



Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

**FY21 Second Half
Marketing Campaign Summary
Draft Report**

Regional TDM Marketing Group

June 15, 2021

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FY21 Second Half Marketing Campaign Summary

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Executive Summary

Overview

This document summarizes Commuter Connections' FY21 second half marketing activity occurring between January and June 2021. Although the normally robust regional TDM Mass Marketing initiative remained on pause, Commuter Connections continued to provide assistance to essential workers, held Bike to Work Day and are in the midst of planning the Employer Recognition Awards ceremony.

Although great strides have been made, during the second half of FY21, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to have a significant impact on the region. After a year-plus of working from home for non-essential employees, nearly all who want to be vaccinated have been given the opportunity to do so. In addition, most guidelines for gatherings, social distancing, and mask wearing have been completely lifted. As of present however, schools are not yet open full time for students, masks are still required on public transit. Masks are also still required in some workplaces, at management discretion.

Bike to Work Day

Commuter Connections concluded its annual sponsorship drive at the end of January 2021 and launched registration for the event, in early March 2021. The media buy for the Bike to Work Day 2021 marketing campaign ran for three weeks leading up to the event, at a cost of \$64,000. Bike to Work Day was held on May 21, 2021 and marked the popular bicycling event's 20th anniversary. Due to the pandemic, registration was expectedly down by roughly 50 percent.

Employer Recognition Awards

The 2021 Employer Recognition Awards program recognizes employers who initiate 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 late March, and winners will be honored in June. The media buy for the Bike to Work Employer Recognition Awards print ad is \$7,500.

Mass Marketing Campaign

Due to the coronavirus pandemic the FY21 second half traditional mass marketing campaign which would have normally begun in February 2021, did not take place. A regional recovery campaign has however been under development and is poised to be released at the end of FY2021 and into FY2022 to help transition commuters back to using non-SOV methods of travel to the workplace in a safe and healthy manner.

CarpoolNow

The 'Pool Rewards marketing campaign remains on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Flextime Rewards

The Flextime Rewards marketing campaign remains on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic.

incentTrip

The incentTrip marketing campaign remains on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic.

'Pool Rewards

The 'Pool Rewards marketing campaign remains on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Introduction

Results about respondents' attitudes, behaviors, and commute patterns from the following surveys helped to shape marketing efforts.

- 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 FY21 includes the following activities:

- Newsletters (Winter and Spring 2021)
- Bike to Work Day 2021
- Employer Recognition Awards 2021
- Regional TDM Marketing Group meetings (March and June 2021)
- Regional Recovery Campaign development

About Commuter Connections

Commuter Connections is a regional network of transportation organizations coordinated 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 a host of incentives programs and special events. Through its Employer Outreach Representatives, Commuter Connections also assists employers with establishing and enhancing commuter programs for their employees, including telework.

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 Neck Rideshare/PDC
- Northern Virginia Transportation Commission
- OmniRide (PRTC)
- Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation
- Rappahannock Area Development Commission
- 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 forty-five years. Through Commuter Connections' online Ridematching system, commuters registering for the service are given direct access to others who are looking to carpool and vanpool, along with access to commute 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.



Bike to Work Day

Commuter Connections concluded its annual sponsorship drive on January 29, 2021 for the May 21, 2021 Bike to Work Day 20th anniversary event. A total of \$46,700 was raised, representing both new sponsors and sponsors carried over from the cancelled May 2020 event. Registration for Bike to Work Day 2021 was launched in early March 2021.

| Bike to Work Day Budget | MWCOG Cost | Gross Dollars | Estimated Impressions |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| WTOP.com | \$3,530 | \$3,000 | 360,030 |
| Pandora | \$41,178 | \$35,000 | 879,760 |
| Spotify | \$17,647.50 | \$15,000 | 1,136,361 |
| YouTube | NA | \$1,500 | TBD |
| El Zol | \$9,880 | \$8,398 | 199,600 |
| SOTS | \$588 | \$500 | 25,394 |
| PoPville | \$705 | \$599 | 39,100 |
| Totals | \$73,528.50 | \$63,997 | 2,640,245 |

BIKE TO WORK DAY 2021

Friday, May 21
FREE EVENT - REGISTER AT BikeToWorkMetroDC.org

Pre-Register by May 14 for **FREE T-SHIRT*** & **BIKE RAFFLE**
Free refreshments & giveaways while supplies last.

