



MEETING NOTES
CAR FREE DAY 2023 EVENT STEERING COMMITTEE
March 8, 2023

1. Introductions

Committee members, guests, and other attendees introduced themselves by name and affiliation.

2. Meeting Minutes Approval

Minutes from the September 14, 2022 meeting were approved as written.

3. Car Free Day 2022 Draft Event Report

A comprehensive draft report was distributed which highlights activity surrounding the promotion of Car Free Day 2022 and the event's pledge results. Total 2022 pledges reached 4,054, more than the last two years and the second highest in the last five.

The Car Free Day 2022 proclamation signing took place at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) meeting on July 20, 2022. During the meeting, Pamela Sebesky, City of Manassas Vice Mayor and TPB Chair, signed the enlarged prop and officially proclaimed September 22, 2022 as Car Free Day in the Washington, DC region. Many jurisdictions also approved local Car Free Day proclamations of their own, including Charles and Prince William counties, and the cities of Manassas and Rockville.

All who took the Car Free Day pledge were entered into a free raffle for a chance to win prizes donated by sponsors. In addition, all who took the Car Free Day pledge received a \$30 Nift Gift promocode, a 24-hour Capital Bikeshare pass, and a free cup of coffee at Busboys and Poets.

The total Car Free Day paid media budget for the 2022 event was \$45,000 and consisted of radio spots, text messages, a YouTube video, sponsored article, social media influencers, and digital banner ads. Other efforts to promote Car Free Day included social media and earned media.

The Capital Area Car Free College Campus Challenge was created as a friendly competition to generate awareness of and participation in Car Free Day on college campuses throughout the region. The college with the greatest number of pledges, the University of Maryland, received a plaque to commemorate the occasion.

Commuter Connections network members hosted numerous promotions to celebrate Car Free Day. Clean Air Partners leveraged a network of local social media influencers to build engagement around Car Free Day 2022, prompting followers to visit the Car Free Day website and take the pledge.

A thorough analysis and reporting was provided of the Car Free Day 2022 pledge data. With 1,580 (39%), Virginia was the state with the greatest number of pledges in 2022, followed by Maryland at 1,230 (30%), and the District of Columbia at 1,199 (30%). Other states received 45 pledges (1%).

All COG jurisdictions participated in support of Car Free Day 2022, to some extent, and generated pledges. The District of Columbia was the number one jurisdiction, with 1,199 (30%) of the total pledges, followed by Montgomery County at 809 (20.0%), and Arlington County with 657 (16%). Triple digit pledges were also generated by other jurisdictions in the following order: Fairfax County, Prince George's County, City of Alexandria, Loudoun County, and Prince William County.

Participants were asked to select the mode(s) they would use on Car Free Day 2022. Participants could select more than one travel mode, and the average number of travel modes per person was 2.2. The breakdown was as follows: Walk/Run 2,515 (62%), Bicycle/Scooter 1,866 (46%), Telework 1,855 (46%), Train 1,255 (31%), Bus 982 (24%), and Carpool/Vanpool 363 (9%).

Those who took the pledge in 2022 were engaged in the following activities on Car Free Day: Working 3,574 (82%), Recreation/Exercise 1,936 (48.0%), Shopping/Errands 1,168 (29%), Dining Out/Entertainment 715 (18%), Taking Classes 300 (7%), and Other 464 (10%).

The following were work locations on Car Free Day 2022: Commuted to Standard Workplace Location 1,939 (48%), Worked From Home 1,757 (43%), Other/Not Working 413 (10%), Co-working/Shared Workspace/Telework Center 98 (2%).

The 2022 Car Free Day event report was posted to SharePoint and the Steering Committee was asked to submit edits to the document by April 5, 2023. An updated draft document will be presented to the Commuter Connections Subcommittee on May 16, 2023, and a comment period will be established.

4. Car Free Day 2023 Date

Car Free Day is traditionally held on September 22nd. September 22nd falls on a Friday in 2022.

5. Marketing Materials

COG/TPB staff will discuss the feasibility of development of new marketing materials for the 2023 Car Free Day event. Once the new FY24 fiscal year begins as of July, funds will become available for the Car Free Day event media plan.

6. Sponsor Drive

The Steering Committee is in search of sponsors to donate prizes for the regional raffle. Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland will donate a Samsung Galaxy tablet.

7. Other Business/Suggestions for Next Meeting

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, will present results of the 2022 Car Free Day Survey highlights at the next Steering Committee meeting to be held on Wednesday, May 10, 2023 from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm, at the COG building.