# Commute Trip Reduction 101

An Introduction For Employee Transportation Coordinators (ETCs)

THURSTON REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

# Agenda

- What is CTR?
  - Section 1: Commute Trip Reduction Background
- How do I fit in?
  - Section 2: Your Role as an ETC
- What are our commute options in Thurston County?
  - Section 3: Alternative Commute Modes
- How can my worksite encourage and support CTR?
  - Section 4: Incentives, Subsidies, and Parking Management
- What now?
  - Section 5: Next Steps

# What is CTR?

Section 1: Commute Trip Reduction Background

# What is CTR?

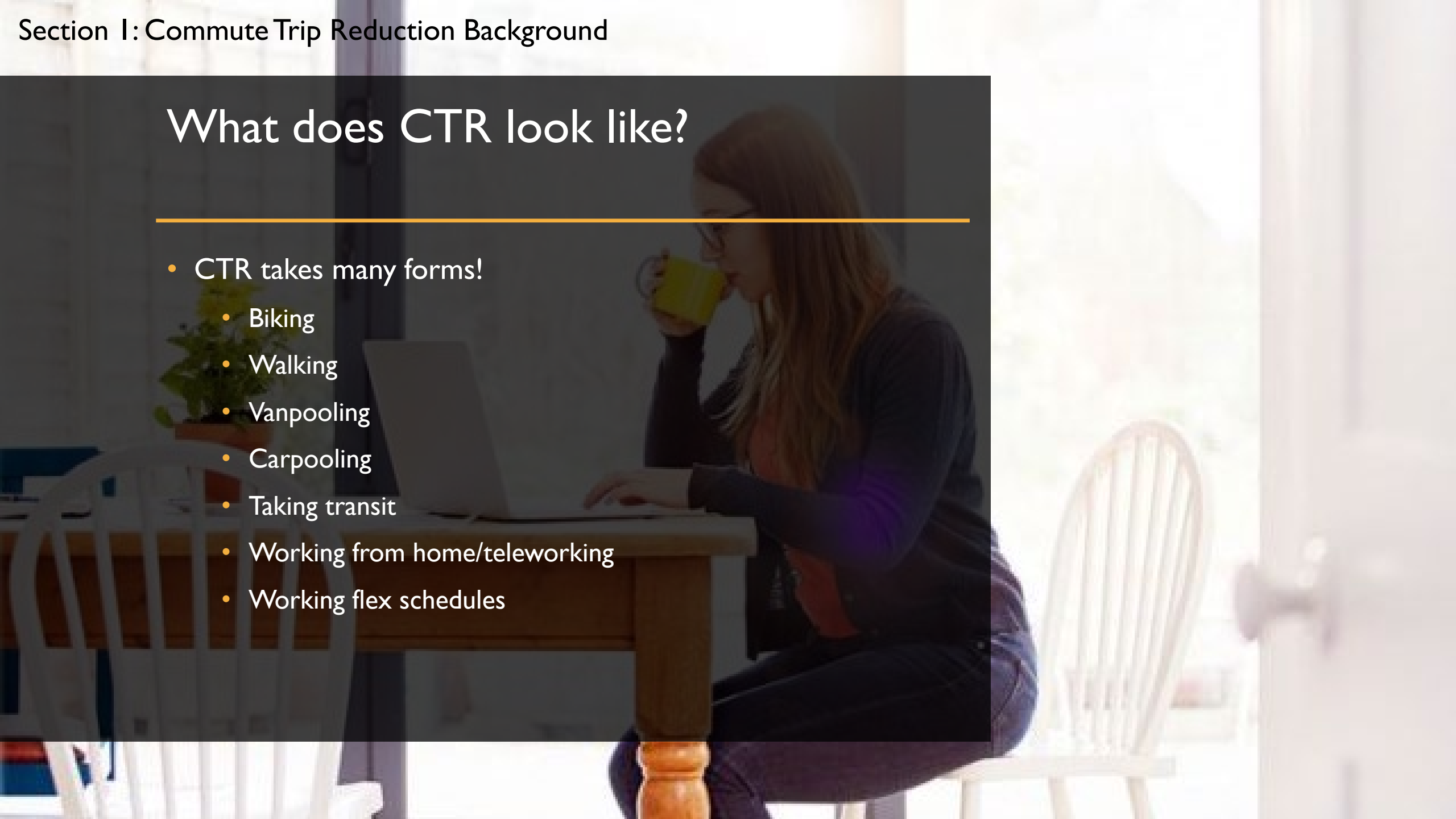
- CTR, or Commute Trip Reduction, is a program required by law for certain worksites in Washington
  - The program encourages employees to reduce the number and length of trips they make alone by car to work
- ETCs, or Employee Transportation Coordinators, are the CTR resource at each worksite
  - You are the point-of-contact that helps CTR get rolling at your worksite!

