



FY 2026 WORK PLAN

Approved: June 26, 2025

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Introduction

In 2021, the Commute.org Board of Directors adopted **Strategic Plan 2025**, a bold and forward-looking document that has guided the agency for the past four years. Developed during the height of the pandemic, the plan balanced known challenges and opportunities with the uncertainty of the moment. The result was an ambitious roadmap that positioned Commute.org to evolve and lead in a rapidly changing transportation landscape.

As we enter Fiscal Year 2026, the agency remains firmly grounded in the current strategic plan while actively developing a new plan that will guide the next five years. Though it is still early in that process, we anticipate that the core objectives of Strategic Plan 2025 will remain central to the new strategy. These core objectives are:

- **Ensure Organizational Sustainability**
- **Integrate Equity Principles Across All Programs**
- **Develop Programs and Services to Meet Emergent Challenges and Opportunities**
- **Expand Participation in Core Programs**

By staying focused on these strategic goals and aligning annual initiatives accordingly, Commute.org has made substantial progress toward realizing the original vision. While challenges remain, the agency has successfully delivered on many key priorities over the past several years.

This Work Plan outlines our initiatives for the fiscal year beginning **July 1, 2025**, and ending **June 30, 2026**. It draws heavily from Strategic Plan 2025, while also incorporating elements that signal our transition to a new planning phase. Some initiatives go beyond the current plan, laying the foundation for future strategic priorities.

A central tenet of Commute.org's approach is adaptability. The combination of **Core Activities, Key Initiatives, and Special Projects** described in the pages that follow reflects our commitment to evolving in response to shifting conditions.

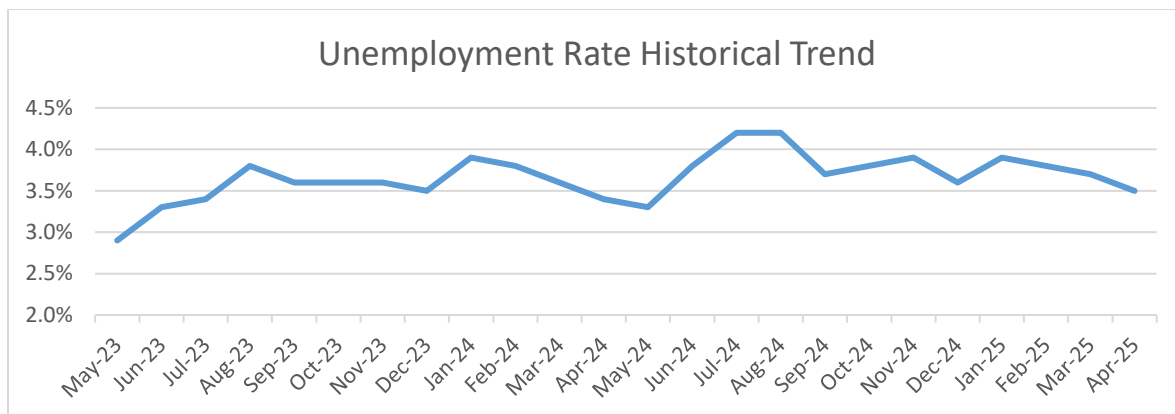
In developing this Work Plan, staff considered not only the strategic framework but also broader factors such as **economic trends, public policy developments, program performance metrics, and funding outlooks**. Taken together, these lenses suggest that FY 2026 will be a year of both challenge and opportunity.

External Environment: Context and Considerations

At the federal level, shifts in policy are deprioritizing environmental initiatives and reducing support for alternative transportation, which is already having an impact on local agencies and commuters. Further changes could exacerbate these effects in the year ahead.

The possibility of an economic slowdown remains. Although San Mateo County has been buffered from past recessions by its strong base of tech and biotech employment, new tariffs and market pressures raise the risk of decreased hiring and overall economic activity. If realized, these trends may reduce traffic congestion while increasing demand for shared and public transportation options.

As of April 2025, the unemployment rate in the San Francisco–Redwood City–South San Francisco Metro Division was 3.5%, up slightly from the prior year. In San Mateo County, it was 3.4%, indicating a relatively stable but cautious labor market.



Unemployment San Francisco-San Mateo County Metro Division April 2025 (source: EDD)

Changing Commute Patterns

Commuters in the Bay Area are still adjusting to the post-pandemic reality. While most people have settled into their “new normal” commute pattern, many employers are implementing policies that may disrupt the “new normal” as employees spend more time in-office. While those changes may not directly impact a lot of commuters, the increase in vehicle traffic that comes with more in-office demand will have a deleterious impact on commuters in general.

The Bay Area Council Economic Institute’s Return to Office Tracking Poll provides valuable insights into shifting commute behavior. According to the February 2025 survey:

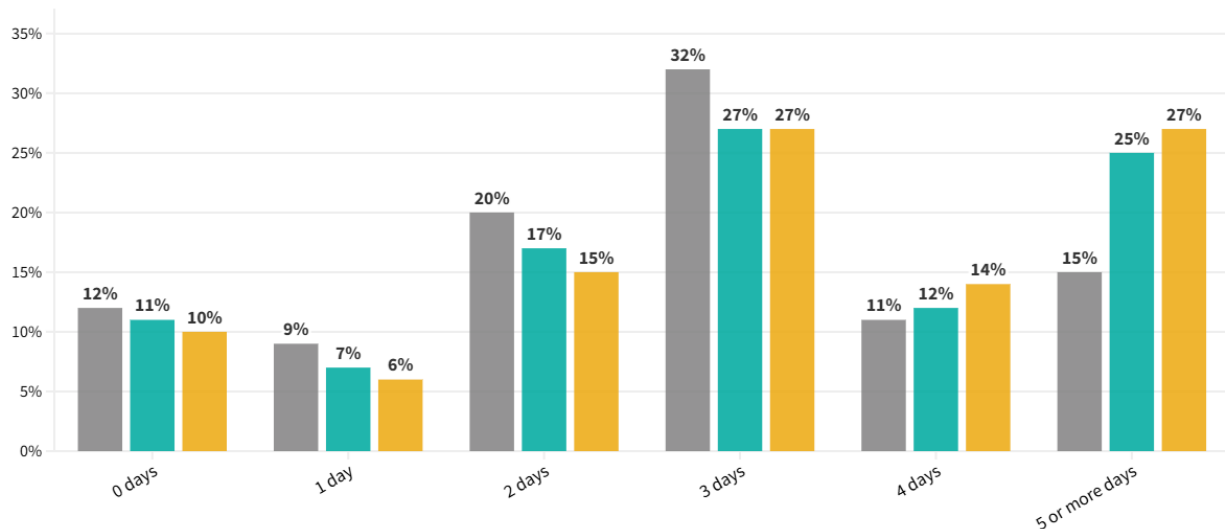
- Sixty-four percent of employees are currently working in the office three or more days per week.
- Employers expect this to rise to sixty-eight percent in the next six months.
- In-person work is concentrated midweek, but Monday and Friday are both seeing notable increases compared to previous years.

These trends suggest growing commute demand across the full workweek, creating new challenges for traffic congestion and opportunities for expanded transit use and shared mobility.

What is your best estimate of the frequency your Bay Area workforce comes to the workplace each week?

Percentages are averaged across responses.

