



COMMUTER CONNECTIONS RIDEMATCHING COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, December 18, 2018
10:00 p.m. - 12:00 p.m.

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

Chairperson: Thomas Hamed, City of Alexandria
Vice Chairperson: Allison Kemp, Bethesda Transportation Solutions

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

1. Introductions

The meeting was brought to order by Chairperson Thomas Hamed of the City of Alexandria. Attendees were asked to introduce themselves and sign the attendance sheet.

2. Minutes of the September 18th, 2018 meeting

Approval was sought for the September 18th, 2018 Ridematching Committee Meeting minutes. George Clark, Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, mentioned a correction in agenda item #3, Upcoming Fairs and Promotions. The correction was noted by COG staff and the meeting minutes were then approved. All attendees were in favor.

3. Upcoming Fairs and Promotions

Montgomery County

- Planning meetings to promote Dockless bikeshare.
- Three townhall meetings in November have taken place to promote the expansion of Dockless vehicle pilot program beyond Silver Spring and Takoma Park (more info at: <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/bikeshare/>).
- BTWD Discovery pitstop is needing to be replaced. Likely candidate is the Silver Spring Civic Center.
- BTWD pitstop at Rockville Town Center will be pending.
- There will not be a BTWD pitstop in Wheaton for 2019 due to construction.

North Bethesda Transportation Center

- Working with NIH transit office employees moving the Rock Spring Park.
- Working with two NB companies to submit COG awards.
- Working with employers during January through February to submit annual reports for traffic mitigation plans.
- Scheduling winter CID's – ongoing.
- Dockless bikes are now in NB.

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

PRTC

- Car Free Day awareness at Manassas farmers market on 9/22.
- DATA commuter event on 10/3.
- Fort Belvoir orientation on 10/9.
- Regional vanpool forum at OmniRide on 10/24.
- Manassas farmers market on 10/25.
- DHS commuter fair on 11/8.
- TMP Fall summit on 11/9.
- Salute to armed forces lunch in Quantico on 11/13.
- Quantico welcome aboard brief on 11/19.

Transit Services of Frederick County

- Finished online bark campaign promoting ridesharing and GRH with Manning Media.
- Running 15 second commercials on ridesharing with Comcast spotlight.
- Running telework promotion on Facebook for employer outreach.
- Preparing for Spring events and promotions.

Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland

- MDOT/MTA QTR Rideshare meeting/training in January.
- TAM recap in Annapolis.
- USCG Commuter Fair in January.
- Southern MD. recap in Annapolis in February.

GW RideConnect

- Print advertisements.
- Social media advertisements.

Harford Commute Smart

- Aberdeen MARC commuter appreciation day on May 2nd.
- Edgewood MARC commuter appreciation day on May 7th.
- Bike to Work Day Havre de Grace on May 14th.
- Bike to Work Day APG North on May 15th.
- Bike to Work Day Bel Air on May 17th.
- Bike to Work Day APG South on May 21st.
- Dump the Pump day on June 21st.
- Aberdeen MARC/Amtrak commuter appreciation day on May 23rd.

Baltimore City

- Bike to work day sponsorship.
- Bike to work day planning.
- Continue to work with employers to promote commuting smart.

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

- Coast Guard Transportation Fair September 12.
- NSA (Naval Support Activity) Bethesda Outdoor Commuter Fair September 26.
- DATA Block Party Reston Town Center October 3.
- National Guard Transportation Day October 3.
- Upcoming USCG event in January.

- incenTrip mobile application will be shared with account holders. Cash incentives may be available late June or early July.

4. TDM System Update

Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff, began his presentation by displaying the new Commuter Connections website. Mr. Finafrock then asked those in attendance to review the website, especially the "Commuters" section. Mr. Finafrock then explained that many of the pages from the old website have been condensed into an accordion-type style, meaning, a user will need to click on a topic and additional information will expand. The order of information displayed was determined by popularity tracked by Google Analytics. Mr. Finafrock then reads off the various options and clicks "Rideshring." The menu expanded, and Mr. Finafrock then clicked on a link to display information on carpool and vanpooling. Mr. Finafrock then went back to the "Commuters" page to access the park and ride lot map. He then explained that the top reason for site visits is to view the park and ride map.

