

**WORK PROGRAM FOR THE
COMMUTER CONNECTIONS PROGRAM
FOR THE GREATER WASHINGTON
METROPOLITAN REGION**

**FISCAL YEAR
2008**

**NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD**

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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SUMMARY

Program Overview

The Fiscal Year 2008 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP) consists of regional activities, plus a set of jurisdictional activities that are conducted at the discretion of individual states. This CCWP structure comprises a core program of regional planning activities funded jointly by state and local jurisdictions plus a set of technical assistance activities funded by and conducted for individual agencies.

The regional state funding shares for the program elements are defined in terms of a formula agreed to by the state funding agencies. Funding agencies include: District Department of Transportation, Maryland Department of Transportation, Virginia Department of Transportation, Maryland Transit Administration, and Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation. The jurisdictional activities are defined by the costs allocated directly to the jurisdiction or jurisdictions that choose to conduct them. This ensures that the regional activities upon which all other activities depend would be conducted regionally, and that the costs are allocated to the participating jurisdictions according to the agreed upon 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.

The FY 2008 Commuter Connections program elements are classified as follows:

REGIONAL PROGRAMS	JURISDICTIONAL PROGRAMS
Commuter Operations Center	Employer Outreach*
Guaranteed Ride Home	Telework
Marketing	DC Kiosks
Monitoring and Evaluation	

**Includes both a Regional and Jurisdictional Component*

The CCWP was re-structured in FY 2006 and the FY 2008 CCWP provides additional opportunity for streamlining the administration and oversight processes for the program. Commuter Connections has expanded incrementally over time, 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.

The State TDM Work Group meets monthly and provides administrative and programmatic oversight of the core program elements by the three state funding agencies. During FY 2008, The Commuter Connections Subcommittee will continue to provide overall technical review of the regional program elements and will meet every other month. The Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee will also continue to meet quarterly on technical issues regarding the regional TDM software system. Oversight for jurisdictional program elements will be provided by the states that are funding them. Specialized project work groups would continue to meet as needed to address particular implementation issues, such as the development of marketing

campaigns.

The State TDM Work Group will assist to define the program content and budget for each fiscal year and to develop and approve a detailed annual work program in cooperation with COG/TPB staff and the Commuter Connections Subcommittee that will be reviewed by program stakeholders, the Commuter Connections Subcommittee, the TPB Technical Committee, and the TPB. The State TDM Work Group will also review all RFP's and RFQ's as part of the work program and serve as the selection committee. The State TDM Work Group will review and approve all CCWP work products with input from the Commuter Connections Subcommittee. Program performance measures will also be put in place by the State TDM Work Group that will include an end of year survey of the member jurisdictions of Commuter Connections to determine program satisfaction and value the program adds to their jurisdictions' TDM efforts. Findings from the end of year survey will be used to make changes, as appropriate, to the program and the manner in which it is implemented.

The key elements of the FY 2008 Commuter Connections Work Program are summarized as follows:

- The Commuter Operations Center provides ridematching services to commuters through a central toll free number "1-800-745-RIDE" and www.commuterconnections.org web site.
- The new regional TDM Software system will be tested and implemented and will streamline many of the program databases including regional ridematching, Guaranteed Ride Home, and the Employer Outreach database.
- Guaranteed Ride Home provides users of alternative commute modes 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.
- Marketing of alternative commute options provides continual regional marketing of car/vanpooling, teleworking, mass transit, Bike to Work Day, and Guaranteed Ride Home aimed at persuading commuters to switch to alternative commute modes from the use of single-occupant vehicles, as well as persuading commuters currently using alternative commute modes to continue to use those modes.
- Monitoring and Evaluation provides data collection and analysis activities as well as program tracking and monitoring reports for each program area. An analysis will be conducted of the regional Employer Outreach data, an employer Telework survey will be conducted as well as a regional vanpool survey. A car-sharing survey is also slated to be conducted. The general public 2007 State of the Commute report will also be released.
- Employer Outreach supports outreach and marketing efforts to the region's employers to encourage use by their employees of alternative commute modes such as ridesharing, transit, telecommuting, bicycling, and walking; including assisting employers to hold bicycling seminars for employees, and maintaining an up-to-date regional Bicycling Guide.

- Telework provides information and resources to employers on the benefits of teleworking and assists them in setting up telework programs for their employees. An on-call consultant was hired in FY 2007 to provide this assistance to both employers and Employer Outreach sales representatives in both Maryland and Virginia.
- DC Kiosks are located at selected areas associated with Business Improvement Districts to provide commuting information to the general public. Infrastructure improvements will continue to be made by installing new static kiosk displays.

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 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 the InfoExpress Kiosk program was eliminated in Virginia and changed in the District of Columbia during FY 2007.

Figure 1 on Page 7 of this document illustrates the Commuter Connections service area is actually much larger than the MSA for workers eligible for the guaranteed ride home (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 the private automobile, including ride-sharing, transit, telecommuting, bicycling, and walking. The program has evolved and expanded over the past three 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 agency 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. All of these measures 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 developed by the Travel Management Subcommittee of the TPB Technical Committee, and adopted into the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) by the Transportation Planning Board (TPB). These measures were funded jointly by the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia Departments of Transportation, with some variation in funding shares for the different measures.

