



George Clark's People-First Approach to Transportation in Southern Maryland



The Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland (TCCSMD) serves as a “regional forum for the discussion and resolution of issues” affecting Southern Maryland. George Clark is the Transportation Director at TCCSMD, where he has transformed how residents in Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary’s counties think about their commute options. In these bedroom communities of DC, George faces a unique challenge, promoting transportation alternatives in an area without access to metro or light rail. As a result, his role requires creative approaches to connect residents with carpool, vanpool, and commuter bus services.

George’s path to Transportation Demand Management (TDM) wasn’t traditional. After spending 27 years in electronics engineering, he retired and joined TCCSMD in 2007 as a workforce development specialist. Two years later, he transitioned to the transportation side of things at the suggestion of his executive director, which ignited a passion he describes as transformative. What sets George apart is his innovative marketing strategy to reach residents who work across county lines. He’s pioneered targeted advertising campaigns on streaming platforms like Pluto, YouTube, and Crackle, which are cost effective alternatives to traditional television commercials that allow him to tailor messages by specific area and demographic. His approach extends beyond typical commuter outreach; George was among the first to market the Guaranteed Ride Home program at the local lot level (as opposed to advertising only to commuter bus riders) because he wanted to ensure that workers at places like Lowe’s and McDonald’s have the same transportation benefits as other commuters.

A self-described “people person” and “straight shooter,” George has cultivated strong relationships with elected officials across three counties. In his work, he knows the importance of authentic relationship-building in advancing transportation programs. His crowning achievement came in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic when he successfully lobbied the Rural Maryland Council for vanpool incentive funding. The \$300/month incentive program, which featured sanitized vehicles, masks, and hand sanitizers from Enterprise, helped restore vanpool participation from zero back to 18-19 active vanpools. The program’s success has since become a model for Frederick County and Prince George’s County.

Perhaps most telling is George’s dedication to personal service in his region. Known for multitasking and providing residents with his personal contact information to make sure everyone gets the individualized help they need; he embodies the personal touch that makes TDM effective. His work demonstrates that successful TDM isn’t just about systems and policies, it’s about understanding people’s needs and connecting them with solutions, one conversation at a time.

“I didn’t start out in transportation, but once I started I found a passion for it and I love it what I do.”

-George Clark
Transportation Director