

**MEETING NOTES**  
**REGIONAL TDM MARKETING GROUP**  
**March 17, 2020**

**1. Introductions**

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

**2. Meeting Minutes**

Notes from the December 17, 2019 Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting were approved as written.

**3. Marketing Campaign Summary Report**

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, reviewed substantive updates to the FY2020 1st Half Regional TDM Marketing Campaign Summary report. The report provides a full overview of Commuter Connections marketing activity between July and December 2019. The final document will be posted to SharePoint for download. Notable additions to the report were located within the appendix and included updates to performance measurements, and results of digital campaigns for rideshare, GRH Washington DC, GRH Baltimore, 'Pool Rewards and incenTrip.

**4. Commuter Connections FY20 Marketing Activity**

Dan O'Donnell, Odonnell Company, provided a review of the regional TDM spring marketing campaign and the FY2020 2nd Half Regional TDM Marketing Campaign Summary draft report was distributed.

The FY2020 second half media campaign promotes Ridesharing and Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH), using new advertising developed for spring 2020, in both audio and visual forms. Campaign creative themes are "The Big Deal" for Rideshare, and "Why Ride Alone?" for GRH. The Rideshare and GRH campaigns kicked off in February, with radio ads produced in January 2020. The campaigns will run for a total of twenty weeks, alternating weeks between Rideshare and GRH. The new regional TDM marketing campaigns include for Rideshare: radio, Facebook, and YouTube; for GRH Baltimore: radio, Instagram, and YouTube; and for GRH Washington DC: radio (including Hispanic), Facebook, YouTube, paid and donated transit signage, Popville (sponsored article), and NBC4 (broadcast and streaming TV).

For 'Pool Rewards, nearly 100 live radio reads aired in January 2020 to promote the incentives program on behalf of the I-66 project. The Flextime Rewards marketing campaign started in February and includes social media, and wtop.com and Federal News Radio website banner ads. The incenTrip marketing campaign included social media and Google. Considering the COVID-19 pandemic and its resulting drastic slowdown of commuter travel within the region, Commuter Connections will be suspending its mass marketing campaign until further notice. The exception is for Telework marketing, currently on several social media platforms.

The Bike to Work Day (BTWD) 2020 sponsorship drive secured 18 sponsors reaching \$56,000 in cash. A total of 100,000 BTWD flyers, rack cards, posters, plus flyers translated into Spanish were printed and distributed to pit stop managers and employers throughout the region. Other marketing items for BTWD will include radio, T-shirts, and vinyl banners. Registration for BTWD officially launched with a COG press release on March 2, 2020 with an announcement on social media. The fate of hosting the annual bicycling event is pending serious and careful discussion regarding large gatherings and crowd safety.

#### **5. VRE Marketing**

Cindy King, Virginia Railway Express (VRE), presented marketing activities of the commuter rail service. Different marketing tactics are individually geared toward each of three audiences: new long-term riders, maintaining existing ridership, and "daytrippers" and short-term riders. Website and search engine optimization is used to improve VRE's internet search engine rankings. Each station has a listing on Google, while sponsored (paid) ads on social media provide low cost exposure to targeted audiences. Standalone display units are used at commuter fairs in situations when staff is stretched beyond availability. This unique arrangement allows presence at multiple locations occurring simultaneously. Riders guides and RIDE Magazine inform riders of VRE service information as well as other transportation and community matters. For other communications, "Train Talks" (subscriber-based alerts and updates by email or text), press releases, and station messaging are used. Some of VRE's employer outreach includes SmartBenefits® webinar/materials and HR packages. VRE will be working with regional and local partners to assist commuters and other travelers impacted by Metro's platform improvement project.

#### **6. Alexandria Marketing**

Thomas Hamed, City of Alexandria, provided an update on the jurisdiction's GO Alex TDM marketing initiatives. GO Alex helps to increase mobility and improve air quality through the promotion of transportation alternatives for residents and workers. GO Alex also assists employers by creating customized commuter programs through workshops and meetings. The City is currently developing a plan to rollout a SmartBenefits +50 program, similar to neighboring Fairfax County. The incentive program offers employees (through their employer) a free \$50 SmarTrip® card just to try transit. The retail side of GO Alex provides visibility for the program by operating a Mobile Store that visits Metrorail stations, community centers, and libraries. Water taxi reimbursement program, parking cash-out support, and Transportation Management Plans are other programs, planning, and support. Collateral

and giveaway items are developed and used for general marketing initiatives and transportation events. Facebook and other social media are used to promote services and make announcements.

**7. Calendar of Events/Marketing Round Table**

There were no announcements made by the Committee for this agenda item.

**8. Other Business/Suggested Agenda items for next meeting**

The next Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 16, 2020 from noon – 2:00 p.m.