

**MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA
REGIONAL TDM MARKETING GROUP
December 15, 2020**

1. Introductions

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

2. Meeting Minutes

Notes from the September 15, 2020 Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting were approved as written.

3. Commuter Connections FY21 Marketing Activity

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, presented FY21 fall marketing activities. The FY 2021 1st Half Marketing Campaign Summary draft report reflecting marketing activity occurring from July to December 2020 was distributed as an initial draft report.

In the start of FY21, the number of COVID-19 hospitalizations and COVID related deaths appeared under reasonable control which allowed many restrictions to be lifted and for phased re-openings to breathe life back to the region. In late summer, Car Free Day was promoted for both work and non-work trips and commuters and the general public were encouraged to take the online pledge. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, focus shifted to place more emphasis on bicycling, scootering, walking, teleworking, and on employer based ridematching.

Traditional radio, blogs, streaming radio, social media, text messages, donated transit space, and earned media were used to promote Car Free Day 2020. Images developed for the Car Free Day campaign were relevant to working remotely and traveling during the coronavirus pandemic while practicing safe and healthy practices. The total number of Car Free Day pledges for the 2020 event was 3,834. While this was a decrease from the previous year, pledges were still greater in 2020 than in 2015 and 2018.

In 2020, pledges for transit and ridesharing were down dramatically while teleworking received the greatest number of pledges. During a typical year, teleworking has the least number of pledges. Bicycling and walking remained impactful this year, in part because nearly a third who took the Car Free Day pledge biked or walked for recreation or exercise. For the College Campus Challenge, the college with the greatest number of pledges, Georgetown, received Commuter Connections branded face masks and hand sanitizer.

The regional TDM Mass Marketing initiative remained on pause due to the coronavirus pandemic. Commuter Connections, however, continued to provide assistance to essential workers and embarked on its “Commute with Confidence” campaign. Through this nominal marketing budget initiative, guidance was provided to get commuters to work and back home in a safe and healthy manner. Commuter Connections used a combination of paid social media, YouTube, and value add radio exposure from Entercom and WTOP to provide commuters with confidence as they headed back to work as part of the phased

business re-openings. Entercom Radio also interviewed COG/TPB staff for three of its Community Affairs programs.

The Bike to Work Day 2021 sponsor drive began in November and a nomination brochure was created and distributed in early December for the 2021 Employer Recognition Awards. In addition, during the first half of FY21, both summer and fall newsletters were produced.

4. MDOT Walktober

Francine Waters, Maryland Department of Transportation, presented the Walktober initiative, which spotlighted pedestrian safety, health, commuting options, and walking programs. Walk Maryland Day was held on October 7, 2020 and four “Walkinars” (webinars) took place on throughout the month of October. Most webinar attendees reporting learning about the Walkinars through email blasts and a total of 877 attended the online events. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration launched its first-ever national campaign to address pedestrian safety and named October as Pedestrian Safety Month.

An extensive range of interagency state departments and partnerships with outside pedestrian advocates and enthusiasts helped to promote Walktober, many of whom provided testimonials. Outreach for Walktober included a proclamation by the governor, information on the MDOT website, e-blasts, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, and videos from the Maryland Secretary of Transportation. Sixteen counties hosted 70 walks throughout Maryland. Groups of walkers were named “Sole Mates” and individual walkers were coined “Sole-O” walkers.

5. OmniRide Marketing

Ivanna Baez, OmniRide (PRTC), presented its “We’re Ready When You Are” marketing campaign and other activity. After the COVID-19 pandemic hit and stay-at-home orders were given, marketing and advertising was suspended. OmniRide’s focus shifted toward creating signage about the pandemic onboard buses and on the OmniRide website. Appreciation was shown to OmniRide essential transit workers who continued to keep the community moving. These workers were recognized through social media and a webpage with a theme entitled “Sound the Horn”.

In anticipation of the phased re-opening of businesses, OmniRide created “We’re Ready When You Are” and “Welcome Back” campaigns for phases two and three respectively. The two-part campaign was meant to reduce the uncertainty of taking public transportation by demonstrating what OmniRide was doing to keep riders safe. A video was produced showing the cleaning of buses, social distancing signage, wearing of masks etc. to ease riders back to using public transit services. Advertising included boosted Facebook posts, LinkedIn, and print and digital advertising. While wearing facemasks, OmniRide employees participated in socially distanced meet-n-greets with commuters while giving away hand sanitizers, fans, and information.

6. FY20 Guaranteed Ride Home Customer Satisfaction Surveys

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, reported findings from the FY20 Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Customer Satisfaction surveys conducted within the Washington, DC and Baltimore metropolitan regions.

The total number of Washington, DC region GRH surveys distributed in FY 2020 was 1,707, with a response rate of 10 percent. The overwhelming majority of respondents, 97

percent, were pleased with overall service. Written comments were received by 70 percent of respondents, and compliments outweighed criticism by an 8 to 1 margin. For each of the four categories, a “good” or “excellent” rating was given by 96 percent or more of the respondents. The average wait time was 13 minutes, and 96 percent waited 30 minutes or less. At 42 percent, personal illness was the most prevalent reasons for using GRH in the Washington, DC region.

The total number of Baltimore region GRH surveys distributed in FY 2020 was 68, with a response rate of 10 percent. For each of the four categories, a good or excellent rating was given by 100 percent the respondents. Written comments were received by 100 percent of respondents, and no complaints were made. The average wait time was 28 minutes and at 43 percent, overtime was the most common reason for using GRH in the Baltimore region.

7. Metro Marketing

Jake Park, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, presented an overview of “Doing Our Part”, Metro’s COVID-19 recovery marketing campaign. The integrated campaign was launched in October 2020 and different messaging has been used to target riders at various stages of returning. For example, those who stopped using public transit and who were considering a return were comforted with knowing the safety measures put into place. The messaging strategy outlined how both riders and Metro staff could together ensure the Metro system is safe for all. For example, Metro performed enhanced cleaning with hospital-grade disinfectant and placed hand sanitizer stations throughout the system. Riders do their part by using the hand sanitizer, through proper use of face coverings, and by socially distancing. For those who already returned to using the system, signage and electronic messaging was placed at station entrances, platforms, and aboard buses and trains to reinforce safety actions taken and rider requirements.

The marketing campaign includes local and cable TV stations, streaming media services, social media, internet radio/podcasts, and online display ads. Advertising included specific actions riders can take, employee spotlights talking about what Metro is doing such as disinfecting, enforced compliance i.e. “No mask. No Metro”, and the promotion of mobile pay as a contactless way to ride. The campaign is expected to run into 2022, evolving along the way based on reopening phases and as the region returns to normal.

8. Marketing Round Table/Calendar of Events

Meeting participants were invited to discuss COVID-19 response or other marketing related news/plans within their organizations.

Kelly Woodward, Dulles Area Transportation Association, announced a webinar in developmental phase (date and name not yet known). The webinar will discuss legal ramifications of employers requiring employees to return to the workplace.

9. Other Business/Suggested Agenda items for next meeting

The next Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 16, 2021 from 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.