



EASTSIDE EXPRESS

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TOP TWENTY BEST WORKPLACES FOR COMMUTERS

In October 2005, the Environmental Protection Agency announced two Greater Redmond TMA member companies on the Top 20 list of Best Companies for Commuters.

Microsoft

Ranked number 4 by offering their employees greener commute options through a fully subsidized Flexpass, as well as offer employees on-site amenities like showers and locker rooms. Over 11,000 Microsoft employees leave their cars at home.



Safeco

Ranked number 10 with over half of their population using a commute alternative to get to work. They also provide employees a Flexpass, as well as offer employees on-site amenities like a hair salon and dry cleaning.



Congratulations Microsoft and Safeco!

DOWNTOWN SEATTLE TRANSIT TUNNEL



On September 24, 2005 the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel closed. The tunnel will be closed for two years to update the existing structure to create room for the new light rail trains. All buses operating in the tunnel have been moved to street level. The closure may continue to impact commuters throughout the construction.

- During the morning and afternoon commute periods, 3rd Avenue between Stewart and Yesler will be converted into a transit-priority corridor. General traffic will be allowed to travel on 3rd Avenue for just one block, then must make a right hand turn. Seattle Police

will be on duty to keep traffic moving and to enforce the new rules. There will also be additional Metro Transit Police patrolling bus stops and shelters.

- Buses using 3rd Avenue will operate on a new pattern called Skip-Stop. They will make fewer stops downtown to keep travel times up.

The tunnel will reopen September 2007, and light-rail is scheduled to be in service by 2009.

For more information head to the following:

www.seattletunnel.org

CELL PHONES AND DRIVING TO CALL OR NOT TO CALL

Did you know that distracted driving is a major contributor to automobile accidents? This includes using the cell phone while driving. Distracted drivers contribute to half of the 6 million U.S. crashes reported annually.

The use of cell phones while driving is a big debate right now at both local and federal levels, however this is not the only reason drivers can become distracted. Anything that takes a drivers hands off the wheel or eyes off the road is a distraction; this includes eating in the car, changing stations on the radio, talking to passengers, and talking on the cell phone.

It can be frustrating when you see an inconsiderate,

careless driver talking on the phone. Hands-free phones and headsets do not necessarily make talking on the phone while driving any safer, only more convenient. They do not increase safety because it is not the device that distracts drivers but the conversation. Current research shows that banning cell phones will not necessarily reduce safety. A study from the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that talking on the cell phone and changing stations on the radio are similar levels of distraction.

AAA recommends that drivers do not use their cell phone while driving. If you need to take that call, here are some tips you can use to be a safer driver:

- Remember that driving requires your complete attention
- Familiarize yourself with all the features of your cell phone before driving
- Only use your cell phone if it is necessary
- If you are not driving alone, ask your passenger to make the call for you
- Keep your conversation short
- Let the other person on the line know you are driving
- Try not to use your phone in heavy traffic or in bad weather
- Secure your phone when not in use, it can become a projectile in a crash

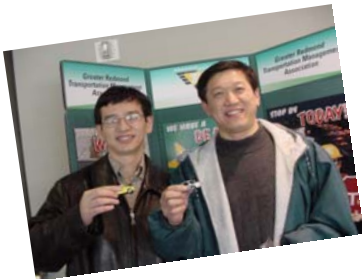


"Appreciation in any form at any time brightens anyone's existence."

- Ruth Stafford Peale



PICTURE PERFECT 2005



Pictures clockwise:
Cingular, Microsoft, Nintendo,
& Westpark



ROAD CONSTRUCTION UPDATE



NE 116th St (York) Bridge Replacement

King County and City of Redmond are working together to replace the York Bridge which crosses the Sammamish River on NE 116th, between Willows Road and Woodinville Redmond Road.

The project will raise the bridge to allow the trail to cross under and to allow for a better view of cars entering and leaving Sixty Acres Park.

Detours have been set up via NE 124th Street to the North and NE 90th Street to the South. The Sammamish River trail will be detoured around the construction to the East. The bridge will reopen November 2006.



**VANPOOL
TO
RELAX**

John Wiltshire of Astronics is a Community Transit vanpool driver. Six years ago, his carpool converted to a vanpool. Monday through Thursday, he faithfully picks up his vanpool participants in Everett and Bothell and drops them off at their employers located along Willows Road. At the end of the day, he picks up riders and safely returns them to their morning pickup location.

The group has a pleasant mix of chatters and sleepers. John said, "Since I'm driving, I fall

into the chatter group-- otherwise I'm sure it would be quite alarming for the passengers." The group often jokes that they should be granted authority to write driving citations. One night on their way home, the driver of the vehicle in front of them was illegally driving in the HOV lane and tailgating a car, unknown to them at the time, the tailgated car was an unmarked police car. They cheered the police officer on when he moved to let the tailgater pass only to move behind him to pull the driver over.

ple to talk to on the way to and from work."

If you are interested in vanpooling, register in www.RideshareOnline.com and run a match list of agency vanpools and individuals in the system that share your commute. Join an existing vanpool or form a new one. It takes a minimum of five people to form a new vanpool and the monthly cost is determined by the total mileage of the van and the number of riders. Through Redmond's city-wide RSVP program new riders can receive a \$50 per month subsidy for 6 months. Also, new driver and referral bonuses are available. For details and to download forms, visit www.gortrip.com.

Way to go John for being so committed to vanpooling!

When asked about the benefits of vanpooling, John said, "The obvious one is money saved. This includes not just fuel cost, but loss of value to your personal vehicle as you pile up miles on it. There is also a much longer gap between replacing expendable items on your personal vehicle such as oil, tires, brake, and mufflers, etc. But the not-so-obvious benefit is having friendly peo-

John Wiltshire far right and riders



Transit Information

KC Metro Automated Bus Schedules
(206) 287-8463
Community Transit Customer Information
(425) 353-7433
Sound Transit Customer Service
(888) 889-6368

Bicycle Information

Cascade Bicycle Club
(206) 522-2453
Bicycle Alliance of Washington
(206) 244-9252

Incentives for Redmond Commuters

RSVP—vanpool incentives up to \$300
R-PASS—one month free transit pass
R-REWARDS—earn \$50 in City-wide
Commuter Club
www.GOtrip.com
(425) 702-8001 ex 202



GREATER REDMOND TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

The "Eastside Express" is published by the Greater Redmond
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www.grtma.org

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