



**COMMUTER CONNECTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, March 21, 2017

12 noon – 2:00 p.m.

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

777 North Capitol Street, N.E.

Third Floor, COG Board Room

Chairperson: Fatemeh Allahdoust, VDOT

Vice Chairperson: Janiece Timmons, WMATA

Staff Contact: Nicholas Ramfos 202/962-3313

Item #1 Introductions

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

Item #2 Minutes of January 17, 2017 Meeting

Approval was sought for the January 17, 2017 Commuter Connections Subcommittee Meeting Minutes.

A motion was sought by subcommittee Chair Fatemeh Allahdoust to approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

A motion was made by George Clark, Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland and seconded by Holly Morello, PRTC and Mark Sofman, Montgomery County.

The Subcommittee unanimously approved the previous meeting's minutes.

Item #3 FY 2016 Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Customer Satisfaction Draft Survey Reports

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the substantive changes made to the draft FY 2016 GRH Customer Satisfaction Reports for both the Baltimore and Washington DC metropolitan regions.

Mr. Franklin began his presentation by sharing that both reports were presented at the January 17th meeting. Subcommittee members were given a comment period of February 24th. Mr. Franklin then reviewed final edits and stated he would subsequently be requesting an endorsement for release. He noted that most changes were minor, however there were changes worth noting including on page 3 of the Washington report where there was an adjustment made to the number of surveys distributed whereas 2,258 was changed to 2,242 surveys. The change did not affect the response rate which remained 16%. Similarly, for the Baltimore region report on page 3, 117 surveys were changed to 118 which also did not affect the return rate percentage. He then opened the floor for comments.

As there was no further discussion on the item Fatemeh Allahdoust, VDOT requested a motion from the Subcommittee to endorse the two reports. A motion was made by George Clark, Tri-

County Council for Southern Maryland and seconded by Kendall Tiffany, Frederick County. The Subcommittee voted unanimously to endorse both the Washington and Baltimore Region's FY 2016 GRH Customer Satisfaction Reports for release. Final copies of the reports will be posted to the Commuter Connections web site in the Publications section.

Item #4 2016 Bike to Work Day TERM Analysis Draft Report

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff reviewed the 2016 draft Bike to Work Day TERM Analysis Report. A comment period was established for Friday, April 14th.

Mr. Ramfos began by reminding the Subcommittee that he shared highlights from the report at the previous meeting in January and noted that the report was presented to the Bike To Work Day Steering Committee during its meeting on March 8th. He stated that the report outlines the survey methodology used and contains information regarding demographics, duration of participation and use of biking before, during and after the event. The report also contains information regarding commute patterns during non-biking days, assistance offered by employers for bicycling and bike use during non-commute trips.

Mr. Ramfos encouraged Subcommittee members to read through report and provide feedback. He noted that once the report is finalized, the results will be used as part of the Mass Marketing TERM to determine program impacts regarding both transportation and emissions, which will be incorporated into the TERM analysis report. He then drew the Subcommittee's attention to the back of the report where the actual survey is located and two new questions that were added including what participants' favorite part of Bike To Work Day was, also participant quotes on page 8 and a chart on page 9 that illustrates reasons participants liked the event

Mr. Ramfos requested that comments be provided by April 14th and that an endorsement for release of the report will be requested during the next Subcommittee meeting on May 16th.

Fatemeh Allahdoust, VDOT noted that she found it particularly interesting that in the highlights section it reads that 23% of participants stated that the 2016 event was the first Bike To Work Day that they attended and that 95% of respondents stated that they were likely to participate again in the future. She then asked whether the trend in growth is anticipated to continue for the 2017 event.

Mr. Ramfos noted that generally around a quarter of participants are new participants to the event, that there has not been a dramatic increase in participation, but that growth has been consistent and incremental. He also noted that forecasts on growth are difficult to make, that recent growth was not as great as in past years and that eventually the growth potential of the event may reach a cap.

Item #5 2017 Bike to Work Day Event

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the 2017 Bike to Work Day event to be held on Friday, May 19th.

Mr. Franklin began by noting that this year's event will be held on May 19th with the goal of acquiring 18,600 registrants. This represents a 6% increase difference from the previous year's

registration level, adding another 1000 registrants. He noted that registration has been open for 2 weeks and that a press release from COG was published to officially announce the opening of registration and that 1,300 people have signed up, which is a typical trend. Mr. Franklin shared that a few pit stops have been removed, but new pits stops have also been established which brings the year's total to 86 pits stop, being 3 more than last year's total. Regarding new pits stops, this is the first year that a pit stop will be in SW DC at the SW waterfront and there are also 2 new additional pit stops on east side of Anacostia river totaling 3 in that area.

