



FY 2025
Marketing Communications Plan and Schedule Final
September 17, 2024

Mission

Commuter Connections is a regional network of organizations providing commute services and information to area residents and employers in the Washington, DC metropolitan region to help reduce traffic congestion and emissions caused by single occupant vehicles (SOVs).

Overview

As part of the regional mass marketing program element, the Commuter Connections marketing campaigns will provide frequent promotion of ridematching services, Guaranteed Ride Home, 'Pool Rewards, CarpoolNow, Flextime Rewards and CommuterCash. In addition, the program promotes the following special events: Bike to Work Day, Car Free Day, and the Employer Recognition Awards.

These services and special events promote alternative commute options including ridesharing, transit, bicycling, walking, scootering, and teleworking. The FY 2025 marketing program will raise awareness of commuting choices available in the Washington, DC metropolitan region through paid and earned media. The marketing will support Commuter Connections network members in educating area commuters and employers on the benefits of using single occupant vehicle alternatives for work trips and by providing assistance to facilitate such activity. Both work and non-work trips apply to use of the CommuterCash app and participation in the Car Free Day event.

Marketing Input

The background for this marketing brief was derived from the following sources:

- FY 2024 Commuter Connections Applicant Database Annual Placement Survey Report
- 2023 Commuter Connections TDM Analysis Report
- State of the Commute 2022 Survey Report
- 2022 Commuter Connections Guaranteed Ride Home Applicant Survey Report for the Washington DC Region
- 2022 Commuter Connections Guaranteed Ride Home Applicant Survey Report for the Baltimore Region
- 2022 Bike to Work Day Survey Analysis Report

The findings of these reports and surveys help establish the basis for the FY 2025 Marketing Communications Plan. They provide quantitative and qualitative measurement of commute behavior by employees, program applicants, and event participants throughout the metropolitan Washington region, and indicate the impact of these actions on air quality and congestion. Other important inputs include performance data from past campaigns, information gathered through industry reports, surveys, and trends and how they might be applied to the Commuter Connections marketing campaign.

Current Environment

Hybrid work schedules have become ubiquitous for white-collar employees and has changed the region's commuting habits and most dramatically, that of downtown DC, challenging city officials, employers, and commuters to find middle ground solutions that support the health of the economy, environment, mobility, and work/life balance.

A hybrid work format is seen as less of a perk than it used to be and more of an accepted and even expected work/life balance that employees have grown to accept within the post pandemic age. According to a recent governmentwide survey, about 70 percent¹ of all federal employees telework at least occasionally.

For certain weekdays, however, traffic congestion has returned and even surpassed pre-pandemic levels. Traffic congestion persists as those who commute just a couple of days per week are driving alone to the office instead of using more sustainable transportation alternatives.

Free unlimited parking offered by employers coupled with no transit subsidies is a formula for encouraging drive-alone commuting. The DC government aims to circumvent this challenge through a recently enacted law. Known commonly as the Parking Cash Out Law, it dissuades driving alone to work and encourages the use of sustainable transportation. A parking cashout is now a required employer benefit (based on the number of an employer's workforce commuting to the District) where monetary compensation or sustainable transportation benefits are offered to employees in exchange for an employee willing to give up their parking space.

More employees are working from home than before the pandemic, yet unfortunately, commuters traveling into the office just a few times a week are more likely to commute by

¹ Federal Times. Nov. 6, 2023.

single occupant vehicle, even if they took transit pre-pandemic when commuting was an everyday practice.

Excluding telework, the 2022 State of the Commute Survey found that commuters drove alone to work about 78% of the time and alternative modes made up the balance. Respondents took transit for 15% of workdays, and vanpooled or carpooled for 3.3% of workdays.²

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority is feeling the impact of the new hybrid environment, with overall weekday ridership at 78 percent of pre-pandemic levels. While bus ridership has surpassed (101%) 2019 levels, rail is slower to rebound and overall ridership remains down by 35 percent.³

This trend is also having an impact on traffic. In its annual traffic scorecard report, transportation data and analytics firm INRIX found that the continuation of hybrid and remote work has flattened and extended commutes, creating a new “10-to-4” midday rush-hour that’s been in effect since 2020. The number of trips taken during the midday rush-hour has increased by 23 percent since 2019. In addition, the amount of time drivers spend in traffic is also up. Commute times in DC, Maryland, and Virginia increased about 20 percent from 2019 to 2022.

