



# **TDM RESOURCE GUIDE SMP**

**WASHINGTON, DC  
METROPOLITAN REGION**

**FY 2025 FINAL REPORT**

**Regional TDM Marketing Group**

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**FY 2025 TDM Resource Guide and SMP**  
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## BACKGROUND

The first formal transportation demand management efforts for the Washington D.C. region began in 1974, under the name Commuter Club, which was established by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), the General Services Administration, and the Greater Washington Board of Trade to provide basic Ridematching for carpools and vanpools. In subsequent years, the program grew into a COG-coordinated network of local rideshare agencies, and in 1989, it became the Ride Finders Network which provided free alternative transportation information and computerized ride matching services to area residents seeking to join car or vanpools or locate appropriate transit arrangements and park-and-ride locations. In 1996, the regional network was renamed Commuter Connections.

In 1997, Commuter Connections expanded its services to include regional telework assistance and resources, its first website, a regional Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program, information on bicycling to work, InfoExpress commuter information kiosks, and free assistance to employers for the development and implementation of alternative commute programs and benefits. In 1998, Commuter Connections began to honor employers in the region through the Employer Recognition Awards program. In 2001, Bike to Work Day was rolled out regionally by Commuter Connections after initially starting as a local District of Columbia event by the Washington Area Bicyclist Association.

In 2003, Commuter Connections expanded its marketing efforts through the implementation of a regional mass marketing measure. The purpose of the measure was to brand the Commuter Connections name as the umbrella organization for commuter transportation information in the Washington metropolitan region and to subsequently increase the use of alternative forms of commuting. In 2008, Commuter Connections began coordinating Car Free Day as a regional event. In 2009, Commuter Connections introduced a carpool incentive project, 'Pool Rewards, which was expanded in 2012 to include vanpools. In 2010, Commuter Connections expanded its coverage of the Guaranteed Ride Home program to include the Baltimore region and St. Mary's County, MD.

In 2016, Commuter Connections introduced CarpoolNow, a real-time ridesharing mobile app. In 2017, Commuter Connections launched Flextime Rewards, developed in conjunction with the University of Maryland. The system sends notifications to commuters when heavier than normal traffic congestion is detected along their route, during peak travel periods. In 2019, Commuter Connections and the Maryland Transportation Institute at the University of Maryland launched incenTrip, a mobile app with personalized and real-time features to guide commuters to adjust their travel choices. In exchange, users can accumulate points that can be redeemed for cash and other rewards. In 2024, the incenTrip app is being rebranded to CommuterCash. Also in 2024, Commuter Connections celebrated its fiftieth year of service.

Today, the Washington, DC region has some of the most challenging traffic congestion in the country, however, boasts one of the highest rideshare, transit, and bicycling rates. The Commuter Connections regional network provides commute services and information to area residents and employers in the Washington metropolitan region to reduce traffic congestion and emissions caused by single occupant vehicles (SOVs). The outreach mission is to create awareness and benefits of alternatives to driving alone; to position Commuter Connections as an umbrella resource that provides support services to network organizations, employers, and the general public to facilitate those who are seeking to change SOV travel, primarily for commuting purposes. Travel methods promoted by the Commuter Connections network include carpooling, vanpooling, transit, bicycling, walking, scootering, and teleworking.

The following agencies share the regional commuter database, provide ridematching services and share information and resources: Alexandria Go Alex , Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City Department of

Transportation, Baltimore Metropolitan Council, Bethesda Transportation Solutions, Fairfax County Commuter Services, U.S. Food & Drug Administration, Frederick County Transit Services, George Washington Regional Commission, Harford Commute Smart, Howard County Go Howard, Loudoun County Commuter Services, Maryland Department of Transportation, Maryland Transit Administration, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Montgomery County Commuter Services, National Institutes of Health-Bethesda, North Bethesda Transportation Center, Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission, Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission OmniRide, Prince George's County Department of Public Works & Transportation, Rappahannock Rapidan Regional Commission, Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, and Washington Headquarters Services - DOD. COG provides Ridematching services directly for Arlington County, the District of Columbia, and to residents in other jurisdictions in both Maryland and Virginia not listed above.

Commuter Connections is a program of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board, the region's designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, and is funded through the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, and U.S. Departments of Transportation. Other entities that play a major role in the delivery of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) products, services, and messages in the Washington, DC region include transit agencies, local governments, business partnerships, bicycling associations, and transportation management associations.

The partnership between agencies and jurisdictions has been encouraged to develop and promote a congruent multi-modal transportation system, and a coherent message to commuters that will accelerate the trial and adoption of alternative commute modes. TDM mass marketing assists the region in supporting air quality goals through the implementation of regional transportation demand management measures, which in turn help increase regional mobility and efficiencies in the use of the existing transportation infrastructure, conserve energy, and help to improve public health by reducing air pollution.

TDM marketing campaigns maximize regional effectiveness in increasing awareness and use of alternative transportation modes. Regional TDM marketing activities are strategically planned and executed to optimize available resources. Messages are tailored and targeted to audiences who are most inclined to try and adopt alternative methods of commuting. Evaluation methodologies measure levels of change in travel behavior.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Commuter Connections, through partner input conducts and reviews regional commute data and market research. Findings and results are applied to planning and marketing communication programs by targeting specific audience groups likely to adopt alternative commute practices, and through the most cost-effective media with messaging that resonates.

This SMP includes key activity centers and Equity Emphasis Areas within the Washington, DC metropolitan region. It includes topline data from previously conducted relevant TDM research. The Regional TDM Marketing Group updates this document on an annual basis through collaborative input.

The Washington, DC region continues to show growth in households and employment at a steady pace. The stress on the region's highway and public transportation systems remains a challenge to manage.

Through previously conducted research within the Washington, DC region, we understand that the general population is aware of the negative outcomes of both traffic congestion and clean air challenges. Most of the population have not translated this awareness into action. For some, SOV alternatives lack the conveniences of driving alone and they are not receptive to change. For others, however, so-called inconveniences are only perception. Marketing campaigns initiated within the region must champion key attributes of more sustainable transportation (lowering stress, cost savings, time savings) and demonstrate that such options are flexible to match the commuters' needs.

## Metropolitan Washington Regional Activity Centers

Activity Centers are existing urban centers, priority development areas, transit hubs, suburban town centers, and traditional towns. They are the locations that will accommodate much of the region's future growth and development in the coming decades.

While Atlanta has Livable Centers, and San Francisco has Priority Development Areas, the DC region has Activity Centers. Different terms yet similar concepts; they represent places or hubs in large metropolitan areas where future growth is designated, encouraged, and concentrated.

Activity Centers emerged from the Transportation Planning Board's 1998 Vision, which called for a strong regional economy, including a healthy regional core and dynamic Activity Centers. Following the vision, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), in cooperation with local planning officials, produced the first regional map of Activity Centers in 2002 and an update in 2007. Initially, Activity Centers were mostly used for technical analysis and transportation planning purposes, such as developing growth forecasts, measuring commercial construction activity, and modeling transportation capacity.

In 2010, area leaders convened at COG through the Region Forward initiative to collaborate on fostering an accessible, sustainable, prosperous, and livable metropolitan Washington. The vision called for a mix of housing, jobs, and services in Activity Centers, as well as efficient transportation connections within and between Activity Centers. Most importantly, Region Forward re-emphasized Activity Centers as the best strategy for accommodating future growth.

**Place + Opportunity:** Strategies for Creating Great Communities and a Stronger Region is a concept to strengthen and enhance Activity Centers throughout metropolitan Washington. Activity Centers are the places that will accommodate much of the region's growth in the coming decades—attract residents, businesses, and visitors to the area, and are critical to ensuring the region's future competitiveness and success. Incorporating in-depth research on market, physical, and socioeconomic characteristics of the region's Activity Centers, this report offers goals, strategies, and tools to assist local governments and other stakeholders working to create thriving, high opportunity places.

Strong Activity Centers are the foundation of a strong region. While they take many different forms throughout the region, Activity Centers share some common characteristics; communities that offer a range of housing, transportation options, jobs, services, and amenities. Most importantly, they provide access to opportunity for residents, workers, and businesses. The importance of these places to local communities and the region is increasingly clear. Activity Centers will more efficiently accommodate the significant growth projected for metropolitan Washington. Activity Centers with a mix of uses, amenities, and good pedestrian infrastructure have been shown to attract more people and growth, perform better economically, and prove more resilient during recessions than less mixed-use and less walkable neighborhoods. The region's Activity Centers are diverse, ranging from highly urban places to suburban town centers, to traditional towns. Each community has its own aspirations, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach to achieving success. However, Activity Centers with common characteristics can benefit from similar strategies and investments.

To help make progress toward the TPB's transportation and land-use goals and get more out of the investments made in existing transportation infrastructure, the TPB calls upon regional leaders to promote policies that bring jobs and housing closer together. A TPB priority is focusing new development to support population growth in Activity Centers and near high-capacity transit station areas. Doing so can expand travel options and make for shorter trips in vibrant walkable communities.

Currently, 29% of the region's population lives within Activity Centers, and 66% of jobs are located within them. Based on the performance analysis of the financially constrained element of Visualize 2045, by 2045, 35% of the region's population will live in Activity Centers, and 67% of the region's jobs will be located in them. By pushing the pace on implementing policies that encourage development in Activity Centers, promoting housing affordability in Activity Centers, and by continuing to invest in efficient public transit, the region can reap even greater benefits from this type of land-use planning.

The Regional Activity Centers on the following pages represent the top 100 in descending order by number of jobs.

**Employment by Activity Center/Cluster**  
**Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments**  
**Round 9.2 Cooperative Forecasts**  
**Top 100 Sorted by Number of Jobs**

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Activity Center Name</b>	<b>2025 Employment</b>
District of Columbia	Farragut Square	192,995
District of Columbia	Downtown DC	115,804
District of Columbia	Monumental Core	72,166
District of Columbia	Westend	69,322
District of Columbia	NoMa	68,396
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Dulles South	58,036
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Merrifield Dunn Loring	52,024
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Tysons Central 123	48,530
Montgomery County	Bethesda	46,391
District of Columbia	Dupont Circle	43,932
Arlington County	Crystal City	42,868
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Reston Town Center	41,620
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Fort Belvoir	39,157
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Fairfax Center	38,323
Arlington County	Rosslyn	36,309
District of Columbia	Capitol Hill	35,781
District of Columbia	Capitol Riverfront	35,446
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Fort Belvoir North Area	34,291
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Herndon	32,320
Montgomery County	White Oak / FDA	28,938
Arlington County	Ballston	28,681
Montgomery County	Silver Spring	28,526
Montgomery County	White Flint	27,283
Arlington County	Pentagon	26,000
Frederick County	Francis Scott Key Mall	25,957
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Fairfax City	24,409
Montgomery County	Life Sciences Center/ Gaithersburg-Crown	24,122
Montgomery County	NIH / Walter Reed National Military Medical Ctr	23,727
Montgomery County	Rockville - South / Twinbrook	23,146
City of Alexandria	Carlyle / Eisenhower East	22,901
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Dulles East	22,367



<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Activity Center Name</b>	<b>2025 Employment</b>
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Tysons East	20,489
City of Alexandria	King Street / Old Town	20,474
District of Columbia	McMillan / Old Soldiers Home	20,432
PrinceWilliamCo/Manassas/ManassasPark	City of Manassas	20,349
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Wiehle- Reston East	20,261
District of Columbia	U / 14th Corridor	20,049
District of Columbia	Georgetown	19,826
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Springfield	18,657
Montgomery County	Rockville - Town Center	18,570
Montgomery County	Germantown	18,413
City of Alexandria	Braddock Road Metro Area	18,355
Montgomery County	Rock Spring	17,967
Prince George's County	New Carrollton	17,800
Frederick County	Downtown Frederick	17,599
Arlington County	Pentagon City	17,449
District of Columbia	Southwest Waterfront	17,148
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Tysons Central 7	16,751
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Tysons West	16,499
City of Alexandria	Beauregard	16,131
Loudoun County	RT 28 Central	15,737
Charles County	Waldorf	15,246
Arlington County	Court House	15,043
Loudoun County	Dulles Town Center	14,797
District of Columbia	St Elizabeth's	14,616
PrinceWilliamCo/Manassas/ManassasPark	Potomac Town Center / Potomac Mills	14,470
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Bailey's Crossroads / Western Gateway	14,315
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Fairfax Innovation Center	13,882
City of Alexandria	Landmark / Van Dorn	13,518
Loudoun County	Leesburg	13,364
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	City of Falls Church	13,353
Prince George's County	Largo Town Center/ Morgan Blvd	12,026
Fairfax Co./Fairfax City/Falls Church	Beltway South	11,890
PrinceWilliamCo/Manassas/ManassasPark	Gainesville	11,390

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Activity Center Name</b>	<b>2025 Employment</b>
Frederick County	Fort Detrick	10,970
Loudoun County	Ashburn Station	10,925
Prince George's County	Bowie	10,153
Montgomery County	Gaithersburg - Central	10,141
Arlington County	Virginia Square	9,770
District of Columbia	Columbia Heights	9,698
Arlington County	Clarendon	9,405
Montgomery County	King Farm / Rockville Research Center	9,047
Montgomery County	Friendship Heights	9,020
PrinceWilliamCo/Manassas/ManassasPark	City of Manassas Regional Airport	8,877
Prince George's County	Suitland Metro	8,872
Montgomery County	Gaithersburg - Kentlands	8,772
Loudoun County	Ashburn	8,526
District of Columbia	Friendship Heights	8,490
District of Columbia	Walter Reed	8,193
Montgomery County	Olney	8,118
Prince George's County	College Park	7,894
Loudoun County	RT 28 South	7,796
Prince George's County	Landover Mall	7,790
Montgomery County	Gaithersburg - Metropolitan Grove	7,678
District of Columbia	Rhode Island Ave	7,624
Prince George's County	National Harbor	7,620

## Metropolitan Washington Equity Emphasis Areas

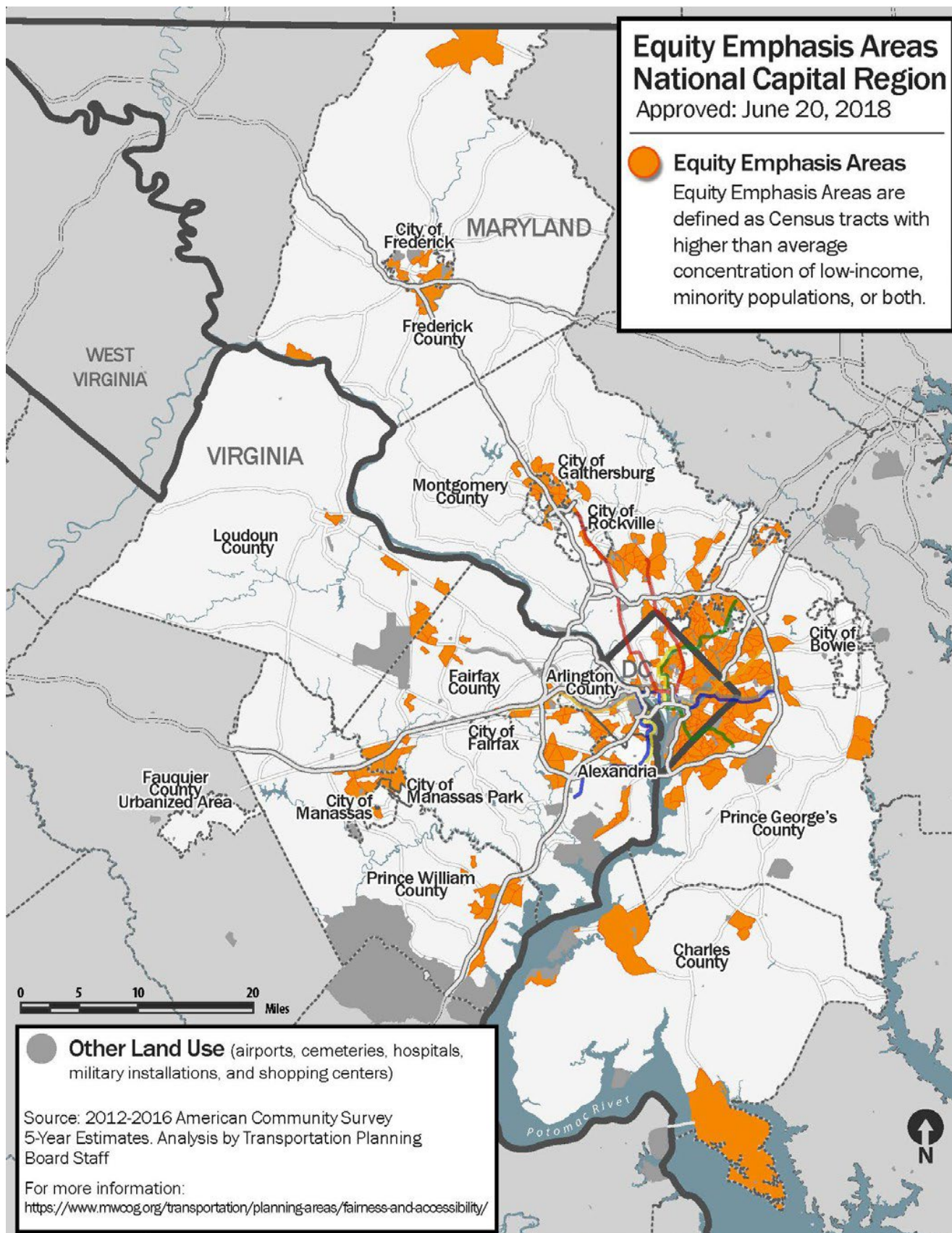
Equity Emphasis Areas which are small geographic areas that have significant concentrations of low-income, minority populations, or both. The methodology for the Equity Emphasis Areas was adopted by the TPB in March 2017. Tract-level Census data is used to identify communities that have significant concentrations of low-income and / or minority populations (African American, Asian, and Hispanic or Latino). Data from the American Community Survey for each of the minority population groups is used:

To identify concentration, the tract percent for each group was divided against its respective regional average. This resulted in a tract-level Ratio of Concentration, or the number of times the regional average, for each population group. To identify tracts with significant concentrations of low-income or minority population groups, as well as to normalize and compare results across the four groups and region, an Index Score is calculated based on each groups' Ratio of Concentration for every tract in the region. Index Scores for each population group is aggregated to reach an uncapped Total Index Score. Total Index Scores greater than or equal to 4.00 are considered Equity Emphasis Areas.

Tracts are identified as Equity Emphasis Areas if one of two criteria are met: Tracts must have a concentration of individuals identified as low-income more than one-and-a-half times the regional average or high concentrations of two or more minority population groups and/or high concentrations of one or more minority population groups together with low income concentrations at or above the regional average. Index scores are used to ensure that these conditions are met. A person is considered low-income if their household income is less than one-and-a-half times the federal government's official poverty threshold which varies by household size.

The TPB is required to analyze the long-range transportation plan for disproportionately high and adverse impacts on low-income and minority populations. The TPB's primary purpose for the Equity Emphasis Areas map is as an analytical tool to identify regional impacts of the planned transportation projects as whole by comparing accessibility and mobility measures for the Equity Emphasis Areas compared to the rest of the region.

Additionally, the Equity Emphasis Areas will be used in other planning activities and will be made available to local jurisdictions to assist with considering equity in initiatives such as education, health, and green space.



## TDM Research Findings

Below are key findings of recent TDM research. Ongoing research provides Commuter Connections with a better understanding of commuter trends and changing demographics, preferences, and behaviors of our regional audience.

### ***2024 Applicant Database Placement Survey Technical Survey***

#### Commute Travel Patterns

At the time of the survey (November 2023), 69% of respondents said they were teleworking at least occasionally; 28% teleworked three or more days per week and 7% teleworked full-time. This was a substantial change from the telework findings in the November 2020 placement survey, when 84% of workers teleworked at least some days and 77% teleworked three or more days per week, in response to the coronavirus pandemic. While telework was at a lower level in November 2023 than in November 2020, both the incidence and frequency of telework were higher in 2023 than in February 2020, just before the start of the pandemic. At that time, only 49% teleworked at all and 11% teleworked three or more days per week.

Telework/work from home days eliminated 22% of respondents' weekly commute "trips." Respondents used transit for nearly six in ten (57%) commute trips that they made to outside work locations. They drove alone for two in ten (20%) weekly commute trips to outside work locations, vanpooled for 9% of trips, and carpoolled for 6%. Respondents bicycled or walked to work for 8% of weekly commute trips.

The average one-way commute distance was 32.8 miles. The average one-way commute time was 63 minutes.

#### Commute Changes

Six in ten (60.2%) survey respondents started, tried, or increased use of alternative modes of transportation after receiving assistance from Commuter Connections. About three in ten made a change to a transit mode; 18.3% made a change to train and 10.8% made a change to bus. About two in ten (17.2%) made carpool or vanpool changes.

More than four in ten (41.6%) respondents made a change to an alternative mode they continued to use at least one day per week. This 41.6% was the "continued placement rate." The temporary placement rate, defined as the percentage of respondents who made a change but returned to their original modes, was 6.8%.

