

Sustainable Transportation Toolkit

Cost-Free Services for Sustainability, Safety, and Workplace Wellness



MISSION

RideWise connects you to information you need to navigate Somerset County.

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This publication was prepared with funding from the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This document is disseminated under the sponsorship of NJTPA and FHWA in the interest of information exchange. NJTPA and FHWA assume no liability for its contents or use thereof.

Somerset County’s central location, combined with a host of premier services, amenities, recreational opportunities, and picturesque communities make it an in-demand location for business. As the County’s residential and business communities expand, transportation is playing a greater role in what makes a company appealing to employees.

RideWise is dedicated to promoting and advocating for transportation choices that are efficient, safe and sustainable. Our organization engages with large and small employers, local government, state agencies, school districts and nonprofits to advocate for travel options that are good for business, good for the environment, good for communities, and good for residents.

Many Somerset County worksites are able to attract, recruit, and retain the best workers by addressing their employees’ daily commute with assistance from RideWise. **The commuting options an employee has available to them can affect retention rates,** and how much a company promotes sustainability through sustainable travel options can attract customers.

RideWise is here to help your worksite develop a commuter benefit program that has a positive outcome on your business and your employees. We’ll help you identify your needs, design a custom program, and roll it out to employees. **Consider RideWise an extension of your workplace resources.** We offer a variety of services and programming to help you promote safe and sustainable travel options.

Not only will you have a happier, more productive workforce, you may be recognized for your efforts as a New Jersey Smart Workplace, a statewide award for worksites that demonstrate leadership by providing quality commuter information and programs to employees.

HUMAN RESOURCES

- >> **Expand and diversify your labor pool**
Commuter benefits make your business accessible to a greater number of workers.
- >> **Increase employee retention, job satisfaction and productivity**
An employee’s commute is an integral part of his/her quality of life. Happier employees are more productive, satisfied, and less likely to switch jobs.
- >> **Promote employee wellness**
Commuter options can supplement wellness programs by incorporating active transportation presentations, walking challenges, mindful guided walks and safe cycling.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY

- >> **Be prepared for the unexpected**
When transportation is impacted by road construction or weather events, having a commute options strategy keeps your worksite functioning.

FINANCIAL

- >> **Reduce the cost of employee recruiting and turnover**
Commuter benefits help retain talent.
- >> **Reduce facility costs through teleworking**
Fewer employees onsite allow employers to reduce facility costs. Reducing the number of employees driving to a worksite allows for easier access and improves traffic flow.
- >> **Tax benefits**
Qualified transportation fringe benefits (Section 132(f) of the Internal Revenue Code) save employers payroll related taxes while employees save on federal income taxes.



Earth Day Fairs

Sanofi, one of our New Jersey Smart Workplaces, invited RideWise to its Worldwide Environmental Day to show how RideWise programs can encourage sustainable and healthy living.

ENVIRONMENTAL

- >> **Reduce air pollution, climate change, and energy demand**
Fewer cars on the road lessens air and climate change pollutants and gasoline usage.
- >> **Decrease traffic congestion**
Improve air quality and mobility in your local community.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

- >> **Get positive recognition**
Be recognized as a Platinum, Gold, Silver or Bronze New Jersey Smart Workplace.
- >> **Be a sustainable business**
Demonstrate that your worksite is committed to helping employees, the community and the environment.

Smarter commute options are



Cost effective



Healthy for employees



Community oriented



Environmentally friendly

Every worksite is unique. There is no “one size fits all” approach when developing a commuter benefits program. Company culture, location and employee preferences should all be taken into consideration. This guide serves as a framework to assist your site with program development, implementation and evaluation.

STEP 1 | Contact RideWise

Consider us your transportation options resource. We are here to provide ongoing education, promotion, encouragement, and to measure the impact of your programs.

STEP 2 | Identify the key contact person

This is the person who will serve as the point person between RideWise and the worksite and its employees. This can be someone in human resources, facilities management, or someone on the sustainability/green team. This person’s role is to ensure that employees are aware of the new travel options and support programs that are being made available to them.

STEP 3 | Assess needs and goals

Before developing a commuting program, the first step is to understand employee commuting habits, patterns and attitudes. Where do employees live and how do they travel now? What alternate travel options are of interest to them? RideWise can design, distribute, collect and analyze a simple online or paper survey.

