

2004 Commuter Connections State of the Commute Survey Arlington County Analysis Study

SPONSOR:

Commuter Connections, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

Contact: Nicholas Ramfos, Director

Nicholas Ramfos

Director

Commuter Connections

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 300

Washington, DC 20002-4230

(202) 962-3313, (fax) 202.962.3202

RESEARCH SUPPLIERS:

LDA Consulting

Contact: Lori Diggins, Principal

Telephone: (202) 548-0205

Email: LDACWDC@aol.com

OVERALL STUDY PURPOSE:

- ☞ This study analyzed data collected in two regional commuter surveys undertaken in the Washington DC metropolitan region by Commuter Connections. The first survey was conducted in 2001 and the second in 2004.
- ☞ The study analyzed data for respondents who lived in Arlington County and those who worked in Arlington County and compared these results to results for all regional respondents.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

- ☞ Document commuting behavior, such as types of transportation used for commuting and distance traveled.
- ☞ Examine prevalent attitudes, awareness, and use of transportation services, such as public transit and Park & Ride facilities, available to commuters in the region.
- ☞ Document commuters' reasons for choosing current types of transportation and reasons they did not choose other types.
- ☞ Identify commuters' sources of information travel options and their awareness and use of regional commute information and assistance services that might influence commuting behavior.
- ☞ Determine availability and use of commute information services available at respondents' worksites.

METHODOLOGY:

Mode of Data Collection	Random Digit Dialing Telephone Survey
Completed Surveys	7,200 Respondents Total region-wide in each of 2001 and 2004: 2001 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 600 respondents who lived in Arlington County - 527 respondents who worked in Arlington County - Both datasets included 189 respondents who worked <u>and</u> lived in Arlington County 2004 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 600 respondents who lived in Arlington County - 552 respondents who worked in Arlington County - Both datasets included 193 respondents who worked <u>and</u> lived in Arlington County
Survey Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All employed residents 16 years or older living in one of the 12 jurisdictions that comprise the MWCOG region, regardless of work location - Quotas were established to collect completed interviews with 600 residents in each of the 12 jurisdictions, including Arlington County. Residents were asked in which jurisdiction they worked. The resident-based quotas produced the “work in Arlington” counts noted above
Survey Instrument	- Telephone Questionnaire and CATI Interviewing
Criteria for Participation	- Resident of Washington metropolitan region. Age 16 or older. Employed full-time or part-time.

SELECTED KEY FINDINGS

Demographics:

- ☞ Arlington residents were on average younger than the regional average. More than a third (37%) of Arlington residents were younger than 35, compared with about one-quarter of all regional respondents (28%). Arlington workers tended to be older than the regional average. Only 22% of respondents who worked in Arlington were younger than 35. Half of Arlington employees were 45 years or older, compared with only 37% of Arlington residents and 41% of all respondents in the region.
- ☞ Arlington residents’ incomes were quite similar to those of the regional employee population. About half (56) of Arlington residents had household incomes of \$80,000 or higher, about the same percentage as for all regional respondents (55%). But nearly two-thirds (63%) of respondents who worked in Arlington had household incomes of \$80,000 or more.
- ☞ More than four in ten Arlington residents said they worked in the District of Columbia. And another 53% worked either in Arlington (33%) or in another Virginia jurisdiction (21%). About a quarter of respondents who worked in Arlington County also lived in the

County. Another 49% lived in another Virginia jurisdiction and a quarter (24%) lived in Maryland.

- ☞ Respondents who worked in Arlington were less likely to work for private employers (37%) than were either Arlington residents (47%) or other regional workers (49%). They were more likely to work for federal agencies (37%) than were Arlington residents (24%) or other regional workers (22%).