About 1.4% of respondents tried using a new alternative mode for a few days (one-time placement rate) and 10.4% made a change to a mode they use occasionally, but less than one day per week on average (occasional placement rate).

Three in ten (30%) respondents who made a mode change shifted from driving alone. The remaining 70% shifted from one alternative mode to another.

Respondents who made a commute change cited both commute-related and personal-related reasons. The top commute reason was to save money, cited by 20% of respondents who made commute changes. The top personal factors motivating commute changes were changing jobs or work hours (19%) and moving to a new residence (9%).

One-quarter (26%) of respondents who made a commute change indicated that information they received from Commuter Connections influenced or assisted their decision to make the change. About 8% cited a carpool or vanpool matching or assistance service, 5% named a transit information service, and 4% named Guaranteed Ride Home. Eight percent said the incenTrip mobile app had been influential. One-third (36%) of respondents were

influenced or assisted by a service from their employer or another commute service organization. The most common services in this category were financial incentives, cited by 22% of respondents who made a change, and vanpool assistance, named by 4%.

#### Contact with Commuter Connections

Respondents cited three primary sources to learn about Commuter Connections: employer/employee survey (26%), word of mouth referrals (24%), and Internet (17%). Internet also was the primary source of contact with Commuter Connections; 74% of respondents cited this method. About two in ten (21%) made a contact by telephone, 14% made their contact through the incenTrip mobile application, and 13% said their contact was through an employer.

One-third (33%) of respondents contacted Commuter Connections to find back-up transportation in case of emergency, 13% wanted to check commute options or a transit schedule, and 8% wanted rideshare information. Fourteen percent said they were interested in saving money and 7% were tired of driving and wanted to find another travel option.

#### Information and Assistance Requested and Received

The top service received overall, by a large majority, was Guaranteed Ride Home; 62% of respondents said they received or accessed this service, which is open to any commuter who uses an alternative mode to commute.

Four in ten respondents received or accessed a Commuter Connections service to help with carpooling or vanpooling. One-quarter (24%) received a matchlist with names and contact information for potential carpool/vanpool partners, 15% received a map showing home and work locations of potential carpool/vanpool partner, and 7% obtained vanpool assistance.

Six in ten (60%) respondents who received a matchlist tried to contact someone named on the list and 75% who tried to make contact reached someone on the list.

One-third (32%) of respondents received transit schedule and/or fare information from Commuter Connections. Thirty-seven percent of these respondents used the information provided to contact a transit agency and 87% who contacted a transit agency used information from the transit agency to try transit.

Respondents also reported using incentive programs offered by Commuter Connections. One-quarter (25%) had used the incenTrip mobile trip tracking app, 9% participated in the Flextime Rewards program that offered rewards for diverting from congested routes when highway incidents caused unexpected traffic, and 8% had registered for the CarpoolNow real-time rideshare mobile app.

The most common service that respondents received from an employer was a transit pass discount, noted by 50% of respondents. Respondents also mentioned other financial incentives that were available: vanpool subsidy (9%), Federal Transit tax benefit (9%) carpool subsidy (6%), or other cash incentive (11%). One-quarter (25%) of respondents mentioned that their employer offers telework or compressed schedules; this was a substantial drop from 2020, when 65% of respondents indicated this service was offered at work.

### ***2022 State of the Commute Survey***

#### Findings Related to the Coronavirus Pandemic

Commute disruptions were widespread – Three quarters of all workers experienced some disruption to their pre-pandemic commute patterns. Six in ten started or increased their use of telework; 32% shifted to full-time telework, eliminating all their commute trips, and 28% increased the number of days they teleworked. Workers also reported making other commute and work situation changes; 16% were working for a different employer or different job, 13% were working different days or hours, and 9% had shifted to a different type of transportation for their commute. The State of the Commute (SOC) survey interviewed only residents who

were employed at the time of the survey. It is likely some residents who lost jobs during the pandemic had not yet returned to work but these job and commute disruptions are not included in the results.

Both the percentage of workers who teleworked and the average frequency of telework were dramatically higher in 2022 than in 2019. In 2022, 66% of regional commuters were teleworking at least occasionally, nearly double the 2019 percentage of 35%. In 2022, teleworkers numbered 2.14 million regional workers. The average telework frequency also rose, nearly tripling from 1.2 telework days in 2019 to 3.37 telework days in 2022.

Telework replaced nearly half of daily commute trips in 2022 – The combination of the high percentage of workers teleworking and the high frequency of telework produced a nearly five-fold increase in the percentage of commute trips replaced by telework in 2022 compared with 2019. In 2022, telework accounted for 48% of commute trips, compared with about one in ten trips in 2019. On a typical workday in 2022, nearly 1.5 million workers teleworked, eliminating 2.9 million daily commute trips.

Driving alone accounted for a higher share of trips that were made to outside work locations in 2022, and the analysis examined commute patterns both with and without telework. When telework was excluded from the mode distribution, the resulting mode splits for trips made to outside work locations showed a statistical increase of nearly 14 percentage points in the drive alone mode share between 2019 and 2022 (2019 64.6%, 2022 78.4%). These trips were shifted from train (10.0 percentage points), carpool/vanpool (1.8 points), and bus (1.7 points), all of which lost mode share between 2019 and 2022.

Transit mode share declined across all geographic and demographic commuter populations. The analysis also examined commute patterns across a range of commuter characteristics. When telework was excluded, relative patterns of mode use were generally similar in 2022 as in 2019. For example, transit use in 2022 was higher among workers who lived and/or worked in the Core area, younger workers, Non-Hispanic Black respondents, and respondents who had limited access to a personal vehicle. These groups also had been above-average users of transit in 2019. But even for commuting populations for which transit was a common mode, transit use declined between 2019 and 2022. For example, in 2019, three in ten workers under 45 years old had primarily used transit; in 2022, only 16% used transit as their primary mode. In all cases, the lost transit mode share was shifted to driving alone.

Commuting got easier for some workers and more difficult for others but overall commute satisfaction was about the same in 2022 as in 2019. One-quarter (26%) of respondents who were traveling to an outside work location said their commute was more difficult than one year ago but 24% said their commute was easier. The percentage who had a more difficult commute was about the same as in 2019. However, workers who reported an easier commute rose from 15% in 2019 to 24% in 2022. The percentage of respondents who were satisfied with their commute was about the same in 2022 (52%) as in 2019 (50%).

Transit riders were more likely to report commute difficulty and less commute satisfaction than were other mode users. Respondents who primarily teleworked, carpooled/vanpooled, or drove alone to work were particularly likely to report an easier commute than last year. This likely reflected the fact that while commute distances were about the same in 2022 as in 2019, commute travel times had declined, due to fewer vehicles on the road. More difficult commutes were far more common among train riders (50%) and bus commuters (42%). Transit riders also gave lower ratings for commute satisfaction; 46% of Metrorail riders and 44% of bus commuters reported being satisfied with their commute, compared with about half of carpools/vanpools (52%) and drive alone commuters (51%). Transit riders also were less satisfied in 2022 than they had been in 2019; perhaps due to transit service disruptions during the pandemic and riders' concerns with the potential exposure to coronavirus.

Workers were less aware of commute advertising and commute resources in 2022. About 27% of all respondents said they had seen, heard, or read advertising about commuting in the year prior to the survey, a considerably lower percentage than estimated in the 2019 survey (45%). This is likely due in part to lower exposure to

advertising. Workers who teleworked most or all their workdays would have fewer opportunities to see or hear advertising during their commute and perhaps noticed it less because it was not relevant to their current work situation. But some organizations that sponsor commute advertising paused their mass media and worksite outreach, so it also is likely that fewer ads were available for commuters to notice. Awareness of regional and local commuter assistance services also fell; awareness of Commuter Connections dropped from 48% in 2019 to 40% in 2022, and five of the ten local jurisdiction commute assistance programs experienced lower name recognition in 2022 than in 2019.

But respondents continued to report access to workplace commute services at nearly as high a rate in 2022 as in 2019. Fifty-six percent of respondents said their employers offered one or more commuter benefits or services at the worksite; this was a slight decrease from the 60% rate estimated in the 2019 SOC survey. This could suggest some employers discontinued commute services because many employees were working from home during the pandemic. However, working from home could have limited employees' exposure to information or services they might have noticed if they were working at their usual work location. Transit subsidies and commute information continued to be the most common worksite services, and employees who had access to the services were as likely to use them in 2022 as they did in 2019.

### Commute Patterns

In 2022, 48% of weekly days were telework. This was vastly different than in 2019, when telework accounted for just 10% of weekly commute days. But even controlling for the growth in telework, for commute trips made to outside work locations, use of drive alone increased and alternative modes fell as a share of commute trips.

Two modes, driving alone and telework, accounted for nearly nine in ten commute days in 2022. Workers teleworked for 47.6% of their commute days/trips and made 41.2% of commute trips by driving alone (including taxi/ridehail service). The remaining commute days/trips were divided into 7.8% transit, 1.7% carpool/vanpool, and 1.7% bike/walk.

The 2022 mode split was dominated by the pandemic-related increase in telework. Excluding telework from the total reveals the distribution of modes used on days workers traveled to outside work locations. Driving alone accounted for about 78% of commute trips to outside locations and alternative modes made up the balance; 15.0% transit, 3.3% carpool/vanpool, and 3.3% bike/walk.

Comparison of the "outside commuting" mode splits for 2022 and 2019 showed a statistical increase of nearly 14 percentage points in the drive alone share of commute trips (2019 64.6%, 2022 78.4%). These trips were shifted from train (10.0 percentage points), carpool/vanpool (1.8 points), and bus (1.7 points), all of which lost mode share. Bike/walk mode share remained essentially unchanged, when telework is excluded.

Carpooling declined as a share of weekly commute trips. Among those who carpooled in 2022, about 75% carpooled with family members. This was a significant increase over the 56% of "household carpools" reported in 2019. By contrast, the share of carpoolers who said they used casual carpools or "slug" carpools declined from 20% in 2019 to just 4% in 2022. The coronavirus pandemic could have had two impacts on casual carpooling. First, the shift of many workers to work from home/telework would have reduced the number of potential slug drivers and riders. The second possible factor is commuters' desire to minimize their risk of contracting coronavirus by avoiding travel with commuters whose virus and or vaccination status they did not know.

Alternative mode use fell across all geographic and demographic characteristics but remained higher for respondents who lived and/or worked in the central portion of the region than for those who lived/worked outside the regional core.

When telework is excluded from the mode distribution, only about half (49%) of commuters who lived in the Core area (Alexandria, Arlington, and District of Columbia) drove alone. This was much lower than the 81%



drive alone rate for the Middle Ring (Fairfax, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties) and the 88% rate for the Outer Ring (Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Loudoun, and Prince William counties). The mode pattern for employment area was similar; about six in ten (59%) commuters who worked in the Core area drove alone, dramatically lower than the drive alone rates for Middle Ring workers (88%) and Outer Ring workers (93%).

The average commute distance of respondents who commuted to outside work locations declined slightly from 17.1 miles in 2019 to 16.9 miles in 2022. The 2022 survey asked respondents the distance from their home to their work location. Respondents who teleworked full-time were asked the distance to the location where they would work if they were not teleworking. Respondents who commuted to an outside location traveled 16.9 miles one way, essentially the same as the 17.1 miles average measured in the 2019 survey. Full-time teleworkers reported their travel distance would be 16.3 miles if they were not teleworking. Across all workers, the average commute distance would be 16.7 miles.

Respondents who were traveling to an outside work location commuted an average of 37 minutes one-way, a notably shorter time than that reported in 2019 (43 minutes). This could be related to the slight drop in commute distance, but it is likely the elimination of commute trips due to expanded telework as the more significant factor. One-third of workers teleworked full-time at the time of the survey and another one-third teleworked at least occasionally. This would have removed a much larger number of commuting trips from the peak period in 2022 than in 2019.

Commuters who used alternative modes recognized personal benefits of choosing these modes. When alternative mode users were asked what personal benefits they receive from using these modes, 94% named at least one benefit, a slightly higher share than the 89% in 2019. Saving money topped the list of personal benefits, mentioned by 32%. Respondents also cited benefits with a connection to quality of life, such as getting exercise or health benefit (20%), avoiding traffic (17%), and helping them avoid stress or relax while commuting (14%). Fourteen percent said they could save time or travel more quickly and 13% said they could use their travel time productively when they used an alternative mode. Over one in ten said it was a convenient/easy way to travel (11%) and 10% benefited by not needing to find or pay for parking.

#### Telework

The percentage of workers who telework exploded between 2019 and 2022, in response to the pandemic. In 2022, 2.14 million regional workers teleworked at least occasionally. This represented a near doubling of regional teleworkers.

Two-thirds (66%) of regional commuters said they teleworked at least occasionally. "Commuters" were defined as workers who were not self-employed and would otherwise travel to a worksite outside their homes if not teleworking. These teleworkers represented 2,137,000 regional workers.

The 66% telework percentage is almost double the 2019 percentage of 35%. Telework incidence grew in every demographic and occupational segment.

Even with the dramatic telework increase in 2022, the survey showed that an additional 9% of all commuters "could and would" telework if given the opportunity (295,000 workers). These respondents said they did not telework but would like to telework and could perform some or all their job responsibilities at a location away from the main workplace. In fact, many of these workers did occasionally work remotely, although they did not consider it as "telework;" 73% said they worked from home all day during their regular work hours at least one day in the past year and 27% worked from home at least one day per month. But they worked from home infrequently; on average just 13.5 days per year or about 0.27 days per week.

In early 2022, 1,455,400 workers (44% of all regional workers) teleworked/worked from home on a typical workday. This action eliminated nearly 3 million commute trips each work day.

The average telework frequency also rose between 2019 and 2022. Nearly four in ten were teleworking their workdays in 2022 and 32% teleworked three or four days per week. Across all teleworkers, this averaged 3.37 telework days per week, nearly triple the average of 1.2 days per week in 2019.

When the average 3.37 days per week telework frequency for teleworkers and the 0.27 days per week work-at-home frequency of non-teleworkers are applied across the region, it equates to approximately 1,455,400 regional workers teleworking/working at home on a typical workday, or about 44% of all regional workers. Assuming two commute trips per day, these workers eliminate nearly three million work trips each workday.

Most teleworkers reported that telework had a positive impact on their ability to do their work and most teleworkers wanted to continue teleworking in the future. More than nine in ten (92%) respondents who were teleworking at the time of the survey said they would want to telework at least one day per week and 39% said they would want to telework all their workdays. Only 2% of teleworkers were not interested in continuing to telework at all.

Teleworkers were shown four statements about their experience with telework and were asked to rate their level of agreement with each statement on a five-point scale. Nearly nine in ten (86%) agreed (rating of 4 or 5-strongly agree) with the statement that they were productive while they were teleworking and 80% agreed that they were able to coordinate with co-workers while they were working at home. Two-thirds (66%) agreed that they were better able to concentrate on work tasks while teleworking. Conversely, when asked if they found it difficult to unplug from work while teleworking, nearly half (45%) agreed. But more than one-third either disagreed or strongly disagreed, suggesting that it was not universally a concern. The percentage of teleworkers who worked under “formal” telework arrangements was more than twice as high as the percentage who teleworked under informal arrangements with supervisors.

Half (50%) of all respondents (both teleworkers and non-teleworkers) said their employer had a formal telework program and 21% said telework was permitted under informal arrangements between a supervisor and employee. Formal programs were most common at federal agencies and among respondents who worked for large employers.

The 50% share of workers who reported a formal telework arrangement at work was a considerable increase over the 34% who reported formal telework in 2019. It is possible that employers that expanded telework to a much greater number and wider range of employees to respond to the pandemic prompted some employers to formalize telework policies and replace informal agreements that had been sufficient for use with selected employees before the pandemic.

#### Availability and Use of Transportation Options

Most respondents reported access to some transit service in their home area. More than four in ten (44%) respondents said they lived less than one-half mile from a bus stop and 53% said they lived less than one mile away. Train station access was less convenient; only 19% lived less than one mile from a train station. About one-quarter of respondents said they did not know how far they lived from the bus stop and train station.

Among respondents who could provide a distance, the average distances were 1.1 miles to the nearest bus stop and 4.4 miles to the nearest train station. But respondents who lived in the Core area said the closest bus stop was an average of 0.4 miles away and a train station was 1.2 miles away. Three-quarters (78%) of Core area residents lived less than one-half mile from a bus stop.

At the time of the survey, one in ten respondents who were commuting to outside work locations used transit for their commute. Among those who were not riding transit to work, 31% said they had done so within the past three years. When asked why they stopped riding, 68% cited the coronavirus pandemic as a reason and half

said it was an important factor in their decision to change commute modes. But access to transit also was a factor for former riders. Twelve percent said transit was less available because they had changed their work location or schedule. Five percent moved to a home area where transit was not available or convenient, and 13% said the transit service or schedule was limited. Former riders also noted some transit service characteristics as barriers to transit use, particularly that transit “takes too much time” (14%), “could be unreliable” (8%), and expensive (5%), or that they did not feel safe on transit (5%).

One in ten commuters region-wide had used an HOV lane for their trip to work and 14% had used an Express/Toll Lane. But more than three-quarters of commuters who used the Express/Toll Lanes said they typically drove alone while using the lane. Thus, these lanes offer only modest benefits for congestion relief along those corridors.

Three in ten (31%) respondents said there was an HOV lane along their route to work and one-third of these respondents, equating to about 9% of all commuters, had used the lanes. Fewer respondents (26%) had access to Express/Toll Lanes, which are open to drive alone commuters for a fee. But more than half of respondents who had an Express/Toll Lane available had used it, representing 14% of all commuters region-wide.

More than three-quarters (77%) of Express/Toll Lane users said they typically drove alone while riding in the lanes. But commuters who carpooled, vanpooled, or rode transit buses in Express/Toll Lanes used the lanes more frequently. One-third (33%) of commuters who typically rode in a carpool/vanpool or bus on an Express/Toll Lane used the lanes three or more days per week; only 14% of commuters who drove alone in an Express/Toll Lane used the lanes this frequently.

More than four in ten commuters who used an HOV lane (HOV lane only or HOV and Express/Toll lanes) made a travel change influenced by availability of the lanes. Among those who used only the Express/Toll Lanes, 24% made a change influenced by the lane availability.

More than one-third (35%) of respondents who used both HOV and Express/Toll Lanes said they made an alternative mode change to be able to use the lanes (18% started carpooling/vanpooling, 8% added another rider to a carpool/vanpool, and 9% started riding transit). Among respondents who used only HOV lanes, 13% made one of these alternative mode changes to use the lanes. Some HOV respondents said they changed their work schedule to avoid the restricted hours (HOV only 11%, HOV/Express 18%). Respondents who used only Express/Toll Lanes were less likely to have made alternative mode travel changes; only small percentages started ridesharing (3%) or riding transit (1%) to use the lanes. One in ten (13%) changed their work schedule to avoid the time restriction and 5% started or increased driving alone, presumably shifting from alternative modes.

Respondents who used an HOV/Express Lane for commuting estimated that they saved an average of 16 minutes for each one-way trip when they used the lanes. HOV/Express Lane users who lived in the Outer Ring jurisdictions saved an average of 20 minutes one-way.

#### Commute Changes, Commute Ease, and Commute Satisfaction

While many commuters were long-time users of their mode, commuters continued to shift modes. Commuters who drove alone to work had used this mode an average of 6.4 years and 30% had been driving alone for 10 years or more. Four in ten (39%) started driving alone within the past three years. By contrast, 45% of train riders, 53% of bike/walk commuters, 58% of bus riders, and 65% of carpoolers adopted these modes within the past three years.

Commuters who shifted to alternative modes within the past three years did so primarily to save money (11%), because the new mode was more convenient (9%), or because they had a change in their personal circumstances, such as changing jobs or work hours (21%) or moving to a new residence (20%).

Respondents who started driving alone to work in the past three years gave some of the same reasons for switching modes as did alternative mode users; changing jobs or work hours (16%), moving to a new residence (8%), saving time (7%), and ease or convenience (6%). These results suggest both drive alone and alternative mode shifts are made to respond to changing personal circumstances. But respondents who started driving alone reported greater concerns about coronavirus than did alternative mode users; 11% of commuters who started driving alone said they wanted to avoid getting COVID-19 and 7% simply said “coronavirus pandemic.” Twelve percent switched due to reduced or unreliable transit service and 7% said they lost a carpool partner; these also could have been pandemic-related.

Half of commuters were satisfied with their current commute, about the same percentage as in 2019, but transit commuters gave notably lower ratings for satisfaction in 2022 than in 2019.

Half (52%) of commuters rated their commute satisfaction as a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale, where 5 meant very satisfied. Two in ten (20%) rated their commute as a 1 (not at all satisfied) or 2. Commute satisfaction in 2022 was statistically the same as in 2019, when 50% were satisfied.

Nine in ten bike/walk commuters were satisfied with their commutes. By contrast, only about half of carpoolers /vanpoolers (52%) and drive alone commuters (51%) reported being satisfied. Transit riders reported lower satisfaction; half (49%) of commuter rail riders also were satisfied but only 46% of Metrorail riders and 44% of bus commuters rated their commute satisfaction as a 4 or 5.

