




TO: CMTMC Commissioners  
FROM: Cristin Tolen, General Manager   
DATE: April 27, 2020  
RE: Transit Planning App and Bus Stop Enhancement Update

To provide you with an update of RTA's real-time bus tracking and bus stop enhancement project in advance of the Central Maryland Transportation & Mobility Commission and Central Maryland Transportation & Mobility Consortium meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 28, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. The meeting will be held via WebEx.

Key Highlights:

- During the month of February, RTA began installing GPS trackers on the fixed-route fleet
  - On Sunday, February 9th, RTA installed nearly 30 trackers in a one day blitz event aptly named "Trackaganza"
- On February 24th, RTA's GTFS-RT feed was integrated in to its first third party trip planning application, "Transit App". Transit App can plan trips across MTA and WMATA service regions, and has millions of users in the Baltimore-DC region
- From Monday, February 24th until Thursday, March 5th, in less than two weeks, RTA temps underwent training and surveyed all 683 bus stops from Greenbelt to Ellicott City to do the following:
  - Tag each with a unique weatherproof, reflective Stop ID decal, and instructions on how to text the code to our SMS/IVR line that gives live bus arrival predictions to customers
  - Confirm the latitude/longitude of the sign and ensure customers on trip planning apps can find it easily when planning a trip using RTA service
  - As each sign got a decal, it essentially was "live", and customers could immediately start texting the code to see when an RTA bus would arrive to the stop
- On Sunday, March 8th, at the beginning of our spring service change, RTA had real-time tracking of buses and live arrival predictions available via two platforms (via the SMS/IVR system that utilizes the stop IDs, and on the smartphone trip planning application Transit App)
- On Tuesday, March 24th, RTA's GTFS-RT feed was integrated in to its second third party trip planning application, Google Maps. Google Maps has over one billion unique users, and is the most popular transit trip planner in the world.
- On April 13th, RTA completed the installation of all trackers, and is awaiting the integration of our GTFS-RT feed on a handful of other applications so that every rider can get real-time transit data however they prefer.

Moving forward, RTA is testing a live bus location map and tracking feature for our website, which can be viewed via a dropdown menu on [www.transitRTA.com](http://www.transitRTA.com), under the "Bus" tab. We are also awaiting

confirmation from three more companies, Apple Inc., Moovit Inc., and Citymapper Ltd., that our GTFS-RT feed is finished integrating in to their respective trip planning applications. It is anticipated that with these integrations finalized in the coming months, RTA real-time data will be natively supported within mobile apps that millions of people in our region already have on their phones by the beginning of summer 2020.