20th Anniversary

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

COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.
A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

WABA
WASHINGTON AREA BICYCLIST ASSOCIATION

ICF

GO Alex

URBANSTEMS

BICYCLE SPACE

Bike Arlington

Marriott INTERNATIONAL

VERRA Standards for a Sustainable Future

AASHIO
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS

AMERICAN COLLEGE of CARDIOLOGY

FAIR LAKES

Giant

POTOMAC PEDESTAL
MD • DC • VA

VISIONZERO
prince georges

goDCgo
powered by dc

MDOT
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

VDOT
Virginia Department of Transportation

Register free at BIKETOWORKMETRODC.ORG
800.745.7433

#BTWD2021

Visit biketoworkmetrodc.org for pit stop locations and times.
*T-Shirts available at pit stops to first 15,000 registrants.
More than 90 pit stops in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia!
Staggered hours and a strict COVID policy will be in place.

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

bike to work day 2021

DÍA DE LA BICICLETA PARA IR AL TRABAJO 2021

VIERNES 21 DE MAYO
EVENTO GRATUITO - REGÍSTRESE EN BikeToWorkMetroDC.org

Regístrese previamente antes del 14 de mayo para recibir una CAMISETA GRATIS* y participar en un SORTEO DE BICICLETAS.

20th Aniversario

¿Todavía trabajando desde casa? ¡No hay problema! Ve en bicicleta a tu punto de parada para una camiseta gratis y vuelve a casa nuevamente.

Regístrese gratis en BIKETOWORKMETRODC.ORG
800.745.7433

Visite biketoworkmetrodc.org para más información acerca de los puntos de parada y los horarios. *Camisetas disponibles en los puntos de parada a los primeros 15,000 participantes que se registren. Puntos de parada en D.C., Maryland and Virginia. Se mantienen los protocolos estrictos del Covid y se flexibilizan los horarios.

#BTWD2021

El Día de la Bicicleta para ir al Trabajo está financiado por DCOT, MDT, VDOT y USDOT.

Rack Card

Friday, May 21

BIKE TO WORK DAY 2021

20th Anniversary

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

FREE EVENT – REGISTER AT
BIKETOWORKMETRODC.org
 or call 800.745.7433

Pre-Register by May 14 for
FREE T-SHIRT* & BIKE RAFFLE
 Free refreshments & giveaways
 at participating locations,
 while supplies last.

Visit biketoworkmetrodc.org for pit stop locations and times.
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 Pit stops in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia!
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bike to work day
2021

  #BTWD2021



Commuter CONNECTIONS.
A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

WABA
WASHINGTON AREA
RECYCLIST ASSOCIATION

ICF

GO Alex

URBANSTEMS

BICYCLE SPACE

Bike Arlington

Marriott INTERNATIONAL

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FAIR LAKES

Giant

POTOMAC PEDALERS
MD • DC • VA

VISIONZERO
prince georges

goDCgo
powered by DC

MDT
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTATION

VDOT
Virginia Department of Transportation

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

 Printed on recycled paper

Digital Banner Ad Examples




Digital Banners

SOURCE OF THE SPRING
SILVER SPRING & TAKOMA PARK COMMUNITY NEWS

Home About Advertise Shop Subscribe Support Events


Don't Stress. Take the Test



FREE COVID-19 testing sites & dates visit: AAHPcovid.com

County Announces Memorial Day Schedule Changes

May 28, 2021



The county has released schedule changes that will be in effect on Memorial Day Monday, May 31. County and state offices, state courts and county libraries will be closed, as will the Brookside Nature Center.

Friday, May 21

BIKE TO WORK DAY 2021
20th Anniversary

Register for free at
BIKETOWORKMETRODC.ORG
800.745.7433

bike to work day 2021

ABOUT ▾ ADVERTISE CATEGORIES ▾ NEWSLETTER PATREON

Popville  Est. 2006

SPONSORED

Celebrate Bike to Work Day on May 21 (and Get a Free T-Shirt!)

PoP Sponsor May 12, 2021 at 1:15pm



Friday, May 21

Pre-Register by May 14 for FREE T-SHIRT* & BIKE RAFFLE

Still working from home? No problem!

Ride to your local "pit stop" for your free T-shirt and back home again.

Register for free at BIKETOWORKMETRODC.ORG
800.745.7433



Did you know Friday, May 21, is [Bike to Work Day](#)?

No, this isn't another holiday the internet invented (though we don't hate National Pizza Day). Bike to Work Day is a D.C. area holiday that's been around for 20 years now.

Here's how it works: On Friday, May 21, strap on your helmet and bike to work. If you're still working from home, you can still hop on your bike for a little cruise.

Along the way, stop by one of the 95 pit stops set up in D.C., Maryland and Virginia, and grab your Bike to Work Day T-shirt. (Masks are required.) Then, on you go to work — or back home!


Bike alone or feel free to grab your co-worker, friend or work-from-home buddy and have them ride along.

