



## **CAR FREE DAY 2011 STEERING COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday March 9, 2011**

### **Meeting Notes**

#### **1. Introductions**

#### **2. Approval of Minutes from September 8, 2010 Meeting**

Minutes were approved as written.

#### **3. Car Free Day Background**

Car Free Day is a worldwide event which celebrates alternatives to drive-alone car dependence in order to reduce human impact on the environment. Originally started in Europe, it is now celebrated in 1,500 cities in 40 countries. In some countries it's known as "Mobility Day". The objective is the same, to get people to try transportation alternatives in the hope they consider adopting such methods as part of a regular lifestyle.

In 2007 D.C. Councilmember Tommy Wells introduced Car Free Day to the District. In that first year it was a D.C. centric event and in 2008 his staff approached COG and asked Commuter Connections to help make Car Free Day a region-wide event. Despite the name, Car Free Day is not *anti-car* as it also incorporates carpooling/vanpooling, otherwise known as "car-lite". The main distinction between Commuter Connections' modus operandi and how Car Free Day is approached is that the event encompasses not only commuters but all travelers. This provides an opportunity to reach out to new audiences such as students, homemakers, and seniors.

Car Free Day is on Thursday, September 22, 2011. This will be our fourth year to host the event on a regional level.

#### **4. Recap of 2010 Event**

The 2010 event was an overall success with pledges increasing by 11.5% to nearly 7,000. Of those who pledged, 2,346 people (34%) stated they typically drive alone and two thirds were already car-free. Total miles reduced by the SOV group was 55,591. Total miles reduced or saved by all participants equaled 127,420. Overall, news coverage for Car Free Day was very positive. Some of the top news outlets that covered Car Free Day included WTOP radio and the Washington Post. Special promotions included: Sport&Health offered 7-day passes available online; Capital Bikeshare gave out free ride coupons and other prizes at two bike stations; the Regional Telework Centers provided a free week trial; and Montgomery County Commuter Services offered free coffee and donuts at several Park & Ride lots and raffled off free SmarTrip cards.

#### **5. 2011 Pledge Goal**

The committee voted to adopt the previous year's goal of 10,000 pledges, originally set by the state funding agencies.

#### **6. Marketing Materials**

Last year a host of marketing activities were engaged to bring attention to Car Free Day and promote visits to the web site, [www.carfreemetrodc.com](http://www.carfreemetrodc.com). Commuter Connections will continue to support the event through marketing materials, radio and public outreach. Rather than spend extensive time and resources to develop entirely new marketing materials for the visual component of the 2011 campaign, the Committee agreed to utilize the existing creative and make appropriate adjustments to reflect this year's event.

#### **7. Other Business**

The next meeting is scheduled for May 11, 2011 at 11:30.