

# **Telework Program Monitoring Report July 2009-July 2010**

## **Prepared for**

Prince George's County Planning Department  
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

## **Prepared by**

Telework Monitoring Committee  
A Subcommittee of the Management Practices Goal Team

## **Members**

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**February 7, 2011**

## I. Introduction

The intent of this monitoring report is to follow through with the original recommendations of the Telecommuting Task Force in regard to the monitoring of the telework pilot program and beyond within the Prince George's County Planning Department. The purpose of monitoring this alternative Work/Life Program is to determine if the program is fair and equitable in the implementation, selection, participation and its operation, while continuing to support the Planning Department's mission and work program. The Telework Monitoring Committee is a subcommittee of the Management Practices Goal Team. The committee and is largely made up of some of the members of the original Telecommuting Task Force. The Telecommuting Task Force provided recommendations to the Senior Management Team regarding expansion of the telework program within the Planning Department

## II. Program Monitoring

In the original recommendations of the Telecommuting Policy Task Force Report date March 24, 2009, the team recommended that a pilot program limit teleworking<sup>1</sup> to no more than two days a week for the first six months until responsible monitoring of the program in accordance with the following is completed:

Program Monitoring—Data should be collected, analyzed and reviewed on a semi-annual basis to ensure fairness and equity.

### Employee Demographic

Age  
Race  
Gender  
Employee's roundtrip distance from work

### Department Demographic

Division  
Section  
Position

This report establishes the first documentation of the program, 12 months from its initial implementation, beginning in July 2009 through July 2010.

## III. Program Monitoring Data

The Telework Monitoring Committee collected data with the help of the Planning Department's Human Resource's staff to compile information on the demographic status of the participants of the program. The committee was provided the age, race, gender and the employee's roundtrip commuting distance from work. The following tables provide a summary of the data collected during this twelve month period.

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<sup>1</sup> In this report, terms telework and telecommute are used interchangeably.

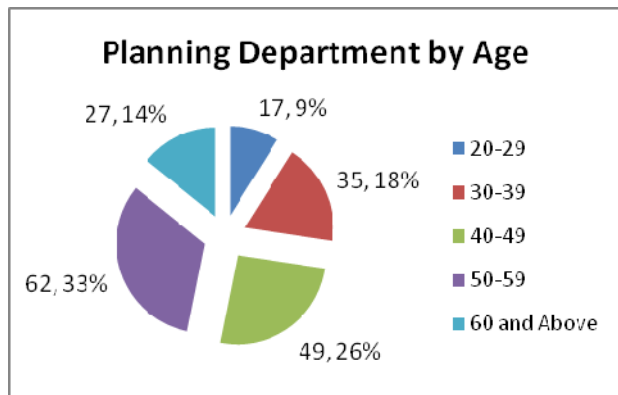
# Employee Demographic Summary Data <sup>2</sup>

## Demographics of Teleworkers

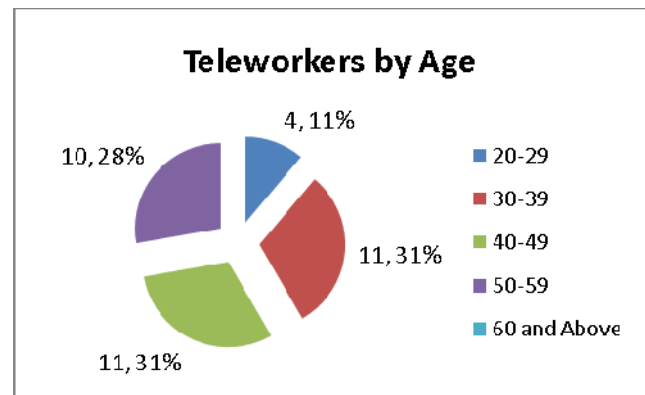
Nineteen percent (19%) or thirty-six (36) of the total department employees (190) applied for and were approved for telework during the first year of the program. Table 1 and Chart 2 show that based on the total number of teleworkers, the smallest share of employees approved for telework are between 20-29 years old, at 11 percent. The number of teleworkers in the three age groups from age 30 to 59 varied slightly, with ages 30-39 and 40-49 both at 31 percent, followed by employees ages 50-59 at 28 percent. There were no teleworkers age 60 and above during this period. Chart 3 shows the distribution of teleworkers by age relative to the total number of Planning Department employees in the same age group.

**Table 1**

Age	Planning Department Employees		Teleworkers	
	Number	Share	Number	Share
20-29	17	9%	4	11%
30-39	35	18%	11	31%
40-49	49	26%	11	31%
50-59	62	33%	10	28%
60 and Above	27	14%	0	0%
Total	190	100%	36	100%

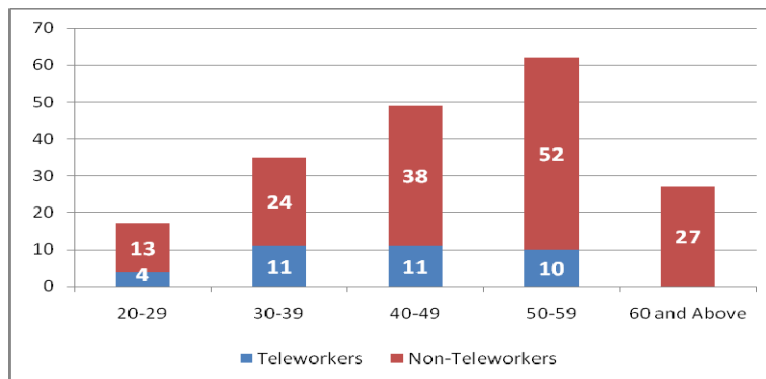


**Chart 1**



**Chart 2**

### Telework Status by Age



**Chart 3**

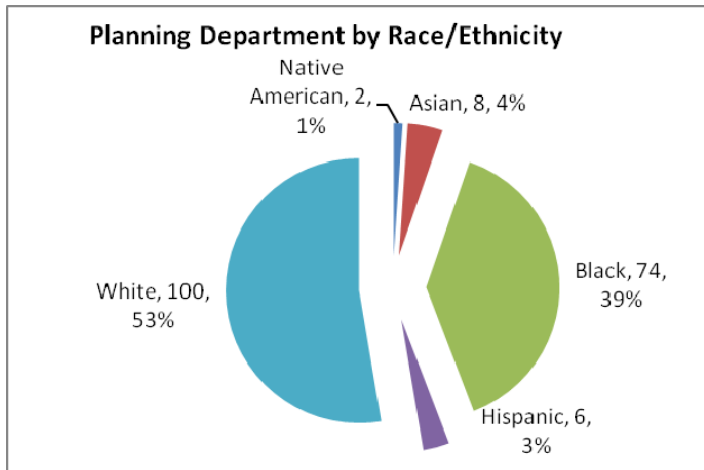
<sup>2</sup> Analyses based on data collected July 1, 2009-July 31, 2010

