



**REGIONAL TDM MARKETING GROUP
MEETING NOTES
December 18, 2012**

1. Introductions

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

2. Meeting Minutes

Notes from the September 18th meeting were reviewed and approved by the Committee as written.

3. FY13 Regional TDM Resource Guide and Strategic Marketing Plan (SMP)

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, distributed and reviewed the FY13 Washington Metropolitan Region TDM Resource Guide and Strategic Marketing Plan Final Draft Report. The document outlines a strategy for Commuter Connections to increase awareness of drive alone alternatives; serves as a resource for current TDM products & services available in the region; and provides a snapshot of current and planned marketing activity occurring within the region for Commuter Connections and its various network members. It also contains summaries of TDM research from the last several years. The report was endorsed by the Committee for final release and it will be posted to the Commuter Connections web site for distribution to network members and the public.

4. Walk and Ride Challenge

Kristen Blackmon of Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS) presented the 2012 Montgomery County Walk & Ride Challenge, where teams of employees working in the County tracked their steps during a three week period in September. Each participant was provided with a Walk & Ride event T-shirt and pedometer. Those who walked at least 50,000 steps per week were entered into a drawing for an Amazon Kindle. Those who walked at least 25,000 steps per week were entered into a weekly drawing for a \$25 gift card to a local business. Each member of the team with highest average steps wins a \$125 gift card, runner up team members each win a \$75 gift card, and third place team members each win a \$50 card.

The goals of the Walk & Ride challenge were to provide a fun event that promotes walking and the use of transit; help Bethesda-based employees learn how easy it is to get in and around downtown areas on foot or by the use of transit instead of driving; encourage team building among co-workers; and to promote Bethesda businesses while developing relationships between

NATIONAL CAPITOL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD, 777 NORTH CAPITOL STREET, N.E., SUITE 300, WASHINGTON, DC 20002-4239

THE COMMUTER INFORMATION SOURCE FOR MARYLAND, VIRGINIA AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

WWW.COMMUTERCONNECTIONS.ORG

1-800-745-RIDE

Montgomery County Commuter Services and its contractors, and employers and employees. In its first year the Walk & Ride Challenge registered just under 100 participants. This year the event added the Gaithersburg TMD and went from 650 in 2011 to nearly 1,000 participants. Also new this year was a 'Show us your Commute' photo contest where participants took pictures of their non- SOV commutes. The submitted photos were posted onto Facebook with comments and testimonials. The Walk & Ride Challenge was promoted through various methods including flyers, email blasts, letters and phone calls to targeted employers, newsletters, print ads, street banners, and web site content, and community groups.

A brief post event survey was distributed via email to all participants. To encourage a higher rate of return, respondents were placed into a random drawing for gift cards to local businesses. Responses helped measure participants' use of alternative commute modes and helped to determine changes for next year. When asked whether participants tried any alternative commuting options during the Challenge, "Metrorail" was the top response, followed by "Metrobus". When asked whether participants altered their commuting practices, 13 out of 24 respondents answered yes.

5. Commuter Connections FY13 Marketing Activity

Dan O'Donnell, from the Odonnell Company presented Commuter Connections marketing activity including a preview of the new FY13 campaign launch. The FY13 1st Half Marketing Campaign Summary Final Draft report was distributed to provide further details regarding the media buy and each of the various components of the Commuter Connections marketing campaign which occurred between July 2012 and December 2012. The fall FY13 marketing campaign was kicked off in October 2012 and included TV, radio, and internet banners for Rideshare, and radio for GRH. The radio spots produced in January of 2012 were used again. The TV ad ran on Comcast Cable on many popular stations and shows.

In October, a half page advertisement published within a military newspaper's relocation guide that was distributed at bases throughout the region. The fall 2012 newsletter and Federal ETC Insert was produced and distributed to the ACT! employer database and TDM stakeholders.

