

# COMMUTING FRONT RUNNERS

20  
23 | EMPLOYER  
RECOGNITION  
AWARDS

JUNE 30, 2023



**Reuben B. Collins II, Esq**  
**President**  
**Charles County Board of Commissioners**



With the recent health pandemic now behind us, life has returned to normal in most aspects within the National Capital Region; in other ways, it has vastly changed how we live and work going forward. While Commuter Connections and its regional network partners continue to support employers by establishing and formalizing telework policies, it is also assisting area workers transition back to commuting to the physical workplace, on a full-time or hybrid schedule.

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 2023 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 'RBC', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Reuben B. Collins II, Esq  
Chair, National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

For more than 25 years, Commuter Connections has been acknowledging distinguished companies in the Washington, DC metropolitan region through its Employer Recognition Awards program. These award-winning employers offer robust commuter programs to encourage ridesharing, bicycling, walking, public transit, and teleworking. Such actions help to maintain optimal work/life balance, increase mobility on our roadways, and improve the region's air quality.

Commuter Connections is a regional network of transportation professionals dedicated to helping employers set up and expand comprehensive commuter benefits and telework programs. These initiatives provide for a greener environment and help employers attract and retain the best and brightest workforce.

Please join me in congratulating the recipients of the 2023 Employer Recognition Awards, who continuously strive to meet and improve the commuting challenges of their employees. 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.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy Galen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judy Galen  
Chair, Commuter Connections Subcommittee



**Judy Galen**  
**Employer Outreach Specialist**  
**Loudoun County Commuter Services**

### **The 2023 Employer Recognition Awards**

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 vehicle trips and miles traveled, 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 and those 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 productivity, and helps businesses attract and retain qualified employees.

### **Employer Services Sales Team Achievement Award**

The Commuter Connections Employer Services Sales 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 in the workplace.



Incentives Award  
**George Mason University**  
**Arlington, Fairfax, and Manassas, VA**





George Mason University has three campuses and numerous other sites across Northern Virginia including the Science and Technology Campus located in Manassas, Virginia; the Fairfax Campus; and the Mason Square Campus in Arlington. Since last winning an Employer Recognition Award from Commuter Connections in 2006, Mason has implemented a robust bicycle commuting initiative, developed online tools to connect employees and students to transit and shared ride options, and created a comprehensive work environment for teleworking.

There are an estimated 822 employees across the university who use alternative transportation methods to and from campus. There are some 1,764 teleworkers plus an additional 1,467 instructional faculty who aren't required to submit telework agreements but many of whom informally telework based on class schedules. Mason offers five free shuttle routes on weekdays and three that operate on weekends, one of which connects with Prince William County's OmniRide bus system and another to the Vienna Metrorail Station for transportation to surrounding areas. In addition, all shuttles are front-mounted with bike racks and provide free wi-fi. Mason offers preferred parking for carpools and vanpools, rebates for formal carpools, up to a \$300 monthly pre-tax transit/vanpool benefit based upon actual commute cost, flex-time and compressed work weeks, as well as bike racks and showers.

The Bike Commuter Choice Program offers four tiers of financial support based on each faculty or staff member's frequency of commuting by bicycle. They also receive complimentary parking permits and a distance bonus based on how frequently and how far they ride. Students, faculty, and staff receive a free bike lock, bike safety information, and bicycling-related giveaways for registering their bike. As part of the bike registration program, bicyclists who do not own a parking permit receive two free bike parking passes per semester. Students also receive a heavily discounted annual membership to Capital Bikeshare for just \$25. Information is made available about bicycling resources, including maps which indicate bike rack locations around campus.

The University has invested in online resources to encourage employees to explore alternative forms of transportation and find ways to commute together. Mason's various commuter incentive programs have led to an estimated reduction of employee vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by 9,876,600 and 448,900 gallons of gas.



The Federal Home Loan Mortgage Company, also known as Freddie Mac, helps to ensure a reliable, affordable supply of mortgage funds across the U.S. by buying loans from approved lenders who can then keep capital flowing into the housing market. Freddie Mac employs more than 5,800 workers in the Washington metropolitan area.

Since 2015, its Commuter Benefits Program has sought to reduce vehicular congestion in the McLean-Tysons area and around the Freddie Mac campus to improve the commuter experience and employee morale. Employees are offered a 50% transit/vanpool subsidy, up to \$300 per month. In addition, a direct shuttle service is offered to and from the McLean Metro station, preferred parking is offered to vanpools; and bike racks, showers, and lockers are available for bicyclists.

Freddie Mac uses a range of internal communications platforms to promote its various benefits to employees. Some of the marketing tactics include messages in a daily employee newsletter, in-person presentations, advertisements on digital signage across the campus, and easy-to-access content on the company's intranet. Freddie Mac also promotes apps that help employees make decisions about commuting alternatives, and which offer live-tracking of their shuttle service.

Freddie Mac needs less parking due to the combination of its hybrid work environment and commuter subsidy. In 2022, the various commuter and telework programs saved nearly 250,000 vehicle miles traveled (VMT).





Marketing Award  
**Federal Home Loan Mortgage Company**  
**McLean, VA**



Telework Award  
**Abt Associates**  
**Rockville, MD**



Abt Associates is a global consulting and research firm employing over 530 individuals in the Washington, DC metropolitan region. Abt's mission is to improve the quality of life and economic well-being of people worldwide. The company partners with clients and communities to advance equity and innovation, from creating scalable digital solutions and combatting infectious disease, to mitigating climate change and evaluating programs for measurable social impact.

