Greater Rochester Regional Commuter Choice Program

Executive Summary

Objective

To establish a cost-effective program that provides the travelling public with the maximum opportunity to save money and reduce pollution by accessing commuting options other than the single-occupancy vehicle.

Development

The Request for Proposals for development of the website was advertised on May 10, 2010 and Ecology & Environment, Inc. of Lancaster, NY was selected as the preferred consultant. An Agreement for Professional Services to develop the website was signed on September, 21, 2010. The website, located at http://www.roceasyride.org, was launched on April 6, 2012. Total project cost is $69,000, which includes website development and technical support through May 2014.

Project Considerations

A number of considerations guided the website design, including:

- Capabilities – the project should integrate public transportation, carpool, and bicycle trip planning, calculate emissions reductions, and track cost savings.

- Employer/Organizational affiliation – the website should allow individuals that choose to limit their matches to an affiliated employer or organization to do so.

- Branding – the website should be associated with the region and have a name that was descriptive, positive, and easy to remember.

- Web Address – the website address should be easy to remember and consistent with its brand.

- Ease of Administration – the website should be relatively easy to administer, even for staff with little or no programming expertise.

- Privacy – user privacy must be protected without making the website difficult to use.

Website Overview

The ROCEASYRIDE website meets the overall project objective and successfully addresses the considerations described above. The use of the website is summarized as follows: 1) User

establishes an account ("My Page") on the website, specifying home address, work address, commuting preferences (smoking/non-smoking), etc; 2) user completes commute profile for the trip they wish to plan (multiple commute profiles are allowed); 3) user is shown potential carpool matches and has the choice whether to send an email through the system if they wish to discuss carpooling with the prospective match; and 4) if a carpool is established, the system will track all emissions reductions and cost savings as long as the participants log each trip in their Commute Calendars.

In addition to the basic functions described above, ROCEASYRIDE allows users to plan their commute via public transportation using Google transit planning services and by bicycle using Google bicycle routing services and the *2009 Edition of the Greater Rochester Area Bicycling Map*. As with carpools, the system will track the emissions reductions and cost savings benefits of bicycling and riding the bus as long as each trip is recorded in the user's Commute Calendar.

ROCEASYRIDE allows employers and organizations to establish their own "pages" on the website where access can be limited via Personal Identification Number (PIN) to employees/members only. In these cases, those affiliated with a participating employe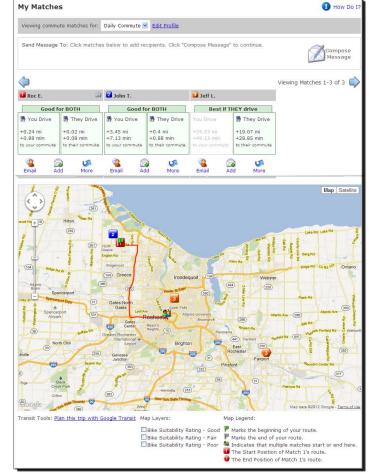r or organization can limit their matches to include fellow employees or organizational members only. This can help to address potential concerns that some participants may have about carpooling with strangers and increase the likelihood that they will carpool.

Participating employers and organizations may customize their Pages on the website and can administer contests and track emissions reductions/cost savings on an employer- or organization-wide basis.

Outreach

Since the website launch on April 6, 2012, staff has reached out to community partners to increase awareness of the website via distribution through their respective networks of contacts.
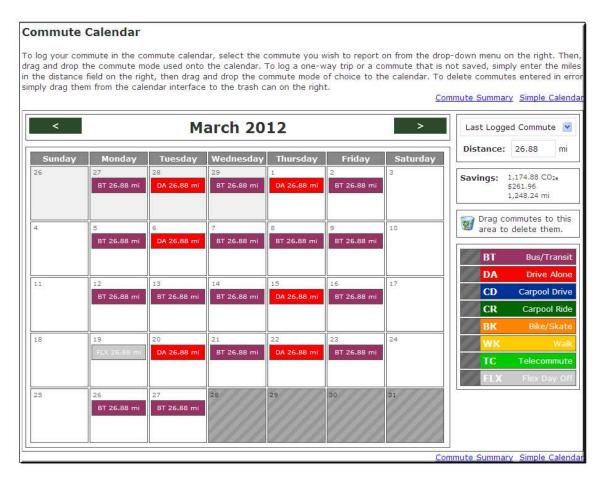
Staff has also promoted the website at the Brighton Green Energy Fair and worked with students at Rochester Institute of Technology to both explore potential marketing strategies for the website and learn about issues and opportunities that may apply to college and university students, faculty, and staff.

Status and Next Steps

As of this writing, the website has 160 registered users. This is encouraging because the system is already finding matches for users even though it's unlikely that it has attained the "critical mass" needed to facilitate frequent matches (i.e. as the numbers of users increase the percentage of participants that find potential matches will increase).

Commute Calendar

To log your commute in the commute calendar, select the commute you wish to report on from the drop-down menu on the right. Then, drag and drop the commute mode used onto the calendar. To log a one-way trip or a commute that is not saved, simply enter the miles in the distance field on the right, then drag and drop the commute mode of choice to the calendar. To delete commutes entered in error simply drag them from the calendar interface to the trash can on the right.

Commute Summary   Simple Calendar

March 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27 BT 26.88 mi	28 DA 26.88 mi	29 BT 26.88 mi	1 DA 26.88 mi	2 BT 26.88 mi	3
4	5 BT 26.88 mi	6 DA 26.88 mi	7 BT 26.88 mi	8 BT 26.88 mi	9 BT 26.88 mi	10
11	12 BT 26.88 mi	13 BT 26.88 mi	14 BT 26.88 mi	15 DA 26.88 mi	16 BT 26.88 mi	17
18	19 FLX 26.88 mi	20 DA 26.88 mi	21 BT 26.88 mi	22 DA 26.88 mi	23 BT 26.88 mi	24
25	26 BT 26.88 mi	27 BT 26.88 mi	28	29	30	31

Last Logged Commute

Distance: 26.88 mi

Savings: 1,174.88 CO₂e
$261.96
1,248.24 mi

Drag commutes to this area to delete them.

BT	Bus/Transit
DA	Drive Alone
CD	Carpool Drive
CR	Carpool Ride
BK	Bike/Skate
WK	Walk
TC	Telecommute
FLX	Flex Day Off

Commute Summary   Simple Calendar

In order to increase awareness of ROCEASYRIDE in the region, GTC staff intends to continue its outreach efforts, focusing on those larger employers, institutions, and organizations that support and share its goals of helping commuters to save money and reduce air pollution.

To support these efforts, staff has prepared an *Administrative Manual for Participating Employers and Organizations* for ROCEASYRIDE and several fact sheets available for download at the website. The website also provides numerous links to *Commuter Resources* in the region to increase awareness of travel options including but not limited to ROCEASYRIDE.

In addition to the outreach efforts described above, GTC staff will continue to monitor performance of the ROCEASYRIDE website, to maintain its links with related websites, and to continually improve its usefulness to commuters that wish to identify options to save money and improve the environment by riding the bus, carpooling, and bicycling in the region.