FY 2022 WORK PROGRAM FOR THE COMMUTER CONNECTIONS PROGRAM FOR THE GREATER WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN REGION

D R A F T

March 5, 2021

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**NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

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SUMMARY

Program Overview

The Fiscal Year 2022 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP) consists of a core program of regional transportation demand management operational activities funded jointly by state and local jurisdictions, plus jurisdictional programs that are conducted at the discretion of individual state funding agencies.

Funding

The regional state funding shares for the program elements are defined using a formula agreed to by the state funding agencies. Funding agencies for the programs listed in this document include the District Department of Transportation, Maryland Department of Transportation, Maryland Transit Administration, and the Virginia Department of Transportation. The Maryland Transit Administration and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation provide direct funding to their local jurisdictions for transportation demand management activities that support the regional Commuter Connections program. The costs of the jurisdictional activities are allocated directly to the jurisdiction or jurisdictions that choose to conduct them. This ensures that the regional activities upon which all other activities depend on will be conducted regionally, and that the costs are allocated to the participating funding agencies per the agreed upon funding formula. At the same time, considerable flexibility is available to the state funding agencies and other agencies to define and fund discretionary activities that respond to their individual policy and funding priorities. Commuter Connections program services have also been incorporated into larger construction projects such as the Transform 66 Express Lanes construction projects in Northern Virginia.

The FY 2022 Commuter Connections program elements are classified as follows:

REGIONAL PROGRAMS	JURISDICTIONAL PROGRAMS
Commuter Operations Center	Employer Outreach*
Guaranteed Ride Home	GRH Baltimore
Marketing	
Monitoring and Evaluation	

Includes both a Regional and Jurisdictional Component

The CCWP was re-structured and streamlined in FY 2006 to clarify and simplify funding responsibilities. The FY 2022 CCWP continues this effort aimed at streamlining the administration and oversight processes for the program. Commuter Connections has expanded incrementally since its inception in 1974 as the Commuter Club, with different program elements having different jurisdictional participation and funding shares. As the program became more complex, it became increasingly difficult to track how much each state funding agency was participating in and paying for each program element. Therefore, a funding formula was devised. Table 1 in this document shows the budget and work program expenditures for FY 2022 for each work activity. Table 2 shows the total FY2022 funding shares each of the state funding agencies will be contributing to the program for each of the program elements. Each of the project areas in the work program also show the overall cost estimate as well as associated consultant costs and any substantive direct costs.

Planning Process Requirements

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) is required by federal regulations to approve a congestion management process which includes travel demand management as part of the metropolitan transportation plan. Commuter Connections constitutes the major travel demand management component of the congestion management process to be approved by the TPB. Initially, Commuter Connections provided transportation emission reduction measure benefits for inclusion in the air quality conformity determination, which was approved by the TPB as part of the annual update of the Long Range Plan and Transportation Improvement Program. However, for the past decade the TPB has not required the use of the program's air quality impacts in the conformity analyses. In addition, Commuter Connections transportation impacts from its various programs may be needed to meet Performance Based Planning and Programming (PBPP) regional targets.

Description of Commuter Connections Committees

The increasing complexity of the program prompted the creation of a working group to provide administrative and programmatic oversight of the core program cost elements. An updated Master Agreement was fully signed in FY 2020 between COG and the state funding agencies for the support of the Commuter Connections TDM program in the Washington metropolitan region. The agreement will continue to be reviewed and updated as needed. COG and the state funding agencies have an established working group; the State TDM (STDM) Work Group, which meets monthly (except for the month of August) and consists of representatives of the state transportation funding agencies in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. The State TDM Work Group helps to define the program content and budget for each fiscal year and helps to develop a detailed annual Work Program in collaboration with COG/TPB staff and the Commuter Connections Subcommittee. The draft work program is reviewed by program stakeholders and the Commuter Connections Subcommittee. The final Work Program is reviewed by the TPB Technical Committee and approved by the TPB. Program developments and/or significant changes to the CCWP made by the State TDM Work Group will be reviewed with the TPB's Technical Committee and in some cases the TPB's Steering Committee in the event the items or information will be presented to the TPB.

The State TDM Work Group also reviews all RFPs and RFQs as part of the work program and will identify selection committee members for individual contract solicitations. The State TDM Work Group will review and approve all CCWP work products with input from the Commuter Connections Subcommittee. Upon request, COG/TPB staff can provide additional details for projects being implemented under each program area.

As shown in Figure 2, the Commuter Connections Subcommittee will continue to provide overall technical review of the regional program elements in this Work Program and meet every other month. The Subcommittee will also review, provide comments, and endorse reports and other products for release. The Bike To Work Day Steering Committee will meet every other month from September to May to organize the regional Bike To Work Day event. The Car Free Day

Steering Committee will meet every other month from March until September to organize the regional Car Free Day event. The Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee will continue to meet quarterly on technical issues regarding the regional TDM software system. The TDM Evaluation Group will meet as needed to provide direction and review of the regional TDM evaluation project. The Employer Outreach Committee will meet quarterly to review and discuss Employer Outreach efforts. The Regional TDM Marketing Group will also meet quarterly to provide input and coordination of regional TDM advertising and marketing efforts. Oversight for jurisdictional program elements will be provided by the states and agencies that are funding them.

Specialized project work groups will continue to meet as needed to address implementation issues, such as the development of regional TDM marketing campaigns and the Employer Recognition Awards. A Strategic Plan, adopted in November 2007 but updated most recently in January 2020, serves as a framework regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Commuter Connections stakeholders. The Strategic Plan can be accessed at www.commuterconnections.org under the 'About Us' Publications link and includes a mission statement, definition of Commuter Connections, overall program and operating objectives, network responsibilities for each program area that include objectives and acceptable performance levels, a committee structure, sample meeting calendar, and internal and external report deliverables.

Key Elements and Highlights

The key elements and highlights of the FY 2022 Commuter Connections Work Program are summarized as follows:

- The Commuter Operations Center will provide ridematching services to commuters through a central toll-free number "1-800-745-RIDE" and www.commuterconnections.org web site, and support to commuter assistance programs operated by local jurisdiction, transportation management associations, and employer-based commuter assistance programs. Work will also help support a regional Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment Program (ATCMTD) grant to expand the incenTrip program.

- Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) will provide users of alternative commute modes up to four free rides home per year in a taxi or rental car or by Metrorail in the event of an unexpected personal or family emergency or unscheduled overtime.

- Marketing will provide frequent regional promotion of alternative commute options, including; car/vanpooling, teleworking, mass transit, bicycling, walking; and support programs such as Guaranteed Ride Home, the Commuter Connections network ridematching services, incentive programs, and Bike to Work Day. The Marketing program aims to raise awareness of alternative commute options and support the Commuter Connections network in persuading commuters to switch to alternative commute modes from the use of single-occupant vehicles, and persuading commuters currently using alternative commute modes to continue to use those modes. The 'Pool Rewards incentive

program provides a cash incentive to new carpoolers and vanpoolers. The CarpoolNow mobile app will allow for the provision of a cash incentive to drivers who offer dynamic carpool rides to passengers during weekday peak hour commuting periods. The Flextime Rewards program will allow commuters using designated corridors in the region to be notified of unusual traffic delays and receive a cash incentive in exchange for delaying or eliminating their normal commuting trip during weekday peak hour commuting times. Commuter Connections will coordinate the region's Car Free Day event as part of World Car Free Day. The Car Free Day event will encourage commuters and the general population to leave their cars home or to use alternative forms of transportation such as carpools, vanpools, public transit, bicycles, or walking. The incenTrip mobile application will allow commuters to avoid both day-to-day congestion and traffic jams caused by traffic accidents, work zones, special events and adverse weather conditions. App users also earn reward points while receiving recommendations on the best travel mode, departure time and/or route recommendation and can exchange their points for a cash incentive. Work on incenTrip will also be leveraged with an Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment Program (ATCMTD) USDOT grant.

- Monitoring and Evaluation includes data collection and analysis activities as well as program tracking and monitoring reports for each program area. The regional TDM Evaluation Framework Methodology document will be updated, the 2022 State of the Commute survey will be conducted, and a Technical Report will be issued. The 2022 GRH Applicant survey will be conducted. Monitoring and evaluation activities are used extensively to determine the program's effectiveness. Evaluation results have been used in the past to make program adjustments; for example, the 'Pool Rewards program was expanded to include vanpools and the budget for the carpool incentive was revised to match demand; the Flextime Rewards program was introduced based on feedback received from the State of the Commute survey; the Telework program was streamlined due to increased participation by the private sector; changes have been made to the Guaranteed Ride Home program guidelines based on participant survey feedback; and target marketing for GRH was re-introduced in the region after it was found that there was a dramatic drop in registrations when the marketing for this measure was streamlined into the mass marketing program.

- Employer Outreach will support outreach and marketing to the region's employers to implement new or expanded employer-based alternative commute modes and incentives such as transit and vanpool benefits, telework, preferential parking for carpools and vanpools, carpool and vanpool formation, flexible work schedules, and bicycling amenities. The outreach program also encourages employees' use of alternative commute modes such as ridesharing, transit, telework, bicycling, and walking. The outreach program also aids employers to hold bicycling seminars for employees, maintaining an up-to-date regional Bicycling Guide, and offering car-sharing and bike-sharing information to lower employers' fleet management costs. Resources will also be provided to employers on the benefits of teleworking and assist them in starting or expanding telework programs.

- GRH Baltimore will provide users of alternative commute modes in the Baltimore metropolitan region and St. Mary's County up to four free rides home per year in a taxi or rental car in the event of an unexpected personal or family emergency or unscheduled overtime.   A GRH Baltimore region and St. Mary's County Applicant Survey will be conducted in FY 2022. Marketing and advertising activities will continue to be developed and implemented in the Baltimore region.

Figure 1 of this document illustrates that the Commuter Connections service area is much larger than the designated area for workers eligible for the GRH program and larger still for workers who can access the Commuter Connections ridematching services. The total Commuter Connections service area has approximately 10 million residents.

Program Background

Commuter Connections is a continuing commuter assistance program for the Washington region which encourages commuters to use alternatives to driving alone in a private automobile, including ridesharing, transit, telecommuting, bicycling, and walking. The program has evolved and expanded over the past four plus decades following its inception in 1974 as the Commuter Club. In the mid-1980s, in an effort to better share regional ridesharing information the Commuter Club was expanded into the Ride Finders Network, which included Alexandria, Fairfax County, Montgomery County, Prince William County and the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission. By 1996, after steady growth in both size and strength, the Ride Finders Network became Commuter Connections, the commuter transportation network serving the Washington metropolitan region, encompassing twelve counties, four cities, and eight federal agencies. The Commuter Operations Center component of the current Commuter Connections Program represents the evolution of the earlier Commuter Club and Ride Finders Network programs.

In the mid-1990s, several new elements were added to the Commuter Connections Program as Transportation Emissions Reduction Measures (TERMs) to help meet regional air quality conformity requirements. The TERMs were designed to produce specific reductions in Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) by reducing vehicle trips and vehicle miles of travel associated with commuting. The measures were adopted into the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) by the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) and funded jointly by the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia Departments of Transportation, with some variation in funding shares for the different measures.