Satisfaction among carpool/vanpool commuters and drive alone commuters increased slightly in 2022. These mode users are most affected by traffic congestion and these changes could reflect a lessening of congestion in 2022, as fewer workers traveled to outside work locations. Commute satisfaction declined between 2019 and 2022 among users of all three transit modes: commuter rail (56% in 2019 to 49% in 2022), Metrorail (56% in 2019 to 46% in 2022), and bus (62% in 2019 to 44% in 2022). The 2022 declines in satisfaction for the three transit options likely are at least somewhat related to transit service disruption during the pandemic and riders’ concerns with the potential exposure to coronavirus.

Commute satisfaction also differed by where the respondent lived and worked. Respondents who lived in the Core were more satisfied (60% satisfied) than were respondents who lived in the Middle Ring (54%) or Outer Ring (45%). Conversely, a much higher share of respondents who worked in the Outer Ring (66%) were satisfied than was the case for Core (50%) and Middle Ring (53%) workers.

Commute satisfaction declined dramatically as commute length increased. Nine in ten (91%) respondents who commuted 10 minutes or less gave a 4 or 5 rating for satisfaction. When the commute was between 21 to 30 minutes, satisfaction dropped to 59% and when travel time exceeded 60 minutes, only 17% rated their commute a 4 or 5.

Commuting got more difficult in the past year for one-quarter of commuters but a nearly equal share had an easier commute. Many respondents considered commuting factors when making job or home location decisions and took actions to improve their commutes.

Twenty-six percent of respondents said their commute was more difficult than one year ago but 24% said their commute was easier. Respondents who primarily teleworked, carpooled/vanpooled, or drove alone to work, and those whose commutes were short, were particularly likely to report an easier commute than last year. More difficult commutes were far more common among train riders (50%), bus commuters (42%), and those who commuted more than 45 minutes to work (39%).

Respondents’ commute satisfaction was influenced by the ease of the commute. Two-thirds (66%) of respondents who had an easier commute than last year and 60% whose commutes had not changed were

satisfied with their commute, compared with only 26% who said their commutes had become more difficult.

Nearly four in ten respondents said they made either a work or home location change in the past two years; 19% changed their work location and 28% changed their residence. The work change percentage was about the same as the 20% who reported a work location change in 2019. But the 2022 home move percentage was well above the 18% who reported a home location change in the 2019 survey.

Respondents who made a home or work location change in the past year were more likely to report an easier commute (27%) than were commuters who did not make a change (22%). This suggests a move could have played a role in improving the commute.

Two-thirds (67%) of respondents who made a location change said they considered a commuting factor, such as the length, ease, or cost of commuting to/from the new location, when making their location decision. Nearly one-third (28%) said commute ease was more important than other factors and 1% said it was the only factor in their decisions.

More than half (52%) of respondents who made a home or work location change considered how close their new location would be to transportation services such as Park & Ride lots, HOV/Express Lanes, protected bike lanes, transit stations/stops, and bikeshare and carshare services. Despite the higher incidence of home location changes in 2022 compared with 2019, the percentage of respondents who considered their transportation access at the new location was the same in 2022 as in 2019 (52%). Most individual services were named by similar percentages of respondents in 2022 as in 2019.

#### Awareness and Impact of Commute Advertising

General awareness of commute information fell between 2019 and 2022 but it is not clear if this is the result of lower recall or lower exposure to advertising.

About 27% of all respondents had seen, heard, or read advertising for commuting in the year prior to the survey, a considerably lower percentage than estimated in 2019 (45%). Increased use of telework might have been a factor in the decline. Workers who teleworked most or all their workdays would have fewer opportunities to see or hear advertising during their commute and perhaps noticed it less because it was not relevant to their current work situation. But Commuter Connections and some other organizations that sponsor commute advertising paused their mass media and worksite outreach in 2020 due to the pandemic, so it also is likely that fewer ads were available for commuters to notice.

Forty-five percent of respondents who recalled advertising could cite a specific advertising message. Nearly three in ten respondents who had heard or seen a message reported a message related to transit service, with most recall focused on the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA, Metro).

Nearly one in ten (9%) respondents reported a message about WMATA and coronavirus cleaning or safety. Six percent named a message about WMATA service improvements and 3% said it was about WMATA service cuts or changes. Eight percent recalled a message about ridesharing and 3% recalled a message to contact Commuter Connections.

Four in ten (41%) respondents who had heard ads could name the sponsor. WMATA was named by 25% as the advertising sponsor. Commuter Connections/MWCOG was named by 6%, lower than the 10% who named Commuter Connections in 2019.

Commute advertising appeared to influence commuters' consideration of travel options. Almost two in ten (17%) respondents who saw or heard advertising said they were more likely to consider ride-sharing or public transportation after seeing or hearing the advertising. This was about the same percentage (18%) as was

estimated in the 2019 survey.

But about one-third of respondents who recalled an advertising message and who were commuting to an outside work location at least one day per week said they took some action after hearing the ad to try to change their commute. Thirty-five percent of respondents who took an action to change their commute said the advertising they saw or heard encouraged the action.

Many respondents who took action sought more information from the Internet, a personal referral, or from a commute or transit service. Almost half who took an action tried or started using an alternative mode for commuting. Although these respondents equaled just 1.9% of all regional respondents, they represent nearly 40,000 commuters region-wide.

#### Awareness and Use of Commute Assistance Resources

About one-third of regional commuters were aware of commute information and assistance resources. About one-third (32%) of respondents said they knew of a telephone number or website they could use to obtain commute information. Awareness of regional commute information resources was the same as noted in the 2019 survey.

Awareness of commute resources was substantially higher among respondents who saw or heard commute advertising in the past year (43%) than for respondents who did not recall advertising (26%). Commuters who had heard of Commuter Connections reported higher awareness of regional commute resources (43%) than did commuters who were not aware of Commuter Connections (24%).

About one-third of respondents who said they knew of a specific number or web site had used it; these respondents represented about 11% of all regional commuters, about the same percentage as in 2019 (12%). Respondents named more than 40 numbers, websites, or mobile apps that they had used, indicating commuters seek information from a wide range of resources. Five percent named a Metro/Wmata resource; about 1% mentioned a resource offered by a county transit, commuter, or transportation agency.

Four in ten regional commuters had heard of Commuter Connections. In 2022, 40% of all regional commuters said they had heard of Commuter Connections. This percentage continued a declining trend dating back to 2013 (2019 - 48%, 2016 - 61%, 2013 - 62%, 2010 - 64%) but still represents a high level of general population awareness.

Five percent of respondents who knew of Commuter Connections had contacted the program or visited a Commuter Connections or MWCOC website in the past year. These commuters represented about 2% of all employed residents of the region.

Most local jurisdiction services were known to at least a quarter of their target populations. Respondents were asked about local commute assistance services provided in the jurisdictions where they lived and worked. Awareness of these programs ranged from 9% to 53% of respondents who were asked the questions. Two of the ten local programs were known to at least half of the target respondents and three other programs were known to about three in ten target respondents.

Use of the services ranged from 1% to 8% of the target audience. Use was generally higher for programs in outer jurisdictions and for programs associated with transit agencies or with a strong transit component. The relationship to the location within region was likely because outer jurisdiction commuters encountered more congestion in their travel and had longer commute times and distances, which could encourage them to seek options for travel to work.

#### Employer-provided Commuter Assistance Services

Availability of worksite commute assistance services declined slightly between 2019 and 2022, perhaps because many employees were working from home.

Fifty-six percent of respondents said their employers offered one or more alternative mode benefits or services to employees at their worksites. This was a slight decline from the 2019 percentage (60%) but about the same as percentages noted in the 2016 (55%) and 2013 (57%) surveys. The drop from 2019 could suggest some employers suspended some commute services because many employees were working from home during the pandemic. However, the percentage represents employees' perceptions or awareness of service availability; the fact that many employees worked from home some or all their workdays could have limited their exposure to services they might have noticed if they were working at their usual work location.

The most common services were SmarTrip/subsidies for transit/vanpool, available to 43% of respondents, and information on commuter transportation options, available to 23% of respondents. Two in ten (23%) respondents said their employers offered services for bikers/walkers and 15% said their employers offered preferential parking for carpools and vanpools.

Respondents who worked for federal agencies were most likely to have benefits/services available (81%), compared with 42% to 60% of respondents who worked for other types of employers. Respondents who worked for large employers also reported greater access to benefits/services than did respondents who worked for small firms. Benefits/services were far more common among respondents who worked in the Core area; 72% of these respondents had access to services compared with 46% who worked in the Middle Ring and 28% who worked in the Outer Ring.

SmartBenefits transit/vanpool subsidies and information on commute options were the most widely used commuter assistance services, used by 56% and 34%, respectively, of respondents who had access to the services. Two in ten respondents who had access to carpool subsidies (19%) and bicycle/walking support (18%) had used these services.

Seven in ten commuters reported having free worksite parking. The majority of respondents (69%) said their employers offered free onsite parking to all employees in 2022. This was a substantial increase from the 60% who reported free parking in 2019. Four percent of workers who had free parking said parking was not free before the pandemic, so this result could indicate employers expanded availability of free parking to the reduced population of workers who continued working at the main workplace.

Respondents who worked for nonprofit organizations and at federal agencies workers were least likely to have free parking at work; only 55% of nonprofit workers and 59% of federal workers had free parking, compared with seven in ten workers who worked for private firms or state/local governments. Free parking also was much less common in the Core; only 37% of Inner Core workers had free parking, compared with 81% of Middle Ring workers and 87% of Outer Ring workers.

The availability of commute benefits/services was inversely related to the availability of free parking at the worksite. Only 40% of respondents who said free parking was offered to all employees said their employers also offered commute benefits/services that would encourage or help them use alternative modes for commuting. By contrast, 66% of respondents who said free parking was not available reported having access to commute benefits/services at work.

Worksite commuter assistance services appeared to encourage use of alternative modes. Driving alone was less common for respondents who had access to benefits. Only 67% of respondents with these services drove alone to work, compared with 87% of respondents whose employers did not provide these services.

Respondents whose employers did not offer free parking also used alternative modes at much higher rates. Six in

ten (60%) respondents who did not have free parking drove alone, compared with 87% of respondents who had free parking.

Commuters in the region have only a modest understanding of the concept of driverless cars. Two-thirds of respondents cited concerns about the concept. Three in ten (31%) respondents said they were “very familiar” with the concept of driverless cars; they had heard or read a lot about them. The largest share, (58%) of respondents said they were only “somewhat familiar” with the concept of driverless cars; they had heard or read something about them but did not know much about them. The remaining one in ten either were “not at all familiar” (7%) or were not sure what they knew (4%). Awareness does not appear to have grown recently; these percentages mirror nearly exactly the awareness reported in the 2019 survey.

General awareness was similar among most demographic groups, but higher shares of men (42%), Non-Hispanic White (35%), and Asian (34%) respondents, and respondents with household incomes above \$160,000 (37%), said they were “very familiar” with the concept.

Two-thirds (66%) of respondents cited a concern that they had with driverless cars. Nearly half (48%) were concerned that driverless cars could reduce the safety of driving or increase driving crashes, and 25% expressed a concern that the technology was not yet reliable enough.

## **BIKE TO WORK DAY SURVEY REPORT 2022**

- 2022 was the first BTWD event for 18% of participants
- 27% of respondents said their favorite part of the event was sharing the bike lanes with others
- 86% of participants rode to work at least occasionally before BTWD; 86% rode to work in the summer after BTWD, 82% were still riding at the time of the survey (November 2022)
- 94% of riders said they rode a personal bike on BTWD; 5% rode a Capital Bikeshare
- 86% of participants rode to work at least occasionally before BTWD; 86% rode to work in the summer after BTWD, 82% were still riding during the survey period (November 2022)
- Respondents who rode to work before BTWD rode an average 2.2 days per week
- 20% either started biking or increased biking in the summer after BTWD 2022
- 18% of BTWD riders said the 2022 event was their first; 82% said they had participated in a BTWD event before 2022
- 92% said they were very likely to participate in BTWD again
- 19% had used Capital Bikeshare during the past year to commute to or from work
- 79% said their employers offered some type of commute assistance information, services, or facilities for employees who biked to work; in 2019, 83% mentioned access to bike services
- Services included bike racks (offered by 60% of employers), secure bike storage (42%), showers (58%), personal lockers (32%), route information (11%), financial incentive for bicycling to work (9%), access to a Capital Bikeshare membership at work (8%)
- 600 riders surveyed suggested improvements including better bike lanes and trails, more pit stops and extend pit stop hours earlier/later, off-peak hours

## ***2022 Guaranteed Ride Home Program Survey Washington, DC Region***

Nearly nine in ten (86%) respondents who drove alone pre-GRH and started using alternative modes during-GRH said GRH had been important to their decision to make the change. Six in ten (59%) said GRH had been very important and 27% said it was somewhat important to the decision.

74% of respondents who increased alternative mode use said GRH was either very important (47%) or somewhat important (27%).

GRH appears to be similarly important for respondents who maintained alternative mode use as for those who



started using alternative modes. About 84% of respondents who maintained their alternative mode use said GRH was very important (52%) or somewhat important (32%) to their decision.

Carpoolers and vanpoolers were most likely to have used a GRH trip, with 52% and 49%, respectively, saying they had taken a GRH trip. About four in ten (39%) bus riders and 35% of commuter rail riders took a trip. Almost a third (30%) of Metrorail riders had taken a trip.

GRH members have far longer commutes. The average one-way commute distance for GRH respondents was 37 miles, compared to the average one-way commute distance for the overall region of 16.7 miles. The average number of one-way commute minutes for GRH respondents was 66 minutes, compared to the average overall one-way commute duration for the region of 37 minutes.

The most frequent reason (75%) for using the GRH program was illness (self, child, or family member) the overwhelming majority of GRH members (97%) said they were satisfied with the program.

### ***2019 Employer Satisfaction Survey Report***

Most respondents are relatively smaller private-sector employers. Almost 60 percent of the respondents said their company employed fewer than 100 employees in the Washington, DC region. The vast majority (78%) of respondents worked for a private company.

More than half of the employers (57%) said they offered SmartBenefits. Eleven percent said they currently offered bike or walk incentives. The most common onsite alternative transportation support facility made available by employers at the worksite was bike racks/showers/personal lockers, at least six in ten respondents.

Over half, (68%) said employees at their worksite were permitted some flexibility in their work start and stop times. More than seventy percent said employees at their location were permitted to telework and over 40 percent said compressed work schedules were available.

Commuter Connections network employer outreach representatives are providing top service. At least 8.5 in ten respondents rated their Commuter Connections network representative a 4 or 5 (excellent) on a 1 to 5 point scale for professionalism (93%), willingness to help (93%), timeliness of service delivery (90%), responsiveness to their requests/questions (91%), enthusiasm about Commuter Connections and its products and programs (92%), knowledge of Commuter Connections and/or local ridesharing and transit products (93%), their ability to provide information that is helpful to the company and employees (90%), and their knowledge of local transportation and air quality issues (87%).

## SUMMARY OF ADOPTED STRATEGY FOR FY25

As part of the Regional Mass Marketing program element, the Commuter Connections Marketing campaigns will provide frequent promotion of Ridematching services, Guaranteed Ride Home, 'Pool Rewards and various other incentive programs largely centered around the CommuterCash app (formerly incenTrip), and the Bike to Work Day event.

These marketing campaigns promote alternative commute options and raise awareness of commuting choices available in the Washington, DC metropolitan region through paid and earned media and other marketing and outreach techniques. The program will support Commuter Connections network members in educating area employers and commuters on how to find and use alternatives to driving alone.

### Marketing Input

The background for this marketing brief was derived from the following sources:

- 2024 Commuter Connections Applicant Database Annual Placement Survey Report
- 2023 Commuter Connections TDM Analysis Report
- State of the Commute 2022 Survey Report
- 2022 Commuter Connections Guaranteed Ride Home Applicant Survey Report for the Washington DC Region
- 2022 Commuter Connections Guaranteed Ride Home Applicant Survey Report for the Baltimore Region
- 2022 Bike to Work Day Survey Analysis Report

The findings of these reports and surveys help establish a foundation for the FY 2025 Marketing Communications Plan. They provide quantitative and qualitative measurement of commute behavior by employees, Commuter Connections program applicants, and event participants throughout the Washington, DC metropolitan region, and indicate the impact of this behavior on air quality and congestion. Other important inputs include performance data from past campaigns, information gathered through industry reports, surveys, and trends and how they might be applied to the Commuter Connections marketing campaign.

### Current Environment

Hybrid work schedules have become ubiquitous for white-collar employees and has changed the region's commuting habits and most dramatically, that of downtown DC, challenging city officials, employers, and commuters to find middle ground solutions that support the health of the economy, environment, mobility, and work/life balance.

A hybrid work format is seen as less of a perk than it used to be and more of an accepted and even expected work/life balance that employees have grown to accept within the post pandemic age. According to a recent governmentwide survey, about 70 percent of all federal employees telework at least occasionally.

For certain weekdays, however, traffic congestion has returned and even surpassed pre-pandemic levels. Traffic congestion persists as those who commute just a couple of days per week are driving alone to the office instead of using more sustainable transportation alternatives.

Free unlimited parking offered by employers coupled with no transit subsidies is a formula for encouraging drive-alone commuting. The DC government aims to circumvent this challenge through a recently enacted law. Known commonly as the Parking Cash Out Law, it dissuades driving alone to work and encourages the use of sustainable transportation. A parking cashout is now a required employer benefit (based on the number of an employer's workforce commuting to the District) where monetary compensation or sustainable transportation benefits are offered to employees in exchange for an employee willing to give up their parking space.

More employees are working from home than before the pandemic, yet unfortunately, commuters traveling into the office just a few times a week are more likely to commute by single occupant vehicle, even if they took transit pre-pandemic when commuting was an everyday practice.

Excluding telework, the 2022 State of the Commute Survey found that commuters drove alone to work about 78% of the time and alternative modes made up the balance. Respondents took transit for 15% of workdays, and vanpooled or carpooled for 3.3% of workdays.

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority is feeling the impact of the new hybrid environment, with overall weekday ridership at 78 percent of pre-pandemic levels. While bus ridership has surpassed (101%) 2019 levels, rail is slower to rebound and overall ridership remains down by 35 percent.

This trend is also having an impact on traffic. In its annual traffic scorecard report, transportation data and analytics firm INRIX found that the continuation of hybrid and remote work has flattened and extended commutes, creating a new “10-to-4” midday rush-hour that’s been in effect since 2020. The number of trips taken during the midday rush-hour has increased by 23 percent since 2019. In addition, the amount of time drivers spend in traffic is also up. Commute times in DC, Maryland, and Virginia increased about 20 percent from 2019 to 2022.

Traffic congestion costs society lost productivity and increases pollution and stress. INRIX reports that in 2023, U.S. drivers lost about 42 hours to congestion, which is equal to \$733 per driver. Downtown DC has seen a 7 percent increase in trips in 2023 compared to 2022. The time-wasting inconvenience and cost of traffic is further compounded by a work environment that has left many offices vacant and slowed the growth of local shops and restaurants.

A year after the White House called for federal employees to return to the workplace, the number of workers going into the office in the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria region is at 44 percent of pre-pandemic levels. A Federal News Network survey in April found that 30 percent of federal employees work entirely remotely, 6 percent work full-time in-person, and 64 percent work on a hybrid schedule. With fewer commuters and office vacancies, buildings are losing value, potentially costing the city as much as \$474 million in tax revenues from 2024 to 2026. Moreover, Washington has among the highest share of office buildings with loans that are at risk of default, adding to the fiscal crisis.

As the District’s economic engine struggles, Mayor Bowser urged the Biden administration to require federal employees to return to the office most days and has called city workers back to the office four days a week. Federal worker unions and the federal government continue to negotiate regarding Work From Home levels. The incoming Trump administration is also a proponent of a return to more in-office days for federal workers.

For those employees who commute to the workplace, there’s a strong case to be made for sharing the ride. Supporting transit can reduce congestion and air pollution while benefiting both commuters and the local economy. The 2022 State of the Commute finds that commuters who use alternative modes see the personal benefits in doing so, with more than 30 percent of respondents noting saving money as a top benefit. They also cited benefits with a connection to quality of life, such as getting exercise or another health benefit (20%), avoiding traffic (17%), and helping them avoid stress or relax while commuting (14%). Fourteen percent said they could save time or travel more quickly, and 13% said they could use their travel time productively when they used an alternative mode. Over one in ten said it was a convenient/easy way to travel (11%) and 10% benefited by not needing to find or pay for parking.