■ Last year (March 2024) ■ Current (February 2025) ■ In 6 months (August 2025)



Bay Area Council Return to Office Survey (February 2025)

Public Policy Developments

Policy shifts are also influencing the TDM landscape. One such issue is the potential elimination of the Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefit (IRS Code 132(f)), which allows employees to use pre-tax dollars for commuting expenses. This benefit is under review in ongoing federal tax negotiations. If eliminated, it could lead to reduced transit ridership as the effective cost of commuting rises.

At the same time, local transit agencies face looming budgetary shortfalls. A regional sales tax measure for transportation will tentatively be on the ballot in November 2026. Even so, agencies like BART, Caltrain, and Muni may still need to reduce service or consolidate routes to maintain operations.

Moving Forward

Despite these challenges, Commute.org enters FY 2026 from a position of strength. The agency benefits from a dedicated and experienced staff, a supportive and engaged board of directors, stable funding, and strong partnerships with employers and public agencies. These assets enable us to continue delivering on our mission: to provide guidance, education, encouragement, and alternatives to solo driving for commuters in San Mateo County.

As we look ahead, the agency's adaptability and commitment to innovation will be critical. FY 2026 will be a pivotal year—one in which we maintain momentum, embrace new opportunities, and navigate an evolving landscape with resilience and resolve.

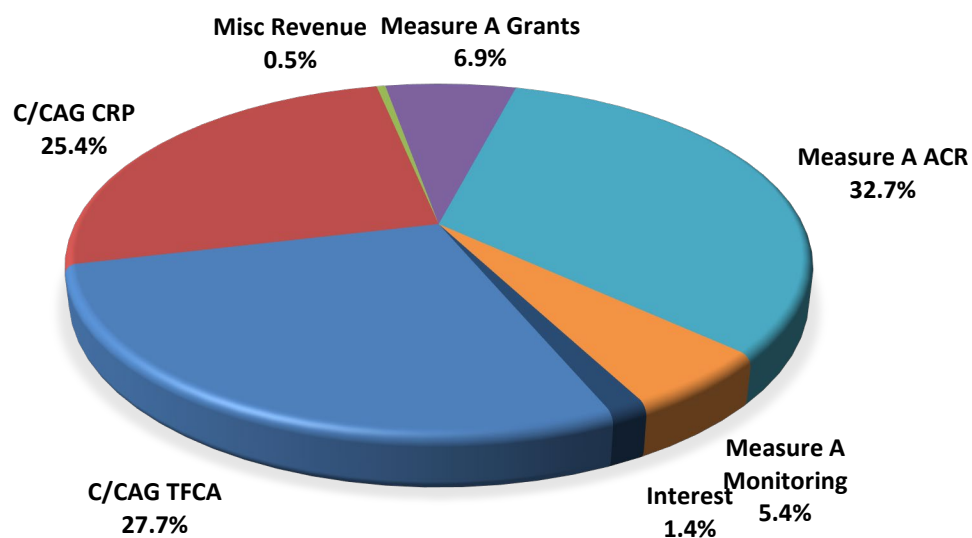
About the Agency

Commute.org is San Mateo County's Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Agency. The agency's members include nineteen cities and towns as well as the County of San Mateo. Working together, Commute.org and its members seek to promote and encourage people to use transportation options other than driving alone. The goal of TDM programming is to shift demand for transportation across all available modes including walking, biking, transit, teleworking, and ridesharing.

Formed as a Joint Powers Agency (JPA) in 2000, Commute.org is managed by a Board of Directors that includes one representative from each of the twenty members (cities, towns, county). The Board of Directors has five regularly scheduled meetings during the fiscal year.

The agency currently has two standing committees, Supervisory and Finance, each of which meets up to five times each fiscal year. The Supervisory Committee is comprised of up to nine appointees from member agencies and partners. The Finance Committee comprises three board members and two Supervisory Committee representatives.

Commute.org is funded through a variety of local government sources along with contributions from public and private employers supporting the shuttle program. As shown in the chart below, the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA), the City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG) of San Mateo County, and the Bay Area Air District (BAAD) provide most of the funding for all non-shuttle programs.



Projected Revenue Sources (ex Shuttles) for FY 2026

Commute.org uses the congestion relief funding it receives from various sources to focus on programming that targets the closely aligned objectives of the funding partners. That approach, combined with Commute.org's size and independence, allows the agency to focus on commute-specific travel to and from the county using a wide range of TDM strategies.

Commute.org's shuttle program is funded through grants received from the SMCTA and contributions from private and public employers (shuttle consortium members). The revenue received from these sources passes through the Commute.org budget to pay the shuttle service contractor and other shuttle program-specific expenses. Shuttle administration and marketing services provided by Commute.org are paid for by the general funding sources and are supplemented by administrative and marketing fees paid by consortium members and SMCTA.

Commute.org currently has eight full-time employees and one temporary employee. Due to the elimination of funding for Sustainability Service Corps, a program of AmeriCorps, at the federal level, we will not be able to continue with the fellowship position. This year's fellow is completing her term as a temporary employee. Thereafter, we are looking to add one full-time employee to assist with program and agency administration.

Staff members are assigned to one of four functional areas: Engagement Programs, Commuter Programs, Shuttle Program, and Administration; however, the organization operates in a cross-functional style with members of each team collaborating on projects to maximize the effectiveness of the agency.

Section 1: Core Activities

Commute.org's core activities target San Mateo County residents who commute to work or college as well as commuters coming from outside the county to worksites and colleges in San Mateo County. We promote our programs and services directly to commuters as well as work to develop relationships with employers, non-profit organizations, school districts, industry groups, community partners, and government agencies. We leverage those relationships to reach a larger portion of the commuter population.

The agency's core programs fall into four categories:

- Engagement
- Programs & Services
- Countywide TDM Monitoring Program
- Shuttle Program

In this section of the Work Plan, we describe the objectives of each program and detail the action items that are planned for the coming fiscal year.


Engagement

Outreach & Engagement

Objective: Increase adoption of commute alternative programs by commuters, employers, and other organizations in San Mateo County by providing TDM tools, education, resources, programs, and expertise.

FY 2026 Action Items:

- Continue to reengage with commuters, employers, and other stakeholders.
- Establish new relationships with employers in underserved or underrepresented industries and geographic sectors, which have been identified as part of the agency's Equity Project. Many of the difficult-to-reach employers do not have commute programs or staff assigned to assist employees with commute alternatives, so different tactics are required.
- Use a combination of existing and new direct marketing and outreach approaches to identify organizations that will benefit from our TDM programs and services. Not all employers will need the full suite of programs that we offer but making sure that they know Commute.org is there for them when they do need assistance is critical.



2025 CALENDAR

NEVER MISS A CHANCE TO WIN
EARN POINTS, ENTER RAFFLES, AND WIN REWARDS FOR YOUR COMMUTE!

How to Participate
Track your sustainable commute trips* to work or college to/from San Mateo County on the CommuteStar app or at mycommute.org for your chance to win!

