

**Regional TDM Marketing Group  
Meeting Notes**

**Tuesday December 21, 2010**

**1. Introductions**

**2. Minutes of September 21, 2010 Meeting**

The meeting notes were approved as written.

**3. FY11 Regional TDM Resource Guide and Strategic Marketing Plan (SMP)**

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, distributed the FY11 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 partners. It also contains summaries of TDM research from the last several years. The report was endorsed by the Committee for final release. A final copy will be posted to the Commuter Connections web site.

**4. Regional Bikeshare Program Outreach**

Rex Hodgson, COG/TPB staff, discussed the proposed outreach for regional expansion of Capital Bikeshare. Already among few cities in the world with bike-sharing, a regional expansion of Capital BikeShare was proposed as part of a TIGER II competitive grant application to grow the system from its current 1,000 bike capacity to 3,000. Although the grant was denied, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board directed COG to nonetheless press forward to promote expansion of Washington D.C. and Arlington County's new BikeShare program into other jurisdictions. This will be through targeting other revenue sources, namely developers and facility managers of major employers. For the cost of two parking spaces, a Capital Bikeshare site can be installed. A brochure will be developed along with a one pager fact sheet showing the ease of installation.

**5. Commuter Connections FY11 Marketing Activity**

Dan O'Donnell, Odonnell Company, presented FY11 fall marketing activity and a preview of the FY11 spring campaign. The FY11 1st Half Marketing Campaign Summary Final Draft report was distributed to provide detail regarding the media buy and each of the various components of the Commuter Connections marketing campaign occurring between July 2010 through December 2010.

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**

Nearly 7,000 residents in the Washington metropolitan region went car free or car-lite on Wednesday, September 22, up 11.5% from 2009. Registrants pledged to rely less on their cars by riding metro, bicycling, carpooling, vanpooling, walking or teleworking. Radio, posters, facebook ads, bus sides and shelters, email blasts and an earned media effort were created to drive the public to [www.carfreemetrodc.com](http://www.carfreemetrodc.com) to make a pledge to go car free.

The 'Pool Rewards incentive program was re-launched this fall and was open to SOV commuters in the Washington DC region without restriction to travel patterns. The program offers a cash incentive to encourage drive alone commuters to change their commute behavior by trying carpooling. The marketing campaign for 'Pool Rewards included outreach to the region's Employee Transportation Coordinators (ETC) as well as promotion to the region's commuters. For each employee that applied and was accepted into the program, the ETC will receive a chance to win a VISA gift card or other prizes. Postcards were sent to ETC's to encourage them to promote the program to their employees. Marketing outreach to area commuters included live radio reads on WTOP and also Facebook ads. The communications outreach for 'Pool Rewards gained exposure on ABC-7News, WTOP, WAMU, NPR, WUSA 9, Washington Post, Washington Business Journal, Washington Examiner and WAMU.

The fall umbrella campaign began in October and radio was used as the anchor medium with a broad mix of seven Washington area radio stations. Radio ads produced for the Guaranteed Ride Home and Ridematching campaigns in spring 2010 were re-ran for the fall campaign. Radio spots for the two programs were evenly rotated through the end of December. One of the radio stations included the Hispanic station, VIVA 900. Print ads were also placed in the El Tiempo Latino newspaper during the fall campaign to further support outreach to the Hispanic community. Internet banner ads appeared during the fall campaign on [wtop.com](http://wtop.com), [TBD.com](http://TBD.com) and [sigalert.com](http://sigalert.com).

Value-added promotions provided further exposure for Commuter Connections and included the Rideshare Tuesday promotion. In addition WRQX (MIX 107.3) ran a rideshare reward contest. Listeners were instructed to go to the station website to tell about their rideshare stories and one carpool was selected each week to receive dinner at Chipotle for the carpool. Other value add on-air mentions were used to promote the availability of GRH in Baltimore, and AAA Mid-Atlantic's Terrible Traffic Tuesday.

The 2011 Employer Recognition Awards nomination forms were developed and mailed out in the beginning of December. The mailer brochure was sent to level 3 and 4 employers and included a nomination form.

Qualitative market research was conducted using an online survey methodology. Respondents were recruited from a panel based on geography, employment and age. The purpose of the survey was to obtain behavioral and attitudinal opinions of the Rideshare and Guaranteed Ride Home advertising concepts for the FY11 spring campaign. The survey was fielded November 2-7, 2010. Nearly 600 qualified, completed surveys were received. Results of the qualitative research coupled with workgroup feedback will be incorporated into the Spring FY11 campaign. Mr. O'Donnell presented the tested conceptual approaches for the FY11 spring marketing campaign and shared the results. The Rideshare theme will be "Save Half" and the GRH theme will be "Don't Flip Out, aka Stay Calm". This was based on both the qualitative research findings and feedback from the

Regional TDM Marketing Work Group. The direct mail campaign will be sent in late December 2010 to 400,000 households within the Washington region to promote Ridematching and the Guaranteed Ride Home program. The mailers will contain visuals reflective of the Spring FY11 campaign.

Response for the first half of the fiscal year indicated a 15% increase in web visits.

**6. Ride On**

Beverly Le Masters of Montgomery County Ride On, one of the largest suburban systems in the country, provided an update on the bus system, including marketing and communications activity. The bus system provides more than 27 million passenger trips per year, which was almost 30 million during the high gas prices. All buses are accessible to persons with disabilities and carry bicycle racks. The fleet is comprised of 40% alternative fuel vehicles and buses have been branded with a new logo and paint scheme. The vehicle advertising program managed by Clear Channel started in 2008 and has been a successful venture. Advertising is also available on 400 shelters. Montgomery County Ride On provides an online trip planning tool with transit route and schedule information including Google Maps. Soon to be added, as a supplement to the trip planner, will be Metrobus information for the entire Washington region. Ride On is also developing their own "Next Bus" system which provides customers with real-time predictions on when the next bus will arrive.

**7. FY10 Guaranteed Ride Home Customer Satisfaction Survey**

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, reported preliminary findings from the FY10 Guaranteed Ride Home Customer Satisfaction Survey. A total of 3,179 surveys were distributed with a 18% survey completion rate. Good or above ratings were given by at least 92% of respondents for each category. Written responses were entered on two-thirds, 68% of the returned surveys, the overwhelming majority of which were compliments. The question regarding overall GRH service received a 95% satisfaction rating by survey respondents. The average response wait was 14 minutes with 93% waiting 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 and upcoming events happening within their organizations. Montgomery County is hosted SmartBenefits seminars in November.

**9. Other Business/Suggested Agenda items for next meeting**

The next FY11 Regional TDM Marketing Group meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 15, 2011.