



COMMUTER CONNECTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, May 16, 2023
12 noon – 2:00 p.m.

Chairperson: Judy Galen, Loudoun County
Vice Chairperson: Janiece Timmons, WMATA
Staff Contact: Nicholas Ramfos 202/962-3313

Item #1 **Introductions**

The Subcommittee members were asked to introduce themselves based on their jurisdictional location in order to be marked as present on the attendance sheet.

Item #2 **Minutes of March 21, 2023 Meeting**

Approval was sought for the March 21, 2023 Commuter Connections Subcommittee Meeting Minutes.

Judy Galen, Loudoun County, requested a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Commuter Connections Subcommittee Meeting. George Clark, TCCSMD, made a motion to approve the minutes; Mark Sofman, Montgomery County, seconded the motion. The Subcommittee unanimously voted to approve the meeting minutes of the March 21, 2023 Commuter Connections Subcommittee Meeting.

Item #3 **FY 2022 Bike to Work Day Survey Report**

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, presented substantive changes to the FY2022 Bike to Work Day Survey Report. The draft report was presented to the Subcommittee at the March 21st meeting and a comment period was established through April 14th.

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on substantive changes to the FY2022 Bike to Work Day Survey Report. All participants who registered for the 2022 event were invited to participate in the survey. Mr. Ramfos outlined all changes within the report, providing page reference and context for such changes. Mr. Ramfos addressed with the Subcommittee the abundance of non-event related comments; the comments were directly related to other bicycling issues and infrastructure and were irrelevant to the Bike to Work Day event. The Subcommittee was informed of the plan to package such comments and share them with state funding agencies for determination on how they would like to parse those comments to the local jurisdictions. The comments will be presented at the next State Working Group meeting and referenced in other committee meetings that wish to receive copies once they are endorsed.

Following Mr. Ramfos's briefing, the Chair asked for a motion to endorse the report for release. George Clark, TCCSMD, made a motion to finalize and endorse the report for release. Kari Snyder, MDOT, seconded the motion. The Subcommittee unanimously voted to finalize and endorse the FY2022 Bike to Work Day Survey Report for release. Mr. Ramfos noted that the report will be posted to the Commuter Connections website for stakeholder access and reference.

Item #4 **FY 2023 Car Free Day Event Draft Report**

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, presented the draft FY2023 Car Free Day Event report to the Subcommittee. The document was presented to the Car Free Day Steering Committee on March 8, 2023, and a comment period was established through April 14th. The draft report was subsequently presented to the Car Free Day Steering Committee on May 10th.

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, presented information to the Subcommittee for the Car Free Day Event. The first meeting for the event was held in March. This draft report contains the comments and edits provided by the Steering Committee.

Mr. Franklin provided background and origin information for the event and reiterated the event's focus to encourage sustainable alternative commuting methods, such as vanpool, carpool, telework, and being car "lite". Context for pledges and proclamations was given to the Subcommittee as well as the various ways jurisdictions displayed their support.

Mr. Franklin discussed the various morale boosting promotional tactics which included raffles, special offers and competitive challenges. Data was provided to show the media coverage and marketing tools used to advertise the event. Social media influencers played a part in promoting the event. Clean Air Partners, a sponsor of the event, has a network of social media personalities that promoted the event also.

Following the meeting, COG/TPB staff will send a follow-up email to the Subcommittee and post the report onto SharePoint for the Subcommittee to post comments. June 15th was established as the comment period end date. The Subcommittee will reconvene on July 18th and review the report for any substantive changes and ask for endorsement and release in preparation for publishing to the Commuter Connections webpage.

Item #5 Clean Air Partners Update

Judy Galen, Loudoun County Commuter Services, briefed the Subcommittee on the status of Clean Air Partners activities.

Judy Galen, Loudoun County Commuter Services, briefed the Subcommittee on Clean Air Partners activities. She reiterated the primary objectives for the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. A survey was conducted in 2021, and as a result of that survey Clean Air Partners was able get a better point of reference to identifying the areas that posed the greatest opportunity for making significant change and positively impacting air quality. This data was captured in a chart and displayed to the Subcommittee. Eco-driving and lawn care activities are the most lucrative in terms of what people are willing to do and/or have done, which is the reasoning behind Clean Air Partners focusing a large amount of time and attention to these areas.