Feedback was collected from the marketing workgroup on GRH and Rideshare creative concepts and draft radio scripts for the new FY13 regional marketing campaign to launch February 2013. Winning executions were GRH - "Don't be left dangling at work" and Rideshare - "Rideshare - it counts as social networking". Previews of the workgroup selections were shown to the Committee. The radio production will occur in January for the FY13 second half regional TDM marketing ad campaign.

A direct mail campaign piece is being sent out in December to 500,000 households within the Washington region to promote Ridematching and the GRH program. The direct mailer will be

sent to residents within the COG footprint who reflect Commuter Connections' target demographic (ages 25-54 with household incomes of \$75k and above). The targeted residents live within Washington region zip codes identified through a PRIZM analysis. A list of zip codes where the mailer was sent was distributed at the meeting and posted to the Commuter Connections SharePoint system.

An Earned Media plan was developed for FY13. COG/TPB bi-lingual staff took part in an interview with the Hispanic station, WILC - Romantica in October. In addition to paid media spots, over \$116,000 was negotiated in no charge promotional media value. Most of the value added media provided by the radio stations during the fall campaign were used to promote 'Pool Rewards through promotional spots and radio station web site banner ads. WBQB provided space for a ½ page ad in their direct mail piece, sent to 65,000 homes. Bonus spots and reduced rate spots were also provided for Rideshare. Online Rideshare banner ads received thousands of bonus impressions on NBC4.com and on Washington Times' e-newsletter. WBIG and DC101 teamed with Ledo's Pizza to provide a Guaranteed Ride Home contest to enter to win dinner for the winning carpool.

For the first time since metropolitan Washington started celebrating Car Free Day in 2008, Car Free Day fell on a weekend. The marketing expressed a family-friendly focus, and nearly 7,000 people pledged to go car free or car-lite on Saturday, September 22nd.

6. **495 Express Lanes**

Mike McGurk from Transurban presented an overview of marketing campaigns and outreach efforts for the 495 Express Lanes. Marketing efforts included advertising, attendance at festivals & events, media outreach, and social media. Employer outreach included development of employer focused brochures and a dedicated area on the web site with tools for employers. Events at employer sites provided the opportunity for the purchase of E-ZPasses.

495 Express Lanes co-hosted workshops with the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation to maintain open communications with groups regarding toll-free travel via carpooling, and the promotion of new bus routes. The Virginia Department of Transportation held a media event to launch the new Flex Launch transponder, putting the spotlight on carpooling as an option to ride toll-free with two or more passengers. Promotion of the Flex Launch included radio, online and print advertising, wrapped delivery trucks, gas station ads, mall dioramas, banners and floor decals, and cinema ads.

Radio commercials and informational spots expounded on the benefits and new options the 495 Express Lanes offer, such as faster more predictable travel. A diverse array of stakeholders gathered for a ribbon cutting ceremony at the grand opening of the highly touted new express lanes.

Marketing for the 495 Express Lanes program has provided high exposure with over 500 million advertising impressions; Transurban staff participated in over 125 briefings, festivals & events - reaching more than 120,000 people; and media coverage saw more than 275 news articles written about the 495 Express Lanes.

7. FY12 Guaranteed Ride Home Customer Satisfaction Survey

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, will report preliminary findings from the FY12 Guaranteed Ride Home Customer Satisfaction Survey. Of the 3,339 surveys distributed in fiscal year 2012, 620 or nearly 19 percent (18.56%) of surveys were completed. The vast majority, 96% of the survey respondents were pleased with the overall GRH service. Written responses were entered on more than two-thirds (69%) of the returned surveys, the overwhelming majority of which (96%) contained compliments. Compliments outweighed criticism 9.5 to 1. For every category, good or above ratings were given by 90% or more of the respondents. Average response wait was 15 minutes and 93% waited 30 minutes or less. The formal report will be presented to the Commuter Connections Subcommittee next month and a comment period will be established.

8. Calendar of Events/Marketing Round Table

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

9. Other Business/Suggested Agenda items for next meeting

The next FY13 Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting date is Tuesday, March 19, 2013 from 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. in the COG Board Room, 3rd Floor.