

**20
24** EMPLOYER
RECOGNITION
AWARDS

THE STARS AMONG US

DC, MD, AND VA EMPLOYERS TAKE CENTER STAGE
FOR INNOVATION AND EXCELLENCE



Christina Henderson
Councilmember At-Large
District of Columbia

As area workers continue to transition back to the physical workplace, the Commuter Connections Employer Services team is providing guidance and support to employers to bridge the hybrid worker landscape. Commuters are being encouraged and incentivized to use the abundance of multi-modal travel methods available within the region in lieu of driving alone.

The employers we are honoring today have implemented innovative and successful commuter and telework programs. We hope that through their example, other organizations will embrace similar initiatives, creating more opportunities to help maximize the efficiencies of shared commutes and telework.

On behalf of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board, I wish to congratulate the winners of the 2024 Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards and extend thanks for their continued commitment to reducing traffic congestion and improving the region's air quality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christina Henderson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Christina Henderson
Chair, National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board



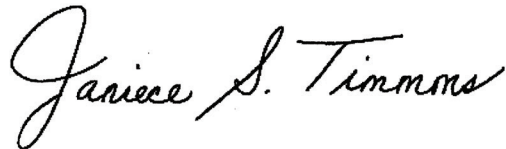
Janiece S. Timmons
Senior Business Development Account Executive
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

This year marks the 50th anniversary of Commuter Connections serving the region's commuting needs. For more than half of those years, the organization has been providing invaluable support to employers through its Employer Outreach Program. The outreach teams collaborate with employers to help them establish and expand comprehensive commuter benefits and telework programs. These investments help employers attract and retain the most talented and dedicated workforce.

The award-winning employers being recognized today have demonstrated a strong commitment to encouraging the use of public transit, ridesharing, bicycling, walking, flexible work schedules, and teleworking. These initiatives not only prioritize maintaining an optimal work/life balance for employees, but also play a crucial role in increasing mobility on our roadways and positively impact the region's air quality.

Please join me in congratulating the recipients of the 2024 Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards. Their unwavering dedication and ongoing efforts to address and improve the commuting challenges faced by their employees are truly commendable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janiece S. Timmons". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J".

Janiece S. Timmons
Chair, Commuter Connections Subcommittee

The 2024 Employer Recognition Awards

The Commuter Connections annual Employer Recognition Awards program acknowledges employers who offer outstanding commuter benefits, amenities, and tools to facilitate teleworking and the use of alternative commuting methods such as ridesharing, transit, bicycling, and walking. By reducing drive-alone travel, these methods help to improve mobility and reduce harmful vehicle emissions.

Qualified applicants were evaluated by a Selection Committee made up of industry experts and professionals from throughout the Washington, DC metropolitan area, and winners were chosen for their ability to offer measurable commuter benefits that reduce automobile fuel consumption and emissions through fewer vehicle trips and miles traveled. In addition, winners were selected for implementing policies that have improved the lives of their employees, residents, and workers within the National Capital Region. The Employer Recognition Awards Selection Committee meeting was moderated and tabulated by a third party, Arch Street Communications.

Incentives Award

An employer offering a host of commuter benefits and incentives to encourage and reward employees for using alternative means of transportation to and from work. Incentives and commuter benefits can come in many forms, including, but not limited to, transit benefits and subsidies; preferred or discounted parking for carpools and vanpools; amenities, such as showers and lockers for bicyclists and walkers; and work schedule alternatives and teleworking.

Marketing Award

An employer educating about and championing for the use of alternative transportation options by frequently promoting available commuter programs to employees in creative ways. Companies who actively promote alternative commuting options enjoy greater employee enthusiasm and higher participation rates. With knowledge of the available choices, employees are empowered to make well-informed decisions about better ways of commuting rather than driving alone.

Telework Award

An employer providing a policy framework and technology to allow employees to seamlessly work from home, or at a local telework or co-working center, one or more days per week. Offering such opportunities allows employees to dramatically reduce or eliminate the time and money spent commuting to and from work. For employers, savings may come in the form of reduced overhead such as office space costs and parking. In addition, teleworking results in better work-life balance, lower absenteeism, higher morale, and helps businesses attract and retain qualified employees.

Employer Services Outreach Team Achievement Award

An Employer Services Outreach Team that has most successfully met its goal of partnering with employers to develop and expand commute benefit offerings.

Employer Services Organization Achievement Award

An organization that has instituted a program or enhanced an existing program that makes it easier for employers to introduce or expand commuter benefits or telework in the workplace.



Incentives Award
Horizon/McDonald's
Montgomery County, MD
North Bethesda



Horizon is an owner-operated management company with nine McDonald's franchise restaurants and 325 employees. Five restaurants are located in Montgomery County, Maryland, three in Washington, DC, and one in Northern Virginia. Horizon developed a transit-aligned work schedule (TAWS) system which allows store managers to accommodate for employees' public transportation schedules when planning and assigning work hours.

Employees receive a monthly transit subsidy of up to \$50 (\$25 for part-time employees), administered through the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's (Metro) SmartBenefits system. Most employees (63%) take advantage of the transit benefits.

