

Regional TDM Marketing Group

February 7, 2006 Meeting

**Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
10:00 a.m. – Training Center**

1. Introductions

2. Minutes of December 6, 2005 Meeting

The minutes were approved as written.

3. FY06 First Half Marketing Campaign

Douglas Franklin of COG distributed the final FY06 First Half Marketing Campaign Summary Report. This document summarizes activity consisting of marketing, advertising and special events conducted by Commuter Connections within the Washington metropolitan area between July and December 2005.

4. Fairfax Connector Celebration

Chris Napolitano from Joint Venture Marketing presented the 20th anniversary promotion for the Fairfax Connector bus service on behalf of the Fairfax County Department of Transportation. Part of the initiative included the development of a new logo and stationery package. The campaign theme was “Tour Fairfax for Just a Buck” and its objectives were to celebrate the 20th year of ongoing service to County residents; increase ridership on the Fairfax Connector by leveraging the anniversary celebration; and brand the Fairfax County transit system as one of the largest local systems in the nation. The strategy was to focus on the low cost of riding and on the expansive service area served by the Connector (the whole county).

Promotional tactics entailed wrapping two Fairfax Connector buses with special anniversary graphics that showcase the many destinations you can travel throughout the county, for just a buck. Other elements included bus back signage on 70 buses; interior car cards in English and Spanish; teen flyers and posters; print advertisements; and chances to win trips to Canada and the Caribbean, as well as chances to win iPods. In addition, a kickoff event took place at the Herndon-Monroe park-and-ride. This event included giveaway items and a ribbon cutting ceremony with guest speakers.

The total cost of the year long campaign is \$80,000 and part of the funding is being offset by corporate sponsorships.

5. DDOT Bus Shelters Program

Lars Etzkorn from DDOT discussed the new Bus Shelter program partnered with Clear Channel. The initiative entails the installation of nearly 800 new bus shelters. Six companies responded to the RFP, and three were selected to make presentations. Mr. Etzkorn noted that Washington, DC was the only major city that has gone through this process without being challenged by special interest groups. This is most likely due to the fact that DDOT proactively sought out opinions and feedback from 12 public agencies and organizations to gain input on the project needs and requirements. Furthermore, nine public meetings were held on the topic. It is unclear at this stage if the shelters will have a uniform look or whether the city may end up with four different styles. Additionally, the colors may end up being a variety, in order to compliment the neighborhoods where they are located. Color options are silver, dark green and black. This will be decided upon by an advisory committee.

Each shelter will contain bus maps, which will be updated annually under the contract, and real-time arrival system electronic displays. The shelters will be “vandal & graffiti resistant” and some will have computerized bike rental systems as well. Ten percent of the advertising to appear will be devoted to PSA’s. The program is slated to generate \$153 million in advertising revenue for the District of Columbia over a twenty year period. The first focus of the new funding source will be applied to the 8th Street initiatives and its neighborhood-oriented retail establishments.

6. Commuter Connections Marketing

Donna Maguire from NDW Communications discussed the upcoming Direct Mail campaign and other Commuter Connections marketing activities for the second half of FY06.

The FY06 campaign will place emphasis on the Commuter Connections ridematching service. Ms. Maguire reiterated that changing behavior from SOV driving to ridesharing presents a larger challenge than the process of encouraging existing alternative mode commuters to sign up for the Guaranteed Ride Home program. The overall ridematch message aims to increase awareness that finding a potential rideshare partner is “free, quick and easy” through Commuter Connections and that “it just takes two to benefit from carpooling/vanpooling” (in terms of the cost savings). The campaign will continue to support ridesharing via the assurance of GRH.

The mailer will be released in waves over ten consecutive weeks beginning late February. The coverage area for the direct mail campaign will include Alexandria,

Arlington, Calvert, Charles, Fairfax, Frederick, Loudoun, Montgomery, Prince George’s, Prince William and Stafford Counties, plus the District of Columbia. Maryland households within close proximity of HOV lanes will receive a mailer which incorporates an HOV message.

The mailing will be targeted based upon the use of a PRIZM analysis of the Commuter Connections rideshare database. The mailer distribution will identify and pinpoint target neighborhoods that are prone to having a higher propensity to carpool/vanpool based on lifestyle segments. The chart below indicates the neighborhood segments targeted for the direct mailer distribution. 85% of the segments have indexes of 190 or higher, meaning these households are at least 90% more likely to use a ridematching service than the “average household”. Using this model, an average household would index at 100, and households less likely to use a ridematching service would index below 100.

