

# FY 2024–FY 2026 TRIENNIAL TDM EVALUATION

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## Meeting #1

Dan Sheehan  
Transportation Operations Program Director

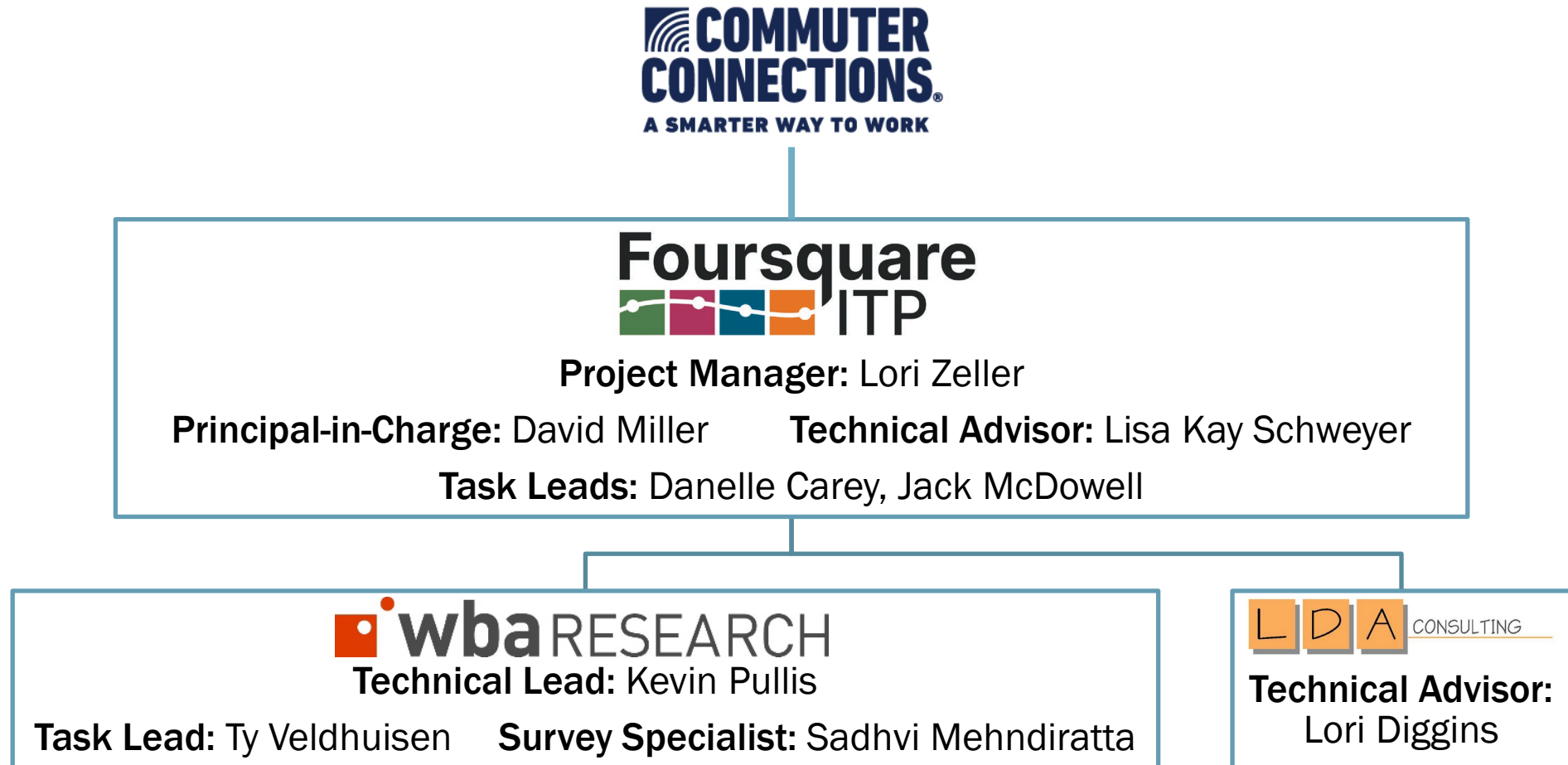
Commuter Connections TDM Evaluation Group  
January 21, 2025

# Welcome and Introductions

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- Please share your:
  - Name
  - Pronouns (optional)
  - Organization
  - Title
- We'll start in the room, then move to the virtual attendees in order of DC, MD, VA

# Project Team Leadership



# Project Overview

# Project Overview

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- **Commuter Connections' programming** to be evaluated during the triennial review:
  - Maryland Telework Assistance
  - Guaranteed Ride Home
  - Employer Outreach
  - Mass Marketing
  - Commuter Program Operations
- **Objective of the evaluation:** Provide timely and meaningful information on the performance of each program element to decision-makers and other groups.

