



**Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments**

**FY22 Second Half  
Marketing Campaign Summary  
Draft Report**

**Regional TDM Marketing Group**

**March 15, 2022**

**FY22 Second Half  
Marketing Campaign Summary**

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## Executive Summary

### Overview

This document summarizes Commuter Connections' FY22 marketing activity occurring between January and June 2022. Commuter Connections began Phase II of its Regional TDM Recovery Mass Marketing Campaign in January for Rideshare and in February for Guaranteed Ride Home.

### COVID

During the onset of calendar year 2022, the Omicron variant was pervasive, being highly contagious and affected the vaccinated and unvaccinated populous. Thankfully, Omicron symptoms are generally milder than the previous Delta variant outbreak, and the strain is far less deadly. Omicron spread rapidly within the region, peaking in January 2022. By February, cases, hospitalizations, and deaths fell as precipitously as they rose. This prompted some non-federal employers who still had a fulltime remote workforce, to begin returning employees to the workplace, at least in a hybrid fashion.

A federal mandate via executive order required companies with 100 or more employees to ensure that all employees were fully vaccinated. The mandate was challenged in the federal court system and in January 2022 was subsequently struck down as unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court, with the exception of healthcare workers. Regardless, federal employees, including the military and federal contractors, are still required to be vaccinated. As of present, most federal employees are still working remotely fulltime, and masks are still required on public transit.

### Regional TDM Recovery Campaign

Phase II of the Regional TDM Recovery Campaign launched in January 2022. The original campaign's "Look Again" theme continued to promote ridematching to help commuters find carpool partners and seats in vanpools. A secondary message encourages Guaranteed Ride Home registrations. Lastly, the campaign highlighted other alternative modes of transportation and is geared to workers returning to the office. The FY22 second half media buy is \$428,300; \$305,900 for Rideshare and \$122,400 for GRH. GRH Baltimore is \$49,900.

### Bike To Work Day

Commuter Connections concluded its Bike to Work Day 2022 event sponsorship drive at the end of January 2022, securing \$45,950 in cash and \$9,250 in in-kind donations. The website and online registration launched March 1, 2022. The media buy for the Bike to Work Day marketing campaign is currently under development and the 21<sup>st</sup> annual regional event will be held on May 20, 2022.

### Employer Recognition Awards

2022 marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Employer Recognition Awards program which pays virtue to employers within the region who initiated outstanding worksite commute benefits and/or telework programs to assist employees. The nomination period concluded at the end of January 2022, the Selection Committee meeting will take place in March, and winners will be honored at a ceremony on June 28, 2022. The media buy for the Employer Recognition Awards print ad is \$7,500.

### Incentive Programs

Marketing campaigns for incenTrip, CarpoolNow, and 'Pool Rewards will roll out in late spring 2022 and are currently in development.

## Introduction

The following reports were assessed as part of the planning process to help shape creative approaches and media selection during the second half of FY22. 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 racial/ethnic backgrounds of its members and the region's overall employed population.

- 2021 Commuter Connections Applicant Database Annual Placement Survey Report
- 2020 Commuter Connections TDM Analysis Report (FY18–FY20)
- 2019 Commuter Connections State of the Commute Survey Report
- 2019 Commuter Connections Guaranteed Ride Home Applicant Survey Report for the Washington, DC Region
- 2019 Commuter Connections Guaranteed Ride Home Applicant Survey Report for the Baltimore Region
- 2019 Commuter Connections Bike to Work Survey Analysis Report

The second half of FY22 included the following activities:

- Regional Recovery Campaign Phase II implementation
- Bike to Work Day
- Employer Recognition Awards
- Newsletters (Winter and Spring 2022)
- Regional TDM Marketing Group meetings (March and June 2022)
- Incentive Programs

## About Commuter Connections

Commuter Connections is a network of transportation organizations coordinated at a 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 Washington, DC metropolitan area. 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 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 services and solutions for more than 45 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.



## Regional Recovery Campaign: Phase II

Phase II the FY22 Regional Recovery Campaign was launched in January 2022. The campaign's "Look Again" theme continued to promote ridematching to help commuters find carpool and vanpool partners. Newly developed creative assets for Guaranteed Ride Home incorporated a similar message by calling on commuters to "Take A Look" and register or re-register for the free emergency ride home service.

The costs of the Phase II Regional TDM Recovery Campaign media buys and known media impressions at this time are documented in the tables below:

Recovery Campaign Ridesharing Budget	Gross Cost	COG Cost	Estimated Impressions
WTOP (newsletter)	\$3,529.00	\$3,000.00	100,000
PoPville 1	\$763.00	\$649.00	2,500
Facebook	\$750.00	\$750.00	NA
Instagram	\$750.00	\$750.00	NA
YouTube	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	NA
Tik Tok 1	\$588.00	\$500.00	10,000
El Zol	\$29,410.00	\$24,999.00	500,000
PoPville 2	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	5,000
NBC4	\$88,237.00	\$75,000.00	1,000,000
Instagram	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	NA
WFED	\$6,960.00	\$5,916.00	100,000
WHUR	\$33,960.00	\$28,866.00	800,000
WPGC	\$29,420.00	\$25,007.00	1,800,000
WTOP	\$76,490.00	\$65,016.50	1,500,000
Tik Tok 2	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	NA
YouTube	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	NA
WTOP.com	\$9,412.00	\$8,000.00	940,000
WAFY	\$17,650.00	\$15,002.50	150,000
WVEG	\$17,645.00	\$14,998.25	X
WFRE	\$17,640.00	\$14,994.00	175,000
WBQB	\$15,830.00	\$13,455.50	175,000
LinkedIn	\$2,490.00	\$2,490.00	NA
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$358,024.00</b>	<b>\$305,893.75</b>	<b>7,257,500+</b>

