

**MEETING NOTES
COMMUTER CONNECTIONS
RIDEMATCHING COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday, June 21, 2011
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

**Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.
COG Board Room
Chairperson: Dawn Bodden, Fairfax County DOT
Vice Chairperson: Lillian Bunton, BMC**

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

1. Introductions

Dawn Bodden, FCDOT, called the meeting to order by introducing herself. Attendees were then asked to introduce themselves and sign the attendance sheet.

2. Introduction of New Rideshare Coordinators

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, introduced new Rideshare Coordinators. The introductions included: George Clark – Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, Sherri Dawson – The BWI Business Partnership, Inc. and Corey Smith – Food and Drug Administration.

3. Minutes of the March 15, 2011 Meeting

Approval was sought for the March 15, 2011 Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee meeting minutes. The meeting minutes were approved as written.

4. Upcoming Fairs and Promotions

The following Rideshare Coordinators shared details of recent or upcoming Transportation fairs or promotions that they have attended:

Lillian Bunton (BMC): June 25, Roots Fest. Upcoming GRH promo for Baltimore region.

Dawn Bodden (Fairfax County): BRAC workshop at Fort Belvoir.

Dotty Dalphon (TransIT Services of Frederick Co.): Ft. Detrick's Safety Awareness event. Habitat's Restore Earth Day event. Free Ride event on TransIT Connector & Shuttle Routes for Dump the Pump Day (41% increase in ridership). More Parks/Less Parking event at Wells Fargo.

Stephen Finafrock (COG/TPB): HHS Earth Day Events; April 12 at the Program Support Center in Rockville, MD, April 14 at the HHS Headquarters – Hubert H. Humphrey building in Washington, DC, April 19, USPTO Green Fair at Madison Building Auditorium in Alexandria, VA, April 28 at the Food and Drug Administration in Laurel, MD, April 26 at the US Geological Survey (USGS) in Reston, VA. April 21, GAO Earth Day in Washington, DC. April 22, American Red Cross Earth Day Fair at American Red Cross Campus in Washington, DC. May 16, Career & Transportation Fair at the Marriott Hotel in Crystal City, VA. May 19, Department of Defense Transportation Fair

at Pentagon. May 20, 2011 was Bike to Work Day and COG/TPB staff represented Commuter Connections at the NoMa BID at First & M Sts, NE in Washington, DC.

Holly Morello (PRTC): Early/Mid fall, BRAC related events for: Ft. Belvoir, Mark Center and Quantico. Late summer/Early fall, 25th Anniversary Related Activities.

George Clark (Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland): June 18, Charles County Green Expo at North Point High School.

Roberta Jackson (Howard County): June 30, US Census Bureau Transportation Fair. August 8-13, Howard County Fair. Sept. 20-22, Transportation Association of Maryland Conference. Oct. 4, GRH Event.

Darlene Nader (North Bethesda TMD): Earth Day events; USNRC, JBG and Transwestern. Outdoor BBQ at Democracy Plaza with Cassidy Pinkard, USEC, Rubino & McGeehin, Lockheed Martin, HMS HOST, Sybase, New York Life, Winchester Homes & HOST Hotels. Kaiser Permanente. Johnson, Bassin & Shaw. Lobby presentation at 11200 Rockville Pike for Snyder Cohn, CAPREIT, McShea. June, Suburban Outpatient Employees. July 1, Whole Foods. Sept, Working on Walk N Ride campaign to coincide with Car Free Day.

5. Employer Record Cleanup Update

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, indicated that a correction to the TDM source code has resolved the problems with the system incorrectly geocoding addresses. Stephen Finafrock requested Fairfax County staff and Montgomery County staff to test and merge Employer records. The instructions for merging are listed on the Commuter Connections website and included in the training manual. Darlene Nader, North Bethesda TMD, asked if the Employer Admin tool will be provided to all jurisdictions. Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, responded that there is no current schedule for additional jurisdiction testing but it may be released to other Commuter Connections members as the need arises.

6. SchoolPool Application Update

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, displayed the SchoolPool matching system and indicated that several minor updates would be rolled out this summer. The SchoolPool flyer and SchoolPool application form was distributed to all meeting members. The SchoolPool introductory flyer and SchoolPool – School Application form may be downloaded at:

http://www.mwcog.org/committee/committee/documents.asp?COMMITTEE_ID=120

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, requested that any Rideshare Committee member who would like to participate in the SchoolPool program, contact himself and/or Stephen Finafrock for assistance with gaining school participation. COG/TPB staff can meet with school principals and staff if required. Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, indicated that each school has to approve of their participation with the SchoolPool program. Any SchoolPool application submitted by a committee member that does not have school approval will not be accepted. COG/TPB staff will follow up with schools which have submitted a completed SchoolPool application. The SchoolPool applications and flyers are being made available to all Ridematching Coordinators. The Ridematching Coordinators may reach out to the schools in their jurisdiction or work with their Safe Routes to School Coordinators (if available).

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, demonstrated the search process in SchoolPool matching software and reiterated that the system provides Parent to Parent matches. Lisa DuMetz, DRPT

staff, asked who will administer each schools account. Stephen Finafrock stated that COG/TPB staff will be responsible for the overall administration of the schools to the SchoolPool database but schools will have the option to administer their account/s, if they choose to do so. The schools administrator for the SchoolPool program can be identified on the SchoolPool application when they register.

