

# METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



## Commuter Connections Subcommittee

### MEETING MINUTES

*Tuesday, November 16, 2004*

**Chairperson: Sharon Affinito, Loudoun County**

**Vice Chairperson: Jane Taylor, WMATA**

**Staff Contact: Nicholas Ramfos (202) 962-3313**

#### **Item #1      Introductions**

Ms. Affinito began the meeting by introducing herself and asked all who were in attendance to do the same. Ms. Affinito asked that everyone in attendance sign the attendance sheet. (*See attached attendance sheet*).

#### **Item #2      Minutes of September 14, 2004 Meeting**

Ms. Affinito proceeded with the review of the previous meeting minutes asking those in attendance if they had reviewed the minutes dated September 14, 2004 and if there were changes or additions. There were no changes made and the minutes were then approved by the Subcommittee.

#### **Item #3      TDM Evaluation Project Update**

*Nicholas Ramfos gave an update of the status of the 2004 State of the Commute(SOC) survey draft Technical Report.*

Mr. Ramfos stated that he presented the draft report to the TPB Technical Committee prior to the Subcommittee meeting. There have been several changes to the report, in terms of the telecommute numbers, including changes in the percentages of teleworkers and teleworker behavioral information.

Mr. Ramfos explained that the draft technical report is going to be converted into a general public report and will be published for distribution early next year. That information will be used in the TERM analysis report in June 2005.

Mr. Ramfos then opened up the floor for any questions or additional information needed from the Subcommittee. Sharon Affinito asked if there was a time frame for when the project update changes or additions would be needed back. Mr. Ramfos stated that what

he had presented to the Subcommittee was the final draft and that it needed to be endorsed. Ms. Affinito asked for the Subcommittee to endorse the report. The Subcommittee endorsed the 2004 SOC Technical Report for release.

**Item #4      FY04 Employer Telework Seminars Evaluation Report**

*The Subcommittee was asked to endorse the FY04 Employer Telework Workshop Seminars report for release. Danette Campbell presented the draft report to the Subcommittee at the July Subcommittee meeting and it was reviewed by the Telecommuting Ad-Hoc Group at their July 7<sup>th</sup> meeting and approved at their October 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.*

Ms. Campbell stated that she had asked for comments on the report to have been sent to her by August 4, 2004. She asked if anyone had any additional comments. Sharon Affinito had some questions and comments on the format of the report. Ms. Affinito suggested that the footnotes be added at the beginning of the chart. Ms. Affinito asked for a motion to endorse the report. The Subcommittee endorsed the report for release.

**Item #5      Guaranteed Ride Home Program Update**

*Christopher Arabia gave an update on recent GRH program activities including recommended program guideline updates from the regional GRH Ad-Hoc Group.*

Christopher Arabia went through the changes in the GRH program guidelines. Mr. Arabia distributed copies of the changes and stated that the markings in red indicated the changes made. Robin Briscoe asked about how often someone requests GRH if they are in town on business. Mr. Arabia answered that it happens from time to time. Another question was asked if they had an emergency and were at the Subcommittee meeting, for example, would they be able to use GRH? Mr. Arabia said that yes they would be able to use GRH.

Some of the changes to the guidelines included a change in Guideline #3 that now reads: *Registered commuters may use the GRH program up to four times annually from their official registration date. Commuters who received a one-time exception, then officially register with Commuter Connections may use the GRH service three more times within 12 months from the date of their one-time exception GRH trip.*

Other changes to the guidelines consisted of condensing the cost information into one guideline, rather than several. With the changes, Guideline # 11 reads: *Commuter Connections will pay for one vendor service and/or one transit service per request. If the GRH trip is made by a taxi, COG's Commuter Connections program will pay for all charges, excluding gratuity, to the destination. **The commuter is responsible only for tipping the taxi driver.** Cancellation on the part of the commuter of a GRH trip may count as one of the four annual trips.*

*If a transit option is used for the GRH, the participant will be mailed a transit reimbursement voucher. The transit reimbursement voucher must be submitted back to COG within thirty days of transit use in order for payment to be made. Please allow 45 days for reimbursement.*

Mr. Arabia stated that the guidelines are currently posted on the website. Sharon Affinito asked for a motion to approve the changes to the guidelines. The Subcommittee approved the changes to the guidelines.