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, noted that the park and ride lot map can be easily accessed from the website's homepage. It is one of three options users will see when scrolling down.

Mr. Finafrock then continues to demonstrate the park and ride lot map and clicks a few locations to display the lot's data. It was also mentioned that the map has a search function to find specific lots. The map was then exited, and Mr. Finafrock pointed out the new Commuter Connections logo on the website.

George Clark, TCCSM, asked to receive a copy of the new logo. Mr. Ramfos asked those in attendance to email the commuter support inbox (commutersupport@mwkog.org) to receive a copy of the Commuter Connections branding guidelines.

Mr. Finafrock then switches to the TDM and logs in using his personal, non-administrative account. He pointed out some of the upcoming special events displayed in the special events ticker and explained the recent addition on the online request a ride for the Guaranteed Ride Home program. Mr. Finafrock mentions that this feature is being used approximately 20 times per month. This feature allows users to provide details about their trip where and email gets sent to GRH dispatchers and COG staff. The GRH dispatcher will then call the commuter and the trip will be arranged over the phone. Mr. Finafrock then clicks on the feature to give an example of how it works and mentions that the feature is unavailable after hours, during weekends and federal closures/holidays.

Mr. Clark mentioned that the phone number for the Guaranteed Ride Home program should be added to the message displayed within the request a ride function. Leigh Anderson, GWRideConnect, was in agreement adding that it would be useful for those using a screen reader.

Mr. Finafrock then moved on to display the new bike routing module and asked those in attendance to provide an address for a demonstration. Mark Sofman, Montgomery County DOT, provided a starting point and a destination. Mr. Sofman confirmed that the route is feasible, and Mr. Finafrock mentioned that the map is still a work in progress with data being continually added.

Mr. Ramfos mentioned that if anyone in attendance has local data, COG can incorporate it into the map.

Kendall Tiffany, TransIt of Frederick County, mentioned they have had an influx of recent accounts being created to use the bike routing module. Mr. Finafrock confirmed they can be counted as legitimate new applicants.

Mr. Ramfos then noted that the bike routing module now includes capitol bikeshare locations. Mr. Finafrock then zoomed into the map to demonstrate the information shown when clicking on a bikeshare location. Bikeshare locations will also appear as a transit layer for ridematching and will eventually be available through Commuter Connections' mobile apps too.

Heidi Mitter, VDOT, asked how often COG staff will be updating the bike routing module. Mr. Ramfos responded saying that the data will be updated at least once a year, or as often as new data is provided by local jurisdictions.

5. Mobile Applications Update

Steven Osborn, COG/TPB staff, began his presentation by providing a summary of the current incentive programs operated by Commuter Connections.

First on the list was CarpoolNow. CarpoolNow is Commuter Connections' newest mobile application and allows users to take advantage of dynamic ridesharing technology. An incentive is currently being offered to drivers who successfully complete a ride using the mobile application. As of now, the incentive amount is \$10 per trip.

The second incentive program listed was the Flextime Incentive program. Users can register for this program and receive notifications on higher-than-average traffic volumes along their route. Those traveling along selected corridors can be entered into a monthly prize drawing of \$100.00. These corridors are: I-495 IL between VA-267 and I270 Spur, I-495 OL between I-95 and MD-193, I-66 EB at VA-267 and DC-295 SB at Benning Rd.

The third incentive listed was incenTrip mobile app. The incenTrip mobile app was designed by a startup company established by the University of Maryland called Future Mobility Labs, LLC. incenTrip can accurately predict traffic to help travelers avoid both day-to-day congestion and traffic jams caused by traffic accidents, work zones, special events and adverse weather conditions. App users also earn reward points while receiving recommendations on the best travel mode, departure time and/or route recommendations. In addition, incenTrip analyzes and help users adopt eco-friendly driving behavior. Commuter Connections ridesharing has been integrated into the app for those wishing to carpool.

