

ONGOING CHALLENGES

Rapid technological changes challenge transportation agencies to keep up – today’s cutting-edge technology is tomorrow’s outdated technology. The public’s travel patterns change quickly, and transportation agencies must always be ready to adjust. TPB will help regional transportation agencies face these challenges by continually facilitating information exchange and collaboration.

THE POLICY CONTEXT

Aspirational Initiatives

Technology, management and operations will be key components of the BRT and regional express travel network initiatives. Real-time systems monitoring and “smart” infrastructure enable the safety and travel efficiencies that are key objectives of these initiatives.

Planning Factors

- Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users.
- Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users.

RTPP Goals

- Maximize operational effectiveness and safety of the transportation system.

Transportation Demand Management

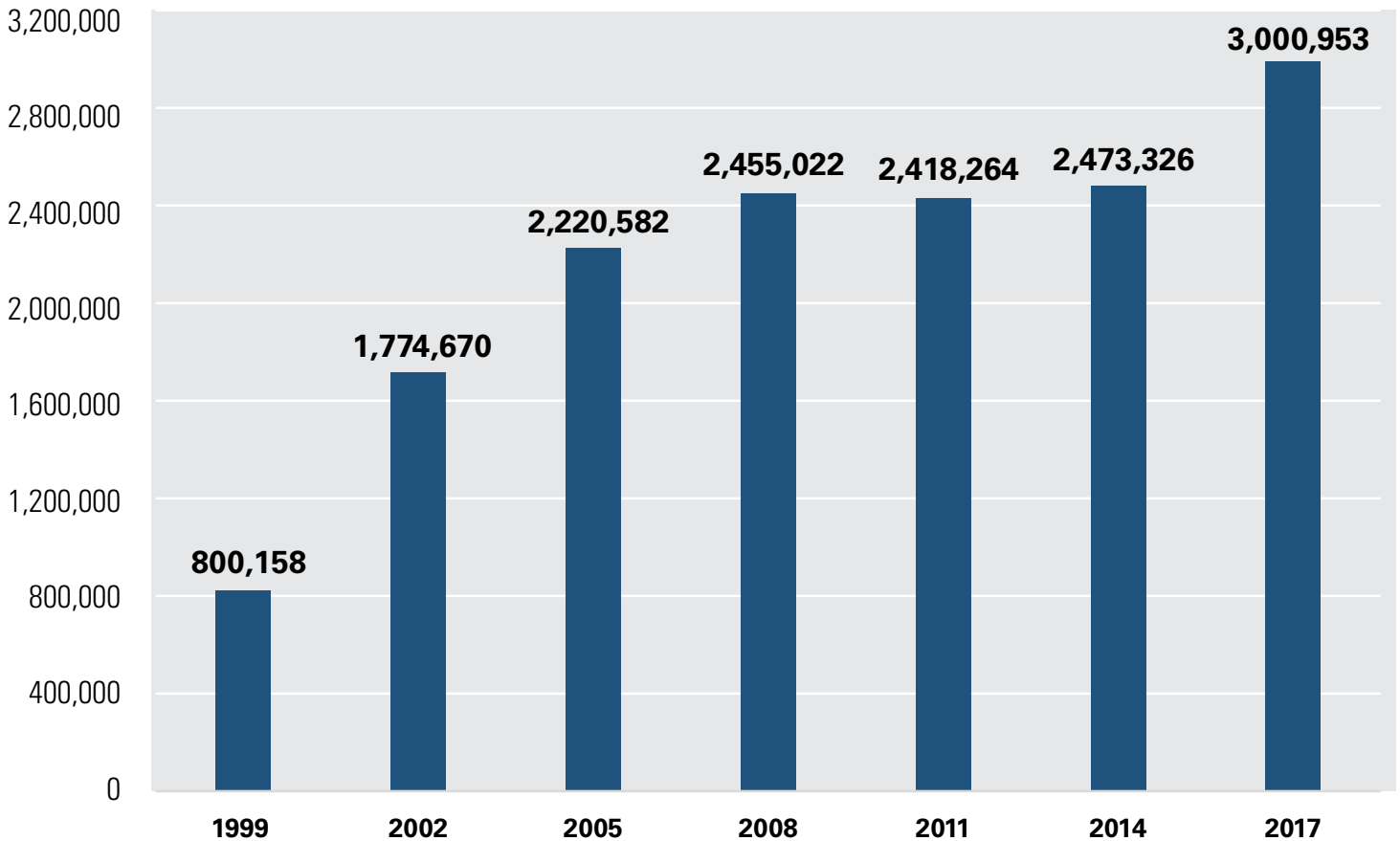
INTRODUCTION

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is 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 in the Washington metropolitan region to reduce traffic congestion and emissions caused by single occupant vehicles (SOVs). The outreach mission is to create 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.

TPB’S ROLE

Commuter Connections is the major demand management component of the TPB’s congestion management process and it helps support regional air quality goals. Its products and services are provided to member agencies through central program administration, implementation, and monitoring 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 are coordinated regionally through subcommittees and ad-hoc groups, which meet both regularly and as needed. 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 provides input to program services. More information about Commuter Connections can be found at www.commuterconnections.org.



Figure 7.6 Daily Vehicle Mile Travels Reduced in the Region by the Commuter Connections Program (1999-2017)

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 travelled. Fewer people choosing to drive alone in the future will make the region's air cleaner and help reduce congestion on the roads.

ONGOING CHALLENGES

TDM faces many challenges in influencing commuters to choose other ways to get to work. Commuters may not understand the value of carpools or vanpools because they may have trouble quantifying how much time they spend commuting. Employer policies may reduce access to telework options and may encourage driving by offering free parking. In addition, low gas prices may encourage more people to continue to drive alone.

THE POLICY CONTEXT

Aspirational Initiatives

Transportation demand management is the basis for the telework and other commute options initiatives. Commuter Connections promotes and encourages employer-based parking cash-out, transit/vanpool benefits, teleworking, and flexible work schedules.

Planning Factors

- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve the quality of life.

RTPP Goals

- Provide a comprehensive range of transportation options.