<u>Measure</u>	<u>Date Implemented</u>
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

As the program elements shown above were implemented their performance was evaluated over time, the measures were revised in FY 2006 to focus resources on the most effective program components. Total daily impacts of the Commuter Connections program were calculated in FY 2005 based on the original TERMS adopted and are as follow:

	<u>Daily Impacts</u>
VT Reductions:	128,973
VMT Reductions:	2,499,637
NOx Reductions (Tons):	1.9
VOC Reductions (Tons):	0.9

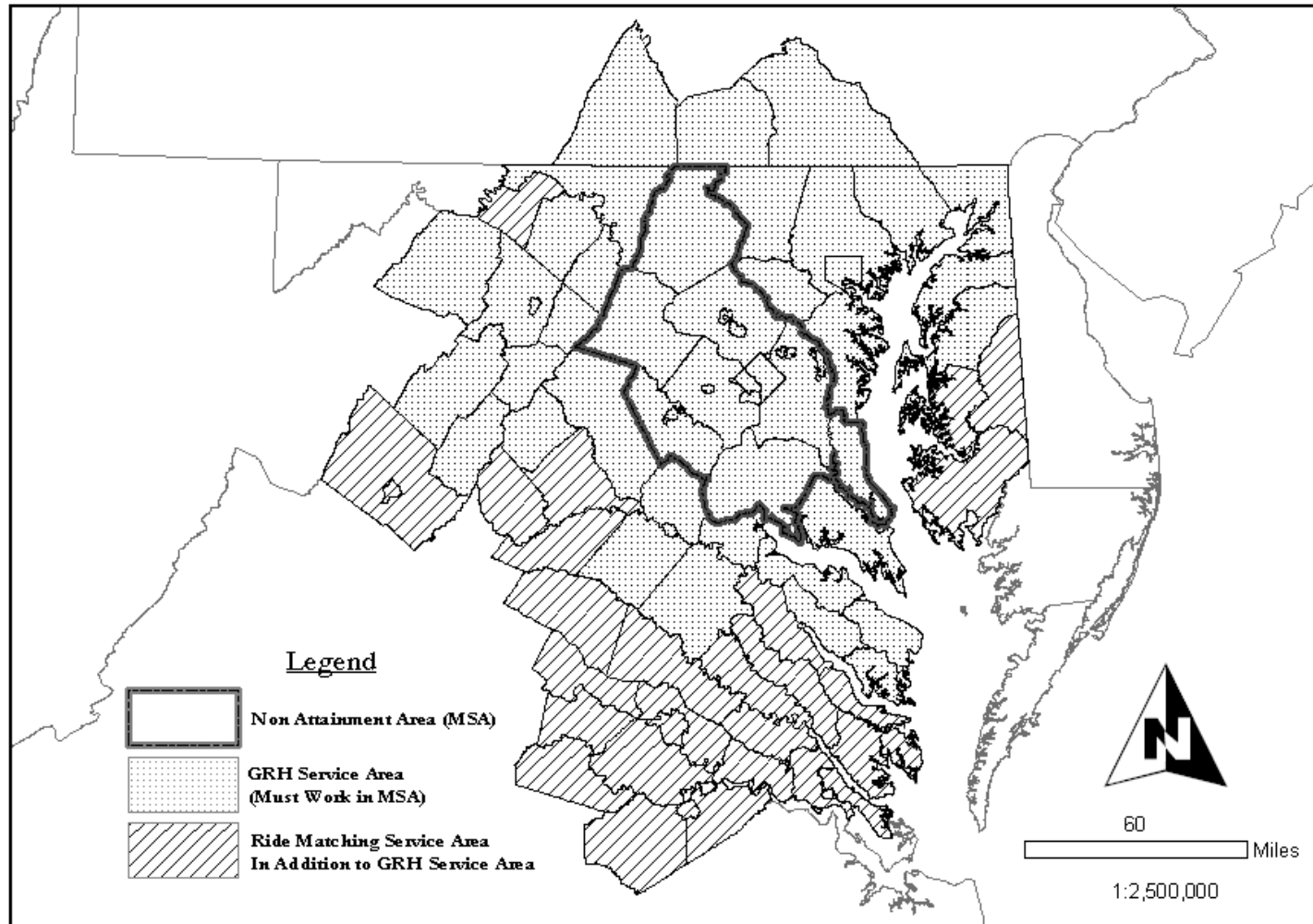
Extensive monitoring and evaluation have been carried out for the Commuter Connections Program over the past several years, and comprehensive data sets are available for reviewing the performance of individual program elements and identifying areas for both strengthening the performance of the program and streamlining the oversight and management procedures. The Program has been shown through the FY 2003 – 2005 TERM 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 2003 – 2005 TERM Analysis Report that was released on January 17, 2006:

Daily Impacts

Cost per VT reduced:	\$0.15
Cost per VMT reduced:	\$0.01
Cost per ton of NOx reduced:	\$10,000
Cost per ton of VOC reduced:	\$20,000

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 oversight and administration of the program.