# Performance Measures

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The evaluation reports the **reductions** in:

- Vehicle trips (VT)
- Vehicle miles traveled (VMT)
- Tons of vehicle pollutants (Nitrogen Oxides (NOx), Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC), and Carbon Dioxide (CO2))

...resulting from implementation of each TDM program element and compares the **impacts** against the **goals** established for each program element.

# FY 2025 Evaluation Activities

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Evaluation  
Framework

Vanpool Driver  
Survey

Guaranteed  
Ride Home  
Applicant Survey

2025 State of  
the Commute  
Survey

Will continue into and  
conclude in FY 2026

# FY 2025 TDM Evaluation Work Group Touchpoints

Task	Touchpoint	Timeframe
<b>Evaluation Framework</b>	Initial input	Today (January 21) through January 31
	Review draft Evaluation Framework	Surrounding February 18 work group meeting
	Receive finalized Evaluation Framework	Early to mid April
<b>State of the Commute Survey Implementation</b>	Review short-form draft questionnaire	Today (January 21) through January 31
	Receive finalized questionnaire	Surrounding February 18 work group meeting
	Receive update on first wave of survey respondent counts; review report outline	Surrounding May 20 work group meeting
<i>Details of Guaranteed Ride Home Survey Implementation and Vanpool Driver Survey touchpoints to be shared at February 18 work group meeting</i>		



# Evaluation Framework

FY 2024–FY 2026 Commuter Connections Evaluation

# Introduction to the Evaluation Framework

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- Includes priorities, goals, and performance metrics, and serves as the overarching work plan for the triennial evaluation of Commuter Connections' programs.
- The framework is updated every three years to align with current data needs.
- **Purpose of our agenda item today:**
  - Review outline of Evaluation Framework
  - Review proposed updates to the Evaluation Framework
  - Solicit work group feedback on the proposed updates

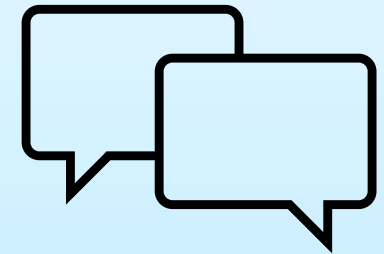
# Previous Evaluation Framework – Outline

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- Overview
- Evaluation Objectives and Issues
- Performance Measures
- Evaluation of Individual TDM Program Elements
- Description of Data Sources
- Basic Method for Calculating Program Impacts
- Reporting and Communication of Evaluation Results
- Evaluation Schedule and Responsibilities

# New Section: “Context of Evaluation”

- **Purpose:** Explains the current context for commute travel and how potential recent changes may affect mode choice and evaluation of Commuter Connections’ programs.
  - E.g., GRH usage was stable when many people commuted 5x/wk. Now that hybrid schedules are more prevalent, GRH registrations have decreased dramatically.
- New section would provide an overview for themes such as:
  - Pandemic and post-pandemic influence on travel behavior; and trend analysis context for three years ago (pandemic) vs. six or more years ago (pre-pandemic).
  - Employer decisions influence on travel behavior (e.g., moving jobs, relocating employees, and commercial vacancies).



**Are there other themes that are important to mention regarding the context of commute travel in the region?**

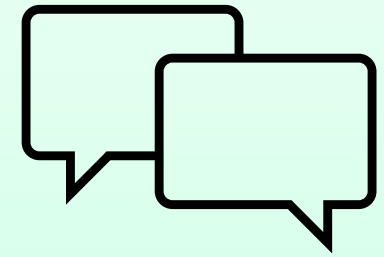
# Evaluation Objectives and Issues – Emphasis Areas for FY 2024–FY 2026

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- Explore post-pandemic travel behavior and how Commuter Connections programs can address new travel trends
- Position Commuter Connections to assist with regional transportation initiatives and issues
- Expand understanding of revamped programs in commute travel decision-making
- Quantify Commuter Connections' contribution to societal benefits