Measure	Date Implemented
Commuter Operations Center	1974
Metropolitan Washington Telework Resource Center	1996
Integrated Ridesharing	1996
Employer Outreach	1997
Guaranteed Ride Home	1997
Employer Outreach for Bicycling	1998

Mass Marketing of Alternative
Commute Options   2003
GRH Baltimore   2010

As the program elements shown above were implemented, their performance was evaluated over time. In FY 2006, the measures were revised to focus resources on the most effective program components. The total daily impacts of the Commuter Connections program were calculated in FY 2020 to be:

	Daily Impacts
VT Reductions:	137,000
VMT Reductions:	2,648,000
NOx Reductions (Tons):	0.5
VOC Reductions (Tons):	0.4
	Annual Impacts
PM 2.5 Reductions (Tons)	8
PM 2.5 Precursor NOx	
Reductions (Tons)	177
CO2 Reductions (Tons)	258,000

Extensive monitoring and evaluation have been carried out for the Commuter Connections Program over the past two decades, and comprehensive data sets are available for reviewing the performance of individual program elements and identifying areas for both strengthening the performance of the program and streamlining the oversight and management procedures. The Program has been shown through the FY 2018 – 2020 TDM Analysis Report to be a highly cost-effective way to reduce vehicle trips (VT), vehicle miles of travel (VMT), and vehicle emissions associated with commuting. The following overall cost-effectiveness measures for the Commuter Connections Program are based on the results of the FY 2018 – 2020 TDM Analysis Report that was released on November 17, 2020:

	Daily Impacts
Cost per VT reduced:	$0.18
Cost per VMT reduced:	$0.01
Cost per ton of NOx reduced:	$48,000
Cost per ton of VOC reduced:	$63,000
	Annual Impacts
Cost Per ton of PM 2.5 Reduced	$712,000
Cost per ton of PM 2.5 Precursor	
NOx Reduced	$ 36,000
Cost per ton of CO2 Reduced	$ 24

The Regional TDM programs offer other benefits to residents and commuters of the Washington metropolitan region, in societal objectives such as greater mobility, improved health/safety, and enhanced livability/quality of life. One benefit area that is particularly increasing in importance is transportation system performance, as new performance measurement requirements are established by the region. In the FY2018 – FY2020 regional TDM program evaluation analysis,

estimates of regional cost savings generated for selected societal benefits of the Commuter Connections travel and emissions impacts include:

- Air pollution/emissions reductions (reductions in NOx, VOC, PM 2.5 pollutants)
- Global climate change mitigation (reduction in Greenhouse gases / CO_2)
- Reduction in congestion (reduced hours of peak period travel delay)
- Reduction in fuel consumption (gasoline cost saving)
- Improved health/safety (accidents reduced per 1 million VMT)
- Noise pollution reduction (reduced motor vehicle noise)

The analysis showed that program impacts generate about $686,000 of daily cost savings across the societal benefits included in the calculation. The largest share of the cost saving is in reduction of excess fuel used; this benefit is valued at over $401,500 per day, or about 59% of the total daily benefits. Reduction in hours of travel delay accounts for about 21% of the total daily benefit ($142,913). Noise pollution reduction generates about 9% and the air pollution/Greenhouse gas reduction combined benefits and road safety accident reduction benefits each are responsible for about 6% of the total cost saving.

The Commuter Connections Program is generally regarded as among the most effective commuter assistance programs in the nation in terms of reductions effected in vehicle trips and vehicle miles of travel. Existing data collected on Commuter Connections program performance has been used to refine and enhance the program and to streamline procedures for program oversight and administration.

Figure 1: Geographic Areas Serviced by Commuter Connections

Legend

Washington 8-hour Ozone
Non Attainment Area (MSA)

GRH Service Area
(Must work in the service area)

Ridematching Service Area
in Addition to GRH Service Area

50 Miles

1:2,500,000
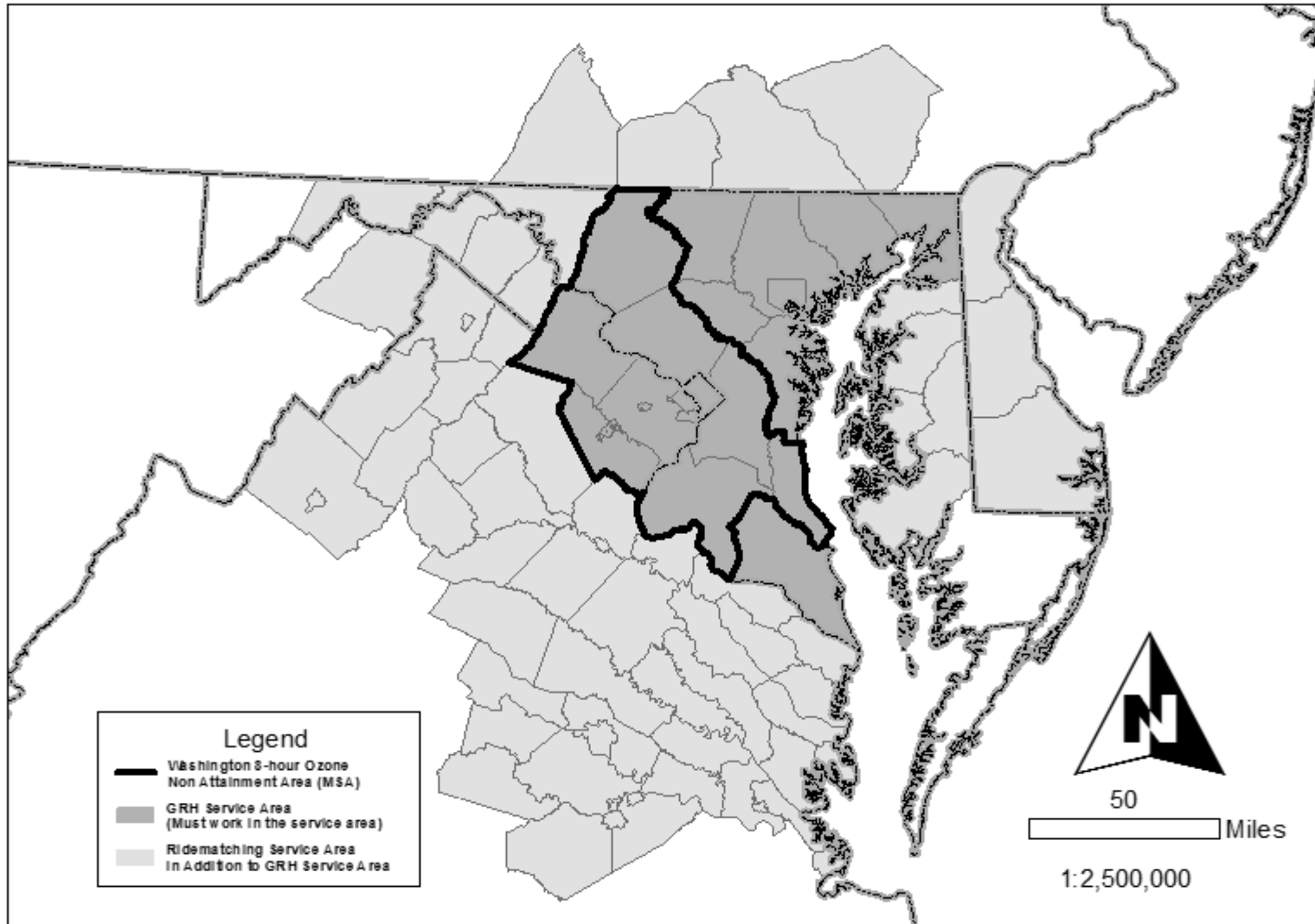
FIGURE 2: COMMUTER CONNECTIONS STRUCTURE
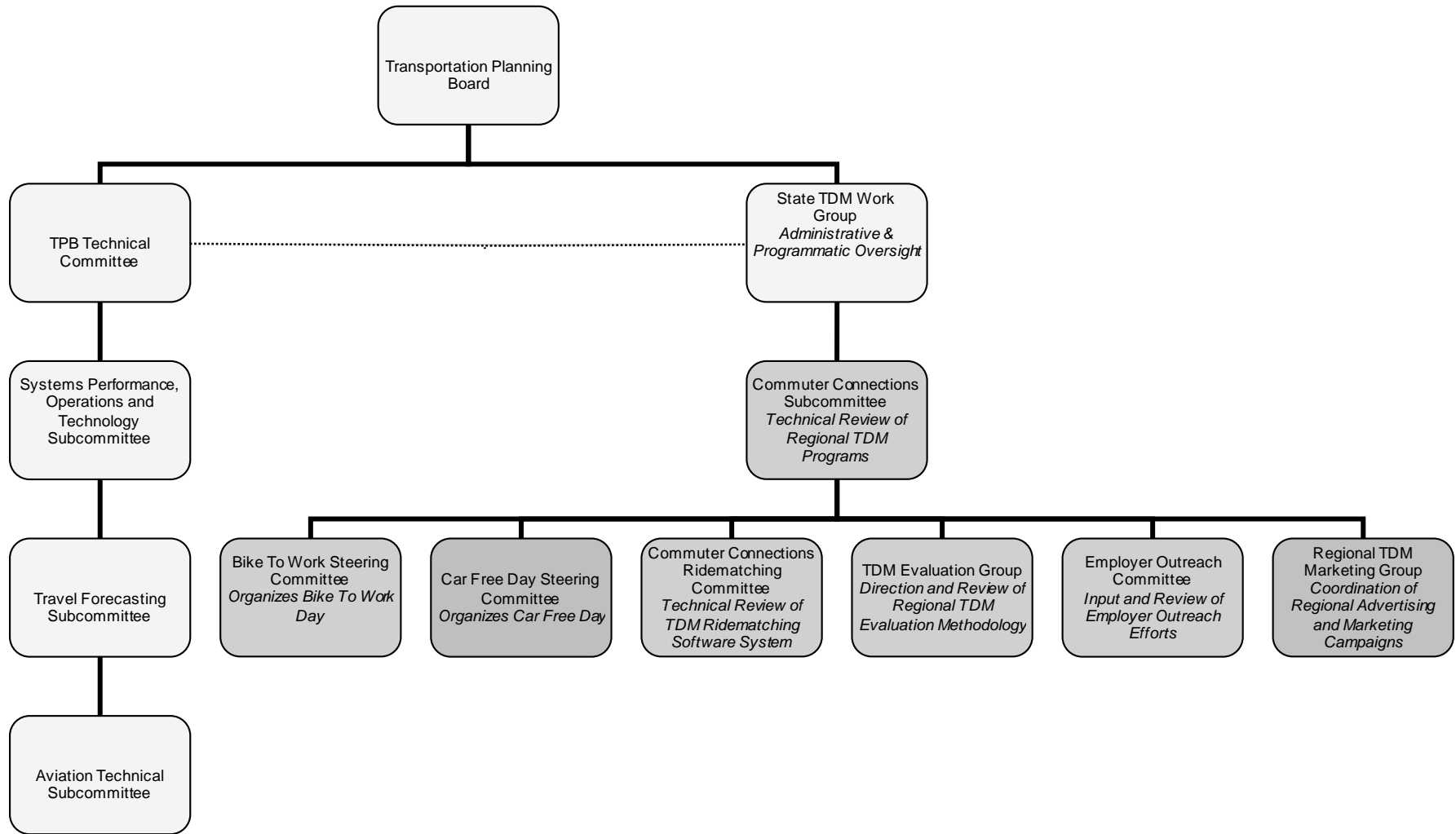
Table 1
FY 2022 COMMUTER CONNECTIONS BUDGET AND WORK PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

| WORK ACTIVITY | DIRECT LABOR EXPENSE | | | | INDIRECT | NON-LABOR DIRECT EXPENSE | | | | |
	SALARIES (includes Leave)	FRINGE BENEFITS 24.40%	INTERNS	OTHER STAFFING	MGMT & ADMIN 59.96%	DATA & PC COSTS	CONTRACT SERVICS	OTHER	TOTAL
Commuter Operations Center	227,343	55,472	-	-	169,576	107,684	95,000	26,725	681,799
Guaranteed Ride Home	195,132	47,612	-	-	145,549	6,741	195,000	327,128	917,163
Marketing	352,856	86,097	6,120	-	266,865	4,175	749,000	1,988,992	3,454,105
Monitoring and Evaluation	172,406	42,067	-	-	128,598	5,145	518,500	39,659	906,375
Employer Outreach	86,785	21,175	-	-	64,733	13,150	-	613,808	799,651
GRH Baltimore	28,992	7,074	-	-	21,625	-	62,250	100,059	220,000
TOTAL	**1,063,513**	**259,497**	**6,120**	**-**	**796,946**	**136,895**	**1,619,750**	**3,096,371**	**6,979,092**