STEP 4 | Conduct a cluster analysis

Do groups of employees live near each other to make carpooling or vanpooling an option? Using mapping software, RideWise can perform a cluster analysis of employee home zip codes to determine if employees live in locations that make carpooling, vanpooling or transit convenient.

STEP 5 | Conduct a site assessment

Determine if there are any infrastructure considerations that may impact your commute program. RideWise can examine your worksite’s parking availability, identify the nearest transit stops, and assess bicycle and pedestrian connectivity.

The data gathered from the survey, cluster analysis and assessment is used to help you develop achievable goals. Your goals will help you identify the best strategies for your commute program.

To help develop these goals, consider the following questions to guide with the decision making process:

- » **How can you attract and retain high quality employees?**
- » **Are there any onsite parking issues that need to be addressed?**
- » **How can commuter benefits increase employee morale?**
- » **Can commuter benefits help your organization achieve a sustainability goal?**

Think about your worksite’s culture as you identify strategies and other staff or departments that should be involved. Also, think about how you want to measure the impact of your program. Do you want to know how many employees are carpooling? Do you want to know how many drive alone miles, vehicle trips or emissions are reduced?

It’s important to include business travel when developing goals. Where, why and when do employees travel for business? Can these meetings be done via teleconferencing, video conferencing or web conferencing and eliminate some travel?

Get Fit Through Walking- "No Sweat!"

A Long Term Approach to Wellness

Tuesday, January 14
11 AM - Noon
Building 19 Training Room

- Guided walk in/outdoors
- Progress tracking through Health Advocate
- Free resources, maps and support
- Tied to quarterly challenges

Contact RideWise to learn more about free services for employers and employees.

RideWise connects you to information you need to navigate Somerset County.

(908) 704-1011 staff@ridewise.org
www.ridewise.org

RIDEWISE INC.
360 GROVE STREET
BRIDGEWATER, NJ 08807

Benefits of Walking

RideWise helped employees of Bridgewater Township and Hillsborough Township fit more healthy and active transportation into their lives with a lunch-n-learn on the benefits of walking, followed by an optional guided walk. The free program was offered by RideWise and the Mayor’s Wellness Initiative, and presented by Mike Schatzki, MPA, CSP, and “recovering couch potato.”

This section contains information on commute strategies and their associated benefits. The strategies that you select should be the ones that make the most sense and yield the biggest impact for your worksite. Use the data gathered from the cluster analysis, employee survey or site assessment to research different strategies or options that will help meet your goals. It is important to note that not every strategy listed will be appropriate for your location. Remember that RideWise is here to help you design and implement any of the strategies listed here.

CARPOOL 

Carpooling is the quickest and easiest way to cut vehicle travel and reduce emissions. A carpool is two or more people sharing the ride in an employee-owned vehicle. This could be two co-workers sharing the ride, two spouses who work together, or friends/neighbors who live and work near one another. The rules are agreed upon by the individuals in the pool. RideWise utilizes the NJ Rideshare database to help connect people who are interested in sharing a ride. Employees can visit the site and search for a carpool match on their own.

Inviting RideWise to your worksite for a commuter fair is a great way to educate employees on commute options.

VANPOOL 

Vanpooling can make the most of a lengthy trip by allowing employees to get a jump start on work, to rest or to socialize. A vanpool is a group of 5 to 15 commuters who have a similar home origin and worksite destination and schedule. The employees ride to work in an insured commuter van that they lease as a group from a third-party vanpool provider. The lease covers the use of the van, insurance, maintenance, and roadside assistance, and the employees divide the cost among themselves. Employees can also visit the vanpool page at the RideWise website to see if there is already a vanpool traveling to their workplace.

Invite RideWise to come to your worksite to hold an informational meeting with employees who are interested in joining or forming a vanpool.

TRANSIT 

Somerset County’s transit network is comprised of two NJ TRANSIT rail lines, four NJ TRANSIT bus routes, and 10 bus routes operated by the County. Creating a partnership with Uber, Lyft or local taxi services can solve the “last mile” by providing transportation to your site from a nearby bus or rail stop. NJ TRANSIT’s Business Pass program enables you to order monthly transit passes or one-way tickets in bulk for your employees or clients.

