Employers in Stanford Research Park have reduced solo driving by 10 percentage points, from 73% in 2016 to 63% in 2019, in only 3 years! One key to this success is the willingness of tenant companies to work together, under the leadership of Stanford University, to provide and promote commute options, including carpools, vanpools, last-mile shuttles, and commuter buses, for their employees.

Stanford Research Park is a 700-acre business park in Palo Alto, California and home to 140 companies and approximately 29,000 employees. The Stanford Research Park transportation program, known as SRPGO, launched in 2016. SRPGO was created in response to large tenant companies, including VMware, SAP, Tesla and HP Inc., requesting assistance with commuter transportation. Although these companies already had impressive in-house commuter transportation programs, they saw the potential to increase participation and efficiency through a park-wide commuter transportation program led by Stanford University.

Although SRPGO was born at the behest of large tenants, smaller companies and their employees may benefit even more. Many smaller companies do not have in-house commuter transportation programs, usually because they don’t have the resources or workforce critical mass to start and sustain an effective program. Thanks to SRPGO, employees at dozens of smaller companies throughout the Research Park have access to the same network of carpools, vanpools, and shuttles as employees who work for large companies.

We can’t wait to see what great ideas you and the team come up with to make our employees’ commutes easier, safer, and more affordable.

Jerry, VMware

Companies of all sizes share the desire to get their employees to work efficiently with minimal impact on the community and environment. Commuter programs have shown positive impacts on recruitment and retention by helping employees save money and time and reduce stress. Working together enables companies in Stanford Research Park to provide valuable commuter services to their employees that they could not practically or effectively provide on their own.
Research Park companies got excited about working with Stanford University on commuter transportation after one of the first successes: a bulk purchase of SmartPasses, annual transit passes from Valley Transportation Authority (VTA). Rather than companies purchasing SmartPasses individually from VTA, Stanford coordinated a group purchase at a lower rate that significantly increased employer participation. Over 40 Research Park companies signed up to provide SmartPasses to their employees in 2016 and have continued to participate in the program. During this time, transit use has almost doubled, increasing from 6% to 11% of trips to the Research Park.

The measurable success of SRPGO highlights the value of establishing mutually beneficial partnerships among neighboring companies. Whether you’re just starting a commuter transportation program or want to take your program to the next level, reach out to your neighbors to identify resource sharing opportunities to achieve the scale that will increase the effectiveness of your efforts. In turn, your company, your employees, your community and the environment will benefit.