

**To:** Board of Directors

**Date:** 3/12/2019

**From:** Melody Reeb, Manager of Planning

**Reviewed by:** *Ref*

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**SUBJECT: FY 2020 Marketing Plan**

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**Background:**

County Connection's upcoming Marketing Plan will focus on disseminating information about the proposed changes to services in San Ramon, including Bishop Ranch, as well as a number of special promotional efforts aimed at increasing ridership promoting the benefits of the recent service restructure. The plan also includes ongoing efforts to increase engagement through social media. Other tasks that have become routine include the Class Pass Program, Summer Youth Program, partnering with 511 Contra Costa on promotions, and participating in outreach opportunities at schools, colleges/universities, senior centers, employment sites, and community events.

**Special Promotions:**

The following special promotional campaigns are currently planned for FY 2020:

San Ramon Service Changes:

Staff is currently proposing changes to routes serving Bishop Ranch and other areas of San Ramon and have initiated the public hearing process. The proposed changes include improvements to route alignments within Bishop Ranch and the addition of weekend service in San Ramon. If approved, the implementation of the changes will require outreach and marketing resources to communicate information to riders and promote the service to potential new riders. Promotion expenses related to the new service will include production of printed materials, such as flyers, brochures, signage, and interior bus cards, and community events.

Free Monument Corridor Service:

Staff anticipates that the implementation of a one-year pilot offering free rides on routes serving the Monument Corridor will help boost ridership. In order to make the most impact, we will need to conduct extensive outreach, particularly to those in the surrounding communities who do not currently use transit. Promotion expenses related to this program will include production of printed materials, direct mail, advertising, community events, and development of a social media campaign.

FACES Campaign:

In 2014, County Connection launched the “FACES of County Connection” campaign, which aimed to recognize and celebrate employees. Staff plans to implement a similar campaign in FY 2020 that focuses on riders as a way to highlight the importance of County Connection within the community. The campaign will be promoted using interior and exterior ad space on vehicles, on the County Connection website, and through social media channels. Promotion expenses related to this campaign will include professional photography and interior and exterior ad printing and installation.

Total Expense: \$100,000

**Website and Social Media:**

Riders are increasingly using the internet and social media to access transit information, stay informed, and interact with County Connection. A portion of the promotions budget will go towards general website maintenance and enhancements, as well as increasing the agency’s involvement with social media.

Total Expense: \$50,000

**Routine Promotion:**

Ongoing promotion expenses include the cost for chamber dues and event fees, materials for outreach events, printing brochures for accessible services and bikes on buses, and promoting the summer youth pass.

Total expense: \$20,000

**Miscellaneous Promotion:**

The miscellaneous promotions budget is intended to cover campaigns or new services that haven’t yet been identified.

Total expense: \$10,000

**Promotions Budget Summary:**

Special Promotions	\$100,000
Website and Social Media	\$50,000
Routine Promotion	\$20,000
Miscellaneous Promotion	\$10,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$180,000</b>

**Recommendation:**

The MP&L Committee and staff recommend that the Board approve the proposed Marketing Plan for FY 2020.

**Financial Implications:**

Staff has budgeted \$180,000 to cover the expenses associated with the Marketing Plan.