

Unlock a new Commute

EARN REWARDS!
BIKING TO WORK!

Join IncentTrip to
earn bike
minutes and
cash and
rewards!



Drop a PIN IN YOUR
COMMUTE!

Drop a pin where your commute starts.
Pick the color that matches your typical
commute option.

- ★ Drive alone (or Uber/Lyft/Taxi)
- ★ Transit/Paratransit
- ★ Carpool/Vanpool
- ★ Walk/Bike/Power



COMMUTER CHOICE MARYLAND 2024 Year in Review



Introduction

Commuter Choice Maryland is a free transportation demand management (TDM) program operated by the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), offering incentives, resources, and free support to commuters and employers statewide. The program aims to ease traffic congestion and address environmental and financial concerns by reducing drive-alone trips and vehicle miles traveled (VMT). It also supports and collaborates with a network of 12 local government TDM programs throughout Maryland. This annual report shares updates on activities undertaken in 2024.

Commuter Choice Maryland by the Numbers

12

Local Government
Commuter Programs

66

Events Attended
or Supported

>4.5M

Digital Outreach
Engagements

191,414

Commuter Choice Maryland
Webpage Views

14,409

BaltimoreCommutes.org
Webpage Views

10,520

Commuter Connections
Accounts

45

Employer Partners

Guiding Strategy

Commuter Choice Maryland Vision

Commuter Choice Maryland increases the use of public transportation, ridesharing, walking, biking, teleworking, and alternative work schedules, to enhance the quality of life of Marylanders.

Commuter Choice Maryland Mission

Goal 1. Make transportation choices easy to understand and access.

- Objective 1.1 Ensure that local and regional public transportation information is accessible to all.
- Objective 1.2 Increase knowledge and comfort with the use of all transportation options, telework, and alternative work schedules.

Goal 2. Enhance the awareness, availability, and use of complimentary statewide employer TDM services that support non-drive alone commuting options, teleworking, and flexible work schedules by employers across Maryland.

- Objective 2.1 Create a branded statewide employer services program.
- Objective 2.2 Build capacity to conduct outreach to businesses and deliver a statewide employer service program.
- Objective 2.3 Ensure MDOT-funded TDM Specialists are trained, have materials, and support needed to execute statewide employer services.

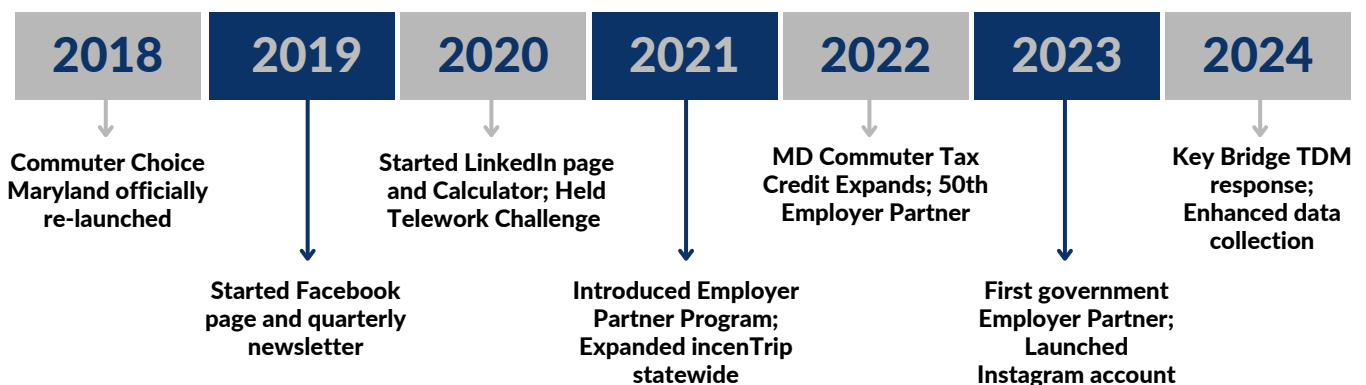
Goal 3. Increase ridesharing support, services, and use statewide.

