



CENTRAL SHENANDOAH PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

COMMUTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM STRATEGIC PLAN

FY2026 - FY2030



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The RideShare Commuter Assistance Program (CAP) aims to transform the daily commuting experience in the Central Shenandoah Valley by promoting sustainable, efficient, and accessible transportation options that reduce single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips. This strategic plan sets the foundation for achieving these goals through a multi-faceted approach that addresses traffic congestion and environmental sustainability. By educating commuters to the benefits of using public transit, carpooling, vanpooling, biking, and walking, RideShare seeks to be a catalyst for change in commuter behavior in the region.

This document replaces the 2017 Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan and outlines RideShare's vision, mission, and goals for Fiscal Years 2026 through 2030. To meet requirements established by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), RideShare program staff at the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) and the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC) partnered with Launch! Consulting to develop this comprehensive strategic plan for delivering commuter resources throughout the program service area. Over the course of a year, the team collected and analyzed population, workforce, and commuter pattern data to better understand commuter needs within and between the CSPDC and TJPDC regions.

The CSPDC region faces commuter challenges that are unlike larger and more urban regions in the Commonwealth and therefore requires commuting solutions that are tailored to our unique needs. The rural and remote nature of much of the region means that commuters must travel further to get to employment hubs; and winding, rustic roads create safety concerns for commuters traveling early in the morning and late at night. For those who do travel on the interstate, the unpredictability of I-81 and I-64 make commute trips more stressful and sometimes more dangerous. When incidents and accidents occur, travelers are stuck on the highway for long-periods of time - not knowing when they will make it to work or home, and worried about their safety as their sit bumper-to-bumper with commercial trucks.

These same factors also make it challenging to provide transportation alternatives that are comprehensive and consistent across the CSPDC region. Some parts of the region have access to public transit, where others do not. Some cities and towns are more walkable than others. Some neighborhoods have enough density to support carpools and vanpools of workers who live nearby, in other places, there may be many miles between neighbors.

In facing these challenges, RideShare must be deployed as a multifaceted and flexible program, rather than a one-size-fits-all solution. With that in mind, we have developed a strategic plan for operations that seeks to deliver needs-based commuter resources at a micro-regional level. In other words, this plan recommends activities that fit target markets and customer profiles, acknowledging that the needs of commuters in Harrisonburg are different than those in Highland County.

RideShare's core mission is to connect people to inclusive and sustainable transportation alternatives to increase mobility and enhance quality of life. Through partnerships with local governments, employers, transit agencies, and community organizations, RideShare program staff foster collaboration to achieve this mission. The program emphasizes sustainability, innovation, accessibility, and equity as the core values guiding every initiative. The following goals will serve as the driving force for RideShare program activities over the next five years:

1. **Reduce single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips.** At the core of what we do, RideShare seeks to move people more efficiently by encouraging the use of alternative transportation modes like carpooling, vanpooling, taking public transit, biking, and walking for commute trips.

2. **Encourage utilization of trip planning tools.** The first step toward shifting behavior away from SOV trips is to make commuters aware of the choices available to them. Using DRPT's ConnectingVA mobile app and website, commuters can plug in their origin and destination points and receive a curated list of transportation options to meet their needs. RideShare seeks to increase awareness and use of these tools to remove barriers to change.

3. **Build and maintain relationships with community stakeholders to promote regional collaboration around transportation solutions.** The problems resulting from congestion are not contained to our roadways and the solutions should not be either. RideShare seeks community involvement in identifying ways to improve the commuter *and* community experience. Bringing employers, fellow transportation agencies, and policy-makers into the discussion will generate ideas and solutions that are more likely to address systemic problems that result in positive economic, environmental, and behavioral changes.

4. **Educate community members on transportation demand management (TDM) as a solution to increased mobility and access throughout the service area.** If we want commuters to make changes to their commuting behavior that is sustainable over a long-period of time, research tells us the motivation must be intrinsic. Through education, RideShare seeks to help commuters understand how increased mobility creates access, and access creates freedom.

The RideShare Strategic Plan provides a detailed action plan with specific objectives and timelines for meeting these goals. It also establishes key performance indicators and metrics for how program staff will measure success. The programming plan and budget projections contained herein outline how RideShare staff will operationalize these objectives in a cost-effective way to maximize resources to achieve results. Notable initiatives include the development of a database to aid in building relationships with employers, revisions to marketing strategies to help elevate the RideShare public profile, and an update to the technological tools used to deliver services. Staff will continue to seek DRPT Commuter Assistance Program grant funds to deliver services while keeping costs low to our member jurisdictions.

To jump to specific elements in this planning document, reference the Table of Contents on the following page. We have also developed regional profiles for each of the CSPDC's member jurisdictions. To learn key commuter facts about your community, find your page below, or click the community's name.

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CHAPTER ONE

COMMUTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Commuter Assistance Program Overview provides a look into the history, structure, and scope of the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission and the RideShare Commuter Assistance Program. This chapter covers the program's origins, including when and why it was established. It also explains how the program is governed and details the roles of decision-makers. Additionally, the chapter provides an overview of the RideShare program's organizational structure, outlining the responsibilities of staff and contractors, as well as the program's mission and milestones. Finally, it describes the program's service area, including the regions and communities it serves.



INTRODUCTION

For 55 years, the **Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC)** has been a cornerstone of regional planning, serving 21 jurisdictions in the Central Shenandoah Valley. Member jurisdictions include the cities of Buena Vista, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Staunton, and Waynesboro and the counties of Augusta, Bath, Highland, Rockbridge, and Rockingham.

The CSPDC region is one of the largest planning districts in the state geographically, spanning over 3,400 square miles. The commission assists their member jurisdictions in various areas, including land use planning and regulation, transportation, emergency management, solid waste management, economic development, water and wastewater management, housing, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping, and human services.

Additionally, the CSPDC conducts transportation studies, creates long-range transportation plans, offers grant-writing assistance, and provides on-call consulting services. As the region's transportation needs have grown, the transportation program has become a significant part of the CSPDC's overall responsibilities. Transportation programs represent 65% of the Planning District Commission's (PDC) annual budget and are staffed by five full-time employees. **The RideShare Commuter Assistance Program (CAP)** of the Central Shenandoah Valley is housed within the CSPDC's Transportation Program, and is managed and supported by planners and administrative staff.



CSPDC TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

The CSPDC serves as the administrator of the **Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (HRMPO)** and the **Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (SAWMPO)**. CSPDC is responsible for managing federal and state funding to support regional transportation planning initiatives. Each Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has a Policy Board and a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) that meet monthly to conduct regular business and provide guidance on transportation planning needs in the region.

The Policy Board is responsible for making all official decisions of the MPO, including adoption of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). TACs are comprised of city, county, town, and agency staff with expertise in planning, engineering, and related fields. The primary responsibility of the TAC is to conduct technical reviews and analyses regarding all work activity of the UPWP, LRTP, TIP and any related issues and programs as specified by HRMPO's Policy Board, and to advise the Policy Board on technical issues concerning transportation.

The HRMPO was established in 2003 and is the regional transportation planning organization that provides support for multimodal transportation projects in the City of Harrisonburg, the towns of Bridgewater, Dayton, and Mt. Crawford, and the surrounding portions of Rockingham County. The voting membership of the HRMPO Policy Board is composed of twelve representatives, or their alternates, designated by and representing their respective jurisdictions or agencies and a state representative designated by and empowered to participate on behalf of the Secretary of Transportation.

Additionally, the nonvoting membership includes one representative designated to represent each of the following agencies, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), Virginia Department of Aviation (VDA), and other agencies or groups as may be agreed upon by a majority of all voting representatives of the HRMPO. The HRMPO has agreed to give a non-voting membership to an official representing James Madison University (JMU).

The SAWMPO was established following the designation of the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Urbanized Area (UZA) by the U.S. Census on March 26, 2012. Federal regulations require an urbanized area to create and maintain an ongoing transportation planning process that is overseen by representatives of the local jurisdictions and state and federal transportation officials. The SAWMPO is the regional transportation planning organization that provides support for multimodal transportation projects in the cities of Staunton and Waynesboro and the urbanized portion of Augusta County.

The voting membership of the SAWMPO Policy Board is composed of the following representatives or their alternates: two representatives each from the cities of Staunton and Waynesboro and Augusta County, and a state representative designated by and empowered to participate on behalf of the Secretary of Transportation. Like the HRMPO, nonvoting membership is composed of one representative designated by the following agencies: FHWA, FTA, DRPT, VDA, and other agencies or groups as may be agreed upon by a majority of all voting representatives. In addition to funding the MPOs, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) allocates part of the State Planning and Research funding to provide annual transportation planning assistance for non-UZAs within the Commonwealth.

The Rural Transportation Planning Program (RTPP) was created to aid the State in fulfilling the requirements of the State Planning Process to address the transportation needs of nonmetropolitan areas. Through this program, the CSPDC provides rural transportation planning services to the counties of Bath, Highland, Rockbridge and the non-urbanized areas of Rockingham and Augusta, the cities of Buena Vista and Lexington, and the towns of Broadway, Craigsville, Elkton, Glasgow, Goshen, Grottoes, Monterey and Timberville.

Planning activities may include updating comprehensive plans, development of small area plans, performing traffic impact analyses, transportation grant application assistance, and other transportation-related studies and plans. A Rural Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (RTTAC) meets quarterly to discuss and advise on rural transportation planning activities. This committee is less formal than those of the MPOs and does not have voting members or established requirements for locality representation.

TRANSIT PLANNING

The CSPDC serves as the grant recipient/subrecipient for federal and state transit funds to provide transit service in both the urban and rural portions of Augusta County as well as the cities of Staunton and Waynesboro. The BRITE Transit System is operated by Virginia Regional Transit (VRT) under a contractual arrangement. In addition to the transit services provided within these localities, BRITE provides service to Blue Ridge Community College (BRCC) and JMU, with routes traveling north and south between Harrisonburg and Staunton.

While BRITE provides limited service within Rockingham County and into Harrisonburg via the BRCC routes, the Harrisonburg Department of Public Transportation (HDPT) is the designated transit provider in the Harrisonburg-Rockingham area. The CSPDC also recently implemented the Afton Express, an inter-regional bus route that provides commuter-oriented service between the Shenandoah Valley and Charlottesville. Regional transit systems are discussed in greater detail throughout this planning document.

>> See Chapter 2: Transit Services
for a full list of transit service providers in the RideShare service area.



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLANNING

The CSPDC administers a Bicycle and Pedestrian Program through the Harrisonburg-Rockingham and Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro MPOs and the Rural Transportation Program. The CSPDC assists in the planning, programming, construction, and marketing of the region's bicycle and pedestrian resources. CSPDC staff provide support to member jurisdictions with the goal of ensuring ongoing support, coordination, and implementation of local and regional bicycle, greenway, pedestrian, and trail plans.

The program is funded through a combination of federal, state, and local resources. The CSPDC is an active participant in planning and promoting regional Bike-Walk Summits. After a reprieve during and immediately following the COVID-19 pandemic, summit planning resumed in 2023. The Staunton- Augusta-Waynesboro Bike-Walk Summit was held in fall of 2023, and the Harrisonburg- Rockingham summit was held in spring of 2024. The CSPDC will continue to support these events in the years to come.

>> Learn More About Bike & Ped Planning

Visit the [HRMPO](#) & [SAWMPO](#) websites to learn more about current and future projects in the CSPDC Region.



COMMUTER ASSISTANCE

The RideShare CAP, the subject of this strategic plan, is a CSPDC program that provides commuter resources to individuals traveling to, from, or within its member jurisdictions. These resources include a website and app-based ride matching platform to help connect commuters to alternative modes of transportation, a rewards system for logging alternative commute trips, and information, education, and outreach about the benefits of utilizing alternative transportation for commute trips.

The CSPDC partners with the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC) to offer these services under the RideShare program name. The service area for the RideShare program spans both PDC regions as illustrated in **Figure 1**.

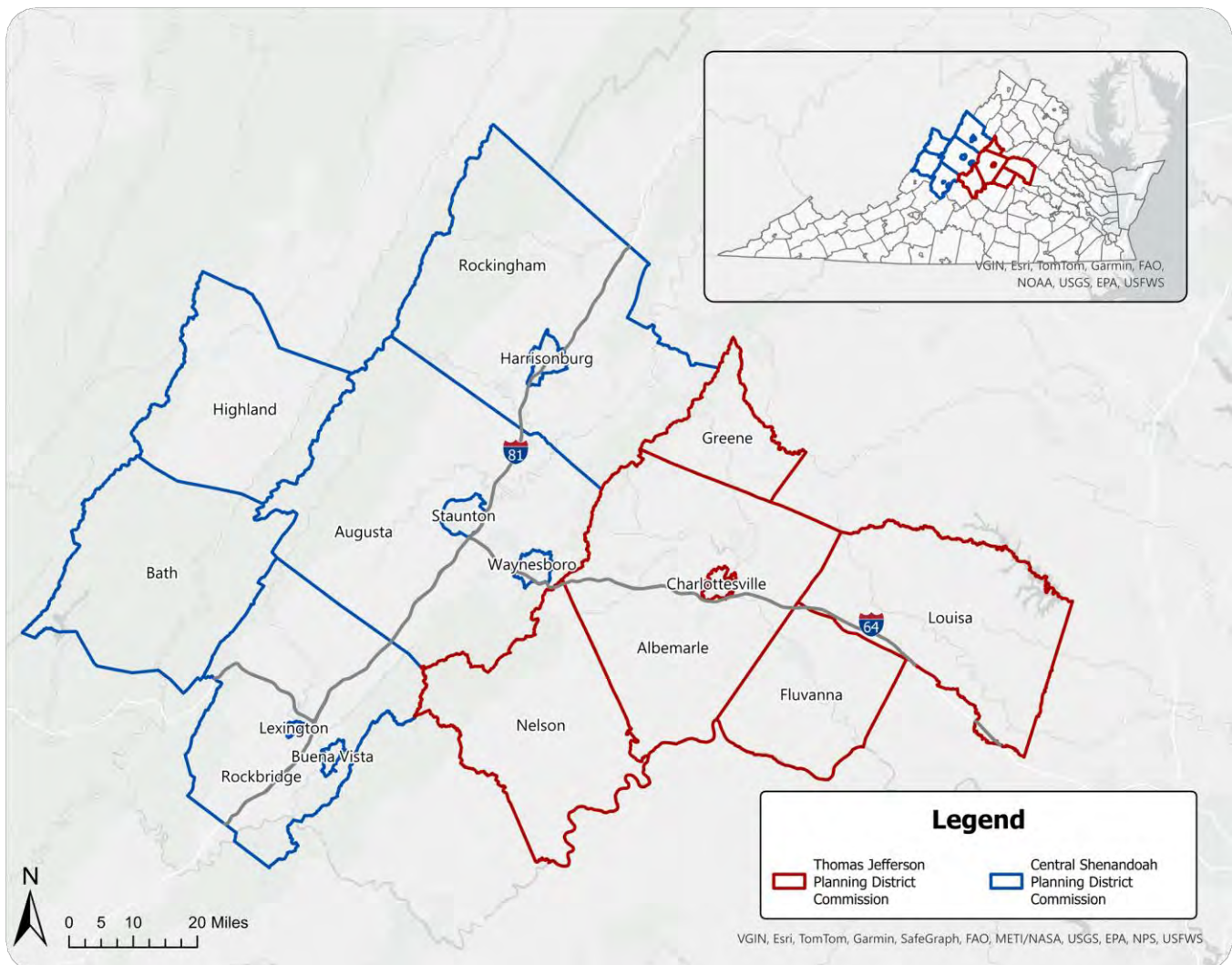


Figure 1. RideShare Service Area

Having these transportation programs housed under one roof creates a strategic advantage in the promotion of Transportation Demand Management (TDM). CSPDC staff who work on the RideShare program are also highly involved in the day-to-day operations of these other transportation programs. This relationship between RideShare and other regional transportation initiatives creates many opportunities for collaboration and incorporation of TDM goals into a range of transportation planning processes.

GOVERNANCE

CSPDC is a sub-division of local government created pursuant to the Virginia Area Development Act. The CSPDC is governed by a Board of Commissioners comprised of representatives from each member jurisdiction. Board membership is appropriated by population with each locality appointing at least one representative to serve on the Board, with more populous jurisdictions appointing several members. A majority of members are local government elected officials, who collectively determine the overall level of the agency’s funding and set the level of matching funds available for all programs and planning operations. Board members serve two-year terms for the Executive Committee and three-year terms for the full committee with no limits on re-appointments. Like many programs housed within the CSPDC, the RideShare program is governed by the Board of Commissioners.

Though the program is largely funded through a state grant, the local funds required to match this grant are provided by each locality in the CSPDC region. Each jurisdiction pays annual assessments to the CSPDC and matching funds for the CAP Operating grant are provided via those assessments. The Board of Commissioners approves the budget for the program by voting on and passing an annual resolution of support. The Board is also the governing body responsible for adopting the RideShare Commuter Assistance Program Strategic Plan (CAPSP).

While the RideShare program only has one direct governing body, the program does not operate in a silo. TDM and multimodal planning are incorporated into all transportation programs managed by the CSPDC. As such, RideShare program activities are guided and influenced by the advisory groups for each of the CSPDC’s Transportation Programs.

Table 1. CSPDC Board of Commissioners (as of 2024)

Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) Board of Commissioners	
Augusta County	Butch Wells, Augusta County Board of Supervisors Pam Carter, Augusta County Board of Supervisors Vickie Moran, Craigsville Town Council Julia Hensley, Non-Elected Representative
Bath County	Lynn Ellen Black, Bath County Board of Supervisors
City of Buena Vista	Tyson Cooper, Buena Vista City Council*
City of Harrisonburg	Laura Dent, Harrisonburg City Council* Monica Robinson, Harrisonburg City Council Adam Fletcher, Non-Elected Representative
Highland County	Henry Budzinski (Vice Chairperson), Highland County Board of Supervisors*
City of Lexington	Frank Friedman (Chairperson), Lexington City Council*
Rockbridge County	Jay Lewis, Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors* Chris Slaydon, Non-Elected Representative
Rockingham County	Leila Longcor, Rockingham County Board of Supervisors Rachel Salatin, Non-Elected Representative Kim Sandum, Non-Elected Representative Vacant
City of Staunton	Amy Darby, Staunton City Council Sharon Angle, Non-Elected Representative*
City of Waynesboro	Terry Short (Treasurer), Waynesboro City Council* Leslie Tate, Non-Elected Representative

* Denotes Executive Committee Members

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

In addition to elected officials who provide high-level oversight functions, the CSPDC is supported by 14 staff positions. An Executive Director oversees the entire commission and its programs. **Figure 2** presents an organizational chart of current positions to date.

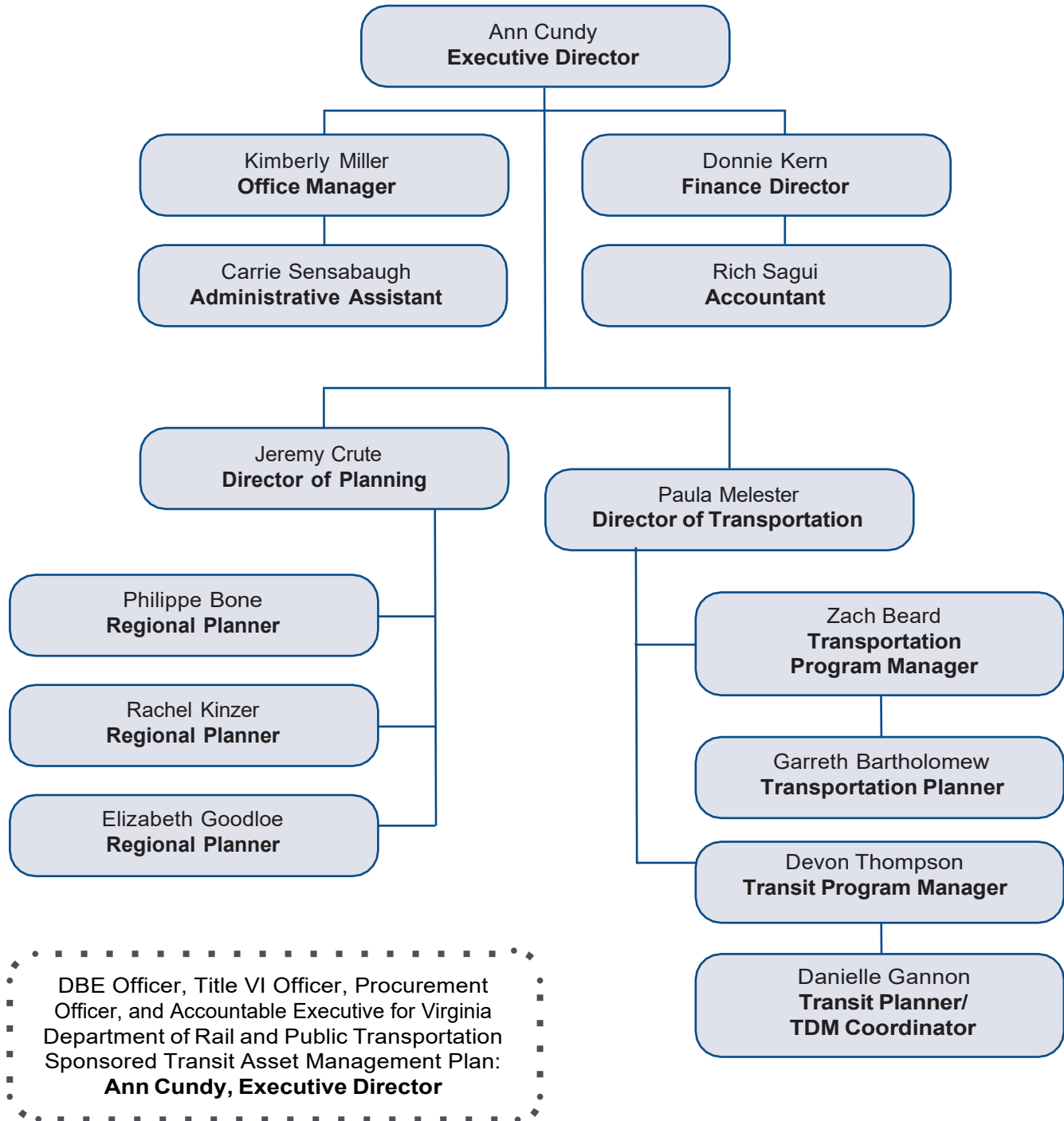


Figure 2. CSPDC Organizational Chart

Note: Organizational Chart as of November 2024

The CSPDC is split into two primary program areas – Community Development and Transportation. The Director of Transportation oversees all transportation programs, including the RideShare commuter assistance program. The RideShare program is managed by the Transit Planner/TDM Coordinator position with approximately 46% of their time being spent on RideShare. The Transit Planner/TDM Coordinator reports directly to the Transit Program Manager. Several other CSPDC staff positions provide support for RideShare in a limited capacity. A full table of RideShare staff and their roles are provided below in **Table 2**.

The CSPDC uses consultants and contracted services when needed to meet needs that exceed staff capacity or expertise. The RideShare program sometimes utilizes professional services for specific projects. Any professional services needed for RideShare activities are included in each year’s grant application and are subject to the approval of DRPT.

TJPDC is a key service delivery partner to CSPDC with respect to the RideShare program. While the CSPDC operates the marketing, outreach, and programming activities concentrated in the CSPDC region, TJPDC RideShare staff do the same for their jurisdictions. The staff in each PDC work collaboratively to deliver high-quality programming within and between both regions, sharing responsibilities for many aspects of the program.

