

**2010 Car Free Day Steering Committee  
Meeting Notes  
Wednesday March 10, 2010**

- 1. Introductions**
- 2. Approval of Minutes from October 14, 2009 Meeting**
- 3. Car Free Day Background**

The Car Free Day event celebrates alternatives to drive-alone car dependence in order to reduce human impact on the environment. The first Car Free Day events were organized in 1995 by the World Car Free Day Consortium and took place in three European cities. In 2000 the event went global with programs launched throughout the world and was also established as a Europe-wide initiative by the European Commission as part of Mobility Week. Today, CarFree Day includes celebrations in 1,500 cities in 40 countries.

Car Free Day was introduced to the District by Council member Tommy Wells. In 2008, Commuter Connections assumed the role of event coordinator and rolled out Car Free Day on a regional scale. Each year, the Washington D.C. region recognizes Car Free Day on September 22.

In the Washington region, the term “Car Free Day” is a partial misnomer as the event is not anti-car and in fact includes a “car-lite” element, ridesharing. Car Free Day targets all travelers and is an opportunity to reach out to non-traditional TDM audiences to include students, homemakers, and seniors. The objective is to get people to try alternative methods of transportation on Car Free day in hopes they consider adopting such methods on a regular or part-time basis. The day is also an opportunity to celebrate those who are already car free.

- 4. 2010 Pledge Goal**

Participation in the Car Free day event grew significantly in 2009, increasing by 14%. The total number of pledges climbed from 5,471 pledges in 2008 to 6,211 pledges in 2009. The committee voted to adopt the previous year’s goal of 10,000 pledges, originally set by the state funding agencies.

## **5. Web Site**

Over the past several years the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) provided funding for a contractor to develop and maintain the Car Free Day web site located at [www.carfreemetrodc.com](http://www.carfreemetrodc.com). Anna McLaughlin stated that due to budget constraints, DDOT will not be able to manage the site for 2010. Commuter Connections will assume that responsibility.

## **6. Marketing Materials**

Car Free Day is an opportunity to create awareness about transportation alternatives, engage the public and gain media exposure. Commuter Connections will continue to support the event through marketing materials (flyers), radio and a public outreach campaign.

Rather than spend extensive time and resources to develop entirely new marketing materials for the visual component of the 2010 campaign, the Committee agreed to utilize the existing creative and make appropriate adjustments to reflect the 2010 event.

Kristin Haldeman from the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority will explore the opportunity to provide Metro bus signage once again to help promote Car Free Day and possibly provide some SmarTrip cards for prizes as well. Last year bus queens were provided.

Montgomery County also provided free ad space on Ride On buses and Shelters.

## **7. Other Business**

Regional prizes will be needed for this year's event.

Joe Stainsby from VPSI wants to be more engaged and proactive with the Car Free Day event by facilitating free vanpool transportation to a few employment centers in the region. A cluster analysis can be performed to determine potential employers to target.

Mirza Donegan from the North Bethesda Transportation Center reminded the Committee that the Car Free Day occurs within the time frame of the Bethesda/North Bethesda Walk & Ride Challenge, a three week event in September. There are synergies between the two events.

Nicholas Ramfos stated the possibility of having the Transportation Planning Board carry out a proclamation for Car Free Day.

Dan Hayes from the University of Maryland is looking to organize a bike challenge with George Mason University for Car Free Day if all goes well for the same type of challenge for Bike to Work Day.

Kristin Howard from Arlington Transportation Partners stated that Arlington County's car free diet skeptic campaign can complement Car Free Day.

Nohemy Miranda from Fairfax County mentioned that the County is looking to get more involved with the Car Free Day event.

The next Car Free Day Steering Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 12, 2010, 11:30 am – 12:30 pm, COG Mtg Room 3