### Racial/Ethnic Demographics of Teleworkers<sup>3</sup>

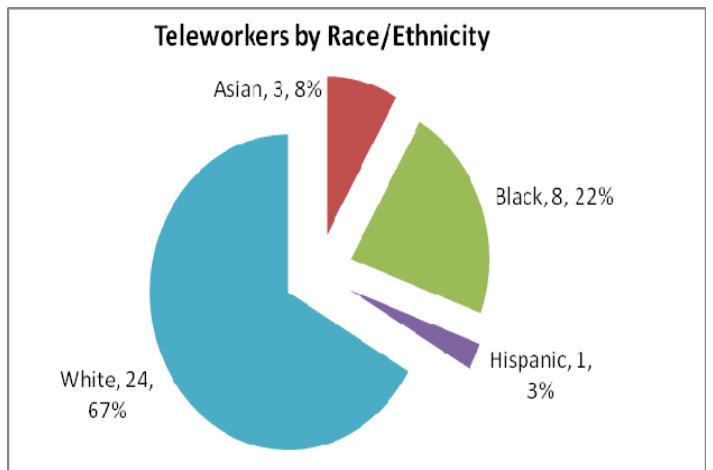
By racial/ethnic group, white employees represented both the largest share of total employees (53%) and the largest share of employees approved for telework during the first year of the program (67%). Blacks represented the second largest percent of all staff with a total of 74 employees (39%), whereas they represent a 22 percent of all teleworkers. Asian staff represented four percent of all department staff and 8% of teleworkers. Hispanic staff persons represented three percent of both department staff and teleworkers during this period. There were no American Indian/Alaska Native teleworkers during this period. Chart 6 shows the distribution of teleworkers by race relative to the total number of Planning Department employees of the same race group.

**Table 3**

Race/Ethnicity	Planning Department		Teleworkers	
	Number	Share	Number	Share
American Indian/Alaska Native	2	1%	0	0%
Asian	8	4%	3	8%
Black	74	39%	8	22%
Hispanic	6	3%	1	3%
White	100	53%	24	67%
Total	190	100%	36	100%



**Chart 4**



**Chart 5**

<sup>3</sup> For the purpose of this assessment only, inconsistent with the Census definition, Hispanic/Latino is counted as a racial group. All other races are of non-Hispanic origin.

### Telework Status by Race/Ethnicity

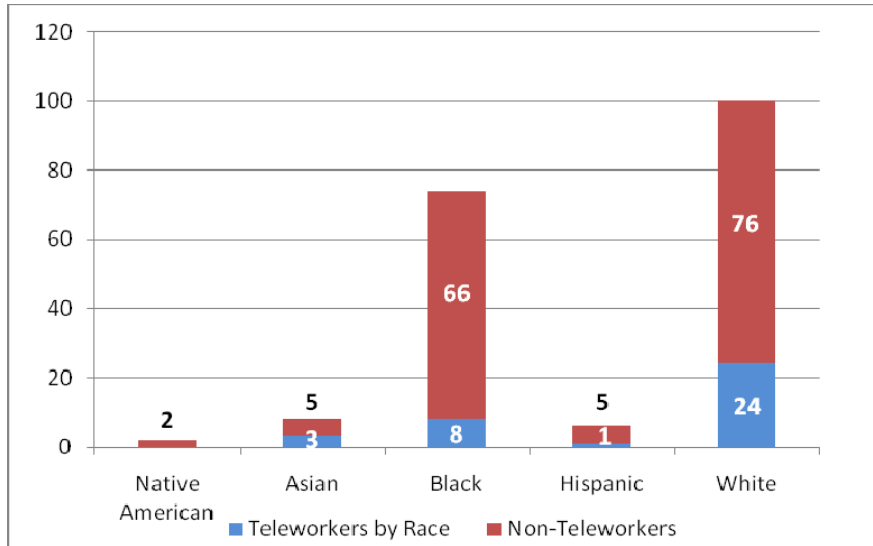


Chart 6

### Gender Distribution

Eight percent (18%) or thirteen (13) of the total eighty two (82) male employees teleworked during the first year of the program, compared to thirteen percent (13%) or twenty three (23) of the total one hundred eight (108) of all female employees.

Table 4

Gender	Planning Department		Teleworkers	
	Number	Share	Number	Share
Male	82	43%	13	36%
Female	108	57%	23	64%
Total	190	100%	36	100%

