



Standing out from the crowd.

June 23, 2010





David Snyder
Chair, National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

The National Capital Region is a vibrant place to live, work and visit, and it's also known for some of the nation's most infamous congestion. High Occupancy Toll Lanes, Metrorail to Dulles and the Inter-County Connector will indeed help to ease some of the Washington area's congestion issues. Changing daily commuting behavior, however, will continue to be a long term challenge for the region.

The business community plays an integral role in shaping the commuting behavior of their employees. Many employers offer transit subsidies or pre-tax transit benefits, others encourage teleworking or reward ridesharing by providing preferred and/or free parking to carpools and vanpools. Others offer showers and lockers for bicyclists and walkers.

The employers we are honoring today demonstrate a concern about the quality of life for their employees and the region. We hope that through their example, other employers will embrace similar practices.

On behalf of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board, I congratulate the winners of the 2010 Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards and thank them for their continued commitment to excellence by helping to reduce traffic congestion and improve the air we breathe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DS', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

David Snyder
Councilmember, City of Falls Church, Virginia

Welcome to the thirteenth annual Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards ceremony. We are here to honor a select group of employers whose exemplary commuter programs are helping to improve the quality of life for their employees and the citizens of the Washington metropolitan area.

Employers who support transportation alternatives such as ridesharing, bicycling, public transit and teleworking create a better quality of life for employees and our community. The Commuter Connections Employer Services program offers a comprehensive region-wide transportation network dedicated to helping employers set up and expand commuter benefits for their employees. These programs help employers attract and retain a quality workforce, improve their bottom line and even help them gain Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) certification credits.

Please join me in congratulating the recipients of the 2010 Employer Recognition Awards who have worked hard in dedicating resources to meet the commuting challenges of their employees. They are shining examples to other organizations within the region.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William Epps, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

William Epps, Jr.
Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation

Willie Epps, Jr.
Chair, Commuter Connections Subcommittee



The 2010 Employer Recognition Awards

Commuter Connections encourages the general public and area businesses to support teleworking and the adoption of alternative commute methods to and from work everyday. These methods help to mitigate traffic congestion and provide for cleaner air through reduced auto emissions. The Commuter Connections Annual Employer Recognition Awards Ceremony recognizes employers who have voluntarily initiated programs that facilitate the use of such alternatives. Eligible employer programs included those that marketed alternative commuting options, initiated a successful telework program, or provided incentives that made using alternative transportation modes easier and more attractive than driving alone.

Applicants were evaluated by a selection committee made up of Transportation Demand Management professionals. Winners were chosen for their ability to offer measurable commuter benefits that reduce automobile fuel consumption and emissions through fewer vehicle trips and miles traveled. In addition, winners were selected for their policies that have positively influenced the lives of their employees and the region as a whole.

Incentives

Commuter incentives reward and encourage employees for using alternative means of commuting. They also help to attract and retain employees. Incentives and commuter benefits can come in many forms such as transit and vanpool subsidies, pre-tax transit and vanpool passes and preferred or discounted parking for carpools and vanpools. Other incentives might include offering flex-time schedules or the provision of facilities and equipment such as showers and lockers for those who bike or walk to work, on-site amenities, free shuttle service or laptops for teleworkers.

Marketing

Promoting the merits of ridesharing, transit and teleworking within a company is an essential part of a successful commuter program. Companies who educate and advocate alternative commuting options enjoy high employee participation rates in such methods. With knowledge of the available choices, employees are empowered to make well-informed decisions about better and smarter ways to get to work. They arrive less stressed and more able to be productive on the job. Marketing of commuter information and available benefits serves as an influential aspect behind helping to change commuter drive alone patterns to and from work.

Teleworking

Teleworking at home, at a local telework center, or at an employer's satellite office, allows employees to dramatically reduce or completely eliminate the time and money spent commuting to and from work, one or more days per week. For employers, savings may come in the form of reduced overhead for office space and parking costs. In addition, teleworking provides for lower absenteeism, higher productivity and helps businesses attract and retain qualified employees.



Incentives



ICF International

ICF International is a global firm that delivers consulting services and technology solutions in the energy, environmental, transportation, social programs, health, defense, and emergency management markets. ICF employs 2,200 employees in the Washington D.C. area.

Because of its focus on environmental issues, providing an office conducive to cleaner air and a healthy work-life balance are foremost priorities to ICF. Supporting the growth of its commuter benefits program is a natural progression to that end.

The center point of its transit program is a shuttle bus providing service between the Vienna Metro station and office headquarters. The ICF shuttle is coupled with a pre-tax transit benefit up to \$120 per month and a monthly subsidy of \$50. In 2009, a total of 448 employees received the subsidy, a 20% increase from 2008.

