

# Transportation Demand Management Research KNOWLEDGE PAPER

SEPTEMBER 2006

## Our Evaluation Plan

Arlington County Commuter Services (ACCS) tracks and evaluates its overall program performance through a comprehensive *Evaluation Plan*. The *Evaluation Plan* establishes a series of performance indicators related to objectives and expectations established for ACCS, defines data needed to assess progress in the indicators, recommends data collection and analysis tools, presents a schedule for implementation of the research and evaluation activities, and suggests protocols to report results periodically.

The *Evaluation Plan* outlines a process to assess performance of six categories of ACCS services:

- 1) Sales—[Arlington Transportation Partners \(ATP\)](#)
- 2) Retail Commuter Information and Support
- 3) ACCS Marketing
- 4) Operations and Support
- 5) Special Initiatives
- 6) Planning and Research

These programs are targeted to individual audiences but are designed to present a unified environment in which all parts work together to facilitate travelers' choice of non-Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV) modes for travel to and within the County. Some of the services can be evaluated independently of the others, but most are inter-related, with the combination of multiple services needed to realize their full potential.

The ACCS *Evaluation Plan* also takes into account the influences of the Urban Villages development policy and the extensive transit, HOV, and bicycle-pedestrian infrastructure that exist in Arlington County. ACCS believes this policy and infrastructure contribute to Arlington's high non-SOV mode split, but it is important to explore how they support use of non-SOV modes and, as much as possible, quantify the separate contributions of the



One of six categories of ACCS services being assessed is Retail Commuter Information and Support.

The objective of the *Evaluation Plan* is to provide timely, useful, and meaningful information on ACCS' performance and impact to County decision-makers, program funders, ACCS staff, and local and regional transportation program partners, to assist them in future transportation

planning, and decision-making. This includes information on service participation and satisfaction, as well as the outcomes of the services and their impacts on travel behavior.



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policy, transportation infrastructure, and ACCS' services toward High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) use. In essence, does the ACCS "software" make the Transit Oriented Development policy and infrastructure "hardware" more successful?

The *Evaluation Plan* also supports and guides future decision-making about funding priorities to ensure resources are allocated to services and functions that will produce the highest level of benefits to Arlington County, reinforces existing clients' participation and attracts new clients, and ensures that ACCS continues to respond to market demand with desirable program enhancements.

ACCS *Evaluation Plan* complements various local and regional evaluations performed by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT).

The plan was developed by the [Southeastern Institute of Research](#) and LDA Consulting with substantial involvement of ACCS staff and input from documents, data, and reports provided by ACCS staff and other County staff. Additionally, documents available through other published sources (e.g., Web sites and other resources) also were reviewed to identify previous research performed by or for ACCS and current efforts by ACCS to track or assess program performance.

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