



**REGIONAL TDM MARKETING GROUP
MEETING NOTES
September 19, 2023**

1. Introductions

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

2. Meeting Minutes

Notes from the June 20, 2023 Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting were approved as written.

3. Change of Chairpersons

Jaime McKay, Frederick County Transit Services, was presented with a plaque to recognize her service as Chair of the FY 2023 Regional TDM Marketing Group Committee. Robin Geiger, Fairfax County, was announced as the new Chair for FY 2024, and Antoinette Rucker, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority was announced as the new Vice Chair for FY 2024.

4. Marketing Campaign Summary Report

The FY 2023 Second Half Marketing Campaign Summary final report summarizes Commuter Connections' FY 2023 marketing activity that occurred between January and June 2023. Marketing during the second half of FY 2023 included the Spring Umbrella campaign, Bike to Work Day, incenTrip (Regional & MDOT), Flextime, and the Employer Recognition Awards. Substantive additions to the report from the previous draft document were reviewed, along with updated performance measures, and digital media results.

5. 495 NEXT Project

Michelle Holland, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), presented the I-495 Express Lanes Northern Extension project. Known as 495 NEXT, the project is a public-private partnership between the Commonwealth of Virginia and Transurban to extend the Beltway's Express Lanes north by 2.5 miles. The new lanes will extend from the Dulles Corridor to the George Washington Memorial Parkway interchanges, near the American Legion Bridge. 495 NEXT will also include four miles of new bicycle and pedestrian paths, and dedicated funding for new Fairfax Connector bus service to travel over the American Legion Bridge into Maryland. During construction, VDOT is partnering with the Commuter Connections 'Pool Rewards program to provide an additional \$100 above and beyond the existing \$130 for forming new carpools. Marketing and outreach for 495NEXT includes campaign branding development, the project website with an interactive map, email blasts, flyers, community and neighborhood meetings, outreach to elected officials, information hotline, traffic alerts and news releases, highway message boards, social media posts, and newsletters. The extended 495 Express Lanes are expected to open in late 2025; project

completion is slated for 2026.

6. FY24 Marketing Communications Plan and Schedule

COG/TPB staff reviewed the FY24 Final Marketing Communications Plan and Schedule. The document outlines Commuter Connections' planned regional marketing strategy for FY 2024 to promote Ridesharing, GRH, incentives programs, Employer Outreach, and special events. The Marketing Communications Plan and Schedule was posted onto SharePoint in draft form on August 18, 2023 for an open comment period through August 30, 2023. Edits and comments received were worked into the final document and presented at the meeting. Each FY 2024 Work Program component listed an objective, target market, tactics, and media budget allocation. The document also includes timeline schedules for FY 2024 research, creative development, and media campaigns.

7. Commuter Connections FY24 Marketing Activity

Dan O'Donnell and Mark Wirth, Odonnell Company, presented FY 2024 marketing activity in support of the 2023 Car Free Day event, and upcoming fall campaigns for GRH, Rideshare, 'Pool Rewards, and CarpoolNow. Other fall activities include newsletters, Bike to Work Day 2024 sponsor drive, the 2024 Employer Recognition Awards nomination brochure, and development of templates for a future Commuter Connections website refresh.

The Car Free Day 2023 media campaign started at the beginning of September. Radio spots are airing on stations WJFK, WPGC, and WTOP and the radio spot also appears on Spotify along with a companion image. Online banner ads were placed onto WTOP.com, a video was created for YouTube, and paid social media posts were placed onto Facebook and Twitter. Email blasts and text messages were sent as well. The following transit agencies provided complimentary transit ads: Arlington Transit, Metrobus, Fairfax Connector, and Montgomery County Ride On.

The fall 2023 umbrella campaign will use the "Together" concept which conveys that ridesharing is better through trusted channels and that commuting together, even just a few times a week, offers many positive social and financial benefits. The Guaranteed Ride Home portion of the campaign will encourage registrations using a similarly themed message.