<b>Recovery Campaign GRH Budget</b>	<b>Gross Cost</b>	<b>COG Cost</b>	<b>Estimated Impressions</b>
Instagram	\$1,500	\$1,500	NA
El Zol	\$20,600	\$17,510	450,000
PoPville	\$1,529	\$1,300	5,000
FNN	\$3,000	\$3,000	100,000
WFED	\$11,910	\$10,123.50	100,000
WHUR	\$25,110	\$21,344	700,000
WPGC	\$19,200	\$16,320	1,500,000
TikTok	-	-	TBD
YouTube	\$1,000	\$1,000	NA
WAFY	\$17,670	\$15,019.50	150,000
WFRE	\$20,750	\$17,637.50	175,000
WAMU	\$16,685	\$16,685	1,375,000
LinkedIn	\$1,000	\$1,000	NA
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$139,354</b>	<b>\$122,439.50</b>	<b>4,555,000+</b>

<b>Recovery Campaign GRH Baltimore Budget</b>	<b>Gross Cost</b>	<b>COG Cost</b>	<b>Estimated Impressions</b>
WPOC	\$29,350	\$24,948	250,000
WBAL	\$29,400	\$24,990	300,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$58,750</b>	<b>\$49,938</b>	<b>550,000+</b>



**Rideshare Added Value Summary**

Below is a summary of Rideshare added value placements which were negotiated with various media partners.

<b>Media Partner</b>	<b>Added Value</b>	<b>Estimated Value</b>
WTOP.com	Extra impressions	\$1,600
WFRE	50 :30 spots	\$2,400
WPGC	60 :30 spots	\$7,650
WHUR	30 :30 spots	\$6,000
WAFY	96 :10s, 60 :15s, 48 :30 spots plus banners	\$5,500
WFED	36 :30 spots	\$4,680
WTOP	30 :30 spots	\$10,500
NBC4	Autofill	\$7,500
WWEG	96 :10s, 60 :15s, 48 :30 spots plus banners	\$5,500
WBQB	30 :30 spots	\$1,950
TikTok	3 additional videos	\$300
EI Zol	60 :30 spots	\$4,800
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$58,380</b>

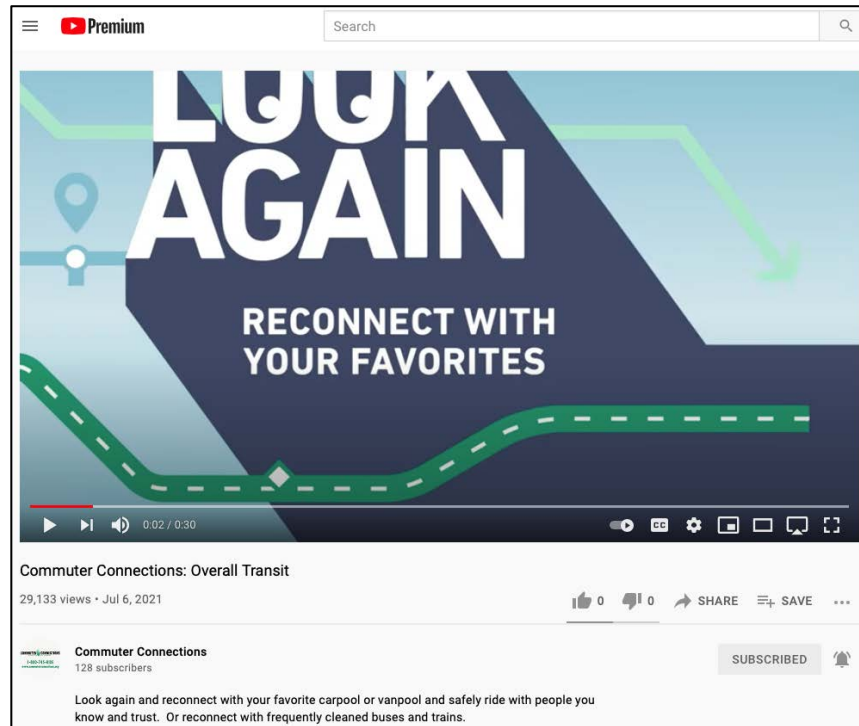
### Guaranteed Ride Home Added Value Summary

Below is a summary of the Guaranteed Ride Home added value placements that were negotiated with various media partners.

Media Partner	Added Value	Estimated Value
WPOC	50 :30 spots	\$5,000
WPGC	50 :30 spots	\$6,400
WHUR	25 :30 spots	\$5,000
WAFY	80 :10s, 50 :15s, 40 :30 spots plus banners	\$4,500
WFED	30 :30 spots	\$3,900
WAMU	250,000 additional imps (minimum)	\$10,000
FNN	bonus 400x250 banners	\$3,500
WBAL	50 :30 spots	\$6,625
El Zol	50 :30 spots	\$4,000
WFRE	50 :30 spots	\$2,400
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$51,325</b>


## YouTube Video (Rideshare)

A :30-second animated video created for the first phase of the Regional Recovery campaign will run again as paid advertising on YouTube. The video touches on commuting by carpool, bus, and train.