Chart 7

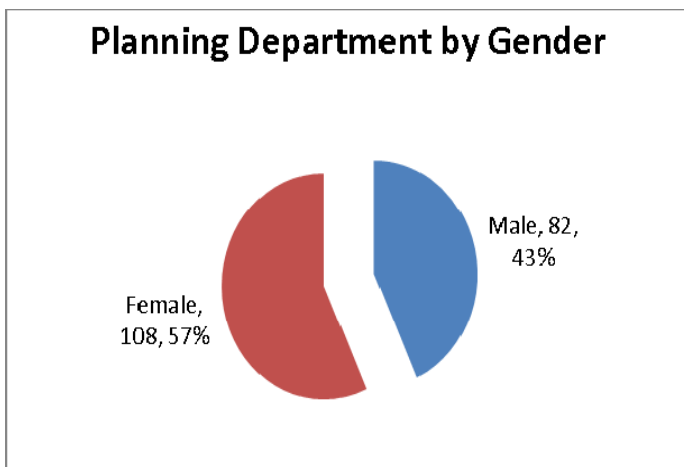


Chart 8

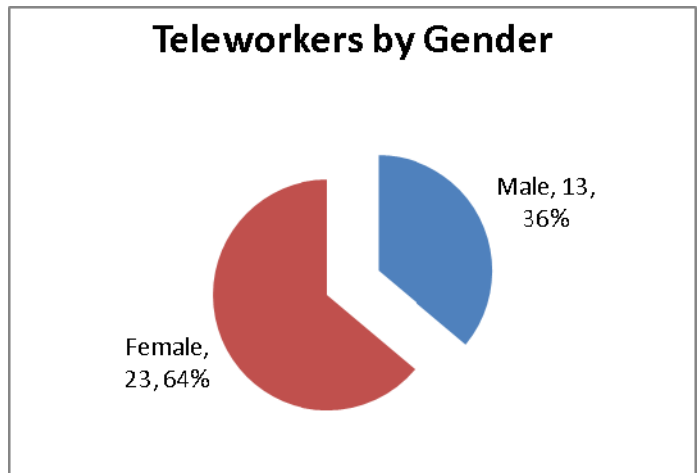


Chart 9

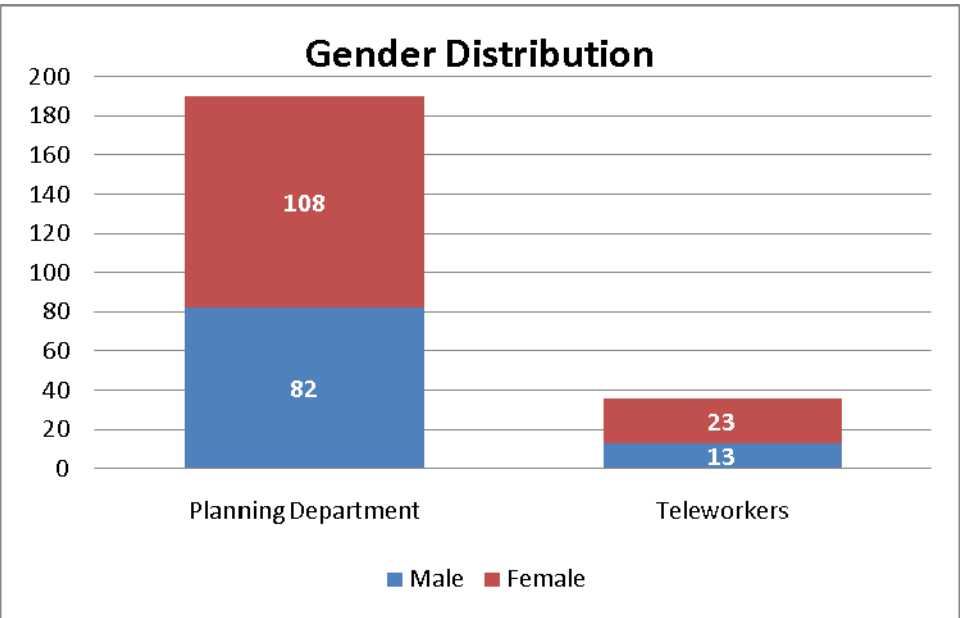


Chart 10

# Department Telework Participation Assessment

## Telework Agreements by Division

During the first 12 months, the total number of employees telecommuting as a percent of the total number of Planning Department employees (190) during the first year program period was thirty-six (36) or nineteen percent (19.0%). Development Review, Countywide Planning and IMD tied with nine staff persons at 25 percent. A total of 75 percent of all teleworkers worked in these three divisions.

**Table 6**

Division	Planning Department Employees		Teleworkers	
	Number	Share	Number	Share
CPDN	19	10%	2	6%
CPDS	18	9%	2	6%
CWPD	43	23%	9	25%
DRD	57	30%	9	25%
IMD	29	15%	9	25%
PDO	24	13%	5	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

