



COMMUTER CONNECTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, November 15, 2022
12 noon – 2:00 p.m.

Chairperson: Judy Galen, Loudoun County
Vice Chairperson: Janiece Timmons, WMATA
Staff Contact: Nicholas Ramfos 202/962-3313

Item #1 **Introductions**

The Subcommittee members were asked to introduce themselves based on their jurisdictional location in order to be marked as present on the attendance sheet.

Item #2 **Minutes September 20, 2022 Meeting**

Approval was sought for the September 20, 2022 Commuter Connections Subcommittee Meeting Minutes.

Judy Galen, Loudoun County, requested a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Commuter Connections Subcommittee Meeting.

A motion was made by George Clark, TCCSMD, to approve the minutes, and seconded by Mark Sofman, Montgomery County.

The Subcommittee unanimously voted to approve the meeting minutes of the September 20, 2022 Commuter Connections Subcommittee Meeting.

Item #3 **2022 Bike to Work Day Draft Event Report**

Mark Hersey, COG/TPB staff, presented the draft 2022 Bike to Work Day event report.

Mark Hersey, COG/TPB staff, presented the draft 2022 Bike to Work Day event report. The report had previously been presented to the Bike to Work Day Steering Committee and contains contributions from a number of pit stop managers. Mr. Hersey noted that the event report has been published annually for many years; this year's version has slight changes on how information is displayed in the report.

Mr. Hersey shared notable highlights from the report. Historical event registration data is displayed on page 10; an upward trend continues after the event was cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic. Summaries from pit stop managers begin on page 13, which showcase each pit stops' unique experience on the day of the event. Marketing materials are archived in the report beginning on page 47.

A comment period was established for the Subcommittee to offer feedback, edits, and contributions to the report. Mr. Hersey asked Commuter Connections Subcommittee members to review the draft report, which will be posted to the Commuter Connections SharePoint document repository, and offer comments by December 16, 2022 to the docomments@mwkog.org email address. Mr. Hersey intends to update the report with comments from the Subcommittee and present a final version of the event report to the Subcommittee in January for endorsement.

Item #4 **2022 Car Free Day Results**

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on results from the regional Car Free Day Event held on September 22nd.

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the results from the regional Car Free Day event held on September 22nd. Mr. Sheehan referred the Subcommittee to an infographic that was created to summarize pledge data from the event. There was a total of 4,054 pledges for the 2022 event. Maryland residents accounted for 1,230 pledges; Virginia residents 1,580; Washington, DC residents 1,199; and 45 pledges from residents of other states. The total pledge count was notably larger than the last two iterations of the event, albeit lower than the 4,756 pledges that occurred in 2019.

The largest number of pledges for a single mode was 2,515 for walk/run. This differs from the prior two years of the event when telework was the most pledged mode. Next came bike/scooter with 1,866 pledges; telework at 1,855, rail at 1,255; bus at 982; and carpool/vanpool at 363. Pledgers could choose more than one mode, hence the reason the pledges by transportation mode exceeded the total amount of unique pledgers. The modal count breakdown by state was mostly proportional across Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, DC. The primary exception was carpool/vanpool pledgers, which mostly occurred in Maryland and Virginia.

Just under a quarter of pledgers reported *not* being normally car free but decided to go car free for the event. Eighty-eight percent of pledgers reported forgoing a work trip on Car Free Day; nearly half reported taking a car free trip to exercise. There were 1,757 pledgers who worked from home during Car Free Day and 2,037 who commuted to an office location.

There was an estimated 43,901 pledged Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) reduced during Car Free Day as a result of the event. COG/TPB staff calculated that 0.010 tons of NOx were reduced; 0.012 tons of VOC were reduced; and 17.38 tons of GHG were reduced.

Item #5

Visualize 2045 Briefing

Stacey Cook, COG/TPB staff, presented on the latest long-range transportation plan update approved by TPB in June 2022.

