

## WTA Membership Focus Group

Tuesday, August 20, 2013

11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

### Attendees:

#### Member Representation

Rhonda Coakley, Beaverton Round Executive Suites

Brad Choi, City of Hillsboro

Kathy Zak, EasyStreet Online Services

Carol Brown, Portland General Electric

Mark Gorman, Portland Community College

Michael Park, Radisys

Alicia Poltson, Vernier Software & Technology

Brett Davis, Intel

Leslee Moore, Enterprise

Don Rhodes, TriMet

Robin Straughan, Washington County

Janna Allgood, Washington County

Adam Argo, David Evans and Associates

#### Other:

Len Schulwitz, Harvard Business School

Association of Oregon representative

Phil Wu, WTA Board Member

Tracy Love-Silver, WTA, focus group facilitator

Jenny Cadigan, WTA

Michael Armstrong, WTA

### Discussion notes:

The conversation began with questions that expanded on survey questions. Most, but not all, of the participants had themselves responded to the surveys.

- By and large, participants did not perceive the transportation issues faced by their employees as a major issue.
- Many participants indicated that transit is not a realistic option for most employees because it would significantly increase their commute times.
- Most believed issues lie in the fact that this is a suburban setting and it is not feasible to expect transit to be able to meet the needs of many employees (distance to transit stops, schedule for stops, time per trip, et.), however, transit was still discussed as perhaps the most effective option for converting people from SOVs. Participants theorized that this is in part a reflection of the hierarchy of awareness of the different travel modes. .
- Participants seemed very excited about the pocket maps produced by WTA for several members
- Many participants were aware of bike programs—and favorably so—but did not report viewing their potential as a major part of their strategy for getting employees to work.
- ***Resources on carpooling and van pooling were discussed in detail as a huge gap in service but also as the transportation mode with the most promise of engaging employees.***
- Drive Less Connect has not been well-received, with participants reporting that they don't quite understand how it works or just what it can do.

When asked about what services and/or programs they would like to see WTA provide, participants suggested the following:

- Overall, there was consensus that the current options for carpooling/carpool matching were disjointed. Companies want help with matching and marketing, and need more accessible information on the options and benefits available. Suggestions were made for:
  - An “App”
  - On-line resources
  - “canned” resources that could be private labeled, including web, and to a lesser extent, print--Anything that would allow them to customize their resources without having to devote a lot of their own time and effort.
  - Help with “partnering” with other member businesses to increase carpool choices—especially when companies are close to one another.
- Challenges and incentive programs such as the Carefree Commuter Challenge and Bike Commute Challenge—Participants reported an interest among their employees in *Prizes*.
- Commuter workshops—that would be onsite—designed to raise confidence levels in commute options.
- “Best Practices” member meetings—“Where WTA would find out all the information and bring it to us—so we don’t have to go out and find it.” WTA to be the experts and share knowledge on particular subjects with the TCs
- Community building—connecting transportation coordinators—develop an online forum where TCs can discuss common issues: provide occasional in-person opportunities to do the same.
- Act as an advocate for transportation issues at all levels, and keep members abreast of anything pertinent.

### **WTA Focus Group Takeaway**

- Members are interested in help setting up carpools/finding carpool solutions
- Brett Davis’ idea on more meetings at the TC level to share WTA transportation expertise and best practices among group
- Want more informational materials and/or info templates
- Employees are interested in the cost savings
- Members look to WTA for information, programmatic assistance and advocacy

### **Overall takeaways**

- Members believe in the mission
- Want more educational/marketing materials
- Members are very interested in incentive programs and challenges