

To: Advisory Committee

Date: 03/03/2023

From: Ryan Jones, Manager of Marketing & Communication

Reviewed by: MR

SUBJECT: FY 2024 Marketing Plan

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 Marketing Plan for FY 2024 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.

During the plan development, staff engaged the Advisory Committee, who provided ideas on what to include in the plan and then reviewed and provided comments on an initial draft. Staff incorporated those comments into the plan now being presented for approval. The plan 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, and coordinate with resources that provide rehabilitation and care services for our disabled community, making them aware of programs like One-Seat Ride and our Travel Training Program.

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

Educational Campaigns:

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 their community. This could include sharing how we plan our routes, what goes into maintaining our bus fleet, where our funding comes from, 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 share current employee testimonials.

Total expense: \$15,000

Financial Implications:

Staff has budgeted \$170,000 to cover the expenses associated with the FY 2024 Marketing Plan.

Events and Promotions	\$100,000
Service Alerts and General Updates	\$20,000
Educational Campaigns	\$35,000
Recruitment	\$15,000
TOTAL	\$170,000

Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of the proposed FY 2024 Marketing Plan.

Action Requested:

Staff requests that the MP&L Committee forward the proposed FY 2024 Marketing Plan to the Board for approval.

Attachments:

None