



Latest News

- Status of Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefits Levels for 2014 and Beyond
- 2014 Florida Commuter Choice Certificate Program
- Strengthening the TDM to LEED Connection - Opportunities for Growth Netconference

BWC Spotlight:

Greater Valley Forge (GVF) Transportation Management Association

Ask Team BWC:

What does "Qualified Bicycle Commuting Reimbursement" cover?

Newest Members of BWC:

More workplaces - large and small, private and public are qualifying as Best Workplaces for Commuters!

[Email to a Friend](#)

[Update Your Profile](#)

[Email Feedback](#)



[2014 Member List](#)

[Resource Center](#)

[Bestworkplaces.org](#)

Latest News

Status of Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefits Levels for 2014 and Beyond

For our members who provide commuter benefits to their employees, Best Workplaces for Commuters, is sharing the following update on potential changes to qualified transportation fringe benefits. The summary and opinions expressed below are those of the Commuter Benefits Work for US Coalition.

On April 4, the Senate Finance Committee voted to send a tax extenders bill, The Expiring Provisions Improvement Reform and Efficiency (EXPIRE) Act to the full Senate. The EXPIRE Act extends a number of tax provisions that over the past few years have been known as "tax extenders". This proposed legislation includes a 2-year extension of parity between the transit and parking portions of the commuter benefit retroactive to January 1, 2014. This would restore the transit benefit to the same \$250 level as the parking benefit. The proposed legislation is retroactive to January 1st of this year, however, experience with a similar provision in 2013 shows that many employers are reluctant to take on the administrative burden of doing so. The EXPIRE Act is waiting for further action in the Senate which may not occur until later this year. If passed by the Senate, it will face an uncertain future in the House.

A tax reform proposal released by House Ways and Means Chairman Dave Camp (R-MI) would affect commuters who receive employer-provided mass transit benefits compared to those commuters who drive and thus park at work. Chairman Camp's proposal freezes the current transit and parking caps at \$130 and \$250 respectively, eliminates the annual cost of living adjustment and denies the current employer deduction of FICA for pre-tax commuter benefits. The latter is an important incentive for employers to provide the Commuter Benefit. Although this specific proposal will not be enacted, it does demonstrate that there is interest in Congress to maintain the concept of a transit benefit.

The Commuter Benefits Work for US Coalition, which consists of transit agencies, benefit providers, business and advocacy groups (<http://www.commuterbenefitsworkforus.com/>) has concerns that elements of the proposal may surface in the future. The Coalition strongly objects to all changes, especially removal of the annual cost of living adjustment. Employers offer Commuter Benefits to their employees as part of a variety of fringe benefits and the Commuter Benefit, in particular, because the current law allows employers to keep their share of FICA taxes for the amount that employees elect. The Coalition believes that H.R. 2288 - The Commuter Parity Act of 2013 offers a far more practical solution as an attractive yet revenue neutral Commuter Benefit.

2014 Florida Commuter Choice Certificate Program

The purpose of the country's only certification program for transportation demand management (TDM) professionals is to improve the performance of commuter assistance programs. We do this by providing comprehensive and effective technical training to transportation professionals to advance their delivery of practical, proven solutions to current and future transportation needs through TDM. The training program offers 11 courses that are directed at Florida transportation professionals, and others involved with the planning, management, funding, and/or oversight of commuter programs.

The Commuter Choice Certificate is funded by the Florida Department of Transportation. Most of the courses are taught by CUTR's TDM team of expert researchers. The TDM team brings over 40 years of combined experience in planning, operating, and evaluating TDM, augmented by other senior researchers at CUTR who are national experts in their respective fields. Instructors use web-based conferencing technology to deliver the training to the participant's desktop. Using tools such as whiteboards, virtual breakout rooms, polling questions, and application sharing fosters an environment of active learning. The only requirements are a computer (preferably with a headset), and an internet connection. Participants hear the audio portion of the presentation via streaming computer audio, and simultaneously view the training presentation via the internet.

To earn the certificate, students must complete a minimum of 80 credit hours that include a mixture of required and elective courses. Online training is held every Wednesday from 12:00 to 1:00PM (EST). The program is free for Florida professionals. Out-of-state participants pay \$50 per course or a flat annual fee of \$250 for all 11 courses. For more information, visit www.commuterservices.com or contact Tameika Fraser, Training Support Specialist at fraser3@cutr.usf.edu.

