

# METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



## COMMUTER CONNECTIONS RIDEMATCHING COMMITTEE

### MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

777 North Capitol Street, N.E.

Training Center A & B, First Floor

Chairperson: Chris Kingery, Loudoun County

Vice Chairperson: Kevin Thornton, Prince George's County

COG Staff Contact: Nicholas Ramfos, (202) 962-3313

Items addressed and issues discussed were as follows:

1. **Introductions** (see attached attendance sheet).
2. **Minutes of the June 20, 2006 Meeting**

The minutes of the June 20, 2006 meeting were approved as written.

3. **Change of Chairpersons**

Mr. Ramfos introduced the new Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

Christine Kingery, Loudon County will replace Darlene Nader, North Bethesda Transportation as new Chairperson.

Kevin Thornton, Prince Georges County will replace Christine Kingery, Loudoun County as the new Vice Chairperson.

Ms. Nader was presented an Award of Service plaque as recognition of her efforts as the Chairperson for Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee. Ms. Nader encouraged committee members to get involved and to actively participate in the new TDM Software Project by providing feedback throughout the course of its development.

#### **4. Upcoming Fairs and Promotions**

Ms. Nader stated that North Bethesda Transportation staff participated in series of events with employers to include Boston Properties (three buildings) and the CheeseCake Factory. Staff will also participate in activities and promotions in September 2006 at Coventry Heath Care, Host Hotels, US Pharmacopoeia (three locations), Marriott International and North Bethesda Conference Center.

Ms. Richards stated that Harford County staff asked the Governor, Harford County Executive and Harford County Council to proclaim September as "It's Cool to Pool" month to promote ridesharing and transit services for the community. Harford County Government received a proclamation before the Harford County Council and the promotion aired on the Harford County Television Station.

Ms. Dalphon stated that Frederick County staff will participate in the Great Frederick Fair on September 22<sup>nd</sup> to reach Frederick County commuters. Free rides will be given as part of their campaign. Frederick County is also participating at the Latino Festival held at Fredrick Community College on September 23<sup>rd</sup> and Business Appreciation Week on September 29<sup>th</sup>. Upcoming events for the month of October 2006 includes the Elder Expo On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, Communities in Motion day on October 5<sup>th</sup> and In the Street on October 7 To focus on the community.

Ms. Norfleet stated that the City of Alexandria staff will participate at a Transportation Fair located at the Potomac Yard on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Alexandria staff is also participating at two events on October 26<sup>th</sup>; the Northern Virginia Community College Fall Festival and a Transportation Fair located at Trammell Crow at the King Street Station.

Ms. Briscoe stated that Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland staff participated in a Vanpool Formation Meeting on August 4<sup>th</sup> to include VSPI, Smart Ride, Inc and the King Shuttle which focused on commuters interested in vanpooling services. Staff also attended a press conference held by the Governor of Maryland, the Secretary of Transportation and local elected officials at the Mattawoman Beantown Road Park-and-Ride. It was announced that there would be additional commuter bus services to the Southern Maryland Region in September 2006.

Congressman Steny Hoyer, Senator Roy Dyson, Delegate John Bohanan and other local elected officials announced new transportation initiatives in Southern Maryland including drive alone alternatives such as carpooling, vanpooling, commuter bus and expansion to existing park and ride lots and for the area. Tri County Council staff will participate in meeting on September 27<sup>th</sup> at the Waldorf Jaycees for Commuters to meet with the commuter bus provider and the MTA on service enhancements and other issues.

Ms. Robertson stated that Baltimore City staff will attend a meeting with the Safety Council and vendors in October to focus on new bus services routes and promote safety to children traveling to school.

