



REGIONAL TDM MARKETING GROUP

MEETING NOTES

September 17, 2019

1. Introductions

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

2. Meeting Minutes

Notes from the June 18, 2019 Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting were approved as written.

3. Change of Chairpersons

Antoinette Rucker, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, was presented with a plaque and thanked for her service as Chairperson of the FY 2019 Regional TDM Marketing Group. Semia Hackett, Prince George's County, was announced as the new Chair for FY 2020, and Bobbi Greenberg, Arlington County Commuter Services, was announced as the new FY20 Vice Chair.

4. Marketing Campaign Summary Report

The FY 2019 Second Half Marketing Campaign Summary final report reflecting marketing activity between January and June 2019 was presented. Substantive additions to the report from the previous draft were reviewed including media impressions, the Employer Recognition Awards print ad, sponsored WTOP ads, performance measures, and digital media results.

5. FY 2020 Marketing Communications Plan

The Marketing Communications Plan and Schedule outlines Commuter Connections' planned regional marketing strategy for FY 2020 to create awareness and generate interest in Ridesharing, GRH, Incentives Programs, Employer Outreach, and Special Events. On August 21, 2019 the document was posted in draft form onto SharePoint for an open comment period through the end of the month. All edits and comments received were worked into the final document. Each FY 2020 Work Program component listed an objective, target market, tactics and media budget allocation. The document also includes timeline schedules for FY 2020 creative development and media campaigns.

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
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6. **I-395 Express Lanes**

Mike McGurk from Transurban presented on the upcoming (late fall 2019) opening of the I-395 Express Lanes and its education and marketing campaigns. The project is a public-private partnership with the Virginia Department of Transportation and Transurban, and converts two reversible HOV Lanes to three Express Lanes between Edsall Road and the District line; adds a new fourth southbound general-purpose lane between Duke Street and Edsall Road; improves traffic flow at the Eads Street interchange; provides transit/carpool access at the Pentagon; installs new and modifies existing sound walls; and provides an annual \$15 million investment in transit improvements.

Work will continue during non-peak hours after the I-395 Express Lanes grand opening in order to install sound walls, and to work on the fourth general purpose lane between Duke Street to Edsall Road. After opening, the Seminary Road south ramp will remain HOV and drivers will need an E-ZPass Flex. New signage will let travelers know that tolling will begin after next exit.

Slugging vehicles must travel on the I-395 Express Lanes with their E-ZPass Flex set to HOV-mode. When exiting at Eads Street to drop off sluggers, drivers must switch back to toll-mode to reenter. The driver will not be charged a toll if they reenter within a reasonable time frame during their trip (not yet defined).

An educational campaign will occur from August 2019 to February 2020 to prepare and educate travelers about understanding the rules and benefits of the new I-395 Express Lanes. The campaign consists of earned media, signage, events, and stakeholder outreach. A paid advertising campaign will run from September 2019 through January 2020 and include online, radio, keyword searches, out-of-home, and print advertising.

7. **Commuter Connections FY2020 Marketing Activity**

Dan O'Donnell, Odonnell Company, discussed FY 2020 marketing activity including the 2019 Car Free Day event, the upcoming fall media buy, and written conceptual approaches for the FY20 spring marketing campaign. The Car Free Day campaign continued the same "Drop it for a Day" message as the previous year. The call to action directed area workers, residents and students to go online and take the pledge to use transportation alternatives on September 21-23, 2019. A promotion with Nift provides a \$30 promocode credit to all who take the Car Free Day pledge, valid at local participating merchants. In addition, 16 sponsors donated prizes for the regional raffle.

The Car Free Day marketing campaign started the first week of September and will continue through the week leading up to the event. It comprises of radio on five iHeart area stations which are promoting a bike giveaway contest through Brilliant Bicycles. In addition, DC101 is giving a Pizza Party to the college with the most pledges through Lido's Pizza. A pre-roll Car Free Day video is running on YouTube, and a banner ad with companion audio is running on Spotify. On September 11, 2019, a sponsored article ran on the Popville blog, which focuses on DC neighborhoods. On September 16, 2019 a sponsored article will appear on WTOP.com entitled "7 Ways You Can Make an Impact This Car Free Day". Bus signage was donated by Arlington Transit, Fairfax Connector, Montgomery County Ride On, Metrobus, and Prince George's County.

