



MEETING NOTES
REGIONAL TDM MARKETING GROUP
December 20, 2016

1. Introductions

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

2. Minutes of Meeting

The notes from the September 20, 2016 Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting were approved as written.

3. FY17 Regional TDM Resource Guide and Strategic Marketing Plan (SMP)

Douglas Franklin COG/TPB staff, reviewed the FY17 Washington Metropolitan Region TDM Resource Guide and Strategic Marketing Plan Final Draft Report. The document contains a profile of the region's population and job growth through 2040, how that will impact travel congestion and air quality, and the significant capital improvements planned for the region's highway and transit systems to help manage such growth. The SMP also serves as a resource for TDM products & services available in the region; provides a snapshot of current and planned marketing activity occurring within the region for Commuter Connections and its various network members; and contains summaries of TDM research conducted over the past five years. The SMP report was endorsed by the committee for final release, and It will be posted to the Commuter Connections web site in January.

4. GO Alex

Jim Wright from Pulsar Advertising presented the City of Alexandria's TDM brand evaluation. As part of the evaluation, Pulsar underwent a comprehensive best practices review of other TDM brands. Key takeaways found that the best programs have strong brands and campaigns built around them, and they tap into community pride and culture. The characteristics of a successful brand evokes authenticity, audience-engagement, and emotion. The City's previous brand, "Local Motion" lacked strong name identity and awareness. The brand evaluation included more than 25 new concepts, which were narrowed to four options, and one recommendation. The winning brand name "Go Alex" is friendly and uses the City of Alexandria's familiar nickname, Alex, while accompanying it with the word "Go", relating to the ease of movement. A Go Alex Walk, Bike and Ride guide using the new branding was distributed at the meeting.

5. Commuter Connections FY17 Marketing Activity

Dan O'Donnell from Odonnell Company discussed digital trends, Commuter Connections' fall FY17 marketing activity, and presented a preview of the upcoming spring campaign. The FY 2017 1st Half Marketing Campaign Summary draft report was also distributed.

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Two thirds of online activity is through mobile devices, compared to a third on desktop. Digital ad spending has closed the gap with that of television, and is forecasted to continue to trend upward and soon exceed television. Twenty percent of time spent online by U.S. adults is on social media. The largest share of users for all major social networking sites are between 18-29 years of age. The business social network, LinkedIn is the exception, as their main audience are between the ages of 30-64.

The Car Free Day campaign raised public awareness of more sustainable modes of transportation, and challenged drivers to leave their cars at home for the day and go car free or car-lite. Radio, text messaging, posters, transit signage, social media, digital, and an earned media effort were engaged to bring attention to the Car Free Day event and drive the public to the web site to take the pledge. In part, this year's event targeted commuters and employers impacted by SafeTrack. Pledges reached 4,497 which included the 952 pledges generated during the Car Free Day Capital Area College Campus Challenge.

The fall umbrella media buy was launched in October and runs through the end of December, using ads developed in the previous fiscal year. Rideshare radio encompasses a mix of news/talk, music, and Hispanic stations; television; digital; and social media. GRH includes news/talk and music radio stations.

Creative concepts for the new spring campaign were developed and feedback was solicited from the marketing workgroup members. The workgroup made selections from a series of creative visuals and draft radio scripts for both GRH and Rideshare. Winning concepts were 'Problem. Solved' for the Guaranteed Ride Home theme, and 'A Couple of Clicks' for Rideshare. A direct mail piece to be released in late December will incorporate the new creative in a mass mailing to Washington region households.

Advertising for 'Pool Rewards was placed on LinkedIn, Facebook, and NBC4 Television. The Bike to Work Day sponsor drive began in November, and a nomination brochure was created for the 2017 Employer Recognition Awards, based on feedback from the Employer Recognition Awards workgroup.

6. Walk & Ride Challenge

Montgomery County Commuter Services contractors Kristen Blackmon, Bethesda Transportation Solutions, and Traci McPhail, North Bethesda Transportation Center, along with Mark Sofman, Montgomery County Commuter Services staff, presented the fall 2016 Montgomery County Walk & Ride Challenge. For a three-week period in the fall, teams of employees working in the county tracked their steps using pedometers. The main goals of the Walk & Ride challenge were to provide a fun event that encourages team building and helps employees learn how easy it is to get around on foot or by using transit rather than driving.

The Walk & Ride Challenge was promoted through various methods including, flyers, letters, emails, print ads, newsletters, street banners, web site, outreach events, and phone calls to employers. Weekly promotions keep the enthusiasm afloat, such as a 'show us your commute' photo contest. The theme of the Challenge was 'put a little step in your commute'. After signing up, each participant received a bag containing Walk & Ride Challenge branded items such as a t-shirt, pedometer, mug and a walking/transit map.

Those who walked at least 25,000 steps per week were entered into weekly drawings for \$25 gift cards to local businesses. Those who walked at least 50,000 steps per week were entered into a drawing for an Amazon Kindle. Each member of the team with the highest average steps won a \$125 gift card. Runner up team members each won a \$75 gift card, and third place team members won a \$50 gift card.

7. FY16 Guaranteed Ride Home Customer Satisfaction Survey

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff reported preliminary findings from the FY16 Guaranteed Ride Home Customer Satisfaction surveys conducted within the Washington and Baltimore metropolitan regions.

The total number of Washington Region Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) surveys distributed in fiscal year 2016 was 2,258, with a response rate of 16 percent. The vast majority of respondents, 91 percent were pleased with the overall GRH service. Written comments were received by more than three-quarters of respondents, 77 percent. Compliments outweighed criticism at a 3.4 to 1 ratio. For each of the four categories, a good or excellent rating was given by 90 percent or more of the respondents. The average wait time was 16 minutes, and 92 percent waited 30 minutes or less. Personal Illness was the most prevalent reason for using GRH in the Washington region.

The total number of Baltimore Region Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) surveys distributed in fiscal year 2016 was 117, with a response rate of 14.5 percent. The vast majority, 81% of the survey respondents were pleased with the overall GRH service. Written comments were received by 65 percent of respondents, and compliments outweighed complaints by a 3 to 1 margin. The average response wait time was 35.5 minutes, and 52 percent waited 30 minutes or less. Personal Illness was the most prevalent reason for using GRH in the Baltimore region.

8. Calendar of Events/Marketing Round Table

Antoinette Rucker from the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority shared Metro's 2016 holiday shopping guide brochures, happy holiday shopping bags, and playing cards to commemorate the new Metrobus National Harbor-Alexandria line (NH2 bus). She also mentioned Metro's new web site, and large panda statues placed in major Metrorail stations, to promote the National Zoo's ZooLights event.

9. Other Business/Suggested Agenda items for next meeting

The next Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 21, 2017 from 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.