

**COMMUTER CONNECTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, September 18, 2018
12 noon – 2:00 p.m.**

**Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.
Third Floor, COG Board Room**

**Chairperson: Janiece Timmons, WMATA
Vice Chairperson: George Clark, Southern Maryland
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 July 17, 2018 Meeting

Approval was sought for the July 17, 2018 Commuter Connections Subcommittee Meeting Minutes.

Janiece Timmons, WMATA requested a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Commuter Connections Subcommittee Meeting.

A motion was made by Kari Snyder, MDOT and seconded by Mark Sofman, Montgomery County.

The Subcommittee unanimously voted to approve the meeting minutes of the July 17, 2018 Commuter Connections Subcommittee Meeting.

Item #3 Vice Chair Nominating Committee

Janiece Timmons, WMATA, announced the Commuter Connections Vice Chair Nominating Committee's selection of the next Subcommittee Vice Chairperson. The Subcommittee was asked to approve the Nomination.

Janiece Timmons, WMATA, announced that the Commuter Connections Vice Chair Nominating Committee met and selected the new Vice Chair and that Marcus Moore, Fairfax County, was nominated and accepted the nomination. She then asked for a motion that Mr. Moore be appointed as the next Vice Chair of the Subcommittee.

The motion was made by Nancy Huggins, MTA; and seconded by Mark Sofman, Montgomery County. The Subcommittee unanimously approved Mr. Moore's appointment.

Item #4 Change of Chairs

George Clark, Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, assumed chairmanship and presented a plaque in gratitude to Janiece Timmons, WMATA, and thanked her collectively for her contributions to the Subcommittee.

Item #5 Long Range Plan TDM Initiative

Daniel Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the substantive changes to the TDM Long Range Plan strategies initially presented to the Subcommittee on July 17th. The Subcommittee was asked to endorse the strategies.

Daniel Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, presented a finalized memorandum on behalf of the Long-Range Transportation Plan TDM Work Group that suggests TDM programs for the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) to consider for implementation as part of the aspirational strategies in the region's long-range plan, Visualize 2045. Mr. Sheehan elaborated upon the TPB's intention to prioritize TDM strategies in the upcoming plan, noting that "providing more telecommuting and other options for commuting" is one of the seven aspirational goals in Visualize 2045. Strategies for achieving this goal are highlighted in the memo. Comments submitted by the Committee were incorporated into the memo, which resulted in a rewording of the "Collaborate with WMATA to Promote SmartBenefits" section and inclusion of TeleworkVA! in the "Regional Commuter Tax Benefits section."

A motion was made by Kerry Snyder, MDOT, and seconded by Fatemeh Allahdoust, VDOT, to endorse the memo for presentation to the TPB. The Subcommittee voted to approve the motion unanimously. The memo is expected to be presented at the October TPB Technical Committee meeting and the November TPB Meeting.

Item #6 Visualize 2045 TDM Element

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the TPB's Visualize 2045 TDM Program Element.

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, informed the Subcommittee of the TPB's intention to include an aspiration element focused on regional TDM within the Visualize 2045 Long Range Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Mr. Ramfos noted that this is the first time the TPB has featured TDM as a fundamental element of the plan. The TPB chose to place emphasis on TDM to mitigate congestion, increase safety, and reduce emissions throughout the region. A preview of Visualize 2045, which includes regional TDM-related content, is available at www.visualize2045.com.

Item #7 SmartBenefits Employee Self-service Features

Jim Bongiorno, WMATA, presented the new SmartBenefits employee self-service web-based features. The Subcommittee was asked to provide feedback on the item.

Jim Bongiorno, WMATA, presented the new SmartBenefits employee self-service web-based features. He began by discussing an update released earlier this summer that is the foundation of the new features in design. He walked the Subcommittee through the pages commuters use to manage a SmarTrip account including allocation of amounts to various transit providers, parking, and SmarTrip card registration.

Mr. Bongiorno detailed streamlined enrollment for commuters, enhanced functions within the portal for employers who manage large amounts of employees including summary emails rather than detailed emails. There are no administrative fees for the service other than the cost of a replacement card (\$2.00). There will also be updates to the vanpool management pages.

Mr. Bongiorno stated that WMATA hopes to have the updated interface released for “Friends & Family” roll-out of the redesigned website will be late November/early December with full promotions occurring directly after the holidays.

Item #8 Regional TDM Evaluation Project

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the data collection activities and schedule associated with the regional TDM Evaluation project for FY2019.

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, outlined various TDM evaluation data collection activities scheduled to occur in FY2019 from a detailed summary of tasks in the meeting agenda packet. Throughout the year, COG/TPB staff and their consultants will conduct the TDM Evaluation Framework report (September 2018 – TBD 2019), Guaranteed Ride Home Survey and technical report (October 2018 – November 2019), State of the Commute Survey and technical report (September 2018 – November 2019), and the Employer Outreach Customer Satisfaction Survey (October 2018 – March 22).