Strengthening the TDM to LEED Connection - Opportunities for Growth netconference

On behalf of the co-sponsors, Association for Commuter Transportation's Sustainability Development Council and the National Center for Transit Research's Best Workplaces for Commuters, I extend this invitation to you to join us for our next netconference.

Event date and time: Thursday, May 29, 2014 from 2:00 PM to 3:15 PM EST.

There is no cost for the netconference but you must register. The link to register follows description and presenters below. If you are unable to attend, the netconference will be recorded and available at www.bestworkplaces.org within 48 hours of the event.

Event description:

More communities, developers and property management companies are actively seeking to mitigate traffic while embracing sustainable energy and environmental practices through the design of buildings and communities. Research has found that such practices yield societal benefits and a real return on investment. LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is a point based system developed by the U. S. Green Building Council (USGBC) to certify building and communities on such practices. While LEED is often discussed in the context of new construction, there is a significant opportunity to earn a substantial number of points for "alternative commuting transportation" for existing buildings seeking LEED certification. Co-chairs of the Association Commuter Transportation's Sustainable Development Council, Peggy Schwartz, the Executive Director of the Transportation Action Partnership, Inc. and Justin Schor with Wells & Associates will identify new opportunities for the transportation demand management (TDM) professionals to work with developers and building owners. They also will demonstrate how to use the "Green Building Resource Website" hosted by the TDM Institute to help link developers and property managers with qualified TDM professionals. Nicholas Ramfos, president of the TDM Institute, will discuss the impetus to provide this latest tool to the TDM community.

Event presenters:

Justin Schor

Justin Schor has dedicated his entire career to the transportation demand management (TDM) industry. With first-hand outreach experience combined with his background in city and regional planning, Mr. Schor has the unique ability to confidently recommend TDM strategies and plans that are realistic, achievable, and measurable. Mr. Schor has been an active member of ACT since 1995. In that time he has developed and managed several ACT award-winning programs and served two terms on the ACT Board. He is currently serving as an At-Large Member of the ACT Board. Mr. Schor co-founded ACT's Sustainable Development Council in 2013 and currently co-chairs it.

Nicholas Ramfos

Mr. Ramfos has been a TDM practitioner with nearly 25 years of program development and implementation at various Metropolitan Planning Organizations. He has developed and implemented various commute alternative programs and policies in the Washington DC, San Diego, Detroit, and Chicago regional markets. Many of the projects have encompassed energy efficiency, sustainability and livability issues. Ramfos has also implemented commuter transportation marketing campaigns which focus on social responsibility through traditional media and the use of social marketing. Ramfos is currently the Alternative Commute Programs Director with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) and is responsible for the development, implementation and evaluation of the regional Commuter Connections program which includes Maryland, Northern Virginia, and DC. He is currently the President of the TDM Institute, a member of the TRB TDM Committee, and member of US Green Building Council. He is former VP for ACT.

Peggy Schwartz

Peggy Schwartz has been involved with transportation demand management and traffic mitigation programs for over 30 years and has worked in the public-sector as well as in the private-sector with developers and property management companies. Peggy is the Executive Director of the Transportation Action Partnership, Inc. which operates the North Bethesda Transportation Management District providing TDM programs and services for over 900 private-sector companies and several major Federal agencies. She is a graduate of Leadership Montgomery and Maryland's Smart Growth Leadership Program. She has a BA in Urban Studies from Hiram College and a Master's degree in Planning from Cornell University. She co-chairs ACT's Sustainable Development Council.

Registration

You can register for this free online event at

https://www.livemeeting.com/lrs/cutr_ccc/Registration.aspx?PageName=6trds4w3cw07z4qp

You will then receive an email with connection information (generally within an hour). If you do not receive the connection info and you have checked your spam folders, please email winters@cutr.usf.edu

Message from the event organizer: There is no cost for this netconference.

First time users of Microsoft Live Meeting: To test your computer's compatibility with Microsoft Office Live Meeting 2007, please visit the following Microsoft Web site: <http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?LinkId=90703>

If you have difficulty joining the meeting, contact Microsoft technical support at 1-866-493-2825

Please direct other questions to Phil Winters at winters@cutr.usf.edu

BWC Spotlight

Greater Valley Forge (GVF) Transportation Management Association

GVF is a not-for-profit Transportation Management Association (TMA,) founded in 1990. GVF is headquartered in King of Prussia, a Philadelphia suburb and has seven full-time staff members.

GVF works with over 130 private-public organizations ranging from Fortune 500 companies, colleges and universities, health care institutions, engineering firms, local, state and federal officials with the common goal of creating a viable transportation network for the region's economic vitality.

