



## COMMUTER CONNECTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 15, 2015

Chairperson: Jim Sebastian, DDOT

Vice Chairperson: Adrienne Moretz, Frederick County TransIT

Staff Contact: Nicholas Ramfos 202/962-3313

### Item #1 Introductions

*The Subcommittee members were asked to introduce themselves and to sign the attendance sheet*

Jim Sebastian, DDOT staff, called the meeting to order by introducing himself and asking the rest of the attendees to do so.

### Item #2 Minutes of July 21, 2015

*Approval was sought for the July 21, 2015 Commuter Connections Subcommittee Meeting Minutes.*

Approval of the minutes was put forth on a motion by Mark Sofman, Montgomery County, MD, and supported by George Clark, Tri-County Council for Southern MD, to approve the minutes of the meeting as written.

### Item #3 Announcement of new Vice-Chair

*Jim Sebastian announced the choice of the next Subcommittee Vice Chairperson.*

Jim Sebastian, DDOT, announced that the new vice-chair of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee would be Fatemah Alladouhst, VDOT. George Clark, TCCSMD, offered a motion to approve and acceptance was unanimous. Mr. Ramfos noted that because Ms. Alladoust was already representing VDOT on the Clean Air Partners and could not have more than one vote, Ms. Moretz had graciously agreed to stay on as the Commuter Connections representative to Clean Air Partners.

### Item #4 Change of Chairs

*Jim Sebastian, DDOT, announced the new chair of the Commuter Connections Adrienne Moretz, Frederick County TransIT staff.*

Ms. Moretz, Frederick County TransIT staff, presented an award of appreciation to Mr. Sebastian for his leadership over the past year as chair of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee.

### Item #5 2014 Regional HOV Report

*C. Patrick Zilliacus, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the Spring 2014 Regional HOV study.*

Patrick Zilliacus briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the Spring 2014 Regional HOV study. He stated that the data was collected during the spring and fall of 2014 and that draft reports were submitted to the Travel Forecasting Committee Subcommittee and the TPB Technical Committee with a final revision in review now. Once approved the final document will be shared with the Subcommittee (Item 5A).

The report seeks to measure vehicle occupancies in traffic in HOV and non-HOV lanes using travel times through GPS units with the processing methodology built in. Corridors studied included I-95, I-395 (before conversion to Express Lanes) I-66, VA 267, I-270 and US-50. This study did not examine the 495 Express Lanes or MD-200 (ICC). The study was conducted during the a.m. commute on inbound traffic with the exception of US-50 due to HOV restrictions in place 24/7.

The findings of the study concluded that barrier-separated HOV lanes performed well (I-95 and I-395) while inside the beltway HOV lanes on I-66 were congested in places. The concurrent-flow HOV lanes along I-270 did not perform especially well. Vehicle occupancy counts, or the average auto occupancy were nearly always less than the HOV requirement due to the hybrid and Dulles exemptions in Virginia.

**Item #6      Update on the Transportation Sector Working Group of the COG Multi-Sector Working Group (MSWG) to Examine Greenhouse Gas Reductions**

*Robert Griffiths, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the activities of the MSWG and the transportation sector working group.*

Robert Griffiths explained the charge of the contractor, ICF, to the Subcommittee. He stated, ICF is tasked with identification of viable, implementable local, regional and state actions to reduce GHG emissions in four sectors (Energy, the built environment, Land Use, and Transportation). The study should quantify the benefits, costs, and implementation timeframes of these actions. The study should also explore specific GHG emission reduction targets in each of the four sectors and jointly develop an action plan for the region. In December 2014, the TPB reaffirmed its commitment to this study and committed staff and resources to its production. The MSWG is comprised of membership from the TPB, COG Board of Directors and MWAQC.

The MSWG followed a public process which included MSWG subgroups identification of viable and stretch strategies. The prior is assumed to be implementable by 2040 and the latter is expected to “push the envelope” of implementation. Public comment periods and MSWG strategies were distilled and the findings were presented to the TPB, MWAQC, CEEPC and the COG Board.

Mr. Griffiths reviewed the project milestones of the MSWG with the Subcommittee and reminded the Subcommittee that the interim reports were due to COG’s policy boards between September and October 2015. The final draft would be prepared in November – December 2015 and the final report would be due in January 2016. At that time, the development of an action plan should begin. During the action plan development, real world examples will be fleshed out such as electric car charging stations, priority HOV parking, tax benefits to folks who purchase electric vehicles or provide charging stations for them.

He went on to state that the aspirational goal of the MSWG would be an 80% reduction in GHG by 2050 from the 2005 baseline. As the region continues to grow, it will be necessary to implement these tools in order to keep GHG production in check.

**Item #7      2015 Car Free Day Event**

*Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, discussed the FY 2015 Car Free Day Event.*

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB Staff, briefed the Subcommittee on planning for FY 2015 Car Free Day. Mr. Franklin reminded the committee that Car Free Day is Tuesday, September 22 and stated the three main objectives are: use CFD to promote alternate modes of both commute and non-commute transportation, encourage commuters and the general public to use car-free or car lite-travel and finally, to measure and report emissions impacts.

