

To: Board of Directors

Date: 05/10/2018

From: Ruby Horta, Director of Planning & Marketing

Reviewed by: WC.

SUBJECT: Marketing Plan FY 2019

Background:

County Connection's upcoming Marketing Plan will focus on disseminating information about the proposed service and fare restructure, with an emphasis on the dissemination of Clipper and its benefits. The plan includes ongoing efforts to update and simplify the website and enhance the mobile device interface. Other tasks that have become routine include implementation of the Class Pass Program and the Summer Youth Program, partnering with 511 Contra Costa and 511 SWAT, participating in outreach opportunities at schools, senior centers and employment sites and community events.

Promoting Fare and Service Changes:

There are two proposals (fare modification and service restructure) that staff has been authorized to share with the public. The public comment process, as well as the actual implementation of any changes, will require a significant amount of outreach and marketing resources to effectively communicate the changes. Staff anticipates using the majority of the promotions budget towards these efforts.

In order for the fare restructure to achieve a significant level of success, Clipper must be widely adopted. This will require Clipper cards to be widely available to passengers as well various partnerships to ensure passengers are properly educated on the benefits embedded in the Clipper card and how to effectively use the Clipper system.

Promotion expenses related to launching new fares and service will include web and graphic design, promotional events, mailer and flyer layouts, printing, direct mail, and interior bus card printing. The wide dissemination of Clipper cards will include giveaways, webpage design to explain and market the benefits as well as print materials to be used as information and outreach, translated to various languages.

Total Expense: \$100,000

Website and Social Media:

County Connection riders are increasingly using the internet to access transit information for trip planning, bus schedules and real time arrival predictions. Because so many riders and non-riders are viewing County Connection on the web using their mobile devices we intend to spend a good share of the promotions budget on website maintenance, mobile interfaces, and building community through use of social media.

Total expense: \$50,000

Routine Promotion Expenses:

Ongoing promotion expenses include the cost for chamber dues and event fees, yellow pages ads, printing brochures for accessible service, bikes on buses, and promoting the summer youth pass.

Total expense: \$20,000

Miscellaneous Promotion:

The miscellaneous promotions budget is intended to cover general website maintenance, some radio and print advertising, as well as fund campaigns or new services that haven't been identified.

Total expense: \$10,000

Summary Promotions Budget:

Fare & Service Changes	\$100,000
Website & Social Media	\$50,000
Routine Expenses	\$20,000
Miscellaneous Promotion	\$10,000
Total	\$180,000

Recommendation:

The Marketing, Planning & Legislative Committee and staff recommend the Board approve the Draft FY19 County Connection Marketing Plan.

Financial Implications:

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