

EMPLOYER OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Notes from the July 18, 2023 meeting

AGENDA ITEM 1 - INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting began with self-introductions of those in attendance. (See attached list)

AGENDA ITEM 2 – REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MEETING (4/18/23) NOTES

Approval was sought for the April 18, 2023, Employer Outreach Committee Meeting minutes. An initial motion to approve was made by Mark Sofman, Montgomery County Commuter Services, and a second to the motion was made by Antoinette Rucker, WMATA. The minutes were approved as written.

AGENDA ITEM 3 - FINAL THIRD QUARTER FY2023 AND DRAFT FOURTH QUARTER FY2023 CONFORMITY VERIFICATION STATEMENTS

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, presented the final third quarter FY2023 and draft fourth quarter FY2023 conformity verification statements. There appears to be considerable growth for new Level 3 employers between the third and fourth quarters.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – INCENTRIP EMPLOYER REWARDS PRESENTATION

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, presented the new Employer Rewards feature that was recently developed and deployed within the incenTrip mobile app. The feature allows employers to create and administer customized commute programs, or “challenges,” for their employees. While the app provides the structure for program management, employers will be able to customize challenges to meet their unique needs and goals. Once a challenge is setup by an employer, employees can earn points and redeem them at the Employer Rewards Store. Any program administered by an employer is overlaid on top of the existing public incentive programs in incenTrip.

Variables that can be customized on behalf of employers include the challenge name, description, number of trip logs, duration, type of trip logs, and points awarded. Mr. Sheehan outlined sample challenges that an employer could build, including offering rewards for events such as Rideshare Month, Try Transit Week, Bike to Work Day, and Walktober. Employers can stock the Employer Rewards Store with items such as gift cards, Paid Time Off, parking perks, giveaways, free lunches, etc. There is not a set type of reward employers may offer; some employers may be able to provide monetary rewards, others may offer in-kind rewards or a mixture.

Mr. Sheehan briefly walked through the process for an end-user to participate in an Employer Rewards Program. The end-user must have incenTrip and a Commuter Connections account.

COG/TPB staff will assign commuters to an employer challenge, where they will be able to activate challenges and earn points by logging eligible trips. Challenge setup occurs within the Commuter Connections TDM System, which feeds information to end-users of the incenTrip mobile app.

The Committee provided feedback on the new feature. Josh Etim, City of Alexandria, suggested a different name for the program since "Employer Rewards Program" could sound like a reward program directed to employers. Antoinette Rucker, WMATA, recommended COG/TPB staff give a live demonstration of the program at the September Employer Outreach Training Session. Danelle Carey, goDCgo, suggested COG permit local jurisdictions to fund incentives on behalf of employers. The group in general thought the feature could be helpful to employers and requested marketing collateral to help with promotions.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – COMMUTER CONNECTIONS CASE STUDIES

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, encouraged Committee members who may know of an employer who could be featured in a FY2024 Case Study to submit their suggestion to himself at nramfos@mwkog.org and Mark Hersey, COG/TPB staff, at mhersey@mwkog.org. One employer is profiled in each state: The District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. Commuter Connections Employer case studies are good resources to show employers who may be considering implementing similar employee commute solutions that have been successfully implemented by other employers in the region. Ronit Dancis, DATA, asked if there were particular items COG wants to see when profiling an employer. Mr. Ramfos responded that the employer should be at least a Level 3 or greater with a program that has generated measurable impacts.

The publish date for FY2024 Commuter Connections Employer Case Studies is expected to occur in April 2024 and are featured in the summer employer newsletter.

AGENDA ITEM 6 – TDM AND SALES TRAINING SESSIONS UPDATES

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, presented and discussed the Employer Outreach training sessions planned for this fiscal year. There are four sessions in total, two on sales techniques and two on TDM. The selected training topics were the result of a committee survey that was recently conducted. The training in September 2023 will be about TDM Incentive Programs; December 2023 will be about Strategic Sales Tactics; March 2024 will be about Educating Employee Transportation Coordinators; and June 2024 will be about Communication Strategies.