Table 2. RideShare Staff and Roles

Staff Position	Percent of Time on RideShare	Program Activity
Executive Director	0.6%	Oversees all agency programs; receives quarterly updates on RideShare program activities, sets and internally approves agency-wide budgets, and presents information to the Board of Commissioners for approval.
Director of Transportation	0.6%	Oversees all transportation-related programs, conducts semi-regular check-in meetings with TDM staff, reviews budget reports and funding applications, and approves annual programming and work plan for TDM program.
Transit Program Manager	7.7%	Provides direct supervision of TDM Coordinator, conducts weekly check-in meetings, approves timesheets, approves reimbursement packets, and reviews quality of work.
Transit Planner/ Transportation Demand Management Coordinator	46.2%	Responsible for day-to-day operation of the RideShare program, writes grants, implements operational plans, creates content and prepares informational materials, conducts public engagement and outreach activities, manages web and social platforms, reconciles budget, prepares reimbursement packets, submits monthly performance metrics, and acts as a Rideshare liaison to DRPT Program Manager.
Transportation Planner	0.5%	Provides GIS mapping support for RideShare program as necessary and may also assist with public engagement and outreach activities. Serves as liaison between TDM program and MPOs.
Finance Director	1%	Maintains budget database, manages all accounts receivable and regularly provides expenditure reports and payroll job cost reports to TDM Coordinator for budget monitoring.
Accountant	1%	Processes invoices and reconciles monthly payments, and prepares materials for quarterly reimbursement packets.

PROGRAM HISTORY

RideShare began operating in Central Virginia in the 1980's through TJPDC originally serving the counties of Greene, Louisa, Nelson, Fluvanna, and Albemarle, and the City of Charlottesville. The CSPDC attempted to create their own TDM program in the 1990's but it was discontinued due to lack of support among local government officials and residents within the region.

Financial hardships from a nationwide economic recession and a rise in gas prices in 2008 renewed resident interest in transportation alternatives – particularly in the Harrisonburg-Rockingham metropolitan area. As a result, the Rockingham County Board of Supervisors and the Harrisonburg City Council approached the CSPDC about forming a rideshare/carpool program in the region. The CSPDC pursued grant funding from DRPT to support a regional TDM program and was awarded a TDM grant in 2009. Given the success and name recognition of the RideShare program in the neighboring region, the CSPDC partnered with TJPDC becoming a co-sponsor of the existing commuter assistance program. Henceforth, the RideShare program provides commuter assistance services throughout and between both regions.

The decision to partner with TJPDC has consistently proven to be both economically and operationally beneficial to both regions – particularly as the volume of commuters between the two regions increases over time. Interstate 64 (I-64) between the City of Charlottesville and the Shenandoah Valley has become a significant commuting route for those who live in the Valley and work in Charlottesville. The area around Staunton and Waynesboro, and nearby portions of Augusta County grew so much between 2000 and 2010, the census reclassified the region as an urbanized area.

As a result of the urban designation, the aforementioned SAWMPO was established to conduct regional transportation planning regularly. Operating two MPOs (HRMPO and SAWMPO) out of the CSPDC created and expanded opportunities for TDM. The integration of TDM solutions into regional transportation planning enables the RideShare program to continue to benefit from these partnerships.

>> Visit www.rideshareinfo.org to learn more!

Log and search trips,
or join a carpool or vanpool.

Create an account or download the software to get started.

Login / Sign-up Download for iOS Download for Android

EXPANDING SERVICES

The urbanized designation for the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro region also changed the way public transit services operated in the area. Prior to 2010, public transit services in the rural parts of the CSPDC region were operated by private, non-profit agencies. At that time, the City of Harrisonburg was the only jurisdiction in the CSPDC region with municipality provided public transportation. From 1992 to 2002, Coordinated Area Transportation Services (CATS) provided demand response transit service in portions of the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro region. As the need for transit grew, additional services were added. In 2002, a new fixed-route bus service was established along US Route 250 between Staunton and Waynesboro. The launch of the 250 Connector marked the beginning of a new era in the region's public transit. It was then that Virginia Regional Transit (VRT), another non-profit agency, took over operations of the area's transit services. VRT received rural transit funding from the State to facilitate the delivery of fixed route bus and trolley services.

Following the changes in the 2010 census, the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro area became eligible for additional federal funding for transit systems located in urban areas. However, the FTA stipulates that formula funding may only be allocated to a public entity. This meant the direct recipient of these federal funds must be a local government, transit authority, or PDC. Based on this, VRT would no longer be eligible to receive funding support to operate transit in this region. Given the regional nature of the transit system, the CSPDC was the best suited agency to take over administration of transit funding, and in 2013, the SAWMPO and Board of Commissioners passed a resolution authorizing the CSPDC to become the direct recipient of Section 5307 and 5311 transit funds.

Since then, the CSPDC receives annual funding from both federal and state agencies, matches those funds with local dollars, and contracts the delivery of transit service to a third-party transit operator. Through a competitive procurement process, VRT was selected as the contractor and has continued to provide the fleet of buses, drivers, and maintenance operations of the region's transit system – now known as BRITE Bus. Both the CSPDC's involvement in transit service delivery and the growth of the BRITE Bus system has aided in the expansion of RideShare's services. Because carpooling and vanpooling were the only alternative transportation options in the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro region for many years, RideShare focused most efforts on promoting ride matching services. With a new mode of transportation available to commuters in the region, RideShare began promoting transit use through the BRITE Bus system as well as HDPT.

Between 2002 and today, the BRITE Bus system has grown from one fixed-route to eight and has significantly expanded their demand response/ paratransit services for individuals with mobility challenges. Between BRITE and HDPT, and RADAR fixed- route bus service is available in Harrisonburg, Staunton, Waynesboro, and parts of Rockingham, Augusta, and Rockbridge Counties. This has significantly increased alternative transportation options among commuters in the CSPDC region.



THE AFTON EXPRESS

In 2021, the CSPDC and BRITE Bus launched the region's first commuter bus service with the Afton Express. The Afton Express operates Monday through Friday, and its schedule is designed with commuters in mind. The addition of the Afton Express has contributed to commuter transportation options in the region significantly. The University of Virginia (UVA), one of the region's largest employers, has three stops along the Afton Express route. This provides commuters with a direct service from Park and Ride lots in Staunton, Waynesboro, and Fishersville to their workplace. Recent estimates indicate that roughly 80% of regular riders on the Afton Express are traveling to the University or its hospital system. The utilization of transit for commuting has increased drastically.

Based on data from the AgileMile trip logging system, commuters in the CSPDC region logged 684 transit trips in 2021, 4,820 trips in 2022, and 5,016 transit trips in 2023. Prior to 2021, there were limited transit options in the region for commuters. Therefore, the increase in transit utilization is likely attributed to the addition of the Afton Express. Qualitative data from Afton Express rider surveys indicate many of these commuters were previously driving alone and a few participated in informal carpools. With this knowledge in hand, the RideShare program has adjusted its priorities in recent years to emphasize promoting transit as a commuting option, with particular attention to the Afton Express. While RideShare staff continue to actively promote other transportation modes such as carpooling, vanpooling, biking, and walking, they recognize the significant value of targeted outreach and marketing efforts for transit.



Beyond transit, a few small adjustments and changes to focus areas have been made over the past five years. One change of note is the deemphasis of telework as an alternative commute mode. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, RideShare offered telework consultation services to employers who wished to establish telework or hybrid workplace policies. When the pandemic hit, employers had to quickly adapt, with many requiring employees to work from home for health and safety. Out of the pandemic came a new landscape for working environments. Some employers opted to retain their telework policies where others required employees to return to work entirely in person.

Following a directive issued by the Governor of Virginia in July 2021, State employees returned to work in person with few exceptions. To align policies and messaging, state-funded programs, such as RideShare, no longer promote telework as an alternative commute mode. However, hybrid and remote work arrangements are still prevalent in other sectors in our region. Based on results from the Commuter Services Survey conducted during the development of this strategic plan, 45.1% of respondents indicated they work remotely for a portion or all of their job. Telework remains a trip option in the ConnectingVA mobile application and commuters who work hybrid or remote work schedules may still log their telework trips and earn rewards for those trips.

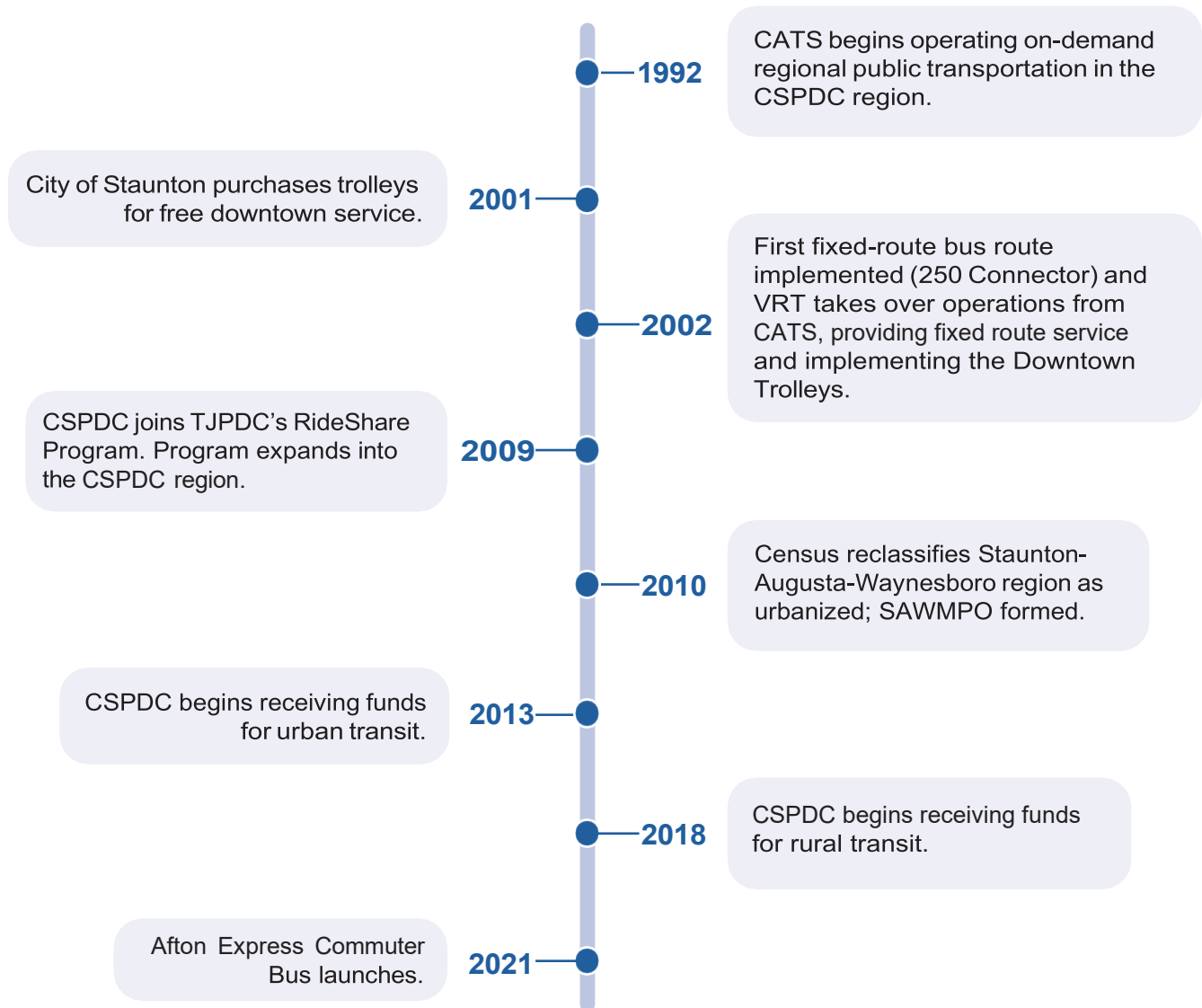


Figure 3. Key Milestones of the RideShare Program

AUGUSTA COUNTY

RideShare Community Profile



- Total Population: 77,373
- Median Age: 45.9
- Median Household Income: \$71,349
- Percent of RideShare Workforce: 14%
- Percent Commuting: 93%
- Commuters Driving Alone: 83%
- Commuters Carpooling: 9%
- Commuters Riding the Bus: 0.8%

Source: US Census Bureau's ACS 5-Year Estimates (2021)

Augusta County represents 26% of the CSPDC region and 14% of the total RideShare region. It is home to over 1,900 businesses, making it the third largest employment hub in the CSPDC region. Of the 39,000 employed residents in the county, 93% commute with half traveling outside of Augusta County for work. Most commuters drive themselves to and from work with a small percentage carpooling. Augusta County has a walk score of Q indicating that commuters are extremely car dependent.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

- Carpool coordination through ConnectingVA mobile app and website
- Vanpool coordination through Enterprise
- BRITE Transit routes (250 Connector, Stuarts Draft Link, and the BRCC Shuttle); Afton Express Commuter route connecting Fishersville to Charlottesville.
- 2 park and ride lots (Verona, Greenville)

COMMUTER PATTERNS AND NEEDS

- Aside from a few areas of higher density, most of the county is rural forcing workers to travel long distances to and from work.
- With two large employment hubs in nearby Harrisonburg and Charlottesville, commuters in Augusta County are likely to travel on Interstates I-81 and I-64 to get to work.
- **Opportunity!** Manufacturing and distribution centers that use shift scheduling are highly compatible with carpooling and vanpooling. Workers tend to arrive and depart at the same time and do not often leave work within their shifts. Augusta County has many of these facilities.

CHAPTER TWO

SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS AND CHARACTERISTICS

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the demographics, commuter, and workforce characteristics within the RideShare service area, covering the CSPDC and the TJPDC regions. It includes an analysis of population demographics, workforce distribution, major employers, and commuter behaviors. The chapter highlights existing transportation services and facilities to understand the commuter options currently available in these regions.



POPULATION

The RideShare service area covers approximately 574,395 residents across 16 unique localities in the CSPDC and TJPDC regions, which include a mix of urban, suburban, and rural communities.

In the CSPDC region—which covers Augusta, Bath, Highland, Rockbridge, and Rockingham counties, as well as the cities of Buena Vista, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Staunton, and Waynesboro—Rockingham County holds the largest share of the service area population at 15%. Augusta County follows with 13.6%, while the cities of Harrisonburg, Staunton, and Waynesboro contribute 9.0%, 4.5%, and 3.9%, respectively. Rockbridge County and the cities of Lexington and Buena Vista account for 3.9%, 1.3%, and 1.2%, respectively, with Bath and Highland counties representing the smallest shares at 0.7% and 0.4%, respectively. These population distributions highlight the diverse areas served by the RideShare program.

In the TJPDC region, which consists of six localities—Albemarle, Louisa, Fluvanna, Greene, Nelson counties, and the City of Charlottesville—Albemarle County holds the largest share of the population at 20.2%. Charlottesville is a key urban center, contributing 8.1% of the total population. Louisa (7%), Fluvanna (4.9%), Greene (3.7%), and Nelson (2.6%) add a blend of suburban and rural character.

Table 3. Total Population by Locality

PDC	Locality	Population Estimate	Percent of Service Area Population
CSPDC 53.5%	Augusta County	78,373	13.6%
	Bath County	4,065	0.7%
	Buena Vista City	6,598	1.2%
	Harrisonburg City	51,870	9.0%
	Highland County	2,205	0.4%
	Lexington City	7,414	1.3%
	Rockbridge County	22,642	3.9%
	Rockingham County	85,620	15.0%
	Staunton City	26,016	4.5%
	Waynesboro City	22,669	3.9%
TJPDC 46.5%	Greene County	21,423	3.7%
	Charlottesville City	46,740	8.1%
	Albemarle County	115,941	20.2%
	Louisa County	40,070	7.0%
	Fluvanna County	28,056	4.9%
	Nelson County	14,693	2.6%
Total Population		574,395	100%

Source: 2023 ESRI GeoEnrichment

AGE

The age distribution across the 16 localities reflects the diverse rural, suburban, and urban landscapes within the RideShare service area.

In the CSPDC region, which encompasses smaller cities, suburban areas, and rural counties, the population generally trends older. Highland County has the highest median age in the service area at 57.2, followed by Bath County at 52.3 and Rockbridge County at 49.7. This reflects an appeal to older adults potentially drawn to these counties' rural environments. Median ages in Augusta and Rockingham counties, as well as in the cities of Staunton and Waynesboro, fall closer to the middle range, at 45.9, 42.3, 44.1, and 41.1, respectively. In contrast, Harrisonburg and Lexington have notably younger populations, with median ages of 24.8 and 24.9, respectively. This is likely influenced by the presence of universities such as James Madison University (JMU) and Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) in Harrisonburg, and Washington and Lee University (W&L), and the Virginia Military Institute (VMI) in Lexington.

In the TJPDC region, the City of Charlottesville has the lowest median age at 30.1, which is likely due to the presence of the University of Virginia (UVA). Other areas show slightly higher median ages, with Albemarle County at 39.9 and Greene County at 41. Louisa and Fluvanna counties have median ages of 45.5 and 43.2, respectively, indicating a slightly older population in these suburban and rural areas. Nelson County stands out as the highest median age, with 51.8, potentially influenced by the rural characteristics of the area.

Table 4. Median Age by Locality

PDC	Locality	Median Age
CSPDC	Augusta County	45.9
	Bath County	52.3
	Buena Vista City	39.2
	Harrisonburg City	24.8
	Highland County	57.2
	Lexington City	24.9
	Rockbridge County	49.7
	Rockingham County	42.3
	Staunton City	44.1
	Waynesboro City	41.1
TJPDC	Greene County	41
	Charlottesville City	30.1
	Albemarle County	39.9
	Louisa County	45.5
	Fluvanna County	43.2
	Nelson County	51.8

Source: ESRI GeoEnrichment 2023

RACE AND ETHNICITY

Understanding the racial and ethnic composition of the RideShare service area is essential to making commuter options accessible and inclusive for all residents.

In the CSPDC region, most localities are predominately White, while Staunton and Waynesboro have the highest proportions of Black or African American residents at 11% each. Asian representation is most concentrated in Harrisonburg, Lexington, and Highland County, with approximately 3.1–3.2% in each. Harrisonburg stands out for its diversity, with 20.8% of residents identifying as Hispanic or Latino and 11.6% as two or more races.

The TJPDC region also shows a majority of White residents, but with a higher representation of Black or African American residents in several areas. The City of Charlottesville (17%), Louisa County (13%), and Fluvanna County (13%) have the highest percentages of Black or African American residents. Asian residents are most prominent in Charlottesville and Albemarle County, at 7% and 5.6%, respectively. Greene County has the highest representation of Hispanic or Latino residents in TJPDC with 6.6%.

Table 5. Race and Ethnicity by Locality

PDC	Locality	Total Population	White	Black or African American	Asian	Two or More Races	Hispanic or Latino
CSPDC	Augusta County	77,433	91.0%	4.0%	<1%	2.8%	3.4%
	Bath County	4,177	94.0%	5.0%	<1%	0.0%	0.7%
	Buena Vista City	6,639	87.0%	4.0%	<1%	7.0%	1.5%
	Harrisonburg City	51,784	71.0%	7.0%	3.2%	11.6%	20.8%
	Highland County	2,247	94.0%	0.0%	3.1%	2.6%	0.0%
	Lexington City	7,346	84.0%	5.0%	3.1%	6.0%	5.1%
	Rockbridge County	22,673	91.0%	4.0%	<1%	2.2%	2.1%
	Rockingham County	83,905	90.0%	2.0%	<1%	4.9%	7.8%
	Waynesboro City	22,341	76.0%	11.0%	1.8%	9.0%	9.3%
TJPDC	Greene County	20,631	81.0%	6.0%	2.3%	5.0%	6.6%
	Charlottesville City	46,289	69.0%	17.0%	7.0%	5.9%	5.8%
	Albemarle County	112,513	79.0%	9.0%	5.6%	5.2%	5.9%
	Louisa County	38,106	78.0%	13.0%	<1%	6.3%	3.6%
	Fluvanna County	27,442	77.0%	13.0%	1.4%	6.2%	4.2%
	Nelson County	14,773	82.0%	12.0%	<1%	2.6%	4.6%

Source: US Census Bureau's [2022] ACS 5-Year Estimates

INCOME

Median household income data for the RideShare service area provides an indicator of economic well-being in each locality which can help to guide planning for inclusive commuter services. By assessing income levels, services and infrastructure can be more effectively tailored to the specific needs of communities across the TJPDC and CSPDC regions.

In the CSPDC region, Rockingham County has the highest median household income at \$75,411, which is slightly lower than the Virginia state median of \$87,249.¹ At the other end, the cities of Buena Vista, Waynesboro, and Harrisonburg have the lowest median household income in the region at \$40,306, \$46,509, and \$49,593, respectively. This may suggest potential economic challenges and underscores the importance of strategies to enhance access to employment, both on-site and remote, especially in areas with lower income levels.

In the TJPDC region, Albemarle County stands out with the highest median household income at \$98,000, which is well above the Virginia state median. This may reflect the county's larger population, availability of high-paying jobs, and telework-friendly job opportunities. Conversely, Nelson County and the City of Charlottesville report the lowest median household incomes in the region, at \$63,757 and \$66,571, respectively. Nelson's rural character may contribute to its lower income levels, while Charlottesville's figures could be impacted by its sizable student population.

Understanding these income disparities across the TJPDC and CSPDC regions is essential for developing transportation solutions that ensure access to job opportunities for all residents.

Table 6. Median Household Income by Locality

PDC	Locality	Median Household Income
CSPDC	Augusta County	\$71,349
	Bath County	\$53,082
	Buena Vista City	\$40,306
	Harrisonburg City	\$49,593
	Highland County	\$53,600
	Lexington City	\$65,246
	Rockbridge County	\$57,190
	Rockingham County	\$75,411
	Staunton City	\$54,021
	Waynesboro City	\$46,509
TJPDC	Greene County	\$76,030
	Charlottesville City	\$66,571
	Albemarle County	\$98,000
	Louisa County	\$75,502
	Fluvanna County	\$84,207
	Nelson County	\$63,757

Source: ESRI GeoEnrichment 2023

1. U.S. Census Bureau, 2022

WORKFORCE

Approximately 282,551 residents within the RideShare service area are employed, making up nearly half of the total population. The distribution of employed residents generally aligns with the population size of each locality, meaning areas with larger populations tend to have more workers.

In the CSPDC region, Rockingham County holds a significant portion of the employed population at 15%, emphasizing its importance as an employment hub within the region. Meanwhile, smaller localities like Bath and Highland counties represent 0.7% and 0.3%, respectively, of the employed population. These lower employment figures likely reflect the rural nature of these areas, with smaller populations and fewer job opportunities.

In the TJPDC region, Albemarle County accounts for the largest share of the employed population at 20.2%, highlighting its role as a major employment center in the region. This reflects the county’s strong workforce and access to job opportunities.

The concentration of workers in Albemarle and Rockingham counties suggests a potential commuting pattern, where residents may live in one jurisdiction but work in another. This underscores the importance of RideShare services and inter-jurisdictional transportation solutions to support commuters across the region.

Table 7. Employed Population (16+) by Locality

PDC	Locality	Employed Population (16+)	Percent of Service Area Worker Population
CSPDC 53.6%	Augusta County	39,340	13.9%
	Bath County	1,972	0.7%
	Buena Vista City	3,541	1.3%
	Harrisonburg City	25,258	8.9%
	Highland County	961	0.3%
	Lexington City	2,905	1.0%
	Rockbridge County	10,989	4.0%
	Rockingham County	42,252	15.0%
	Staunton City	12,624	4.5%
	Waynesboro City	11,191	4.0%
TJPDC 46.4%	Greene County	10,735	3.8%
	Charlottesville City	24,331	8.6%
	Albemarle County	57,191	20.2%
	Louisa County	19,619	6.9%
	Fluvanna County	12,814	4.5%
	Nelson County	6,828	2.4%
Service Area Total		282,551	100%

Source: ESRI GeoEnrichment 2023

WORKER EARNINGS

Tables 8 and 9 provide an overview of annual earnings for the estimated 282,551 employed residents within the RideShare service area.

In the CSPDC region, income distribution reveals a substantial proportion of workers in the middle-income brackets. The largest group, representing 17.8% of the service area, has household incomes between \$50,000 and \$74,999. The next largest income group is those earning between \$100,000 and \$149,999, accounting for 16.5% of workers. Workers in the \$35,000 to \$49,999 bracket make up 12.3%, while 13.2% fall within the \$75,000 to \$99,999 range. Higher income brackets are less prevalent, with 7.3% of workers earning between \$150,000 and \$199,999 and 5.2% earning \$200,000 or more. Lower income levels, under \$25,000, make up about 17% of the area. This data indicates a mix of economic backgrounds within the CSPDC region.