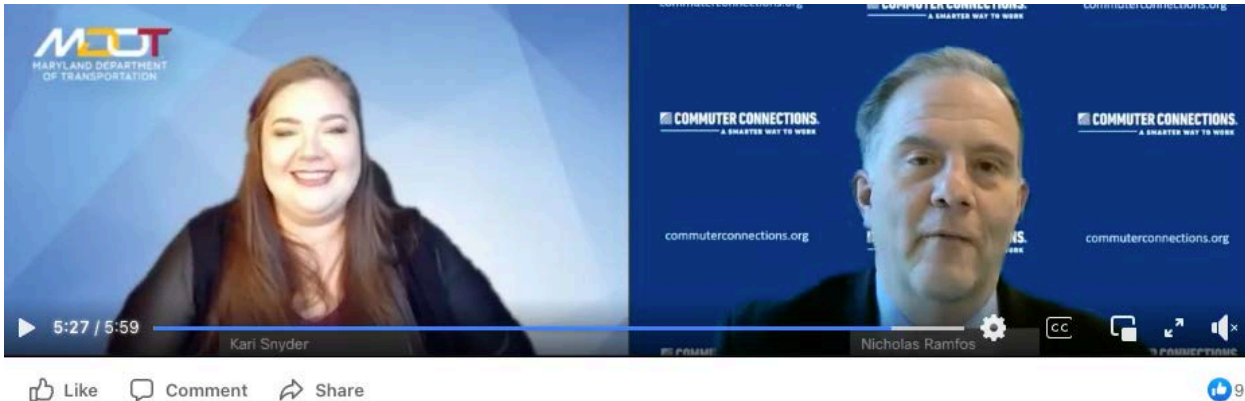


## Live Video (Rideshare)

A new short-form video discussion series “Commute with Confidence”, was launched in February, hosted by Nicholas Ramfos, Commuter Connections Director. These short videos discuss how as a region and as individuals the commute can be navigated with confidence. In the debut episode, Nicholas spoke with Kari Snyder, Maryland Department of Transportation Regional Planner, and Commuter Connections Subcommittee Chair. The second video was with Pam Sebesky, Vice Mayor, City of Manassas and TPB Chair. The purpose of the discussion series is to engage the public on the importance of mobility options as commuters begin returning to the office.



The banner features the title "COMMUTE WITH CONFIDENCE DISCUSSION SERIES" in large, bold, blue letters on a light blue background. Below the title, a dark blue bar contains the text "Visit [commuterconnections.org](https://commuterconnections.org) or call 1.800.745.RIDE." and the "COMMUTER CONNECTIONS. A SMARTER WAY TO WORK" logo. A red calendar icon with the number "10" is on the left. Below the banner, the text "TOMORROW AT 12:30 PM" is in red, followed by the event title "Commute With Confidence Live Discussion" and "Facebook Live". A "Watch live video" button is on the right. A notification box below states: "The live video hasn't started. You'll be able to watch the live video when the event host goes live."



The screenshot shows a Facebook Live video player with two participants. On the left is Kari Snyder, with the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) logo in the background. On the right is Nicholas Ramfos, with the Commuter Connections logo in the background. The video progress bar shows 5:27 / 5:59. Below the video are "Like", "Comment", and "Share" buttons, and a notification icon with the number "9".

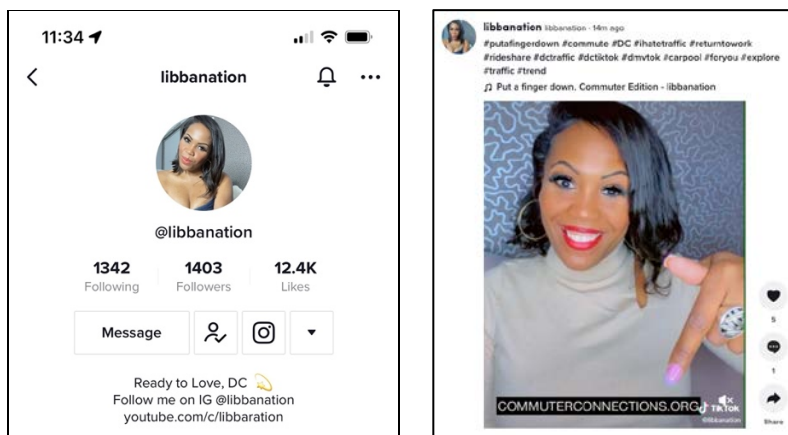
## Social Media (Rideshare/Transit)

A series of “Look Again” social media posts (animated and static) were created for the Regional Recovery Campaign and placed onto Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.



## TikTok

A new tactic employed for the Rideshare campaign was partnering with a TikTok influencer to create a buzz on the popular social media platform. This video introduced Commuter Connections to followers of libbanation, a popular DC vlogger.



## Radio

Radio served as the main media component for the Regional Recovery Phase II Campaign. Thirty and 15-second Rideshare spots, previously developed for Phase I, began airing again in January 2022. New spots for Guaranteed Ride Home were produced for Phase II and began airing in February. Both Rideshare and GRH radio also aired in Spanish.

### Rideshare Scripts & Stations

#### **:30 Second Carpool/Vanpool Radio Script**

Reconnect with a carpool or vanpool and ride with people you know and trust—safely. By forming a commute circle with your rideshare group, and following current safety guidelines, you can enjoy your favorite way to get to work in a safe manner. For more ways to ride safely to and from work, visit [Commuter Connections Dot Org](http://CommuterConnectionsDotOrg) or call 1.800.745.RIDE. That's [Commuter Connections Dot Org](http://CommuterConnectionsDotOrg) or 1.800.745.RIDE.

#### **:15 Ridesharing - Carpool/Vanpool**

Reconnect with a carpool or vanpool and ride with people you know and trust—safely. Enjoy your favorite way to commute once again with your rideshare group. For more ways to stay safe, healthy and happy to and from work, visit [Commuter Connections Dot Org](http://CommuterConnectionsDotOrg) or call 1.800.745.RIDE.



## Guaranteed Ride Home Scripts & Stations

### :30 Second Guaranteed Ride Home Radio Script

Returning to the office but worried about getting stuck? Relax – we got you! Commute with confidence when you sign up for Guaranteed Ride Home from Commuter Connections. Take a look! If you rideshare to work, you're eligible for a free ride in case of illness, unexpected emergencies or unscheduled overtime – guaranteed! Register or renew today for free at [commuterconnections.org](http://commuterconnections.org) or 800.745.RIDE. That's [commuterconnections.org](http://commuterconnections.org). Some restrictions apply.