Mr. Daniels stated that Fairfax County staff will participate in transportation fairs being held at Trammell Crow at the King Street Station on September 26<sup>th</sup> and the County Fall for Fairfax on September 30<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Affinito stated that six (6) new buses were added for routes to Dulles South. Loudoun County staff attended the South Riding Business and Community Fair on September 9<sup>th</sup> to hand out information on new bus routes. Services have been expanded from Leesburg to West Falls Church, Howard Hughes Medical Center, Lansdowne and George Washington Campus along Route 7. In "Remembrance of 911" staff honored the victims of Sep 11, 2001 with by hanging flags and photos inside the buses traveling to the Pentagon. Staff will also participate in AOL Transportation Fair on September 20-21, Chamber of Commerce Job Fair on September 25<sup>th</sup> and the Loudoun Lunch and Learn With Employers on October 24<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. McColl mentioned that ARTMA staff will attend a seminar with Sam Minetti (MDOT) on September 21<sup>st</sup> which focuses on planning promotion for development of Annapolis Transit. ARTMA staff lobbied for funding and received a funding pledge for Fiscal Year 2007 to develop transit in Anne Arundel County.

Ms. Hinton stated that COG/TPB staff will participate in Transportation Fair located at Trammell Crow at the King Street Station in Old Town Alexandria on September 26<sup>th</sup>. Staff also participated in Transportation Fair at Discovery Communications in Silver Spring on August 17<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Hall stated that Montgomery County staff will attend a Super Fare Share which includes diversity day planning.

Mr. Thornton announced reallocation of resources within Prince George's County, *TheBus*, to address overcrowded buses on several key routes.

Mr. Steigerwald announced Prince William County's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on September 20<sup>th</sup>. PRTC will run a \$.20 Ride a Bus Day Promotion for commuters on September 20<sup>th</sup>. Staff will also participate in a book Drive for Kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Students.

## **5. New Regional TDM Software System Update**

Mr. Ramfos discussed the status and the next steps for the TDM Web-Based Software System Project. Mr. Ramfos mentioned that the Procurement Process was underway and that there was no announcement of the selected vendor at the present time. Mr. Ramfos stated that the RFP and vendor selection is under review due to protests from vendors that submitted proposals and were not awarded the contract.

Ms. Nader encouraged Committee members to continue to contact COG staff regarding changes or improvements needed for the software system.

Mr. Ramfos stated that future and more frequent meetings for the Committee can be arranged to help keep committee members abreast of the software system project.

## **6. Transit and Street Center Line Updates**

Mr. Edgar reported provided an update on the status of transit and street centerline files. Mr. Edgar distributed a color coded handout describing the counties whose data was received and affirmed that some changes had occurred since the last meeting. The TIGER lines dramatically improved. The new counties were added for more accurate Geocoding. Eighty-seven (87) separate entities are being treated when ERSI updates between two versions. Mr. Edgar explained that he is in the process of contacting additional counties for their data.

Mr. Edgar reported on improvement of neighboring county streets for more accurate matching.

Mr. Steigerwald inquired about the timeline and incremental updates.

Mr. Edgar stated that the timeline is approximately 2 weeks but it would take at least one month to download all the data collected from other counties.

Mr. Arabia suggested that the incremental approach would be the appropriate way to complete the project and deliver what is available at this time rather than waiting for additional information.

Mr. Ramfos stated that staff would coordinate with MWCOG GIS staff to receive updates and proceed with the latest information from local counties to include the latest development instead of TIGER line files.

Committee members of various jurisdictions volunteered to assist Mr. Edgar in obtaining GIS Data information by contacting their Planning Commission Office and/or providing Mr. Edgar with a point of contact.

Mr. Ramfos recommended purchasing data for BMC but it would subject to a fee for the data to get uploaded.

## **7. Landmark & Building Look-up Table**

Ms. Hinton stated that updates to both the Landmark and Building Code Tables were underway. Feedback is highly encouraged to update tables, building codes and landmarks and include the most current information for migration to the new TDM Software System.

Mr. Ramfos stated that the last update for the tables was about ten years ago and that

many landmarks may no longer exist in surrounding areas.

Mr. Steigerwald stated his concern with removing old landmarks and how it would affect current commuter records. He suggested creating a second page for older landmarks instead of deleting landmarks.

Mr. Ramfos stated that staff would run a report for all landmarks that no longer exist to identify the commuters using the landmark for their origination and destination. Local clients may send information to COG staff to update or re-code commuter records.