Figure 1: Geographic Areas Serviced by Commuter Connections



COMMUTER CONNECTIONS STRUCTURE

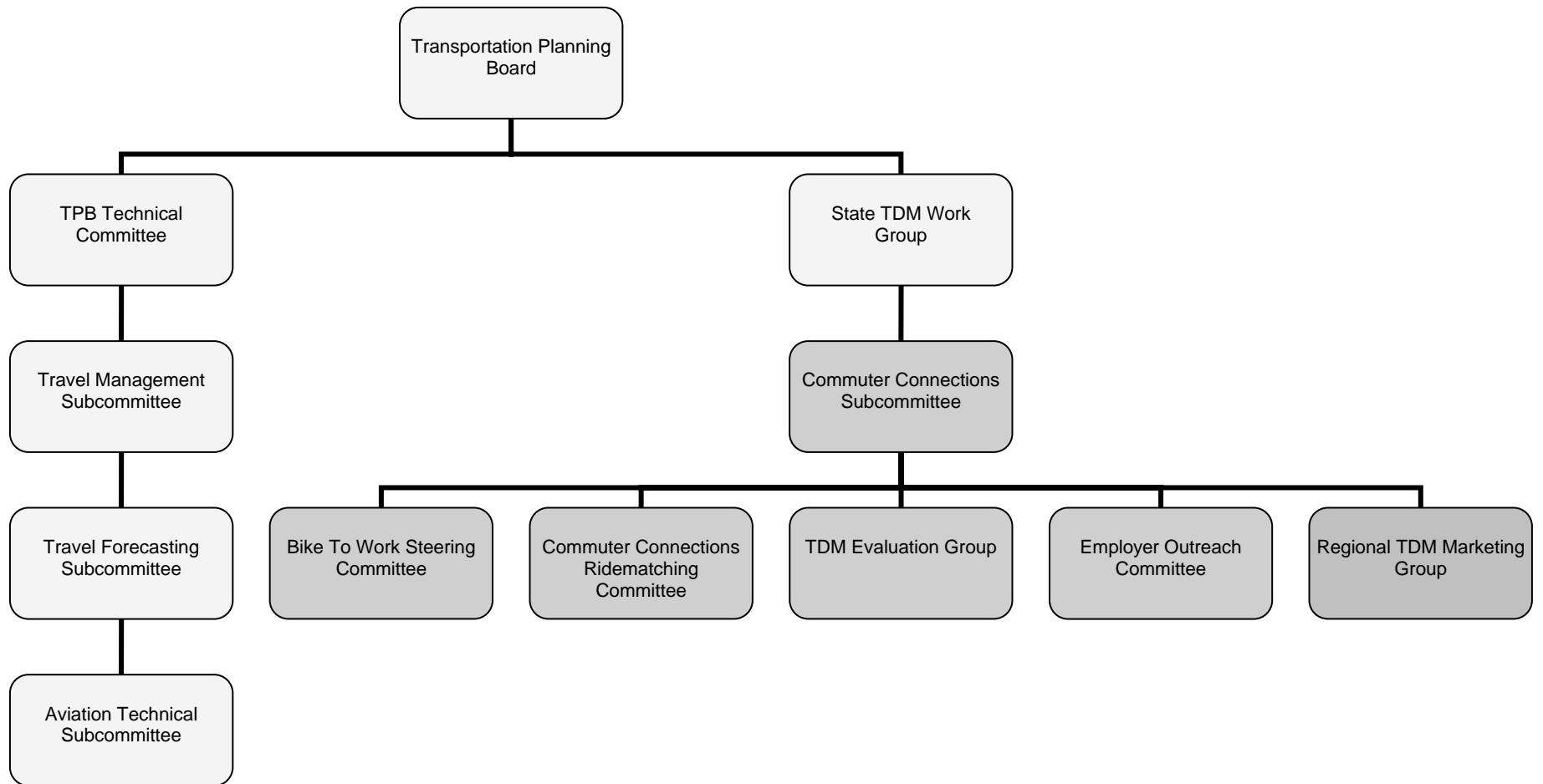


Table 1
FY 2008 COMMUTER CONNECTIONS BUDGET AND WORK PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

WORK ACTIVITY	DIRECT SALARIES STAFF	M& A 27%	LEAVE BENEFITS 18%	FRINGE BENEFITS 19%	INDIRECT COSTS 38 %	DATA & PC COSTS	CONTRACT SERVICES	DIRECT COSTS	TOTAL
Commuter Operations Center	\$132,447	\$35,761	\$30,277	\$37,712	\$90,705	\$49,500*	\$249,999	\$18,060	\$644,461
Guaranteed Ride Home	\$91,223	\$24,630	\$20,854	\$25,974	\$62,769	\$3,500	\$121,487	\$195,147	\$545,584
Marketing	\$141,079	\$38,091	\$31,747	\$39,542	\$95,175	\$3,000	\$560,000	\$1,265,450	\$2,174,084
Monitoring and Evaluation	\$77,705	\$20,980	\$17,763	\$22,125	\$52,658	\$0	\$216,500	\$13,999	\$421,730
Employer Outreach	\$56,816	\$15,340	\$12,988	\$16,177	\$38,502	\$3,000	\$15,000	\$861,898	\$1,019,721
Telework	\$12,144	\$3,279	\$2,776	\$3,458	\$8,230	\$0	\$120,000	\$12,239	\$162,126
DC Kiosks	\$2,086	\$563	\$477	\$594	\$1,414	\$0	\$25,000	\$897	\$31,031
TOTAL	\$513,500	\$138,644	\$116,882	\$145,582	\$349,453	\$59,000	\$1,307,986	\$2,367,690	\$4,998,737

* The Commuter Operations Center includes \$49,500 in local membership fees for Data & PC Costs

Table 2

**COMMUTER CONNECTIONS FISCAL YEAR 2008 BUDGET
BY STATE FUNDING AGENCY AND PROGRAM ELEMENT**

FUNDS SOURCE	Commuter Operations Center*	Guaranteed Ride Home	Marketing	Monitoring & Evaluation	Employer Outreach	Telework	DC Kiosks	TOTALS
District of Columbia	\$69,610	\$63,833	\$254,368	\$49,342	\$108,700	\$0	\$31,031	\$576,884
State of Maryland	\$270,708	\$248,241	\$989,208	\$191,888	\$422,721	\$81,063	\$0	\$2,203,829
Commonwealth of Virginia	\$254,643	\$233,510	\$930,508	\$180,500	\$488,300	\$81,063	\$0	\$2,168,524
Other**	\$49,500							\$49,500
TOTAL	\$644,461	\$545,584	\$2,174,084	\$421,730	\$894,721	\$162,126	\$31,031	\$4,873,737

* Commuter Operations Center measure shown for FY 2008 for the Commonwealth of Virginia in the amount of \$106,643 is being provided by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation.