## **Item #6      FY04 Employer Satisfaction Survey Presentation**

*Mark Hersey presented the preliminary findings from the FY04 Employer Satisfaction survey. The preliminary findings were presented to the Employer Outreach Ad-Hoc Group on October 19<sup>th</sup>.*

Mr. Hersey provided the Subcommittee with a year by year progression on how the survey has done from FY2000-FY2004. The average response rate from FY2000-FY2004 is just over 10% (10.19%). In his presentation, Mr. Hersey reviewed the FY2004 survey response rate. There was a response rate of 13%, which netted 215 actual responses. He then reviewed the response rates by jurisdiction, which showed that Frederick County had the highest response rate of 50%. A year by year comparison in response rate was also given, showing that the response rate has increased from 8.95% in 2000, to 13.01% in 2004.

Mr. Hersey continued to go into more detail with the survey; breaking down each individual question accompanied by a chart showing results. Mr. Hersey's presentation concluded with a year to year comparison of the effectiveness rating of the Employer Outreach efforts. This graph showed that 2004 had the highest effectiveness rating. Thirty percent of the employers felt that the Employer Outreach efforts were very effective.

Several questions were raised regarding the overall survey. Valerie Pardo from VDOT asked who the recipients of the survey were. Mr. Hersey explained that he reviewed the regional Employer Outreach database to see how many surveys were mailed out in previous years and compare that with how many were returned. Due to the fact that in previous years, a great deal of money was being spent on mailing the survey and not having a significant amount of responses returned, records were selected for the survey that would have a higher probability of not being returned. Mr. Hersey further explained that if he was not comfortable with the address that was given in the database, then the survey was not sent.

To limit the cost of postage, numbers for certain jurisdictions that had higher levels or returned surveys were kept smaller. Robin Briscoe from Tri-County Council asked if Mr. Hersey looked at the levels when he was sending out the surveys because Tri-County only has three employers who would be at Level 3. Mr. Hersey explained that he looked at the validity and accuracy of the names and addresses in each record when he was

selecting records to send surveys to. He did not just send it to Level 3 records, but also based the record selection on his comfort level with the information in the database.

Finally, Mr. Hersey reported that edits to the draft report would be accepted until November 30.

#### **Item #7          Regional TDM Marketing Campaign Update**

*Douglas Franklin updated the Subcommittee on the status of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the fiscal year regional TDM marketing campaign.*

Mr. Douglas Franklin presented the marketing awareness statistics from the 2004 State of the Commute Survey. In 2004, 60% of the survey respondents had heard of Commuter Connections. GRH awareness in 2001 was 20% and in 2004 it is at 59%. Mr. Franklin also went into the upcoming schedule for the FY05 mass marketing campaign. There are going to be two 60 second mass marketing spots and two 60 second GRH spots. Web visits have gone up 50% and Mr. Franklin explained that they are trying to get some traffic sponsorship for the upcoming fiscal year. He also stated that the radio is currently the best way to find out about alternative commute programs.

Sharon Affinito asked if the marketing campaign ventures outside of the district area. Mr. Franklin said that the current traffic networks being used for mass marketing campaign broadcasts may possibly expand to new networks in the new fiscal year. Mr. Franklin also said that marketing is expanding to internet advertising, with a banner at the bottom of the page that consistently stays at the bottom of the Internet page. There are also some ads that are currently on keyword searches as well.

Mr. Franklin went on to discuss the GRH self-mailer distribution that is going to be taking place within the next couple of months. He said that the GRH self-mailers did very well in the spring and will be exclusively used this fall. Currently there are English and Spanish versions of the self-mailers.

Mr. Franklin showed examples of the mailers and gave credit to the Regional TDM Marketing work group of Althea Evans, Leann Landry and Victor Egu who helped review and make edits to the postcards.

#### **Item #8          FY06 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP) Update**

*Nicholas Ramfos briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the FY06 CCWP.*

Mr. Ramfos distributed Item 16 from the TPB mailout for tomorrow's TPB meeting which was an approval of the FY2005-2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. Ramfos stated that DDOT has reviewed this memo and the TPB is working on putting the FY06 Commuter Connections funding back into the Transportation Improvement Program. Mr. Ramfos also stated that we would not be on schedule with

getting the FY06 Commuter Connection work program completed due to an on-going dialogue with the funders of the program structure.

Mr. Ramfos asked if there were any questions or comments. If anyone had any questions regarding the FY06 CCWP, they were instructed to contact Mr. Ramfos.

**Item #9      1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Budget Report**

*Nicholas Ramfos distributed and discussed the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter FY05 CCWP budget report.*

Mr. Ramfos explained that all of the funding commitments are already in for this year. Currently, he said that FY05 CCWP budget expenditures are at 10% of the budget expenditures through September 2004. Staff is in the process of updating about 10 GRH service providers' contracts and winding down an expanded Telework initiative contract.