- Objective 3.1 Partner with local jurisdictions to support ridesharing infrastructure.
- Objective 3.2 Expand the use and availability of existing ridesharing and Guaranteed Ride Home solutions to underserved areas.

Goal 4. Maximize the reach and effectiveness of TDM services through collaboration and innovation.

- Objective 4.1 Foster strong working partnerships with public and private stakeholders.
- Objective 4.2 Leverage emerging and existing technology tools and services providers to expand the effectiveness of TDM services.

Commuter Choice Maryland Timeline



Network of Partners

Coordination with Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Specialists Supports Goals 1, 2, 3, and 4

Twelve local government agencies receive Ridesharing/Commuter Assistance grants from the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). Dedicated TDM Specialists lead programs that complement Commuter Choice Maryland's efforts to meet its goals and objectives by promoting the Maryland Commuter Tax Credit, incenTrip, Guaranteed Ride Home, and the Employer Partner Program, in addition to their own local transportation initiatives. The network meets quarterly to share best practices, with support provided for their events throughout the year.

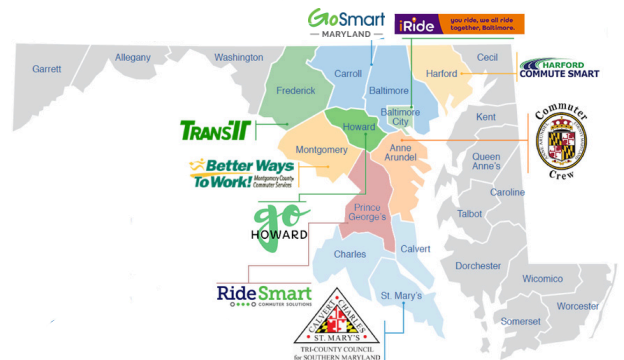
Additional Stakeholder Engagement Supports Goals 1, 2, 3, and 4

Commuter Connections: The DC-area Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) Commuter Connections program is a strong partner, providing TDM program administration and oversight in the greater Washington, D.C. and Baltimore areas for ridesharing and Guaranteed Ride Home, and expanding statewide access to incenTrip and employer outreach resources.

MDOT Workgroup: MDOT created an internal Commuter Choice Maryland Workgroup to collaborate, engage, and support all the TDM projects that every modal administration is implementing or planning to implement. Most MDOT modal administrations are represented in the workgroup, which meets bi-monthly.

Maryland State Agencies: The program has expanded its outreach to State agencies to ensure collective leadership in offering and promoting commuter benefits.

Local TDM Specialists:



Research Partners: In 2024, the program supported the University of Maryland National Center for Smart Growth on the annual Maryland Commuter Survey and their research on the Maryland Commuter Tax Credit. The program also provided content for a UMD iSchool capstone project group, and promoted Morgan State University's Key Bridge survey efforts.

New Focus Areas and Accomplishments

New Partnerships

Commuter Choice Maryland made several new connections with employers and organizations including:

- Maryland Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM)
- Maryland Nonprofits
- Maryland Philanthropy Network
- I-95 Business
- MD Department of Planning, Emergency Management, Commerce, and Labor

I95 BUSINESS Expertise Magazine Videos Inbox Events Jobs

How Maryland's Transportation Department Incentivizes Commuting Options

MDOT's Commuter Choice Maryland program keeps people moving while saving employers and commuters money.

MDOT
Oct 09, 2024
Doing Business | Commerce

Share Post SHARE

By Sara Johnson

Since its relaunch in 2018, MDOT's Commuter Choice Maryland program has offered incentives to Maryland commuters and employers that encourage workers to get to and from their workplaces using ways other than driving alone. Some of the key initiatives of Commuter Choice Maryland are the Employer Partner Program, the Maryland Commuter Tax Credit and the incenTrip mobile app.