How it Works
Each day you track a trip = 1 point and 1 raffle entry
Winners are randomly selected & notified by email

<p>JANUARY FEBRUARY MARCH</p>	<p>NEW APP PROMOTION Download the new Commuteststar app and log your first sustainable commute trip for a chance to win a San Francisco Vacation Package</p>
<p>APRIL MAY</p>	<p>COMMUTER CHALLENGE Log your sustainable commute trips for a chance to win weekly & grand prizes (up to \$3,000 in prizes) BIKE MONTH Log bike trips during Bike to Work Week (May 12-16) to win more</p>
<p>JULY AUGUST</p>	<p>SUMMER PROMOTION Log your sustainable commute trips for a chance to win a \$100 e-gift card – 3 winners</p>
<p>SEPTEMBER</p>	<p>TRANSIT MONTH Log transit, ferry or shuttle trips to win a \$100 e-gift card—2 winners</p>
<p>OCTOBER</p>	<p>CARPPOOL MONTH Log carpool or vanpool trips to win a \$100 e-gift card—2 winners</p>

COMMUTESTAR STORE: YEAR-ROUND CHANCES TO WIN!

30 pts = 1 entry to win a \$25 e-gift card
50 pts = 1 entry to win a Swag box
100 pts = \$10 Nonprofit donation

Quarterly drawing deadlines
(\$25 e-gift card / Swag box)
March 31st June 30th Sept 30th Dec 31st

*Eligible sustainable commute trips: train, bus, shuttle, ferry, carpool, vanpool, bike, walk, or remote work

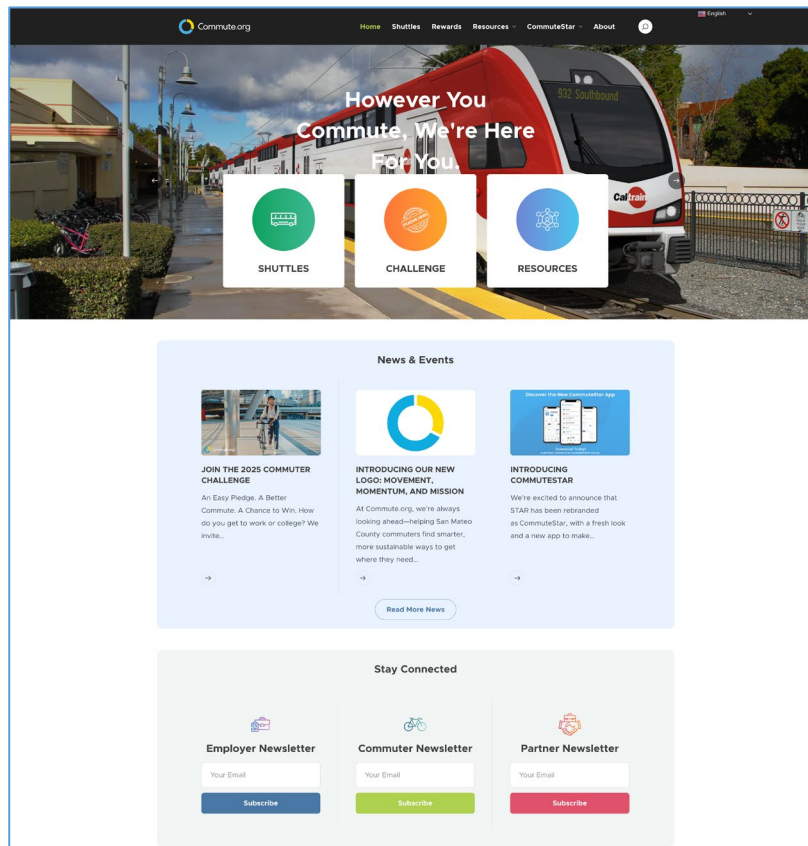
2025 Promotions Calendar

- Continue to adapt our employer-focused programs to address the evolving needs of hybrid workforces. Many employers are open to innovative programs and services to offer their employees, and Commute.org can provide them with a suite of tools that brings their employees value for truly little effort.
- Participate in employer-sponsored onsite events, typically hosted by large employers or property managers. Our engagement teams are available to provide information on the commuter programs and incentives and further the relationship with the host of the events.



Onsite Community Event

- Develop marketing campaigns designed to raise awareness of specific programs and/or connections to Commute.org via the website. The agency has effectively used social media, digital ads (e.g., Google, Meta, LinkedIn, Nextdoor), bus side graphics, and bus shelter posters, to promote the full suite of programs. We will also use direct mail to target residents and hard-to-reach employers. Geotargeted social media campaigns and direct mail are being used to focus on Commute.org's equity target groups.
- Use the website to provide useful information about transportation alternatives in San Mateo County to the broad range of stakeholders. The site is designed to serve multiple purposes: real-time shuttle information, resources for employers, program information, and agency governance. That mixture of purposes means that the content must be reviewed and updated frequently. A Google translate add-in is now available on the website for visitors to translate the content into multiple languages.
- Commute.org website will undergo a review of its SEO (Search engine optimization), which is the process of improving the quality and quantity of website traffic to a website or a web page from search engines.



Commute.org Website Home Page

- Produce and distribute a bimonthly e-newsletter for employers to share TDM best practices, compliance, and other general topics with our vast array of subscribers. Over 3,000 employer and partner contacts receive the newsletter.
- Produce and distribute a monthly e-newsletter for commuters called the Commuter Club with news and resources, which is currently sent to over 20,000 subscribers. The team studies “open rates” and other metrics to make sure the content is valuable and timely.
- Produce and distribute a quarterly e-newsletter for community partners to share Commute.org’s programs and services and special news for community partners. This newsletter was created after the Equity Analysis in FY 2023 and is targeted at groups serving people less represented in Commute.org’s programs. Translation is available if needed.

Partnership Development

Objective: Develop partnerships with public and private sector entities that facilitate the growth and adoption of TDM measures throughout San Mateo County. Commute.org has become the recognized leader for TDM programming and support services in San Mateo County; however, it, which requires consistent and ongoing efforts to maintain that status.

FY 2026 Action Items:

- Expand our roster of active partners in the public, private, and non-profit sectors.
- Leverage the partner relationships to assist in achieving our mission of significantly reducing vehicle miles traveled by commuters in San Mateo County. Our partners are known and trusted by their constituents, which allows our programs to reach a much larger segment of the population than if we do it alone.
- Design and implement new methods for connecting with organizations that have not been reached by our prior methods. The Equity Project has identified a new set of targets and organizations that we will need to engage with to expand the reach of our programs. Working with and through community-based organizations has proven to be a good model and we are building on that effort via the pilot Community Partner Program (see Key Initiatives) as well as the Caltrain Pass Forward program. Like the employer engagement levels, activities with community partners will be tracked in OneCommute to assess levels of engagement.
- Represent San Mateo County on regional boards, committees, and task forces.
- Strengthen relationships with TDM agencies across the Bay Area, which is increasingly important as we collaborate on regional initiatives. CommuteStar is a leader in the Bay Area Commuter Carpool Network, connecting with six other county agencies. This integration enables commuters to find ride matches throughout the Bay Area, enhancing regional connectivity and commuting options.

- Assist recipients of the TA's ACR/TDM Program funding with their TDM studies and projects. All recipients are JPA members, therefore we have an established relationship and can add value to their projects.
- Expand financial participation by employers, property owners, and residential communities on consortium-funded shuttle routes. Additional participation lowers the cost for all participants and helps to ensure the sustainability of the shuttle program.
- Work with partners who are collaborating on measures to expand TDM practices throughout San Mateo County.

