



**COMMUTER CONNECTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE  
Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, November 18, 2014**

**Chairperson: Jim Sebastian, DDOT**

**Vice Chairperson: Adrienne Moretz, Frederick County TransIT**

**Staff Contact: Nicholas Ramfos 202/962-3313**

**Item #1 Introductions**

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

Jim Sebastian, DDOT staff, called the meeting to order by introducing himself and asking the rest of the attendees to do so.

**Item #2 Minutes of September 16, 2014**

*Approval was sought for the September 16, 2014 Commuter Connections Subcommittee Meeting Minutes.*

There was a motion by George Clark, Southern Maryland, and seconded by Mark Sofman, Montgomery County Commuter Services Section, to approve the minutes of the meeting as written.

**Item #3 FY 2012 – 2014 Commuter Connections Draft Transportation Emissions Reduction Measure (TERM) Analysis Report**

*Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the results from the Draft Transportation Emissions Reduction Measure (TERM) Analysis Report for FY 2012 – 2014.*

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, reviewed the most up-to-date version of the Draft Transportation Emissions Reduction Measure (TERM) Analysis Report for FY 2012 – 2014. The draft was first presented with a comment period in July and again in September. The present draft reflects the changes suggested after both sessions. Mr. Ramfos detailed the key changes made to the FY 2012 – 2014 Draft TERM Analysis Report.

- Page 1: Added language to mass marketing section to include impacts from the 'Pool Rewards program.
- Page 1: Made corrections to sentence referring to the region as a moderate ozone non-attainment area to marginal ozone non-attainment area.
- Page 3: Corrections were made to the numbers for daily tons of NOX reduced and VOC reduced for the bicycling program.
- Page 4: Language under Table 3 was changed to reflect COG's continual collection of data on Greenhouse gases emitted in the region.
- Page 13: Corrections were made to the number of teleworkers outlined in the Telework Assistance Summary of Goals and Impacts section.

- Page 23: Corrections were made to the numbers of daily tons of VOC reduced and VMT under the Transportation Benefit results.
- Page 25: Under Section 7, added language to signify that analysis will incorporate data from 'Pool Rewards, Carpool and Vanpool incentives.
- Page 29: Language added to clarify split between GRH and Commuter Operations Center.
- Appendices: Corrections to number of Bike to Work Day riders.

Mr. Ramfos provided a brief presentation to explain the history and purpose of the TERM analysis report. Currently, there are a little over 5 million residents and over 2.7 million workers in this region. By 2014, there will be 4 million more trips made each day in the region. Analysis indicates that all forms of commuting including, walk/bike; transit; carpooling; and single occupancy driving, will increase. Initially, the TERMS were adopted to address air quality concerns; however, the program has evolved to address congestion and sustainability of transportation. Since 1999, there has been a noticeable decrease in daily vehicle trips, vehicle miles of travel, however, daily tons NOx, and VOC peaked early in the evaluation cycle as vehicles are getting cleaner and the region is now using a new air quality model called MOVES..

The next steps include endorsing the 2014 TERM Analysis Report for release, and publishing and distributing the report. Program cost effectiveness for the program will be calculated and discussed with the State funding agencies. Finally, the resulting impacts from the report will be integrated into the regional air quality conformity and Congestion Management Process.

There was a motion by Traci McPhail, NBTMD, and seconded by George Clark, Southern Maryland, to endorse the FY 2012 – 2014 Commuter Connections Draft Transportation Emissions Reduction Measure Analysis Report. The Committee voted to endorse the report.

**Item #4      2014 Bike to Work Day Draft Event Report**

*Mark Hersey, COG/TPB staff briefed the Subcommittee on the 2014 Bike to Work Day Draft Report. A comment period was established.*

Mark Hersey, COG/TPB staff, briefed the committee on the 2014 Bike to Work Day Draft Report. With help from the Bike to Work Day Committee and Pit stop managers, the highlights from the 2014 Bike to Work Day Event are included in the report. A total of 16,797 individuals registered to participate in the 2014 Bike to Work Day event, while slightly below the goal, this is the largest number of registrants to participate in the event. Mr. Hersey that there were 5 pit stops in May 2001 and 79 pit stops in May 2014, highlighting the growth of Bike to Work Day over the years. Mr. Hersey requested committee members to review the draft report and provide comments and suggestions by December 19, 2014. A suggestion was made to present results from the 2014 Bike to Work Day event to the Bike Ped Committee. Mr. Sebastian, DDOT staff, volunteered to present the results to the Bike Ped Committee later in the day.

**Item #5      2014 Car Free Day Results**

*Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, presented results from the 2014 Car Free Day event to the Subcommittee.*

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, informed the Subcommittee of the results from the 2014 Car Free Day event held on September 22, 2014. Strategies to promote Car Free Day included creating awareness through regional marketing and media campaigns; using social media; generating in-kind sponsorships as incentives to participate; promoting local jurisdiction

promotions and events; engaging with universities; and other methods. Mr. Franklin outlined the pledge data from the 2014 Car Free Day event including, mode; VMT; number of pledges by State; and emission impacts.