In addition to changing where and how we work, the pandemic also changed commuters’ awareness of alternative modes of transportation. The 2022 State of the Commute Report Survey found that about 27% of all

respondents said they had seen, heard, or read advertising about commuting, a considerably lower percentage than in the 2019 (45%) survey. This is likely due to lower need for such services due to pandemic-related work from home situations and less exposure to advertising which targeted drivers. Workers who teleworked most or all their workdays would have fewer opportunities to see or hear advertising and likely noticed it less due to its irrelevancy to their work situation at the time. Additionally, such a significant dip in awareness is also due to those transit agencies pausing or reducing the frequency of their alternative commute messaging. Awareness of regional and local commuter assistance services also fell; awareness of Commuter Connections dropped from 48% in 2019 to 40% in 2022.

Commuter Connections has worked to restore awareness of alternative transportation through campaigns that promote the agency's programs, incentives, and annual events. Marketing efforts have yielded significant results from FY23 to FY24, highlights of which include an increase in CommuterConnections.org website visits by 37 percent.

#### Marketing Strategies

- Emphasize the cost savings of ridesharing by using simple and direct messages.
- Leverage Commuter Connections' mobile ridematching capabilities to position the brand as the trusted, provider of convenient ridematching services for 50 years.
- Draw on the additional savings of various incentive programs within rideshare ads.
- Position GRH as a safety net for ridesharing and public transportation users, available to commuters in case of unexpected illness, emergencies, or unscheduled overtime.
- Drive inner core, Baltimore region commuters who use public transportation, bicycling, or walking to register for GRH.
- Increase the number of participants in the Car Free Day and Bike to Work Day events.
- Recognize employers for having made a positive difference within the region for implementing workplace programs to help employees choose more sustainable commuting methods.
- Increase the number of downloads and usage of Commuter Connections mobile apps.
- Increase employee participation in the Flextime Rewards program.
- Promote programs to millennials, Spanish-speaking and African American audiences and commuters within equity emphasis areas.
- Celebrate the 50th anniversary of Commuter Connections.
- Re-brand the incenTrip mobile app to CommuterCash.

#### Digital Media

Paid digital media networks and specific platforms such as Google, YouTube, X, Meta, and LinkedIn will complement the overall campaign. Paid advertising with visuals and video (where applicable) will drive target audiences searching for commuter options, such as carpool/vanpool, etc. to the Commuter Connections' websites. The use of social media influencers to reach new prospects may provide an opportunity to promote Commuter Connections. Utilizing such tactics at key decision-making moments will increase the reach to target audiences and increase the likelihood of click-throughs and ultimately a request for ridematching, GRH, or other programs and services offered. Facebook continues to be the most popular social network and X is an ideal platform for real-time marketing and responses within minutes of an event.

Digital advertising is also visual and closer to one-to-one selling than any other form of media. Optimized placement of banner ads on websites and mobile apps targeted to location, news, weather, television affiliates and job sites may be used to reach commuters who are just a click away from Commuter Connections' online ridematching service or GRH registration/re-registration.

The marketing team will continue to investigate additional strategies to increase visibility and engagement and integrate social media activities through other marketing approaches. The team will continue to improve mobile

access to Commuter Connections resources and commute option information and benefits and explore possibilities to better reach new audiences.

#### Traditional Media

The marketing effort will effectively and efficiently reach its target markets based on a review and analysis of third-party media data from Strata, Scarborough, and Arbitron as monitored by a professional media buying firm. Reach and frequency of the target demographic will be calculated using a cost/value proposition for each media option. Media buying strategies will be selected based on Scarborough Research reports for specific target audiences for Ridesharing, Guaranteed Ride Home, GRH Baltimore, Employer Awards, Car Free Day, Bike to Work Day, 'Pool Rewards, and CommuterCash. These reports identify specific media that are best suited for each target audience. The report information is considered along with the cost of each media option and results from previous Commuter Connections campaigns.

Visual creative is important to provide reinforcement of messages delivered through radio spots as well as brand awareness. FY 2025's marketing strategy will include well-placed visuals across the geographical region. Outdoor print such as bus signage and shelters will be evaluated as potential visual elements for the campaign.

#### Sponsorships

Opportunities will be sought to involve retailers and local businesses in cash sponsorship for Bike to Work Day and prize raffle donations for the Car Free Day event. This aims to identify businesses interested in encouraging the use of more sustainable, healthy transportation and benefiting from the patronage of those commuters.

#### Creative

Results from prior year campaigns will be studied and best practices will be carried forward to new campaigns. New creative will be developed for the rideshare and GRH spring FY 2025 campaign, and for the Bike to Work Day 2025 event, and as needed for other FY 2025 campaigns.

## REGIONAL PROFILE

The information within this section of the SMP are excerpts from Visualize 2045: the federally mandated Long-Range Transportation Plan for the National Capital Region. The federal government requires that this plan is updated every four years.

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) approved the update to Visualize 2045, the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the accompanying air quality conformity analysis on June 15, 2022.

Visualize 2045 represents a new kind of long-range planning effort in the region. For the first time, in addition to projects that the region's transportation agencies expected to be able to afford between 2018 and 2045, the plan included aspirational projects, programs, and policies that go beyond financial constraints.

The National Capital Region comprises of approximately 3,500 square miles and spans the spectrum of settlement patterns: urban, suburban, exurban, and rural. The region is one of the most affluent in the country, with an annual median household income of nearly \$106,000 and a gross regional product of over \$561 billion per year.

This economic strength is due in large part to a consistently strong job market that, even during the COVID-19 pandemic, is driven by the federal government and the robust service sector that recovered much of its job losses or could shift to telework. The difference in laws, government structures, and financial resources of Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia creates a complex policy environment. The region's large size and range of development patterns lead to diverse transportation needs. For these reasons, regional transportation planning and decision-making must balance a wide array of needs and priorities.

### Recent Trends

Over the past few decades, the National Capital Region's healthy economy has fueled consistently strong population and job growth, and that trend is expected to continue well into the future. Since 1970, the region's population has nearly doubled, and the total number of jobs in the region has grown at an even faster rate.

According to the U.S. Census, from 2000 to 2020 the region steadily gained over one million residents from 4.4 to 5.6 million people. Total regional employment has grown by almost 284 thousand jobs from 2000 to 2020, although the recession of the late-2000s slowed the growth and resulted in reductions in regional employment for a few years. More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to a loss of 371,000 jobs from March to April 2020, followed by a recovery of 318,000 jobs by October 2021.

### Forecast Growth

Where and how the region grows impacts the transportation options, congestion levels, and quality of life for the people in the region. According to the latest data from COG's Cooperative Forecasts, there are 5.7 million people living in the National Capital Region and, by 2045, that number is expected to increase to over 7 million, an increase of 23 percent. Fairfax County (including City of Fairfax and City of Falls Church) and the District of Columbia will gain the most residents, by 252 thousand and 258 thousand, respectively.

The number of jobs in the region will grow from 3.4 million today to 4.3 million by 2045, an increase of 26 percent. Fairfax County (including City of Fairfax and City of Falls Church) and the District of Columbia, the jurisdictions with the most forecasted job growth, are expected to gain 196 thousand and 199 thousand jobs, respectively.

Housing availability and affordability is a growing problem in the region. As noted in the COG report The Future of Housing in Greater Washington, "There is an imbalance between the number of jobs and the amount of housing available to the workforce. This situation affects the area's affordability, potentially undercuts its appeal to new companies and talent, strains the transportation system, and impacts the environment and quality of life for the region's residents. For some, this means not only long commutes to work, but also difficult choices between paying rent or affording other basic necessities such as food or

medicine.” With employment expected to grow at a faster rate than the population, if housing growth cannot keep up with the rate of employment growth, more and more people will have to commute into the region from outside. This type of commuting pattern puts a heavy load on the region’s roads and transit systems as trips become longer and more congested.

Working closely to align regional transportation policy and land-use policies, the TPB and regional leaders are committed to finding solutions to the regional housing and job imbalance. One approach is to encourage greater concentration, circulation, and connection of residential and commercial developments in mixed-use Activity Centers and near high-capacity transit, places optimal for future growth.

#### Demographics

The National Capital Region is a dynamic and diverse metropolitan area. According to data from the U.S. Census, it is a highly diverse region, less than half (42 percent) non-Hispanic white, followed by 26 percent African American, 17 percent Hispanic/Latino/a/x, and 11 percent Asian. In terms of age distribution, the largest age groups are between 25-34 and 35-44 (15.5 percent and 14.7 percent, respectively). There is slightly larger proportion of females (51.3 percent) compared with males (48.7 percent). Nearly one-quarter (23 percent) of the region’s households earn less than \$50,000 a year.

Analysis of regional household travel data collected in 2017-2018 identifies important findings in household size, type and tenure, and vehicles. These figures have important implications for land use and transportation plans, programs, and policies as the region determines the needs of residents.

There are currently 2.1 million households in the TPB region. The largest household size group in the region are two-person households (30 percent), followed by households with four or more persons (27 percent), one-person (26 percent) households, and three-person households (17 percent). About 70 percent of households live in single-family housing (51 percent single family detached, 20 percent single family attached homes, such as row houses) and 30 percent live in multifamily housing, such as apartment buildings. Over two-thirds of households own their home (71 percent) while just over one-quarter of households live in rental housing (27 percent), the remaining 1.7 percent is categorized as other. In terms of vehicle availability, 34 percent of households have one vehicle, 39 percent have two vehicles, and 19 percent have three or more vehicles. About eight percent of households do not have a vehicle.

#### The Regional Transportation System

Planning for the future transportation system is built on the patterns of past growth, development, and infrastructure investment. When considering the total job and residential locations expected in 2045, about 80 percent of those are already in place in the region. Visualize 2045 adds to and enhances the region’s already extensive transportation network but to preserve past investments about 28 percent of funds go to system maintenance.

An integrated and extensive rail and bus transit system and a connected system of highways and priced toll lanes comprise the high-capacity backbone of the transportation system. In addition, extensive infrastructure for bicyclists and pedestrians, as well as provisions for bike sharing, ridehailing, and car-sharing services, allow for a wide range of options throughout the region.

The region is served by:

- More than 17,000 lane miles of highways and major roads, more than 500 miles of which are tolled lanes.
- 129 miles of Metrorail and 91 Metrorail stations.
- 173 miles of MARC and VRE commuter rail and 39 commuter rail stations.
- 37 miles of bus rapid transit, light rail, and streetcars, with more to come.
- 800+ of miles of off-street paved trails and paths for walking and biking.
- 400+ miles of bike lanes.
- More than 19,000 directional miles of important freight corridors within the TPB’s planning area carrying more than 300 million tons of goods annually.

- Two Class I railroads—CSX Transportation and the Norfolk Southern Corporation which operate 250+ miles of mainline track and carry more than 47 million tons of local freight annually.
- 852 EV Charging Stations 2,424 and EV plugs.
- 15+ local and commuter bus systems and about 10 paratransit service providers.
- Nine intercity train stations and an estimated 14 intercity bus stations.
- Three major airports with extensive domestic and international connections, Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA), Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI), and Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD) that also carry significant levels of freight cargo.

#### Transportation Emissions and Air Quality

Transportation planning in the region is heavily influenced by air quality planning, which is a federal requirement. Once the financially constrained element project list of the plan is approved by the TPB, it is tested to ensure that the plan's projects collectively contribute to the air quality improvement goals embodied in the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. Using models, TPB staff perform a series of tests to forecast how much air pollution will be generated between now and 2045, and how much the air will be improved by cleaner gasoline standards and other factors.

If the TPB's analysis demonstrates that the plan meets regional air quality goals, federal agencies certify that the plan is "in conformity." In other words, the TPB ensures that the constrained element "conforms" to air quality improvement goals. Results of the most recent analysis show that, with respect to ozone season pollutants, specifically, Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) and, Nitrogen Oxides (NOx), the TPB is in attainment for all criteria but ozone, and the TPB is making plans to be in attainment for that criteria. While not federally required, the TPB also forecasts GHG emissions and takes strides to contribute to achieving the COG 2030 climate mitigation goals.

Data analysis provides important context to the experiences of residents of the region. Traffic and the number of vehicles passing near or through communities can lead to prolonged exposure to transportation-related emissions. Increased exposure to certain forms of air pollution can lead to significant health risks. Communities' proximity to congested or high-volume roadways increases the likelihood of localized impacts, especially if elements aimed at mitigating the impacts are not present. Further, national studies and reporting have concluded that communities of color are more likely to bear a greater burden of emissions related exposure.

Like other large metropolitan regions, proximity to congested roadways and high levels of vehicle volume in the National Capital Region are not felt equally. Communities closer to the region's core, interstates, or major highways experience greater exposure than in outer suburban or rural parts. In Activity Centers, proximity and level of traffic is 150 percent higher than in non-Activity Centers. This is likely reflective of high traffic counts on highways and major roads near Activity Centers. From an equity perspective, EEAs in the region experience 57 percent greater traffic volume than non-EEAs. The proximity of many EEAs near the region's core and along major roadways leads to the uneven experience.

#### TPB's Aspirational Initiatives

In 2018, the TPB adopted seven transportation initiatives. Each initiative incorporates policies and transportation solutions that the TPB has championed for years as documented in the CMP. These strategies are most effective when working together by providing more options on a well-integrated and reliable transportation network. As the TPB members prioritize funding and enact these strategies, the region has the potential to significantly improve its transportation system performance. With the update to Visualize 2045, the region will make progress on these initiatives that improve mobility, accessibility, and air quality in the region while contributing to the region's GHG reduction and climate resiliency goals.

The TPB led a study that engaged a long-range plan task force to establish consensus on regional policy priorities, which led to the 2018 endorsement of the Aspirational Initiatives, as follows:

- Bring Jobs and Housing Closer Together by concentrating more housing and jobs in central locations such as Activity Centers and near high-capacity transit station areas to make it possible for more



people of all incomes to live near employment and other frequent destinations. This can enable trips to be shorter and reduce auto trips as people will be able to choose from a range of travel options.

- Expand Bus Rapid Transit and Transitways throughout the region to provide people not only more transit options but also a reliable and fast bus service for work and non-work trips.
- Move More People on Metrorail, by providing more frequent services with longer trains and expanded stations that are accessible by nonmotorized modes.
- Provide More Telecommuting and Other Options for Commuting to take advantage of the many jobs suitable for teleworking and to provide employees with transit and nonmotorized travel benefits and disincentivize commute parking.
- Expand Express Highway Network strategically, in an environmentally sensitive manner, to create a network that connects much of the region, featuring express bus systems and allowing carpools and vanpools to be exempt from tolls.
- Improve Walk and Bike Access to Transit, as investments that remove barriers to walking and biking to transit stations to reduce auto travel and help fully utilize the investments already made in high-capacity transit.
- Complete the National Capital Trail Network to create an extensive network of trails that provides walk and bicycle access to jobs and other activities by connecting communities across the region to Activity Centers.

### Equity Considerations

Where and how the Aspirational Initiatives are implemented can have an impact on equity outcomes in our region. To assist implementing agencies consider equity in the planning process, the TPB makes the Equity Emphasis Areas (EEAs) available as a planning tool to examine demographic patterns in the region. For example, EEA locations can be used to plan and prioritize areas to improve walk and bicycles access, transit movements, and routing. The TPB also conducts studies and outreach that consider equity across a range of subjects and encourages the findings to be considered when planning for investments that promote the initiatives. The following pages describe the initiatives and offer data and perspectives from the TPB's focus groups and Aspiration to Implementation activity to provide insights on how the initiatives relate to equity concerns. The benefits of the initiatives, when implemented together regionwide, can address some of the top equity concerns raised during the focus groups, such as safe walk and bike access to transit, housing affordability near a range of transportation options, transportation access, travel time, and reliability.

### Transportation Options

As a growing and diverse region, metropolitan Washington needs a transportation system that provides a wide range of ways to get around. Through the TPB, transportation agencies in the region work together to provide more convenient and affordable transportation options, allowing each person to choose what works best for them. This update to Visualize 2045 emphasizes the need for transportation options, programs, and policies that will help the region work together to address climate change, improve safety, and advance equity in the region. Strategies include the integration of the transportation system and access to more transportation choices, such as riding transit, walking, or biking, so that everyone can connect more easily to activities, services, and opportunities.

### Transportation Demand Management

Many of the strategies in this section represent Transportation Demand Management (TDM) approaches intended to help people find and use alternatives to driving alone. TDM uses marketing, incentives, and employer-based programs to reduce congestion and improve air quality. Commuter Connections is the TPB's TDM program. The Commuter Connections regional network provides commuter services and information to area residents and employers to reduce traffic congestion and emissions caused by single occupant vehicles (SOVs). The outreach mission creates awareness of SOV alternatives and their resulting benefits, to build the Commuter Connections

network as an umbrella resource that provides support services to network organizations and individuals who currently drive alone, and to facilitate those who are seeking to change SOV behavior by providing information about commute alternatives. The Commuter Connections network primarily promotes activities including ridesharing, using transit, bicycling, walking, teleworking, and employer services.

#### Equity Considerations

Providing travel demand management means increasing access to travel options and telework that can expand the number of jobs that a person might be able to access within the region and help employer or government TDM incentive programs to reduce travel costs. Shorter and non-SOV commutes can reduce emissions and provide health benefits to commuters. While many lower-paying jobs do not have telework as an option, promoting telework in the region helps reduce congestion for those that need to drive or take transit to travel to and from work.

#### TPB's Role

Commuter Connections is the major transportation demand management component of the TPB's congestion management process (CMP) that helps support regional air quality goals. Its products and services are provided to member agencies through central program administration, implementation, and monitoring of tasks outlined in the annual Commuter Connections Work Program. Approximately 30 independently run programs are members of the Commuter Connections network. Each has its own funding sources, budgets, goals, staff, and operational strategies. Many of the operational logistics are carried out at the local level and coordinated regionally through subcommittees and ad-hoc groups, which meet regularly and as needed. Commuter Connections network members also assist employers to start or expand commuter benefit programs. The TPB staff provides regional resources such as telework and "flexwork" policy templates that employers can use to tailor their worksite programs. Regionwide incentive programs such as the Guaranteed Ride Home and 'Pool Rewards programs, and the CommuterCash app can help nudge commuters out of their SOV mode into ridesharing, transit, and active transportation modes of travel. This allows for each jurisdictional program to have its own strategic TDM plan based on local resources and needs. The Commuter Connections Subcommittee provides overall technical review and input into program services.

#### Visualize the Future

The Commuter Connections program is generally regarded as among the most effective commuter assistance programs in the nation in terms of reducing vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled. During the COVID-19 pandemic, surveys show there was a significant increase in telework, walking, and biking, while there was a decrease in transit and driving. While short-term impacts of the pandemic were significant, the long-term impacts on travel behavior are still unknown. The TPB will continue to monitor system usage through its various tools, including the State of the Commute Survey and will forecast transportation system usage based on objective information and sound planning assumptions. Looking to 2045, when another 1.3 million people and nearly one million jobs will be added to the region, the importance of managing transportation demand will only increase. Enabling people to not drive alone in the future will make the region's air cleaner and will help meet the 2030 GHG reduction goals of the COG Climate and Energy Action plan (endorsed by the TPB in 2020) and will help reduce congestion on the roads.

The sponsors for the projects in the constrained element identified 42 projects as implementing the Aspirational Initiative that focuses on transportation demand management: Provide More Telecommuting and Other Options for Commuting. The sponsors also identified hundreds of other projects that improve or expand alternatives to driving, a key feature of transportation demand management. Projects examples in the constrained element that promote TDM and descriptions of benefits from project sponsors include the White Flint District East and West in Montgomery County that supports expanding BRT and providing access to BRT and Metrorail.

#### Ongoing Challenges

TDM faces many challenges in influencing commuters to choose other ways to get to work. Concerns related to

public health following the COVID-19 pandemic have impacted attitudes when choosing to drive or take transit. Commuters may not understand the value of carpools or vanpools because they may have trouble quantifying how much time they spend commuting. As commuters seek housing that they can afford, they may not find sufficient affordable housing near high quality transit options. Employer policies also encourages driving by making free parking available. The price at the pump also has impact on commuting behavior. High gas prices encourage more ridesharing behavior, and vice versa.

#### Bicycles, Pedestrians, and Micromobility

The metropolitan Washington region is a national leader in bicycle and pedestrian-oriented community design. Bike sharing, protected bike lanes, bike trails, and bike parking have been critical to the success of new developments such as the Wharf in the District of Columbia and Potomac Yard in Alexandria. Projects like the National Capital Trail Network, a 1,400-mile trail network, which is one of the TPB priority initiatives, are knitting existing disconnected trails across the region into a true network. Projects such as the Washington Boulevard Trail, the Bethesda Trolley Trail, and the Rhode Island Avenue Trolley Trail are linking residential and commercial areas to nearby parks, transit, and other community assets. As of 2019, about 3.3 percent of work trips in the region were on foot, scooter, or bike. Currently, there are over 800 miles of bike paths and over 400 miles of bike lanes in the region. Since 2014, the region has added roughly 350 miles of paved bike paths and bike lanes to the network, or roughly 60 miles per year. Walking and biking are forecast to increase at much higher rates than any other mode of travel. Where trails can be added alongside rail and utilities, further expansion is possible. An additional 2,445 miles of bicycle and pedestrian facilities are planned through 2045, including over 1,200 miles of shared use paths, 600 miles of standard bike lanes, and 190 miles of protected bike lanes.