# Evaluation Objectives and Issues – Adding Equity

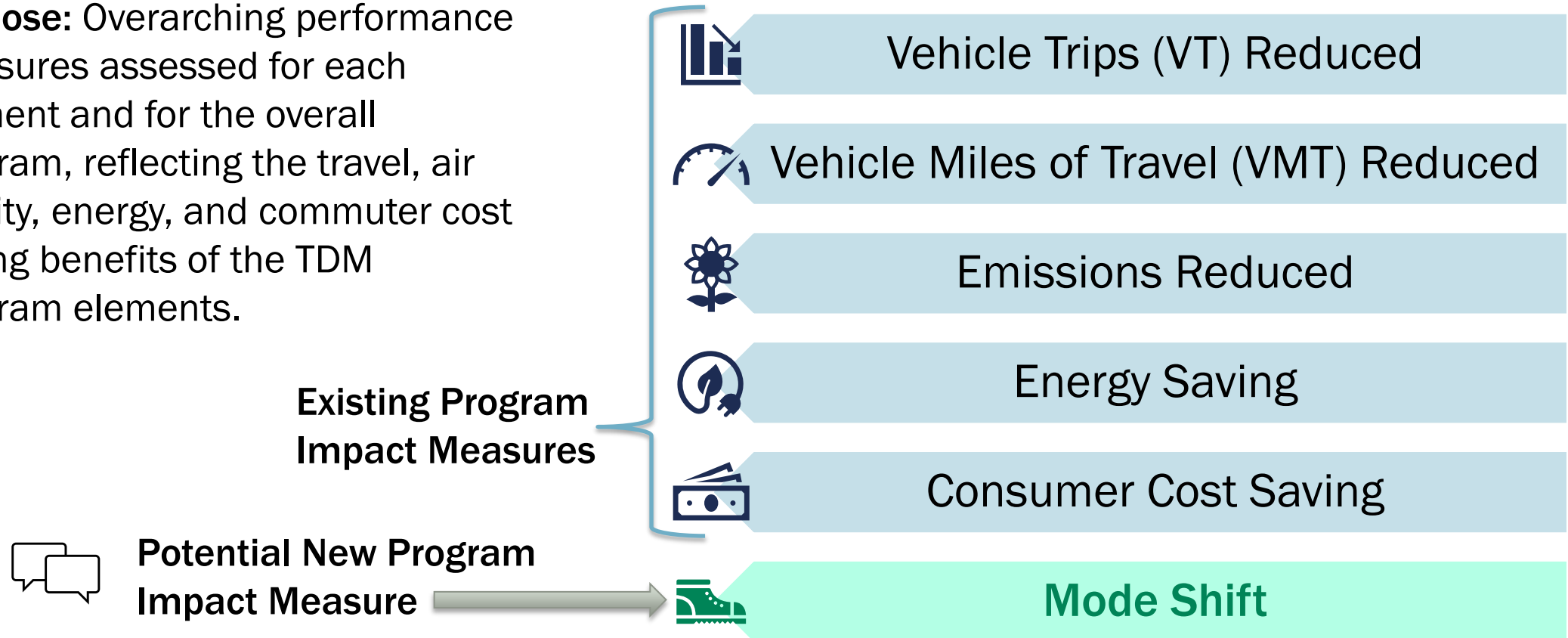
- **Recommendation:** Add new emphasis on the importance of delivering commuter services equitably; and evaluating equity of access to commuter services and TDM outcomes for Equity Emphasis Areas (EEAs).
- **Guiding questions:**
  - Is Commuter Connections limiting TDM outreach too narrowly targeted to “traditional 9-5” commuters?
  - Could and should Commuter Connections look for ways to expand the reach of the programs?
  - Has commute travel timing changed, shifting away from peak periods because of more flexible work arrangements and schedules?



**How do you see equity playing a role in the delivery of Commuter Connections programs and their evaluation?**

# Performance Measures – Program Impacts

**Purpose:** Overarching performance measures assessed for each element and for the overall program, reflecting the travel, air quality, energy, and commuter cost saving benefits of the TDM program elements.