In 2023, Horizon experienced a significantly below-average turnover rate for its industry and for that of other McDonald's franchises. Horizon achieved recognition as a leader in sustainability programs, including being the first McDonald's franchise in the country to achieve Level One certification by the Green Restaurant Association. The company was also recognized by Green Business Certification Inc.

Horizon spent \$51,600 in 2023 on employee transit subsidies. In 2023, Horizon employees reduced 1,071,000 annual vehicle miles and saved 48,682 gallons of gas.



Comstock is a leading asset manager, developer, and operator of mixed-use and transit-oriented properties in the Washington, DC region. They have become one of the area's premier real estate service companies by creating extraordinary places, delivering exceptional experiences, and generating excellent results for all stakeholders.

Comstock recognizes the importance of commuter benefits to help attract and retain top talent by demonstrating an investment in employee well-being. To entice employees to try more eco-friendly commuting options instead of driving alone to work, Comstock partnered with the Dulles Area Transportation Association and promoted their Plu\$50 program which offers employees a free \$50 SmarTrip® card to try transit and sign up for Comstock's Commuter benefits pre-tax program. Employees who then wish to start using transit more regularly are given a \$100 match towards the cost of transit each month. The company also supports bike infrastructure, specifically at their Reston Station worksite, which has bike racks, lockers, and shower facilities.

Through various promotional tactics, such as its website and internal newsletters and flyers, Comstock spreads awareness to employees about green commuting. Comstock also leverages employee events to promote its commuter benefits, such as during its annual Health and Wellness Fair. The commuter program is also emphasized during recruitment and onboarding of new employees.

In 2023, Comstock estimated that employees saved \$24,000 in gas and reduced 155,700 miles of commuting.

COMSTOCK



Marketing Award
Comstock Companies
Fairfax County
Reston, VA

Groundswell TTRIP Program

Transit & Telework Resources, Impactful Practices



groundswell



GROUNDSWELL EMPLOYEES HELPED SAVE

49,918 GALLONS OF GAS

24,232 TRIPS TO THE OFFICE

27,730 HOURS OF COMMUTING

1,108,183 MILES OF COMMUTING

397 METRIC TONS OF CO²

49,591 TREES TO OFFSET CO²

DATA BASED ON ACTUAL 2023 EMPLOYEE DATA

Telework Award
Groundswell
Fairfax County
McLean, VA



Groundswell is a technology company with more than 400 employees that helps federal agencies streamline and modernize their digital processes efficiently and effectively through software. In 2022, Groundswell grew its business exponentially, between acquiring three companies and being awarded significant contracts supporting federal agencies, onboarding over 150 new hires within a short period of time. The company's Transit & Telework Resources Impactful Practices (TTRIP) program was created to support the work-life balance needs and overall well-being of its employees.

TTRIP is embraced by both existing and new employees and includes telework (fully remote and hybrid), flexible work schedules, pre-tax transit benefits, wellness benefits, and on-site amenities. All employees participate in one or more of the benefits offered by Groundswell.

Employees are equipped with a monitor, keyboard, mouse, and USB-C/HDMI adapter for teleworking. For hybrid employees, the office offers a free state-of-the-art gym, café, bike racks, showers, lockers, reserved parking spots for carpools and vanpools, and EV Charging stations. A team was put in place to proactively help build and support morale and camaraderie, strengthen team cohesion, and foster interdepartmental relationship building across the entire Groundswell population – with the 60 percent of Groundswell's employees who work remotely and the 40 percent of those working hybrid in mind.

Groundswell was awarded Monster.com's "Top Workplaces for Remote Workers" award, which spans 65 regional markets and celebrates people-first organizations with 150 or more employees cultivating exceptional remote working environments. The award is based solely on the feedback of Groundswell employees. In 2023, the company estimated that employees saved \$742,000 in auto expenses, including a reduction of 49,918 gallons of gas. Employees also reduced 1,108,183 miles and avoided 27,730 hours of commuting. Overall, employees made a positive impact on the environment by eliminating 397 tons of CO₂. The Groundswell corporation saved more than \$243,000 in parking costs and is proud of the positive impact the company and its employees are having on the planet.



The Employer Services Outreach Team Achievement Award is given to the Commuter Connections employer outreach team that has most successfully met its goal of partnering with employers to develop and expand commute benefit offerings. There are a total of 10 employer services teams and 28 representatives in the Washington, DC metropolitan region that cultivate and support employer-based transportation programs.

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board's (TPB) Commuter Connections program is pleased to honor Montgomery County Commuter Services with the 2024 Employer Services Outreach Team Achievement Award. During the past year with nine representatives, a total of 11,428 contacts were made with employers in Montgomery County, and 172 meetings were held.

Selection was based on information provided by the jurisdictions as part of their required monthly reporting to COG/TPB, and through ongoing database verifications. Montgomery County Commuter Services is in the Office of Transportation Policy and Planning of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation, and appreciates the support of its contractors for employer outreach and related efforts. They include Bethesda Transportation Solutions, North Bethesda Transportation Center, Fovndry by Van Eperen, Sharp & Company (dba Sensis), Clark Concepts, and McAndrew Company.





