Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Overview

What is CTR?
Commute Trip Reduction requires employers in the most congested areas to encourage employees to reduce the number and length of drive alone commute trips made to their worksite.

The Commute Trip Reduction Law (RCW 70.94.521 - 551) was adopted in 1991 as part of the Washington Clean Air Act. The purpose of the law is threefold – to reduce: air pollution and greenhouse gases, traffic congestion and energy consumption.

You’re joining an amazing network of state, local, and private organizations committed to improving the environment and reducing traffic congestion in the Pacific Northwest.

Does CTR work?
YES!
CTR sites statewide have non-drive alone trips 66% higher than the national average.

The State of the Region
The Puget Sound is growing fast, and Snohomish County is no exception.

In fact, between 2015-2017, Snohomish County added over 15,000 people.

Washington Clean Air Act adopted to reduce

Air Pollution and Greenhouse Gases
Traffic Congestion
Energy Consumption

In 2018 the CTR program

Reduced CO₂ by 66,000,000 lbs
Left 22,400 cars at home every weekday
Saved over 3,700,000 gallons of fuel

Source: Washington State Department of Transportation, 2017
By 2040 the population of Snohomish County is expected to increase by 1.3 million. Can you imagine what it would look like to have 1.3 million more cars on the road, preventing employees from getting to work on time or moving freight? Neither can the State of Washington, which is why they implemented the CTR law!

Commutes are also getting longer as congestion increases, which drives companies and employees to seek out other travel options.

All this extra time on the road affects our air quality and climate too. Transportation is a major polluter, even with the introduction of electric and hybrid vehicles.

We’re at a critical point in Snohomish County, and CTR could be a major help!

What does the law require?

The CTR law requires local jurisdictions to work with major employers to develop and implement a commute trip reduction program. The employer must appoint an Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC), who must meet a number of additional requirements (more on that later).

Every two years (or if you’re a new worksite, within 90 days), the employer must conduct an employee commute survey showing employee commute behavior and the worksite’s progress toward commute trip reduction goals. If the employer does not meet goals, Community Transit will work with the employer to make changes to its program.

What is an affected employer and a CTR affected employee?

An affected employer is a public or private employer that employs 100 or more CTR affected employees. A CTR-affected employee is a full-time employee at a single worksite who is scheduled to begin their regular workday between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m., on two or more week days, for at least 12 continuous months. It sounds confusing, but if you have over 100 employees who work regular hours, you’re probably affected!

A voluntary worksite has elected to participate in the CTR program without being required by the law. Maybe they expect to become affected soon and want to get a head start, or maybe part of their corporate mission is to be a good steward of the environment. Voluntary worksites have the same requirements (and benefits) as an affected employer.
But what if...

Yes, there are exceptions! Here’s the top 3:

1. Employees are required to drive as part of their job. These specific employees become non-affected, and do not count toward the total.

2. They’re not my employees. Contractors don’t count (though they may be affected themselves). Only count employees who are getting paychecks from your company.

3. We’re (hiring, laying off, moving). Hardship cases can delay or exempt implementation of CTR requirements. Check with Community Transit!

What are the CTR goals?

The success of Community Transit’s CTR program is grounded in the contributions made by its employers. Building on this success, Community Transit has made an employer-specific goal to increase non-drive alone trips by 7% between 2020-2022.

This means one of the first steps will be to establish a baseline of travel at your worksite. We’ll work with you to do this via the state’s CTR survey. After that, we’ll work with you to create or enhance your program and get to that 7%.

