



COMMUTER CONNECTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, November 17, 2015

Chairperson: Adrienne Moretz, Frederick County TransIT

Vice Chairperson: Fatemeh Allahdoust, VDOT

Staff Contact: Nicholas Ramfos 202/962-3313

Item #1 Introductions

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

Adrienne Moretz, Frederick County TransIT, called the meeting to order by introducing herself and asking the rest of the attendees to do so.

Item #2 Minutes of September 15 2015

Approval was sought for the September, 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 2015 Bike to Work Day Draft Event Report

Mark Hersey, COG/TPB staff briefed the Subcommittee on the draft 2015 Bike to Work Day event report.

Mark Hersey, COG/TPB staff, reviewed the contents of the draft 2015 Bike to Work Day event report. He stated that there was an increase in registrations. There has also been an increase in the number of pit stops over the years. The bulk of the report consists of write-ups from each of the pit stop managers. There are some pit stop sections that are still missing information. Employer information in terms of registrant participation is included in the report. There has been a tremendous growth in federal agencies participating. The University of Maryland won the employer challenge. Information on social media tracking is also included in the report as well as web site traffic. There is also information and photos of the proclamation signing as well as photos of all of the marketing materials. Newspaper ads that ran are shown as well as media coverage. There is also a section of photos from various pit stops. The report also indicated over 6,800 first time riders which is about 30% of the overall registrants. The comment period was set for December 18th by 12 noon. Comments should be submitted to docomments@mwkog.org.

Item #4 2015 Car Free Day Results

Douglas Franklin, COG/TB staff, presented the results of Car Free Day which was held on September 22, 2015.

Douglas Franklin stated that Car Free Day was held on September 22nd this year and thanked the Car Free Day Steering Committee members and sponsors of the event. The prizes from the event have been distributed and have been marketed through social media. Social media likes and followers both increased for Facebook and Twitter. Car Free Day had over 40 media

mentions. There was also a friendly college campus competition for pledges which was won by Georgetown University. The total number of times web pages viewed were nearly 40,000. There were 3,422 pledges for the event. 22% of the unique web page users took the pledge which amounted to 1 of every 5 visitors. Registrants were asked to choose a team related to their alternative mode use. There were six choices and participants were asked to choose the mode they used the greatest distance for. The modes included, bike, rail, bus, walk, telework, and pool. 25% of those that pledged stated that they would normally drive alone which translated to 876 pledges. There were 17,596 miles saved for those who typically drive alone. Mr. Franklin stated that emission reductions were calculated for the event. The event had lower participation rates due to the papal visit and the Yom Kippur holiday. Fatemeh Allahdoust suggested that perhaps marketing for the event next year needs to focus more on drive alone commuters given the distance of the SOV commuters that participated in the event this year.

Item #5 Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Participation Guidelines

Steven Osborn, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the recommended changes to the Guaranteed Ride Home participation guidelines.

Steven Osborn, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on changes being recommended to the regional Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program. The review of the guidelines and recommended changes were in response to recent situations that have occurred with commuters requesting rides. Recommended changes to the guidelines included the following:

- Guideline #4: "Commuters must re-register annually to maintain their GRH registration. Commuters **may** contact Commuter Connections to re-register and update their registration information **or request re-registration through the Commuter Connections website.**
- Guideline #5 would be updated to reflect the following: "...Cases in which the GRH program cannot be used include, but are not limited to the following: previously scheduled medical appointments, trips to the **doctor, urgent care center, emergency room, or hospital** for a commuter that needs medical attention, personal errands, transit service disruptions and/or delays, business related travel, working late without a supervisor's request, weather emergencies, any type of **office or building closing and/or** evacuations, and natural disasters. **If any of the above unqualified cases should lead to a qualifying reason, the trip will not be granted due to its underlying cause.**

The recommended changes will be posted to the SharePoint site and Subcommittee members are asked to provide comments not later than December 17th at docomments@mwkog.org. Mr. Osborn explained that the final guidelines will be presented during the January Subcommittee meeting for final review and endorsement.

Item #6 FY 2016 Regional TDM Evaluation Project Update

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the Regional TDM Evaluation project.

Mr. Ramfos gave a brief overview of the upcoming regional TDM Evaluation project and stated that the TDM Framework Evaluation methodology document was being updated and was the "blue print" on what type of data is collected and how the data is evaluated for the Transportation Emission Reduction Measures (TERMS) and the Commuter Operations Center

being implemented by COG. A draft document will be prepared and presented to the TDM Evaluation Group in December and to the Subcommittee in January. A comment period will be established then. Mr. Ramfos then discussed the status of the questionnaire for the 2016 State of the Commute survey. He stated that the questionnaire would be finalized in early December in order for a pre-test survey to be conducted in mid-December. The full survey will begin to be administered in early January. Next, the Guaranteed Ride Home 2016 survey for both the Baltimore and Washington DC metropolitan regions was discussed. The survey questionnaire will be finalized early next year and the survey will be conducted in April. A new Retention Rate survey will also be developed for implementation during the fiscal year. The purpose of the survey is to interview past program participants to determine whether or not they are still using alternative modes to get to and from work. The survey will help determine a retention rate that can then be used as part of the overall TERM Analysis program impact calculations. The survey is slated to be implemented in March of next year and staff along with LDA Consulting is focused on determining the survey target audience.