This is also a great way to celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month. You'll get to enjoy the springtime temps and stretch your legs — all while reaping the mental health benefits of exercise.

The event is free, and if you [pre-register by May 14](#) and attend, you get a free T-shirt (while supplies last) and bike raffle entry.

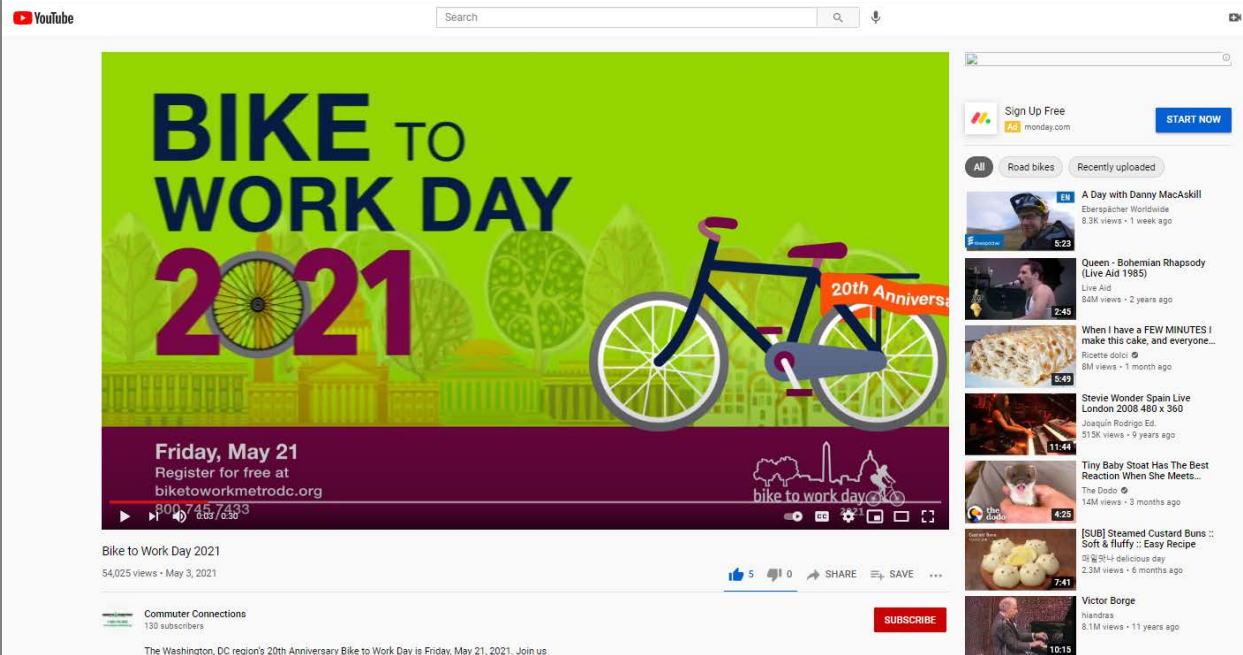
Bike to Work Day is funded by DDOT, MDOT, VDOT and USDOT.

YouTube Video



Bike to Work Day 2021
Commuter Connections • 23K views

The Washington, DC region's 20th Anniversary Bike to Work Day is Friday, May 21, 2021. Join us at pit stops in DC, MD, and VA for



YouTube Search

BIKE TO WORK DAY 2021

Friday, May 21
Register for free at biketoworkmetrodc.org
800.745.7433

0:31

Sign Up Free
monday.com START NOW

All Road bikes Recently uploaded

- A Day with Danny MacAskill
Eberspächer Worldwide
8.3K views • 1 week ago
- Queen - Bohemian Rhapsody (Live Aid 1985)
Live Aid
84M views • 2 years ago
- When I have a FEW MINUTES I make this cake, and everyone...
Ricetta dolce
8M views • 1 month ago
- Stevie Wonder Spain Live London 2008 480 x 360
Joaquín Rodrigo Ed.
31.5K views • 8 years ago
- Tiny Baby Stoat Has The Best Reaction When She Meets...
The Dodo
14M views • 3 months ago
- [SUB] Steamed Custard Buns :: Soft & fluffy :: Easy Recipe
최달민's delicious day
2.3M views • 6 months ago
- Victor Borge
Nandras
6.1M views • 11 years ago

Bike to Work Day 2021
54,025 views • May 3, 2021

Commuter Connections
130 subscribers

The Washington, DC region's 20th Anniversary Bike to Work Day is Friday, May 21, 2021. Join us at pit stops in DC, MD, and VA for this FREE event for a healthy and safe way to start your day.

Social Media

LAST CHANCE TO REGISTER!



**BIKE TO WORK DAY 2021
FRIDAY MAY 21**
Register for free at
BIXETOWORKMETRODC.ORG • 800.745.7433



STILL WORKING FROM HOME?



**BIKE TO WORK DAY 2021
FRIDAY MAY 21**
Register for free at
BIXETOWORKMETRODC.ORG • 800.745.7433



REGISTER TODAY!



**BIKE TO WORK DAY 2021
FRIDAY MAY 21**
Register for free at
BIXETOWORKMETRODC.ORG • 800.745.7433



RIDE TO KEEP HEALTHY!



**BIKE TO WORK DAY 2021
FRIDAY MAY 21**
Register for free at
BIXETOWORKMETRODC.ORG • 800.745.7433



BIKE TO WORK DAY 2021

Friday, May 21
Register for free at
biketoworkmetrodc.org
800.745.7433



GEAR UP!



**BIKE TO WORK DAY 2021
FRIDAY MAY 21**
Register for free at
BIXETOWORKMETRODC.ORG • 800.745.7433



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

2021 20th Anniversary

**BIKE TO WORK DAY 2021
FRIDAY MAY 21**
Register for free at
BIXETOWORKMETRODC.ORG • 800.745.7433



Bike to Work Day
Published by Hootsuite · May 14 at 6:00 PM ·

Bike to Work Day 2021 is just a week away, and there's still time to register: [#BTWD2021](http://bit.ly/DCBTWD21)

REGISTER TODAY!

**BIKE TO WORK DAY 2021
FRIDAY MAY 21**
Register for free at BIKETOWORKMETRODC.ORG · 800.745.7433

178 People Reached 12 Engagements [Boost Post](#)

4 1 Share

Bike to Work Day
Published by Hootsuite · May 14 at 6:30 PM ·

Whether you're working from home or commuting to work, give your health a boost by riding to a pit stop on the 20th anniversary of Bike to Work Day! Register today for [#BTWD2021](http://bit.ly/BTWD2021) [#health](http://bit.ly/BTWD2021) <http://bit.ly/BTWD2021>

STILL WORKING FROM HOME?

**BIKE TO WORK DAY 2021
FRIDAY MAY 21**
Register for free at BIKETOWORKMETRODC.ORG · 800.745.7433

313 People Reached 19 Engagements [Boost Post](#)

3 2 Shares

Bike to Work Day
Published by Hootsuite · May 19 at 5:00 PM ·

Wear bright or neon-colored clothing to help others see you! Flashing lights and reflectors can also be beneficial. <http://bit.ly/btwddc2021> [#BTWD2021](http://bit.ly/btwddc2021)

GEAR UP!

**BIKE TO WORK DAY 2021
FRIDAY MAY 21**
Register for free at BIKETOWORKMETRODC.ORG · 800.745.7433

506 People Reached 41 Engagements [Boost Post](#)

8 5 Shares

Bike to Work Day
Published by Hootsuite · May 20 at 12:30 PM ·

It's almost that time! Sign up at <https://www.biketoworkmetrodc.org/> [#BikeToWorkDayDC](https://www.biketoworkmetrodc.org/#BikeToWorkDayDC) [#BTWD2021](https://www.biketoworkmetrodc.org/#BTWD2021) [#WashingtonDC](https://www.biketoworkmetrodc.org/#WashingtonDC) [#BikeDC](https://www.biketoworkmetrodc.org/#BikeDC)

LAST CHANCE TO REGISTER!

**BIKE TO WORK DAY 2021
FRIDAY MAY 21**
Register for free at BIKETOWORKMETRODC.ORG · 800.745.7433

1,010 People Reached 47 Engagements [Boost Post](#)

10 1 Comment 6 Shares

T-shirt



Radio Scripts

:30 SEC Radio Script

Join us on Friday, May 21st for the 20th Anniversary Bike to Work Day organized by Commuter Connections and the Washington Area Bicyclist Association. This free event has over 90 pit stops in DC, Maryland, and Virginia. Still working from home? Get healthy in a safe way by biking to a pit stop, picking up your free T-shirt, then back home. A strict COVID policy will be in place and masks are required. Go to [Bike to Work Metro DC Dot Org](#) to register. Bike to Work Day is sponsored by Go Alex, ICF, and Urban Stems.

:15 SEC Radio Script

Join us on Friday, May 21st for the 20th Anniversary Bike to Work Day! This free event has pit stops in DC, Maryland, and Virginia. A strict COVID policy will be in place and masks are required. Go to [Bike to Work Metro DC Dot Org](#) to register.

