



MEETING MINUTES

COMMUTER CONNECTIONS RIDEMATCHING COMMITTEE

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

777 North Capitol Street, N.E.

COG Board Room, Third Floor

Chairperson: Kevin Thornton, Prince Georges County

Vice Chairperson: Diana Utz, GWRideConnect

COG Staff Contact: Nicholas Ramfos, 202/962-3313 or nramfos@mwkog.org

(Note: If you cannot attend this meeting, please call 202/962-3327.)

1. Introductions

Vice Chairperson, Diana Utz began the meeting and asked that all meeting attendees introduce themselves.

2. Minutes of the September 19, 2007 Meeting

Minutes were approved with the following changes: 1) change "Fairfax Community College" to "Frederick Community College" in item #4 under Frederick County's upcoming fairs and promotions, and 2) change the language for DRPT's upcoming fairs and promotions to "DRPT will attend a Telework VA fair. DRPT will also attend public meetings for the Commonwealth of Virginia six year plan."

3. Upcoming Fairs and Promotions

Heather McColl, ARTMA: ARTMA held a Commuting Made Easy event. ARTMA is also starting a direct mailing campaign to encourage alternative transportation use.

Nicole Huntington, NIH: NIH representatives have been concentrating their efforts on transitioning to SmartBenefits.

Lillian Bunton, Baltimore Metropolitan Council: BMC is starting a newspaper advertising campaign designed to encourage alternative transportation use.

Darlene Nader, North Bethesda Transportation Center: NBTC has been concentrating their efforts on transitioning all Super Fare Share companies to SmartBenefits. NBTC has also worked with the following employers: Capital Financial Group, Smith Barney, VOB Auto Sales, Timpanos Italian Restaurant, Target, Deposition Services, and Tranwestern Commercial Services.

Dorothy Dalphon, TransIT Services of Frederick County: The Frederick News-Post published the article "Costs of the Commute" on 11/1/07, which highlighted local vanpoolers and the GRH program. Frederick County will also be starting radio, television, and cinema advertisements designed to encourage alternative transportation use.

Pat Fielder, Harford County: Harford County has been working on initiating vanpools with APG. Harford County has also been working with the Saks Fifth Avenue Distribution Center to reduce congestion caused by the center.

Glenn Hiner, Fairfax County: Fairfax County attended a fair at Ft. Belvoir pertaining to BRAC.

Dallen Hall, Montgomery County: In October, Montgomery County attended a fair at Social and Scientific Systems. In November, Montgomery County attended a fair at Discovery Communications. In December, Montgomery County attended a fair at FDA's White Oak Campus and an event at Bethesda Regional Service Center promoting SmartBenefits.

Charles Steigerwald PRTC: PRTC attended a fair at Ft. Belvoir pertaining to BRAC.

Diana Utz, GWRideConnect: GWRideConnect will start a radio and print advertising campaign designed to encourage alternative transportation use. GWRideConnect has also been exploring vanpool self insurance.

Stephen Finafrock, Commuter Connections: Commuter Connections representatives attended a fair at the FDA's new campus in White Oak, Maryland in December.

4. Regional TDM Marketing Update

A direct mail campaign is currently underway. Mailers are being sent to 435,000 residents over a 4 week timeframe. The mailers contain built-in applications so people can apply for CCRS and GRH. The mailer is to be sent out during the holiday season because people take off time during the holidays and have more time to read their mail. While the mailer will be targeted to households within the Metropolitan Statistical Area, extra mailers will be available to outer jurisdictions for a fee. Any outer jurisdictions interested should contact Douglas Franklin at dfranklin@mwkog.org or 202-962-3792.

The Fall newsletter is the most recent newsletter. The newsletter is sent out to employers in the region.

The application brochure for the employer awards to 2008 is now available, and the search for nominations is underway. The application brochure was sent out to level 3 and 4 employers in the ACT! database. The application brochure has also been sent to Employer Service Representatives and boards of trade.

Planning for Bike to Work Day 2008 is underway. A Bike to Work day meeting will take place on January 9, 2008.

Preliminary planning for the Spring advertising campaign has begun. As part of the

campaign, advertising space will be purchased on gas pump covers.