### :15 Second Guaranteed Ride Home Radio Script

Take a look! If you rideshare to work, you can get free guaranteed rides home in case of illness, unexpected emergencies or unscheduled overtime. All free! Register today at [commuterconnections.org](http://commuterconnections.org) or call 800.745.RIDE. Some restrictions apply.



## Guaranteed Ride Home Baltimore Radio Stations

The same 15 and 30-second newly produced radio spots for Guaranteed Ride Home in the Washington, DC region also aired on two Baltimore market stations in February 2022.



## Digital Banner Ads

Digital banner ads were placed to promote the message of the Recovery campaign and will appear on multiple websites.

**LOOK AGAIN**

- FOLLOW COVID GUIDELINES
- ENJOY THE RIDE, TOGETHER

**A SAFE WAY TO RIDESHARE**

**COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.**  
A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

**TAKE A LOOK**

**GET A FREE GUARANTEED RIDE HOME!**

**SHARE THE RIDE, SKIP THE WORRY.**

- ILLNESS
- UNEXPECTED EMERGENCIES
- UNSCHEDULED OVERTIME

Some restrictions apply

**COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.**  
A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

**LOOK AGAIN**

**A SAFE WAY TO RIDESHARE**

FOLLOW COVID GUIDELINES • ENJOY THE RIDE, TOGETHER

**COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.**  
A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

**GET A FREE GUARANTEED RIDE HOME!**

Some restrictions apply

**TAKE A LOOK**

**SHARE THE RIDE, SKIP THE WORRY.**

**COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.**  
A SMARTER WAY TO WORK



## Newsletter Advertisements

Ads were placed in various local online newsletters to kick off Phase II of the campaign.

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar with links for HOME, ABOUT, ADVERTISE, CATEGORIES, NEWSLETTER, and PATREON. The main header features the PoPville logo (PRINCE OF PETWORTH, Est. 2006) on a green background. Below the header, there are two main content blocks. On the left, under the heading 'DOWNTOWN, RESTAURANTS', is an article titled 'Farewell Note from Cafe Mozart, "We thank you from the bottom of our hearts. We only ask one thing of you, please, visit your small independent businesses."' with a sub-headline 'Prince Of Petworth Today at 11:35am' and a photo of the Cafe Mozart building. On the right is a vertical advertisement for 'LOOK AGAIN' with the text 'A SAFE WAY TO RIDESHARE' and bullet points: 'FOLLOW COVID GUIDELINES' and 'ENJOY THE RIDE, TOGETHER'. At the bottom of the ad is the 'COMMUTER CONNECTIONS' logo with the tagline 'A SHORTER WAY TO WORK'.

This is a vertical screenshot of the 'MORNING FEDERAL REPORT' newsletter from the Federal News Network, dated December 20, 2021. It features several articles: 'DEFENSE: Omicron causes Pentagon Reservation to extend telework', 'FEDERAL REPORT: What's the new state of your 2022 estate?', 'DEFENSE: DoD is likely missing tens of thousands of hazing incidents, watchdog says', 'INSIGHT BY IBM: Expert Edition: Accelerating innovation through public-private partnerships', 'Advertisement: Celebrate 60 Years of the CFC', 'CYBERSECURITY: After turbulent cyber year, agencies enter 2022 with fresh security crisis on hand', 'TOM TEMIN COMMENTARY: We take notice of what you like to read', and 'Advertisement: Reconnect with a carpool and ride safely'.

This is a vertical screenshot of 'THE FEDERAL REPORT' newsletter from the Federal News Network, dated January 05, 2022. It features several articles: 'DEFENSE: For DoD, solving spectrum sharing is a matter of national, economic security', 'FEDERAL REPORT: Got a best age to retire in mind? If not, maybe you should!', 'ADVERTISEMENT: Join Us In Putting People First In 2022', 'CYBERSECURITY: Here's how DHS's risk center responds to threats like ransomware', 'INSIGHT BY PING IDENTITY: The Evolution of ICAM Strategy in a Hybrid World', and 'ADVERTISEMENT: Reconnect with a carpool and ride safely'. It also includes a 'RECOVERY' advertisement featuring a man in a suit.

## Bike to Work Day

In January, Commuter Connections concluded its annual sponsorship drive for the 2022 Bike to Work Day event. A total of \$54,000 (\$45,950 cash/\$8,050 in-kind) was raised, representing both new and returning sponsors. Registration for Bike to Work Day 2022 launched on March 1, 2022.

**BIKE TO WORK DAY 2022**

**Friday, May 20**

**FREE EVENT - REGISTER AT [BikeToWorkMetroDC.org](http://BikeToWorkMetroDC.org)**

Pre-register by May 13 for Free T-Shirt\* + Bike Raffle.  
Free refreshments + giveaways at participating locations, while supplies last.

Working from home? No problem!  
Bike to your local "pit stop" for your free T-shirt and back home again.

**SPONSORS:**

- URBANSTEMS
- ICF
- BILTON LAW FIRM
- City Dental DC
- VERRA
- NATIONAL LANDFILL
- Bike Arlington
- BICYCLE SPACE
- FAIR LAKES
- AASHIO
- BIKES@VIENNA
- GIANT
- MDOT
- VDOT
- goDCgo
- THREE WHEEL CYCLES
- VISIONZERO
- SLIP ALERT SAFE
- BLUEJACKET

Register free at [BIKETOWORKMETRODC.ORG](http://BIKETOWORKMETRODC.ORG)  
800.745.7433

Visit [biketoworkmetrodc.org](http://biketoworkmetrodc.org) for pit stop locations and times.  
\*T-Shirts available at pit stops to first 15,000 registrants.  
Pit stops in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia!

Bike to Work Day is funded by DDOT, MDOT, VDOT, and USDOT.