Employers can qualify for the Maryland Commuter Tax Credit by funding or subsidizing a variety of commuter programs, from vanpools, carpools and mass transit to internet costs for telework and even bike maintenance. The tax credit is equal to 50% of the cost of providing qualifying commuter benefits, up to \$1,200 per employee per year. MDOT has set a goal to have 50 companies apply for the credit this year.

Maryland Commuter Tax Credit Research

The National Center for Smart Growth Transportation Policy Research Group worked with the program to conduct interviews and focus groups to research the effectiveness of and barriers to employers claiming the Maryland Commuter Tax Credit.

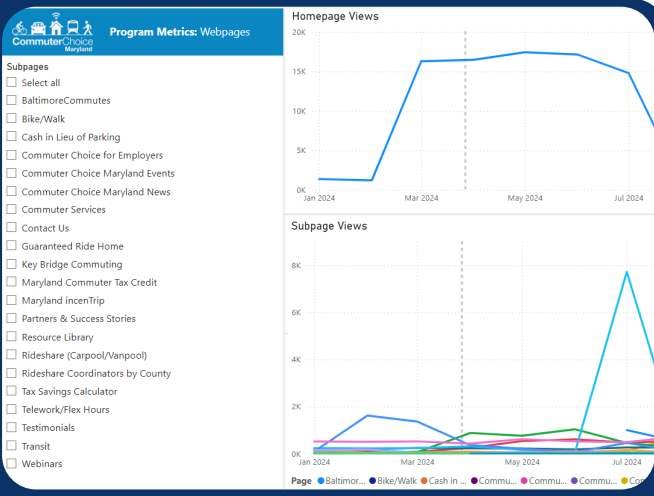
Examining Use of the Maryland Commuter Tax Credit and Opportunities for Improvement

Allibi Shokputov
John Abu
Chester Harvey

Transportation Policy Research Group
National Center for Smart Growth
University of Maryland, College Park

TDM Evaluation

The program began establishing an expanded TDM evaluation framework to improve the measurement of effectiveness and identify areas of improvement for statewide TDM efforts.



New Focus Areas and Accomplishments

TDM Response to the Key Bridge Collapse

On March 26, 2024, the Francis Scott Key Bridge was struck by a cargo ship and collapsed. This unprecedented, tragic loss has disrupted commuting patterns for Maryland residents, employees, and employers. Commuter Choice Maryland has collectively responded to improve traffic flow and access to information to help roadway users make the best travel choices.

The program is also leveraging this opportunity to develop new programs to help employers and employees maximize the use of commuting options to reduce drive-alone trips and alleviate congestion.

The Commuter Choice Maryland team response has included the following:

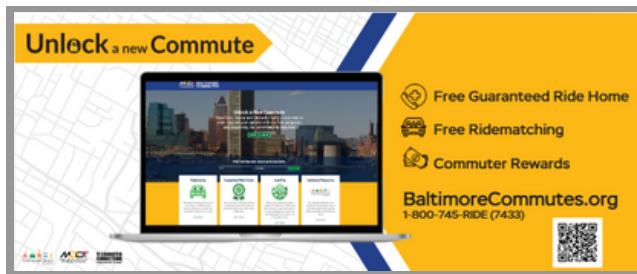
Increasing commuter and employer-facing communications.

- built a dedicated webpage and a new microsite BaltimoreCommutes.org
- ran a successful campaign that generated over 3.5M impressions, 11,600 website visits, and 155 new accounts using the new URL.

Helping Maryland State agencies lead by example in promoting commuting options to State employees.

- developed a TDM toolkit and resources and have been meeting with agencies

Developing and implementing new commuting incentives and pilot programs to help employers and commuters use more transit, carpool, and vanpool options.



Commuter and Employer Engagement

Engagement: Events, Meetings, and Presentations Supports Goals 1, 2, 3, and 4

Commuter Choice Maryland staff connected with over 5,500 commuters and employers in-person, virtually, and supported other departments and jurisdictions at 66 events in 2024, including Bike to Work Day, Car Free Day, fairs, meetings, public events, and conferences across the state.