Ms. Galen gave the Subcommittee a recap on what's happening this spring and leading into the summer campaign. Ms. Galen pointed out that special attention be given to the report about Ozone Action Month in August specifically because Commuter Connections network members have an opportunity to bring some attention to individual programs and this very important cause.

In April, Clean Air Partners launched Air Quality Awareness Week with a backyard bubble event. Pictures from the event were furnished to the Subcommittee during the briefing. During Air Quality Awareness Week lawn care and other outdoor activities were showcased. Individuals could enter contests and win random giveaways.- There were opportunities to receive eco-friendly/electric equipment which included mowers, trimmers, and propane gas grills.

Ms. Galen highlighted the digital partner toolkits which are distributed monthly. Jurisdictions not already receiving these toolkits were encouraged to contact Jen Desimone with COG/TPB staff to be added to the distribution list.

Ms. Galen also shared information on what is expected in the month of August, which is Ozone Action Month, including the return of the car bubble, some media outreach, and pop-up events. The Subcommittee was informed of upcoming event dates throughout the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. A special thank you to Southern Maryland, George Clark and TCCSMD stakeholders was given for Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative's (SMECO) sponsorship.

Promotion included signage as well as media outreach. Clean Air Partners uses digital ambassadors and some of those ambassadors were using their own Instagram sites to provide giveaways and engagement with followers about the campaign.

Clean Air Partners wants to raise awareness and let people know how to take small actions when air quality is typically at its worst. Clean Air Partners is educating people on what can be done in terms of driving, including recommending the use of carpools and vanpools and directing people toward transit. When possible, Clean Air Partners is also coordinating with meteorologists to make sure that any Code Red or Code Orange days can be amplified so the information gets out to people about activity on poor air quality days. The plan is to have some in-person events as well, including opportunities for sponsorship from local jurisdictions.

Item #6 **WMATA Orange Line Summer 2023 Work Briefing**

Kerri Toney and Jameshia Peterson, WMATA, briefed the Subcommittee on the upcoming Orange Line work occurring this summer.

During May, WMATA kicked off the 2023 Major Construction Project. The purpose is to increase reliability and advanced system modernization for customers. WMATA is installing new rail and fiber optics on the Orange Line, Silver Line (specifically in Virginia) and on the Green Line.

Summer 2023 Orange Line work was announced in January. Since the announcement, WMATA has been rolling out press releases and travel alternatives, giving people advance notice for the outages that are coming next.

Ms. Toney outlined the general overview of all schedules and affected areas to the Subcommittee and provided detailed context.

Both Ms. Toney and Ms. Peterson provided information on WMATA's website that went live on April 17th and provided time frames, alternative travel maps, parking, reference information during the anticipated outages, and the addition of extra shuttles.

WMATA will be launching a digital communications toolkit. A website reference was provided to the Subcommittee on where this information can be obtained. Subcommittee members were encouraged to share it with other stakeholders where they can log in, get the newsletter, and information to share with various community partners.

Item #7 **2023 Bike to Work Day Event**

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the FY 2023 Bike to Work Day event being held on Friday, May 19, 2023.

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on Bike to Work Day which is Friday, May 19th. This will be the first "normal" in-person event since the start of the pandemic with a lot of the pit stops having various activities and/or vendors to keep the participants engaged. There are 107 pit stops this year, which is 11 more than last year. There are also 10 convoys and a current registration count of 11,700 with a goal of reaching at least 14,000 registrants by the day of the event.

As part of preparation for the event, COG hosted a group of volunteer sorters from all around the region to help sort and count T-shirts for each of the 107 pit stops. COG hosted T-shirt pick up days on May 12th and 15th. All t-shirts were picked up and accounted for.

