting can save employers approximately \$14,000 a year through greater employee retention, reduced rent costs, and more. http://www.bestworkplaces.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/telecommute_benefit_brief.pdf



PRE-PAYROLL TAX DEDUCTIONS



Explanation:

Allows employees to pay for transit or vanpooling out of their gross pay (pre-tax income).

Local Example

- › BJC HealthCare systems offer a \$20 transit subsidy with the remaining cost of the pass, \$58, eligible for the pre-payroll tax deductions. If they have approximately 1,200 employees participating, that is \$1,123,200 in payroll per year not eligible for payroll taxes.

A Monthly transit pass in Saint Louis costs \$78, \$936 less taxable income per year.



100 EMPLOYEES **\$93,600**



**LESS ON
PAYROLL
TAXES**

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HEALTH & WELLNESS PROGRAMS



Employers understand the economic benefits of a healthy workforce and many offer wellness programs to help employees get active, lose weight, and be more productive on the job. However, the connection between transit and a healthy lifestyle is rarely made.

Here are 2 programs that support those goals:

1 Promote the Ten Toes Express in your Health & Wellness Efforts

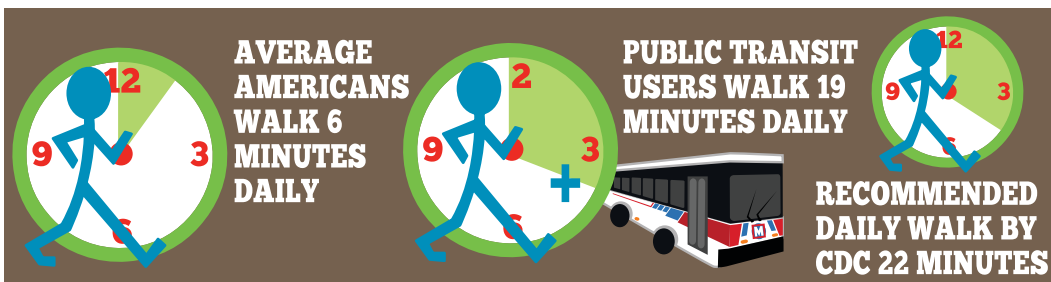
- › CMT's Ten Toes Express is a walking program linking MetroLink & MetroBus use with a healthy lifestyle. Participation includes a walking kit with tickets, walking maps, a pedometer, a travel bag, that link transit to Greenway Trails in the region.
- › Help your employees embrace the health benefits of transit.
 - Host the Ten Toes Express at a health or employee benefit fair.
 - Provide information on the program in your health benefit promotions.

Local Example

- › REI in St. Louis rewards its employees for using walking, public transportation, cycling, running, skiing, or anything besides driving a car with an incentive program that tallies points that are applied toward purchasing dollars in the store.

2 Encourage employees to Bike to Work

- › Promote Great Rivers Greenway's numerous bike trainings, guides, maps, and support programs for bike commuters.
- › Help your employees bike to work
 - Corporate Membership in the Downtown Bike Station
 - Offering bicycle parking on site
 - Allow bikes to be kept in their cubicles
 - Provide Showers and lockers at work
 - Work with GRG for identifying routes.



GUARANTEED RIDE HOME PROGRAM

- › An incentive for commuters who take MetroLink, bus, bike, or walk to work. The program provides an emergency cab or Enterprise Rental car ride home in the case of unexpected personal emergencies, sickness, or unscheduled overtime. Examples Include:
 - › Sickness – Includes personal sickness, child, spouse or other immediate family member.
 - › Unscheduled Overtime – Applies when an employee is required to work beyond normal scheduled work hours without prior notice.
 - › Personal Emergency – Includes theft, fire or other personal emergency requiring immediate attention.

More than 200 local employers utilize this service and 20,000 commuters are already enrolled in this program.



Check online for a list of employers

Enterprise CarShare Program

A carsharing program that allows participants to reserve a car by the hour for one price that includes gas, insurance, customer support, and in many cases, parking. Many employers will lease vehicles that are permanently available to their employees for use as needed, thus decreasing employee need for a personal car at work.

