

Meeting Highlights

Safety Task Force of the Washington Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee

April 24, 2003

Attendees:

Tom Fanning	Metronetworks
Anna Hargrave	Montgomery County Executive Office
Michael Jackson	MDOT
Rachel Lyons	Design House
Jim McAndrew	Design House
Mary McAndrew	Design House
Mimi Murray	Fairfax County DOT
Maria M. White	City of Alexandria

COG Staff Attendees:

Michael Farrell
Andrew Meese
Gerald Miller

1. General Introductions

Mutual introductions were made. Michael Farrell discussed the purpose of the meeting, which was first to hear the results of the FY 2003 Street Smart Campaign, and second to discuss the content, timing, and funding possibilities for FY 2004.

2. Street Smart 2003 Final Report

Mary McAndrew, Design House
Jim McAndrew, Design House

Mary and Jim McAndrew discussed the final report for the FY 2003 Street Smart campaign, which is available in paper and on the COG web site. The purpose of the campaign was first to improve awareness of pedestrian and bicycle safety among drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists, and second, to change behavior and save lives. The target audience for the four-week radio campaign was males age 18-44. Among the target audience we achieved an average of twelve exposures to an ad per person.

Any campaign to change deep-rooted behaviors takes time. We achieved a substantial increase in awareness for a relatively modest price.

It was pointed out that there was no mention of bicycles on the cover of the final report.

3. Discussion - Street Smart 2004

a. Content

Michael Farrell suggested that we simply run the same materials again. It was suggested that we show more ethnic groups in the posters. The brochure should have less text and be more readable. Anna Hargrave suggested that we incorporate some elements of a campaign under development in Montgomery County to target Hispanics, especially recent immigrants. Ideas suggested included giving away playing cards or phone cards with pedestrian safety messages, and commissioning some radio ads in Spanish first, then translating into English. We should also develop a long-range plan, whereby an initial stage of the campaign to raise awareness would be complemented by a campaign to change specific behaviors. Budget problems might restrict how much can be done with mass media in terms of promoting specific behavioral changes.

b. Timing

While October is a good time to run the campaign, it does not work given the schedule of the major program funders. Last year the program went forward without signed agreements with all the funding agencies, which is an unacceptable risk. March, April, August, and September were suggested. Michael Farrell promised to look into the pedestrian crash rates to help pick a month. The group leaned towards March or April, in order to maintain momentum.

c. Funding

Michael Farrell suggested applying to last year's funders for the same amounts, while soliciting contributions from municipalities that participated in the press event but did not contribute last year. Local funds are important because they are needed to match the federal money that the States provide. Gerry Miller and others suggested that we ask people at the top for the money, since they have shown enthusiasm for the program. It might be good to have representatives from the three States talk about the Street Smart program to the Transportation Planning Board at its June meeting. Although the budget situation is tight, the amounts needed are very small by the standards of this region, and support from the top is likely to shake loose some funds.

4. Other Business.

The meeting was adjourned.