** Local membership fees

Detailed Task Descriptions and Cost Estimates for the FY 2008 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 program, COG/TPB staff provides local agency coordination, training, and technical assistance, transportation information services to the general public, maintenance of the regional commuter database system, evaluation services, and a wide array of commuter transportation choices and reports.

The Commuter Operations Center is a regional program and consists of four project areas listed below. The total annual FY 2008 project cost for the Commuter Operations Center regional program tasks is \$644,461 *

Budget also includes \$300,000 for the design and implementation of Phase II of the new regional TDM software system. The \$300,000 also includes \$49,500 in local membership fees.

A. LOCAL AGENCY COORDINATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Each month, COG receives several hundred applications for ridematching and transit information. More than 90% of these applications are received through the Commuter Connections Web site. COG staff reviews and processes all applications received through the Web site. Matchlists for carpool and vanpool information are sent daily by mail or email (depending on the applicant's preference). An email notification is sent to the client member serving the applicant's home jurisdiction. This email serves as a notice that an application was received from someone living in that jurisdiction and that the client member staff should follow up with that commuter to provide any additional assistance. Applications received at COG through the mail and fax are forwarded to the client member serving the applicant's home jurisdiction for entry into the rideshare database.

The Commuter Connections Subcommittee serves as the coordinating body, administered under COG and is staffed by the TPB to support the following local jurisdictions that deliver program services through the Commuter Connections network to their residents and workers:

District of Columbia	Maryland**	Virginia**
COG/TPB*	ARTMA	City of Alexandria
	Baltimore City	Fairfax County
	Baltimore Metropolitan Council	LINK – Reston Transportation Management Association

District of Columbia	Maryland**	Virginia**
	Bethesda Transportation Solutions	Loudoun County
	Frederick County	Northern Neck Planning District Commission
	Harford County	Northern Shenandoah Regional Valley Commission
	Howard County	Potomac and Rappahannock Regional Commission
	Maryland Transit Administration	Rappahannock Area Development Commission
	Montgomery County	Rappahannock – Rapidan Regional Commission
	National Institutes of Health	
	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.*

***Programs listed in Maryland and Virginia receive separate grants dollars from the Maryland Transit Administration and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation to help support regional TDM program activities.*

During FY 2008, COG/TPB staff will continue to provide technical support and training to rideshare member agencies for the regional Commuter Connections ridematching software system (CCRS). Staff will also maintain an electronic discussion group forum through the Commuter Connections Extranet that will allow client members to pose questions and receive information from either COG/TPB staff or other client members regarding TDM program services. 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 will produce client member reports, and provide staff support and coordination to the Commuter Connections State TDM Work Group, the Commuter Connections Subcommittee, and the Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee. COG/TPB staff will also fulfill daily client 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 2009.

Cost Estimate: \$125,323

Products: Documentation of specific support actions taken, documentation of all Subcommittee and group meetings, daily technical support and documentation, member site visits for software installation and technical support, daily

matchlist generation and distribution, software training for client members, training manual updates, monthly and bi-weekly statistical reports, monthly commuter renewal notices generation and distribution, Federal agency ETC training, completion and monitoring of the Emergency Management Contingency Plan, maintain a Transportation Demand Management Resources Directory, maintenance and updates to the Federal ETC Web site, production of the FY 2009 Commuter Connections Work Program.

Schedule: July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008

B. TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION SERVICES

The Commuter Operations Center provides basic carpool/vanpool, transit, telecommuting, bicycling, and walking information. Specialized transportation information is also provided in support of Air Quality Action Days, Welfare to Work, and other regional commuter service programs.

COG has provided these transportation information services for more than 30 years in the Metropolitan Washington region.

COG staffs the regional commute information telephone number 1-800-745-RIDE. Calls received at COG are transferred to the local client-member site (based on jurisdiction of residence 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. 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 2008, COG/TPB staff will continue to provide traveler information on alternatives to driving alone to the general public by telephone, Web site, electronically, or through printed information. Staff will continue processing applications from the general public and/or from Commuter Connections client members who request the service on a permanent or temporary basis. COG/TPB staff will answer the regional "800" telephone line and respond to e-mails on information requests from the Commuter Connections Web site. Over 90% of requests are received through the Web site, compared to less than 10% by telephone.

Cost Estimate: \$96,669

Products: Provide commuter traveler information on alternatives to driving alone to the general public by telephone, Web site, electronically, or printed information.

Process applications from the general public and answer the regional "800" line and respond to e-mails from the

Commuter Connections Web site and the provision of general public customer service.

Schedule: July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008

C. TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION SOFTWARE, HARDWARE, AND DATABASE MAINTENANCE

The regional Commuter Connections Ridematching Software (CCRS) system is provided as a regional database resource linked to nearly 30 client member sites that include local rideshare agencies, Transportation Management Associations, and federal government agencies. The client member sites use the CCRS System to service their local commuters' transportation needs for alternative commuting information.

This project includes the daily routine monitoring and maintenance of the CCRS. Tasks include: the daily backup of the CCRS hardware and software database, the maintenance of rideshare and Web site maps on the file transfer protocol (ftp) servers, the maintenance of the rideshare database, software files and server, the maintenance and update of Commuter Connections Web site data, and the maintenance of the application processing E-Communicator software.

This project will also include the ongoing migration of the CCRS on to the Commuter Connections Web site and the review and development of Phase II of the new Web-based transportation system software system that would include the testing of the regional ridematching database, system documentation, training and the development of the telework, and employer outreach databases as well as the customized external jurisdiction GRH program features. This project will be coordinated with Commuter Connections local jurisdictions and funding agencies.

