



## **FY12 REGIONAL TDM MARKETING GROUP**

### **Meeting Notes**

**September 20, 2011**

#### **1. Introductions**

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

#### **2. Minutes of June 21, 2011 Meeting**

The meeting notes from the June 21, 2011 meeting were approved as written.

#### **3. Change of Chairpersons**

The FY 2011 Vice Chair, Christine Rodrigo, Public Relations Specialist of the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission will become the new Chairperson of the FY 2012 Regional TDM Marketing Group. The new Vice Chair will be Antoinette Rucker, Sr. Business Development Account Executive, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), Office of Marketing.

#### **4. Commuter Connections FY11 Marketing Campaign Summary Report**

The Final FY11 2nd Half Marketing Campaign Summary report was included in the meeting announcement and reviewed. The report provided detail about the media buy and each of the various components of the Commuter Connections marketing campaign from January 2011 through June 2011. Some of the unique features included gas pump toppers for Ridematching, and a new television ad and a Flippin' Pizza promotion for GRH.

## **5. FY12 Marketing Workgroup Volunteers**

FY 2011 Marketing Workgroup members were recognized for valuable input, members included Mirza Donegan, North Bethesda Transportation Center; Kristin Howard, goDCgo, representing the District Department of Transportation; and Rico Fleshman, VPSI Inc. Committee members who volunteered to serve on the FY12 Commuter Connections Marketing Workgroup are Mark Sofman, Montgomery County Commuter Services; Bobbi Greenburg, Arlington County; and Antoinette Rucker, WMATA. Workgroup members will review and comment on creative and radio scripts developed for the Commuter Connections FY 2012 spring campaign and other marketing developed throughout the fiscal year.

## **6. InterCounty Connector**

Glenn Saffran, Deputy Director MARC and Commuter Bus from the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) presented on the ICC Express bus service. The ICC is an 18.8 mile toll road linking I-270 and I-95. The MTA introduced express bus service in March 2011 with routes from Gaithersburg to Fort Meade, and from Gaithersburg to BWI Airport, both with a flat fare of \$5 one way. MTA's plan is to initiate additional service in early 2012 including bus routes from Frederick to College Park and from Germantown to College Park. General marketing efforts for ICC express bus service cost \$219,000 and included radio, print, bus advertising, signage, publications, giveaways, social media, and outreach events. Marketing specifically targeting the BWI route was \$207,834 included transit shelters, print, radio, and a Total Traffic Network sponsorship. Ridership has grown steadily since the launch as more riders have become aware of the service. In particular, the bus route from Gaithersburg to BWI Airport grew ridership from approximately 1,000 monthly passenger trips to nearly 4,000 in just five months.

## **7. Commuter Connections FY12 Marketing Activity**

Dan O'Donnell from The Odonnell Company discussed FY 2012 marketing activity including Car Free Day and presented conceptual approaches for the FY 2012 spring marketing campaign. The Draft FY 2012 Marketing Communications Plan and Schedule was posted onto the Commuter Connections Extranet on August 12th and a two week open comment period was given through August 26th. The final document incorporated all edits and was included as part of the meeting

announcement. This document outlines the target audience and tactics used for each of the TDM services including GRH and Ridematching, and outlines the media budget allocation for each. It also plans out the FY 2012 creative development schedule from concept to campaign launch.

The fall FY 2012 marketing campaign will be kicked off in October 2011. The campaign will include TV and radio for GRH, and Google paid keywords and radio for Rideshare. The radio includes a Hispanic station for both Rideshare and GRH. The radio spot themes are "Save Half" for Rideshare and "Don't Flip Out" for GRH which were produced as part of the spring FY11 campaign. A half page vertical advertisement was placed into a Relocation Guide to publish in October as part of a newspaper distributed at military bases throughout the region. Commuter Connections produced and distributed the summer 2011 newsletter and it was distributed to the ACT! employer database and TDM stakeholders. The cover story was on the 2011 Employer Recognition Award winners.

Radio, posters, facebook ads, bus sides and shelters, email blasts and an earned media effort were created to bring attention to the Car Free Day event and drive the public to [www.carfreemetrodc.com](http://www.carfreemetrodc.com) to make a pledge to go car free. The radio spot created for Car Free Day was done so with input from the Steering Committee and reminded listeners to spend less time in traffic and "stop and smell the roses". Free transit ad space was donated by Arlington County, Fairfax County Connector, Frederick TransIT, Montgomery County Commuter Services and WMATA. Emails blasts were sent out to stakeholders, universities, employers, and past Car Free and Bike to Work Day participants. Clean Air Partners also send an email blast. Text messages were sent to those who opted in to receive. A total of three text messages were sent out with different variations on "tell a friend" messages. Facebook and Twitter postings were made on a regular basis to keep the Car Free Day event in the social network limelight and garner more friends and followers.

