

To: Marketing, Planning & Legislative Committee

Date: 2/25/2020

From: Ruby Horta, Director of Planning, Marketing & Innovation

Reviewed by:



SUBJECT: FY 2021 Marketing Plan

Background:

County Connection's upcoming Marketing Plan will focus on Clipper education to youth and low-income communities, highlighting route level information, particularly in areas that have experienced increased ridership since the service changes of 2019. Staff will also pursue passenger input on potential additional changes, particularly in areas that continue to experience ridership decline. 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 2021:

San Ramon Service Changes:

Staff implemented service changes on Bishop Ranch routes in November 2019, and it is expected that additional adjustments may be needed over the next year as passengers adjust and provide feedback. Obtaining feedback and implementation of any 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.

Route Level Outreach/Surveys:

Staff anticipates minor changes to local routes, based on passenger input. Surveys will be required in the upcoming fiscal year to enhance service changes that have resulted in ridership growth and rethink service changes that have either had no impact or a negative impact on 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 planned to implement a similar campaign in FY 2020 that focuses on riders to highlight the importance of County Connection within the community. Due to staff limitations, this campaign was postponed from FY2020 to FY2021. Over \$70,000 unused allocation from the FY2020 promotions budget will be carried over to FY2021. 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: \$30,000

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: \$10,000

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	\$30,000
Routine Promotion	\$10,000
Miscellaneous Promotion	\$10,000
TOTAL	\$150,000

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the MP&L Committee approve the proposed Marketing Plan for FY 2021.

Financial Implications:

Staff has budgeted \$150,000 to cover the expenses associated with the Marketing Plan.