RideWise can help connect your employees with these local bus and rail services and even provide group or one-on-one travel training.

BIKING 

Many people live close enough to bike to work, but they don’t know the safest ways to get there. Bikes can be brought onboard most NJ TRANSIT trains and many NJ TRANSIT and Somerset County buses offer bike racks on the front of the bus, allowing employees to bike and ride. Of course, not all employees can or should bike to work. However, for those that can, RideWise can provide a “bike safety” lunch-n-learn to provide information on bicycle parking, planning a route, how to dress for your ride, safety, how to properly fit a bike helmet and “quick checks” to do before every ride. Your employees can also visit the RideWise website for an interactive map of on-road and off-road bike trails located in Somerset County.

Providing staff with a safe place to lock up or store their bike and shower facilities makes it more likely they will be willing to bike to work.

WALKING 

Walking to work may not be an option for most employees, but that doesn’t mean walking can’t be incorporated into other areas of the work day. Host a walking lunch-n-learn or a guided mindful walk, have walking meetings or host a walking challenge to motivate employee health and fitness.

FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS 

How much flexibility do your employees have in their working hours? Can they come to work before or after rush hour? Do they have the flexibility to occasionally work from home?

Flexible work arrangements help your employees reduce or eliminate time spent commuting by providing alternate ways or locations for working. These arrangements may not work for every worksite, but for many this flexibility is often a boost to morale and a factor in improving employee productivity and retention.

Flexible work arrangements can also be useful in helping employees adjust their work schedule to take the bus, carpool or vanpool.

Don’t forget about work-related meetings when thinking about flexible work arrangements. Promote the use of teleconferencing or video conferencing in lieu of traveling to meetings.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES (EV) 

RideWise can help facilitate electric vehicle (EV) adoption at your worksite by offering educational programming on EVs and connecting you to grant resources that address purchasing, installation, management and maintenance.

Commuting support programs are services or incentives that help reduce barriers to using a commuter alternative and make employees more open to trying.

COMMUTER TAX BENEFIT

The IRS allows your employees to use pre-tax dollars to pay for eligible public transit, vanpooling, parking and some ridehailing (Uber and Lyft) expenses. This can be done in three ways:

- >> **Direct Contribution**—tax free for your employees and tax deductible for you, the employer.
- >> **Pre-tax Payroll Deduction**—reduces tax payments for your employees and for you.
- >> **A combination of the above**

The pre-tax payroll deduction is the most popular benefit option. The amount that is tax free is capped. The IRS sets the cap annually. These funds are then excluded in the tax calculations for employee federal income tax, employee social security and Medicare payroll taxes, and employer matching Social Security and Medicare taxes.

INTERNAL INCENTIVES IDEAS

Employer incentives can range from simple to complex. The goal of the incentive is to increase employee participation in trying a commute option. The key is to provide incentives that fit your worksite’s culture. Ideas can include additional time off, free lunch or other rewards, monthly drawings, employee recognition, etc.

PREFERENTIAL PARKING

Preferential parking is when company parking spots are dedicated for employee carpools and vanpools. These spots are designated with a specific parking sign and are given priority in terms of proximity to the building so carpoolers and vanpoolers receive the best onsite parking.

EMERGENCY RIDE HOME

One of the biggest concerns employees have about using a commute alternative is being unable to get home in the event of an emergency or unforeseen circumstance. An emergency ride home removes the “what ifs” that can deter employees from trying commute options. If your employees have an emergency or must work overtime unexpectedly, RideWise will reimburse them for the cost of arranging a ride through a ride hailing service, taxi or car rental provider. You can also provide an employer-based emergency ride home for your employees as a supplement to the RideWise program.

VANPOOL SPONSORSHIPS/SUBSIDIES

Vanpools traveling to a worksite in Somerset County may qualify for an empty seat subsidy from RideWise if a passenger leaves the vanpool. RideWise also assists vanpool groups with applying for NJ TRANSIT’s monthly sponsorship. You can also offer an employer vanpool subsidy as an incentive for employees.