Table 2
COMMUTER CONNECTIONS FISCAL YEAR 2022 BUDGET
BY STATE FUNDING AGENCY AND PROGRAM ELEMENT

FUNDS SOURCE	Commuter Operations Center	Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH)	Marketing	Monitoring & Evaluation	Employer Outreach*	GRH Baltimore	TOTALS
District of Columbia (DDOT)	$73,172	$107,308	$401,205	$106,046	$22,172	$0	$709,903
State of Maryland (MDOT)	$280,804	$411,806	$1,539,668	$406,962	$694,011	$170,000	$3,503,251
State of Maryland (MTA)	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$50,000	$50,000
Commonwealth of Virginia	$271,423	$398,049	$1,513,231	$393,367	$83,468	$0	$2,659,538
Other**	$56,400						$56,400
TOTAL	**$681,799**	**$917,163**	**$3,454,104**	**$906,375**	**$799,651**	**$220,000**	**$6,979,092**

Virginia and the District of Columbia have allocated $1,416,126 pending available funds to local jurisdictions and contractors to implement the TERM. DDOT has allocated $304,892, VDOT has allocated $711,234, and VDRPT has allocated $400,000.
**Software User Fees - $56,400

Detailed Task Descriptions and Cost Estimates for the
FY 2022 Commuter Connections Work Program

I. COMMUTER OPERATIONS CENTER

The Commuter Operations Center has been in existence since 1974 and provides local jurisdictions, Transportation Management Associations (TMAs), and federal government agencies a centralized database for commuting information. As part of the overall program, COG/TPB staff provides the following services:

- Ridematching coordination, training and technical assistance to local agencies;
- transportation information services to the general public;
- maintenance of the regional commuter database system hardware and software programming code and related mobile applications; and
- data updates to the software system.

The program is comprised of the four project areas listed below. The total annual budget for the Commuter Operations Center regional program is $681,799.

A. RIDEMATCHING COORDINATION, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Each month, COG receives several hundred applications for ridematching information. Nearly 100% of these applications are received through the Commuter Connections web site. COG/TPB staff reviews and processes all applications received through its web site. Matchlists for carpool and vanpool information are sent daily by email or mail (depending on the applicant's preference). Each local Commuter Connections network member has access to the regional TDM on-line system and is notified through a customized queue when a commuter application has been entered through the Commuter Connections web site from a commuter living in that network member's jurisdiction or in some cases, depending on the network member, it may be a commuter working in their service area. The queue serves as notification that the network member staff should take ownership of the record and follow up with the commuter to provide additional assistance, as needed. Applications received at COG through the mail are forwarded to the network member serving the applicant's home jurisdiction or work jurisdiction for entry into the rideshare database.

The following local jurisdictions, transportation agencies, transportation management associations, and federal government agencies deliver ridematching and commuter assistance services through the Commuter Connections network to their residents and/or workers:

District of Columbia	Maryland	Virginia
COG/TPB	Anne Arundel County	City of Alexandria
	Baltimore City	Arlington County-COG/TPB

District of Columbia	Maryland	Virginia
	Baltimore Metropolitan Council	Department of Defense
	Bethesda Transportation Solutions	Dulles Area Transportation Association
	Food and Drug Administration	Fairfax County
	Frederick County	George Washington Regional Commission
	Harford County	Loudoun County
	Howard County	Northern Neck Planning District Commission
	Maryland Transit Administration	Northern Shenandoah Regional Valley Commission
	Montgomery County	Potomac and Rappahannock Regional Commission
	National Institutes of Health	Rappahannock – Rapidan Regional Commission
	North Bethesda Transportation Center	
	Prince George's County	
	Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland	

COG/TPB staff administers ridematching services on behalf of the District of Columbia and Arlington County. The local jurisdiction commuter assistance programs listed in Maryland and Virginia receive separate grants from the Maryland Transit Administration and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation to provide local services and to help support regional TDM program activities.

During FY 2022, COG/TPB staff will continue to provide technical support and training to Commuter Connections network member agencies for the regional Commuter Connections TDM software system. In addition, staff will be providing administrative support for the Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment Program (ATCMTD) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) grant to expand the incenTrip program in the DMV mega region. Staff will continue to review and distribute ridematching applications received from employers and the general public. Matchlist and renewal notice generation and distribution services will also be provided through COG. COG/TPB staff will produce network member technical assistance reports from the Commuter Connections TDM system, and provide staff support and coordination to the Commuter Connections State TDM Work Group, the Commuter Connections Subcommittee, the Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee, and to the Federal ETC Advisory Group. Staff will monitor current events and regional trends to determine whether TDM-oriented work groups need to be

organized and facilitated. COG/TPB staff will also fulfill daily network member data requests. Federal Agency Employee Transportation Coordinator training will be coordinated and, in some instances, given by COG/TPB staff. Staff will also produce an annual Commuter Connections Work Program for FY 2023. The CCWP Master Agreement between COG and the state funding agencies will continue be reviewed and updated as needed.

COG/TPB staff will also continue work to expand the regional SchoolPool program so that more schools, safe routes to school coordinators and jurisdictions use the service, maintain the special events ridematching software module, and monitor the trip tracking software module and the use of the Commuter Challenge module.

Cost Estimate:	$196,386
Products:	Database documentation of specific technical actions implemented. *(COG/TPB staff)*
	Documentation of Subcommittee and Ridematching Committee meetings. *(COG/TPB staff)*
	Documentation of daily technical client member support given through COG's Help Desk. *(COG/TPB staff)*
	Daily matchlist generation and distribution. *(COG/TPB staff)*
	TDM Web Based System Training Manual updates, as needed. *(COG/TPB staff)*
	Monthly commuter renewal notices as part of the purge process. *(COG/TPB staff)*
	Review and update existing Emergency Management Continuity of Operations Plan for Commuter Connections program services. *(COG/TPB staff)*
	Transportation Demand Management Resources Directory update twice yearly. *(COG/TPB staff)*
	Federal ETC Web site updates. *(COG/TPB staff)*
	FY 2023 Commuter Connections Work Program. *(COG/TPB staff)*
Services:	Software client Member Help Desk technical support. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Software and customer service training, as needed. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Federal agency ETC training and support to the Federal ETC Advisory Group. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Staff the Commuter Connections Subcommittee, Ridematching Committee, and STDM Work Group, as well as any other specially formed work groups *(COG/TPB Staff)*

Work with state funding agencies to review and update CCWP Master Agreement *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with State Funding Agencies)*

Schedule: July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Oversight: Ridematching Committee

- Communicate Technical Support Issues
- Share knowledge and experience on "Hot Topic" Issues
- Provide input and feedback on Software Technical Policies (i.e. purge process, Help Desk)
- Provide requests for software training

Commuter Connections Subcommittee

- Provide input and comments to FY 2023 CCWP
- Provide input and feedback on all programs and projects in CCWP

STDM Work Group

- Provide input and comments to FY 2023 CCWP
- Provide input, feedback and approval on all programs and projects in CCWP
- Review and provides updates, if needed, to CCWP Master Agreement

B.   TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION SERVICES

COG has provided transportation information services for nearly 50 years in the

Washington metropolitan region. The Commuter Operations Center provides basic carpool/vanpool, park-and-ride lot, transit, telecommuting, bicycling, and walking information. Specialized transportation information is also provided in support of Bike to Work Day, Car Free Day, Air Quality Action Days, CarpoolNow, Flextime Rewards, incenTrip, SchoolPool, and Special Events as well as other regional commuter service programs.

COG staffs the regional commute information telephone number 1-800-745-RIDE. Calls received at COG are transferred to the local Commuter Connections network member site (based on jurisdiction of residence or in some cases work location of the caller) where applicable. COG/TPB staff provides transportation information services to those commuters who cannot be assigned to a client member site, including residents of the District of Columbia and Arlington County, Virginia. COG receives several hundred calls per week through the 800 number. COG staff also responds to daily requests and questions received by email.

During FY 2022, COG/TPB staff will continue to provide traveler information on alternatives to driving alone to the general public by telephone, web site, electronically, and through printed information. Staff will also provide information on Commuter Connections' incentive programs such as CarpoolNow, Flextime Rewards, and incenTrip. The incenTrip program information will also be provided to commuters in the DMV mega region which includes Baltimore, MD and Richmond, VA through the ATCMTD grant project. Staff will continue processing applications from the general public and/or from Commuter Connections network members who request the service on a permanent or temporary basis based on information requests received. COG/TPB staff will answer the regional "800" telephone line, TDD line, and respond to e-mails on information requests from the Commuter Connections TDM system web service.

Cost Estimate:	$95,603
Products:	Provide commuter traveler information on alternatives to driving alone to the general public through the Web site, electronically, or through printed information. *(COG/TPB staff)*
Services:	Provide commuter traveler information on alternatives to driving alone to the general public by telephone and email. *(COG/TPB staff)*
	Process applications from the general public. *(COG/TPB staff)*
	Answer and respond to commuter calls from the regional "800" Commuter Connections line and COG TDD line. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Respond to commuter e-mails from the Commuter Connections TDM web service. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Provide general public customer service. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Schedule: July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Oversight: Ridematching Committee
- Provide input and feedback to information services policies and procedures.

C.   TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION SOFTWARE, HARDWARE, AND DATABASE MAINTENANCE

The regional Transportation Demand Management (TDM) software system is provided as a regional database resource with secure online access to nearly 30 commuter assistance programs that include local rideshare agencies, Transportation Management Associations, and federal government agencies. The commuter assistance programs use the TDM software system to service their local commuters' transportation needs for alternative commuting information.

This project includes the daily routine monitoring and maintenance of the TDM software system as well as the hosting of the on-line system through COG's data center as well as all mobile applications. Tasks include: daily backup of the TDM database, maintenance of the TDM Web system servers, contingency management services, Windows support to TDM Oracle database and to virtual web servers, oracle database administration and support, documentation of system and system changes, Storage Area Network (SAN) connectivity and maintenance, and the maintenance and replacement of hardware and software as needed.

This project will also include ongoing software code upgrades to the web-based TDM system and associated mobile applications. Changes made to the software code will be reflected in a responsive web design format in order to be displayed on smart phone devices such as Android and iPhone and tablets. Access to specific system modules will be provided through mobile applications such as Commuter Connections, CarpoolNow, and incenTrip. COG/TPB staff will continue to examine ways in which its existing service applications and programs can be enhanced and streamlined to integrate the gamification and rewards aspects including the incenTrip mobile application. Support will also be provided to the Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment (ATCMTD) grant program to expand the incenTrip mobile app software functionality.

Cost Estimate: $321,673
Consultant Costs as Part of Estimate: *$ 95,000*

(Maintenance Contracts/Software)

Services:	Provide daily routine monitoring and maintenance of the TDM system and database for approximately 30 commuter assistance programs. *(COG/TPB staff)*
	Maintain and update TDM system servers, software programming code, mobile applications, and web hosting. *(COG/TPB staff in consultation with contractor).*
Schedule:	July 1, 2021- June 30, 2022
Oversight:	Ridematching Committee

- Provide input and feedback to TDM system maintenance policies.
- Provide recommendations for TDM Web based system software code upgrades.

D.   COMMUTER INFORMATION SYSTEM

The Commuter Information System project provides the TDM system with a GIS based information system that includes transit stop data, telework center locations, park and ride lot locations, carpool pick-up points, and bicycling information as part of the ridematching functionality.