Traffic congestion costs society lost productivity and increases pollution and stress. INRIX reports that in 2023, U.S. drivers lost about 42 hours to congestion, which is equal to \$733 per driver.⁴ Downtown DC has seen a 7 percent increase in trips in 2023 compared to 2022,⁵. The time-wasting inconvenience and cost of traffic is further compounded by a work environment that has left many offices vacant and slowed the growth of local shops and restaurants.

A year after the White House called for federal employees to return to the workplace, the number of workers going into the office in the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria region is at 44 percent of pre-pandemic levels.⁶ A Federal News Network survey in April found that 30 percent of federal employees work entirely remotely, 6 percent work full-time in-person, and 64 percent work on a hybrid schedule.⁷ With fewer commuters and office vacancies, buildings are losing value, potentially costing the city as much as \$474 million in tax revenues from 2024 to

² Commuter Connections. 2022 State of the Commute. Sept. 20, 2022.

³ Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. Metro Ridership Snapshot. May 2024.

⁴ INRIX. New Normal of 10 am to 4 pm Hybrid Work While Congestion Grows Globally. June 25, 2024.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Bloomberg. Washington DC’s Cash Bounty to Wither on Empty Offices, Downtown. April 9, 2024.

⁷ Federal News Network. Survey: Feds question the “why” behind return-to-office push. April 22, 2024.

2026.⁸ Moreover, Washington has among the highest share of office buildings with loans that are at risk of default, adding to the fiscal crisis.

As the District's economic engine struggles, Mayor Bowser has urged the Biden administration to require federal employees to return to the office most days and has called city workers back to the office four days a week. Federal worker unions and the federal government continue to negotiate regarding Work From Home levels.

For those employees who commute to the workplace, there's a strong case to be made for sharing the ride. Supporting transit can reduce congestion and air pollution while benefiting both commuters and the local economy. The 2022 State of the Commute finds that commuters who use alternative modes see the personal benefits in doing so, with more than 30 percent of respondents noting saving money as a top benefit. They also cited benefits with a connection to quality of life, such as getting exercise or another health benefit (20%), avoiding traffic (17%), and helping them avoid stress or relax while commuting (14%). Fourteen percent said they could save time or travel more quickly, and 13% said they could use their travel time productively when they used an alternative mode. Over one in ten said it was a convenient/easy way to travel (11%) and 10% benefited by not needing to find or pay for parking.

In addition to changing where and how we work, the pandemic also changed commuters' awareness of alternative modes of transportation. The 2022 State of the Commute Report Survey found that about 27% of all respondents said they had seen, heard, or read advertising about commuting, a considerably lower percentage than in the 2019 (45%) survey. This is likely due to lower need for such services due to pandemic-forced work from home situations and less exposure to advertising which targeted drivers. Workers who teleworked most or all their workdays would have fewer opportunities to see or hear advertising and likely noticed it less due to its irrelevancy to their work situation at the time. Additionally, such a significant dip in awareness is also due to those transit agencies pausing or reducing the frequency of their alternative commute messaging. Awareness of regional and local commuter assistance services also fell; awareness of Commuter Connections dropped from 48% in 2019 to 40% in 2022.

Commuter Connections has worked to restore awareness of alternative transportation through campaigns that promote the agency's programs, incentives, and annual events. Marketing

⁸ The New York Times. Businesses in D.C. Blame the Government for the District's Empty Offices. May 22, 2024.

efforts have yielded significant results from FY23 to FY24, highlights of which include an increase in CommuterConnections.org website visits by 37 percent.