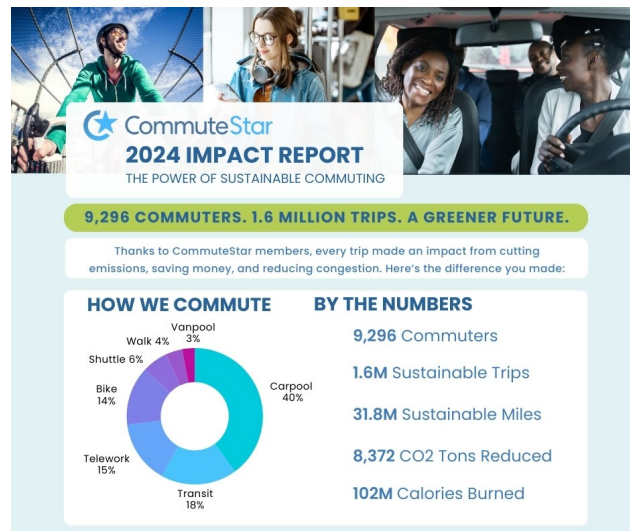
Programs & Services

Objective: Provide commuters and employers with effective tools, programs, and incentives that not only encourage a shift away from drive-alone commuting but also sustain continued use of preferred sustainable modes. Areas of work include:

Promote the CommuteStar tool

CommuteStar is a free web and mobile app powered by RideAmigos and customized for Commute.org. It serves as a centralized hub for commuter engagement by helping users plan, track, and coordinate sustainable commute options. Available at no cost to commuters and employers, CommuteStar enhances access to valuable commuter benefits. Key features to promote include:

- Rewards and challenges that incentivize sustainable travel
- Matching tools for carpools, vanpools, and bike partners
- Trip planning capabilities
- Employer-specific networks for internal commuter support
- An integrated GHG emissions calculator to measure the environmental impact of tracked trips.
- Demographic survey that gathers anonymized data on user profiles, enabling Commute.org to identify and engage underrepresented groups.



2024 CommuteStar Impact Report

Leverage the Annual Commuter Challenge to Engage New Commuters

The Commuter Challenge is a flagship outreach campaign that encourages commuters to try sustainable transportation through a simple, rewarding experience. Planned activities include:

- The simplified model introduced in FY 2024 will continue in FY 2026, allowing participants to pledge to use non-drive-alone modes during April and May. Pledging automatically enters them into a raffle for one of five grand prizes.
- CommuteStar membership will be actively promoted during the Challenge to encourage deeper engagement and enable year-round support and rewards.
- Promotional efforts will include bilingual campaign materials and coordinated outreach through employers and community partners.

Promotion for 2025 Commuter Challenge

Seasonal Promotions for Year-Round Engagement

Strategic promotions tied to seasonal and regional events help maintain momentum and deepen commuter engagement throughout the year. Core Campaigns Include:

- Transit Month
- Rideshare Month
- Winter and Summer Campaigns
- Earth Week
- Bike Month

Additional Strategies:

- Launch new campaigns aligned with timely milestones such as the New Year, back-to-school, and major holidays.
- Feature-tailored messaging, branded content, and social media to drive participation.
- Provide custom promotions to new employers joining the CommuteStar network to accelerate employee onboarding and participation.



Transit Month Promotion

Increase awareness of the Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Program

The GRH program provides “commute insurance” for San Mateo County-based commuters and college students who use sustainable modes. When an eligible emergency or event arises (e.g., illness, family emergency, unexpected overtime, bicycle breakdown), the program reimburses a ride home or to a transit hub. Key actions for this year include:

- Require CommuteStar registration and trip logging for GRH reimbursement eligibility.
- Launch a multilingual marketing and education campaign to promote GRH to employers, community partners, and commuters—available in English, Spanish, and other languages upon request.



GRH Promotion

Increase Participation in the Commute Rewards Programs

These incentive programs provide direct rewards to encourage carpooling, vanpooling, and bicycling to work or college.

Carpool/Vanpool Incentives: Participants earn \$25 for every 10 days of logged carpooling or vanpooling using CommuteStar, with a maximum reward of \$100 per year.

Bicycling Incentives: Participants earn \$25 for every 10 days of logged biking to work. Commuters log bicycle commutes using Strava or CommuteStar. For every 10 days of biking to work, participants receive \$25, with a maximum reward of \$100 per year.

Program Evaluation: Conduct post-incentive surveys to assess continued use of commute alternatives. Include demographic questions to better understand participation across different population groups.



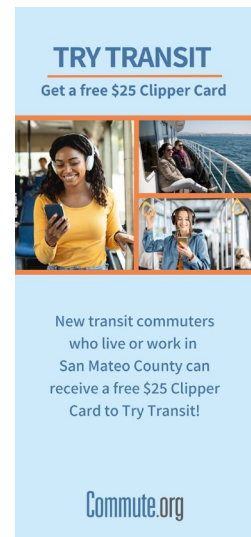
Commute Rewards Materials

Try Transit Incentive Program

Objective: Increase the number of commuters traveling to or from San Mateo County on public transit by offering a free \$25 Clipper card to individuals who have not previously used transit for commuting.

FY 2026 Action Item:

- Promote the program through Commute.org’s regular commuter, employer, and community e-newsletters.
- Educate commuters about public transit options and the Try Transit program at employer outreach and community events.
- Partner with employer HR departments to include Try Transit information in new hire onboarding materials.
- Conduct follow-up surveys with incentive recipients to assess ongoing transit use, collect demographic data, and evaluate program effectiveness.



TDM Programming and Support

Objective: Provide TDM programming and support services to employers and organizations throughout San Mateo County. Most employers in San Mateo County do not have dedicated resources or expertise in TDM programming; therefore, Commute.org serves as a valuable, no-cost resource to those employers. For employers who have their own programs and dedicated staff, Commute.org can supplement their programs to make them even more effective.

FY 2026 Action Items:

- Maintain employer and partner information using OneCommute, a cloud-based platform that manages employer and partner outreach. The platform serves as a comprehensive database for capturing addresses, contact details, TDM programs offered by employers, compliance with the Bay Area Commuter Benefits Program, and engagement with Commute.org. Staff maintain the platform to ensure data accuracy and relevance. The captured data is instrumental in evaluating the agency's outreach efforts and gaining insights into our employers and partners for targeted engagement.
- Use the OneCommute platform and employer engagement tracking to monitor the types of industries that Commute.org regularly engages with. Use this information to understand if we are reaching the diversity of industries throughout the county and how to target efforts.
- Promote the use of CommuteStar by employers and organizations. CommuteStar allows individual employers, cities, and organizations to have their own unique "networks" under the Commute.org license. Each network is a subset of the overall system, so network participants have access to their network-specific programs as well as the host of programs available to everyone.
- Provide ongoing support services to San Mateo County employers who are required to comply with the Bay Area Commuter Benefits Program (Regulation 14, Rule 1). Since the pandemic, many of the employers in the Bay Area have failed to register or update their compliance annually. We strive for San Mateo County to have the highest compliance rate of any county in the Bay Area.
- Develop TDM tools including infographics, guides, tip sheets, social media campaigns, webinars, videos, and white papers that are used to introduce employers without a formal TDM program or coordinator to commute alternatives as well as providing useful information to employers who do have formal transportation coordinators.
- Coordinate bicycle safety and training workshops with employers by a certified bicycle safety instructor to provide rules of the road for cyclists, tips on buying a bicycle, and bicycle maintenance instruction. Providing bicycle education is a proven way to get people comfortable using a bike for all or a portion of their commute.



