

Smart COMMUTER

Issue No. 28, Spring 2006

Commute Information for Business Executives & Elected Officials in Northern New Jersey

Route 139 Holland Tunnel Shuttle Launched to Improve Pedestrian Safety

Popularly known as the 12th and 14th Street Viaducts, Route 139 is synonymous with the Holland Tunnel. Route 139 experiences some of the highest traffic volumes in the country.

With the reconstruction of the aging viaducts, pedestrians who used this short cut from The Heights section of Jersey City to downtown, soon found their sidewalk removed. Undaunted, these citizens continued to walk along the viaducts. Alarmed by these conditions, Meadowlink, the New Jersey Department of Transportation, and the Hudson Transportation Management Association joined forces to provide a shuttle service.

On March 20, 2006, the Route 139 Courtesy Construction Shuttle began operation.

This free shuttle service operates Monday through Friday from 6:00 to 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. Pick-up/drop-off points are located on 14th Street near Palisade Avenue in The Heights and Jersey Avenue in front of the Port Authority building downtown.

For more information, please call or e-mail:

Tamara Jolley, 201-939-4242,
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Jon S. Corzine, Governor of New Jersey, at the April 27 Press Conference, addressing the new transportation initiatives to combat high gas prices.

Carpooling Makes “Cents”

A press conference was held on April 27, 2006, regarding high gas prices and the initiatives Governor Jon S. Corzine is taking to assist New Jersey commuters.

One initiative provides \$500,000 in funding for \$100 gas cards to be offered as an incentive for new carpoolers.

The program is administered by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) and implemented by the TMA’s (Transportation Management Associations), like Meadowlink. The program is effective as of May 1.

To qualify for the \$100 gas card, participants must:

1. Register their new carpool with the TMA servicing their area.
2. Carpool a minimum of 24 days over a two-month period.
3. Provide documentation as needed by their TMA.

Gas cards will be mailed to participants upon completion of the two-month program. For more information about the program, please call or e-mail:

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Finance

\$ Vanpool Sponsorship Funding Increases from \$150 to \$175

The already considerable amount of money saved by vanpoolers has risen again. NJ Transit announced an increase in its sponsorship program from \$150 to \$175 per month for each registered vanpool.

The Vanpool Sponsorship program recognizes and supports employees who choose to vanpool to work on a voluntary basis.

Vanpoolers also get use of the reduced traffic HOV lane on the New Jersey Turnpike and free emergency rides home via a taxi or limousine service.

For vanpoolers traveling between exits 11 and 14 on the New Jersey Turnpike, NJ Transit offers an additional sponsorship of \$150 each month, bringing total cash incentives for these vanpoolers to \$325 per month.

Additionally, Meadowlink offers new vanpools a subsidy of \$60 for every empty seat during the first three months of operation. Meadowlink will also enroll vanpoolers in its Emergency Ride Home program, which provides three free rides per year in the event of an emergency.

So, if employees have an illness, family emergency or even simply have to work late, they get a free ride right to their door.

Vanpools consist of between 5 and 15 commuters who live and work in the same geographical area and decide to meet in a centralized location or pick-up point.

Employees who vanpool think it's a great way to commute because it allows riders to read, relax and sleep on their way to and from work. "I love vanpooling," says Debra Lehach, a Merck employee. "It's convenient, with no hassle, and I save on wear and tear on my own vehicle."

Not to mention, it saves riders more than \$6,000 a year. Employees typically enjoy a less stressful commute.

Meadowlink is seeking to partner with businesses to encourage more employees to take advantage of these great programs.

For more information on how Meadowlink can assist your employees, call or e-mail:

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Smart Commuter, a quarterly newsletter on commuting issues in our region, is issued to employers by Meadowlink. Call the Editorial Director, Frank T. Mongioi, Jr. at (973) 247-2435 with comments, suggestions or corrections.

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MEADOWLINK (Meadowlands Transportation Brokerage Corporation), prepared this newsletter through a grant financed in part by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration. This newsletter is disseminated under the sponsorship of the NJDOT in the interest of information exchange. The State of New Jersey assumes no liability for its content or use thereof.

Employers In the Spotlight



200 UPS Employees Sign Up to Participate in Carpool Matching

The Meadowlink staff had recently held Commute Information Sessions at the UPS distribution facility site in Secaucus. More than 400 employees participated in these sessions, with about 200 or more employees signing up for car/vanpool matching and the Emergency Ride Home Program.