Marketing Strategies

- Emphasize the cost savings of ridesharing by using simple and direct messages.
- Leverage Commuter Connections' mobile ridematching capabilities to position the brand as the trusted, provider of convenient ridematching services for 50 years.
- Draw on the additional savings of various incentive programs within rideshare ads.
- Position GRH as a safety net for ridesharing and public transportation users, available to commuters in case of unexpected illness, emergencies, or unscheduled overtime.
- Drive inner core, Baltimore City commuters who use public transportation, bicycling, or walking to register for GRH.
- Increase the number of participants in the Car Free Day and Bike to Work Day events.
- Recognize employers for having made a positive difference within the region for implementing workplace programs to help employees choose more sustainable commuting methods.
- Increase the number of downloads and usage of Commuter Connections mobile apps.
- Increase employee participation in the Flextime Rewards program.
- Promote programs to millennials, Spanish-speaking and African American audiences and commuters within equity emphasis areas.
- Celebrate the 50th anniversary of Commuter Connections.
- Re-brand the incenTrip mobile app to CommuterCash.
- Launch new Commuter Connections website.

Digital Media

Paid digital media networks and specific platforms such as Google, YouTube, X, Meta, and LinkedIn will complement the overall campaign. Paid advertising with visuals and video (where applicable) will drive target audiences searching for commuter options, such as carpool/vanpool, etc. to the Commuter Connections' websites. The use of social media influencers to reach new prospects may provide an opportunity to promote Commuter Connections. Utilizing such tactics at key decision-making moments will increase the reach to target audiences and increase the likelihood of click-throughs and ultimately a request for ridematching, GRH, or other programs and services offered. Facebook continues to be the most popular social network and X is an ideal platform for real-time marketing and responses within minutes of an event.

Digital advertising is also visual and closer to one-to-one selling than any other form of media. Optimized placement of banner ads on websites and mobile apps targeted to location, news, weather, television affiliates and job sites may be used to reach commuters who are just a click

away from Commuter Connections' online ridematching service or GRH registration/re-registration.

The marketing team will continue to investigate additional strategies to increase visibility and engagement and integrate social media activities through other marketing approaches. The team will continue to improve mobile access to Commuter Connections resources and commute option information and benefits and explore possibilities to better reach new audiences.

Traditional Media

The marketing effort will effectively and efficiently reach its target markets based on a review and analysis of third-party media data from Strata, Scarborough, and Arbitron as monitored by a professional media buying firm. Reach and frequency of the target demographic will be calculated using a cost/value proposition for each media option. Media buying strategies will be selected based on Scarborough Research reports for specific target audiences for Ridesharing, Guaranteed Ride Home, GRH Baltimore, Employer Awards, Car Free Day, Bike to Work Day, 'Pool Rewards, CarpoolNow, Flextime Rewards and CommuterCash. These reports identify specific media that are best suited for each target audience. The report information is considered along with the cost of each media option and results from previous Commuter Connections campaigns.

Visual creative is important to provide reinforcement of messages delivered through radio spots as well as brand awareness. FY 2025's marketing strategy will include well-placed visuals across the geographical region. Outdoor print such as bus signage and shelters will be evaluated as potential visual elements for the campaign.

Sponsorships

Opportunities will be sought to involve retailers and local businesses in cash sponsorship for Bike to Work Day and prize raffle donations for the Car Free Day event. This aims to identify businesses interested in encouraging the use of more sustainable, healthy transportation and benefiting from the patronage of those commuters.

Creative

Results from prior year campaigns will be studied and best practices will be carried forward to new campaigns. New creative will be developed for the rideshare and GRH spring FY 2025 campaign, and for Bike to Work Day 2025 event, and as needed for other FY 2025 campaigns.

Guaranteed Ride Home Washington, DC Region

Objective: Increase the number of applicants in the GRH database by promoting the commuter support service as a trusted and reliable transportation benefit, eliminating a barrier to using transit, carpooling, vanpooling, bicycling, and walking to work.