Cost Estimate: \$401,010

Products: Provide daily routine monitoring and maintenance of the CCRS for approximately 30 client member sites in the region. Implement Phase II of ridematching software system project and Web site and map server maintenance and updates.*

Schedule: July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007

**Costs include \$300,000 for Phase II of the regional TDM Software System project. This work will be competitively bid-out.*

D. COMMUTER INFORMATION SYSTEM

The Commuter Information System project provides the CCRS with a GIS based information that includes transit stop data, telework center locations, park and ride lot locations, and bicycling information on the ridematch lists generated by the CCRS.

During FY 2007, COG/TPB staff will continue integration activities of new transit,

telework center, and park and ride lot data into the CCRS server. Staff will also continue to obtain updated transit data and street centerline information from local jurisdictions and transit properties and reformat data into GIS for use on the CCRS. Updates to park-and-ride and telework center datasets for use on the CCRS 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 center, and bicycle lanes/paths datasets. The updated information will also be packaged to be uploaded onto the InfoExpress kiosk software system.

Cost Estimate: \$21,459

Products: Updated local and regional information for transit, telework center locations, park and ride lots, and bicycling information which will be used in the CCRS and on the GIS-based Web site application as well as on the InfoExpress kiosks.

Schedule: July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007

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 usage of these 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 outlined below. The total annual project cost for the Guaranteed Ride Home regional program task is \$545,584*

**291,787 of this budget is part of a competitively bid out contract for daily operations and ride providers.*

A. GENERAL OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

GRH transportation service is provided by several taxi companies, a rental car company, and a paratransit company, all on contract with COG. Commuters make their GRH trip request through a menu option provided on COG's Commuter Connections 800 telephone number. This menu option transfers calls for GRH trips directly to an operations contractor. This 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.

COG staff processes all GRH applications received by mail, fax, and 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 all questions and requests for information and applications are taken by COG 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.

The operations contractor contacts, by telephone, GRH registrants whose registration is near expiration and re-registers the qualifying commuters. While the system of calling commuters has been successful, many messages left on commuters' voice mail are not returned. For this reason, COG 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 2008, 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.

During FY 2008, 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 10 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. 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, 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.

Cost Estimate: \$545,584 *

Products: Respond to requests from the general public for registration and re-registration to the program. Notify commuters when registration is about to expire.

Prepare and send GRH new and re-registration ID cards, registration letters and participation guidelines on a weekly basis.

Monitor and update GRH applicant database.

Management and monitoring of contract services for day-to-day operations, and 10 service providers. This includes processing invoices for payment for contractors and for the general public for transit vouchers.

Update and maintain program participation guidelines.

Annual customer service training.

Schedule: July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008

**291,787 of this budget is part of a competitively bid out contract for daily operations and ride providers.*

III. MARKETING

The Marketing program includes the use of media and other forms of communication at high reach and frequency levels to communicate the benefits of alternative commute methods to Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV) commuters most likely to shift to non-SOV travel. The campaign delivers a "brand promise" for Commuter Connections as an umbrella solution for

commuters seeking alternative commuting options within the region. Regional TDM marketing campaigns also aim to encourage current non-SOV populations to continue using alternative transportation modes for commuting. In addition, Commuter Connections marketing initiatives encourage employers to provide alternative commuting benefits to their employees. Regional TDM marketing campaigns complement other on-going Commuter Connections program efforts that have been implemented in the region, increasing their overall efficiency and effectiveness. The program will include TDM marketing on ridesharing, transit, Guaranteed Ride Home, telecommuting, bicycling/walking, car-sharing, Live Near Where You Work, and Employer Outreach program activities.

Competitive procurement expertise is obtained to develop a regional marketing campaign, with input from the state funding agencies and the Marketing Planning Workgroup. The program builds upon current regional TDM marketing efforts by state, regional and local agencies to establish continuous year round marketing for regional TDM programs.

Marketing and promotion of alternative commute modes and incentives have been a major component of the Commuter Connections regional marketing campaigns. The campaigns also include direct mail promotion of the TDM programs and incentives to several hundred thousand households and to employers, radio, television, and Web site advertisements. Other promotion of TDM programs includes on-site promotions at employment sites. The direct mail piece is different for each campaign in order to attract attention, and periodically, new radio advertisements are produced to keep the message "fresh." Partnerships between COG and area transit agencies have also enabled the promotion of incentives such as the GRH program to transit riders and automobile drivers.

Marketing is a regional program and consists of two project areas listed below. The total annual project cost for the program tasks is \$2,174,084.

A. TDM MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

Commuter Connections Web site advertisement will be provided through banner ads and placement of keyword search engine sponsorships. Regional on-line yellow pages advertising will be provided. Bus and rail advertising will be negotiated. Staff will update and implement a public relations plan and continuously update the Extranet for posting marketing and advertising materials for review by the State TDM Work Group and regional marketing planning workgroup members. The Extranet also has been expanded to include an interactive communications and management tool for use for and by Commuter Connections committees.

COG/TPB staff will coordinate marketing and promotional activities through the Regional TDM Marketing Group which consists of transit, ridesharing, and other transportation demand management agencies. A regional commute alternatives newsletter, *Commuter Connections*, will be published quarterly and distributed to several thousand employers. 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 130 Federal ETC's. The regional Resource Guide and Strategic Marketing

Plan will also be updated with input from member agencies.

This project includes the production of radio spots to promote alternative mode use, the use of the regional GRH program, teleworking, the implementation of employer-based commuter benefit programs, and incentive based programs. The overall objective of the project will be to continue to brand Commuter Connections. A marketing/advertising/public relations contractor will be used to produce the creative, copywriting, and public relations plan. COG/TPB staff also will review and participate in special event advertising (e.g. baseball games or other events that will help boost the Commuter Connections brand). This project also includes day to day monitoring and management of the marketing/advertising/public relations contractor and the processing of media placement orders.

