

Columbia Sportswear Employee Bike Share 2019 Final Data Report

In Summer 2019, Westside Transportation Alliance (WTA) and Columbia Sportswear partnered to offer an employee bike share program at Columbia Sportswear's Amberglen Call Center in Hillsboro, OR. This was the third consecutive year the program was offered as a seasonal program.

Background

Previous programs demonstrated the benefits of an employer-sponsored bike share program, including:

Helped employees use transit for commute trips by providing a connection to light rail station.



42% of participants shifted commutes to include transit (2017)



46% of trips were one-way between the MAX station and worksite (2018)

Positive impacts on employee morale and workplace environment.



86% felt their personal work performance had improved (2018)



83% felt more positive about their employer at the end of the program (2017)



100% of participants and 50% of non-participants felt the program improved the work environment (2018)

Program Overview

The 2019 program ran from June to October (19 weeks) and included 10 bikes. Both were increases from the 2018 program that used 8 bikes and ran for 14 weeks.

WTA managed all programmatic aspects for Columbia Sportswear's 2019 employee bike share program, including:

- ✓ Supplying and maintaining the bike fleet
- ✓ Setting up, activating, and monitoring back-end technology used for participant registration and bike checkout processes
- ✓ Planning program activities and coordinating all communications with Columbia Sportswear staff

Bikes could be checked out from either the Amberglen Call Center or the Quatama MAX station. Trips could be one-way between these two locations or round trip. The bike share program was exclusive for Columbia Sportswear employees and there was no cost to the employees.

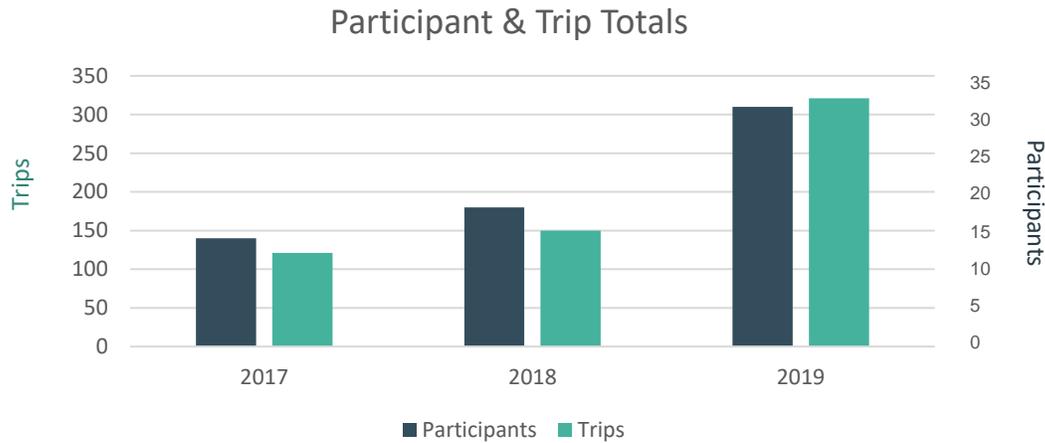
The program used Open Bike Initiative (OBI) technology, an open source model for managing shared mobility systems. After registering for the bike share program, employees check out bikes by sending a text with the bike number and receiving a reply with combination for the lock on the bike. Employees were also asked to submit a location code to identify where they were starting their trip, but the location code was not mandatory. A known challenge with the OBI platform is that once participants know the combination for a specific bike they may use the bike multiple times without sending a new text. To mitigate this impact the bike lock combinations were changed frequently during the program.

“A LOT OF PEOPLE HERE DEPEND ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AND WITH THE MAX LINE BEING ABOUT A MILE, IT’S VERY MUCH NEEDED FOR A LOT OF EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING MYSELF. WE ARE CERTAINLY ALL APPRECIATIVE FOR THE SERVICE THAT’S PROVIDED TO US.”

Columbia Sportswear
Amberglen Call Center Employee



Increased Engagement and Usage

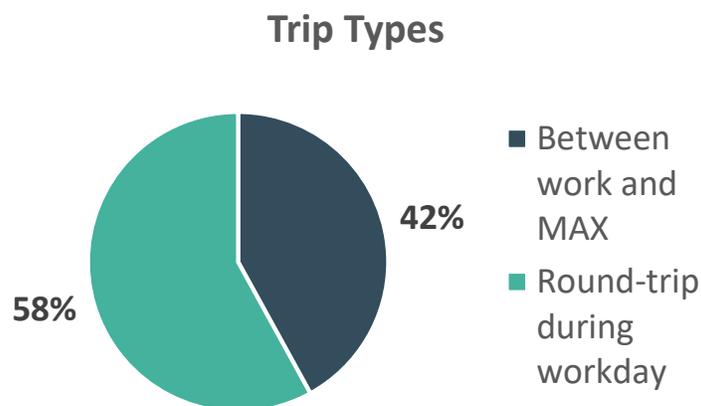


The number of registered employees increased by 72% from 2018. Participating employees used the bike share more than twice as much as the previous year. The increase was due to two factors:

- The program was five weeks longer than in 2018, and
- There was an increased frequency of trips (average trips per week increased by 54%).

Employees used the bikes more frequently before July 4th and after Labor Day. The period between July 4th and Labor Day had the fewest average trips per week.

Usage Patterns



Employees used the shared bikes as a first and last mile solution to access the Quatama MAX station and as active travel options for round trips from the worksite for mid-day breaks and errands.

The overall usage of the bikes throughout the day was fairly consistent. There was slightly higher usage in the morning (38%) compared to mid-day (31%) and afternoon (31%).

Recommendations

1. **Start program in May.** An earlier start would extend the length of the pre-July 4th period when the highest frequency of usage occurred, and it would provide the opportunity to combine the program's launch with Bike More Challenge activities.
2. **More consistent text tracking.** Incentivize and better communicate the importance of:
 - a. Sending texts at the start of each trip (observed consistent evidence of unreported usage).
 - b. Including location information in texts (number of texts with locations dropped from 83% to 55% during the program).
3. **More frequent checks on distribution of bikes between two locations.** Partially as a result of unreported trips, there were two times when all the bikes were at the worksite and had to be redistributed to the MAX station. In general, normal usage of the bikes resulted in a balanced distribution with only an occasional need to move one or two bikes to even the distribution.