In-Person Bike Education Seminar

- Provide managerial support to the San Mateo Rail Corridor TMA. Commute.org has served as the administrator of the TMA since 2011. This service has also allowed the agency to develop relationships with the TMA members and city staff. The experience we gain continues to assist us as we work with other cities and business districts on TMA program development.
- Host an annual event alternating between employers and jurisdiction staff. Prior to the pandemic, Commute.org held annual in-person events to further engage with employers. This event was reintroduced as an online employer seminar in May 2024 and as an in-person TDM workshop for jurisdiction staff in February 2025. Moving forward, these events will alternate each year – focusing on employers one year and jurisdiction staff the next. In 2026, Commute.org will host an in-person half-day conference for employers, designed to share TDM best practices, highlight success stories, provide networking opportunities, and promote ongoing engagement with Commute.org. The jurisdiction-focused event will continue to support local implementation efforts and provide training and tools to staff. Both events are aimed at fostering collaboration and enhancing the impact of TDM programs.
- Implement an ongoing employer survey using the OneCommute platform. Commute.org distributed the employer survey in Q4 of 2024 but received limited response. In FY 2026, staff will conduct more targeted outreach and use incentives to increase participation. This survey is designed to gather information on the TDM programs employers offer and collect feedback on Commute.org's programs. Staff will leverage OneCommute to efficiently capture and analyze survey data, using that data to update existing employer information. Survey participation will be encouraged with incentives. Commute.org will utilize findings to report on countywide TDM program offerings, enhance program effectiveness, and tailor services to meet employer needs.

Employer Recognition Program

Objective: Acknowledge and reward employers for actively promoting our programs and services among their employees. This program encourages more frequent and meaningful engagement by allowing employers to earn points for each activity and achieve annual certification in Bronze, Silver, and Gold tiers.

FY 2026 Action items

- Maintain and refine guidelines for point allocation and tier qualifications based on feedback and data from FY 2025. Staff will review and adjust point allocations and tier thresholds as needed to ensure fairness and clarity.
- Continue promoting the program through the employer e-news, social media, direct communications, and partner channels to increase awareness and participation.
- Support and engage participating employers by sending regular progress updates, offering guidance on how to earn additional points, and sharing upcoming engagement opportunities.
- Track engagement activities and tier status on OneCommute. Staff will regularly report on the program's progress and outcomes and share key metrics.
- Recognize certified employers, including at the 2026 employer event. Staff will issue certificates, plaques, and/or digital badges to recognized employers. Commute.org will also acknowledge certified employers on our website, employer e-news, and social media.
- Explore added incentives to make the program more enticing, such as offering exclusive benefits to participating employers. This may include hosting on-site ice cream parties featuring a brief presentation on Commute.org's programs and services to boost awareness and engagement in a fun and memorable way.

Countywide Bicycle Education Program

Objective: The Countywide Bicycle Education Program, funded by the San Mateo County Transportation Authority and C/CAG, encourages greater bicycle use for transportation in the county. It seeks to achieve this by offering a minimum of fifteen free, public, adult classes across the county and certifying ten new League Certified Instructors (LCIs) from January 2026 to December 2027. Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC) is a key program partner, responsible for providing educators and managing course logistics.

FY 2026 Action Items:

- Commute.org will review collateral, post information through Commute.org's social media accounts, and share information with Member Agencies (19 cities in San

Mateo County and the County of San Mateo) about scheduled free, public, bike education classes.

- Coordinate planning and class facilitation with SVBC.
- Review and update Marketing and Evaluation Plans as needed.
- Update and print a Countywide Bicycle Map, which was last updated in 2015. This resource is popular with residents and workers in SMC, particularly at events throughout the county at which Commute.org tables. It is complementary to the Countywide Bicycle Education Program as an updated bike map will be important for the new and enthusiastic bike riders trained through the program.

Countywide Caltrain Pass Forward Program

In partnership with Caltrain, Commute.org provides income-qualified San Mateo County commuters with free, annual Caltrain Go Passes. This program allows us to engage deeper with a great diversity of people across the income spectrum by providing no-cost public transit to commuters who can benefit the most. This also opens an opportunity to collaborate with employers and commuters from different geographic and industry sectors to assist in making Caltrain an affordable option to travel to work.

We utilize the Pass Forward program to build and/or strengthen relationships with community-based organizations that can help identify prospective applicants. Key actions for this year include:

FY 2026 Action Items

- Promote and distribute the remainder of the six hundred Clipper Cards with Go Passes that were allocated to Commute.org for calendar year 2025. Materials are currently available in English, Spanish, and Simplified Chinese and we have the resources to communicate with people speaking other languages as needed.
- If Caltrain continues the program in 2026 and allocates passes to Commute.org, distribute the allocated Go Passes to eligible applicants throughout calendar year 2026.
- Engage with at least thirty community organizations to publicize the program to its members.
- Provide ongoing support to recipients on riding Caltrain using Caltrain, CommuteStar, Clipper, and other transportation services.

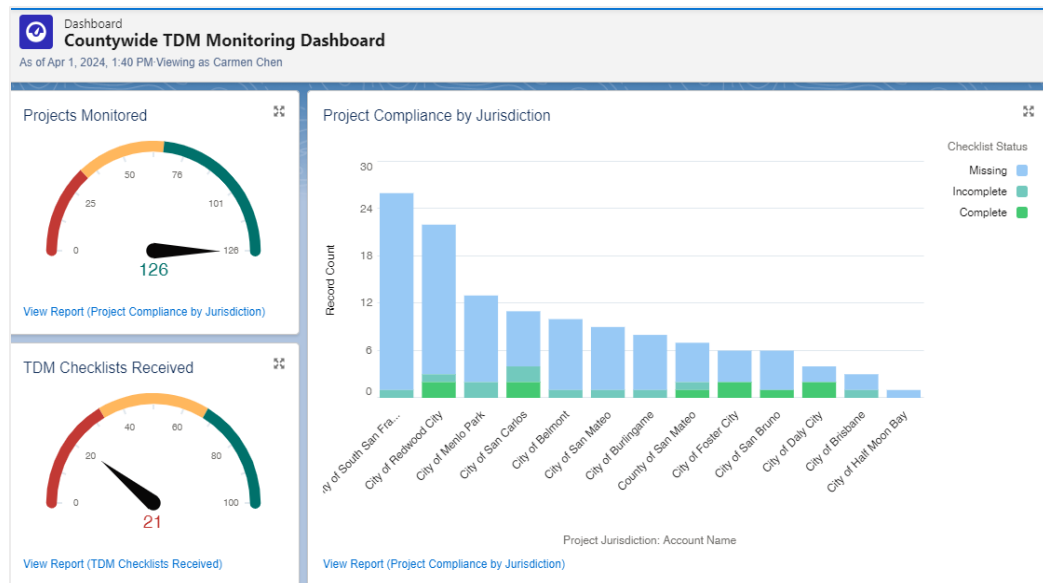
Countywide TDM Monitoring Program

TDM Policy Monitoring

Objectives: Ensure countywide TDM policy compliance by providing guidance and monitoring support to local jurisdictions and project applicants subject to the C/CAG Countywide TDM Policy. Commute.org also offers that same level of support to exempt jurisdictions with their own policies.

FY 2026 Action Items:

- Regularly update and maintain the OneCommute platform to ensure accurate and up-to-date tracking of TDM policy compliance across all jurisdictions. This platform, which is also used for employer and partner engagement, serves as a centralized platform to document and report on compliance.
- Monitor and review data on the OneCommute platform to ensure that all new development projects subject to the TDM Policy are tracked. Staff will continue to send periodic updates to jurisdictions regarding individual projects to ensure TDM policy compliance.