Lillian Bunton, BMC, asked where softcopy versions of the SchoolPool flyer and applications could be obtained. Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, indicated that the forms will be posted with the meeting documents and will be available for download by all committee members. Darlene Nader, North Bethesda TMD, asked which organization is responsible for addressing questions or concerns from parents. Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, stated that questions should be answered by the jurisdictions to the best of their ability but involve COG if further assistance is required. Dawn Bodden, Fairfax County, had questions in regards to the distance of the matches. Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, displayed the search process, showing that a radius around the origin can be adjusted.

Roberta Jackson, Howard County, requested that a FAQ sections be displayed on the SchoolPool site. Nick Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, indicated that no significant changes will be made to the site and because of this; a FAQ section will not be added. Darlene Nader, North Bethesda TMD, mentioned how helpful it would be to receive a list of the most common questions that committee members receive from schools and parents. Stephen Finafrock requested that all Rideshare Coordinators submit questions for consideration in the FAQ document to: commutersupport@mwkog.org. Additionally, COG/TPB staff will review other common questions or FAQ's from other organizations (Denver, San Francisco) that have Rideshare programs for school systems and determine the best way, if at all, of providing a FAQ for the SchoolPool program.

7. PRTC BRAC Resource Guide

Michael Weinberger, PRTC, presented and distributed the Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) - Resource Guide. PRTC piloted the Resource Guild to compile the various resources for BRAC. The guides' primary focus is on Northern Virginia but additional information for locations like Ft. Meade and Ft. Detrick are being worked on.

Dawn Bodden, Fairfax County, asked which organization the guide is marketed towards. Michael Weinberger, PRTC, stated that the guide is created for customer service representatives and Rideshare coordinators.

8. TDM System Suggested Improvements Review

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, has compiled a list of suggested improvements/issues, made by DRPT and Navy Medical Center, and addressed the resolution of each issue.

Issue #1: It has been requested to have user email addresses listed within the reports provided by COG. Resolution: COG policy does not allow or provide for sharing of a "wholesale" list of user email addresses. Because of this, user email addresses will not be included in reports. Individual email addresses can be obtained in the TDM system by Rideshare staff when email addresses are required. As an alternative long term resolution, a new Communication Module is being designed for the TDM System that provides the functionality of emailing a user from within the TDM system. This would provide the functionality as requested but retain the email addresses within TDM system. Policies and procedures are still being discussed and will be reviewed this Fiscal Year.

Issue #2: DRPT staff requested the implementation of an interactive Vanpool Driver Report to replace the current version that is printed at COG and mailed to Rideshare Coordinators. Resolution: Ross Edgar, COG/TPB staff, implemented an interactive Vanpool Driver Report for all Rideshare Coordinators. Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, demonstrated the newly added, interactive "Vanpool Driver Report" from TDM Reports. Adding Alternate Start addresses to this report will be considered.

Issue #3: Requests have been made for customized Match Letters so they include logos and contact information related to the user's specific jurisdiction. Resolution: COG/TPB staff is considering this change for next fiscal year. It's important to note that specific standards will have to be upheld for a change of this nature. Dawn Bodden, Fairfax County, asked if we could add a Notes feature to the Ridematch Letter. Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, indicated that the Special Instructions box would display notes on the Ridematch Report.

Issue #4: It was recommended that COG create a button or warning to let a user know when their application during registration has not been completed. Resolution: The "Submit" button located on the registration page was changed to read "Next Page." As a possible alternate solution, Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, recommended having a pop-up window indicate when information is missing or when a program has not been selected. The pop-up would occur as a user attempts to exit the site. Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, reiterated the fact that joining a program and submitting all the information listed on the application is not required to create a Commuter Connections account.

Issue #5: It was recommended that additional contact information for new users be required during registration. Resolution: For the Rideshare program, a phone number is required. COG is considering having a home and work phone number but this currently is not mandatory.

Issue #6: The homepage has too much text and new users find it difficult to register. Resolution: The login page may become integrated on www.commuterconnections.org depending on the resolution of technical issues involving implementation of FLASH on secure web pages.

Issue #7: It was mentioned that the website is unappealing. Resolution: No significant changes are planned but changes to font and color are being considered.

Issue #8: A suggestion was raised regarding employer specific look and feel as well as employer specific matching in the TDM System. Resolution: Ridematching can be done within 1/10 of a mile of a destination address. Lisa DuMetz, DRPT staff, asked if Facebook, Twitter or other social media will be integrated into the Commuter Connections site. Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, indicated that there is a security risk with such integration and COG has no plans of social media implementation through the Commuter Connections site. Mr. Finafrock cited the constantly changing Facebook security settings policy as well as sharing of user data among applications as being the primary concerns against this integration. Commuter Connections does have Facebook and Twitter accounts with regular updates. Additionally, a route/commute based search will be implemented as part the Commuter Connections Facebook page.

9. Client Site Status/Roundtable

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, indicated that 'Pool Rewards would be expanding the program eligibility to include vanpools. Additional details concerning the 'Pool Rewards program and the addition of vanpools will be provided as information becomes available.

Tim Harrison, BWI Business Partnership, asked if Central Maryland Regional Transit could attend the next Ridematch Committee meeting. Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, indicated that the Ridematching Committee meeting agenda's are primarily for the Ridematching focused initiatives or program services. However, consideration will be put into inviting Central Maryland Regional Transit to present information during the next Committee meeting.

10. Other Business/Upcoming Agenda Items

The next meeting of the Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee will be held on September 20th, 2011 from 2:00pm to 4:00pm.