

CarShare Vermont Case Study High Meadows Fund Learning Event

March 29, 2011 from 1-4:30pm | Champlain Valley Housing Trust, Burlington, VT

Participants: Annie Bourdon (CarShare Vermont), Becca Van Dyke (CarShare Vermont), Bryan Davis (CCMPO), Chapin Spencer (Local Motion), Devon Karn (Kevin and Devon Karn Design), Gaye Symington (High Meadows Fund), Jennifer Green (CEDO), Johanna Miller (VNRC), Jon Adam-Kolitz (CEDO), Julia Andrews (Spike Advertising/Go Vermont), Katie Bailey (CATMA), Kevin Karn (Kevin and Devon Karn Design), Mary Sullivan (BED), Matt Coogan (New England Transportation Institute), Michele Boomhower (CCMPO), Phelan Fretz (ECHO, BBA), Rose Getch (CCTA), Ruthie Schwab (High Meadows Fund), Sam Hoar (Dinse Knapp & McAndrew), Sandy Thibault (CATMA), Tom Horn (VEIC);

Facilitator: Andy Robinson

What would make CarShare Vermont's programs important to your business's goals?

- Cost savings
- Save time and reduce administrative hassles (i.e. bookkeeping)
- Convenience for employees
- Enhance image
- Bragging rights
- Support "green" claims
- Mission compatibility
- Pride
- Employee wellness
- Productivity
- Employee benefit = happier employees
- Recruitment and retention
- Manage parking demand
- Save parking for customers/commerce
- Community-building opportunity
- Expansion opportunities—availability of CarShare Vermont supports smart growth
- Improved air quality for everyone

What opportunities might be lost by not participating? What are the risks?

- Becoming/perceived as stodgy
- Risk of employees not meeting their transportation needs
- Risk of costs rising (fuel)
- Waiting = less savings
- Peer pressure
- Increased cost for health insurance
- Recruitment
- Credibility
- More members = CarShare Vermont is stronger = more cars
- Ability to promote other modes effectively
- Risk of losing competitive advantage over suburban area for business location; want downtown to thrive
- Vibrant urban area

What info/message bearers would most influence your thinking?

- Peers: "we're doing it, why aren't you?"
- Employees
 - o Benefit
 - o Cost savings
 - o Choice
- Neighbors/community
- Customers
- Politicians, state gov.
- Influence groups (e.g. Rotary Clubs)
- Institutions (e.g. Chamber of Commerce, CATMA, UVM, etc.)
- Energy committees
- Regulatory processes (e.g. raise parking rates, reduce minimum parking requirements)
- Clearly and quickly state what car-sharing is and how it works
- Showcase other businesses that saved money

What are possible barriers?

- Location of vehicles
- Ignorance
- Inertia
- Lack of buy-in from decision-makers
- What if's (emergencies)
- Availability
- Turn-over
- Knowing who to target, finding the right champion)
- Being able to monetize benefit
- Putting together the pieces—how does CSVT fit in with other modes?
- Internal buy-in up and down chain of command
- Getting it engrained
- Not yet part of employee incentives

What are the strategic steps we can undertake to mobilize employers to act?

- Normalize car-sharing—how?
- Competition—pressure from other employers
- Pressure from employees
- Introducing CSVT as part of a package
- Making a CSVT membership easy to understand and implement
- Asking
- Direct contact with decision-makers
- Testimonials/references
- Create friendly competition among niche businesses (e.g. law firms)
- VT Business Roundtable
- Getting the word out broadly to find more messengers
- Joint marketing with partners
- Targeting community affairs departments
- Media
- Climate Action Plan (City of Burlington)
- Social networking
- Making sure we're talking to right audience
- Employers with parking problems
- Employers that pay for parking
- Incentivize ambassadorship (offer financial incentives to members who recruit their employer to join)
- Offer 1-year guarantee
- Free 3-6 month trial membership
- Run a cooperative campaign to save the city 400 parking spaces through car-sharing
- Tough love campaign about how poor a job businesses are doing at prioritizing transportation
- "Are you prepared for the future?" campaign
- Low carbon fuel standard
- Press event—official debut of business program
- Market CSVT as a key that unlocks the door for other modes for employees
- Find out what businesses already do
- Distinguish car-sharing from carpooling
- Make the "how to" very transparent to employers
- Put business community people on Board of Directors

What are the internal indicators (for CSVT)?

- More business members
- Increased utilization
- Fleet size and number of pods
- Lower VMT in Burlington
- Reduction in vehicle ownership
- Addition of business-serving pods
- Increased awareness
- Media placements as proxy
- Number of presentations
- Increased staffing due to success
- Model for other communities
- Sponsorship money raised

What are the business indicators?

- Employee satisfaction
- Reduced expenditures on parking
- Less parking provided
- Mileage reimbursement costs reduced
- Increased employee participation
- Options offered to employees, whether or not employees choose to accept
- Fleet vehicles, company cars reduced
- Reduction in business travel
- Business opportunity to co-brand; annual reports

What are the societal indicators?

- Number of parking spaces liberated downtown
- Burlington as “leader”—setting community norms
- Emissions reduced
- Number of other cities that look to CSVT as model
- PR/bragging rights

What should the policy agenda be?

- Expense of parking
- More park & rides
- Make parking/driving less convenient
- Reduce minimum parking requirements
- Bike/ped policies
- Land use
- More non-SOV options
- Carpooling with people you don’t know

What else should CarShare Vermont be paying attention to?

- Technology
- Fuel sources
- Cross-marketing
- Watch the way the public perceives our product
- Pushing discomfort
- Not just for privileged people
- Fun
- Competition
- Data collection
- Smart grid
- Our culture
- Peers in other cities
- Staying abreast of business news
- Communicate with property developers/managers