

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of the State-of-the-Commute (SOC) Survey conducted for the Commuter Connections program of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). Commuter Connections provides a wide range of transportation information and assistance services in the Washington metropolitan area designed to inform commuters of the availability and benefits of alternatives to driving alone and to assist them to find alternatives that fit their commute needs. COG administers these services, called Transportation Emission Reduction Measures (TERMs), in a regional effort to reduce vehicle trips, vehicle miles of travel, and emissions resulting from commute travel.

COG has a strong interest in evaluating the effectiveness of its commuter services programs. In 1997 Commuter Connections established an evaluation framework that outlines a methodology and data collection activities to evaluate several of its commuter programs. This framework was updated and revised in March 2001 and again in March 2004, to include several enhancements.¹ A major addition to the 2001 framework was the State of the Commute (SOC) survey, a random sample survey of 7,200 employed persons in the 12-jurisdiction Washington metropolitan region.

The SOC survey serves several purposes. First, it documents trends in commuting behavior, such as commute mode shares and distance traveled, and prevalent attitudes about specific transportation services, such as public transportation, that are available to commuters in the region.

Second, the SOC survey is used to help estimate the impacts of some TERMS, such as the Telework Resource Center and the InfoKiosk portion of Integrated Rideshare, two TERMS that might influence on the population-at-large as well as on commuters who directly participate in the TERMS. Finally, by querying commuters about sources of information on alternative modes and their reasons for choosing alternative modes for commuting, the survey examines how other commute alternative programs and marketing efforts might influence commuting behavior in the region.

This report summarizes the survey methodology, presents key results of the survey, and offers conclusions about regional commute travel based on the results. The report is divided into three sections following this introduction:

- Section 2 – Description of the survey and sampling methodology
- Section 3 – Presentation of the survey results
- Section 4 – Conclusions from the survey results

Following these four main sections are six appendices dealing with survey procedures. They include: Appendix A – Survey data expansion, Appendix B – Final dialing disposition, Appendix C – SOC Survey instruments, Appendix D – Interviewer Instructions and Terms, and Appendix E – Comparison of 2004 SOC Results and 2001 SOC Results.

¹ For more information on the evaluation framework in effect at the time of this survey, readers may refer to *Transportation Emissions Reduction Measures (TERMs) Revised Evaluation Framework – July 2002 – June 2005*, available from COG.

SECTION 2 – SURVEY AND SAMPLING METHODOLOGY

OVERVIEW

The geographic scope of COG's responsibility encompasses the 12 counties and four independent cities that make up the Washington metropolitan region. All households within this geographic area that had at least one employed person residing in the household were eligible for selection in the 2004 study. A total of 600 random telephone surveys were conducted in each of the 12 jurisdictions of the study area, resulting in 7,200 completed surveys.

Using GENESYS, CIC's random digit dialing sampling system, household records were randomly drawn by county and where prefixes overlapped counties, by ZIP code, from all working prefixes. A detailed list of dialing results can be found in Appendix B.

QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

The 2004 SOC questionnaire was based on the questionnaire developed in 2001, with modifications and additions as needed. LDA Consulting, CIC Research, and COG modified the survey questionnaire, with input from a TDM Evaluation Advisory Panel comprised of representatives from the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. The survey was intended to meet multiple objectives, including trend analysis and evaluation of three TERMS: Telework Resource Center, Integrated Rideshare (Kiosk component), and new for 2004, the Mass Marketing TERM.

Wherever possible, an attempt was made to replicate questions used in the 2001 SOC Survey to allow trend analysis, but the consultants made changes when the revisions were expected to add substantially to the accuracy of the data. Additionally, significant new questions were added to collect data for evaluation of the Mass Marketing TERM.

