

What is transportation demand management?

What is commute trip reduction?

Transportation demand management is a set of policies, programs, and incentives that help folks use our transportation system more efficiently. It's everything from encouraging flexible work schedules and teleworking to planning entire communities that are more walkable and have easy access to public transportation.

Commute trip reduction is a strategy within transportation demand management that uses policies, programs, and incentives that motivate folks to use alternatives to driving alone to work, like using public transportation, carpooling, biking, or just working from home.

The Washington State Commute Trip Reduction Program has a nearly 35-year history of helping people make the switch from their car to cleaner, more sustainable modes of transportation to get to and from work. Implemented after the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill, the goal of the program was to reduce carbon emissions and traffic congestion on the state's busiest commute routes ([RCW 70A.15.4000-4110](#)).

CTR's biennial budget of \$9 million generates outsized benefits for Washingtonians:

Yearly benefits of commute trip reduction:

- 49 million** gallons of gasoline saved
- \$162 million** consumer dollars saved on gasoline
- 373,000** metric tons of CO2 emissions avoided
- 2.18** metric tons of PM2.5 from brake wear avoided
- 1.09** metric tons of PM2.5 from tire wear avoided

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics' Estimated U.S. Average Vehicle Emissions Rates per Vehicle by Vehicle Type Using Gasoline, Diesel, and Electric; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Tailpipe Greenhouse Gas Emission from a Typical Passenger Vehicle; and U.S. Energy Information Administration's Analysis of U.S. Retail gasoline prices)



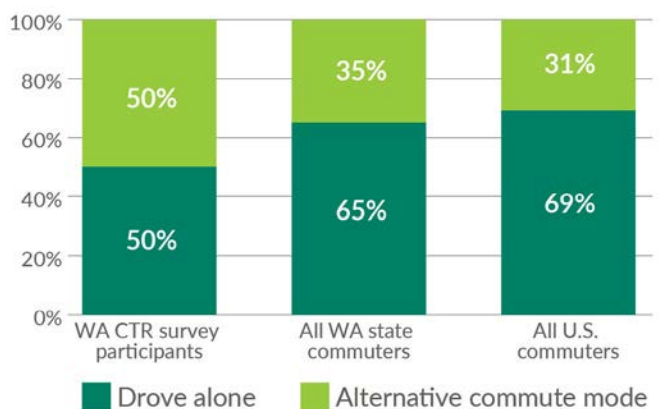
State Commute Trip Reduction Program performance

Washington leads the way in choosing alternatives to driving alone thanks in large part to the State Commute Trip Reduction Program.

In the chart (right), of the nearly 225,000 employees working at commute trip reduction-affected worksites who took the 2023/2024 commute trip reduction survey, 50 percent chose alternatives to driving alone for their commute. For comparison, only 35 percent of commuters statewide and 31 percent of U.S. commuters used alternatives to driving alone.

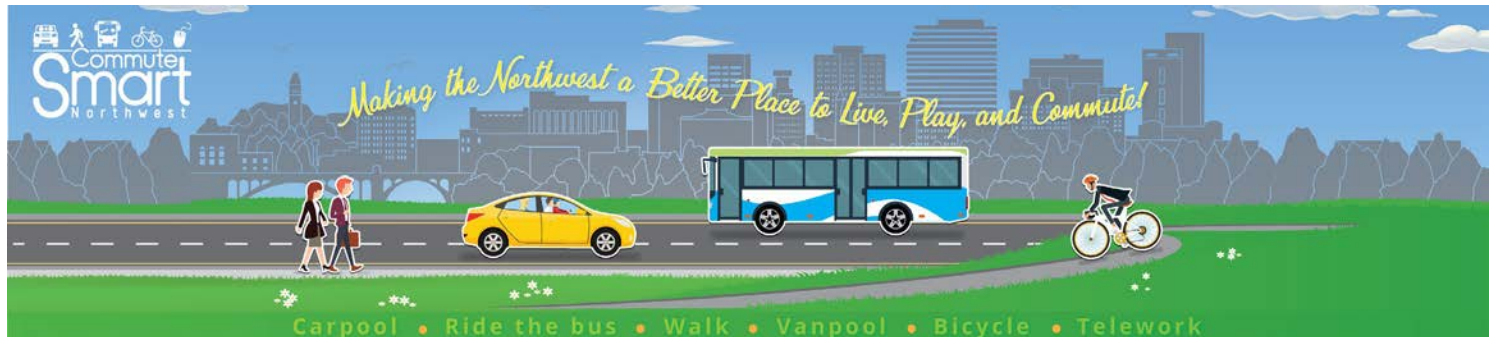
Modest public investments can spur private companies to go big on commute trip reduction: The Commute Trip Reduction Tax Preference allowed employers in Washington to claim a business and occupation or public utility tax credit for a portion of the incentives they provided to their employees to use commute options other than driving alone, like ridesharing or taking a bus.

2023/2024 commuter drive-alone rates



The Commute Trip Reduction Tax Preference was a moderate investment with an outsized benefit. The credit cost the state \$2.75 million annually, but employers using the preference reported providing more than \$143 million to employees through transportation services and benefits from 2016 to 2022.

From Bellevue's growing downtown to Spokane's Commute Champions, to a grandmother in Renton who can now reach her medical appointments with ease, transportation demand management and commute trip reduction provide transportation solutions to many – and benefits to all. These small, nimble, cost-effective policies, programs, and incentives multiplied across thousands of daily trips build stronger communities and a more sustainable Washington. Transportation demand management and commute trip reduction aren't just about how we get to the office and back; they're about how we connect with our neighbors, with our cities, and with the future we're building together.



Spokane County Commute Smart NW

Commute trip reduction-affected employers in Spokane County reduce more than 44 million miles of single-occupancy vehicle travel and more than 40 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions every year. And these employers know commute trip reduction benefits come full circle: commute trip reduction helps reduce the number of vehicles on the road – which allows businesses to transport goods and services more efficiently, in turn making those very businesses more successful and profitable.

Commute Smart NW is Spokane County's commute trip

reduction implementer. They know part of increasing the reach of commute trip reduction is celebrating its champions at every level.

Commute Smart NW helps emphasize their business partners' role in increasing commute trip reduction benefits by providing Commute Smart Champions Awards to organizations that are leading the way in promoting mobility options to their employees. Last year's champion business leaders included Providence Urban Campuses, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services - Division of Child Support, Eastern Washington University, and Airway Heights Corrections Center.

City of Vancouver: Residential program

The City of Vancouver is expanding beyond its employer commute trip reduction program with a new residential program.

The residential program engages with neighbors across the city to create travel behavior changes during major life transitions, such as moving.

The residential program provides:

- Free transit fare
- Informative resources
- One-on-one support

The program also makes use of experiential learning events to provide community members with opportunities to try new travel options for the first time and build familiarity and confidence with those options.

In the 2023–2025 biennium, the State Commute Trip Reduction Program contributed \$391,900 to City of Vancouver to implement commute trip reduction strategies.



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