

**Commuter Connections Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, November 15, 2011

**Chairperson: Lorraine Taylor, (WMATA) Washington D.C.
Vice Chairperson: Sam Oji, Montgomery County
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, called the meeting to order by introducing herself and asking the rest of the attendees to do so.

Item #2 September 20, 2011

Approval was sought for the September 20, 2011 Commuter Connections Meeting Minutes.

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

Item #3 FY 2011 Bike to Work Day Event Draft Report

Mark Hersey, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the draft Bike to Work Day 2011 event report.

Mark Hersey, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on substantive changes made to the FY 2011 Bike To Work Day Event final draft report. The draft report was presented to the Subcommittee on September 20, 2011, with a comment period established for October 7, 2011. The final draft report was presented to the Bike to Work Day Steering Committee on November 9, 2011. Overall the May 20, 2011 event generated 10,945 registrants from 49 pit stops. Bicyclists enjoyed free T-shirts, snacks, participated in prize drawings, heard live bands as well as music spun by DJs, and listened and talked to elected officials. Commuter Connections was able to secure \$46,850 in sponsorship fees that went towards the overall regional marketing efforts. Mr. Hersey also displayed the pictures from various Pit Stops for the BTWD Event. The Subcommittee was asked to endorse the final draft report for release. The report was endorsed for release and will be posted to the Commuter Connections web pages in the publications pages for downloading.

Item #4 Briefing on the Draft 2009–2011 Transportation Emission Reduction Measure (TERM) Analysis Report

Lorri Diggins, LDA Consulting, briefed the Subcommittee on the draft 2009-2011 TERM Analysis Report.

Ms. Diggins gave a presentation on the draft 2008-2011 TERM Evaluation Results. The report was presented to the Subcommittee on September 20, 2011 with a comment period established for October 5, 2011. Data from the changes made to the report was presented at the TDM Evaluation Group meeting on October 18, 2011.

The objective of evaluation is to apply methodology outlined in the TDM Evaluation Framework Methodology report to estimate effectiveness of four Commuter Connections TERMS, MD/VA Telework, Guaranteed Ride Home, Employer Outreach and Mass Marketing. The impact is shown for all TERMS from July, 2008 to June, 2011.

MD & VA Telework had two impact components; Teleworkers who cited Commuter Connections/COG as source of Telework information in the 2010 State of the Commute survey and Teleworkers whose employers received info/assistance from Commuter Connections/COG. There were approximately 35,237 teleworkers influenced by Commuter Connections/COG. THE GRH TERM had 15,369 new registrants from July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2011. The GRH TERM impacts did not meet vehicle trip or VMT reduction goals, due to lower than anticipated GRH participation. The Employer Outreach TERM met all goals including number of employers participating, trips reduced, VMT reduced, NOX reduced and VOC reduced. The Mass Marketing TERM was well under VMT goals, because bicycle shifts were a much larger component of new mode use than expected; 76% of vehicle trip impacts from "direct influence," 13% from Bike To Work Day; 8% from "referred influence" and 2% from 'Pool Rewards.

Overall, all of the TERMS along with the Commuter Operations Center did meet the collective goal for vehicle trips reduced and VMT reduced goal. Mr. Ramfos stated that a new comment period would be established until December 6th and the final draft report will be presented at the January Subcommittee meeting for endorsement.

Item #5 Beltway Hot Lanes Briefing

Pierce Coffee of Transurban briefed the Subcommittee on the Hot Lanes and Carpooling.

. Pierce Coffee, Transurban, briefed the Subcommittee on HOT Lanes and carpooling. An overview was given on how the HOT lanes will work and an introduction to tools to help communicate the benefits of carpooling to the HOV community. This project is a partnership between Virginia and Fluor Transurban and the facility will have 2 lanes in each direction on the Virginia portion of the Capital Beltway for 14 miles. The individuals and groups that can utilize these lanes for free will be HOV3, Transit, motorcycles and emergency vehicles. These lanes will connect to 95 HOV lanes, 66 HOV lanes and Dulles. There are currently 58 bridges and overpasses being rebuilt. Ms. Coffee reported that the HOT lane facility is scheduled to open late next year. There will not be any tollbooths, everything will be electronic. Carpoolers will now be able to use the EZ-Pass Flex transponder, which will be available in the summer of 2012. THE EZ-Pass flex transponder will be distributed by both Virginia and Maryland and will have a switch on it that can change from HOV to non HOV. A web site will also be available for commuters to obtain information on carpooling and how to use the facility.