Before the full survey was conducted, CIC completed a pretest of the questionnaire. Using the responses to these surveys, the questionnaire was finalized with COG Project staff and translated into Spanish. The survey instrument was designed for telephone administration using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). A copy of the English questionnaire is included in Appendix C. The Spanish questionnaire is available upon request.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

The telephone survey was conducted in CIC's telephone survey facilities. Surveys were conducted using CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system and Quantime software. Before beginning the full survey effort, CIC conducted interviewer-training sessions. Issues discussed in the session included:

- Explanation of the purpose of the study
- Identification of the group to be sampled
- Overview of COG and its function
- Verbatim reading of the questionnaire

- Review of the definition and instruction sheet to familiarize interviewers with the terminology
- Paper/computer review of skip-patterns to familiarize interviews with questionnaire flow
- Practice session on CATI systems in full operational mode

Interviews were conducted between February 7 and May 2, 2004. Additional Fairfax County interviews were conducted between June 5 and June 15, 2004. Calls were made to the respondent's home number. All weekday calls were made from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm local time and all weekend calls from 10:00 am to 6:30 pm local time. CIC interviewers conducted a minimum of four callback attempts over different days throughout the data collection period. CIC adopted measures to assure confidentiality of responses. When the call was answered by an answering machine, the interviewer left a message asking the person to call back on a 1-800 number. Bilingual interviewers surveyed all Spanish-speaking respondents using the Spanish questionnaire. A total of 156 surveys (2.2%) were completed in Spanish.

All interviewing was conducted with survey supervisors present. The survey supervisor was responsible for overseeing the CATI server, checking quotas, editing call-back appointment times, monitoring interviews, answering questions, reviewing completed surveys, and passing respondents to an available station when they called in on the 1-800 line. To insure quality control, the survey supervisor conducted periodic random monitoring.

A total of 600 interviews were completed in each of the 12 counties, resulting in a total sample size of 7,200 completed surveys. The refusal rate for the survey was 24.4 percent². An average of 45.0 call attempts was made for each completed interview. Interviews for Fairfax County were conducted separately, when the initial dialing specifications were found to cover the City of Fairfax only. A total of 586 additional interviews were completed to provide an accurate representation for all of Fairfax County. Fourteen surveys from the City of Fairfax were retained from the original interviewing period. The refusal rate for these interviews was 18.8%, while an average of 47.5 call attempts was made for each completed interview.

SURVEY DATA EXPANSION

Survey responses were expanded numerically to align the sampled survey results with published, employment information for the study area. The process developed for the 12-area, Washington, DC metropolitan region is detailed in Appendix A. The 2004 method differs from the 2001 expansion methodology at the recommendation of COG. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) were utilized to provide an acceptable, straightforward approach to estimating the number of workers by jurisdiction. The 2000 U.S. Census statistics were used to proportionally adjust survey bias for the distribution of race/ethnicity in Washington, DC.

² Refusal rates are calculated as the number of initial refusals plus the number terminated during the interview, divided by the total sample. See Appendix B.

SECTION 3 – SURVEY RESULTS

This section of the report presents the key findings of the survey. To align the sampled survey results with published numbers for the study area, the data were weighted to represent the number of employed people in the metropolitan region. The expansion methodology, described in Appendix A, allows the proper representation of employees in each of the 12 jurisdictions included in the survey area. Percentages presented in the results tables and figures show percentages weighted to the total working population, but also show the raw number of respondents (e.g., n=__) who answered the question.

Where relevant, survey results are compared for sub-groups of respondents. Survey results also are compared with corresponding data from the 2001 SOC Survey, where the comparison is notable. A comparison of key results from the 2001 and 2004 surveys also is presented in Appendix ____.

The results in this section generally follow the order of sections in the survey questionnaire.

- 3-A Characteristics of the sample
- 3-B Commute patterns
- 3-C Telecommuting in the Washington Metropolitan region
- 3-D Availability of and attitudes toward transportation options
- 3-E Awareness of and actions related to regional commute advertising
- 3-F Awareness of use of commuter assistance resources
- 3-G Commuter assistance services provided by employers
- 3-H Commute information kiosks

3-A CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

At the end of the survey interview, respondents were asked a series of questions about themselves, including: sex, ethnic background, age, income, home and work locations, type of employer, size of employer, and occupation. These results are presented first, to define characteristics of the sample.

