84.4% OF HARVARD EMPLOYEES WORKED REMOTELY compared to 5.1% in 2019.

FOR THOSE WHO COMMUTED TO CAMPUS 5% DROVE, 3% WALKED, 3% BIKE, AND 1% TOOK TRANSIT.

PANDEMIC RESPONSE

In response to the Pandemic, Mail and Distribution Services expanded their core operations by adding new services including the distribution of 13,848 packages of disinfecting wipes, 348,618 Covid Test Kits, 2,045,300 masks, 595,200 gloves, and 850 gallons of hand sanitizer to the Harvard Community in 2020.

ID PRODUCTION

The Campus Service Center produced 13,666 Harvard ID’s, down from 39,949 the previous year with all undergraduate ID’s embedded with MBTA Charlie Card technology.

FLEET/SHUTTLE

Shuttle services operations saw substantial changes due to the pandemic with the number of rides dropping by 75.9%. 21,895 shuttle trips were taken in throughout the year with 26,036 passengers.

ZOOM BIKE SESSIONS

A new feature during the pandemic, CommuterChoice held 6 virtual bike sessions held throughout the year with 328 participants.

SAFER STREETS

2,269 feet of separated bike lanes added on the Quincy/DeWolfe corridor.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Campus Service Center had 156 virtual appointments and fielded 13,786 calls, down from 21,054 the previous year.

TRANSIT RIDERSHIP TRENDS

The pandemic drastically altered commuting patterns. Over 80% of transit passes were canceled by Harvard employees, with monthly subsidized passes dropping from an average of 7,800 to 1,200 between March and April.
NOTARY PUBLIC
Campus Service Center staff notarized 163 documents, down from 374 in 2019. Notarized documents included absentee ballots for the Harvard community.

MAIL DELIVERY
In addition to supporting the university response to Covid-19, Mail Services distributed 2,919,787 pieces of mail and 107,452 parcels in 2020.

BLUEBIKES GROWTH
19 bike share docks were added to the Harvard campus with a new station at the Athletics complex. In total 86,968 Bluebikes trips were taken in 2020 down from 111,753 in 2019.

RETURNED PERMITS
The Campus Service Center processed 1,326 returned parking permits in 2020, with a peak of 412 in March due to Harvard’s switch to remote operations.

ALLSTON BIKE RACKS
160 outdoor bike racks and 410 secure bike racks installed at the Science and Engineering Campus.

PARKING ADDITIONS
Over 320 parking spaces added to support the Science and Engineering Campus.

METER UPDATES
4 new solar powered multi-space meters installed on campus.

Campus parking dropped off significantly during the early months of the pandemic, with utilization below 14% of normal occupancy. Parking utilization has climbed to approximately 34% normal occupancy over time as operations adjust to new safety and distancing protocols.
**Harvard University** is a leading employer in maintaining an exceptionally low Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) commuting rate locally, regionally and nationally. This accomplishment represents a significant contribution to and investment in local transportation planning options and is an important component of Harvard’s greenhouse gas emission reduction goals. Since 1998, Harvard’s CommuterChoice Program has developed many programs to encourage sustainable transportation choices to meet the Parking and Transportation Demand Management (PTDM) Plan goals in Cambridge and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Rideshare Report goals for Harvard’s Boston campuses.

The 2020 transportation survey data indicates an **SOV rate of 5.0% for Cambridge-based employees and off-campus graduate students**. Although this SOV rate was heavily impacted by the remote work and learning demands caused by the pandemic, the low drive-alone rate is also a sustained result achieved through a careful balance of campus planning, parking prices, and financial incentives for transit, bicycle and carpool commuting, and educational initiatives to foster the use of alternatives to SOV commuting.

The pandemic significantly impacted campus transportation services and demand. Remote work and instruction dramatically altered commute habits, resulting in rapid and significant reductions in transit and driving commutes as students and employees switched to remote learning and working.

**2020 Commute Mode Split Cambridge Campus**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Remote Work</th>
<th>Drive Alone</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>Public Transit</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
<th>Ride Hail</th>
<th>Vanpool</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>84.4%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>&lt;0.1%</td>
<td>&lt;0.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transportation Services Highlights

**Edenred transition**

In April 2020, Harvard University transitioned to a new transit benefit provider, Edenred Benefits. The transition to the Waltham-based provider achieved improved customer service, faster PERQ CharlieCard replacements, user-friendly ordering, and a built-in guaranteed ride home program.

**Distribution of test kits**

Harvard University Mail and Distribution Services has coordinated the distribution and transport of over 500,000 COVID test kits to Faculty, Staff and Students on and off campus. Since September, all self-administered kits are transported daily to over 40 locations across campus, including the Arboretum and Harvard Forest. HUMS also transports kits for processing at the North West Labs and the Broad Institute in Cambridge. HUMS is doing this work 7 days a week, from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.

**No-contact services**

The Campus Service Center and Parking Services transitioned the parking permit application online, providing an opportunity for employee flexibility in extending or cancelling parking permits. For those requiring in-person services such as ID cards and notary, the Campus Service Center opened a satellite office in the lobby of the Smith Campus Center.

