

Regional TDM Marketing Group

Meeting Notes Tuesday, June 17, 2008

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

COG Board Room - 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

1. Introductions

2. Minutes of March 18, 2008 Meeting

The minutes were approved as written

3. District of Columbia Bike Sharing

Anna McLaughlin from DDOT discussed the introduction of the “SmartBike” bike sharing system which is an automated bicycle rental system developed by ClearChannel. The District’s will place 120 red four-speed bicycles at ten kiosks between Georgetown and Chinatown. Participants in the program join online and pay an annual subscriber fee of \$40. No separate charges apply for using the Bicycles. Cards issued to subscribers are swiped at the various bike stations. Bikes may be rented and returned from different locations provided there is an open return spot available. The bikesharing system will have its own web site.

4. Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission Update

Althea Evans from the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) discussed a variety of new programs and activities underway at the transit agency to improve service to riders. In November 2007, PRTC installed bicycle racks on all OmniLink Cross County Connector buses and Metro Direct buses. The transit agency is exploring bike rack installation on commuter buses. In February 2008, PRTC introduced the Interactive Voice Response phone system (IVR) that allows OmniLink local bus riders to request and manage off-route trips without needing to speak directly with a customer service agent. Off-route is defined as trips which travel $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile beyond the scheduled route. This is marketed to mothers with dependant children and seniors. A surcharge of \$1 is collected. May 2008 marked the completion of PRTC’s SmarTrip rollout. The cards are now accepted on all PRTC buses and bus tokens are no longer accepted. Brochures were developed in both English and Spanish for all of the various new programs. Ms. Evans shared that email is one of the best ways to communicate to existing commuter bus riders and traditional letters sent through the mail is the best way to communicate with local bus patrons. This summer, PRTC introduced a Teen Summer Pass, a sticker that is placed on a student’s photo identification card that allows unlimited rides on the bus system, for a nominal flat fee of \$20. The program was not as successful as anticipated however, in terms of the volume of stickers purchased. Ms. Evans noted that older teens were more receptive. The program was marketed in schools and PRTC felt that the difficulty may have been competition with prom preparation. Focus groups will be established to gain student feedback on how to possibly repackage the program. The PRTC web site has received a makeover to enhance the site and to better

address 508C compliance. New features include new Google based maps, and an improved trip planner. In the fall of 2008, PRTC will be rolling out bolder bus signage with universal symbols. The transit agency is moving away from the current cartoon type graphics and will color-code the signs to correspond with each printed route schedule.

5. StreetSmart Campaign

Mike Farrell from COG provided a recap of the 2008 Street Smart campaign which rolled out a new theme in the spring. The same campaign will be used in the fall. Pedestrian fatalities accounted for 19% of the total traffic fatalities in the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland and northern Virginia from 2002-2006. Bicycles represented 1% of total traffic fatalities during that same time period. This year the campaign downgraded the focus on bicycles. The Street Smart campaign first started in 2002 to encourage behavioral change through public education and awareness. The Street Smart initiative for 2008 geared toward motorists and pedestrians had a media budget of \$389,000 and took place in March. The program is coordinated as part of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), and is supported by federal funds with matching contributions from WMATA and TPB member governments at a .05 cents per capita rate.

To an area as congested as the greater Washington region, the challenge of pedestrian and bicyclist safety is of grave concern to the public, law enforcement, and transportation officials alike. The Street Smart campaign used media outreach and stepped up law enforcement in an effort to change motorist and pedestrian behavior, in order to reduce related deaths and injuries. This is communicated by increasing awareness of the dangerous results of such crashes; recommending actions to reduce risks; and increasing awareness of law enforcement action against unsafe and illegal behavior. The month long wave of advertising themed "Cross like your life depends on it" appeared on radio, transit signage and internet advertising. Additionally, a Safety Tips brochure was created for drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists. Male motorists aged 18 to 34 are disproportionately involved in collisions of all types, including collisions with pedestrians and bicyclists. Radio allows for cost-effective targeting of this demographic through select stations catering to the driving audience. Pedestrians are more difficult to reach than motorists because they do not typically carry radios, so they are targeted through the signage. Some ads were created in Spanish and strategically placed based on area. The Spanish translation was a hybrid of Guatemalan and El Salvadorian, the two groups with the highest propensity for pedestrian accidents.

The Street Smart press briefing was handled through Stratacomm and a kickoff was held at the Bailey's Crossroads area of Fairfax County in March. The press event was hosted by Supervisor Penny Gross and over two dozen law enforcement officers were present.

6. Commuter Connections FY08 Spring Marketing Activity

Dan O'Donnell from Odonnell Company presented a recap of FY 2008 second half Commuter Connections marketing activities. Advertising included radio, bus shelters, internet banners, gas pump toppers, coffee cup sleeves and direct mail. Photos of these items in action were shared with the group. The campaign also shared audio of on-air promotions conducted with several network members. The earned media component included interviews with major media outlets. Mr. O'Donnell noted that

value-added promotions with radio stations equated to \$102,510 in free value. A paid promotion was arranged with WTOP's Sprawl & Crawl. Lastly, special events included Bike to Work Day, various Live Near Your Work seminars and the Employer Recognition Awards program to occur in late June. January through May 2008 Rideshare and GRH applications increased by 45 and 56% respectively, compared to the previous time period in 2007. The final draft of the FY08 First Half Marketing Campaign Summary Report was issued to provide further detail regarding the various marketing components of the campaign. The presentation also included steps outlining the FY09 marketing approach as noted below.

June 2008	Analyze research and results from recent campaigns
July 2008	Develop Marketing Brief - post to Extranet for Marketing Committee Review
Aug 2008	Collect Feedback from Marketing Committee via Extranet
Sept 2008	Present conceptual approaches to Mrktng Committee at Reg. TDM Marketing Grp Mtg
Oct 2008	Develop approach based on Marketing Committee feedback
Nov-Dec 08	Develop creative with feedback from Marketing Workgroup

7. FY09 Call for Volunteers

Staff called for volunteers to serve as part of the FY09 Marketing Workgroup. One member from each state who has not recently served was asked to step forward. During the meeting Dotty Dalphon from Frederick County offered to serve.

8. FY09 Regional TDM Resource Guide and Strategic Marketing Plan (SMP)

Staff discussed procedures for making revisions to the upcoming FY09 SMP report. COG will communicate to network members via email and phone follow-up in order to gain updates for the FY09 publication. For reference purposes, a final copy of the FY08 report was distributed to the group. Revisions will be collected through mid August and COG will issue a first draft of the FY09 SMP report at the September marketing meeting.

9. Calendar of Events / Marketing Round Table

Meeting participants shared recent advertising/marketing collateral and discussed news and upcoming events happening within their organizations, including:

- DDOT held a Live Near Your Work workshop at National's stadium June 17
- Dump the Pump will occur on June 19
- Try Transit will occur during the week of September 22
- VDOT is launching www.vahotlanes.com

10. Other Business/Suggested Agenda for next meeting

No other business was discussed.