In the TJPDC region, income levels are similarly varied, with a notable concentration of workers in the \$100,000 to \$149,999 bracket, which includes 17.6% of the workforce. The \$50,000 to \$74,999 range represents 15.7% of workers, and 12.9% fall within the \$75,000 to \$99,999 bracket. Lower-income groups (those earning less than \$25,000) account for about 13% of the service area, reflecting a significant portion of economically disadvantaged workers. The region also has 13.1% of workers in the highest income bracket (\$200,000+).

Table 8. Worker Earnings by Region

Household Income	Number of Workers in the CSPDC Region	Percent of Service Area	Number of Workers in the TJPDC Region	Percent of Service Area
<\$15,000	11,329	9.4%	7,695	7.2%
\$15,000 - \$24,9999	9,172	7.6%	6,210	5.8%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	12,717	10.6%	6,914	6.5%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	14,785	12.3%	10,673	10.0%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	21,341	17.8%	16,699	15.7%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	15,864	13.2%	13,731	12.9%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	19,789	16.5%	18,751	17.6%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	8,772	7.3%	11,673	11.0%
\$200,000 +	6,249	5.2%	13,970	13.1%

Source: ESRI GeoEnrichment 2023

EMPLOYERS

The RideShare service area encompasses a total of 20,070 businesses, which provides a snapshot of the employment landscape within the TJPDC and CSPDC regions.

The CSPDC’s business distribution aligns with its population size. The City of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County have the highest number of businesses, with 2,502 and 2,111, respectively. Augusta County (1,903) and the cities of Staunton (1,126) and Waynesboro (902) also contribute significantly to the region’s business landscape, helping to create employment opportunities across the CSPDC area.

In the TJPDC region, Albemarle County leads with the highest number of businesses, totaling 4,208, reflecting a strong commercial base. The City of Charlottesville also plays a key role as a commercial hub with 3,709 businesses. Smaller localities like Louisa (802), Fluvanna (560), Nelson (545), and Greene (550) counties have fewer businesses, suggesting more localized, smaller-scale markets with less commercial diversity.

Table 9. Total Businesses by Locality

PDC	Locality	Total Businesses
CSPDC	Augusta County	1,903
	Bath County	239
	Buena Vista City	215
	Harrisonburg City	2,502
	Highland County	187
	Lexington City	437
	Rockbridge County	704
	Rockingham County	2,111
	Staunton City	1,126
	Waynesboro City	902
TJPDC	Greene County	550
	Charlottesville City	3,079
	Albemarle County	4,208
	Louisa County	802
	Fluvanna County	560
	Nelson County	545
Total Businesses		20,070



Source: ESRI GeoEnrichment 2023

The CSPDC region’s employment profile highlights a strong representation in administrative, sales, and management roles, with Office/Administration leading at 10.6%. Sales and management closely follow representing 9.0% and 8.9%, respectively. The region also emphasizes production (8.1%) and transportation/moving (8.6%) roles, underscoring its connection to industrial and logistics-focused sectors. The region is home to diverse manufacturing sectors, including food and beverage, automotive, and plastics, all of whom rely on freight to transport goods. These factors make the Valley a prime location for industry. Additionally, healthcare and social assistance, alongside educational services are supported by institutions such as JMU and various healthcare facilities, play pivotal roles in shaping the employment landscape.

In the TJPDC region, there is a high concentration of management positions (12.5%) and education/library roles (9.7%), highlighting a workforce geared toward knowledge-driven industries. This is further supported by notable representation in Office/Administration and Sales roles, both representing 9.1%. The region demonstrates a notable emphasis on business/finance and computer/math occupations, highlighting its alignment with professional, technical, and educational expertise. This trend is likely influenced by the presence of numerous hospitals and medical facilities, further supported by educational institutions such as the University of Virginia (UVA) and Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC).

Table 10. Employed Population (16+) Occupations by Region

Occupation	Percent of CSPDC Region	Percent of TJPDC Region
Architecture/Engineer	1.6%	1.8%
Building Management	4.4%	3.8%
Business/Finance	3.6%	5.8%
Computer/Math	2.1%	4.3%
Construction/Extraction	4.8%	4.5%
Education/Library	6.9%	9.7%
Entertainment/Sports	1.8%	2.3%
Fish/Forestry	1.4%	0.5%
Food Prep	5.7%	4.7%
Health Practitioner	5.9%	8.0%
Healthcare Support	3.2%	2.7%
Installation/Repair	4.2%	2.6%
Legal	0.8%	1.3%
Life/Social Science	1.0%	2.4%
Management	8.9%	12.5%
Office/Administration	10.6%	9.1%
Personal Care	2.9%	2.8%
Production	8.1%	3.0%
Protective Services	2.3%	2.1%
Sales	9.0%	9.1%
Social Services	2.3%	2.3%
Transportation/Moving	8.6%	4.8%

Source: US Census Bureau’s [2021] ACS 5-Year

TOP TEN EMPLOYERS

The top ten employers for each region based on Virginia Employment Commission data highlights the varied employment opportunities that shape the RideShare service area.

In the CSPDC region, JMU is the largest employer. Walmart and Sentara Healthcare also play key roles as top employers. The Rockingham and Augusta County school districts, Augusta Medical Center, and Washington and Lee University also highlight the strong presence of education and healthcare. Industrial and manufacturing strength is reflected in employers like Hershey Chocolate of Virginia, Cargill Meat Solutions, and Merck Sharp & Dohme Corp.

In the TJPDC region, the UVA/Blue Ridge Hospital leads as the largest employers, reflecting the area's focus on healthcare and education. Public sector roles are significant, with Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville providing government services. Retail and healthcare are also prominent, with Walmart, Sentara Healthcare, and the UVA Health Services Foundation. Other major employers, such as Dominion Virginia Power, the U.S. Department of Defense, and Louisa County Public Schools, showcase the region's varied employment landscape, spanning education, energy, and federal services.

This data demonstrates the economic variety in both regions, with healthcare, education, retail, and manufacturing as leading sectors. It underscores the need for transportation solutions like RideShare to connect workers with diverse employment opportunities.

CSPDC Top Ten Employers

- 1 James Madison University
- 2 Walmart
- 3 Sentara Healthcare
- 4 Rockingham County Schools
- 5 Augusta Medical Center
- 6 Augusta County Schools
- 7 Hershey Chocolate of Virginia
- 8 Washington and Lee University
- 9 Cargill Meat Solutions
- 10 Merck Sharp & Donhme Corp

TJPDC Top Ten Employers

- 1 University of Virginia/Blue Ridge Hospital
- 2 County of Albemarle
- 3 Walmart
- 4 Sentara Healthcare
- 5 University of Virginia Health Services Foundation
- 6 City of Charlottesville
- 7 Louisa County Public Schools
- 8 Dominion Virginia Power
- 9 U.S. Department of Defense
- 10 Food Lion

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Economic Information & Analytics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 3rd Quarter (July, August, September) 2023

COMMUTER PATTERNS

Commuting patterns within the RideShare service area provide key insights into transportation habits across its 16 localities, supporting strategic planning for transportation demand management (TDM).

In the CSPDC region, commuting trends highlight distinct local employment dynamics. Bath County leads with 78.1% of residents working locally, while Buena Vista has the lowest at 36.8%, with 61.9% commuting to other counties. Highland County stands out, with 9.1% of its workforce employed outside Virginia. Harrisonburg maintains a balance, with 62.3% working locally and 33.1% commuting out. Augusta, Rockingham, and Rockbridge Counties each see about half of their workforce commuting to other counties, while Staunton and Waynesboro show similar patterns, with over 50% commuting externally. These trends underscore the region’s reliance on inter-county commuting, with higher density hubs serving as localized employment centers.

In the TJPDC region, Charlottesville and Albemarle County emerge as primary employment hubs with 60.4% and 58.7% of their workforce employed locally. Greene and Fluvanna Counties experience significant out-commuting rates, with 66.1% of workers traveling to other counties. Louisa County retains 43.5% of its workforce locally, with 52.4% commuting out. Nelson County has 2.2% of its workforce working outside Virginia, the highest in the region. These patterns reflect a connected regional economy, anchored by Charlottesville and Albemarle County, and a workforce extending across local and state boundaries.

Table 11. Commuting Patterns by Locality

PDC	Locality	Workforce Commuting	Working in County of Residence	Working Outside of County of Residence	Working Outside of Virginia
CSPDC	Augusta County	93.1%	49.2%	48.8%	0.7%
	Bath County	96.4%	78.1%	18.3%	2.0%
	Buena Vista City	96.1%	36.8%	61.9%	0.7%
	Harrisonburg City	90.3%	62.3%	33.1%	0.8%
	Highland County	87.1%	69.5%	20.6%	9.1%
	Lexington City	82.5%	69.3%	23.1%	0.6%
	Rockbridge County	89.7%	50.4%	45.8%	1.8%
	Rockingham County	92.1%	52.0%	45.7%	0.8%
	Staunton City	93.4%	45.4%	51.7%	1.2%
	Waynesboro City	93.2%	37.8%	60.8%	0.8%
TJPDC	Greene County	87.2%	29.6%	66.1%	1.3%
	Charlottesville City	86.4%	60.4%	37.7%	0.8%
	Albemarle County	83.3%	58.7%	39.0%	0.8%
	Louisa County	88.7%	43.5%	52.4%	1.7%
	Fluvanna County	86.6%	32.4%	66.1%	0.2%
	Nelson County	79.8%	45.7%	48.1%	2.2%



Commuting insights from the RideShare public survey indicated that 85.4% of respondents commute 3 to 5 days per week.

Of those respondents, 40.2% live and commute within the CSPDC region, 25.6% live and commute within the TJPDC region, and 19.5% live in the CSPDC region and commute to the TJPDC region.

The CSPDC region reveals some variability in how residents travel to work. Driving alone is the predominant commuting choice in most localities, with Bath County leading at 88.2%, followed closely by Augusta County at 83.1%. Harrisonburg shows the lowest percentage of solo drivers (69.8%), reflecting a greater reliance on carpooling (10.5%), walking (5.9%), public transportation (2.1%), and bicycles (2.0%). Lexington stands out with a particularly high percentage of commuters walking to work (25.8%). Highland County also sees a notable share of commuters working from home (12.1%), reflecting its rural and remote nature. Most other localities, including Rockbridge and Rockingham Counties, maintain solo driving rates around 78-81%, with limited use of alternative modes of transportation.

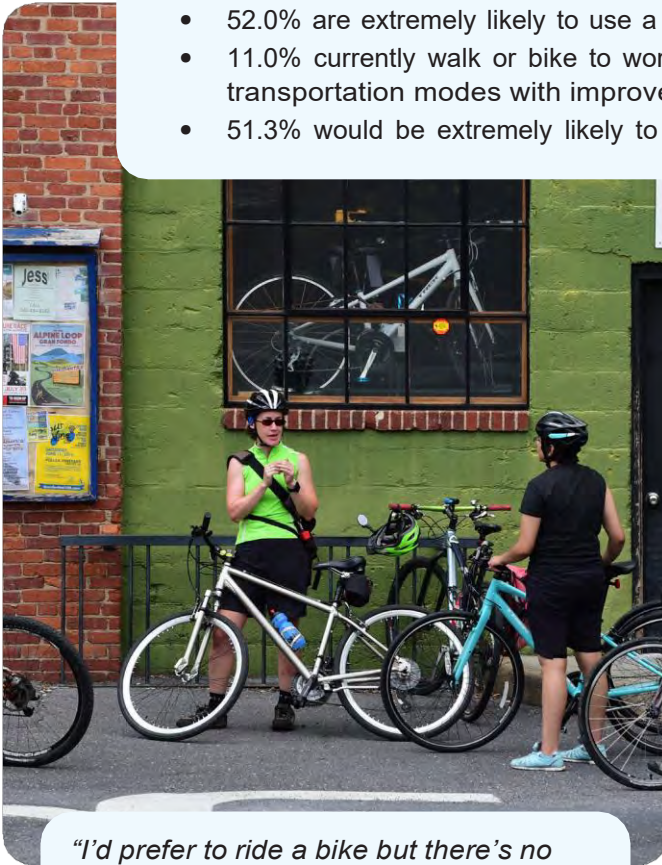
In the TJPDC region, commuting patterns highlight diverse travel choices, particularly in Charlottesville, where only 57.6% of residents drive alone. The city also leads in public transportation usage (11.9%), walking (12.6%), and bicycling (2.4%), attributed to its urban infrastructure and accessibility. Albemarle County follows with 68.9% of commuters driving alone, while Greene County sees one of the highest carpooling rates at 14.5%. Nelson County has the lowest share of solo drivers (61.5%) but leads in working from home, with 16.1%. Fluvanna and Louisa Counties show traditional commuting patterns, with over 74% of residents driving alone and minimal use of alternative transportation.

Table 12. Commuting Choices by Locality

PDC	Locality	Drive Alone	Carpool	Public Transportation	Other Means	Bicycle	Walk	Work at Home
CSPDC	Augusta County	83.1%	8.7%	0.8%	0.4%	0.0%	0.6%	5.5%
	Bath County	88.2%	6.0%	0.0%	0.9%	0.0%	1.3%	2.0%
	Buena Vista City	81.9%	5.9%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	7.2%	3.3%
	Harrisonburg City	69.8%	10.5%	2.1%	1.1%	2.0%	5.9%	5.9%
	Highland County	75.2%	4.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	7.2%	12.1%
	Lexington City	49.8%	6.1%	0.0%	0.6%	0.3%	25.8%	10.5%
	Rockbridge County	79.1%	7.4%	1.2%	1.5%	0.4%	0.8%	8.3%
	Rockingham County	78.2%	9.7%	0.4%	0.7%	0.2%	3.2%	6.4%
	Staunton City	80.0%	6.8%	0.9%	1.2%	0.6%	4.4%	4.9%
	Waynesboro City	81.2%	8.5%	0.7%	0.9%	0.0%	2.2%	6.2%
TJPDC	Greene County	68.7%	14.5%	1.5%	2.9%	0.0%	0.5%	9.8%
	Charlottesville City	57.6%	6.6%	11.9%	1.3%	2.4%	12.6%	12.6%
	Albemarle County	68.9%	8.6%	3.8%	1.0%	0.5%	2.5%	15.2%
	Louisa County	76.8%	10.2%	0.5%	0.7%	0.0%	0.6%	8.9%
	Fluvanna County	74.0%	9.4%	1.2%	1.7%	0.0%	1.0%	12.1%
Nelson County	61.5%	15.7%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	1.7%	16.1%	

Commuting Preferences from the RideShare Public Survey

- 22.0% of respondents use public transportation for their daily commute.
- 52.0% are extremely likely to use a bus if available in their area.
- 11.0% currently walk or bike to work, while 50% would consider alternative transportation modes with improved infrastructure.
- 51.3% would be extremely likely to telecommute if options were accessible.



"I'd prefer to ride a bike but there's no cycling infrastructure for much of the commute."

- Public Survey Respondent



"I'm incredibly grateful for the Afton express bus route. It makes for a long day, but since cost of living is lower in Staunton, I'll continue to utilize the bus to Charlottesville."

- Public Survey Respondent

REGIONAL WALK SCORES

Walk Score is a metric that assesses the walkability of a location based on the availability and proximity of various amenities such as grocery stores, schools, parks, and restaurants. A higher Walk Score suggests that daily errands and commuting can be easily accomplished on foot, making the area more pedestrian-friendly and less dependent on vehicles. A lower Walk Score indicates that essential services and amenities are spread out, resulting in a greater need for car transportation. Walkability scores are particularly valuable in TDM, as they provide insights into the infrastructure and accessibility of a region. This information can help guide future transportation and infrastructure planning, ensuring that both regions are accessible and inclusive for all residents.

Walk Scores across the CSPDC region can be found in each of the community profiles and in the **Appendix**.

BATH COUNTY

RideShare Community Profile



- Total Population: 4,065
- Median Age: 52.3
- Median Household Income: \$53,082
- Percent of RideShare Workforce: 0.7%
- Percent Commuting: 96%
- Commuters Driving Alone: 88%
- Commuters Carpooling: 6%
- Commuters Riding the Bus: 0%

Source: US Census Bureau's ACS 5-Year Estimates (2021)

Bath County represents 1% of the CSPDC region and 0.7% of the total RideShare region. It is home to approximately 290 businesses. About half of residents are in the workforce and 78% commute within the county. Most commuters drive by themselves to and from work with a small portion carpooling and some working from home. Bath County has a walk score of 0 indicating commuters are extremely car dependent.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

- Carpool coordination through ConnectingVA mobile app and website
- Vanpool coordination through Enterprise
- 2 park and ride lots (Warm Springs, Bacova)

COMMUTER PATTERNS AND NEEDS

- Bath County is very rural with mountainous terrain and narrow, winding roads making commuting long distances even more challenging and arduous.
- **Opportunity!** Large employers in the county like Bath Community Hospital and The Omni Homestead may have the resources to operate their own vanpools; employer provided shuttles could help residents who lack reliable transportation get to work.

WORKFORCE DENSITY

The workforce density maps in **Figures 4-7** on the following pages reveal important insights into commuting patterns across the RideShare service area.

In the CSPDC region, workforce density is notably high in Augusta, Rockingham, and Rockbridge counties, as well as in the cities of Buena Vista, Harrisonburg, Lexington, and Waynesboro. These areas likely serve as employment hubs, attracting a larger concentration of workers. In contrast, rural counties like Bath and Highland exhibit lower workforce densities, reflecting more dispersed populations and fewer concentrated employment opportunities.

In the TJPDC region, workforce density is more evenly distributed across the area. Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville stand out as major employment centers; while surrounding counties such as Fluvanna, Greene, and Louisa also show relatively high workforce densities. Although Nelson County is more rural, it still attracts workers due to its tourism industry and local businesses.

These density patterns help pinpoint where TDM services can be most impactful in the service area. High-density areas may benefit from expanded mobility services like RideShare programs and public transportation, while lower-density, rural areas may require customized commuting options, such as carpooling and telecommuting support, to ensure accessible transportation for all residents.

What are workforce density maps?

The workforce density maps provide a visual representation of where residents live and work in the RideShare service area. They highlight the concentration of workers in residential neighborhoods and key employment centers. These maps reveal commuting patterns by illustrating the flow of workers between their homes and job locations, showing where workforce activity is most intense and where it is more dispersed. This information is essential for understanding the movement of residents and identifying areas with high or low commuting demand.

For RideShare, workforce density maps are an important tool for tailoring transportation services to meet the unique needs of different communities. By identifying areas with high concentrations of workers, RideShare can focus their efforts in expanding program offerings to reduce congestion and support efficient commuting. In areas with lower workforce density or more dispersed employment locations, these maps highlight opportunities for alternative commuting solutions, such as carpooling networks, vanpool programs, or telework options, which can provide flexible and sustainable transportation choices. Overall, workforce density maps help RideShare strategically allocate resources to maximize accessibility and convenience for commuters across the region.

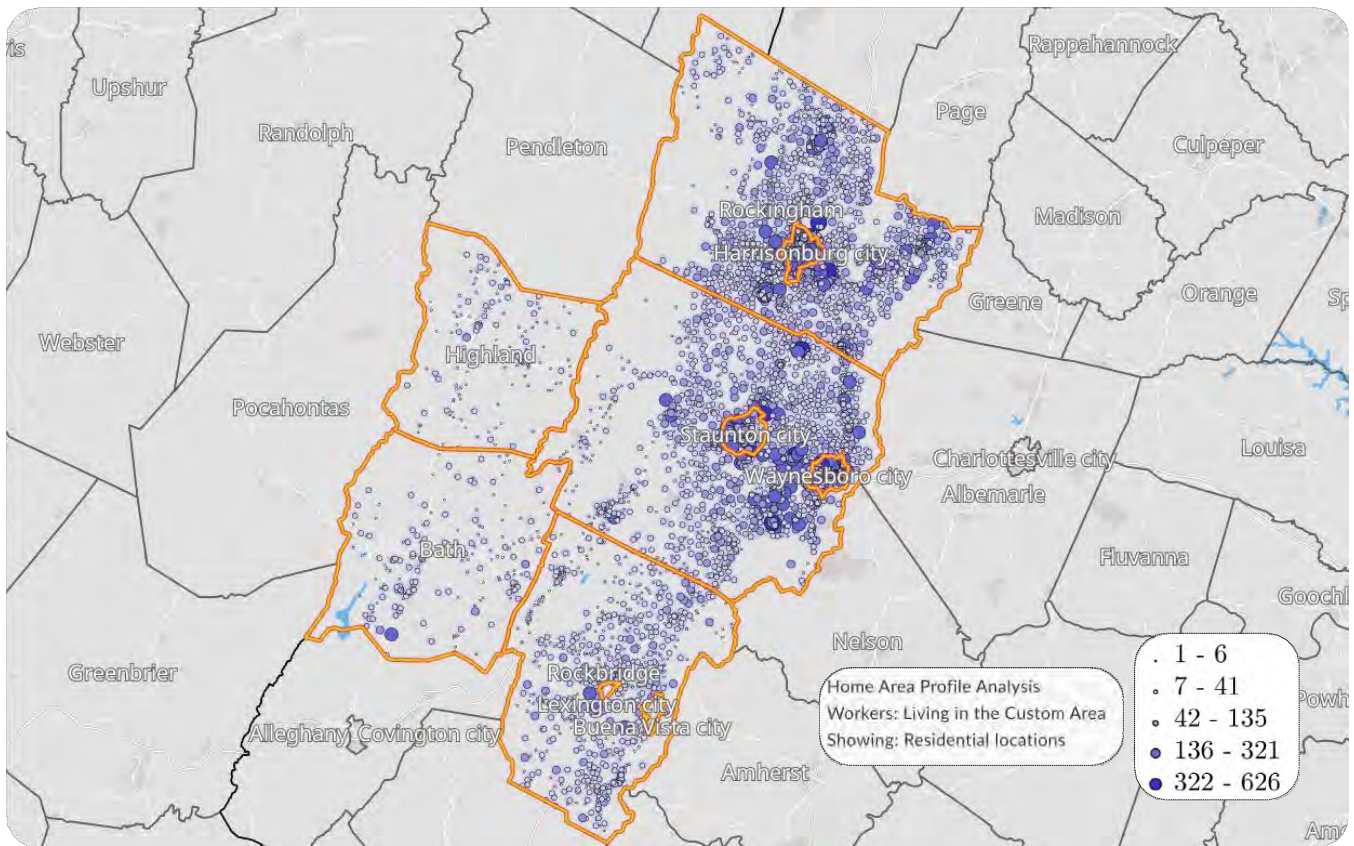


Figure 4. Density of Where People Live in the CSPDC Region

Source: US Census Bureau's [2024] OnTheMap

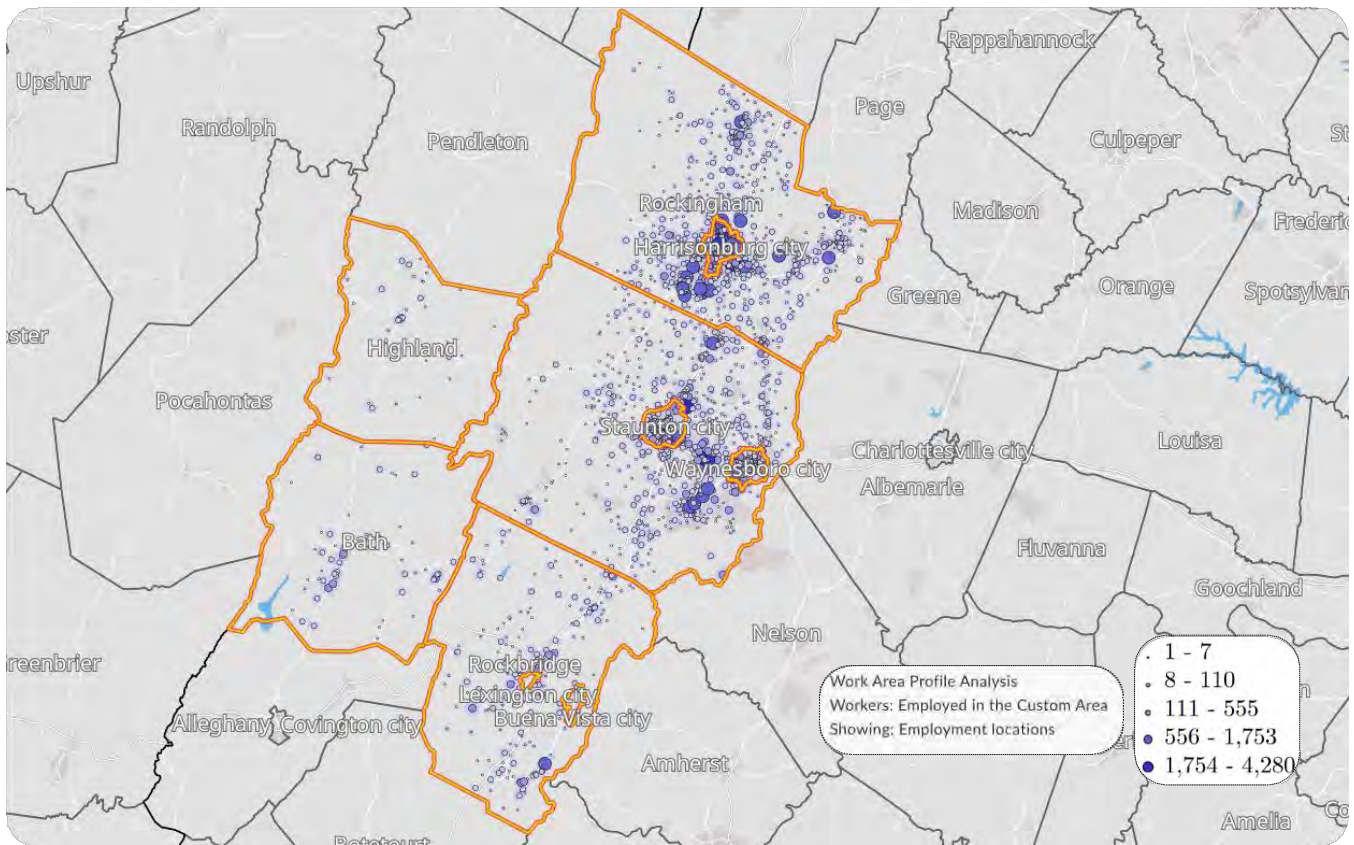


Figure 5. Density of Where People Work in the CSPDC Region Source: US Census Bureau's [2024] OnTheMap