Demographic Characteristics

Sex – Most respondents were female (55%). This was essentially the same percentage as in the 2001 SOC survey (54% female).

Age – As shown in Table 1, about three-quarters of respondents (76%) were between the ages of 25 and 54. About seven percent were under 25 and about three percent were 55 years or older.

Table 1
Respondent Age

(n=6,964)

Age Group	Percentage	Age Group	Percentage
Under 18	1%	45 – 54	27%
18 – 24	6%	55 – 64	14%
25 – 34	21%	Over 64	3%
35 – 44	28%		

Ethnic Background – As illustrated in Table 2, Caucasians and African-Americans represented the two largest ethnic groups of survey respondents, 64% and 23% respectively. Hispanic and Latino respondents accounted for about six percent and Asians/Pacific Islanders represented five percent.

Table 2
Ethnic Background

(n=6,801)

Ethnic Group	Percentage	Ethnic Group	Percentage
White/Caucasian	64%	Asian	5%
African-American	23%	Other/Mixed	2%
Hispanic/Latino	6%		

Income – Table 3 shows that almost three-quarters (72%) of respondents had household incomes of \$60,000 or higher. Nearly one in five (39%) had incomes of \$100,000 or more. About one-quarter (22%) had household incomes between \$30,000 and \$59,999.

Table 3
Annual Household Income
(n=5,706)

Income	Percentage	Income	Percentage
Less than \$20,000	2%	\$80,000 – 99,999	16%
\$20,000 – 29,999	4%	\$100,000 – 119,999	14%
\$30,000 – 39,999	8%	\$120,000 – 139,000	7%
\$40,000 – 59,999	14%	\$140,000 – 159,000	5%
\$60,000 – 79,999	17%	\$160,000 or more	13%

Home and Work Locations – Table 4 presents the distribution of respondents by their home and work states and counties. About equal shares of respondents lived in Maryland (45%) and Virginia (44%). The remaining 11% of respondents lived in the District of Columbia. Because the survey only interviewed residents of the 12-jurisdiction COG region, no respondents lived outside these areas.

Work locations were more evenly divided. The largest number of respondents worked in Virginia (37%), but Maryland and the District of Columbia, with 31% and 29% of respondents respectively, were close behind in employment numbers.

Four jurisdictions accounted for residences of seven in ten respondents: Fairfax County (including Fairfax City and Falls Church) (23%), Montgomery County, MD (19%), Prince George’s County, MD (17%), and the District of Columbia (11%). The same four jurisdictions also represented about three-quarters of the work locations, but in different proportions: District of Columbia (29%), Fairfax County (20%), Montgomery County (16%), and Prince George’s County (10%).

Table 4
Home and Work Locations

State/County	Home Location* (n=7,200)	Work Location** (n=7,200)
District of Columbia	11%	29%
Maryland Counties	45%	31%
Montgomery Co.	19%	16%
Prince Georges Co.	17%	10%
Frederick Co.	4%	3%
Charles Co.	3%	1%
Calvert Co.	2%	1%
Virginia Counties	44%	36%
Fairfax Co.	23%	20%
Prince William Co.	7%	3%
Arlington Co.	5%	6%
Loudoun Co.	5%	3%
Alexandria City	3%	3%
Stafford Co.	2%	1%
Other***	N/A	4%

* Adjusted distribution allows for the proper representation of working households in each geographical area.

** Work location percentages for Maryland and Virginia include only counties located in the COG 12-jurisdiction region. Maryland and Virginia locations outside this area are counted in the “other” category.