During FY 2022, COG/TPB staff will continue integration activities of new transit, telework/co-working centers, park and ride lots, and bicycle route data into the TDM system server. Staff will also continue to obtain updated transit data primarily via GTFS feed, street centerline information and park-and-ride lot data from local jurisdictions and transit properties and reformat this data as necessary to the proper GIS format for use on the regional TDM system. Updates to the park-and-ride and telework/co-working center datasets for use on the TDM system will continue as will updates to the interactive GIS-based Web site application to include updated local and regional information for 11,000 plus transit, telework/co-working center, park-and-ride lots, and bicycle lanes/paths records. The bicycle routing module will also be maintained and updated to reflect any new and/or expanded bicycle paths and/or trails.

Cost Estimate:	$68,137
Services:	Update local and regional information for transit, co-working and telework center locations, park and ride lots, and bicycle route information which will be used in the TDM Web system. *(COG/TPB staff)*
Schedule:	July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Oversight: Ridematching Committee
- Provide input into data source updates for TDM web based system.

II. REGIONAL GUARANTEED RIDE HOME PROGRAM

The regional Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program eliminates a major barrier to using transit, carpooling, vanpooling, bicycling or walking to work. Studies have shown that a commuter's fear of being "stranded" at work if they or a family member become ill, or if they must work unexpected overtime, is one of the most compelling reasons commuters do not rideshare or use transit to travel to work. The regional GRH program eliminates this barrier by providing a free ride home in the event of an unexpected personal emergency or unscheduled overtime. The GRH program's free ride home is offered only to commuters that carpool, vanpool, use transit, bicycle, or walk to work at least two days per work week. As a result of the GRH program, some single occupant vehicle drivers will switch to a ridesharing or transit commuting alternative, and current ridesharing and transit users will increase the use of alternative commute modes. The GRH program is an insurance program for those commuters who do not drive alone to their worksite.

The Guaranteed Ride Home program is a regional program and consists of the project area previously outlined in Figure 1. The annual budget for the Guaranteed Ride Home program for the two project components outlined below is $917,163.

A.   GENERAL OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

COG/TPB staff processes all GRH applications received through the Commuter Connections web-based TDM software system or by mail. Using the web based TDM system, COG/TPB staff registers qualifying applicants, produces GRH registration ID cards, and sends ID card and participation guidelines to new registrants. Commuters can obtain information about the GRH program and complete an application on the Commuter Connections Web site, www.commuterconnections.org. Commuters may also call COG's Commuter Connections 800 telephone number, 1-800-745-RIDE, to ask questions about the GRH program and/or request information and an application. The 800 number is equipped with a menu so that callers can choose the menu item that best fits their needs. All GRH questions and requests for information and applications are taken by COG/TPB staff.

COG/TPB staff also mails GRH applications to GRH users who have used the GRH program without formally registering. GRH guidelines permit a commuter to use the GRH service one time as a "one-time exception" before they register. Also, COG/TPB staff mails transit vouchers to GRH users who used transit as part of their GRH trip. All vouchers and invoices from transportation service providers are processed by COG/TPB staff.

In the event the commuter has not supplied an e-mail address, COG/TPB staff mails a re-registration notice to commuters who could not be contacted by telephone. The notice contains an application which the commuter can complete and send to COG to re-register. The commuter can also call Commuter Connections or visit the Commuter Connections web site to re-register.

During FY 2022, staff will assist the Commuter Connections Subcommittee in reviewing the GRH participation guidelines for any recommended changes. These recommendations will be presented to the Commuter Connections Subcommittee for their final review and approval. In the past, recommendations have been made to modify and add participation guidelines to better convey the GRH trip authorization, GRH re-registration, and one-time exception rules and restrictions.

COG/TPB staff will continue to respond to the general public and to GRH applicants for registrations and re-registrations to the program. Registered commuters will be notified when their GRH registration is about to expire. Staff will continue to prepare and send new and re-registration GRH ID cards along with corporate rewards coupons, registration letters, and participation guidelines on a weekly basis. Staff will also continue to monitor and maintain the GRH applicant database and server. COG/TPB staff will continue to update and maintain program participation guidelines.

Cost Estimate:	$275,251
	Direct Costs (Telephone, Copies, etc.) as Part of Estimate: $30,302
Products:	GRH new and re-registration ID cards who corporate rewards coupons and registration letters *(COG/TPB staff)*
	GRH Program participation guidelines. *(COG/TPB staff)*
Services:	Process application requests from the general public for registration and re-registration to the program. *(COG/TPB staff)*
	Notify commuters when registration is about to expire. *(COG/TPB staff)*
	Monitor and update GRH applicant database. *(COG/TPB staff)*
Schedule:	July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022
Oversight:	Commuter Connections Subcommittee

- Provide input and feedback on GRH program participation guidelines and policies.

B. PROCESS TRIP REQUESTS AND PROVIDE TRIPS

GRH transportation service is provided by several taxi companies, a Transportation Network Company (TNC), and a rental car company all under contract with COG as well as Metrorail. Commuters make their GRH trip request through a menu option provided on COG's Commuter Connections 800 telephone number or through the Commuter Connections web site. The telephone menu option transfers all calls for GRH trips directly to an operations contractor and the email request produces and sends a notification to the contractor. The contractor reviews and assesses the trip request and approves or denies the request based on the GRH Participation Guidelines. The contractor then arranges the approved trips with the appropriate transportation providers. If a trip request is denied, the commuter is offered an arranged trip at their own expense.

During FY 2022, COG/TPB staff will continue management and monitoring of contract services for day-to-day operations services. Day to day operations include confirming ride request eligibility; dispatching rides through the ride service providers; tracking ride requests in the GRH database; and processing invoices for payment for ride service providers, the daily operations contractor and for the general public for transit vouchers.

Customer service training will be provided to all Guaranteed Ride Home call center agents as needed.

Cost Estimate:	$641,912

Consultant/Contractor Costs as Part of Estimate:
(Daily Operations)   *$195,000*
(Cab, TNC, and Car Rental Companies)   *$297,406*

Services: Process GRH trip requests, approve/deny requests, and arrange rides. *(Daily Operations Contractor)*

Management and monitoring of contract services for day-to-day operations and seven cab, car rental, and TNC ride service providers. This includes processing invoices for payment for contractors and for the general public for transit vouchers. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Customer service training for GRH call center agents. *(COG/TPB Staff and contractor)*

Provide GRH Rides *(Cab, TNC, and Car Rental*

Schedule:	July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022
Oversight:	Commuter Connections Subcommittee

- Provide input and feedback on GRH program operations.

III.   MARKETING

The Marketing program delivers a "brand promise" for Commuter Connections as an umbrella solution for commuters seeking alternative commuting options within the region through regional marketing campaigns and special events and initiatives. The use of media and other forms of communication at high reach and frequency levels are used to communicate the benefits of alternative commute methods to Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV) commuters most likely to shift to non-SOV travel.

Marketing is a regional program and consists of eight project areas listed below. The total annual project cost for the program tasks is $3,454,104.

A.   TDM MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

Regional TDM marketing campaigns aim to encourage both current SOV and non-SOV populations to either start or to continue using alternative transportation modes for commuting. Regional TDM marketing campaigns complement other on-going Commuter Connections program services that have been implemented in the region by increasing their overall efficiency and effectiveness.

Outreach for Commuter Connections regional marketing campaigns may include but are not limited in the use of direct mail to households and employers, radio, television, web site, social media, web banner, bus and rail, and specials event advertisements, and keyword search engine sponsorships.   COG/TPB staff and its network members may also participate in promotions at employment sites and special events.

The overall objective of the project will be to continue to brand Commuter Connections and to meet the Mass Marketing and overall Commuter Connections impact goals. A marketing/advertising/public relations contractor will be used to produce and execute the creative, copywriting, and earned media (public relations) plan.

The marketing/advertising/public relations contractor provides expertise to develop the regional marketing campaign. The program builds upon current regional TDM marketing efforts by local, state, and regional agencies to establish a coordinated and continuous year-round marketing effort for regional TDM programs. Campaigns will also include the strategic development of a DMV mega region outreach campaign as part of the

ATCMTD grant to expand the incenTrip program including an earned media strategy. Partnerships between COG and area transit agencies have been established and are maintained to enable the promotion of incentives such as the GRH program to transit riders. COG has also partnered with local jurisdictions to promote various program services through value added media opportunities.

A Marketing Communications Plan and Schedule is issued within the first quarter of the fiscal year that will outline the overall marketing strategy to be used for the marketing campaign. Input on this plan will be provided by the state funding agencies and the Regional TDM Marketing Group members. A Marketing Planning Workgroup will then be formed provide input to the detailed creative development of the regional marketing campaigns.

COG/TPB staff will update and implement a public relations earned media plan and continuously update the SharePoint site for posting marketing and advertising materials for review by the regional Marketing Planning Workgroup members. An outbound email box has also been established at docomments@mwcog.org for communications on reports and other work program products that require feedback by Commuter Connections committee groups. COG/TPB staff will maintain the primary Commuter Connections web site and associated social media sites.

A regional commute alternatives newsletter, *Commuter Connections,* will be published quarterly and distributed to several thousand employers. The focus of the newsletter is on federal, state, regional and local information and/or ideas employers can use to either start, expand or maintain employer-based commute benefit programs. In addition, COG/TPB staff works with the General Services Administration to produce a quarterly Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) newsletter insertion into the Commuter Connections newsletter, for distribution to more than 100 Federal ETC's.

COG/TPB staff will continue to maintain and update all Commuter Connections collateral materials and Web based information. The regional Resource Guide and Strategic Marketing Plan will also be updated with input from member agencies.

> **Cost Estimate:** $2,535,941
>
> ***Consultant/Contractor Costs as Part of Estimate:***
> *(Advertising and Marketing Contractor)* $ 535,000
> *(Media Buy)* $1,199,723
> *(Postage/Printing)* $ 219,220

Products: SharePoint postings for marketing and advertising materials for review by workgroup members and all other Commuter Connections committees. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Earned media plan. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction*

with consultant)

Quarterly employer newsletter and Federal agency Employee Transportation Coordinator newsletter. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Mass Marketing material updates and re-prints. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Commuter Connections Web Site and social media page updates. *(COG/TPB staff in consultation with consultant as needed)*

Creative materials for regional TDM marketing campaigns. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Bus and rail advertising development and placement. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Special event advertising development and placement. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Marketing Communications Plan and schedule. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

2021 Strategic Marketing Plan and Resource Guide. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Services: Placement of advertisements including, but not limited to: Web site advertisement through banner ads and social media sites, placement of keyword search engine sponsorships, radio, print, and television, and value-added spots, as needed. *(Consultant)*

Placement of advertisements in printed and electronic telephone directories. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Staff the Regional TDM Marketing Group. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Track the effectiveness of advertising campaigns through call volumes, internet and social media hits. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Process media placement invoices. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Monitor and adjust the implementation of regional marketing campaigns. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Attend and participate in commuter promotional events and special events, as needed. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Management and oversight of marketing contract. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Schedule:	July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022
	Marketing Communications Plan and Schedule: September 2021
	2021 Strategic Marketing Plan and Resource Guide: December 2021
Oversight:	Regional TDM Marketing Group

- Provide input and feedback on marketing plan, collateral materials, and recommendations made by the Marketing Planning Work Group.

- Provide information on current regional TDM marketing efforts by local, state, and regional agencies to establish and coordinate continuous year-round marketing for regional TDM.

B. BIKE TO WORK DAY

A major marketing activity is the annual Bike to Work day event. Participation in this event has grown steadily each year and includes bicyclists from all jurisdictions in the region. This event is co-sponsored by the Washington Area Bicyclists Association (WABA) and is supported by COG/TPB staff, the state funding agencies and local jurisdictions, and individual sponsoring companies and organizations. Some of the costs of the event are off-set by business and interest-group sponsors who receive publicity for their financial support.