#BTWD2022

bike to work day 2022

## Employer Recognition Awards

The Employer Recognition Awards program honors employers who initiated outstanding worksite commute benefits and/or telework programs to assist their employees. FY22 marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this prestigious event. Self-mailers with a loose application form were sent in late November to more than 3,200 level 3 & 4 employee transportation coordinators, level 3 & 4 executive level contacts, and Chambers of Commerce throughout the region. The printing and postage cost for the mailing was \$3,180. PDFs of the materials were also made available online. The 2022 awards nomination period ended January 31, 2022, and the Selection Committee will meet in March. Winners will be honored on June 28, 2022 at a ceremony to be held at the National Press Club.



# Nomination Brochure

**COMMUTER CONNECTIONS** | A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
777 North Capital Street, NE, Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20002

PRESORTED  
FIRST CLASS  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Permit No. 9770  
Washington D.C.

**25 YEARS**

**2022 EMPLOYER RECOGNITION AWARDS**

Apply now for the 2022 Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards.

# 25 YEARS

**2022 EMPLOYER RECOGNITION AWARDS**

HONORING EMPLOYERS WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE!

### About the organizations

**Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments**

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MCOG) is an association of 24 local governments in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. MCOG's National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board is a forum for addressing and coordinating regional transportation programs.

Please visit [mwcog.org](http://mwcog.org) for more info.

**Commuter Connections**

A program of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board, Commuter Connections is a regionwide transportation information, outreach, and service network dedicated to easing the workday commute and reducing the number of single-occupant vehicles. Free information, incentive programs, and assistance on services including ridesharing, public transit, teleworking, bicycling, park & ride lots, HOV lanes, and Guaranteed Ride Home is available for both employers and commuters.

Commuter Connections is funded by the District, Maryland, Virginia, and U.S. Departments of Transportation, with state and federal transportation funds.

Please visit [commuterconnections.org](http://commuterconnections.org) or call 800.745.7433 for more info.

### Easing the way for what's to follow

Ridesharing, commuting by public transportation, bicycling, walking, or teleworking contribute to less traveled roads. That often means smoother, easier, and faster commutes, and a reduction in harmful vehicle emissions.

### Opening new doors... and getting in

Commuter Connections encourages area businesses and commuters to discover innovative ways to reduce the number of single-occupant vehicles on the road.

The Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards acknowledges employers who initiate or improve programs encouraging commuting alternatives. Companies who implement these programs and services make a difference to their organization, employees, local community, and the region.

Awards are given in the following categories:

**INCENTIVES**  
Offering a host of commuter incentives to encourage and reward employees for using alternative means of transportation to and from work.

**MARKETING**  
Educating about and championing for the use of alternative transportation options by frequently promoting available commuter programs to employees in creative and effective ways.

**TELEWORK**  
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.

Has your organization made a difference in any of the following areas? If so, apply now.

**AIR ALERTS**  
Providing free e-mail Alerts from Clean Air Partners about forecasted unhealthy Code Orange/Red days to encourage employees to improve air quality by teleworking, bicycling, walking, ridesharing, or taking transit.

**BICYCLING AND WALKING**  
Providing bike racks, fruit stations, lockers, and/or shower facilities for bicyclists and walkers. Offering a direct monthly bicycle benefit for purchases, improvement, repair, or storage.

**CLEAN ENERGY VEHICLES**  
Providing electric car charging stations, or a company fleet of clean energy vehicles or hybrids.

**DISCOUNTED MEMBERSHIPS**  
Offering discount memberships to nearby gyms, bikesharing, and/or carsharing services.

**GUARANTEED RIDE HOME**  
Promoting and/or supplementing Commuter Connections' free emergency ride home program for employees during unexpected personal or family emergencies/illnesses, or unscheduled overtime.

**PARKING STRATEGIES**  
Offering reduced parking fees and/or preferred parking spaces for carpools and vanpools.

**RIDESHARING**  
Promoting Commuter Connections' free Ridematching services for carpools and vanpools, or providing your own on-site employee ridesharing service.

**TELEWORKING**  
Providing management support, training, and technology to enable employees to work from home, a remote office, or co-working space, either on a part-time, full-time, or occasional basis.

**TRANSIT AND VANPOOLS**  
Offering monthly transit and vanpool pre-tax or direct benefits, through SmartBenefits®. Providing shuttle services to and from the workplace and transit stations.

**WORK SCHEDULE ALTERNATIVES**  
Offering flexible or staggered start and end times, or compressed work week schedules, such as 4 days/40 hours, or 9 days/80 hours.

# 25 YEARS

**2022 EMPLOYER RECOGNITION AWARDS**

2022 Employer Recognition Awards

### A bit about last year's winners:

**MARKETING**

**GEICO**  
Chevy Chase, MD

GEICO is one of the fastest-growing auto insurers, holding more than 18 million policies nationwide and covering over 28 million autos. GEICO employs more than 3,100 in the region and matches employee contributions to Metro's SmartBenefits, up to \$110 per month. The company is a short walk from the Metrorail station and encourages commuting by bicycle. GEICO has provided bike education classes to its employees; and has installed numerous bike racks, lockers, and showers.

GEICO promotes its commuter benefits program to employees through new hire orientations, bi-annual benefits fairs, intranet, email, and brochures within the cafeteria and break rooms. GEICO also partners with Montgomery County Commuter Services to promote participation in annual events such as the Walk and Ride Challenge and Bike to Work Day. Through marketing of its commuter programs to employees, GEICO has helped reduce employee vehicle miles by 1,384,000 and save 62,919 gallons of gasoline annually.

**INCENTIVES**

**NIAD**  
Rockville, MD

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease (NIAD) is part of the National Institutes of Health and advances infectious disease research to improve public health. NIAD offers a variety of commuter incentives, including carpool and vanpool parking, electric vehicle charging stations, secure bike parking, a bike trail, and showers and lockers. It offers employee health and wellness classes, fitness areas, and other on-site amenities that encourage employees to stay on campus throughout the workday.