# Updates to Data Gathering and Reporting

New “Micro Surveys”	State of the Commute Survey Data Dashboard	Commuter Connections Program “Vitals” Dashboard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For people who recently participated in a Commuter Connections program (like Guaranteed Ride Home)</li><li>• Short, pulse-type survey (1-2 minutes max.) to gather customer experience info</li><li>• Will provide more frequent touchpoints with participants</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enable COG staff, regional partners, other TDM program staff, and the public to explore the SOC data</li><li>• Easy-to-use interface</li><li>• Will allow for detailed data filtering and visualizations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Display regular updates of Commuter Connection “vitals”, such as how many people are enrolled in various programs or used a service in a given month</li><li>• Unrelated to survey efforts</li></ul>

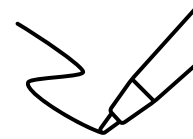


# Next Steps

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The work group will have until January 31 to provide additional input as we continue developing the draft Evaluation Framework.

Please email [docomments@mwcog.org](mailto:docomments@mwcog.org) with any questions or feedback.



At the February 18 work group meeting, the work group will be presented with the draft Evaluation Framework and can provide feedback at that time or during a subsequent comment period.

# 2025 State of the Commute

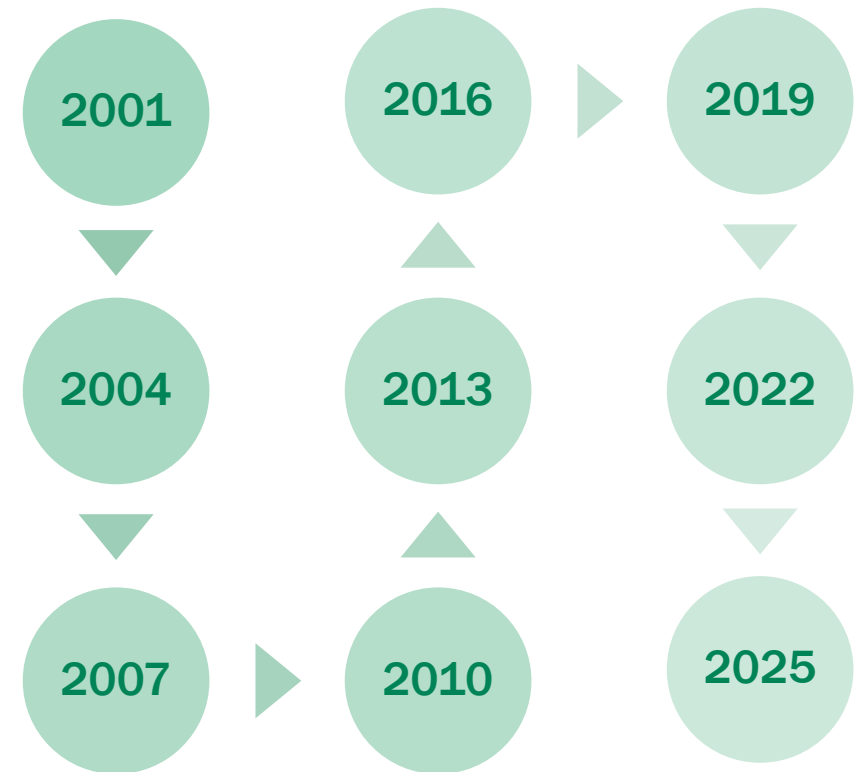
Survey Implementation

# Introduction to the State of the Commute Survey

**Survey objective** is to collect data for multiple purposes:

- Detail commute patterns for use by COG and local partners
- Evaluate TDM program elements for regional commuters (e.g., mass marketing)
- Evaluate awareness and use of Commuter Connections and other regional/local TDM services
- New/proposed regional infrastructure or commute service initiatives

**This will be the ninth triennial survey!**



# Purpose of Today's Agenda Item

Review and discuss:

- **Focus themes** for the 2025 State of the Commute (SOC) survey
- Data collection and evaluation **methods**
- Survey implementation **timeline**
- Proposed updates for the 2025 survey (via the **draft short-form questionnaire**)