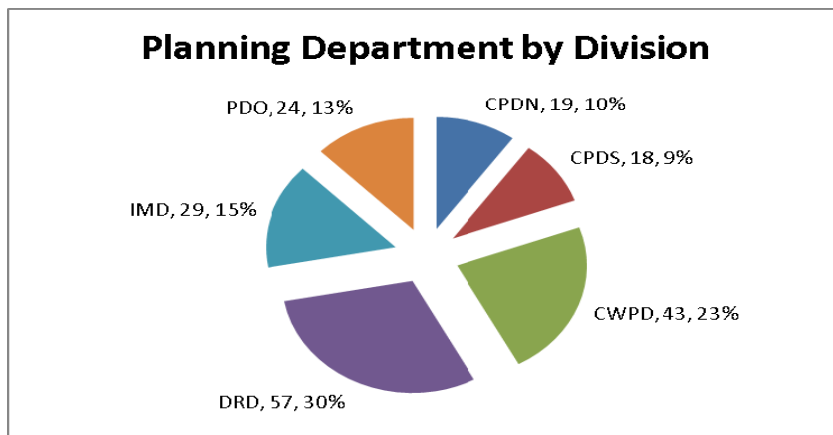


Chart 11

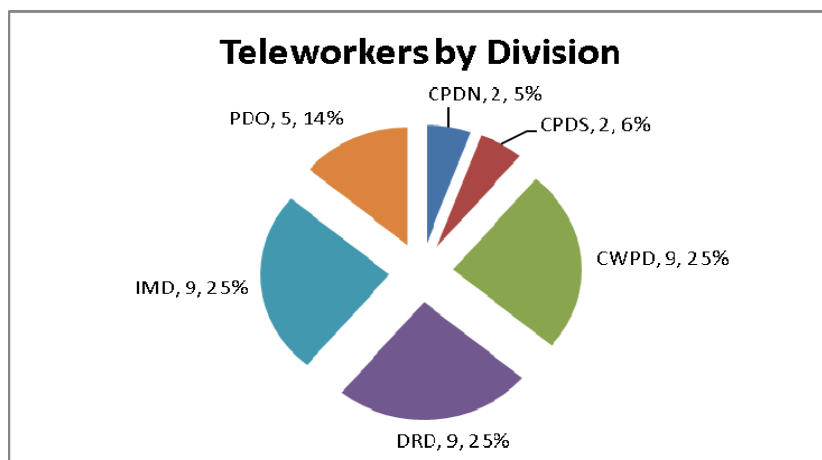


Chart 12

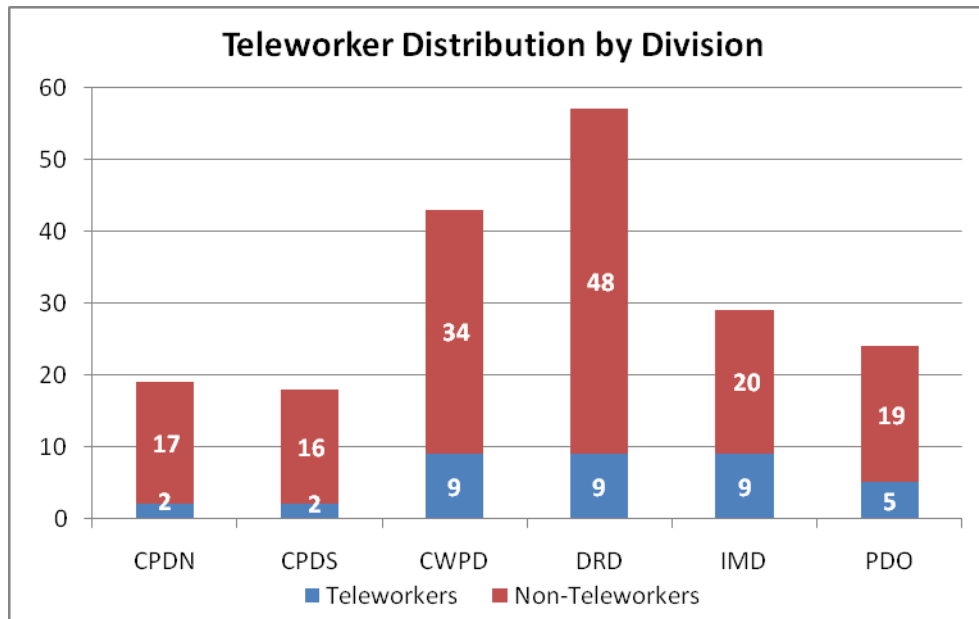


Chart 13

### Telework Agreements by Frequency

Seventy-two percent (72%) of approved telework is for dedicated telework days. The remaining twenty nine percent (29%) of telework applications were approved on an intermittent basis. (See Chart 13)

The majority of the twenty six (26) telework applications for dedicated days, sixty nine percent (69%) were approved for one day per week. Thirty-one percent (31%) were approved for one day every other week. (See Chart 14)

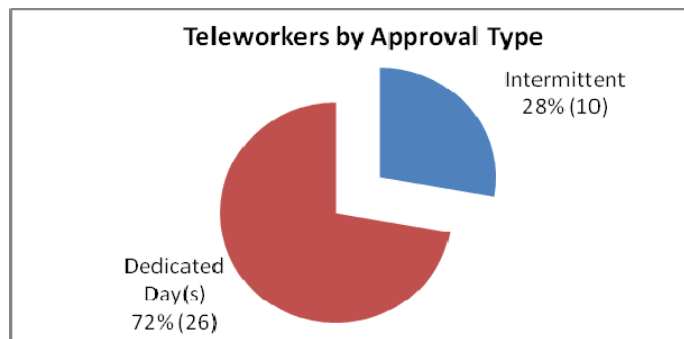


Chart 14

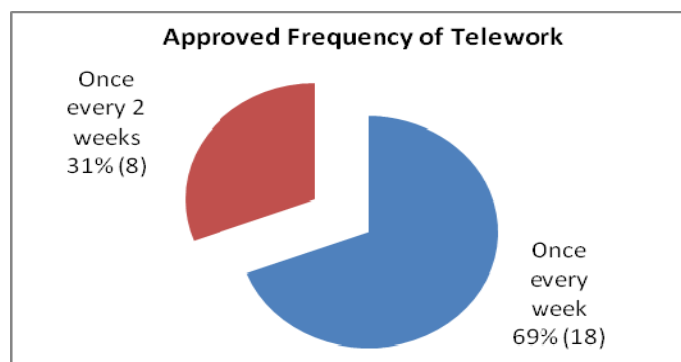


Chart 15



Table 7

Telework Agreements by Division and Frequency

Division	Section	Number of Teleworkers by Approved Frequency				
		Total Approved	Intermittent	Dedicated Day(s)	Once every week	Once every 2 weeks
<b>CWPD</b>						
	Administrative					
	Special Projects	3	1	2	2	
	Transportation	1		1		1
	Historic	1	1			
	Environmental	3	2	1	1	
	Research	1		1		1
	<b>Division Total</b>	<b>9</b>				
<b>IMD</b>						
	Administrative					
	GIS	6	1	5	4	1
	Data Systems	3		3	1	2
	Network Support					
	<b>Division Total</b>	<b>9</b>				
<b>DRD</b>						
	Administrative	2		2	2	
	Permits					
	Urban Design	1		1	1	
	Subdivision	2		2	2	
	Zoning	4	1	3	3	
	Applications					
	Planning Information					
	<b>Division Total</b>	<b>9</b>				
<b>CPD</b>						
	Administrative					
	North	2	2			
	South	2		2		2
	<b>Division Total</b>	<b>4</b>				
<b>PDO</b>						
	Administrative	4	2	2	1	1
	Web Development	1		1	1	
	Public Affairs					
	Office and Publications Services					
	Publications and Graphics					
	<b>Division Total</b>	<b>5</b>				
<b>Total</b>		<b>36</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Percent</b>		<b>100%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>31%</b>

**Table 8**

**Telework Agreements by Employee Position Title**

Planner Coordinators, Senior Planners and Planners encompass more than half of all teleworkers, fifty five percent (55%). GIS Specialist I and II represent 14 percent (14%) of all teleworkers.