Of its 4,500 employees in the region, 40 percent telework up to eight days a month, supported by NIAD's flexible scheduling. NIAD is within walking distance to a Metrorail station and 37 percent of employees receive a transportation subsidy up to the federal limit. As a result of its various commuter benefits and amenities, NIAD has saved an average of 11,700,000 employee vehicle miles and an estimated 524,000 gallons of gasoline annually.


**TELEWORK**

**ASHA**  
Rockville, MD

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) is a national organization with 218,000 members and affiliates made up of pathologists, audiologists, scientists, and students. Since 2004, ASHA has grown its telework program from one of every six employees to one of every two employees teleworking up to 66 percent of their total workdays.

In response to the pandemic, ASHA pivoted to an entirely remote workforce and provided laptops, monitors, and desk chairs; plus employees were given \$500 to purchase home-office supplies. ASHA's "Wellbeing Navigator" provided ergonomic sessions so employees could maintain comfort within a home/office setting. The organization has also maintained a flextime program that allows staff to manage their individual work schedule arrangements. ASHA's telework and work schedule alternatives programs have helped reduce employee vehicle miles by 700,450 and save 31,848 gallons of gasoline annually.

# Nomination Form



Please apply with this form or apply online at [commuterconnections.org/employer-recognition-awards](http://commuterconnections.org/employer-recognition-awards)

**Eligibility**  
Employers in the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia that have initiated, enhanced, or expanded an employee alternative commute or telework program may apply for these awards. To be eligible, programs must have been initiated or improved before January 1, 2021, as a year or more of a program in place provides a better opportunity to demonstrate successful, sustainable, and quantifiable impacts.

**Deadline**  
The application deadline is January 31, 2022. Completed applications should be sent to:  
Commuter Connections  
Douglas Franklin  
777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20002-4290  
Tel: 202.962.3792  
webmaster@commuterconnections.org  
commuterconnections.org

**Instructions**  
Nominations can be submitted online or by using this form, and should include all information requested in items 1-5, plus the program summary narrative as described in question #6. Supplemental materials may be submitted in addition to, but not in place of the nomination form questions and program summary narrative.


**1. CONTACT INFORMATION**  
Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Program Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ Website \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Program Began (must have been initiated or improved before January 1, 2021) \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Program (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_  
Name, email, and phone of Person Submitting Nomination Form (if different from above) \_\_\_\_\_

**2. AWARD CATEGORY**  
Which Award Category below best describes the focus of your program? (See brochure or website for description of categories.)  
 Marketing  Incentives  Telework  
Is there a secondary category you would like to apply for? (Note: You can only win in one category.)  
 Marketing  Incentives  Telework

**3. TYPE OF ORGANIZATION**  
Please mark one of the choices below that best describes your organization.  
 Private sector  Local, State or Federal government  
 Non-profit organization  Other \_\_\_\_\_ Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**4. NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS**  
How many people do you employ in the Washington metropolitan area? \_\_\_\_\_  
At how many work sites? \_\_\_\_\_  
What is the total number of program participants in the Washington metropolitan area? \_\_\_\_\_

Nomination Form



**5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**  
I acknowledge that I am authorized to submit this nomination form on behalf of my organization and that, if selected as a winner, my organization will participate in the awards ceremony and video, and that Commuter Connections will promote my organization's initiatives online and in print.  
Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

**6. PROGRAM SUMMARY NARRATIVE**  
Please attach a 1-3 page written summary about your program, answering and elaborating on as many questions below that apply. Address each part (A, B, C, D) in a separate paragraph and provide measurable results of the program, wherever possible.  
Provide a clear, concise description of your program's activities. If you are a previous Commuter Connections award winner, please make clear what new initiatives have taken place and/or what has been done differently to encourage substantial increases in employee participation since last winning.  
Questions and points to address in narrative if applicable:


**A. Description of Program**  
• What was the situation or condition that led to the creation of your program?  
• What were the program's goals and how has it been successful in meeting its goals?  
• What have the results been compared to previous years?  
• What type of commuter benefits, services, information, or amenities are offered to employees and how many take advantage of each?  
• How are the various programs promoted within your worksite?  
• If parking is provided, is it free or employee paid? If employee paid, are carpools given discounts or preferential parking spaces?  
• Is transit fare offered to employees on a pre-tax basis?  
• Is transit fare subsidized as an out-of-pocket expense by your organization, paid by employees, or a combination of both?  
• If transit fare is subsidized, what is the dollar amount provided to employees?  
• Do you provide shuttle services between your worksite and nearby transit centers?  
• Do you have bike racks, lockers, Fixit stations, and/or shower facilities?  
• Do you offer bikesharing discounts?  
• Are flextime or compressed work weeks offered?  
• How many employees telework and how often do they do so?  
• What type of training and/or amenities are offered to management and to employees who telework?  
• Is your telework program informal or do you have a formal telework policy?

**B. Employer and Employee Benefits**  
Describe how the program has:  
• Improved employee morale, productivity, absenteeism.  
• Increased your organization's ability to attract and retain qualified employees.  
• Helped reduce employee commuting times and stress.  
• Contributed to better employee work-life demands/balance.

**C. Economic and Financial Benefits**  
Describe how the program has:  
• Helped reduce employee commuting expenses.  
• Reduced your organization's costs associated with providing commuter parking and/or office space.  
• Provided other dividends for your organization or employees.

**D. Environmental Impacts**  
Describe and quantify the benefits to the community. Describe how the program has:  
• Reduced traffic congestion. How many vehicles have been taken off the roads? How many annual vehicle miles have been reduced? To calculate vehicle miles reduced, please visit [commuterconnections.org/commuting\\_resources/vmt\\_calculator](http://commuterconnections.org/commuting_resources/vmt_calculator).  
• Reduced gasoline consumption and emissions. What is the number of estimated gallons of gas saved annually?  
• Affected your awareness or support of air quality. Does your organization provide air quality alerts to employees and allow teleworking on such days?

