



**REGIONAL TDM MARKETING GROUP
MEETING NOTES
June 16, 2020**

1. Introductions

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

2. Meeting Minutes

Notes from the March 17, 2020 Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting were approved as written.

3. Commuter Connections FY20 Marketing Activity

Dan Odonnell, Odonnell Company, provided a review of the abridged Regional TDM Mass Marketing spring campaign, and Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, reviewed updates to the FY20 2nd Half Regional TDM Marketing Campaign Summary draft report.

The Rideshare campaign “Why Rideshare? Why Not?” and the Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) campaign “Don’t Freak Out” began in February 2020 and by mid-March were placed on pause due to the coronavirus pandemic. The stay-at-home directives initiated to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus caused a lack of demand for TDM services. As a result, public transportation schedules were drastically limited and traffic congestion was essentially diminished. Other in-progress marketing campaigns for Commuter Connections’ incentives programs were also necessarily placed on hold or ceased to begin.

More emphasis had already been placed on teleworking, which fit well into maintaining continuity of operations, as many employers looked for guidance and assistance to shift to a remote workforce model. Commuter Connections began promoting its vast teleworking online resources and content available to employers and employees. Bike to Work Day, which was to be held in May 2020 was cancelled for the entirety of the calendar year. The Guaranteed Ride Home program however remained a vital resource for essential workers, and paid messaging was crafted to address the still operational GRH program during the pandemic. As part of the GRH radio buy, value-added PSA spots were secured to announce the Orange and Silver line Metro station closures. An email was also sent to over 4,000 transit riders in Virginia that are part of the Commuter Connections database.

The annual Employer Recognition Awards ceremony will take place virtually on June 23, 2020 through the National Press Club broadcast studio and will be live streamed on YouTube and Facebook. To recognize the employer winners, a display ad will appear in the Wall Street Journal on the Friday following the event. Videos, digital signage, and a program booklet were created for the event. Winners received a trophy, custom press release, and electronic winner seal.

4. Marketing Workgroup FY21

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, recognized the following Commuter Connections marketing workgroup member volunteers for serving in FY20: Antionette Rucker, Washington Area Metropolitan Transportation Authority; Michelle Golden, Montgomery County Commuter Services; and Sharon Affinito, Loudoun County Commuter Services. For FY21, a volunteer from each state will serve on the marketing workgroup and review and comment on regional TDM marketing creative. FY21 workgroup members were announced as follows: George Clark, Tri-County Council for Southern MD; Thomas Hamed, City of Alexandria; and a workgroup member from DDOT/goDCgo to be named.

5. Prince George's County Marketing

Thomasine Johnson, Prince George's County Department of Public Works & Transportation, provided an overview of the county's TDM marketing programs which are in the process of rebranding RideSmart and introducing new TDM initiatives. RideSmart aims to create partnerships between the business, government, and educational communities to build a sustainable and livable Prince George's County. RideSmart works to increase awareness of and access to efficient transit and other alternative travel options within Prince George's County and surrounding jurisdictions. Current marketing tactics include community outreach events, employer e-mail blasts, social media, radio, and gas pump advertising. Community events are held throughout the year which provide an opportunity to engage with the general public, many of whom rely on public transportation. Some of the events include the Hispanic Festival, and the Senior Picnic where the Call-A-Bus and Call-A-Cab programs are promoted. Through the Economic Development Partnership, employers were invited to participate in a series of MTA webinars such as "Business Benefits of Bike and Walk Friendly Workplaces". The County is also seeking a partnership with the Prince George's County Chamber of Commerce.

Additional marketing opportunities are being explored such as movie theaters, at the Motor Vehicle Administration offices, and with the minor league baseball team, Bowie Baysox. A focus will also be placed on VisionZero to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, plus ways to promote the introduction of new services such as microtransit and circulators. RideSmart is currently revamping its website to provide a more user-friendly atmosphere and navigation. The website will include trip planners, vanpool listings, and current traffic and travel information. A telework resource page on the website will allow the County to survey commuters about transit services and future programs.