<b>Position Title</b>	<b>Planning Department</b>	<b>Teleworkers</b>	<b>Percent of Teleworkers Within Position Title</b>
GIS Specialist II	5	4	80%
Principal Administrative Specialist	3	2	67%
Programmer Analyst III	5	3	60%
Administrative Manager	2	1	50%
IT Support Specialist II	2	1	50%
Planner	8	3	38%
GIS Specialist I	3	1	33%
Senior Planner	25	8	32%
Senior Administrative Assistant	4	1	25%
Planner Coordinator	37	9	24%
Principal Administrative Assistant	12	2	17%
Planner Supervisor	13	1	8%
Administrative Assistant	1	0	0%
Administrative Specialist	1	0	0%
Administrative Specialist (Senior)	1	0	0%
CAD/GIS Technician III	1	0	0%
Clerk Supervisor	1	0	0%
Deputy Planning Director	1	0	0%
GIS Specialist III	2	0	0%
IT Support Specialist (Senior)	3	0	0%
IT Systems Manager/Leader	2	0	0%
Mapping and Graphics Assistant Support	1	0	0%
Master Planner	5	0	0%
Office Supervisor	1	0	0%
Planning Director	1	0	0%
Planning Division Chief	5	0	0%
Planning Information and Permit Review Supervisor	3	0	0%
Planning Technician (Principal)	17	0	0%
Planning Technician (Senior)	16	0	0%
Programmer Analyst II	1	0	0%
Public Affairs Specialist III	1	0	0%
Publications Specialist	3	0	0%
Senior Clerical/Inventory Operations Assistant	2	0	0%
Special Projects Coordinator	1	0	0%
Stock Clerk II	1	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>19%</b>

