



COMMUTER CONNECTIONS RIDEMATCHING COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

**Tuesday, December 19, 2017
10:00 p.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

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

**Chairperson: Alan Doran, Harford Commute Smart
Vice Chairperson: Thomas Hamed, Alexandria City**

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

1. Introductions

The meeting was brought to order by Chairperson Alan Doran of Harford Commute Smart. Attendees were asked to introduce themselves and sign the attendance sheet.

2. Minutes of the September 19, 2017 Meeting

Approval was sought for the September 19, 2017 Ridematching Committee Meeting minutes. An initial motion to approve the minutes was made by George Clark of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland (TCCSM) and seconded by Nancy Huggins of the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). The Committee approved the minutes as written.

3. Upcoming Fairs and Promotions

Baltimore City Department of Transportation

- Bike to Work Day planning
- Updating Carpool applications
- Planning for future events to attend

City of Alexandria

- Telework Week
- City of Alexandria Earth Day – April 28th
- Bike to Work Day
- Bike to School Day

PRTC

- Vanpool Workshop at PRTC
- TMP Fall Summit – Alexandria
- PW Chamber Economic Dev. Series luncheon
- Mark Center Transportation Fair
- Stratford University Employer Event
- FEC Transit Fair
- Benefits fair at Micron

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

Transit Services of Frederick County

- Hosted "Try Transit" week on November 6th – 11th. Incorporated driver and customer appreciation days with a scavenger hunt and free rides
- Outreach during January and February to senior groups on public transit and paratransit options
- Eco Logix (contractor) working on creating a short telework video to start conversations with employers
- Working with local schools and county organizations to create marketing materials on how to use alternative transit options

Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland

- Mark Center Transportation Fair
- Charles County Transportation Summit
- FEC Commuter Fair
- TAM Legislative Reception
- Rideshare ads currently running

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

- Data "Live More, Commute Less" block party
- Riverdale Park event in PG County
- Transit Fair at Ronald Reagan National Airport
- Mark Center Transportation Fair

North Bethesda Transportation Center

- Macy's at Westfield Montgomery
- Abt. Association Relocation Commute Fair
- Barwood CID
- Finishing up survey distribution
- Wrapping up the County's preparation for upcoming annual reports for North Bethesda companies
- Working on Winter CIDs
- Vanpool meeting with Enterprise at Marriott

Anne Arundel County

- Spanish Health Festival
- Homeless Resource Day
- Office of Transportation open house
- Geofenced ads
- GRH advertisements
- TAM Legislation Reception
- Transportation Fair at National Business Park
- Ft. Meade transportation page will be updated to bring users directly to Commuter Connections

Arlington Transportation Partners

- Vanpool tabling event at the Nature Conservancy

4. TDM System Update

Dr. Lei Zhang of the University of Maryland presented his team's progress on their incenTrip mobile application. Dr. Zhang began his presentation by briefing the Committee on how the app uses real-time traffic models and predictions to calculate optimal travel times and modes while offering personalized incentives to its users. The purpose of this app is to "nudge" each user into making positive changes in their commute.

Dr. Zhang then began to review comments and suggestions he had received from his presentation during the September 19th Ridematching Committee meeting. The suggestions included:

- Integration with CarpoolNow, Uber Pool, Uber Commute and other ridesharing/ride-hailing service providers
- Integration with emerging modes and mobility services such as dockless bike sharing
- Ability to incentivize drivers to form carpools for complimentary use of Express Lanes
- Ability to implement incentives for HOT lanes
- Additional incentives for carpool and P&R

- Privacy and personal information

George Clark, of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, asked Dr. Zhang if they had taken into consideration removing the question regarding the user's income. Dr. Zhang reiterated that they take user's privacy and personal information seriously and have made that question optional for the user. Dr. Zhang then began to address the remainder of the Committee's suggestions through a live demonstration of the technology. First, Dr. Zhang demonstrated the integration with Commuter Connections and Uber Pool and noted that other service providers and modes are feasible and may be forthcoming.

If a user chooses to carpool, they are presented with an option for Commuter Connections and are shown how many matches they will receive on their matchlist. To access that information, a user would still have to sign into their Commuter Connections account to run a matchlist. Shown below Commuter Connections is also the option for Uber Pool. Dr. Zhang and his team hope to improve this feature by adding the option for users to pay for their Uber trip within the app.

Dr. Zhang then began to demonstrate how the app's real-time travel models and prediction can be used to delay a trip based on best travel time, or, the user can choose a different mode or multi-modal option. Travel times are predicted across all modes every few minutes. This ensures that the user will always be receiving up-to-date information.

Each trip will result in the user receiving "Eco Points," which accumulate and equate to a graduated series of "saver" levels; i.e. "Planet Saver." The points earned can be spent on rewards. Travel options are presented to the user based on which option they are most likely to accept, and not on the highest number of Eco Points earned. Eco Points are based off optimal emission reduction and energy consumption.

