



COMMUTER CONNECTIONS RIDEMATCHING COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, September 17, 2019
2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.
COG Board Room

Chairperson: Thomas Hamad, City of Alexandria
Vice Chairperson: Allison Kemp, Bethesda Transportation Solutions

COG Staff Contact: Stephen Finafrock, 202/962-3385 or sfinafrock@mwcog.org

1. Introductions

The meeting was brought to order by Chairperson Thomas Hamed of the City of Alexandria. Attendees were asked to introduce themselves and sign the attendance sheet.

2. Minutes of the June 18th, 2019 meeting

Approval was sought for the June 18th, 2019 Ridematching Committee Meeting minutes. An initial motion to approve was made by Holly Morello of PRTC and a second motion to approve was made by Alan Doran of the Harford Commute Smart. The minutes were approved as written. All were in favor.

3. Change of Chair

Allison Kemp, Bethesda Transportation Solutions, was named the new Chairperson, replacing Thomas Hamed of the City of Alexandria. Yolanda Creal of The Department of Defense (Washington Headquarters Services) was appointed as the new Vice Chairperson. Thomas Hamed of the City of Alexandria received a plaque of recognition for his time as Chairperson of the Ridematching Committee.

4. Upcoming Fairs and Promotions

Arlington Transportation Partners

- Wrote a blog and 2 different program newsletter highlighting FlexTime Rewards
- Attended the IncenTrip launch
- Promoting Carpool/Vanpool for Car Free Days
- Hosted a vanpool event with Nestle
- 5th Annual Amazing Commute Race in
 - Vienna Metro Station to Rosslyn
 - Modes: Telework, bus, slugging, SOV, bike, Waze carpool
 - Everyone is going to track in IncenTrip to compare how each mode scores
- Commuter66 webinar on Thursday, Sep 19th, at 11:00am
 - Will feature FlexTime rewards, GRH etc.
- Arlington Transit (ART) is offering free bus rides on Sep 9th to promote transit week and Car Free Days

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD, 777 NORTH CAPITOL STREET, N.E., SUITE 300, WASHINGTON, DC 20002-4239

THE COMMUTER INFORMATION SOURCE FOR MARYLAND, VIRGINIA AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

WWW.COMMUTERCONNECTIONS.ORG

1-800-745-RIDE

- Three upcoming State Departments fairs
- Arlington Public Schools Staff Transportation Fair Oct 2nd and Benefits Fair Oct 15th

Bethesda Transportation Solutions

- Walk & Ride Challenge
- Car Free Day
- Conducted 4 Commuter Information Day events in various locations in downtown Bethesda
- Commute Information Day at Chevy Chase Cars Sep 25th
- Imagination State Benefits Fair Oct 16th

City of Alexandria

- PARK(ing) Day/Try Transit week Sep 09/19/19
- Transportation Demand Management Summit 11/08/19
- GoAlex Operation Illumination project will be providing bike lights, arm and ankle straps to Alexandria residents promoting safe bicycling and walking in the dark 11/08/19

GWRideConnect

- Fort Belvoir Community Day
- Try Transit Promotions
- Radio Ads on 101.5 and 93.3
- Chamber of Commerce publication ads (Print)
- Car Free Day promotions

Harford Commute Smart

- Havre de Grace – Susquehanna River Running Festival 09/28/19
- Second Chance Job Fair – Epicenter Edgewood 09/20/19

OmniRide

- Omniride, GMU and City of Manassas Transportation Forum 06/26/2019
- DHHQ Commuter Fair 06/27/2019
- TDM outreach at Mark Center (relating to Omniride route changes) 07/30/2019
- PW County Chamber of Commerce Mega Networking Event in Gainesville 08/23/2019
- Coast Guard Transit Fair 09/04/2019
- City of Manassas TableTop Commuter Event at City Hall and Car Free Day Proclamation Signing 09/09/19
- Assett Loop Employee Commuter Event with Transform I-66 Manassas 09/11/2019
- PW Chamber of Commerce Ec. Dev. Luncheon table top 09/12/2019
- Car Free Day at Manassas Farmers Market 09/21/2019. Walking tour, bike tour, bus on site
- Quantico Welcome Abroad Brief 09/23/2019
- PWC Employer Council Mtg. (Inaugural) 10/03/19
- PWSHRM HR/Law Summit Manassas VA. Omniride will platinum sponsor (10 minutes of podium) Oct 11th

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

- Coast Guard Transportation Fair, 9:00-1:30 Sep 4th
- NIH Transportation Fair at Rockledge Campus 10:30-1:00 Sep 12th
- Access Tyson Transportation Fair Invitation 11:30-1:30 Sep 17th