Employees who signed up for RidePro, the statewide carpool matching network, were provided with a free "matchlist" of names, phone numbers, and schedules of people whose commutes were similar to theirs. Employees already carpooling or using NJ Transit to get to work, signed up for the Emergency Ride Home program.

This program allows three free rides per year, in case an emergency situation arises.

Later this spring, Meadowlink will be hosting more sessions at the UPS IT World Headquarters site in Mahwah, consisting of over 1200 employees. Sessions will also be held at UPS sites in Paramus and Ramsey, consisting of more than 800 and more than 400 IT employees, respectively.

If you would like Meadowlink to set up a Commute Information session at your company, please call or e-mail:

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A&P Partners With Meadowlink to Review Employee Commute Options

The Meadowlink staff recently met with the management of A&P Corp. of Paterson. With its Paterson office closing in April of this year, the firm was concerned about its imminent office relocation. A&P Corp. moved about 400 employees to the World Corporate Headquarters in Montvale, where there are now 800 or more employees.

With reduced parking spaces available in Montvale, a satellite parking lot located at the Woodcliff Lake, Hilton helps ease the commute for some A&P Corp. employees. A shuttle will take employees from Woodcliff Lake to the Montvale office.

Meadowlink will be hosting commuter events this spring to help A&P employees, since public transportation may no longer be an option for some employees.

For personalized assistance, transportation professionals will provide information regarding car/vanpooling and the Emergency Ride Home Program.

For more information about Meadowlink's corporate relocation assistance, call:

Frank T. Mongioi, Jr. (973) 247-2435
frank.mongioi@meadowlink.org

Host a "Lunch and Learn" at Your Office

Meadowlink hosts "Lunch and Learn" days for employees at the workplace.

The focus of the event is "Saving Money on Your Commute." Discussions cover joining a car or vanpool, taking public transit to work, and biking and walking for shorter trips.

These sessions don't aim to take all cars off the roads as a long-term solution. Instead, they encourage people to think about the impact of their commute choices.

Cleaner, more effective forms of transportation can enhance everyone's quality of life, as well as help them save money by using less gas.

If lunch isn't a convenient time for employees, Meadowlink staff is also available at the beginning and end of all shifts.

Sessions are provided on a first-come, first-serve basis. If your company would like to host one, please call or e-mail:

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Service Updates

Central Avenue Weekend Shuttle in Jersey City Experiences High Ridership

Meadowlink recently partnered with federal, state and county agencies to launch a free weekend shuttle service along Central Avenue in Jersey City. The service fills a major gap for weekend commuters.

Meadowlink worked with the Federal Highway Administration, the NJ Department of Transportation and Hudson County along with Hudson Transportation Management Association on the shuttle. It uses two mini-buses that operate at three-minute intervals, making stops between Hague Street and Journal Square. Stops are made at several Central Avenue intersections, providing easy access to the general public.

The shuttle operates from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, from Hague Street, Jersey City to the Journal Square (Platform D3) area.

Jay DiDomenico, TDM Program Manager of the Hudson TMA, is helping to monitor and promote the service. On behalf of the Hudson TMA, Mr. DiDomenico states, "This is our first partnership with Meadowlink in providing vital transportation in our region and we look to create more transportation solutions as the need arises."

Currently, there is an average of about 570 people riding the Central Avenue Shuttle each weekend, reaching a high of 800 riders. "We are very happy with this shuttle," Mr. DiDomenico says, before predicting that ridership will continue to grow.

For more information about the Central Avenue Shuttle or to start a new shuttle service, please call or e-mail:

Wendy Arias, (201) 939-4242
wendy.arias@meadowlink.org

Freebees galore.....

Safety Booklets and Displays for Bike Month

May is Bike Month. Do you need information about bicycle safety and a display to hold them? Meadowlink can provide you with a series of informative and entertaining bicycle safety brochures from the New Jersey Department of Transportation. Meadowlink recently made these displays available and ready for your company to use.

For more information or to obtain a display, call or e-mail:

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Ozone Passes & Free Plant Seeds

Employers who offer NJ Transit's Ozone Passes allow their employees to receive a special ticket during the hot days of ozone season, May 15-September 8, 2006. Tickets are only \$2.50 round trip from any NJ Transit bus, train, or light rail system.

For more information on how to join Ozone Pass and to receive FREE plant seeds, please call or e-mail:

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New ideas? Articles?
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