Commuter Connections participation in Bike to Work day includes support for the planning and promotion of the event, the maintenance and management of the event

website, and assistance at the various "pit stops" through new pit stop manager training and on the day of the event, development of promotional materials and advertising, and earned media. An "Employer Challenge" is also held which identifies the top five employers with the most registered participants in the event. A drawing is then held with the five employers to select a winner. The winning employers' registered participants receive a free lunch event sponsored by Commuter Connections.

COG/TPB staff will continue to support and implement a regional Bike To Work Day event and promote the event to employers and commuters. This will be accomplished through management and oversight of the event web site, media placements and marketing coordination activities with the marketing/advertising/public relations contractor.

Cost Estimate:	$195,914

Consultant/Contractor Costs as Part of Estimate:

(Advertising and Marketing Contractor)	*$ 80,000*
(Media Buy)	*$ 64,000*
(State Funding Agency Sponsorships)	*$ 3,600*
(Postage/Printing)	*$ 12,597*

Products:

Earned media plan. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Creative materials for Bike To Work Day Event which may include, but is not limited to logo update, poster, take-away brochure, transit signage, t-shirts, custom banners for each pit stop, radio ad, writing copy for live radio reads, print ad, internet ads, HTML e-mail blasts, and public service announcements. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Regional Proclamation. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Services:

Coordinate regional pit stops and pit stop managers for Bike to Work Day event in May 2022. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Coordination and management of event web site *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with WABA staff and consultant)*

Bike to Work Day web site and social media page updates *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Design and distribute event collateral materials to

employers and the general public. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant).*

Placement of advertisements; including, but not limited to: Web site advertisement through social media, banner ads, placement of keyword search engine sponsorships, radio, and print, as needed. Activities include negotiation of value-added media. *(Consultant)*

Solicitation of corporate sponsors. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant).*

Media outreach and coordination of interviews. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Coordination of Employer Challenge. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Process media placement invoices. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Management and oversight of marketing contract. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Staff regional Bike To Work Day Steering Committee. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Schedule:	July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022
Oversight:	Bike To Work Day Steering Committee

- Provide input and feedback on marketing collateral materials, radio advertisements and event logistics.

C. EMPLOYER RECOGNITION AWARDS

COG/TPB staff will coordinate the annual Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards for employers showing commitment towards voluntarily implementing commute alternative programs and telecommuting at their respective worksite(s). COG/TPB staff will also explore additional public relations opportunities for the award-winning agencies to be profiled or highlighted. During FY 2009, a review of the program occurred and recommended changes that were adopted were implemented in FY 2010. An Employer Recognition Awards work group will continue to provide input to the collateral material developed for the awards program.

Coordination activities will include developing and distributing an awards nomination

packet and soliciting nominations from employers through local jurisdictions, Chambers of Commerce and directly from the employers. Staff will also work with the marketing contractor to review and classify the award submissions. A selection committee of objective transportation industry professionals will be recruited for the awards selection committee. The selection committee will be chaired by a member of the TPB.

The marketing contractor will work with COG/TPB staff to validate nomination entries and obtain any clarification needed from nominees. The marketing contractor will facilitate the selection committee process and tally the voting ballots for each nominee. Once the selection committee makes its recommendations, the award winners will be notified. An awards booklet, giveaway, and short video briefs of each of the award winners will be produced for the awards ceremony. The awards ceremony will be held towards the end of the fiscal year. Staff will coordinate all logistics for the event including, but not limited to: securing speakers, writing remarks, securing event venue, and staffing the event. Additionally, COG's Office of Communications along with the marketing contractor will identify media opportunities to highlight the winners.

Cost Estimate:	$120,961
Consultant/Contractor Costs as Part of Estimate:	
(Advertising and Marketing Contractor)	*$65,000*
(Media Buy)	*$ 7,500*
(Postage/Printing/Video)	*$24,000*

Products: Awards nomination printed packet and on-line form. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant).*

Awards invitations *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant).*

Awards Booklet. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant).*

Award Trophies. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Giveaway Item. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant).*

Video Briefs. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant).*

Event Photos. *(Consultant)*

Print Ad. *(Consultant in conjunction with COG/TPB staff)*

Services: Coordinate placement of program information on the

Commuter Connections website *(COG/TPB staff)*

Coordinate award submissions with local jurisdictions. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Coordinate logistics for awards selection committee. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Facilitate selection committee meeting *(Consultant)*

Identify and coordinate earned media opportunities. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Placement of print ad. *(Consultant)*

Process media placement invoices. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Coordinate event logistics including recruitment of speakers, writing speaker remarks, securing event venue, and staffing the event. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Management and oversight of marketing contract. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Schedule: July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Oversight: Commuter Connections Subcommittee
- Provide input and feedback on project and recommendations made by Employer Recognition Awards work group.

D. 'POOL REWARDS

The purpose of the 'Pool Rewards carpool incentive project is to recruit and retain commuters in a carpool through a cash incentive. Similar programs are in operation in major metropolitan areas such as Los Angeles and Atlanta. Research has shown that commuters who are paid to carpool tend to stay in a carpooling arrangement longer than those carpoolers who are not paid. Commuters who currently take transit or a vanpool to work are eligible to receive $270 per month under the IRS Qualified Transportation Fringe benefit provisions. Carpoolers are not eligible to participate. Carpool incentive programs have been used in a limited fashion in the Washington metropolitan region during large-scale construction projects such as the Wilson Bridge where the program was named "Bridge Bucks." The program proved to be extremely successful in convincing commuters to use an alternative form of transportation other than driving alone during the construction period.

The 'Pool Rewards program began in FY2011 after results were reviewed from a pilot program conducted in FY2010. After measuring the benefits produced from the carpool financial incentive program, comparisons were made from the expected outcomes to the actual outcomes in terms of auto occupancy and vehicle miles of travel, vehicle trips reduced and emission impacts. A follow-up survey conducted in FY 2011 of the original demonstration project participants showed a 93% carpool retention rate of all participants. A survey of new participants was conducted in FY 2011 and showed that 98% of the program participants planned to carpool after the incentive had ended. A survey of all program participants that had completed the program and were paid was conducted in FY 2014 and results showed a 55% carpool/vanpool retention rate. Pool Rewards participants registered during the FY 2015-2017 and FY2018 – 2020 evaluation periods, were surveyed in FY 2017 and FY 2020 to explore retention in alternative modes. The survey found that 87% of participants were still using an alternative mode and 13% had returned to driving alone to work. These results were used to derive the long-term retention placement factors: 87% continued placement and 13% temporary placement. Continued evaluation will be conducted in order to adjust program guidelines and documentation of program participation from the user's end. Results from the FY 2017 survey along with program participation rates in both the carpool and vanpool incentive programs were used to adjust the program budget.

The current carpool incentive allows each one-time new participating carpooler to earn up to $130 over a 90-day time frame through a trip-tracking process. In FY 2012 the 'Pool Rewards program was expanded to include vanpools. Newly formed vanpools that originate in either the District of Columbia or in Maryland whose destination is in the Washington DC non-attainment region are eligible to participate. Third-party vanpool providers on contract with COG/TPB provide the vanpool service and each of the 'Pool Rewards eligible vanpools receive an on-going $200 per month incentive. COG/TPB staff worked with WMATA to develop a monthly mileage reporting system for the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) National Transit Database. There will also be continued coordination with Virginia's vanpool incentive program, Vanpool Alliance.

The I-66 Express Lanes project is a public-private partnership between the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), and private partner, I-66 Express Mobility Partners, delivering $3.7 billion of transportation improvements in the I-66 corridor. The Express Lanes are scheduled to open in December 2022.The Commuter Connections 'Pool Rewards program will allow for the formation of new carpools in and around the I-66 corridor outside of the Beltway prior, during, and after the peak construction time of the project. Each participant that joins a new carpool will be eligible for an additional $100 during a 90-day reporting period which will be funded through VDOT's approved Transform 66 Transportation Management Plan. The additional $100 for the I-66 Express Lanes project will be above and beyond the current $130 that is available through the regional 'Pool Rewards program. The purpose of the program is to provide an added incentive for commuters to alter their driving behavior prior, during, and after the project construction period. Marketing and advertising for the I-66 Express Lanes 'Pool Rewards incentive will be separate for this activity.

Those participants receiving payouts from 'Pool Rewards and participate in other

Commuter Connections incentive programs would have the amounts received from 'Pool Rewards included in the $600 total Commuter Connections incentive amount allowed each calendar year.

In FY 2022, advertising materials will be updated along with on-line advertising to entice additional project participants.

Cost Estimate: $110,195

Consultant/Incentive Costs as Part of Estimate:
(Advertising and Marketing Contractor)   *$ 6,000*
(Media Buy)   *$16,000*
('Pool Rewards Incentive Payments) $ 5,000 (carpools)
                                                                     $25,000 (Virginia I-66)
                                                                     $30,000 (vanpools)

Products: Marketing materials. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Services: Operation of 'Pool Rewards program which includes registering and verifying participants, monitoring trip logs, supervisor verification, and payments to program participants. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Administer program surveys and obtain supervisor verifications *(COG/TPB staff)*

Media Placements on radio, television, web. Social media, and value-added spots, as needed (*Consultant*)

Process media placement invoices. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Management and oversight of marketing contract. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Report vanpool data to the FTA's National Transit Database *(COG/TPB staff)*

Update program terms and conditions, and participation guidelines as needed *(COG/TPB staff)*

Design and distribute collateral materials for distribution to employers and the general public *(COG/TPB staff)*

Schedule: July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

> **Oversight:**   Commuter Connections Subcommittee
> - Provide input and feedback on project recommendations for program continuation and/or expansion.

E. CAR-FREE DAY

During FY 2022, COG/TPB staff will coordinate with local jurisdictions to implement the regional Car Free Day campaign that will encourage residents to leave their cars behind or to take alternative forms of transportation such as public transit, carpools, vanpools, telework, bicycling or walking.

Car Free Day was first held in FY 2009. Following the 2019 event, Commuter Connections conducted a brief survey of event registrants to examine their use of car-free and car-lite) travel options during the Car Free Day event and their subsequent continued use of these options for commute travel. The analysis only captured impacts for commuting travel. The survey found that 86% of all respondents had used a car-free or car-lite option for a commute trip on Car Free Day. For 16% of these respondents, the Car Free Day option was a different mode than they usually would have used, and 76% who changed mode would have driven alone or carpooled/vanpooled. Participants had an average commute distance of 14.9 miles one-way. These results were used to calculate the "event day" trip reduction impact.

The survey further indicated that 11% of employed respondents had increased their regular average frequency of car-free/car-lite options, with an average weekly trip reduction of 3.32 trips, equating to a daily trip reduction of 0.66. These factors were applied to the participant population to estimate the on-going Car Free Day impacts which are highlighted in the FY2018 – FY2020 regional TDM Analysis Report.

This event will be held on September 22nd each year in tandem with World Car Free Day. Evaluation results of the project will include participation and transportation and emission impacts which will be used to make improvements to the annual event. A marketing campaign along with public outreach efforts will be developed to coincide with this worldwide celebrated event.

> **Cost Estimate:** $113,188
> ***Consultant/Contractor Costs as Part of Estimate:***
> *(Advertising and Marketing Contractor)*   *$ 32,000*
> *(Media Buy)*   *$ 45,000*
> *(Postage/Printing)*   *$ 19,011*
>
> **Products:**   Marketing collateral which can include but is not limited to development and printing of posters, transit signage, bus shelter signage and other related advertising collateral that will need to be printed**.**

(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)

Development and production of radio, internet, and social media ads, and text messages, and HTML e-mail blasts. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Earned media plan development and implementation. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Update of website and social media pages. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Services: Implement regional Car Free Day(s) event on September 22, 2021 and promote event to the general public, employers and to the media. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant).*

Media Placements, including the negotiation of value-added placements. *(Consultant)*

Process media placement invoices. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Staff regional Car Free Day Steering Committee. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Management and oversight of marketing contract. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Schedule: July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Oversight: Car Free Day Steering Committee
- Provide input and feedback on marketing collateral materials, radio advertisements and event logistics.