*** Each response in the “Other “ category was mentioned by less than one percent of respondents.

Employment Characteristics

Type and Size of Employer – Respondents were asked for what type of employer they worked and the number of employees at their worksites. These results are shown in Tables 5 and 6, respectively. Nearly half (47%) of the respondents worked for a private sector employer. Government agencies employed about one-third: federal agencies, 22%, and state and local agencies, 13%. About one in ten (10%) worked for a non-profit organization and the remaining seven percent were self-employed.

Table 5
Employer Type

(n=7,030)

Employer Type	Percentage
Private sector	47%
Federal agency	22%
State/local agency	13%
Non-profit	10%
Self-employed	7%

The majority of respondents worked for employers that are either very small or very large. About half (48%) worked for firms with 100 or fewer employees. About a quarter (25%) worked for employers that have at least 1,000 employees.

Table 6
Employer Size

(n=6,502)

Number of Employees	Percentage	Number of Employees	Percentage
1-25	24%	101-250	13%
26-50	12%	251-999	15%
51-100	12%	1,000+	24%

Occupations – Respondents represented many occupations, as shown in Table 7. About six in ten respondents (39%) worked in professional or executive/managerial occupations (21%). Other common occupations included administrative support (10%) and technicians/technical support (7%). Sales and service occupations each represented six percent of respondents.

Table 7
Occupation
(n=6,767)

Occupation	Percentage	Occupation	Percentage
Professional	39%	Protective services	2%
Executive/managerial	21%	Military	2%
Administrative support	10%	Transportation	1%
Technicians/support	7%	Equipment handlers/cleaners	1%
Sales	6%	Other*	1%
Service	6%	Refused/don't know	1%
Precision craft, production	4%		

* Each response in Other category was mentioned by fewer than 1.0% of respondents.

SECTION 4 – SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This section of the report summarizes the highlights of the results presented in Section 3 and presents major conclusions from the analysis of the survey.

A primary function of the SOC survey was to examine regional trends in commute behavior, awareness, and attitudes. The results of this 2004 survey would be compared against past results as measured in the 2001 SOC survey, the most recently performed regional commute survey to identify any commute trends.

A second objective of the SOC survey was to collect data to support the upcoming TERM evaluation, scheduled to be performed in the spring of 2005. Additional analysis of SOC data is underway for this purpose and results of these analyses will be included in a TERM evaluation report to be produced in June 2005.

Following is a summary of the key results from the SOC survey for the following topics:

- Commute patterns
- Telecommuting
- Awareness and attitudes toward transportation options
- Awareness of commute advertising
- Awareness of commute assistance resources
- Commuter assistance services provided by employers
- Guaranteed Ride Home
- InfoKiosks

Commute Patterns

Use of drive alone appears to have grown since 2001 at the expense of carpool/vanpool.

- Drive alone continued to be the most popular commute mode in the Washington metropolitan region. About 74.1% of weekly commute trips made to worksites outside the home were made by driving alone. This represented an increase over the 72.6% of weekly trips that were drive alone in 2001.
- Weekly trips made by transit and bike/walk were essentially unchanged from 2001 to 2004; bus dropped from 4.7% to 4.6%, train use rose from 12.7% to 12.8%, and bike/walk trips dropped from 2.4% to 2.3% of weekly commute trips.
- But weekly carpool/vanpool trips exhibited a statistically significant drop from 7.6% of weekly trips to 6.1% from 2001 to 2004.
- About a quarter (24.3%) of regional commuters said they used an alternative mode (carpool, vanpool, public bus, buspool, subway, commuter rail, bicycle, or walk) “regularly,” that is, three or more days per week for commuting. An additional 3.8% of commuters used an alternative mode one or two days per week, resulting in almost three in ten (28.1%) of commuters using an alternative at least once per week.

- The most popular alternative mode was train, which was used by 12.2% of respondents on a “regular” basis, three or more days per week. An additional 1.2% of commuters said they used the train one or two days per week.
- Bus was the regular commute mode for 4.4% of respondents. An additional 0.6% occasionally rode the bus to work.
- Carpooling/vanpooling was used by 5.6% of commuters three or more days per week and 1.3% used it one or two days per week. The majority of carpoolers continued to use a “traditional” form of carpooling, with the same partner(s) all the time. About 12% of carpoolers/vanpoolers “casual” carpooled (slug).