Stacey Cook, COG/TPB staff, presented on the latest long-range transportation plan update approved by TPB in June 2022. The update included changes to the FY 2023-2026 TIP and the Air Quality Conformity Analysis. Ms. Cook began the presentation by discussing why a regional long-range transportation plan is needed. Visualize 2045 sets goals and priorities for federally funded transportation projects in the region. Projects included in the plan must meet federal requirements, including public participation, congestion management, Title VI, environmental justice, and air quality. Priorities and goals established in Visualize 2045 seek to help steer transportation dollars to the most impactful projects in a way that helps metropolitan Washington strategically incur the projected 1.3 million more people and 1 million more jobs to come to the region by 2045. Many of these goals are also driven by TPB's aspirational initiatives, which are highlighted in chapters 6 and 7 of the plan.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) has a key role in the plan and is a core element for many of the aspirational initiatives, notably "providing more telecommuting and other options for commuting." The TPB has evaluated TDM in scenario planning studies and found the collection of strategies to be some of the most effective for meeting the TPB's mobility and accessibility goals. Additionally, the TPB carries out a Congestion Management Process (CMP), of which TDM and transit strategies are some of the primary options to support congestion management. For these reasons, TDM is offered as an effective and worthwhile component of transportation investment in Visualize 2045. State and local jurisdictions are encouraged to manage demand before expanding roadways.

Ms. Cook continued by providing information on performance results and the TPB policy framework. The TPB measures performance as one way of tracking progress on goals and priorities presented in the TPB Policy Framework. Transportation investment is allocated to projects that are projected to yield high levels of performance. For instance, the region is projected to increase in population and jobs; much of this growth will

occur in activity centers throughout the region. Projects that help reduce congestion and delay within high-growth activity centers by increasing transit ridership, increasing vehicle occupancy, and creating viable alternatives to driving alone are seen as high-performance projects. Even still, the region continues to be auto dependent, with 38% of trips projected to be single-occupant in 2045. However, HOV and carpools are expected to grow to 40% of trips; walking and biking is expected to have the highest percentage growth increase of all modal options. These shifts to more sustainable transportation options are helping to lead a decrease in forecasted greenhouse gas emissions per capita through 2045.

Ms. Cook concluded her presentation by sharing materials and resources with the Subcommittee. More information about the plan, and the plan itself, can be found at www.visualize2045.org.

Mackenzie Love, NVTA, asked if the HOV/carpool stats included shared-rides provided through Uber and Lyft. Ms. Cook and Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, speculated that they do not include Uber and Lyft data since the total amount of shared-rides produced by Transportation Network Companies is not statistically significant. Katy Lang, DDOT, asked if there is a specific section of the report that references TDM data. Ms. Cook advised viewing the sub-section of Visualize 2045 on TDM, and the draft scenarios summary that synthesizes what's been learned about TDM and its impacts. Ms. Lang also asked about the build-out scenario for trips in 2045 and how to align practitioner goals with data projections in Visualize 2045. Ms. Cook suggested implementing the aspirational initiatives and working with TPB board members to prioritize TDM investment in local jurisdictions. Mr. Ramfos commented that the Visualize 2045 plan features the most expansive TDM section over the past several decades and is thankful that the TPB has included TDM in their planning process.

Hardcopies of the Visualize 2045 plan can be requested by sending a message to docomments@mwcog.org

Item #6 Regional TDM Evaluation Project

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the status of data collection activities with the regional TDM Evaluation project for FY2023.

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the status of data collection activities with the regional TDM Evaluation project for FY2023. The Bike to Work Day survey has been distributed to about 13,000 participants and 2,200 responses have been received, which is around a 17% response rate. Mr. Ramfos projected an overall higher rate than the past iteration of the survey. A draft report based on survey responses is expected to be presented to the Subcommittee in March.

The Car Free Day survey is being prepared for distribution. It will likely be sent out after the Thanksgiving holiday. COG/TPB staff intentionally delayed the distribution of the Car Free Day survey a few weeks so that participants would not confuse it with the Bike to Work Day survey. Highlights from this survey is expected in January. A report is not produced for the Car Free Day survey.

Results from both the Bike to Work Day and Car Free Day surveys are incorporated into the regional TDM Analysis report.

An Employer Telework Survey of Maryland employers is expected to be released in February.

Item #7 Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment (ATCMTD) Project Update

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the COG ATCMTD Project.