Target market (indicated from 2022 Commuter Connections Guaranteed Ride Home Applicant Survey Report for the Washington, DC Region):

- Ages 25-34 (4%), 35-44 (19%), 45-54 (31%), 55-64 (39%)
- Non-Hispanic White (62%), Non-Hispanic Black (20%), Asian (9%), Hispanic (6%)
- Male (54%) and female (46%)
- Annual household income \$60,000+ (96%), \$100,000+ (80%), \$120,000+ (66%), \$160,000+ (42%)
- One-way commute more than 30 miles (63%)/more than 45 minutes (72%)
- Lives in Virginia (57%), Maryland (38%), DC (2%) or another state (3%), with emphasis on Prince William (15%) and Fairfax counties (11%)
- Works in DC (59%), Virginia (22%) and Maryland (19%).

Tactics:

- Target commuters in the metropolitan Washington region and its primary commuter shed.
- Incorporate new and existing digital and social media – Google, social media, streaming TV, influencers, YouTube pre-roll–into the media mix.
- Use radio stations within the region, including those with predominant Hispanic and African American audiences.
- Use TV to visually present the message that’s conveyed in radio spots.
- Incorporate web with print media to increase web traffic and reach a younger demographic.
- Evaluate print and/or transit signage to increase awareness of the GRH program.
- Leverage human interest stories on social media, e.g., a brief video to be used on the Commuter Connections website.
- Update website images to integrate with the campaign.
- Use direct mail as needed.

GRH Washington, DC Region Media Allocation: Approximately 40% of the overall FY25 media budget.

Guaranteed Ride Home Baltimore Region

Target market for Baltimore Metropolitan region (from 2022 Commuter Connections Guaranteed Ride Home Applicant Survey Report for the Baltimore Region):

- Ages 25-34 (9%), 35-44 (20%), 45-54 (25%), 55-64 (39%)
- Non-Hispanic White (52%), Non-Hispanic Black (38%), Asian (6%) and Hispanic (4%).
- Female (62%), male (38%)
- Annual household income \$80,000+ (73%), \$120,000+ (48%), \$160,000+ (22%)
- One-way commute 30+ miles (58%)/more than 45 minutes (52%)
- Lives in Maryland (87%), Virginia (6%), Pennsylvania (1%), New Jersey (0%), DC (1%) Delaware (2%)
- Top home jurisdictions are Harford (21%), Baltimore City (19%), Baltimore County (18%)
- Works in Maryland (91%), DC (8%), Virginia (1%)

Tactics:

- Target commuters in the Baltimore metropolitan statistical area and St. Mary's County in Southern Maryland and exurbs, encouraging them to register for GRH.
- Use new and existing digital media – Google, social media, YouTube pre-roll –as part of the media mix.
- Focus radio advertising on stations serving the Baltimore market, including Hispanic and African American commuters.
- Evaluate digital banner ads and interactive ads geared directly towards generating registrations.
- Incorporate web with print media to increase web traffic and reach a younger demographic.
- Evaluate print and/or transit signage to increase awareness of the GRH program.
- Leverage human interest stories on social media, e.g., short videos shown on the website.
- Update website images to integrate with the campaign.

GRH Baltimore Media Allocation: Approximately 3% of the overall FY25 media budget.

Ridematching

Objectives: Maintain and increase awareness of shared ride modes, retain current ridership on these modes, gain new riders, and gain new applicants to the regional database.

Target market (from FY 2024 Commuter Connections Applicant Database Annual Placement Survey Report):

- 35-64 years old (79%): <35 (16%), 35-44 (28%), 45-54 (27%), 55-64 (24%),
- Female (52%), male (48%)
- Non-Hispanic White (60%), Non-Hispanic Black (20%), Asian/Pacific Islander (10%), Hispanic (7%)
- \$100,000+ annual household income (71%)
- One-way commute of more than 30+ miles (48%)/more than 45 minutes (62%)
- Lives in Virginia (43%) or Maryland (39%); works in DC (49%), Virginia (19%), Maryland (23%)
- Works for employers with more than 100 employees (79%), works for employers with 1,000 or more employees (43%)
- Works for federal agencies (66%), private sector (22%)

Tactics:

- Increase awareness of benefits and ease of ridesharing through radio advertising, including Spanish-speaking and African American radio stations.
- Consider TV as an opportunity to visually present the message that's conveyed in radio spots.
- Use social media and influencers for real-time engagement with commuters.
- Use optimized digital banner ads on select websites to drive users to the Commuter Connections website and/or mobile ridematching service for registration.
- Consider out-of-home components that make a direct connection between commuting options and saving money.
- Provide testimonials of ridesharing success stories and broaden awareness and registrations through public relations/media communications.
- Update website images to integrate with the campaign.
- Use direct mail as needed.