The Goal:
Increase Non-Drive Alone Trips by 7% by 2022

Proportional contributions to 2015 county Greenhouse Gas emissions

Source: Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, 2018
ETC/Employer Requirements

Your jurisdiction has developed a CTR plan and ordinance to assist (and enforce) the CTR law. Find yours at communitytransit.org/ETC. Each city has slightly different techniques, but all have the same series of requirements for affected employers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required Element</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Designate Employee Transportation Coordinator</td>
<td>The Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) is the point of contact on-site between the employer and its workforce and between the employer and Community Transit to track the employer’s progress in meeting CTR requirements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETC Basic Training</td>
<td>A new ETC is required to attend an ETC basic training session within six months of appointment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distribute Information to Employees</td>
<td>The employer will distribute information about non-drive alone commute options and the worksite transportation program at least twice a year to employees.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CTR Reporting Quarterly</td>
<td>The employer is required to complete the Quarterly Employer Report with Community Transit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>The employer shall collect data on the progress of their worksite transportation program through the Commute Trip Reduction Survey, online logging, and/or other methods.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Drive Alone Tools and Strategies</td>
<td>The employer will implement tools and strategies to encourage non-drive alone commute behavior by their employees.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced Training/ETC Networking</td>
<td>The ETC is required to attend at least 6 hours of networking meetings or advanced trainings per year. Trainings and networking meetings may include in-person, web based curriculum, surveys, or other specified promotional activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Worksite Promotion of Employer CTR Program</td>
<td>Employers are required to hold at least one annual “transportation fair” or equivalent promotion which is available to all employees at each affected worksite.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employer Notification</td>
<td>The employer is required to notify Community Transit when there are proposed changes to their CTR program, changes in ETC or contact information, and/or changes in number of employees at the worksite.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Faith Effort</td>
<td>The employer must make a “Good Faith Effort” toward meeting worksite trip reduction goals, which means working with Community Transit.</td>
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Penalties

An affected worksite that is unresponsive may be assessed civil penalties. Specific amounts vary by city, but can be as high as $250/violation/day.

Introduction to Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is the umbrella term that encompasses all the programs and strategies you’ll be undertaking in your CTR program. TDM strategies have been implemented by cities from London to Lynnwood and by companies large and small. These can include promoting carpooling or transit use to your employees, providing proper facilities for employees who want to walk, run, or bike to work, managing parking, and providing flexible scheduling or teleworking opportunities if appropriate. TDM is often significantly cheaper and more effective than costly alternatives like adding additional roadways, leasing additional office space, or building additional parking spaces.

How Does TDM Fit Into Our Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Program?

There is considerable overlap between TDM and CTR programming. From promoting and providing ORCA cards to providing priority parking for carpools and vanpools to having racks and showers for bike commuters, you are helping support your employees commuting habits and implementing TDM and CTR strategies.

Did You Know?

Transportation is the second largest expense for most American households after housing— over $9,000 per year. Whether you’re in the suburbs or a more urban setting, your employees can save thousands of dollars by exploring their transportation options.

CTR Employee Commuting Survey

A survey completed by employees at CTR-affected worksites both when the company becomes affected (a baseline) and every even numbered year. Employees answer questions about how they commute. Responses are aggregated and measure progress towards worksite and county goals.
The state-provided survey is available in online or paper format and takes about 5 minutes to complete.

**Who administers the Survey?**

The ETC distributes and collects the surveys. A total response rate of 70% is required to be statistically significant. Community Transit is here to help!

**How often must an employer complete a CTR employee survey?**

Community Transit requires CTR-affected employers to administer an employee survey biennially on even years. Newly affected worksites must complete their first employee survey (baseline) within 90 days of becoming affected by the law.

Worksites that do not obtain the minimum response rate will field the survey again at a date agreed upon with Community Transit.

**What is the Survey Report?**

WSDOT processes the surveys and Community Transit provides the results to ETCs. The Survey Report includes your worksite's overall Non-Drive Alone Rate (NDAR) and progress towards your goal, how employees commute, why employees choose these commute options, where employees commute from, and responses to any supplemental questions requested by the employer. If you don’t have yours on file, contact Community Transit to get a copy.
The CTR Law requires affected employers to appoint an Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) to implement, promote and administer the CTR Program on an ongoing basis. Selecting the appropriate staff is critical to the success of your program.

While an ETC can be placed at any level or in any department in your organization, the following list outlines the factors that can affect your ETC’s success.

ETCs need the professional skills to complete the following legally mandated requirements

- Develop the CTR Program and implement the approved CTR Program
- Coordinate the distribution and collection of the biennial CTR surveys to all employees at your worksite
- Promote the CTR Program to employees through distribution of informational pieces

ETCs succeed in the right environment

Generally speaking, ETCs work best when they have flexibility in workload and a connection to employees. Common ETC roles are in Human Resources, Facilities, or Administration.

While ETCs can be located anywhere in your organization, our experience has shown ETCs have more leverage if they work directly in the center of their transportation program— for example, in HR if the program is an employee benefit.

The amount of time spent on ETC duties varies greatly between organizations and the needs of employees. To meet basic requirements you’ll probably need at least 1-3 hours a month.
Common Characteristics of ETCs

To fulfill these duties, our experience has shown that the most successful ETCs share the following abilities and characteristics:

• Flexibility in schedule and duties to implement and promote your program
• The ability to work well with people and have access to all employees
• Access to management
• Good computer skills
• Excellent communication and organization skills
• Interest in commute options

Don’t Go It Alone!

Few ETCs are able to work full-time on their transportation program. That is why it can be helpful to form a CTR Committee. This can provide helping hands, creative minds, and broaden your skill base to build support for your CTR activities.

Some tips for forming a CTR committee at your worksite:

• Secure management support. Your committee may cross departmental lines and require time and approval from other supervisors.
• Determine the optimum number of members. Too large can be difficult to control, too small may not be as effective as you want.
• Find the right group. Having members from those parts of the organization you need: HR for benefits or orientation; facilities for worksite amenities, etc., can give your CTR committee the weight and skill it needs to make real change.
• Don’t forget your champions. Employees who already bike, bus, or choose other transportation options make great members and double as modal cheerleaders.

Having a committee of enthusiastic individuals can make all the difference.
What's in it for You?

So you’re appointed as ETC, expected to create or enhance your program. What comes along with the extra responsibility?

Not only are you helping your organization do its part to reduce traffic congestion, conserve energy and improve air quality, you also get a chance to show your employer your skills as a project manager. The ETC position can be an excellent proving ground for future job growth within your company. After all, your CTR program will only be as successful as you make it. Imagine how great your ETC experience will look on a resume. For example you will:

- Manage a program
- Be creative designing promotions and publicity materials
- Have greater visibility within the organization
- Network with other ETCs
- Generate positive publicity for your company
- Develop written and verbal communications skills
- Lead a CTR committee

Becoming an Employee Transportation Coordinator is a great opportunity. You have an amazing support system of fellow ETCs for exchanging ideas and suggestions. There are many training and marketing tools available to make your job easier. And of course, you have the support of Community Transit who is happy to offer assistance.
CTR in Snohomish County and Bothell

What makes Snohomish County and Bothell's program unique?

Community Transit has always been a leader in promoting and assisting with CTR programs in Snohomish County and Bothell. With over 60 worksites and over 28,000 employees, you’re in good company!

Community Transit partners with a number of cities and the county to provide CTR services to worksites throughout Snohomish County. This has a number of advantages:

For the County

1. By pooling resources together, we’re able to provide more to your worksite
2. Our expert staff are able to spend their time and focus on your program
3. We can provide connections and resources between worksites countywide— you’re not alone
4. Consistency. The programs, services, and requirements in Arlington are the same as in Lynnwood
5. Transit experts. We also run the bus and vanpool network in the county

For the Worksite

1. Promotional and educational materials
2. We develop and provide trainings on numerous topics
3. Consultation services on implementing ORCA, telework, or other programs
4. Relocation assistance
5. Rideshare promotions and ridematching
6. Transportation program strategy development and implementation assistance

Learn more about how Community Transit can help in Chapter 4.
CTR - Getting started checklist

☑ Appoint an ETC at your worksite - done!

☐ Complete ETC Basic Training (you’ll be checking this box soon!)

☐ Locate the most recent Quarterly Report completed for your worksite to familiarize yourself. If you can’t find it, contact Community Transit.

☐ Find out how transportation benefits and amenities are communicated to employees.

☐ Complete the Program Elements survey and ask Human Resources and Facilities whether any transportation benefits or amenities have changed.

☐ Find your most recent CTR Employee Commute Survey and review the results.