Mr. Franklin continued in discussing the regional sponsor drive which started in fall 2016 and ended in early February with 21 cash sponsors, categorically there are 4 gold, 5 silver and 12 bronze. For the regional raffle, there are several bikes, accessories and a bike rack to give away. The cash donations will pay for the event t-shirts. Mr. Franklin then shared a sample of the T-shirt with the Subcommittee, of which 16,000 will be printed costing nearly \$35,000. Sponsor dollars will also purchase large vinyl banners and with remaining funds, paid social media will be purchased.

Mr. Franklin shared the event poster encouraging Subcommittee members to take some for distribution. He stated that pit stop managers should be receiving promotional materials within the week if they haven't already.

Fatemeh Allahdoust, VDOT sought clarification regarding sponsorships and whether there has been any increase in giving for the event, to which Mr. Franklin replied the affirmative in that sponsorship did increase this year with the addition of new sponsors including Allegra, California Tortilla and DC Bike Ride.

Mr. Franklin continued in noting that posters for the event have been printed in both English and Spanish in addition to rack cards, which pit stop managers will be receiving. In total 90,000 items have been printed, COG also did a mailing to all employers in region to further advertise the event.

The event Proclamation will take place in a month with TPB Chair and Rockville Mayor Bridget Newton signing. A radio add will be recorded and will air in May. The hashtag for the event is #BTWD2017 and the Twitter handle is @biketoworkday

The TPB Technical Committee will be briefed in April and all local jurisdictions will be encouraged to adopt proclamations and to help spread the word.

Item #6 FY2018 Commuter Connections Work Program Update

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the FY2018 CCWP.

Mr. Ramfos began by informing Subcommittee members that the previous TPB meeting had been cancelled and is rescheduled for March 29th. Due to this, the CCWP was yet to be approved, but approval is anticipated.

Mr. Ramfos noted that two changes were made to the FY2018 CCWP. Language was changed in the GRH Baltimore section to allow for an impact analysis that will be produced as part of the data that was collected for 2016 GRH Applicant Survey at a cost of \$5,000 which was reallocated

from the 'Provided Trips' project section and added to the Operations project side. The change to the document was discussed with the state funding agencies and approved by MDOT.

Mr. Ramfos stated that a funding commitment letter from Howard County has been received to market the CarpoolNow mobile application. The funding commitment for \$197,000 was originally provided to Howard County as a grant by the MTA as they were considering the development of a real-time ridematching application. Given that Commuter Connections already developed the app, a decision was made to help promote what is already in existence. A project section was added under the Marketing section of the Work Program which outlines how those resources will be spent for marketing purposes. The project was initially anticipated to be initiated during the current fiscal year, but due to time constraints the project was moved to FY2018 and the project is shown in the Baltimore Metropolitan Council's (BMC's) Transportation Improvement Program.

The overall goal of the project is to promote the mobile app in the Baltimore region, primarily in Howard County, but there will also be crossover in the Washington metropolitan region. He noted that currently consideration is underway in evaluating opportunities for traditional marketing, radio advertising, social media, venue and special event advertising in addition to earned media. Also under consideration is the potential to implement a possible driver or rider incentive which would have to be accommodated through the mobile app to allow users to register for the incentive and verify that a trip was taken. Depending on the experience and given the need for critical mass, resources will be reserved to pilot the program and may be reallocated to DC region if it is well utilized.

George Clark, Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland sought clarification as to the process in which Howard County received the funds in question and how they could provide said resources to the Commuter Connections program. Mr. Ramfos stated that the funding was provided through a funding commitment letter and through the CMAQ funding approval of both the BMC, MTA, and the FTA. Mr. Ramfos concluded in requesting any ideas or suggestions from Subcommittee members for marketing the mobile app.

Fatemeh Allahdoust, VDOT sought clarification as to which fiscal year would the project be implemented region-wide given a successful pilot, to which Mr. Ramfos noted 2019 and the marketing resources would have to be further identified in the future Work Program for the expansion of the initiative. Mrs. Allahdoust also asked about a presentation to the TPB regarding a collaboration with the University of Maryland as it relates to the (CCWP).