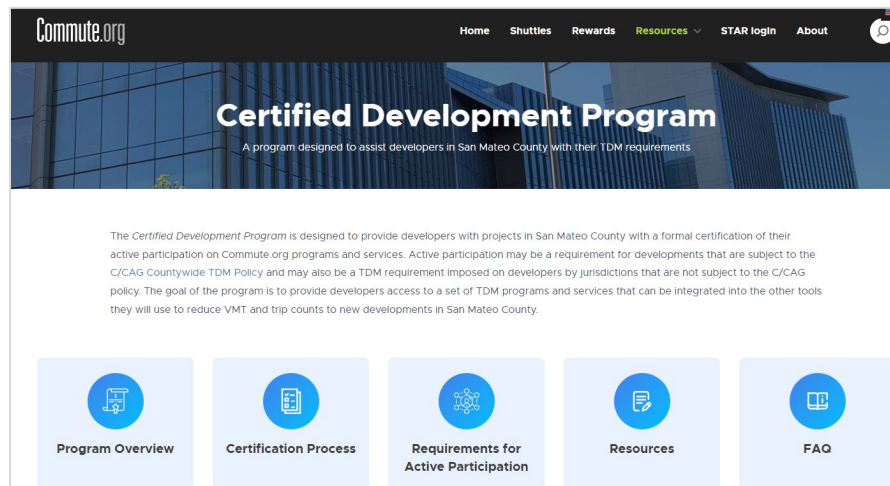
TDM Monitoring Dashboard on OneCommute

- Hold “office hours” for jurisdictions, developers, and consultants. Many smaller jurisdictions and those with limited staff availability have difficulty monitoring and enforcing TDM requirements for developers. Commute.org helps free up limited jurisdiction staff time by providing guidance and monitoring support.

- Customize the OneCommute platform for exempt jurisdictions interested in using OneCommute to track their own TDM policies. South San Francisco is pending exemption and will be our first test case for using the platform to distribute monitoring reports in Fall 2026.
- Onboard new jurisdiction staff that have requested login credentials for the OneCommute platform. Staff will be available for ongoing technical assistance.
- Automate and streamline monitoring reports using OneCommute, notifying staff and jurisdictions when monitoring reports are due for projects post-occupancy. Staff will continue to finalize and evaluate these automated notifications.
- Report on countywide TDM policy compliance, using OneCommute to prepare reports summarizing compliance and the effectiveness of TDM policies across the county.
- Work with C/CAG to maintain regular communications with local jurisdictions and regional boards and committees to address compliance challenges and share updates on policy changes.
- Gather feedback from jurisdictions and project applicants to continuously improve the monitoring process and support provided.

Certified Development Program

Objectives: Assist developers in San Mateo County with meeting their TDM requirements. The program supports C/CAG TDM Policy compliance and provides development projects with a formal certification of their active participation in Commute.org programs and services.



Certified Development Program Webpage

FY 2026 Action Items:

- Hold “office hours” for developers to learn about the certification process and requirements. Commute.org will continue to meet with projects post-certification to maintain and enhance their participation in Commute.org programs.
- Increase outreach to developers and jurisdictions to raise awareness of the Certified Development Program, extending beyond projects mandated by the C/CAG TDM Policy. Developers can certify their projects to demonstrate their commitment to TDM and benefit from Commute.org resources. The program is also a valuable tool for jurisdictions to promote and enforce TDM by ensuring active participation with Commute.org.
- Maintain a database of certified projects and monitor their ongoing compliance and engagement on the OneCommute platform. Commute.org will notify jurisdictions of projects that lose their certification status.
- Support certified developments through ongoing engagement, offering resources and guidance to maintain compliance with the TDM program and ensuring projects continue to meet their TDM goals post-certification.

Shuttle Program

Shuttle Program Development and Management

Objectives: Provide safe and dependable first/last mile shuttle services between employment centers, hospitals, and residential areas in San Mateo County and Caltrain, BART, and San Francisco Bay Ferry stations/terminals so that people can utilize public transit as a means of commuting to or from the county.



Commute.org Shuttle in South San Francisco

- Work with consortiums of employers, property managers, and municipalities to provide matching funds to operate the service and to attract and retain ridership.
- Provide shuttle services that are equitable, accessible, financially sustainable, and successful as measured by the funders' targets and benchmarks.

FY 2026 Action Items:

- Commute.org currently operates nineteen different shuttle routes that operate in nine cities throughout the county. All nineteen routes receive funding from the SMCTA Measure A Countywide Shuttle Program. Three of the routes also receive a portion of their funding through the C/CAG TFCA Regional Shuttle program.
- SMCTA recently conducted a Call for Projects (CFP) for the FY 2026/2027 funding period. Commute.org applied for funding for seventeen routes, two fewer than operated in FY 2025. The results of the CFP are still unknown; however, all seventeen routes have been recommended for funding.
- Costs for the new funding period will increase approximately 70 percent per operating hour due to an increase in the vendor rate. That increase puts tremendous strain on the consortium members that provide the matching funds for each route. Staff have been working with the consortium members to educate them on reasons for the increase; however, it will be a challenge to keep the consortium funding intact during this period.
- The Shuttle Team, in coordination with the Engagement Team, have been working to find new employers and property managers to join the consortiums. In some cases, cities make it a requirement for new projects to participate in the shuttle program; however, that is not common throughout the county.
- One route (OTP) was eliminated due to its non-compliance with SMCTA qualifications. Two routes (OPF and UGF) were consolidated and will now operate with a single vehicle serving a larger area. Another route (HCC) was reconfigured to serve areas of San Mateo with greater demand and fewer transit alternatives.
- SamTrans, the agency that holds the contract with the shuttle vendor, executed a two-year extension with the current vendor when the RFP process did not result in a new contract. It is unclear at this time if SamTrans will conduct a new RFP in FY 2026, but if they do, Commute.org will provide any requested support.
- The Shuttle Team works closely with the Engagement Team when opportunities for new and expanded routes arise. If a development project is required to provide shuttle service to their project, then Commute.org sponsored shuttles are often the most economical – especially if there is existing service nearby. Collaborating with developers and their counterparts at the city where the project is located before a project is built allows for better service to be designed.
- Continue using the complaint/compliment logging system to provide formal tracking of issues. Customer service has become increasingly important as new

and returning passengers come to the service. We use text messaging, website alerts, social media, and newsletters to communicate with passengers and program partners.

- Continue to work with public works departments and property managers to maintain and replace route signage at existing and new shuttle stops throughout the county.
- Provide support to local jurisdictions that sponsor bus stop improvement projects. Anything that a city can do to make it easier, safer, and more comfortable for commuters to use transit (including Commute.org shuttles) is important.
- Continue to push our GTFS data (route scheduling) to third-party providers of trip planning and public transit systems and provide the GTFS management for other SamTrans' sponsored routes (e.g., Menlo Park and Daly City Bayshore). Having our route information available on as many systems as possible helps provide "seamless" trip planning for passengers.
- Conduct shuttle monitoring checks to ensure vendor compliance with agency policies and procedures. Each route is reviewed and monitored at least quarterly. This target may grow as additional routes are added to Commute.org shuttle management program. Much of the route monitoring can be done remotely with the tracking tools; however, in-person checks are still important to conduct.
- Conduct the annual passenger survey to assess satisfaction. The survey also includes demographic questions so that the agency can use this information to understand the ridership.
- Continue to provide updates and outreach to passengers through newsletters, shuttle flyer postings, social media content, and text alerts. We believe it is important to increase our digital presence to encourage usage and awareness of the shuttle program.



