

Bylined Article

Written By:

Tom Workman, Carver County Commissioner, District 2

Randy Maluchnik, Carver County Commissioner (Vice Chair), District 3

A Win-Win-Win Proposition for Business, Employees and Carver County Carver County Among the First to Endorse eWorkPlace Initiative – Participants Will Save Approximately \$6,500

Earlier this month, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT, in partnership with the University of Minnesota/Humphrey Institute announced a new initiative called eWorkPlace – a program that could literally change the way Carver County residents work. And, frankly, we hope it does.

The program's primary purpose is to reduce congestion on roadways in and around the Twin Cities by encouraging employers to offer workers the option of teleworking (working from home or a remote location and connecting to the office, co-workers and clients through the Internet and other technology).

We appreciate the fact that this partnership is looking forward and using technology to benefit Carver County businesses and communities. (It's already a proven model in markets such as Atlanta, Houston, Washington DC and others.) Businesses benefit by an increase in productivity, improvements in recruiting/retention and free training/tools on how to effectively run a telework program.

Employees benefit because it allows them to work smarter, not necessarily harder, which often gives them autonomy and control over their work. Studies show that telework employees work harder and feel a better work-life balance. It is estimated that a Carver County telecommuter will save on average \$1980 a year in just automobile expenses and close to \$6500 if other saving are considered. In today's economy it is great reason to consider to Telework.

The benefits list goes on for businesses and their employees, but in Carver County, we see many more benefits to the program. Less commuting for county residents, means more people running errands, eating lunch and shopping right here in Carver County. We see it as a potential boost to Carver County's economic health.

The program also has a positive impact on our environment. According to eWorkPlace program leaders, automobiles and light trucks emit 20 percent of the United States' fossil fuel-based carbon dioxide, a key contributor to the greenhouse effect. A 90-minute round-trip commute (which many of residents drive each day) pumps 9 pounds of carbon monoxide and 45 pounds of carbon dioxide into the air every day.

As a large employer in our area, Carver County looks forward to determining how our job tasks and employees might qualify for this program. There's no doubt it's *not* for everyone (or every job position). However, when it makes sense, we hope to experience the benefits and share those benefits with our employees and residents.

If you manage a business in the Carver County area, we encourage you to learn more about eWorkPlace to see how you can participate. If you're an employee, tell your manager or human resource person about eWorkPlace to see if a telework program is right for you and/or your co-workers. Together, we could all change how we work, positively impact our day-to-day living and better our environment. Who doesn't want that?

For more information on eWorkPlace, visit www.eworkplace-MN.com.

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