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the COG ATCMTD Project. Mr. Sheehan began his presentation by providing an overview of the project, which is funded by FHWA. The \$5.95

million grant application was awarded in November 2020 with an overall goal of improving the incenTrip mobile application. The project will last for a period of three years with focuses on specific elements in each of the three years. The first year focused on model enhancements and program expansion, which were completed by late 2021. Year 2 tasks focused on specialized TDM programs, and Year 3 tasks will focus on improved accommodations in incenTrip.

Mr. Sheehan highlighted accomplishments for each project task that occurred over the past year. Task C, “Expand multimodal reward and payment options within the incenTrip community,” saw increased reward options added including gift cards, Nift Gift, SmarTrip, and E-ZPass. Task D integrated the Flextime Rewards program into incenTrip. Upon release, incenTrip users will have the ability to log their eligible flex trips in incenTrip to receive points that can be exchanged for a monetary reward. The program requirements are nearly identical to the existing Flextime Rewards program; three new corridors were added in the MDOT service area. Traveler Alerts were also added, which notify incenTrip users of adverse traffic conditions so that planned travel can be altered and/or mitigated. Task E introduced corridor “challenges” into incenTrip, which awards point bonuses associated with the Commuter Connections program if any incenTrip users were to participate in a challenge. The challenges are pre-populated and serve two specific corridors: I-66 and I-270. While these two corridors were targeted as the initial corridors involved with the ATCMTD project, the new functionality was built in a manner that will permit additional corridors to be added if future requests are made. Corridor challenges can be tailored to suit the needs of a specific corridor. For instance, a “carpool expansion” challenge was designed for I-66, which is experiencing an HOV requirement increase from HOV-2 to HOV-3 to use the Express Lanes for free. As a prerequisite for the new corridor challenges feature, improved rideshare functionality will be added to incenTrip. This new functionality will permit incenTrip users participating in carpools to simultaneously log a carpool trip.

The project team is beginning to establish requirements for the final tasks associated with the ATCMTD project. A draft design for the Employer Module (Task F) was developed and is currently being refined by the project team. The design phase for Specialized Transportation options (Task G), which is anticipated to integrate a toggleable trip planning option that accounts for taxis and nonprofits that use Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAC), is also expected to commence soon. The ATCMTD Stakeholder Group will be asked to help define the geographical areas where the specialized trip planner will be activated.

Mr. Sheehan concluded the presentation by sharing incenTrip usage metrics. User activity has continued to increase throughout the life of the ATCMTD project; new account creations, trip logs, and rewards redemptions continue to grow quarter-over-quarter.

Item #8 **FY2024 Work Program Development and Commuter Connections Strategic Plan**
*Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the development of the
FY2024 Commuter Connections Work Program development and Strategic Plan.*

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the timeline development of the FY2024 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP) and the Commuter Connections Strategic Plan. Mr. Ramfos provided an overview of the Commuter Connections program. Commuter Connections is a network of public and private transportation organizations, including COG, state funding agencies, and local organizations, that work together to assist and encourage people in the Washington DC metropolitan region to use alternatives to the single-occupant automobile. The benefits of Commuter Connections include helping to reduce and manage commuter congestion, that in turn will assist with improving goods movement and tourist travel and reduce emissions. The program also supports local efforts to attract and retain employers. The daily impacts of the program show a reduction of 156,000 vehicle trips, 3,009,000 vehicle miles of travel, and 0.7 tons of nitrogen oxides (NOx). Commuter Connections constitutes the major demand management component of the region’s congestion management process. The program also supports regional air quality goals and is part of the annual update of the region’s Long Rang Transportation Plan (Visualize 2045) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Results from the program may also help to contribute to performance measures

and goals set by the region under FAST Act and IJA requirements. The proposed FY2024 CCWP budget shows about a 2% overall increase when compared to the FY2023 program budget. New items in the FY 2024 CCWP include the migration of Commuter Operations Center assets to the Cloud and changing from an Oracle to a Postgres database platform, celebrating Commuter Connections 50th Anniversary, production of the 2022 State of the Commute Survey General Public Report, producing the 2021-2023 draft TDM Analysis Report, conducting the Employer Outreach Customer Satisfaction Survey, and the GRH Baltimore program impact analysis.