**On-call shuttle driver team**

The Transit Services department worked with College partners to form an “On-call shuttle driver team” to help transport students who test positive for COVID-19. Six shuttle drivers volunteered to perform this service which started in September and operates seven days a week from 8am to 8pm. Transit Services also received two new shuttle buses which improved the reliability of the fleet.
Flexible Commuting

Debit card for pre-tax savings on transit and parking

During the pandemic, CommuterChoice launched a pre-tax debit card for employees looking for more flexible commuting options. With this debit card, employees can purchase a variety of transit passes, including but not limited to, mTicket commuter rail 10 ride tickets, flexible 5 ride commuter rail pass, weekly passes or single rides, MASCO shuttle passes and more. The pre-tax parking benefit is limited to MBTA or other commuter parking facilities and can be used in conjunction with the new Harvard ZipBy hourly parking app coming this fall.

Changes in parking fees

As more members of the Harvard community returned to campus throughout the pandemic, Harvard Transportation Services transitioned from no-charge parking to the next phase of its plan to support those who commute to and from the University. Through the end of FY21, most commuter parking permits will be offered at significantly reduced rates. This temporary reduction from typical rates better align parking and public transportation costs, maintain regulatory agreements with the City of Cambridge, and uphold Harvard’s commitment to sustainability.

New interactive web map

The Harvard Planning Office launched a new and improved online campus map this fall. Accessible at map.harvard.edu, the map allows users to locate resources and find their way around campus. The tool shows the locations of shuttles and arrival times, provides walking and functionally accessible directions, real-time Bluebikes dock information, as well as bike racks, bike repair stations and bicycle routes. In addition to transportation features, there is information about buildings, culture and arts, accessible entrances, events, food, safety and more.

In Fall 2020, the Harvard Square kiosk area received bike and pedestrian infrastructure upgrades to improve safety.

Source: Nearmap
Facilitating MBTA credits

In response to the unpredictability around the coronavirus pandemic, the MBTA established a credit process for unused transit passes through March 2021. Credits provide commuters ease of mind when ordering their transit passes, especially with unpredictable return-to-campus schedules.

Flexible Parking on Campus

To accommodate parking flexibility on campus during the pandemic, four new solar powered multi-spacer meters will be installed in the Observatory and 2 Hague Street lots by April 2021. Harvard affiliates will have the option to park in these spaces for four hours at a time and parking permits are not necessary.

Transit

46,627 on-demand riders on the Harvard van in 2020

The Harvard Shuttle is typically a fixed route service in Cambridge and Allston that passengers can view real-time transit information via TransLoc mobile app. Over the summer, the fixed route shuttle switched to a daytime on-demand service, using the Evening Van app. On-demand van ridership in 2020 was 46,627, down from 56,811 in 2019.

Electric Bus Grant

Harvard Transportation Services was awarded a $500,000 grant by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), along with a $1,000,000 loan from the Harvard Green Revolving Fund to purchase four 100% electric shuttle buses and electric infrastructure. The new buses will replace four bio-diesel-powered vehicles and allows Harvard to take one more step toward their goal of becoming fossil fuel neutral by 2026.

The Harvard Shuttle map has a new and simplified look that resembles a mass transit map that is easier to read.

Photo credit: Harvard Planning Office
GSAS adoption of Edenred services

The CommuterChoice office facilitated the transition of the in-house Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences semester pass program to Edenred Benefits. This program provides graduate students with a 50% subsidy on the MBTA Semester Pass Program. Each semester, GSAS typically processes up to 700 subsidized PERQ CharlieCards and Commuter Rail pass orders. For the Fall 2020 semester, GSAS seamlessly transitioned the semester pass program to Edenred Benefits to manage the distribution and replacement of the passes. This process not only simplifies the administration of the program, but also allows for contactless distribution of cards.

Biking

Inclusion of Bluebikes and remote work months into bike benefit

In 2020, Bluebikes memberships were added as an eligible expense for reimbursement under the bicycle commuter benefit. The university also approved “remote work” months as eligible for the benefit as employees are considering biking as a viable commute mode during the pandemic. The inclusion of these months can assist in this transition, up to a maximum of $360 in reimbursable expenses annually.

Bicycle Benefit Participation and Reimbursements for Faculty and Staff

Eligible employees who commute by bike can be reimbursed up to $360 annually for bike expenses.

Bicycle benefit participation rates during a pandemic year is the same as in 2019. This is a testament to Harvard University’s commitment to supporting alternative transportation and employee access to commuter benefits.
Bike benefit expanded to graduate student workers

In July 2020, the Harvard Graduate Students Union contract was ratified. This contract allows student workers to receive commuter benefits, including the bike benefit. Student workers submit bike expenses through an online form for reimbursement, receipts are then validated by the CommuterChoice office, and funds are distributed via payroll.

