

### Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Second Half FY06 Marketing Campaign Summary Preliminary Draft Report

### **Background**

Since 2002 Commuter Connections has implemented a continuing and extensive integrated communications program aimed at the Washington metropolitan region to develop awareness and understanding of Commuter Connections' services and the various alternatives to commuting alone by car, including public transit, telework and carpools. Additional focus was also given to marketing the Guaranteed Ride Home program. By most accounts, overall awareness levels are high.

According to the 2004 State of the Commute survey results:

- 66% of all regional commuters said they had heard of Commuter Connections
- 40% knew that Commuter Connections sponsored the Guaranteed Ride Home program
- 28% knew the organization offered general rideshare information
- 16% knew the organization offered help finding a carpool or vanpool partner

Based on these findings the 2006 regional TDM marketing program was developed to convert high awareness levels into increased action. Specific tactics for accomplishing this include:

- Solidifying the base by continuing to drive awareness levels through high reach and frequency marketing such as radio, for the overall benefits of alternative commuting, Guaranteed Ride Home and Ridematching Programs. This tactic is supported by the following State of the Commute findings:
  - 69% of respondents who had taken some action said the advertising they saw or heard encouraged the action\*
  - 70% of respondents who took an action\* were driving alone at the time
  - 61% of respondents who sought information but had not made a commute mode change were likely to try using an alternative mode within the next year

<sup>\*</sup>Action may include seeking a carpool/vanpool partner, starting an alternative mode, seeking out commuter service information via Internet or contacting a commuter organization.

- Focusing on an undercapitalized opportunity through increased promotional emphasis on ridesharing. According to the State of the Commute, 47% of area workers did not carpool because they did not know anyone with whom to carpool. Additionally, only 16% of respondents knew Commuter Connections offered help finding a carpool or vanpool partner. We intend to capitalize on this opportunity by communicating that finding a potential rideshare partner is Free, Quick and Easy through Commuter Connections.
- Leveraging partnerships with area employers to implement a more focused "community based" program. Social science research indicates that we are most likely to change our behavior in response to direct appeals from others. The community in this instance is the work community – a significant and influential community in terms of commuter behavior. This has also been validated by the State of the Commute which reported that respondents were more likely to know about Commuter Connections if they worked for a large employer and if their employer offered commuter benefit programs at the worksite.

### **Highlights**

Radio was again selected as the primary communication vehicle for the spring 2006 campaign, since it is the most efficient way to target SOV commuters, specifically during "drive times" when they are feeling the most frustration. Radio provides consistency for the Commuter Connections brand, as well as the foundation for maintaining awareness levels. Supporting this communications strategy is a combination of outdoor advertising and a direct marketing campaign targeting those having the highest propensity to carpool or vanpool. The target audience was selected based on a PRIZM analysis of the Commuter Connections Rideshare database (inclusive of records containing carpool and vanpool commuters).

### **General Marketing**

- 1. To reinforce awareness of alternative commuting options in order to change commuting behavior through spot radio
- 2. The 60 second and 30 second spots created in the fall were used for the spring campaign. The spots emphasized the frustration of traffic and the benefits of participating in the commuting solutions offered through Commuter Connections
  - a. **Super Commuter (General Marketing Message)** a commuter informs listeners of how using Commuter Connections helped him find an alternative commuting method, making him feel like a super hero. He then lists all the services that are backed by the GRH program.
  - b. **Satisfaction Guaranteed (GRH)** uses real testimonials to talk about the benefits of the GRH program. The voice over announcer then tells the listeners how they too can take advantage of the GRH program.
  - c. **Men, Women and Sharing (Ridematching)** opens with a man and women talking about the different things that men and women like to share with their own gender but they find a common ground when it comes to ridesharing.

### **Marketing Media Schedule**

The total radio outlay for the second half of FY06 is \$410,000.

The radio spots airing during three two-week flights and two three-week flights between February 6, 2006 and June 25, 2006 achieve a 75% reach and 24 frequency. The radio campaign airs on 18 mainstream stations in 11 main and seven outer markets. The flights skew slightly for morning drive time for both the local key counties and outlying counties (Daypart Mix for Spots: 60% am drive, 30% pm drive, 10% M-F 6a-7p, Daypart Mix on Outlying Stations: 45% am drive, 40% pm drive, 15%Sa/Su 10a-7p).

Due to the overcrowded conditions of transit, increased emphasis has been given to marketing to potential carpoolers. Hence, the three radio spots were rotated at 50% Ridematching, 25% GRH and 25% Marketing for the entire flight.