Abt lives its mission internally by incorporating social and environmental responsibility into how it operates, committing both to decarbonization and practices that ensure employees thrive. Abt's remote work policy is a critical element of this approach.

Since last winning the Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Incentives Award in 2020, Abt has embraced a culture of seeing work as something you do, not a place you go, reassessing its remote work policy to include both hybrid and fully remote telework options for staff. As a result, 60% of DC metropolitan staff elected to work fully remote schedules (five days per week), with the remaining 40% electing hybrid schedules (three to four remote days per week) or primary on-site (up to two remote days per week).

Abt staff have reported a greater sense of work-life balance through choosing their working locations, as well as support through option-specific benefits offered, such as monthly public transit subsidies for staff who commute on-site, and home technology and ergonomics stipends for hybrid and fully remote employees.

In 2021, Abt enhanced its virtual private network, digital collaboration tools, and file storage capabilities to improve and ease remote collaboration for all staff, regardless of work location. Abt also offers two-week flextime work schedules and compressed work weeks for additional support and employee well-being.

Abt's remote work policy has led to the reduction of 1,720,330 vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and saves nearly 78,200 gallons of gasoline annually.



The Employer Services Sales Team Achievement Award is given to the Commuter Connections Employer Services sales 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 sales teams, and 32 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 2023 Employer Services Sales Team Achievement Award. During the past year with six sales representatives, more than 13,300 contacts were made with employers in Montgomery County, and more than 200 meetings were held.

Selection of the 2023 Employer Services Sales Team Achievement Award recipient was based on information provided by the sales teams 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 of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation, and appreciates the support of its contractors with outreach and related efforts, including Bethesda Transportation Solutions, North Bethesda Transportation Center, Fovndry by Van Eperen, Sharp & Company, and McAndrew Company.







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



Employer Services Organization Achievement Award  
**Reston Town Center Association**  
**Reston, VA**





Located within the Dulles Corridor, Reston Town Center is a transit-oriented development governed by the Reston Town Center Association, a group that provides services to benefit those who work, reside, and spend enjoyment time there.

Considered as Reston's downtown, and one of the leading employment and amenity centers in the region, Reston Town Center has approximately seven million square feet of office and retail space with commercial and retail occupancy rates higher than the regional average. Reston Town Center's corporate landowners and prominent tenants include Bechtel, Brightspot, CACI, Charles Schwab, College Board, CVS, Facebook, Fannie Mae, Harris Teeter, Hyatt Regency, Leidos, Microsoft, Oracle, Peraton, Reston Hospital, Target, and Volkswagen.

In fall 2022, Reston Town Center's shuttle, linkRTC, became the new way to get to and around the dynamic employment hub and regional destination. There are approximately 10,000 workers within the linkRTC circulation path which runs Mondays through Fridays from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, at 10-minute intervals. Six stops are along the linkRTC route including a dedicated shelter stop at the Reston Town Center Metro Station. The shuttle service provides free, convenient, and reliable connections and is funded by properties within Reston Town Center under a cost-sharing agreement.

The shuttle is gaining fast momentum as during its fifth month of service, linkRTC reported a 42 percent increase in total boardings over the previous month. The service includes two 14-passenger vans and a mobile app that allows passengers to track the shuttle's whereabouts and arrival time. linkRTC is operated by Reston Limousine under the authority of the association's board of directors.



### **2023 Honorable Mention**

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

Ameritel Communications Corporation; Derwood, MD  
Avixa; Fairfax, VA  
Federal Aviation Administration; Silver Spring, MD  
FH+H Law Service; Tysons, VA  
GEICO; Chevy Chase, MD  
Goodwill Industries International; Rockville, MD  
Liptz, Roberts, Marquez, Merkle, Singh & Zipor Chartered; Chevy Chase, MD  
Microsoft; Reston, VA  
Montgomery County Department of Recreation; Silver Spring, MD  
NuAxis Innovations; Tysons, VA  
REI Systems; Sterling, VA  
The Universities at Shady Grove; Rockville, MD  
Washington Eye Physicians & Surgeons; Chevy Chase, MD

### **2023 Selection Committee**

Commuter Connections would like to acknowledge the following members for volunteering as part of the 2023 Employer Recognition Awards Selection Committee:

Endy Chicas, Ellumen  
Christina Henderson, District of Columbia\*  
John Hillegass, Greater Washington Partnership  
Nancy Huggins, Maryland Transit Administration  
Randy Mosier, Maryland Department of the Environment  
Stephanie Piperno, District Department of Transportation  
Harriet West, Mack Global

\*Committee Chairperson

### **2023 Workgroup**

Commuter Connections would like to acknowledge the following members for volunteering as part of the 2023 Employer Recognition Awards Workgroup:

Jaime McKay, TransIT Services of Frederick County  
Hamzat Sani, City of Alexandria  
Katy Lang, District Department of Transportation



### **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. Departments of Transportation.

### **How to Get Involved**

Does your company provide a robust commuter or telework program? If so, apply for the 2024 Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards. For more information about free employer services and assistance available through Commuter Connections, visit [www.commuterconnections.org](http://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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