

HANDOUTS

from previous meeting



September 10, 2008



Pledge to go CarFree on Sept. 22

**CAR
FREE
DAY**
METRO DC

www.carfreemetrodcc.com





METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300 Washington, D.C. 20002-4239

Telephone (202) 962-3200 TDD (202) 962-3213 Fax (202) 962-3201 Internet: www.mwcog.org

For Immediate Release
September 2, 2008

Contact: Jeanne Saddler
202-962-3250

**New Online Ride-matching System Will Meet Record
Demand for Carpooling, Commute Options**

***Officials Announce D.C.'s First-time Participation in Worldwide Car Free Day—
Event Encourages Commuters to “Uncar” or Go “Car-Lite”***

Washington — Commuter Connections launched its new online ride-matching system today during a press conference at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). The new launch marks the first-time commuters have direct access to people that live and work near them and who want to join carpools and vanpools.

The purpose of opening access to the Web-based service is to further help residents of Maryland, D.C., and Virginia, cope with traffic congestion and fluctuating gas prices by supplying them with transportation alternatives to solo driving.

“Commuters in this region face some of the worst traffic in the country as well as high gas prices. This system connects them with an alternative to solo-driving—and most important, it gives them control of their commute,” said Nicholas Ramfos, director of Commuter Connections, which has been providing ridesharing services since 1974.

Ramfos said that the organization experienced a record-level 184% increase in ridesharing applications from June 2007 to June 2008. In the first seven days the new web-based system was available, nearly 3,000 people registered for the free service.

The system allows individuals to find and contact carpool matches among a regional database, and map a preferred route. The innovative system is built on Google Maps API (Application Programming Interface) and is among the most sophisticated, simple to use in North America. Charles A. Jenkins, Frederick County Commissioner and Vice Chairman of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) called the new system a collaborative effort among the transportation network’s members in metropolitan Washington.



METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300 Washington, D.C. 20002-4239

Telephone (202) 962-3200 TDD (202) 962-3213 Fax (202) 962-3201 Internet: www.mwcog.org

“This new software represents a three-year effort by Commuter Connections’ network members to make it easier than ever for area commuters to find nearby carpoolers,” Jenkins said.

According to survey participants for Commuter Connections’ annual State of the Commute Report, commutes appear to be getting more difficult, and commuters are making changes to improve their commutes.

“The 2007 State of the Commute Report found that a quarter of respondents said their commutes were more difficult than a year ago. And three fourths of respondents stated that the primary reason for this was traffic congestion,” Transportation Planning Board Chairman and D.C. Council Member At-Large, Phil Mendelson said. The survey found that six percent of commuters reported their commute as being easier because they started using alternative methods of getting to work other than driving alone.

Car Free Day Announced

Officials also announced the metropolitan Washington’s first-time region-wide participation in Car Free Day, a worldwide event on September 22 to encourage commuters to pledge to “uncar” for a day. Commuter Connections is expecting 10,000 pledges from area residents.

Started in 2000, Car Free Day now counts 1,500 participating cities in 40 countries, where commuters pledge to leave their car at home for the day, and ride a train, bus, bicycle, subway, Telework, or walk to work. People also can go “car lite” by carpooling or vanpooling. Commuters can visit www.carfreemetrodc.com to make the pledge to go car free and link to the new online ride-matching system, transit info and itineraries for WMATA and other systems.

“This is their opportunity to take a day off from spending their money on fuel costs and celebrate independence from their car,” David Snyder, Falls Church Council Member and Vice Chairman of the Transportation Planning Board said.

Transportation officials hope that commuters who take part in Car Free Day will make a permanent or at least part-time switch to alternative transportation. “We know that if a commuter has a good experience with public transportation, carpooling or teleworking, they are very likely to make it part of their regular routine,” Ramfos said.



METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300 Washington, D.C. 20002-4239

Telephone (202) 962-3200 TDD (202) 962-3213 Fax (202) 962-3201 Internet: www.mwcog.org

Terrible Traffic Tuesday

Traffic congestion in the Washington Metropolitan region is among the worst in the nation and on the day AAA calls "Terrible Traffic Tuesday," the gridlock continued as expected. The Tuesday following Labor Day is generally marked by surging traffic levels at the end of the traditional low levels of the summer.

"It's T-3, Terrible Traffic Tuesday, We're back from vacation, we're back in our schools and offices and our roads are chocked full," said Mahlon G. (Lon) Anderson, AAA Mid-Atlantic's Director of Public and Government Affairs.

The Washington metro area boasts 3.3 million registered vehicles. At this time last year 1.7 million area motorists drove to work alone. However, skyrocketing gas prices and worsening traffic congestion in the Washington metro area are forcing some commuters to seek alternatives this year, noted the spokesman for the auto club.

"Although the average price of gasoline is now below the historic highs experienced in mid-July, the high cost of gasoline is still forcing area commuters to drive less, using more fuel-efficient vehicles, relying more on Metro, MARC and VRE, and carpooling, slugging, and ridesharing more often," Anderson noted.

Though streets were crammed as expected today, Ramfos is thrilled about the innovative online ride-matching system and the increased interest in commute alternatives.

"The State of the Commute report shows us that commuters are looking to make changes in their travel behavior. They are searching for alternatives to solo-driving and ways to escape the gridlock and high gas prices and Commuter Connections equips them with options. Providing them with innovative tools like our new ride-matching system and opportunities such as Car Free Day gives them the control they want and it encourages behavior change," Ramfos said.