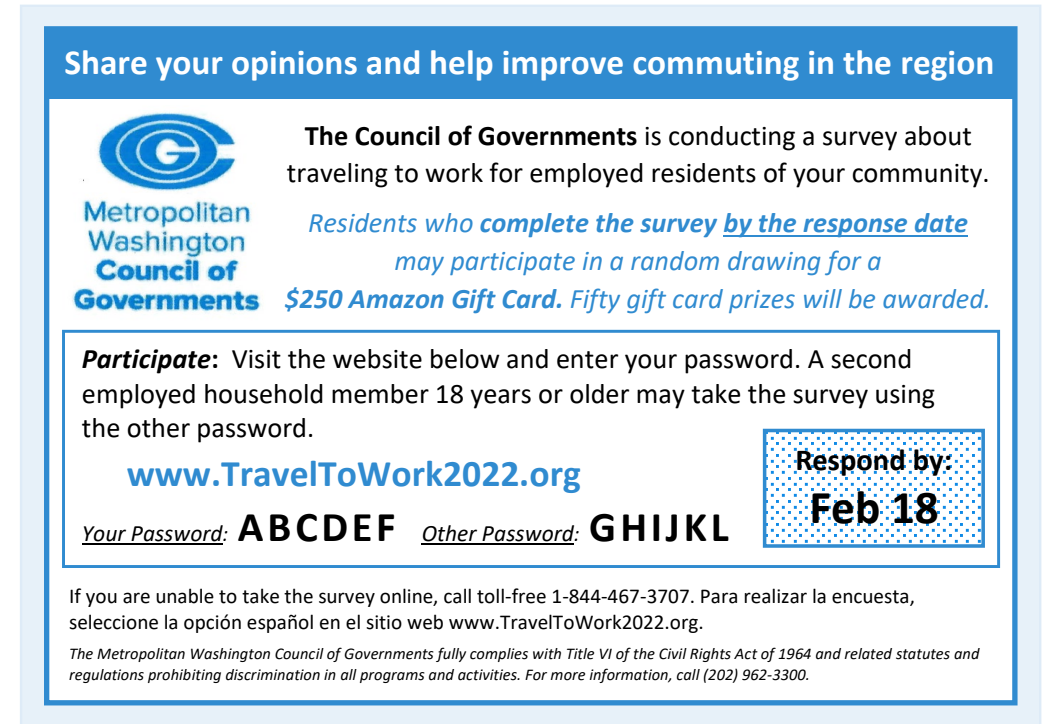
# SOC Method – Reaching Respondents

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- Employed adult residents of 11-jurisdiction COG region
- Drawn from randomized address-based sample (ABS)
- Postcards will be sent to 450,000 addresses (estimating regional response of ~1.8% varying by jurisdiction) in two waves, with the second wave focused on increasing responses from areas with low response and target demographic groups
- Target of ~8,000 respondents (95% +/- 1.1%)
  - Minimum 500 per jurisdiction
  - Oversample residents of Urban Core and larger jurisdictions
  - Samples sufficient for robust regional and sub-area analysis
  - Targets are similar to those used in 2022

# SOC Method – Taking the Survey

- Respondents will receive a postcard in the mail with a URL and two passcodes (the survey can be taken by two employed adults in the same household)
- To increase response rate, postcard address block will name the county, “e.g., “Loudoun County Resident”
- Respondents complete the survey on the website
- Financial incentive drawing for respondents
- Spanish language option available



2022 SOC Postcard Example

# Overview of Questionnaire Topics

## Commute patterns and trends

Current commute patterns (mode, distance, duration), telework frequency, and characteristics of use of alternative modes

Comparison from 2022 to today (comparing to time of last SOC and from “during pandemic” to “post pandemic”)

## Infrastructure use and commute satisfaction

Awareness of and use of transit, toll/express lanes, park and ride

Factors influencing changes in commute; ask previous users of transit/pooling why they stopped

## Commute info and assistance

Mass marketing awareness and influence (ad recall, travel changes after ad exposure)

Awareness of Commuter Connections, Guaranteed Ride Home, other regional and local services

Employer commute assistance (awareness, benefits)

## Demographics

Home and work locations; employment details (occupation, employer size); household size and vehicles available; race/ethnicity; gender; income



# Notable Changes from 2022 SOC to 2025 SOC

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- **Expanded questions to explore changing telework patterns and impacts**
  - Presence of “return-to-office” policies and impact on commute and mode use
  - Part-day work from home (“coffee badging”)
- **Focus on commuter pattern changes and emerging commute issues/opportunities**
  - Commute changes since 2022 (e.g., more/less telework, mode or job changes)
  - Work departure time, frequency of leaving work at different times
  - Stops along commute trip and trips during workday for shopping/personal errands
- **Updated to include new commute assistance services options**
  - Added parking cash-out and personal bike benefits to list of employer benefits
  - Updated list of travel/trip information apps available