Virtual bike safety and maintenance workshop series with MassBike

Throughout the pandemic, Harvard CommuterChoice hosted a monthly virtual bike workshop series with MassBike. Session topics ranged from bike maintenance, bike safety, urban bicycle riding and more. Over 230 unique attendees joined in throughout the six sessions. The workshops were recorded and added to a new virtual “Bike Education Library” hosted on the CommuterChoice website which focuses on bicycle safety and maintenance.

Dewolfe Bike Corridor

The Quincy-Bow-Dewolfe corridor establishes a new north-south bike route that connects Harvard Square to the Allston Campus via the Weeks Footbridge. These one-way streets now have a protected contraflow bike lane to allow for northbound access for bicycle users. Other installments include wider sidewalks, raised crosswalks and a two-way cycle track connection to the Weeks Footbridge. This new bike corridor is a public-private partnership between the City of Cambridge and Harvard University.

MassBike executive director, Galen Mook, hosts a “Maintain your bike, wits and distance” virtual workshop on June 3, 2020.

Quincy-DeWolfe bicycle corridor connects Harvard Square to Allston. Photo credit: Harvard University Planning
Bike lock library

CommuterChoice now offers Harvard affiliates with free 24-hour bike lock rentals. This program is designed to assist commuters who bike to work but forget their lock at home. Bikers simply stop by the CommuterChoice office, sign out a lock, and return it the following day.

Bluebikes ridership during the pandemic

During the pandemic, there were 370 employee and 402 student memberships, down from 1037 total members pre-pandemic. Bluebikes recorded 39,333 employee trips and 46,475 student trips between March-December 2020.

Digital bike badges

Before bike month was moved from May to September, Harvard CommuterChoice celebrated virtual bike month. The Harvard community was encouraged to practice safe social distancing by riding solo or with their household. CommuterChoice created digital badges that can be downloaded and added to email signatures for each month they rode their bike.

Ride sharing and car sharing

43 Zipcars available to Harvard community members

Harvard offers a discounted annual $25 membership to employees and students. Zipcars are located throughout the Cambridge, Allston and Longwood campuses. During the pandemic, there was an average utilization rate of 39%, with a total of 741,787 miles driven. Both the number and time allotted of reservations peaked over the summer, which can be attributed to a switch to “destination” trips compared to traditional “errand” trips.
Transportation Services Responds to the Pandemic

Transportation Services adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic in a swift and efficient manner.

CommuterChoice:

- **Hosted a monthly virtual bicycle workshop series** that focused on safety and maintenance as the Harvard community explored bicycling as a safe commute mode during the pandemic.
- **Facilitated the return of transit credits** in response to the unpredictability around the coronavirus pandemic.
- **Moved to paperless carpool applications** during the pandemic to promote safe, contactless and seamless remote operations.
- **Launched Microsoft Bookings portal** to provide Harvard affiliates access to one-on-one virtual meetings with CommuterChoice staff that stimulates an “in-person” environment. The tool was used for commute assistance, commuter benefits questions and bike maintenance assistance.

The Campus Service Center:

- **Opened a satellite location** on the first floor of the Smith Campus Center for new and lost Harvard ID cards. This new location eliminated the need to ride an elevator or take the stairs up to their 8th floor center.
- **Provided notary service** to those who needed to certify their mail-in or absentee ballots for the 2020 election.
- **Updated service windows in all customer service facing areas** with plexiglass screens and barriers to keep staff and customers as safe as possible.
- **Transitioned to contactless services** for the Harvard community, including online parking permit applications and permit mailings, and Harvard ID validations via virtual Microsoft Bookings appointments.
Mail Services:

- Managed the COVID Supply Stockroom in Allston, including inventory and delivery process of supplies such as disinfectant, gloves and masks to departments all over campus.
- Coordinated the retrieval of university property from students and staff who left campus.
- Forwarded mail to students and departments who did not return to campus.
- Managed the distribution of COVID test kits on and off campus, and transport to the Broad Institute for processing.
- Updated service windows in all customer service facing areas with plexiglass screens and barriers to keep staff and customers as safe as possible.

Transit Services:

- Reduced shuttle capacity to 50% during the pandemic to comply with social distancing guidelines. Shuttles were outfitted with clearly marked onboard seating patterns to ensure social distancing.
- Installed plexiglass barriers at vehicle entrances to keep drivers and passengers as safe as possible.
- Worked closely with Custodial Services to ensure high touch point cleaning was performed twice a day on transit vehicles. In addition, shuttle drivers were provided with personal COVID kits containing PPE including face coverings, antibacterial wipes, latex gloves and hand sanitizer.
- Transitioned to an on-demand daytime shuttle schedule during the pandemic due to reduced shuttle bus ridership. Shuttle passengers were able to request rides using the popular Harvard Evening Van app.
Parking Services:

- **Offered parking permit flexibility** for Harvard employees who had the option to extend their permits if they did not commute to campus during the pandemic.
- **Reduced parking permit rates** for annual and daily parking permits. Employees were offered temporary reduced rates if they did not feel comfortable commuting via transit.
- **Provided no-contact services** for the Harvard community. The parking permit application was transferred to an online form and employees had the option to send or receive permits via mail.
- **Installed plexiglass protection** at all booths and increased the cleaning schedule in all garages.