

MEMORANDUM

FOR: Chair Phyllis J. Randall and Members,
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

FROM: Monica Backmon, Executive Director, NVTA

DATE: July 1, 2021

SUBJECT: Update of Travel Trends in Northern Virginia

1. **Purpose.** To update the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) on recent travel trends due to COVID-19 pandemic.
2. **Background.** At the June 10, 2021, Authority meeting, staff presented a snapshot of travel trends in Northern Virginia. Travel data metrics for highways and transit systems were analyzed from January 2020 to May 2021. Staff has updated following data metrics for highway travels. A comprehensive update with transit ridership data from all providers in Northern Virginia is expected in this fall.
3. **Telecommuting.** The Region continues to show high percentage of workers working-from-home. According to a special Census survey (online Household Pulse Survey), about 47% of workers in Washington D.C. Metro area worked from home in June. This is still the highest among its 14 large peer metro areas in the United States.
4. **Highway Travels.** Volumes on freeways and major arterials in Northern Virginia have been trending upward. In June, volumes are reported to be within 92% of pre-COVID conditions compared to 89% in May. Travel speeds continue to be about 13% faster, compared to 12% in May.
5. **Travel Pattern by Time-of-Day:** Although there was a decline in travel in AM Peak, there was an increase in mid-day travel, building up to similar evening rush hour congestions. Table below shows travel volumes for different periods of a day, as a share of respective daily totals.

	PRE-COVID	2020
AM PEAK	32.0%	29.3%
MID DAY	25.0%	27.7%
PM PEAK	35.1%	35.7%
EVENING	8.0%	7.3%

- 6. Next steps.** Staff will continue this trend analysis to track emerging travel patterns, as the region is opening up to socio-economic activities.