



**CAR FREE DAY 2015 STEERING COMMITTEE
MEETING NOTES
March 11, 2015**

1. Introductions

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

2. Approval of Minutes

The Committee approved the September 12, 2014 meeting notes as written.

3. Recap of 2014 Event

In the Washington metropolitan region 4,755 people pledged to go car free or car-lite on Monday September 22nd, 2014, a 16 percent increase over the previous year. The Car Free Day 2014 proclamation signing took place on July 16, 2014 at the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board meeting at the Council of Governments.

The marketing campaign raised public awareness of Car Free Day and challenged drivers to leave their cars home for the day and go car free, or go car-lite by carpooling. The visual displayed a car placed on a coat hanger with the messaging "Put it Away". The marketing campaign consisted of radio, text messaging, posters, bus cards and bus sides, email blasts, online banner ads, social media and earned media. The Car Free Day website was updated to include elements from the new creative, unifying the campaign's digital presence with the printed marketing materials. More noticeable ways to reach the pledge page were added to the event web site, making it more obvious and easier to find. A Car Free Day Facebook page was used to keep friends of the event up to date on activities prior to and following the event. Car Free Day was "liked" by nearly 4,000 Facebook fans. Twitter was used to engage with the public and to promote Car Free Day activities and sponsors in the region. Car Free Day had over 450 followers on Twitter.

Commuter Connections' network members rose to the challenge and hosted numerous events and promotions for those looking for car-free alternatives. Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland was at the North Beach Board Walk giving away freebies for Car Free Day at the Farmers Market.

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
777 NORTH CAPITOL STREET, N.E., SUITE 300, WASHINGTON, DC 20002-4290

THE COMMUTER INFORMATION SOURCE FOR MARYLAND, VIRGINIA AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Montgomery County Commuter Services celebrated Car Free Day with giveaways at Metro stations, transit centers and Ride On bus stations. goDCgo appeared outside of Union Station to greet morning commuters with stickers that showed how they traveled on Car Free Day. Capital Bikeshare celebrated Car Free Day by offering 24-hour memberships at any station for just \$1. TransIT Services of Frederick County made it easy to give transit a try by providing free rides on Connector and shuttle buses on Car Free Day.

Donated prizes were offered as incentives to people pledging to go car free or car-lite. Local businesses and organizations donating goods or services gained exposure and were associated with a cause that contributed to the betterment of the region's traffic congestion and air quality. The two major prize sponsors included Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland's donation of a Kindle Fire, and the donation of a Sole Custom Bicycle by Clear Channel Communications.

To help create a buzz about Car Free Day on college campuses around the region, a friendly competition was held. Five universities encouraged their students, faculty and administration to take the Car Free pledge. The total number of pledges with .edu email addresses was 239. The top two institutions were Georgetown University and George Washington University; and the two were only separated by one pledge. The committee agreed the program could have reached more people – especially considering one of the campuses had 0 pledges.

A strategic calendar of media releases was designed to build momentum, beginning with a calendar listing one month ahead and continuing with several press releases. Each focused on a different benefit of participation in the 2014 event. The communications team pitched the press releases to newspapers, magazines, radio, television, blogs and social media. Notable coverage included NBC 4, WUSA 9, WAMU, WMAL and the Washington Post.

Of the 4,656 who took the pledge to go Car Free or Car-Lite, more than half used a combination of modes. District residents generated 29 percent of the pledges, Maryland 35 percent, and Virginia 36 percent. The total mileage saved by using alternative modes on Car Free Day was 109,428 miles.

4. Appointment of Chair

Jonathan Bollhoefer from Arlington Transportation Partners was appointed Chair of the 2015 Car Free Day Steering Committee.

5. Car Free Day Date

Car Free Day will be held on Tuesday, September 22, 2015.

6. 2015 Pledge Goal

The Committee agreed to keep the pledge goal at 10,000, the same as it was the prior year.

7. Marketing Materials

The Steering Committee discussed a refresh of the poster graphics to reflect a team concept for Car Free Day 2015. Stickers were proposed as a cheap marketing material that could promote the team concept (#teambike, #teambus, #teammetro) and be handed out at various Metro stations and transit areas. More team concept ideas were set to be discussed in the meeting on May 6th. Marketing could also be changed to focus more on those who already don't use their cars and not just those who do. To further appeal to drivers, wording was proposed to change from "car free day" to suggesting only giving up your car for a single trip. Rack cards were suggested as well.

8. Other Business

The next Car Free Day meeting will be held on May 6, 2015 from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm in meeting rooms 4 & 5.