



Walkable Washington

collaborate, take action, celebrate

For information about Walkable
Washington and other Feet First
programs

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Case Study

Walkable Washington

The Walkable Washington program grew out of the Feet First Cities Program. It showcases exceptional pedestrian-oriented improvements, community groups and outreach programs; maintains a statewide network for key contacts and stakeholders including an annual symposium; and provides assistance with Safe Routes to School, walking audits and other educational activities and programs.



Smart Trips Whatcom County, WA

Description and purpose

Whatcom Smart Trips encourages and helps Whatcom County residents to walk, bicycle, take the bus and share rides instead of driving alone. Outreach messaging centers around positive goal achievement and avoids negative “guilt trip” language. The campaign has six major goals: 1) to reduce traffic congestion; 2) to increase transportation system efficiency, mobility and accessibility at a lower cost; 3) to provide health benefits to individuals; 4) to strengthen social connections; 5) to create a more vibrant local business community; 6) and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other forms of water and air pollution.



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Participants log their Smart Trips online to track both distance traveled and cumulative environmental and financial savings. In addition, Whatcom County employers and businesses have partnered with Whatcom Smart Trips to provide incentives to active participants, including monthly cash drawings, prizes, gift certificates and member discounts. The Whatcom Smart Trips program also makes use of targeted outreach to local schools and neighborhoods, an emergency ride home service, bicycle education courses, and an extensive public awareness effort.

Costs and funding

Whatcom Smart Trips is funded by contributions from the City of Bellingham, Whatcom County, Whatcom Transit Authority, Whatcom Council of Governments, and the State of Washington as well as grants from the Northwest Clean Air Agency, Puget Sound Energy, ConocoPhillips Ferndale Refinery, and the U.S. Department of Energy. Partner businesses donate prizes for the incentive program. The first three years (2006-2009) of Smart Trips cost \$1.9 million, which includes staff to administer the program.

The program operates with a level of investment of between \$2-3 per county resident. Periodic individualized marketing efforts designed to reach those interested in how to make smarter transportation choices can increase this investment to \$5-6 per resident.

Community involvement

Whatcom Smart Trips is open to all residents of Whatcom County. Training and information sessions are also regularly available to target groups, such as schools, retirement communities, and neighborhood organizations.

Image courtesy of Whatcom Smart Trips.

Benefits and results

The detailed travel behavior data generated from Whatcom Smart Trips program participants since July 1st, 2006 show that the program has:

- Signed up 16,372 county residents
- Recorded over 2.94 million smart trips for a total of 45.87 million miles
- Prevented over 18,600 tons of carbon dioxide emissions
- Recorded 1.19 million hours of healthy physical activity
- Saved 1.91 million gallons of gasoline worth approximately \$6.87 million

In addition to these impressive results, the City of Bellingham experienced increases in walk, bike, and public transit mode share citywide from 2004-2009. According to a 2012 Mobility Report, a targeted group of about one third of city residents who received targeted outreach between 2007 and 2009 reduced their vehicle trips by 13 percent while increasing walking, biking and taking the bus by 22, 35 and 10 percent, respectively. This result was the largest measured reduction in vehicle trips of any program designed to increase alternative mode share in a U.S. city.

Project Contacts

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Resources

Whatcom Smart Trips

<https://www.whatcomsmartrips.org/>

2012 Bellingham, WA Mobility Reports

<http://smartrips.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/TravelInBellinghamSinglePgs.pdf>



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