COG/TPB staff will also place advertisements for Commuter Connections in printed and electronic telephone directories.

COG/TPB staff will coordinate and participate in on-site commuter promotions at employment sites (public and private sector), retail centers, transit centers, and special events throughout the year. On average COG staff attends six to ten events a year.

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.

COG/TPB staff will continue to maintain and update collateral materials and Web based information on the regional GRH program.

A loyalty and rewards incentive demonstration program that is web-based for GRH program users will continue in FY 2008.

Cost Estimate: \$2,073,084

Products: Regularly update and maintain the Extranet for posting marketing and advertising materials for review by workgroup members and all other Commuter Connections committees.

Staff the Regional TDM Marketing Group.

Evaluate effectiveness of advertising campaigns through call volumes, internet hits, and placement rate study.

Monitor and manage advertising contract and process media placement invoices.

Update and implement earned media plan.

Monitoring the implementation of regional marketing campaigns.

Production of a quarterly newsletter for employers and Federal agency Employee Transportation Coordinators.

Placement of advertisements in printed and electronic telephone directories.

Updating and maintaining marketing materials and the Commuter Connections Web Site.

Annual Employer Recognition Awards (*approximately \$85,000 of the overall budget for this project area*).

Annual update of the Regional TDM Strategic Marketing Plan and Resource Guide.

On-site employer commuter promotions that promote all alternative commute modes at employer commuter transportation information events.

Production of electronic advertisements using the Commuter Connections marketing themes for all TDM program services (ridesharing, transit, GRH, telecommuting, employer outreach, etc).

Placement of electronic advertisements.

Conducting special event advertising that tailors the Commuter Connections messages to special events.

Management and oversight of marketing/advertising/public relations contractor(s).

Web site advertisement through banner ads and placement of keyword search engine sponsorships.

Bus and rail advertising.

Regional GRH loyalty and rewards demonstration incentive program.

Schedule: July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008

2007 Strategic Marketing Plan and Resource Guide: October 2007

**\$560,000 of this project budget is part of a competitively bid out contract for a marketing/advertising/public relations contractor. \$938,000 of the project budget will be used for media placement and promotions.*

B. BIKE TO WORK DAY

A major activity with regard to employer outreach for bicycling 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. Commuter Connections participation in Bike to Work day includes support for the planning and promotion of the event, and assistance at the various “pit stops” on the day of the event.

During, FY 2008, COG/TPB staff will continue to support and implement a regional Bike To Work Day event and promote the event to employers. This will be accomplished through media placements and marketing coordination activities with the marketing/advertising/public relations contractor.

Cost Estimate: \$101,000

Products: Implement regional Bike To Work Day event and promote to employers and to the general public.

FY 2007 Bike To Work Day Event Summary Report

Schedule: July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008
FY 2007 Bike To Work Day Event Summary Report: January 2008

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 Transportation Emission Reduction Measures (TERMS). One project will solely focus on those activities directly related to data collection and analysis for the TERMS. Results from this project will directly impact the FY 2006 – FY 2008 TERM Analysis report for Commuter Connections and the final results will be used to update the regional TERM Tracking Sheet.

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, Telework, and Marketing. In some instances, direct customer satisfaction surveys will be performed to gauge the level of satisfaction for program areas such as Guaranteed Ride Home and Employer Outreach. 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 \$421,730.

A. TERM DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

During FY 2008, COG/TPB staff will conduct an evaluation of the regional Employer Outreach database as specified in the FY 2006 – 2008 TDM Evaluation Framework Methodology Document. An employer telework survey will be conducted to gauge the effectiveness of assistance provided to employers to start and expand a telework program. Regional vanpool and car-sharing services surveys will also be conducted to verify vanpool ridership data and the effectiveness of car-sharing on congestion and air quality. A Bike TO Work Day survey of the FY 2007 program participants will be conducted and the general public report of the 2007 State of the Commute Survey will also be prepared for distribution. A draft FY 2008 TERM Analysis report will also be prepared. Various presentations on the survey projects 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.

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.

During FY 2008, 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. Quarterly level of effort verification statements will be produced by COG/TPB staff.

Contract oversight for employer database tabulation and reporting will be provided by COG/TPB staff. Results from the employer database tabulated surveys is used to estimate the participation rates and impacts for employer-based TDM programs reported from the local sales jurisdictions. COG/TPB staff will begin using the revised regional Employee Commute Survey.

Cost Estimate: \$297,390*

Products: 2007 State of the Commute general public report.

Regional evaluation of Employer Outreach database for FY 2006 – FY 2008 TERM Analysis Report.

Regional Vanpool Survey.

Regional Car-sharing Survey.

FY 2007 Bike To Work Day participant survey for FY 2006 –

FY 2008 Draft TERM Analysis Report.

Fulfillment of data requests.

Data collection activities from ten local sales territories.

Review of employer database records.

Classification of employer records into levels of participation.

Quarterly level of effort verification statements.

Schedule: July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008
2007 State of the Commute Survey General Public Report:
June 2008
2007 Bike To Work Day Participant Survey Report: June
2008
Regional Vanpool Survey Report: June 2008
Regional Car-Sharing Report: June 2008
2008 Draft TERM Analysis Report: June 2008

**\$216,500 of this budget is part of a competitively bid out contract on work for Employer Survey data tabulation, and the Employer Outreach database analysis, Employer Telework Survey, regional vanpool survey, regional car-sharing survey, 2007 BTWD participant survey, State of the Commute General Report, the 2008 draft TERM Analysis Report, and associated data requests and presentations.*

B. PROGRAM MONITORING AND TRACKING ACTIVITIES

COG/TPB staff will collect monthly program statistics, and produce quarterly progress reports, and a FY 2007 annual summary of program statistics of the number and type of commuter traveler requests filled by COG and other client member program sites. During FY 2008 COG/TPB staff will continue to collect monthly program statistics and will produce quarterly progress reports and an annual progress report for the regional Guaranteed Ride Home program. Staff will collect and analyze data from the monthly customer satisfaction survey for program users, and administer a customer satisfaction survey based on feedback from program users. Staff will produce an annual report on the findings. Survey results will be used to change program guidelines and/or policies as needed.