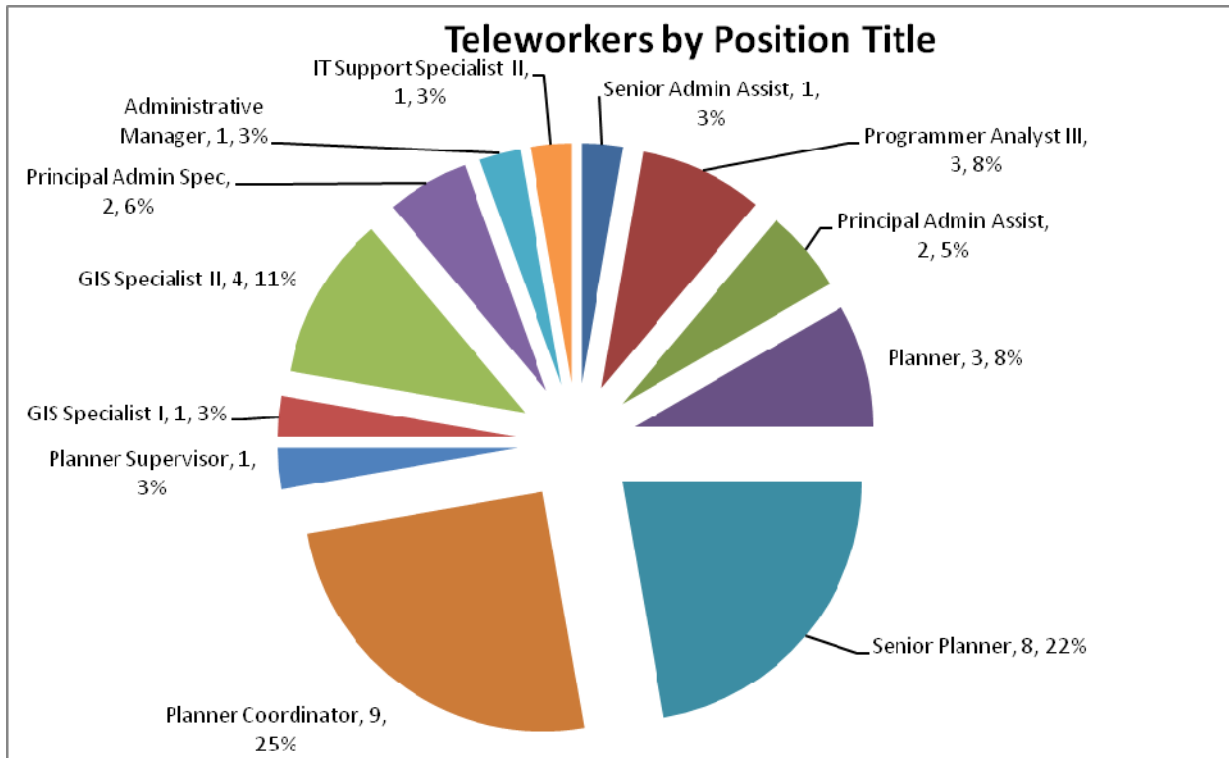


Chart 16

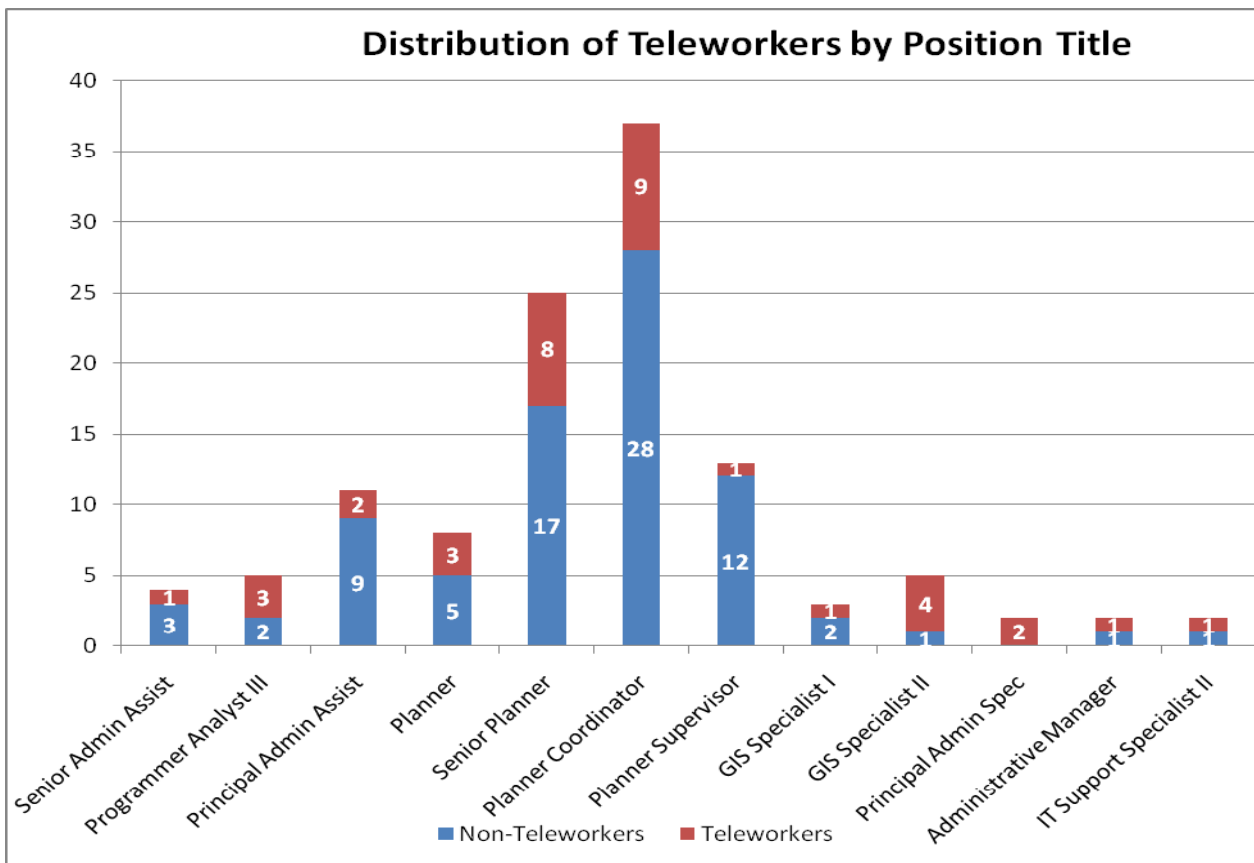


Chart 17

## Planning Department Teleworker Commuting Mileage Savings

Approximately 2,439 total miles in commuting are saved per pay period due to telecommuting.

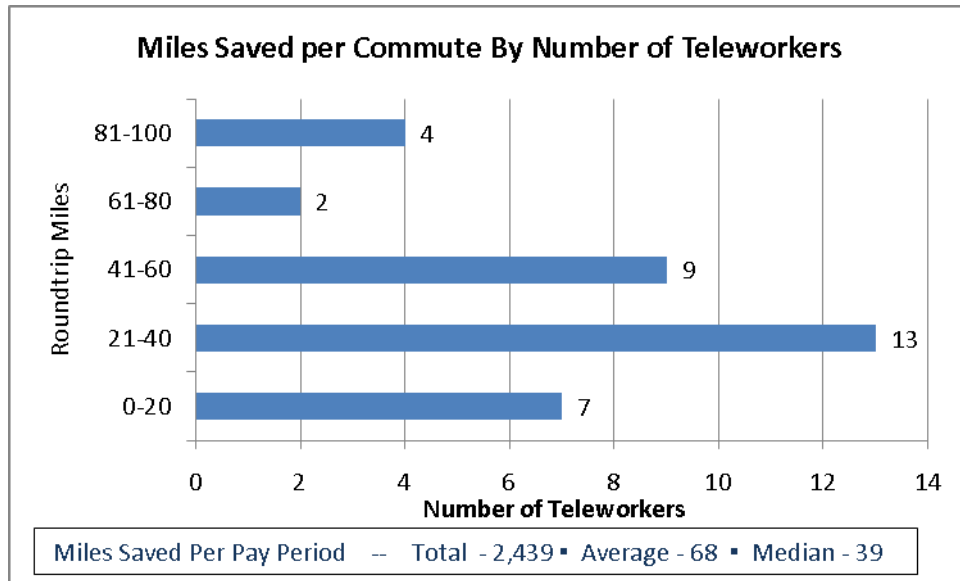


Chart 18

**Table 5**

Roundtrip Mileage	Number of Teleworkers
0-20	7
21-40	13
41-60	9
61-80	2
81-100	4
Over 100	1

Approximately 63,414 miles in commuting were saved last year due to the expansion of the telework program.

### V. Program Analysis

Overall the telecommuting program has been a success in the Planning Department. The evidence of this success is that more than nineteen percent (19%) of the employee population is participating in the first year. The range of the participation appears to include nearly all staff levels, except the Division Chief, Principal Planning Technician and Senior Administrative Aide levels. It was expected that participation of management would not be implemented in the first year of the pilot phase of the program.

Based on the information collected in regard to age distribution, it appears that people are participating fairly evenly across the age groups. (Chart 3) The most remarkable indication is that the age sixty (60) and above group of employees constitutes fourteen percent (14%) of the employees and none participated in the

program. A possible conclusion could be that employees over the age of 60 are more comfortable with a traditional work environment.

In regard to race, Asians, Whites and Hispanics participated in the program at or above their prevalence in the Planning Department. Blacks and American Indian/Alaska Natives did not participate at the level of their prevalence in the Planning Department. The analysis by racial distribution indicates that zero percentage of American Indian/Alaska Native individuals participated in the program. However, this is not of concern since there are only two employees within the Department in that category. What is of concern is that while blacks make up 39% of the Department, only 11% are participating in telework. Further investigation is warranted if this trend continues in the next monitoring cycle.

In regard to gender, females are tending to participate in the program at a rate more frequently than males in the Department (Chart 6). Further investigation is warranted if this trend continues in the next monitoring cycle.

In regard to Divisional breakdown, it appears that three divisions, CWPD, IMD and PDO have employees participating at a higher rate than their share of employees within the Department. (Charts 11 & 12) Specifically IMD has the highest rate of participation. This may be because the programming function of that Division is suitable for teleworking. The DRD telework participation rate is nearly the same as their share of employees within the Department. Two divisions, CPDN and CPDS have a low participation rate with only two people participating in each of these divisions. Further investigation is warranted if this trend continues in the next monitoring cycle.