F. CARPOOLNOW MOBILE APPLICATION

During FY 2017, COG/TPB staff launched CarpoolNow, a new rideshare mobile application that gives commuters in the Washington metropolitan region the ability to carpool on-demand and in real-time. The app immediately connects users who are offering a ride with those seeking a ride. It also displays routes, estimates pickup times, and confirms pick-up and drop-off locations.

During FY2018, COG coordinated with Howard County, Maryland on a marketing initiative to support the CarpoolNow app. The marketing initiative was used to encourage

commuters to download and use the app and consisted of producing creative materials to be used on traditional and digital media outlets. A driver incentive was also designed, examined and tested. Results from this project were used to expand the marketing of the CarpoolNow mobile app and a $10 per trip driver incentive to the Washington metropolitan region in FY2019. Drivers receiving the incentive can receive up to $600 per calendar year. The $600 total would also be inclusive of any other Commuter Connections incentive program payments.

Cost Estimate: $67,014

Consultant/Contractor Costs as Part of Estimate:

(Advertising and Marketing Contractor)   *$ 6,000*
(Media Buy)   *$ 15,000*
(Commuter Incentives)   *$ 34,889*

Products: Development and production of creative and marketing services including, but not limited to: radio, internet, newsprint, educational video, SEO blog posts, venue, mobile, social media and text ads. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Update of web site and social media pages to reflect promotional activities and incentives. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Services: Promote mobile app to the general public, employers and to the media. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant).*

Operation of CarpoolNow driver incentive program which includes registering and verifying participants, monitoring trip logs, supervisor verification, and payments to program participants. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Media placements, including the negotiation of value-added placements. *(Consultant)*

Process media placement invoices. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Management and oversight of marketing contract. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Schedule: July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Oversight: Commuter Connections Subcommittee
- Provide input and feedback on project

recommendations for program continuation and/or expansion.

G. FLEXTIME REWARDS

During FY 2017, COG/TPB staff researched and wrote a Flextime Incentives "White Paper" which was endorsed for release in FY 2018. The White Paper provides speculation on the positive impacts of implementing a flextime incentive program for the Washington D.C. metropolitan region. Research on the subject was examined and flextime impacts within major metropolitan areas of the United States and abroad are examined. This document selects corridors in the Washington D.C. region that may benefit from an incentive program and details the beneficial impacts of implementing a flextime-incentive pilot program.

Based on responses with regards to the likelihood of using a flextime incentive from the 2016 State of the Commute survey, analysis of the region's top-10 traffic bottlenecks, and to allow for a variety of roadway segments on a regional scale, a pilot program was launched in FY2018 for commuters traveling on the following four corridors:

- The Beltway near the I-270 spur and American Legion Bridge.
- The Beltway between I-95 and MD-193
- I-66 heading eastbound at VA-267
- DC-295 heading southbound at Benning Road.

During FY2017 and FY2018, COG coordinated with the University of Maryland to develop the algorithm using a variety of verification techniques to confirm the legitimacy of a user's trip. This includes the mandatory use of location services to verify departure and arrival times, as well as verify the route the individual has traveled. This verification helps confirm participants traveling to their registered workplace, particularly for those receiving a cash incentive. It also helps verify that the participant is truly flexing their time and rerouting the trip. Verification techniques used in FY2018 simply included self-reporting by the commuter for inclusion in a monthly or quarterly prize/gift drawings.

Part of the program's implementation is determining the severity of an incident along a corridor that would require a notification to be sent to registered users. Levels of service during the peak period on all the corridors of interest are already consistently rated "E" – "F" without the presence of an incident. The University of Maryland's predictive travel model assists in determining which incidents warrant a notification. This model calculates the estimated time of arrival while traveling along corridors in the region and recalculates every time an incident is detected. This will give insight into the severity of an incident that has recently occurred and allow notifications to be pushed appropriately.

Commuters using these four corridors register to participate in the incentive program through an electronic application. In FY2019 it was determined that an $8 cash incentive would be paid to a commuter each time they received a traffic notification and elected to delay their trip during peak hour travel times in the a.m. and/or the p.m. This cash amount determination was made on previous literature review regarding incentive programs from the Flextime White paper issued by COG/TPB staff. Commuters participating in Flextime Rewards can receive up

to $600 per calendar year. The $600 total would also be inclusive of any other Commuter Connections incentive program payments.

The applications received from individuals traveling along select corridors are reviewed and either approved or denied by COG/TPB staff. Careful attention is given during this process to determine eligibility associated with implementing an incentive program of this type. Depending on eligibility requirements, existing Commuter Connections account holders may be able to simply opt in to the program and use the Commuter Connections mobile app to participate in the program.

Given that the pilot project focused on four top bottleneck corridors in the region, it is was reasonably expected that 35 flextime notifications would be sent during a typical year involving the selected corridors resulting in the following annual incentive costs; however the costs associated with 35 notifications will be dependent on the number of participating individuals choosing to delay or avoid their trip during peak of the peak hour commuting periods in the a.m.(7 to 8 a.m.) and in the afternoon (5 to 6 p.m.).

The corridors selected for observation were purposely chosen for pilot program implementation in FY2018. Corridors not included as a corridor of interest may still benefit from an incentive program and can still be a candidate for future expansion of the program given overall participation and survey results.

Cost Estimate:	$107,589
Consultant/Contractor Costs as Part of Estimate:	
(Advertising and Marketing Contractor)	*$ 12,000*
(Media Buy)	*$ 15,000*
(Commuter Incentives)	*$ 60,332*

Products:	Development and production of creative and marketing services including, but not limited to: radio, internet, newsprint, educational video, SEO blog posts, venue, mobile, social media and text ads. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*
	Update of web site and social media pages to reflect promotional activities and incentives. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*
Services:	Operation of Flextime Rewards program which includes registering and verifying participants, monitoring trip logs, supervisor verification, and payments to program participants. *(COG/TPB staff)*
	Administer program surveys and obtain supervisor verifications as needed *(COG/TPB staff)*

Promote Flextime Rewards program to the general public, employers and to the media. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*.

Media Placements, including the negotiation of value-added placements. (*Consultant*)

Process media placement invoices. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Management and oversight of marketing contract. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Schedule:	July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022
Oversight:	Commuter Connections Subcommittee

- Provide input and feedback on project recommendations for program continuation and/or expansion.

H.   INCENTRIP MOBILE APPLICATION

During FY 2019, COG/TPB staff in collaboration with the University of Maryland, soft-launched incenTrip, a new mobile application that gives commuters in the Washington metropolitan region the ability to avoid both day-to-day congestion and traffic jams caused by traffic accidents, work zones, special events and adverse weather conditions. App users also earn reward points while receiving recommendations on the best travel mode, departure time and/or route recommendations. The app was formally launched in August 2019 at a launch event hosted and conducted by the TPB's officer's and UMD senior project leadership.

The app allows users to earn reward points every time a trip is planned through incenTrip and users can take advantage of multimodal travel options, outsmart traffic jams, and invite their friends to join. With a single click, users can exchange their points for an incentive.

By supporting incenTrip and providing incentives to travelers, Commuter Connections can address congestion, reduce energy use, and emissions. The key innovation of incenTrip is the development of personalized and dynamic incentives that vary based on individual preferences and real-time traffic conditions, which significantly improves the cost-effectiveness of traveler incentives. incenTrip performance can be monitored daily via a customized dashboard. The goal of the incenTrip eco-system is to improve multimodal transportation system performance along congested corridors.

During FY2020, COG fully launched the incentive portion of the incenTrip app following its testing period during FY2019. A Commuter Connections work group helped develop the points and awards structure for the app. A marketing initiative accompanied the launch of the incentive to encourage commuters to download and use the app and included the production of creative materials to be used to market the product through traditional and digital media outlets.   Marketing of the app to both commuters and employers will continue. Support will also be provided to the Advanced Transportation and Congestion

Management Technologies Deployment (ATCMTD) grant program to expand the incenTrip mobile app functionality and to process the incentive payments and implement marketing campaign activities including a media plan and placement of advertisements.

Cost Estimate:	$203,302
Consultant/Contractor Costs as Part of Estimate:	
(Advertising and Marketing Contractor)	*$ 13,000*
(Media Buy)	*$ 40,000*
(Commuter Incentives)	*$125,000*

Products: Development and production of creative and marketing services including, but not limited to: radio, internet, newsprint, educational video, SEO blog posts, venue, mobile, social media and text ads. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Update of web site and social media pages to reflect promotional activities and incentives. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Services: Operation of incenTrip rewards program which includes registering and verifying participants, monitoring trip logs, supervisor verification, and payments to program participants. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Promote mobile app to the general public, employers and to the media. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant).*

Media Placements, including the negotiation of value-added placements. *(Consultant)*

Process media placement invoices. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Management and oversight of marketing contract. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Schedule: July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Oversight: Commuter Connections Subcommittee
- Provide input and feedback on project recommendations for program continuation and/or expansion.

IV. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Monitoring and Evaluation program will provide overall program and individual project results when appropriate for the various projects in the CCWP that will be used to track progress for the regionally adopted Commuter Connections Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program elements that were originally adopted as Transportation Emission Reduction Measures (TERMS). One project will solely focus on those activities directly related to data collection and analysis for the TDM program elements. Data collection and analysis for the Commuter Connections program elements occur over a three-year period. Results from this project will directly impact the FY 2021 – FY 2023 Regional TDM Program Analysis report for Commuter Connections. Cost effectiveness results are also calculated every three years. Impact and cost effectiveness results will also be used by the State TDM Work Group to make any necessary recommendations for changes to the TDM program elements being operated through Commuter Connections.

The second project area will include the ongoing tracking and monitoring activities for each of the CCWP program areas, including the Commuter Operations Center, Guaranteed Ride Home, Employer Outreach, and Marketing. A direct customer satisfaction survey will be performed to gauge the level of satisfaction for Guaranteed Ride Home. Monthly data collection and quarterly progress reports and an annual progress report will also be produced by COG/TPB staff.

The Monitoring and Evaluation program is a regional program and consists of the two project areas outlined below. The total annual project cost for the program tasks is $906,375.

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A. REGIONAL TDM DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Data collection analysis for the Commuter Connections TERMs occurs over a three-year period. The current cycle began in fiscal year FY 2021 (July 1, 2021) and will conclude in FY 2023 (June 30, 2023).

During FY 2021, the previous data collection cycle's Regional TDM Program Analysis Report was finalized and published and the Placement Rate Study for the new data collection period was completed. In FY 2022, the Framework Methodology Document will be updated and published, and data collection activities will occur for the 2022 State of the Commute Report and 2022 GRH Applicant Survey. Draft Technical reports will be produced for both data collection activities.

During FY 2023, the final year in the data collection cycle, COG/TPB staff will conduct an evaluation of the regional Employer Outreach database as specified in the FY 2021–2023 TDM Evaluation Framework Methodology Document. An employer telework survey will also be conducted to gauge the effectiveness of assistance provided to employers to start and expand a telework program in Maryland. A Bike To Work Day survey of the FY 2022 program participants will be conducted, and the 2022 State of the Commute Survey Technical Report will be finalized, and a general public report will be prepared for printing. The 2022 Guaranteed Ride Home Applicant Survey Report will

be finalized. The draft FY 2023 TERM Analysis report will also be prepared.

Retention rate surveys will also be conducted for Commuter Connections applicants and Guaranteed Ride Home applicants, but not until FY2026. Results from this survey will be used in the FY2026 data collection cycle.

During FY 2022, COG/TPB staff will work to update the FY 2021–FY 2023 TDM Evaluation Framework Methodology document. The TDM Evaluation Framework Methodology document is used as the "blueprint" in data collection activities for the three- year Commuter Connections TDM Evaluation cycle and provides the methodology used to calculate Commuter Connections program benefits. Updating this document will also provide an opportunity to re-visit program goals for each of the Commuter Connections program elements relevant to recent impact and cost effectiveness data released in the FY 2018-FY2020 Regional TDM Program (TERM) Analysis report.