Nomination Form



## LinkedIn

A paid ad was placed on LinkedIn to help generate nominations from Washington, DC region employers. The ad began on December 23, 2021 and extended into the second half of FY22, running through January 16, 2022. The total purchase was \$2,500.

**Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments**  
2,380 followers  
Promoted

COG's Commuter Connections program is accepting applications for the 25th Annual Employer Recognition Awards. Highlight your organization's commitment to employee commute benefit programs.

The Employer Recognition Awards honor employers who initiate, enhance, or expand innovative commuter programs that encourage employee use of mobility options

Learn more about the three Awards categories—Incentives, Marketing, and Telework

[#EmployerRecognitionAwards](#) [#Awards](#) [#Bicycling](#) [#Cleantransportation](#) [#Employeehealth](#) [#EmployerRecognitionAwards](#) [#GreatResignation](#) [#MetroDC](#) [#Virginia](#) [#Maryland](#)

**25 YEARS**  
**20 EMPLOYER RECOGNITION AWARDS**  
**22**  
HONORING EMPLOYERS WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE!

Employer Recognition Awards  
[commuterconnections.org](http://commuterconnections.org) [Apply](#)

Like Comment Share Send

Add a comment...

## Email Blast

A second email blast was sent to approximately 2,100 employer contacts in early January 2022.

The graphic features the Commuter Connections logo at the top left, with the tagline 'A SMARTER WAY TO WORK'. Below this is a dark blue banner with '25 YEARS' on the left and '20 EMPLOYER RECOGNITION AWARDS' on the right, followed by the text 'Apply now for the 2022 Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards.' The central part of the graphic is a collage of images: a subway train, a street scene with the US Capitol, two women walking, and a man in a suit holding a document. To the right of the collage is a large '25 YEARS' text and another '20 EMPLOYER RECOGNITION AWARDS' box. Below this is the text 'HONORING EMPLOYERS WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE!'.

**Call for Employer Award Nominations!**

Commuter Connections is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Employer Recognition Awards and is **currently seeking nominations from employers** who offer outstanding commuter and/or telework programs.

Nominations are due by January 31, 2022. [For more information and to apply, click here.](#)

*Commuter Connections is a program of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments that promotes bicycling, ridesharing through carpools and vanpools, and other alternatives to driving alone.*

## Newsletters

The winter edition of the Commuter Connections newsletter was issued in February. The six page, 4-color newsletter is produced and distributed quarterly to employers and stakeholders. The newsletters are also available in PDF format on the Commuter Connections website. The spring 2022 edition will be issued in May.

**COMMUTER CONNECTIONS** | A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

Issue 1, Volume 26 WINTER 2022 WHAT'S INSIDE

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- 5 Montgomery County Ride On Extends Free Fare



### COMMUTER BENEFIT INCREASES IN 2022

Commuters who use transit or vanpools to travel to work are now able to set aside an extra \$10 per month to pay their fares in 2022. The federal qualified transportation fringe benefit monthly tax-free limit was raised from \$270 in 2021 to \$280 in 2022, or \$3,360 per year.

In 1984, an agreement with the IRS, prompted by Congress, allowed employers to give employees \$15 per month to pay for transit and vanpools. As its popularity grew, in 1993 the commuter benefit was built right into the federal tax code, (section 132(f)). The Qualified Transportation fringe benefit sparked a big change in how commuters paid for (and saved with) transit and vanpools.

Today, commuter benefits are a mainstream within America's payrolls and are among the top benefits provided by employers. On their website, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) noted a 2020 national survey of 500 C-suite and HR executives by Care.com to learn what benefits they plan to change due to the pandemic. The survey showed that 31 percent of respondents planned to either introduce or expand commuting benefits in the near future.

The commuter benefit was primarily used by employees who traveled to the office Monday through Friday. Now, a portion of employees will work on a hybrid schedule where they work remotely a few days per week and commute to the office on the remaining days. With new discounted transit fare for fewer rides per week and the growth of part-time vanpooling, commuters can still save money with the benefit.

In addition to sparking a remote working revolution, the pandemic also left millions of unused dollars in employees' commuter benefit accounts. Money can build up in a commuter benefit account but it cannot be refunded and the employee cannot take it with them when they leave their employer. Employee Transportation Coordinators (ETCs) or HR managers should remind commuter benefit account holders to keep track of their accounts and update their preferences when something changes.



In the Washington, DC region, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) allows employers to designate unused monthly contributions as "rollover" or "non-rollover." Rollover permits unused employer contributions to accumulate in the commuter benefit accounts from month to month. "Non-rollover" sends unused employer-paid benefits back to the employer at the end of the month.

And remember, employers save too when they provide a monthly commuter benefit contribution to employees. According to Commuterbenefits.com, employers can save about \$40 per month in payroll taxes for each benefit participant; if 50 employees are enrolled in the benefit, the employer might save more than \$24,000 annually.

A new bicycle commuter benefit is included in the Build Back Better Act of 2021, still tied up in legislation. The provision would set the bicycle commuting tax-free limit at 30 percent of the amount provided for transit, vanpooling, and parking.




## Federal ETC Updates Newsletter

The winter 2022 edition of the Commuter Connections Federal ETC Updates newsletter was issued in February. The two-page black & white newsletter is produced and distributed quarterly to Federal Employee Transportation Coordinators via GSA. It is also available in PDF format at [www.federaletc.org](http://www.federaletc.org). The spring 2022 Federal ETC Updates edition will be issued in May.