In regard to the number of teleworkers by position: Further analysis is warranted of the positions in which no one is participating. In many cases, where there are few in that position in the Department, it is possible that the persons in those positions either don't choose to telework or their work is not suitable for telework. There are two categories with a substantial number of people filling the position: Planning Technician (Principal) and Planning Technician (senior), but no one in these positions is participating in telework. Further investigation is warranted if this trend continues in the next monitoring cycle.

Additional recommendations for improvement of the program are provided below.

## **VI. Program and Policy Recommendations**

Following are recommendations from the Telework Monitoring Committee to improve the program as we move forward. These recommendations follow the original Telecommuting Task Force Final Report and have been updated to reflect the current monitoring period.

### **A. Formal application and agreement**

1. The supervisor and employee should create a written Telework Performance Plan **prior** to commencement of a dedicated telework day schedule. The telework application includes the times and types of work the employee will perform while teleworking. This information should be included in a Telework Performance Plan. We have not seen a form created and it is not clear if this issue is being handled verbally between supervisor and employee.

2. For employees whose applications are denied, managers should provide feedback as to why the staff's application was denied. This appears to be happening for those applications that are placed in writing.

## B. Selection Criteria

It appears that the teleworking program is open to employees who meet the criteria stated in The Work Life Program, Administrative Procedures for the Telework Program, Telework Screening Survey (Appendix A). The consideration of the applicant's request for regular or intermittent teleworking should be based on the employee's tasks or a particular task in the case of a request for scheduling and intermittent telework single event. Intermittent approval should not be based solely on the position. It appears that this concept is being met; however, the committee recommends that a survey be distributed to the employees to explore this further.

In addition to the criteria in the Commission's own telework policy, we recommend guidelines such as the following borrowed from best practices are considered:

1. Ability of the work program to continue to meet customer's needs.
2. Ability to continue to provide for unscheduled face-to-face contact with other employees, elected officials or the public.
3. Tasks to be completed off-site will benefit from quiet or uninterrupted time.
4. Technology needed to perform the tasks is available.
5. Clear work objectives have been identified for the job and are defined in an employee's Telework Performance Plan or on the Intermittent Telework Form. [J:\Forms\Telework\\_Appendix G Intermittent Telecommuting Request\\_October 2010.docx](J:\Forms\Telework_Appendix G Intermittent Telecommuting Request_October 2010.docx)
6. Review of the employee's most recent performance evaluation to ensure that the employee is eligible for telework. A poor performance evaluation is a reason for denial.
7. Combination of alternative work programs (such as part-time work and compressed work schedules) while at the discretion of the supervisor, should be considered with regard to the amount of time the individual will be away from the office and how it affects the work program, training, and one's effect on other staff workload or programs. It should also be made clear, to all concerned parties, when the employee is working off-site and appropriate times and ways to reach the teleworker during their off-site work hours.

**We recommend that the managers continue to use these criteria for reviewing applications.**

## **C. Participation**

1. Intermittent telework should be requested in advance and is appropriate when:
  - a. Work related tasks do not require interfacing with public.
  - b. Working independently will assist the completion of the task.
  - c. Extenuating circumstances during which working in the office is not possible, such as liberal leave and weather related absences. With regard to weather-related absences: we recommend following the lead of the Federal Government policy of allowing unscheduled telework when liberal leave is in effect for those who have previously been approved for a regular or intermittent telework schedule. The employee should notify the appropriate person in the office.

## **D. Training**

Training for approved teleworkers and their managers, offered through the Commission's Department of Human Resources and Management continues to be mandatory before a telework arrangement can be implemented. However, because training has not been recently offered, some people have begun to telework without the training. The team recommends expanding the training as follows:

1. Staff—Interested employees should have the training prior to application. On-site training should be offered once a year. Provide another round of Telework Training for both employees and supervisors. This training will enable more employees to become eligible to apply for telecommuting as well as provide training for those who are now teleworking but did not receive training during the initial training phase.
2. Management—Mandatory training for all managers to better understand telecommuting and make it a successful program. Regular training for Managers should be required annually. Also, provide continual training for all managers with the specific focus towards management skills and techniques in a telework environment.
3. Training should address information technology concerns, including but not limited to, establishing a technical environment and maintaining equipment at an off-site location. Training should also include connecting via VPN and remote desktop and when and who to call in the event help is needed.
4. Training should address using alternative forms of communication, such as e-mail, voicemail, teleconference and internet groups. Initial and on-going training should address effective communication skills:
  - a. "Check-in" procedures and sign in/sign out board while teleworking
  - b. How to handle ongoing communication with supervisor, staff and customers

- c. Setting priorities for meeting attendance, making decisions which meetings to physically attend and which meetings can be attended remotely through voice or video conference.
5. Increase cross training of employees to allow for work continuity and to for face-to-face contact with customers. Along with the CCI Employee Development and Training Goal Team, work on training sessions for both employees and supervisors regarding trust.

## **E. Program Monitoring**

We recommend the telework monitoring responsibility be moved from within the CCI umbrella and established as a committee in its own right within the Department. Telework has become an accepted Departmental program and part of the Department's organizational culture, similar to the Performance Recognition Program and should, therefore, be established as its own non-CCI committee as was done with monitoring of Performance Recognition.

We also recommend that we survey the staff and managers with regard to the effectiveness and productivity of the telework program and selection process. We recommend that this survey be done soon and the results be included in the next monitoring report.

The following data should continue to be collected, analyzed and reviewed on an annual basis to ensure fairness and equity.

### **Employee Demographic**

Age  
Race  
Gender  
Employee's home distance from work

### **Department Demographic**

Division  
Section  
Position

In addition, we would also like to include the following in the program monitoring process:

1. Monitoring of the Compressed Work Schedule program should be included in the next monitoring cycle.

An unanticipated result of the telework program is that there has been an increase in the number of employees who have elected to utilize the alternative work schedule of the Compressed Work Program. The compressed work week program has many of the same benefits to the employee as the telework program and is therefore a positive outcome. The compressed work week program should be monitored in the same fashion as the telework program for fairness and equity, recognizing that both provide similar benefits to the employee utilizing these work life programs.