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 and provide direct assistance when requested. Quarterly progress reports and level of effort tracking sheets listing results of each local sales jurisdiction will be prepared. An annual detailed snapshot of overall progress will be provided to appropriate DOT funding agencies for their respective jurisdictions. COG/TPB staff will also continue to administer and produce the annual Employer Customer Satisfaction Survey and report. 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. Local jurisdiction contract performance monitoring for Employer Outreach goals will also be a part of this activity.

During FY 2008, COG/TPB staff will also continue to produce Employer Case Studies showcasing telework program results. 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.

Formal quarterly documentation will also be provided on level of 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. An event summary report will also be produced for the FY 2007 regional Bike To Work Day event. An overall internal program survey will also be conducted to measure the overall satisfaction of the program by the local jurisdictions and COG.

Monthly program statistics will be collected and quarterly progress reports will be provided for all program areas in the FY 2008 CCWP and an annual progress report for FY 2007 will be produced.

Cost Estimate: \$124,340

Product: Collect monthly program data and produce quarterly progress reports for the Commuter Operations Center, Guaranteed Ride Home, Employer Outreach, Telework, Marketing, and Evaluation programs.

Produce FY 2007 annual progress report.

Collect and analyze data from monthly GRH customer satisfaction survey for program users. Produce annual customer satisfaction survey from FY 2007 and report based on feedback from program users.

Production of quarterly Employer Outreach progress report and level of effort tracking sheet listing results for each local jurisdiction outreach agency.

Administer and produce annual Employer Customer Satisfaction Survey.

Production of Employer case studies on telecommuting.

Marketing lead analysis and campaign summary results.

Conduct jurisdictional and COG satisfaction survey.

Production of FY 2007 Bike To Work Day report.

Schedule:

July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008

FY 2007 Annual Progress Report: September 2007

FY 2007 GRH Customer Satisfaction Survey: March 2008

FY 2007 Employer Customer Satisfaction Survey: February 2008

FY 2007 Bike To Work Day Report: January 2008

V. EMPLOYER OUTREACH

The Employer Outreach program is designed to increase outreach efforts in ten jurisdictions located in the region's MSA. COG's Commuter Connections staff provides overall administration and arranges for sales training and support as well as technical training on the regional sales contact management database.

The following local jurisdictions provide services and are part of the Commuter Connections Employer Outreach network:

District of Columbia
Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland
Frederick County
Montgomery County
Prince George's County
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, which improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, 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.

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 computerized regional employer/employee sales contact database to facilitate local efforts and avoid duplication.
- 2) Providing coordinated marketing materials for the program.
- 3) Coordinating technical training and offering sales support and training for the sales and service representatives in each of the participating jurisdictions.
- 4) Supporting the Employer Outreach Committee of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee which provides guidance to the program.
- 5) Coordination with WMATA’s Metrochek/SmartBenefits program sales staff, and/or their assigned consultant(s).

- 6) Providing 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.
- 7) Synchronizing and updating individual local sales contact databases with Commuter Connections on a regular basis.
- 8) Providing bicycling information to area employers to help and support bicycling to work by their employees.
- 9) Providing a regional "Live Near Where You Work" program to assist both employers and prospective employees in information regarding housing near their respective work location.

The regional components of the program are listed in the three project tasks below. The total annual cost for the regional components of the Employer Outreach program are \$172,561.

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 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) Overseeing pass-thru funding to local sales jurisdictions for the implementation of voluntary transportation demand management strategies at private sector employment sites.
- 4) Updating and printing sales materials and employer case studies both in hard copy and for inclusion on the Commuter Connections Web site.

The jurisdictional components of the program are outlined in the project task below. The total annual costs for the jurisdictional components of the Employer Outreach program are \$847,160.

Regional Component Project Tasks

A. **REGIONAL EMPLOYER DATABASE MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING**

During FY 2007, COG/TPB staff will continue to maintain and update the hardware and software for the computerized regional employer ACT! database and coordinate training and technical assistance to local sales jurisdictions requesting it as well as monitor the regional web-based database installed during FY 2007.

Cost Estimate: \$32,561

Products: Coordination and monitoring of Employer Outreach regional database and provision of sales representative database training as needed, maintenance and update of regional contact management database.

Schedule: July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008

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 preparation of a 24-page guide on biking to work ("Biking to Work in the Washington Area: A Guide for Employers and Employees), and incorporation of WABA bike mentors into the ride-matching database. (WABA's Web site now 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).

Commuter Connections staff also provides support for other bike-to-work marketing activities including lunch time seminars, association meetings and strategic mailings.

Cost Estimate: \$15,000

Products: Employer assistance and seminars, and regional Bicycling to Work Guide, updates.

Schedule: July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008

C. LIVE NEAR YOUR WORK PROGRAM

This project will encompass necessary updates to the comprehensive set of collateral materials for employers that were developed during FY 2007 both in print and electronically to provide information to the business community on housing close to the employees' work site(s).

COG/TPB staff will continue to distribute pertinent information on housing incentives and programs available throughout the metropolitan region and will coordinate with federal, state, and local jurisdictions on any additional information regarding transit-oriented housing developments that could be incorporated into the information.