# CTR Law and Goals

- CTR law is part of Washington's 1991 Clean Air Act
- Goals
  - Increase the use of high-efficiency transportation options for commutes
  - Expand the availability and use of transportation options
  - Increase policy makers' support for transportation demand management
- It is working?
  - Yes! CTR worksites statewide have 66% more non-drive alone trips than the national average (WSDOT, 2017)

# What does CTR look like?

- CTR takes many forms!
  - Biking
  - Walking
  - Vanpooling
  - Carpooling
  - Taking transit
  - Working from home/teleworking
  - Working flex schedules



# Why does CTR matter?

- CTR is a win-win for employers and employees
- There are financial, environmental, and health benefits to employers and employees!
- Take a minute to answer these questions:
  - How do you benefit if your coworker commutes to work using an alternative mode?
  - How do you benefit if YOU commute to work using an alternative mode?

# Thought Exercise

## How do you benefit if your coworker commutes to work using an alternative mode?

- Less cars on the road, so you are stuck in less traffic (if you are commuting in a vehicle)
- Easier to find parking at your worksite if needed
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change

## How do you benefit if YOU commute to work using an alternative mode?

- Regardless of mode, you save money
  - Less $$$ on gas and vehicle wear-and-tear
  - Potentially lower insurance costs
  - Never pay for parking
- If you bike or walk
  - Physical health benefits
- If you telework or use transit, vanpool, or carpooling
  - More free time! Take a nap, make your grocery list, or play a game on your phone

## How much road space do 60 commuters use?

## How much road space do 60 teleworkers use?

# How do I fit in?

Section 2: Your role as an Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC)

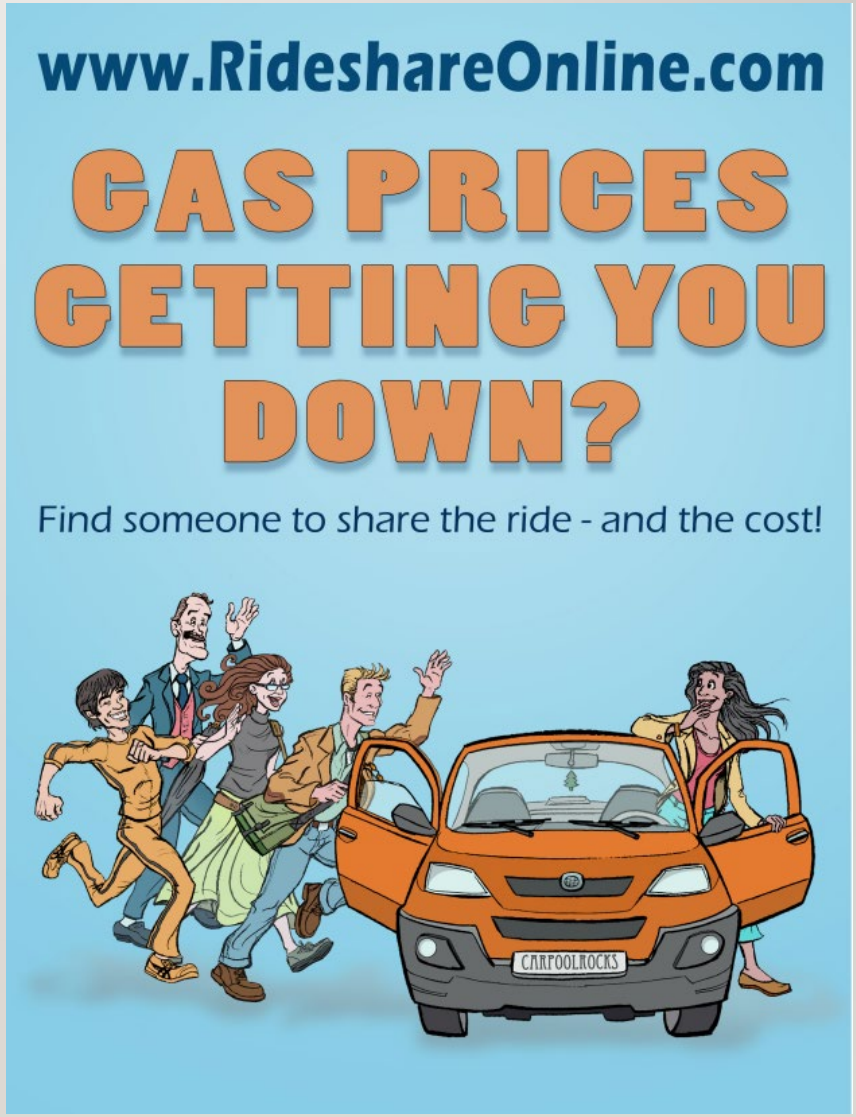
# What is my primary responsibility as an ETC?