Mr. Franklin shared the 30 second radio commercial with the Subcommittee that will be aired on WASH, WBIG and WITH to promote Car Free Day. He also repeated the primary slogan will be, "Join a Team that Fits your Mobility Best." The idea is to provide a sense of belonging for those who take the pledge and provide more ownership and "virtual" camaraderie through hashtags that were created to correspond with each mode: #TEAMBUS, #TEAMRAIL, #TEAMPOOL, #TEAMBIKE, #TEAMWALK, and #TEAMTELEWORK. The printed copies of the poster were made available by mid-August and a pdf of the poster is available for download on the web site, [www.carfreemetrodc.org](http://www.carfreemetrodc.org). 16,000 flyers were printed in mid-August and 7,000 of those were sent to employers with a cover letter and instructions on how to promote the event. Additional marketing for the event will be via text messaging, direct mail, email, press releases and stickers and buttons.

Mr. Franklin stated that additional marketing was achieved through Commuter Connections network members through Frederick County TransIT offering free rides on all shuttles and Connector buses on Car Free Day, Loudoun County Commuter Services raffling two \$75 VISA gift cards, City of Alexandria Local Motion will provide free T-shirts on Car Free Day, Montgomery County Commuter Services will celebrate Car Free Day at the select Metro and transit stations, Fairfax County is hosting a Transportation Expo at the Fairfax County Government Center, Arlington in Crystal City, Ballston and Rosslyn will be offering free coffee and snacks, and the Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland will be at North Beach promoting the event during the street closure and farmers market.

**Item #8            FY 2016 Regional TDM Evaluation Project Update**

*Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff briefed the Subcommittee on the FY 2016 TDM Evaluation Project data collection activities and schedule.*

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB Staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the FY 2016 TDM Evaluation Project data collection activities and schedule, which would include the TERM Evaluation Framework, Guaranteed Ride Home Survey, the Retention Rate Survey and the State of the Commute Survey. Mr. Ramfos stated that revamping framework methodology was an important step because it is the backbone for evaluating the work that the TDM groups perform. Mr. Ramfos also mentioned, the TDM Evaluation group will meet in October 20, 2015 and that the draft Framework Methodology report will be presented to the Subcommittee in January. The final report is expected to be adopted in March.

The GRH surveys for Washington and Baltimore are to be completed this year as well. This fall the questionnaire will be reviewed and the updated questionnaire will be brought back to the TDM Evaluation group in November 2015. The initial draft report will be issued to the Subcommittee in July.

Mr. Ramfos detailed that Retention Rate Survey as well which will include commuters from 2008-2015. Mr. Clark asked a point of clarification to determine if commuters that did not choose a

program would also be included in the survey. Mr. Ramfos responded that they would as long as contact information was available.

Mr. Ramfos also discussed the 2015 State of the Commute Survey with the group. He mentioned reaching respondents by landline, cell phones and a new internet pilot for the survey.

**Item #9      FY 2017 Work Program Development and Commuter Connections Strategic Plan**

*Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, discussed the FY 2017 Work Program Development and Strategic Plan.*

Mr. Ramfos, COG/TPB Staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the FY 2017 Commuter Connections Work Program timeline and highlights of each program area. He also discussed the Commuter Connections Strategic Plan and reviewed the Commuter Connections mission statement, the definition of Commuter Connections, program objectives and operating objectives. Details in the plan include each component such as the Commuter Operations Center, Guaranteed Ride Home, Marketing of Alternative Commute Options, Monitoring and Evaluation, Employer Outreach and Telework.

Mr. Ramfos stated that a draft version of the FY 2017 CCWP would be presented to the Subcommittee in November and a comment period will be established. Comments will also be requested on the Strategic Plan.

**Item #10      ACT Conference Re-Cap**

Members of the Subcommittee shared with the group their experiences at the 2015 ACT International Conference. Mr. Ramfos and Ms. Moretz shared their experiences relating to the activities that were part of the conference as did Traci McPhail.

**Item #11      4th Quarter CCWP Budget Report, FY 2015 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Progress Report and FY 2015 CCWP Annual Progress Report**

*Barbara Brennan, COG/TPB staff, discussed the 4th Quarter CCWP Budget Report, FY 2015 4th Quarter Progress Report and FY 2015 CCWP Annual Progress Report FY 2016 1st Quarter*

Barbara Brennan, COG/TPB Staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the 4th quarter preliminary budget report for FY 2015 as well as expenditures and spend rates. She also reviewed the FY2016 First Quarter Progress Report and the FY 2015 Annual Progress Report.

**Item #12      Other Business/Set Agenda for Next Meeting**

Subcommittee members are encouraged to contact Nicholas Ramfos with any particular agenda items they may be interested in seeing on the next agenda.

**The next meeting of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee will be held on Tuesday, November 17, 2015 at 12 noon.**