DRIVE LESS SOMERSET CHALLENGE

RideWise organizes and administers Drive Less Somerset, an annual business and community sustainability event that is free and open for the public to participate. Drive Less encourages your employees to eliminate vehicle trips and drive alone miles by carpooling, vanpooling, biking, walking, using public transit or telecommuting. Employees are eligible to compete for weekly prizes, while the worksite that eliminates the most drive-alone miles earns the title of Drive Less Somerset Employer Champion. RideWise can help your site organize other challenge ideas that motivate and engage your employees including Bike to Work Day, Rideshare Month, and walking challenges.

ON-SITE AMENITIES

Is your organization alternate commute friendly? Employees that have a secure spot to park/store bicycles or a place to wash-up before working are more likely to try biking or walking to work. If your site doesn’t have the space for a shower or locker room, consider partnering with a local YMCA or health club. Giving employees access to repair/maintenance tools onsite can help with flat tires or safety adjustments before or after the ride.

BICYCLE LOCKERS

RideWise manages enclosed bike lockers for short and long-term rental at the Somerville and Raritan rail stations. The lockers protect bikes from weather, theft or damage, and are large enough to fit a bike, helmet and some gear.

EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS

Posting information in a visible, high traffic area or sending it electronically to employees is a good way to share alternative commute information. Be sure to include the new programs, incentives and benefits in new employee orientation materials.

LUNCH-N-LEARNS

Your site can take advantage of RideWise’s lunch-n-learn programs which are presented by RideWise or by an outside subject matter expert.

- >> **Distracted Driving**
- >> **Preparation for Roadside Emergencies**
- >> **Ridesharing 101**
- >> **Bicycle Safety; Bicycle Commuting; bike drives**
- >> **Pedestrian Safety**
- >> **The Benefits of Walking; walking challenges**
- >> **Electric and Alternative Fueled Cars**



Lunch-n-Learns

MICRO Corporation, one of our New Jersey Smart Workplaces, asked RideWise to arrange for a distracted driving lunch-time seminar for employees as part of Distracted Driving Awareness Month.



Since 2007, over 100 of Somerset County's top worksites have collaborated with RideWise and have been recognized as a New Jersey Smart Workplace.

ADESA New Jersey
 Affinity Federal Credit Union
 Akzo Nobel
 Alight Solutions
 Allergen
 Alpha
 Anadigics
 AON Hewitt
 Ashland Inc.
 AT&T
 Beasley Media Group
 Bernards Township
 Biovail
 Bridgewater Marriott
 Bridgeway Senior Healthcare
 Brother International Corporation
 Cegedim
 Change Healthcare
 Citi
 Comfort Inn & Suites
 Costco Wholesale Bridgewater
 Costco Wholesale N. Plainfield
 Dolce Hotels and Resorts,
 Basking Ridge
 Doubletree Hotel
 Duke Farms Foundation
 Eli Lilly & Co.
 Enzon Pharmaceuticals
 Ethicon

Fairfield Inn & Suites
 Fellowship Village
 Fiddler's Elbow Country Club
 Financial Resources Credit Union
 Hamamatsu
 Henkel
 Hillsborough Township
 Hilton Garden Inn Bridgewater
 Homewood Suites by Hilton Somerset
 Hyatt house Bridgewater
 II-VI OptoElectronics
 Imclone Systems
 Infosys
 Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of J&J
 JM Sorge, Inc.
 Johnson & Johnson Bridgewater
 Johnson & Johnson Cordis
 Johnson & Johnson TS
 LifeCell
 Linde North America, Inc.
 Manville Borough
 Matheny Medical & Education Center
 McKesson Corporation
 MetLife - Bridgewater
 MetLife - Somerset
 Micro Corp.
 Montgomery Academy
 National Starch
 Natural Systems Utilities

Nestle Health Science
 Nestle Waters North America
 Nouryon
 Olde Mill Inn & Grain House
 Ortho Clinical Diagnostics
 Ortho McNeil
 Oticon Inc.
 Parsons
 Pfizer Inc.
 Pharmagistics
 Philips Lighting Company
 Premier Development
 Procure Proton Therapy Center
 PVH Corp.
 Qualcomm
 Raritan Americas, Inc.
 Raritan Valley Community College
 Reckitt Benckiser
 Regency Jewish Heritage Nursing
 Robert Wood Johnson
 University Hospital Somerset
 S&G Cleaning Services, LLC
 Sanofi
 SHI International Corp.
 ShopRite of Hillsborough