#### Transit

The region boasts one of the premier public transit systems in the country. Metro moves hundreds of thousands of people—commuters, students, and tourists each workday on rail, bus, and paratransit. Commuter rail services in Maryland (MARC) and Virginia (VRE) and dozens of local bus and other transit providers move many thousands more. Together, these transit services play a critical role in providing affordable transportation options, sustaining economic vitality, providing high-quality alternatives to driving, building communities, and reducing environmental impacts. Transit ridership has been significantly impacted by the pandemic, with changing travel patterns and services, and the rise of telework, long-term impacts are not yet known.

Transit planning in the region involves all transit agencies and jurisdictions as well as various regional organizations. WMATA operates Metrorail, Metrobus, and MetroAccess, which together carry close to 85 percent of all public transportation trips in the region. WMATA has its own planning documents, and in 2020 concluded a regional effort to reimagine bus service in the region, the “Bus Transformation Project.” DDOT, the MDOT MTA, and the Virginia DRPT also engage in transit planning, such as MDOT MTA’s 2020 MARC Cornerstone Plan. Local jurisdictions and operators develop more detailed plans for transit service, typically published as Transit Development Plans or Transit Strategic Plans. Other regional organizations plan for transit, including the NVTC, which is leading development of the proposed VA-7 BRT line and providing transit operating funds, and the NVTa, which conducts multimodal planning and funds transit capital projects.

#### Driving and Riding in a Vehicle

The region’s extensive highway and road network provides connectivity for people and goods to destinations across the region. Every day, millions of people travel on our region’s roads to access jobs, schools, and medical care, as well as shopping, entertainment, and recreational opportunities. Roads also carry most goods delivered to homes, schools, businesses, and stores in the region. The TPB encourages people who travel in vehicles to share the ride through carpooling when possible. In the last decade, rideshare and ridehail services have grown creating new opportunities for people to share rides, or use a vehicle as-needed rather than investing in a vehicle, but these services could also encourage more trips in cars. The 2017-2018 Regional Travel Survey reports nearly three times the amount of taxi and ridehail travel in 2017-2018 compared to the 2007-2008 survey. The TPB continues to monitor the impact of these services on transportation demand and travel choice, especially given recent short-

term disruptions to travel trends due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Long-term impacts of the pandemic remain uncertain.

The responsibility for planning and investing in the region's roadways is shared by state, county, and local transportation planning agencies. Generally, each road has an owner that is responsible for how that roadway functions, including roadway performance and congestion, maintenance, safety, and alignment with Complete Streets policies. Maintaining facilities in a state of good repair is a critical, if unsung, emphasis of transportation agencies' future investments, whether bridge or pavement conditions, traffic signals, lighting, signage, or other infrastructure. While all roads in the region form the network that connects our communities, only those projects of regional significance that are required for inclusion in the region's air quality analysis or that use federal funding are included in the constrained element.

## Profiles of Network Members and Regional Partners

### **GO ALEX – CITY OF ALEXANDRIA**

[www.alexandriava.gov/GOAlex](http://www.alexandriava.gov/GOAlex)

GO Alex is the City of Alexandria's transportation program for promoting and encouraging time and money saving alternatives to travelling by Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV), with the goals of reducing traffic congestion, facilitating mobility, and improving air quality. GO Alex promotes, plans and supports mobility options to benefit quality of life, economic development and the experience of people traveling in Alexandria.

Ongoing employer outreach marketing and promotional activities include:

- **Employer Services:** Interacting with Alexandria employers and workers to discuss transportation and telework options for employees. GO Alex offers a variety of products to assist, including trip planning, transit incentives (such as Plus50) and information about City events and travel disruptions.
- **Transportation Alternatives:** GO Alex helps with many transportation alternatives, including bicycle and dockless events and education, water transportation, and others.
- **Go Alex Web site:** [www.alexandriava.gov/GOAlex](http://www.alexandriava.gov/GOAlex) is the program website that offers news and tools for traveling to, from, and through the City. The site is promoted to residents, businesses, and visitors via brochures, displays, newsletters, partner websites. The site provides information about public transportation, ridesharing, walking/bicycling, telework, Guaranteed Ride Home, upcoming meetings and events, Capital Bikeshare, The Mobile Transit Store, and other information.
- **Promotional Events:** Conduct outreach at worksites and residential communities. GO Alex also participates in health and benefits fairs, and events coordinated by TMP representatives, and regional partners GO Alex organizes the Alexandria Bike to Work Day pit stop, Try Transit Week promotions and other events as needed.

**Alexandria Mobile Transit Store:** The City's Mobile Transit Store provides one-stop shopping for Metro, VRE, MARC, and EZ Pass Flex with the convenience of flexible but consistent locations and times all around the entire City. You can also purchase and load funds onto the standard SmarTrip cards in addition to the popular Senior SmarTrip. The Store's calendar can be found at [www.alexandriava.gov/TransitStore](http://www.alexandriava.gov/TransitStore).

## **ARLINGTON COUNTY**

[www.arlingtonva.us](http://www.arlingtonva.us)

Marketing Budget \$800,000 for Commuter Services broken down as follows:

Arlington Transportation Partners - \$50,000.00

Umbrella campaign - \$540,000.00

Commuter Stores, CommuterPage.com and CommuterDirect.com - \$100,000.00

Arlington Transit - \$110,000

Arlington County Commuter Services will do the following:

- Direct Mail Program to Arlington households
- Arlington cable TV (ATV) programs
- On-Board bus interiors
- Subway tunnel 2-sheets advertising
- Google AdWords, Facebook, and Instagram advertising
- Sponsorships of local community events
- Retail kiosks and point-of-purchase displays
- Transit information displays
- Street team outreach at events
- Packages for top 400 employers
- E-mail alerts and e-newsletters
- Websites, mobile tools, and apps
- Social marketing such as Facebook, X, and Instagram
- Blogs
- Videos for YouTube, ATV, and websites
- Brochures, flyers, and posters
- Spanish language brochures and websites
- Transit screens

## COMMUTER CONNECTIONS

[www.commuterconnections.org](http://www.commuterconnections.org)

The overall media budget from the Commuter Connections FY25 Work Program is **\$1,565,500**.

<u>Campaign</u>	<u>Media Buy</u>
TDM Marketing & Advertising (Rideshare & GRH)	\$1,248,000
GRH Baltimore	\$50,000
Bike To Work Day	\$65,000
Employer Recognition Awards	\$7,500
'Pool Rewards	\$20,000
Car Free Day	\$45,000
CommuterCash App	\$80,000
MDOT CommuterCash App	\$50,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,565,500</b>

Below are objectives, targets, and tactics for the various marketing components for FY25:

### ***GUARANTEED RIDE HOME WASHINGTON DC REGION***

**Objective:** Increase the number of applicants in the GRH database by promoting the commuter support service as a trusted and reliable transportation benefit, eliminating a barrier to using transit, carpooling, vanpooling, bicycling, and walking to work.

**Target market** (indicated from 2022 Commuter Connections Guaranteed Ride Home Applicant Survey Report for the Washington, DC Region):

- Ages 25-34 (4%), 35-44 (19%), 45-54 (31%), 55-64 (39%)
- Non-Hispanic White (62%), Non-Hispanic Black (20%), Asian (9%), Hispanic (6%)
- Male (54%) and female (46%)
- Annual household income \$60,000+ (96%), \$100,000+ (80%), \$120,000+ (66%), \$160,000+ (42%)
- One-way commute more than 30 miles (63%)/more than 45 minutes (72%)
- Lives in Virginia (57%), Maryland (38%), DC (2%) or another state (3%), with emphasis on Prince William (15%) and Fairfax counties (11%)
- Works in DC (59%), Virginia (22%) and Maryland (19%).

#### **Tactics:**

- Target commuters in the metropolitan Washington region and its primary commuter shed.
- Incorporate new and existing digital and social media – Google, social media, streaming TV, influencers, YouTube pre-roll–into the media mix.
- Use radio stations within the region, including those with predominant Hispanic and African American audiences.
- Use TV to visually present the message that's conveyed in radio spots.
- Incorporate web with print media to increase web traffic and reach a younger demographic.
- Evaluate print and/or transit signage to increase awareness of the GRH program.
- Leverage human interest stories on social media, e.g., a brief video to be used on the Commuter Connections website.
- Update website images to integrate with the campaign.
- Use direct mail as needed.

**GRH Washington, DC Region Media Allocation:** Approximately 40% of the overall FY25 media budget.

## **COMMUTER CONNECTIONS**

### ***GUARANTEED RIDE HOME BALTIMORE REGION***

**Target market for Baltimore Metropolitan region** (from 2022 Commuter Connections Guaranteed Ride Home Applicant Survey Report for the Baltimore Region):

- Ages 25-34 (9%), 35-44 (20%), 45-54 (25%), 55-64 (39%)
- Non-Hispanic White (52%), Non-Hispanic Black (38%), Asian (6%) and Hispanic (4%).
- Female (62%), male (38%)
- Annual household income \$80,000+ (73%), \$120,000+ (48%), \$160,000+ (22%)
- One-way commute 30+ miles (58%)/more than 45 minutes (52%)
- Lives in Maryland (87%), Virginia (6%), Pennsylvania (1%), New Jersey (0%), DC (1%) Delaware (2%)
- Top home jurisdictions are Harford (21%), Baltimore City (19%), Baltimore County (18%)
- Works in Maryland (91%), DC (8%), Virginia (1%)

#### **Tactics:**

- Target commuters in the Baltimore metropolitan statistical area and St. Mary's County in Southern Maryland and exurbs, encouraging them to register for GRH.
- Use new and existing digital media – Google, social media, YouTube pre-roll –as part of the media mix.
- Focus radio advertising on stations serving the Baltimore market, including Hispanic and African American commuters.
- Evaluate digital banner ads and interactive ads geared directly towards generating registrations.
- Incorporate web with print media to increase web traffic and reach a younger demographic.
- Evaluate print and/or transit signage to increase awareness of the GRH program.
- Leverage human interest stories on social media, e.g., short videos shown on the website.
- Update website images to integrate with the campaign.

**GRH Baltimore Media Allocation:** Approximately 3.25% of the overall FY25 media budget.



## **COMMUTER CONNECTIONS**

### ***RIDEMATCHING***

**Objectives:** Maintain and increase awareness of shared ride modes, retain current ridership on these modes, gain new riders, and gain new applicants to the regional database.

**Target market** (from FY 2024 Commuter Connections Applicant Database Annual Placement Survey Report):

- 35-64 years old (79%): <35 (16%), 35-44 (28%), 45-54 (27%), 55-64 (24%),
- Female (52%), male (48%)
- Non-Hispanic White (60%), Non-Hispanic Black (20%), Asian/Pacific Islander (10%), Hispanic (7%)
- \$100,000+ annual household income (71%)
- One-way commute of more than 30+ miles (48%)/more than 45 minutes (62%)
- Lives in Virginia (43%) or Maryland (39%); works in DC (49%), Virginia (19%), Maryland (23%)
- Works for employers with more than 100 employees (79%), works for employers with 1,000 or more employees (43%)
- Works for federal agencies (66%), private sector (22%)

#### **Tactics:**

- Increase awareness of benefits and ease of ridesharing through radio advertising, including Spanish-speaking and African American radio stations.
- Consider TV as an opportunity to visually present the message that's conveyed in radio spots.
- Use social media and influencers for real-time engagement with commuters.
- Use optimized digital banner ads on select websites to drive users to the Commuter Connections website and/or mobile ridematching service for registration.
- Consider out-of-home components that make a direct connection between commuting options and saving money.
- Provide testimonials of ridesharing success stories and broaden awareness and registrations through public relations/media communications.
- Update website images to integrate with the campaign.
- Use direct mail as needed.

**Rideshare Media Allocation:** Approximately 40% of the overall FY25 media budget.

## **COMMUTER CONNECTIONS**

### **'POOL REWARDS**

**Objectives:** Recruit commuters in carpools through monetary incentives offering \$5 per day, up to \$320, over a 90-day period.

#### **Target Market**

- Rideshare demographics.
- Target will skew slightly younger to reach a more thrift-conscious audience.

#### **Tactics:**

- Use media and public outreach to build awareness of the program and incentives.
- Use the cash incentive as the primary message. Additional messaging will promote environmental/health benefits of ridesharing.
- Focus on Facebook and Instagram ads that promote awareness. Optimized digital banner ads may also be used.
- Evaluate radio as a secondary media.
- Tie 'Pool Rewards eligibility to Rideshare messages. For example, "...interested in Ridesharing? Earn 'Pool Rewards cash..."
- Investigate TV and live radio reads to generate additional interest in the program and drive people to the website for more information.
- Use value add from the mass marketing campaign to expand the reach of 'Pool Rewards.
- Consider opportunities to expand into Spanish radio.
- Promote the 'Pool Rewards bonus offer for those traveling through the I-495 Northern Extension corridor during construction of the 495 NEXT expanded Express Lanes project, scheduled to open late 2025. VDOT offers a \$100 extra bonus 'Pool Rewards payout.

**'Pool Rewards Media Allocation:** Approximately 1.25% of the overall FY25 media budget.

## **COMMUTER CONNECTIONS**

### **COMMUTERCASH MOBILE APP – COMMUTER CONNECTIONS PROGRAM**

**Objectives:** CommuterCash will address congestion, reduce energy use, and reduce emissions while improving multimodal transportation system performance along congested corridors. A key benefit of CommuterCash is the development of personalized and dynamic incentives that vary based on individual preferences and real-time traffic conditions, which significantly improve the cost effectiveness of traveler incentives.

#### **Target Market**

- Commuters working in the metropolitan Washington region, including those from the Richmond region who commute one-way an average of 17.1 miles and an average of 43 minutes.
- General public, employers, and media outlets.

#### **Tactics:**

- Implement a marketing initiative for the re-branded launch that will ask commuters to download and use the CommuterCash app.
- The marketing initiative will include, but not be limited to, radio, internet, newsprint, educational video, SEO blog posts, venue, mobile, social media and text ads.
- Update the website and social media pages to feature promotional activities and point based incentive.
- Use media placements, including value-added placements, to reach the target markets.
- Promote earning rewards points for cash, PayPal, Visa cards, SmartBenefits, and E-ZPass.
- Promote CommuterCash for employers that up a companywide employee challenge through a customized dashboard.

**CommuterCash (Commuter Connections) Media Allocation:** Approximately 5% of the overall FY25 media budget.

## **COMMUTER CONNECTIONS**

### **COMMUTERCASH MOBILE APP – MDOT PROGRAM**

**Objectives:** CommuterCash will help reduce congestion, energy use and emissions while improving multimodal transportation system performance along designated congested corridors. A key benefit of CommuterCash is the development of personalized and dynamic incentives that vary based on individual preferences and real-time traffic conditions, which significantly improve the cost effectiveness of traveler incentives.

#### **Target Market**

- Commuters working in Maryland outside of the metropolitan Washington region (i.e., all jurisdictions in Maryland except for Prince George's, Montgomery, Charles, and Calvert counties).
- Smaller-urban areas throughout the state such as Cumberland, Hagerstown, Salisbury, and the outskirts of Wilmington.
- General public, employers, and media.

#### **Tactics:**

- Implement a marketing initiative for the launch that will ask commuters to download and use the CommuterCash app.
- The marketing initiative will include, but not be limited to, radio, internet, newsprint, educational video, SEO blog posts, mobile, social media, and text ads.
- Update the website and social media pages to feature promotional activities and rewards-based incentives. Use media placements, including value-added placements, to reach the target markets.
- Design and coordinate the marketing effort with the input of MDOT staff.
- Promote earning points for cash, PayPal, Visa cards, SmartBenefits, and E-ZPass incentives to travelers who use CommuterCash.

**CommuterCash (MDOT) Media Allocation:** Approximately 3% of the overall FY25 media budget.

## COMMUTER CONNECTIONS

### SPECIAL EVENTS

**Objectives:** Use Bike to Work Day, Car Free Day, and the Employer Awards events to highlight existing programs and encourage other employers and commuters to become involved, increase their ridership, or enhance commuter benefits programs. Increase participation in Bike to Work Day and Car Free Day, and employer nominations for the awards program.

#### Target Markets:

- Car Free Day 2024 (from 2022 Car Free Day Survey)
  - The target audience for this campaign is the car-driving population of the metropolitan Washington region and includes SOV drivers and may include commuters, residents, and students.
- Bike to Work Day 2024 (from 2022 Bike To Work Survey Analysis Report): Ages 25-55 (61%), 25-34 (14%), 35-44 (25%), 45-54 (22%), 55-64 (26%)
  - Male 65% and female 35%.
  - Caucasian 82%, Hispanic (6%), Asian (5%), African American (4%)
  - Annual household income \$80,000+ (86%), \$100,000+ (79%), \$120,000+ (69%), \$160,000+ (51%)
  - Works for federal agency (36%), private sector (35%), nonprofit (18%)
  - Lives in VA (45%), DC (27%), and MD (28%)
  - Lives in Montgomery (20%), Fairfax (18%), Arlington (13%)
  - Works in DC (48%), VA (32%), and MD (20%)
  - Works for employer size of more than 100 employees (62%), 1,000+ (31%)
- Employer Recognition Awards 2024:
  - Level 3 & 4 employers in the Commuter Connections Network area.

#### Tactics:

Car Free Day (CFD) September 23, 2024:

- Secure prize sponsors with a focus on consumer retailers.
- Tie-in the CommuterCash mobile app and promote the bonus points that can be realized if using the app to go car free or car-lite on CFD.
- Promote CarpoolNow mobile app.
- Focus on teleworking and vanpool in addition to family-friendly messaging.
- Explore teaming with media channels to promote and cover local events.
- Expand digital and social media, explore video ads, digital radio, digital video and YouTube as primary media.
- Evaluate using radio personalities and key influencers through on-air and online/social media communications to increase awareness the Car Free Day event and generate pledge-takers.
- Provide marketing collateral such as flyers.
- Use transit/outdoor signage (bus exterior and bus shelter ads).
- Use text messaging to opt-in participants.
- Send mailing to employers.
- Send email blasts to past participants, opt-in customer database, employers and committee members.
- Engage Transportation Planning Board members through regional proclamation and encourage jurisdictional partners to do the same.
- Increase University Challenge participation through campus commuter programs, green groups, clubs, media, and RA Directors.
- Create friendly challenges between universities and workplaces for most pledges.
- Complement paid digital and social media with a strong earned media plan as well as outreach to employers, schools, and key influencers like bloggers and podcasters.

- Send an email after the event to all of those who took the pledge, offering congratulations, appreciation, and a list of the benefits of going Car Free or Car Lite, along with a link to the Commuter Connections website for more information on programs to sustain a car free lifestyle.
- Produce newsletter articles.
- Increase the number of pledges beyond 2023 event.
- Include a daily pledge leaderboard by mode on the website.

#### Bike to Work Day (BTWD) May 2025:

- Secure corporate and other sponsorships.
- Use an integrated mix of radio, social media, and digital display advertising to boost registration.
- Provide additional marketing collateral and advertising including t-shirts, flyers, posters, and rack cards.
- Should additional sponsor dollars become available, provide additional marketing such as pit stop banners.
- Send mailing to employers.
- Send email blasts to past participants, opt-in customer database, employers and committee members.
- Use earned media to reach minorities and women.
- Engage Transportation Planning Board members through regional proclamation and encourage jurisdictional partners to do the same.
- Meet the goal set by the committee.

#### Employer Recognition Awards

- Coordinate the Employer Recognition Awards ceremony, June 2025.
- Provide brochure/online nomination form in support of the nomination process
- Send email blast to potential nominees.
- Include marketing collateral for the event such as invitations, program brochure, podium sign, and promotional giveaways.
- Place a print advertisement in a major business publication(s) highlighting winning employers.
- Secure earned media for the event and winners.

**Special Events Media Allocation:** Approximately 7.5% of the FY25 overall media budget: 4% for BTWD, 3% for CFD, and 0.5% for the Employer Recognition Awards event.

## **COMMUTER CONNECTIONS**

### ***EMPLOYER OUTREACH***

**Objectives:** Add new level 3 & 4 employer clients, expand participation and offerings in existing employer programs, recognize existing employers who have implemented successful commuter benefits programs, increase the number of employers offering the tax-free commute benefits, increase use of SmartBenefits offered through employer programs as well as other TDM strategies such as telework, flextime, and ridematching.

**Target Market** (from FY 2024 Commuter Connections Applicant Database Annual Placement Survey Report):

- Employers with more than 250 employees (64%).
- Private sector employers (22%).

#### **Tactics:**

- Update web content as required.
- Update social media applications (e.g., Facebook) for telework.
- Produce quarterly employer newsletter.
- Provide images and logos to support Commuter Connections programs for use in network member newsletters and correspondence.
- Send email marketing.
- Develop Employer case studies.