Mr. Ramfos stated that although it's not in the FY2018 Work Program, Commuter Connections is in partnership with the University of Maryland, the Central Maryland Region Transit Group, Local Motors which produces autonomous vehicles, and the new DC Department of For-Hire Vehicles, in applying for a grant from the Department of Energy with the goal of creating a "Living Lab," working with employers to get employees to use alternative fueled and/or autonomous vehicles to commute to and from work. A "closed road" demonstration where a vehicle from Local Motors would be used to demonstrate how TDM can be merged with this new type of technology (AVs/AF) would also be part of the project. Lastly, there would also be an "open road" demonstration in coordination with jurisdictions. Other components include 1st mile/last mile activities through partnerships with transit agencies to use these types of vehicles. Mr. Ramfos referenced a station at the University of Maryland at College Park with a shuttle system with a typical 30-minute wait where the potential exists to use one of the vehicles to transport riders more quickly to and from campus. An advisory committee will probably be established with the

inclusion of transit agencies to plan for this component. Additionally, for the "Living Lab" component, COG/TPB staff is examining partnering with other agencies such as VDOT relating to the I66 project or other activities with taxi cabs in terms of alternative fuel/autonomous vehicles.

Mr. Ramfos continued in sharing that it is a multifaceted 4-year project involving cost sharing with a 2-million-dollar request from the DOE. The 1st round of the grant competition included a group abstract that was evaluated by the DOE. Selection was based on abstracts that were the most aligned with the goals of the project. The partnership was notified that the group was selected for the project and they have until Friday, March 24th to submit the proposal.

George Clark, Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland asked what CMRTs role is in all of this, to which Mr. Ramfos noted that CMRTs name will be changing and they are looking at a couple different components, one of which being first mile last/mile types of situations.

Mrs. Allahdoust asked the question as to what role will TNCs like Uber and Lyft play in the project s to which Mr. Ramfos noted that they could play a role with the DC Department of For-Hire Vehicles.

Concerning the cost share aspect of the project, the collaboration needs to show what non-federal dollar amounts are for the program areas that would most closely coincide with the aspects of the project; ridematching and the "Living Lab portion of the project are good examples. Marketing is also being considered as part of the grant application and could include an incentive. The potential budget for this would be in the range of \$200-\$250 thousand. There may be some work with the Employer Outreach program to inform employers of opportunities available for employees to participate. Overall, Commuter Connections has a cost share over the life of project of \$1.2 million which would not be new money or funds diverted from current activities. There is no hard cash match necessary and the collaboration needs to illustrate how the work we are conducting will lend itself to the grant

Ms. Allahdoust questioned whether the \$1.2 million identified will be from existing programs to which Mr. Ramfos noted the affirmative and that it's a non-federal share of the money. Ultimately we are looking for a fit between TDM and this technology and how the experience transfers to other parts of the county. If selected, it will be a large project and opportunity for great exposure for TDM strategies in the region. The project would be slated to begin October 1st.

Mr. Ramfos concluded in reiterating that there will be Advisory Committee input activity as part of the project and encouraged members around the table to volunteer involvement particularly if they have any project that lends itself to the grant.

Item #7 SafeTrack Work Group Update
Travis Johnston, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the Commuter Connections SafeTrack Work Group activities.

Mr. Johnston began in noting that since the last Subcommittee meeting, the Commuter Connections SafeTrack Work Group has had several calls regarding the status of SafeTrack. He continued to share that Surge #12 which was between the Rosslyn and Pentagon stations, ended on February 28th. It was reported by WMATA to be a successful surge and that commuters were

beginning to try alternative commute options and that public opinion was not as negative as in the past.

Regarding the current surge at the time, Surge #13, Mr. Johnston shared that it involves the Yellow and Blue lines between Braddock Road, Huntington and Van Dorn stations and began on March 4th. The surge was originally anticipated to end on April 9th, however due to weather conditions and safety considerations, it was extended to April 12th. Additionally, for this surge there was single tracking between King Street, Van Dorn and Huntington stations on both the Yellow and Blue lines. He reported that on March 24th and April 12th WMATA will use buses south of the Braddock Road station due to the need to move heavy equipment.

Regarding Surge #14, it is tentatively scheduled to take place for 30 days between April 15th and May 16th and will be focused on the Green line between the Greenbelt and College Park stations and further information will be released by WMATA this week.

Regarding the remaining surges, Surge #15 is tentatively scheduled to be in mid-May and go through mid-June and will pertain to the Orange Line between Minnesota Avenue and New Carrollton stations. The anticipated final surge, #16 will be focused on the Red Line between the Shady Grove and Twinbrook stations, there will be single tracking and it will last from mid-June through July 4th.