Travel Patterns:

- ☞ A large majority of both respondents who lived in Arlington (98%) and those who worked in Arlington (98%) used one type of transportation three or more days per week for travel to work.
- ☞ Arlington residents made fewer drive alone work trips (56%) than did all regional commuters (71%).
 - Arlington residents were more likely to travel by train (25%) than were their regional counterparts (12%).
 - Arlington residents' shares of trips made by bus (7% vs 4% region-wide) and bike/walk (4% vs 2% region-wide) also were slightly higher for Arlington residents than for the region as a whole.
 - Arlington residents who worked in the District of Columbia were substantially less likely to drive alone to work (37%) than were those who worked in Virginia (73% DA) or Maryland (88% DA).
- ☞ Respondents who worked in Arlington also drove alone less (60%) than did other regional commuters (56%).
 - Arlington workers made a greater percentage of their work trips by train (16% vs 12% region-wide) and carpool or vanpool (12% vs 6% region-wide) than did all regional commuters.
- ☞ Arlington residents traveled shorter distances to work than did other commuters in the region (average 9.9 miles vs 16.5 miles region-wide). However, Arlington residents did not have proportionately shorter commute times than the regional average. Commute times also were shorter than the regional average (27 minutes vs 34 minutes region-wide), but not proportionately shorter. This was primarily due to the greater use of transit and walk/bike.
- ☞ Commuters who worked in Arlington traveled farther to work than did all regional commuters and nearly twice as far, 18.3 miles on average, as did Arlington residents. Their commute times were slightly longer (38 minutes) than the regional average.
- ☞ About 28% of commuters who lived in Arlington and 31% who worked in Arlington used or tried a non-drive alone type of transportation in the past two years that they were not using at the time of the survey.
 - But 60% of Arlington residents who were using an alternative type of transportation said they either had previously used another alternative type or had "always used" their current type of transportation.
 - Among commuters who worked in Arlington, 50% had switched from driving alone.

Telecommuting:

- ☞ The percentage of commuters who telecommute at least occasionally was similar for commuters who lived in Arlington (12.5%), for all regional commuters (12.8%), and for commuters who worked in Arlington (13.2%).
- ☞ About a quarter of Arlington resident commuters who did not telecommute said their job responsibilities would allow some telecommuting and that they were interested in using

this arrangement. The percentage of “could and would” telecommuting potential was similar for non-telecommuting commuters who worked in Arlington.

- ☞ Half (49%) of telecommuters who worked in Arlington and 69% of telecommuters who lived in Arlington said they heard about telecommuting from their employer.
 - This percentage was considerably higher in 2004 than in 2001. In the 2001 SOC survey, only 31% of Arlington residents who telecommuted said they learned of telecommuting at work or through their employer.
 - Respondents who worked in Arlington were more likely than were Arlington resident to say they heard of telecommuting through word of mouth (30% vs 15% for Arlington residents).

Availability of and Attitudes toward Transportation Options

- ☞ Nearly nine in ten commuters who lived in Arlington and three-quarters of those who worked in Arlington said public transportation service operated between their home and work areas. By contrast, only two-thirds of all regional commuters said they had access to public transportation for their trip to work.
- ☞ Commuters who worked in Arlington were more likely to have HOV lanes available on their commute route (52%) than were either commuters who lived in Arlington (30%) or all regional commuters (29%). They also were more likely to use HOV lanes for commuting.
- ☞ Commuters who lived in Arlington were much less likely to say that they knew locations of Park & Ride lots along their trip to work (21%) than were either all regional commuters (42%) or commuters who worked in Arlington (42%).
- ☞ The top reasons why Arlington resident commuters said they did not use the train or bus for commuting included: “no service available in home or work area,” “takes too much time,” and “need car during work day or before or after work.” These were also the top three reasons named by commuters who worked in Arlington.
- ☞ Reasons given for not carpooling or vanpooling included: “don’t know anyone to ride with,” “work schedule is irregular,” and “need car during work day or before or after work.”

Commute Advertising Recall and Actions Taken

- ☞ About 57% of Arlington resident commuters and 64% of commuters who worked in Arlington said they remembered hearing, seeing, or reading commute advertising within the past six months.
 - About a third of commuters in each group could name a specific message they remembered and four in ten who recalled ads could name the sponsor.
 - About half of respondents said they heard it on the radio and about two in ten said they saw the ad on television. Other often mentioned sources included newspapers and a sign on a transit vehicle or at a bus stop or Metro station.
- ☞ About one in five Arlington resident commuters who heard or saw ads said they were more likely to consider ridesharing or using public transportation after seeing or hearing the advertising. And 10% of those who said the ads made them likely to consider another type of transportation actually did take some action (0.5% of all resident respondents), such as looking for more information about commute options or trying another type of transportation for commuting.
- ☞ A slightly higher percentage (20%) of commuters who worked in Arlington and said they were more likely to consider another type of transportation took an action to change their commute. In all cases, these commuters said they looked for more commute information. These commuters equaled about one percent of the commuters who worked in Arlington.