Item #7 Capital Bikeshare Results

Lori Diggins, LDA Consulting, discussed the results of the recent Capital Bikeshare Survey

Lori Diggins, LDA Consulting, briefed the Subcommittee on results from the 2014 Capital Bikeshare survey. There were 27,000 bikeshare users contacted to participate in the survey there were about 4,000 responses. The demographic of the users are young and slightly lower income with 80% having college degrees. These demographics do not mirror the general population. The survey showed a slightly lower white demographic. Given the expansion of the program to other jurisdictions, the population has shifted. The primary reason of use is greater access and flexibility of travel. There are no parking hassles or theft of the bike. It changes the way users think about getting from their origin to their destination. Over three quarters of users joined because they think that bicycling is fun. It is a mode that can be used occasionally or as a regular transportation option.

Use of the program was very trip specific. The most common use is for non-work trips. About three quarter of respondents stated that they use bikeshare to get to work. It also serves as a feeder service to transit. Two-thirds of respondents stated that they use it to get to and from Metrorail. It assists with first mile last mile trips. The reason that respondents used bikeshare for their most recent trip was because the destination was too far to walk to. Older individuals and those with vehicles used the service because they didn't have to worry about driving and/or parking. About four in ten of the respondents stated that they would have taken transit if Bikeshare was not available. Six percent stated that they would have driven.

In the past month, half of users have made a trip that they would not have made. These trips were induced trip and mostly social trips. Respondents who used bikeshare have increased their bike use, and included those that have personal bikes. The bigger finding was a decrease use of driving, use of taxi and transit. Those using bikeshare to and from work average about 6.2 miles which is dramatically less than the regional work trip distance which is about 16 miles.

Respondents were asked if they had change their mode to work because of bikeshare. Three in ten employed respondents started or increased use of biking for their trip to work since joining Capital Bikeshare. Thirteen percent started or increased use of bicycle as their primary mode and another 19% started using bicycling as a secondary mode. As a result of this increased use

of bike, the share of respondents who primarily biked to work increased from 9% of employed respondents to 29%.

Item #8 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 draft FY 2017 Commuter Connections Work Program. He stated that there was also a companion Commuter Connections Strategic Plan that would also need to be reviewed and updated. The version in today's agenda packet is from last fiscal year and is the short version of the plan. There is also a longer more detailed version that expands on specific tasks and objectives for Commuter Connections network members. Once changes are made to the "short plan," the longer plan will be updated. Mr. Ramfos then reviewed the definition of Commuter Connections which is captured in the Strategic Plan and also included in the draft Work program. He then reviewed the benefits that Commuter Connections provides to jurisdictions, employers and employees. The geographic area covered by Commuter Connections is larger than the TPB's non-attainment region and much larger than COG's footprint. The region also ranks in the top five jurisdictions in the country for percentage of workers that use transit and carpools. There are also daily program impacts for transportation and emission that are derived from the regional TDM Evaluation project. Commuter Connections also plays a role in the regional planning process when it comes to the congestion management process and inclusion of the TERM benefits into the region's air quality conformity determination process. Future requirements may include providing benefits to meet regional greenhouse gas emission targets that may be set as well as providing input to regional performance measurements set as part of MAP-21 requirements.

Mr. Ramfos then reviewed the cost effectiveness of Commuter Connections in terms of both transportation and emission impacts. He then discussed the budget changes from this fiscal year to what is being proposed for next fiscal year. There will be an overall 3.4% decrease in the budget and approximately 30% of the budget goes for staff and overhead costs, an additional 55% is reserved for private sector services and 8.5% of the budget is passed through to local jurisdictions while 6% of the budget goes towards direct costs. Mr. Ramfos then covered what was new in the FY 2017 CCWP and focused on the Monitoring and Evaluation program element as well as the GRH Baltimore project.

In terms of next steps for the draft document, the state funding agencies will review the final draft in December and will be asked to approve the final document in January. The Subcommittee will be asked to provide comments on both the draft FY 2017 CCWP and the Strategic Plan by December 4th through documents@mwcoq.org. The document will then be reviewed again by the Subcommittee in January for endorsement along with the updated Strategic Plan. The document will then be presented to both the TPB Technical Committee and the TPB in February for review and comment and will also be released for public comment. The TPB will be asked to approve the final document in March.

Item #9 FY 2016 1st Quarter CCWP Budget Report and 1st Quarter Progress Report

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, discussed the 1st Quarter CCWP Budget Report and 1st Quarter Progress Report

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB Staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the FY 2016 1st quarter budget report in terms of expenditures and spend rates and stated that although only 10% of the budget had been expended the idea was that by the 4th quarter of the fiscal year the expenditure rate would be between 90 – 100%. Expenditures cannot exceed the budget. He also reviewed the FY2016 First Quarter 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, January 19, 2016 at 12 noon.