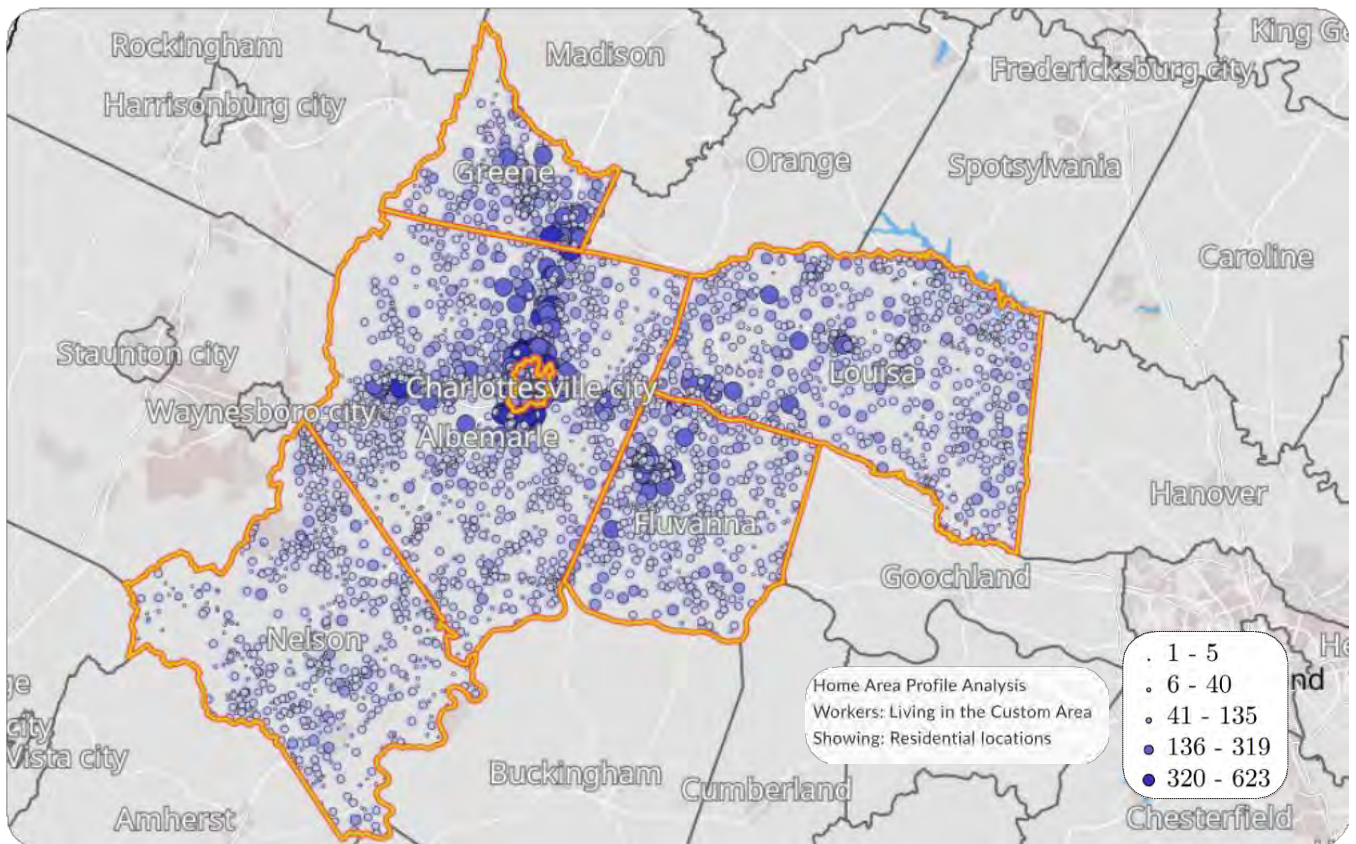


Figure 6. Density of Where People Live in the TJPDC Region
Source: US Census Bureau's [2024] OnTheMap

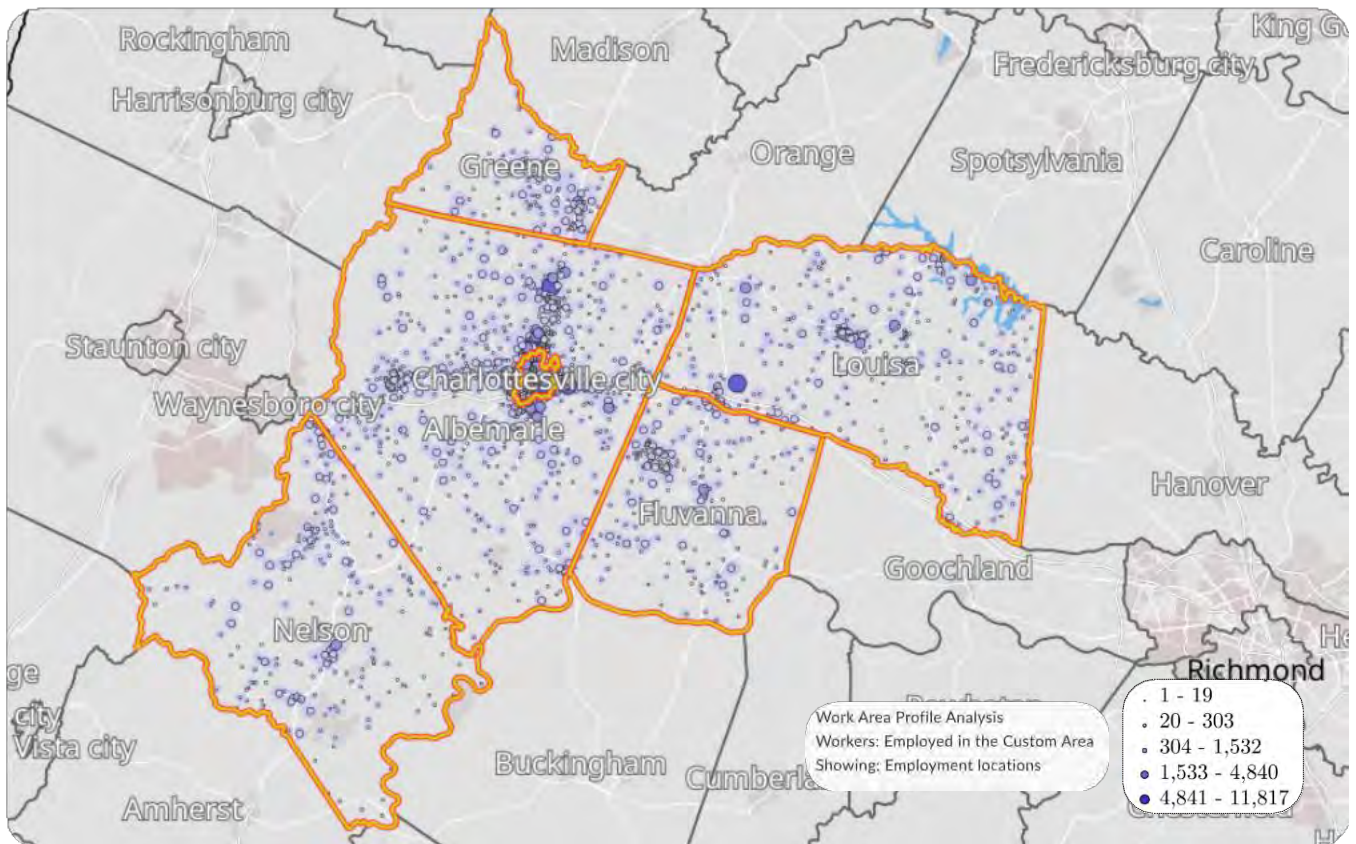


Figure 7. Density of Where People Work in the TJPDC Region
Source: US Census Bureau's [2024] OnTheMap

EXISTING FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Figure 8 below presents the existing transportation facilities and services within the RideShare service area and **Figure 9** highlights the existing facilities and services in the CSPDC region. This includes fixed bus routes, rail lines, park and ride lots, transit hubs, and train stations. All facilities and services provide alternative transportation options for commuters within both the CSPDC and TJPDC regions.

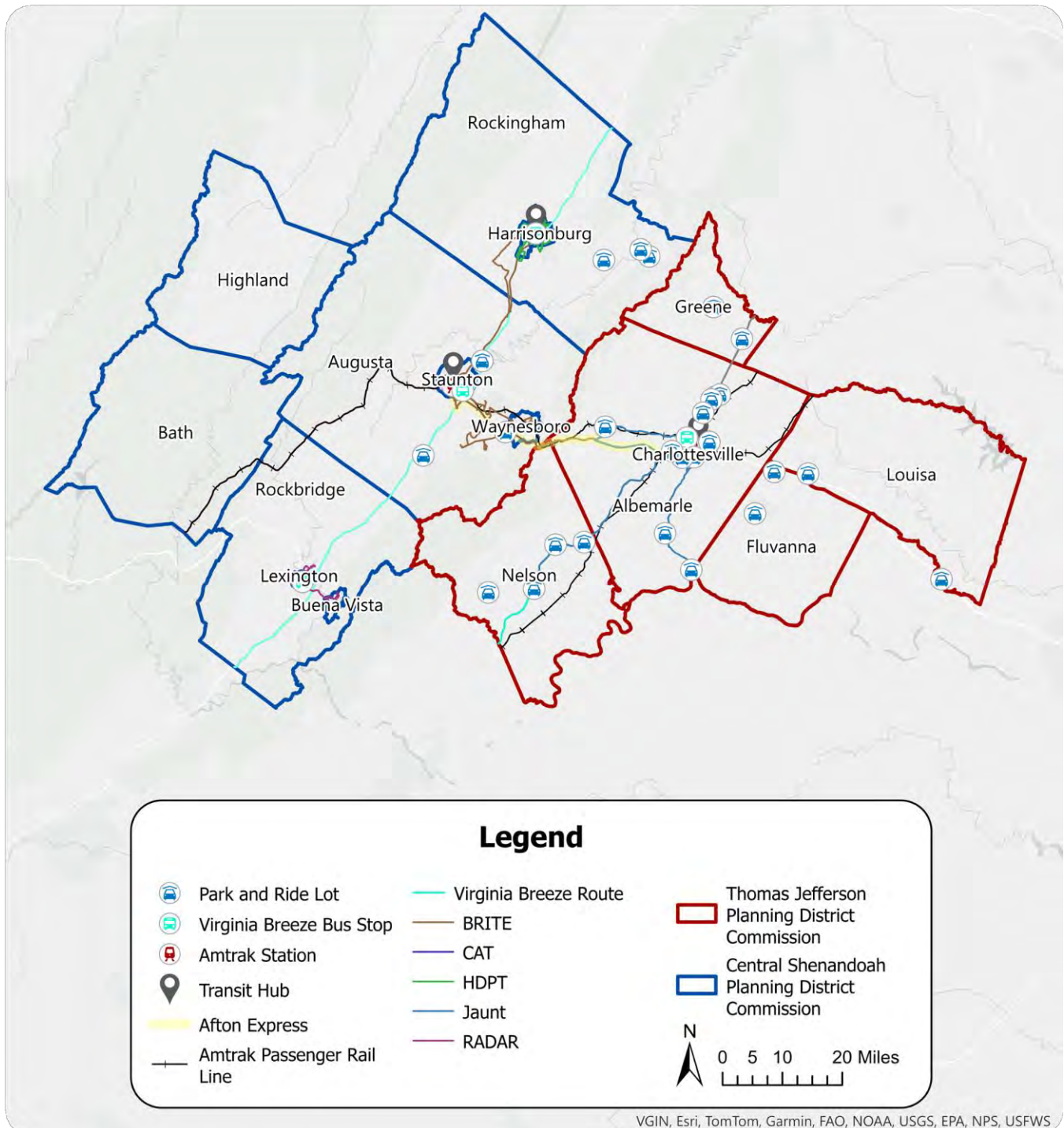


Figure 8. RideShare Service Area Existing Facilities Map

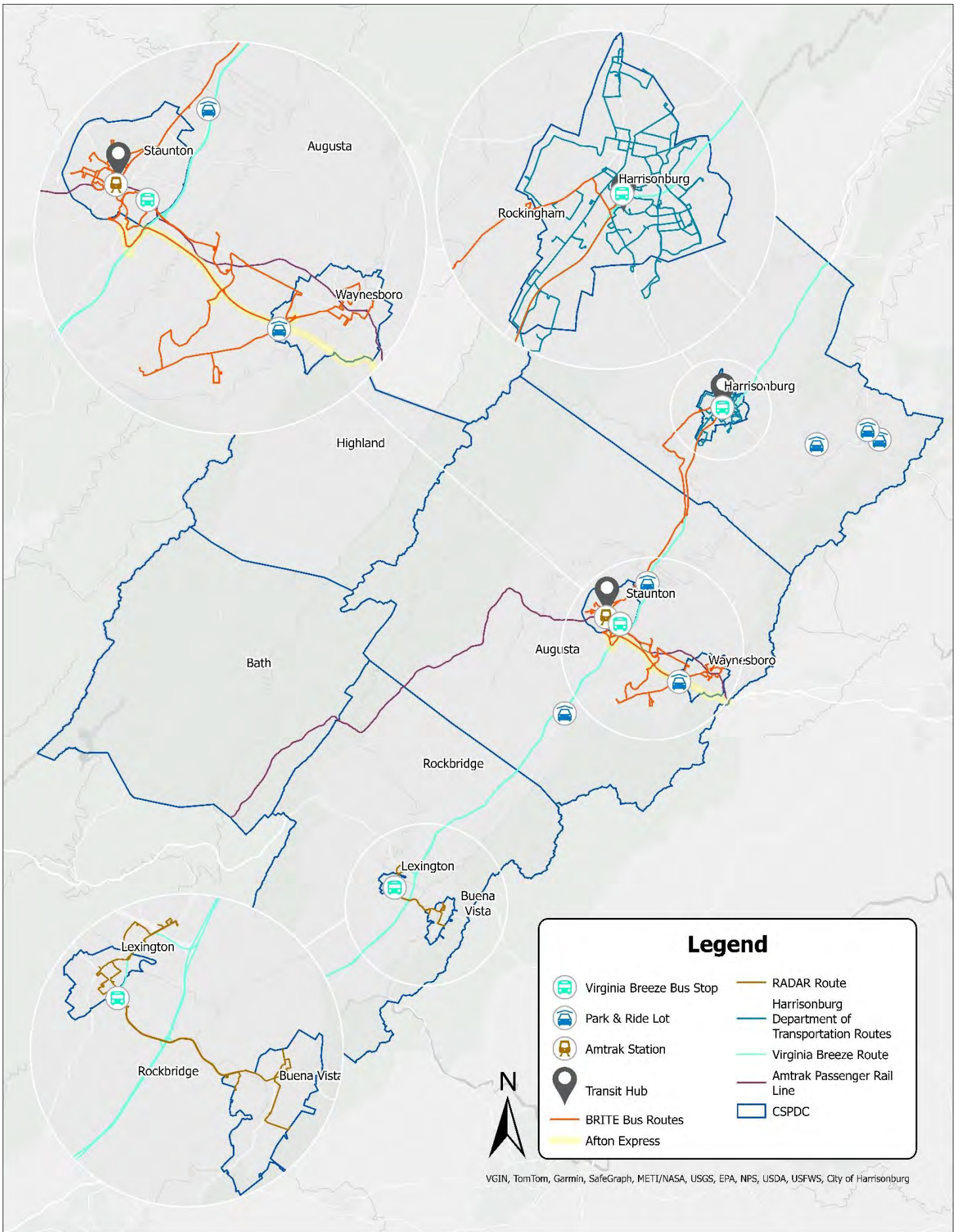


Figure 9. CSPDC Existing Facilities Map

TRANSIT SERVICES

The collaboration between TJPDC and CSPDC has established a transportation network that aims to connect residents, workers, and visitors, addressing a wide range of transportation needs across urban and rural areas. Stretching from Charlottesville to Harrisonburg, these transit services encompass major counties such as Albemarle, Augusta, and Rockbridge. This partnership aims to create a flexible, efficient transportation system that enhances mobility and accessibility throughout Central Virginia.

CSPDC TRANSIT SERVICES

BRITE BUS

BRITE provides fixed-route and on-demand transportation in the Staunton- Augusta- Waynesboro area and parts of Rockingham County and Harrisonburg. Managed by the CSPDC, with guidance from the BRITE Transit Advisory Committee (BTAC), BRITE's network includes routes like the 250 Connector, Stuarts Draft Link, BRCC Shuttles, Waynesboro Circulator, and Staunton North & West Loops. The Afton Express, BRITE's newest route serving both the CSPDC and TJPDC regions, is detailed further on page 12.

HARRISONBURG DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION (HDPT)

HDPT is the municipally owned public transportation system for the City of Harrisonburg. It operates six fixed-route bus services covering key areas of the city, along with dedicated routes for JMU students. HDPT also offers commuter options and paratransit services for individuals with disabilities.

RADAR TRANSIT

RADAR, a non-profit organization, provides rural public transit services primarily in the Greater Roanoke Valley. It offers various transportation options, including the Maury Express, which serves Lexington, Buena Vista, and Rockbridge County. RADAR's services include fixed-route transit and specialized options for seniors and individuals with disabilities, focusing on improving accessibility and connectivity in rural communities.

ROCKBRIDGE AREA TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM (RATS)

RATS offers safe, affordable transportation in the Rockbridge/Alleghany area, with a focus on accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Its fleet includes 12 wheelchair-accessible vans, three cars, and one SUV, operated by a team of drivers, schedulers, and administrators dedicated to rider safety. Supported by grants and donations from residents, businesses, and churches, RATS keeps fares low to ensure affordable service for the community.

TJPDC TRANSIT SERVICES

CHARLOTTESVILLE AREA TRANSIT (CAT)

CAT provides public transportation in Charlottesville, serving key areas like the UVA and the downtown mall. It offers fixed-route bus services, trolley routes, and paratransit options. The free trolleys operate on two routes—the Downtown Trolley and the University Trolley—connecting major destinations. CAT operates on a schedule, with real-time tracking available through the CAT Bus Tracker app or website.

JAUNT

Jaunt transit offers transportation services across Albemarle, Buckingham, Fluvanna, Louisa, and Nelson counties, as well as the City of Charlottesville. Its offerings include flexible door-to-door demand-response services, fixed-route connections between communities, and commuter services linking residential areas to major employment hubs. Jaunt's CONNECT services (Crozet, 29 North, Buckingham, and Lovingston) transport commuters from park-and-ride lots to destinations like UVA and downtown Charlottesville. Additionally, out-of-county services enable travel between regions within the service area.

UNIVERSITY TRANSIT SERVICE (UTS)

UTS operates fixed-route services around the UVA, offering essential transportation for students, faculty, and staff. UTS provides shuttles connecting parking lots, garages, and campus buildings, ensuring convenient access to academic, residential, and recreational areas. Designed for the UVA community, UTS runs on a schedule, offering reliable and efficient transit across the university grounds.

CONNECTING BOTH REGIONS

AFTON EXPRESS

The Afton Express extends beyond a standalone service by connecting with BRITE on the western side of Afton Mountain and CAT and UTS in Charlottesville, creating a comprehensive transit network for residents in both the CSPDC and TJPDC regions. Commuters from Augusta County, Staunton, and Waynesboro can enjoy seamless transitions between stops. The Afton Express offers a reliable and comfortable transportation option across Afton Mountain, enhancing mobility within the CAP service area.

OTHER TRANSIT OPTIONS

The **Virginia Breeze** bus lines connect small towns and cities across Virginia, including stops in Charlottesville, Staunton, and Harrisonburg, as well as major hubs like Dulles International Airport and Union Station in Washington, D.C. However, its north-south route does not provide a direct connection between the CSPDC and TJPDC regions, requiring travelers to pass through Washington, D.C. Starting in 2025, the **Tidewater Current** route will be introduced, offering an east-west route along the I-64 corridor and extending to I-81, connecting to Harrisonburg.

Amtrak services are available in both regions. Charlottesville's station is near downtown and UVA, while Staunton's station offers a route to Charlottesville on select days, providing an additional option for inter-city travel within the RideShare service area.

BUENA VISTA

RideShare Community Profile



- Total Population: 6,598
- Median Age: 39.2
- Median Household Income: \$40,306
- Percent of RideShare Workforce: 1%
- Percent Commuting: 96%
- Commuters Driving Alone: 82%
- Commuters Carpooling: 6%
- Commuters Riding the Bus: 0%

Source: US Census Bureau's ACS 5-Year Estimates (2021)

Buena Vista represents 2% of the CSPDC region and 1% of the total RideShare region. It is home to approximately 215 businesses. About half of residents are in the workforce with roughly 61% commuting to places outside of the city. Most commuters drive by themselves to and from work with a small percentage carpooling, walking, and working from home. Buena Vista is somewhat walkable with a walk score of 65 - the second most walkable locality in the CSPDC region.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

- Carpool coordination through ConnectingVA mobile app and website
- Vanpool coordination through Enterprise
- Limited transit service provided by RADAR's Maury Express route

COMMUTER PATTERNS AND NEEDS

- Of all localities within the CSPDC RideShare region, Buena Vista has the fewest number of workers who commute within the city. Most travel outside of the city for work. This may indicate there are fewer employment options within the city.
- **Opportunity!** The downtown area is more walkable than most in the CSPDC region, and the city has invested in improvements that will make it even more attractive to pedestrians. This makes it a great location for businesses who are looking to employ local residents.

RIDESHARE PROGRAM

RideShare is the CAP operated by the TJPDC and CSPDC for residents, workers, commuters, and employers. The program promotes sustainable and shared commuting options, focusing on carpooling, vanpooling, and other environmentally friendly transportation solutions. RideShare's comprehensive approach to shared commuting underscores its role in advancing sustainable transportation solutions and promoting community-oriented initiatives in the service area.



RideShare Supports Commuters!

RideShare is experiencing a growing demand from commuters traveling between Harrisonburg and Staunton along the I-81 Corridor.

PROGRAM OFFERINGS



CARPOOLING AND VANPOOLING

RideShare supports commuting solutions through its carpooling and vanpooling services. Carpooling encourages two or more commuters to share a private vehicle regularly, reducing the number of Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) trips taken during peak commuting times. RideShare provides free carpool matching services, connecting commuters to individuals who share similar commutes, that result in benefits such as cost savings, reduced traffic congestion, and environmental sustainability.

For individuals facing commutes of 35 miles or more one-way, RideShare advocates for vanpooling as a cost-efficient, time-sensitive, and comfortable alternative. The program assists individuals in forming vanpools by guiding them through the process of gathering riders, calculating fares, determining routes, and initiating the vanpool. Vanpool services are provided through Enterprise Vanpools and offer recent model SUVs, vans, and crossovers, enhancing both savings and the overall commuting experience.



ONLINE RIDE MATCH SYSTEM

RideShare operates an online ride matching system, providing a self-directed platform where individuals can create profiles and search based on commuting preferences. The system presents potential matches allowing users to directly contact potential carpool or vanpool partners through the app. Users have the flexibility to log in at any time to make changes to their schedules, locations, radius, and profiles.



ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT

RideShare is committed to supporting individuals interested in shared commuting options. Users can access the online Ride Match System for updates and additional searches. Assistance is available by calling (888) 974-5500 for those who need support or have questions.



GUARANTEED RIDE HOME (GRH) PROGRAM

The GRH program is an initiative designed to support individuals who use alternative transportation methods to commute to work at least twice a week. This program provides a safety net in case of unexpected emergencies or situations that require participants to alter their work schedule unexpectedly. Eligible participants (employed full- or part- time utilizing alternative commuting methods) can benefit from up to five free trips per calendar year.

In eligible situations, such as sudden illnesses or injuries to oneself or immediate family members, unscheduled overtime requested by a supervisor, unexpected early departure of a carpool driver, or emergencies at home, participants can utilize the service. The program covers the cost of a taxi or rental car, providing a reliable and timely means of transportation. Rides utilizing Uber or Lyft can be reimbursed after submitting the necessary paperwork and verifying the ride qualifies.



PARK AND RIDE LOTS

Park and ride lots are designated areas where individuals can park their personal vehicles and transfer to shared transportation options, such as buses, carpools, or vanpools, to continue their journey. Currently, there are 27 park & ride lots serving central Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley. Some of these lots are shared facilities, available to commuters through the businesses or organizations that own the property.



CONNECTINGVA

App to Help Residents Find Rides!

The ConnectingVA app helps commuters get connected to alternative transportation options, now with new features to find rides for single trips and events.

ConnectingVA is a comprehensive tool created by DRPT to serve as a central resource for Virginians seeking information about accessing and utilizing alternative commute options that align with their needs. TJPDC and CSPDC collaborate with DRPT through the statewide ConnectingVA program to offer free ride matching services, helping users find carpools, vanpools, and various public transportation options. The program also provides trip planning assistance and information on park-and-ride lots, bike share services, electric vehicle charging stations, and reward programs.

In June 2023, TJPDC hosted a RideShare focus group to better understand local commuter perception of the program and individual needs when commuting. The following insights were provided:

Convenience in Commuting

When considering commuting, participants associated convenience with factors such as:

- Access to services when needed, particularly for families needing to pick up children (i.e., flexibility of transport times).
- A variety of transportation options available throughout the day.
- Safe biking routes
- Bus service availability that meets personal schedules, with consistent timing, minimal transfers, and reliable transportation options.

Ideal Alternative Transportation Offerings

- A commuter train connecting Staunton to Charlottesville.
- The possibility of reducing personal car ownership.
- Expanded bus routes, particularly between Pantops and UVA, and along 29 North.
- Better bus services to underserved locations, such as 2400 Old Ivy Road.
- Real-time tracking of buses to enhance reliability and convenience.

Areas for Improvement

- Expanding alternative transportation service areas to accommodate commuters living further away from urban centers.
- Increasing the frequency of transportation services, particularly during midday, to reduce the number of GRH trips and to enable more recreational travel.
- Better advertising and communication of RideShare offerings, particularly within large organizations like UVA, and in parking lots or employee orientations.
- Collaborating with local businesses and UVA to offer financial incentives for employees who carpool or use alternative transportation.

MICROMOBILITY AND MICROTRANSIT

Micromobility and Microtransit, although limited within the RideShare service area, are innovative concepts studied throughout the CSPDC and TJPDC regions. These concepts are tailored for urban and suburban environments and prioritize efficiency and convenience. Micromobility includes lightweight, sometimes electric, modes of transportation such as scooters and bicycles. These options cater to short-distance travel needs, serving as a solution for the first or last mile of a commute. Microtransit often involves on-demand transportation services operating on a smaller scale than traditional public transit. This may include shuttle buses or on-demand vans. Microtransit services respond dynamically to real-time demand and utilize technology to optimize routes. CSPDC will conduct a Microtransit feasibility study in FY25 for the BRITE Transit service area. In addition, Charlottesville Area Transit (CAT) and HDPT both are in the process of launching Microtransit pilot programs in their respective cities.

The following micromobility and Microtransit services are currently available within the RideShare service area.

ELECTRIC SCOOTERS

Electric scooters are a popular micromobility option and provide a convenient solution for short-distance travel in urban areas. Users can easily rent electric scooters through mobile apps. These scooters are available within the cities of Harrisonburg and Charlottesville to provide additional commuting options for residents, university students, and visitors.

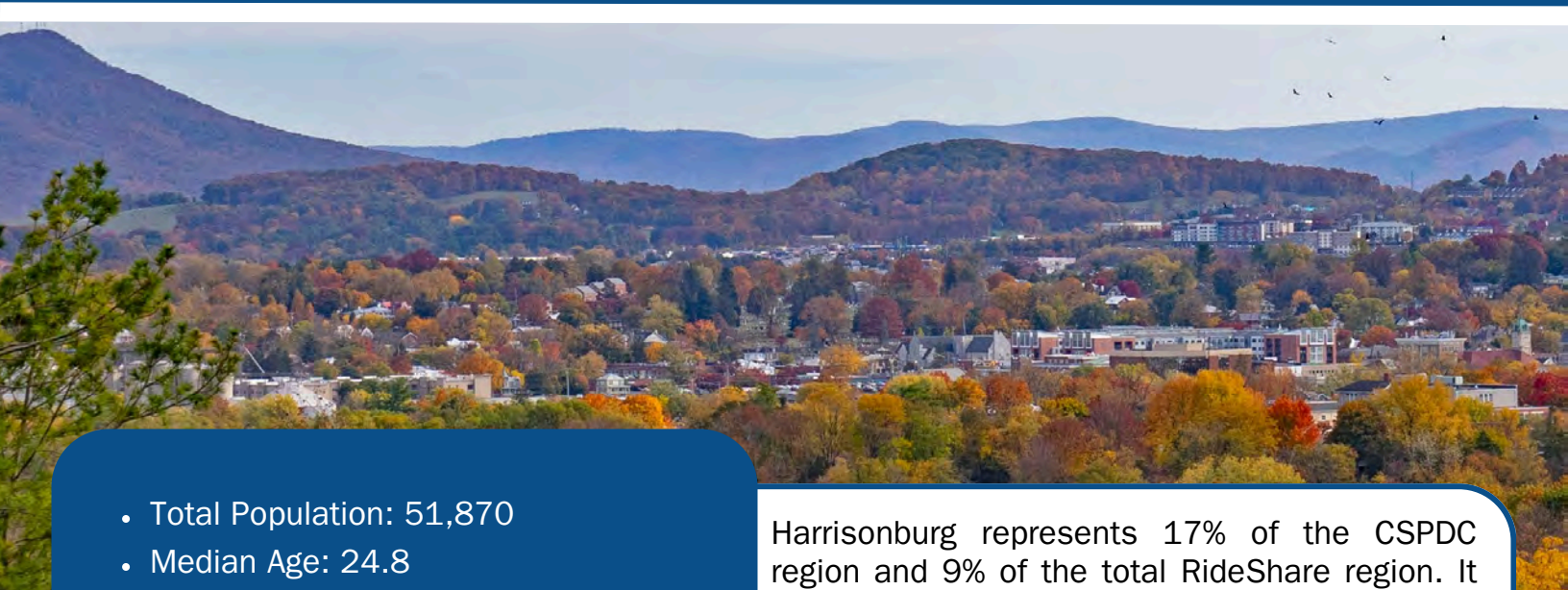
ELECTRIC BIKES AND BIKE SHARE

Electric bikes, or e-bikes, are bicycles equipped with an electric motor that assists the rider's pedaling effort. Bike share programs provide e-bikes for shared use to individuals on a short-term basis. These programs typically operate in urban areas and allow users to rent bikes from designated stations or through mobile apps. The only locality in the two regions that currently provides any form of bike-share services is the City of Charlottesville through the provider Veo.



HARRISONBURG

RideShare Community Profile



- Total Population: 51,870
- Median Age: 24.8
- Median Household Income: \$49,593
- Percent of RideShare Workforce: 9%
- Percent Commuting: 93%
- Commuters Driving Alone: 83%
- Commuters Carpooling: 9%
- Commuters Riding the Bus: 0.8%

Source: US Census Bureau's ACS 5-Year Estimates (2021)

Harrisonburg represents 17% of the CSPDC region and 9% of the total RideShare region. It is home to over 2,500 businesses, making it the largest employment hub in the CSPDC region. It is home to the region's largest employer - James Madison University. With 90% of residents commuting to work, 62% work within the city. There are many commute modes available in Harrisonburg, and the city has a walk score of 45 indicating that commuters are still car dependent.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

- Carpool coordination through ConnectingVA mobile app and website
- Vanpool coordination through Enterprise
- Public transit throughout the city and university area provided by HDPT

COMMUTER PATTERNS AND NEEDS

- Harrisonburg has the highest percentage of carpools in the CSPDC RideShare region, and the highest use of public transit and biking as commute modes. Despite having access to all types of modes, SOV trips are still the most common way commuters get to work.
- **Opportunity!** As a dense city with a younger population, Harrisonburg could increase the use of active transportation (bike, walk) with investments in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. With many projects already in the planning or development phase, Harrisonburg may see an increase in the use of alternate commute modes in the near future.

CHAPTER THREE

VISION, MISSION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

This chapter details RideShare’s strategic framework, including its vision, mission, goals, objectives, and metrics. This framework serves as the cornerstone for the CAPSP’s development, steering the program’s direction in the years ahead. Staff members from the TJPDC and the CSPDC jointly designed these guiding principles, using their regional expertise and data from Chapter 2 to inform their decisions. The vision, mission, goals, and objectives represent the diverse needs of the 16 distinct localities within the RideShare service area.



VISION, MISSION, AND GOALS



RIDESHARE VISION

To be the trusted resource where regional travelers come to find sustainable, relevant solutions for transportation.

RIDESHARE MISSION

Connecting people to inclusive and sustainable transportation alternatives to increase mobility and enhance quality of life.

RIDESHARE GOALS

1

Reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips.

2

Encourage utilization of trip planning tools.

3

Build and maintain relationships with community stakeholders to promote regional collaboration around transportation solutions.

4

Educate community members on TDM as a solution to increased mobility and access throughout the service area.

1

Reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips.

This goal aims to decrease the number of vehicles on the road with only one occupant, which can help alleviate traffic congestion, reduce emissions, and promote more sustainable transportation options.

OBJECTIVES AND MEASUREMENTS

Objective 1a: Increase utilization of carpool and vanpool services.

- Track the total number of new vanpool formations facilitated through the program.
- Track the total number of new carpool and vanpool searches in the carpool matching system.
- Track the total number of new carpool and vanpool trip types logged.
- Conduct new surveys to assess commuter satisfaction and perceived benefits of participating in carpool and vanpool programs.

Objective 1b: Increase utilization of transit services.

- Monitor ridership data for public transit systems, tracking changes in the number of passengers over time.
- Track the total number of new transit trip types logged.
- Conduct surveys to assess commuter satisfaction and perceived benefits of utilizing transit services.

Objective 1c: Increase utilization of non-vehicle trips (e.g., bicycling, walking, telework).

- Track the total number of new other non-vehicle trip types logged.
- Monitor the participation rates in telework programs among eligible employees.

What Residents Say About Their Daily Commute...

- 46.3% of survey respondents currently drive alone for their daily commute.
- 68.3% have considered alternative options like carpooling, ride-sharing, or commuter buses.
- 43.2% reported traffic congestion as one of the main challenges of their daily commute.
- 73.0% cited convenience as a key factor in their choice of transportation.

2

Encourage utilization of trip planning tools.

This goal focuses on promoting the use of trip planning tools (e.g., DRPT trip planner and the ConnectingVA mobile app) to help individuals and communities efficiently plan their travel routes, modes of transportation, and schedules.

OBJECTIVES AND MEASUREMENTS

Objective 2a: Collaborate with local transportation agencies and community organizations to conduct outreach events at key transit hubs, employment centers, and community gatherings to introduce commuters to trip planning tools.

- Measure attendance and participation rates at outreach events.
- Collect feedback from attendees to assess awareness and understanding of trip planning tools before and after the events.
- Track the number of new users or downloads of trip planning apps following outreach efforts.

Objective 2b: Offer training and support for commuters and partners (e.g., employers, community organizations, etc.) on existing trip planning tools and how to utilize them to enhance their travel experiences.

- Measure participation rates in training opportunities.
- Conduct pre- and post-training surveys to assess knowledge and confidence levels in using trip planning tools.
- Track the number of participants who subsequently utilize trip planning tools for their travel needs.

Objective 2c: Promote the GRH Program through various channels, including social media, transit stations, employer networks, and community events.

- Track the reach and engagement metrics of social media posts promoting the GRH program.
- Track the number of employers reached or engaged through outreach efforts.
- Measure the utilization of the GRH among employees of participating employers.

Awareness of the ConnectingVA App

- 47.4% of survey respondents are familiar with the ConnectingVA app.
- 25.0% are familiar with and have used the app.
- 22.4% are familiar with the app but have not used it.

3

Build and maintain relationships with community stakeholders to promote regional collaboration around transportation solutions.

This goal emphasizes the importance of fostering partnerships and collaboration among various stakeholders to address transportation challenges and implement effective solutions at a regional level.

OBJECTIVES AND MEASUREMENTS

Objective 3a: Reach out to community organizations, advocacy groups, educational institutions, and underrepresented communities to broaden the network of stakeholders involved in transportation planning and decision-making.

- Monitor the expansion of the stakeholder network by tracking the number of new partnerships and collaborations formed.
- Conduct surveys or interviews to assess stakeholders' perceptions of engagement and effectiveness of outreach efforts.

Objective 3b: Develop targeted outreach campaigns to engage communities that may be disproportionately affected by transportation issues or underserved by existing transportation services (e.g., more rural communities).

- Measure the reach and engagement of outreach campaigns through metrics such as website traffic, social media interactions, and event attendance.
- Monitor changes in transportation-related indicators (e.g., mode share, commute times) in targeted communities following outreach efforts.

Objective 3c: Utilize a multi-channel approach to public outreach, including traditional media, social media, community events, and direct mail, to reach a broad and diverse audience.

- Track the effectiveness of different communication channels by comparing engagement metrics and reach.
- Conduct surveys to assess the level of participation across diverse demographics and geographic areas.

Objective 3d: Participate in relevant educational workshops to facilitate discussions on TDM related topics and distribute information materials.

- Monitor the reach and engagement of digital materials distributed through online platforms or email newsletters, such as website views, downloads, or email open rates.
- Measure the attendance and participation rates at educational workshops.
- Conduct surveys or feedback forms with workshop participants to gather insights on their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to transportation topics.

4

Educate community members on TDM as a solution to increased mobility and access throughout the service area.

This goal aims to raise awareness and understanding of TDM strategies among community members to improve mobility, reduce congestion, and enhance access to transportation options.

OBJECTIVES AND MEASUREMENTS

Objective 4a: Provide opportunities for professional development for PDC staff, such as attending conferences, participating in webinars, and pursuing certifications related to TDM.

- Measure staff participation in professional development opportunities, including attendance at conferences, webinar, and training sessions.
- Conduct pre- and post-training assessments to evaluate staff knowledge and skills in TDM concepts and strategies.

Objective 4b: Compile and disseminate semi-regular reports or newsletters highlighting TDM initiatives, accomplishments, and progress made by PDCs and partner organizations.

- Measure the distribution and readership of reports/newsletters through metrics such as open rates, click-through rates, and downloads.

Objective 4c: Share success stories, case studies, and testimonials from community members, employers, and stakeholders to showcase the impact and effectiveness of TDM strategies.

- Measure the reach and engagement of success stories and case studies through metrics such as website views, social media shares, and media coverage.
- Collect feedback from stakeholders on the perceived impact and effectiveness of the stories and case studies in promoting TDM awareness and adoption.

Objective 4d: Establish mechanisms for stakeholders to provide input and suggestions for future quarterly updates, ensuring that the content remains relevant, informative, and responsive to community needs and interests.

- Measure stakeholder participation in feedback mechanisms such as surveys, focus groups, and advisory committees.
- Analyze stakeholder input to identify trends, priorities, and areas for improvement in TDM education and outreach efforts.

Objective 4e: Collaborate with local Chambers of Commerce, business associations, and industry groups to promote TDM adoption among employers and share best practices and success stories.

- Monitor the number of Chamber of Commerce events and activities featuring TDM education and outreach.

4

Educate community members on TDM as a solution to increased mobility and access throughout the service area.

This goal aims to raise awareness and understanding of TDM strategies among community members to improve mobility, reduce congestion, and enhance access to transportation options.

OBJECTIVES AND MEASUREMENTS CONTINUED...

Objective 4f: Collaborate with colleagues in other program areas within PDCs, such as housing, environment, and land use planning, to integrate TDM principles and strategies into broader community development initiatives.

- Monitor the integration of TDM principles into housing, environment, and land use planning processes and projects.
- Conduct cross-departmental meetings or workshops to assess collaboration and alignment of goals and strategies.

Objective 4g: Initiate dialogue and collaboration with the VDOT to raise awareness and understanding of the importance of integrating TDM strategies into construction projects and infrastructure improvements.

- Track the number of collaborative projects or initiatives between the organization and VDOT.
- Conduct surveys or interviews with stakeholders, including VDOT staff, to assess awareness and understanding of TDM strategies and their potential impact on construction projects.
- Monitor any policy changes or updates to VDOT guidelines that reflect the integration of TDM strategies into construction projects.

Comments on the RideShare Program

- “[The RideShare Program] needs more marketing [and] exposure.”
- “I think that you could do more to promote carpooling. I think that you also could work more with UVA to develop more alternatives for their employees to commute via vanpool or carpooling.”

HIGHLAND COUNTY

RideShare Community Profile



- Total Population: 2,205
- Median Age: 57.2
- Median Household Income: \$53,600
- Percent of RideShare Workforce: 0.3%
- Percent Commuting: 96%
- Commuters Driving Alone: 88%
- Commuters Carpooling: 6%
- Commuters Riding the Bus: 0%

Source: US Census Bureau's ACS 5-Year Estimates (2021)

Highland County represents 0.7% of the CSPDC region and 0.4% of the total RideShare region. It is home to approximately 187 businesses. About 43% of residents are in the workforce with 70% commuting within the county, 20% commuting outside of Highland County, and 10% working outside of Virginia. Most commuters drive by themselves to and from work. Highland County has a walk score of 0 indicating commuters are extremely car dependent.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

- Carpool coordination through ConnectingVA mobile app and website
- Vanpool coordination through Enterprise

COMMUTER PATTERNS AND NEEDS

- Highland County is very rural with mountainous terrain and narrow, winding roads making commuting long distances even more challenging and arduous.
- **Opportunity!** Highland County has the highest percentage of telework employees in the CSPDC region with 12% indicating they work from home. Access to high-speed internet could allow workers to live where they desire, like Highland County, without having to worry about the distance to employment hubs.

CHAPTER FOUR

TARGET MARKETS

This chapter focuses on the strategic planning of RideShare services, outlining the program's targeted approaches to maximize SOV trip reduction within resources. By identifying specific target markets of RideShare users within both the CSPDC and TJPDC regions, RideShare can allocate resources strategically. This chapter explores these considerations to ensure that RideShare effectively serves the community's commuting needs while maximizing cost-effectiveness.



DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGY

A comprehensive and collaborative process was used to develop target markets and commuters in the RideShare service area. This included the integration of data analysis, RideShare staff expertise, and public feedback. RideShare staff played a pivotal role in leading this process, leveraging their collective knowledge of the service area and its commuters to inform decision making.



Data Review and Analysis

RideShare staff reviewed data from Chapter 2, which provided insights into the broader service area and existing commuter patterns. This included analyzing demographic information, commuting behaviors, and transportation preferences to identify potential target markets and users.



Staff Expertise and Local Knowledge

Drawing on their knowledge of the area and their customers, RideShare staff contributed valuable insights into commuter demographics, employment sectors, and transportation challenges. Their expertise helped to refine target market criteria and customer profiles to ensure alignment with the program's objectives.



Public Survey

To gather additional insights and validate preliminary findings, RideShare conducted a public survey reaching out to residents, workers, and commuters within the service area. The survey received responses from 84 individuals living and commuting in the service area. This survey provided valuable feedback on commuting habits, commuting needs, and perceptions of the RideShare program. Results from the survey were analyzed and incorporated into the development of target markets and customer profiles.

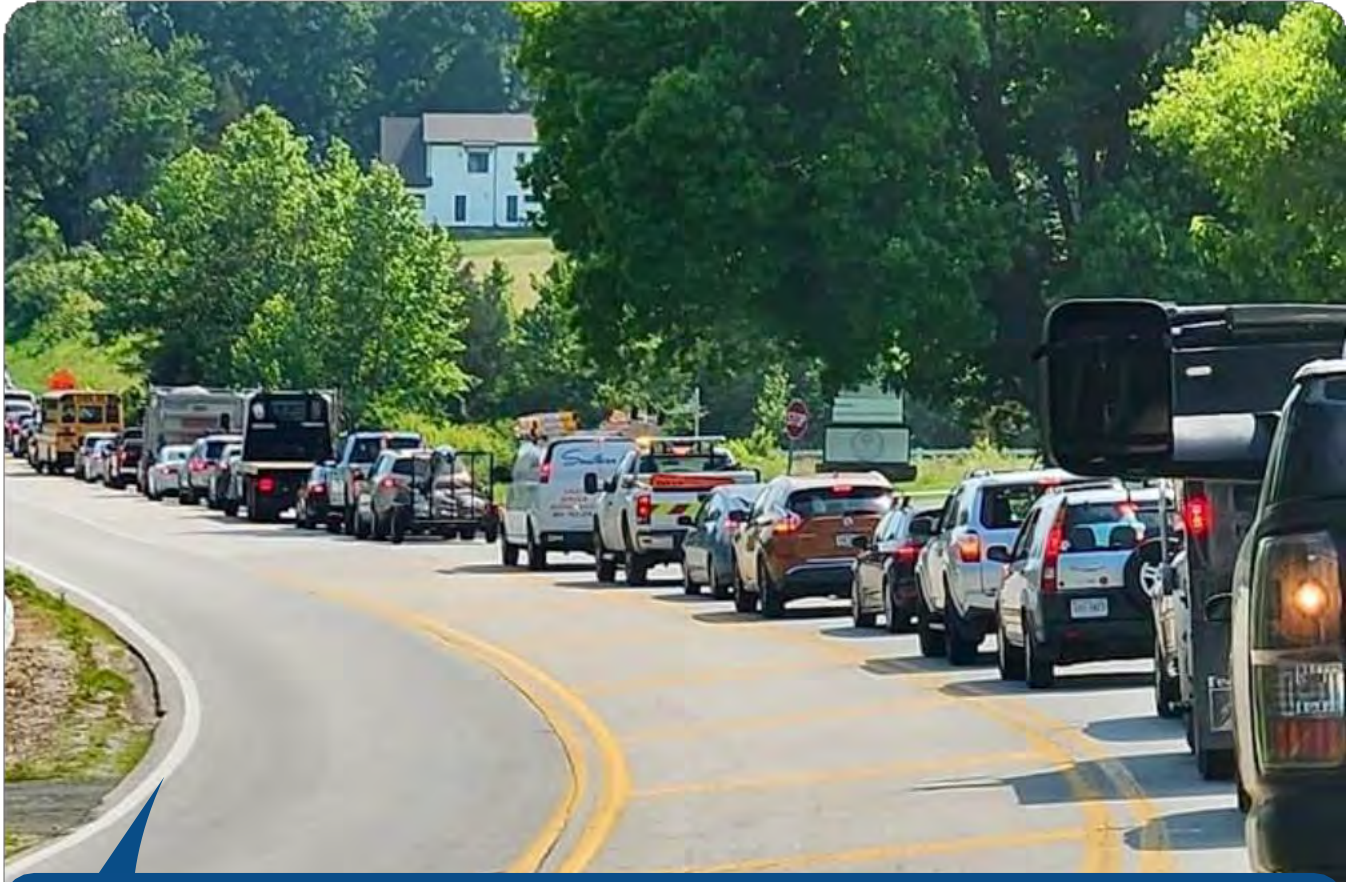


Integration and Iteration

Throughout the development process, RideShare staff integrated findings from data analysis, their expertise, and public survey results. This iterative approach allowed for refinement and validation of target markets and customer profiles, ensuring alignment with the program's goals and objectives.