Somerset County
 Somerset County Park Commission
 Somerset County Recycling
 Somerset County Vocational
 & Technical Institute
 Somerset Hills Learning Institute
 Somerset Medical Center
 Somerset Patriots
 Somerset Patriots Baseball Team
 Somerville Bicycle Shop LLC
 The Jewish Federation of Somerset,
 Hunterdon & Warren Counties
 The Oscar & Ella Wilf Campus
 for Senior Citizens
 The Palace at Somerset Park
 The Spaulding Group
 Thermo Fisher Scientific
 Township of Bridgewater
 Township of Franklin
 Township of Warren
 VA New Jersey Health Care System
 Verizon Bedminster
 Verizon Communications
 Verizon Wireless Branchburg
 Verizon Wireless Warren



Ingredion Bridgewater Goes Electric

Ingredion Bridgewater and RideWise partnered to deliver an All Electric Vehicles Day to celebrate the installation of Ingredion's new electric vehicle chargers. The event offered attendees the opportunity to test drive a Tesla Model 3 or a Model X by Tesla of Short Hills.

BRONZE LEVEL

Employers must complete **four** of the following activities to be a **bronze level** New Jersey Smart Workplace:

- >> Establish and maintain a relationship with RideWise
- >> Designate an on-site point of contact for employee commute inquiries
- >> Place alternative commute options information in new-hire packets
- >> Encourage employees to register for traffic alerts at 511NJ.org
- >> Provide access to site-specific commuter information display
- >> Regularly promote commute options and TMA incentives through memos, posting, e-mail, Intranet or other employee communications
- >> Encourage employees to register their carpool or vanpool with RideWise
- >> Hold at least one commuter information event at your worksite
- >> Hold at least one vanpool or carpool formation meeting at your worksite
- >> Hold at least one TMA lunch-n-learn presentation
- >> Offer an informal flex-time program
- >> Offer an informal telecommuting program
- >> Conduct an employee commute survey with help from RideWise

SILVER LEVEL

Employers must complete **four bronze level** criteria and **three** of the following criteria to be a **silver level** New Jersey Smart Workplace:

- >> Host or sponsor TMA events/programs such as Bike to Work Month, Car Free Week, National Walk Month, Drive Less Somerset or Distracted Driving awareness at the worksite.
- >> Provide financial or staff assistance for TMA-sponsored community events
- >> Host two or more commuter information events at your worksite
- >> Host two or more TMA lunch-n-learn presentations
- >> Host two or more on-site vanpool/carpool formation meetings
- >> Provide a designated outdoor bicycle parking area or an appropriate indoor area
- >> Provide employees access to basic bike maintenance tools
- >> Provide preferential parking for vanpoolers or carpoolers
- >> Offer a formal flex-time program

- >> Offer a formal telecommuting program
- >> Offer a formal compressed work week policy
- >> Provide pre-tax payroll deductions for commuting costs for employees (vanpool, transit, bicycle or ride hailing commuters)
- >> Provide an Emergency Ride Home for employees (separate from the RideWise program)
- >> Sell transit passes on site
- >> Provide on-site amenities such as food service, dry cleaner, ATM/bank, sundries, and showers
- >> Implement a teleconference policy

GOLD LEVEL

Employers must complete **five bronze level** activities and **five silver level** activities to be a **gold level** New Jersey Smart Workplace.

PLATINUM LEVEL

To be a **platinum level** New Jersey Smart Workplace, employers must achieve **gold level** and implement a comprehensive site-specific alternative commute program such as:

- >> Telework or compressed work week program that reduced commute trips by 3%
- >> A monthly employer subsidy towards transit passes
- >> A monthly employer subsidy/benefit for employees who carpool or vanpool
- >> Partnering with local gyms, YMCAs or health clubs to provide off-site showers
- >> Supplement parking by partnering with local organizations to create private park and rides
- >> Provide a fleet of bicycles for employee use or rental
- >> Provide an employer-subsidized shuttle
- >> Provide electric vehicles for employee business use
- >> Provide electric vehicles and charging stations for employee use



360 Grove Street
Bridgewater, NJ 08807
908.704.1011
www.ridewise.org