Regional commuters continue to try new alternative modes.

- Approximately one in five (22%) respondents said they had used or tried any alternative mode, other than one they were currently using, within the two years prior to the survey. Train was the mode mentioned most often; 57% of respondents said they had used or tried the train. One-third (32%) of respondents had tried the bus and 14% had tried carpooling. These were essentially the same percentages of trial and/or temporary use of alternatives as were observed in 2001.
- Prior to starting to use their current modes, about 40% of respondents who were using alternative modes previously drove alone to work. About a third (36%) had used a different alternative mode. About three in ten (30%) said they either had always used the alternative mode or were not working in the metropolitan area then.

A large portion of commuters who use alternative modes are long-time users of these modes.

- More than half (54%) of respondents who used alternative modes said they had used these modes for more than two years. This was a slight increase from the 2001 percentage of 49%. But about a quarter (23%) of the 2004 respondents said they started using their current alternative mode within the past year. Commuters who used alternative modes had been using the modes for an average of 70 months. This is a considerably longer duration than had been generally assumed as the duration of an alternative mode arrangement.

A sizeable portion of commuters who use alternative mode drive alone part of the trip.

- Nearly three in ten (29%) of commuters who used an alternative mode said they drove alone to the alternative mode meeting spot (park & ride lot, train station, etc.) and left their cars at those places. Respondents traveled an average of 3.1 miles to these meeting points. Four in ten respondents walked to the meeting point and the remaining respondents who used an alternative mode either took transit, or were dropped off by a carpool partner or picked up at home.

Commute lengths continue to increase.

- Respondents traveled on average of 16.5 miles and 34 minutes in 2004. The one-way commute distance increased from the average of 15.5 miles in 2001. The commute time stayed approximately the same as the 32 minutes estimated from the 2001 survey.

Telecommuting

About one in eight regional commuters telecommutes, but potential exists for additional telecommuting growth.

- About 12.3% of total survey respondents said they telecommuted at least occasionally. These telecommuters accounted for 12.8% of regional commuters, workers who were not self-employed and would otherwise travel to a worksite outside their homes if not telecommuting.
- The percentage of regional telecommuting, 12.8% of regional commuters, appears to have increased from the 2001 level of 11.3%. We note that the 2004 survey used a more restrictive definition of telecommuting than did the 2001 survey, excluding respondents, such as sales staff, who travel to multiple client sites during their workday and respondents who work at home for only a portion of a day. These respondents would have been considered telecommuters under the 2001 definition. To enable a comparison between results for the two years, the 2001 telecommute results were revised to exclude respondents who would not have been counted as telecommuters under the 2004 definition. This adjustment estimated that 11.3% of regional commuters telecommuted at least occasionally.
- The 2004 survey also showed that an additional 19% of commuters who do not telecommute today “would and could” telecommute if given the opportunity. These respondents said their job responsibilities would allow them to telecommute and they would like to telecommute. About two-thirds of these interested respondents said they would like to telecommute “regularly,” while one-third would like to telecommute “occasionally.”

Telecommuting is concentrated in certain demographic and employment groups.

- Telecommuters were statistically more likely to be: male, of white ethnic background, with incomes greater than \$60,000, and commute distance more than 30 miles.
- Telecommuters also were statistically more likely to be: employees of non-profit organizations or private employers; employees of very small employers (fewer than 25 employees) or employers with 251 to 999 employees; employed in technical, professional, and executive/managerial occupations.
- The potential for additional telecommuting seems to be primarily in the sub-groups in which telecommuting is now common. But high latent potential does exist in two sizeable groups in which telecommuting is now under the average: employees working for large (251 or more employees) organizations (24% could and would telecommute) and federal agency workers (24% could and would telecommute). This telecommute potential exists for Federal agency workers, even though the percentage of Federal workers who telecommute has increased from about seven percent of total Federal workers in 2001 to 12% in 2004.

