



**REGIONAL TDM MARKETING GROUP
MEETING NOTES
June 15, 2021**

1. Introductions

Committee members, guests, and other attendees introduced themselves by name and affiliation.

2. Meeting Minutes

Notes from the March 16, 2021 Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting were approved as written.

3. Commuter Connections FY21 Marketing Activity

Dan Odonnell and Mark Wirth from Odonnell Company provided a review of regional TDM marketing activity and a preview of the FY22 Regional TDM Recovery Campaign. Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, reviewed updates to the FY21 2nd Half Regional TDM Marketing Campaign Summary draft report.

The all-new regional bicycling map was completed in May and includes major trail systems throughout the region, both on and off-street. The bilingual map cover panels reflect a similar look and feel to the recently refreshed Park & Ride lot map. The new bike maps also have bike rule safety tips and several local inset maps with closer map detail. The bike maps were made available for the 2021 Bike to Work Day pit stop events.

The Bike to Work Day 2021 event celebrated its 20th anniversary in the region and focused on mental and physical health as a way to circumvent the pandemic. The media budget was \$64,000 and included streaming radio with Pandora and Spotify, which made up about 75 percent of the budget and encompassed :15 and :30 audio with a companion image. Other paid media were :30 second Spanish radio station spots on El Zol, digital banner ads on WTOP.com and SourceOfTheSpring.com, a sponsored ad on Popville.com, and a :30 animated video on YouTube. The earned media component placed calendar listings, pitched two press releases, developed a social media toolkit for sponsors, an outreach toolkit for digital community influencers, minorities and women's organizations. COG/TPB staff took part in television interviews about Bike to Work Day on ABC7, and on Telemundo.

The annual Employer Recognition Awards ceremony will take place in-person on June 29, 2021 at the National Press Club. To recognize the employer winners, a display ad will appear in the Wall Street Journal on Wednesday, June 30, 2021. Videos, podium signage, branded giveaway items, and a program booklet were created for the event. Winners will receive a trophy, custom press release, and electronic winner seal.

A \$550,000 Regional TDM Recovery Campaign included non-paid social media posts beginning June 2021 and will roll out officially in FY22 during the summer months. The campaign will have a 70/30 allocation towards transit-dependent and general audiences,

respectively, each with some uniqueness within the media buy based on defined equity emphasis areas within the region.

The campaign's aims are to help toward the region's recovery efforts in getting area workers back into shared travel modes through raised awareness around safety protocols and affordability, with emphasis on increasing local and commuter bus ridership. Incentives may be considered. The secondary objective is to focus on encouraging Metrorail and commuter rail, as well as carpool and vanpool use with coworkers, neighbors, and household members.

4. FY22 Regional TDM Resource Guide and Strategic Marketing Plan (SMP)

COG/TPB staff discussed the process to begin updates for the FY22 Regional TDM Resource Guide and Strategic Marketing Plan (SMP) report. Last year, due to COVID, the Regional TDM Marketing Group did not issue the SMP. The most recent edition of the 240-page document, its 23rd volume, was endorsed for publication in December 2019. Some of the main sections of the document include: Regional Activity Centers, key findings and strategic implications, summary of adopted strategy, regional profile, profiles of multi-modal options, summary tables of bus and rail activity, marketing write-ups from network members and regional partners, tables of current and recommended marketing strategies by jurisdiction, and TDM research summaries. The process to begin updating the SMP document for FY2022 will take place in July. Sections pertaining to each jurisdiction will be sent in a Word document format to Regional TDM Marketing Group members to allow for easy editing using track-changes. The due date to return updates will be August 17, 2021. A first draft of the FY2022 report will be issued at the September 21, 2021 meeting.

5. Metro Marketing

Antionette Rucker, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, presented an overview of SmartBenefits outreach and Metro's Welcome Back regional recovery efforts. Besides frequency of cleaning, Metro's real-time crowding information for both bus and rail provides synergy with the COVID recovery. Ms. Rucker noted that transit ridership is starting to pick up slightly. The presentation included a status on the Metrorail Platform Improvement Project for summer 2021 on the Green and Yellow Lines, affecting the Greenbelt, College Park-UMD, Prince George's Plaza, and West Hyattsville stations. An overview was provided about the new faregates being phased in starting July 2021 and the phase out of first-generation SmarTrip cards. SmarTrip cards starting with 0167 require no action, while all other cards owned by 45,000 SmartBenefits participants will need to be replaced, as they will not work with the new faregates. The faregates will be completed in June 2022. In-station signage will post notices at least 30-days before the upgrade to the new faregates. Ms. Rucker also noted that 650 employers attended recent SmartBenefits webinars. Also, an employer survey captured 100 respondents who answered questions regarding the timing of plans to return to the office, and to what extent the transition may entail a hybrid telework model or an expansion of post-pandemic longer term telework situation.

6. Marketing Round Table

Meeting participants shared recent advertising and marketing activity occurring within their organizations.