In 2024, Commuter Choice Maryland strengthened connections with MDOT modes and State agencies, and made great new connections with employer-facing organizations and community-based organizations, helping to significantly expand reach regionally and statewide.

Newsletters Supports Goals 1, 2 and 3

Commuter Choice Maryland sent electronic newsletters to over 7,000 businesses and commuters throughout Maryland to promote the Key Bridge commuting resources, the Maryland Commuter Tax Credit, incenTrip, highlight Employer Partners, and share Statewide events like Bike to Work Day. In 2024, seven newsletters were sent; the open rates averaged 41.4% and ranged between 22% and 58%.

Newsletter	# Opens	Open Rate
Winter 2024	2,074	34.6%
Spring 2024	2,081	35.7%
Key Bridge #1	675	38.7%
Summer 2024	1,265	21.7%
Key Bridge #2	365	57.6%
Fall 2024	1,160	49.9%
Dec. Webinar	1,264	51.9%



Event Highlights

- **Winter** – Howard County Transportation Open House
- **Spring** – Harford County Business Breakfast, Earth Day events, Bike to Work Day events
- **Summer** – Maryland Nonprofits Conference, MML and MACO Summer Conferences, MDOT commuter fairs
- **Fall** – Car Free Day, Bike Around Downtown Columbia, Associated Black Charities Cookout, MD SHRM Annual Conference, Maryland Philanthropy Network Roundtable

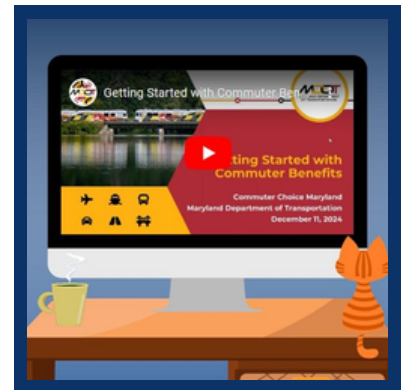


4. Engagement (continued)

Webinars

Supports Goals 1, 2 and 3

In December 2024, the Commuter Choice Maryland webinar series relaunched after a pause to focus on the Key Bridge TDM response. Commuter Choice Maryland’s “Getting Started with Commuter Benefits” webinar gave an overview of the basics of developing a commuter program and is available on the MDOT YouTube channel.



Social Media

Supports Goals 1, 2, and 3

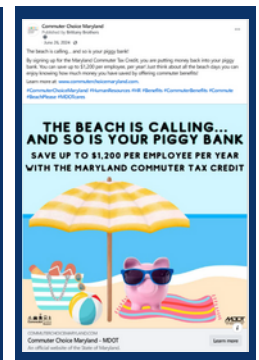
Social media continues to be an effective way to provide resources and tools for commuters and employers throughout Maryland. Boosting posts and launching short ad campaigns have also been cost-effective ways to promote relevant content to the program’s focused audiences.

Facebook

The program launched a Facebook page in October 2019 and increased from 263 followers to 311 in 2024. The organic and boosted posts generated 131,248 impressions and 2,127 total clicks. The post with the highest impressions and reach promoted the Morgan State University-led survey on Key Bridge commuting impacts, and the post with the most clicks promoted the Maryland Commuter Tax Credit.



Most Impressions



Most Clicks

LinkedIn

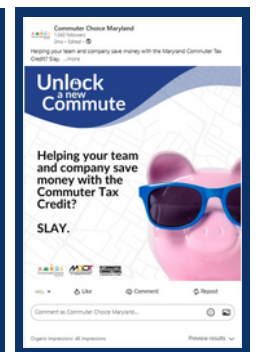
Launched in 2018, the LinkedIn page connects Maryland employers and business professionals with commuter program resources, support, and tax benefits information.

2024 statistics and successes:

- Followers increased from 1,001 to 1,042.
- There were 130,754 total post impressions; 88.4% sponsored and 11.6% organic.
- Organic posts had slightly more clicks (654) and higher CTR (3.97%) compared to sponsored post clicks (608) and CTR (0.49%). This appears to reflect higher engagement around organic posts that included hosting organizations of events our team attended.



