



## **What Tenants and Commuters Want: Less Traffic, Cleaner Air How property managers are using green programs to stand out**

By: Kevin Green

*Executive Director, The Clean Air Campaign*

Recognizing the link between transportation and air quality, more property owners, managers and employers are joining The Clean Air Campaign to reduce smog and traffic in the Atlanta area. Organizations like Hines and Colonial Properties Trust are successfully differentiating themselves in the marketplace — and responding to the expectations of tenants — through green initiatives that encourage carpooling, vanpooling, teleworking, riding transit systems and bicycling to work.

The commitment among metro-Atlanta employers and property managers to champion the increased use of these alternatives to driving alone is important, considering that half of the region's smog-forming emissions come from the tailpipes of cars and trucks. But property managers also use this concept to add more value to the tenants they serve. Hines, for example, operates a shuttle to link one of its properties to MARTA's Medical Center station and to Perimeter Mall during lunch hours. Colonial Properties Trust offers reserved parking for those who carpool and provides walking trails to connect buildings at one of its locations.

"Programs that take cars off the road can help property managers reduce their environmental footprint, realize bottom-line benefits in the form of reduced overhead and even count towards achieving LEED certification," said Kevin Green, executive director of The Clean Air Campaign and the featured speaker at the 2009 BOMA-Atlanta Trade Show luncheon.

The Clean Air Campaign's team of consultants and partners work with more than 1,600 Georgia employers and property managers at no cost to develop commute options programs that are marketed onsite to commuters. In order to motivate more commuters to use "cleaner" alternatives to driving alone in their daily trek to and from work, The Clean Air Campaign makes financial incentives available, including the following.

- \$3 a day, up to \$100, to current drive-alone commuters who make the switch to a cleaner alternative
- \$40 to \$60 in monthly gas cards for carpools of three or more people
- \$25 cash prizes to commuters who continue using alternatives

A growing number of property management companies are also participating in a special Clean Air Campaign program to reduce unnecessary idling from diesel vehicles that provide deliveries. Nearly 50 organizations have drafted formal policies and created No-Idling zones on loading docks and other areas to protect employees and tenants from harmful exhaust emissions.

The Atlanta region is among the most wired in the nation, creating opportunities for teleworking at many organizations. The Clean Air Campaign is working with more than 250 employers to assist with drafting policies for and training, piloting and formalizing teleworking programs that will impact more than 10,000 employees. In addition, Georgia was among the first states in the nation to offer a Telework Tax Credit to employers who start or expand a teleworking program, with up to \$20,000 in tax incentives plus a \$1,200 credit per teleworker. The Clean Air Campaign provides assistance to employers wishing to apply for the tax credit, which has an October 31, 2009 deadline.

The most important attribute of The Clean Air Campaign's programs is that they are measurable, allowing property managers to quantify their efforts toward reduced traffic and air pollution. Each day, the 1,600 employers and property managers who participate in The Clean Air Campaign's programs help eliminate 1.6 million vehicle miles of travel and keep 800 tons of pollution out of the air we breathe.

Throughout the year, The Clean Air Campaign and the region's local Transportation Management Associations hold transportation fairs and events at worksites and properties across Atlanta. For more details on how your organization can be part of The Clean Air Campaign, call 1-877-CLEAN AIR or visit [CleanAirCampaign.org](http://CleanAirCampaign.org).



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