VANPOOL MICROTRANSIT PILOT

Creating Software to Increase Vanpooling as a Viable Public Transit Mode for Transportation Disadvantaged Populations

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Ridematching Committee
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Grant Context

- Funded by FTA's Enhancing Mobility Innovation (EMI) program

  - Focus on research, development, and/or demonstration projects

  - Nine agencies awarded funding in 2022

- Goals of the EMI program:

  - Support innovation in passenger-centric mobility that meets evolving needs

  - Advance equitable and climate-smart transportation

  - Contribute to knowledge of national significance to improve public transportation service

  - Advance the vision of "mobility for all"

Project Details

- Federal award: $250,000

  - Total project budget: $312,500

- Commuter Connections' existing software development team and marketing contractor will provide direct services

- Support letters from: MDOT, MTA, UMD-MTI, TCCSMD, Commute with Enterprise, GWP, and Geico

- Ridematching Committee identified as a guiding body

  - Stakeholder group will be created to provide feedback

- Cooperative agreement with FTA executed in February 2023

- 24+ month project

Project Description

- Primary deliverable: Development of an open-source microtransit platform that aids in the creation and growth of flexible vanpooling

- Differs from traditional vanpooling model (long-distance, inflexible, minimal stops)

- Implementation focus on transit scarce census tracts; Equity Emphasis Areas

- Direct partnership with employers

- "Public Transit" by bridging vanpool operations with General Transit Feed Specifications (GTFS) open standards for real-time transit