Additionally, COG/TPB staff would coordinate with local Employer Outreach sales representatives in offering “Live Near Your Work” briefing sessions with employer groups, Chambers and Employee Transportation Coordinators.

COG/TPB Staff would include resource information for those seeking employment at Metropolitan Washington based companies and information that can be included in new hire orientation packages or job offers made to employees who are living outside of the jurisdiction where they accepted the job offer.

Cost Estimate: \$125,000*

Products: Regional Live Near Where You Work collateral materials.
Briefing sessions in coordination with local jurisdictions to employer groups, Chambers of Commerce, and Employee Transportation Coordinators.

Schedule: July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008

**\$15,000 of this budget is part of a competitively bid out contract as part of the marketing contract to design Live Near Your Work collateral materials. \$80,000 of this budget will be used for local jurisdiction briefing sessions.*

Jurisdictional Component Project Tasks

A. LOCAL AGENCY FUNDING AND SUPPORT

This task includes the management and oversight of pass-thru funding to local sales jurisdictions to support local jurisdictions, consultants, or TMA staff in implementing voluntary transportation demand management strategies at private sector employment sites. It also involves the review and approval of an annual Scope of Work for each of the ten sales jurisdictions and day to day contract management. This task also includes updating and printing sales materials and employer case studies both in hard copy and for inclusion on the Commuter Connections Web site.

Cost Estimate: \$847,160*

Products: Oversight to local sales jurisdictions to implement voluntary transportation demand management strategies at private sector employment sites. Bi-annual sales support conference calls and site visits as needed.

Electronic and printed updates of sales materials and case studies.

Schedule: July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008

** \$752,664 of this budget includes direct pass-thru dollars to ten local sales jurisdictions for the provision of local employer services.*

VI. TELEWORK

Commuter Connections established a Telework program to provide information, training, and assistance to individuals and businesses to further telework programs. Activities include development of case studies, and marketing and outreach activities.

Jurisdictional Components of Telework:

- 1) Educating employers and their employees in Maryland and Virginia on the benefits of teleworking through telemarketing and sales outreach activities.
- 2) Monitoring local, state and federal telecommuting and telework initiatives in Maryland and Virginia.
- 3) Exchanging information with other telework and telecommuting programs around the nation and the world to ensure that the most effective new concepts and approaches are fully known and utilized in the Washington metropolitan region.
- 4) Assisting local Employer Outreach representatives in Maryland and Virginia to develop formal Telework policies, and to initiate or expand telework programs.
- 5) Providing information on available Telework Centers.

This program's jurisdictional component is outlined below and the total annual cost is \$162,126.

A. GENERAL ASSISTANCE AND INFORMATION

During FY 2007, COG/TPB staff will continue to provide information on teleworking to the general public, local agencies, and employers from Maryland and Virginia contacting Commuter Connections through its 800-745-RIDE toll free number and through the Commuter Connections web site. Interested employers will be referred to local Employer Outreach sales representatives. COG/TPB Staff will also provide two half-day or all-day training sessions to the Employer Services representatives from Maryland and Virginia to strengthen sales skills relating to selling telework to employers. Employer Telework Case studies will also be updated.

Direct follow-up with employers will be undertaken by local Employer Outreach jurisdiction staff in both Maryland and Virginia in conjunction with the on-call consultant(s), as requested. The local Employer Outreach sales representatives will receive and review employer leads received at Commuter Connections and elect whether or not to use the on-call consultant(s). Local employer outreach sales representatives would be responsible to document follow-up activities in conducting employer site visits and follow-up visits, developing or updating formal Telework policies, or starting or expanding a telework program. Documentation activities can be recorded in the regional Employer Outreach database.

Additional program services will be provided by the local jurisdictions to enable employers to start or expand telecommute programs in conjunction with Maryland's Telework Partnership with Employers (TPE) and Virginia's Telework!VA incentive programs with guidance by the on-call consultant(s) and COG/TPB staff, if required. COG/TPB staff will monitor this work with employers in Maryland and Virginia by the local jurisdictions and on-call consultant(s).

Cost Estimate: \$162,126*

Products: Provide as requested general telework information to the general public, local agencies, and employers. Pass employer sales outreach activity leads to appropriate local sales representatives and to on-call consultant(s) to identify and work with employers in Maryland and Virginia to address teleworking program implementation issues and provide sample formal Telework policies.

Two half-day telework sales training sessions.

Updated employer Telework case studies.

COG/TPB staff to monitor project progress for both employer services representatives and selected on-call consultant(s).

Schedule: July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008

** \$100,000 of this budget is part of a competitively bid out contract for on-call telework consultant(s), \$17,000 of the total budget is for a telework program sales trainer, and \$3,000 will be used to update telework case studies.*

VII. DC INFORMATION KIOSKS

The District of Columbia information kiosks will promote traveler information and other alternative transportation services to employers and to the general public.

This program's jurisdictional component task is outlined below and the annual total cost is \$155,154.

A. IMPLEMENTATION OF DC INFORMATION KIOSKS

During FY 2008, COG/TPB staff will continue to work on installing static kiosk displays in conjunction with DDOT and Business Improvement Districts. The kiosks will be maintained and updated by Business Improvement District representatives.

During FY 2008, COG/TPB staff will also provide recommendations on kiosk structures for placement at the Business Improvement Districts.

Cost Estimate: \$31,031 *

Products:

Selection and recommendations of kiosk enclosures, and any additional structural hardware needed. Purchase and installation of the kiosk static structures in conjunction with DDOT and BOD staffs.

Schedule: July 1, 2007 - December 30, 2007

**\$25,000 of this budget includes competitively bid out work for purchase of 3 to 5 static information kiosks.*