"We partner with organizations to help them fulfill their transportation and sustainability needs, including: implementing carpooling and vanpooling programs, managing shuttles, biking programs, analyzing surveys and performing studies about employee transportation habits," says Chrissy Mittura, Marketing and Outreach Coordinator for GVF adding "We utilize a multitude of outlets to market our services. We encourage partners to follow our highlights on our Social Media outlets and

view websites that we manage. We are well known within the industry that we serve, so our reputation as transportation experts really drives our organization and advocacy efforts."

GVF TMA hosts four Signature Events per year that have increased attendance every year. These events include Legislative updates, an Annual meeting, where outstanding leaders of the industry are recognized, a Sustainability Breakfast awarding partners for their excellence in sustainability (to date, 71 organizations that represent over 100,000 employees have been awarded), and the Transportation Conference which is the most well-attended event all year. The conference provides networking opportunities and participation in an informative and educational concurrent panel sessions, where professional development hours are available.

Chrissy added, "Being active in the community at all levels provide our partners with access to resources they wouldn't have otherwise. We are able to connect key-decision makers in the community with successful businesses to make projects come to fruition and solve transportation issues."

GVF's knowledgeable staff contributes to its excellence in many different areas including knowledge of local, state and federal policy issues and connections for business development and marketing its service in many different outlets. In addition to performing geographical studies, GVF is able to show continued growth in the number of partners and able to provide a multitude of services.



Pictured top left to right: Rob Henry, Executive Director, Kyle Guie, Project Manager, Laura Dowhie, Marketing and Outreach Coordinator, Chrissy Mittur, Marketing and Outreach Coordinator. Bottom left to right: Trish Sakal, Administrative Assistant, Diane Pfanders, Office Manager, Maureen Farrell, Assistant Director.

For more information on this TMA, go to www.gvftma.com

Ask Team BWC

Q: What does "Qualified Bicycle Commuting Reimbursement" cover?

A: **Qualified bicycle commuting reimbursement.** For any calendar year, the exclusion for qualified bicycle commuting reimbursement includes any employer reimbursement during the 15-month period beginning with the first day of the calendar year for reasonable expenses incurred by the employee during the calendar year. Reasonable expenses include: a) The purchase of a bicycle and b) Bicycle improvements, repair, and storage.

These are considered reasonable expenses as long as the bicycle is regularly used for travel between the employee's residence and place of employment. See [Answer ID 3110](#) for the value of the qualified transportation fringe benefit's statutory monthly limit for bicycle commuting.

Qualified bicycle commuting month. For any employee, a qualified bicycle commuting month is any month the employee: Regularly uses the bicycle for a substantial portion of the travel between the employee's residence and place of employment and does not receive:

- ◆ Transportation in a commuter highway vehicle,
- ◆ Any transit pass, or
- ◆ Qualified parking benefits.

Bicycle Commuting Benefit and Compensation Reduction.

According to the IRS, "Generally, you can exclude qualified transportation fringe benefits from an employee's wages even if you provide them in place of pay. However, qualified bicycle commuting reimbursements do not qualify for this exclusion."

Source: [IRS Publication 15-B](#)

See [Answer ID 3114](#), [Answer ID 3115](#), [Answer ID 3116](#), [Answer 3117](#), and [Answer ID 3118](#) for information on compensation reduction.

Got questions? Check the [BWC Helpdesk](#) where you can find answers or [Ask Team BWC](#)

Newest Members of BWC:

Opportunity Village, Las Vegas, NV

Renewed BWC Members

- BASF Corporation, Research Triangle Park, NC
- George Mason University, Fairfax, VA
- Mast General Store, Knoxville SmartTrips, Knoxville, TN
- PACCAR Inc Parts, Bellevue, WA
- Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation, Greensboro, NC
- SRI International, Menlo Park, CA
- Stanford University, Stanford, CA
- Stanford University-Menlo Park, Stanford, CA
- Stanford University-Medicine Outpatient Center, Stanford, CA
- Stanford University-Porter Drive, Stanford, CA
- Tindale-Oliver & Associates, Inc., Orlando, FL
- Tindale-Oliver & Associates, Inc., Tampa, FL
- Triangle J Council of Governments, Research Triangle Park, NC
- University of Maryland, Baltimore, MD
- VHB, Orlando, FL
- Yale-New Haven Hospital, New Haven, CT

[Get Your Workplace on the List - Apply Online Today](#) | [Email Feedback](#)