5. TDM Software System Project Update

Patrick Holway of Base Technologies presented several updates to the TDM Software System project. including changes to the reporting functionality to allow for better administrative use. Reports can be exported to Microsoft Excel. All reports that are requested by administrators will be incorporated into the new program. Additionally, Base Technologies has been working with outer jurisdictions to adapt the software to meet the jurisdictions' look and feel requirements as well as implementing access to the ACT! database through the new TDM Software System. Administrators can manage pools online including add/change/remove pools and add members to a pool.

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, then presented a change to the matching and mapping component of the Rideshare software. COG and Base Technologies have decided to utilize Oracle for matching functions and Google Maps for mapping functions. This represents a shift from using the ESRI, ARCVIEW and NAVTEQ systems. Google Maps is now freely available as long as site using Google Maps is free for community use. Also, Google now offers geo-coding services and turn by turn street directions, which had not previously been available in application form. These new functions allow Base Technologies to overlay any customized landmark or other point of interest onto Google Maps. Benefits of using the new Oracle/Google Maps technologies include faster ridematch requests, faster mapping, a more familiar user interface, reduced strain and demand on COG servers, and a reduced cost.

Users will be able to use any of the standard map, satellite, hybrid, and terrain overlays. Additionally, Base Technologies will be able to add any overlays necessary (including park and ride locations, bus stops, commuter rail stations, commuter bus routes, new streets, etc.). Users will be able to toggle different layers on or off.

Google allows up to 50,000 geo-codes per day as well as 500,000 views per day. Google has an automatic address correction which makes it better for geo-coding. Radius searches of a mile will take under 1 second. When new applications come in, they will be automatically geo-coded so people can instantly find ridematches.

A bicycling routing system requested by the TPB's Bicycle and Pedestrian Technical Subcommittee will be integrated into the new TDM software.

Vanpools will be able to search for matches at multiple stops along their route. The searches will only retrieve commuters who are interested in vanpools and not in a vanpool.

Users will have to register to see the mapping functions.

A Memorandum detailing the change to Oracle/Google Maps will be forthcoming from COG/TPB staff.

Testing deadline for the Ridematching function will be extended. Test sites will receive an email with the new testing date deadlines.

6. TDM Software System Testing Results

Testing of the new TDM software is underway. Testing forms received by Commuter Connections staff from the testing sites will be analyzed. Any failures/changes will be forwarded to Base Technologies. To date, testing results have been positive with the TDM software performing as expected.

7. TDM Software System Training

A training session for the new TDM software system is schedule for March 4, 2008 from 9:00AM-5:00PM. Training is for anyone who will be using the system. Email invitations will be sent out.

8. Data Migration Plan

The transfer schedule from the old TDM software to the new TDM software was presented. The 4 TDM Software System Testing sites will be the first to migrate to the new system. Each Monday 4-5 additional sites will be moved over. COG/TPB Staff and base Technologies Staff will perform nightly data dumps from the old CCRS System into the new web-based TDM Software System in order to guarantee that Commuter Connections clients will have access to all records. A detailed plan will be forthcoming from COG/TPB staff and Base Technologies staff as the migration nears. The current CCRS will remain live until June 30, 2008. On or about July 1, 2008 Commuter Connections intends to launch the public site to allow commuters to directly access their own records.

9. Client Site Status/Roundtable

Users will be notified ahead of time about the new TDM Software System and to encourage them to open up an account on the new system. By default, commuters' contact information will not be available for other commuters to view. A generic way to contact commuters will be created.

A marketing campaign will be undertaken in the future promoting the new system.

A Commuter Connections regional Vanpool survey will be underway in January-February 2008. The goal of the survey is to learn about the state of vanpooling in the region from vanpool operators.

10. Other Business/Upcoming Agenda Items

Chuck Steigerwald has a new position with PRTC as a Transit Planner and will no longer be the Rideshare Specialist for PRTC.

No issues were requested for the next meeting's agenda. Any future agenda items should be sent to the attention of Stephen Finafrock at sfinafrock@mwkog.org.

The next meeting of the Commuter Operations Center Subcommittee will be held on March 18, 2008 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

The Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee will meet on the following dates in 2008:

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|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Tuesday, March 18, 2008 | 10:00 am – 12:00 pm |
| Tuesday, June 17, 2008 | 10:00 am – 12:00 pm |
| Tuesday, September 16, 2008 | 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm* |
| Tuesday, December 16, 2008 | 10:00 am – 12:00 pm |

***note change in time**