Ms. Hinton stated that the new deadline to submit changes, edits, additions and deletions to both the Landmark and Building Code Tables is Friday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## **8. Extranet**

Mr. Edgar provided presentation for an update on the status of the Extranet. Mr. Edgar demonstrated of the use of the portal site for accessing information relevant to Commuter Connections and local rideshare programs. The Extranet is created to promote interactions between local jurisdictions, post current information and upcoming meetings and events.

Mr. Ramfos mentioned that the Extranet is another option to provide updates on the status of the New Regional TDM Software Project. Some local client members are testing the Extranet for minor enhancements.

Mr. Edgar provided examples of how to create topics and post events in a calendar. Passwords and logins will be distributed among jurisdictions and it is expected that the service go-live in the next 30 to 60 days.

Ms. Norfleet suggested that a link to other rideshare programs and the name of the person posting the message and calendar of events is added.

Mr. Edgar followed up to mention the possibility of banner ads or a hyperlink to each topic.

## **9. Electronic Purge Letters Update**

Ms. Hinton provided an update on the status of the Electronic Purge Letters process. The electronic purge letter process was implemented successfully. Approximately 500 commuters were contacted via electronic purge notices. For all undeliverable email messages staff flagged each commuter record with 'I' for Invalid email address.

Ms. Hinton mentioned that paper purge notices were generated for all commuter records without email address and invalid email address. Responses received by commuters via

email are forwarded to local clients to complete follow up and updates to commuter records.

Ms. Briscoe stated concern that those undeliverable messages were treated as spam and sent to different folders for commuters TRI County Council of Southern Maryland.

Ms. Norfleet and Mr. Steigerwald proposed enhancements to the electronic purge letter.

1. Commuter Preferences - Please select one: Ride, Drive, Both
2. Home address
3. Hours: 05:30AM 02:30 PM

Mr. Edgar stated that changes could be made for the next month but could be limited due to the amount of space allotted.

Mr. Ramfos asked members to forward all requests for edits to the purge letters to Towanna Hinton at [thinton@mwkog.org](mailto:thinton@mwkog.org).

Members requested accelerated schedule for Commuters to be Purged List in order to become more current. COG staff will print the next two months (March/April 2006) starting September 30<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Ramfos mentioned the importance of completing follow-ups prior to actual commuters being deleted from CCRS Database for March and April 2006.

Ms. Nader mentioned that she would follow up with Montgomery County about the accelerated schedule.

Mr. Daniels mentioned the current re-registration process and deficiencies from the web site. The concern is how to manage duplicates created by on-line registration.

Ms. Hinton discussed the new Re-Registration messages received in the in-box and Duplicate Reports used to eliminate duplicate records that have made it into the system.

Mr. Ramfos mentioned that staff would conduct clean up of the database in the future as a means of deleting duplicates that were created in the CCRS Database.

## **10. Commuter Connections Technical Support**

Ms. Hinton discussed the Commuter Connections Technical Assistance Policy. There currently is a Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) for each local client in their file. A copy of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) was presented to the states for review. Additional information was requested to in addition to the responsibilities for COG and local clients sites presented in the current MOU.

Mr. Ramfos mentioned that everyone should review the MOU for their local office. Each office should send an email to Towanna Hinton at [thinton@mwkog.org](mailto:thinton@mwkog.org) to request a copy

of the MOU. A revised copy will be distributed at the meeting in December. If there is a consensus to move forward then a new MOU will be reissued for all local clients to sign.

Mr. Ramfos followed up that once the document is signed, it will serve as a tool to clarify and provide better understanding of expectations and responsibilities for both COG staff and local client sites for technical assistance.

#### **11. Client Site Status/Roundtable**

Ms. Hinton distributed the June Progress Reports to include all monthly tables for review.

Mr. Ramfos stated that there will be changes to the Monthly Reports. Data will be reported on a Quarterly basis for Fiscal Year 2007.

1. Tables 2A and 4A (Quarterly).
2. Tables 6A and 6B (Annually).
3. Table 1(Annually).

#### **12. Other Business/Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

Mr. Ramfos encouraged committee members to request and send agenda items for the upcoming meeting.

**The next meeting of the Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee will be held on Tuesday, December 19, 2006.**