COG also provided pit stops a supply of Commuter Connections regional bicycling guides and bike maps. Other contributions included Fairfax County bike maps, patch kits from Bicycle Space, and small giveaway items. The

TPB signed a Bike to Work Day Proclamation at their April meeting and TPB Chair Commissioner, Ruben Collins, Charles County, signed the regional proclamation.

Mr. Franklin also elaborated on the Bike to Work Day media campaign which consisted of posters/flyers, traditional radio, television ads, banners, social media, digital website banners on various websites including wtop.com, sponsored articles, and newsletters. An e-mail blast to past participants and other stakeholders was also distributed.

Item #8 ATCMTD Project Update

Daniel Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the ATCMTD project.

Daniel Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management and Technologies Deployment (ATCMTD) Project. Mr. Sheehan provided an overview of the incenTrip App and its updated features over the past six months. Mr. Sheehan reviewed highlights from various tasks for the ATCMTD grant, which integrated Flextime Rewards and corridor challenges into the application. Context for the point system as well as the incentives associated with the program were provided to the Subcommittee members. Several updates have taken place that include enhanced travel notifications. The app now provides travel, weather, and traffic alerts.

The Subcommittee was briefed on the plan to package and prepare the software elements associated with this project and incenTrip for transfer so that COG can maintain the software and continue operating it following the conclusion of the ATCMTD project.

The task timeline was outlined to the Subcommittee in anticipation for the close of the project. Mr. Sheehan reviewed several tables associated with program activity and impacts.

Item #9 2023 Car Free Day Event

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the Car Free Day event which will be held on Friday, September 22, 2023.

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the 2023 Car Free Day Event, which is set to be held on Friday, September 22, 2023. The website for the event will launch August 1st for pledges. Posters for the event will be finalized in mid-July and distributed by mid-August. Jurisdictions are encouraged to participate, and COG is open to any suggestions or contacts among the jurisdictions that would like to donate prizes.

The proclamation for Car Free Day will be signed at the next TPB meeting on July 12th at 10:00 AM.

Item #10 FY 2023 3rd Quarter CCWP Progress and Budget Reports

Daniel Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the FY 2023 CCWP 3rd Quarter Progress Report, and Nicholas Ramfos briefed the Subcommittee on the FY 2023 CCWP 3rd Quarter Budget Report.

Daniel Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the FY2023 CCWP 3rd Quarter Progress Report highlights. The FY2024 Commuter Connections Work Program was updated, finalized and adopted by the TPB in March. In January 2023, the TDM Resource Directory was finalized, published, and distributed to network members. 13,460 commuters were served during the quarter, which is a slight increase compared to the amount served in the prior quarter. Server transfer work of Commuter Connections assets was completed

which included converting several program databases to a new database system and migrating all assets from local servers to the Amazon Web Services cloud servers.

The GRH Program registered 192 new commuters, which brings the total to 2,197 total registrants for that program. Over the prior quarter, 159 trips were provided, and the team completed preparing creative assets and media buys for the new Better Together Spring Umbrella TDM marketing campaign, which was launched in February.

Tables which summarize the program-wide total activity and impacts for all Commuter Connections network members were provided to the Subcommittee. Data collected demonstrated basic program interaction and other information collected to monitor program performance.

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB Staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the FY2023 CCWP 3rd Quarter Budget Report. Expenditures are close to half of the budget with one more quarter remaining. The Guaranteed Ride Home program is improving (not at the rate of 2019), but program participation is gradually increasing in rides as well as registrations.

Marketing is on track to be mostly spent. incenTrip and FlexTime Rewards will have a campaign in which expenditures will increase. Employer Outreach database upgrades and training is on track. The fourth quarter will yield the most expenditures. Overall, about 47% of the budget has been spent and expenditures occurring in the fourth quarter are expected to increase total expenses for the fiscal year to around 90% of the total CCWP budget. A follow-up preliminary report will be provided to the Subcommittee in July.

Item #11 Other Business / Set Agenda for Next Meeting

This is an opportunity for Commuter Connections Subcommittee members to bring up other business and to request agenda items for the next meeting.

There were no topics discussed for this item.

The next meeting of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee will be held on Tuesday, July 18, 2023 at 12 noon.