Encouraging Smart Commuting During COVID-19 and Beyond

September 15, 2020

Presenters

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Agenda

- Teleworking Strategies and Best Practices for Employers
- Transportation Leaders Program
- Statewide Return to Work Survey

• Framework for Action Development
• Smart Commuting Actions
• Success Stories and Benefits
Sustainable CT
Local Actions. Statewide Impact.
Founding Partners, Funders and Board
Framework for Action Development

1. Idea Emerges
2. Evaluate Importance and Relevance
3. Research Best Practices
4. Bring in Stakeholders with Expertise
5. Work with Towns to Test Ideas
6. Pilot/Focus Group Testing
7. Action is Finalized
Principles for Evaluating Importance and Relevance

Greater accessibility for smaller communities

Recognition of broader world context

Committed partners
Encourage Smart Commuting

5.3 Encourage Smart Commuting

Action Updates

Objective

This action has been revised for the current certification cycle. A version of this action from the prior program year is available for comparison. Edits are highlighted in yellow. (Last update 2020)

What to Do

Credit for Past Action

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Funding

Resources

Objective

Inspire and incentivize area employees and residents to choose alternative commuting methods.

Complementary actions:

- Implement Complete Streets
- Promote Public Transit and Other Mobility Strategies
Encourage Smart Commuting

What to Do

If you collaborate with other municipalities or other stakeholders to implement this Action, please describe the partnership in the “partners” box of your submission. Please also consult this guidance document to help your municipality earn points for actions pursued in partnership. Regional collaboration and other forms of partnership are highly encouraged.

1. Achieving silver or gold status in the CTrides Transportation Leaders Program satisfies the requirements of this Action. Alternatively, complete at least five/nine activities from this checklist to encourage municipal employees to engage in alternative commuting strategies (10, 15 points).

Submit: Documentation of silver or gold status recognition in the CTrides Transportation Leaders Program, or submit this checklist to report steps taken and the worksheet to report the estimated annual data on the percentage of municipal employees impacted/affected by/participating in each strategy.
Success Story: New Britain
Smart Commuting: Multiple Co-Benefits

**Environmental Impacts**
Cleaner air and water, and enhanced preservation of land and natural resources.

**Greenhouse Gas Reductions**
Reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

**Health and Wellness**
Optimal health and wellness for all residents.

**Cost Savings**
Cost savings to your municipal budget and operations.

**Economic Well-Being**
Stability and growth for local businesses, and job retention and creation.

**Climate Resilience**
Improved ability of your community to anticipate, adapt and flourish in the face of disruption.

**Community Building**
Enhanced connection of your residents to your local community, engaged partnership to improve your community, and enhanced resident awareness.

**Equity**
New, improved and valued relationships between different members of your community. More inclusive decision-making and improved access to services and sharing of benefits with all residents - current and future - regardless of race, income, ability, age, gender, sexual orientation, etc.

*Plus* potential recognition in both the Transportation Leaders Program and as a Sustainable CT-certified community.
CT rides
About Us

- **CTrides** is a program of the Connecticut Department of Transportation
- Comprehensive resource for commuters to find better commutes than driving alone
- Customized worksite solutions for employers
- Supporting Connecticut businesses since the mid-90s
- Telework services
  - Policy Development
  - Technology Assessments
  - Employee Selection and Pilot Programs
  - Training
Teleworking Strategies and Best Practices for Employers
Telemanaging Through Goal-Setting

Define objectives and deliverables

Establish timeframes

Communicate send an email or have a conversation on goals and deliverables to get agreement

Review status by end of the week or periodically

Coach employees

Repeat the process on a weekly basis
Establishing Communications Standards

- How might teleworking change communications?
- What happens to impromptu communications?
- Is it OK to interrupt?
- What types of communication channels are to be used?
- Can there be flex hours while teleworking?
- Can there be core hours?
Teleworkers and Communication

- Accessibility
- Electronic calendar
- Contact number
- Work & meetings
- Ongoing communications within reason
- Personal non-available time
Work-Life Balance and the Business Impacts

Work life and family life role balance

Maintain role boundaries and avoid role overload

Find opportunities for health promoting and wellness behaviors

The business impact of work life balance
Best Practices

- Set clear expectations
- Manage based on productivity and not proximity
- Plan for success
- Establish communication standards
- Active coaching & Work life balance
- Review and adjust
CTrides Transportation Leaders Program
Purpose - Make Connecticut a better place to work and live by

- Reducing employees' use of personal vehicles to drive alone to work
- Fighting climate change by lowering harmful greenhouse gas emissions from autos
- Lowering traffic congestion by encouraging use of transit, car/vanpooling, telecommuting and active transportation modes like walking and biking
The Transportation Leaders Program offers three levels of recognition:

- **Gold**: 9 or more activities
- **Silver**: 5 or more activities
- **Bronze**: 1 or more activities

Eligible Activities:

- Conduct a CTrides commuter survey
- Provide commuting information to all employees
- Provide CTrides commuter information to new employees
- Offer a free CTrides Emergency Ride Home benefit
- Host quarterly on-site events
- Host a Try-It Day event for employees to try out a greener commuting mode
- Establish a telework program
- Offer a pre-tax commuter benefit
- Provide preferential parking for carpools or vanpools
- Establish a flexible work schedule program
- Provide on-site amenities to support greener commutes
- Sell transit passes on-site
- Offer incentives to use greener ways to commute
- Operate or subsidize an employee shuttle
- Apply for recognition as a bike friendly business
- Offer a tax-free subsidy for transit or vanpooling
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<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Bronze</th>
<th>Silver</th>
<th>Gold</th>
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<tr>
<td>Framed Certificate and Transportation Leader Digital Seal</td>
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<td>Invitation to Annual Recognition Event</td>
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<td>Featured on CTrides Website and in Program Materials</td>
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<td>Highlighted in Statewide Publications and Social Media Postings</td>
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<td>Quarterly Employee Green Commute Raffles</td>
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<td>Invitation to Special Networking and Transportation Events</td>
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CTrides Statewide Return to Work Survey
Survey Overview

Purpose: To understand the current impact of COVID-19 on the commuting characteristics of Connecticut’s workforce and its lasting effects

Survey Details

- Connecticut Residents who Commuted to their Workplace Before the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Survey fielding
  - 3rd Party email list; Social Media Posts; CTrides members; website announcements
  - Employer partners distribution to employees
  - Transit Operators promotion
- Conducted July 10 – July 28
- 4,133 Responses
- Margin of Error +/- 1.36%
Employee Work Locations

More than three times as many respondents reported they intend to work from home either full-time or part-time in the future than before COVID-19.
Primary Commuting Mode*

The use of a personal vehicle will increase when residents return to work, while commuter rail and carpool/vanpool usage will remain fairly constant.

*Excludes respondents who worked at home full-time pre-COVID-19.
Requirements for wearing masks, social distancing practices, increased service and increased cleaning were all ranked as top priorities to return to public transit.

*Governor’s executive order required commuters to wear masks when using public transit.
Future Plans for Transit Use

The majority of surveyed respondents indicated their primary method of commute would remain consistent when they return to their workplace; however, a majority of those who used a vanpool reported they intend to shift modes in the future. Requirements for wearing masks, social distancing practices, increased service and increased cleaning were all ranked as top priorities to return to public transit.
Conditions to Return to Public Transit in the Future

- *58.5%* Wearing masks required
- *51.7%* Social distancing and extra space
- *46.9%* Increased frequency to reduce number of passengers on each train

- *60.5%* Wearing masks required
- *59.2%* Social distancing and extra space
- *41.8%* Increased cleaning of facilities and vehicles
Questions?

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