- Get the word out
  - Prominently display ETC contact information at worksite
  - Distribute information to employees about commute alternatives to driving alone at least once a year (hopefully much more)
  - Promote RideShareOnline.com*
  - Promote telework per Governor's Executive Order 16-07*
  - Present CTR to top management annually*

*Requirement for state agency worksites, good practice for all worksites

# Other ETC Requirements – Program Administration

- Attend Basic Training within one year of assignment
- Submit an Annual Report and Program Description
- Provide notice when making major changes to CTR program, such as a worksite move, a new ETC, or a significant change in subsidies and incentives
- Survey employees about their commute habits every two years or as required by the jurisdiction



# Other ETC Requirements - Networking

- Participate in the CTR network
  - Collaborate with neighboring CTR worksites
  - Attend two Networking Sessions per year*
- The CTR network is also a benefit to ETC's
  - Get to know your regional partners
  - Learn new skills in a fun atmosphere

*Requirement for state agency worksites, good practice for all worksites

# It's not all bad!
# ETC Benefits

- New skills
- Greater visibility within and outside of your organization
- Networking
- Generating positive publicity for your organization

# Who is an affected CTR employer? What happens if you don't achieve a reduction of drive-alone trips?

- The CTR law applies to all employers, including public and private, that have 100 or more "affected" employees who work at a single worksite, and to all state agencies in the urban growth areas of Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater
- "Affected employees" are employees who:
  - Work full-time (35 or more hours per week), and
  - Are scheduled to begin work between 6 and 9 a.m. on two or more weekdays for at least 12 continuous months at a single worksite
- Not achieving a reduction of drive-alone trips does not violate the CTR law
- Failing to develop, submit, and implement a CTR program is a violation of the CTR law

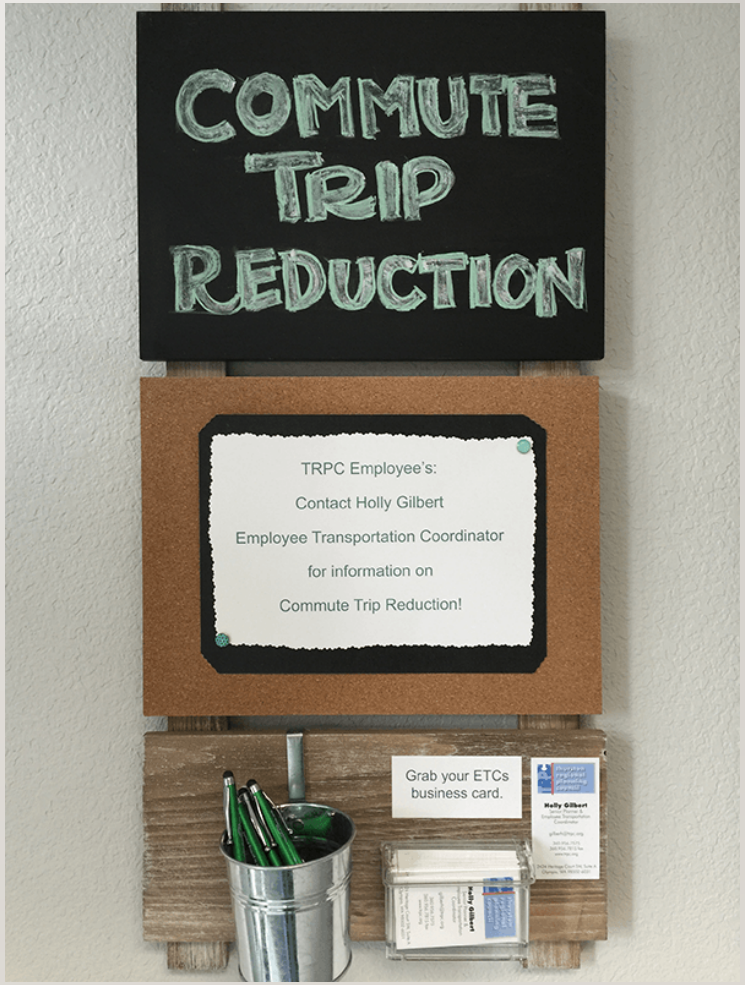
# What is the Annual Report? (AKA "Program Report")