The fourth program listed was 'Pool Rewards for carpool and vanpools. Qualified carpools can earn a maximum, one-time payment of \$130.00. Users must log their trip info using Commuter Connections software. Those traveling on I-395 and I-66 outside the beltway are eligible for an additional \$100.00. Qualified vanpools can earn a \$200.00 per month payment in exchange for their trip data. This payment is ongoing until the vanpool terminates, or they no longer meet our program requirements.

Lastly was the Guaranteed Ride Home program. Registered users can receive a free ride home up to four times per year in the event of an emergency, personal illness or unscheduled overtime. The ride will be provided by either taxi or rental car. Users can reregister after a year to receive another four rides.

Mr. Osborn then moved on to present updates made to the Commuter Connections mobile application. The latest update is the mobile commute log. Those participating in the Flextime Rewards program can now use the mobile app to passively log their trips using their phone's geolocation services. Users will be presented with an interstitial message explaining how they can now participate using the app. If the user's geolocation services are not turned on, they will be prompted to allow the app to use their location. The user will then tell the app when they have begun their trip. The app will recognize when the trip is completed based on the destination in their profile.

Mr. Osborn then continued and presented a remainder that the driver incentive is still available to those using CarpoolNow. Download stats for the Commuter Connections mobile apps were also displayed. The statistics are as of December 17th, 2018 and are as follows:

Commuter Connections:

iOS – 2,303

Android – 976

Carpool Now:

iOS – 2,430

Android – 1,320

6. iCabbi Presentation

Daniel Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, began his presentation by mentioning that COG went out to bid this fiscal year for Guaranteed Ride Home providers. Mr. Sheehan then introduced Kyle Summers, Alexandria Yellow Cab Co., to demonstrate the iCabbi software. Mr. Summers explains that the dispatches can make the reservation through the website and the software will determine the correct fleet based on location. Commuter Connections' contracted dispatchers, Diamond Transportation, are currently using this software. Mr. Summers then typed in an address and displayed a map showing the current locations of taxi cabs nearby. Different types of vehicles can be selected, and an ETA is determined.

If the user has booked using a cellphone number, they can receive a text message alert when the booking has been reserved. This alert will contain a link to the iCabbi mobile site where they can track the vehicle picking them up. The driver will indicate when the passenger has been picked up and the ETA will change according to the destination. Users can see all upcoming and current reservations, as well as their ride history.

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, mentions that this software can make it easier to communicate with users and clarify to drivers that the trip is taken through the GRH program.

Mr. Summers mentioned that iCabbi is currently being used in Virginia and DC, but not Maryland.

7. Client Site Status/Roundtable

Becky Sandretzky, NSVRC/RideSmart, mentioned that a new bus route has been created as part of the TMP. The bus runs from Front Royal to DC. This information will be added to the transit options list for those running a matchlist in that jurisdiction.

8. Quarterly Progress Report

The FY19 first quarter progress report was presented by Stephen Finafrock, COG/TPB staff. Mr. Finafrock mentioned the beginning narrative and ask those in attendance to review the progress report, especially Table 16, which has undergone some recent updates and corrections.

Mr. Finafrock reminded those in attendance that GRH trips are not tracked based on jurisdiction. The data for ridematching displayed is for the current report quarter, the prior quarter and this quarter last year.

Mr. Finafrock clarifies that "this quarter" refers to the first quarter of FY19. Mr. Finafrock also mentioned that an error on pg.49 has been corrected.

9. Other Business/Upcoming Agenda Items

George Clark, TCCSM, mentioned that a presentation on Maryland's Commuter Choice program could be an agenda item for the next meeting. Nancy Huggins, MDOT, agreed.

Elizabeth Denton, Arlington Transportation Partners, asked those in attendance if they are familiar with any types of carpool incentives that scale based on the number of riders in the pool.

Sara McGowan, DATA, spoke regarding opening School Pool up to pre-k students. Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, confirmed that School Pool will not be available to pre-k students.

A motion to adjourn was initiated by Thomas Hamed and was supported first by George Clark and second by Alan Doran.

The Next meeting of the Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee will be held on March 19, 2018 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.