



**COMMUTER CONNECTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, January 20, 2015

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 November 18, 2014

Approval was sought for the November 18, 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 2014 Bike to Work Day Draft Event Report

Mark Hersey, COG/TPB staff, detailed the changes made to the 2014 Bike to Work Day Draft Report. The Subcommittee was asked to endorse the document for release.

Mark Hersey, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee 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. The draft report was reviewed by the Bike to Work Day Steering Committee on September 12th and November 12th. The document was also presented to the Subcommittee on November 18th and a comment period was established.

Significant changes to the report were in the acknowledgements section for a more complete listing of contributors for the region's pit stops. Several pit stops were either cancelled or scaled back due to the weather conditions on May 16. Several pit stop managers submitted topical advertisements and promotional pieces that were included in the final draft. The report was endorsed for release by the Subcommittee. The final report will be published and posted to the publication page on the Commuter Connections web site.

Item #4 FY 2016 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP) and 2014-2015 Strategic Plan

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff briefed the Subcommittee on the latest draft of the FY 2016 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP) and the Commuter Connections Strategic Plan. The Subcommittee was asked to endorse both documents for release.

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, presented the Subcommittee with the final draft of the FY 2016 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP) and the Commuter Connections Strategic Plan. These documents were presented to the Subcommittee for review during the November 18, 2014 Commuter Connections Subcommittee meeting. A comment period of December 5, 2014 was established. Mr. Ramfos reviewed substantive changes made to the document based on comments received. He stated that changes were made to the budget page on Page 11 of the draft CCWP in the footnote to note the correct amount for Virginia's portion of the Employer Outreach program. Mr. Ramfos also stated that on Page 39 there was general language regarding the fact that VDOT would be providing VDRPT with funds to administer the TeleworkVA! program; however, there is not a budget amount specified in order to avoid confusion as to whether or not the project is part of the CCWP.

Mr. Ramfos also stated that COG/TPB staff would be working on the cost effectiveness numbers for the Commuter Connections TERMS and will incorporate the updated numbers into the next iteration of the draft FY 2016 CCWP which would be presented to the TPB Technical Committee and to the TPB..

Mr. Ramfos noted that changes were made to the Jurisdictional Component of the Employer Outreach Program Administration project adding Virginia funding components for the various services being provided. Lastly, Mr. Ramfos explained the costs for the Employer Recognition Awards and that they are primarily for contractor support to conduct outreach to local jurisdictions during the nomination process to encourage award submissions. Once nominations are submitted, the contractor reaches out to each nominee to clarify responses for the selection committee review process. The contractor also designs the nomination brochure and awards booklet as well as the giveaway item. A video is also produced to highlight each winner's accomplishments. The event enjoys high visibility amongst elected officials.

Mr. Ramfos stated that there were no additional changes made to the Commuter Connections Strategic Plan.

The Subcommittee was asked to endorse both documents for release during the present meeting and did so. The draft FY 2016 will be presented to the TPB Technical Committee in February and then to the TPB and released for public comment.

Item #5 FY 2014 Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Customer Satisfaction Draft Survey Reports

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, presented results from the draft FY 2014 GRH Customer Satisfaction survey reports from the Washington D.C. and Baltimore metropolitan regions. A comment period was established.

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on FY 2014 Guaranteed Ride Home Customer Satisfaction survey draft reports for both the Washington and Baltimore regions. The

total number of Washington Region Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) surveys distributed in fiscal year 2014 was 2,276. Nearly 16 percent of the surveys were completed and returned. The vast majority of respondents, 94 percent were pleased with the overall GRH service. Written responses were received by more than two-thirds, 72 percent of survey respondents, the overwhelming majority of which, 77 percent contained compliments. Compliments outweighed criticism at a more than five to one ratio. For every category, good or excellent ratings were given by 87 percent or more of the respondents. The average response wait was 17 minutes, and 88 percent waited 30 minutes or less.

The FY 2014 Baltimore GRH Customer Satisfaction Survey draft report was comprised of 198 distributed surveys, and 160 surveys were completed. The vast majority, 85% of the survey respondents were pleased with the overall GRH service. Written responses were entered on nearly three quarters of the returned surveys, the majority of which, 58% percent contained compliments. Compliments outweighed criticism more than two to one. For every category, good or above ratings were given by 75 percent or more of the respondents. Average response wait was 30 minutes and 34 percent waited 30 minutes or less.

Both reports will be posted to SharePoint and comments will be taken through February 20th.

Item #6 FY 2014 Applicant Placement Rate Study

Lori Diggins, LDA Consulting, briefed the Subcommittee on the results from the FY 2014 Applicant Placement Rate Survey that was recently conducted.

Lori Diggins, provided a brief overview of the FY 2014 Applicant Placement Rate Survey results conducted in November 2014. The survey is conducted triennially through internet and phone surveys. It assesses the current and previous commute patterns, travel changes, motivations for change, types of services accessed, and use of CC services by Commuter Connections service users.