- Describes your worksite's CTR program
- Every 2 years is a survey year – during survey years, the Annual Report is abbreviated and combined with the survey
- Completed by ETC and signed by management

- The report includes details about…
  - Posting of ETC contact information
  - Basic training attendance
  - How CTR information is distributed
  - Relocation of worksite
  - How management is updated
  - Contact information for ETC and management
  - What promotions are planned
  - Subsidies and incentives for alternate modes: bus, vanpool, carpool, bicycle, walk
  - Telework/flex schedules/compressed work week (CWW)
  - Worksite amenities – bicycle racks/cages, lockers, showers
  - Emergency ride home
  - Parking – priority for carpools & vanpools, free or charged

# What is the CTR Survey?

- Survey occurs every 2 years
- Asks employees about their commute patterns
- Like all aspects of CTR, the survey requires good communication
  - TRPC will send sample communications to ETCs
  - ETCs should communicate in advance with management and employees



# What are our commute options in Thurston County?

Section 3: Alternative Commute Modes

# What are the alternatives to driving alone to work?

- Carpooling
- Vanpooling
- Riding Transit
- Walking and Cycling
- Working a Compressed Work Week
- Teleworking

# Dive In: Carpooling

- Most popular choice (11%)
- May be suitable for individuals with safety concerns or mobility issues
- How can I help my employees find a carpool?
  - www.rideshareonline.com
  - Host events to promote carpooling

# Dive In: Vanpooling

- A vanpool is a group of three or more people who share a similar commute
- Intercity Transit will provide the van, fuel, insurance, and maintenance
- We will help recruit and ridematch
- Users pay a low monthly fare based on daily round trip miles
  - Employer may cover or subsidize this
- https://www.intercitytransit.com/services/vanpool/join-vanpool

# Why I Vanpool

# Dive In: Transit

- Thurston County is fortunate to have an excellent ZERO-FARE transit system through Intercity Transit
- Most Intercity Transit buses have a bike rack in the front
- Ride to a bus stop, or park at a park-and-ride to use transit for a portion of your ride
- Rural Transit (also zero-fare) provides service in Thurston's rural areas, and connects to Intercity Transit and Twin Transit in Lewis County

- Transit tools
  - Intercity Transit Route Planner https://www.intercitytransit.com/plan-your-trip/routes
  - Google Maps
  - One Bus Away
    - www.OneBusAway.org
    - Real-time arrival information for most transit agencies
    - Arrival information for every bus stop
  - www.thurstonrT.org