Item #6 'Pool Rewards Update

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the

'Pool Rewards Project.

Nicholas Ramfos briefed the committee on the Status of the 'Pool Rewards project." Mr. Ramfos explained that an FY 2012 CCWP Work Program Amendment had been adopted by the TPB to expand the 'Pool Rewards program to include Vanpools by offering a \$200 month incentive to Vanpools in exchange for obtaining information from the van to report to the Federal Transit Administration's National Transit Database. As part of the amendment, COG/TPB staff agreed to work closely with Virginia with regards to the outcome of their Virginia Vanpool study. In order to move forward with project implementation a workgroup was formed with representatives from DC, Maryland, and Virginia. COG/TPB staff will also be working with WMATA on program logistics. The goal is to launch the program by March or April..

Item #7 SmartBenefits and SmartTrip Update

Lorraine Taylor, WMATA, briefed the Subcommittee on the SmartBenefits and SmartTrip cards

Lorraine Taylor briefed the Committee on the an update on recent and upcoming changes to SmartBenefits and SmartTrip cards. WMATA has added about 40-50,000 employee participants that have now migrated to smart benefits auto-load. This process allows the passenger to present their SmartTrip card for bus or rail fare. You will no longer have to go to the faregate machine to add benefits. This program should be available by the third week of January 2012. The last week of October, WMATA launched a new service called Farragut Crossing. This is a virtual tunnel, that will allow individuals to walk above ground transferring between the two Farragut stations, North & West. This was created to help eliminate the traffic at Metro Center.

Item #8 FY 2013 Work Program Development and Commuter Connections Strategic Plan

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the FY 2013 Work Program Development and Commuter Connections Strategic Plan

Nicholas Ramfos, briefed the Subcommittee on the draft FY 2013 CCWP and reviewed the highlights of the program projects and the substantive changes to the Commuter Connections Strategic Plan. On the CC Strategic Plan Update, there was language added to the second bullet points on pages 4 and 6. Mr. Ramfos asked everyone to review the Strategic Plan once again, so in January the updated document can be endorsed for release. A comment period was established for December 2nd.

Mr. Ramfos briefed the Subcommittee on the FY 2013 Commuter Connections draft Work Program (CCWP), which consists of a core program of regional transportation demand management operational activities funded jointly by state and local jurisdictions, plus jurisdictional programs that are conducted at the discretion of individual state funding agencies.

Mr. Ramfos explained that the CCWP was re-structured and streamlined in FY 2006 to clarify and simplify funding responsibilities. The FY 2013 CCWP continues this effort aimed at streamlining the administration and oversight processes for the program. The Commuter Operations Center will continue to provide ridematching services to commuters through a central toll free number "1-800-745-RIDE" and www.commuterconnections.org web site. Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) will

provide users of alternative commute modes up to four free rides home per year in a taxi or rental car in the event of an unexpected personal or family emergency or unscheduled overtime. Marketing will provide frequent regional promotion of alternative commute options, including; car/vanpooling, teleworking, mass transit, bicycling, walking; and support programs such as GRH, the Commuter Connections network ridematching services and BTWD. Monitoring and Evaluation provides data collection and analysis activities as well as program tracking and monitoring reports for each program area. The regional TERM Evaluation Framework Methodology document will be updated, the 2013 State of the Commute survey will be conducted, and the 2013 GRH Applicant survey will be conducted. Employer Outreach will support outreach to the region's employers to implement new or expanded employer-based alternative commute modes and incentives such as transit and vanpool benefits, telework, preferential parking for carpools and vanpools, carpool and vanpool formation and incentives, flexible work schedules, and bicycling amenities.

Mr. Ramfos asked that the Subcommittee member's review the document and provide comments. A comment period was set for December 2nd.

Item #9 Budget Report and Annual Report

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/DTP staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the 1st Quarter Budget Report and 1st Quarter Progress Report.

A copy of the 1st quarter Commuter Connections budget report for FY11 was distributed to the Subcommittee. Mr. Ramfos reviewed the report and went over the Commitments and Expenditures for FY 12 (July 1, 2011 – September 30, 2011) and asked if there were any questions or comments.

Mr. Ramfos also reviewed the 1st Quarter FY2012 CCWP Progress Report.

Item #10 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, January 17, 2012 at 12 noon.