Awareness and Use of Commuter Assistance Resources

- ☞ About half (45%) of Arlington resident commuters and nearly six in ten (58%) commuters who worked in Arlington said they knew a regional transportation information number or website existed.
 - About two in ten commuters in both of these groups could name a specific number or website.
 - About 14% of respondents who lived in Arlington and about one in ten (8%) of those who worked in Arlington named a number or website of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) or Metro. One percent of respondents in each category named one of the two commuter service websites hosted by Arlington County Commuter Services: www.commuterpage.com or www.commuterdirect.com.
- ☞ Among commuters who did not know about such a resource, six in ten Arlington commuters said they would look first on the internet if they wanted this information.
- ☞ About 14% of Arlington resident commuters said they had used a transportation information resource in the past year. By comparison, about 10% of Arlington workers and 10% of all regional respondents said they contacted a commute information website or phone number. The primary site/number used by respondents who lived in Arlington was WMATA's; 13% of respondents used either a WMATA phone number or website in the past year.

Commuter Assistance Services Available at Worksites:

- ☞ Respondents who lived in Arlington and those who worked in Arlington were more likely than were other regional commuters to have access to commuter incentives or support services.
 - Two-thirds (64%) of Arlington resident commuters and three-quarters (73%) of Arlington employees said their employers offered commute assistance services.
 - Only 54% of all regional commuters who had access to these services.
- ☞ The percentage of all regional workers who had access to services few only slightly between 2001 (51%) and 2004 (54%). But availability of services increased between 2001 and 2004 for both Arlington residents and workers.
 - In 2001, 54% of Arlington residents said their employers offered services. In 2004, the percentage had grown to 64%.
 - Among respondents who worked in Arlington, 60% said they had access to commute services in 2001. In 2004, 73% said their employers offered services.
- ☞ Respondents who worked for federal agencies and large employers were most likely to have incentives/ support services available at their worksites
 - Nearly nine in ten (86%) federal employees said they had commuter services, compared with 61% of non-profit employees and 42% of respondents who worked for private employers.
 - Only 35% of respondents who worked for employers with 100 or fewer employees and 51% of respondents who worked for employers with 101-250 employees said they had any services, compared with 65% of respondents at sites with 251-999 employees and 78% of respondents who worked for organizations with 1,000+ employees.
- ☞ Nearly half (46%) of respondents who lived in Arlington and 59% of respondents who worked in Arlington said their employers offered Metrochek/transit subsidies to employees. This was compared to 54% of all workers regionwide whose employers offered these benefits.
- ☞ Respondents who lived in Arlington and those who worked in Arlington were less likely than were other commuters in the region to have free parking at work.

- Only about half of respondents in these groups said free parking was available either on-site or off-site. This is in contrast to 69% of all regional commuters who said they do not have to pay for parking at work.
- ☞ Rates of driving alone were considerably lower among respondents who said they did not have free parking at work; 69% of respondents who had free parking drove alone, compared with less than half (47%) of respondents who did not have this benefit. Respondents who had to pay for parking used all alternative modes at higher rates than did respondents who had free parking.

OTHER RELATED STUDIES, PLANS & DOCUMENTS:

AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS:

Questionnaire
Data Tables
Summary Report

KEY WORDS:

Arlington County, Attitudes, Awareness, Bicycle, Bike, Bus, Car, Carpool, Commute, Commute advertising, Commute mode, Commuters, Commuting, High Occupancy Vehicle, HOV, Metro, Metrobus, Metrorail, Parking, Perceptions, Private Vehicle, Rideshare, Single Occupant Vehicle, SOV, TDM, TDM Planning and Administration, Telecommute, Train, Transit, Transportation Alternatives, Transportation System, Walk