

**REGIONAL TDM MARKETING GROUP
MEETING NOTES
December 21, 2021**

1. Introductions

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

2. Meeting Minutes

Meeting notes from the September 21, 2021 Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting were approved as written.

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

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, reviewed the FY 2022 Washington Metropolitan Region TDM Resource Guide and Strategic Marketing Plan (SMP) final draft report. The SMP serves as a resource for TDM products and services available in the region; features key activity centers; provides a snapshot of planned marketing activity by Commuter Connections and its various network members; and contains summaries of TDM research conducted over the past five years. The SMP includes a profile of the region's population and job growth, its impact on mobility, and how transportation planning and TDM play a vital role as part of the Congestion Management Process. New to the SMP this year was a section on Equity Emphasis Areas, which are small geographic areas with high concentrations of low-income or minority populations compared to the regional average. The SMP also underscored how the pandemic adversely impacted transit and ridesharing. The SMP FY 2022 document was endorsed by the Regional TDM Marketing Group for final release and will be posted to the Commuter Connections website.

4. Commuter Connections FY22 Marketing Activity

Dan O'Donnell and Mark Wirth, Odonnell Company, presented Commuter Connections' FY 2022 regional TDM marketing activity. The FY 2022 1st Half Marketing Campaign Summary document, which reflects marketing activity occurring from July to December 2021, was distributed as an initial draft. The report contains media buy specifics, creative assets, and performance results. A Regional TDM Recovery Campaign began in July 2021, with the main push occurring during the month of August 2021. A portion of the campaign also ran into early September 2021. The campaign's "Look Again" message aimed to help transition commuters back to using transit and ridesharing in a safe and healthy manner. The campaign reached both traditional audiences and those in Equity Emphasis Areas. Approximately two-thirds of the budget was applied toward reaching Equity Emphasis Areas and one-third towards the General Audience Campaign. The total cost of the Regional Recovery Campaign summer 2021 media buy leading up to Labor Day was approximately \$400,000. The media mix for the Regional TDM Recovery Campaign Equity Emphasis Area target audience consisted of radio (streaming), radio (traditional English and Spanish), transit signage, direct mail, text messaging, TV (streaming), social media, and a sponsored article. Media engaged for the Regional TDM Recovery General Audience Campaign consisted of streaming radio, traditional radio, broadcast TV, newsletters, direct mail, transit signage, social media, and text messaging. The second half FY 2022 Regional TDM Recovery Campaign (Phase II) will have a media budget of approximately \$450,000 and the media plan being slotted for a late January 2022 start. The Rideshare creative will continue the "Look Again" message, and GRH will be introduced back into the fold in February 2022.

A marketing campaign promoted the Car Free Day event held on September 22, 2021. Pledges reached nearly 3,000 which was a decrease from the 2020 event, due to the continued impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the region. Compared to 2020 when most were teleworking, in 2021 more workers were back at the office and may have been hesitant to use alternative modes of transportation, particularly buses. The total cost of the Car Free Day media buy budget was approximately \$45,000. The Capital Area Car Free College Campus Challenge winner was the University of Maryland. To help promote Car Free Day, Clean Air Partners worked with ten local social media influencers to build engagement.

The Bike to Work Day sponsor drive began in October 2021 and six sponsors have been secured to-date for a total of \$14,000. The sponsor drive will remain open through January 31, 2022.

To kick off the Employer Recognition Awards call for nominations, a nomination brochure and form were developed and mailed to employers in early December 2021. The awards nomination period will remain open through January 31, 2022.

Marketing campaigns for Commuter Connections' various incentive programs such as 'Pool Rewards, CarpoolNow, and Flextime Rewards will be reintroduced in spring 2022.

5. City of Alexandria Marketing

Renee Moore, City of Alexandria GO Alex program, discussed 2021 marketing activity and DASH's shift to system wide permanently free bus service. The City of Alexandria created residential outreach guides for multi-family units and sent out a mailer to new homeowners. A scooter "petting zoo" was held at a multi-family unit where residents could test ride each brand. A winter Bike to Work Day took place in February 2021 with 45 attendees and in May 2021 more than 200 bicyclists participated in spring Bike to Work Day 2021 at three pit stops. Park(ing) Day was held in September 2021. National Walking Day in April 2021 was promoted via social media to encourage residents to walk on the many trails offered throughout Alexandria. For "Operation Illumination", lights and reflective gear were given away at Metro stations and the Mt. Vernon Trail. More than a dozen bike classes were held with WABA with 130 participants, ranging in age from children to seniors.

GO Alex communicated with 471 employers in 2021 and provided a travel planner for employees to choose alternatives to work. GO Alex monthly employer e-newsletters average a 30 percent opening rate. A parking cash-out pilot program was started for City of Alexandria employees, which charges a daily parking fee of \$5 and conversely awards employees with a daily payment of \$5 for using SOV alternatives for their commute. A Plus50 transit incentive program (SmarTrip card valued at \$50) was also offered to City of Alexandria employees.