A coupon for Flippin' Pizza was created and emailed to those who pledged through the designated cut-off date. A promotion was coordinated with WMAL to give away Congressional Handbooks for Car Free Day. At its July 20th meeting, the TPB adopted a proclamation to make Sept 22nd Car Free Day, and an enlarged proclamation was signed by TPB Chair Muriel Bowser. Three press releases were sent out within a two month span leading up to Car Free Day as part of the earned media campaign. Several media interviews took place about Car Free Day, including on WMAU and Metro Networks. The Capital Car Free Campus Competition was a

friendly-intercampus challenge among six major universities in the Washington region which encouraged faculty and staff to bike, walk and use transit on Car Free Day. Participants included American University, George Mason University, George Washington University, Georgetown University, the University of the District of Columbia, and the University of Maryland, with American University having the greatest number of pledges. Grand prizes donated included an Apple iPad, courtesy of Base Technologies and a Kona bicycle, courtesy of BicycleSPACE. The goal for Car Free Day pledges for the 2011 event is 10,000.

Work began on the FY12 regional marketing campaign to be kicked off in February of 2012. Creative concepts for the second half of the fiscal year were developed and feedback was solicited from marketing workgroup members. The marketing consultant reviewed the various stages of planning for the FY 2012 marketing campaign, including the creative and media selection process, and the creative development schedule.

## **8. PRTC Marketing Activity**

Christine Rodrigo from the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission presented about PRTC's 25th Anniversary and other recent marketing activity. A series of contests were held throughout September 2011 with prizes ranging from \$25 to \$250. Contests included "find the hidden logo" on PRTC's web site and a trivia contest. There was also a community give-back event, where donated items were collected on buses to be given to two social service agencies in Prince William County. Those who donated got a free ride coupon and were entered into a prize drawing. A video was posted to You Tube showing how PRTC positively impacts the community. Outreach for the anniversary included newspaper ads, a press release, exterior bus ads, decals on bus windows, posters on buses, email blasts, and a new anniversary web page. A stakeholder celebration was held for 100 guests in September with keynote speaker Sean Connaughton, Secretary of Transportation for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Ms. Rodrigo also discussed the OmniLink Teen Summer Pass program, a \$30 unlimited pass for riders 13-19 years of age for use between June 1st and September 3<sup>rd</sup>. The point of the program is to encourage transit habits in children so that it may stick with them throughout adulthood. A fun and colorful tri-fold brochure was developed to explain the program. In its fourth year of existence, nearly 200 passes were sold. At the conclusion of the program an online survey was conducted to assess the program and allow for improvements.

## **9. FY12 Draft Regional TDM Resource Guide and Strategic Marketing Plan**

The FY12 Regional TDM Resource Guide and Strategic Marketing Plan Draft report (SMP) was included as part of the meeting announcement. The SMP is an annual guide that serves as a resource for planned marketing strategy and activities conducted within the Washington metropolitan region by Commuter Connections and its network members. It also contains summaries of recent TDM research from the last several years. Commuter Connections network members were asked to contribute by updating sections of the report pertaining to their organizations. The report was inclusive of initial edits received during the first round of changes that took place in August. Final edits will be taken through October 31st, and the final draft report will be distributed at the December meeting for adoption and release. The draft report will be posted onto SharePoint in PDF form and made available for download, a link to SharePoint will be sent to Committee members. An email account is being set up specifically to capture comments and updates.

## **10. Calendar of Events/ Marketing Round Table**

Meeting participants shared recent advertising/marketing collateral and discussed news or upcoming events happening within their organizations.

Buddy Alves from the MTA discussed the success of the Grand Prix IndyCar/Firestone Indy Lights Series recently held in Baltimore during the week of August 29 - September 4, 2011. The MTA also updated GRH brochures for the Baltimore market with new photos.

## **11. Other Business/Suggested Agenda items for next meeting**

For future direct mail campaigns, it was agreed upon by Commuter Connections that network members would be notified in advance of the zip codes where materials are being distributed.

Next FY12 Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting date:  
Tuesday, December 20, 2011 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm, Board Room