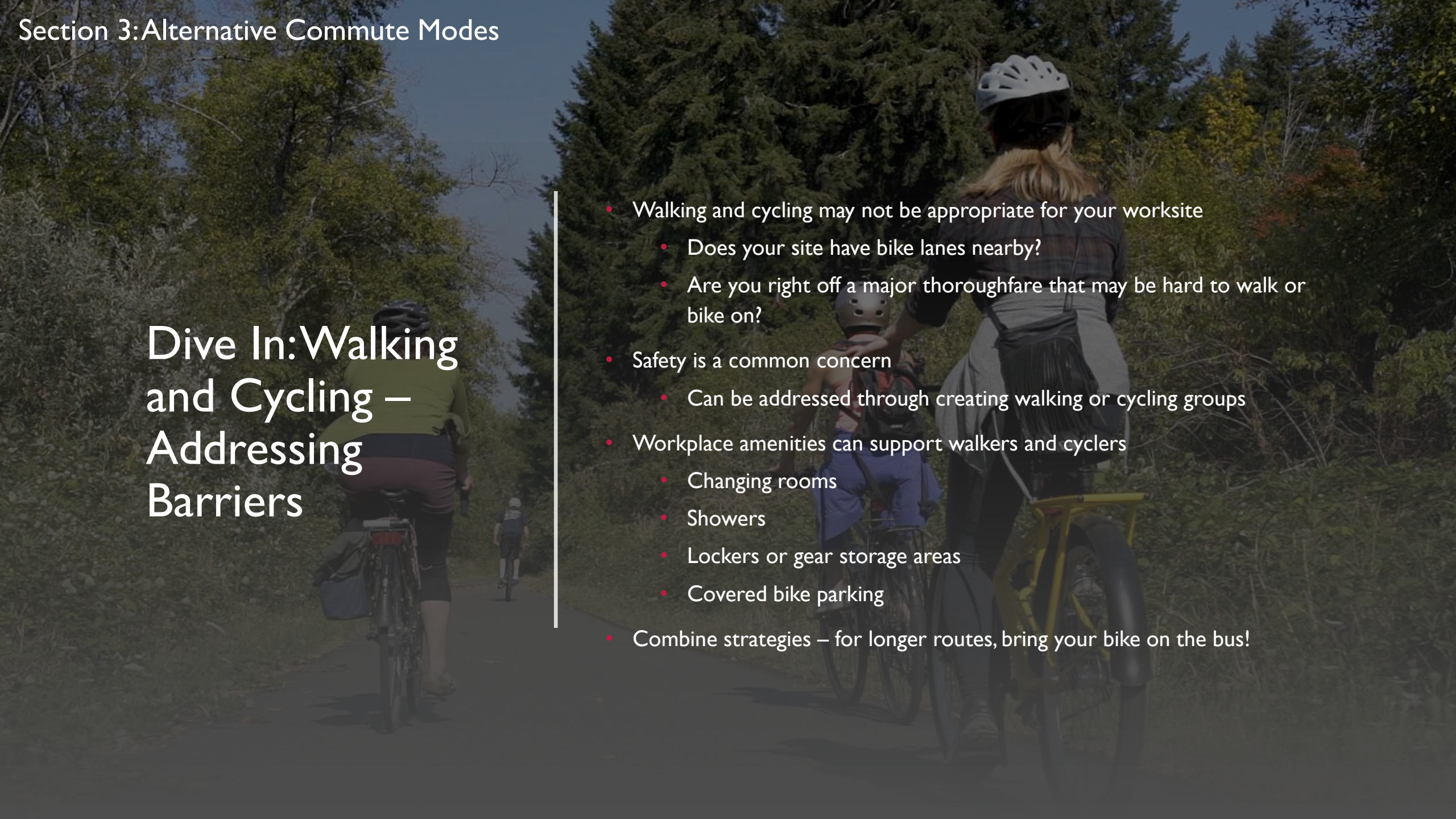
# Dive In: Transit – Addressing Unfamiliarity with Transit

- Using transit for the first time can be intimidating
  - Provide help with route planning, or offer to do a ride-along
  - Provide information on Intercity Transit's free bus-buddy program https://www.intercitytransit.com/how-to-ride/bus-buddies
  - https://www.intercitytransit.com/how-to-ride
- There are lots of great resources to help people figure out how to plan their trip, get on/off the bus, and more – see IT's video on loading your bike on the bus

# Why I Take the Bus

# Dive In: Walking and Cycling

- Thurston County has nearly 6 miles of paved shared-use trails connecting Olympia, Lacey, Rainier, Yelm and Tenino
- Intercity Transit hosts a Bicycle Community Challenge every February and May
  - Create a staff team
  - Combine with a health & wellness program
  - Help publicize the event to your worksite
- www.thurstonbikemap.org



# Dive In: Walking and Cycling – Addressing Barriers

- Walking and cycling may not be appropriate for your worksite
  - Does your site have bike lanes nearby?
  - Are you right off a major thoroughfare that may be hard to walk or bike on?
- Safety is a common concern
  - Can be addressed through creating walking or cycling groups
- Workplace amenities can support walkers and cyclers
  - Changing rooms
  - Showers
  - Lockers or gear storage areas
  - Covered bike parking
- Combine strategies – for longer routes, bring your bike on the bus!