#### Stations:

WTOP-AM	All News
WJFK-FM	Talk
WBIG-FM	Oldies

WARW-FM Classic Rock

WROX-FM Adult Contemporary

WMMJ-FM Urban Oldies
WJZW-FM Smooth Jazz
WASH-FM Soft Rock
WMZQ-FM Country
WHUR-FM Adult Urban
WWDC-FM Album Rock

#### Stations in Outer Markets:

WKIK-FM	Country	Calvert & Charles Counties
WSMD-FM	Classic Rock, Oldies	Calvert & Charles Counties
MEDE EM	•	

WFRE-FM Country Frederick County
WAFY-FM Adult Contemporary Frederick County
WFMD-FM News/Talk Frederick County

WBQB-FM Adult Contemporary Spotsylvania & Stafford Counties WFLS-FM Country Spotsylvania & Stafford Counties

# Mass Marketing FY05 2<sup>nd</sup> Half Radio Campaign

	I												200	)6													
		JANUARY			FEBURARY				MARCH					APRIL					MAY				JUNE				
MEDIA	26	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	
Radio																											
:60 Spots																											
Includes spots in																											
outlying markets																											
Total Traffic Net																											
:15 Traffic Spons.																											
Outdoor																											
(Includes Production) 30-Sheet Posters																											
Frederick County																											
Prince William																											
Rotary Bulletins																											
Prince Georges																											
Radio Target Audience																											
Adults 35-54																											
Drive to Work Alone																											
\$75k HH Income																											

### **Added-Value Opportunities**

WASH-FM

97.1 - Adult Contemporary

A morning drive promotion is scheduled for the week of April 3. Each day, Monday through Friday, the nth caller will win a "Commuter Care Package" courtesy of Commuter Connections/Council of Governments. The package will contain things such as oil changes, car wash certificates, CDs, gas cards, etc. (specific items TBD). COG will receive a total of 20 on-air promotional mentions; 10 of these being live and airing Monday through Friday 8-10 AM and 10 being prerecorded and airing Monday through Friday 9 AM to 5 PM. Contest details will also be included on the WASH website with a link to MWCOG's website.

WGMS-FM

104.1 Classical

To coincide with the Winter Olympics, WGMS hosted "The Classical Olympics". Listeners went to wgms.com and selected their own "Olympic Team" from a list of composers. Each daypart on the station featured a different "Olympic event" with various classical composers participating. During that daypart, pre-selected "Medal Winners" were announced. If a listener had all the correct composers on their team, they earned points for their medals—5 points for gold, 3 for silver, and 1 for bronze. The games continued until February 24 and on February 27 the overall gold, silver, and bronze winners (based on accumulated points throughout the 2-week period) were announced. COG received a minimum of 40 promotional announcements, logo and link on the Classical Olympics page of wgms.com, and logo inclusion in 2 Classical Eletters.

WJFK-FM

106.7 - Talk/Personality

"Time Out" vignettes air throughout the day and highlight community events and current happenings. Commuter Connections will receive a minimum of 10, 10-second promos for each week scheduled on the station. In addition, WJKF hands out Commuter Connections brochures at various station events throughout the campaign period.

# **Outdoor Advertising**

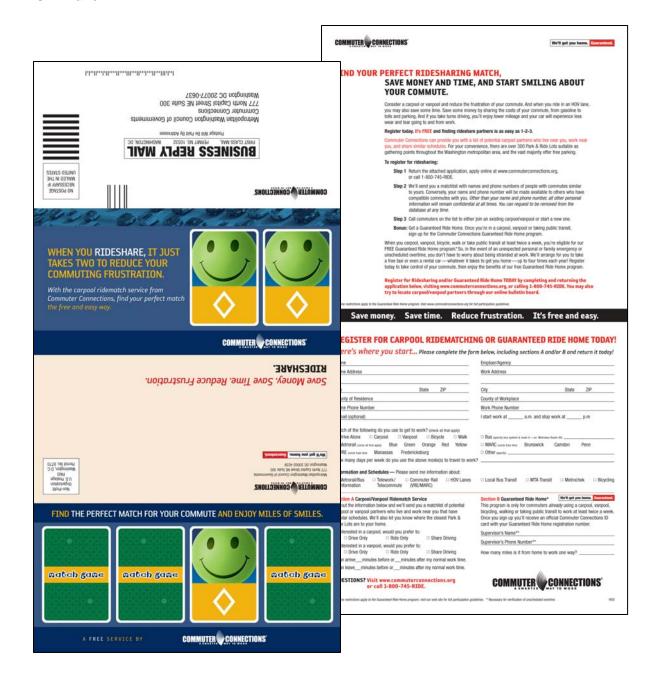
Radio advertising was supplemented with billboards in Frederick, Prince William and Prince George's counties. The budget for the outdoor advertising was \$47,900. The billboards carried a similar look and feel to that of the direct mailer.