**Item #6      FY 2014 'Pool Rewards Survey Results**

*Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on results from the FY 2014 'Pool Rewards Survey.*

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, presented the results from the FY 2014 'Pool Rewards Survey conducted with program participants that completed the program and were paid from the launch of the program in October 2010 through May 2014. Mr. Finafrock provided some background on the carpool incentives program, 'Pool Rewards. The program originally identified corridors in the region that may benefit from an incentive program. The corridors were later dropped due to low registration rates. The program was launched in October 2010 with a goal of 1,000 commuters to participate. A marketing campaign consisted of outreach to employers and commuters through social media, direct mail, radio, web, and Commuter Connections Newsletter. While the program corridors were dropped due to low participation, it was expanded to include vanpools. Mr. Finafrock then explained the program's trip tracking software.

The survey focused on carpool retention, impacts on Congestion and Air Quality, and program structure. Eighty-five percent of respondents were commuting approximately 21 – 30 miles, five days a week, to get to work. Fifty-four percent of respondents continued to use carpools or other alternative modes to get to which, which indicates a strong retention rate for the program. Most respondents that discontinued using carpools indicated that their carpool partners changed jobs. Results from the most recent survey will be used to make structural changes to the Commuter Connections Work Program incentive budget beginning in FY 2016.

**Item #7      FY 2015 Regional TDM Evaluation Project Update**

*Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, updated the Subcommittee on the status of the regional TDM Evaluation Project.*

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, provided the Subcommittee an update on the status of the regional TDM Evaluation Project. The two major reports for 2014 include the TERM Analysis Report and the State of the Commute with corresponding "At-A-Glance" section brochures. COG/TPB staff is currently working on the FY 2015 Applicant Placement Rate Survey which will measure Commuter Connections TDM software system applicants' travel behavior changes. Data collection efforts are being conducted through an internet survey and by telephone and postal mail for those with no email address. ; Highlights of the survey will be presented to the Subcommittee in January, a draft report in March will be produced, and a finalized report in May 2015. This upcoming spring, COG/TPB staff will re-bid the TDM Evaluation project contract.

**Item #8      FY 2016 Work Program Development and Commuter Connections Strategic Plan**

*Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff briefed the Subcommittee on the draft FY 2016 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP) and reviewed the Commuter Connections Strategic Plan. A comment period was established.*

Mr. Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the draft Commuter Connections Work Program and Strategic Plan for FY 2016. The draft of the Work Program was presented to the

State funding agencies and received comments. Mr. Ramfos highlighted a change made to the footnote on page 11 of the draft CCWP; Virginia Department of Transportation allocated \$587,666 for Employer Outreach to local jurisdictions as pass-through.. The major changes made to the document focus on the evaluation section starting on page 33 of the document. The next State of the Commute survey will be conducted in FY 2016; a draft technical report will be produced documenting the results. Surveys measuring Guaranteed Ride Home services for the Washington and Baltimore regions will be conducted in FY2015 as well.

Mr. Ramfos noted that state funding agencies have provided initial comments and edits on the Draft FY 2016 CCWP. The Subcommittee is requested to review the draft and provide its comments and edits by the comment period through December 5, 2014. Once these comments have been collected, state funding agencies will review the document once more and provide their additional comments by December 19<sup>th</sup> for a final review and approval in January 2015. COG/TPB staff will brief the TPB Tech Committee on February 6<sup>th</sup> and again on March 6<sup>th</sup> on the draft document. The document will go out for public comment at the Citizen's Advisory Committee meeting in February. . The TPB will also receive the draft in February and will be asked to approve the draft during its March meeting. Finally, the program will commence July 1, 2015.

**Item #9      1st Quarter Budget Report and 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Progress Report**  
*Barbara Brennan, COG/TPB staff, discussed the FY 2015 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Budget Report and FY 2015 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Progress Report.*

Barbara Brennan, COG/TPB Staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter budget report for FY 2015, and the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Progress Report for FY 2015. She noted that the overall spending rate was 13%. Ms. Brennan highlighted the Commuter Operations Center had a spending rate of 26%, Marketing and Advertising of 10%, and Monitoring and Evaluation of 18%. Due to the Car Free Day event held in September, the spending rate for Car Free Day in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter is 85%.

Moving onto the Progress Report, Ms. Brennan pointed to Table 1 noting that GRH applicants increased since the last quarter. Table 2, highlighting the Applicant Activity summary, enumerated a total of 2500 new applicants and re-applicants. Ms. Allahdoust, VDOT, noted that in the Quarterly Budget Report, the Vanpool table should list DC and Maryland and not DC and Virginia.

**Item #10      Other Business/Set Agenda for Next Meeting**

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, noted that the next Bike to Work Day Steering Committee Meeting will be held on January 14<sup>th</sup> and not on January 7<sup>th</sup>. He also mentioned that the call for nominations for 2015 Employer Outreach is unofficially opened.

Ms. Allahdoust, VDOT, requested an update on the status of the mobile app. Mr. Ramfos noted that the app is live and in use; however, COG is will be working on the development of a real-time Ridematching feature for the mobile app.

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 20, 2015 at 12 noon.**