

Harvard University is a leading employer in maintaining an exceptionally low Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) commuting rate locally, regionally and nationally. This accomplishment represents a significant contribution to and investment in local transportation planning options and is an important component of Harvard’s greenhouse gas emission reduction goals. Since 1998, Harvard’s CommuterChoice Program has developed many programs to encourage sustainable transportation choices to meet the Parking and Transportation Demand Management (PTDM) Plan goals in Cambridge and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Rideshare Report goals for Harvard’s Boston campuses.

The 2019 transportation survey data indicates an **SOV rate of 14.7% for Cambridge-based employees and off-campus graduate students**. The sustained result is achieved through a careful balance of campus planning, parking prices, and financial incentives for transit, bicycle and carpool commuting, and educational initiatives to foster the use of alternatives to SOV commuting.

2019 Commute Mode for Cambridge Campus

Public Transit	Walk	Bike	Drive Alone	Telecommute	Carpool	Ride-Hail	Vanpool
38.2%	24.3%	14.8%	14.7%	5.1%	3.2%	0.1%	<.1%



Harvard Transportation Services hosted the annual Ivy+ Transportation Conference at Harvard Law School from June 22 – June 25, 2019. The event brought together transportation executives from ten peer institutions to present and discuss topics including fleet electrification, autonomous vehicles, change management, and innovations in sustainable mobility.

TRANSIT SERVICES

7,501 subsidized transit passes distributed to employees

Harvard offers employees a **50% subsidy and pre-tax savings** on monthly MBTA passes. Pre-tax passes for private transit are available up to federal limits.

- **86%** of Harvard employees commute to work via a sustainable transportation mode compared to 33% of commuters in the Greater Boston Area.¹
- **~3,000** MBTA semester passes are distributed by 9 different graduate schools at Harvard University with subsidies ranging from **11-50%**.

Emergency Ride Home Program Continuity

In April 2019, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation’s MassRIDES program and its Emergency Ride Home program were eliminated. The Emergency Ride Home program supports Harvard green commuters with a free ride if an unexpected emergency arises. CommuterChoice brought the program in-house so employees could continue to commute to campus with the reassurance that they can get home in case of an emergency.

657,000 inter-campus shuttle trips taken on the Harvard Shuttle

The Harvard Shuttle is a fixed route service in Cambridge and Allston. Shuttle passengers can view real-time transit information via TransLoc mobile app. The Harvard Evening Van is an on-demand service that runs from 7:30 pm to 2 am around Cambridge and Allston. Ridership using new the on-demand service app is up 67% from last year.

BIKING ON CAMPUS

Bicycling is an integral component of the University’s transportation system; many stakeholders at Harvard invest considerable effort in developing programs, infrastructure, and supporting the improvement and growth of networks that connect the University with Cambridge and Boston.

8 bike-related events hosted across campus

Events focused around the themes of bike education, visibility and safety, maintenance and celebration of bicyclists.

629 \$10 bike helmets sold

The number of bike helmet sales doubled in 2019 compared to sales in 2018.

498 \$5 bike light sets sold

Bike lights encourage bicycle safety and visibility, the Campus Service Center now sells front and rear bike light sets.

1037 Harvard Bluebikes members

Harvard affiliates are eligible for a discounted \$70 annual Bluebikes membership.

- In May 2019, Bluebikes held the “Commuter Challenge”, a contest to make biking your “go-to” mode of transportation. Harvard University won both categories in the “XL” division: Harvard students had the most number of trips and Harvard employees had the highest participation rate.



Pop-up safety checks at the Kennedy School.
September 5, 2019.

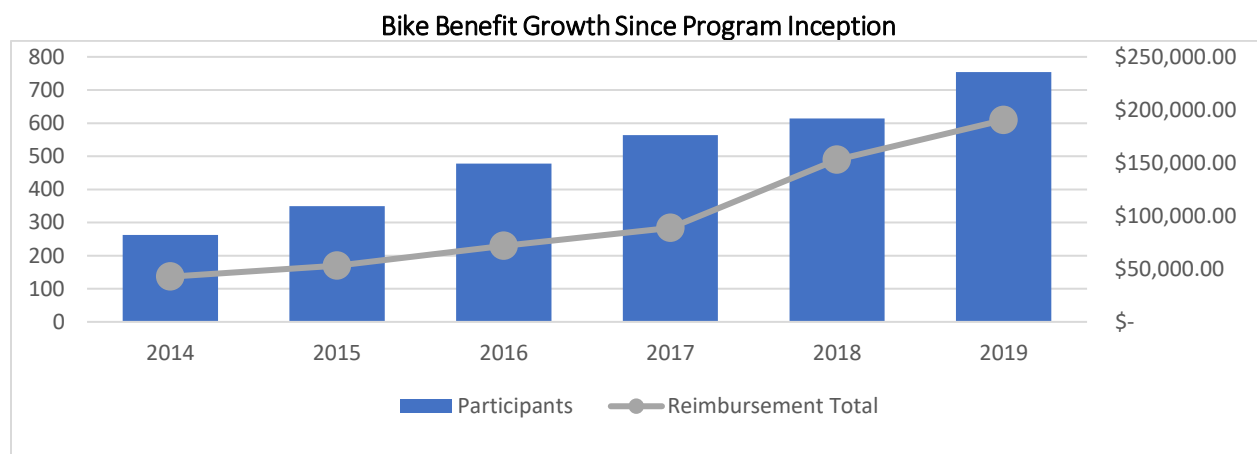
¹United States Census Bureau. (2018). ACS 1-year Estimate for Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH Metro Area.

