

**MEETING NOTES
COMMUTER CONNECTIONS
RIDEMATCHING COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday, March 15, 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
(Note: If you cannot attend this meeting, please call 202/962-3327.)

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. Minutes of the December 21, 2010 Meeting

Approval was sought for the June 15, 2010 Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee meeting minutes. The meeting minutes were approved as written.

3. Introduction of Rideshare Delaware

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, introduced the Rideshare Delaware staff, which included Sean Saffle (Project Manager) and Jaime Gradoville (Outreach Manager). Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, displayed the customized Rideshare Delaware site and read through the "New Rideshare Delaware Interactive System" post from March 7th off of the Rideshare Delaware site: <http://www.ridesharedelaware.org/>

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, indicated a process change for all TDM account activations. If a user account is created by a TDM administrator, an automated email (when applicable) will be sent to the user requesting the creation of a password by the user. Mr. Finafrock then demonstrated the password creation process from the commuter's perspective. In addition, a Matchletter was produced to display the Rideshare Delaware look and feel. It was noted that Rideshare Delaware has a Guaranteed Ride Home program that is maintained by the staff and not through MWCOG.

The Special Events page was displayed by Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, and there was a request by Sean Saffle, Rideshare Delaware, to change several of the default images to images that relate to Delaware events (ex. Lincoln Financial Field – Philadelphia Eagles stadium).

Steve Overbay, Harford County Commuter Assistance, asked if Rideshare Delaware Ridematching includes Aberdeen Proving Grounds (APG). Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, responded by indicating that Rideshare Delaware includes all counties and regions that currently reside in the TDM system. He indicated that there may be some overlap of

commuters in border jurisdictions such as Harford and Cecil counties if commuters apply through either the Commuter Connections or Rideshare Delaware web sites. If a commuter is determined to be better served by Commuter Connections or Rideshare Delaware, the account can be moved by COG/TPB staff. Typically an account will remain in the program through which they applied unless they would be prevented from joining a GRH program.

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): Bike to Work – Baltimore Region & Towson, White Marsh & Westminster. Earth Day/Army, Earth Day/Howard Co. Green Fest, Towsontown Fest, Sustainable Living Fair, Commuter information tables at Towson, Radio/Print and Bike Trail tune-ups.

Dotty Dalphon (TransIT Services of Frederick Co.): Transition Fair at Frederick Community College, Ft. Detrick Earth Day Celebration and Health & Wellness Expo at Frederick Senior Center.

Stephen Finafrock (COG/TPB): March 23, NOAA Seas & Skies Annual Career Information & Resource Fair; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS): April 12, Program Support Center, Rockville, MD and April 14, HHS Headquarters, Hubert H. Humphrey Building, Washington, DC. April 19, USPTO (Patent and Trademark), Dulany Street, Alexandria, VA; April 20, 1828 L St NW, Washington DC; April 21, 1707 L St NW, Washington, DC; April 21, GAO (US Government Accountability Office), 441 G Street NW Washington, DC; April 22, American Red Cross, 2025 E St NW, Washington, DC; April 26, US Geological Survey, Geological Survey Drive, Reston, VA; April 28, Food and Drug Administration, Silver Spring, MD; and May 19, DoD Pentagon Transportation Fair, Pentagon Center Courtyard.

Holly Morello (PRTC): April 7, TYTRAN Keep Tyson's Moving Event at Capital One, 1680 Capital One Drive, McLean, VA 22102 and April 20, Freddie Mac Earth Day Event at Freddie Mac.

Roberta Jackson (Howard County, MD): April 2, GreenFest at Howard Community College; April 7, CMRT Transportation Summit at BWI Holiday Inn; May, Columbia Association Bike About/Save the Planet Day and May 20, Bike to Work Day at Columbia Mall. Ms. Jackson stated that Howard County Government was recently designated as one of the best places for commuters for 2011.

Darlene Nader (North Bethesda TMD): May 20, Bike to Work day at White Flint mall. NIH – Numerous promotions with NIH main campus. Ms. Nader stated that NBTMD staff was currently working on 32-02 annual reports for 120+ companies. She stated TMAG was holding coordination meetings with developers in White Flint. Earth Day: USNRC, JGB and Transwestern.