George Clark, TCCSMD, and Ronit Dancis, DATA, requested two months advance notice of training session dates whenever possible.

AGENDA ITEM 7 – EMPLOYER RECOGNITION AWARDS CEREMONY RECAP

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, presented the recap of the 2023 Employer Recognition Awards Ceremony held on June 30 at the National Press Club. The Telework Award was given to Abt Associates, the Incentives Award was given to George Mason University, and the Marketing Award was given to the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Company. The Sales Team Achievement Award was given to Montgomery County Commuter Services for their efforts in FY2023 and the Organizational Achievement Award was given to Reston Town Center for their work operations of

"linkRTC," which is a new way to get around the area by linking Metrorail to the Town Center. A print advertisement highlighting the award winners was placed in the Washington Business Journal. A spotlight on the winners will be covered in the summer Commuter Connections newsletter.

Mr. Franklin reminded Committee members that nominations for the 2024 Employer Recognition Awards will be available beginning in December 2023.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – EMPLOYER OUTREACH ROUNDTABLE

Lakeshia Lewis and Holly Morello, OmniRide, are working with various local councils to get feedback for OmniRide operations and services. Feedback on Cap SP was also gathered.

Judy Galen, Loudoun County, noted that Loudoun County Commuter Services has sponsored a bus ad campaign to promote SmartBenefits PLU\$50. Follow-up is ongoing from a direct mail campaign promoting Best Workplaces for Commuters. Upcoming outreach includes Ozone Action month in August, Workforce Development Month in September, and Car Free Day in September.

Danelle Carey, goDCgo, is working on a DC Parking Cashout communications plan and outreach strategy.

Hamzat Sani and Josh Etim, City of Alexandria, are wrapping up the current fiscal year and growing internal staff. Alexandria is releasing a new TMP policy.

Antoinette Rucker, WMATA, shared about WMATA's new Lift program, which is an income qualified program for half-off trips. Ms. Rucker noted that workplace development and equity efforts of the program could align with goals of the Employer Outreach Committee. WMATA will be introducing fare increases, which could especially affect employees who ride Metro during off-peak hours. WMATA will be hosting a webinar and in-person seminar at L'Enfant office to traditional and non-traditional SmartBenefits clients, although the date has not yet been determined.

Mark Sofman, Montgomery County Commuter Services, shared that the County is preparing for the Walk N Ride Challenge, Car Free Day and Bike Donation Day.

Traci McPhail, North Bethesda TMD, is preparing for Walk N Ride and various employer benefit fairs. The TMD is also reviewing recent commuter survey results and Maryland's recent state commuter tax credit expansion.

Jennifer Bolick, Silver Spring/Shady Grove TMDs, is participating in Commuter Information Days along with WMATA Lift and Cabi. Partnerships are in-the-works with several property managers.

Brandan Stuckey, BTS, is preparing for Walk N Ride and working with the local Chamber of Commerce.

George Clark, TCCSMD, is gearing up for the ACT conference. Mr. Clark also introduced new staff at TCCSMD, Jessica Richards.

Christian Bacon, PGC DPWT, stated that PGC DPWT is currently undergoing an effort to re-engage with employers.

Theresa McMullin, Fairfax County, is focusing on partnerships. Two webinars are scheduled but the County is also exploring how to get transportation fairs back on-site at employer buildings.

Ronit Dancis, DATA, shared that DATA was a recipient of the Innovative Practice of the Year Award from the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce. DATA staff are at a job fair at Dulles International Airport today.

AGENDA ITEM 9 – OTHER BUSINESS

Antoinette Rucker, WMATA, invited Committee members to suggest agenda topics to COG/TPB staff. Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, invited Committee members to attend in-person at the next meeting scheduled in October at the COG offices as new Audio/Visual equipment has been installed. George Clark, TCCSMD, asked if there will be a web conferencing option for the next meeting. Mr. Ramfos responded that the Committee will be switching from Microsoft Teams to Webex beginning in October.

The next Employer Outreach Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 17, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.