**Employer Outreach Media Allocation:** 0% of media budget.

sign

## **DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

<https://ddot.dc.gov/page/transportation-demand-management-and-godcgo>  
[www.goDCgo.com](http://www.goDCgo.com)

The District's transportation demand management (TDM) program is designed to help achieve the mode share goal set forth in moveDC by implementing strategies and transportation amenities to shift travel demand and change traveler behavior. The TDM program is organized around a three-pronged approach to reduce single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) travel and encourage the use of public transit, biking, walking, teleworking, and ridesharing:

1. Promoting sustainable transportation options and amenities through DDOT's outreach and marketing brand called goDCgo;
2. Reducing impact on the transportation network from new development projects by helping developers right-size their TDM plans to mitigate additional vehicle trips; and
3. Implementing smart policies and laws such as the Commuter Benefits Law of 2014 and the Transportation Benefits Equity Amendment Act of 2020.

### **goDCgo**

goDCgo became a full service TDM program in March 2010 and encourages the use of sustainable transportation including walking, biking, and taking public transit. As the leading resource for transportation information, goDCgo provides commuters, residents, and visitors with the education and assistance they need to make more informed choices about their daily travel. The program reduces single-occupancy vehicle travel, decreases traffic congestion, and improves air quality to create a better quality of life in the District.

goDCgo works with employers, schools, and multi-family buildings in the District to promote sustainable transportation by assisting with the development and implementation of commuter benefits programs and transportation amenities. These programs are strategically designed to mutually benefit the organization and its employees or residents. goDCgo's trained outreach specialists work one-on-one with clients to evaluate transportation challenges and identify solutions to decrease the drive-alone rate, help the organization reduce their carbon footprint, and create a commuter-friendly environment.

Complimentary client services include:

- Employee commute surveys
- Customized marketing materials
- Step-by-step guidance with implementing the DC Commuter Benefits Law
- Step-by-step guidance with complying with DC's Parking Cashout Law
- Seminars, workshops, and webinars
- Discounted Capital Bikeshare Corporate memberships
- Assistance with office relocation
- On-site tabling for transportation or health and wellness fairs

Visit <https://goDCgo.com> to find out more or contact us at [info@godcgo.com](mailto:info@godcgo.com) and 202-299-2186.

### **Development Review**

As the District grows and attracts new developments, DDOT has implemented a plan to minimize site-generated vehicle trips. The DDOT Comprehensive Transportation Review Guidelines provide standardized TDM plans by land use, user type, and project impact for development that work in tandem with reduced parking, priced parking, and nearby transit. There are three tiers of plans, each tied to the amount of on-site parking and identified traffic impacts.



Refer to Appendix C of the CTR Guidelines for standardized TDM plans for the residential, office, retail, and hospitality land uses.

### **Commuter Benefits Laws**

As part of the Sustainable DC Omnibus Amendment Act of 2014, the Council of the District of Columbia passed a Commuter Benefits Law that requires businesses with 20 or more employees in the District to offer commuter transit benefits.

District employers with 20 or more employees are required to provide at least one of the following commuter benefit options:

1. Employee-Paid, Pre-Tax Benefit; allow employees to set aside income on a pre-tax basis to cover the cost of commuting by mass transit or vanpools, up to \$300 per month.
2. Employer-Paid, Direct Benefit; offer a tax-free subsidy for transit or vanpools, up to \$300 per month.
3. Employer-Provided Transportation; Provide shuttle or vanpool service at no cost to employees.

The DC Omnibus Amendment Act of 2014 was amended to include the Transportation Benefits Equity Amendment Act of 2020. The new law requires employers with 20 or more employees who offer free or subsidized parking benefits to employees to implement one of three compliance options that encourage commuting using sustainable transportation options instead of driving to work.

Covered employers must implement one of the following compliance options:

1. Offer a Clean Air Transportation Fringe Benefit: offer the equivalent value in benefits to covered employees who do not drive to work in the form of a transit subsidy, increased compensation, and/or a healthcare contribution;
2. Implement a transportation demand management plan: create a DDOT-approved TDM plan and reduce employees' commuter trips made by car by at least 10% year over year until 25% or less of employees' commuter trips are made by car; or
3. Pay a Clean Air Compliance fee to the District Department of Transportation (DDOT): pay \$100 per employee per month who is offered a parking benefit.
4. Report an exemption to DDOT: if you do not offer free, subsidized, or reimbursed parking to employees, or you qualify for one of the other exemptions (such as owning your parking prior to October 2020), report that exemption to DDOT.

All District employers with 20 or more covered employees must report their compliance or exemption to DDOT every two years by January 15, starting January 15, 2023. Covered employers electing to implement a TDM Plan must submit a commuter survey report every year.

## **DULLES AREA TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION (DATA)**

[www.datatrans.org](http://www.datatrans.org)

The Dulles Area Transportation Association (DATA) is a transportation management association (TMA) that serves a 335-square mile area surrounding Dulles Airport. DATA works under contract, through grants and with membership investment to complement transportation demand management (TDM) efforts in eastern Loudoun County, western Fairfax County, and northern Prince William County. As a public-private partnership, DATA is able to undertake innovative approaches to congestion mitigation impractical for agencies dependent only on public funding. DATA's business connection sets this TMA apart from other like-minded, mostly government-based operations.

DATA's paid members combine with over 40 advisory members, including employers, local governments, public officials, property owners, and honorary members from government entities interested in transportation mobility in the Greater Dulles Area. The staff includes four full-time and two part-time staff members.

DATA aggressively employs social media to encourage commuters to adopt alternative modes and to promote its programs to employers and employees alike. Corollary applications include an X account and Facebook page as well community events to engage commuters in seeking information on commuting options.

DATA publishes a quarterly DATA Details, which is electronically distributed to over 1500 employers and elected officials, providing comprehensive information on DATA activities as well as general developments in the transportation field. On a more regular basis, DATA issues DATAAlerts that highlight issues, topics and subjects of immediate attention. In 2022, DATA developed a monthly publication that informs recipients of important topics that have occurred in the previous three/four weeks.

DATA continues to maintain an active seminar schedule in cooperation with peer organizations and major employers. Topics range from commuter benefits to the continuing monitoring of the opening of the Silver Line, Phase II. Partner organizations include WMATA, Committee for Dulles, and Transform 66 Outside the Beltway. DATA events like seminars and its Anniversary Celebration continue to afford DATA members and the Dulles business/citizen community access to transportation information and stakeholders.

In FY23, DATA will continue to support bilingual ridematching services to seniors, veterans, and persons with differing abilities under a Federal Transit Administration Enhanced Mobility grant. DATA will partner with organizations in its service area to recruit volunteer drivers to enable the seniors, veterans and the disabled to make doctor's appointments, shopping trips, and other commitments.

## **FAIRFAX COUNTY COMMUTER SERVICES (FCCS)**

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/commuter-services](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/commuter-services)

Total Budget: \$1,124,992

With a population over 1.2 million and the region's largest employment center outside of the Metropolitan Washington D.C. core, Fairfax County is committed to improving mobility for all who live, work or travel in and out of the county. The Fairfax County Commuter Services (FCCS) promotes and implements transportation demand management (TDM) strategies throughout the county to reduce traffic congestion, greenhouse gas emissions, and provide transportation alternatives to single-occupant vehicle travel. FCCS focuses its marketing and trip reduction efforts on employers with 100 or more employees, but also responds to requests from smaller employers. FCCS has implemented high-level TDM programs at 404 Fairfax County employers.

The Commuter Friendly Community Recognition Program has partnered with over 350 residential developments, multi-family complexes and associations to promote use of alternative modes of transportation. The Commuter Friendly Community Recognition Program is dedicated to encouraging people who live, work or commute in/or through Fairfax County to use transit, carpools, vanpools, walking, biking, or teleworking instead of drive alone commuting.

FCCS ridematching program assists more than 15,000 commuters each year. Some of the programs and services offered include customized commuter programs design and implementation support, SmartBenefits Plus50 Program, Commuter Connections ridematching and guaranteed ride home programs, as well as planning for telework programs, incentives, and flexible schedules implementation.

FCCS offers employee density plots, commuter surveys, Employee Transportation Champion (ETC) training manuals and general support for workplace transportation benefit programs. It also establishes Transportation Information Centers, and hosts employee fairs and workshops as well as carpool and vanpool formation meetings at major employment sites. For special promotions, such as Try Transit Week or Bike to Work Day, email blasts, posters, banners and other materials are provided to employers, for internal promotion efforts.

FCCS also collaborates with other regional partners and TDM and transportation agencies to market and share information to many of the citizens that take cross -jurisdictional trips on their daily commutes, to help identify their best alternative mode of choice. In addition to this FCCS also provides information on individual commutes and recommendations or education on use of local resources such as park n rides, transit stores, bike & pedestrian trails, Metrorail, regional transit and HOV / Express lanes.

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, in partnership with the University of South Florida's Center for Urban Transportation Research, has designated more than 150 Fairfax County employers as "Best Workplaces for Commuters" (BWC) since the inception of the county program in 2010. The BWC designation acknowledges employers who have excelled in implementing green commuter programs. These types of TDM programs improve mobility by reducing the number of single-occupant vehicles on the roads. By meeting CUTR's National Standard of Excellence and offering high-level commuter benefits, qualifying employers are recognized annually at a Fairfax County Board of Supervisors ceremony for the range of transportation options offered to employees.

The BWC program is a win program for all:

- Employers benefit from the recognition as a "green" workplace, and are better able to attract

- and keep employees;
- Fairfax County benefits from having "green" employers whose efforts reduce traffic congestion;
- Employees benefit by having commute options like transit subsidies, reserved parking for carpools, teleworking and flexible work

FCCS Outreach Activities include:

- Employer/Commuter Benefit Fairs
- Large scale DOD Outreach Events
- Chambers of Commerce partnerships and events
- Special promotions around themed days/weeks:
  - Telework Week
  - Bike to Work Day
  - Dump the Pump Day
  - Car Free (or Lite) Day
  - Try Transit Month
  - Countywide Earth Day Events
- Large-scale community events such as Herndon Festival, area Farmers Markets and other events
- Annual Employer Recognition event for "Best Workplaces for Commuters" in front of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.
- District Town Meetings and other Community Meetings

Other marketing and advertising activities include:

- The SmartBenefits Plus\$50 incentive program
- In-and out-of-home (multi-pronged, scalable and geo-targeted) advertising campaigns:
  - Radio on-air and online ads, including digital providers
  - Videos on cable TV, YouTube and on our web pages
  - Social media posts and tweets, and paid social media advertising
  - Ads in local news media (traditional and new), Human Resources industry publications, military base directories, etc.
  - Direct mail to residents and employers
  - Movie theater and digital extension ads
  - Interior and exterior bus ads
  - Bus shelter ads
  - Counter-top displays, banners and posters
  - Other platforms as they become available

## **FAIRFAX CITY/CUE BUS**

<http://www.fairfaxva.gov/transportation>

[www.cuebus.org](http://www.cuebus.org)

The City of Fairfax promotes the local bus service (CUE) and other commuting options. The CUE bus marketing budget supports the purchase and distribution of bus system brochures (schedules and maps) and the purchase of promotional items (such as pens, tote bags, and lights) which are given away at events. The budget also supports CUE staff presence at select events. City staff also participate in several events such as Bike to Work Day, pop-up events to promote Car Free Day, Try Transit, and other transit-related events throughout the year, and community meetings as appropriate. CUE and other city staff collaborate with George Mason University to promote transportation options between the City and campus. CUE also began a Zero-Fare pilot program in January 2022, providing fare-free transit to all riders through at least 2025.

CUE staff maintain an active presence on X to promote CUE as a transportation option and to promote tools that make transit more attractive such as real-time passenger information. Staff also coordinate with the City communications department to promote CUE and other commuting options on the City's social media channels including X, Facebook, and YouTube as well as other communication channels such as City newsletter, City calendar and website, and alerts. The City will continue to promote transit, including direct connections to Metrorail and regional bus routes, as well as cross-promoting regional transportation options such as Commuter Connections ridematching and guaranteed ride home programs, regional events such as Car Free Day, and other regional transportation projects and programs. This fiscal year, the City's Transportation Division has contracted a public communications firm to assist with numerous communications and marketing efforts including updating the CUE website, rolling out the new CUE brand, and evaluating and updating the division's social media strategies, in addition to supporting communications for other transportation programs.

CUE completed a brand update project to transform CUE's image in the community. It includes a new logo, new color scheme, and a slight change to the CUE name, (replacing "City University Energysaver" with "City University Everyone"), which offers fresh messaging opportunities while retaining the old CUE name recognition. This update is meant to attract new riders to CUE by refreshing our brand and encouraging people to take a new look at transit as a commuting option. Efforts are underway to roll out the brand in Fall 2023 with new bus wraps, signs, uniforms, an updated website, and other updated assets.

## **FREDERICK COUNTY TRANSIT SERVICES**

[www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/transit](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/transit)

To promote transit and ridesharing Frederick County will:

- Place advertisements in various local magazines, newspapers, and event programs.
- Place online ads advertising Rideshare programs and local transit services.
- Share via social media rideshare issues, events, and incentives.
- Purchase radio ads and host live remote broadcasts at commuter events.
- Purchase giveaway items for certain campaigns.
- Participate in Chamber events, including business card exchanges and other membership events.
- Attend In the Street and other community events to spread the word about transit and transportation alternatives for commuters.
- Promote Travel Training and outreach through social media and the Transit website.
- Issue press releases regarding Transit and commuter news.
- Maintain Facebook and X accounts to widen the reach of publicity regarding Transit and commuter services.
- Produce schedule brochures and informational brochures for public distribution.
- Contact employers via mailings and in person to promote rideshare alternatives and assist with implementation of transit benefits.
- Work with local media outlets to air PSAs on pertinent issues.
- Create partnerships with established businesses and other County divisions to co-market services.
- Market mobile applications for simplified ridematching, trip planning, bus arrival time and location, etc.
- Survey employers and employees to determine route changes, event success, and suggested changes.
- Update marketing materials and website language for easier and more effective readability
- Run commuter and Transit services ads via social media

## LOUDOUN COUNTY

[www.loudoun.gov/commute](http://www.loudoun.gov/commute)

Combined Advertising & Promotion Media and professional services budget: \$549,094

Loudoun County Transit and Commuter Services educates and assists the public with alternatives to driving alone through its website, customer service phone lines, social media, news releases, advertising, signage, community outreach and events.

During FY2025, Loudoun County will leverage collateral developed for promotion of local transit service in late FY2024, the “Be Bus Savvy” campaign, and will revamp the “Let’s Go” campaign focused on commuters. Both campaigns strive to increase awareness of alternative modes of transportation while striving to increase enrollment in the Commuter Connections Ridematching System and Guaranteed Ride Home program, as well as increased awareness of and ridership on local transit in Loudoun. Each campaign has materials available in both English and Spanish.

Marketing efforts, which will be approved by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), include:

- 1) Amplifying Commuter Connections, DRPT, and Virginia Department of Transportation campaigns.
- 2) Promoting commuting options surrounding the Silver Line Metrorail stations in Loudoun County.
- 3) Conveying the flexibility and ease of commute alternatives regardless of how frequently one travels to work.
- 4) Promote Guaranteed Ride Home as an option for commuters to use in times of illness, family emergencies, and unscheduled overtime.
- 5) Informing new residents and those who move within Loudoun County of alternative forms of travel while encouraging them to share rides or take transit.

The Loudoun County Employer Outreach program promotes commuting alternatives to businesses and nonprofit organizations to increase employer participation levels. During FY2025, promotional efforts include:

- 1) *Commuter Shortcuts* e-newsletter – Newsletter design was refreshed to offer workplace resources for employee transportation coordinators and ready-to-share commuter news for employees.
- 2) Promote SmartBenefits Plu\$50 to encourage employers to offer transit benefits programs. Advertising for the program will include print ads, newsletter articles, social media, and in-person event promotion.
- 3) Support employer recognition for outstanding commuting programs through the Employer Recognition Awards and Best Workplaces for Commuters.
  - A. Conduct outreach, maintain partnerships, and pursue sponsorships with the Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce, Loudoun Workforce Resource Center, and Loudoun County Department of Economic Development.

## MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

[www.mta.maryland.gov](http://www.mta.maryland.gov)

MTA participates in a variety of community events and projects each year including:

- Sports events – Orioles baseball, Ravens football, and Preakness (horse racing), Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure.
  - Local Cultural Activities – Artscape Music and Art Festival, Maryland State Fair, Bike to Work Day.
- MDOT's MTA offers the following products and services:
- Local Bus including CityLink, LocalLink, and Express BusLink
  - Commuter Bus
  - Light RailLink
  - Metro SubwayLink
  - MARC Train
  - Mobility (Paratransit)
  - Taxi Access
  - All Access College Transit Pass program for participating schools in the Maryland area
  - MARC Train discounts through the national Student Advantage Program
  - Statewide Ridesharing Program
  - Transit Advertising through current contractor Vector Media USA
  - WTTZ Radio Station featuring Transit Team Reports
  - MDOT MTA Commuter Connections TV Show
  - CharmCard® fare payment smart card
  - CharmPass mobile fare payment app
  - Transit app – bus tracker
  - Rider newsletters
  - E-mail Service Notification system
  - Online Pass Sales
  - Local Pass Sale Outlets
  - MDOT MTA Transit Store
  - Transit Information Contact Center - 410-539-5000 or 1-866-743-3682
  - MDOT MTA website – [www.mta.maryland.gov](http://www.mta.maryland.gov)

#### MTA Ongoing Marketing Activities:

- Ongoing BaltimoreLink marketing and branding campaigns
- Collateral materials distribution including Orioles, Ravens and Preakness information brochures
- Transit System Maps at bus shelters, Light Rail Stops, Metro Subway Stations and MARC Train stations
- Business and Community Outreach
- Smart benefits employer/employee outreach campaign
- All Access College Transit Pass campaign
- Rider newsletters Community Events Special Events: Artscape, State Fair
- Guaranteed Ride Home marketing campaign
- Safety campaign
- MDOT MTA Commuter Connections TV Show
- I-83 Outdoor Sign
- Transportation and Benefits Fairs
- Transit app Bus Tracker campaign
- Social Media



- MDOT MTA Radio Station WTTZ

## COMMUTER CHOICE MARYLAND PROGRAM

Commuter Choice Maryland is the Maryland Department of Transportation Travel Demand Management Program that promotes and encourages alternatives to driving alone such as taking transit, carpool/ridesharing, vanpool, walking, biking, teleworking, Maryland Commuter Tax Credit and Guaranteed Ride Home. Commuter Choice Maryland can provide options to maximize travel choices and deliver solutions that can reduce congestion, conserve energy, facilitate economic opportunity, and enhance the life of all Marylanders.

Ongoing employer & commuter outreach marketing and promotional activities include:

- Commuter Choice Maryland website & social media: [www.CommuterChoiceMaryland.com](http://www.CommuterChoiceMaryland.com) is the program website that offers resources for businesses and commuters traveling throughout the state of Maryland. This site is promoted to businesses and commuters via partner websites, MDOT & partner social media such as LinkedIn and X, brochures, displays, webinars, toolkits, and promotional items. This site provides information about public Transportation options, Ridesharing/Carpools, Vanpools, Park and Rides, Guaranteed Ride Home, Bicycling & Walking, Telework/Co-work, Parking Cash Out, Road Traffic & Toll Information, High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes, Guaranteed Ride Home Program, Contact information for TDM Specialists in the State of Maryland, Maryland Commuter Tax Credit, Business Webinars on various transportation topics, and additional business and commuter resources. Website visits have also increased since the inception in 2018 with over 50,000 visits. Commuter Choice Maryland also has a strong social media presence on LinkedIn with over 700 Connections.
- Promotional Events: Conduct outreach to businesses and commuters. Commuter Choice Maryland also participates in various business events coordinated by Maryland TDM Specialists, government agencies, and partners. Commuter Choice Maryland organizes and/or markets the Get on Board Pop-up Event, Earth Day, Bike to Work Day, Car Free Day, Parking Day, and various Office of Minority Business events throughout the state and other events as opportunities arise. Commuter Choice Maryland also participates and/or is promoted at City and County events such as Artscape, The Maryland State Fair, Maryland Association of Counties Summer Conference, and the Transportation Association of MD Conference.
- Business Webinars: The business webinars are administered quarterly and have included the following topics: “Learn How to Expand Your Commuter Benefits Program”, “Alternative approaches to traditional work hours and expanding employee transportation options such as telework, alternative work, schedules, and vanpool, and “The Benefits of Bike and Walk Friendly Workplaces”. There are over 7,000 businesses throughout the state of Maryland that Commuter Choice Maryland reaches out to for these webinars.
- Business & TDM Specialist Resources: Commuter Choice Maryland understands the need for businesses to have ready access to information that can help them expand or start a commuter benefits program, vanpool, and telework program. Toolkits have been developed by Commuter Choice Maryland and are available for download on our website, made available at various outreach events, hard copies available by request, and available through our Maryland State TDM Specialists.

Business Highlights: Commuter Choice Maryland also highlights businesses who have implemented a smarter commute and are actively looking for more businesses throughout the state of Maryland to highlight.