TARGET MARKETS

RideShare staff developed target markets to strategically target program services and effectively address the diverse commuting needs of the TJPDC and CSPDC regions. Both PDCs focus on serving commuters within their respective regions, as well as those traveling between and from outside regions. Each region has unique commuting needs, which require tailored efforts to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips.



Where Are People Traveling?

Based on survey responses, commuters in the RideShare service area travel along the I-64 Corridor between Staunton and Charlottesville (34.4%), followed by the I-81 Corridor between Harrisonburg and Staunton (21.9%), and the I-64 Corridor east of Charlottesville (18.8%). Other significant corridors include the I-81 Corridor north of Harrisonburg (14.1%) and areas categorized as "Other" (20.3%).

What Challenges Do Commuters Face?

Survey participants identified the main challenges during their daily commutes as:

- Traffic congestion (43.2%)
- Long travel times (32.4%)
- Safety concerns (36.5%)

This data emphasizes the importance of targeted outreach and tailored commuting solutions to address congestion, improve safety, and provide reliable alternatives for commuters.

CSPDC TAGRET MARKETS AND CUSTOMERS

TARGET MARKET 1

Commuters within the CSPDC region

TARGET CUSTOMER 1

Commuters traveling from rural counties to urban centers such as Staunton, Waynesboro, Lexington, and Harrisonburg for work.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Demographics

- **Occupation:** Shift laborers and professional administrative workers, particularly in the education sector.
- **Income Range:** Broad spectrum, ranging from \$20,000 to \$75,000 annually.
- **Employment Status:** Includes both part-time and full-time workers.

Behavioral Characteristics

- Commuters traveling from dispersed rural areas to concentrated urban employment hubs often seek reliable, cost-effective alternatives to solo driving to avoid traffic congestion. With limited commuting options in rural areas, they are likely to consider carpooling or vanpooling. They are motivated by financial savings, reduced commuting stress, and the convenience these alternatives offer.

Pain Points

- The dispersed nature of rural origins poses challenges for centralized outreach and uniform commuting solutions, while urban hubs like Staunton and Harrisonburg face congestion that makes solo driving less appealing. Additionally, limited cost-effective opportunities to disseminate information across the region may leave many commuters unaware of alternative transportation options.

Opportunities

- Concentrating outreach and service promotion near urban hubs, where commute destinations are clustered, can maximize impact. Partnering with educational institutions and large employers in these areas can encourage the adoption of carpooling and other commuting alternatives. Additionally, offering flexible, accessible RideShare options tailored to the unique needs of rural commuters with varied schedules and employment types ensures broader inclusivity and effectiveness.

Key Insights

- This commuter group relies on urban centers for employment and values cost-effective transportation solutions. By promoting carpooling near urban hubs and partnering with employers, RideShare can effectively engage this segment. Tailored outreach strategies are key to addressing the challenges of reaching a dispersed rural population and maximizing the impact of commuting alternatives in the CSPDC region.

TARGET MARKET 2

Commuters from the CSPDC region to the TJPDC region

TARGET CUSTOMER 2

Commuters traveling from the CSPDC region to the TJPDC region, specifically those commuting from Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County to Charlottesville for employment in the healthcare and university sectors.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Demographics

- Occupation: Professionals working in healthcare, education, or other university-related roles.
- Income Range: Typically, higher-income earners.
- Employment Status: Primarily full-time employees with varied shift schedules.

Behavioral Characteristics

- Long-distance commuters traveling between urban hubs in the CSPDC region and Charlottesville often seek alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel. They show a strong interest in services like the Afton Express, which alleviates the stress of solitary commutes and reduces the burden of driving. Key motivations for exploring alternative commuting options include cost savings, reduced wear and tear on personal vehicles, improved road safety, and the convenience these services provide.

Pain Points

- Commuters face significant concerns about rising fuel prices, vehicle maintenance costs, and the overall expenses associated with solo driving. Road safety is another major worry, with issues such as inadequate highway lighting adding stress to long commutes. Extended working hours combined with lengthy travel times contribute to exhaustion, making comfortable and convenient alternatives highly appealing. However, a general lack of awareness about available transportation options limits their ability to consider alternatives, highlighting the need for improved outreach and education.

Opportunities

- Raising awareness about existing solutions, such as the Afton Express and other RideShare options, through targeted outreach is essential to reaching these commuters. Emphasizing convenience-focused solutions, such as the stress-free nature and cost-effectiveness of shared transit, can further appeal to this group. Partnering with employers, particularly healthcare institutions and universities in Charlottesville, to promote RideShare services and offer commuting incentives can significantly boost adoption rates.

Key Insights

- This commuter group prioritizes reliable, convenient transportation to address challenges like cost, safety, and fatigue from long commutes. Raising awareness of options like the Afton Express and emphasizing convenience and affordability can effectively engage this audience. Partnering with major Charlottesville employers provides a strategic opportunity to boost outreach and adoption.

TJPDC TAGRET MARKETS AND CUSTOMERS

TARGET MARKET 1

Commuters within the TJPDC region

TARGET CUSTOMER 1

Commuters within the TJPDC region, particularly those traveling from rural outlying counties to the Charlottesville-Albemarle metropolitan area for work.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Demographics

- Occupation: Shift laborers and professional administrative workers, particularly in the healthcare and hospitality sectors.
- Income Range: Broad spectrum ranging from \$30,000-\$75,000.
- Employment Status: Primarily full-time employees working varied shift schedules.

Behavioral Characteristics

- Commuters regularly travel from rural areas to urban employment hubs within urban areas, often seeking cost-effective and reliable alternatives to solo driving. With limited public transportation options in rural regions, they show a strong interest in carpooling as a practical and affordable solution. Key motivations influencing their transportation choices include cost savings, reduced vehicle wear and tear, and the convenience of shared transportation.

Pain Points

- Rising fuel prices and vehicle maintenance costs have made solo commuting increasingly undesirable for rural commuters. With limited access to public transit systems, they often rely on personal vehicles or carpooling as their primary transportation options. However, shift-based employment presents scheduling challenges, making traditional transit services less effective in meeting their needs.

Opportunities

- Flexible and affordable carpooling programs tailored to the specific needs of rural commuters can provide practical solutions for this group. Raising awareness about RideShare services in rural counties is crucial, as many commuters may be unaware of the alternatives available to them. Collaborating with major employers, such as hospitals, hospitality businesses, and other key organizations in the Charlottesville-Albemarle area, can help promote carpooling participation and foster sustainable commuting practices.

Key Insights

- This commuter group is a key segment in the TJPDC region, facing challenges from rural origins and shift-based schedules. Promoting carpooling and shared transportation can reduce single-occupancy trips, cut costs, and offer sustainable solutions. Targeted marketing and employer partnerships are essential for reaching and supporting this audience.

TARGET MARKET 2

Commuters from the CSPDC Region to the TJPDC Region

TARGET CUSTOMER 2

Commuters from Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County to Charlottesville for employment in healthcare sectors and educational services.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Demographics

- Occupation: Healthcare professionals, educators, and administrative staff.
- Income Range: Mid to upper-income earners.
- Employment Status: Primarily full-time employees.

Behavioral Characteristics

- Daily commutes for this group average 30 to 45 minutes, with most traveling in SOVs from rural or suburban areas to urban job centers in Charlottesville. They show interest in alternative commuting options such as carpooling or the Afton Express bus service, seeking solutions that lower costs and reduce the stress of solo driving. Convenience, affordability, and reliable schedules are key factors shaping their commuting choices.

Pain Points

- Limited parking availability and high costs in urban job centers, combined with rising fuel prices and vehicle maintenance expenses, make commuting increasingly challenging. Traffic congestion along major routes adds stress and extends travel times, while shift-based work schedules require flexible and adaptable commuting solutions to meet these demands.

Opportunities

- Promoting carpooling as a cost-effective and stress-reducing alternative to solo driving can address commuters' needs effectively. Targeted outreach along high-traffic corridors and at employment hubs will help maximize the impact of these efforts. Collaborating with major employers, such as UVA, can further raise awareness and encourage participation in RideShare programs.

Key Insights

- This commuter group is highly impacted by commuting costs, time, and stress, making them receptive to practical and affordable alternatives. Tailored outreach highlighting convenience and cost savings can drive engagement, while strategic partnerships with employers can enhance the visibility and adoption of shared commuting solutions.

TARGET MARKET 3

Commuters from outside regions to the TJPDC region

TARGET CUSTOMER 3

Commuters traveling long distances from areas like Richmond to the Charlottesville metropolitan area for employment.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Demographics

- Occupation: Professionals working in government, administration, or institutional roles.
- Income Range: Mid to upper-income earners.
- Employment Status: Primarily full-time employees.

Behavioral Characteristics

- Commutes for this group range from 1 to 1.5 hours each way, making these trips both lengthy and costly. With limited transit alternatives, they prefer shared transportation options such as carpooling or vanpooling. Key motivations include cost savings, reduced stress from solo driving, and an improved quality of life through shared commuting experiences.

Pain Points

- Long travel times contribute to commuter fatigue and stress, while high transportation costs—such as fuel, tolls, and vehicle maintenance—place a significant burden on individuals. The lack of alternative transportation options further limits flexibility and available choices for commuters.

Opportunities

- Many long-distance commuters are unaware of carpooling and vanpooling options that could reduce costs and improve their commuting experience. Targeted outreach and effective marketing are essential to reach commuters from outside regions and showcase the benefits of shared transportation solutions. To encourage adoption, carpooling and vanpooling services must prioritize flexibility and reliability, catering to full-time workers with fixed schedules. Promoting these shared transportation options can not only alleviate congestion in the TJPDC region but also enhance the overall commuting experience for long-distance travelers.

Key Insights

- This commuter group faces significant time and cost challenges due to their lengthy commutes. They are likely to embrace carpooling or vanpooling as practical, cost-effective solutions if properly informed. By raising awareness and focusing on the convenience and savings of shared transportation, RideShare can encourage a mode shift among this market. Partnerships with employers and strategic outreach efforts can further enhance engagement and reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips into the TJPDC region.

LEXINGTON

RideShare Community Profile



- Total Population: 7,414
- Median Age: 24.9
- Median Household Income: \$65,246
- Percent of RideShare Workforce: 1%
- Percent Commuting: 96%
- Commuters Driving Alone: 82%
- Commuters Carpooling: 6%
- Commuters Riding the Bus: 0%

Source: US Census Bureau's ACS 5-Year Estimates (2021)

Lexington represents 2% of the CSPDC region and 1% of the total RideShare region. It is home to approximately 437 businesses. Only 39% of those living in Lexington are in the workforce. Of those who commute to work, about 70% work within the city and 30% travel elsewhere. Lexington commuters use a range of commute modes with the lowest percentage of commuters driving alone. Lexington is the most walkable locality in the CSPDC region with a walk score of 87 and 26% of commuters walking to work.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

- Carpool coordination through ConnectingVA mobile app and website
- Vanpool coordination through Enterprise
- Limited transit service provided by RADAR's Maury Express route

COMMUTER PATTERNS AND NEEDS

- Lexington is the most diverse community in the CSPDC RideShare region in terms of how workers choose to commute; and has the lowest percentage of commuters choosing to drive. The only commute mode not significantly utilized is public transit.
- **Opportunity!** With a young population and housing and employment so close to each other, Lexington is a prime location to promote active transportation. Hosting a city-wide Bike/Walk-to-Work Day or event could create engagement and community among active commuters.

CHAPTER FIVE

OPERATIONAL PLAN

This chapter presents an overview of the existing services and future needs for the delivery of the RideShare Commuter Assistance Program, managed by the TJPDC and CSPDC. RideShare's strategic initiatives aim to advance sustainable transportation solutions and foster community-oriented efforts across its service area. The chapter details RideShare's current services, new and enhanced service plans, technological tools, partnerships, staffing needs, and marketing strategies. RideShare seeks to optimize resource allocation, reduce SOV trips, and effectively serve the diverse commuting needs of the community while ensuring cost-efficiency and sustainability.



EXISTING SERVICES

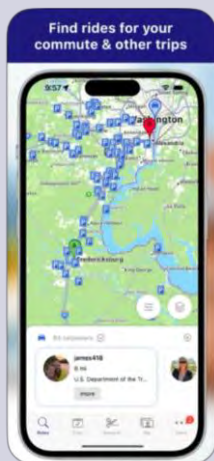
COMMUTER ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT

RideShare caters to commuters and employers, emphasizing sustainable and shared commuting choices such as carpooling, vanpooling, and other modes of eco-friendly transportation. RideShare plays a pivotal role in advancing sustainable transportation solutions and fostering community-oriented initiatives across its service area. The program offers free carpool matching services, which connects commuters with similar routes, resulting in benefits like cost savings, decreased traffic congestion, and environmental preservation. RideShare advocates for vanpooling as a viable option for individuals facing lengthy commutes of 35 miles or more one-way, providing guidance on forming vanpools, and initiating vanpooling arrangements. By integrating both carpooling and vanpooling services, RideShare caters to diverse commuting needs, delivering flexibility, cost-efficiency, and sustainable transportation alternatives.

RideShare currently utilizes several web-based tools to connect commuters to resources including a carpool matching database with a rewards system, a dedicated website, and information sharing through social media channels. Additionally, the program utilizes DRPT's ConnectingVA platform for trip planning and ride matching, provides a support phone line, and collaborates with Enterprise Vanpools to assist with their formation of vanpools for interested commuters. These services support goals one and two of this strategic plan and are for all market segments.

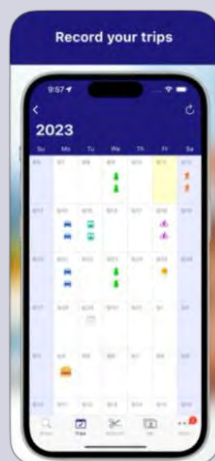
Throughout the duration of this strategic plan, RideShare program staff will continue promoting carpooling and vanpooling to commuters within the TJPDC and CSPDC regions. Although no new services related to carpooling and vanpooling are to be introduced during the five-year period covered by this plan, staff will continue to look for new and innovative ways to market these services through advertisements and outreach to commuters, employers, and community- partners.

Your Commute, Simplified with the ConnectingVA App!



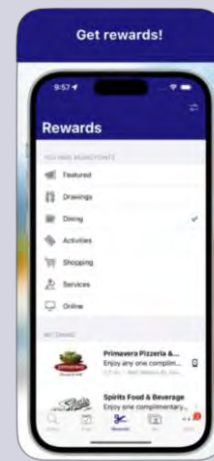
Find Rides

Explore your best commute options, including transit, carpooling, vanpooling, or biking, all in one app.



Track Your Trips

Log your greener trips to see how much money you save, emissions you reduce, and points you earn with ConnectingVA.



Earn Rewards

Earn points for every trip, redeemable for coupons, discounts, and more.

GUARANTEED RIDE HOME PROGRAM

The GRH program is designed to aid individuals who commute to work using alternative transportation methods at least twice a week. This service provides a safety net for unexpected emergencies or situations requiring participants to alter work hours without notice. Eligible participants (full- or part- time employees utilizing alternative commuting methods) are allowed up to five free trips per calendar year. In eligible scenarios, such as sudden illnesses, injuries to oneself or immediate family members, unscheduled overtime, unexpected early departure of a carpool driver, or emergencies at home, participants can utilize the service.

The program covers the expenses of a taxi or rental car, ensuring a reliable and prompt means of transportation home from work. RideShare staff oversee the application process, verification of contact information, provision of welcome packets, and promotion of the program. These services support goals one and two and apply to all market segments.

Although it is available to commuters in both regions, TJPDC RideShare staff are responsible for managing enrollments and processing emergency ride home requests. It is understood that DRPT is in the process of implementing a new state-wide emergency ride home program, though it is not clear when the new system will be available in the RideShare region. The new platform would require requests for emergency rides to be routed to staff for approval.

If RideShare program staff are responsible for processing real-time requests for emergency rides, TJPDC staff may require additional support either in the form of additional staff hours within their agency or supplemental support from CSPDC staff. Program staff will also increase promotion of emergency ride home services at the time the new program is implemented. This will ensure commuters who are currently enrolled in the GRH program are migrated to the new program, and new users are aware of how to register for the service. This would require staff time and an allocation of the advertising and printing budget for the creation of new marketing materials.

>>Learn more and register for the Guaranteed Ride Home Program at www.rideshareinfo.org/guaranteed-ride-home/

Register Now!

NAME	EMPLOYER				
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>				
ADDRESS	ADDRESS				
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>				
CITY	STATE	ZIP	CITY	STATE	ZIP
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
HOME PHONE	WORK PHONE	NAME OF SUPERVISOR	SUPERVISOR PHONE		
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		
EMAIL	<input type="text"/>				
I CURRENTLY GET TO WORK BY:					
<input type="checkbox"/> CARPOOL <input type="checkbox"/> VANPOOL <input type="checkbox"/> CAT <input type="checkbox"/> BRITE <input type="checkbox"/> AFTON EXPRESS <input type="checkbox"/> JAUNT <input type="checkbox"/> BIKE <input type="checkbox"/> WALK					
DAYS PER WEEK USING THE METHOD ABOVE:					
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7					

RESEARCH AND PLANNING

RideShare program staff provide essential planning and research services toward the goals of TDM. They play a pivotal role in supplying valuable data to partners and assist in identifying regional transportation solutions. This involves conducting an annual marketing survey to gather insights crucial for program enhancement and development. Additionally, RideShare actively engages with member localities in both TJPDC and CSPDC regions, and collaborates with major transportation planning partners such as VDOT and the MPOs within their jurisdictions. These efforts ensure a comprehensive understanding of transportation needs and facilitate informed decision-making processes.

RideShare program staff will continue to engage in research and planning activities throughout the duration of this strategic plan. Beyond current and ongoing activities, additional resources may be required to support the annual updates to the strategic plan and to the full re-write scheduled for fiscal year 2030 (FY30). These resources could include increased staff time, reallocation of existing staff time from other program activities, or funding for professional services to contract with an external agency for plan development. According to DRPT funding requirements, any contracted services for strategic plan development must be provided through a Technical Assistance Grant rather than operating funds.



PARK AND RIDE LOTS

Park and ride lots serve as designated areas where individuals can park their personal vehicles and seamlessly transition to shared transportation options like buses, carpools, or vanpools to continue their journey. Presently, there are 30 park and ride lots catering to commuters in central Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley. Some of these lots are private facilities, accessible to commuters through the businesses or organizations that own the property. RideShare actively promotes existing park and ride lots, provides information and resources for their expansion, monitors utilization, and maintains maps of their locations on the website. These lots are also featured on the ConnectingVA website. This supports all goals of this plan and applies to all market segments.

Staff will continue to promote the region's park and ride lots as a commuter resource to be used for access to carpools, vanpools, and transit. An overhaul of the RideShare website is planned for future years to improve access to commuter resources and information. As part of this re-design, additional or enhanced park and ride lot information may be explored. Regardless of future website efforts, the park and ride lot GIS map will be kept up to date regularly – adding new lots as they come online, such as the planned lots at Staunton Crossing (CSPDC), and Crozet (TJPDC). As of FY25, DRPT's CAP operating funds may no longer be used for data collection on park and ride lot utilization. RideShare program staff will continue to conduct utilization counts and an annual conditions assessment on behalf of VDOT. Costs associated with these activities will no longer be charged to the RideShare operating budget and funds from another source must be allocated to cover these expenses. Beyond FY24, CSPDC and TJPDC intend to use Rural Transportation funding to conduct these activities.

MARKETING, OUTREACH, AND EDUCATION

RideShare program staff undertake a multifaceted approach to marketing, outreach, and education to promote alternative transportation options. This includes active participation in tabling events at various community gatherings such as fairs and chamber of commerce sponsored events, as well as engagement with educational institutions like JMU and UVA. They also invest efforts in creating and disseminating social media content through both organic and paid advertisements, alongside other digital ads, movie theatre ads, and radio and streaming advertisements.

Additionally, RideShare program staff utilize printed marketing materials to reach a wider audience. In addition to RideShare's region- specific content, staff promote DRPT marketing campaigns and make regular presentations to key stakeholders such as each region's Board of Commissioners, and MPO Policy Boards and TACs. Furthermore, RideShare program staff regularly include commuter assistance and TDM content in agency newsletters, providing information and updates about the RideShare program and its activities.

These initiatives collectively aim to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips by raising awareness about alternative transportation options and encouraging their adoption among various segments of the community. These activities support goals one and four and apply to all market segments. Marketing, advertising, and outreach activities will continue throughout the period covered by this strategic plan. RideShare program staff are always exploring new pathways and opportunities to reach commuters with valuable information and resources.

To reach commuters in all target markets, RideShare program staff plan to:



Identify new advertising and outreach opportunities and work with their program managers at DRPT to get these activities reviewed and approved for inclusion in future year marketing plans.



Continue translating existing materials into other languages, such as Spanish, and develop new materials that appeal to commuters with limited or no English proficiency.



Use the target markets and commuter profiles developed as part of this strategic plan, to create targeted marketing materials (i.e. digital content) that appeals directly to these different market segments.



Undergo a complete re-design of the RideShare website and re-evaluate the mediums and modes used to share information with commuters.

To accomplish these goals, RideShare program staff may contract with outside firms such as communications consultants and graphic designers, translators, and web developers. Costs associated with these professional services will be one-time expenses to be included in future year budgets. The annual budget for marketing, advertising, and outreach activities may fluctuate from year-to-year based on planned campaigns and activities but will not increase significantly without further evaluation of the cost/benefit analysis for doing so. Estimated costs for marketing, advertising, and outreach activities from year to year are outlined in the five-year budget projections included in **Table 15 and 16** in the financial plan (Chapter 6).

PARTNERSHIP AND COORDINATION

The RideShare program collaborates with various partners, programs, and agencies to advance commuter assistance and support across the TJPDC and CSPDC regions. Presently, program partners encompass key entities such as DRPT, VDOT, MPOs, and transit providers such as BRITE Bus, Afton Express, CAT and Jaunt. Additionally, RideShare maintains relationships with academic institutions like JMU and UVA.

By working closely with these strategic partners, RideShare ensures programming and services align with regional transportation goals. RideShare program staff engage with local employers to facilitate the implementation of commuter assistance initiatives that help to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips. By partnering with various community groups, the program fosters community-driven support for alternative modes of transportation.

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

As the primary entity responsible for maintenance and development of Park and Ride Lots throughout the CSPDC and TJPDC regions, VDOT plays an important role in providing access to carpool, vanpool, and transit options for commuters. As such, it's critical for RideShare program staff to work with VDOT to promote TDM strategies by meeting regularly with district staff and participating in advisory committees. By working with partners like VDOT, RideShare can ensure transportation amenities and facilities, like Park and Ride Lots, are accessible to commuters. Higher utilization of Park and Ride lots leads to the reduction of single occupancy vehicle trips.