Montgomery County Commuter Services

- Promotions at several Metro Stations for Car Free Day Sep 20th
- Mobile Commuter Store remains in service at various locations around the County
- Walk & Ride Challenge including 5 Transportation Management Districts on Sep 9th
- Montgomery County is updating Park & Ride Guide
- Survey for dockless vehicles remains open in pilot program area

National Institute of Health

- E-mail sent to NIH staff for Car Free Day Sep 10th
- Rockledge Campus outreach Sep 12th
- Car Free Day Medical at Medical Center Metro Sep 17th
- Car Free Day Table at Relay Race Sep 18th
- Car Free Day Table at Building 10 Sep 19th
- Outreach RideFinders at Building 35 Sep 26th
- Refresher Course Oct 3th
- Fisher Lane RideFinders Building 35 Oct 4th

North Bethesda Transportation

- CID at NIAID Aug 15th
- CID at JBG Aug 22nd
- Attended IncentTrip Launch Party Aug 28th
- Walk and Ride Campaign Sep 9-27
- Large Outdoor CID/Employee Fair at NIH main campus Sep 12th
- County Residential Surveys begin in NB Sep 16th
- CID/Staff Meeting at Brighton Gardens Sep 26th
- County Employer Survey begins in North Bethesda Sep 30th
- Benefits Fair at Digital Management Inc. Oct 3th
- ACT Chesapeake Chapter Awards Luncheon Oct 9th
- Marriott Benefits Fair Oct 28th
- CID at USNRC Nov 7th

Transit Services of Frederick County

- Promoting ads with Manning Media for GRH and Ridesharing
- Radio Ads on Key103
- Large Ad at Frederick Indoor on alternative commute assistance
- Promoting ridesharing with Comcast Spotlight
- In The Street Event Sep 14th
- Fair providing extra shuttle to help with traffic and parking Sep 13-22nd
- Free rides Monday Sep 23th for Car Free Day
- Beginning plans for Try Transit Week in October

Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland

- Mark Center on June 26th
- Charles County Economic Development Quarterly Business Roundtable July 30th
- NAS Pax River Commute Vanpool Impact Aug 29th
- US Coast Guard Transportation Fair Sep 4th

VDOT

- University Blvd Park & Ride opening October 5th. 960 spaces for carpool/vanpool
- 395 Express Lanes. HOV 3 is free. Nov

5. TDM System Update

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, began his presentation with a brief overview about proposed enhancements to the TDM System for FY2020.

The first notable enhancement is the Commuter Connections GIS Depot. This is an ongoing project to update and consolidate relevant Commuter Connections data into a newly developed, centralized database. This will enable most mapping data and resources needed to power Commuter Connections' applications to be developed, consolidated, and stored in a safe and reliable database. This approach streamlines application updates by reducing redundancies and reducing reliance on Google. Phased implementation includes:

- Integration of ArcGIS Geocoding Service

- Development of Navigable Network within ArcGIS
- Creation of ArcGIS Map Services

Mr. Sheehan continued his presentation talking about how Commuter Connections will explore ways to simplify the registration process. This includes a reevaluation of current required fields and the development of automatically generated follow-up messages to encourage profile completion.

Mr. Sheehan went on to present another proposed enhancement to the TDM System, in this case exploring the possibility of creating an automated chatbot to communicate with commuters on common tasks normally performed online. This will mitigate call center use and improve customer experience of the system.

The next proposed enhancement presented was the implementation of the "help" feature in Commuter Connections mobile apps. To better improve user experience within Commuter Connections applications, a help button may be added to the Commuter Connections mobile application and CarpoolNow that will show users how to perform common actions as well as provide an FAQ about the app.

Finally, Mr. Sheehan, ended his presentation with the last update for the TDM System which is the integration of incenTrip. Commuter Connections will work closely with the University of Maryland to integrate features such as carpool IDs, verified commute tracking, and to further streamline the functionality between various Commuter Connections incentive programs.

Mr. Sheehan clarified that, in order to receive points/rewards for incenTrip it is necessary to have an account with Commuter Connections. Some users who are not registered with Commuter Connections may use the program without points for navigation purposes, traffic prediction, or to use the Eco-driving feature.

Additionally, he reminded everyone that the incenTrip app has the ability to passively track location when commuting. The software will track the commuter's travel pattern. During peak hours the app will display the best route. The commuter will have to follow that recommendation receive points. Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, reaffirmed that if a commuter deviates from the app's suggested route no points will be given. He reminded the Committee that there will be adjustments down the road.

A member of the Committee pointed out that VRE was not showing as an alternative transit option during the meeting. Mr. Sheehan reminded the Committee that any feedback will be very much appreciated in order to find glitches.

Fatemeh Allahdoust, VDOT, brought up the fact that there is only one private company that provides ride-hailing. She advised that the use of Virginia state funds adheres to strict regulations for the promotion of private companies. The Committee decided to temporarily remove Uber in the next software update until further notice.

6. incenTrip

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, continued his presentation talking about the updates to the incenTrip mobile application. He started by mentioning the exciting launch event that took place on Aug 28th of this year.

incenTrip can be downloaded easily from the Apple App Store and Google Play. Mr. Sheehan highlighted how easy it is for users to register. Users can create a new account or sign in with Commuter Connections. All important user functions are accessible from the home page. The app provides real time data feeds and traffic prediction for all trips. Commuters who use the app can avoid traffic jams, transit delays, and save money. Transit options are included, and commuters can benefit from the flextime program as well.

Mr. Sheehan ensured everyone that the information gathered from commuters is safe. The data stays with COG and UMD. Personal data is protected and never shared with a third party.

He continued by explaining the possibilities of the incenTrip app. All travel options are shown for the planned trip. That is a real benefit for commuters who can learn about travel time, distance, cost (fare, fuel parking etc.) for each option.

The system is integrated with Commuter Connections using the dynamic ridematching services. It's easy to find ridesharing options. Commuters can create their own rideshare pool and invite friends to join the pool for easy rideshare arrangements and rewards.

Commuters and users can get rewards by using the app. Mr. Sheehan referred to the points model described in Item #6A. The model currently programmed in incenTrip rewards a larger amount of points to users who are logging non-SOV commutes for the first time. Points are gradually diminished over time as the non-SOV commute mode becomes a habit.

Another form of gamification within incenTrip are "Levels." Levels are rankings you earn as you collect more and more points. Commuters begin every month at the Green level and have until the end of the month to gain more levels; higher levels earn more points. Points can be exchanged for gift cards or cash. Commuter Connections program reward points will be exchanged for cash payments via checks. Mr. Sheehan added that users who pledge to go car free or car-lite and log their respective trips in incenTrip during the Car Free Day(s) event will earn bonus points.

7. SchoolPool

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, reminded the Committee about the SchoolPool Program: A referral service for those looking to arrange shared transportation, including carpool, walking, bike riding or public transit to or from school for their children under age 18. Mr. Finafrock informed members of the Committee that SchoolPool fliers are available if any jurisdiction is interested in promoting this program.

He reiterated that the program relies heavily on local jurisdictions. He mentioned DATA as one of the jurisdictions with the most active data enabling users to search for possible matches.

Only administrator account holders can edit their child's information. Program administrators are able to update schools' information who are participating in the program. In the same way it is recommended to purge schools who are no longer participating.

Mr. Finafrock demonstrated a real example for finding matches of nearby schools in Arlington. The user can select the travel preferences and see the school schedule. There are many possible configurations. The existence of data is crucial to produce results.

Mr. Finafrock finished by adding that he is willing to include the topic again for the next Ridematching Meeting taking place in December if the program generates more interest among members of the Committee.

8. July 2019 TDM Resource Directory

Steven Osborn, COG/TPB staff, informed the Committee that the TDM Resource Directory has been completed. There is a digital PDF file version which members of the Committee can access. Hard copies are also available by request.

Any updates such as new Park & Ride locations will be added to the next Directory projected for Jan 2020

9. Client Site Status | Round Table

No new topics were proposed for the next Ridematching Committee meeting.

10. Quarterly Progress Report

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, reviewed the FY2019 Fourth Quarter CCWP Progress Report and the Annual Progress Report. Mr. Finafrock encouraged Committee members to review page 23 of the Quarterly Progress Report to find and report any discrepancy with the numbers entered.

Mr. Finafrock also briefed the Committee on the Annual Progress Report. He encouraged Committee members to review page 53 including table 6A "calls received at client programs" and table 6B "applications received TDM System." Mr. Finafrock reminded members of the Committee to submit data in time to be accountable and make the report as clear as possible.

11. Other Business | Upcoming Agenda Items

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, reminded members of the Committee to submit requests regarding "best practices" followed by jurisdictions ahead of time so they can be added to the next meeting's agenda if they are interested in presenting

at the next meeting. Elizabeth Denton, Arlington Transportation Partners, showed interest in possibly presenting at the next meeting.

The Next meeting of the Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee will be held on December 17, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.