Timothy Harrison (BWI BP): MeadeRide the rideshare transportation program for Fort Meade is in full swing, with transportation services setup and moving with the assistance from Central Maryland Regional Transit (CMRT). As of January 1, 2011 1100 DISA employees have relocated to the Ft. Meade area, 26% have signed up and using some form of rideshare method. March 15, BBP attended an invitation Rideshare event for the employees of NSA. December, the Work

on Wheels service broke its record for ridership, breaking the record of highest numbers of riders since it began. March 27, the Sunrise Shuttle will begin service for BWI employees that live in Baltimore City and are scheduled for work between the hours of 4:00am – 9:30pm when public transportation is not available. This service was funded by MTA through a JARC grant.

5. Employer Record Cleanup Update

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, indicated the revised Commuter Connections Web-Based TDM System Administration Manual, with corrections to a typo on the cover, would not be re-distributed. Printed copies of the manual will be provided upon request.

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB, displayed the Employer Admin tool and provided instructions on its use. These instructions included: merging bad employer records into good employer records, the recommended employer search process - using Street Address as the primary search option, and lastly, recommend that symbols such as "&" or "/" not be used as part of the Street Name entry. The symbol entries, such as "&" as part of the street name cause inaccuracies with the search. Replacing "&" with "and" resolves the inaccuracies. Additionally, symbols like "&" can be used for the Employer Name. Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, requested the Employer Admin users provide feedback concerning their use of the tool.

Several options were discussed to address the prevention of bad employer records from being created. An option that will be researched is a "Google" type of search where results are displayed as a user is typing.

6. School Pool Application Update

Stephen Finafrock and Paul Straw, COG/TPB staff, passed out a sample School Pool flyer. Mr. Finafrock provided a walkthrough of the School Pool website which included creating a new account, read through the SCHOOLPOOL TERMS OF USE AGREEMENT, logging in, how to add a child to a parents account, editing a child's information and running a Ridematch report. It was pointed out that the School Pool database is separate from the Rideshare database. Information from one database cannot be accessed by the other.

Lillian Bunton, BMC, asked if there would be photo option that would display the image of the parent. This would ensure the safety of the participants because they could verify the image to the parent. Mr. Finafrock said this option would be considered but it was stressed that the parents should be meeting and obtaining contact with other parents prior to letting their child School Pool with other participants.

Each jurisdiction will have to work with COG to have a school added to the School Pool list of schools. Schools can only be added by COG administrators. Once a school has been added to the School Pool database, the school may choose to maintain their list of registrants. Steven Overbay, Harford Co., asked if there will be an option in the School Pool program to indicate if your child requires a car seat. This will be researched by COG/TPB staff.

COG/TPB staff asked that any rideshare coordinator that is interested in receiving the flier review the follow-up email message that is to follow the meeting and to respond accordingly.

7. Commuter Connections Progress Reports

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, reviewed the Progress Reports with the committee. A downloadable version of the report can be found online.

8. New Queuing Process for Employer Based Records

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, indicated that COG is devising a process to automatically direct new users towards their respective employers' jurisdiction. Until the automated process is complete, the process of moving a new user to a jurisdiction based on their employer is manually completed by Paul Straw, COG/TPB. When a user is moved through this process, a note detailing the reason for the move is posted in the notes section of the TDM system.

9. Commuter Connections Technical Support Protocol

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, indicated that all support requests should be made to the email address commutersupport@mwkog.org or called in at 202-962-3333. A request for support via email was encouraged over calling in, since emails will allow for better and more accurate tracking of support issues.

10. Client Site Status/Roundtable

Dawn Bodden, FCDOT, asked about the status and success of the 'Pool Rewards program. Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB, indicated an uptick in registered users since the recent increase in gas prices. Paul Straw, COG/TPB, provided specific updates on the number of 'Pool Rewards registrants and their status.

Lillian Bunton, BMC, requested that her email address be updated to lbunton@baltometro.org for the newsletter emailing.

Tammy Bowles, Montgomery County, MD, asked if the number of alternative commute options could be reduced from the Ridematch Request page. The number of choices is confusing and complicated for the users.

Lillian Bunton, BMC, made a request to clarify the registration process for new users since many users fail to realize additional steps (i.e. selecting a program) are required after the basic user info has been submitted. Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, suggested that this topic be added as an agenda item for the next Ridematching Committee meeting.

COG/TPB staff discussed possible changes to simplify the commuter application process in the TDM System. Rideshare Coordinators were asked to review the current application process and to suggest possible changes to reduce the number of commuters who are not enrolled in either Rideshare or GRH. The follow-up email will include more information and instructions for the submittal of suggested changes.

11. Other Business/Upcoming Agenda Items

The next meeting of the Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee will be held on June 21st 2011 from 10:00am to 12:00pm.