

# Employer Case Study

## Downtown Bellevue



### Jacobs sees success with cost-sharing

Jacobs, a technical professional consulting firm, has 55,000 employees world-wide. Their Bellevue office is home to approximately 130 employees and focuses on civil engineering projects such as the I-405 Bellevue Braids and the Alaskan Way Viaduct. Even with field work requiring time away from the office, these engineers have built a solid foundation to support non drive-alone commuting.



Employees at Jacobs enjoy working right next to the transit center.

#### Getting Started

Jacobs started sharing the cost of commuting with their employees in the 1990s. Always in competition for design projects, the firm knows it's important to keep the best and brightest engineers on its team, and providing a comprehensive commute program is one way they get it done. ORCA Passport gives employees the option of riding the bus, Link light rail, Sounder commuter trains, vanpools and vanshares, as well as an emergency ride home. If employees can't conduct their field visits via transit, they can use one of two fleet cars, one of which is a hybrid vehicle, or get 100% reimbursement for their Zipcar use. The program at Jacobs is truly an integral part of the office's culture. Case in point: Though Jacobs recently had opportunities to lease office space in other buildings, they ultimately decided to stay at Bellevue Corporate Plaza because of its proximity to the transit center. With bus routes at their doorstep, employees find it easier than ever to get on board.

#### Program Elements

- 50% subsidized ORCA Passport; pre-tax employee contribution is deducted each pay period
- 100% subsidized carpool parking
- 30% subsidized solo driver parking
- 2 fleet vehicles for midday use; Zipcar use is also reimbursable
- Flexible scheduling combined with reduced Friday office hours

#### Return on Investment

- Nearly 80% of employees choose to pay their portion of the ORCA Passport cost, giving them flexibility to use the pass when it works for their schedule
- Minimal administration is required with an annual pass
- Valuable recruiting tool, particularly among candidates coming from the East coast who value the low cost

#### Keys to Success

- **Cost-sharing with employees**  
By splitting the cost of transit passes, Jacobs reduces its own expenses and helps employees understand the value of the pass. Employees of all levels, from the highest ranking manager in Bellevue to the company's administrative staff, invest in a pass each year.
- **Parking disincentive**  
Employees only pay \$13 a month for ORCA Passport compared to \$75 a month for parking.
- **Flexible schedule**  
Most employees work 9 hours Monday thru Thursday, making every Friday a half day. Doing so helps relieve congestion during the end-of-the-week PM commute, and it's a morale booster too.