Shuttle Stop in Foster City

Section 2: Key Initiatives

In addition to core programs, the agency focuses on several “Key Initiatives” each year. Key Initiatives can be one-time projects, time-critical tasks, program redesigns, or projects that require special funding. In some cases, Key Initiatives can span multiple years, but they can also be projects completed in a single year. Key Initiatives for the upcoming fiscal year include:

- Community Partner Program
- Countywide Vanpool Subsidy Program
- AI Initiative

Community Partner Program

In 2023, the agency conducted outreach to priority audiences that have been less represented in our programs and in 2024, developed a pilot grant program to improve engagement with those audiences. The objective of this pilot program is to increase participation and input from communities currently underrepresented in Commute.org’s programs. Through this grant program, we hope to see sustained engagement with Community Partners that represent and serve these communities, thereby increasing awareness and use of our programs and services, and transportation options throughout San Mateo County.

Grants of \$5,000 were awarded to three organizations working in San Mateo County for activities to be completed within one year, starting July 1, 2024:

- El Concilio of San Mateo County
- Climate Resilient Communities
- Friends for Youth

Grant recipients are asked to:

- Promote Commute.org’s programs and services to their community
- Help enroll their constituents in Commute.org programs
- Collaborate with Commute.org on the development and refinement of programs and services that best meet the needs of the community

The Commute.org Board approved the extension of the current pilot program for FY 2026. This will give the current grantees the opportunity to participate in the pilot for a second year with an increased annual grant amount of \$7500. This will also allow staff more time to improve data collection, refine our communication approach, and gather additional data to inform a future program for the following years while maintaining the groundwork that we have achieved with these three grantees.

In early 2026, Commute.org will process quantitative and qualitative results from the program to propose an updated iteration and new call for projects for FY 2027.

Countywide Vanpool Subsidy Program

Commute.org will explore and pursue funding opportunities to launch a dedicated vanpool subsidy program for San Mateo County commuters. The proposed initiative is modeled after successful programs in Santa Clara, Marin, and Contra Costa counties, which offer up to \$500 per month to qualified vanpools in addition to the existing MTC Bay Area Vanpool Program subsidy. The goal is to establish a sustainable, county-supported vanpool subsidy program to reduce single-occupancy vehicle travel, lower commuter costs, and alleviate congestion on key corridors like Highway 101 and regional bridges.

A vanpool is a group of 7 to 15 commuters who regularly travel together in a shared vehicle, driven by one of the riders. Vanpooling is a cost-effective, environmentally responsible alternative to driving alone, especially for long-distance commuters. Key actions include:

- Identify and apply for grant funding through local sources to support a long-term vanpool subsidy program.
- Coordinate with MTC and regional partners to align San Mateo County's program with the existing Bay Area Vanpool Program structure and eligibility criteria.
- Develop and launch a pilot subsidy program offering up to \$500/month for qualifying vanpools that start or end in San Mateo County.
- Conduct targeted outreach to large employers, business parks, and underserved commute corridors to recruit vanpool groups and promote the subsidy.
- Integrate vanpool support into CommuteStar, allowing for streamlined subsidy application, trip tracking, and ongoing communication with participants.
- Evaluate program performance by tracking vanpool formation, cost savings, participant feedback, vehicle miles reduced, and greenhouse gas emissions avoided.

As the cost of commuting continues to rise and congestion worsens on critical corridors, expanding access to vanpooling offers a high-impact, scalable solution. By enabling more commuters to join shared rides, the program would reduce the number of vehicles on the road, support regional climate goals, and improve the quality of life for workers traveling to and from San Mateo County.

AI Initiative

In FY 2026, Commute.org will launch a strategic initiative to enhance customer service through the integration of advanced AI tools, benefiting employers, commuters, and shuttle riders across San Mateo County. The effort will begin with a comprehensive needs

analysis to identify service gaps, recurring inquiries, and communication pain points. This analysis will involve collecting feedback from partner employers, surveying program participants, and evaluating support interactions across existing platforms. The goal is to pinpoint areas where AI-powered solutions can provide faster, more accurate, and more accessible support to all users.

Following the needs assessment, Commute.org will collaborate with technology partners and internal stakeholders to design AI tools tailored to each audience segment. For employers, AI systems may streamline onboarding processes for commute programs, answer frequently asked HR and benefits questions, and provide data-driven recommendations on employee engagement strategies. For commuters and shuttle riders, AI tools will be developed to offer real-time assistance on topics such as route planning, shuttle schedules, incentive eligibility, and troubleshooting transit issues. These systems will be designed with multilingual support and accessibility in mind to ensure equitable service delivery.

Throughout the year, the agency will conduct iterative development and testing of these tools, focusing on training AI agents using Commute.org's knowledge base, customer interaction histories, and public transit data. Pilot programs will be deployed in controlled environments to assess performance, gather user feedback, and refine responses for clarity and effectiveness. AI agents will be built with a strong emphasis on maintaining privacy, accuracy, and alignment with the agency's mission to support sustainable commuting options.

By the end of FY 2026, Commute.org plans to deploy AI agents across key digital touchpoints, including its website, social media channels, and potentially within the CommuteStar app. These agents will provide 24/7 customer service, enabling users to receive immediate answers and support without relying solely on staff availability. The integration of AI into Commute.org's customer service strategy will not only increase operational efficiency but also enhance user experience, ensuring that commuters and employers receive timely, personalized, and reliable information whenever they need it.

Section 3: Special Projects

San Mateo County Commute Profile Survey

The San Mateo County Commute Profile Survey, last conducted in June 2023, is a triennial effort led by Commute.org to better understand local commuting trends, travel behaviors, and interest in sustainable transportation options. Conducted every three years, the survey targets individuals who work full-time or part-time or attend college in San Mateo



County. Planning for the next survey will begin this fiscal year. The results play a critical role in shaping transportation demand management (TDM) strategies, informing program development, and guiding outreach efforts.

To encourage broad participation, Commute.org will again offer raffle prizes to

respondents and provide employers, cities, and partners with unique survey links—enabling customized participation tracking and personalized reports. This approach proved successful in the previous survey cycle and will be repeated. To ensure resident perspectives are captured, at least 10,000 postcards will be mailed to households throughout the county. These efforts aim to produce a comprehensive dataset that supports more effective and inclusive transportation planning across San Mateo County.

Website Accessibility Review Project

In April 2024, the Department of Justice (DOJ) published a Final Rule establishing the technical requirements and standards for public agencies to ensure the accessibility of their web content and mobile apps for people with disabilities. The agency has until April 24, 2026, to comply.

The FY 2026 Website Accessibility Review Project represents a strategic endeavor to meet the requirements defined by the DOJ and to foster an equitable online experience for all users. This initiative will entail an examination of our website's accessibility features, encompassing both technical elements and user interfaces. Through a systematic assessment process guided by the Web content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1, we aim to identify and rectify potential barriers to access faced by individuals with disabilities.

Staff will collaborate with external consultants to analyze website components such as navigation menus, forms, multimedia content, and interactive elements to ensure they meet the WCAG 2.1 Level A and AA standards.