REGIONAL EMPLOYERS

During the COVID-19 pandemic, promoting commuter resources was not a high priority for regional employers. Organizations were focused solely on finding ways to continue operating while keeping workers healthy and safe. Furthermore, many employers were forced to quickly provide alternative working environments for their employees. As telework became the "new normal," services once provided by RideShare, like employer telework consultations, were no longer needed. Coming out of the pandemic, the business landscape throughout the CSPDC and TJPDC regions has changed, and challenges once faced by employers have been replaced with entirely new and different challenges.

Over the next five years, RideShare staff are committed to growing and nurturing the relationships with the partners identified herein. In addition to these existing partnerships, RideShare program staff will seek to rebuild relationships with employers that were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and expand its employer network within both the TJPDC and CSPDC regions. To better coordinate the promotion of commuter resources by and among employers in the two regions, RideShare program staff will seek to establish a comprehensive employer database.

By working collaboratively with more employers, specifically those larger institutions, RideShare can reach a larger pool of commuters and encourage the utilization of carpools, vanpools, and transit. Currently, no additional resources are needed to pursue these partnerships and relationships. Staff time will be allocated accordingly within the operating plan budget from year-to-year.

If it becomes apparent that the previously offered employer resources (i.e. telework consultations) are no longer required or relevant, RideShare program staff will assess the needs of employers and identify new or additional programming that may be better suited to the modern-day workforce. Given the timeline of this guiding document, the development of new employer services is likely outside the scope of this plan and may be better suited for future iterations.

TRANSIT PROVIDERS

There are several transit providers operating within the RideShare program service area. CAT provides public bus service and on-demand Microtransit in the City of Charlottesville and urban Albemarle County. Operating fare-free, these bus routes provide a great opportunity for individuals commuting within the city. Jaunt provides public bus service in rural Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa and Nelson Counties with specific routes designed to connect commuters from these suburban and rural areas to the City of Charlottesville and the University of Virginia.

In the CSPDC region, the BRITE Transit system serves residents in the cities of Staunton and Waynesboro and portions of Augusta and Rockingham Counties. The transit system is operated by the CSPDC via a contracted service provider, Virginia Regional Transit. The newest route of the BRITE system, the Afton Express, is a commuter bus route connecting Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County to Charlottesville and Albemarle County. This route aligns well with RideShare's target market of individuals commuting between the Shenandoah Valley and the greater Charlottesville area.

Beyond the transit system directly operated by the CSPDC, RideShare staff seek to strengthen partnerships with other transit agencies in the region. The CSPDC will emphasize relationships with HDPT, RADAR, and RATS. RideShare program staff will continue to work closely with these transit agencies and promote the use of transit services to commuters in the CSPDC and TJPDC regions.

Through these symbiotic relationships, RideShare provides information about routes, stops, and schedules to commuters and transit agencies benefit from increased ridership. As members of the Afton Express Strategic Planning committee, RideShare program staff routinely meet with BRITE Transit and the University of Virginia's Office of Parking and Transportation to identify commuter needs and ensure TDM is at the forefront of plans for service delivery. RideShare staff also attend TAC meetings for each MPO in their respective regions. These TACs provide an opportunity to interact with city and town staff, along with representatives from transit agencies.



NEW AND ENHANCED SERVICES

TARGET TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

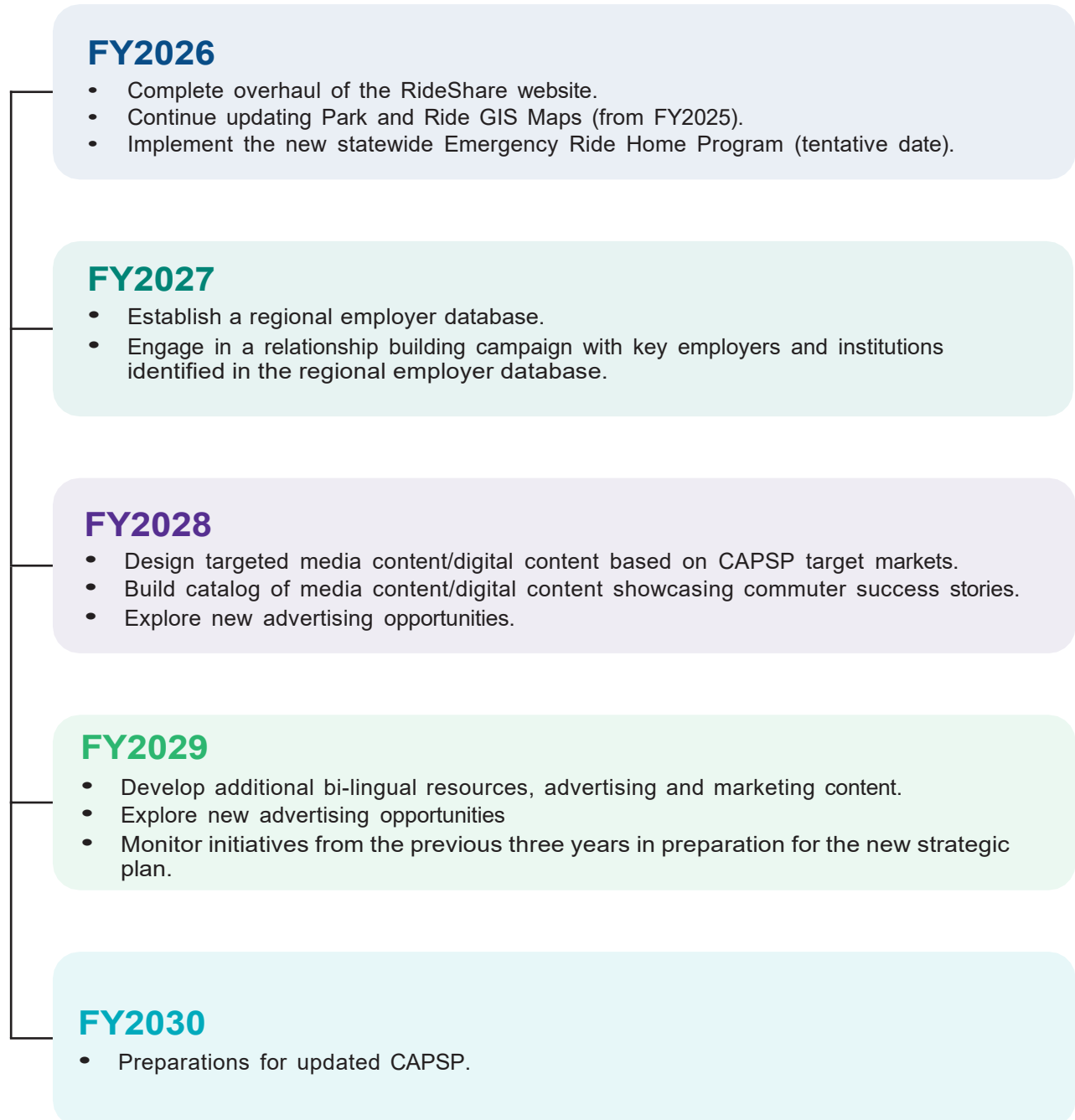


Figure 10. Target Timeline for Implementation

ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY

RideShare Community Profile



- Total Population: 22,642
- Median Age: 49.7
- Median Household Income: \$57,190
- Percent of RideShare Workforce: 4%
- Percent Commuting: 90%
- Commuters Driving Alone: 79%
- Commuters Carpooling: 7%
- Commuters Riding the Bus: 1%

Source: US Census Bureau's ACS 5-Year Estimates (2021)

Rockbridge County represents 7% of the CSPDC region and 4% of the total RideShare region. It is home to approximately 704 businesses. Of the roughly 11,000 workers who call Rockbridge home, half commute within the county, and half travel elsewhere for work. Most commuters drive to and from work with a small percentage using other modes of transportation. Rockbridge County has a walk score of 0 indicating commuters are extremely car dependent.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

- Carpool coordination through ConnectingVA mobile app and website
- Vanpool coordination through Enterprise
- Limited transit service provided by RADAR's Maury Express route
- 1 park and ride lot (Kerrs Creek)

COMMUTER PATTERNS AND NEEDS

- Rockbridge County is largely rural which presents challenges for most alternative commute modes. With employees spread throughout the county, it is difficult to find solutions that serve the county at large.
- **Opportunity!** There are several active vanpools traveling to Mohawk Industries. This may serve as a model for establishing other employer-based vanpools. Identifying locations for additional park and ride lots throughout the county may also help promote carpooling.

CHAPTER SIX

FINANCIAL PLAN

The RideShare Program is operated jointly by the CSPDC and the TJPDC. However, each agency maintains its own budget. This chapter outlines the financial plan and budget considerations for CSPDC's RideShare operations over the five years covered by this plan.



FINANCIAL PLAN OVERVIEW

Both TJPDC and CSPDC RideShare staff collaborated to develop a strategic plan focused on a shared mission, vision, and goals for the commuter assistance program. Chapter 5 outlines the operations and programming plan, which takes a holistic, partnership-driven approach. TJPDC and CSPDC staff worked together to allocate costs for new initiatives and services across both agency budgets. This collaboration has been key in helping each PDC create their own financial plans, ensuring efficient service delivery while keeping costs low and sustaining the program's long-term viability.

Consultant-led workshops guided staff in identifying activities and programming to meet Chapter 3 goals. During the operations plan development, staff prioritized activities and set timelines for phased implementation, allowing one-time costs to be spread across budget years. This careful planning enables each initiative to be fully developed and implemented effectively, and guides financial planning for each PDC, ensuring feasibility and the conditions for success.

EXISTING FUNDING SOURCES

The CSPDC's RideShare program is funded through grants from DRPT. CSPDC applies for State funding through DRPT's Commuter Assistance Program Operating Assistance grant program each February - requesting the amount needed to operate the program for the upcoming fiscal year. These applications are then reviewed and scored by DRPT staff and recommendations for funding are presented to the Commonwealth Transportation Board for their inclusion in and approval of the state's Six-Year Improvement Plan.

Presently, DRPT's CAP operating assistance fund provides 80% of operating costs to agencies and requires 20% of costs to be matched by local funds. The CSPDC utilizes funding from their annual locality assessments to provide the required match for the grant award. Funding for one-time planning projects, such as the development of a strategic plan, are not eligible expenses under DRPT's CAP Operating Assistance fund and are typically paid for via DRPT's Technical Assistance grant program. These projects often have a higher match requirement (i.e., 50% state/50% local).

With the low match requirement for operating assistance funds, this grant program allows the CSPDC to staff and operate the RideShare program at a relatively low cost to member jurisdictions. A funding source requiring a higher contribution from local partners may make the program less desirable, as many of the CSPDC's member jurisdictions do not currently experience high levels of congestion.

The financial plan herein accounts for the existing services provided by the CSPDC's RideShare program at the time of plan development and is therefore based on the budgetary needs over three fiscal years (FY23, FY24, and FY25). For future programming and service enhancements identified in Chapter 5, a five-year budget projection is included as well. These projections consider future one-time costs linked to new initiatives and estimates for incremental increases in costs associated with staff wages, fringe benefits, and indirect costs.

BASELINE FINANCIAL PLAN

RideShare’s operating budget is broken down into various categories of expenses, which are expanded upon in the following subsections. The baseline budget was established by using the past five years’ expenses. Because FY21’s budget was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, it was omitted from calculations. Though the total program budget did not change from FY22 through FY25, individual categories of expenses within each budget varied from year to year. A complete description of the baseline budget for FY22-FY25 is provided in **Tables 13 and 14** below. Fluctuations in expense lines are due to staffing changes, specific marketing and advertising campaigns (i.e., Dukes Commute), and variable costs associated with travel. In one example, costs related to vehicle milage increased significantly as gas prices and vehicle maintenance costs increased nationwide.

Table 13. Baseline Revenue and Funding Sources

Funding/Revenue Sources	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	Average % of Total
DRPT/CAP Operating Assistance Grant	\$51,880	\$76,000	\$76,000	\$76,000	\$76,000	80%
CSPDC Local Match	\$12,970	\$19,000	\$19,000	\$19,000	\$19,000	20%
Total Revenue - Baseline Budget	\$64,850	\$95,000	\$95,000	\$95,000	\$95,000	

Table 14. Baseline Expenditures by Budget Line

Expense Description	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	Average % of Total
Wages and Benefits	\$41,011	\$57,159	\$54,562	\$51,950	\$51,213	54%
Indirect Costs	\$17,719	\$23,406	\$25,203	\$22,340	\$22,022	23%
Advertising and Promotion	\$2,370	\$9,635	\$9,660	\$11,660	\$14,260	10%
Promotional Items	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$1,000	\$-	1%
Printing	\$1,500	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$1,550	\$1,400	2%
Travel	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,400	\$3,500	2%
Supplies	\$750	\$1,000	\$975	\$850	\$1,010	2%
Membership Dues	\$250	\$600	\$575	\$675	\$875	1%
Education and Training	\$250	\$350	\$350	\$475	\$-	0.4%
Professional Services	\$-	\$-	\$800	\$3,000	\$600	1.5%
Incentives for Transit	\$-	\$50	\$75	\$100	\$120	0.1%
Total Expenses	\$64,850	\$95,000	\$95,000	\$95,000	\$95,000	

WAGES AND BENEFITS

Wages and benefits continue to be the largest program expense as it takes roughly 1,140 staff hours to operate the RideShare CAP annually. During the baseline year (FY25) salaries and wages represent 55% of total program costs. To calculate wages, the CSPDC uses a base salary rate for each position and multiplies that rate by the number of hours assigned to that position for work on the RideShare program.

Benefits are based on the agencies approved fringe rate, which for FY 2023-FY 2025 is 56.47%. This predetermined rate is established by the CSPDC's Indirect Cost Allocation Plan (ICAP) which is updated every three years. The current ICAP covers FYs 2023-2025 and was established using audited financials from FYs 2019 – 2021.

All CSPDC employees received a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) in both FY24 and FY25 to account for historic rates of inflation. Despite these increases, RideShare personnel costs decreased between FY23 and FY25. This is due to a reduction in the number of staff hours and number of persons assigned to work on the RideShare program. FY25 establishes both a baseline for staffing needs and individual personnel costs.

INDIRECT COSTS

Tied to personnel, the second largest expense for the RideShare program are indirect costs. Indirect costs are calculated by multiplying labor expenses by the predetermined indirect cost rate. Also established in the CSPDC's ICAP, the current rate is 43% and will remain in place through FY25. The CSPDC's indirect rate is adjusted as needed to account for fluctuations in total CSPDC programming costs. Projections for the next five years are based on the current rate of 43%, however this rate could increase or decrease within that time. These budget projections can be adjusted during future annual updates to this plan if/when the indirect rate is renegotiated.

ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION

Advertising and promotional expenses, also known as the marketing budget, represent the largest direct expense within the Rideshare budget. Advertising the program to reach commuters is the most significant activity within the Rideshare operations plan. Costs associated with the placement of advertisements represent 10% of the total Rideshare budget, but represent 65% of total direct expenses (wages, benefits, and indirect excluded).

Historically, the marketing budget has averaged \$9,000 per fiscal year. In FY24 and FY25, this increased to account for a large advertising contract with JMU to facilitate the Dukes Commute campaign. In a concentrated effort to reach more commuters in the Harrisonburg/Rockingham region, RideShare partnered with the region's largest employer (JMU) to advertise program services at various athletic events over the course of each year.

This included print and digital ad placements, as well as in-person tabling event opportunities. In FY24, the partnership proved to be effective and RideShare renewed the agreement for an additional year to continue to build momentum. Moving into FY26 and beyond, the marketing budget is expected to return to the baseline. RideShare will continue to promote the Dukes Commute campaign through traditional University channels, but the minimum advertising contract amount required by JMU Athletics would be difficult to sustain annually.

RideShare program staff evaluate the effectiveness of past and ongoing marketing methods and media to determine which strategies should be continued. Based on overall cost-effectiveness and return-on-investment, marketing methods and media are identified and the next year's marketing plan is created. The strategies below make up the core annual marketing budget for the RideShare program and will be included in each year's marketing plan unless circumstances change lessening their utility.

RideShare Marketing Strategies



Boosted and Paid
Social Media Posts



Digital and Streaming Radio
Advertisements



Local Radio
Advertisements



Movie Theater Advertisements



Participation in Chamber of
Commerce and Community Events



Digital Advertisements through
Chamber of Commerce Websites

While the content promoted through these channels will vary over time, the platforms have proven to be useful in informing commuters and employers of RideShare program services. Over the course of this strategic plan, RideShare staff will continue to explore new opportunities for marketing the program and adjust the annual marketing budget accordingly.

PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

Following guidelines provided by DRPT, promotional items are only purchased when affiliated with a specific marketing or advertising campaign. In FY24, \$1,000 was included in the annual budget to purchase branded promotional items for the Dukes Commute campaign. Funding for the purchase of promotional items is not a recurring annual cost, so it has not been included in all future-year forecasts. CSPDC has allocated \$2,000 in FY26 to purchase items to promote the new Guaranteed/Emergency Ride Home program, should it be ready to implement during that budget year.

PRINTING

The budgeted funding for printing and reproduction covers the costs associated with outside printing needs. This typically includes brochures, postcards, flyers, and other informational materials. The costs associated with internal printing, such as copier lease, maintenance, and supplies are accounted for in the CSPDC's indirect costs. Over the past five years, the RideShare budget included roughly \$1,800 per year in costs for outside printing. This aligned with a complete re-design of all RideShare informational materials to bring content up to date. Given the work recently completed, lower costs related to printing for the next five years is anticipated.

To create a baseline for budget projections for FY26-FY30, CSPDC accounts for small- batch printing of campaign-specific materials. To facilitate employer outreach goals in FY27, CSPDC has allocated an additional \$500 of printing costs anticipating additional printing needs to create new employer information packets.

DUES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

The CSPDC pays annual membership dues to the Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT), the nation's primary professional organization for the field of Transportation Demand Management. In recent years, the cost for this annual membership has been \$575. In FY24, the cost increased to \$675. This represents the bulk of the membership dues and subscriptions budget line.

There are three established Chambers of Commerce in the CSPDC region. These organizations are the most effective way of reaching groups of local employers. The CSPDC pays to be members of each Chamber of Commerce out of the general agency fund, however, there are dues/fees associated with attending certain Chamber events throughout the year. Anticipating these events, RideShare allocates funding in the Dues and Subscriptions budget line to cover the cost to attend these regionally significant meetings and events.

TRAVEL

The travel budget for the Rideshare program represents costs associated with travel to and from regional and state-wide meetings, trainings and workshops, and historically, for the vehicle mileage associated with conducting quarterly park and ride lot inventories and assessments.

Through FY24, a large portion of travel expenses were associated with conducting quarterly park and ride Lot inventories. As discussed in Chapter 5, those activities will continue but will no longer be paid for using Commuter Assistance Operating funds. After removing those expenses from the budget, baseline assumptions for projecting travel costs over the next five years were established.

Recurring program travel expenses include vehicle mileage for the following activities:

- Participate in community, employer, and commuter outreach events organized throughout the region.
- Attend quarterly meetings with TJPDC RideShare staff.
- Participate in training and network events held by the ACT Chesapeake Chapter.
- Conduct meetings with regional employers.
- Distribute promotional materials as needed.

These costs are projected using the current IRS mileage reimbursement rate of .67 cents per mile.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida offers two professional certificate programs that are highly relevant to TDM – the Commuter Choice Certificate and the Social Marketing Certificate. The CSPDC will hire a new TDM Coordinator in FY25 and expects that the new TDM Coordinator will participate in these professional development opportunities in their first three years in the position.

INCENTIVES FOR TRANSIT

The RideShare program periodically purchases farecards from regional transit providers to use as incentives and rewards for commuters as part of larger transit-focused marketing campaigns. RideShare participates in DRPT's annual Discover Transit and Connecting Commuters campaigns, which often include contests where commuters log their transit trips. These farecards are used as incentives to encourage participation in these contests.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Professional services and service contracts are allowed under the Commuter Assistance Operating program funding to support programming efforts by procuring skilled services that exceed the capabilities and capacity available internally. These are typically a one-time expense incurred in the fiscal year in which the project is to be completed. In FY23, RideShare used these funds to hire a photographer to create a repository of regional transportation photos to use in the marketing and promotion of the program. Many of these photos are featured throughout this document. In FY24 and FY25, professional services were allocated to translate marketing materials and informational brochures into Spanish.

Looking forward, RideShare intends to continue translating materials into additional languages, and will seek to have new digital content created based on the market segments and target customers identified in this strategic plan. To facilitate those efforts, professional service funds are included in the projected budgets for FY28, FY29, and FY30. There will be no annual or ongoing expenses related to professional services.

BUDGET FORECAST

The funding forecasts included in **Tables 15 and 16** reflect the CSPDC's best ability to effectively operate the RideShare Commuter Assistance Program and to address the improvements and initiatives outlined in Chapter 5 of this plan. Future budget projections from FY2026 – FY2030 are fiscally constrained and are based on the baseline total program budget of \$95,000. Any additional revenue needs beyond FY25 are not committed currently. Funding of any expanded services would come only from the adjustment and reallocation of internal resources and not through additional outside funding. Any increase in the overall budget of the program must consider the impact to the local match requirements, which are necessary for state grant assistance.

Although the five-year budget projection in Table 16 estimates a 3% increase to baseline expenses each year, the CSPDC does not intend to increase the overall budget for RideShare over the next five years. Any increases in costs in one area of operations (i.e., wages or indirect) must be absorbed by the existing budgets. To constrain the FY26-FY30 budgets, minor adjustments will be made each year to achieve the target of \$95,000. FY25 operating funds were included in the Six-Year Improvement Plan and were approved by the Commonwealth Transportation Board for approval in June 2024.

Operational funding from the DRPT CAP for FY26 and beyond have not yet been secured. The CSPDC will apply for these funds each year in February for the following fiscal year. Funding is subject to approval and availability by DRPT.

