We are pleased to present the Fiscal Year 2014 Annual Report for the Peninsula Traffic Congestion Relief Alliance (Commute.org). Recognized as one of the nation’s leading regional transportation demand agencies, Commute.org has been promoting alternative transportation solutions for San Mateo County employers and residents since 2000.

The Annual Report presents a synopsis of Commute.org’s program of work, the challenges that we face and the key initiatives that the agency will embark on in the next year. The report also profiles several commuters that have made alternative transportation their choice for a “smarter commute” in San Mateo County.

Everyone who lives or works in San Mateo County knows that congestion on the highways and city streets has increased significantly since the 2008-2009 recession. The increased economic activity and labor force participation has resulted in more commuters, longer commute times, and increased ridership on public transit – including the Commute.org shuttles. Commute.org plays a critical role in providing education, incentives, and leadership that helps employers, commuters and residents become part of the solution.

As the need to commute more smartly and efficiently in San Mateo County increases, we are pleased to share with you some of the highlights of the past year, including:

- Increased shuttle ridership and reduced cost per shuttle passenger
- Increased employer participation in funding the shuttle program
- A new record for participants on Bike to Work Day
- Partnered with SamTrans on consolidation of shuttle programs and the issuance of a Request for Proposal for shuttle services, and
- Partnered on Connect, Redwood City! - the Last Mile Connection
- Averaged more than 10,000 visitors per month on the Commute.org web site

Commute.org is constantly looking for new and different ways to engage the people who can make a difference by using alternatives to driving alone. We are making great strides but know there is much more to do. Please let us know if you have an idea for a new or improved program.

As we wrap up the past fiscal year, we want to thank our employees, volunteers, partners and funders. With your continued involvement and support we look forward to another year of serving San Mateo County.

Sincerely,

Jeff Gee
Board Chair

John Ford
Executive Director
Employer Outreach

Commute.org’s core work involves providing employers with the information needed to adopt and sustain employee participation in commute alternative programs, such as taking public transit, carpooling, vanpooling, biking and walking. In FY 2014, agency staff worked closely with 300 employers in San Mateo County (representing 25% of the county’s total workforce) and provided program information to another 4,000 employers.

Employer-Based Shuttle Program

Commute.org manages 21 shuttle routes that transport employees between transit stations and work places. Additionally, the shuttles serve residents that live in close proximity to shuttle routes and help connect them to transit stations in the county. The shuttle program is funded through a combination of grants from agencies that include the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County and the San Mateo County Transportation Authority, and funds from private employers and/or sponsoring cities. Each route must meet performance metrics to qualify for funding in the biennial county-wide call for projects.

In FY 2014, Commute.org shuttles provided 483,784 passenger trips. This represents a 6.5% increase from the prior year. Average daily ridership is almost 2,000 passengers. Approximately 75% of the Commute.org routes saw increased ridership compared to the previous 12 months.

Walk:

Walking to work is fun and it is great for you. There’s no better way to arrive at work on time and refreshed.

Ada has been walking 30 minutes to get to and from work. She says, “My walk commute has become a great time to listen to a book, take a phone call, or reflect on my day.” Although Ada walked to work prior to the campaign, she says that it has made her more thoughtful about her options, and has researched new routes to take. Ada C

Vanpool:

Vanpooling is convenient and economical, especially if you work far from home. Traditionally, vanpools have 7 - 15 passengers, including the driver.

Corinna has a 45 minute commute and has been vanpooling to get to work. She enjoys that she is able to save time by using the carpool lane. She adds, “I can sleep in the van when it’s not my turn to drive.” Extra sleep is definitely a perk of vanpooling. Corinna C
**Employer Support Services**

Commute.org works with employers of all sizes and types including private companies, non-profits, schools, and government agencies. The Employer Outreach Team provides free consulting and support services for employers’ transportation coordinators, HR departments and facilities managers.

The Emergency Ride Home Program supports commuters who use alternative modes by guaranteeing that they will be able to get home via taxi in the event of an emergency. A total of 62 employers with over 40,000 employees participate in the program, which is funded by Commute.org and participating employers.

April 2014 was the official launch of the Bay Area Commuter Benefits Program. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District and Metropolitan Transportation Commission are coordinating the program at the regional level while Commute.org provides support for the San Mateo County employers that are required to register and provide commuter benefits to their employees. The program is already resulting in more employees receiving commuter benefits and much more is expected as the deadline for employers to register approaches in the new fiscal year.

**CARPOOL/TELECOMMUTE:**

Carpooling is two or more commuters traveling together to work, typically with each person taking turns driving their own vehicle.