“Informal” telecommuting arrangements predominate, but formal programs have increased since 2001.

- About 15% of all respondents (both telecommuter and non-telecommuters) said their employer had a formal telecommute program and 20% said telecommuting is permitted under informal arrangements between a supervisor and employee. Formal programs were most common at Federal agencies and among large employers.

- About one-third (32%) of current telecommuters said they telecommuted under a formal arrangement. The remaining telecommuters worked under an informal agreement with their supervisor. This suggests employers are more willing to craft individual agreements for selected employees than to institutionalize telecommuting. But the percentage of formal programs increased from only 27% in 2001, perhaps signaling a greater acceptance of formal telecommuting.

Most telecommuters telecommute from home.

- The overwhelming majority of telecommuters (95%) telecommuted exclusively from home. The remaining five percent telecommuted from a satellite office provided by an employer, a telework center, or both home and other location.
- Respondents who telecommuted from a location outside the home traveled on average 13.2 miles to those locations. The majority (68%) drove alone to these locations.

The average frequency of telecommuting seems to have increased slightly from 2001.

- Telecommuters telecommuted about 1.3 days per week on average. This was a slight increase in telecommute frequency from the 1.2 days per week estimated in the 2001 survey. Note that the 2001 frequency reflects the adjustment described earlier to estimate 2001 results under the 2004 telecommute definition.

Telecommuters get information on telecommuting from a variety of sources.

- More than half of the telecommuters surveyed said they obtained information on telecommuting from a “special program at work” or “word of mouth.” About one in six said they “initiated request on my own.”
- Just over five percent of telecommuters surveyed said they received telecommute information directly from Commuter Connections or MWCOG, either from the Telework Resources Center or an MWCOG website.
- An additional three percent said they learned about telecommuting through advertising. Although this was not necessarily advertising from Commuter Connections, COG has advertised widely about telecommuting, so this response could indicate some additional telecommuters who learned about telecommuting from Commuter Connections’ outreach. A portion of “special program at work” also could be the result of Commuter Connections’ outreach and assistance to employers.

Awareness and Attitudes Toward Transportation Options

The survey results show that public transportation is widely availability in the region.

- Two-thirds of respondents (68%) said public transportation was available in their home and work areas, the same percentage who said in 2001 that they had access.
- Metrobus, named by 53% of respondents, Metrorail, named by 46%, and RideOn, cited by 11% of respondents, were the most widely available services. But respondents named 10 additional public transportation services that provide service in the region.

Over a quarter of respondents have access to HOV lanes for their commutes.

- More than a quarter of respondents (29%) said there was an HOV lane along their route to work. Virginia residents were more likely to have access to HOV lanes than were residents of either Maryland or the District of Columbia.
- About a quarter of commuters who had access to HOV lanes used them and more than half (58%) of these respondents said availability of the HOV lane influenced their decision to use an alternative mode for commuting.
- Respondents who used the lanes said they saved an average of 25 minutes for each one-way trip. This might be an overestimation of the actual time saving, since 27% said the time saving was equal to or greater than the total length of their commute.

About seven percent of regional commuters use Park & Ride lots.

- About four in ten respondents (42%) said they knew the locations of Park & Ride lots along their route to work. Of those who knew the locations, 18% said they had used these lots when commuting during the past year. These respondents equate to about seven percent of the regional population.

Commuters' reasons for not using public transit or ridesharing varied by mode.

- The majority of respondents who did not use the bus for commuting said that the bus “takes too much time” (32%), that they “need car for work” (15%), or that there was “no service available in home/work area” (13%).
- “No service available” was the primary reasons for not using the train (37%). Smaller percentages of commuters said they did not use the train because the train “takes too much time” (21%) or because they “need car for work” (14%).
- The overwhelming reason that commuters did not carpool was that they “didn’t know anyone to carpool/vanpool with” (47%). Other reasons were that the commuters had “irregular work schedules” (20%) or “need car for work” (12%).