# Why I Bike

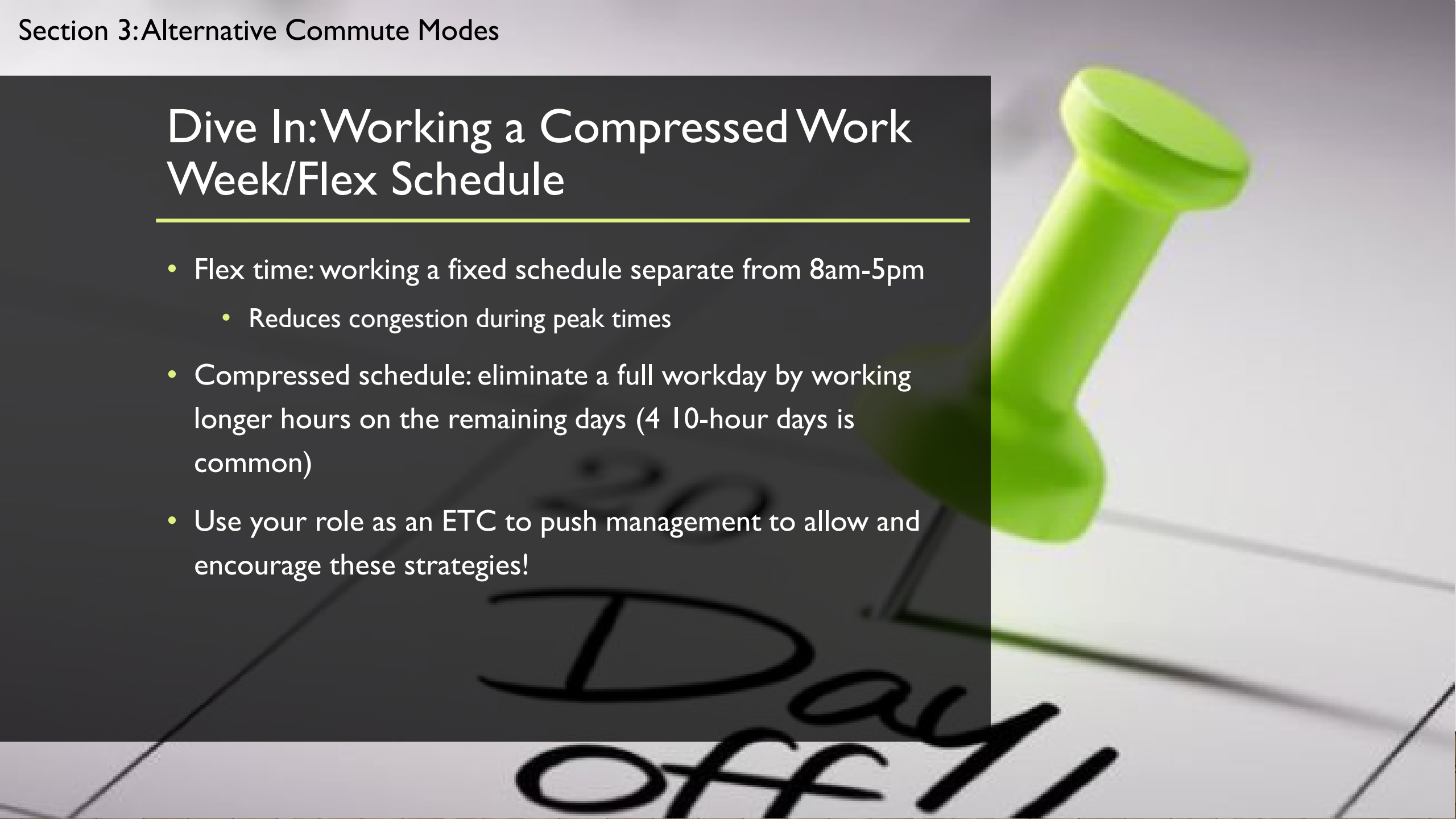
What if I take the bus or walk, and have to rush home or to my child's school for an emergency?

## Provide an Emergency Ride Home Program (you probably already do)

- A common barrier to CTR is feeling comfortable without your car
- State Agency Free Emergency (SAFE) Program
  - State employees who work in Thurston County are eligible for 8 emergency rides per year
- Non-state worksites can set up contracts with taxi services, distribute uber/lyft codes or allow use of employer vehicles
- A coworker can drive the employee to their emergency destination
- **These programs are not useful if your team members don't know about them – as an ETC, that's where you come in!**

# Dive In: Working a Compressed Work Week/Flex Schedule

- Flex time: working a fixed schedule separate from 8am-5pm
  - Reduces congestion during peak times
- Compressed schedule: eliminate a full workday by working longer hours on the remaining days (4 10-hour days is common)
- Use your role as an ETC to push management to allow and encourage these strategies!