Prior to the Catch a Ride campaign Stan drove to work alone. Now he is carpooling 3-4 days a week and telecommuting 1-2 days a week. His commute used to take 45-90 minutes each way, now it’s 35-50 minutes when he carpools. And he adds, “I’m much more relaxed, even on the days that it’s my turn to drive. I enjoy having someone to talk to during the long drive. When it’s not my turn to drive, I enjoy being able to rest, catch up on emails or play apps on my phone. And, for those really tough weeks, I even get to catch a short nap.” *Stanley C.*
Inspiring Commuters to Use Alternative Transportation

Direct Communication with Commuters
The Commute.org website features detailed information about alternative transportation programs in San Mateo County. The site attracts an average of 10,000 visitors each month many of whom use the mobile version to get the latest information on shuttles and other commuter support programs. Additionally, Commute.org’s Commuter Club has over 4,000 participants who receive quarterly newsletters and other promotional material.

Vanpool and Carpool Incentive Program
The Carpool Incentive Program encourages commuters to try carpooling for at least two days per week for eight weeks. In FY 2014, a total of 446 people participated in the program and received an incentive to encourage them to continue carpooling. In a survey of those who received incentives, nearly all (95%) indicated that they plan to continue carpooling an average of four days per week. During the fiscal year, Commute.org supported 51 new vanpool participants by providing subsidies during the first few months of their participation.

Try Transit Incentive Program
For more than a decade, Commute.org has been promoting the Try Transit Incentive Program to encourage commuters to use public transit as an alternative to driving alone. The program provides free transit tickets from transit agencies that operate in and around San Mateo County. Caltrain, SamTrans, BART, and San Francisco Bay Ferry provide complimentary tickets for this program. Of the 828 people who participated in the program in FY 2014, 78% said they would continue using transit while paying for their own tickets.

Bicycle Safety & Parking
Coordinated by Commute.org, free bicycle safety workshops led by a certified bicycle safety instructor provide employers and residents with essential information, including: rules of the road for cyclists, tips on buying a bicycle and bicycle maintenance. In FY 2014, Commute.org hosted six workshops and subsidized 55 bicycle racks and lockers for employers to install at their worksites.

School Pool and Carpool to College
The Commute.org School Pool and Carpool to College programs offer new participants incentives to use carpooling at least twice a week during the school year. Also, the agency partners on Safe Routes to School initiatives to encourage bicycling and walking.

Train/Shuttle/Bike:
Trains, Bikes and Shuttle, oh my! Find your options and maybe, you can mix up your commute modes to keep your commute interesting.

Scott has about a 50 mile door to door commute through some, as he puts it, “ugly traffic”. He has been riding Caltrain, then taking a Commute.org shuttle or riding his bike to get to work. And although this extends his commute time, he uses that time to get some work done and arrives relaxed. He says, “I enjoy being able to get a little fresh air and exercise riding from the train station to my office.” Scott S
**Special Campaigns and Events**

**Catch a Ride! Let’s Roll San Mateo County**
The annual Catch a Ride! Let’s Roll San Mateo County Campaign, ran in March and April. Participants pledged to take a commute alternative to work a minimum of eight times during the campaign period. At the end of this year’s record-setting campaign, 1,967 participants completed a survey about their experience during the campaign and received incentives for transit passes or cycling gear.

**Connect, Redwood City!**
Under an MTC Climate Initiatives grant, Commute.org and its partners (County of San Mateo, City of Redwood City and San Mateo County Transportation Authority) marketed a suite of transportation demand management programs to the employers and residents in Redwood City. Commute.org coordinates the vanpool component of the program and has put a dozen vans on the road resulting in reduced VMT (vehicle miles traveled) and tremendous cost-savings for the participants. The grant funding will end in FY 2015; however, the program is likely to continue.

**Bike to Work Day**
Commute.org is the county-wide coordinator for Bike to Work Day which takes place every year in May. In 2014, San Mateo County had 11,329 bike riders counted by the more than one hundred volunteers as the cyclists rode past the 41 Energizer Stations (a new record) in San Mateo County. Special thanks to the groups that staffed the Energizer Stations which included employers, cities and the Bike San Mateo County organization.

**Bike Commuter of the Year**
As part of Bike to Work Day in 2014, Lori Burns was named San Mateo County’s Bicycle Commuter of the Year. When presented with the award, Lori explained that her “transformation” to becoming an active cyclist started on Bike to Work Day 2010. She loved the notion of reducing her carbon footprint, but was not sure how to do it until she rode her bike that day to her job at the Town of Colma. She has been an avid commuter and recreational cyclist ever since and an inspiration to her friends and colleagues.

