



What is *Way to Go, Seattle?*

Way to Go, Seattle! is part of Seattle's effort to improve transportation systems and provide more transportation choices. The *Way to Go, Seattle One-Less-Car* demonstration program offers families financial incentives and information to help them reduce automobile use, try other transportation options, and rethink the way they use their car for both commuting and errands or entertainment. This project shows people that they can save money and simplify their lives by not owning their second or third, or even first car.

In exchange, participating families sign a contract to not use their "extra" car during the pilot, keep a diary of their transit behavior and choices, and help us determine both the barriers and incentives to car trip reduction. The economic incentive the families receive is the same amount of money they would have in their pocket if they didn't own that second car. The incentive has been \$85 a week, the amount of money the average second car costs to own and operate (this figure includes all costs such as registration and insurance, maintenance, gas, and parking costs), although in the third round the incentive will match each families actual car ownership costs. Our goal is to ease neighborhood traffic and automobile-caused air pollution.

What do *Way to Go, Seattle! One-Less-Car* participants do?

For the third round, the City of Seattle will sign a contract with approximately 40 participating families for 10-12 weeks starting fall 2002. Families agree to give up use of their "extra" car and receive the financial equivalent of owning and operating a second car matched to each household's actual cost.

- ◆ Participants will be provided with information and tools they can use to try other transportation options.
- ◆ Each driving member of the household will agree to keep a daily diary of their travel behavior, including costs, e.g. when and why they took a bus or taxi, drove their car, biked, walked, rode with a neighbor, etc. They'll also keep qualitative comments in their diary, such as how they consolidated trips, when and why the transportation mode they chose either worked well or was too inconvenient, how weather influenced their choices, etc.
- ◆ Participants will also be asked to keep the travel diary for the first 3 weeks of the project, detailing how they normally get around – to give us "baseline" information. They will be paid for providing us with this valuable baseline information, but at the lesser rate of \$25/week. For the weeks that they are not using the second car, they will be paid how much money they would actually have in their pocket if they didn't own their "extra car".
- ◆ Participants will turn in their travel diaries each Monday, and be paid their weekly stipend via automatic deposit after sending in the weekly travel diary. We are developing an online diary form to make this process easier and reduce labor, although participants will have the choice of using that, e-mailing, faxing, or postal mailing in their diaries.
- ◆ We'll check odometers of the car the participants gave up at the start and end of the non-driving period to make sure the "extra" car was not used during the 9 weeks. We'll also check the odometer of the other car to give us an estimate of how much more the first car will be driven.
- ◆ Project households will be asked to participate in media/informational/educational campaigns to describe the pros and cons of making more conscious transportation choices for up to one year after the project is completed.
- ◆ Participants will fill out a follow-up survey to determine if there are lasting results.

We'll receive regular updates and at the end of their contract, we'll meet with participants to hear from them directly how the project worked for their families. We'll also evaluate their use of

the funds they received and the information in their diaries to see if, in fact, making better travel choices was less expensive than owning a second, or even a first, car and to learn what successes might be incorporated in a broader car trip reduction effort.

How does the public benefit from Way to Go, Seattle?

Public benefits include less neighborhood traffic and less pollution. Over 60% of pollution contributing to global warming in the Northwest is from driving. Approximately 75% of trips are non-work related, so this is why we're as frustrated by traffic on weekends doing errands as we are during weekday commute hours. The project will form the basis of an educational effort to get Seattleites to think about their transportation decisions and try riding the bus, participating in car sharing, bicycling and walking and other things that reduce auto trips.

Why do we want to know how to help Seattle residents change their transportation behavior? Because, in the long run, trip reduction can result in cleaner air, less wear and tear on streets, less land devoted to parking, and a shift in thinking about automobile use. This project is a cost-effective experiment to determine what works and how receptive Seattle residents are to car trip reduction. In the future, the information may also form the basis for a promotional campaign urging citizens to save money by making wise transportation choices including potentially selling their "extra" cars. Increasing the mobility options and realizing the costs of driving is particularly important for low-income families where the cost of owning a car has a disproportionate impact on the family income.

We have produced a web page that offers tips and tools to make transportation choices including public transportation connections, maps, and sample "car-free trips." This page is being produced in conjunction with the Car Smart Communities project – offering grants to help Seattle residents reduce trips in their communities. Please visit <http://www.cityofseattle.net/carsmart/>

What's Next for the Way to Go One-Less-Car Demonstration?

- ◆ Just from hearing about the project, people are selling their cars! When we contacted households to participate in the second demonstration (spring 2001), we had 5 – 6 households decide to promptly sell their second cars and start realizing the savings immediately. Some of the families made the decision to sell their cars after hearing how much other families saved, others made the decision after they filled out our new Car Cost Worksheet that helped them calculate how much money they would save each month if they gave up one car.
- ◆ We'll take the results of all three demonstration projects and let others know what these families learned. We've received a grant to do the third, improved demonstration this year to test some new ideas. For the long term, we plan to use the case studies from these pilot projects as the basis of a public education program to encourage other Seattle families to save money and improve their communities livability by making more conscious transportation choices. We will also be packaging the results to enable other cities to replicate this project – we have a waiting list of 20 cities so far. For more information visit www.cityofseattle.net/carsmart/waytogo.htm.

**For more information please call the *Way to Go, Seattle!* project at 615-1550
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