

**REGIONAL TDM MARKETING GROUP
Meeting Notes December 16, 2008**

1. Introductions

2. Minutes of September 16, 2008 Meeting

The minutes were approved as written

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

COG/TPB staff distributed the FY 2009 Regional TDM Resource Guide and Strategic Marketing Plan (SMP) Final Report. This report was posted on the COG web site as part of the meeting announcement, and the initial draft report was issued in September 2008 with an open comment period through October 2008. This annual guide serves as a resource for TDM products, research and planned marketing activities conducted within the Washington metropolitan region. The document was approved for final release.

4. Washington Nationals Marketing Update

Francine Waters from the Washington Nationals presented TDM marketing efforts enacted for the National's new stadium. The objective is to move 41,000 fans on any given day by means other than driving to the ballpark as only 5,000 parking spaces exist. Opening Day was the fifth largest ridership in Metro history and on-average about 55% of fans took Metro throughout the season.

Ms. Waters passed out several brochures including the Nationals Park Transportation Guide which touts "The Easy Routes to the Ballgame" and features the popular president mascots using various transportation methods. The guide encourages fans to use "hassle-free" transportation to Nationals Park. A second brochure specifically promotes Metrorail to the ballpark and promotes special pages within WMATA's web site at wmata.com/nationals where one can utilize a personalized trip planner to get to the ballpark. The brochure reads "You'll Hit a Home Run Every Time You Take Metro." Over 100,000 copies of each brochure were printed and both contain the Metrorail system map complete with the Nationals logo placed near the Navy Yard Metro station. Both also contain a street level map of the Capitol Riverfront area.

Commemorative Washington Nationals limited SmarTrip Cards were available online at the WMATA web site. Major League Baseball did not permit the sale of the special fare cards on the Nationals' web site. Commemorative cards were also available at Metro sales offices, all regional Transit Stores and at select SmarTrip dispensers.

Radio Advertising was developed with the message “you don’t want to spend the whole game looking for a parking space.” The spots directly implore fans that unless they have a reserved space, not to drive to the game. Instead it asks them to ride Metro or park free at RFK and ride the Nats Express. The Nats Express from RFK is a free Luxury motor coach fan shuttle and operates continuously starting 1.5 hours before the game. The Washington Nationals has a free bicycle valet which holds over 250 bike racks surrounding the ballpark and is open 2 hours before game time.

Other advertising placed by the Washington Nationals to promote transportation to the ballpark included the Washington Post and Metrorail Dioramas. Additionally, the Nationals will be working with Commuter Connections to promote Special Event Ridesharing for the 2009 season.

5. Commuter Connections FY09 Marketing Activity

Dan O’Donnell from Odonnell Company presented a recap of fall FY09 marketing activities including the Car Free Day event on September 22, 2008. Mr. O’Donnell also presented a preview of the spring 2009 marketing campaign concepts developed with feedback from the marketing workgroup. The draft FY09 1st Half Marketing Campaign Summary report was also distributed. Fall activities presented at the meeting include the following:

CarFree Day promotional materials included a logo, poster and radio spot. The theme selected was “Uncar for a Day” with a car-lite caveat. The radio spot was aired on four Washington area stations over four week period leading up to the event. Commuter Connections also ordered 2,500 buttons and made them available to Steering Committee members to help promote the event. Other marketing included donated ad space on Metro and Montgomery County Ride On buses as well as Montgomery County bus shelters. Poster art was resized for all transit signage to provide visual consistency with the larger campaign. The pledge form offered an opt-in field for cell phone numbers. Commuter Connections sent text email reminders which read “Thanks for pledging to go CarFree on September 22. Get a friend to pledge at <http://www.carfreemetrodc.com>”.

Radio was reused from spring 2008 and served as the anchor medium for the fall campaign with a broad mix of 15 radio stations. The campaign reached out to Spanish-speaking commuters with spots running on WLZL, El Zol. WLZL interviewed Commuter Connections for their “Tu Familia Zol” Program. Ten D.C. focused stations and five exurban stations were used during the campaign. The radio campaign kicked off the second week of October and ran on and off for eight weeks through mid-December. The Marketing Workgroup provided feedback on new radio scripts to be produced for the spring 2009 campaign.