8. FY24 Strategic Marketing Plan

The 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, DC metropolitan region by Commuter Connections and its network members. Other sections include regional activity centers, TDM product profiles with benefits and challenges of each, and summaries of TDM research conducted over the past five years. The draft report was inclusive of initial edits received during the first round of changes that took place in August 2023. Commuter Connections network members who have not yet contributed to the report were asked to provide updates to sections pertaining to their organizations by October 31, 2023. The document will be posted to SharePoint and a follow up reminder message regarding the open comment period will be sent out. The final draft report will be distributed at the December 2023 Regional TDM Marketing meeting for endorsement.

9. Montgomery County Marketing

Michelle Golden, Montgomery County Commuter Services, presented on marketing and outreach within the County. Montgomery County comprises of approximately 3,800 employers and 219,000 employees. There are six Transportation Management Districts (TMD's) within the County, each with its own Advisory Committee. Commuter programs offered include FareShare, which reimburses employers for transit costs beyond \$25 and up to \$300 per month, per employee. Commuter Information Days, onsite or virtual, are also offered to employees, as well as telework consulting services. In addition, Montgomery County Commuter Services participates in Chambers of Commerce meetings, manages a mobile commuter store, hosts several Bike to Work Day pit stops, organizes the Walk & Ride Challenge, and attends Earth Day fairs, and other community events. Montgomery County Commuter Services will begin to provide regular and targeted outreach services to some of the more urbanized areas outside of the TMD's, such as Germantown, Glenmont, and Wheaton. As part of this initiative, a newly created position of Travel Smart Ambassador will implement objectives outlined within the County's Climate Action Plan and other transportation plans. Marketing and outreach will focus on residents of Equity Emphasis Areas.

10. Marketing Round Table

Meeting participants discussed marketing related news, plans, and upcoming events within their organizations.

Cate Longino, goDCgo, mentioned the "Get Paid to Pedal" program which will launch in October and provide \$700 vouchers to income-eligible applicants. Assistance is being provided regarding the DC Parking Cashout Law, which has a January 15, 2024 reporting deadline for employers. As part of a final push, social media ads are being placed and webinars are being held. Outreach is being made to organizations such as the local DC SHRM office and government agencies. The "Fall in Love with Biking" campaign will take place in October through early November and will focus on bike education in Wards seven and eight. A SchoolPool campaign is also running to sign up schools and parents in the District.

Halie Mitchell, Virginia Department of Transportation, noted that it will be hosting the 18th Annual Transportation Career Fair, on October 5th at the Prince William County Fairgrounds. The career fair theme is "Your Ride to the Future" and is designed to expose highschoolers to the transportation industry and its many career paths for both college and non-college bound students.

Ivanna Baez, OmniRide, placed a print ad through Inside NoVa to promote Car Free Day and noted that social media posts also supporting the event.

Leigh Anderson, GWRideConnect, stated that social media posts have been used to encourage commuters to participate in Car Free Day, and to support The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation's Discover Transit marketing campaign. GWRideConnect is attending a host of community events in September.

Antoinette Rucker, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, noted that Metro is adding more detail signage for wayfinding in stations and updating its website with wayfinding information. The SmartBenefits team is participating in upcoming health and

wellness, and benefits fairs.

Kendall Tiffany, Loudoun County, mentioned that print ads are being posted in HOA newsletters/magazines and in local publications such as Get Out Loudoun. Recent outreach included two events at Northern Virginia Community College and the Clean Air Partners Car Bubble display at Dulles Town Center. Plaques and certificates were provided to the Economic Development Office for the 2023 Best Workplaces for Commuters initiative. To promote Car Free Day, the county is using social media and hosting a pop-up event at Ashburn Metro Station on September 21st. Lastly, digital ads are being planned for the Let's Go campaign.

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

The next Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting will be held on December 19, 2023 from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm.