

Commuter Connections Subcommittee

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

Chairperson: Linda Stewart-Byrd, MDOT

Vice Chairperson: Christopher Hamilton, Arlington County

Staff Contact: Nicholas Ramfos (202) 962-3313

Item #1 Introductions

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

Chair, Linda Stewart-Byrd called the meeting to order by introducing herself and asking the rest of the attendees to do so (*See attached attendance sheet*).

Item #2 Minutes of November 21st, 2006

Approval was sought for the November 21st, 2006 Commuter Connections Subcommittee meeting minutes.

There was a motion and a second to approve the minutes of the November 21st meeting as written.

Item #3 Employer Outreach Customer Satisfaction Survey Final Report and New Employer Outreach Goals

Mr. Mark Hersey reported on substantive changes made to the report. The Subcommittee was asked to approve the FY 2006 Employer Outreach Customer Satisfaction Survey report. The Subcommittee was also asked to approve the New Employer Outreach Jurisdiction Goals for the 2006-2008 TERM reporting period.

Mr. Hersey reviewed the changes to the Employer Satisfaction Survey report. He stated there is an addendum to the report that includes charts and graphs from the start of the program in FY 2000 which would track responses through the most recent report. Questions 1 -7 and 9 & 10 will be used in the graphs to reflect the historical data. The 2nd quarter draft conformity report will be changed to reflect the new goals and a listing of level 3 & 4 employers.

Concern of the data used for mailing was raised by Sharon Affinito with regards to high return rates of surveys due to bad address information and Ms. Affinito requested that language be added to this effect. Mr. Hersey offered to send out reminders in May for each jurisdiction to ensure that the information in the ACT Database is correct before the database is synched with COG before the survey mailing to employers in June.

The FY 2006 Employer Satisfaction Survey Report was approved for release by the Subcommittee with added changes on the language for survey returns on page 6 of the report.

Item #4 GRH Participation Guidelines

Ms. Towanna Hinton reviewed the changes to the GRH Participation Guidelines.

Ms. Hinton reviewed item 2 which now states "Commuters must provide the supervisor name and phone number and at least two (2) phone numbers (home and work) in order to register for the GRH service." Item 3 now states "The GRH credits are non-transferable." The word "program" was removed from item 11.

The GRH Participation Guidelines were approved by the Subcommittee as written.

Item #5 2006 Bike To Work Day Event Draft Report

Mr. Mark Hersey reviewed substantive changes to the 2006 Bike To Work Day Event Draft Report.

Mr. Hersey thanked those Subcommittee members who submitted their comments and stated that those comments were reflected in this draft of the 2006 Bike To Work Day Event Report.

The 2006 Bike To Work Day Event Draft Report was approved for release by the Subcommittee as written.

Item #6 VDOT "Dynamic Ridesharing Data" Study

Mr. Rahul Trivedi of VDOT presenting findings of a recent study conducted by VDOT to assess the number of "slugs" at park and ride lots located along the I-95 corridor.

Mr. Trivedi reviewed data collected by VDOT during spring (April) 2006 along the Fredericksburg, VA –Springfield, VA corridor. "Slugging" is a form of instant carpooling where a driver will announce his destination and hopefully find other riders going to the same destination, allowing them to take advantage of HOV lanes. The purpose of the study was to measure slug activity by site, jurisdiction and destination during the AM Peak Period. The increase in "slug" activity since 1999 was also evaluated.

The majority of "sluggers" call Prince William County home (56%). Fairfax County (22%), Stafford County (17%), and the City of Fredericksburg (5%) follow respectively. The most popular "slugging" destination is the Pentagon (33%). Rosslyn (13%) and Crystal City (10%) conclude the destinations and Northern Virginia. The downtown Washington destinations included 14th Street, NW (19%), L'Enfant Plaza (11%), and 19th Street, NW (10%). Four percent of "sluggers" reported an "Other" destination. Overall, Northern Virginia accounts for fifty-six percent of sluggers by destination while the District of Columbia accounts for forty-four percent. The number of commuters "slugging" has more than doubled since 1999. 3,085 commuters were "slugging" in 1999 as determined by the 1999 "slug" count data from the I-95/I-395 HOV Restriction Study, while the number for 2006 was 6,459. The increase in "slugging" has been attributed to many factors including increased parking spaces, better transit services, and population increase.

Item #7 Arlington County TDM Evaluation Project

Mr. Howard Jennings briefed the Subcommittee on its recently on-going TDM Evaluation project.

Mr. Jennings briefed the Subcommittee on Arlington County's on-going TDM Evaluation project and its three main components: documenting results of programs and services, enhancing and exploring customer satisfaction, and identifying new service opportunities. These goals can be met by addressing the customer needs through research of the needs of current and potential customers, examination of satisfaction with existing services, identifying service gaps, and developing or modifying existing services. The overall direction of this study is a shift to a "customer-centric" assessment achieved through a two-tiered approach. The first tier, strategic, examines whether quality of life is related to mobility and transportation and the second tier, tactical, examines whether a range of services drive satisfaction with service.

Selected findings from the study include: Eighty-eight percent of Arlington County residents rate their quality of life as good or very-good, while eighty-three percent rate their transportation system and services in the same fashion. Ease of getting around the county came in just slightly under at seventy-six percent. Several factors were found to influence county residents in their choice to use transit. These factors include safety, convenience, time required to make trips, and the ability to travel around Arlington County. The increase in transit usage and options is thereby shown to have a positive influence on the overall quality of life for county residents. The data collected for this survey was taken from participants whom were chosen at random through a telephone digit selection process.

Item #8 FY 2008 Draft Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP)

Mr. Nicholas Ramfos discussed the draft FY 2008 CCWP and established a comment period.

Mr. Ramfos stated the TDM Software System project will continue with phase II of the program under the Commuter Operations Center. Testing and documentation of the system as well the telework and employer outreach databases will be developed and implemented. Software training is also expected to begin during FY 2008. The budget for the Guaranteed Ride Home program was increased by \$5,000. The loyalty and incentive rewards program for GRH is still in the work program as a demonstration for FY 2008, though it may not be fully implemented until the following year.

The Monitoring & Evaluation Program includes several surveys and reports. The State of the Commute general public report will be produced during FY 2008. The Employer Outreach TERM analysis is scheduled to be conducted as well as surveys involving vanpooling, car-sharing, and bicycling.

There were minor changes for the Employer Outreach program. The program budget for Live Near Your Work has been decreased to \$125,000, with \$80,000 allotted for jurisdictional pass-thru grants. The program budget for Telework will remain the same. Commuter Connections, in conjunction with DDOT is planning to roll out a new form of static informational kiosks.

Mr. Ramfos asked that comments regarding the draft FY 2008 Draft CCWP be submitted by February 1, 2007. The document will be posted to the Commuter Connections Extranet where all comments should be posted. On February 2, 2007 the draft FY 2008 CCWP will be presented to

the Transportation Planning Board's Technical Committee and then on February 21st it will be presented to the Transportation Planning Board where it will be released for public comment.

Item #9 Strategic Planning Plan

The Subcommittee continued discussion on the "Parking Lot Issues" associated with the final version of the Commuter Connections Strategic Plan.

Chair, Linda Stewart-Byrd led the discussion on the remaining Parking Lot Issues associated with the final version of the Commuter Connections Strategic Plan.

#3 – Include planning activities as part of local and COG responsibilities.

R - The Subcommittee expressed an interest in integrating TDM into other transportation and land-use planning activities.

#7 – Explore how to promote Commuter Connections network and yet retain individual jurisdictions' identities.

R – The Subcommittee expressed and high level of interest regarding a uniform letterhead to be used by all members of Commuter Connections, emphasizing their membership in the network. (This item was previously discussed at the November 21, 2006 Subcommittee meeting).

8 – More coordination on regional/local outreach that is funded by Commuter Connections.

R – The Subcommittee felt that discussing the "Parking Lot Issues" was evidence of increased coordination among the jurisdictions.

#16 - Section 11: Consider TDM certification for network members, perhaps based on CUTR program.

R- The Subcommittee agreed that certification would aid in its goal to seek inclusion in the planning process as discussed in item #3.

Ms. Hinton stated that Commuter Connections was identifying the need to address data processing (#3) and increasing knowledge and familiarity with geography and people in the local jurisdictions (#4). The chair acknowledged that items 1 thru 3 contained in Managing Expectations were addressed through the set-up of "e-support" from the Commuter Connections Operations Center. Item #4 is addressed directly in the newly updated MOU.

Issues 1 & 3 require further discussion by the Subcommittee.

Item #10 Budget Report

Mr. Nicholas Ramfos distributed the second quarter budget report for FY 2007.

Mr. Ramfos distributed the second quarter budget report for FY 2007. He asked that anyone who has a comment or question concerning it contact him directly.

Item #11 FY 2006 GRH Survey Report

Mr. Douglas Franklin briefly reviewed the draft FY 2006 Guaranteed Ride Home Customer Satisfaction Survey Report.

Mr. Franklin reviewed the draft FY 2006 Guaranteed Ride Home Customer Satisfaction Survey Report. Highlights included 2,846 surveys mailed with 927 being returned to Commuter Connections amounting to a thirty-three percent response rate. The combined, overall positive experience was rated at ninety-three percent by commuters using the service. The positive rating for the transportation service was ninety-four percent while the same rating for response time was ninety-three percent. The average response time was 16 minutes, while ninety-two percent of all rides were dispatched within 30 minutes or less. The overall positive rating for the service portion was ninety-six percent. The number one reason for GRH usage was personal illness. Mr. Ramfos asked that all comments be posted by February 9, 2007 to the Commuter Connections Extranet.

Item #12 Other Business/Set Agenda for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee will be held on Tuesday, March 20, 2007.