Tim Grzesiakowski

Executive Director,
Lake Cook TMA
Shuttle Bug Program

Shared Employer Shuttles: Sharing the Road and the Savings

April 25, 2017
TMA of Lake-Cook

- Founded in 1989
- Mission: “Improve employees’ commute to work” in Cook & Lake Counties
- Represents over 40 firms, 42,000 employees
- Advocates for highway and transit service improvements
Shuttle Bug Program

• 13 Pace shuttle routes connect 1 CTA & 6 Metra stations with 4 suburban employment centers

• Last-mile service & reverse commute

• 1,000 daily passenger trips

• Public-private partnership between Pace/Metra and participating firms since 1996

• Employers & public sector share cost 50/50
Shuttle Bug History

- **1994:** Last-mile shuttle service planning initiated to provide connections from major employers in Lake-Cook Corridor to planned Lake-Cook Road Metra Rail Station in Deerfield, IL
- **January 1996:** Lake-Cook Road Metra Station opens
- **March 1996:** Shuttle Bug Program begins with 6 vans
  - $400,000 in CMAQ funding provides first 2 years of service plus $250,000 in sidewalk improvements within a ½ mile of station
- **October 1997 – March 1998:** Service transitioned from vans to 26-passenger buses operated by Pace due to routine overcrowding caused by strong ridership demand
What Makes a Shuttle Program Successful

- 2 - 4 employers with sizable employee headcounts (3,000-5000 employees total)
- Long distance commutes (>20 miles one way)
- Live along Metra rail line (60% shuttle bug riders are reverse commuters)
- Frequent Metra rail service
- Employers financially support and see value in program
- Partnership with Pace & Metra
Challenges to Expansion

• Funding
• Vehicle Availability & Capacity
• Impact of Private Carriers
• The “World of Work” has changed
• Low gasoline prices
• Metra fares keep increasing
• Impact of TNCs
Corporate Relocations Are Big News

Then

Sears Plans Move to Site Near Chicago
Published: June 27, 1989 in the New York Times
Sears, Roebuck & Company said yesterday that it would move 6,000 employees to a Chicago suburb

Now

Companies Say Goodbye to the 'Burbs: Young Talent Wants to Live in Chicago, Not Libertyville; Dilemma for Older Workers
Published: Dec 4, 2013 in the Wall Street Journal
Plans for a 100-bed Psychiatric Hospital at Former CDW/Allstate building at 300 N. Milwaukee Ave. in Vernon Hills Presented to Village Officials
Published: October 26, 2016 in the Daily Herald
Lessons Learned

- Shuttle market in the suburbs is alive and well
- The future of that market is still evolving
- Organizations need to evaluate how to react to evolving market conditions
- Stay current on trends – things change!
Thank you!

Tim Grzesiakowski
Executive Director
TMA of Lake-Cook
tim_grzesiakowski@baxter.com
www.tmalakecook.org