



## COMMUTER CONNECTIONS SAFETRACK WORK GROUP CONFERENCE CALL MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, May 24, 2016

11:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

Staff Contact: Nicholas Ramfos 202/962-3313

### 1. Introductions

Conference call participants introduced themselves. Participants included:

Fatemeh Allahdoust

Michelle Althoff

Ian Beam

Sande Brecher

Marina Budimir

Walter Daniel

Larry Filler

Beth Francis

Julie Hershorn

Heidi Mitter

Holly Morello

Gabe Ortiz

Nicholas Ramfos

Jim Sebastian

Charlie Scott

Joe Stainsby

Shawntea Smith

Kari Snyder

### 2. Review of WMATA's May 19, 2016 Metrorail SafeTrack Plan

Julie Hershorn, Asst. Director WMATA gave a brief explanation on SafeTrack. All information on the plan is on WMATA's web site. Each of the surges will have their own page on the web site. The 1st surge will occur from June 4<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> and will affect Orange, Blue and Silver line riders. Ms. Hershorn then walked the group through the final issued SafeTrack Plan dated May 19, 2016. The focus of the discussion was on Surge 1 which will begin on Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup>. The Metrorail system will close down on Friday June 3<sup>rd</sup> at midnight and work will begin on the 4<sup>th</sup>. The work will affect not only weekend travelers but weekday travelers including the rush hour periods. Ms. Hershorn reported that Metro's trip

planner will be updated to reflect schedule changes and that there would be at least 40-50 additional buses available to transport passengers and to lessen overcrowding on the platforms. The first surge will include buses from the East Falls Church Metro station to Ballston. The overall message is that the system will simply not be able to accommodate all of the normal ridership and commuters will be strongly encouraged to use other ways to get to work. There will also be extra staff on hand at West Falls Church, East Falls Church and Ballston to answer questions and direct system users to other alternative modes. As many eight-car trains will be used as possible and trains will be running about every 18 minutes.

3. Surge #1 (June 4 – 16) Ballston to East Falls Church – Single Tracking

a. Fairfax County Plan

Beth Francis, Fairfax County, reported that the Fairfax Connector will be operating additional shuttle services from the Vienna Metro, Reston, and Saratoga Springs Park and Ride Lot to the Pentagon. A web site has also been developed and deployed ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov/safetrack](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/safetrack)) and 1,300 employers in the county have been notified by Fairfax County Board Chair Sharon Bulova by letter regarding options that they can communicate to employees.

b. Arlington County Plan

Larry Filler, Arlington County, reported that the county will be promoting flexwork and telework scheduling as well as a concierge service and added emphasis to slug lines. The county is also looking into the possibility of additional protected bus and bicycling lanes. On-street parking may also be limited and there may also be a possibility to institute off-fare loading. Mobility hubs will be created at the transit stores in Ballston, Rosslyn and Crystal City in order to direct people using Metro into various alternate modes of travel. There will be curbside options to feed as many people as possible into buses. The Bikeshare program will also be beefed up with temporary bike corals. There will also be strategically located “bike trains” formed from Ballston and Rosslyn into DC with volunteers leading the trains. The county’s planning department is also working with Metro to accommodate additional bus service as capacity at the bus bays will need to be re-configured along with traffic light signalizations. A SafeTrack web page will also be available on [www.CommuterPage.com](http://www.CommuterPage.com)

c. VDOT Plan

Fatemeh Allahdoust, VDOT, reported that the agency will have a strong public affairs push on getting information out to the public and will also be monitoring traffic signal timing and making necessary adjustments as needed. Lane closures may also be considered. An internal traffic operations team meeting will be occurring Thursday where the signal timing will be reviewed, particularly during peak periods and whether or not to extend hours to address congestion. Traffic operations will be continually monitored and HOV Lane enforcement will be in effect. Ms. Allahdoust also reported that telework would be promoted through the Telework! VA program being implemented by VDRPT.

d. Commuter Connections Plan

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB, reported that there were several committee groups at COG which were reviewing the situation including the TPB's Bike/Ped Subcommittee, the Regional Public Transportation Subcommittee, MOITS, and MATOC. Commuter Connections has established a SafeTrack web hub on its home page. The page will feature the WMATA SafeTrack Plan as well as any other Traffic mitigation/operations plans put forth by the impacted jurisdictions, web links to SafeTrack information and links to each of the SafeTrack surge maps through WMATA. Geo-targeted messages to employees and residents surrounding the impacted Metrorail stations will be developed and sent this week along with geo-targeted messages to employers in the same areas. The goal is to get information into the hands of those commuters impacted and to also encourage those that are already in carpool and vanpools to consider adding additional passengers. Other alternative modes of travel will also be promoted including flextime, telework, and commuter rail, commuter bus, bicycling and walking. Public Service Announcements are also being placed through COG's Office of Communications as well as paid media on radio and both non-paid and paid social media.

e. Other Jurisdictional TDM Plans

Jim Sebastian, DDOT reported that DDOT's goDCgo program will have a web site set up and will be promoting alternative bus routes. DDOT is also looking into dedicated lanes for buses going into

Georgetown. Blogs will be used to promote alternate ways to work and Bicycle Parking capacity is being examined in the Eastern Market area. A meeting with all of the Business Improvement Districts is also in the works. Parking enforcement is also going to be examined.

4. Set Meeting Date/Time

Mr. Ramfos recommended that the group meet at least a week prior to each of the safety surges throughout the project. The group agreed. A calendar invite will be sent to the group.

5. Other Business

Julie Hershorn stated that the head of customer service at WMATA is Jeremy Franklin and he can be reached at (301)562-4702 or at [jfranklin@wmata.com](mailto:jfranklin@wmata.com).

**Next Meeting Date: June 7, 2016 10 a.m.**