# Dive In: Teleworking

- As we all learned recently, telework is a viable option to increase quality of life for employees
- Maximizes most CTR benefits
  - Reduces greenhouse gas emissions
  - Saves $$$ you would spend on your commute
  - Saves time that you can spend sleeping, petting your furry friends, and relaxing
- Supports continuity of operations, reduces facility costs
- Enhances retention, recruitment, and employee productivity

# How can my worksite encourage and support CTR?

Section 4: Incentives, Subsidies, and Parking Management

# Dive In: Incentives

- Incentives are CTR strategies designed to motivate employees not to drive alone
  - Many organizations offer $1-2/trip for using an alternative mode
  - Promotional items with organization's logo (mugs, pencils, etc)
  - Monthly or quarterly drawings
  - Preferential parking for carpools and vanpools
  - Prize drawings for campaigns such as the Bicycle Commuter Challenge
- Get creative!
- Use the CTR network and TRPC to help brainstorm imaginative incentives

# Dive In: Subsidies

- Subsidies are one way a worksite can support CTR
- Subsidies reduce the employee's overall commute cost on a regular basis. An example is a monthly vanpool or transit subsidy. Many worksites offer subsidies, but not all do
- The STAR pass was a subsidy program for state employees, prior to Intercity Transit going zero-fare
- Your role as an ETC
  - Learn about the subsidies your worksite offers
  - Get the word out!