Radio stations were asked to support Commuter Connections’ Rideshare Tuesday promotion. Attention was drawn to the benefits of ridesharing through on-air mentions of Tuesday as the day to consider commute alternatives. Listeners were urged to visit www.commuterconnections.org to find someone to share the ride or to consider other commute options. The script provided for this promotion also highlighted some of the benefits of the new online ride-matching software.

Bus shelter advertising was placed using visuals from the spring 2008 campaign. Two shelter ads appeared near a Metro stop and displayed the Guaranteed Ride Home message to promote the service to transit commuters. This practice provides reinforcement to stick with SOV alternatives. Three additional shelters were placed along major commute routes to deliver the Rideshare message to commuters who are traveling to work by car.

Internet advertising during the fall campaign included rotating sizes of banner ads served to specified websites and geo-targeted to IP addresses in the Washington D.C. Region. The placements provided over 7.5 million impressions with an overall click thru rate of .10% in the Adult 35-54 market. As reported in the 2007 State of the Commute Survey, 18% of respondents offered changing jobs or work hours as a top reason for using alternative transportation. Major job websites were therefore targeted for the fall campaign as well as Washington news and weather websites. Mr. O'Donnell also discussed that Social Networking web banners are being investigated as part of the spring 2009 marketing campaign.

In order to encourage Fort Belvoir personnel to consider ridesharing, a half page color ad was created for the Fort Belvoir Eagle's special transportation section which published in November. The Fort Belvoir army base located near the heavily traveled Route 1 and I-95 corridors have seen an influx of personnel as part of the BRAC realignment. Commuters traveling to the site reach 20,000 daily.

As part of Commuter Connections' continued outreach and support of employers, the Work Schedule Alternatives brochure was updated to the same look and feel as the Employer Sales Kit brochures.

The drive for sponsors for Bike to Work Day 2009 started at the beginning of October 2008. By December, the sponsorship drive netted a major sponsor and several other sponsors. Funds will be used to offset costs for printing the 7,500 T-Shirts given out at the event.

An Employer Recognition Awards application brochure for nominations was developed and distributed in December for the 2009 awards. Feedback was provided by the Employer Recognition Awards Work Group. An application page was also created online at www.commuterconnections.org.

In addition to radio, spring marketing will also include the return of coffee cup sleeves, direct mail, transit advertising and internet ads.

6. FY08 Guaranteed Ride Home Customer Satisfaction Survey

Douglas Franklin presented preliminary findings from the FY 2008 Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Customer Satisfaction Survey. The results encompassed a survey of trip recipients during fiscal year 2008 (July 2007 through June 2008). The customer satisfaction survey for GRH was collected on an ongoing basis throughout the fiscal year. All commuters who obtained a free ride home through the program received a survey response card for each ride taken.

Of the 2,994 surveys distributed in fiscal year 2008, 1,008 completed surveys were received. Survey response in FY 2008 was above average and increased by five percentage points from the previous year to 33%. This was the highest quantity of surveys ever distributed and the second highest number of surveys returned since program inception.

The vast majority, 95% of the survey respondents were satisfied with the overall GRH service. Written responses were entered on over a third of the returned survey cards, the majority of which were compliments. Good or above ratings were given by at least 91% of the respondents for each category. Average response wait was 15 minutes and 92% waited 30 minutes or less.

7. Calendar of Events/Marketing Round Table

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

Christopher Arabia from VDRPT is working with VDOT on developing media ads for HOT Lanes to promote commute options during the construction period, specifically Telework.

Keith Bounds from MDOT is promoting alternative transportation options to employees at office headquarters.

Debra Adams from MTA mentioned the availability of special presidential inauguration tickets for transit.

Glenn Hiner from Fairfax County stated that an ad was placed into a Society of Human Resource Management publication to appear in January 2008.

Kristin Howard from Arlington Transportation Partners stated that Arlington County is targeting hotels to help distribute transit fare cards to guests.

8. Other Business/Suggested Agenda items for next meeting

The next Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 17, 2009 from 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm, COG Board Room – 3rd floor.