## **MONTGOMERY COUNTY**

[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/commute](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/commute)

[www.rideonbus.com](http://www.rideonbus.com)

[www.X.com/RideOnMCT](https://www.X.com/RideOnMCT)

[www.facebook.com/RideOnMCT](https://www.facebook.com/RideOnMCT)

[www.youtube.com/RideOnMCT](https://www.youtube.com/RideOnMCT)

[www.instagram.com/RideOnMCT](https://www.instagram.com/RideOnMCT)

[www.rideonflex.com](http://www.rideonflex.com)

[www.ridetheflash.com](http://www.ridetheflash.com)

[www.X.com/mcdotnow](https://www.X.com/mcdotnow)

[www.facebook.com/mcdotnow](https://www.facebook.com/mcdotnow)

[www.instagram.com/mcdotnow](https://www.instagram.com/mcdotnow)

Montgomery County (MC) has a very large and diverse business base. It also has a large residential base. There are approximately 311,000 commuters who live and work in MC, 200,000 who travel to the County from other jurisdictions, and 216,000 who leave the county for other destinations.

Marketing activities are conducted countywide, with emphasis on those areas in Montgomery County with high concentrations of employment and transit, the Transportation Management Districts (TMDs): Silver Spring, Friendship Heights, Bethesda, Greater Shady Grove, North Bethesda, and White Oak, which recently began operations as the sixth TMD. Marketing activities related directly to promotion of the Ride On system are conducted by Ride On Marketing. Marketing activities related to promotion of transit of all types, car/vanpooling, walking, biking, bikesharing, micromobility, telework, and all other Transportation Demand Management efforts in those areas and throughout the County are conducted by Montgomery County Commuter Services.

### **Employer Outreach/Programs/Services:**

- Employer Meetings and Presentations: Montgomery County conducts meetings and presentations with County employers to persuade them to adopt high-level commuter benefits programs and Traffic Mitigation Plans (TMPs).
- Transportation Demand Management services focused on urban centers: The County operates six TMDs: Silver Spring, Bethesda, Greater Shady Grove (which includes the Life Sciences Center), North Bethesda, Friendship Heights and White Oak. Wheaton, a Transportation Policy Planning Area, is also part of the urban network. Employer, commuter, and transit services outreach efforts are concentrated in these areas of high employment and urban development. Efforts are targeted at achieving the County's Non-Auto Driver Mode Share (NADMS) goals for employees (and in some cases, employees and residents) commuting to work from their homes in those TMDs.
- Training sessions to assist employers with SmartBenefits® and the Maryland Commuter Choice Tax Credit: MC continues to promote and provide training and support to assist employers with the use of SmartBenefits® and the Maryland Commuter Choice Tax Credit.
- Telework webinars to inform employers about the advantages of telework programs and also make the business case for telework. MC continues to promote telework and help employers implement successful telework programs. Personalized telework consulting is available to County businesses using consultants provided free of charge by Commuter Services, with funding from MWCOG. A number of these webinars were conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic to assist both employers and employees in getting set up for and managing remote work. Additional Incentive Programs: MC gives subsidies to employers that provide a transit benefit to their employees, up to \$300 per employee, per month, under the FareShare program as long as the employer contributes at least \$25. The County also

promotes the Maryland Commuter Tax Credit and the Montgomery County Home Computer Telecommuting Incentive Tax Credit to encourage employers to adopt high-level TDM programs.

- On-Site and virtual Transportation Fairs: Commuter Services and its contractors conduct commuter information fairs at employment sites and the lobbies of multi-tenant facilities. Montgomery County conducts property management outreach campaigns, in which staff set-up large lobby displays and hold commuter information sessions at work sites throughout the county. Due to the pandemic, some of these outreach events have been held virtually. In the North Bethesda and Greater Shady Grove TMDs, where residential Non-Auto Driver Mode Share (NADMS) goals have been adopted, outreach events are also conducted at multi-unit projects.
- Commuter Survey: MC conducts biennially (every 2 years) a commuter survey of employees that work in the County. Surveys are distributed to more than 100,000 employees through more than 200 employers, concentrating on employers within TMDs and large employers elsewhere in the County. Residential surveys are also conducted on Bethesda, North Bethesda, Shady Grove and White Oak.
- Countywide and periodic area-specific e-newsletters and e-blasts: MC issues its monthly newsletter, Better Ways to Work, in electronic format, distributed to subscribers via e-mail. Area-specific electronic newsletters are distributed for the Bethesda and North Bethesda, Friendship Heights, Silver Spring and Shady Grove TMDs by those TMD contractors, and periodic e-blasts on specific topics are also issued by Commuter Services.
- Employer Recognition/Special Events: Periodically MC has conducted its Transportation Awards Ceremony and other employer recognition events to highlight businesses providing outstanding programs to address traffic congestion. Past events have featured remarks by the County Executive, the Governor of Maryland, Senators, and leading businesspeople. Other employer recognition events have included the Transportation A2CE Awards (Advocates for Alternative Commuting Excellence). These businesses are partnering with the County to address traffic congestion and air quality challenges and contributing to a more sustainable and environmentally-friendly community, while at the same time helping their employees get to work in a less stressful and more cost-effective manner. Other types of employer recognition activities are conducted each year, including articles highlighting businesses involved with TDM efforts in the Better Ways to Work monthly e-newsletter.
- ACT! for Web CRM: This database is used to track and manage contacts and relationships with over 4,000 employers in the County.
- On-line system for the filing of Traffic Mitigation Plans (TMP) and TMP Annual Reports by TMD employers: Traffic Mitigation Plans are now called Transportation Demand Management Plans for Employers (Employer TDM Plans) in recently adopted changes to the County's TDM laws. The online system for submitting plans and annual reports continues to be refined and improved. This system is periodically upgraded to adapt to changes in the law that address sizes of employers and locations that qualify them as needing to submit Employer TDM Plans, upgrades with enhanced features.
- Walk & Ride Challenge: Each year Montgomery County works with employers in Bethesda, Friendship Heights, Silver Spring, North Bethesda, Greater Shady Grove and White Oak TMDs to promote and conduct the 3-week Walk & Ride Challenge. This program encourages walking and taking transit to work. Walk & Ride Challenge is hosted on its own County Web site, [www.walkandride.net](http://www.walkandride.net)
- Bicycle Swag Bag Contest during Bike Month and leading up to Bike to Work Day and Car Free Day: MCDOT Commuter Services promotes Bike to Work Day by featuring a different bike path/trail in Montgomery County each week. MC asks bike riders to submit a favorite picture of themselves enjoying their ride along the featured trail or any trail on the County to be entered into a weekly drawing. The pictures are posted and tagged on @MCDOTNow on Instagram or X, along with the hashtag #MoCoBikes to be entered into that week's drawing for a Bicycle Swag Bag prize.

#### Promotional Materials:

- Better Ways to Work Toolkit used in employer meetings and presentations, with contents tailored to the specific interests and needs of the business.
- Commuter Services Guide, New Employee Commuting Guide and Transit Benefit brochures used to provide businesses and employees with key information.
- Park & Ride Lot Brochure: MC produces a Park and Ride brochure with all P&R lots in Montgomery and adjoining counties, including transit services available from each lot. The guide was last updated September 2021. MC also promotes use of the Commuter Connections Park & Ride page, <https://commuterconnec.wpengine.com/park-ride-lots-in-the-metropolitan-washington-baltimore-regions/>
- “Montgomery County Bikeways Map,” and “Shifting Gears” maps are created and printed. All are available in hard copy and portable document format (PDF). “Biking to Bethesda” map/brochure also available. (MCDOT’s Shifting Gears bike map is also available online in an interactive format)
- Websites -- MC and the TMDs continue to upgrade and refine communication strategies via several websites: Better Ways to Work (<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/commute>) and Ride On <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rideon>), Bethesda Transportation Solutions (<http://www.bethesdatransit.org/> and North Bethesda TMD (<http://www.nbtc.org>) websites. A special bikeshare website has also been created, <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/bikeshare/index.html>.
- Convert existing forms, brochures, maps, etc. to easier-to-use electronic format.
- Work with marketing services consultants to develop new or revised promotional materials as needed to support employer outreach efforts.
- A Ride On User Guide has been published and distributed to help riders new to our transit system. It discusses riding the bus, accessibility, trip planning, fare media transfers and Title VI.

#### Advertising:

- Ads in newspapers and employer-targeted publications, and on website
- Chambers of Commerce: MC advertises its programs and services in local chamber publications, including newsletters, membership directories, dining guides, and special publications
- Use Ride On bus sides, bus stop shelters and bus interior cards to promote commuting options
- Promotions on Instagram, X, and Next Door
- Ride On also uses Facebook, X, and NextDoor.com to promote services, public forums, service changes, etc.

#### Commuter Outreach/Programs/Services:

- Promote Bike Transit: grants from TPB using FTA funds, and the Maryland Department of Transportation, coupled with County, City of Rockville and private sector funding, enabled MCDOT to bring the Capital Bikeshare system to Montgomery County in fall 2013, with 51 new stations opened within the following year. Commuter Services is promoting use of bikeshare through a variety of mechanisms. There are now 90 bikeshare stations in the County.
- A special program for low income bikeshare participants has been developed. CaBi For All provides a free one-year membership, free bike helmet, and free bicycle safety classes for those who qualify.
- TRiPS Commuter Store: The Silver Spring as TRiPS store – “Transportation Resources, Information and Places to See” – sells Metro and Ride On fare media, Peter Pan bus tickets, and provides transit information, maps, and schedules to commuters and visitors. Information on MARC and VRE is also available. Commuter Services and TRiPS coordinate with other agencies to provide increased information and assistance to commuters.

- **Mobile Commuter Store:** MC operates a Mobile Commuter Store that has scheduled stops throughout the County. The store is full-service, offering SmarTrip® cards and reloads, MARC rail tickets, Metro and Ride On bus passes, transit related items and extensive travel/commute information. Its weekly schedule is posted at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-dir/commuter/trips/mobile-commuter-store-sched.html>
- **BikeMatchMoCo:** BikeMatchMoCo program is a free online service sponsored by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation; BikeMatchMoCo collects donated bicycles and distributes them to residents in Montgomery County who need bikes to travel but cannot afford to purchase one. BikeMatchMoCo allows people with extra, unused bicycles to donate their bikes using a simple online form. The same can be done by those who need a bike for commuting to work. The program was created in 2019. As of November 2023, 655 bikes have been distributed to County residents through BikeMatchMoCo, [montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-dir/commuter/bikeshare/bikematch.html](https://montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-dir/commuter/bikeshare/bikematch.html)
- **Discounted car/vanpool parking in Bethesda and Silver Spring.** The Bethesda and Silver Spring Transportation Management Districts certify car/vanpools to qualify for significant parking discounts.
- **Bike to Work Day.** Each year over 2,000 Montgomery County bike commuters participate at one of the many Bike to Work Day Pit Stops hosted at Montgomery County locations with high employee concentrations. Locations over the past several years have included the downtown areas of Silver Spring, Friendship Heights and Bethesda, as well as North Bethesda, NIH Main Campus, NIH Executive Blvd, Marriott International, three locations in Takoma Park, FDA White Oak, and two Rockville locations (Town Center and Shady Grove/Falls Grove).
- **Car Free Day.** Each year since 2008, MC has participated in the promotion of the regional Car Free Day at several locations with high concentrations of transit commuters. MC features promotional item giveaways, ridesharing applications and non-SOV commuting information.
- **Promote the 100 percent accessibility of the Ride On fleet to bicyclists along with the County's series of County bike maps.** Whenever possible, a Ride On bus is brought to major events to enable demonstration of how to load and unload a bike from the bus's bike rack. The bus provides the opportunity for attendees to try the process in a low-stress setting. Broad-based community outreach is conducted periodically by Commuter Services and/or Ride On through participation at large-scale events, including the following: Earth Day, GreenFest, Senior Info Expo, Wheaton and Silver Spring Summer Concerts, Strathmore Hall Summer Concert Series, Montgomery County Agricultural Fair, Taste of Wheaton, Taste of Bethesda, Accessible Public Transportation Options Expo, Oktoberfest, Diversity Days, Health and Benefits Fairs, and Car Free Day and various ethnic festivals (e.g., Latina Heath). Capital Bikeshare promoted as a transportation option for trips of less than 3 miles, especially as a way of connecting to/from transit.
- **Low-income residents and employees are able to obtain free bikeshare services (including free helmets and safety classes) through the CaBi For All (Montgomery County Low Income Bikeshare) program.** Free or low-cost bike safety classes are available for members of the Capital Bikeshare system in the County, as well as for other cyclists. In June 2019, MCDOT introduced the dockless e-scooter program to geographically defined areas in the east and west portions of the County. MCDOT conducted a demonstration project with three selected companies that deployed dockless e-scooters at no cost to the County. The initial demonstration project ran for six months and was extended in January 2020. MC currently has three vendors that deploy e-scooters and e-bikes in the approved areas of the County. They are also required to offer free training classes from Spring to Fall to encourage people to learn how to ride the e-scooters and e-bikes and the correct way to operate and park them safely.

#### Transit Services:

- **Promote Real-Time information project to provide riders the status of their bus.**

- Continue to support Montgomery College student program. With valid Student ID, Montgomery College students can ride Ride On anytime on any route.
- Promote Ride On monthly pass. Ongoing promotion of SmarTrip®.
- Promotion of Van Go Shuttle in downtown Silver Spring.
- Promotion of Bethesda Circulator in downtown Bethesda
- Promote availability of Senior SmarTrip® card now sold at MC Public Libraries.
- Promotion of Seniors and People with Disabilities Ride Free on Ride On and select Metro buses in MC at all times.
- Promote Kids Ride Free program: Kids can ride free all day every day. Campaign to increase number of riders 5 to 18 years of age; recruited Montgomery County Libraries as a partner to distribute Youth Cruiser SmarTrip® Cards which increases the number of locations from 3 to 24; recruited schools to distribute Youth Cruiser SmarTrip® Cards which has increased from 21 to 71 schools; flyers distributed to all County schools (400+), home schools (600+), libraries, recreation centers, and community centers.
- Continue to promote feeder service to MARC and Metrorail.
- Promote free transfers for MTA commuters with weekly and monthly passes.
- Promotion of new clean diesel, hybrid electric-diesel and compressed natural gas (CNG) buses with low floors.
- Promotion of our new all-electric buses.
- Promotion of our new rapid transit service called the Flash.
- Additional new buses with ramps now means Ride On is 100 percent accessible to persons with disabilities on the fixed route services.
- Promote Metro's program for MetroAccess customers who are able to ride free with a companion on Ride On and Metro buses and rail.
- Implement a comprehensive program to install upgraded bus shelters and related pedestrian access and amenities throughout the County.
- Positioning of a Ride On bus at major outreach events -- This provides an opportunity for Ride On operators to serve as "ambassadors" for the bus system, interacting on a more extended basis with current and potential future riders, as well enabling cyclists to practice loading a bike on the bus.
- Promote the Give and Ride Campaign with Manna Foods which collects non-perishable food items for needy families.
- Conduct Public Forums for Service Changes.
- Conduct Public Forum for Fare Changes.
- Post Website notices, alerts, and current events.
- Promote Dump the Pump campaign to encourage use of mass transit.
- Promote See Something Say Something transit security campaign.
- Public Outreach: Montgomery County Fair booth, Montgomery County Public Schools Back-To-School Fair booth, Customer Appreciation Days at Transit Centers and Metro Stations.
- Continuing Facebook, X, Instagram, and YouTube social media sites to keep riders better informed.
- Use GovDelivery (Granicus) email blasts and text alerts for notices and current events.
- Post regularly on NextDoor.com electronic bulletin board system for all MC neighborhoods and 272,000+ residents.
- Partner with other agencies within Montgomery County Government, including Libraries, Regional Service Centers, Public Information Office to disseminate information about transit services programs operated in the County.
- Radio and cable TV ads to promote the Ride On, Ride On extRa, Ride On Flex and Flash services.
- Promote Flash rapid transit - limited stop service along US 29.

- Promote Ride On Flex on-demand bus service in Rockville and Wheaton/Glenmont via social media, websites, newspaper ads, bus ads, bus shelter ads, mobile ads, online news digital ads, regional service centers, transportation management districts, etc.



## **NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH**

<https://www.nih.gov>

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) serves as one of the foremost agencies under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, focusing on health and scientific research. With a central headquarters in Bethesda, Maryland, NIH is home to most of its workforce, though its impact stretches across the globe through its funding of scientific studies in diverse research institutions and universities.

### **Transportation and Environmental Initiatives**

The NIH supports a comprehensive Employee Transportation Services Office (ETSO), which is a part of the Division of Amenities and Transportation Services (DATS). This office plays a vital role in enhancing employees' access to sustainable commuting options, aligning with the NIH's mission to reduce traffic congestion, energy consumption, and environmental impact within the National Capital Region. Employees can access a range of alternative commuting programs, including:

- **Commuter Connections:** A resource hub for carpooling and vanpooling.
- **Guaranteed Ride Home Program:** Ensures that employees using public transit have a reliable way to get home in emergencies.
- **Transit Subsidies through NIH Transhare Program:** Offers commuting subsidies in compliance with Executive Order 13150, designed to promote the use of public transit, ease traffic, and lessen environmental impacts.

### **Commuting Technology and the CAPS System**

The NIH has developed the Commuting and Parking Services (CAPS) system, an advanced tool linked to NIH's employee database that supports ride-sharing, carpool, and vanpool matching. CAPS allows employees to search for others with similar commuting routes and enables the ETSO to reach out to employees based on location to optimize shared-ride options. This system encourages more employees to switch from single-occupancy vehicle trips to carpooling or vanpooling. In addition, NIH has strategically allocated carpool-only parking spots across its campus. This infrastructure aims to reduce single-vehicle trips and promote shared commuting.

### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities**

The NIH's commitment to sustainable commuting is evident in its support for bike commuters. With nine on-campus and four off-campus buildings equipped with shower and locker facilities, and racks and lockers to store 800 bikes, NIH is a biking-friendly institution. The NIH Bike Club promotes bicycling as a commuting option with the motto "Non-polluter, Commuter." The club actively maintains bike trails and organizes events to raise awareness about the health and environmental benefits of cycling. NIH has consistently led the region in Bike to Work Day participation and has won multiple awards from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments for these efforts.

To ensure pedestrian safety, NIH has invested in creating a pedestrian-friendly campus with well-lit pathways and large crosswalks, further supporting those who choose to walk as part of their commute.

### **Partnerships and Community Engagement**

NIH partners with North Bethesda and Bethesda Transportation Management Districts, and local transit agencies to improve local transit access, decrease traffic congestion, increase transportation capacity, and promote safe pedestrian and bike access. NIH also participates in regional transportation groups with other partners, including Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation, Walter Reed National Medical Center, and

Suburban Hospital. Through these collaborations, NIH works toward reducing air and noise pollution and enhancing community accessibility.

### **Shuttle and Electric Vehicle Services**

NIH offers a shuttle service with 13 routes that serve both employees and patients commuting from off-campus government facilities. Shuttle locations can be tracked in real-time via a mobile app or the DATS website to help employees minimize wait times. For employees with electric vehicles, NIH has implemented a charging program with dedicated stations across the campus, further supporting environmentally friendly commuting.

### **Awards and Recognition**

NIH, along with DATS and ETSO, has received several awards for its commitment to sustainable transportation, including:

- **Health and Human Services Green Champion Award**
- **Employer Recognition Award for Incentives (2013)** by Commuter Connections
- **Best Workplaces for Commuters** by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- **Outstanding Participation and Support in the Federal Transit Benefit Program** by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
- **Employee Transportation Coordinator of the Year** by the Association of Commuter Transportation
- **MWCOG Bike to Work Day Award** for highest NIH employee participation

NIH's ETSO actively promotes these initiatives through webinars, campus newsletters, targeted emails, and collaborations with regional transportation organizations. These efforts not only reinforce NIH's commitment to employee well-being and environmental sustainability but also foster a community culture that values healthy, eco-friendly commuting.

## **NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

[www.novatransit.org](http://www.novatransit.org)

[www.novarides.org](http://www.novarides.org)

<https://X.com/NoVaTransit>

<https://www.facebook.com/NoVaTransit>

[https://www.instagram.com/novatransit\\_ig/](https://www.instagram.com/novatransit_ig/)

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/northern-virginia-transportation-commission/mycompany/>

NVTC serves as a regional forum for discussion and analysis of transit issues that are critical to our economy and quality of life. Founded in 1964, in part to represent the interests of the Commonwealth of Virginia during the establishment of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Agency (WMATA), NVTC is charged with the funding and stewardship of Metro and the Virginia Railway Express (VRE), which it co-owns.

Because Northern Virginia is home to six bus systems, NVTC works across jurisdictional boundaries to facilitate improved transit service, leverage joint procurements, and coordinate emergency response to transit incidents. NVTC also is the lead agency in the administration of the Commuter Choice program, a multi-decade effort that uses toll revenues to support transit and transportation demand management activities.

### *Programs and Initiatives*

#### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

NVTC manages over \$350 million annually for Metro, Virginia Railway Express and five bus systems. NVTC administers the regional motor fuels tax, as well as federal grants on behalf of local jurisdictions.