Commutes appear to be getting somewhat more difficult, but commuters are making changes to improve their commutes.

- Nearly three in ten respondents said their commute was more difficult than it was a year ago. The primary reason for it being worse was that the route was more congested now (81%).
- About 14% of respondents said their commute was easier than last year. The primary reasons were that the trip was shorter (44%), took less time (21%), or was less congested. But six percent said the commute was easier because they started using an alternative mode and two percent said they improved their commute by using HOV lanes.

Awareness of Commute Advertising

Commute information advertising appears to be widely recognized.

- Over half (55%) of respondents said they had seen, heard, or read advertising for commuting in the six months prior to the survey and two-thirds of these respondents could cite a specific advertising message. This was approximately the same result as was observed in the 2001 survey.
- Recall of general rideshare messages, such as [ridesharing] will “save time” or “help the environment, was below the levels estimated in 2001, but recall of messages about commute assistance services, such as GRH or carpool/vanpool matching assistance, had increased. A large portion of the messages that respondents recalled focused on Commuter Connections programs. This was consistent with the shift in Commuter Connections’ advertising toward product and service awareness marketing.
- Most (66%) of the respondents who had heard ads could not name the sponsor, but about 13% of respondents recalled Commuter Connections as the sponsor of advertising and 15% recalled WMATA as a sponsor.

Commute advertising also appears to be having an effect on commuters’ consideration of travel options.

- About 18% of respondents who had seen advertising said they were more likely to consider ridesharing or public transportation after seeing or hearing the advertising.
- The most persuasive messages appealed to commuters’ interest in saving time or reducing congestion. Respondents who were using alternative modes during the survey week were more likely to be influenced by the advertising (26% of respondents likely to consider alternative modes) than were commuters who drove alone (17%).
- About one in five respondents who said they were likely to consider ridesharing or public transportation for commuting had taken some action to try to change their commute. These respondents comprised slightly more than one percent of all regional commuters.
- The majority of these respondents said they sought information about commuting on the internet, from a family member or co-worker, or from a regional commute service organization. A very small percentage said they tried or started using an alternative mode after hearing the ads.
- More than two-thirds (69%) of respondents who had taken some action said the advertising they saw or heard encouraged the action. And more than 70% of respondents who took an action were driving alone at that time. This suggests that the advertising is acquainting drive alone commuters with other commuting opportunities and encouraging them to seek more information on these options.

Awareness of Commute Assistance Resources

Regional awareness of commuter information and assistance resources has grown since 2001.

- Nearly half (46%) of respondents said they knew of a telephone number or website they could use to obtain commute information. This was considerably higher than the 33% of respondents who

knew of these resources in 2001. About 15% of respondents could name a specific number or website.

- About 11% of respondents said they had used a commuter assistance number or website in the past year. This was about the same as the 10% who said in 2001 that they had used the number/website.
- Respondents who recalled commute ads were slightly more likely to have used a commute number or website than those who did not recall advertising. About 10% of respondents who recalled seeing or hearing advertising had used one of these resources, compared with about six percent of respondents who did not recall any ads.
- Respondents who used train (20%), bus (18%), or bike/walk (17%) were more likely to have used one of these numbers or websites than were either carpoolers/vanpoolers (10%) or drive alone respondents (6%). It is possible that some respondents who used alternative modes at the time the survey was conducted and who contacted a commute information number or website used the information they received to shift to an alternative. More than one-third of these respondents said they started using their current alternative mode within the past year.

Commuter Connections has high name and service recognition.