The 2022 State of the Commute Survey will also be designed and implemented as it is conducted every three years. The purpose of the State of the Commute report is to document trends in commuting behavior, such as commute mode shares and distance traveled, and prevalent attitudes about specific transportation services, such as public transportation, that are available in the region. The State of the Commute Survey is also used to help estimate the congestion, air quality and other societal impacts of Commuter Connections. The survey instrument used for data collection activities will be reviewed and updated accordingly, data collection activities will occur, and a draft Technical Report will be produced. Results from the survey will be used in the FY 2021–2023 Regional TDM Program Analysis report.

COG/TPB staff will also be updating the survey instrument design for the in-depth Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Applicant survey. This survey is conducted every three years to assess the mode shift changes of 1,000 GRH program applicants. Data collected will be used to determine transportation and emission impacts of the program in the FY 2021–FY 2023 Regional TDM Program Analysis Report. A draft survey report will be prepared and released by June 2022.

Various presentations on the data collection instruments and reports will be prepared and given to the Commuter Connections TDM Evaluation Group, the Commuter Connections Subcommittee, the TPB Technical Committee, and the TPB, if warranted. The evaluation contractor will also be fulfilling data requests that are received or needed by COG/TPB staff during the course of the fiscal year.

During FY 2022, data collection activities from local sales territories will continue as will the review of employer database records and the classification of employer records into levels of participation.

COG/TPB staff will also provide day to day management and monitoring of evaluation contract services and will report results through monthly data collection activities and quarterly progress reports and an annual progress report.

Cost Estimate: $647,907
                    Consultant Costs as Part of Estimate:
                    (TDM Evaluation Project Consultant)   *$488,500*

Products: FY 2021- FY 2023 TDM Evaluation Framework Methodology
                                Document. (COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant).

                                2022 State of the Commute Survey design and data
                                collection activities. (COG/TPB staff in conjunction with
                                consultant).

                                2022 State of the Commute Draft Technical Report.
                                (COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant).

                                2022 GRH In-Depth Applicant Survey and draft report.
                                (COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant).

                                Review of Employer Database Records and Classification
                                into Levels of Participation in ACT! Database (COG/TPB
                                staff)

Services: Fulfillment of data requests. *(COG TPB Staff)*

                                Collect monthly Employer Outreach data from ten local sales
                                territories. *(COG TPB Staff)*

                                Employer Site Survey Coordination (COG TPB Staff)

                                Management and oversight of TDM Evaluation contract.
                                (COG/TPB staff)

Schedule: July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

                                FY 2021 – FY 2023 TDM Evaluation Framework
                                Methodology Document: December 2021

                                2022 State of the Commute Survey Draft Technical Report:
                                June 2022

                                2022 In-Depth GRH Applicant Draft Survey Report: June
                                2022

Oversight: TDM Evaluation Group
                                              ● Provide input and feedback on data
                                                collection activities, survey

methodology, and draft reports.

B.   PROGRAM MONITORING AND TRACKING ACTIVITIES

COG/TPB staff will collect monthly program statistics, produce quarterly progress reports, monthly Executive Summary reports, and produce a FY 2021 annual summary of program statistics of the number and type of commuter traveler requests filled by COG and other client member program sites. Staff will collect and analyze data from the monthly customer satisfaction survey for all GRH program users and produce a customer satisfaction survey report based on the findings. Survey results will be used to change program guidelines and/or policies as needed.

COG/TPB staff will assist local Employer Outreach sales representatives to conduct employer site surveys. A contractor will be used to provide technical assistance for the electronic surveying process and analysis of results, and data entry assistance for those employers using a paper copy of the survey. Survey tabulation and reporting will be provided by COG/TPB staff. Results from the employer database tabulated surveys are used to estimate the participation rates and impacts for employer-based TDM programs reported from the local sales jurisdictions. COG/TPB staff will also maintain and update the archived Employer Commute Survey database.

COG/TPB staff will also monitor monthly progress for local Employer Outreach sales jurisdictions based on their approved Scopes of Work and contract project goals. Local jurisdiction contract performance monitoring for Employer Outreach goals will also be a part of this activity. COG/TPB staff will oversee a regional monitoring and evaluation program for Employer Outreach which includes data collection activities from local employer outreach sales territories. Quarterly Employer Outreach level of effort verification statements will be produced and distributed by COG/TPB staff. An annual detailed snapshot of overall progress will be provided to appropriate state funding agencies for their respective jurisdictions.

Results from local employer telework sales calls and outreach services will be documented in terms of level of effort and progress and shown in quarterly progress reports. Quarterly documentation will also be provided on level of participation and effectiveness and results from sales and outreach activities for employer-based telework programs. Overall monitoring and evaluating employer-based telework programs throughout the region will continue.

Staff will also evaluate effectiveness of advertising campaigns through call volumes, internet hits, and the annual placement rate study. Marketing campaigns will be monitored through lead analysis and detailed campaign summary results. Campaign summary documents will be produced that will outline campaign specifics such as direct mail distribution points (i.e. zip codes), radio stations, internet and social media advertising outlets used, etc. Event summary reports will also be produced for the FY 2021 regional Bike to Work Day and Car Free Day events.

Monthly program statistics will be collected, and quarterly progress reports will be provided for all program areas in the FY 2022 CCWP and an annual progress report for FY 2021 will be produced.

Cost Estimate:	$258,468
Consultant Costs as Part of Estimate:	
(Employer Survey Project Consultant)	*$ 30,000*

Products:
Collect monthly program data and produce quarterly progress reports and monthly Executive Summary reports for the Commuter Operations Center, Guaranteed Ride Home, Employer Outreach, Marketing, Evaluation, and GRH Baltimore programs. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Produce FY 2021 annual progress report. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Collect and analyze data from monthly GRH customer satisfaction survey for FY 2021 program users, and produce a report showing results. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Quarterly Employer Outreach sales contact data and level of effort verification statement *(COG/TPB staff)*

Annual Employer Outreach Snapshot Analysis and Project Recommendations *(COG TPB Staff)*

FY 2021 Bike to Work Day Event Report *(COG/TPB staff)*

FY2021 Car Free Day Event Report *(COG/TPB staff)*

Survey reports to Employer Outreach representatives from Employer Commute Survey results. *(COG/TPB staff)*

1st Half of the Fiscal Year Regional TDM Marketing Campaign Summary and Lead Analysis Document. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

2nd Half of the Fiscal Year Regional TDM Marketing Campaign Summary and Lead Analysis Document. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

Services:
Updating and Maintaining Employer Commute Survey

archived database. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Management and oversight of Employer Survey contract. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Data documentation from monthly Employer Outreach Activity Reports from ten local sales territories. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Staff the TDM Evaluation Group *(COG/TPB staff)*

Schedule:	July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

FY 2021 Car Free Day Event Report: July 2021

FY 2021 4th Quarterly Progress Report: July 2021

FY 2021 Annual Progress Report: September 2021

FY 2022 1st Quarter Progress Report: October 2021

FY 2021 2nd Half of the Fiscal Year Regional TDM Marketing Campaign Summary Document: December 2021

FY 2022 2nd Quarter Progress Report: January 2022

FY 2021 Bike to Work Day Event Report: January 2022

2021 GRH Customer Satisfaction Survey Report: March 2022

FY 2022 3rd Quarter Progress Report: April 2022

Employer Outreach Snapshot Analysis: May 2022

FY 2022 1st Half of the Fiscal Year Regional TDM Marketing Campaign Summary Document: June 2022

Oversight:	Commuter Connections Subcommittee

- Provide input and feedback on data collection activities for GRH customer satisfaction survey, monthly, quarterly, and annual progress reports.

Regional TDM Marketing Group

- Provide input and feedback on campaign lead analysis reports.

Employer Outreach Committee
- Provide input and feedback on quarterly employer outreach verification statement reports and Employer commute survey process, reports and survey result archives.

V.   EMPLOYER OUTREACH

The Employer Outreach program provides and supports outreach efforts in ten jurisdictions located in the region's MSA. This program contains regional and jurisdictional components. COG/TPB's Commuter Connections staff provides overall administration and arranges for sales training and support for the jurisdictional components of the program and technical training on the regional sales contact management database. The local jurisdictions provide outreach to employers and work with employers to develop and implement new or expand existing employer-based alternative commute programs.

The following local jurisdictions provide employer outreach services:

District of Columbia
Frederick County
Montgomery County
Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland
Prince George's County
City of Alexandria
Arlington County
Fairfax County
Loudoun County
Prince William County

Most employers who promote commute alternatives do so for practical reasons associated with the operation of their businesses. But the community as a whole benefits from commute alternatives programs, help reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and other societal benefits, and support economic development. For this reason, many local governments in the region continue to offer programs that encourage commute options at the employment site. These programs range from marketing efforts and incentive programs conducted through ridesharing programs to "adequate public facilities ordinances" that have trip reduction requirements for affected employers. Additionally, the Virginia Department of Transportation administers funds directly to the local jurisdictions in Northern Virginia to implement the Employer Outreach program and has also allocated funding to the Telework! VA program for employers to either start or expand a telework program. The District Department of Transportation is using the pass-thru dollars for the program to hire a contractor directly.

Results from these activities are reported and analyzed under the regional Monitoring and Evaluation program.

The Commuter Connections program's ongoing goal has been to weave existing local employer and government programs into a coherent, voluntary regional network, and to promote ways in which worksite commute alternatives programs may grow, without imposing burdensome mandates upon employers.

Regional Components of the Employer Outreach Program include:

1) Maintaining and updating a web-based regional employer/employee sales contact database to facilitate local efforts and avoid duplication.

2) Coordination with WMATA's SmartBenefits program sales staff, and/or their assigned consultant(s) and develop a process through which TPB member jurisdictions work collaboratively with WMATA to undertake a targeted outreach to employers to increase participation in WMATA's SmartBenefits program.

3) Review of individual local sales contact databases on a continuing basis to ensure quality control.

4) Providing bicycling information to area employers to help and support bicycling to work by their employees.

5) Coordinating technical training for the regional sales database on an as needed basis.

6) Supporting the Employer Outreach Committee of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee which provides guidance to the program.

7) COG/TPB staff support for updating and printing customized sales materials and employer case studies both in hard copy and for inclusion on the Commuter Connections web site.

8) Providing coordinated marketing materials for the program including; but not limited to, customized sales portfolios, employer case studies, Alternative Work Schedule, and Emergency Commute Preparedness information.

9) Providing customized information on voluntary commuting actions that can be taken by employers and the general public to reduce mobile source emissions, particularly on Air Quality Action days, through the Clean Air Partners program.

10) Offering sales training for the sales and service representatives in each of the participating jurisdictions.

The regional components of the program are listed in the two project tasks below. The total annual cost for the regional components of the Employer Outreach program is $98,409.

Jurisdictional Components of the Employer Outreach Program include:

1) Contacting individual employers in each locality, (carried out by the local sales and service representatives) through the regional contact sales database which Commuter Connections maintains and updates.

2) Accomplishing local program goals in Maryland jurisdictions via staff, contractors, TMA's, or other entities. A scope of work is submitted to COG to expedite an annual program contract for each locality, and funding is allocated to localities based upon guidance to COG from the state funding agencies.

3) COG/TPB support for overseeing pass-thru funding to local sales jurisdictions for the implementation of voluntary transportation demand management strategies at private sector employment sites.

4) Providing sales support for the sales and service representatives in DC and Maryland.

The jurisdictional components of the program are outlined in the two project tasks below. The total annual costs for the jurisdictional components of the Employer Outreach program are $701,242.