**Ferry Service in South San Francisco**
The San Francisco Bay Ferry began daily service from the East Bay to South San Francisco in June 2012. Since then, ridership on the ferry and the shuttles that meet the passengers when they arrive has been steadily increasing. Commute.org continues to work with SF Bay Ferry, local business organizations and community leaders to promote the ferry service as a commute alternative to San Mateo County.
AGENCY DEVELOPMENT

Strengthening the Agency
Under the guidance of the Board of Directors and Supervisory Committee, the staff of Commute.org has been focused not only on improving existing programs and services, but also adding, refining or eliminating programs to meet the evolving needs of the employers and commuters in San Mateo County.

The agency’s limited budget and small staff makes partnerships with public and private sector partners essential. Commute.org leverages those partnerships to broaden the reach of the agency and strengthen its ties to the San Mateo County community.

As a public agency, Commute.org understands the need to be completely transparent in all of its activities. Earning and maintaining the trust of the funders, program participants, and JPA members is not just a goal, but a core requirement of the agency’s staff and board at all times.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2015

Commute.org’s FY 2015 work plan focuses on programs that will improve the commute and air quality in San Mateo County. In addition to our normal operations, the items below highlight several of the critical tasks that are scheduled for the year:

• Bay Area Commuter Benefits Program - the program requires employers with 50 or more full-time employees in the Bay Area to offer commuter benefits to their employees. Employers subject to the Program must select and implement their program by September 30, 2014. Commute.org will assist with the outreach and implementation in San Mateo County.

• Commute Profile Survey - Commute.org conducts a triennial survey of San Mateo County commuters and residents. The survey provides important information about the commute mode choices, commute patterns, effectiveness of incentives, employer participation rates, and a host of other data that will provide the framework for Commute.org’s updated Strategic Plan. The survey results will be published in late 2014.

• Shuttle Services Contract - Commute.org has partnered with SamTrans on a joint RFP for shuttle services. The new contract will be awarded in FY 2015 and will result in improved service for the thousands of commuters who rely on our shuttles for first and last mile connections to and from transit in San Mateo County.

TRANSIT:
Public transit is taking off, as more commuters are discovering its benefits – like saving money and reducing stress. Commute.org can connect you to buses, trains, ferries and shuttles.

Liz’s commute is about 2.5 hours a day. She takes Caltrain then hops on a shuttle to get to work. She says, “Although it is usually faster to drive, it’s less stressful to take the train. I can play games or read articles on my phone instead of worry about traffic. If it’s been a long week, I treat myself with a drink from the coffee shop next to the Hillsdale Caltrain station.” Liz H

COMMUTER BENEFITS
- Less Stressful
- Saves Time
- Saves Money
**Funders and Partners**

| Bay Area Air Quality Management District | San Mateo County Transportation Authority | Metropolitan Transportation Commission | C/CAG |

**Board of Directors**

**Jeff Gee**
(Chair)
Mayor
City of Redwood City

**Elizabeth Lewis**
(Vice Chair)
Council Member
City of Belmont

**Cathy Wright**
Council Member
City of Belmar

**Clifford Lentz**
Council Member
City of Brisbane

**Jerry Deal**
Council Member
City of Burlingame

**Rae Gonzalez**
Vice Mayor
City of Colma

**Carol Klatt**
Council Member
City of Daly City

**Laura Martinez**
Mayor
City of East Palo Alto

**Steve Nakamoto**
Council Member
City of Foster City

**Marina Fraser**
Vice Mayor
City of Half Moon Bay

**Shawn Christianson**
Council Member
Town of Hillsborough

**Anne Oliva**
Council Member
City of Millbrae

**Sue Digre**
Council Member
City of Pacifica

**Jim Ruane**
Mayor
City of San Bruno

**Bob Grassilli**
Council Member
City of San Carlos

**David Lim**
Council Member
City of San Mateo

**Richard Garbarino**
Vice Mayor
City of South San Francisco

**Susan Wheeler**
Management Analyst
City of Redwood City

**Gary Heap**
Senior Engineer
City of San Mateo

**Douglas Kim**
Director, Planning
San Mateo County Transit District

**Sam Bautista**
Principal Engineer
City of South San Francisco

**Supervisory Committee**

**Maria Saguisag-Sid**
(Chair)
Senior Management Analyst
City of Brisbane

**Randy Torrijos**
(Committee Vice Chair)
Legislative Aide, District 1
County of San Mateo

**John Hoang**
Program Manager,
C/CAG

**Shirley Chan**
Traffic Engineer
City of Daly City

**Fy 2014 Funding**

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<th>Category</th>
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<td>AB 434 Funds: BAAQMD (C/CAG)</td>
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<td>Congestion Relief Funding: C/CAG</td>
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<td>Shuttle Funding: SMCTA, Consortium Members</td>
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**Fy 2014 Expenditures**

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**City/County offices and titles as of June 30, 2014**

**Commute.org**

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