Most Impressions
Most Clicks

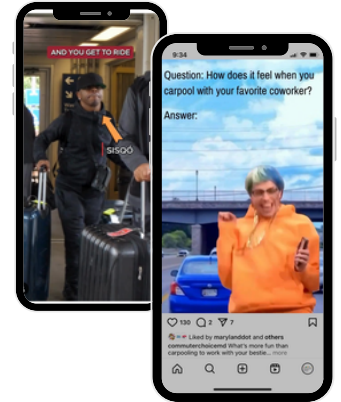


Highest CTR

4. Engagement (continued)

Instagram

The Commuter Choice Instagram account launched in November 2023 to expand engagement approaches. Followers increased from 43 to 349 in 2024, and posts reached 39,446 viewers. Video content generally saw more exposure than static posts. The post with the highest impression was a shared video featuring an MDOT employee's commute (and special guest!); the post with the highest reach was a video clip promoting carpooling on National Best Friend Day.



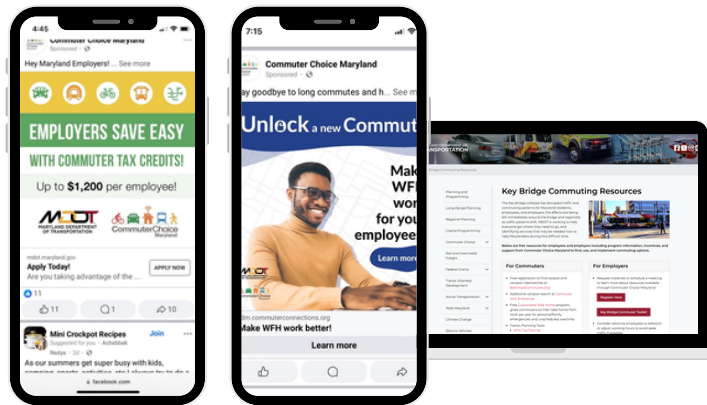
Nextdoor

One new area of digital outreach in 2024 was to post commuting program information on Nextdoor to geotargeted audiences. Poll-based content was well received by public viewers, and the program plans to explore this approach more in 2025.

Paid Social Media Ad Campaign Results

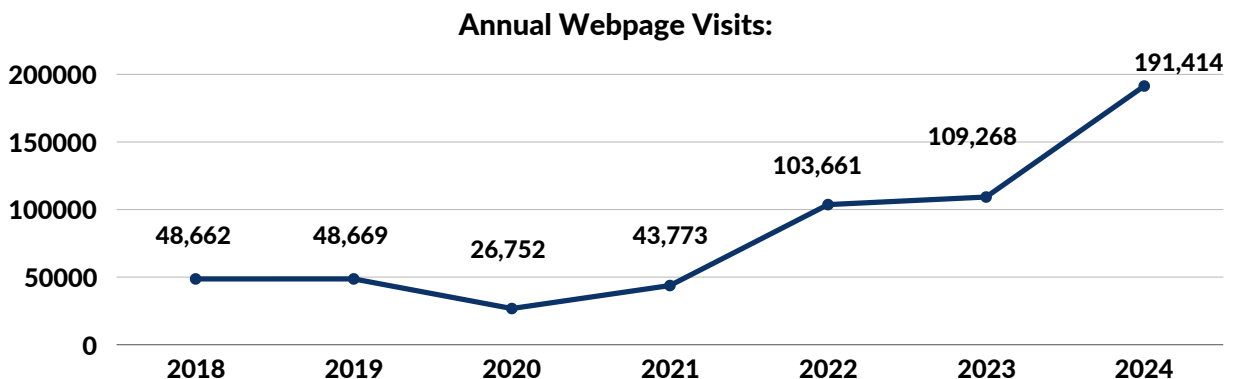
In 2024, paid ad campaigns launched on social media and Google to promote the Maryland Commuter Tax Credit (July) and the Unlock a New Commute and BaltimoreCommutes.org resources (October-November).