Rideshare Media Allocation: Approximately 40% of the overall FY25 media budget.

CarpoolNow Mobile App

Objectives: Increase knowledge and activity of app use, in turn easing consumer access to ridesharing.

Target Market

- Rideshare demographics.
- Target audience will skew slightly younger as such individuals use mobile apps to a greater extent.

Tactics:

- Use media and public outreach to build awareness of mobile app.
- Focus messaging on promoting the driver cash incentive.
- Leverage Commuter Connections brand equity in the Washington, DC region.
- Promote awareness with influencers and a heavy digital presence to reach potential commuters.
- Evaluate radio for use as a secondary media.
- Use live radio reads to generate additional interest in the program and drive people to the website for more information.
- Explore a video tutorial and optimize the features of the app such as the driver's incentive.
- Value add from the mass marketing campaign may be used to expand the reach of the CarpoolNow Mobile App.
- Promote free passenger trips.

CarpoolNow Mobile App Media Allocation: Approximately 1% of the overall FY25 media budget.

'Pool Rewards

Objectives: Recruit commuters in carpools and vanpools through monetary incentives.

Target Market

- Rideshare demographics.
- Target will skew slightly younger to reach a more thrift-conscious audience.

Tactics:

- Use media and public outreach to build awareness of the program and incentives.
- Use the cash incentive as the primary message. Additional messaging will promote environmental/health benefits of ridesharing.
- Focus on Facebook and Instagram ads that promote awareness. Optimized digital banner ads may also be used.
- Evaluate radio as a secondary media.
- Tie 'Pool Rewards eligibility to Rideshare messages. For example, "...interested in Ridesharing? Earn 'Pool Rewards cash..."
- Investigate TV and live radio reads to generate additional interest in the program and drive people to the website for more information.
- Use value add from the mass marketing campaign to expand the reach of 'Pool Rewards.
- Consider opportunities to expand into Spanish radio.
- Promote the 'Pool Rewards bonus offer for those traveling through the I-495 Northern Extension corridor during construction of the 495 NEXT expanded Express Lanes project, scheduled to open late 2025. The VDOT offers provide a \$100 in extra 'Pool Rewards payout above the standard \$130 for each carpool participant, for a total of \$230.

'Pool Rewards Media Allocation: Approximately 1.25% of the overall FY25 media budget.

Flexitime Rewards

Objectives: Increase knowledge and participation in the program; help reduce peak traffic congestion by alerting commuters of flexitime options.

Target Market

- Workers with flexitime and telework availability.
- Younger demographics, 35 years old and younger.

Tactics:

- Use media and public outreach to build awareness of the program.
- Promote awareness by leveraging social media.
- Evaluate radio for use as a secondary media with a focus on radio talent to help personalize the promotions.
- Integrate Flexitime Rewards marketing into the Commuter Connections website.
- Promote Flexitime Rewards as part of the CommuterCash app.

Flexitime Rewards Media Allocation: Approximately 1% of the overall FY25 media budget.

CommuterCash Mobile App – Commuter Connections Program

Objectives: CommuterCash will address congestion, reduce energy use, and reduce emissions while improving multimodal transportation system performance along congested corridors. A key benefit of CommuterCash is the development of personalized and dynamic incentives that vary based on individual preferences and real-time traffic conditions, which significantly improve the cost effectiveness of traveler incentives.

Target Market

- Commuters working in the metropolitan Washington region, including those from the Richmond region who commute one-way an average of 17.1 miles and an average of 43 minutes.
- General public, employers, and media outlets.