Employer Recognition Awards

The Employer Recognition Awards program recognizes employers who initiate outstanding worksite commute benefits and/or telework programs to assist their employees. The 2021 awards nomination period ended January 29, 2021, and the Selection Committee met on March 19, 2021. Winners will be honored on June 29, 2021 at the 24th annual awards ceremony.



Invitation



20 EMPLOYER
RECOGNITION
21 AWARDS

TUESDAY, JUNE 29, 2021

8:30 am to 10:00 am
Breakfast and Ceremony

RSVP online by JUNE 18, 2021
www.commuterconnections.org/rsvp

HOSTED BY

The Metropolitan Washington Council of
Governments' National Capital Region
Transportation Planning Board

We congratulate employers in the Washington, DC metropolitan region who initiated outstanding programs encouraging employees to use commute alternatives.

AWARDS are given in the categories of
INCENTIVES, MARKETING & TELEWORK

THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

529 14th St. NW, Washington, DC 20045

Corner of 14th & F Sts., 13th Floor Ballroom
Metrorail to Metro Center, exit onto 13th St.

For questions contact dfranklin@mwcog.org,
202.962.3792.

COMMUTER CONNECTIONS. | A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

Program Booklet



About the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

COG is the hub for regional partnership where every month more than 1,500 officials and experts convene to make connections, share information, and develop solutions to the region's major challenges. Together, they help advance COG's Region Forward vision for a more prosperous, accessible, livable, equitable, and sustainable future.

Founded in 1957, COG is an independent, nonprofit association with a membership of 300 elected officials from 24 local governments, the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, and U.S. Congress. COG is supported by financial contributions from its member governments, federal and state grants and contracts, and donations from foundations and the private sector.

The Board of Directors is COG's governing body and is responsible for its overall policies. In addition, a wide network of policy, technical, and advisory committees, partnerships, and programs advance COG's regional work. Elected leaders, transportation planners, environmental experts, police chiefs, housing directors, and more find tremendous value in working together at COG. A staff of more than 130 subject matter experts and technical professionals support COG and its members.

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
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202.962.3200
www.mwcog.org



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Giveaway Item (booklight)

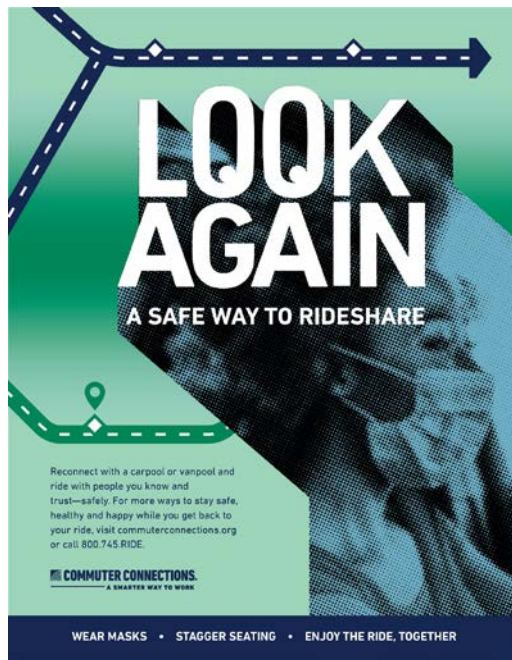


Regional Recovery Campaign

Commuter Connections has developed a marketing campaign to help persuade commuters back to transit (especially buses) and vanpools and carpools (with coworkers, neighbors and household members).

The regional recovery campaign is poised to help restore non-SOV commute levels so that traffic congestion does not surpass pre-pandemic levels due to returning workers avoidance of shared rides. Additionally, the campaign aims to provide reassurance to help transition commuters back to using non-SOV methods of travel to the workplace in a safe and healthy manner. The readied campaign will be released in late FY2021 and into FY2022.

Creative Concepts



LOOK AGAIN
THE BUS IS CLEAN AND READY TO ROLL

You have been here for others—and your local bus is here for you. When you take transit, your safety is top of mind. Take another look, reconnect and ride with us, safely. Learn more at commuterconnections.org or call 800.745.RIDE.

COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.
A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

CLEANED FREQUENTLY • SPACED SEATING • LOW COST

LOOK AGAIN
WE'RE READY TO ROLL

COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.
A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

LOOK AGAIN
CLEAN AND BACK ON TRACK

Reconnect with your favorite ride. No matter where you need to go, the Metrorail and train are clean, spacious and safe. Learn more at commuterconnections.org or call 800.745.RIDE.

COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.
A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

CLEANED FREQUENTLY • STAGGERED SEATING • LOW COST

LOOK AGAIN
WE'RE BACK ON TRACK

COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.
A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

Newsletters

The winter and spring 2021 editions of the Commuter Connections newsletter were produced during the second half of FY21. The six page 4-color newsletter is produced and distributed quarterly to employers and stakeholders. It is also available in .pdf format on the Commuter Connections website.

COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.

Issue 1, Volume 25 WINTER 2021

WHAT'S INSIDE

A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

- 1. Bikes to Work Day Set for May 2021
- 2. New Policies for Electric Scooters
- 3. Bikes in 2021: Overview
- 4. Spring/Summer 2021 Metro Transit Rebranding
- 5. On-Demand POC Link Service

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



TRANSIT INNOVATIONS IN THE REGION

While 2020 was a year most said good riddance to, transit agencies can reflect back on several diamonds in the rough. Last fall brought state-of-the-art and groundbreaking bus innovations to the Washington, DC metropolitan region to help get your employees to and from work.

The appeal of developing bus solutions to relieve the region's congested roadways are many: beyond environmental gains, topping the reasons are lower costs and quicker deployment to get bus systems up and running.

Flash is a new bus rapid transit (BRT) network which serves the East side of Montgomery County, traveling along Colesville Road/Columbia Pike (US 29) and Lockwood Drive, between the downtown Silver Spring Transit Center, Four Corners, White Oak, Fairland, and Burtonsville.

Unique station designs come with weather protection, pre-payment stations, and real-time transit information. The new articulated (bendy) style 80 passenger buses are extra-long and spacious. Buses are equipped with features such as free Wi-Fi and USB charging ports.

Flash buses are the first within the region where bicycles can be taken onboard, unlike conventional buses which have bike racks mounted to the front. Wheelchairs and strollers are also welcome to roll on board.

"The October launch of Flash significantly improved transportation options for Montgomery County residents. We've been encouraged by the community's enthusiastic reception and the growing ridership on our new service. Our success on US 29 informs and inspires our ongoing work to implement our countywide bus rapid transit plan," said Chris Conklin, Director, Montgomery County Department of Transportation.

Flash is not the first BRT in the region, but it is the first in Maryland. Metrobus was introduced in 2014 as part of the Metrobus system and has gained wide popularity for speedily transporting riders along Route 1 between

Arlington and Alexandria from Pentagon City to the Braddock Road Metrorail station, via Potomac Yard.

The Flash system has bus-only shoulders in the northern part of the US 29 corridor, north of its Tech Rd. Station, allowing the buses to travel at more predictable rates of speed, making them more reliable, especially during rush hours. In addition, Flash buses use transit signal priority to extend green lights and shorten red lights to advance through some 15 intersections more efficiently.

With several features similar to Metrorail's efficiency, BRT platforms are essentially level with bus entryways to make boarding and deboarding faster. Additionally, all doors open when the bus arrives, allowing riders to enter or exit from any of the three doors instead of waiting in line for just one.

Flash's Blue route operates weekdays only during rush hours, (6:30 to 8:00 am) and (3:30 to 7:00 pm), and travels between the Silver Spring Transit Center and Burtonsville. Buses arrive at least every 15 minutes, and where Blue and Orange routes overlap, service is every 7 to 8 minutes.

Flash's Orange route operates seven days a week, all day (5:30 am to 11:55 pm) and travels between the Silver Spring Transit Center and Briggs Chaney. Buses arrive at least every 15 minutes, and on weekdays where Orange and Blue routes overlap, every 7 to 8 minutes during rush hours.



Photo courtesy of Montgomery County Department of Transportation

Continued on page 2

COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.

Issue 2, Volume 25 SPRING 2021

WHAT'S INSIDE

A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

- 3. Re-Starting Your SmartBenefits Program
- 4. New Regional Bikes: How Other Bikes to Work Resources
- 5. Help Improve Bus, Rail Commutes
- 6. Employer Services Representatives

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



GOING BACK TO THE WORKPLACE: COMMUTER CONNECTIONS CAN HELP

A recent Commuter Connections survey found that among employers who participated in its employer programs, 56 percent had all of their employees teleworking every workday during the pandemic. In all, 97 percent of employers had their employees teleworking at least some of the time. This compares to the one-third of regional employees who teleworked at least some of the time, pre-pandemic. (Source: 2019 Commuter Connections State of the Commute Survey).

After the pandemic is over, it is likely that many, if not most, of these employees will want to continue to telework beyond pre-pandemic levels. The survey found that 67 percent of work sites expected to see a long-term increase in post-pandemic teleworking.

As part of the recovery plan, employees might be interested in changing their work schedules or commute mode rather than resume driving alone in traffic five days a week.