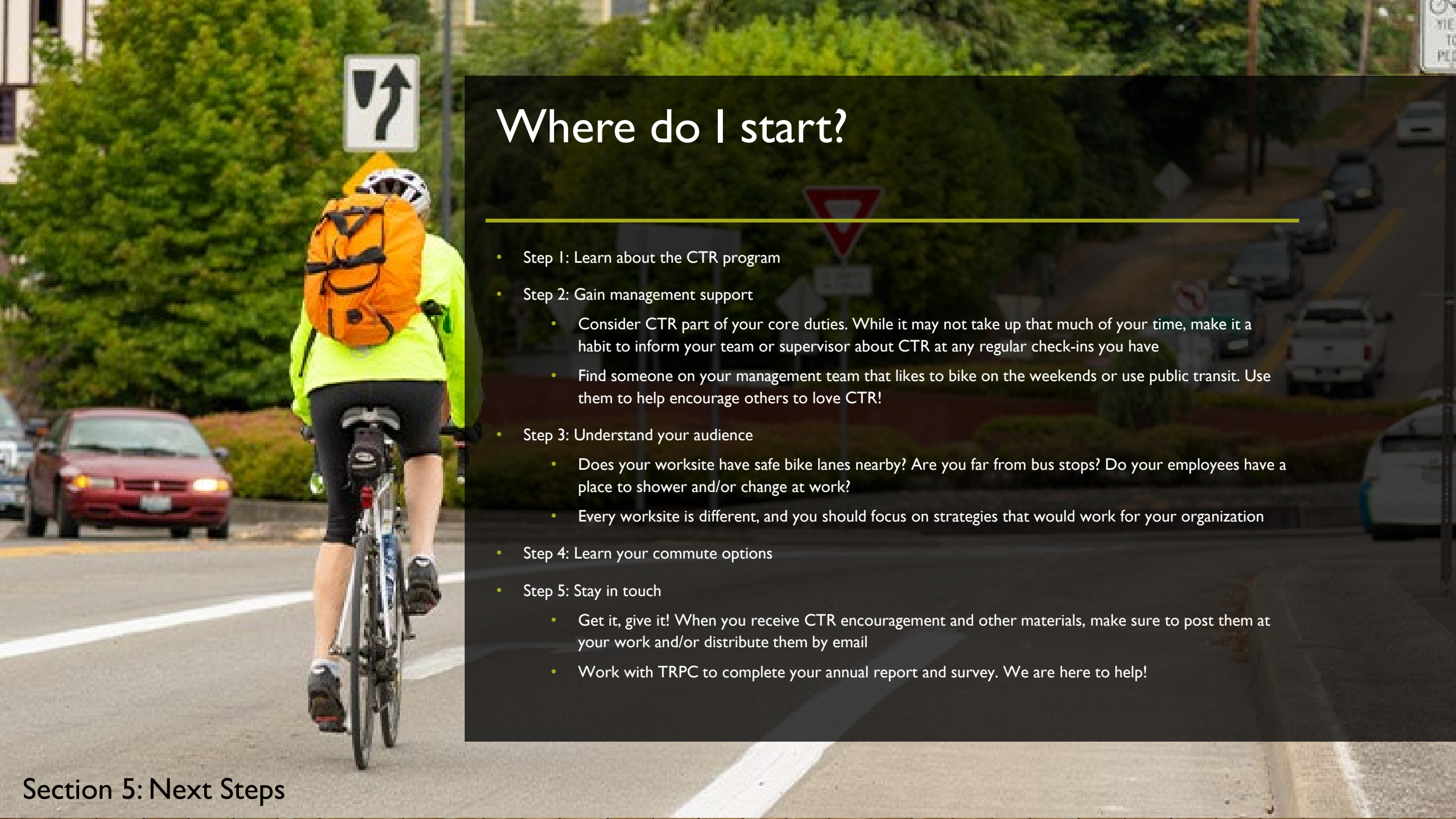
# Dive In: Parking Management

- Parking management strategies balance the supply and demand for parking
- Commuter travel choice is often influenced by the cost, availability, and convenience of free parking
- Sample strategies
  - Preferential parking for carpools
  - Reducing the supply of parking
  - Charge for parking

- To learn more about why free parking poses several problems, check out this video: https://youtu.be/Akm7ik-H_7U

# WHAT NOW?

SECTION 5: NEXT STEPS



# Where do I start?

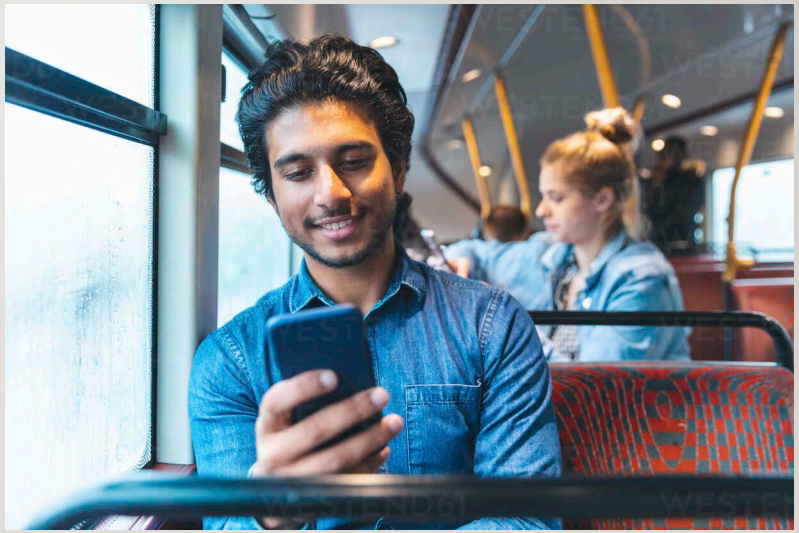
- Step 1: Learn about the CTR program
- Step 2: Gain management support
  - Consider CTR part of your core duties. While it may not take up that much of your time, make it a habit to inform your team or supervisor about CTR at any regular check-ins you have
  - Find someone on your management team that likes to bike on the weekends or use public transit. Use them to help encourage others to love CTR!
- Step 3: Understand your audience
  - Does your worksite have safe bike lanes nearby? Are you far from bus stops? Do your employees have a place to shower and/or change at work?
  - Every worksite is different, and you should focus on strategies that would work for your organization
- Step 4: Learn your commute options
- Step 5: Stay in touch
  - Get it, give it! When you receive CTR encouragement and other materials, make sure to post them at your work and/or distribute them by email
  - Work with TRPC to complete your annual report and survey. We are here to help!

# What tools do I have access to?

- The CTR Network – don't be a stranger!
  - TRPC
  - Peer networking sessions with fellow ETCs (quarterly)
- Online resources
  - Thurston Here to There https://www.trpc.org/922/Thurston-Here-to-There
  - Thurston Walk and Bike Map www.thurstonbikemap.org
  - Intercity Transit route planning https://www.intercitytransit.com/plan-your-trip/trip-planner
  - One Bus Away www.OneBusAway.org

# How do I get my team excited about CTR?

- Publicize the benefits
  - Lower stress
  - Save $$$
  - Read, listen, shop, relax
  - Legal cellphone use
  - More physical activity
  - Health benefits
  - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change
  - Network within your organization



# How do I get my manager excited about CTR?

- Talk about the benefits to them
  - Increased employee satisfaction
  - Recruitment and retention
  - Reduced lateness/absenteeism
  - Reduced demand and cost on infrastructure
  - Alignment with your agency's mission
  - It's the law!
- Keep bringing it up on a regular basis

# Congratulations!

You are almost done with basic training. Please email Veronica Jarvis (jarvisv@trpc.org) at TRPC once you have completed this training. You will be scheduled for a one-on-one meeting to discuss your organization's CTR program.