In September 2021, the City of Alexandria eliminated fares on DASH buses for all passengers. Additionally, bus service runs all day every 15 minutes, 7 days per week on major transit corridors. DASH is the first transit agency in the region to permanently eliminate fares. DASH ridership increased by 50% from August to October 2021, and October 2021 ridership reflected 72% of pre-pandemic levels.

6. FY21 Guaranteed Ride Home Customer Satisfaction Surveys

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, discussed draft memorandums written for the FY 2021 Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Customer Satisfaction surveys for the Washington and Baltimore metropolitan

regions. Due to the pandemic, the GRH service saw very low usage and consequently low response to the surveys. Specifically, in the Washington, DC region only 12 surveys were returned throughout the entire fiscal year and there were no respondents for the Baltimore region survey whatsoever. Each year, COG/TPB staff provides a formal written report of the GRH Customer Satisfaction Survey findings to the Commuter Connections Subcommittee. Due to the lack of statistically significant response in the Washington, DC region, and the lack of any response in Baltimore, it was decided that formal reports will not be issued for FY 2021. In lieu of the reports, memorandums were prepared explaining the reasoning. The draft memos will be presented at the January 18, 2022 Commuter Connections Subcommittee meeting for review and comment.

7. Marketing Round Table/Calendar of Events

Meeting participants shared recent or upcoming advertising or marketing occurring within their organizations.

Kendall Tiffany, Frederick County TransIT Services, noted the recent wrap up of fall advertising that included radio, native digital advertising, social media, mobile ad scroll, and print media that focused on GRH, commuter options, and other local initiatives such as hiring. The social media and mobile ad scroll will continue until spring 2022, at which time the full marketing campaign will resume.

Korrea Johnston, goDCgo, mentioned the “Get Rolling for Rewards” fall bike campaign that incentivized bicycling during the cooler months by offering a \$200 bike reimbursement or a bike tune-up package from a local bike shop. During the campaign, goDCgo promoted custom bike resources, hosted a holiday bike ride, and conducted bike usage surveys. A school bike incentive offered a \$200 bike reimbursement to teachers and staff to encourage them to commute by bike. goDCgo will relaunch both incentives in 2022.

Brandan Stuckey, Bethesda Transportation Solutions, stated that the Employer Recognition Awards call for nominations is being promoted on social media, newsletter, and through the local Chamber of Commerce. A winter photo contest called ‘Cool Commute’ is starting.

Julia Vaughn, Montgomery County Commuter Services, is assisting a new employer in Friendship Heights with completing and submitting their TDM plan. Outreach has begun to encourage employers to apply for the Employer Recognition Awards. Visits will be arranged in 2022 with employers who participated in the Walk & Ride Challenge.

Traci McPhail, North Bethesda Transportation Center, noted that employers are being met with to discuss return-to-work plans, Commuter Information Days, and telework refresher sessions. Employers are also being encouraged to apply for the Employer Recognition Awards.

Bobbi Greenberg, Arlington County Commuter Services, stated that the County has continued with in-person outreach at farmers markets and other community events. WalkArlington completed an eight-week walking challenge with over 500 participants pledging to walk 30 minutes a day. BikeArlington held a variety of bike classes with WABA including Adult Learn to Ride, Basic Skills Clinics, and Confident City Cycling. BikeArlington had a Halloween Bike Ride and Balaclavas and Baklava craft workshop. BikeArlington will hold a Holiday Lights Bike Ride on December 21, 2021 and is working on winter Bike to Work Day.

Stacey King, Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T), mentioned in-person and virtual active transportation meetings and events to promote active commuting; outreach sessions at the Motor Vehicle Administration Largo branch; mailing and dropping off commuter program packets to employers; and presenting commuter programs to County field staff during mandatory training sessions. DPW&T also launched a winter challenge through social media to encourage new Commuter Connections, incenTrip, and CarpoolNow accounts between December 21, 2021 and January 21, 2022. Plans are being made for advertising on radio, digital banners, takeout boxes, gas stations, and through the Chamber of Commerce.

Holly Morello, OmniRide, noted that the TDM team has been participating in a number of in person and virtual Chamber of Commerce events including policy maker series events with the Mayors of Dumfries and Manassas Park, and an employer vendor event. OmniRide is working with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation's marketing bench contractor to update the OmniRide Rideshare ad campaign.

Renée Moore, City of Alexandria, stated that PSA's are on Capital Bikeshare panels to promote winter Bike to Work Day with discounted hot beverages at St. Elmo's Coffee Pub. The approach for Bike to Work Day pit stops for 2022 is being discussed and outreach is being planned to promote recently installed bikeshare stations. Lastly, GO Alex is hosting a TMP Summit in mid-January 2022.

8. Other Business/Suggested Agenda items for next meeting

The next Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 15, 2022 from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm.