



**Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments**

**FY24 Second Half
Marketing Campaign Summary
Draft Report**

Regional TDM Marketing Group

June 18, 2024

**FY24 Second Half
Marketing Campaign Summary**

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Executive Summary

Overview

This document summarizes FY24 marketing activity by Commuter Connections occurring between January and June 2024.

Today more employees in the region continue to work from home than before the pandemic. Despite an August 2023 push from the White House for federal employees to return to the office, thus far, unions representing those workers continue to embrace remote work. Those who are required to commute to the workplace are choosing SOV over other forms of travel, such as transit. Additionally, researchers comparing travel data from cellphone users found that the average travel time had increased 20%¹ to 35 minutes for commuters in the region.

Some forms of alternative commuting, however, are seeing significant gains. A recent report from the North American Bikeshare & Scootershare Association shows riders took 157 million trips in 2022.² Nearly two-thirds (64%) of riders reported using shared micromobility for first and last-mile connections to/from transit.

GRH & Ridesharing Spring Umbrella Campaign

The spring 2024 umbrella marketing campaign focuses on encouraging alternative modes of travel with an emphasis on hybrid workers. For Rideshare, the “Roll with Rideshare” concept focuses on companionship as well as saving money and time. For Guaranteed Ride Home, the “Did Someone Say Free?” concept uses a rhetorical question to emphasize the no-cost aspect of the emergency ride home program. The FY24 second half spring media buy is \$625,000 for Rideshare and \$240,000 for GRH and includes digital, radio, and out of home advertising. The GRH Baltimore media buy is \$25,000 and encompasses the use of radio.

Bike to Work Day

The Bike to Work Day 2024 event sponsorship drive concluded at the end of January 2024, securing \$37,550 in cash and \$22,098 of in-kind donation value. The marketing budget for the May 17th event was \$65,000 and total registration neared 14,000 at 109 local pit stops.

Employer Recognition Awards

The 2024 Employer Recognition Awards program honors employers who initiated outstanding worksite commute benefits and/or telework programs to assist employees. The nomination period concluded at the end of January; the Selection Committee took place in mid-March; and winners will be honored at a ceremony in FY25.

Incentive Programs

A marketing campaign for incenTrip regional and incenTrip MDOT ran during the months of February and March funded by the Federal ATCMTD budget. The incenTrip regional media buy was \$43,160, while the incenTrip MDOT media buy was \$18,510. A campaign for

¹ The Washington Post. “New habits are making more commutes miserable”: Sept. 22, 2023.

² NABSA. 2022 Shared Micromobility State of the Industry Report. August 2023.

Flextime Rewards ran after Bike to Work Day, while the CommuterCash campaign has been moved to FY25.

Media buying services are managed for Commuter Connections by a professional media buying firm which uses third-party demographic data (and other relevant media industry data) from Strata, Scarborough, and Arbitron. Media buying determination is centered on a cost/value proposition to identify specific media that are best suited for each target audience to optimize reach and frequency. The outcomes of previous Commuter Connections campaigns are also factored into the process.

Introduction

The following reports were assessed as part of the planning process to help shape approaches and media selection during the second half of FY24. These survey reports indicate respondents' attitudes, preferences, behaviors, and patterns about commuting and Commuter Connections programs, services, and events. Many of the surveys also gathered demographic data to help understand the age, income, gender, and ethnic backgrounds of the region's citizens and Commuter Connections members.

- 2022 Commuter Connections Bike to Work Survey Analysis Report
- 2022 Commuter Connections Guaranteed Ride Home Applicant Survey Report for the Baltimore Region
- 2022 Commuter Connections Guaranteed Ride Home Applicant Survey Report for the Washington, DC Region
- 2022 Commuter Connections State of the Commute Survey Report
- 2021 Commuter Connections Applicant Database Annual Placement Survey Report
- 2023 Commuter Connections TDM Analysis Report (FY21–FY23)

The second half of FY24 included the following activities:

- GRH and Rideshare spring campaigns
- incenTrip/incenTrip MDOT campaigns
- Employer Recognition Awards nominations and selection
- Regional TDM Marketing Group meetings (March & June 2024)
- Bike to Work Day campaign
- Flextime Rewards campaign
- Winter/spring employer newsletters
- Commuter Connections website templates
- Commuter Connections 50th anniversary planning

About Commuter Connections

Commuter Connections is a network of transportation organizations coordinated at the regional level through the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Commuter Connections offers free commuter services to workers in the metropolitan Washington region. Major services include ridematching for carpools and vanpools, and administration of the Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program in the Washington, DC and Baltimore regions. Other key elements include TDM evaluation, incentive programs, and special events. Through its Employer Outreach Representatives, Commuter Connections also assists employers with guidance on establishing and enhancing commuter programs, including telework and offering free collateral materials.

Organizations represented in the Commuter Connections Regional TDM Marketing Group include:

- Arlington County Commuter Services
- Bethesda Transportation Solutions
- City of Alexandria GO Alex
- City of Fairfax
- District Department of Transportation
- Dulles Area Transportation Association
- Enterprise Rideshare
- Fairfax Connector
- Fairfax County Commuter Services
- GW Ride Connect
- Loudoun County Commuter Services
- Maryland Department of Transportation
- Maryland State Highway Administration
- Maryland Transit Administration
- Montgomery County Commuter Services
- Montgomery County Ride On
- National Institutes of Health
- North Bethesda Transportation Center
- Northern Virginia Transportation Commission
- OmniRide (PRTC)
- Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation
- Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission
- TransIT Services of Frederick County
- Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland
- Tysons Partnership Transportation Council
- U.S. General Services Administration
- Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation
- Virginia Department of Transportation
- Virginia Railway Express
- Washington Area Bicyclist Association
- Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Brand Character

Commuter Connections delivers a brand promise as the preeminent and trusted regional network of transportation organizations in the Washington, DC region, providing free commuting assistance, services, and solutions for 50 years. Through Commuter Connections' online Ridematching system, commuters are given free direct access to others who are looking to carpool and vanpool, along with access to routes and other alternative mode options such as transit, bicycling, and teleworking. Sharing a ride to work positively affects air quality and mobility for the region.



Rideshare & GRH Spring Campaigns

For Rideshare, the “Roll with Rideshare” concept focused on saving money and time. These ranked as among the most important personal benefits commuters get from sharing the ride in the 2022 State of the Commute. This concept used big playful headlines and clean, visually grabbing graphics to sell these top benefits of ridesharing. All the while, the concept was supported with inclusive language, using “we” to underscore togetherness and social connection. For Guaranteed Ride Home, the “Did Someone Say Free?” concept used a rhetorical question to emphasize the no-cost aspect of the free emergency ride home program.

Costs from the media buy and associated impressions are below:

Ridesharing Budget	Gross Cost	COG Cost	Estimated Impressions
CausallQ	\$129,411.76	\$110,000.00	12,500,000
WTOP.Com	\$17,647.06	\$15,000.00	1,000,000
ESPN	\$41,176.47	\$35,000.00	3,208,333
iHeart Streaming	\$70,588.24	\$60,000.00	2,600,000
Audacy Email & social	\$17,647.06	\$15,000.00	558,332
AllTerrain - bike ads	\$24,705.88	\$21,000.00	250,000
WWDC-FM	\$22,975.00	\$19,528.75	1,460,000
WTOP-FM	\$99,205.00	\$84,324.25	6,270,900
WPGC-FM	\$25,650.00	\$21,802.50	997,700
WJFK-FM	\$33,925.00	\$28,836.25	1,073,900
WIHT-FM	\$25,560.00	\$21,726.00	802,000
WASH-FM	\$26,460.00	\$22,491.00	1,520,000
WAMU Streaming	\$47,000.00	\$39,950.00	760,000
Pandora	\$70,588.24	\$60,000.00	2,183,330
El Zol	\$20,825.00	\$17,701.25	597,500
AllOverMedia - Digital Trucks	\$58,823.53	\$50,000.00	960,000
WJFK - Brian Mitchell	\$3,000.00	\$2,550.00	107,390
Totals	\$735,188.24	\$624,910.00	36,849,385

GRH Budget	Gross Cost	COG Cost	Estimated Impressions
CausallQ	\$52,941.18	\$45,000.00	10,000,000
WTOP.Com	\$11,764.71	\$10,000.00	675,000
ESPN	\$32,941.18	\$28,000.00	2,566,666
AllOverMedia - Digital Trucks	\$29,411.76	\$25,000.00	480,000
iHeart Streaming	\$33,858.82	\$28,780.00	440,000
WAMU Streaming	\$33,200.00	\$28,220.00	646,000
WASH-FM	\$28,185.00	\$23,957.25	1,400,300
WPGC-FM	\$20,650.00	\$17,552.50	850,000
WTOP-FM	\$39,360.00	\$33,456.00	2,000,300
Totals	\$282,312.65	\$239,965.75	19,058,266

GRH Baltimore Budget	Gross Cost	COG Cost	Estimated Impressions
WPOC	\$15,176.47	\$12,900.00	1,200,400
WZFT	\$14,226.47	\$12,092.50	435,000
Totals	\$29,402.94	\$24,992.50	1,635,400

Value Add

A total of approximately \$62,400 in value add was negotiated for Ridesharing, \$35,600 for Guaranteed Ride Home, and \$7,500 for Guaranteed Ride Home Baltimore.

Radio (Rideshare)

Radio served as the main media component for the Rideshare campaign which aired through both traditional radio and streaming on news/talk, sports, and music stations. A variety of music station formats included adult contemporary, urban contemporary, contemporary hit radio, and rock.

Rideshare Scripts

:30 Ridesharing Radio Script

The savings rock when you find a new way to roll—like sharing the ride to work. Even if you're commuting just a few days a week, Commuter Connections can match you with others who live and work near you. It's easy AND free! Plus, you can get cash and other rewards for carpooling, up to \$600 a year! Get rolling on a new way to work with Rideshare. Register today at Commuter Connections Dot Org or call 1-800-745-RIDE. Some restrictions apply.

:15 Ridesharing Radio Read

Rock the savings when you find a way to roll—like sharing the ride to work. You can save time and money every time you Rideshare, even if you're commuting just a few days a week. Register at Commuter Connections Dot Org or call 1-800-745-RIDE.



Digital Banner Ads (Rideshare)

Banner ads in various sizes ran on multiple media properties including but not limited to ESPN.com, WTOP.com, DCNewsNow.com, NBC4washington.com, WUSA9.com, USAToday.com, sports.yahoo.com, allrecipes.com, aol.com, cnn.com, eatingwell.com, foxnews.com, realtor.com, and southernliving.com. Digital ads also appeared in various online games including Block Blast!, Wordscapes, Soccer Super Star, Football League 2024, Match 3D -Matching Puzzle Game, MiniCraft: Blocky Craft 2023, Darts Club: PvP Multiplayer, Mad Skills Motocross 3 and more.

ROCK THE SAVINGS. ROLL WITH RIDESHARE.
 Rock the savings when you find a new way to roll—like sharing the ride to work. Earn up to \$600 a year when you sign up for Rideshare.
50 YEARS 1974-2024
COMPUTER CONNECTIONS.
 A SMARTER WAY TO WORK.
 commutercnnections.org | 800.745.RIDE
GET STARTED TODAY!

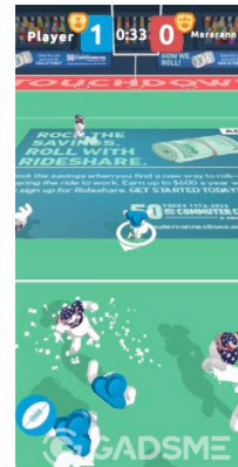
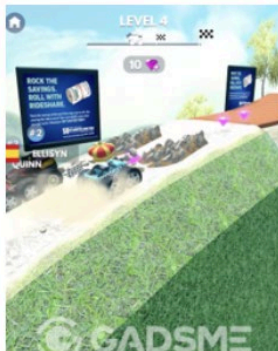
ROCK THE SAVINGS. ROLL WITH RIDESHARE.
 Rock the savings when you find a new way to roll—like sharing the ride to work. Earn up to \$600 a year when you sign up for Rideshare.
50 YEARS 1974-2024
COMPUTER CONNECTIONS.
 A SMARTER WAY TO WORK.
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GET STARTED TODAY!

A NEW WAY TO ROLL
 Share the ride. Skip the stress. Save big time. Earn up to \$600 cash!
REGISTER FOR FREE!
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 A SMARTER WAY TO WORK.
 commutercnnections.org | 800.745.RIDE

A NEW WAY TO ROLL
 Share the ride. Skip the stress. Save big time. Earn up to \$600 cash!
REGISTER FOR FREE!
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HOW WE ROLL!
 Share the ride and save \$\$.
SIGN UP TODAY!
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 commutercnnections.org | 800.745.RIDE

A NEW WAY TO ROLL
 Share the ride and save \$\$.
SIGN UP TODAY!
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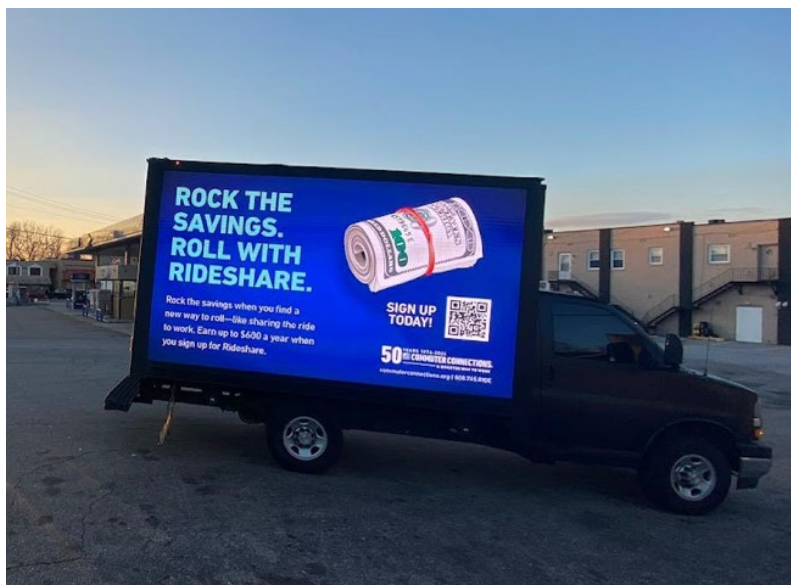
Streaming & YouTube Video (Rideshare)

A 30-second animated video promoting ridesharing ran as paid advertising on YouTube and CausallQ. Some of the media properties the video also appeared on include Pluto TV, Samsung TV Plus, The Weather Channel, Fubo, and The Roku Channel.



Digital Truck Ad (Rideshare)

Digital truck ads spread the ridesharing message during peak commuting periods and focused on the I-95 corridor from Prince William County to DC, I-495 Capital Beltway, I-66 from Gainesville to DC, Dulles Toll Road Rt 267 (Loudoun County to the Beltway), I-270 from Frederick County to DC, and US 50 in Prince George's County.



Bicycle Billboard Ad (Rideshare)

Bike billboards ads ran along popular routes in the region.




Social Media (Rideshare)

A series of social media posts created for the spring campaign ran as organic posts on Facebook and Instagram.



Audacy Newsletter (Rideshare)

A newsletter promoting ridesharing was sent four times to subscribers of the Audacy opt-in radio network. Audacy owns multiple radio stations in the market and is a competitor of iHeart Radio.



A NEW WAY TO ROLL

Share the ride.
Skip the stress.
Save big time.
Earn up to \$600 cash!
REGISTER FOR FREE!

Find accessible, affordable commuting options that work for your schedule with Commuter Connections!

The savings rock when you find a new way to roll - like sharing the ride to work. Even if you're carpooling or vanpooling just a few days a week, Commuter Connections can match you with others who live and work near you. It's easy and FREE! Plus, earn up to \$600 a year by signing up for 'Pool Rewards, incenTrip, or CarpoolNow. Get rolling on a new way to work with Rideshare.

Some restrictions apply.

REGISTER TODAY

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COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.
A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

commuterconnections.org | 800.745.RIDE

Radio (GRH)

Radio served as the main media component for the GRH campaign which aired through both traditional radio and streaming on news/talk and music stations. Music station formats included adult contemporary, urban contemporary.

Scripts

:30 Guaranteed Ride Home Radio Script

Did someone say FREE RIDE HOME? If you like carpooling or vanpooling but worry about getting stuck at the office—relax! With Commuter Connections, you can get up to 6 FREE rides home for unexpected emergencies or unscheduled overtime, even if you're commuting just a few times a week. Register or renew for Guaranteed Ride Home today at CommuterConnectionsDotOrg or call 800-745-RIDE. Some restrictions apply.

:15 Guaranteed Ride Home Radio Read

Get a FREE RIDE HOME! You heard right! Commuter Connections offers a free guaranteed ride home for unexpected emergencies – even if you're commuting just a few times a week. Learn more at CommuterConnections.org or call 1-800-745-RIDE.



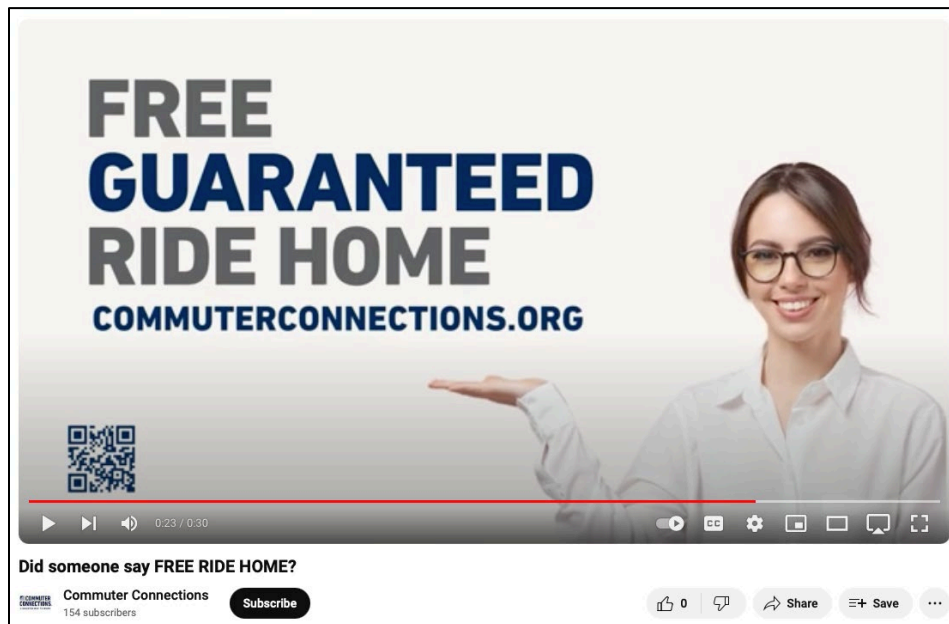
Digital Banner Ads (GRH)

Digital banner ads in various sizes ran on several media properties including ESPN.com, WTOP.com, USAToday.com, sports.yahoo.com, allrecipes.com, aol.com, cnn.com, eatingwell.com foxnews.com, realtor.com, and southernliving.com.



Streaming YouTube Video (GRH)

A 30-second animated video promoting Guaranteed Ride Home touched on the benefits of the program.



Digital Truck Ad (GRH)

Digital truck ads spread the GRH message during peak commuting periods and focused on the I-95 corridor from Prince William County to DC, I-495 Capital Beltway, I-66 from Gainesville to DC, Rt 267 Dulles Toll Road (Loudoun County to the Beltway), I-270 from Frederick County to DC, and US 50 in Prince George's County.



Social Media (GRH)

A series of social media posts created for the spring campaign were shared on Facebook and Instagram.



Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH Baltimore)

GRH radio spots aired on the following two Baltimore stations. Both stations also supported the campaign with social media posts.



Employer Recognition Awards

The Employer Recognition Awards program recognizes employers who initiate outstanding commute benefits and/or telework programs to assist their employees. The nomination period ran through January 2024 and a total of 17 nominations were received for the three award categories. The selection committee met in March 2024 and a ceremony to showcase the winners will occur in the fall.



Bike to Work Day

Commuter Connections concluded its annual sponsorship drive for the 2024 Bike to Work Day event in January with a total of \$37,550 in cash and \$22,098 of in-kind donations. Sponsor dollars were allocated toward the cost of procuring the event T-shirts. Approximately, 14,000 registered for the May 17, 2024 event.

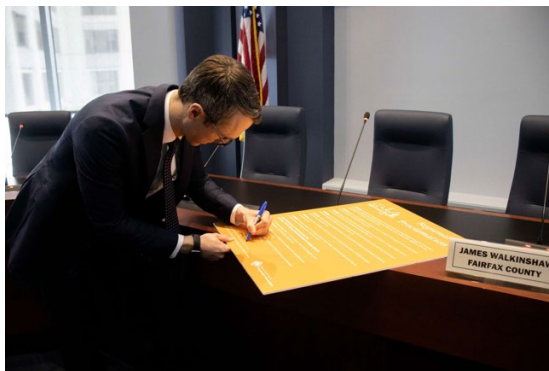


Costs from the media buy and associated impressions are below:

Bike to Work Day Budget	Gross Cost	COG Cost	Estimated Impressions
CausallQ (OTT & Display)	\$24,117.65	\$20,500.00	2,645,833
WTOP.Com	\$5,882.35	\$5,000.00	333,333
WJFK	\$15,204.00	\$12,923.40	311,400
WIAD	\$13,364.00	\$11,359.40	520,300
WIHT	\$13,717.65	\$11,660.00	408,600
Social Media	\$3,529.41	\$3,000.00	NA
YouTube	\$588.24	\$500	NA
Totals	\$76,403.29	\$64,942.80	4,219,466

Proclamation

Transportation Planning Board Vice-Chair James Walkinshaw and Commuter Connections Bike to Work Day Steering Committee Chair LaToya Crump presented the Regional Bike to Work Day 2024 Proclamation. The Proclamation recognized Friday, May 17, 2024 as Bike to Work Day throughout the Washington, DC metropolitan region.



Flyer and Poster

Marketing materials were designed to help promote the May 2024 Bike to Work Day event. Materials were distributed to each of the 109 local pit stops. A mailing was sent to employers containing the flyer and a cover letter. The English and Spanish flyers are available at www.biketoworkmetrodc.org.



Outdoor Banner Art

An outdoor vinyl banner template was developed, and art files were shared with pit stop managers to print locally for promotional use for their events.



Rack Card

Rack cards with the same look and feel were printed and made available to pit stop managers.

FREE EVENT

BIKE TO WORK DAY

FRIDAY

MAY 17, 2024



Working from Home? No Problem!
Bike to Your Local Pit Stop on May 17th for Your **FREE T-SHIRT* & BIKE RAFFLE**

REGISTER TODAY AT
BikeToWorkMetroDC.org

Free refreshments & giveaways at participating locations, while supplies last.



Register for free at
BIKETOWORKMETRODC.ORG
800.745.7433

#BTWD2024



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WABA
WASHINGTON AREA BICYCLIST ASSOCIATION

GO Alex **ICF** **Bike Arlington**

TERRAPIN BICYCLES **AL's** **BICYCLE SPACE**

AASHIO **NATIONAL LANDING** **capital bikeshare**

goDCgo **MDOT MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION** **VDOT**

Giant **AMERICAN COLLEGE of CARDIOLOGY** **FAIR LAKES**

VISIONZERO **See Alert Safe**

HANDY BIKES **BIKES@VIENNA**

Visit **biketoworkmetrodc.org** for pit stop locations and times.
*T-shirts available at pit stops to first 16,000 registrants.
Pit stops in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia!

The Bike to Work Day event is a program of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and is funded by DDOT, MDOT, VDOT, and USDOT.

Printed on recycled paper

T-Shirts

The orange theme was carried over into the shirt emblazoned with the 2024 Bike to Work Day logo as well as the sponsors who supported this year's event.



Radio

Radio served as the main media component for the Bike to Work Day 2024 campaign and included 30-second spots and endorsement radio reads on popular radio stations in the region including news/talk, sports/talk, and music formats.

Bike to Work Day Script

:30 Radio Script

Friday May 17th is Bike to Work Day! Register for this FREE event for a chance to win a new bike and other great prizes. The first 16,000 people who register and attend get a free T-shirt from one of 100 pit stops in DC, Maryland, and Virginia. Free giveaways at participating locations, while supplies last. Go to Bike to Work Metro DC Dot Org to register. Bike to Work Day is sponsored by Commuter Connections, the Washington Area Bicyclist Association, Al's Bike Shop, GO Alex, and ICF.

:15 Radio Read

May 17th is Bike to Work Day! Register for this FREE event for a chance to win a new bike and other great prizes. The first 16,000 to register and attend get a free T-shirt. Go to Bike to Work Metro DC.org, that's Bike to Work Metro DC.org.



Digital Banner Ads

Digital banner ads in various sizes ran on WTOP.com and the CausallQ network.



YouTube Video

The BTWD video aired on the CausallQ network as well as on YouTube. It was also promoted on COG's various social media channels.



COG Email Blast

An email blast was sent to help kick off the BTWD registration process. Recipients included employers, Bike to Work Day and Car Free Day participants from recent years, and other stakeholders.

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Join us for [Bike to Work Day](#) at more than 100 pit stops throughout DC, MD, and VA. The first 16,000 who register and attend this free event will receive a T-shirt. Free giveaways and refreshments available at most pit stops, while supplies last. Register and you'll be entered into a raffle for a chance at winning a free bike!

FREE EVENT
BIKE TO WORK DAY FRIDAY
MAY 17, 2024

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A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

WABA

GO Alex

ICF

Bike Arlington

TERRAPIN BICYCLES

ALS

PR2

AASHIO

NATIONAL CHANGING

capital bikeshare

gDCap

MDOT

VDOT

Giant

AMERICAN COLLEGE of CARDIOLOGY

FAIR LAKES

HANDY BIKES

VISIONZERO

BIKE-VA

BIKES-VIETNAM

Working from Home? No Problem!
Bike to Your Local Pit Stop on May 17th for Your
FREE T-SHIRT* & BIKE RAFFLE

REGISTER TODAY AT
BikeToWorkMetroDC.org

Free refreshments & giveaways at participating locations, while supplies last.

Visit BikeToWorkMetroDC.org for pit stop locations and times.
*T-shirts available at pit stops to first 16,000 registrants.
Pit stops in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia!

Register for free at
BIKETOWORKMETRODC.ORG
800.745.7433

The Bike to Work Day event is a program of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and is funded by DCMT, MDOT, VDOT, and USDOT.

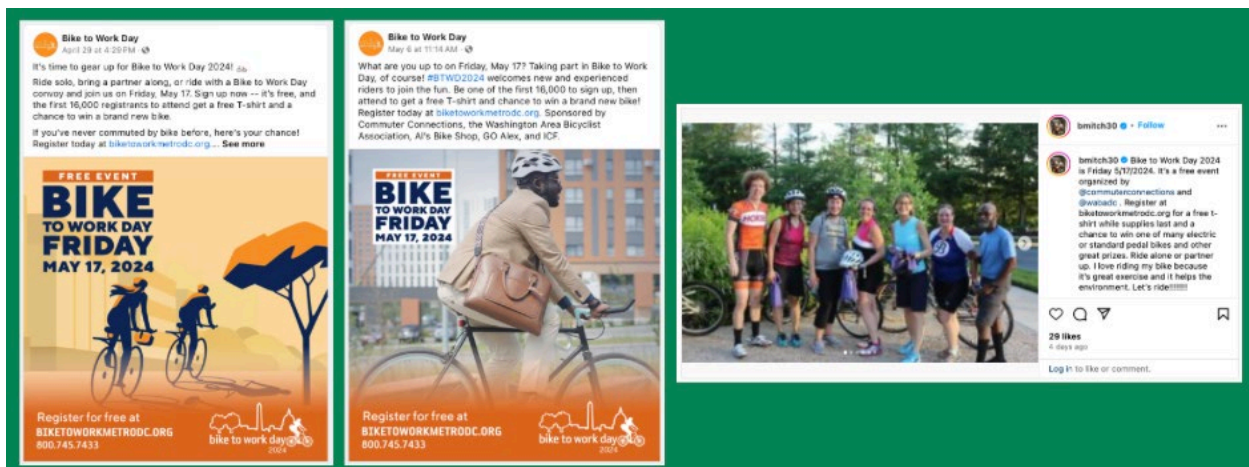
#BTWD2024

bike to work day 2024

For assistance with registration, please call Commuter Connections at 1-800-745-7433. For general questions regarding the event, please visit Bike To Work Day's [FAQ](#) page.

Social Media

Images were created for use on the official Bike to Work Day social media accounts and for the use of pit stop managers to promote their local events.



Newsletter

The winter and spring 2024 editions of the Commuter Connections newsletter were issued during the second half of FY24. The six page, 4-color newsletters are produced and distributed quarterly to employers and stakeholders. The newsletters are also available in PDF format on the Commuter Connections website.

50 YEARS 1974-2024

COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.


A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

The Commuter Information Source for Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia

Issue 1, Volume 28 WINTER 2024

WHAT'S INSIDE

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GRH = PIECE OF MIND

Since 1997, Commuter Connections has offered Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) to ease employees' fear of being without a way home due to unexpected emergencies or unscheduled overtime. To qualify, commuters just need to use transportation alternatives to driving alone to and from work, two or more times a week.

GRH provides up to six free rides per year by way of taxi, Uber, or Enterprise rental car for commuters registered with Commuter Connections. Registration is also free! For first-time commuters who forgot to register with the Commuter Connections GRH program, there is a "one-time exception" to allow new commuters to use the service without pre-registering. Commuters who wish to enjoy GRH for subsequent free tips must register.

How aware of GRH are commuters in the region? Commuter Connections has issued the State of the Commute survey (SOC) every three years since 2001 to measure awareness of its various programs and the general state of commuting within the region. The most recent survey was conducted in 2022 and was a random sample survey of employed persons in the Washington, DC region.


Survey respondents who were not teleworking/working from home full-time were asked if they knew of a regional GRH program available for commuters who rideshare or use public transportation.

The 2022 SOC survey found the following:

- awareness of GRH was strongly tied to respondents' awareness of Commuter Connections; 23 percent of commuters who said they had heard of Commuter Connections knew that a regional GRH program existed, compared with only 5 percent of commuters who did not know Commuter Connections
- GRH awareness was highest among respondents who rode a commuter train to work; 47 percent of these respondents knew of the GRH program
- 22 percent of carpool and vanpool riders and 19 percent of bus riders knew that a regional GRH program existed

Commuter Connections also tracks the GRH participant retention rate. The 2021 Retention survey asked more than 1,300 registered commuters in the GRH and other Commuter Connections databases. Of those interviewed, 68 percent had registered with GRH.

The GRH placement rate was calculated for Washington, DC metropolitan Non-Attainment Area (NAA) participants and those outside of the NAA. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency defines the geographic boundaries of areas that do not meet federal standards for air quality as "non-attainment" areas. The placement rate is the percentage of GRH participants who made a shift to



GUARANTEED RIDE HOME

Get a free ride home in case of an unexpected emergency or unscheduled overtime! Sign up today for FREE!

Some restrictions apply.

50 YEARS 1974-2024

COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.

A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

commuterconnections.org | 800.745.RIDE

Continued on page 2

50 YEARS 1974-2024

COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.


A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

The Commuter Information Source for Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia

Issue 2, Volume 28 SPRING 2024

WHAT'S INSIDE

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METRO RAIL RED LINE CLOSURES SUMMER 2024

A three-year major capital construction plan recently announced by Metro will modernize the Metrorail system, improve safety and reliability, and maintain a state of good repair. Beginning in June 2024, the work will temporarily close a number of stations along the Red Line, including:

- Glenmont
- Wheaton
- Forest Glen
- Silver Spring
- Takoma

These Montgomery County stations are expected to remain closed through early September. A new mezzanine at the Silver Spring Station will provide easier access between Metro and the future Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) Purple Line Project. Metro will provide passengers with free express and local shuttle buses during the shutdown periods.

Planned work includes:

- signaling system upgrades
- communications and train control cable installation to allow trains to cross tracks
- leak mitigation
- automatic train control system replacements
- traction power cables installation
- drain pumping station and tunnel standpipe replacement
- elevator and escalator maintenance

Other closures are scheduled to occur periodically through summer 2024, which will affect specific stations on all other lines throughout the system:

- December 2024 – January 2025: Two-week closures at Farragut West, McPherson Square, lower level of Metro Center (upper-level Red Line open), Federal Triangle, Smithsonian, and Foggy Bottom-GWU to L'Enfant Plaza stations




Photo Courtesy: WMATA

- Summer 2025: Three-week closures at Franconia-Springfield to King Street, Van Dorn Street, and Franconia-Springfield stations
- Summer 2025: Six-week closures at Congress Heights to Branch Avenue, Southern Avenue, Naylor Road, Suitland, and Branch Avenue stations
- Winter 2025 – Winter 2026: Closure dates and duration to be determined; L'Enfant Plaza to Fort Totten stations
- Summer 2026: Closure dates and duration to be determined; Friendship Heights to Grosvenor-Strathmore, Medical Center and Bethesda stations

Information on upcoming major construction is available on X: @wmata, @metrorailinfo, @metrobustinfo. Sign up for Metro Alerts text and email messages at www.metroalerts.info


Federal ETC Updates Newsletter

The winter and spring 2024 editions of the Commuter Connections Federal ETC Updates newsletter was produced during the second half of FY24. The two-page black & white newsletters are shared with Federal Employee Transportation Coordinators via GSA. They are also available in PDF format at www.federaletc.org.

WINTER 2024

FEDERAL ETC UPDATES

A VAST WORKFORCE AND LIMITED PARKING AT THE PENTAGON



The Pentagon is big. Really big. As Thomas Hamed, transportation planner in the Washington Headquarters Services' (WHS) Transportation Management Program Office, said: "A place this large makes its own weather." Hamed notes that 25,000 employees and just 8,000 parking spaces (even fewer now due to construction on the campus) creates a powerful incentive to seek alternatives to driving alone to work on "the Reservation," as employees refer to the Pentagon. And those 8,000 parking spaces aren't easy to get. Each Command gets an allocation of spaces and then sets their own policies for doling them out.

Luckily, they've got the largest transit facility on the east coast (outside of New York City) right on campus. The Pentagon Transit Center (PTC) serves more than 7,500 riders each weekday. Most are disembarking at the PTC, while the remainder of riders are switching to other trains or buses. More than half of all Pentagon employees go through the PTC on their way to work. The PTC is a connection point to and from seven regional bus lines including:

- Arlington Transit
- DASH
- Fairfax Connector
- Metrobus

- Loudoun County Transit
- PRTC OmniRide
- Ride Smart Northern Shenandoah Valley/DC Motorcoach

Department of Defense (DoD) employees can have some or, in many cases, all of their transit paid for with the Mass Transit Benefit which this year gives employees up to \$315 in SmarTrip® monthly benefits, depending on the actual cost of their commute.

Rumors of the demise of slugging in DC abound but apparently the Pentagon hasn't heard them. Slugging is going strong at the Pentagon: about 4 percent of Pentagon employees (about 1,000 people) travel this way. Slug stations going to various destinations are displayed on signs where people can line up for rides, usually Park and Ride lots. Hamed believes that slugging complements the transit service. The OmniRide strike in February 2023 lasted a month, and most of the Pentagon employees who rely on OmniRide opted to make their trips back to Prince William County, Manassas, and Manassas Park via slugging.


The mass transit benefit may also be used for eligible vanpools. The WHS Transportation Program Office promotes their commute program through monthly table events where employees can find out from the

Continued on back

SPRING 2024

FEDERAL ETC UPDATES

IS MY COMMUTE BILLABLE? IT DEPENDS



Commuting to the office and back five days per week is no longer the norm for many federal workers. Remote work (newly defined as full-time teleworking) and teleworking several days per week have become standard practice for many white-collar workers.

In this new age of full-time workers with part-time commutes, questions arise around whether commute time is billable time. Federal Times examined guidance on the question and identified scenarios when commuting hours can or cannot be paid.

They found two factors that determine whether commuting should be considered paid or non-paid time. The first is whether such time is covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), and secondly, whether the employee is a remote worker or teleworker.

In most cases, agency management and administrative jobs are exempt from the FLSA. The publication found:

- if a teleworker begins their workday at home and gets a call from their supervisor that requires them to come into the office, that commute to the office is paid whether or not the employee is covered by the FLSA
- if a teleworker gets advance notice that they have to be on-site on what would have been a telework day, their commute is not paid
- a teleworker may choose to use annual leave or paid time off at the end of the workday to leave earlier and commute home; they may also request leave
- the FLSA says if an employee is required to travel during work hours on official business, that time is paid time
- employees can commute during designated breaks and work the rest of the day at home
- time spent traveling from home to the agency worksite during the workday is hours of work for both FLSA-exempt and FLSA-nonexempt employees
- for remote workers in a different time zone than the office, the agency can specify core hours and allow the remote worker to work a flexible schedule

For fully remote workers who do not report to an office with any regularity, the rules slightly differ:


If a remote worker lives within their agency worksite's official duty station and can make the trip to the worksite the same day, travel time to the site is not paid. If, however, one lives outside the official duty station, travel to the site is considered work time and is paid.

E-Newsletter

The winter and spring 2024 editions of the Commuter Connections e-newsletter was emailed to the same employers and stakeholders that received the printed hard copy.

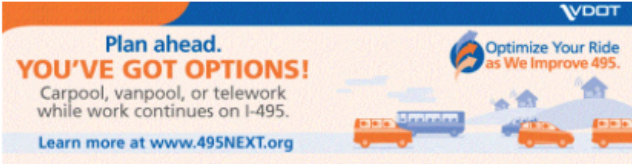
50 YEARS 1974-2024
COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.
A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

Bike To Work Day 2024 Registration Opens March



Are your employees ready for Bike to Work Day 2024? Encourage them to circle Friday, May 17th on their calendars and make the fun journey to work by bike. Free registration begins early March 2024.

495 NEXT: Building a Better Ride for Commuters



The I-495 Express Lanes Northern Extension (495 NEXT) project is extending the existing Express Lanes north by two and a half miles, from the Dulles Corridor interchange to the George Washington Memorial Parkway, in the vicinity of the American Legion Bridge.

More News

GRH = Peace of Mind

Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) provides up to six free rides home per year by way of taxi, Uber, or Enterprise Rent-A-Car for commuters who are faced with unexpected illness, emergencies, or unscheduled overtime at the office. GRH is for employees who commute two or more days a week.

50 YEARS 1974-2024
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A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

MetroRail Red Line Closures Summer 2024



Beginning June 2024, work along MetroRail's Red Line will temporarily close a number of stations including Glenmont, Wheaton, Forest Glen, Silver Spring, and Takoma.

Bike To Work Day 2024



Register for free at BIKETOWORKMETRODC.ORG
800.745.7433

Register free for Bike to Work Day Friday, May 17. Those commuting or working from home can participate at 109 pit stop locations. The first 16,000 registered participants get a free T-shirt and bike raffle entry.

More News

incentTrip (ATCMTD)

The incentTrip app rewards commuters who carpool, vanpool, bike, or take transit then log their trips onto the app. Points are earned for each trip, which can be redeemed for cash, up to \$600 per year. In addition, the app provides smart routing to help commuters avoid getting stuck in traffic due to delays caused by traffic accidents, work zones, and other traffic-related incidents during the morning and afternoon peak commuting times.

Two separate yet interrelated targeted marketing campaigns ran from February to the end of March 2024 to encourage commuters to download and use the app. The media buy included radio ads (regional only) and digital banner ads and were funded by the Federal ATCMTD budget.

Target Audiences

incentTrip Regional

Commuters within the traditional Washington, DC metropolitan region.

incentTrip MDOT

Commuters living or working in the Baltimore metropolitan region (Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Carroll County, Harford County, Howard County, Queen Anne's County), St. Mary's County, Washington County, Hagerstown, living in Berkley County, Jefferson County; Martinsburg, WV; Ranson, WV; Charles Town, WV; and working in MD, working/living in Allegany County, Cumberland, MD; Frostburg, MD; Cecil County, MD; or living in New Castle County; Wilmington, DE; and working in MD.



Costs from the incentTrip ATCMTD media buys and associated impressions are below:

incentTrip Regional Budget	Gross Cost	COG Cost	Actual Impressions
CausallQ	\$17,058.82	\$14,500.00	3,222,222
WTOP.Com	\$8,347.06	\$7,095.00	473,000
WTOP-FM	\$25,370.00	\$21,564.50	1,475,000
Totals	\$50,775.88	\$43,159.50	5,170,222

incentTrip MDOT Budget	Gross Cost	COG Cost	Actual Impressions
CausallQ	\$11,764.71	\$10,000.00	2,222,222
WTOP.Com	\$10,011.76	\$8,510.00	567,333
Totals	\$21,776.47	\$18,510.00	2,789,555

Radio Script (Regional)

wtop

:30 Radio Script (recorded spot)

Take a clean commute and get cash back with the incenTrip app by Commuter Connections. Earn points each time you use the app to commute via ridesharing, transit, or biking. Redeem points for cash – up to \$600 a year! The incenTrip app has real-time navigation to help you choose the best travel method, route, and departure time, to help avoid traffic delays – saving time and money. Learn more about incenTrip and register at commuterconnections.org. That's commuterconnections.org. Or call 800 745-RIDE. Some restrictions apply.

Digital Banner Ads (Regional)

A variety of animated and static digital banner ads ran on WTOP.com and CausallQ.



Digital Banner Ads (MDOT)

A similar set of animated and static digital banner ads focused on Maryland also ran on WTOP.com and CausallQ.



Flextime Rewards

The Flextime Rewards campaign ran during the month of June. The campaign encouraged commuters to sign up for Flextime Rewards. Alerts are sent to the user when heavier-than-normal traffic occurs along the user’s commute route. Upon such notifications, those who delay their commute will receive rewards points, equivalent to \$8 per delayed trip.

Accumulated points may be exchanged for cash (check, PayPal, or Venmo), Visa gift cards, SmarTrip or Capital Bikeshare fare, up to \$600 per person.

Target Audiences

- SOV drivers on the following corridors starting July 1, 2023:
 - I-95 North and South at VA-123/Exit 160
 - BW Parkway North at Powder Mill Road
 - US-301 South at McKendree Road/Cedarville Road
 - I-495 Inner Loop at the I-270 spur
 - DC-295 heading southbound at East Capitol Street
- Any SOV or Alternative Transportation Commuters

Costs from the Flextime Rewards media buy and associated impressions are below:

Flextime Rewards Budget	Gross Cost	COG Cost	Estimated Impressions
WTOP.com	\$9,411.76	\$8,000	533,333
CausalIQ	\$8,235.29	\$7,000	1,555,555
Totals	\$17,647.06	\$15,000	2,088,888

Digital Banner Ads

A variety of digital banner ads ran on WTOP.com and the CausallQ network.



Social Media

Social media posts and images were created and used on COG's Facebook and Instagram social media accounts.



APPENDIX A
Performance Measures

Web Visits

Month	FY 2023 Web Visits	FY 2024 Web Visits	+/-	+/- %
January	6,632	7,968	1,336	20.1%
February	7,942	12,879	4,937	62.2%
March	12,070	11,878	(192)	-1.6%
April	10,509	9,417	(1,092)	-10.4%
May	8,086	8,693	607	7.5%
June				
	45,239	50,835	5,596	12.4%

Phone Calls

Month	FY 2023 Phone Calls	FY 2024 Phone Calls	+/-	+/- %
January	333	372	39	11.7%
February	402	403	1	0.2%
March	359	326	(33)	-9.2%
April	356	332	(24)	-6.7%
May	381	361	(20)	-5.2%
June				
	1,831	1,794	(37)	-2.0%

GRH Applications

Month	GRH FY 2023 Applications	GRH FY 2024 Applications	Change	%
January	240	255	15	6.3%
February	120	224	104	86.7%
March	169	196	27	16.0%
April				
May				
June				
	529	675	146	27.6%

Ridematching Applications

Month	Rideshare FY 2023 Applications	Rideshare FY 2024 Applications	Change	%
January	516	372	-144	-27.9%
February	520	500	-20	-3.8%
March	415	671	256	61.7%
April				
May				
June				
	1,451	1,543	92	6.3%