Dr. Zhang then mentioned that it is also feasible to use the incentive to encourage commuters to carpool along the Express and HOT lanes.

Dr. Zhang then reiterated that they want to embrace all users regardless of the personal information they provide. If they refuse to provide certain personal information they can still participate in incenTrip.

Lastly, Dr. Zhang presented the app's tier system, which is based on the Eco Points a user has accumulated. The Eco Driving feature was also demonstrated. This feature grades the user's driving habits and can offer suggestions to help them drive more efficiently.

Dr. Zhang announced an open house around February 2018 to let the public and interested transportation agencies learn more about incen trip. Dr. Zhang added that currently there are not rewards being offered through incenTrip, but the technology is ready. He reiterated that the University of Maryland is fully committed to the program.

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, thanked the presenters, and pointed out the interest in this pilot program for Commuter Connections as a natural evolution of the programs offered by Commuter Connections.

Finally, Thomas Hamed, City of Alexandria, asked about the possibility for other forms of rewards such as coupons for participating restaurants and retailers. Enterprise Holdings expressed interest in getting involved.

5. TDM Technology Update

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, began his presentation by giving a brief overview of how Commuter Connections has evolved through the years, leading to the creation of the CarpoolNow app and Flextime Incentive program. Mr. Finafrock also mentioned the CarpoolNow driver incentive which is now available to drivers in Howard County, MD.

Mr. Finafrock then began to outline the standard registration process and the required information for users to participate in any of the Commuter Connections programs. This led to a demonstration of how an existing user would opt into the Flextime Rewards program. A user would first sign into their account, select the Flextime Rewards option and click "Register for Flextime Rewards." The registration form was then presented.

George Clark, TCCSM, asked if supervisor information was a requirement for this program. COG staff confirmed that supervisor information is a requirement of the application.

Mr. Finafrock then explained how a registered user will receive an email notification if significant traffic is detected along their corridor. COG staff is working on improving this technology to include text message notifications to its users. Once a user has received a notification, they must log their trip using Commuter Connections' commute log calendar.

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, added that Commuter Connections will be making a formal announcement launching the pilot program. Mr. Ramfos also added that the Flextime Incentive program has been added into the Commuter

Connections Work Program for next year and that COG/TPB staff is looking to work with employers in the region for program participation.

Mr. Finafrock then transitioned into his presentation on the new driver incentive for CarpoolNow users. Qualifying participants must have a trip that originates, ends in or passes through Howard County, MD. Mr. Finafrock explained how the user interface will be familiar to existing Commuter Connections members and how the application works the same regardless of their enrollment in other incentive programs.

To enroll, users must click on the menu in the top, right-hand corner of the app. From there, the user can select the driver incentive to enroll and agree to the terms and conditions. The reward is \$10 per trip. Qualifying trips must take place during the morning or evening peak periods.

6. Bike Routing Module & GIS Update

Ross Edgar, COG/TPB staff, updated the Committee on the status of the bike-routing module. Mr. Edgar began by performing a live demonstration of the bike-routing application. As of now, the routing only includes trails inside the Beltway and will be expanded throughout the region during FY2018. Mr. Edgar then explained the map's legend and how the user can control what is showing on the app. A prominent feature of this bike-routing map will be the user's ability to "point and shoot" to select points on the map and have ArcGIS route the optimal bike path. Users may also type- in the directions for their route. Mr. Edgar then began his first example by selecting a point in Alexandria and routing a trail into Washington, DC. A user can then select multiple points to draw the desired route. The module will create step-by-step directions for the user to click on. Clicking on a step will highlight the specific section of the route it refers to.

Those in attendance were reminded a bike routing system was part of the TDM System previously. The new map in progress is introducing new technology and will be a vast improvement compared to the old bike-routing map. Mr. Edgar considered this map a great tool for bicyclists. This map is expected to be ready for the public in advance of Bike to Work Day in 2018.

Mr. Edgar then showed how the bike-routing system can seamlessly take users off a bike path and onto the street network. Finally, he announced that the new Park and Ride Map will be ready very soon.

7. Client Site Status | Roundtable

No discussion was had regarding this topic.

8. Quarterly Progress Report

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, reviewed the FY18 1st quarter CCWP progress report. Mr. Finafrock encouraged those in attendance to review the report and report any comments or suggestions they may have.

9. Other Business | Upcoming Agenda Items

Elizabeth Denton, Arlington Transportation Partners, briefed the committee on the ACT Impact Leadership Program. This program will have 18 participants match with a mentor to help further their professional development.

The next meeting of the Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee will be held on March 20, 2018 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Reasonable accommodations are provided upon request, including alternative formats of meeting materials. Visit www.mwcog.org/accomodations or call (202) 962-3213 (TDD)