Kendall Tiffany, Frederick County TransIT Services, has been using digital marketing and ad scroll marketing for Commute with Confidence and Guaranteed Ride Home. The first commuter outreach event since the pandemic was held on June 16, 2021 at the Urbana Park and Ride lot with local station WFRE.

Stacey King, Prince George's County, is promoting RideSmart and Commuter Connections by distributing materials as part of community walks and summer events including pop-up bike traffic garden/rodeos. An employer outreach postcard is being sent to 500 large business, preparations are being made to conduct in-person collateral drop offs to employers, and connections are being made through municipalities' economic development departments. TheBus and Commuter Connections are being promoted as part of Metro's summer platform project. Assistance is being provided this summer with TheBus's new real-time tracking app. Gas station, pizza box flyers, and radio station ads are under development. Lastly, advertising was placed at Bowie Baysox minor league baseball stadium,

Korrea Johnston, goDCgo, held the 5th annual Employer Ambassadors Awards ceremony recognizing a dozen employers. The "Commute Savings Ahead" campaign which raises awareness about DC's affordable transportation options has been extended. The "Bike Your Way" campaign to increase bike ridership in the District runs through June 2021. The "Pledge to Pedal" provides a chance to win a new bike, and a helmet decorating social media contest provides a chance to win a \$50 Amazon gift card. goDCgo's Pride Bike Ride event will be held on June 26, 2021. The "Commute with Care" dedicated webpage is in development as a one-stop shop to raise rider confidence and increase transit ridership. The webpage provides the latest updates and information regarding DC public transportation protocols and tips related to pandemic recovery. The "Travel Like You Live Here" summer tourism campaign is in the early stages of development. The campaign will work with hotel partners to promote sustainable travel resources and guests may earn rewards.

Traci McPhail, North Bethesda Transportation Center, is focusing on hosting virtual Commuter Information Days with employers to help with the transition back to the workplace. One event was held in early June 2021 and more are being scheduled.

Brandon Stuckey, Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS), is working on a new detailed employer guide for transit to bring commuters to and from and around downtown Bethesda. BTS is hosting a "Learn To Ride" Bike Class on July 11, 2021 at the Bethesda Chevy Chase Rescue Squad and is teaming up with WABA to host a community bike ride through downtown Bethesda on July 13, 2021. Bike to Work Day went well and local bike shops, Griffin Cycle and Terrapin Cycle, gained exposure and added business as a result.

George Clark, Tri County Council for Southern Maryland, stated that a new Commute with Confidence ad campaign was started in all three county newspapers and on Comcast/Verizon Fios online and mobile apps. Also, the first fair since the pandemic will take place at the Charles County Chamber's Business after Hours at the Blue Crabs Baseball Stadium on June 24, 2021.

Judy Galen, Loudoun County Commuter Services, noted that the Employer Outreach program continues to leverage its Loudoun SHRM sponsorship to publicize Commute with Confidence resources. The Commuter Shortcuts newsletter continues to provide helpful content including a late June profile on Nick Ramfos and the partnership with Commuter Connections. Bike to Work Day pit stops were successful with 126 attendees in Sterling and 160 in Leesburg. Upcoming plans include support of Workforce Development Month in September 2021, teaming with the Loudoun Workforce Resource Center. Outreach staff will prepare and conduct two workshops (one virtual and one in-person) promoting SmarTrip for fare payment and Transit app for real-time information throughout the Loudoun County Transit system.

Ivanna Baez, Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission, mentioned that OmniRide began operating out of its Western Facility which went hand-in-hand with the Summer Service Change. Upcoming June 2021 meetings and events include the Employer Council update, Virtual Town Hall to discuss OmnRide's future plans, and the Hispanic Council Meeting.

Mark Sofman, Montgomery County Commuter Services, is having planning meetings to discuss Car Free Day and county-specific initiatives such as FareShare and Walk & Ride. Bike to Work Day was successful, notwithstanding lower registration numbers. Commuter Services coordinated with a dozen bike shops who held pit stop events and enjoyed the exposure provided to their businesses.

Bobbi Greenberg, Arlington County Commuter Services, noted that participants appreciated having the Bike to Work Day event and the county considered the pit stops to be successful, despite the COVID challenges. Arlington installed its 100th Capital Bikeshare station and had a promotion to give 100 free memberships to new members which was accomplished in less than two days. Outreach events continue at Farmer's Markets and other outdoor events, as well as continuing with virtual events.

Renée Moore, City of Alexandria, is working on a parking cashout program for the hospitality industry and is promoting Capital Bikeshare to employees. Bike to Work Day was hosted at three bike shops rather than at Market Square. Consideration is being given to continuing the pit stops for subsequent Bike to Work Day events. Mailers are being sent to new residents to inform them about transportation options in Alexandria. Also being considered is a transportation fair with a co-working space.

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, reminded invited guests to RSVP for the 24th Annual Employer Recognition Awards in-person event by June 18, 2021.

7. Other Business/Suggested Items for Next Meeting

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, noted that in-person meetings will resume at COG after Labor Day 2021.

The next Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting is Tuesday, September 21, 2021 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.