

MEMORANDUM

TO: Commuter Connection Subcommittee
FROM: Long Range Transportation Plan TDM Work Group
DATE: Tuesday, September 18, 2018
RE: Long-Range TDM Initiatives for Further Consideration

BACKGROUND

The National Capital Regional Transportation Planning Board (TPB) resolved to formally convene the Long Range Plan Task Force through Resolution R1-2018. The resolution charged the Task Force to further explore initiatives identified by the Phase 1 Baseline Report of the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), which includes *Initiative 10: Amplified Employer-based Travel Demand Management*. The Task Force recommended further exploration of SOV reduction strategies related to this initiative, including but not limited to:

- Employer-based parking cash-out
- Expanded employer-based transit/vanpool benefits
- Expanded telework and flexible schedule adoption
- Substantial increases in priced commuter parking in major Activity Centers

WORKING GROUP VOLUNTEERS

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SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

Category 1: Programming & Resources

Create Pilot Programs in Partnership with Target Employers. Pilot programs allow for a controlled introduction and analysis of TDM strategies at a specific employer site. These finite programs may be narrow in focus or they could broadly introduce TDM to a worksite. Results will be used to enhance programs before scaling at the regional level.

- **Create Applicable and Adaptable Case Studies.** Case studies give a sense of comfort to employers by allowing them to replicate successes previously documented by other, similar employers. TDM Specialists can use case studies as a “how-to guide” to actively coach employers through the process of creating or enhancing their TDM programs.
- **Develop a Regional Framework for Parking Pricing.** FHWA conducted research in 2016 that found Washington D.C. employers who offer a cash-out policy in addition to pre-tax transit options can reduce VMT by 11%. Unfortunately, many employers lack the bandwidth to create and implement their own policies. Commuter Connections could research, develop, pilot, and promote a framework for regional parking pricing that includes customized cash-out policies to fit the various needs of diverse worksites.

Collaborate with WMATA to Promote SmartBenefits. SmartBenefits provides employers the opportunity to let their employees commute tax free. WMATA is investing over \$1.5M in FY19 to simplify SmartBenefits. Consider leveraging this investment by enticing employers to participate with a tiered financial incentive designed to offset SmartBenefits’ start-up costs while also spearheading training and outreach efforts that may help reduce perceived administrative burden.

Leverage Technology to Enhance TDM Programs. Technological advancements are creating new ways to influence behavior change. Enhancing existing apps (e.g. CarpoolNow, incenTrip) and programs (e.g. Flextime Rewards) with gamification modules that consider behavioral economics concepts may further encourage mode shift while also generating valuable data.

Adapt Flextime & Telework Resources to Current Standards. Telework continues to grow in popularity among employers, but logistical and perception barriers remain, especially among small and mid-sized employers. Adapting our model telework policies to encourage incremental adoption of telework and flextime policies may resonate with target employers.

Category 2: Plans & Policies

Strategic TDM Integrations with Local Plans. Land-use plans, transportation plans, and site-specific TMPs should account for the induced traffic influxes of new developments and present viable TDM policies and programs that mitigate projected strain on existing infrastructure. Use of proffers, tax credits, TPB funding, and other business-centric incentives could help enforce smart growth principles such as Transit-Oriented Development. Commuter Connections can facilitate coordination for this effort.

- **Price Parking Appropriately.** Advocate for codification of “fair-value commuting” within local codes, which would likely yield higher parking costs at activity centers. Properly charging for these spaces – perhaps in a dynamic fashion – could deter SOV trips. Commuter Connections could seize this as an opportunity

to market free or reduced-cost carpool parking spots and other non-SOV alternatives.

Regional Commuter Tax Benefits. Policies such as the Maryland Commuter Tax Credit and Telework VAI Tax credit exist to incentivize employers to offer commuter benefits. Enhancing these policies to provide attractive tax incentives for employers while remaining simplistic in nature may encourage employer participation. Creating clear-cut policy that is regional in scope may ease implementation efforts due to collaborative education and marketing efforts.

Evaluate D.C. Commuter Benefits Law. The District recently passed legislation that requires employers with 20 or more employees to offer a [pre-tax or subsidized commuter benefit](#). The District's Department of Employment Services will begin enforcing the law in 2018. Commuter Connections stakeholders will monitor the data and trends produced by this law to evaluate feasibility and replicability on a regional scale.

NEXT STEPS

1. The memo is expected to be presented at the TPB Technical Committee in October and to the TPB in November
 - a. COG/TPB staff will seek TPB guidance on which initiatives to pursue further and explore potential conduits for implementation.

As endorsed by the Commuter Connections Subcommittee on September 18, 2018