The upcoming fall FY20 regional TDM mass marketing campaign will use ads that were originally produced for the spring FY19 campaign. The campaign themes are "Why Rideshare? Why Not?" for Rideshare and "Don't Freak Out" for GRH. The media buy for fall 2019 is under development. Planning stages for the spring FY20 marketing campaign were reviewed, and several written concepts were presented. The state funding agencies will review and comment on creative designs developed at their October meeting, after which, marketing workgroup members will also have an opportunity to review and comment on the materials. The creative materials will be refined based on the collective feedback and finalized for the spring campaign.

8. Metro Platform Improvement Project

Marc Bowman and Morgan Bassford, Sharp and Company, represented the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) in their presentation on Metro's platform reconstruction and outreach. The project which occurred during summer 2019 was performed to make the outdoor Metrorail station platforms south of Reagan National Airport safer and more accessible. The station closures were the longest in WMATA history and put shuttle operations into place which lasted more than 100 days and involved 1,200 staff, 219 buses, 26,000 daily trips, and more than two million customer trips.

Outreach was very successful in creating awareness of the pending shutdowns as 98.4 percent of respondents from a WMATA rider survey knew of the station closures in advance. After outreach was performed, 94 percent of respondents understood why the station shutdowns were taking place; 77 percent had a good understanding of their alternative travel options; 74 percent felt that Metro was making the right decisions to ensure safety; yet only 38 percent believed the stations would reopen on time.

Street teams and brochures helped communicate news of the closures. A paid social media campaign on Facebook and Instagram reached 100,000 people within zip codes near the affected stations. A week before the stations reopened an earned media campaign was deployed consisting of emails to stakeholders, kiosk displays, blog updates, and employer outreach. Tours and site visits were given to the media, as well as access to WMATA General Manager, Paul Wiedefeld. On September 9, 2019 Metro executives, staff and street teams personally welcomed riders back to Metro with giveaways. Metrorail levels will be monitored closely to evaluate the return of ridership.

9. FY20 Strategic Marketing Plan

The FY20 Regional TDM Resource Guide and Strategic Marketing Plan report (SMP) is an annual guide that serves as a resource for current and planned marketing strategies and activities conducted within the Washington metropolitan region by Commuter Connections and its network members. It contains a profile of the region and forecasted population and employment growth trends. Other sections include regional activity centers, TDM product profiles with benefits and challenges of each, and summaries of recent TDM research. The draft report was inclusive of initial edits received during the first round of changes that took place in August 2019. Commuter Connections network members who have not yet contributed were asked to provide updates to sections of the report pertaining to their organizations by October 31, 2019. The final draft report will be distributed at the December 2019 Regional TDM Marketing meeting for endorsement.

10. Calendar of Events/Marketing Round Table

Meeting participants shared recent advertising/marketing occurring within their organizations.

Gladys Hurwitz, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), noted that for Car Free Days, MARC will be operating bike cars with full-size racks across all three MARC train lines on September 20 and 23, 2019. Also, on those same dates, MDOT representatives will be at the BWI Marshall rail station to share information on commuter options.

MDOT will be conducting a business webinar on October 16, 2019 on “How to make commuter benefits easy for your business”. Guest speakers include Janiece Timmons, WMATA, to talk about SmartBenefits and Tim Nizer, MDOT, to discuss the MTA CharmPass app and SmartBenefits integration. Registration is available at CommuterChoiceMaryland.com, including a quarterly webinar schedule. Information from previous webinars are also available on the website.

11. Other Business/Suggested Agenda items for the next meeting

The next Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 17, 2019 from 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. in the COG Boardroom.