ICF has been a staunch supporter of bicycling and the Bike to Work Day event for many years. To support their own pedalers, ICF provides bicycle racks as well as showers and lockers. Based on a 2008 commuter survey, 10% of ICF employees either walk, bike or use carpools to get to work.

ICF has a formal telework policy with about 200 employees telecommuting on a full-time basis, while others telework one to two days per week. The program allows flexible scheduling and provides laptops to employees. Teleworkers have the ability to forward calls to cell phones and even receive voicemail through e-mail. Employees are also reimbursed for work-related cell phone/PDA expenses.

The total savings per year for ICF employees based on alternative transportation methods, including telework is approximately 11.9 million vehicle miles and 600,000 gallons of fuel annually.



Social & Scientific Systems (SSS) is an employee-owned corporation which improves worldwide public health by providing technical, research, and program management services to its government and other clients. SSS provides a work culture that actively supports a serious commitment to work-life balance and promotes a wide variety of incentives for adopting environmentally-friendly commuting modes. Attracted by the area's growth and redevelopment, and especially by its transit accessibility, the company consolidated its 450 employees to downtown Silver Spring.

Serving as a member of the Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee, SSS actively engages with the Montgomery County Commuter Services team. This provides an inside track regarding important transportation news and happenings within the County, allowing employees to be kept up to date about the latest commuting trends and changes.

SSS employees receive ongoing information about commuting options from many sources. Postings on their intranet site called SSSence and the weekly staff newsletter have been keys to marketing the transportation programs throughout the company on a regular basis. SSS also motivates employees in hands on ways through events such as the annual Bike to Work Day local pit stop and by hosting commuter outreach events such as semi-annual benefits and health fairs, and disseminating the Annual Commuter Survey.

SSS offers employees up to \$65 per month in direct subsidy through Super FareShare. When Montgomery County eventually phased out of its financial contributions to the program, SSS continued to maintain support of the subsidy. Participation in the well publicized program has grown rapidly by 37%, increasing from 85 employees in the prior year to 115. SSS's popular telework program includes 70 participants and a flexible work schedule policy permits employees to adjust their work hours to travel during off-peak hours. Compressed work schedules enable employees to reduce the number of commute trips per week. Since winning an Employer Recognition Award from Commuter Connections in 2003, SSS has added showers and lockers to encourage bicycling and offers a \$50 credit to employees for commuting by bicycle.

As a result of developing a robust transportation program and proactively marketing and promoting it, participation has accounted for an estimated reduction of 700,000 vehicle miles traveled each year and a savings of 34,000 gallons of gasoline annually.





Marketing



Social & Scientific Systems, Inc.



Telework

TCG

TCG is a small company with 36 staff members specializing in delivering high quality, individually tailored e-Government and e-Business solutions.

Telecommuting and flexible work arrangements have been hallmarks of TCG since its inception in 1994. Using cutting edge technologies, employees transparently work at different Federal agency work-sites and from home based offices.

Employees who telework at least two days per week are provided with a computer, two monitors, a printer if necessary, and other additional equipment and software where required. In addition, all staff members are provided with a VoIP (voice over IP) extension, and those who work at home a day or more each week also get a VoIP phone, creating a virtual office phone system. TCG staff can use these phones anywhere with internet access. The system also enables call forwarding and redirects, so staff can take their phone calls on any phone number. Employees working from home receive reimbursement for their internet provider expenses.

More than 58% of TCG's employees work from home full-time while many others telework at least one day per week. For employees who work from government worksites, clients are regularly solicited to allow TCG employees to work from home at least one or two days a week.

The telework policy has allowed TCG to reduce its parking facilities to serve just two cars in downtown DC, a major cost saving for the company. Employees reduce the mental stress caused by commuting and save money by reducing the need for gas and parking. As a result of cost savings and work-life benefits brought on by its telework policy, TCG's employee retention rate is 96%. TCG estimates annual vehicle mile reductions of 244,500, and a savings of 12,348 gallons of gasoline per year.



The Employer Services Sales Team Achievement Award is given to the Commuter Connections Employer Services sales team that has most successfully met its goal of partnering with employers to develop and expand commute benefit offerings. There are a total of ten Employer Services sales teams with twenty-five representatives in the Washington metropolitan region that cultivate and support employer based transportation programs. Employers who offer commuter friendly programs encourage employees to try and adopt alternative means of getting to and from work. These practices lessen the heavy rush hour demand on our roadways and its resulting levels of pollution. Employees maintain better morale, lower stress, and enjoy less costly commutes. Employers benefit from higher employee retention and savings may come in the form of taxes and reduced overhead through lower parking and office space requirements.