Concerning Commuter Connections' involvement, in addition to facilitating the Work Group calls the program is continuing to send geo-targeted messages to commuters and employers highlighting alternative options, promoting CarpoolNow, as well as social media.

George Clark, Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland opened a discussion regarding how and or why SafeTrack is affecting ridership levels and asked if ridership has increased after surges are completed to which Janiece Timmons, WMATA shared that ridership is still down, but WMATA is working on how to get ridership back. Mr. Ramfos noted that there are several contributing factors including increases in teleworking, Bikeshare and Car-share activity and TNCs like Uber and Lyft. He also mentioned that the Metro Safety Commission is moving ahead legislatively and that once established riders may feel safer which may increase ridership.

Mr. Johnston concluded in mentioning that a meeting notification will be sent out soon and requested full participation for upcoming SafeTrack Work Group conference calls.

Item #8 FY2017 Regional TDM Evaluation Project Update

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed The Subcommittee on the status of data collection activities related to the regional TDM Evaluation project.

Mr. Ramfos began by stating that the program is working on the public report for the 2016 State of the Commute (SOC) report. A design firm and technical editor have been hired to work on the report, which is anticipated being completed by the end of June with a final printed report available in July or August.

He also noted that local jurisdictional data from the report is now available to share and a message was sent out to network members regarding the data's availability. Jurisdictions are encouraged to reach out to Mr. Ramfos if they would like to receive the data. Additionally, Mr.

Ramfos shared that the Employer Telework Survey in Maryland has been completed and that information will be combined with data from Virginia. Staff will be finalizing the Bike To Work Day Survey in the upcoming month and anticipate releasing the survey's results by May.

Currently, the analysis of the ACT! Database for employer outreach is taking place. Regarding the draft TERM analysis, it will initially cover a timeline from July 2014 to December 2016 and we will be presented to the Subcommittee in July, but data will continue to be collected through the summer for the January – June 2016 timeframe. He informed members that they have until the end of July to input ACT! data for TERM evaluation purposes. Operations Center data including registration information, GRH registration and Car Free Day information for mass marketing has been included in the initial analysis.

Additionally, emissions factors were updated because we're now using an updated MOVES model from the EPA which has different factors than 2014. By September there will be an updated version of the report presented and a comment period will be established. The final report will be produced by November for Subcommittee endorsement. Once the final report has been completed, cost effectiveness will be calculated and provided to the state funding agencies. Transportation and emissions results will be used for the TERM Analysis for the region and for the air quality conformity determination and congestion management processes.

Item #9 2nd Quarter CCWP Progress Report

Travis Johnston, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the FY 2017 2nd Quarter Progress Report.

Mr. Johnston began by drawing the members' attention to pages 3 and 4 of the report to highlight some of the work that has been performed on the TDM system software and mobile applications. He shared that some of the software bugs were fixed in addition to the introduction of the new route-based matching which is now currently live.

He then moved on to page 15 of the report to point out the breakdown of the number of applications for ridematching, Guaranteed Ride Home and the Employer Outreach program and their impacts.

Mr. Johnston informed members that they can find each jurisdictions' data on pages 16 through 47 and asked members to review the data for any potential inaccuracies and to let program staff know if any errors are found. Concluding, Mr. Johnston discussed the Employer Outreach table found on page 49, which reflects efforts relating to outreach, contacts and new programs that have been created.

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.

Holly Morello, PRTC shared that on June 8th the Chesapeake chapter of ACT! will have a workshop at the Phoenix Park hotel in Washington, DC containing two sessions and that the A.M. session will be focused on vanpooling and more information will be forthcoming.

Traci McPhail, North Bethesda TMD reminded members that the next Car Free Day Steering Committee meeting will take place on May 10th at 11:30. She thanked members who participated in the last meeting and encouraged members who have not participated to join the meeting, noting that a teleconference option is available for those who may not be able to physically attend.

George Clark, Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland shared that he is working on supporting communities in southern Maryland where there are many areas without broadband access and can't telework and that he is in conversation with the College of Southern Maryland to develop the potential of creating a telework center and exploring ways in which transit benefits could be used for telework given that it is a form of TDM strategy.

Fatemeh Allahdoust/VDOT shared a similar strategy that she is investigating regarding converting portions of libraries into telework centers if it was necessary however there may be constraints due to security protocols for federal employees.

The meeting was subsequently adjourned.

The next meeting of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee will be held on Tuesday, May 16, 2017 at 12 noon.