<http://www.enterprisecarshare.com/>



CMT'S TRY & RIDE INCENTIVE

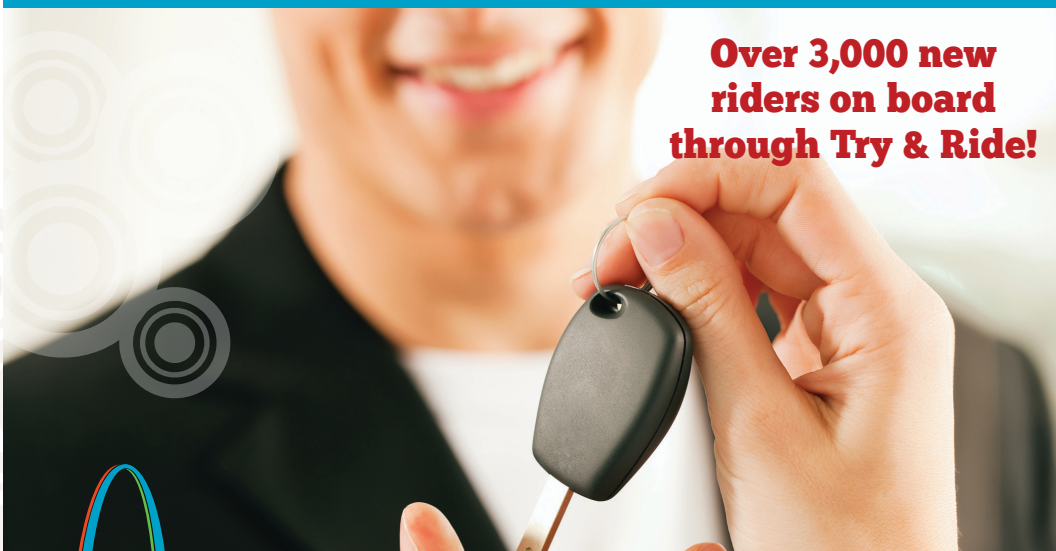
What It Is:

The Try & Ride program provides an incentive for new users to try taking transit to work by giving employees complimentary tickets, a personalized route, and tips to use transit in exchange for a commitment to use transit for 2 months.



One of the biggest hurdles to transit use is unfamiliarity with the system.

Over 3,000 new riders on board through Try & Ride!



EMPLOYEE SURVEY

What It Is:

A resource for identifying the best commute choices to offer your employees.



Another obstacle to using transit for non-riders is the perception that they do not live or work near it. However, 95 percent of St. Louis and County's jobs are accessible by transit.




MOVING FORWARD

WITH YOUR COMMUTER CHOICE TOOLKIT



Explore your commute options further

- 
 - 1 Ready to offer your employees' transit subsidies?**
Contact Metro at 314-982-1400 or email: marketing@metrostlouis.org to coordinate.
 - 2 Considering your options?**
Contact CMT to discuss your company's needs.
 - 3 Curious about your employees current commutes?**
Send the Commuter Survey to your employees to gauge employee interest and readiness.
 - 4 Wondering how to implement a Commuter Choice Program?**
 - 4a** Determine how the commuter benefit program would be administered at your organization.
 - 4b** Identify key departments and appropriate managers to be involved in implementing the logistics-human resources/benefits, payroll/accounting, tax/legal.
 - 4c** Determine which benefits your company will provide to whom.
 - 4d** Update the company personnel policy handbook with a description of the program.
 - 4e** Use CMT's marketing to promote the program to your employees through new employee orientations, benefits fairs, special events, periodic communications, and mailings to employee homes.
 - 5 Consider locating new worksites near transit!**
Learn more at the TOD Clearinghouse:
<http://cmt-stl.org/transit-oriented-development-clearinghouse/>

Helpful Resources:

CMT cmt-stl.org

Metro <http://www.metrostlouis.org>

Best Workplaces for Commuters <http://www.bestworkplaces.org/>

CMT: 911 Washington Ave., Ste. 200, St. Louis, MO 63101 | 314.231.7272 | cmt-stl.org





WANT AN IMPROVED TRANSIT SYSTEM IN ST. LOUIS? Consider the following...

- › Become a CMT corporate member and show your support for transit!
Join Online Today - <http://cmt-stl.org/join-cmt/>
- › Sign up for CMT's eblast to keep abreast of news, events, activities, ways to get involved, and legislative initiatives for transit.
Write info@cmt-stl.org to sign up today
- › Consider re-locating or building an office closer to the system, learn more at the TOD Clearinghouse:
<http://cmt-stl.org/transit-oriented-development-clearinghouse/>
- › Sponsor CMT events and activities to educate your workforce and the community about transit. **cmt-stl.org**
- › Contact CMT to discuss additional partnership opportunities:
info@cmt-stl.org





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