Segment	Index	Percentage
Fast Track	296	2%
Country Casuals	286	2%
Upward Bound	260	13%
Country Squires	226	16%
New	224	9%
White Picket	216	6%
Big Sky Families	207	4%
Kid Country.	198	2%
Brite Lites, Li'l	191	21%
God’s Country	190	11%
Other	51-125 Various	14%

Billboards were developed for a March launch in Frederick, Prince William and Prince George's Counties. The billboards will coincide with the direct mail campaign and have a similar look and feel as the mailers. Billboards will appear on arteries leading to main commuter corridors.

The FY06 broadcast marketing plan for Commuter Connections calls for continued high reach & frequency through 60-second radio spots. Total media spending on radio for the second half of the fiscal year will be \$410,000. This encompasses five - two to three week flights beginning Feb 6th and running each month through June. 25% of the rotation in May, approximately 75 spots, will be in support of the Bike to Work Day event, which will be held on Friday May 19, 2006.

60% of the spots will air during a.m. drive, 30% p.m. drive and 10% during off peak hours, Monday through Friday. The rotation will consist of three spots that were newly developed for FY06; ridematching services- "Men, women and sharing" (50% Rotation); overall alternative mode spot "Super Commuter" (25% Rotation); and a GRH ad "Satisfaction Guaranteed" (25% Rotation). The spots will air on twelve main market radio stations and seven outer market stations including Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Spotsylvania, Prince William and Stafford Counties.

Other aspects of FY06 second half marketing activity will include qualitative research conducted with level 2-3 employers via telephone surveys. This research aims to gain insight about challenges employers face and how they feel Commuter Connections may become a greater resource. The data can then be used to develop a communications piece to market our services to employers.

New brochures for GRH, Ridematching and overall Commuter Connections services are under development and will be made available by the end of the first quarter of 2006. The new brochures will take on a sleek look and feel and will incorporate photography.

7. Frederick County TransIt Services

Dotty Dalphon from Frederick County TransIt presented an overview of the County's marketing practices to promote their transit services. Ms. Dalphon distributed a copy of the "Frederick County Guide to Commuting Options" and played a radio spot and video of a vanpooling commercial.

The purpose of Frederick County TransIT's marketing and communications outreach is to raise awareness of available services to the general public and various segments of the population including senior citizens, persons with disabilities, students and commuters who are driving alone. The desired objective is to increase ridership levels for its public, paratransit, & commuter transportation services.

TransIT promotes their services through a wide assortment of methods including, radio spots, PSA's and staff interviews on local radio stations; Printed communications such as brochures and schedules, press releases, newsletters, print advertising in local newspapers, magazines and periodicals; Sports marketing at the local minor league baseball stadium; Attendance at 18 community events and fairs each year; Television ads on popular cable channels as well as the Weather Channel crawl; Cinema ads in local theatres; and Backlit mall ads.

The County's TransIT also has a robust electronic communication component centered on its website. Paid internet advertising and links on various partner web sites generate an average of 8,000 visits per month. Emails are also sent out to all County and City employees to announce new services and transportation alternatives, and on Air Quality Action Days.

Frederick County TransIT has also partnered with the Maryland Transit Administration on radio advertising and signage in support of MARC train service and MTA commuter bus service to the Shady Grove Metro. Results through these efforts have netted more than a 20% increase in ridership in each of the last three years. TransIT has also been the recipient of awards for Outstanding Transit System and Best Fixed Route in Maryland in 2005.

8. Guaranteed Ride Home FY05 Customer Satisfaction Survey

Douglas Franklin presented the preliminary results of the FY05 Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Customer Satisfaction Survey. This survey is designed to gauge how the GRH program is viewed by commuters who use the service. Each month, survey cards are sent out to all customers who have utilized the service within the previous month. Mr. Franklin indicated an overall customer satisfaction rating of 96%. This outstanding mark is a clear indication that the well run GRH program is very popular with Washington area commuters. Customer feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and appreciative, and some GRH customers also offer suggestions for improvements. In general, most suggestions are either cost prohibitive or not within direct control of Commuter Connections. Nonetheless, steps are being taken to continuously improve and refine the program. Evidence of this perpetual improvement is reflective in the steady increase of the customer satisfaction rating since the program's inception. A formal draft report will be distributed at the April meeting.

8. Calendar of Events / Marketing Round Table

This was an opportunity for meeting participants to share recent advertising, marketing collateral and information, and to discuss news or upcoming events happening within their organizations.

9. Other Business / Set Agenda for Next Meeting

Marketing Group members were asked to provide any suggestions for topics for the next Regional TDM Marketing meeting to be held on Tuesday April 4, 2006. No suggestions were offered at this time.