Table 15. Budget Forecast and Projections - Funding and Revenue

Funding/Revenue Sources	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	Average Percent of Total
DRPT/CAP Operating Assistance Grant	\$73,061	\$73,954	\$77,422	\$77,147	\$79,171	80.0%
CSPDC Local Match	\$18,265	\$18,488	\$19,355	\$19,287	\$19,793	20.0%
Total Revenue - Baseline Budget	\$91,327	\$92,442	\$96,777	\$96,434	\$98,964	

Table 16. Budget Forecast and Projections - Baseline Expenditures

Baseline Expenditures	Base Year	Projected Fiscal Year Expense					Average Percent of Total
	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	
Wages and Benefits	\$51,213	\$53,973	\$55,592	\$57,260	\$58,978	\$60,747	60.0%
Indirect Costs	\$22,022	\$23,209	\$23,905	\$24,622	\$25,361	\$26,121	86.0%
Advertising and Promotion	\$14,260	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$9,000	35.0%
Promotional Items	\$-	\$2,000	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	10.0%
Printing	\$1,400	\$600	\$1,100	\$600	\$600	\$600	1.0%
Travel	\$3,500	\$1,100	\$1,100	\$1,100	\$1,100	\$1,100	2.0%
Supplies	\$1,010	\$250	\$550	\$250	\$250	\$250	1.0%
Membership Dues	\$875	\$775	\$775	\$775	\$775	\$775	1.0%
Education and Training	\$-	\$300	\$300	\$50	\$50	\$50	1.0%
Professional Services	\$600	\$-	\$-	\$3,000	\$200	\$200	1.0%
Incentives for Transit	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120	1.0%
Total Expenses	\$95,000	\$91,327	\$92,442	\$96,777	\$96,434	\$98,964	

ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

RideShare Community Profile



- Total Population: 85,620
- Median Age: 42.3
- Median Household Income: \$75,411
- Percent of RideShare Workforce: 15%
- Percent Commuting: 92%
- Commuters Driving Alone: 78%
- Commuters Carpooling: 10%
- Commuters Riding the Bus: 0.4%

Source: US Census Bureau's ACS 5-Year Estimates (2021)

Rockingham County represents 28% of the CSPDC region and 15% of the total RideShare region. It is home to over 2,100 businesses, making it the second largest employment hub in the CSPDC region. Of the employed residents in the county, 92% commute to work with half traveling outside of Rockingham County for work. Most commuters drive themselves to and from work with a small percentage carpooling, walking, or working remote. Rockingham County has a walk score of 0 indicating that commuters are extremely car dependent.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

- Carpool coordination through ConnectingVA mobile app and website
- Vanpool coordination through Enterprise
- BRITE Transit routes serve Bridgewater, Dayton, and Mount Crawford
- 5 park and ride lots (Massanutten, Elkton, Broadway, Bergton)

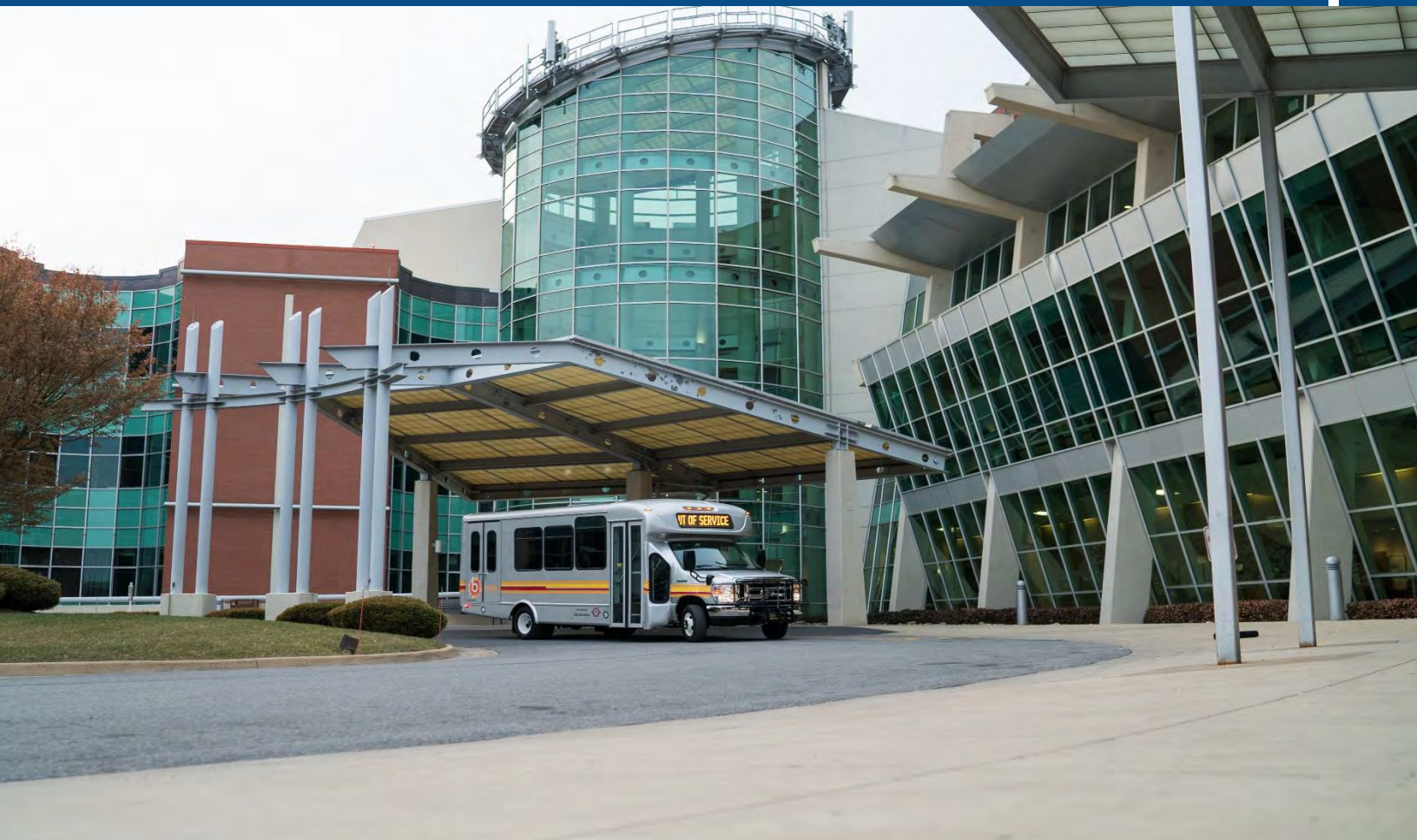
COMMUTER PATTERNS AND NEEDS

- Rockingham County spans the width of the valley from east to west making for long commute drives for those living in rural communities. Commuters traveling to employment hubs in the urbanized portion of the county travel along the main corridors of I-81, Rte. 11, Rte. 42, and Rte.33.
- Half of the 10 largest employers in the region are located in Rockingham County bringing significant groups of workers to the same locations.
- **Opportunity!** With these routes serving as the primary arteries for commuters heading to these large employment sites and an abundance of park and ride lots available, Rockingham County is an ideal location for carpools and vanpools.

CHAPTER SEVEN

MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

Chapter Seven provides further context into the performance measures and evaluation plan for the RideShare program. It outlines what is being measured, the data collection needs and timelines, and how the results are utilized to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the program. This will allow RideShare program staff to better track and assess the goals and objectives developed in this strategic plan overtime and to adjust as needed in future updates.



OVERVIEW

Chapter 3 outlines the overarching strategic goals of the RideShare program along with specific, measurable objectives designed to achieve those goals. While the goals represent long-term aspirations, the objectives can be monitored and evaluated regularly to gauge the effectiveness of operational strategies. RideShare staff will use two key methods to measure the success of the RideShare program and progress toward achieving the goals and objectives described in this plan. Using both qualitative and quantitative data collected through a variety of sources and methods, RideShare staff can assess program outcomes and make decisions about programming based on actual outcomes.

QUANTITATIVE METHODS

Quantitative research uses **numerical data** that can be directly measured and objectively analyzed. Tools like surveys, polls, and database analytics provide structured insights to evaluate program performance and inform strategic decision-making.

How Will RideShare Staff Use Quantitative Data?

RideShare staff will use quantitative data from the ConnectingVA mobile application and its corresponding database. By leveraging the AgileMile software program, staff generate reports and analyze commuter behaviors across various travel modes. This data collection will assist staff with making data-driven decisions and program enhancements.

KEY MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF ACTIVITIES USING QUANTITATIVE METHODS

Tracking Trip Frequency by Mode: Using data from the AgileMile database, RideShare staff will routinely analyze the utilization of each alternative commute mode over time. Performance metrics will include the frequency of carpool, vanpool, and transit trips, as well as the logged bike-to-work and walk-to-work trips by RideShare users over a designated period.

Compiling Monthly and Quarterly Reports: Currently, staff run reports on commute trips logged in their respective regions and report specific metrics to DRPT on both a monthly and quarterly basis. Staff will continue to provide the metrics as requested by DRPT and will also track the number of logged trips by commute type monthly to assess the effectiveness of programming. Analyzing utilization over time will also allow staff to make inferences about the relationship between programmed activities and increases in the number of trips or new users recorded during and immediately after public engagement and outreach events.

It is important to note that this type of analysis can suggest correlation but cannot determine cause without a controlled environment. For example, an increase in new registered users after a pop-up event likely results from the event, but this cannot be definitively proven. To improve data reliability, RideShare staff allow users to register on-site using paper forms during events. Staff then manually create these accounts in the AgileMile system afterward. Although this process is time-consuming, it ensures accurate tracking of new users directly linked to specific events.

Analyzing Carpool Matching: Another way RideShare staff use data to measure success is by tracking the number of attempted carpool matches within the ConnectingVA web and mobile application. This data helps to determine how often commuters use the trip-planning tools to find alternatives modes of transportation to their work or destination. Comparing the number of carpool matches attempted to the number of successful matches helps assess the strength and utility of the carpool matching database. If the number of attempts is significantly greater than successful matches, RideShare staff may need to identify ways to increase the number of registered users. More users in the database create more opportunities for commuters seeking a carpool partner to find someone aligned with their travel needs.

Tracking Stakeholder Engagement: Stakeholder engagement and community outreach is not easily measured using data from the AgileMile system. The objective of these forms of outreach is to connect with businesses, employers, community non-profits and other agencies that can help RideShare staff reach commuters. Employers and community organizations may be able to incentivize employees to decrease SOV trips to the workplace in ways RideShare cannot. The intention of these outreach activities is to ensure regional employers and organizations understand the types of resources available to the populations with whom they regularly interact. The success of these efforts can be measured by the number of new connections made with stakeholders and by tracking any activity that results from that new relationship. Staff track and report this information to DRPT in the program's quarterly reports.

Tracking Guaranteed Ride Home Registrants: Finally, RideShare staff will track the number of RideShare users registered for the Guaranteed Ride Home program. As one of the most useful benefits of the program, the GRH program is an excellent tool for recruiting and retaining new commuters. Monitoring registration rates can inform strategies for marketing and promoting the program to new users.

QUALITATIVE METHODS

Qualitative research focuses on gathering **non-numerical data** to capture rich, contextual insights into the experiences, perceptions, and needs of program participants and stakeholders. Methods such as interviews, open-ended surveys, focus groups, and observations are used to explore the lived experiences of individuals and to evaluate the program's impact in a meaningful way.

How Will RideShare Staff Use Qualitative Data?

RideShare staff will use qualitative data to monitor progress toward achieving program goals and objectives. Insights gained from stakeholder feedback, public engagement outcomes, and participant experiences will be used to assess and refine strategies. By identifying recurring themes, staff can address areas for improvement, ensuring the program remains responsive to community needs. These efforts will be documented in DRPT's monthly and quarterly reports.

KEY MONITORING AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES USING QUALITATIVE METHODS

Building Outreach and Partnerships: Aligning with Goal Three of the strategic plan, RideShare staff will focus on building and maintaining relationships with diverse community stakeholders. Objectives include targeted outreach to community organizations, advocacy groups, educational institutions, and underrepresented communities. The effectiveness of these efforts will be assessed using qualitative methods such as open-ended surveys, interviews, and participant feedback. Stakeholders will share their perspectives on engagement activities, enabling staff to evaluate the success of outreach initiatives. Additionally, surveys and feedback forms will capture participants' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to transportation topics. Insights drawn from lived experiences will inform adjustments to outreach strategies and program offerings, ensuring they remain effective and community focused.

Gathering Stakeholder Feedback and Refining Strategies: Staff will actively solicit stakeholder input to guide program adjustments. Feedback from employers, community leaders, and participants will inform refinements to outreach plans and operational strategies. Success stories and case studies will be documented to illustrate program impact and promote TDM awareness.

Evaluating Promotional Campaigns and Public Engagement Efforts: Qualitative data collection will help assess the success of promotional campaigns and public outreach activities. Feedback gathered through focus groups, interviews, and event evaluations will identify effective practices and areas for improvement. Goal Four of this strategic plan aims to raise awareness of TDM strategies. Success stories, case studies, and one-on-one discussions with partners in areas like transportation, housing, environment, and land use planning will be used to build collaborative relationships and ensure campaigns resonate with their intended audiences. Insights from these collaborations will be captured to guide future promotional campaigns.

COMBINING BOTH METHODS

RideShare program staff will utilize both qualitative and quantitative methods to monitor, evaluate, and refine strategies aimed at achieving the goals and objectives outlined in this plan. By combining these complementary approaches, staff will gain a comprehensive understanding of program performance and its impact on the community.

Quantitative methods will deliver objective, measurable insights into critical metrics such as commuter behaviors, trip frequency, stakeholder engagement, and participation in programs like GRH. These metrics allow staff to track progress over time, identify trends, and make data-driven decisions to improve program offerings and align with strategic goals. For example, analyzing trip logs and carpool match success rates will reveal trends in commuter preferences, while tracking stakeholder engagement will highlight opportunities to strengthen partnerships and expand outreach efforts.

Qualitative methods will capture the nuanced experiences and perceptions of program participants and stakeholders—insights that cannot be quantified. By collecting feedback through interviews, surveys, and focus groups, staff will better understand the program’s impact on individuals and communities. These methods will also allow staff to document success stories, lived experiences, and lessons learned to ensure the program remains adaptive and responsive to the diverse needs of community members.

RideShare staff will evaluate the program with a balanced perspective that combines precise metrics with contextual insights. This will ensure that decisions are not only guided by data but also informed by the voices and experiences of the communities served. Through continuous analysis, feedback collection, and strategy refinement, the RideShare program will maintain its effectiveness, community-driven focus, and alignment with its mission to, *“Connect people to inclusive and sustainable transportation alternatives to increase mobility and enhance quality of life.”*



STAUNTON

RideShare Community Profile



- Total Population: 26,016
- Median Age: 44.1
- Median Household Income: \$54,021
- Percent of RideShare Workforce: 5%
- Percent Commuting: 93%
- Commuters Driving Alone: 80%
- Commuters Carpooling: 7%
- Commuters Riding the Bus: 0.9%

Source: US Census Bureau's ACS 5-Year Estimates (2021)

Staunton represents 9% of the CSPDC region and 15% of the total RideShare region. The city is home to over 1,100 businesses and just under 50% of the population is in the workforce. Almost all of working residents must commute to work with half employed within the city and half traveling elsewhere. Though there are several commute modes available in Staunton, single-occupancy vehicle trips are still the most common trip type. The city has a walk score of 35 indicating that commuters are still car dependent.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

- Carpool coordination through ConnectingVA mobile app and website
- Vanpool coordination through Enterprise
- BRITE Transit routes (250 Connector, Staunton West & North Loops, BRCC Shuttle, and the Downtown Trolley; Afton Express Commuter route connecting to Charlottesville.
- 1 park and ride lot (Staunton Crossing)

COMMUTER PATTERNS AND NEEDS

- Despite having an employment hub within the city, about half of workers are commuting elsewhere, and those who do commute within Staunton are using their vehicles to do so.
- **Opportunity!** With high density and a transit system in place, there is potential to increase the use of alternate commute modes within the existing transportation network. Refining the existing bus routes and schedules and continuing to build out bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure may encourage the use of these modes.

CHAPTER EIGHT

USE OF RESEARCH AND DATA

Chapter Eight provides context into the use of research and data in this strategic plan. It details how it was utilized to craft targeted strategies and identify key markets for the RideShare program. Through the following research and data collection, this plan was tailored to address the unique needs and opportunities within the CSPDC and TJPDC regions, ensuring a more effective and focused approach to commuter assistance.



RESEARCH AND DATA

To create a comprehensive CAP Strategic Plan, RideShare staff and their consultant team employed three key research methods: a regional public survey, a focus group, and quantitative data collection and analysis. Each method provided critical insights into the transportation behaviors and preferences of the region's commuters, ensuring that future programs effectively promote alternatives to SOV trips.

REGIONAL PUBLIC SURVEY

The regional public survey was distributed to residents of the two PDCs through a variety of communication channels, including Facebook, LinkedIn, the GRH program listserv, AgileMile app notifications, and email lists from regional partners. The survey aimed to gather a comprehensive understanding of commuting trends and perceptions of transportation options within the region, specifically focusing on the RideShare program, transit services, and other non-SOV alternatives like carpooling, vanpooling, cycling, and walking.

Respondents were asked to share their experiences with the RideShare program offerings and to provide feedback on factors that would motivate them to switch from driving alone to alternative modes of transportation. Questions covered topics such as the convenience of current transit services, the perceived barriers to using alternative transportation, and the types of incentives—such as cost savings, time efficiency, or environmental impact—that might encourage a shift in commuting habits.

The survey findings provided both quantitative and qualitative data, which helped to shape the strategic plan by confirming the relevance of target markets and customer segments. It also highlighted key commuting patterns and identified potential areas for improvement in RideShare's services and campaigns, ensuring that future initiatives would be aligned with the needs and preferences of the region's commuters. More information about the Commuter Services Survey is available upon request.

FOCUS GROUP

The focus group, hosted virtually by TJPDC in June 2023, provided an opportunity for deeper engagement with a select group of participants who were interested in the RideShare program and non-SOV commuting options. During the session, participants discussed their current commuting choices and explored the challenges and incentives that influence their transportation decisions.

This focus group offered valuable qualitative data by providing a direct line of communication between RideShare staff and residents. Participants shared insights into why they choose their current commute option—whether driving alone, using public transit, or opting for alternative modes—and discussed what would make them more likely to switch to options like carpooling or vanpooling. Topics included convenience, cost, availability of transit routes, and perceived reliability of non-SOV alternatives.

The findings from the focus group offered context to complement the broader survey results. These personal stories and perspectives helped RideShare staff understand the potential barriers that residents face, enabling the team to design more targeted programs and campaigns that directly address commuter concerns and needs.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

In addition to gathering qualitative data through the survey and focus group, RideShare staff utilized quantitative data from various trusted sources to inform the strategic plan.¹

This includes the following:

2023 ESRI GeoEnrichment Data

- Table 3. Total Population by Locality
- Table 4. Median Age by Locality
- Table 5. Race and Ethnicity by Locality
- Table 6. Median Household Income by Locality
- Table 7. Employed Population by Locality
- Table 8. Worker Earnings by Region
- Table 9. Total Businesses by Locality

US Census Bureau's [2021] ACS 5-Year Estimates

- Table 10. Employed Population (16+) Occupations by Region
- Table 11. Commuting Patterns by Locality
- Table 12. Commuting Choices by Locality

US Census Bureau's [2024] OnTheMap

- Figure 4. Density of Where People Live in the CSPDC Region
- Figure 5. Density of Where People Work in the CSPDC Region
- Figure 6. Density of Where People Live in the TJPDC Region
- Figure 7. Density of Where People Work in the TJPDC Region

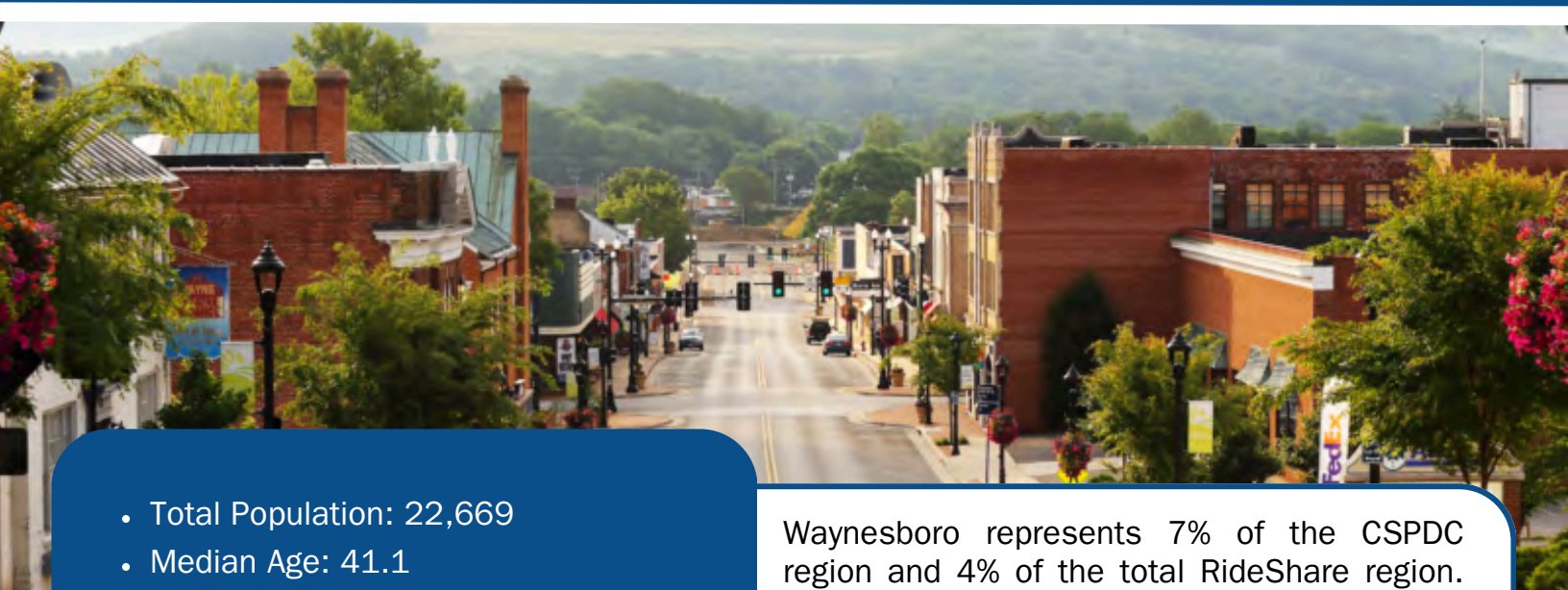
Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) Economic Information & Analytics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 3rd Quarter (July, August, September) 2023

- Top Ten Largest Employers

1. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, demographic trends presented variations which was accounted for in data collection process through sourcing from both US Census Data with ESRI GeoEnrichment Data. This approach ensured access to the most up-to-date information. However, since these two sources may not always align perfectly in timing or methodology, there may be slight discrepancies between the data sets. This approach ensures accuracy while accounting for potential variations between sources.

WAYNESBORO

RideShare Community Profile



- Total Population: 22,669
- Median Age: 41.1
- Median Household Income: \$46,509
- Percent of RideShare Workforce: 4%
- Percent Commuting: 93%
- Commuters Driving Alone: 81%
- Commuters Carpooling: 9%
- Commuters Riding the Bus: 0.7%

Source: US Census Bureau's ACS 5-Year Estimates (2021)

Waynesboro represents 7% of the CSPDC region and 4% of the total RideShare region. The city is home to over 900 businesses and about half of the population is in the workforce. Almost all of working residents must commute to work and over 60% work outside of the city. Most commuters drive their own vehicles but a small portion carpool, use transit, walk, or telework. The city has a walk score of 31 indicating that commuters are still car dependent.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

- Carpool coordination through ConnectingVA mobile app and website
- Vanpool coordination through Enterprise
- BRITE Transit routes (Waynesboro Circulator, Stuarts Draft Link, and 250 Connector); Afton Express Commuter route connecting to Charlottesville.
- 1 park and ride lot (Waynesboro Town Center)

COMMUTER PATTERNS AND NEEDS

- Commuter survey results indicate that most workers who commute outside of Waynesboro are traveling to Charlottesville and Albemarle County. These commuters must traverse Afton Mountain on I-64, making for a challenging and stressful commute.
- **Opportunity!** With new large employers coming into Waynesboro, establishing vanpools early may help those commuting to the city. The continued growth of the Afton Express serves as a resource for those who must travel outside of Waynesboro for work.

APPENDIX - REGIONAL WALK SCORES

Walk Score is a measure of how walkable a location is, determined by the distance to nearby amenities like schools, restaurants, parks, and grocery stores. It indicates how easily someone can navigate the area on foot without needing a car. Additionally, Walk Score offers a Bike Score and Transit Score to evaluate the availability of bike infrastructure and public transportation options.

Scores range from 0 to 100, with 0 representing the least walkable areas and 100 reflecting the most walkable.

Walk Score	Description
90 - 100	Walkers Paradise; Daily errands do not require a car.
70 - 89	Very Walkable; Most errands can be accomplished on foot.
50 - 69	Somewhat Walkable; Some errands can be accomplished on foot.
25 - 49	Car-Dependent; Most errands require a car.
0 - 24	Car-Dependent; Almost all errands require a car.

Below are the available walk, transit, and bike scores for each of the 16 localities in the RideShare service area. For a full explanation of methodology and to explore the Walk Score resource, visit: <https://www.walkscore.com/>

PDC	Locality	Walk Score	Transit Score	Bike Score
TJPDC	Greene County	0	-	-
	Charlottesville City	58	38	57
	Albemarle County	12	-	9
	Louisa County	0	-	19
	Fluvanna County	0	-	9
	Nelson County	27	-	26
CSPDC	Augusta County	0	-	-
	Bath County	0	-	-
	Buena Vista City	65	-	48
	Harrisonburg City	45	31	40
	Highland County	0	-	-
	Lexington City	87	-	54
	Rockbridge County	0	-	-
	Rockingham County	0	-	-
	Staunton City	35	-	22
	Waynesboro City	31	-	30

Source: *Walk Score, 2024*



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PLAN PREPARED BY: LAUNCH! CONSULTING, INC.
914 E. JEFFERSON ST., SUITE G4
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA 22902
WWW.LAUNCH-CONSULTING.COM
(434) 481-1845 | ADMIN@LAUNCH-CONSULTING.COM