Tactics:

- Implement a marketing initiative for the re-branded launch that will ask commuters to download and use the CommuterCash app.
- The marketing initiative will include, but not be limited to, radio, internet, newsprint, educational video, SEO blog posts, venue, mobile, social media and text ads.
- Update the website and social media pages to feature promotional activities and point based incentive.
- Use media placements, including value-added placements, to reach the target markets.
- Promote earning rewards points for cash, PayPal, Visa cards, SmartBenefits, and E-ZPass.
- Promote CommuterCash for employers that up a companywide employee challenge through a customized dashboard.

CommuterCash (Commuter Connections) Media Allocation: Approximately 3% of the overall FY25 media budget.

CommuterCash Mobile App – MDOT Program

Objectives: CommuterCash will help reduce congestion, energy use and emissions while improving multimodal transportation system performance along designated congested corridors. A key benefit of CommuterCash is the development of personalized and dynamic incentives that vary based on individual preferences and real-time traffic conditions, which significantly improve the cost effectiveness of traveler incentives.

Target Market

- Commuters working in Maryland outside of the metropolitan Washington region (i.e., all jurisdictions in Maryland except for Prince George’s, Montgomery, Charles, and Calvert counties).
- Smaller-urban areas throughout the state such as Cumberland, Hagerstown, Salisbury, and the outskirts of Wilmington.
- General public, employers, and media.

Tactics:

- Implement a marketing initiative for the launch that will ask commuters to download and use the CommuterCash app.
- The marketing initiative will include, but not be limited to, radio, internet, newsprint, educational video, SEO blog posts, mobile, social media, and text ads.
- Update the website and social media pages to feature promotional activities and rewards based incentives. Use media placements, including value-added placements, to reach the target markets.
- Design and coordinate the marketing effort with the input of MDOT staff.
- Promote earning points for cash, PayPal, Visa cards, SmartBenefits, and E-ZPass incentives to travelers who use CommuterCash.

CommuterCash (MDOT) Media Allocation: Approximately 3% of the overall FY25 media budget.

Special Events

Objectives: Use Bike to Work Day, Car Free Day, and the Employer Awards events to highlight existing programs and encourage other employers and commuters to become involved, increase their ridership, or enhance commuter benefits programs. Increase participation in Bike to Work Day and Car Free Day, and also in employer nominations for the awards program.

Target Markets:

- Car Free Day 2024 (from 2022 Car Free Day Survey)
 - The target audience for this campaign is the car-driving population of the metropolitan Washington region and includes SOV drivers and may include commuters, residents, and students.
- Bike to Work Day 2024 (from 2022 Bike To Work Survey Analysis Report): Ages 25-55 (61%), 25-34 (14%), 35-44 (25%), 45-54 (22%), 55-64 (26%)
 - Male 65% and female 35%.
 - Caucasian 82%, Hispanic (6%), Asian (5%), African American (4%)
 - Annual household income \$80,000+ (86%), \$100,000+ (79%), \$120,000+ (69%), \$160,000+ (51%)
 - Works for federal agency (36%), private sector (35%), nonprofit (18%)
 - Lives in VA (45%), DC (27%), and MD (28%)
 - Lives in Montgomery (20%), Fairfax (18%), Arlington (13%)
 - Works in DC (48%), VA (32%), and MD (20%)
 - Works for employer size of more than 100 employees (62%), 1,000+ (31%)
- Employer Recognition Awards 2024:
 - Level 3 & 4 employers in the Commuter Connections Network area.

Tactics:

Car Free Day (CFD) September 23, 2024:

- Secure prize sponsors with a focus on consumer retailers.
- Tie-in the CommuterCash mobile app and promote the bonus points that can be realized if using the app to go car free or car-lite on CFD.
- Promote CarpoolNow mobile app.
- Focus on teleworking and vanpool in addition to family-friendly messaging.
- Explore teaming with media channels to promote and cover local events.
- Expand digital and social media, explore video ads, digital radio, digital video and YouTube as primary media.
- Evaluate using radio personalities and key influencers through on-air and online/social media communications to increase awareness the Car Free Day event and generate pledge-takers.
- Provide marketing collateral such as flyers.

