

Providing Shuttle Service at your Workplace



Connecting your worksite to the nearest MARTA station is an important step in providing commute options for tenants and employees. Shuttle service makes it easier for employees to take transit by providing an efficient way to reach their worksite. Last mile service that bridges the gap between the MARTA station and worksite will provide a key link for commuters who ride transit, and provide instant retention and recruitment benefits for your organization.

Currently, there are nine shuttles that link the three Perimeter area MARTA stations to properties and companies in the business district, serving employees and tenants. An interactive map can be found at <http://perimeterconnects.com/shuttles/>.

Perimeter Connects aids property managers and groups of employers as they establish a shuttle for their employees/tenants. This document offers answers to FAQs for establishing shuttle service and a case study example.

Q: How do I know if I need a shuttle?

A: Most commuters and visitors will not walk farther than half of a mile (10-minute walk) to reach their destination, so if your property is located farther than that from a MARTA station, a shuttle is a crucial service for transit commuters. A shuttle may also be necessary if the pedestrian route does not have sidewalks, there is hilly terrain, or dangerous intersections to cross.

Surveying your employees/tenants to gauge transit usage and interest can help determine the size of the shuttle needed, as well as hours of service.

Q: How do I address the cost of a shuttle?

A: Cost depends on the size of the shuttle, the hours of operation and the amount of gas used. Many employers find it beneficial to partner with other nearby companies or properties to share the cost. Costs can be divided evenly among partners, or as a percentage based on property square footage or number of employees. Usually, employees are not charged to ride the shuttle, as the cost is paid by the property manager or employer.

Employers and property managers can request bids directly from shuttle providers to get an exact cost. Not sure where to start? Customize the [Sample RFP for shuttle services](#) to your requirements before requesting an estimate. In Perimeter, the major shuttle companies include:

[American Coach Lines](#)

[Lanier Parking](#)

[SecurAmerica](#)

[Global Ground Transportation](#)

Q: How often should a shuttle run?

A: For maximum ridership, the shuttle frequency should be the highest around the beginning and end of shift schedules. Typical operating hours are during commute times, between 6:30 – 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 – 6:30 p.m. Some shuttles also run during lunch hours, connecting employees to restaurants and retail, thus reducing the need for a car mid-day. To compliment the link to MARTA and GRTA, train and bus schedules are also factored into the schedule. Most shuttle providers also offer apps to provide riders and visitors with real-time arrival and location information of the shuttle that can be displayed on mobile devices and even in building lobbies.

Q: How do employees know about the shuttle?

A: The shuttle can be publicized through internal communications, lobby events, onboarding materials for new employees and other events. These events can be tied to other promotions that encourage transit usage. You could even host a shuttle launch event, offering a ride-along to a nearby location for lunch, allowing potential riders the opportunity to identify the new shuttle and meet the driver.

Q: I'm interested; what should I do next?

- A:** 1) Assess your workplace for a shuttle need: Is the nearest MARTA station out of walking distance? What hours does your employee/tenant base work? Are there any nearby properties or employers you can reach out to for cost sharing?
- 2) Update the [Sample RFP for shuttle service](#) to meet your needs. If you are unsure of any of the details, ask the bidders to provide a recommendation. The RFP can be as broad or narrow as you prefer. Submit the RFP directly to a few different shuttle providers.
- 3) Select a shuttle operating vendor and confirm shuttle logistics.
- 4) Promote the shuttle to employees and tenants!



Case Study: The Perimeter Shuttle

- ▶ **Opportunity:** When several major employers along Glenlake Parkway and Embassy Row in Sandy Springs realized that MARTA was discontinuing bus service to that route, they looked for a solution to connect their employees to their worksite. Several stakeholders, including property managers and large corporations, formed a partnership to fund and manage a shuttle serving that section of the Perimeter market.
- ▶ **Solution:** On May 1, 2011, the Perimeter Shuttle began running between the Sandy Springs MARTA Station with stops at 5 locations. Six partners fund the Perimeter Shuttle: Columbia Property Trust, Highwoods Properties, Fairlead Realty, Kaiser Foundation, Newell Brands, and United Parcel Service. Shuttle service is provided by American Coach Lines, and the partners contract directly with them. The cost of the shuttle is shared between partners based on the number of employees at each location. Employees, visitors and even the Kaiser clinic patients can ride the shuttle free of charge.
- ▶ **Results:** Currently, the ridership averages over 1,700 boardings per week. The shuttle runs for four hours during the peak morning commute and three hours during the afternoon. American Coach Lines offers an app which shows riders real-time arrival information, and Perimeter Connects hosts an [interactive route map](#) on its website. This kind of cooperation and collaboration has enabled hundreds of employees to utilize a transit commute, helping to relieve congestion in the area and reduce the demand for parking at the worksites.