Regional Component Project Tasks

A. REGIONAL EMPLOYER DATABASE MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING

During FY 2022, COG/TPB staff will continue to maintain and update the hardware and software for the computerized regional employer outreach database and monitor the regional web-based database upgrade installed during FY 2018. In addition, COG/TPB staff will coordinate training and provide technical assistance to local sales jurisdictions upon request.

COG/TPB staff will continue to monitor the process through which TPB member jurisdictions work collaboratively with WMATA to undertake a targeted outreach to employers to increase participation in WMATA's SmartBenefits program.

Cost Estimate:	$83,409
Services:	Management and monitoring of Employer Outreach regional database and provision of sales representative database training as needed. *(COG/TPB staff)*
	Maintenance and update of regional contact management database. *(COG/TPB staff)*
Schedule:	July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Employer Outreach Committee
- Provide input and feedback on technical issues regarding the regional Employer Outreach database.

B.   EMPLOYER OUTREACH FOR BICYCLING

The Employer Outreach for Bicycling program provides information to area employers to help support and encourage bicycling to work by their employees. This information is included in the Employer Outreach materials provided to employers under the Employer Outreach Program.

Specific activities under the Employer Outreach for Bicycling Program include the update of a guide on biking to work ("Biking to Work in the Washington Area: A Guide for Employers and Employees). WABA's Web site provides users with 24-hour matching to WABA bike mentors, automating a service that previously consumed considerable staff time, and which was available only during office hours.   In FY 2016, a presentation entitled "Walk Wise" was developed to incorporate safe practices for employers to promote both bicycling and walking to the worksite.

COG/TPB staff also provides support and facilitation for other bike-to-work outreach activities including lunch time seminars, association meetings and strategic mailings as needed.

Cost Estimate:	$15,000
	Printing as Part of Estimate $6,305
Products:	Regional Bicycling to Work Guide updates. *(COG/TPB staff)*
Services:	Employer assistance and seminars. *(COG/TPB staff)*
Schedule:	July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022
Oversight:	Employer Outreach Committee

- Provide input and feedback on bicycling issues or outreach activities at employment sites.

Jurisdictional Component Project Tasks

A. MARYLAND LOCAL AGENCY FUNDING AND SUPPORT

Local jurisdictions work with employers to develop and implement new or expand existing employer-based commuter benefit programs such as transit and vanpool benefits, preferential parking for carpools and vanpools, carpool and vanpool formation, and telework and flexible work schedules. Results from these efforts are recorded in the regional employer database.

Maryland jurisdictions will also provide general telework information to the general public, local agencies, and employers. Employer Outreach representatives will also work with employers in Maryland to establish new or expand existing telework programs.

Cost Estimate:	Pass-thru to Local Jurisdictions:	$483,196
Telework component of pass-thru:		$81,063
	Total Project Budget:	**$564,259**

Services:	New or expanded employer-based TDM programs in Maryland. *(local jurisdictions).*
	New or expanded employer telework programs in Maryland. *(local jurisdictions).*
Schedule:	July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

B. DC, MARYLAND, AND VIRGINIA PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

This project task includes the management and monitoring of pass-thru funding by COG/TPB staff to local sales jurisdictions in DC and Maryland for contract compliance. It also includes support to DC and Maryland jurisdictions, consultants, or TMA staff in implementing voluntary transportation demand management strategies at private and/or non-profit sector employment sites. This task involves the review and approval of an annual Scope of Work by COG/TPB staff for each of the Maryland sales jurisdictions and day to day contract management. This task also includes COG/TPB staff support for updating and printing employer specific regional employer-based marketing materials as well as providing training opportunities.

COG/TPB staff will also work to promote policy templates and information for small and mid-size employers to adopt and implement Flextime and Telework programs at their work places as a resource.

Cost Estimate:	$136,983

Products: Electronic and printed updates of customized sales portfolio materials, employer specific regional marketing materials (General Commuter Connections brochure, Alternative Work Schedules brochure, and Emergency Commute Preparedness brochure), telework policy templates and brochure for small and mid-size employers, and case studies for DC, Maryland and Virginia. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Services: Sales training offered for sales and service representatives in the region for DC, Maryland and Virginia. *(COG/TPB staff/sales training professionals).*

Oversight to local sales jurisdictions in DC and Maryland to implement voluntary transportation demand management strategies at private sector employment sites. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Bi-annual sales support conference calls to DC and Maryland jurisdictions. Employer site visits by COG/TPB staff as requested or needed by DC and Maryland jurisdictions. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Staff the regional Employer Outreach Committee for DC, Maryland and Virginia. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Schedule: July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Oversight: Employer Outreach Committee
- Provide input and feedback on administrative items such as training, employer-based collateral materials, and case studies.

VI. GUARANTEED RIDE HOME BALTIMORE

A regional Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program was implemented in the Baltimore metropolitan region and in St. Mary's County beginning in FY 2011. The GRH Baltimore program helps to eliminate a major barrier to using transit, carpooling, vanpooling, bicycling or walking to work. Studies have shown that a commuter's fear of being "stranded" at work if they or a family member become ill, or if they must work unexpected overtime, is one of the most compelling reasons commuters do not rideshare or use transit to travel to work. The GRH

Baltimore program eliminates this barrier by providing a free ride home in the event of an unexpected personal emergency or unscheduled overtime.

The GRH Baltimore is similar to the Washington metropolitan region's GRH program in offering a free ride home to commuters that carpool, vanpool, use transit, bicycle, or walk to work at least two days per work week. As a result of the GRH program, some single occupant vehicle drivers will switch to a ridesharing or transit commuting alternatives, and current ridesharing and transit users will increase the usage of these alternative commute modes. The program will be able to demonstrate both transportation and emission impacts that could be used as part of the Baltimore region's air quality conformity process. The GRH program is an insurance program for those commuters who do not drive alone to their worksite.

The budget for the Guaranteed Ride Home program includes two projects outlined below, and with a budget of $220,000.

A.   GENERAL OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Commuter Connections staff at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) will process all GRH applications received by mail and through the Commuter Connections web site. Using the GRH software system, COG registers qualifying applicants, produces GRH registration ID cards, and sends ID card and participation guidelines to new registrants. Commuters can obtain information about the GRH program and complete an application on the Commuter Connections web site, www.commuterconnections.org. Commuters may also call COG's Commuter Connections 800 telephone number, 1-800-745-RIDE, to ask questions about the GRH program and/or request information and an application. The 800 number is equipped with a menu so that callers can choose the menu item that best fits their needs. All GRH questions and requests for information and applications are taken by COG/TPB staff.

COG staff also mails GRH applications to GRH users who have used the GRH program without formally registering. GRH guidelines permit a commuter to use the GRH service one time as a "one-time exception" before they register. Also, COG staff mails transit vouchers to GRH users who used transit as part of their GRH trip. All vouchers and invoices from transportation service providers are processed by COG staff.

In the event the commuter has not supplied their e-mail address, COG/TPB staff mails a re-registration notice to commuters who could not be contacted by telephone. The notice contains an application which the commuter can complete and send to COG to re-register. The commuter can also call Commuter Connections or visit the Commuter Connections Web site to re-register.

COG/TPB staff will assist the Commuter Connections Subcommittee in reviewing the GRH participation guidelines for any recommended changes. These recommendations will be presented to the Commuter Connections Subcommittee for their final review and approval. In the past, recommendations have been made to modify and add participation guidelines to better convey the GRH trip authorization, GRH re-registration,

and one-time exception rules and restrictions.

COG/TPB staff will respond to the general public and to GRH applicants for registrations and re-registrations to the program. Registered commuters will be notified when their GRH registration is about to expire. Staff will continue to prepare and send new and re-registration GRH ID cards, corporate rewards coupons, registration letters, and participation guidelines on a weekly basis. Staff will also continue to monitor and maintain the GRH applicant database and server. COG/TPB staff will continue to update and maintain program participation guidelines and provide annual customer service training to the daily operations contractor and COG/TPB staff assigned to the project.

During FY 2022, data collection activities will continue for a GRH Baltimore Customer satisfaction survey. The purpose of the survey will be to gauge the level of satisfaction from those who have used the program. A report will be developed and finalized from the FY 2021 data collected.

In addition, COG/TPB staff will also be updating the survey instrument design for the in-depth Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Baltimore Region and St. Mary's County Applicant survey. This survey is conducted every three years to assess the mode shift changes of GRH program applicants. Data collected will be used to determine transportation and emission impacts of the program. A draft survey report will be prepared and released by June 2022.

During FY 2022, COG/TPB staff and its contractor will continue the implementation of a marketing and advertising media campaign to promote the GRH Baltimore program which will be targeted to commuters working in the Baltimore metropolitan region. The media advertising campaign materials developed for the Washington DC region will be adapted for the Baltimore metropolitan region and is funded through the Maryland Transit Administration.

Cost Estimate: **$116,002**

Consultant Costs as Part of Estimate:
                        (Advertising)   *$1,250*

                        (FY2022 In-Depth GRH   *$18,500*
                        Baltimore Survey)

Direct Costs as part of Estimate:
                        (Media Buy)   *$50,000*
                        (Telephone/Copies, etc.)   *$ 4,778*

Products: GRH new and re-registration ID cards, registration letters, and
                        corporate rewards coupons *(COG/TPB staff)*

GRH Participation Guidelines *(COG/TPB Staff)*

Final 2021 GRH Customer Satisfaction Survey Report. *(COG/TPB staff).*

Creative materials for regional TDM marketing campaigns. *(COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant)*

2022 GRH Baltimore and St. Mary's County In-Depth Applicant Survey and draft report. (COG/TPB staff in conjunction with consultant).

Services: Process application requests from the general public for registration and re-registration to the program. *(COG/TPB Staff)*

Notify commuters when registration is about to expire. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Monitor and update GRH applicant database. *(COG/TPB staff)*

Schedule: July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

2021 GRH Customer Satisfaction Survey Report: March 2022

2019 In-Depth GRH Baltimore Applicant Survey Impact Analysis: January 2021

Oversight: Commuter Connections Subcommittee
- Provide input and feedback on GRH program participation guidelines and policies.

B. <u>PROCESS TRIP REQUESTS AND PROVIDE TRIPS</u>

GRH transportation service is provided through contracts with COG by several taxi companies, a Transportation Network Company (TNC), a rental car company, and Baltimore's Metro. Commuters make their GRH trip request through a menu option provided on COG's Commuter Connections 800 telephone number or through the Commuter Connections web site. The telephone menu option transfers all calls for GRH trips directly to an operations contractor and the email request produces and sends a notification to the contractor. The contractor reviews and assesses the trip request and approves or denies the request based on the GRH Participation Guidelines. The contractor then arranges the approved trips with the appropriate transportation contractor. If a trip request is denied, the commuter is offered an arranged trip at their own expense.

COG/TPB staff will continue management and monitoring of contract services for day-to-day operations services. Day to day operations include confirming ride request eligibility, dispatching rides through the ride service providers, tracking ride requests in the GRH database, processing invoices for payment for ride service providers, the daily operations contractor and for the general public for transit vouchers.

Customer service training will be provided to all Guaranteed Ride Home call center agents as needed.

Cost Estimate: **$103,998**

Consultant/ Contractor Costs as Part of Estimate:
(Daily Operations): $42,500
(Cab, TNC, and Car Rental Companies) $45,281

Services: Process GRH trip requests, approve/deny requests, and arrange rides. *(Daily Operations Contractor)*

Management and monitoring of contract services for day-to-day operations, and four cab, car rental, and TNC ride service providers. This includes processing invoices for payment for contractors and for the general public for transit vouchers. (COG/TPB staff)

Provide GRH Rides *(Cab, TNC, and Car Rental Companies)*

Customer service training for GRH call center agents. *(COG/TPB staff and contractor)*

Schedule: July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

Oversight: Commuter Connections Subcommittee

- Provide input and feedback on GRH program participation guidelines and policies.