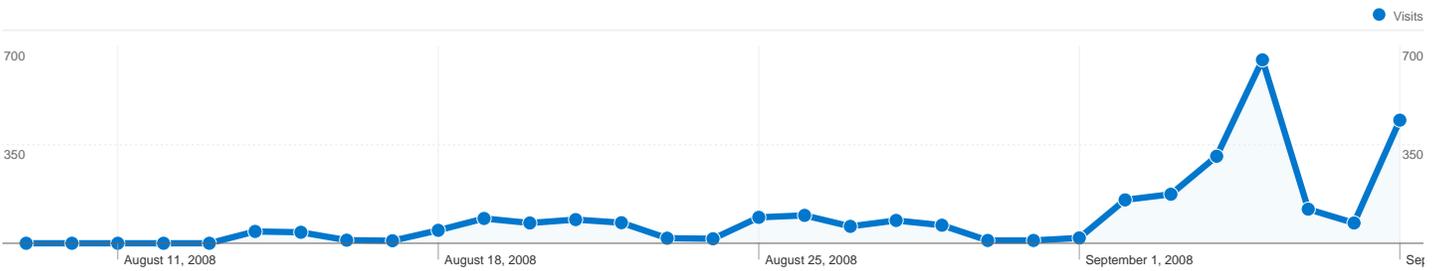


METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300 Washington, D.C. 20002-4239

Telephone (202) 962-3200 TDD (202) 962-3213 Fax (202) 962-3201 Internet: www.mwcog.org

Commuter Connections is a regional network of transportation organizations providing commute services and information to area residents and employers in the Washington metropolitan region in order to reduce traffic congestion and emissions caused by single occupancy vehicles (SOV). Network members, including transportation management associations, transit operators, and county transportation providers will be working with area employers to help them encourage their employees to make the pledge to leave their car at home. The Commuter Connections Network works with hundreds of employers and provides free services to thousands of commuters in D.C., northern Virginia and Maryland.



Site Usage

2,851 Visits

36.23% Bounce Rate

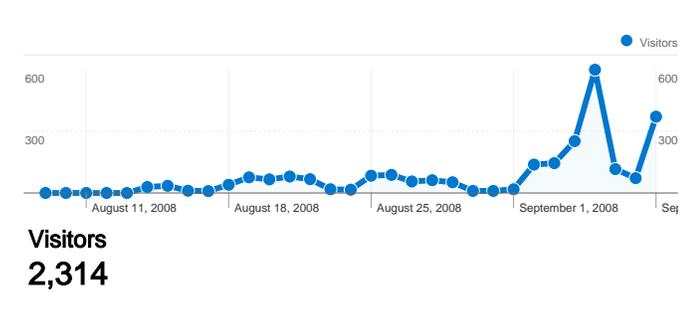
9,051 Pageviews

00:02:40 Avg. Time on Site

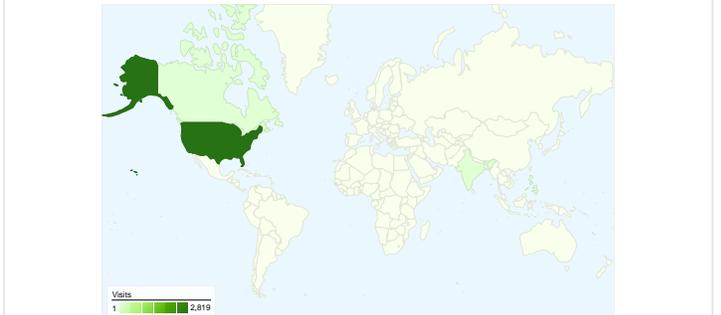
3.17 Pages/Visit

81.13% % New Visits

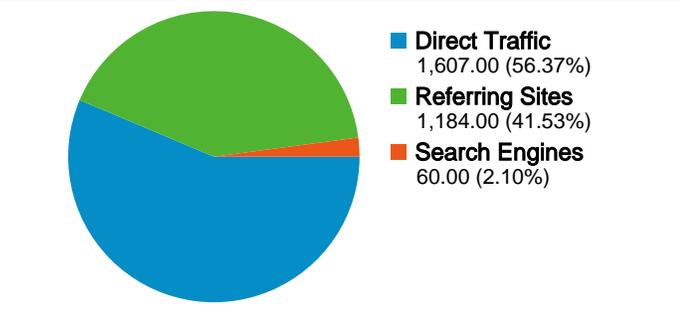
Visitors Overview



Map Overlay world



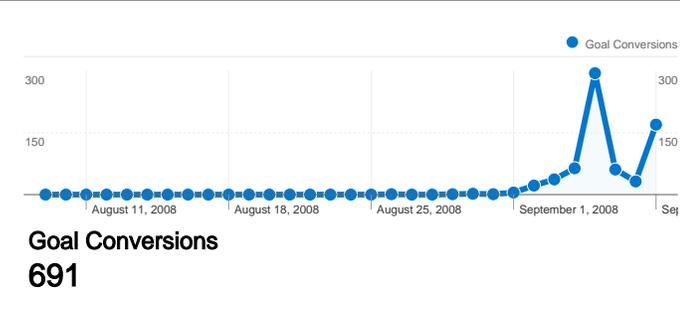
Traffic Sources Overview



Content Overview

Pages	Pageviews	% Pageviews
/	1,988	21.96%
/Pledge/tabid/58/Default.aspx	1,824	20.15%
/Home/tabid/54/Default.aspx	1,328	14.67%
/Information/tabid/57/Default.as	1,132	12.51%
/What/tabid/55/Default.aspx	816	9.02%

Goals Overview



CarFree Day

Total Pledges: 930 9/9/2008

Bicycle	551	59%
Carpool	47	5%
Commuter Rail	39	4%
Local Bus	130	14%
Metrobus	195	21%
Metrorail	407	44%
Telework	35	4%
Vanpool	9	1%
Walk	356	38%