State funding agencies have provided initial comments and edits on draft FY2024 CCWP. Mr. Ramfos asked Subcommittee members to review the draft documents and a comment period will be established through December 5th. State funding agencies will review document and submit comments in December with final review and approval occurring in January. A revised document will be available for the January Subcommittee meeting for further review and endorsement for release. The TPB Tech Committee will receive a briefing of the FY2024 CCWP in February and will be briefed again in March. TPB will receive a draft of the FY2024 CCWP in February and will be asked to approve the document in March. TIP adjustments, if any, will be made and funding commitments secured by June with the program beginning on July 1, 2023.

Item #9 1st Quarter FY2023 CCWP Budget and Progress Reports

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the FY2023 CCWP 1st Quarter Budget Report. Daniel Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, briefed the group on the FY2023 CCWP 1st Quarter Progress Report.

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the FY2023 CCWP 1st Quarter Budget Report. The total budget is about 8% expended as of September 30, 2022. The Commuter Operations Center expended about 13%, GRH 13%, Marketing 6%, Monitoring and Evaluation 12%, Employer Outreach 7%, and GRH Baltimore 10%. Mr. Ramfos speculated that expenditures will start to increase as marketing commences this quarter and invoices are received from local jurisdictions.

Daniel Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, briefed the group on the FY2023 CCWP 1st Quarter Progress Report. Operations highlights included serving 13,270 commuters as part of the Ridematching program which is similar to last quarter. Technical software development work focused on the database conversion from Oracle to Postgres and migration of the servers to Amazon Web Services. Following the supplemental vanpool module launch in June, a training was conducted in July for local rideshare coordinators. Real-time flexible vanpool for CarpoolNow was launched in August.

A total of 211 new applicants were registered and 413 commuters were re-registered into the Guaranteed Ride Home program. The program now has about 1,896 commuters registered in the GRH database and 197 GRH trips were provided throughout the quarter.

For Marketing, the summer 2022 newsletter was published and distributed with the lead story featuring 2022 Employer Recognition Award winners. Plans began for FY2023 marketing; the Marketing Work Group was formed to give guidance on new campaign development. Updates were compiled for the FY2023 Strategic Marketing Plan. The media plan for the fall GRH and Rideshare umbrella campaign. A workgroup was formed for the 2023 Employer Recognition Awards. Two new vanpools were added to the 'Pool Rewards vanpool program; 10 vanpools were operating by the end of September. Car Free Day was held on September 22nd. Planning and prep work for the event occurred throughout the quarter, including the launch of a marketing campaign. The CarpoolNow app was downloaded 236 times throughout the quarter. A Flexible Vanpool Operator FAQ was developed and distributed. Just over 3,400 commuters were registered for incenTrip as of September 30th.

Under Monitoring and Evaluation, the 2022 State of the Commute report and the GRH Applicant Survey report were finalized by COG/TPB staff and endorsed for release by the Subcommittee in September. The Car Free

Day 2021 Event Report was finalized and released. The FY2022 2nd Half Regional TDM Marketing Campaign summary was finalized. Content was compiled for the 2022 Bike to Work Day Event report. Under Employer Outreach, COG/TPB staff conducted Act! Regional Employer Database trainings with Employer Outreach representatives after a new version was launched. Employer Case Studies were finalized and released. A sales training titled "Flexible Rideshare" was conducted on September 29th. For GRH Baltimore, a total of 99 registrants was recorded by the end of the quarter with 16 trips provided. The GRH Baltimore Applicant Survey Report was finalized and released.

Item #10 Other Business/Set Agenda for Next Meeting

This is an opportunity for Commuter Connections Subcommittee members to bring up other business and to request agenda items for the next meeting.

Judy Galen, Loudoun County, recognized Cherice Sansbury, COG/TPB staff, for her work supporting the Commuter Connections Subcommittee. Ms. Sansbury will be moving to a different position at COG and will no longer be supporting the Commuter Connections Subcommittee following the November 2022 meeting. Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, will be the primary contact and administrator for the Subcommittee until further notice.

The next meeting of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee will be held on Tuesday, January 17, 2023 at 12 noon.