#### **FINANCIAL & POLICY ANALYSIS**

NVTC performs financial analyses, documents funding needs, and works with the Commonwealth to develop new funding sources to sustain federal, state and local funding for high-quality, high-capacity public transit that serves Northern Virginia.

#### **METRO POLICY & GOVERNANCE**

NVTC serves as Virginia's voice on the Metro Board of Directors and publishes an annual policy and data report on the performance and condition of Metro.

#### **COMMUTER CHOICE**

Commuter Choice reinvests toll revenues in projects that move more people more efficiently through the two congested corridors, I-66 and I-395/95 Through FY 2024, Commuter Choice had invested a total of \$156 million on projects in the two corridors.

#### **ENVISION ROUTE 7**

NVTC leads the planning process for Envision Route 7, a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system designed to connect the Mark Center in Alexandria to Tysons via Bailey's Crossroads, Seven Corners and Falls Church along the Route 7 corridor, the second busiest bus corridor in Northern Virginia.

#### **TRANSIT TECHNOLOGY**

NVTC brings together regional partners and local transit agencies to explore and procure the latest technologies, especially the transition to zero-emission buses. NVTC works with Metro and regional transit providers to examine and maintenance enhancements to the regional fare-collection system that meets current needs and adapts to changing technologies.

## TRANSIT DATA AND ANALYSIS

NVTC provides technical assistance to member jurisdictions, analyzes transit performance data from across NVTC jurisdictions, publishes reports on transit-related topics and manages a transit data dashboard.

## OMNIRIDE

<https://omniride.com/>

Marketing Budget: \$950,000

OmniRide is a multi-jurisdictional agency representing Prince William, Stafford and Spotsylvania counties and the cities of Manassas, Manassas Park and Fredericksburg. Formerly known as PRTC, the agency has rebranded itself under the OmniRide name. Transit services that serve Eastern Prince William County and operate along the I-95 corridor are headquartered in Woodbridge, VA. The Western Maintenance Facility in Manassas, opened in August 2021, is the headquarters for services that operate in Western Prince William County, the Manassas area and along the I-66 corridor. OmniRide's local service area remains largely residential but there several large employers in its six jurisdictional regions, including Lockheed Martin, GMU, Sentara Northern Virginia Medical Center, Northern Virginia Community College, Micron Technology, NOVEC, IKEA and Comcast.

The focus of the organization and its marketing program is to provide sound transportation alternatives to the SOV that meet the travel needs of Prince William County, Manassas and Manassas Park residents. In addition to co-sponsoring the Virginia Railway Express, PRTC operates the OmniRide family of transit services in Prince William County, Manassas, and Manassas Park. OmniRide also provides commuter bus service to Stafford and Spotsylvania Counties. Starting in late 2024, OmniRide will launch commuter bus routes serving Front Royal and Warrenton, Virginia.

OmniRide Express buses transport commuters between Prince William/Stafford/Spotsylvania/Manassas and Washington DC, the Pentagon, Arlington, Tysons Corner, and Reston. OmniRide Metro Express buses connect Woodbridge and Manassas with nearby Metrorail stations. OmniRide Local buses travel throughout eastern Prince William County, Manassas and Manassas Park, and are great for local activities like shopping and medical appointments. OmniRide's East-West Express buses run between Woodbridge and Manassas. The OmniRide Transit Center is the main hub and transfer center for bus services that operate in eastern Prince William County. The Prince William County Courthouse stop serves as the transfer center for buses that serve Manassas, Manassas Park and western Prince William County. OmniRide Access paratransit service operates in western Prince William and the Manassas area. In eastern Prince William OmniRide's Local buses operate on flex-routing to pick up residents at locations other than designated bus stops, within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile off the standard route, so there is no paratransit service. OmniRide Connect Microtransit operates in two portions of the local service area, serving Manassas Park and Dumfries/Triangle/Quantico. Riders can request same-day trips within the service area. The Wheels-to-Wellness program provides medical transportation to senior and disabled residents.

The OmniRide Ridesharing Program helps match commuters with carpools and vanpools that fit their needs. Through its regional database, this free, personalized ridematching service links commuters with similar work hours, origination and destination points. OmniRide also administers the Vanpool Alliance program, providing a monthly stipend to vanpools for ridership data. The program is a public-private partnership between OmniRide, the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission and the George Washington Regional Commission.

OmniRide Employer Services is a free service available to all businesses in Prince William County, Manassas and Manassas Park, designed to help area employers create and expand commuter benefit programs that will help employees reduce commute-related stress and save money. It also enables area employers to expand sustainability initiatives and provides them with superior recruitment/retention tools. Employer Commute Surveys, Telework Programs, Emergency Preparedness, Transit Subsidies, Carpool/Vanpool Formation, Biking/Walking to Work, Alternative Work Schedules and Parking Management are all areas of focus for this program.

OmniRide's marketing budget funds rider education initiatives, awareness media advertisements, trial-coupon programs, employer and consumer group presentations, print and online ads, brochures, printed bus schedules in English and Spanish, an interactive website, Facebook and LinkedIn pages, transportation fairs, a wide variety of community outreach activities, and a Welcome Aboard program for new residents. In addition, OmniRide has a comprehensive youth program with targeted activities by age groups. OmniRide has established location-specific transit information displays in all bus shelters and at other key stops.

Customers can subscribe to the agency's Rider Express e-mail and text messaging service, which provides service alerts and other information. The Customer Service office provides service Monday-Friday, from 5:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., except for some holidays.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS & TRANSPORTATION**  
[www.princegeorgescountymd.gov](http://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov)

Marketing Budget for RideSmart Marketing Contract: \$102,000

Marketing Budget for TheBus: \$102,000

Prince George's County is working towards providing direct assistance to employers throughout the county through a coordinated Employer Outreach Program. Prince George's County will provide daily employer outreach services for employers in their service area, which will help promote voluntary commute alternatives in ways that best suit their businesses.

Developing direct mail pieces to employers, organizing seminars, telemarketing and conducting on-site sales presentations to employers are a few of the many activities the County promotes. Employers are encouraged to participate in programs that include SmartBenefits, telecommuting, The Guaranteed Ride Home Program, Capital Bikeshare, ridematching and carpool/vanpool formation, and parking management.

Prince George's County is focused on targeting major employers across the county including NASA, The University of Maryland and Prince George's Community College via robust outreach and collaborative marketing campaigns and materials. Attending open houses, benefits fairs and new employee orientations are a large part of the county's FY25 efforts. Prince George's County will continue utilizing promotional 'swag' items to amplify brand marketing and further incentivize employees during onsite outreach.

The RideSmart website at RideSmartSolutions.com provides employers with relevant information and is currently being tracked by SiteAnalytics to quantify marketing successes and opportunities for growth.

Goals are based on the following:

1. An extensive cumulative review of the companies and organizations in the Act! database and other economic development data sources.
2. An analysis of the Commuter Connections Programs' past performance.
3. A comparison of the provisional goals for new fiscal year versus the execution of goals of the previous fiscal year.

Objective is to implement the following measures for the Commuter Connections Program:

1. Increase employer participation in County RideSmart Commuter Solutions.
2. Maintain and increase participation level of active employers.
3. Decrease the number of single-occupancy vehicle trips by increasing employee awareness of the programmatic incentives associated with carpooling, vanpooling, the Maryland Commuter Tax Credit program, flextime, teleworking, biking, and walking.
4. Formalize more telework, carpooling, vanpooling, transit, active commuting programs and commuting benefits offered by employers.

**RAPPAHANNOCK RAPIDAN REGIONAL COMMISSION - Commuter Services**

[www.rrcommute.org](http://www.rrcommute.org)

- Primarily a rural, residential area with a population of 200,000.
- RRRC uses regional advertising strategies via radio, digital, and print methods to promote their commuter services. They participate, support, and promote COG promotions throughout their region such as GRH. The program also uses social media to advertise promotions/contests and get feedback via their Facebook page. There are various targeted advertisements that run annually including outreach at local events.
- The region has twelve official and three unofficial park and ride lots; outreach at lots occurs annually and vanpools are offered participation in startup and/or support subsidies from their Vanpool Assistance Program.
- Marketing efforts have switched gears over the past few years to become more focused initiatives that target specific audiences using digital advertising.



**TRI-COUNTY COUNCIL FOR SOUTHERN MARYLAND - Commuter Assistance Program**  
[www.tccsmd.org](http://www.tccsmd.org)

Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland (TCCSMD) was formed on December 6, 1964, as a cooperative planning and development agency to foster the social and economic development of the Southern Maryland Region. In 1965, the Governor of Maryland recognized the TCCSMD as the regional planning and development organization for the Region comprising Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties. The TCCSMD's statute was established by Act of the Maryland General Assembly in 1966. The TCCSMD's enabling law was reenacted as State general legislation in 1976 (Article 20, Maryland, Annotated Code).

The purpose of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland is to serve as a forum for the resolution of region-wide issues and the attainment of regional goals. The Tri-County Council is a partnership of state and local government established more than forty years ago as the regional development and planning organization for Southern Maryland. As such, the Council provides a framework for cooperation and coordination among the elected, civic and business leaders of the Region; undertakes action programs that focus local, state and federal resources in a comprehensive strategy to enhance the quality of life of all the people of Southern Maryland; and initiates and coordinates plans and projects which foster the physical, economic and social development of the Region.

In carrying out these responsibilities, the TCCSMD serves as a source of information and data; engages in regional planning; serves as an advocate for the region's interests and priorities at the federal and State levels; qualifies the region for federal and State assistance; and develops programs to meet region-wide needs and goals. Key elements of the regional strategy:

- Diversify and broaden the economic base.
- Preserve agriculture as a viable industry.
- Restore and protect the environment.
- Implement highway improvements and expand commuter assistance services.
- Manage growth and requirements for public services.

The Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland has led the regional effort to promote the use of clean fuel and alternative transportation for commuting besides single occupant vehicles (SOV), such as public transit services, ridesharing, carpool and vanpool, telecommute/telework, private transportation companies and services, including subscription bus alternatives.

Local public transportation services are available in Southern Maryland, and this program works cooperatively with these agencies and on efforts related to public transportation initiatives. Calvert (Calvert County Public Transportation), Charles (VanGO) and St. Mary's (STS) counties provide both fixed-route and on-demand local transit services daily. The three local transit systems are connected at Charlotte Hall in St. Mary's County and Solomons in Calvert County. The three transit systems also have links with the MTA commuter bus and serve the region's park-and-ride facilities. As the region's coordinating organization, the annual total ridership has increased from 52,000 in 1988, when MDOT/MTA started the commuter bus operation in the region, to nearly 1.74 million in recent years.

Many Southern Marylanders commute to work in the Washington metropolitan area. The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) provides commuter express bus services to accommodate the rapidly growing commuter demand in the region. The MTA Southern Maryland commuter bus operation, which has the highest ridership growth rate, has been the MTA's most successful operation in the state of Maryland for a decade.

There are thirteen commuter bus routes between Southern Maryland and Washington. These eleven commuter

bus routes are MDOT/MTA commuter bus # 610, 620, 630, 640 and 650 in Charles County, 705, 715, 725 and 735 in St Mary's County, Routes # 820, 830, 840 and 850 in Calvert County. Southern Maryland has recently benefited from increased roundtrip runs. It is important to keep in mind that about 71 percent of Calvert and Charles County residents commute outside their home counties to work (only about 28 percent of St. Mary's residents commute outside the county borders.) Of the region's estimated 160,000 commuters (U.S. Census Bureau 2000), 57,957 are traveling outside of the region for employment, typically to the District of Columbia, Prince George's County, Virginia, or elsewhere. These trends will continue to stress the importance of high occupancy vehicle modes of transportation and the Council's Commuter Assistance Program.

The Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland's Commuter Assistance and Employer Outreach Program goals include increasing the awareness and highlighting the benefits of traveling by non-single occupancy vehicles. The programs obtain these specific goals through educating the region's major employers, employees and residents through a number of marketing and campaign efforts.

Major activities include:

1. Develop an overall strategic outreach plan to educate employers about the benefits of participating in and offering employer-sponsored commute alternatives or Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs at their worksites. The particular focus of this plan will be educating employers about Maryland Commuter Tax Alternatives, Smart Benefits, Clean Commute Month Services, and other TDM programs. The primary outreach method will be through site visits; conducting on-site seminars; participating in local fairs; and mail/email campaigns. There will also be a strong focus on a thorough follow-up plan.
2. Work with TCC's DBED program outreach specialists to coordinate outreach efforts to the area's employers.
3. Market the availability of Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program to area commuters and employers.
4. Develop formalized partnerships for shared marketing events with local health care professionals and human service organizations.
5. Provide coordination and assistance to the development of new vanpools, including information on available financial subsidies, rider agreements and vanpool marketing efforts.
6. Conduct seminars in the Southern Maryland region which enable participation from other metropolitan area coordinators, particularly the areas where Southern Maryland commuters travel, including, but not limited to DC, Baltimore, Annapolis and Prince George's counties.
7. Advertise on local radio stations that provide information about commuter alternatives and employer TDM Programs.
8. Advertise on local cable (television) programs that introduce and share benefits of high occupancy vehicle modes for commuters and TDM Programs for area employers.
9. Utilize special days (Air Quality Action Days and Bike to Work Day) to coordinate events that call attention to the need and importance of commute alternatives.
10. Revamp and distribute a newsletter targeted for Vanpool Owner/Operators that highlights van pool best practices and information on safety, marketing and successful vanpooling techniques.
11. Revamp and distribute quarterly newsletter for Southern Maryland Commuters (distributed through the area's commuter buses) that highlights areas of interest to the Southern Maryland commuter bus passengers on the MDOT/MTA sponsored routes.
12. Revitalize partnership with Clean Air Partners, who works with Southern Maryland regional public and private schools to highlight the benefits of clean air through high occupancy vehicle modes and biking.
13. Seek to re-engage commuters who have allowed their records to expire through the use of traditional and email campaigns.
14. Participate on the Southern Maryland Regional Transportation Coordination Committee.
15. Promote MDOT's new Commuter Choice programs.
16. Promote CommuterCash.
17. Promote and help write policies for Telework/Flextime and Alternative work schedules.

18. Promote Commuter Connections' new mobile app, CommuterCash.
19. Promote the new Southern Maryland Vanpool incentive program, funded by the RMC.

## VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Northern Virginia District

<https://www.virginiadot.org/>

[https://www.virginiadot.org/travel/parkride/resources\\_commuter\\_resource\\_agencies.asp](https://www.virginiadot.org/travel/parkride/resources_commuter_resource_agencies.asp)

VDOT's TDM and multimodal promotion activities are coordinated through the Northern Virginia District, in coordination with VDOT Central Office, and other agencies and partners like Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), to meet the diverse needs of the region's travelers and to reduce congestion and air pollution on roadways.

While the following programs are often coordinated through the Transportation Planning section(s), VDOT's various divisions are continually focused on multimodal needs and the benefits of demand management strategies.

TDM and Multimodal Marketing Activities include:

- Provide funding and active participation in Commuter Connections, Clean Air Partners, and Employer Outreach at the local level, all of which include marketing efforts.
- Megaprojects Transportation Management Plans (TMPs) are aimed at reducing SOV travel and improving operations in construction corridors through marketing, incentives, and engineering/safety tasks. Strategies include TDM/transit incentives, marketing campaigns, and community/employer outreach from the inception of the project through construction.
- Park & Ride Program: VDOT builds and/or maintains many P&R lots in the region with amenities for transit and ridesharing. VDOT also inventories usage and demand for lots and associated multimodal amenities. See [interactive map](#) for Park & Ride lots statewide. Marketing occurs through signage, ribbon cuttings, and promotion from transit/rideshare agencies.
- Bicycle & Pedestrian Program: VDOT plans and promotes active transportation amenities and travel (including developing maps and constructing new bike/pedestrian facilities) as well as a focus on safety/crash reductions and participation in regional Street Smart marketing campaign.
- HOV-3 and Express Lanes: VDOT and partners operate Express Lanes, which are toll free to vehicles with three or more people (HOV-3), and buses, which also provide funding opportunities for public transit and other transportation improvements benefitting the region's travelers in Northern Virginia. Marketing campaigns promote free HOV-3 travel on lanes and fast, reliable trips for transit and ridesharing, including connections to free park and rides.
- Commuter Parking Information System (CPIS): the CPIS system, a program element of the Regional Multi-Modal Mobility Program (RM3P), will entail static, historical, real-time, and predicted data to support app-based parking availability information dissemination, including at WMATA, VRE, and other P&R lots in the Northern Virginia and the metropolitan Fredericksburg areas. Marketing efforts will include promotion of third-party apps receiving and disseminating CPIS parking information to commuters.
- Dynamic Incentivization: Dynamic Incentivization, another program element of RM3P, will offer incentives to the public for changing mode, route, or departure time in ways that lessen the overall impact of congestion and incidents via an app called GoMyWayVA. The program includes a marketing component; additional outreach to employers and commuters will also occur.

VDOT planning and construction projects have various advertised meetings and public outreach initiatives throughout project development and implementation, where citizens and stakeholders are engaged and invited to provide feedback. VDOT shares project details and plans with the public via websites, online surveys, social media, news agencies, and regional partners.

## VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

[www.VRE.org](http://www.VRE.org)

### Marketing Strategy

The primary goal of our marketing strategy is to boost ridership and attract new riders who need to become more familiar with our services. To achieve this, we will capitalize on the success of Fare Free Friday. The promotion, from May 29 to September 4, was combined with a comprehensive marketing campaign.

- Fare Free Friday Promotion:
  - Continue offering Fare Free Fridays throughout the specified dates. {May 29 to September 4}
  - Encourage riders to bring friends and family for a hassle-free introduction to our services.
  - Collect and analyze data on ridership during these Fridays to measure the campaign's success.
- Digital Advertising:
  - Implement a targeted digital advertising campaign, including ads on local websites and streaming radio stations.
  - Focus on prime-time placements for maximum visibility.
  - Create engaging and informative ad content that highlights the benefits of our services.
- Social Media and Geo-Targeting:
  - Utilize paid social media ads on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and X to reach a wider audience.
  - Implement geo-targeting to promote our services to users in specific geographic areas.
  - Partner with SXM for additional advertising exposure.
- Local Partnerships:
  - Collaborate with local businesses to create partnerships that promote our services.
  - Offer special discounts or joint promotions with these partners to incentivize new riders.
  - Display promotional materials in partner establishments.
- VIP VRE Monthly Digital Newsletter:
  - Launch the first VIP VRE monthly digital newsletter to engage with current riders and inform them about service updates and exclusive offers.
  - Include exclusive content, such as rider stories, service highlights, and special promotions.
- Direct Mail Campaign:
  - Send direct mail to over 10,000 households within our service area.
  - Use eye-catching and informative materials to introduce our services.
- Data Collection and Analysis:
  - Continuously collect data on ridership, engagement with digital ads, and the success of partnerships.
  - Use this data to make informed adjustments to the marketing strategy throughout the campaign period.
  - Measure the return on investment to ensure that the allocated resources are used effectively.
- Ongoing Promotion:
  - Maintain a consistent online presence with regular social media updates, paid advertisement, marketing emails, and engaging content.

By combining the Fare Free Friday promotion with a multifaceted marketing approach that leverages digital, social, local partnerships, and direct mail, we aim to increase ridership and introduce our services to new riders. The continuous collection and analysis of data will allow us to adapt our strategy for optimal results.

## **WABA - WASHINGTON AREA BICYCLIST ASSOCIATION**

[www.waba.org](http://www.waba.org)

The Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) empowers people to ride bikes, build connections and transform places. Our vision is a just and sustainable transportation system where biking, walking, and transit are the best ways to get around.

WABA's programs from youth and adult education to grassroots community organizing, engage residents in Prince George's County, Montgomery County, Alexandria, Arlington County, Fairfax County, and Washington, DC. More than five thousand dues-paying members have helped WABA transform bicycling in the region again and again over its 50-year history.

We are currently functioning under four key strategic goals and related strategies and objectives to guide progress toward our Vision and Mission during the first half of this decade (2021-2025). Next year, WABA leadership will embark on developing new strategic goals and related strategies and objectives that will guide our work for the following five years (2026-2030). Our current goals and related strategies and objectives are as follows:

### **Goal 1: Empower People to Engage & Take Action**

- Expand WABA's role as a thought leader in the region
- Develop and grow volunteer leadership
- Deepen engagement through creativity and innovation
- Provide additional opportunities for people to shape WABA's direction
- Invest in community-led initiatives

### **Goal 2: Generate Broad Public Support for Bicycling**

- Normalize bicycling and actively promote a more inclusive bicycling community
- Serve as the stewards of bicycling education in the region
- Expand our engagement in existing coalitions
- Embrace issues aligned with our work

### **Goal 3: Build Political Power**

- Encourage supporters to run for and win elections
- Elected officials champion our issues
- Train and support volunteer advocates to plan, lead, and win campaigns

### **Goal 4: Strengthen and Sustain WABA**

- Membership and Fundraising strategy
- Make WABA a great place to work