Employers offer work/life balance in part through flexible work schedules, compressed work weeks and staggered work hours. A flexible work schedule allows employees to choose a different work schedule to meet personal or family needs. A compressed work week, in the case of a full-time employee, includes working 80 hours every two weeks in fewer than ten workdays. With staggered work hours, employees arrive and depart work at different times with different shifts. Shifts might be staggered anywhere from 15 minutes to several hours. Commuter Connections Employer Services representatives can help employers establish these schedule changes.

A new commute mode, whether a bus, train, carpool or vanpool, can shorten employees' commutes if their route includes a high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane. Walking or biking to work can help employees with an exercise routine during their commute.

Resources can be found on the Commuter Connections website that will support employers and their employees during the transition back to the workplace. The Commute with Confidence clearinghouse offers COVID-19 related safety tips and recommendations to commuters on the use of alternatives to driving alone.

"The clearinghouse has helped employers and their employees navigate the new commuting landscape by providing them with the information they need to plan ahead and consider their options during these unusual times and as part of the region's recovery," said Commuter Connections Director Nicholas Ramirez.



www.commuterconnections.org/covid19-commuting/

Continued on page 2

Federal ETC Updates Newsletter

The winter and spring 2021 editions of the Commuter Connections Federal ETC Updates newsletter were produced during the second half of FY21. 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 on the www.federaletc.org website.

WINTER 2021

FEDERAL ETC UPDATES

NAVSEA – THE FORCE BEHIND THE FLEET



Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) known as "The Force Behind the Fleet" designs, builds, delivers, and maintains the United States Navy's ships and submarines and their combat systems. NAVSEA is the largest of the Navy's five system commands and with a fiscal year budget of more than \$40 billion, NAVSEA accounts for about one quarter of the Navy's entire budget.

The origin of NAVSEA dates back to the late 18th century when piracy against American merchant trading vessels became problematic along the Barbary Coast of Northern Africa. After the Revolutionary War, ships from the newly independent American colonies were no longer under the protection of the British Empire. This enabled the Barbary States to overtake unprotected American ships at will and without repercussion.

Lacking a proper navy, the fledgling American government could do little to prevent such seizures and in 1793, matters got worse when eleven American merchant ships were captured and held for ransom. As part of the Naval Act of 1794, passed by the 3rd U.S. Congress and signed into law by President George Washington, Commodore John Barry was charged to oversee the construction of a 44-gun frigate. It was the beginning of what is now NAVSEA.

Fast forward to modern day warfare, and the Navy's mission to protect U.S. interests here and abroad has not changed, although the size, scope, and weaponry has. Today, with a global workforce of more than 82,000 civilian and military personnel, NAVSEA's challenges are much like any large

government agency, which includes the concerns of getting its employees to and from work cost-effectively and efficiently.

In December 2020, NAVSEA held a virtual commuter event for the approximately 5,000 Washington Navy Yard headquarters personnel with the anticipated return of normal-level commuting options, in a post-pandemic environment. Online attendees learned about the latest developments from representatives of Commuter Connections, OmniRide, Transform 66, and Vanpool Alliance.

For example, half-price fares are available on OmniRide I-66 bus routes from Gainesville.

In Virginia, riders in new vanpools of 5 or more riders pay only \$150 per month for the first 12 months. Plus, mobile apps and incentives programs (CarpoolNow, incenTrip, and Pool Rewards) from Commuter Connections pay cash rewards to commuters for using greener ways to commute.


The commuter subject experts from these various organizations presented on a multitude of topics such as: Upcoming Improvements on I-66, Local and Regional Commuter Assistance Programs, Commuter Resources Available Online and on Mobile Devices, and Financial Incentives for New and Existing Vanpools & Carpools. Afterward, the format of the event consisted of a panel discussion and allowed for the guest panel to field questions from NAVSEA personnel.

For more information, visit www.navsea.navy.mil.

SPRING 2021

FEDERAL ETC UPDATES

REVIEW YOUR SMARTBENEFITS / CHANGES TO SMARTRIP® CARDS



As your federal worksite reopens in the near future it will be important to review your agency's transit benefits program so employees who used transit and vanpools to get to work pre-pandemic, won't feel pressure to drive alone and contribute to the region's congested highways and city streets. SmartBenefits are the key to unlocking your employees' former transit and vanpool ways.

Most federal employees are still enrolled in SmartBenefits and unclaimed benefits are automatically credited back to your agency each month. Employees can confirm their SmartBenefits enrollment status by checking the SmartBenefits Dashboard linked to their SmartRip® account.

According to the Commuter Connections 2019 State of the Commute Survey, respondents who worked for federal agencies were more likely to report availability of commuter benefits/services at their worksites, compared to non-federal employees. Federal workers also had greater access for the most individual commuter benefits/services. This was especially true for transit/vanpool subsidies as 75% of federal workers said that subsidies were offered. Only 51% of non-profit workers and even fewer state/local agencies (30%) and private sector firms (29%) reported that transit/vanpool subsidies were made available to them by their employer. The high availability of transit/vanpool subsidies among federal employees is due to mandates. In 2021, the maximum commuter benefits amount was \$270/month.

