

To: Advisory Committee

Date: 12/29/22

From: Ryan Jones, Manager of Marketing & Communication

Reviewed by: MR

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**SUBJECT: FY 2024 Draft Marketing Plan**

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### Background:

As County Connection continues to recover from lost ridership and revenue due to impacts from COVID-19, we are looking to deepen our engagement and stimulate ridership and regular local travel on our buses. The County Connection Marketing Plan is intended to build upon our current marketing efforts and outlines a strategy to connect with customers within our service area, as well as those who travel to Central Contra Costa County. The plan below is general and covers four communication touchpoints: Events and Promotions, Service Alerts and General Updates, Education, and Recruitment.

### Marketing and Outreach Touchpoints:

- **Events and Promotions:** We will continue to plan our Mobile Lobby events (5x/week) and are looking to include locations that target communities who depend on our bus service and may also be more vulnerable to economic changes (e.g. Monument Corridor). Additionally, new outreach efforts will involve working with area schools, universities (DVC, St. Mary's), transit communities, and major businesses to see if we can persuade some of their students/workforce/residents to choose public transportation at least 1-2 days per week. As well, we will continue to promote the Summer Youth Pass and Pass2Class programs in partnership with 511 Contra Costa.
  - **Total expense:** \$100,000
- **Service Alerts and General Updates:** We have been working to keep passengers informed of service alerts and general updates, which include interruptions in service and bus bridges, as with planned maintenance on BART lines. We currently send out alerts and updates on Twitter and will continue to build unified and consistent messaging across our social media channels. Further, we are going to be working to help passengers with trip planning by promoting the Transit app, which provides real-time bus time predictions for stops, helping to set expectations by informing riders whether or not there is a service interruption.
  - **Total expense:** \$20,000
- **Education:** The focus on education is to provide more insights and transparency into County Connection operations, not just for those who use our service, but to build support among non-riders/residents by showing the value we add to the region. We may share how we plan our routes, what goes into maintaining our bus fleet, and insight into how some of our programs work, (e.g. One Seat, Clipper START).
  - **Total expense:** \$35,000

- **Recruitment:** There has not been a concerted effort through our marketing channels in the recruitment of new employees, particularly bus operators. Our Marketing Department will be working closer with Recruitment to highlight job openings, hiring events, and current employee testimonials.
  - **Total expense:** \$15,000

**Financial Implications:**

Staff is proposing a budget of \$170,000 to cover the expenses associated with the FY 2024 Marketing Plan.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends that the Advisory Committee review and provide feedback on the draft plan. A final version of the plan will be presented to the Board for review and approval in March.

**Action Requested:**

None, for information only.

**Attachments:**

None