- Use transit/outdoor signage (bus exterior and bus shelter ads).
- Use text messaging to opt-in participants.
- Send mailing to employers.
- Send email blasts to past participants, opt-in customer database, employers and committee members.
- Engage Transportation Planning Board members through regional proclamation and encourage jurisdictional partners to do the same.
- Increase University Challenge participation through campus commuter programs, green groups, clubs, media, and RA Directors.
- Create friendly challenges between universities and workplaces for most pledges.
- Complement paid digital and social media with a strong earned media plan as well as outreach to employers, schools, and key influencers like bloggers and podcasters.
- Send an email after the event to all of those who took the pledge, offering congratulations, appreciation, and a list of the benefits of going Car Free or Car Lite, along with a link to the Commuter Connections website for more information on programs to sustain a car free lifestyle.
- Produce newsletter articles.
- Increase the number of pledges beyond 2023 event.
- Include a daily pledge leaderboard by mode on the website.

Bike to Work Day (BTWD) May 2025:

- Secure corporate and other sponsorships.
- Use an integrated mix of radio, social media, and digital display advertising to boost registration.
- Provide additional marketing collateral and advertising including t-shirts, flyers, posters, and rack cards.
- Should additional sponsor dollars become available, provide additional marketing such as pit stop banners.
- Send mailing to employers.
- Send email blasts to past participants, opt-in customer database, employers and committee members.
- Use earned media to reach minorities and women.
- Engage Transportation Planning Board members through regional proclamation and encourage jurisdictional partners to do the same.
- Meet the goal set by the committee.

Employer Recognition Awards

- Coordinate the Employer Recognition Awards ceremony, June 2025.
- Provide brochure/online nomination form in support of the nomination process
- Send email blast to potential nominees.

- Include marketing collateral for the event such as invitations, program brochure, podium sign, and promotional giveaways.
- Place a print advertisement in a major business publication(s) highlighting winning employers.
- Secure earned media for the event and winners.

Special Events Media Allocation: Approximately 7.5% of the FY25 overall media budget: 4% for BTWD, 3% for CFD, and 0.5% for the Employer Recognition Awards event.

Employer Outreach

Objectives: Add new level 3 & 4 employer clients, expand participation and offerings in existing employer programs, recognize existing employers who have implemented successful commuter benefits programs, increase the number of employers offering the tax-free commute benefits, increase use of SmarBenefits offered through employer programs as well as other TDM strategies such as telework, flextime, and ridematching.

Target Market (from FY 2024 Commuter Connections Applicant Database Annual Placement Survey Report):

- Employers with more than 250 employees (64%).
- Private sector employers (22%).

Tactics:

- Update web content as required.
- Update social media applications (e.g., Facebook) for telework.
- Produce quarterly employer newsletter.
- Provide images and logos to support Commuter Connections programs for use in network member newsletters and correspondence.
- Send email marketing.
- Develop Employer case studies.

Employer Outreach Media Allocation: 0% of media budget.

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FY 2025 Creative Development Schedule

Develop Marketing Communications Plan and Schedule	Aug 2024
Review research and results from previous campaigns	Aug 2024
Feedback on Marketing Communications Plan and Schedule	Aug 2024
Present creative approach at the Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting	Sept 2024
Present visual creative concepts to Regional TDM Marketing Workgroup & State TDM Workgroup	Oct 2024
Refine and develop creative based on all feedback; finalize creative	Nov 2024
Produce creative	Dec 2024
Distribute creative to media vendors	Jan 2025
New campaign launch	Feb 2025

FY 2025 Marketing Campaign Schedule

Car Free Day	Sept 2024
Fall Campaign (GRH & Rideshare)	Oct – Dec 2024
CommuterCash / Flextime Rewards*	Oct – Nov 2024
Spring Campaign (GRH & Rideshare)	Feb – June 2025
'Pool Rewards	March 2025
CarpoolNow Mobile Application	April 2025
Bike to Work Day	Apr – May 2025
Employer Awards	June 2025

*The Flextime Rewards campaign may be postponed to spring 2025 if functionality is not ready in the fall of 2024.