7,036 Bike Parking Spaces

During their census of bike parking across the Cambridge campus, the Harvard Planning Office identified rack location, condition, and number of accessible parking spaces. This represents an increase of 9.9% since the last census in 2014.

Bike Benefit Changes

The bicycle commuter benefit allows bike commuters to receive up to \$240/year in reimbursements of bike-related costs. After the 2018 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act eliminated the federal program, Harvard University brought the program in-house. In 2019, Harvard leadership made the decision to increase the benefit to \$30/month or \$360/year post-tax.



RIDE SHARING AND CAR SHARING

444 employees commuted in 218 carpools in 2019

Employees receive a 50% - 75% discount on their annual parking permit and may use four free daily parking permits per month to drive separately.

43 Zipcars available to Harvard community members

Harvard offers a discounted annual \$25 membership to employees and \$15 membership to students. There are 9,545 active Harvard Zipcar members. Zipcars are located throughout the Cambridge, Allston and Longwood campuses.

- CommuterChoice is piloting an intercampus travel program exclusive to Harvard employees at 784 Memorial Drive. The program enhancement allows them to reserve the vehicle and park at select Harvard facilities around Cambridge and Allston at no additional cost. This pilot program is expected to expand to additional departments in 2020.

PROGRAMMATIC UPDATES

Reaching New Employees

In the spring of 2019, the Center for Workplace Development modified their weekly new employee orientation format with a hybrid presentation and tabling session. As a result, new employees can speak one-on-one with CommuterChoice staff to receive personalized commuting assistance. As part of these changes, CommuterChoice created a Transportation Options [video](#) and [webpage](#) focused on providing comprehensive transportation resources for the 30-50 new employees that start at the University every week.

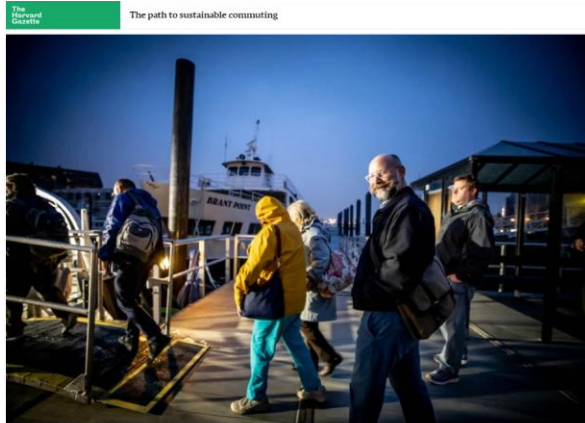
Working Remotely

In alignment with Harvard University's sustainability goals and commitment to employee wellbeing, the Office of Work/Life has created guidelines on establishing flexible work arrangements. In part due to these formalized guidelines, the 2019 transportation survey reflects significant increases in the percentage of employees who identified that they are in a "flexwork" situation.

IN THE NEWS

The Path to Sustainable Commuting

Harvard Gazette. November 12, 2019.



Scott Helms, boarding the commuter boat from Boston to HUL, says, "The ferry does run all winter long. There have only been two trip cancellations over the past few years due to high winds, but is more reliable than the commuter rail. Even with a frozen harbor, there are ice breakers that open up the shipping lanes. It is the most beautiful and least stressful way to get into the city. Who else can say they love their commutes?" Ross Lincoln/Harvard Staff Photographer

Harvard Wins Gold for Bicycling

Harvard Gazette. November 15, 2018.

Harvard is being recognized for its commitment to the biking community. The University just received a Gold level, Bicycle Friendly University award, from the League of American Bicyclists. The awards are given to schools that demonstrate outstanding support of bicycling to ensure healthy, accessible, and eco-friendly transportation.

"More than 15% of Harvard commuters ride bikes so it's important that we make it as easy as possible," said Ben Hammer, Associate Director of Harvard's CommuterChoice program. "Not only is biking a healthy option, but it's an important part of the University's broader effort to reduce fossil fuel emissions." Additionally, [Harvard's Sustainability Plan](#) sets out a commitment to increase the bikeability and safety of the streets in and around Harvard's campus.