Ms. Diggins provided a brief description of the demographics of the survey participants. 60 percent of respondents lived in Virginia but the majority worked in the District of Columbia. 80 percent of the respondents worked for employers with more than 100 employees while nearly half worked for employers with 1,000 or more employees; furthermore, 67 percent of respondents worked for a Federal Agency. Commuter Connections Applicants tended to be older than the regional workforce overall, 67 percent of applicants were between the ages of 45 and 64 compared to 54 percent of regional workers. Lastly, ethnicity and gender distributions of 2014 reflected the 2011 and 2008 results.

According to current commute patterns, applicants used alternative modes for 90 percent of weekly commute trips, of which the train and bus were the most popular alternative modes; additionally, Vanpool use was above the regional average. The results demonstrated that transit use increased substantially from 2008 to 2011 and remained high in 2014; furthermore, other travel characteristics in 2014 were generally similar to results found in 2011 and 2008. The results also indicated that half of all respondents made a commute change after receiving services; however, the percentage of respondents who made a change was slightly lower 2014 than in 2011. Ms. Diggins pointed out that cost, time, and current circumstances continued to be primary reasons why applicants made changes to their commutes.

Survey results indicated that in 2014 participants heard about Commuter Connections programs primarily from 'word of mouth' and employers while internet and radio have declined as info

sources since 2005. However, Ms. Diggins highlighted that the internet remained to be the dominant mode of contacting the Commuter Connections programs. The results revealed that Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) was the most requested service in 2014 at 71 percent. Since 2005, Ms. Diggins noted, requests for matchlists, Park & Ride, and Vanpool information decreased while GRH grew slightly.

Finally, Ms. Diggins, reported that 41 percent of applicants who received transit information contacted a transit agency and used the information to try transit, an increase from the 2011 results. Across the board, the survey results demonstrate that commuters followed-up and used the information received about the services provided by Commuter Connections.

A draft report will be available for the Subcommittee to review in March and a comment period will be established.

Item #7 FY 2015 TDM Software Project Update

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, provided the Subcommittee with an update of the status of the regional TDM Software project.

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, confirmed the launch of the new network member customized matchletters and prompted attendees to send logos if they would like one to appear on their matchletter. He then displayed an example to show the various updates made to the language and formatting. Subcommittee members will need to indicate any specific changes they may want to change or add.

Mr. Finafrock discussed the new customized Employer Pages. He cited the University of Maryland as an example. Employer pages are strictly aesthetic and do not come with any administrative capabilities. He emphasized that employers will be able to choose their own URL. These employer pages are flexible but are limited to larger employers for now.

Mr. Finafrock also updated the committee about the revamp of the SchoolPool program and its new features such as the ability to add additional trip legs and gas emissions. SchoolPool now supports many different languages through the use of Google Translate. Finding matches operates similarly to Commuter Connections and is done between parents. These updates will be launched in early 2015.

Item #8 Share Use Mobility Status Update

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the Transportation Network Companies (TNC's) operations in DC, MD and VA.

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, informed the Subcommittee on the status of the Transportation Network Companies' (TNC's) operations in DC, MD and VA. He noted that a bill was passed over the summer by the DC City Council which deregulated the insurance requirements. This action allows TNC companies to operate without having to abide by the strict requirements placed on taxi cab companies.

In Maryland, the Public Service Commission ruled that TNC's are common carriers and are subject to the same regulations as taxi cab for hire services; however, that ruling did not impact UberX. An appeal was made but was later denied. The Maryland Public Service Commission issued a regulation for TNC companies to apply as common carriers however, it is unclear if this action is occurring.

In Virginia, a Cease and Desist order was over the summer; however, the DMV gave temporary operating authority to both Lyft and Uber. Lyft and Uber were also required to provide 1 million dollars in insurance coverage, as well as, taking a look at their overall liability coverage. Mr. Ramfos noted that, anecdotally, these actions have not occurred. In the current legislative session, a number of bills have been introduced by the Taxi Cab Association, Virginia Taxi Cab Association, and Uber. He also noted that a meeting was scheduled for January 20, 2015 to find a compromise between these three interests.

Additionally, GovPartners approached Mr. Ramfos to speak at a discussion on February 4, 2015. The purpose of the event is to bring the local government and traditional taxi cab companies, and TNCs together to discuss the future and place of TNCs in the transportation industry. Furthermore, the AP style book recommended that the term 'rideshare' should not be used by the media to describe TNCs. He noted that this could be a positive outcome for Commuter Connections because the media relies on the AP style book.

Item #9 2nd Quarter Budget Report

Barbara Brennan, COG/TPB staff, discussed the FY 2015 2nd Quarter Budget Report.

Barbara Brennan, COG/TPB Staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the 2nd quarter budget report for FY 2015. She noted that the program is running at a rate of 33%; some activities, Commuter Operations and Bike to Work Day are running a little higher than that rate. Upcoming activities, such as Employer Recognition Awards and Bike to Work Day will increase these rates.

Item #10 Other Business/Set Agenda for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee will be held on Tuesday, March 17, 2015 at 12 noon.