Mr. Ramfos also mentioned that Commuter Connections recently had a kiosk moved from the Reeves Center. There has also been an ongoing project with migrating the ridematching and GRH software to the web. Virginia wants to include the rest of the state on the system. Mr. Ramfos stated that the three state DOT's would be addressing this project at an upcoming meeting.

**Item #10      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.*

It was announced that Loudoun County Transit has produced new Ride Guides for buses. Also, Vanessa Vega was introduced. She is new with the City of Alexandria.

Valerie Pardo from VDOT said that there has been some trouble with the HOV lanes and the VDOT web site has been receiving several complaints about this.

Nicholas Ramfos mentioned that Commuter Connections won the marketing award from Clean Air Partners at their annual meeting.

Sharon Affinito asked if there were any other agenda items that Subcommittee members wanted to discuss at the next meeting and none were mentioned. The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

**The next regularly scheduled Commuter Connections Subcommittee meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 18, 2005 at 12 noon.**

# COMMUTER CONNECTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING SIGN-IN SHEET Tuesday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2004

Please place a  beside your name, or add it using the space provided on the second to last page.  
&  
Please cross out your e-mail if you DO NOT wish to receive information electronically.

- \* Chair-Robin Briscoe
- \*\* Vice Chair-Sharon Affinito
- \*\*\* COG Staff Contact

NAME	ORGANIZATION	CONTACT #	E-MAIL
<input type="checkbox"/> Debra Adams	MD Transit Administration	410-767-8356	<a href="mailto:dadams@mdot.state.md.us">dadams@mdot.state.md.us</a>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sharon Affinito**	Loudoun County Rideshare	703-771-5251	<a href="mailto:saffinit@loudoun.gov">saffinit@loudoun.gov</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> Renea Bailey	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission	301-415-2265	arb1@nrc.gov
<input type="checkbox"/> Sue Bethke	LINK	703-318-9663	sbethke@cs.net
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Robin Briscoe*	Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland	301-884-2144	rbriscoe@tccsmd.org
<input type="checkbox"/> Keith Bounds	MDOT	410-865-1305	kbounds@mdot.state.md.us
<input type="checkbox"/> Muriel Bowser	Montgomery County Government	301-565-5708	muriel.bowser@co.mo.mc.us
<input type="checkbox"/> Toni Byrd	WMATA	202-962-2765	<a href="mailto:tbyrd@WMATA.com">tbyrd@WMATA.com</a>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Linda Stewart-Byrd	MDOT	410-865-1308	<a href="mailto:Lstewart-byrd@mdot.state.md.us">Lstewart-byrd@mdot.state.md.us</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> Jack Carlile	Maryland Rideshare Corporation	301-384-2233	vpczar@aol.com
<input type="checkbox"/> Randall Carroll	MD Department of Environment	410-537-3252	rcarroll@mde.state.md.us
<input type="checkbox"/> Rick Clawson	DRPT	804-786-7858	rclawson@drpt.state.va.us
<input type="checkbox"/> Lois DeMeester	Arlington Transportation Partners	703-247-9293	ldemeester@earthlink.net
<input type="checkbox"/> Victor I. Egu	P.G. Department of Public & Transpartners	301-883-3115	<a href="mailto:vegu@co.pg.md.us">vegu@co.pg.md.us</a>