6. District of Columbia Marketing

Samantha Huff and Korrea Johnston, goDCgo, co-presented on the District's TDM

marketing programs, which provides transportation information, education, and assistance to commuters, residents, employers, schools, and tourists. Brand awareness for goDCgo includes using posters on Capital Bikeshare stations and on goDCgo's Get Around Guides. The guides help both local and out of town visitors navigate popular DC museums and landmarks, mostly centered around the national mall. The guides are customized for special events such as the Cherry Blossom Festival and Independence Day Celebrations. Depending on the campaign and social media platform used, audiences are engaged through one or more posts a day/week. As a general practice, goDCgo is looking to produce more video content for its various marketing.

Promotions have included Telework Week, Commuter Challenge, Spring Pedal Push, GoGreen to SaveGreen and Pedal for Wellness. Telework Week occurs in early March, which provided a chance to win a goDCgo swag-loaded backpack. A Commuter Challenge in September asked employers to encourage employees to log their daily trips. The Spring Pedal Push invites employers to join Capital Bikeshare's Corporate Membership program or expand employee participation. A new initiative in 2019, GoGreen to SaveGreen, emphasized savings earned from riding a bike. As part of the promotion, a bicycle was given away, plus the first 100 who took the pledge received an annual Capital Bikeshare membership. The campaign included paid social media ads, WAMU radio, and digital ads on popular DC blogs, DCist and Greater Greater Washington.

During COVID-19, essential workers were offered free 30-day memberships to Capital Bikeshare. A Commute with Care tip sheet was developed focused on safety for bike and scooter sharing and riding public transit. Packages with goDCgo branded face masks and hand sanitizer were sent to ten employers with essential workers. goDCgo's current campaign, Pedal for Wellness, began in May and runs through the end of June to promote bicycling for mental and physical wellness while practicing safe social distancing. Participants receive a chance to win a folding bike or a \$500 bike-gear package. A co-promotional activity during the Pedal for Wellness campaign included a helmet decorating contest in which the winner received a \$100 Amazon gift card.

7. FY21 Strategic Marketing Plan

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, discussed the Regional TDM Resource Guide and Strategic Marketing Plan (SMP) report. Typically, to facilitate ease of editing, Committee members are sent a Word formatted document of sections pertaining to their organizations. Among various sections of the document, large portions contain write ups of planned marketing activity for each jurisdiction and Regional Activity Centers. The first draft of the report encompassing network member updates would be issued at the September Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting, and the final report in December. Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, questioned the need to issue the SMP document this year, due to a lack of TDM marketing amidst the Coronavirus pandemic and possible second wave. Feedback on not producing the Regional SMP and Resource Guide is encouraged. For now, the production of the document will be placed on hold and will more than likely not be produced for FY2021.

8. Marketing Round Table

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

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB, mentioned that COG has created a Commute with Confidence webpage with COVID-19 Commuting Tips & Resources, and is running GRH PSA's on radio and social media for essential workers who need a ride home due to an emergency, illness, or unscheduled overtime.

George Clark, Tri County Council for Southern Maryland, will sit on a panel to discuss telework at the ACT Virtual Conference in August and is engaging with the local Chambers of Commerce regarding transitioning back to work.

Kelly Woodward, Dulles Area Transportation Association, stated that a series of webinars are being held with the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority, and the Black and Hispanic Chambers of Commerce.

Brandon Stuckey, Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP), noted the development of a Bingo game to promote Telework.

Nancy Huggins, Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), wrote an article for the Transportation Association of Maryland's newsletter entitled "How COVID-19 Changed TDM Strategies"

Ivanna Baez, Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission, mentioned a "We're ready when you are" campaign to promote the June 22 increase in OmniRide commuter bus service.

9. Other Business/Suggested Items for Next Meeting

Nancy Huggins, MTA, suggested learning more about BUP's telework Bingo game.

The next Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting is Tuesday, September 15, 2020 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.