

[Project: Increasing the Recognition and Support Employer-Provided Commute Benefits Via Best Workplaces for Commuters](#)

Authors: Phillip Winters, Julie Bond

Summary

The theme of the National Center for Transit Research (NCTR) is to make public transportation and all other travel choices safe, effective, efficient, desirable, and secure. This research project focused on increasing these aspects of transportation through recognizing employer-provided commute benefits via the Best Workplaces for Commuters (BWC), a national membership-based program housed within NCTR. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, only 7% of civilian workers have access to subsidized commuting benefits. So, by increasing the number of employers that provide transit and vanpool subsidies and/or provide commute friendly services, the BWC program can effectively increase the use of transit, ridesharing, etc.

This projects objectives were to increase the number of employers providing commute-friendly workplaces as measured by membership (and revenue) in BWC by 10%, increase the number of local supporting agencies actively promoting BWC, and increase media mentions via an annual list release to bring more media attention to NCTR, the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR), and BWC workplaces. To be considered a “Best Workplace for Commuters” or a “Best SITE,” an organization must meet at least one of several criteria that include but not limited to: at least \$30 per month towards a transit pass, a significant telework program that reduces the number of commuting trips by at least 6%, and/or fully or partially fund one or more employee shuttles from rail stations and/or park and ride lots. An organization must also offer employees access to an Emergency Ride Home program and three supporting benefits such as carpool matching, electric vehicle recharging stations, and/or on-site amenities.

The Best SITE designation was created for commercial and retail developers, shopping malls, business campuses, and other multi-employer developments. To obtain the designation, a Best SITE must have 2 of 5 types of transit and bicycling facilities and amenities, 3 of 6 parking management strategies, and 5 of 9 promotions/services/policies that support commuter and resident use of options that decrease vehicle use.

The first task, as further discussed in the full report, was to increase workplace outreach and communications. To do this, the research group first enhances the website. Since the previous reporting period, the website received an 106% increase in the number of users and a 63% increase in page views. Another key outreach strategy was the annual release as many employers enjoy the BWC/Best SITE designation and the public relations value it brings. Further, the research group developed a series of webinars featuring case studies of members and prepared summaries of key topics such as qualified transportation fringe benefits. BWC organized and hosted eight webinars over a 19-month period.

The second and final task was to provide technical assistance support to BWC member and the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) professional community. BWC provided technical assistance using a range of methods from fostering self-service problem solving to short-term support like telephone and email inquiries. The quick response technical support included compiling data and preparing reports in TDM-related issues.

Ultimately, this project yielded numerous achievements with over 300 BWC workplaces identified as meeting the National Standard of Excellence. Further, a press release for the annual BWC list release resulted in 1,336 views by various media outlets and the 8 webinars featured 17 different speakers and had final attendance numbers of over 2,000 people. While BWC began as a simple national recognition program, it has evolved into a nationally recognized resource for information and on programs to encourage the integration of commute-friendly programs and policies at the workplace that, in turn, should increase use in all forms of public transportation.

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