2. Employee Performance Monitoring

Each Division Chief should cooperate with their supervisors to develop an employee performance monitoring plan that should be instituted uniformly for all employees in their section (both teleworkers and non-teleworkers). This plan should include



reporting expectations, scheduling and goal setting. The purchase of performance monitoring software/tools should be considered.

3. Update Telework Tracking Log and create a similar log for the Compressed Work Schedule Program.

## **F. Equipment**

1. Ensure all employees across divisions are aware of and following current policy regarding computer equipment used during telework:
  - Equipment to be used while teleworking: It is preferred that teleworkers use Commission-owned equipment when available. If a Commission laptop is not available, use of employee-owned equipment is permitted with limited support. Laptops have been distributed to each division. An additional twenty have been purchased and will soon be added to the bank available for telework. At printing of this report, distribution of these across divisions is still to be determined. Each division is responsible for implementing a check-out procedure and assigning a person to maintain patches and upgrades of software on the telework laptops.
  - VPN use and support: Supervisors must approve the need for VPN access. Forms can be obtained from the IMD Network & Technology Services Section. Commission-owned laptops are pre-configured by IMD to allow connection to our network via the CAS VPN. IMD provides instructions for the use of the CAS VPN and ensures the VPN is operating. Unresolved VPN connection issues should be reported to the Network & Technology Services Section. IMD will not perform maintenance on or provide trouble-shooting support for non-Commission computers. IMD works with CAS to ensure the VPN is operating; however, unforeseen circumstances may cause occasional loss of service with the VPN or local Internet services. It is recommended that teleworkers have a backup work plan in place in the event the VPN or Internet is not available. The Commission does not provide nor support Internet service for employees.
2. Extend the bank of laptop computers to be made available for the specific purpose of telework. Each Division Chief should review the number of employees teleworking and the days they telework to determine if the bank allocated to each division is equitable.
3. We additionally recommend that this bank of laptops include video conferencing software and hardware.
4. We continue to recommend that, as existing computers need to be upgraded, they be replaced with a laptop and a docking station.
5. We continue to recommend that a virtual desktop environment be implemented. This virtual desktop should contain Department applications that can be securely accessed over the internet.
6. Establish a secure remote access to our internal network: This has been made available to some teleworkers. We recommend providing Remote Desktop to all approved teleworkers. This will eliminate potential data security risks that occur when staff has to take documents home on thumb drives or e-mail it to themselves. This capability will

allow work to continue in the face of emergencies where employees might not be able to get into the office. We also recommend publishing procedures for obtaining remote access. For those employees who use remote access, information concerning login times and use should be made available to the supervisor if requested. (This recommendation follows the guidelines currently in place for electronic data such as internet access and e-mail use.)

7. We continue to recommend creating or extending a cell phone bank for the use of teleworkers to use only for business purposes.
8. We continue to recommend providing office supplies on a limited basis. Printing of documents should be encouraged to be printed in the office.
9. Install a telephone in each conference room. This will allow more opportunities for audio conferencing for teleworkers as well as staff who need to contact the public during meetings. We also recommend that teleconferencing equipment be purchased for the larger conference rooms (Boardroom, IMD Training Room, and Jane Jacobs.) This is because, during larger meetings, the quality of audio conferencing over telephones can be very poor.

#### **G. Support Groups**

The establishment of telework support groups can be an effective tool in helping with the further development of the telework program. The team still recommends having two telework support groups; one for managers and the other for staff.

- a. Management—The management team should establish a support group that meets quarterly to provide an environment where managers can consult with one another and share ideas, methods and practices with regard to telecommuting.
- b. Staff—A support group has been established and should continue for telework staff to share information, concerns, and techniques useful for teleworking. This group currently meets quarterly. We recommend that new teleworkers be formally advised of this group when they receive telework approval.
- c. The self supporting supports groups will report, as needed, to the Telework subcommittee on any issues, concerns and successes concerning the telework program.

#### **H. Security**

1. To date, the following has not been formally implemented: We continue to recommend: establishing guidelines concerning data and equipment allowed off-site, both physically and electronically. Or if it has been done, the information needs to be disbursed to the employees.
2. Require the employee to sign a privacy and security agreement to ensure they understand and will follow established guidelines. This has not been implemented and continues to be our recommendation.

## VII. Conclusion and Future Improvements for 2011 – 2012.

Below is a summary of our recommendations resulting from this monitoring cycle:

- A. Move the telework monitoring responsibility from within the CCI umbrella and establish as a committee as part of the Planning Department structure. (See VI. E.)
- B. Monitor the Compressed Work Schedule program in as part of the program and include in the next monitoring cycle. (See VI. E. 1.)
- C. Survey staff and managers with regard to the selection process, effectiveness and productivity of the telework program. Include the results in the next monitoring report. (See VI. E.)
- D. Create a Telework Performance Plan form to be filled out by the supervisor and employee **prior** to commencement of a dedicated telework day schedule. (See VI. A.)
- E. With regard to weather-related absences: allow unscheduled telework when liberal leave is in effect for those who have previously been approved for a regular or intermittent telework schedule. (See VI. C. 1. c.)
- F. Provide another telework training session for staff and managers as soon as possible. (See VI. D.)
- G. Provide training sessions for both employees and supervisors regarding trust. (See VI. D. 6.)
- H. Consider purchasing performance monitoring software. (See VI. E. 2.)
- I. Distribute the current policy regarding computer equipment used during telework to all employees across all divisions. (See VI. F. 1.)
- J. Consider purchasing telework conferencing equipment for the three largest conference rooms. (See VI. F. 9.)
- K. Managers should determine departmental policy in regard to:
  - a. Allowances for combinations of telework and compressed work schedules.
  - b. Allowances for weather related absences for staff to elect to telework.
  - c. Establish plans of coverage for each division/section by the respective manager, considering public customers and intergovernmental agency needs.