Employees who use transit are more likely to arrive on time and more relaxed than their driving co-workers. When employees are making a change in their routine (starting a new job, moving to a new place, adjusting back to normal life after the pandemic) it's a great time to reacquaint or introduce them to commuting by transit. SmartBenefits is a benefit that has tax advantages for employees. Participating employees can save over \$1,600 on their taxes annually.

SmartBenefits can also be allocated to MARC, VRE, MTA, Commuter Bus, MetroAccess, vanpools, and Metrorail parking. Contactless fare payments can be made on a smartphone or smartwatch.

SmartBenefits are easy to administer, especially with the free help available from Commuter Connections. For assistance, please call 800-745-7433.


Metro is installing Metrorail faregates which will no longer accept SmartRip® cards that were bought before 2012. Pre-2012 SmartRip® cards use an outdated chip technology. If your employees have a card that was purchased before 2012, they will need to transfer their

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E-Newsletters

COMMUTER CONNECTIONS.
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NEWSLETTER | The Commuter Information Source for DC, MD, VA



Transit Innovations in the Region

While 2020 was a year most said good riddance to, transit agencies can reflect on several state-of-the-art and groundbreaking bus innovations brought to the region.

More News



Spring/Summer 2021 Metro Platform Reconstruction

Metro will temporarily close six stations in 2021 to reconstruct deteriorating outdoor platforms. Stations include Arlington Cemetery and Addison Road this spring, and four Green Line stations this summer.

Bike to Work Day Set for May 21, 2021

Those still working from home in May can bike to a nearby pit stop for exercise and a free T-shirt. COVID rules and staggered hours have been established by organizers for the benefit of maintaining public health safety.


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A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

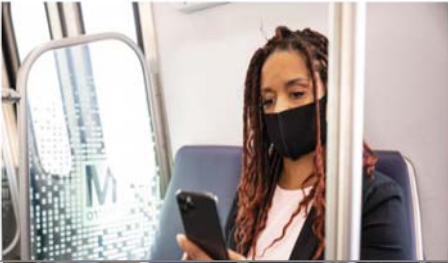
NEWSLETTER | The Commuter Information Source for DC, MD, VA



Going Back to the Workplace: Commuter Connections Can Help


Resources can be found on the Commuter Connections website that will support employers and their employees during the transition back to the workplace.

More News



Re-Starting Your SmartBenefits Program

As your worksite re-opens it will be vital to restart your company's transit benefits program or employees who previously used transit to get to work will feel more pressure to drive.



APPENDIX A

Web Visits

| Month | FY 2020 Web Visits | FY 2021 Web Visits | +/- | +/- % |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| January | 11,699 | 3,410 | (8,289) | -70.9% |
| February | 10,320 | 4,710 | (5,610) | -54.4% |
| March | 9,010 | 4,007 | (5,003) | -55.5% |
| April | 4,320 | 4,210 | (110) | -2.5% |
| May | 3,998 | 6,717 | 2,719 | 68.0% |
| June | | | | |
| | 39,347 | 23,054 | (16,293) | -41.4% |

Phone Calls

| Month | FY 2020 Phone Calls | FY 2021 Phone Calls | +/- | +/- % |
|----------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| January | 1,197 | 144 | (1,053) | -88.0% |
| February | 853 | 159 | (694) | -81.4% |
| March | 730 | 131 | (599) | -82.1% |
| April | 152 | 133 | (19) | -12.5% |
| May | 122 | 178 | 56 | 45.9% |
| June | | | | |
| | 3,054 | 745 | (2,309) | -75.6% |

GRH Applications

| Month | GRH FY 2020 Applications | GRH FY 2021 Applications | Change | % |
|----------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------|--------|
| January | 846 | 198 | -648 | -76.6% |
| February | 635 | 207 | -428 | -67.4% |
| March | 552 | 171 | -381 | -69.0% |
| April | | | | |
| May | | | | |
| June | | | | |

2,033 576 -1,457 -71.7%

Rideshare Applications

| Month | Rideshare FY 2020 Applications | Rideshare FY 2021 Applications | Change | % |
|----------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------|--------|
| January | 1,051 | 702 | -349 | -33.2% |
| February | 1,013 | 815 | -198 | -19.5% |
| March | 1,008 | 689 | -319 | -31.6% |
| April | | | | |
| May | | | | |
| June | | | | |

3,072 2,206 (866) -28.2%