



Commuter Connections Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 15, 2013

Chairperson: Sam Oji, Montgomery County
Vice Chairperson: Holly Morello, PRTC
Staff Contact: Nicholas Ramfos (202) 962-3313

Item #1 Introductions

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

Sam Oji, called the meeting to order by introducing herself and asking the rest of the attendees to do so.

Item #2 January 15, 2013

Approval was sought for the November 20, 2012 Commuter Connections Meeting Minutes.

There was a motion and a second to approve the minutes of the meeting as written.

Item #3 Commuter Connections Strategic Plan Update

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the substantive changes made to the Commuter Connections Strategic Plan.

Nicholas Ramfos discussed the substantive changes made to the Commuter Connections Strategic Plan. The Plan was presented to the Subcommittee on September 18th and November 20th with established comment period deadline of December 7th. Mr. Ramfos discussed the edits and changes made to the Strategic Plan. The Subcommittee endorsed the document for release.

Item #4 FY 2014 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP)

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on substantive changes made to the FY 2014 draft CCWP.

Mr. Ramfos discussed the substantive changes made to the FY 2014 draft CCWP. The draft document was presented to the Subcommittee on November 20th for review and comment and a December 7th comment period deadline was established. Mr. Ramfos stated that the state funding agencies have reviewed the draft document and comments received have been incorporated into the document. The state funding agencies have also approved the document during the January 8th State TDM Work Group meeting. Mr. Ramfos stated that the next steps would be to present the document to the TPB Technical Committee in February and to the TPB where the document will be released for public comment. The document will be presented again

to the TPB Technical Committee in March and then to the TPB in March for final approval. COG/TPB staff will then work with the state funding agencies on any funding adjustments for the TIP. The FY 2014 CCWP will be implemented between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014. The Subcommittee endorsed the document for release.

Item #5 Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom TPB Project Solicitation

Beth Newman, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the application process and timeline and will discussed project types that are eligible for funding.

Ms. Newman discussed Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom, which provide approximately \$1 million per program per year for the DC-VA-MD Urbanized Area for transportation services for low-income workers to access jobs and job-related activities (JARC) and for individuals with disabilities for any trip purpose (New Freedom). The TPB will conduct its final solicitation for JARC and New Freedom funds under SAFETEA-LU from January – April 2013. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered for funding and projects will operate on a two-year timeframe. TPB staff will continue to provide technical assistance to applicants and priorities for the solicitation will be identified by the Task Force and released for a 30-day public comment period prior to the start of the solicitation.

Item #6 Briefing on the FY 2012 -2014 Transportation Emission Reduction Measures (TERMs) Revised Evaluation Framework Draft Report.

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the Reduction Measures (TERMs) Draft Report.

Mr. Ramfos briefed the Subcommittee on the updates to the draft FY 2012 - 2014 TERMS Evaluation Framework Methodology Draft Report. The report is used as the Commuter Connections “blueprint” for data collection and analysis. The Telework Assistance provides information and assistance to commuters and employers to further in-home and telecenter-based telework programs. Guaranteed Ride Home eliminates a barrier to use of alternative modes by providing free rides home in the event of an unexpected personal emergency or unscheduled overtime for commuters who use alternative modes. Employer Outreach provides regional outreach services to encourage large, private-sector and non-profit employers voluntarily to implement commuter assistance strategies that will contribute to reducing vehicle trips to worksites, including the efforts of jurisdiction sales representatives to foster new and expanded trip reduction programs. The Employer Outreach for bicycling TERM also is part of this analysis. Mass Marketing involves a large-scale, comprehensive media campaign to inform the region's commuters of services available from Commuter Connections as one way to address commuters' frustration about the commute. Various special promotional events also are part of this TERM. Mr. Ramfos discussed the changes made to pages 14, 17, 19, 22, & 27-28. He also stated that feedback would be sought from a few of the jurisdictions with regards to how the data collected during the three year evaluation cycle can be communicated more effectively. A comment period on the draft document was established for February 21st.

Item #7 FY 2012 Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Customer Satisfaction Survey

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee

on the results of the GRH Customer Satisfaction Survey.

Mr. Franklin presented the survey results from the draft FY 2012 Commuter Connections Guaranteed Ride Home Survey from the Washington DC metropolitan region. The FY 2012 Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Customer Satisfaction Survey report gauges the level of satisfaction of commuters who used the GRH service from July 2011 through June 2012. The survey consists of multiple-choice questions, a fill in the blank and an area for comments. Questions provide insight into customer opinions regarding various operational functions of the GRH program. Of the 3,339 surveys distributed in fiscal year 2012, 620 or 19 percent of surveys were completed. The vast majority, 96% of the survey respondents were pleased with the overall GRH service. Written responses were entered on more than two-thirds (69%) of the returned surveys, the overwhelming majority of which (96%) contained compliments. Compliments outweighed criticism 9.5 to 1. For every category, good or above ratings were given by 90% or more of the respondents. Average response wait was 15 minutes and 93% waited 30 minutes or less. A comment period was established for February 22nd.

Item #8 Regional TDM Evaluation Project Update

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the Regional TDM Evaluation Project activities.

Mr. Ramfos briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the implementation of the 2013 State Of the Commute Report and GRH Applicant Surveys for both the Baltimore and Washington Metropolitan regions. He stated that the 2013 State of the Commute survey was currently in the field and that adjustments to the survey instrument for the GRH Applicant survey were being made with the consultant. Once the Washington version of the questionnaire is programmed, the Baltimore version will be programmed as well. A pre-test will be conducted in mid-March and the survey will be administered towards the end of March and beginning of April.

Item #9 FY 2014 Work Program Development and Commuter Connections Strategic Plan

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the upcoming pool rewards.

Mr. Franklin discussed The 'Pool Rewards program provides financial incentives to SOV drivers when they form or join new carpools or vanpools. Eligible participants earn up to \$130 for carpooling over a 90 day period and vanpools may receive a \$200 recurring monthly incentive. Beginning February 2013, the Employee Transportation Coordinators (ETC) in the region will be asked to promote awareness of the 'Pool Rewards program. With the help of the ETC's, Commuter Connections is seeking to accelerate participation in the 'Pool Rewards program through a contest. The contest prize will be an office party held at the employer's workplace and sponsored by one of the area's Clear Channel radio stations. The radio station would provide music and bring in a third party sponsor for food and beverages. The contest period will run through the end of April, with the party occurring in late May or early June. Commuter Connections will promote the contest through direct mail, email, newsletter, web site landing page, Facebook and through any earned media opportunities. Materials will include rack-cards (double-sided carpool/vanpool), a flyer about the contest, and sent inside a custom envelope to prompt excitement and increase the likelihood the ETC will open it.

Item #10 2nd Quarter Budget Report

Barbara Brennan COG/DTP staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the Budget Report .

Ms. Brennan discussed the 2nd Quarter FY 13 budget report for July 1, 2012–December 31, 2012 and asked if there were any questions or comments.

Item #11 Other Business/Set Agenda for Next Meeting

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, March 19, 2013 at 12 noon.