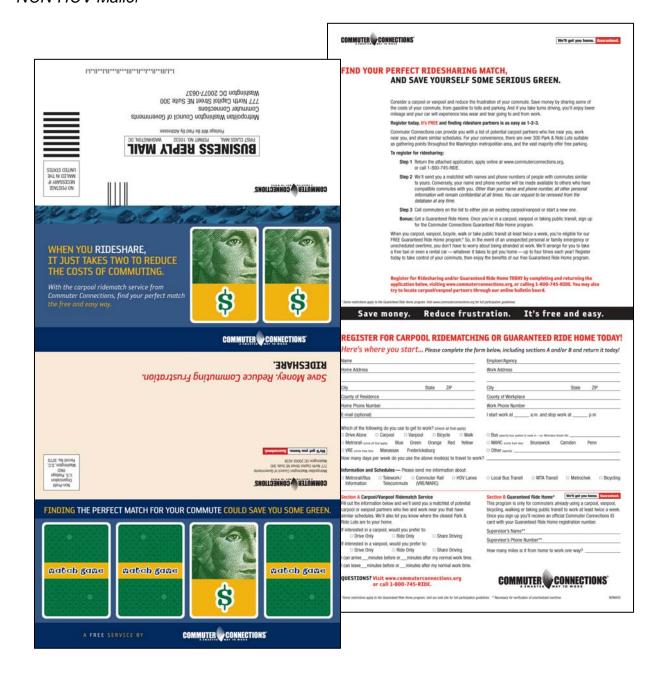


### **Ridematching Direct Marketing Campaign**

The direct marketing campaign was developed to increase top-of-mind awareness that it's "Free, Quick and Easy" to find a potential rideshare partner through the ridematch service available through Commuter Connections.

**HOV Mailer** 





The mailer will be released in waves over ten consecutive weeks beginning late February. The coverage area for the direct mail campaign is listed below:

Alexandria Arlington Calvert
Charles DC Fairfax
Frederick Loudoun Montgomery
Prince Georges Prince William Stafford

Maryland households within close proximity of HOV lanes will receive a mailer which incorporates an HOV message.

The mailing will be targeted based upon the use of a PRIZM analysis of the Commuter Connections rideshare database. The mailer distribution will identify and pinpoint target neighborhoods that are prone to having a higher propensity to carpool/vanpool based on lifestyle segments. The chart below indicates the neighborhood segments targeted for the direct mailer distribution. 85% of the segments have indexes of 190 or higher, meaning these households are at least 90% more likely to use a ridematching service than the "average household". Using this model, an average household would index at 100, and households less likely to use a ridematching service would index below 100.

Segment	Index	Percentage
Fast Track Families	296	2%
Country Casuals	286	2%
Upward Bound	260	13%
Country Squires	226	16%
New Homesteaders	224	9%
White Picket Fences	216	6%
Big Sky Families	207	4%
Kid Country, USA	198	2%
Brite Lites, Li'l City	191	21%
God's Country	190	11%
Other	51-125 Various	14%

### Collateral

General Services Brochure, GRH Brochure, Ridesharing Brochure will be available by the end of March 2006.

### General Services Brochure



### **GRH Brochure**



# Ridesharing Brochure

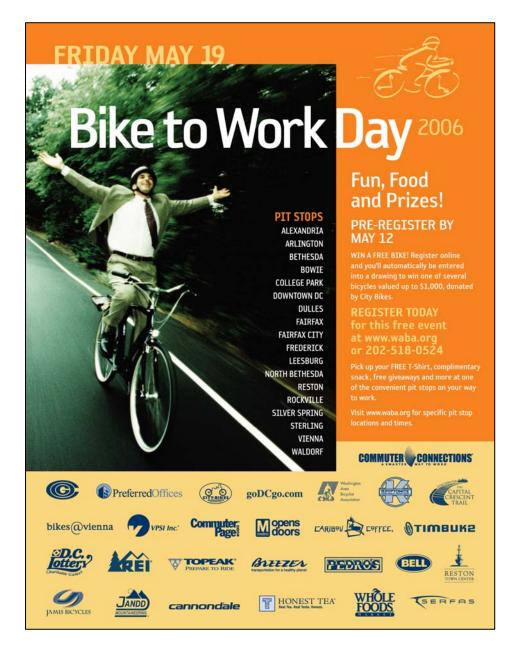


### **Bike to Work Day**

This year's sponsorship drive resulted our most successful year yet. A total of \$16,200 was raised through ten cash sponsors. Major sponsors included Preferred offices, and goDCgo.com, a new traveler information system by DDOT. The sponsorship funds will be used to print ,color T-shirts for the event.