	Impressions	CTR Average
Summer 2024	323,934	3.14% (2.27%-5.67%)
Fall 2024	3,518,736	0.33% (0.07%-1.76%)



Commuter Choice Maryland Website Supports Goal 1

Commuter Choice Maryland maintains commuterchoicemaryland.com and affiliated webpages as a centralized resource of information for Maryland commuters and employers. **Total webpage visits for 2024 increased 75% over last year to 191,414!**



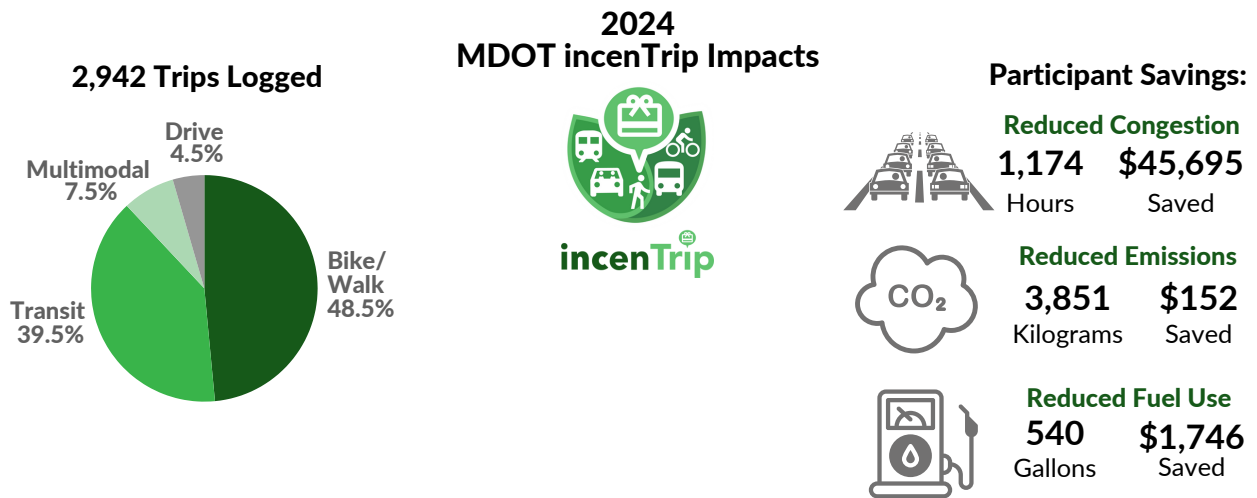
4. Program Participation: Commuters

incentTrip Supports Goals 1 and 4

IncentTrip is a free mobile application that helps Maryland commuters plan their trip and earn rewards when they take transit, carpool, vanpool, bike, or walk to work during peak commuting times. The app was developed through a federally grant-funded partnership between the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Commuter Connections program, The Maryland Transportation Institute at the University of Maryland, and state stakeholders including MDOT. MDOT launched incentTrip statewide in November 2021, expanding access to this free, rewards-based tool beyond the Washington, D.C. and Baltimore regions.

During 2024, there were 242 active users (423 since its launch) in the MDOT program who logged 2,942 trips. The majority of trips (95%) were non-SOV; 48.5% were active transportation (walk/bike), 39.5% were transit, and 7.5% were multimodal. These trips reduced roadway congestion, emissions, and fuel consumption.

In 2025, incentTrip will be rebranded as CommuterCash. The program looks forward to supporting the app in its new form and continuing to build on the program's success!