Employer Services Outreach Team Achievement Award
Montgomery County Commuter Services
Rockville, MD



Employer Services Organization Achievement Award
District Department of Transportation
Washington, DC

The District Department of Transportation's (DDOT) goDCgo program encourages the use of sustainable transportation. goDCgo's Employer Services team provides complimentary consultation to businesses interested in starting or enhancing their commuter benefits programs, making it easier for employees to choose more sustainable, affordable, and healthier ways to get to work.

To improve air quality and traffic congestion, the Transportation Benefits Equity Amendment Act, known commonly as the DC Parking Cashout Law, was signed into law in April 2020. Employers unintentionally encourage driving alone to the workplace when they offer free, subsidized, or reimbursed parking to employees. The DC Parking Cashout Law provides equity in employee benefits regardless of commute mode, encourages the use of sustainable transportation, and dissuades driving alone to work.

A parking cashout is a benefit where an employer offers employees monetary compensation and sustainable transportation benefits in exchange for giving up their parking space. The law covers employers with 20 or more employees (part-time or full-time) who work in the District of Columbia for at least 50 percent of their work time. Such employers are required to report to DDOT every two years on how they are complying or how they qualify for an exemption.

goDCgo Employer Services offers free assistance with Parking Cashout compliance, including helping employers determine the most appropriate compliance option, managing employee commute surveys, and providing education on the law. In 2023, goDCgo updated its *"DC Parking Cashout Law, A Guide for Employers,"* a comprehensive toolkit which explains the new law and makes compliance and reporting easier to understand. goDCgo also partners with the Society for Human Resource Management's DC Chapter and the District Department of Employment Services to hold webinars to educate employers.

2024 Honorable Mention

Commuter Connections would like to acknowledge the following employers with honorable mention:

Access Intelligence - Rockville, MD
American Society of Health-System Pharmacists - Bethesda, MD
Aurinia Pharmaceuticals - Rockville, MD
Eastern Research Group - Arlington/Chantilly, VA
Family & Nursing Care - Silver Spring, MD
Freddie Mac - McLean, VA
GEICO - Chevy Chase, MD
Geller Law Group - Fairfax, VA
H-B Woodlawn Public School - Arlington, VA
Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society - Silver Spring, MD
MITRE - McLean, VA
National Geospatial Intelligence Agency - Springfield, VA
Washington Eye Physicians & Surgeons - Chevy Chase, MD
White Oak Community Recreation Center - Silver Spring, MD

2024 Selection Committee

Commuter Connections would like to acknowledge the following members for volunteering as part of the 2024 Employer Recognition Awards Selection Committee:

Josh Cantor, George Mason University
Elbert Davis, Abt Global
Jordan Ferbish, Enterprise Mobility
Daniel Flores, Greater Washington Board of Trade
Heidi Mitter, Virginia Department of Transportation
Antoinette Rucker, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
James Walkinshaw, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors*

*Committee Chairperson

2024 Workgroup

Commuter Connections would like to acknowledge the following members for volunteering as part of the 2024 Employer Recognition Awards Workgroup:

Christian Bacon, Prince George's County
Bobbi Greenberg, Arlington County
Antoinette Rucker, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Washington, DC metropolitan region. Working with local, state, regional, and federal partners, the TPB coordinates future plans, provides data and analysis to decision makers, and coordinates regional programs to advance safety, land-use coordination, and more. The TPB is housed at and staffed by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG).

Commuter Connections

Commuter Connections is a regional network of transportation organizations coordinated through the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board. Commuter Connections offers free commuter services to employers and employees in the Washington, DC metropolitan region. Services and programs include ridematching for carpools and vanpools; coordination of regional events (Bike to Work Day and Car Free Day); administration of the Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program (Washington and Baltimore regions); and a host of other incentive programs. Through its Employer Outreach Representatives, Commuter Connections assists employers with commuter benefit programs, including telework and alternative work schedules. Commuter Connections is funded by the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

How to Get Involved

Does your company provide an outstanding commuter or telework program? If so, apply for the 2025 Commuter Connections Employer Awards. For more information about free employer services and assistance available through Commuter Connections, visit www.commuterconnections.org or call 800.745.7433, (TDD) 202.962.3213.

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is the hub for regional partnership where each month more than 1,500 officials and experts convene to make connections, share information, and develop solutions to the region's major challenges. Together they help advance COG's Region Forward vision for a more prosperous, accessible, livable, equitable, and sustainable future.

Founded in 1957, COG is an independent, nonprofit association with a membership of 300 elected officials from 24 local governments, the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, and U.S. Congress.

COG is supported by financial contributions from its member governments, federal and state grants and contracts, and donations from foundations and the private sector. The Board of Directors is COG's governing body and is responsible for its overall policies. In addition, a wide network of policy, technical, and advisory committees, partnerships, and programs advance COG's regional work. Elected leaders, transportation planners, environmental experts, police chiefs, housing directors, and more find tremendous value in working together at COG. A staff of more than 130 subject matter experts and technical professionals support COG's members.

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