<b>NAME</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>CONTACT #</b>	<b>E-MAIL</b>
_____ Christina Gordon	Arlington Transportation Partners	703-247-9291	<a href="mailto:cgordon@transpartners.com">cgordon@transpartners.com</a>
_____ Bobbi Greenberg	Arlington County Commuter Services	703-228-4787	<a href="mailto:bgreenberg@co.arlington.va.us">bgreenberg@co.arlington.va.us</a>
_____ Chris Hamilton	Arlington County Department of Public Works	703-228-3725	<a href="mailto:chamil@co.arlington.va.us">chamil@co.arlington.va.us</a>
_____ Fatimah Hasan	MD Department of Transportation/OPCP	410-865-1279	<a href="mailto:fhasan@mdot.state.md.us">fhasan@mdot.state.md.us</a>
_____ Susan Klasmeier	Washington Area Bicyclist Association	202-628-2500	
_____ Kate Konrad	ATP	703-247-9294	<a href="mailto:kkonrad@transpartners.com">kkonrad@transpartners.com</a>
_____ Michael Jones	General Services Administration	202-260-4155	<a href="mailto:mike.jones@gsa.gov">mike.jones@gsa.gov</a>
_____ Laura Beth Maddox	Crystal City CSC	703-413-4289	
_____ Ronald Mitchell	DC Department of Transportation	202-671-2231	<a href="mailto:ronald.mitchell@dc.gov">ronald.mitchell@dc.gov</a>
_____ Jerry Morrison	VDOT – Richmond	804-225-3709	<a href="mailto:morrison_gl@vdot.state.va.us">morrison_gl@vdot.state.va.us</a>
_____ Nancy Noonan	MD Transit Administration	410-767-3775	<a href="mailto:nnoonan@mdot.state.md.us">nnoonan@mdot.state.md.us</a>
_____ Nancy Norris	Transit Services of Frederick County	301-631-3543	<a href="mailto:nnorris@fredco-md.net">nnorris@fredco-md.net</a>
✓ _____ Valerie Pardo	VDOT–NOVA	703-383-2214	<a href="mailto:Valerie.pardo@virginiadot.org">Valerie.pardo@virginiadot.org</a>
_____ Linda Provost	Montgomery County Commuter Services	301-565-5884	<a href="mailto:Linda.Provost@co.mo.md.us">Linda.Provost@co.mo.md.us</a>
_____ Vonnie Reynolds	Northern Neck Rideshare/PDC	804-333-6683	<a href="mailto:vreynolds@nnpdc17.state.md.us">vreynolds@nnpdc17.state.md.us</a>
_____ Charlene Robey	Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transportation	804-786-7968	<a href="mailto:crobey@drpt.state.va.us">crobey@drpt.state.va.us</a>
_____ Sarabeth Rodriguez	U.S. Census Bureau		<a href="mailto:sarabeth.rodriquez@census.gov">sarabeth.rodriquez@census.gov</a>
_____ Rick Rybeck	District Department of Transportation	202-671-2325	<a href="mailto:Rick.rybeck@dc.gov">Rick.rybeck@dc.gov</a>
_____ Katie Sihler	Arlington Transportation Partners	703-247-9290	<a href="mailto:ksihler@transpartners.com">ksihler@transpartners.com</a>
_____ Howard Simons	MD Department of Transportation/OPCP	410-865-1296	<a href="mailto:hsimons@mdot.state.md.us">hsimons@mdot.state.md.us</a>

NAME	ORGANIZATION	CONTACT #	E-MAIL
____ Richard Siskind	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority	202-962-2792	rsiskind@wmata.com
✓ Lynn Sivels	P.G. Department of Public Works & Transportation	301-883-5656	ltsivels@co.pg.md.us
____ Carol Smith	FCDOT	703-324-1204	<a href="mailto:Carol.smith@fairfaxcounty.gov">Carol.smith@fairfaxcounty.gov</a>
✓ Chuck Steigerwald	PRTC	703-580-6130	<a href="mailto:csteigerwald@omniride.com">csteigerwald@omniride.com</a>
____ Lorraine Taylor	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority	202-962-2768	ltaylor@wmata.com
____ Steven Taylor	U.S. Census Bureau		stephen.d.taylor@census.gov
____ Diana Utz	RADCO Rideshare	540-373-7665	dutz@radco.state.va.us
✓ Jane Taylor	WNATO	202-062-1609	jtaylor@wnato.com
✓ Kristin Haldeman	WMATA	202-962-1848	khaldeman@wmata.com
✓ Darlene Nader	NBTMO	301-770-8108	dander@nbtmd.org
✓ M. Donegan	NBTMO	301-770-8108	mdonegan@nbtmd.org
✓ Gerrie O'Steen	MC Commuter Services	301-565-7313	Terri.o'steen@montgomerycountymd.gov
✓ Lisa Dumetz	Fairfax County Government	703-324-1184	<a href="mailto:Lisa.dumetz@fairfaxcounty.gov">Lisa.dumetz@fairfaxcounty.gov</a>
✓ Vanessa Vaga	Alexandria	703-591-3400	Vanessa.vega@alexandriava.gov



NAME	ORGANIZATION/AFFILIATION	CONTACT NUMBER
✓ Nicholas Ramfos ***	COG/TPB	202-962-3313
✓ Christopher Arabia	COG/TPB	202-962-3385
✓ Danette Campbell	COG/TPB	202-962-3286
✓ Douglas Franklin	COG/TPB	202-962-3792
✓ Mark Hersey	COG/TPB	202-962-3383
_____ Owais Rafique	COG/TPB	202-962-3330
✓ Giovanni Balsamo	COG/DTP	202-962-3285
✓ Erin Bijas	COG	202-962-3314
✓ Philo Lovings	COG	202-962-3327