Commuter Program Participation Supports Goals 2, 3, and 4

In addition to incentTrip participation, Commuter Choice Maryland partnered with MWCOG Commuter Connections to begin monitoring commuter program enrollment Statewide for Guaranteed Ride Home and ridematching registrations. **Program participation in 2024:**

10,520
Total
Accounts

5,533
Ridematching
Registrations

5,198
GRH
Registrations



4. Program Participation: Employers



Options to become an Employer Partner include:

- Conduct a commuter survey
- Distribute commute information to employees
- Provide ridematching assistance, preferential parking, or financial incentives for carpools and vanpools
- Implement flextime, staggered work schedule, or compressed work week
- Implement a telework program
- Install bike racks or lockers, showers, or offer financial incentives for active commuters
- Offer a Guaranteed Ride Home program
- Provide a transit benefit
- Offer Parking Cash Out
- Implement a parking fee
- Provide employee shuttles to transit stations

Employer Partner Program Supports Goals 1, 2, 3, and 4

Commuter Choice Maryland launched the Employer Partner Program in 2021 to recognize Maryland employers and organizations for their leadership in offering transportation benefits to their employees which help reduce congestion, conserve energy, protect the environment, and improve the quality of life of all Marylanders.

The Employer Partner Program also offers employers customized support from Commuter Choice Maryland and local TDM specialists to expand their commuter benefits program and measure the impact of their efforts.

45 organizations joined or renewed their Employer Partner Program membership in 2024, including our first construction firm, food manufacturer, and Harford County employers!

A large effort was undertaken in 2023 to identify opportunities for MDOT and all State agencies to understand and improve awareness of commuting options and evaluate possibilities to expand commuter benefits. This will be a multi-year process, involving decision makers across State agencies; in the meantime, support will continue by providing commuting-related materials and increasing promotion of existing commuter benefits to employees at MDOT and all State agencies.

Employer Partner Spotlight:
Downtown Columbia Partnership



"Don't be afraid to try something new because if you don't try, you can't succeed."

Phillip Dodge
Executive Director,
Downtown Columbia Partnership



Employer Partner Spotlight:
DAVIS Construction



"I highly encourage businesses to reach out to the groups available to them to help guide them on the creative ways they can participate in the process."

-Greg Munson
Senior Manager of Office Services and Facilities,
DAVIS Construction



4. Program Participation: Employers

Maryland Commuter Tax Credit Supports Goals 2, 3, and 4

Maryland employers may claim a tax credit of 50% of eligible costs, up to \$1,200 per employee per year, by providing qualifying commuter benefits. In 2022, legislation expanded the tax credit to include eight options. Employer participation has followed COVID-related commuting pattern changes although attempts to increase awareness may have also contributed. There were 32 applications submitted in 2024.

Transit continues to be the most frequently used benefit; however, telework is becoming an increasingly popular option. Businesses claiming the Commuter Tax Credit in 2024 represent a wide variety of industries, and although most participating employers are sized at under 100 employees, several very large organizations participated this year.

With the support of Commuter Connections, in 2024 the program implemented a database to enable better tracking of employer outreach activities for Commuter Choice Maryland and Baltimore-area local TDM specialists.

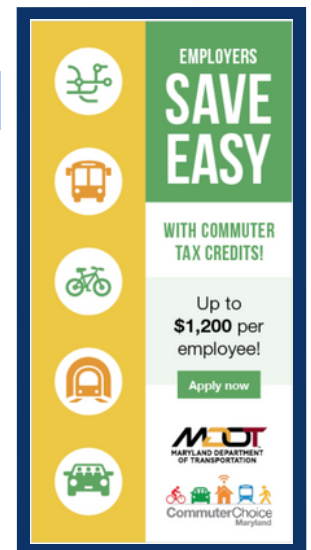
Qualifying Commuter Subsidies Include:

- Transit
- Vanpool
- Cash-in-lieu of parking
- Company-sponsored GRH
- Carpooling
- Telework
- Active transportation
- Multimodal last-mile transportation

Maryland Commuter Tax Credit Application Summary, 2017-2024.