The FY 2026 Website Accessibility Review Project underscores our commitment to inclusivity, ensuring that our digital presence remains accessible to all individuals, irrespective of their abilities or disabilities. By fostering an environment where every user can navigate, interact, and engage with our online platform seamlessly, we strive to exemplify our dedication to equality and empowerment in the digital realm.

Analysis of Programs with Equity Tool

Strategic Plan 2025 set forth an objective to integrate equity principles across all programs. Over the past several years, we have undertaken an equity analysis, data collection, community outreach, and more to reach this objective and have made numerous changes.

One of the next steps is to update and incorporate equity into all existing programs. To do this, Commute.org has developed an Equity Tool (questionnaire) for analyzing both current and future programs. In creating the tool, we have referenced the County of San Mateo's tool, C/CAG resources developed during its equity analysis, and best practices from organizations such as the Government Alliance on Race & Equity (GARE).

The Equity Tool includes questions for staff to consider for each program to create equitable outcomes, set metrics, identify audiences and stakeholders, determine benefits and burdens, include community engagement, and produce strategies to minimize unintended impacts.

In FY 2026, the agency will receive training from San Mateo County staff on integrating the Equity Tool into regular procedures and use the Equity Tool to evaluate priority programs for equity goals, metrics, and outcomes. We will also use this tool to evaluate new and proposed programs. Finally, we will determine whether changes and/or additional reporting are needed.

Strategic Plan Update

Commute.org will undertake a Strategic Plan Update project in FY 2026 to chart the agency's direction beyond the horizon of its current strategic plan, which was designed to guide operations and initiatives through 2025. Recognizing the evolving landscape of transportation, commuter behavior, and regional priorities, the agency is committed to using the existing plan as a living document—one that not only reflects past achievements and current operations but also forms the foundation for future goals. This update will ensure that Commute.org remains responsive, relevant, and proactive in addressing the mobility needs of San Mateo County.

The Strategic Plan Update will be a collaborative endeavor led jointly by agency staff and a steering committee. The steering committee, chaired by Board Member Carlos Romero, will provide governance and oversight into the planning process, ensuring alignment with the agency's mission and stakeholder priorities. Staff will play a pivotal role in facilitating the process, conducting research, and coordinating the input and output needed to produce a comprehensive and actionable strategic plan. This structure allows for both strategic guidance and operational insight, fostering a plan that is both visionary and implementable.

To support this effort, Commute.org will continue to utilize the OnStrategy software platform and its associated tools to structure the strategic planning process, facilitate collaboration, and track progress. External feedback will be solicited through surveys, providing valuable insight from stakeholders, partners, and the public. This feedback loop is critical to ensuring the plan reflects the diverse needs of the communities that Commute.org serves. The use of data-driven tools and participatory methods will help create a plan that is both grounded in evidence and reflective of stakeholder values.

The timeline for delivery is structured to ensure transparency and engagement at key milestones. Updates will be presented to the Board of Directors in June and September 2025, offering opportunities for interim feedback and guidance. A draft version of the new Strategic Plan—tentatively titled Strategic Plan 2030—will be delivered to the board in November 2025 or February 2026 for review. The final version, incorporating board feedback and finalized content, will be submitted for approval in February or April 2026. This schedule ensures that the agency is equipped with an up-to-date strategic framework as it enters the next chapter of its existence.

Appendix

Board of Directors

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Town of Atherton

Phoebe Venkat
City of Foster City

Chris Sturken, Vice Chair
City of Redwood City

Gina Latimerlo, Chair
City of Belmont

Deborah Penrose
City of Half Moon Bay

Rico Medina
City of San Bruno

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Pamela DiGiovanni
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Christian Hammack
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Randy Breault
City of Brisbane

Chanda Singh
County of San Mateo

Shirley Chan
City of Daly City

Sue-Ellen Atkinson
SM County Transit
District

Kaki Cheung
C/CAG

Commute.org Staff

John Ford, Executive Director

Agency Management, strategic planning, financial management, staff development, shuttle program management, board, and funder liaison

Kim Comstock, Deputy Director

Management of commuter programs, CommuteStar platform, marketing, and agency development

Emma Shlaes, Senior TDM Program Manager

Management of engagement, community partners, and equity programs

Carmen Chen, Senior TDM Program Manager

Management of engagement and TDM monitoring programs

Richard Fontela, Senior Shuttle Program Administrator

Operational management of the shuttle program

Customer Service, schedules, route inspections, shuttle vendor management

Alton Chen, Shuttle Program Administrator

Assist Executive Director and Sr. Shuttle Program Administrator with administrative and operational support of the shuttle program, shuttle customer service, technology

Clara Gibson, TDM Programs Representative

Assist program managers with marketing, outreach, incentive program processing, surveys, and partner development

Frida Pensamiento, TDM Programs Specialist

Assist program managers with employer outreach, program promotion, marketing, surveys, and partner development

Malia Boksanski, Sustainability Transportation Associate

Fellowship focused on expansion and support of CommuteStar, Caltrain Pass Forward, social media

Open, Office Administrator & Clerk of the Board

Accounting, general office management, board management, and reporting

Legal Counsel and Financial Services

Legal Counsel

Hanson Bridgett LLP

Joan L. Cassman, Partner

Fiscal Agent

City of Millbrae

Mike Sung, Finance Director

Audit Services

Badawi & Associates

Actuarial Services

MacLeod Watts, Inc.

Catherine MacLeod, Principal & Consulting Actuary

Social Media Channels

Commute.org maintains an active presence on multiple social media platforms to promote sustainable commuting, engage with the community, share program updates, and amplify partner content.

- Bluesky: [@smcountycommute](#)
- X: [@smcountycommute](#)
- Facebook: [@commute.org](#)
- Instagram: [@smcountycommute](#)
- Threads: [@smcountycommute](#)
- LinkedIn: [@commuteorg](#)
- YouTube: [@commute650](#)
- Nextdoor: Commute.org

Primary Funders





CommuteStar

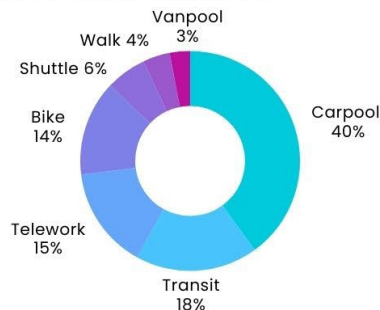
2024 IMPACT REPORT

THE POWER OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUTING

9,296 COMMUTERS. 1.6 MILLION TRIPS. A GREENER FUTURE.

Thanks to CommuteStar members, every trip made an impact from cutting emissions, saving money, and reducing congestion. Here's the difference you made:

HOW WE COMMUTE



BY THE NUMBERS

9,296 Commuters

1.6M Sustainable Trips

31.8M Sustainable Miles

8,372 CO2 Tons Reduced

102M Calories Burned

DISCOVER COMMUTESTAR

Commute.org empowers San Mateo County residents and employees to make their commutes count. Thousands use CommuteStar to plan and track their sustainable trips, proving that local commuters drive real change. This report reflects cumulative data through December 2024.

WHY IT MATTERS

Choosing a sustainable commute eases congestion, lowers emissions, and saves money.

KEEP THE MOMENTUM GOING

Not on CommuteStar yet? Sign up today to earn rewards and make a difference! Every commute counts—let's move toward a smarter, cleaner future together. Join now at Commute.org/CommuteStar.

Brought to you by

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