# 2025 SOC Milestones

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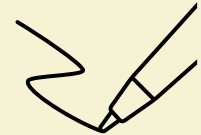
- **Survey preparation through March 2025** (includes questionnaire, sample plan, postcard design, mailing prep)
- **Data collection / survey in the field from April-June 2025**
  - Wave 1 mailing in early April > check Wave 1 response rates and define Wave 2 sample in mid-late April > Wave 2 mailing in early May
  - Survey closes mid-June
- **Analysis and reporting from July 2025-January 2026**
  - Data cleaning and analysis from July-September
  - Draft report to COG staff in mid-September
  - Present to Commuter Connections Subcommittee in October
  - Finalize report in January 2026

# Review of Short-Form SOC Questionnaire

We will now walk through the short-form SOC questionnaire together, with particular focus on the new questions or other notable changes.



The work group will have until January 31 to provide feedback or ask follow-up questions. Email [docomments@mwkog.org](mailto:docomments@mwkog.org) with questions or feedback.



As we review, please keep these questions in mind:

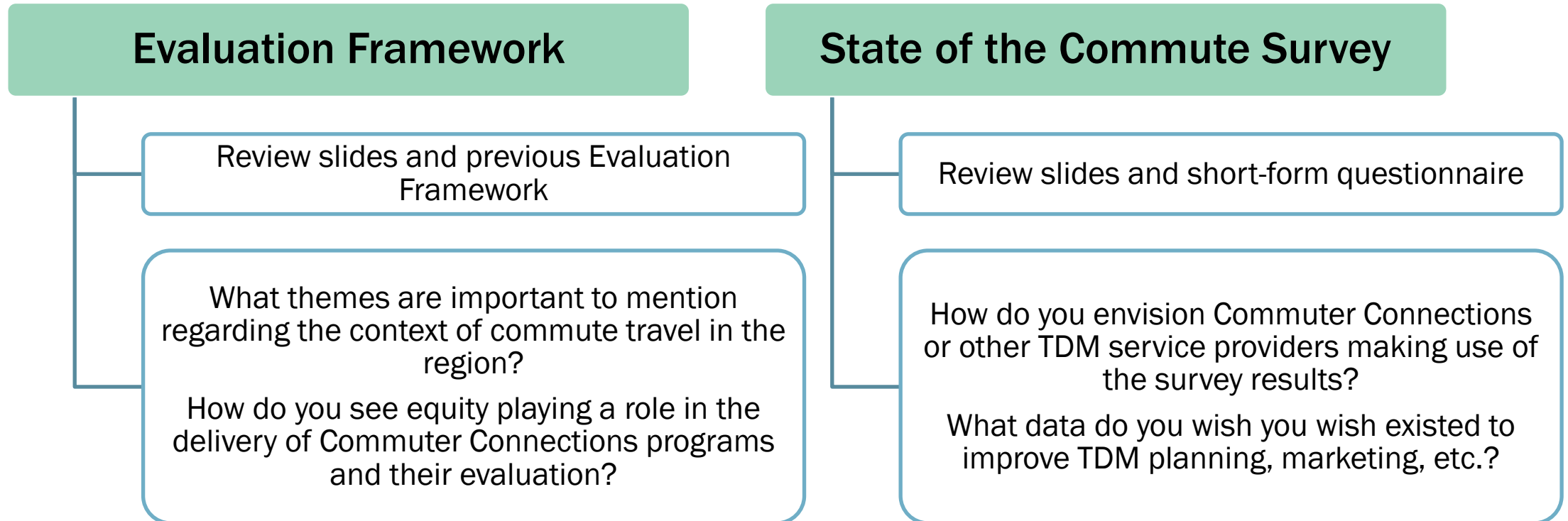
- How do you envision Commuter Connections or other TDM service providers making use of the survey results?
- What data do you wish you wish existed to improve TDM planning, marketing, etc.?



# Wrap-up and Next Steps

# Recap of Opportunities to Provide Input

January 31 deadline to email [docomments@mwkog.org](mailto:docomments@mwkog.org)



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The next meeting is scheduled for February 18, 2025, 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

# Other Questions or Comments?

# Thank you!

Questions?

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