Radio advertising promoting the event, consisting of approximately 75 spots will air during the weeks of May 1st and May 8<sup>th</sup>.

BTWD 8.5" x 11" Poster





## BTWD Bus Poster, 78" x 14"

Three posters will appear on each of six Circular buses in downtown DC in April and May in support of the Bike to Work Day event. This interior bus signage is being given to the event at no cost through the Downtown BID as part of their Gold level sponsorship package along with a cash donation on behalf of goDCgo.com



### BTWD:60 Draft Radio Script

Put a positive on your commute, burn calories instead of gas. Commuter Connections invites you to get in gear on Friday, May 19<sup>th</sup> for Bike to Work Day! Join thousands of area commuters and show your support for bicycling by taking part in a clean, fun, healthy way to get to work. Get a free T-shirt, lots of food, fun, and other free giveaways at one of 20 convenient pit stops located throughout Maryland and Virginia. The main rally will be in downtown DC at Freedom Plaza. Ride with a friend or join an organized commuter convoy with experienced cyclists. Register by May 15<sup>th</sup> to claim your free T-shirt and to be automatically entered for a chance to win one of several bicycles valued at up to \$1,000. Bike to Work Day is a FREE event and it's on Friday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, so get in gear and pre-register today! For details and to register, visit WABA.org or call 202.518.0524. That's W-A-B-A.O-R-G. Bike to Work Day is sponsored by Commuter Connections, City Bikes, Preferred Offices, goDCgo.com, and the Washington Area Bicyclist Association.

BTWD Pit Stop Banner To be developed.

BTWD T-Shirt To be developed.

### **Operations Center Update**

#### Newsletter

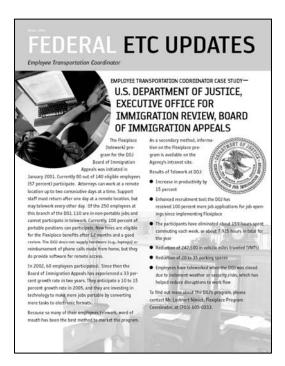
The Commuter Connections newsletter is targeted to approximately 5,200 employer contacts on the COG Employer Outreach ACT! database as well as TDM Stakeholders, both regionally and nationally.

In the second half of FY06, the winter issue of the Commuter Connections Newsletter was completed. The Spring will be completed by the end of May.

#### Winter Issue and ETC Insert

The cover story touched upon the double taxation of telecommuters and the efforts to pass the Telecommuter Tax Fairness Act. Other stories included the *Bike to Work* 2006, Changes on Metro Aimed to Improve Movement of Passengers on Transportation and VA Governor Kaine Holds Public Forums on Transportation.





#### 2006 Employer Recognition Awards Efforts

This year we had more nominees than ever before. Three nominations were submitted in the Marketing group, two nominations in Telework, and twelve nominations in the Incentives group. Summaries were written up for each nominee and judging will take place March 22 by a Selection Committee. The event will be held on June 28<sup>th</sup> at the National Press Club in Washington, DC.

### **Employer Outreach**

A qualitative phone survey was conducted among Level 2 and Level 3 employer partners. The survey was intended to heighten the impact of employer outreach efforts by achieving the following research objectives:

### Level 2 Employer Partners:

- Determine why they do not offer more in the way of Employee Transportation Programs
- Learn what Commuter Connections and its member organizations can do to help them increase their efforts
- Understand what resources, products and services offered by Commuter Connections and its member organizations would be of greatest value to them

### Level 3 Employer Partners:

- Determine the biggest challenges Employee Transportation Programs face in gaining support
- Discover how Commuter Connections and its member organizations can help them overcome these challenges
- Understand what resources, products and services offered by Commuter Connections and its member organizations would be of greatest value to them

A total of 15 employer partners participated in the in-depth one-on-one phone interview (14 Level 2 employer partners and 11 Level 3 employer partners.

# **Third Quarter FY06 Performance Results**

Web Visits						
www.commute	rconnections.org					
January	6,812					
February	6,515					
March						
Total						

GRH Applications Received							
January	532						
February							
March							
Total							

Rideshare Applications Received						
January	587					
February						
March						
Total						