The TPB's Commuter Connections program is pleased to honor the Prince George's County Department of Public Works & Transportation with the Employer Services Sales Team Achievement Award. The employer outreach program is represented by Domain 7/Joint Venture.

During the past year, with a sales staff of one representative, over 1,500 contacts were made with employers within Prince George's County. Over 50 face to face meetings were established and as a result, three companies have implemented programs at significant impact levels. In addition to meetings, the sales team also participated and helped organize transportation fairs and presented at new-hire orientations. This selection was based on information provided by all Employer Services sales teams in their required monthly reports to COG and through on-going database verifications.





2010 Employer Services
Sales Team Achievement Award



Prince George's County Department
of Public Works & Transportation



2010 Employer Services
Organization Achievement Award



Bethesda Transportation Solutions

Bethesda Transportation Solutions' (BTS) Walk & Ride Challenge involved teams of employees who used pedometers to track their steps over a three-week period in September 2009. The purpose was to promote walking and the use of transit to learn how easy it was to get around on foot and/or by using transit instead of driving. Teams of two to five walkers competed to see who could log the most steps.

In its first year, the 2007 Walk & Ride Challenge registered just under 100 participants and was limited to Bethesda-based companies offering Super FareShare. In 2008, the Challenge was opened to all employers and saw a surge in participation, with a total of 400 registered participants from 28 companies. In 2009, BTS teamed up with the North Bethesda Transportation Center, and the two jurisdictions enjoyed a combined 548 participants from 41 companies.

In a post event survey, most respondents indicated hearing about the Challenge through their employers and the vast majority of team entry fees, 89%, were paid by their employers. A majority of respondents also indicated benefiting from a health standpoint and as a result, many have changed their commuting habits. The event also encouraged team building among co-workers. BTS is a division of the Bethesda Urban Partnership, a non-profit organization responsible for operating the Bethesda Transportation Management District under a contract through and in partnership with the Montgomery County Commuter Services Better Ways to Work program.



Honorable Mention

Commuter Connections would like to acknowledge the following nominees with honorable mention:

American Occupational Therapy Association – Bethesda, MD

B. F. Saul Company – Bethesda, MD

Calvert Group – Bethesda, MD

Clean Currents – Rockville, MD

Community Associations Institute – Alexandria, VA

Discovery Communications – Silver Spring, MD

ICF Macro – Bethesda, MD

Imagination Stage – Bethesda, MD

Merchant Link – Silver Spring, MD

QED Consulting – Arlington, VA

U.S. General Services Administration – Washington, DC

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission – Washington, DC

Walker and Dunlop – Bethesda, MD

2010 Awards Selection Committee

Muriel Bowser – District of Columbia Councilmember

Jacque De Vito – The Society for Human Resource Management

Chris Holben – District Department of Transportation

Kim Jackson – Noblis (2009 Award Winner)

Ray Kent – Mid-Atlantic Telework Advisory Council

David Suls – Golden Triangle Business Improvement District

Lorraine Taylor – Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Harriet West – Clean Air Partners

About the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

The Transportation Planning Board (TPB) is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region and plays an important role as the regional forum for transportation planning. The TPB prepares plans and programs that the federal government must approve in order for federal transportation funds to flow to the Washington metropolitan region. The TPB became associated with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) in 1966. COG was established in 1957 by local jurisdictions to address regional concerns including growth, housing, environment, public health and safety, and transportation. Although the TPB is an independent body, its staff is provided by COG's Department of Transportation Planning.

Commuter Connections is a network of Washington metropolitan commuter transportation organizations and a program of the TPB, that works toward easing daily commutes and reducing vehicle emissions. This is accomplished by promoting and facilitating ridesharing, bicycling, walking, teleworking, and transit, and by providing the regional Guaranteed Ride Home program.

How to Get Involved

Does your company have a telework, SmartBenefits, or Air Quality Action Days program? If your company provides these opportunities or others such as rewarding employees who walk, bicycle or carpool to work, we encourage you to apply for the 2011 Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards.

For more information about services and assistance available through Commuter Connections:
Call us at 800.745.RIDE (7433), (TDD) 202.962.3213 or visit our web site at commuterconnections.org.

Special thanks to the Commuter Connections Subcommittee - 2010 Employer Recognition Awards Workgroup

Doris Chism, Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission

Willie Epps, Prince George's County Department of Public Works & Transportation

Lorraine Taylor, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

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METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
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