Item #9 2018 Car Free Days Event

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the 2018 Car Free Days event being held on September 21st and 22nd.

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, noted that Car Free Days 2018 will be taking place on Friday, September 21 through Saturday September 22. The main objectives are to use Car Free Days as an opportunity to promote awareness and use of alternative modes of both commute and non-commute transportation; encourage commuters and the general public to take the online pledge to use car free or car-lite travel; and tabulate pledge numbers and measure transportation and emissions impacts.

Nine sponsors donated prizes for the Car Free Day 2018 raffle, plus everyone who takes the Car Free Day Pledge will receive an email with a District Taco Promo Code for \$3 OFF an online order of \$10 or more. Sponsors will be listed on the website, press release, and on social media. After the Car Free Day event, prizes will be randomly raffled off to participants living or working within the region who pledged to go car free, or car-lite. The following organizations donated prizes for the 2018 raffle: goDCgo, Capital Bikeshare annual memberships; Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, Samsung Galaxy Tab; KIND, healthy snacks gift bag; WMATA, \$25 SmarTrip cards; East Coast Greenway Alliance, T-shirt and annual membership; Giant Food, \$25 grocery store gift cards; VRE, pairs of single ride tickets; WABA, annual memberships; and Cultural Tourism DC, “Washington at Home” book.

Car Free Day posters were made available to Committee members in early August and sent to level 3 and 4 employers within the region, along with a cover letter. A PDF of the poster is also available on the web site for download and was sent in HTML form as part of an email blast. The ad campaign ran from September 1 through Car Free Day, which included paid ads and boosted posts on Facebook, two paid blogs, Pandora, YouTube, and text messages to opt-in cell phone numbers. Endorsement ads were pre-recorded by on-air personalities from three area radio stations. Mr. Franklin presented the Facebook ads, and played the radio endorsements and YouTube videos.

Several press releases were sent; the first announcing the launch of the web site and online pledge form, and the second regarding Car Free Day's partnership with the American Lung and American Heart Associations. A total of more than 500 transit signage ads were donated for Car Free Day by Arlington Transit, Fairfax Connector, Montgomery Co Ride On, Prince George's County, and WMATA.

Several jurisdictions are organizing events or special promotions for Car Free Day. Frederick County will give free rides on TransIT connectors and shuttles; Montgomery County Commuter Services will offer free Ride On ExtRa Bus service from Shady Grove Metro to Black Hill Regional Park and Clarksburg Premium Outlets; Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland will be attending the North Beach Farmer's Market in Calvert County; The City of Manassas will be at the Farmer's Market and give walking and bicycling tours.

Item #10 FY2020 Work Program Development and Commuter Connections Strategic Plan

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the timeline of the development of the FY2020 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP). The Subcommittee was also briefed on the Commuter Connections Strategic Plan.

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, reviewed three documents: Commuter Connections Proposed Work Activities for FY2020, FY2020 Commuter Connections Work Program Timeline Milestones, and the Commuter Connections Strategic Plan for 2017-2018. Mr. Ramfos mentioned the following substantive changes: Commuter Operations Center will support the incenTrip mobile application; Marketing will include incenTrip with its own line item; Monitoring and Evaluation will include finalization of the 2019 GRH Applicant Survey report, Employer Outreach Database Analysis, Telework Survey for Maryland employers in conjunction with TeleworkVA!, Bike to Work Day Survey for 2019, finalization of the State of the Commute (SOC) technical report, drafting of the SOC public report, and the draft TDM Analysis Report.

Mr. Ramfos stated the document will move through the following phases for approval: November 2018: a draft work program will be presented to the Subcommittee and a comment period will be established. The document will then be refined based on feedback from Subcommittee members and the state funding agencies; January 2019: obtain endorsement for release from the Subcommittee; January 2019: the state funding agencies will review and approve the draft CCWP; February 2019: the draft CCWP will be presented to the TPB Technical Committee and the TPB for release and public comment; and March 2019: COG/TPB staff will obtain final approvals from TPB Tech and TPB.

Mr. Ramfos then reviewed the Commuter Connections Strategic Plan for 2017-2018. He asked the Subcommittee to review the document and provide any comments and/or updates.

Item #11 4th Quarter CCWP Budget Report, FY 2018 4th Quarter Progress Report, and FY 2018 CCWP Annual Report

Barbara Brennan, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the FY2018 CCWP 4th quarter final budget report, the FY2018 CCWP 4th Quarter Progress Report and the FY2018 CCWP Annual Progress Report.

Barbara Brennan, COG/TPB staff, stated that spending for the year showed: 98% spent for Commuter Operations, 82% for Regional Guaranteed Ride Home, Marketing final spending rate is 89%, Monitoring and Evaluation is 90%, Employer Outreach 91%, and Guaranteed Ride Home - Baltimore – ended with spending total of 72%. The final spend rate for the year is 89%.

Item #12 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.

The next meeting of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee will be held on Tuesday, November 20, 2018 at 12 noon.