- Two-thirds (66%) of all regional commuters said they had heard of an organization in the Washington region called Commuter Connections.
- Respondents were more likely to know about Commuter Connections if they worked for a large employer and if their employer offered some types of commute services at the worksite. Awareness of Commuter Connections also was much higher among respondents who had seen or heard commute ads (74% recognition) than among those who did not recall any commute advertising (42% recognition).
- An encouraging finding was that respondents largely cited services that Commuter Connections actually does provide. About one third (36%) of respondents said they didn't know specific services, but 40% knew that Commuter Connections sponsored a GRH program and more than four in ten knew the organization offered either general rideshare information (28%) or help finding a carpool or vanpool partner (16%).
- The high recognition of both Commuter Connections program and its services is contradicted, however, to a finding mentioned earlier, that 46% of respondents who do not carpool said their reason for not using this mode was because they "didn't know anyone to carpool with." Although a large portion of the population does appear to know that ridematching is a service provided by Commuter Connections it might be useful to reinforce that message in regional advertising.

Commuter Assistance Services Provided by Employers

Availability of worksite commute assistance services is about the same as in 2001.

- Over half of respondents (53%) said their employers offered one or more alternative mode incentives or support services to employees at their worksites.

- The most commonly offered services were Metrochek/transit/vanpool subsidies (31% of employers) and commute information (22% of employers). About one in six respondents said their employers offered preferential parking (16%), services for bikers and walkers (14%), or GRH (12%).
- Availability of transit/vanpool subsidies and bike/pedestrian facilities appeared to have risen since 2001, while availability of commute information, preferential parking, carpool subsidies, and employer-provided GRH appeared to have dropped slightly.
- Respondents who worked for federal agencies were most likely to have incentive/support services available (84.5%), compared with 40-50% of respondents who worked for other types of employers. Respondents also were most likely to have access to all types of incentive/support services if they worked for large firms than for small firms.

Most commuters continue to have free worksite parking.

- The majority of respondents (66%) said their employers offered free, on-site or off-site parking, about the same percentage as that reported in 2001 (65%).
- Federal agency employees were least likely to have free parking (59%) compared with more than 70% of employees working for other types of employers.

Worksite commuter assistance services appear to encourage use of alternative modes.

- Commute information and Metrochek/transit/vanpool subsidies were the most widely used commuter assistance services, used, respectively, by 45% and 41% of employees who had access to these incentives.
- Driving alone was less common for commuters who had access to incentive/support services. Only 63% of commuters with these services drove alone to work, compared with 81% of commuters whose employers did not provide these services.
- Respondents whose employers did not offer free parking also used alternative modes at much higher rates. Less than half (47%) of respondents who did not have free parking drove alone, compared with 86% of respondents who did have free parking.

Guaranteed Ride Home

Awareness of GRH has grown dramatically since 2001.

- Nearly six in ten (59%) respondents knew that there was a regional GRH program. This was a large increase from the 20% who said they knew of such a program in 2001.
- Respondents who primarily carpooled or vanpooled were slightly more aware of GRH than were other respondents. But drive alone commuters were nearly as aware as were carpoolers and vanpoolers. These two findings taken together suggests that Commuter Connections' GRH advertising is reaching all segments of the commuting population, not just those who use alternative modes.
- Four percent of respondents said they had registered for or used a GRH service within the past two years. Three-quarters of these respondents said the program was sponsored by an employer. About 21% of respondents named Commuter Connections or MWCOG as the sponsor.

Kiosks***Information kiosks offer commuters an additional outlet for transportation information.***

- Slightly more than one in ten (11%) respondents said they had seen one of the transportation information kiosks located around the Washington area. Of these respondents, one in seven (13%), or about 1.4% of the total surveyed respondents, said they had used one of these kiosks to obtain transportation information.
- Respondents who were using alternative modes at the time of the survey were more likely to have used a kiosk than were respondents who were driving alone.
- The information most commonly obtained from kiosks included: transit route/schedule information (46%), general rideshare information (18%), and maps and guides (7%).
- More than one in six respondents (17%) who had used a kiosk said the information had influenced their decision to try a new alternative mode.
- About 61% of the respondents who tried an alternative mode after receiving information from a kiosk were driving alone before they obtained the information.