Customer Services, Operations, and Safety Committee

Board Information Item III-D

October 22, 2009

Access to Transit Scheduling Data

○Action ●Information	MEAD Number:	Resolution: ○Yes ●No

TITLE:

Access to Transit Scheduling Data

PURPOSE:

To provide the Board with an update on how Metro provides access to its transit scheduling data.

DESCRIPTION:

Metro currently provides a Trip Planner on its website to provide customers with detailed itineraries of bus, rail or combined trips and the fare for that trip. Metro also offers its scheduling data free to to all interested parties that agree to the terms and conditions of use. The data is provided in the Google Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) format. Metro staff continues to work with Google on an agreement for their use of the data but Google Transit has limitations that may adversely affect Metro customers: 1. Google Transit does not provide fare information. 2. Google Transit does not provide information on the services of most of Metro`s regional transit partners, and; 3. The schedule information provided by Google Transit may not be completely up to date because Google only updtaes once per month.

FUNDING IMPACT:

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that Metro continue to provide its scheduling data free to to all interested parties that agree to the terms and conditions of use. This will ensure that customers are provided with the most acurate and complete information.

Access to Transit Scheduling Data

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Access to Transit Scheduling Data

Metro's Trip Planner operates under three simple principles:

- Give the most accurate information to our customers to help them make the best possible decisions for their trip

- Provide maximum revenue to Metro through both passenger fares and advertising

- Offer our scheduling data for free as widely as possible to those who want to utilize it

Metro Trip Planner

Travel From Location:

.

Travel To Location:

Using:
- ○ Bus only
- ○ Rail only
- ⊙ Both

Leaving aft ▾

04:17 PM ▾

Date:
09/30/2009

Submit Advanced | Help / Tips
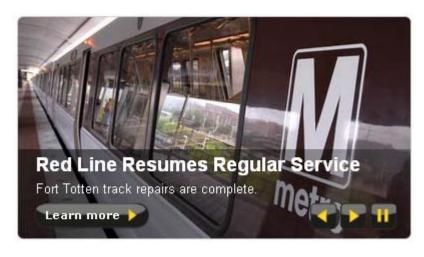
Access to Transit Scheduling Data

Metro's Trip Planner provides customers with:

- Instant itineraries for trips: Metrobus, Metrorail, or both

- Detailed information about each portion of the trip

- Bus timetable in PDF format for each bus leg of the trip

- Rail station pages to provide unique station information

- Escalator/elevator outages for Metro stations on the itinerary

- Walking directions for the walking portion of the trip

- Breakdown of fares at bottom of each itinerary

- Advanced features allowing customers to prescribe criteria such as localities, walking distances and other specifications

Metro's web site offers a wealth of additional information:

- Headlines about planned weekend closures and other major changes

- Real-time bus and rail service status

- Next bus and train arrivals

- Bus maps, timetables, route changes, and short-term detours

- Rail maps, station information, schedules, and disruption reports

Red Line Resumes Regular Service
Fort Totten track repairs are complete.
Learn more ▶

Metro Service Status

Rail	Bus	Elevator

⬛ Red Line	On Time
⬛ Blue Line	On Time
⬛ Orange Line	On Time
⬛ Green Line	On Time
⬛ Yellow Line	On Time

There are no Metrorail delays at this time.

View All Rail Alerts   Sign-up for eAlerts

Metro began web advertising in 2007

- Generated nearly $200,000 in revenue

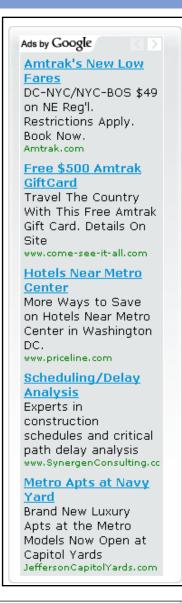 Calendar Year:

  2007: $51,143

  2008: $70,551

  2009: $66,276 (through early October)

- Little to no cost to Metro for this program

- No other major transit system is currently hosting web advertising (MBTA, NY MTA, NJT, BART, LA Metro, CTA, etc.)

- Web advertising revenues are earned on Trip Planner pages and other Metro web pages

Access to Transit Scheduling Data

Metro offers scheduling data for free as widely as possible to those who want to utilize it:

- Metro's Trip Planner rail and bus scheduling data is available publicly to all interested parties

- Interested parties can download Metro's scheduling files after agreeing to Metro's terms and conditions

- Rail and bus scheduling files are available in the Google Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) format

- These files are available to Google as well as others

- 1,800 users have accessed the GTFS download page a total of 4,700 times between March and mid-October

Access to Transit Scheduling Data

Google Transit currently has some limitations that may affect our customers:

- No fare information

- No information for many local transit partners (ART, Fairfax Connector, Ride On, TheBus, etc.)

- Schedules may be out-of-date because Google only updates once per month

Transit Agency	Metro's Trip Planner	Google Transit
Alexandria, DASH	√	√
Arlington, ART	√	
DC Circulator	√	
Fairfax City, CUE	√	√
Fairfax Connector Bus	√	
Loudoun Commuter Bus	√	√
Montgomery, Ride On	√	
Prince George's, TheBus	√	
Annapolis Transit	√	
Frederick Transit	√	
Howard Transit	√	
Laurel Connect-A-Ride Bus	√	
PRTC OmniRide	√	
PRTC OmniLink	√	
U. Maryland Shuttle Bus	√	
MARC Train	√	
VRE	√	

Summary

- Metro's Trip Planner rail and bus scheduling data is available publicly to all interested parties

- Google Transit, as well as other parties, can download Metro's scheduling files after agreeing to Metro's terms and conditions

- Rail and bus scheduling files are available in the Google Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) format

Next Steps

- Staff will move forward to explore an interim agreement with Google Transit

- Staff will continue to research details of Google Transit agreements with other major transit properties