- NTD compatible

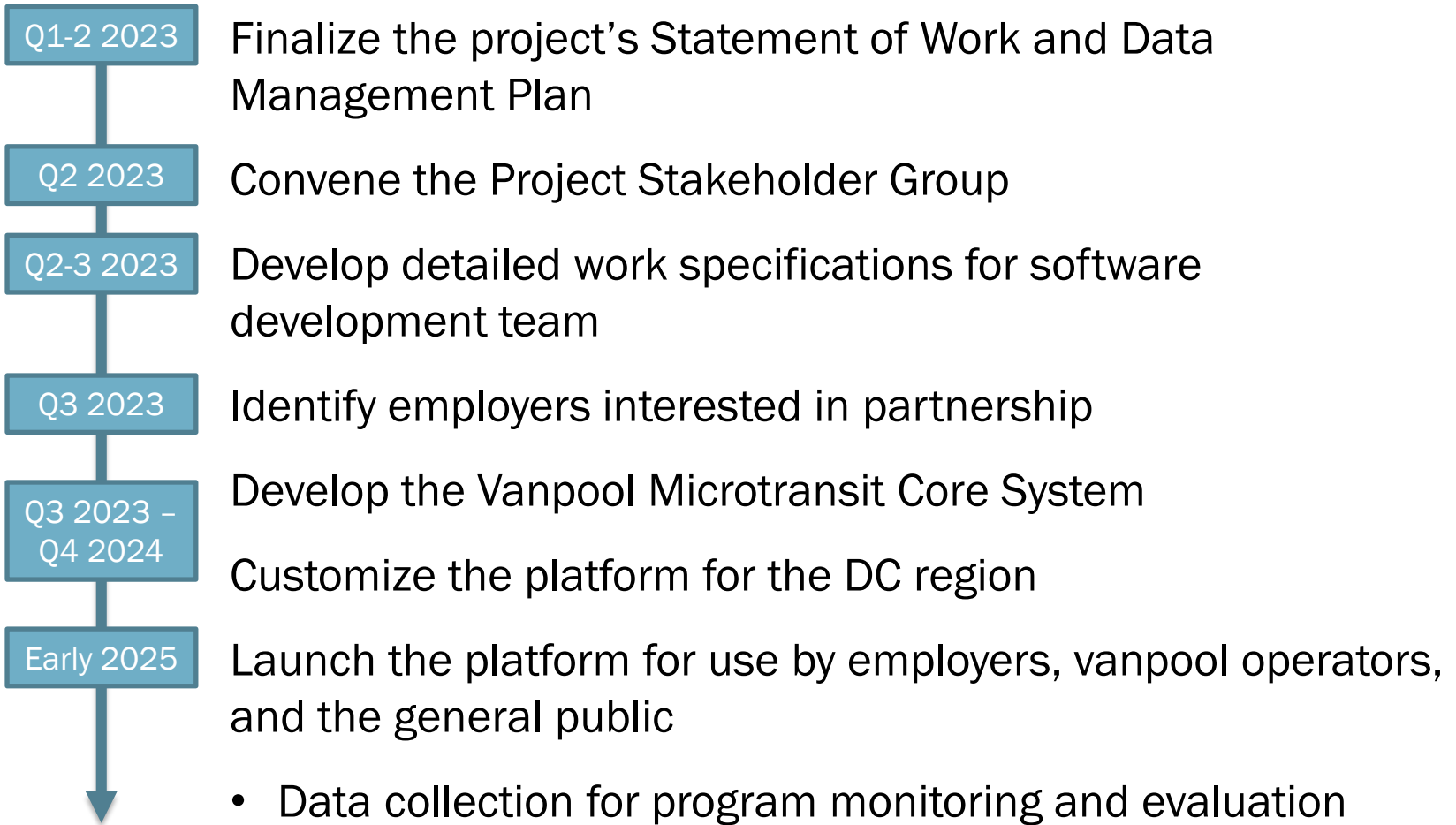**COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.**
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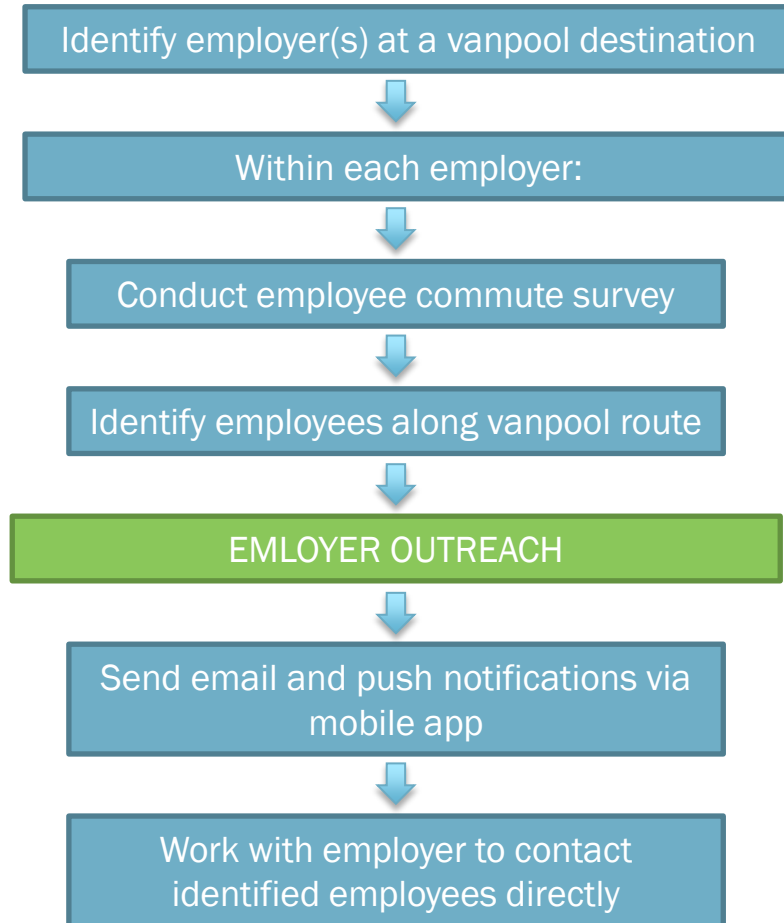# COG Equity Emphasis Areas
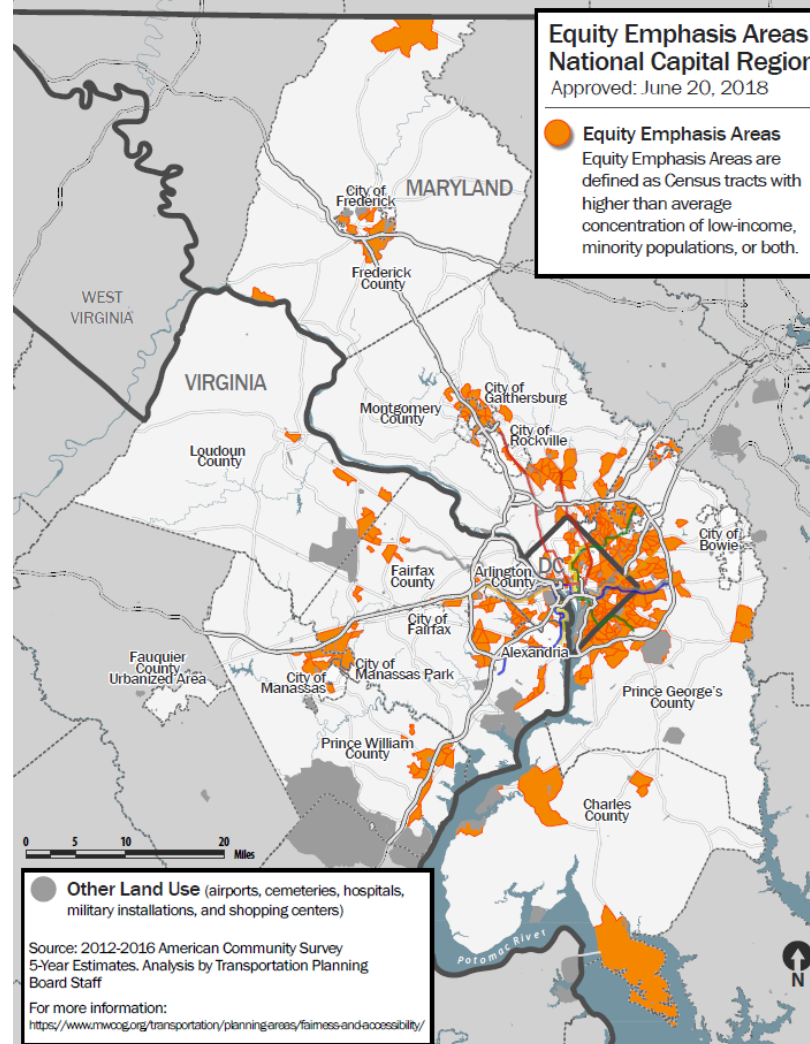
Project Goals