Measure	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*
# Applications/Employers	5	21	25	24	10	25	14	32
# Participating Employees	130	880	1,260	912	551	861	496	2,985
Transit	107	846	1,217	876	548	633	448	2,742
Vanpool	0	0	0	10	0	21	0	6
Carpool	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	0	18
Cash in Lieu of Parking	23	34	43	26	3	162	12	68
Telework	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	25	36	143
Multimodal Last Mile	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	0	0
Active Transportation	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	0	2
Company GRH	0	0	0	0	0	20	0	6

*Data current as of January 2, 2025. Tax credit applications are submitted year-round and may be submitted up to three years after the subsidies were paid.



Commuter Tax Credit participation by industry and business size, 2024.

Industry		Business Size	
Accommodation & Food Service	4	Manufacturing	6
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	2	Other Services	4
Construction	3	Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	3
Educational, Healthcare & Social Assistance	6	Retail Trade	2
Finance & Insurance	2		
Information	1		
		1-9 Employees	7
		10-19 Employees	4
		20-49 Employees	3
		50-99 Employees	4
		100-249 Employees	3
		250-499 Employees	7
		500-999 Employees	1
		1,000-10,000+ Employees	3

5. Looking Ahead

Reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and transportation-related emissions, and connecting more people to employment opportunities are priorities of the Moore-Miller Administration and MDOT. As post-COVID return-to-workplace strategies and the MDOT response to the Key Bridge collapse continue to evolve, Commuter Choice Maryland will continue to play a vital role in reducing congestion and improving the quality of life of all Marylanders.

Goals for 2025

Engagement

- Attend and/or support at least 45 events around the state.
- Support events in at least one county that was not reached in 2024.
- Host or participate in at least 10 presentations (virtual or in-person, led by Commuter Choice Maryland or another entity).
- Aim for at least 300 new followers across social media platforms; test new strategies for market segmentation in digital content promotion.
- Test 2-3 geotargeted, poll-based content posts on the Nextdoor platform.
- Update all Commuter Choice Maryland webpages and explore options to display content in a more dynamic way.
- Continue building relationships with other State agencies and MDOT modal offices to cross-promote commuter programs and increase State employees' participation.



CommuterCash (formerly incenTrip)

- Support and promote the re-launch of incenTrip as CommuterCash.
- Increase the number of app users in the statewide program to at least 500.
- Trial the app's use for at least one statewide promotion in 2025.



New Incentive Programs

- Support the introduction of 1-3 new transit incentive pilot programs and 1-2 new ridesharing incentive programs for the Baltimore region. Significant growth in use of these commute options and will help employers, commuters, and State employees participate in these programs.

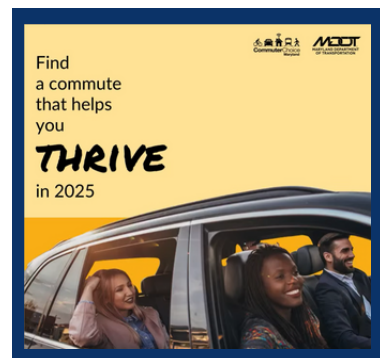


Maryland Commuter Tax Credit

- Aim for a total of 50 businesses to file 2025 tax credit applications.
- Explore new ways to engage with the employer community to encourage applications.
- Promote instructional content to explain the tax credit application process.

Employer Partner Program

- Continue to improve data tracking on employer outreach for Commuter Choice Maryland and all local Maryland TDM programs using a new database already used by several counties in the state and region.
- In December 2022, the Maryland Climate Change Commission set a goal for Commuter Choice Maryland to increase Employer Partners from 50 to 500 by the end of FY 2024; this goal is very ambitious, and the program aims to reach 100 Employer Partners by end of CY 2025.
- Collaborate with local TDM program specialists to increase the number of Partners in their jurisdictions.
- Encourage Employer Partners from new employment sectors, including 4-5 additional State agencies and public sector members.
- Update supporting materials including how-to reference guides and technical assistance documents.





Commuter Choice Maryland

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Mission Statement

The Maryland Department of Transportation is a customer-driven leader that delivers safe, sustainable, intelligent, exceptional, and inclusive transportation solutions in order to connect our customers to life's opportunities.