

Choose your mode! Car-Free Week 2011

Vanpool

As one of the first primary drivers for a Pfizer vanpool in October 2006, I rallied riders from the Seacoast NH area for our van. As our original van (received brand new in Oct 2006 with 11 miles on it) is retired for a newer model, I have cherished every mile over the past five years for:

- The significant cost savings of commuting to work
- The contribution to a greener environment (It really does make you feel your contribution counts.)
- The incredible team spirit, support and friendships that continue beyond the van
- And you can even start/continue your work day on the van (reviewing docs, prepping items or sending emails)!

One of the things I cherish most is the integrity of all those who share the Rule No. 1 pledge: "What's said on the van stays on the van!"

Bev Potter
Pfizer
Andover, MA

Bike

I have been biking to work in the South Boston Waterfront from Newton Upper Falls for a couple of years now. I started in the summer of 2008 as a reaction to \$4 a gallon gas and a U.S. foreign policy structured around fossil fuels. I was going to change the arc of U.S. foreign policy one pedal at a time. Surprisingly, I simply continued to ride through the fall, winter and spring and found that the combination of exercise and freedom of movement outweighed the pure financial benefits. It has simply become a part of my normal commuting habit. Integral to my decision to continue to ride was the ongoing support of my firm and the local Seaport Transportation Management Association.

Biking to work in Boston has continued to improve over the last few years with the addition of numerous bike lanes, and the commitment of the City to cycling more broadly. The bike Friday summer series, The Hub on Wheels, along with the Hubway program released in July all indicate continued support of cycling which keeps me riding.

Ultimately, it is the pure joy of the wind, rain, or snow in my face as I ride along the Charles River or past Boston College, Fenway Park and the State House on Beacon Street that makes riding fun. I still have work to do on changing U.S. foreign policy so Senators John Kerry and Scott Brown (who are avid bike riders in their own right) would do well to look in their rearview mirror on their next ride or campaign. Someone might be gaining on them.

Kent Wittler
AEW Capital Management
Boston, MA



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Carpool

Diane Burnham, Daniela Cambra, and Jennifer Rosignol - who all work at Putnam Investments in Andover, decided to carpool when they learned about the significant savings they could achieve as well as the incentive and support programs provided by the Merrimack Valley TMA. As a carpool, the group annually saves \$10,000 in gas, and individually reduces their commuting miles by close to 23,500 miles each year, as well as saving wear and tear on their personal automobiles. An added benefit is the free-time the group gains each day to play games, relax, and chat - reducing the stress of their long commute and allowing the ladies to arrive at work and return home ready to greet their responsibilities with a positive outlook.



Diane Burnham, Daniela Cambra, and Jennifer Rosignol
Putnam Investments
Andover, MA

Walk

Most days I walk to work – I call it the “ankle express.” It’s about a mile from my house to the office, so my travel time is 15-20 minutes depending on my pace. In the winter, I gear up with my boots, hat, coat, and gloves. In the nicer weather, I strap on some sandals, grab my bag and I’m out the door.

My walk starts around 7am. I love watching the city wake up as I make my way down Tremont Street towards the Transportation Building in Park Square. The neighborhood markets and coffee shops tempt me with chalk-board signs offering smoothies, lattes, extra sweet black grapes, even blueberry pancakes. But I stay on course knowing that a steaming Starbucks tall bold is waiting for me at my journey’s end. The cinnamon scent of fresh baked goods wafts from Francesca’s – good thing for my health and fitness that they don’t open until 8am. I cross paths with joggers, cyclists, parents pushing baby strollers, people walking their dogs, students waiting for the bus, delivery guys bringing supplies to the stores and restaurants, and constructions workers setting up for a day of renovation and repair. As I approach the office, I pass through a swirl of tourists pouring out of the hotels in search of Boston’s history and charm and, I briefly turn into a tour guide who is giving directions to Faneuil Hall or the Old North Church. Then, it’s into the building I go to join my clever and energetic associates as we work to help travelers find smart ways to get where they are going.



Kay Carson
MassRIDES
Boston, MA

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Take Transit

With the cost of parking in Harvard Square and the threat of traffic to get there, Harvard-bound



Stefan Wuensch is very enthusiastic about his choice in taking public transit to work. "I love that my entire month of daily transportation costs me \$75; I love that my wife and I only need to own one car; I love that walking to and from the Lynn train station gets me out into my own community I love the fact that trains are the most fuel-efficient form of land transportation," Stefan shares.

While his MBTA commute does add time to what a traffic-free car trip could take, Stefan says he doesn't mind the additional time as he doesn't have to worry about traffic, he can read, nap, surf the internet, or chat with fellow commuters while on the train. He even became Facebook friends with the two conductors!

An avid "rail fan," as he calls himself, Stefan also volunteers on the MBTA Rider Oversight Committee. Over the last six years, he has been a part of advising the MBTA on numerous issues including fares, courtesy, service reliability, air quality, capital construction projects, service equity for low-income neighborhoods, and more. His daily commute allows him to see first-hand the work he's put into the committee, to make the MBTA better for everyone.

Stephan Wuensch
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA

Work from Home

The UMass President's Office implemented teleworking back in 2005 when the Western Massachusetts offices moved to a more central location in Shrewsbury. A lot of us went from a few minutes drive to over an hour drive, on way. Whether an employee is able to telework is determined on a case by case basis. If an employee consistently has work that can be done away from the office, he/she will be able to telework. The employee picks a day and will have that day each week to telework. In the case of inclement weather, the employee can switch days as to not have to drive in poor weather.



The main reason that teleworking works for me is that I can leave my car in the garage and don't have to fight traffic. I save myself money and frustrations due to sitting in traffic. I also use my telework day to work on things that require quiet surroundings.

Teleworking benefits both the employer and employee morale. It's a good break to maybe sleep in a little since the commute to work is reduced to about 10 seconds, so that will make for a more alert employee. Another benefit to the employer is that employees might tend to work longer hours. I start work earlier on my telework day and sometimes will work later since I don't have a commute. I wouldn't imagine any employer would have a problem with that!

The only real downside to teleworking for me is having a cat that loves to sit on paperwork! I solved that problem by building a fence in my backyard so he could go outside and chase bugs, not paper!

Lorie
UMass President's Office
Shrewsbury, MA