- Add a stable, equitable mobility option to transportation disadvantaged communities

- Pilot a post-pandemic flexible vanpool model

- Grow vanpool occupancy

- Reduce the need for costly single occupancy vehicle commute trips

- Grow employer interest in TDM / commuter benefits for essential workers

Implementation Strategy & Timeline

Q1-2 2023 — Finalize the project's Statement of Work and Data Management Plan

Q2 2023 — Convene the Project Stakeholder Group

Q2-3 2023 — Develop detailed work specifications for software development team

Q3 2023 — Identify employers interested in partnership

Q3 2023 – Q4 2024 — Develop the Vanpool Microtransit Core System

Customize the platform for the DC region

Early 2025 — Launch the platform for use by employers, vanpool operators, and the general public

- Data collection for program monitoring and evaluation

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Envisioned Platform Workflow

Employer-Based Search

Identify employer(s) at a vanpool destination

⬇

Within each employer:

⬇

Conduct employee commute survey

⬇

Identify employees along vanpool route

⬇

EMLOYER OUTREACH

⬇

Send email and push notifications via mobile app

⬇

Work with employer to contact identified employees directly

Commuter Connections Search

Determine vanpool results

⬇

Match route to existing database of active registered commuters within Commuter Connections

⬇

COMMUTER OUTREACH

⬇

Send email and push notifications via mobile app

⬇

Show popup message the next time commuter logs into the website
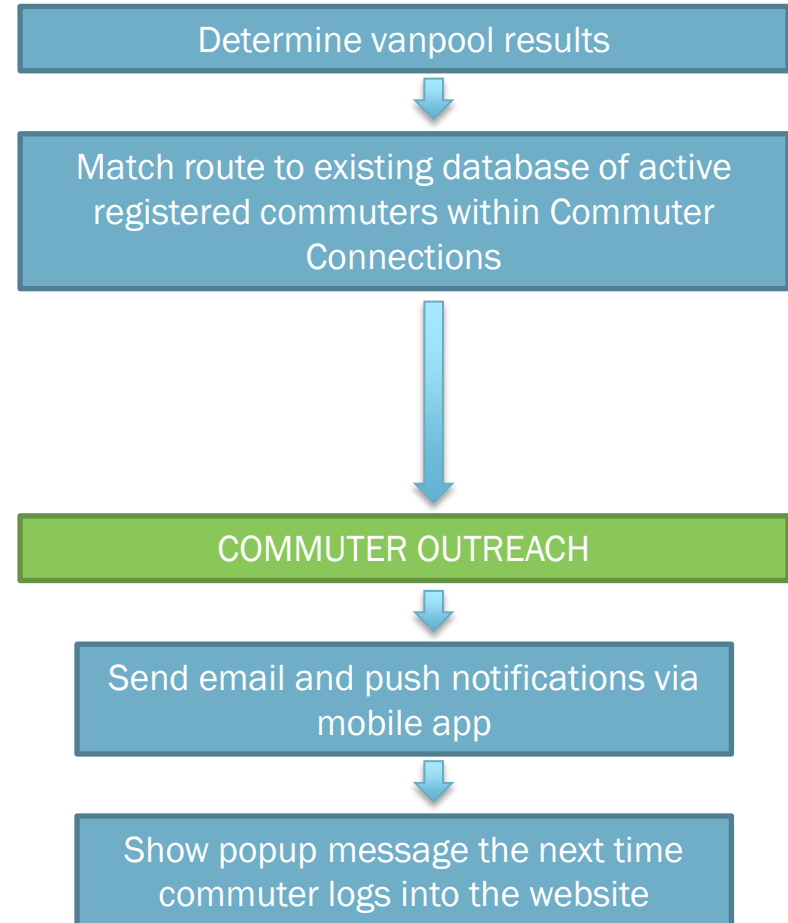
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