

**Commuter Connections Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, January 18, 2011

Chairperson: Gabriel Ortiz, City of Alexandria
Vice Chairperson: Lorraine Taylor, (WMATA) Washington D.C.
Staff Contact: Nicholas Ramfos (202) 962-3313

Item #1 Introductions

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

Lorraine Taylor, Vice chair, called the meeting to order by introducing herself and asking the rest of the attendees to do so.

Item #2 Minutes of November 16, 2010

Approval was sought for the November 16, 2010 Commuter Connections Meeting Minutes.

There was a motion and a second to approve the minutes of the meeting as written.

Item #3 FY 2012 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP) Development

Nicholas Ramfos of COG/TPB Staff briefed the Subcommittee on substantive changes made to the FY2012 draft CCWP.

Mr. Ramfos briefed the committee on the FY 2012 draft CCWP. The CCWP was distributed on November 16th with a comment period received through December 3rd. The draft was revised and presented to the state funding agencies, who provided us with additional comments. A comment/response document was distributed and was reviewed by Mr. Ramfos. The changes were made to the draft CCWP to add the additional products and services to the projects under the Marketing program element in order to reflect the year-round activities as they relate to budgets for the Employer Recognition Awards, Bike to Work Day and Car Free Day. Mr. Ramfos explained that the product deliverables for these projects are more involved than just putting on a one day event. For instances, for Bike to Work Day we registrations are obtained well before the event, pledges are also needed for Car Free Day well before the event date, and nominations are currently being solicited for the Employer Recognition Awards. Mr. Ramfos discussed comments related to the promotion of the Telework program which was streamlined. Additional language regarding Northern Virginia's efforts was added to page 37.

The draft CCWP will be going to the Tech Committee and to the TPB in February and will be released for public comment for 30 days. COG/TPB staff will return to the Tech Committee in March and then to the TPB for final approval. Ms. Taylor asked the Subcommittee to vote on an endorsement for the document's release. There was a motion and a second and the document was endorsed for release.

Item #4 Commuter Connections Strategic Plan Update

Nicholas Ramfos of COG/TPB Staff briefed the Subcommittee on Substantive changes made to the CC Strategic Plan.

Mr. Ramfos briefed the Subcommittee on substantive changes made to the draft Commuter Connections Strategic Plan. The plan was presented to the Subcommittee on November 16th with a comment period established for December 3rd. Mr. Ramfos discussed the changes made to the document. Baltimore was added to the title of the Guaranteed Ride Home Program section of the plan along with updated language regarding the reporting of data on the program. The Subcommittee was asked for an endorsement to release the document. There was a motion and a second to endorse and the document was endorsed for release. Mr. Ramfos reported that the long version of the Strategic Plan would also be updated to reflect the changes made.

Item #5 FY 2010 Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Customer Satisfaction Survey

Mr. Douglas Franklin COG/TPB Staff presented the Subcommittee with the results from the draft FY 2010 GRH Customer Satisfaction Survey.

Mr. Franklin briefed the Subcommittee on the Guaranteed Ride Home Customer Satisfaction Survey, results for Fiscal Year 2010. This survey is conducted on a monthly basis and results are combined for the fiscal year to measure the satisfaction of program users. Mr. Franklin reviewed the results of the survey. Mr. Franklin reported that the response rates for the online surveys had significantly dropped during FY 2010 because this was the first year that the survey was sent to those applicants that had e-mail addresses. A reminder message was not being sent initially, however it is now in place. Mr. Franklin also reported that program users stated that the overall service for GRH has been excellent and the satisfaction ratings for the most part are still very positive despite the response rate drop.

A comment period of February 8th was established. Comments should be posted to the Commuter Connections Extranet.

Item #6 2010 Bike to Work Day Event Survey

Ms. Lori Diggins, LDA Consulting briefed the Subcommittee on the results from the BTWD Event Survey.

Ms. Diggins briefed the Subcommittee on the results of the Bike to Work Day (BTWD) Event Survey. The survey is conducted in November, following BTWD, to identify individuals' bicycling commute patterns before and after BTWD. The number of participants has increased each year for BTWD. Primary barriers to bike use were due to cold weather, distance and safety concerns. There has been a 21 percent increase of bicycle use for Non-Work Trips since their first BTW Day. Results from the survey will be used in the TERM Analysis Report under the marketing TERM.

The next steps will include the production of a draft report that will be presented to both the BTWD Steering Committee and Commuter Connections Subcommittee in March.

Item #7 Update on the TPB Regional Priority Bus Project Grant Under the Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Program

Mr. Eric Randall COG/TPB Staff briefed the Subcommittee on the progress of implementing the TPB Regional Priority Bus Project Under the TIGER Program.

Mr. Randall updated the Subcommittee on the progress of implementing the TPB Regional Priority Bus Project under a \$59 million TIGER (Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery) grant being administered by COG through the FTA. The grant was awarded on February 17, 2010. The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Washington region, submitted the application. The project is a very large regional transportation effort. The competitive application process for TIGER is different from the traditional formula-based transportation funding programs authorized under federal transportation funding laws. This TIGER funding will enable the region to look forward to faster and more reliable bus service along with safer, faster and more convenient bus transfers. The proposal focused heavily on the concept of making the existing system work better. The bus priority corridor improvement will decrease travel time and improve quality of bus service on approximately 75 bus lines throughout the region. This will benefit more than 260,000 current daily riders, and more than 400,000 riders by 2030. This project will ultimately result in air quality and climate change benefits, reduced congestion and even reduced accident costs.

Item #8 'Pool Rewards Project Update

Stephen Finafrock COG/TPB Staff briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the 'Pool Rewards project.

Mr. Finafrock briefed the Subcommittee on the 'Pool Rewards Project. Mr. Finafrock gave a presentation on the 'Pool Rewards Follow-Up Survey reviewed changes made to the program. Mr. Finafrock stated that there was 93% "yes" response rate for the question "Have you continued carpooling to and from work since June 30, 2010?" from the initial demonstration project participants.. Mr. Finafrock also reported that the main reasons given for stopping to carpool was that work hours or residency had changed. In order to receive payment for participation in the 'Pool Rewards program, participants are required to log their commutes.

Mr. Finafrock also reported that there were changes made to the participation guidelines as well as to the way trips were being logged in the system based on feedback from the follow-up survey conducted with demonstration project participants. Based on the evaluation made, the program was re-launched towards the end of October. No payments have been made since the conclusion of the pilot program, however there have been at least 50 new participants in the program. The goal is to reach 1,000 program participants.

Item #9 Capital Bikeshare Project

Chris Holben/ DDOT briefed the Subcommittee on the Capital Bikeshare Project.

Mr. Holben briefed the committee on the BikeShare Project. The BikeShare Project is a program that DC and Arlington started throughout the District and Crystal City to provide bicycles for individuals to utilize 24/7. There are approximately 1,100 bikes in a 114 different locations. You can sign up to become a member and you can use the bikes at any of the stations and return the bikes to any location. You can utilize a bike for free for 30 minutes, after 30 minutes a usage fee will be applied. Mr. Holben also stated that there are plans to expand the program to other sections of the city and other parts of the region as well.

Item #10 2nd Quarter Budget Report

Carlos Tovar, COG TPB staff distributed and discussed the Commuter Connections 2nd Quarter budget report for FY 2011.

A copy of the second quarter Commuter Connections budget report for FY11 was distributed to the Subcommittee. Mr. Tovar reviewed the report and went over the Commitments and Expenditures for FY 11 (July 1, 2010 – December 31, 2010) and asked if there were any questions or comments.

Item #11 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, March 15, 2011 at 12 noon.