WINTER 2022

# FEDERAL ETC UPDATES

## FDA EXPANSION PLAN FOR WHITE OAK, MARYLAND CAMPUS HEAVY ON TDM



With a planned expansion of the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Federal Research Center (FRC) in White Oak, Maryland, along with a large increase in employees from consolidation and internal growth, a comprehensive commuter plan is a welcome commodity. The campus will grow by 1.6 million gross square feet (GSF) and the number of employees on campus will rise from 11,000 to 18,000.

The expansion project Master Plan calls for 7,436 additional parking spaces, about one parking space for every 1.8 employees. Under the plan, 46 percent of employees will need to commute by means other than driving alone: transit, carpooling, vanpooling, remote working, biking, walking.

A commuter survey conducted before the pandemic found that less than a third (31%) of employees commute to the campus every work day, while more than two-thirds (69%) work remotely, most teleworking two days per week. Excluding telecommuters, about 25 percent of current employees use alternative transportation methods to commute to work.

The FDA's robust Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program includes the following:

- Transit subsidies
- Carpool and vanpool support and subsidies
- Alternative Work Hours policies: Flex Hours, Flex Time, Compressed Work Week
- Commuter Connections' Guaranteed Ride Home program
- Telework/remote working
- Locker room and shower facilities
- Bike repair stations around campus

**New TDM strategies during and post-expansion could include:**

- Enhance existing TDM programs
- Expand the commuter shuttle system to include direct shuttle service to and from Park and Ride facilities along the I-270 corridor.
- Bike/walk to work (Live Near Your Work) incentives
- Identify potential sites for new Park and Ride lots, working with Montgomery County and the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA)
- Directional bike lanes along the campus loop roads
- Secure, covered bicycle parking near building entrances
- Wider sidewalks in high pedestrian areas
- Pedestrian crosswalks at all intersections
- Bikeshare docks at the main building and at the transit center
- A campus transit hub that includes a waiting area and real-time transit information, boarding areas for bus and campus shuttle services, a taxi/ridesharing waiting area, and bikeshare dock
- Expanded transit and shuttle service

The Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) will manage many of these strategies and conduct an annual employee survey to monitor progress. The ETC will also market the programs with events and other employee communication strategies. The plan notes that additional TDM staff may be needed to implement and maintain the new effort. According to its information page, funding and timing of the campus construction is dependent on GSA appropriations.

# E-Newsletter

**COMPUTER CONNECTIONS**  
A MEMBER BENEFIT BY METRO



**Commuter Benefit Increases in 2022**  
Commuter's who, and transit or vehicles to transit" to work are now able to use credit all across DC's pre-arranged to pay fares on a and new transit, as the federal qualified transportation benefit monthly credit, limit was raised to \$265.00.

**BIKE TO WORK DAY 2022**  
Friday, May 20  
FREE EVENT  
REGISTRATION  
OPENED MARCH 2022  
BikeToWorkMetroDC.org



**Bike to Work Day Registration Opens March 2022**  
Bike to Work Day 2022 will include bicyclists commuting to their traditional workplace offices via a 'get stay' and those working from home who like to a get stay and back to their home office. The first 15,000 registered bicyclists will attend will receive a free ticket.

**LOOK AGAIN**  
A SAFE WAY TO RIDESHARE



**Marketing Campaign to Focus on Ridesharing and Incentive Programs**  
According to Nicholas Ramirez, Commuter Connections Director, the best way to get commuters back into carpools, vanpools, and other alternatives to driving alone is by going green, "green" not only in the environmental sense,

**Metro Orange Line Station Closures in Maryland, Summer 2022**  
The final phase of the multi-year Metrorail Platform Reconstruction project includes the rehabilitation of three stations along the Orange Line in Maryland this summer.

**Montgomery County Ride On Extends Free Fare**  
In Montgomery County, free rides on the county's bus service have been extended an additional six months, through July 2, 2022.

**Metrorail Silver Line Extension Could Open in May 2022**  
Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority officials announced in December that they have declared work on phase 2 of the Metrorail Silver Line extension project to be "substantially completed."

**New Reston-Arlington Bus Service to Start Under Commuter Choice Funding Grant**  
Virginia's Commonwealth Transportation Board recently approved a \$5.1 million project that will support express bus service between the Reston South Park and Ride lot and workites in Arlington.

**New Amtrak Train: Richmond to DC**  
The new Amtrak Northeast Regional Route 51 offers early 5:35 A.M. service from Main Street Station in Richmond. The new train is the first expansion of service under the "Transforming Rail in Virginia Program."

**2022 Employer Recognition Awards to Celebrate 25 Years**  
Commuter Connections will host its annual Employer Recognition Awards ceremony in late June 2022. This will mark the 25th Anniversary of the program which acknowledges employers who offer outstanding commuter benefits and transit programs.

[READ FULL NEWSLETTER](#)

COMPUTERCONNECTIONS.ORG

THE METRO | Facebook | LinkedIn  
1111 North Capitol Street, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20002

**APPENDIX A**  
**Performance Measures**

**Web Visits**

<b>Month</b>	<b>FY 2021 Web Visits</b>	<b>FY 2022 Web Visits</b>	<b>+/-</b>	<b>+/- %</b>
January	3,410	5,621	2,211	64.8%
February	4,710	5,465	755	16.0%
March				
April				
May				
June				
	<b>8,120</b>	<b>11,086</b>	<b>2,966</b>	<b>36.5%</b>

**Phone Calls**

<b>Month</b>	<b>FY 2021 Phone Calls</b>	<b>FY 2022 Phone Calls</b>	<b>+/-</b>	<b>+/- %</b>
January	144	146	2	1.4%
February	159	188	29	18.2%
March				
April				
May				
June				
	<b>303</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>10.2%</b>

APPENDIX B

Employer Awards LinkedIn Results

Program	Media	Amount Spent	Impressions	Interactions (Click Thrus)	Interaction Rate (CTR)	Cost Per Interaction
Employer Awards	LinkedIn	\$2,500	324,911	244	0.08%	\$10.25