

CTR implementer interview  
Everett Transit, Sabina Popa and Mimi West  
Friday, September 8, 10 a.m.  
Interviewer: Susan Garber-Yonts

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**Tell us about your CTR/TDM program and your role in it.**

Everett Transit administers the CTR program for the City of Everett jurisdiction. Everett in Motion is a grant funded community-based program that complements our CTR efforts and provides incentives for all trips. Mimi West is the administrator of both programs. Sabina oversees the department.

**What are the key barriers you need to overcome to make your program even better?**

The conditions are a little bit different in our jurisdiction (City of Everett) in Snohomish County – different from King County for example. Availability of employee parking is plentiful at most worksites, with only a few challenges in the downtown core. There is plenty of parking at industrial sites.

Enforcement is a double-edged sword. We reach out to approximately 25 worksites and employee transportation coordinators (ETC). We have not enforced or penalized sites for non-participation in our program, but we make a great effort to include and encourage them. Aside from the ETCs at Boeing, which are dedicated staff for the program, ETCs at other worksites are assigned with higher priority tasks.

There's also a lack of awareness of the program in general. It may be the name, as well as the lack of state-wide advertisements, but "CTR" doesn't ring a bell with people. It's easier when there is awareness – otherwise it remains challenging. Volunteer worksites would also be easier to approach and recruit if they understand what it stands for and what we try to accomplish before we approach them. They might hear of individual programs that we advertise, such as Everett in Motion or Community Transit's Curb the Congestion, but that is less so for the CTR program in general.

The restriction on the types of rewards we can offer makes it difficult for our jurisdiction because there are better conditions, and the reasons for using alternatives are not based on constraints for the most part, such as parking or travel time. Most employees at our worksites don't have a problem finding free parking, and in most cases an alternate mode adds time to their commute. So with less of a "stick" and more of a "carrot" approach, we find the "carrot" needs to be enough to promote a change in behavior.

**If you had additional resources, what would you do with them to make your program better?**

Right now is a good example of a period of time when we do have additional resources. We have two CMAQ grants awarded through the state to create and promote the Everett in Motion program. It has been the most useful tool for us to date (it is also extended to the rest of the community), because most employers don't have many incentives for rideshare participants. These funds allowed us to think of other improvements and amenities, for bicyclists for example, that we otherwise couldn't have provided.

These funds allow us to do reach more folks and reward all trips, so they have been incredibly useful. Unfortunately, our funding for program is ending in 2018. If we had additional funding, we would definitely choose to continue and improve the program.

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**What is the single most important thing the state provides to your CTR/TDM program?**

CTR funding is the single most important thing that allows us to have the CTR staff, overseeing the program. Funding for Everett in Motion allows us to have tools and resources for employers. The Rideshareonline.com website and its tools for both program administrators and ETCs is incredible for us to be able to generate useful reports. Also, the fact that we have the CTR law, and awareness of the law at least in other departments of the city that oversee permitting, is a huge support. The fact that large employers are required to participate is a tool for us; otherwise in large organizations, it is very hard to reach the right people and convince them of the benefits of the program, especially when the resources we offer are limited.

**How do you and your customers use the information from the CTR Employer Survey Reports?**

We simply use it immediately following the surveys to look at where they are at in their program and where we are at as a jurisdiction. We don't use it on an ongoing basis.

**How do you and your customers use the information from the Employer Annual Report and Program Description?**

Similar to the survey – it gives us the opportunity to look at what employers are doing and if their situation has changed in any way - number of employers, parking etc. It is also an opportunity for us to make suggestions about potential improvements they can make. It gives us a tool to compare programs among employers, especially those in close proximity to each other. It has to be signed by upper management, which gives it some weight.

We also used the information when requests come from other City departments, such as Planning or Traffic Engineering. This is not a regular occurrence, but the information has been useful in existing site analysis and in the land use review process.

**What other methods do you use to measure the effectiveness of the program?**

We measure the number of participants in the Everett in Motion program and use Rideshareonline.com. We used the aggregate information about miles saved as a measure for our jurisdiction in some of our reports. Rideshareonline.com is great for providing that information. We reward people for being active in logging their trips, which is much more useful than asking about their habits for one week every two years. It keeps the program active in their minds and gives participants an incentive to continue their efforts, by bringing various jurisdiction or state-wide promotions into an already formed environment of tracking trips.

Training and frequent communication with our ETCs have been other ways to be effective. We measure the level of participation in workshops and how receptive people are to things we try to do. Collaborating with employers and partners on site-specific projects has also been effective. An example of that is partnering with Boeing and Community Transit to produce the "Going to Boeing" brochure, an effort we are looking to replicate with other sites, like Everett Community College.

Having funding to provide information and education to employers versus telling them they have to participate is a plus. Surveying and making a good faith effort are challenging. Providing incentives for filling out the surveys on an ongoing basis gives us more information and is more

engaging. Having these special programs to promote – that is exciting and has been great. They will be missed.

**Which subsidies and incentives that you have used are the most effective at helping people change their behavior?**

Due to a restructuring of the types of rewards we could provide through the program, the Everett in Motion has gone through two phases. The first phase of the program offered reward cards, and involved a fulfillment services for managing distribution, which was much easier to manage. It's easy to advertise and universal as an incentive. We then switched over to a package of promotional items and ORCA cards. The promotional items are great for promoting the program, but less of an incentive. For the worksites that provide ORCA cards for their employees, it is less of a draw than our initial phase. Regardless of the challenges, the program in general has been a great incentive. Being able to offer rewards that employers and community members can participate in is the most effective tool we have had in last ten years. Everett in Motion has been the most exciting venture TDM-wise for us.

**Is it important to have the state CTR law?**

Yes. For the bigger employers, it is the beginning of the conversation and provides the medium for distribution of these materials, and a channel to educate the public in alternative transportation options they may otherwise not know about. It is incredibly useful for distributing information from a jurisdictional perspective. The CTR law has been instrumental. If we didn't have it, it would make it much more challenging to reach folks – we wouldn't have enough people, rewards/incentives that are causing people to ask about it.

\*For smaller jurisdictions where grant-funding competitiveness is challenging, what we see happening after Everett in Motion is done is a return to how we used to do things. This means more focus on the CTR law and its enforcement and education, rather than also being able to offer tools and rewards that promote the programs. It was incredibly useful to have the state be the one that secured and provided the funding, creating these opportunities for everyone. It would be helpful if funding for community-based programs would be similar to the CTR funding, or if CTR funding would be increased to allow for these programs to continue. It can be based on number of sites or population, but to have a funding source that is consistent for TDM projects is important. CTR funding allows agencies to have staff to manage the program but CTR funding alone doesn't allow us to have community-type of programs. The additional CMAQ funds allowed us take this program to a level we haven't had before. For 2016, over 7 million miles were logged in our program as not having been taken as drive-alone – that is incredible.