



Vermont Transportation Efficiency Network

“Advancing TDM Outreach for 2020”

1-4 pm | October 9, 2019

Vermont Agency of Transportation

Barre City Place (219 N. Main Street), 4th floor, Room 425

Barre, Vermont

Meeting Action Steps & Takeaways

The group wants training in Community-Based Social Marketing and other behavior change models. **ACTION:** *VTEN organizers to ask Annie or Alicia at CarShare if they can do a webinar or in-person training. Will also look into other behavior change professional development opportunities. For example: Center for Urban Transportation Research’s [Social Marketing in Transportation Certification](#).*

The group is interested in a statewide coordinated outreach schedule, with focus on specific modes (in line with regional and national events, e.g. bike to work day). This is an opportunity to share resources and develop collaborative messaging and outreach plan. Must be collaborative with everyone in the loop. What are the three topics we can come together on? **ACTION:** *Ross, Jenn, Katie, Ana, and Bethany to form a group to work this out and get back to the group with resources and opportunities. ACTION: Partners keep an eye out for survey to start ranking ideas (from meeting work session) into priority order.*

Go! Vermont website contains lots of resources and marketing/outreach materials—we need to remember to use it AND collaboratively help Ross improve/add to it. **ACTION:** *Partners should take/use what’s useful, share with your networks. ACTION: Between now and December, partners should look at the Go! Vermont website, see how each mode is promoted, and give Ross feedback to help improve resources and materials and improve overall coordination on messaging.*

Work Session Highlights for Future Outreach Goals:

- **Individual accommodations/one-on-one/personal touch**
- **Generationally relevant messaging**
- Coordinated outreach (and timing) e.g. one month, one mode focus.
- Promotion paired with health and senior centers, health centers, treatment centers
- Need shared messaging for segmented audiences
- Make it cool/sexy – who’s the “in” group? Identify, recruit “influencers,” do rider profiles
- Use new social media trends (find someone to help us with this)
- Use bus drivers as proactive teachers/ambassadors, involve them early to get buy-in
- Systematic/thematic collaboration (bike folks work together, transit folks work together)
- Yearlong marketing campaigns
- Mind map of talent and resources within the group. Who is good at what?
- Need more knowledge on behavior change messaging

- Need to compile outreach best practices (e.g. how and when to send email blasts)
- Social media training
- Address role of biking within the transit system, e.g. people need to know how to put bike on bus rack, bike shares need to be located near transit
- Change the whole paradigm (goal of STV blog) – are there ways to promote this different way of thinking? Change the conversation- transit first (car second)
- Infrastructure!
- More targeted outreach to youth and seniors
- Keep messaging simple, focus on 1-2 action steps that can make an impact
- Is new Go! Vermont trip planner an opportunity for a statewide campaign?

Other Notes from Work Session (large paper & sticky notes) *NOTE: these notes are somewhat reorganized to put like items together and pull out some new categories.*

What Motivates People's Current Habits?

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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost (car ownership, fuel cost, parking, cost of alternatives) • Convenience (time, distance, safety, does it work? Is it more convenient than alternatives?) • Available options • Health & mobility • Personal transportation • Safety (i.e. for bikes/pedestrians) • Identifying with that mode (attitudes, values, and perceptions) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good first experiences (approachability, travel training) • Early adopters (trend-setting) • Experience • Weather • Infrastructure • Social norms • Trust • Reliability • A healthy earth |
|---|---|

How to Energize / Keep People Engaged?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it easier, cheaper, more convenient • Tap into values of choice riders • Better rider experience • Better information • Unified message • New initiatives to keep up with the times • Events • Incentives • Normalize options | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost time and no parking • Stuff the car (pledge) • Electric bus • Active commute • Travel smart-signs on street • Subsidies • Good customer service • Trip planner and real time transit apps |
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What Do Transit Riders Need (including what we may not offer yet)?

- Easy fare card
- Cheaper alternatives than driving
- Wifi access on buses
- Employer subsidies
- Rural transit solutions
- Consistent routes
- On-time & reliable service
- Information

Current Mode-Specific Messaging That Works

Walk/Bike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health benefits • climate/environment • convenient (depending) • pictures of people in idyllic situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gear (suited to weather) • cost comparison/savings (bike vs car tune up) • fashion, benefits (urban speed)
Carpooling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connecting people • social norm/pressure • easy to do if there is coordination • stress-free/relaxing 	
Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • app/real-time, trip planner • wifi (be productive/do work during commute) • relaxing (less stress) • cost • one-to-one outreach • individual accommodations • bus safety (esp. in winter) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • smart commute • personal ambassadors • climate (for younger, climate activists) • free • easy • move bikers onto bus in winter

Messaging Elements to Keep/Start Using

- *“When roads are bad, be safe with us”*
- Save time
- Save money
- Relax
- Get healthier
- Be more social / build connection
- *‘You’re not IN traffic, you ARE traffic’*
- Fun
- Climate action (jump on Climate Strike momentum)

Disconnects / What Doesn’t Work

- Socio-economic stratification, can be elitist, “our way is the only right way”
- Variation in communication channels
- Retire Facebook when there is no following
- Alternative transit benefits drowned out by lack of convenience
- Shaming is a problem across spectrum, beware of shaming language
- Disconnect w/ environmental issues

- Need to retire messaging that supports SOV, e.g. free parking, advertising parking

What is the Recipe For Each of Below Successes?

- MOOver tripper service for students
- CarShare Vermont's behavior change model

What Resources Can We Make Better Use Of?

- | | |
|--|---|
| • DMV – mobility education | • Behavior change marketing tools |
| • Climate activists | • Go! Vermont resources |
| • Schools – VEEP | • Doctor's offices, public services, treatment centers, visiting nurses |
| • Communication forums & tools (Front Porch Forum, email, smartphones) | • Google – people know and love it |

Presentation Notes (see vitalcommunities.org/transportation/vten/ for presentation slides)

Jenn Wood, Green Mountain Transit

GMT's Top Marketing & Communication Goals:

Improve customer service

- More staffing for call center and front desk
- Driver training (e.g. implicit bias)
- Real time transit app promotion, more social media and onboard signage
- Working with UVM students to create how-to videos

Expand language options

- Survey showed need to offer translation for website & apps, multiple language versions for bus guide and maps

Sustainability focus

- Social media strategy
- Case study: "Take the Pledge" commitment to ride bus once a week during youth climate strike
- Kids can influence parents?

Rural Funding challenges:

- GMT represent 50% of public transit of Vermont
- Is the state's only transit authority, giving it funding opportunities like that of a municipality
- 80% of funding comes from federal/state
- 20% matched from local sources, but municipalities can rarely meet this match, much outreach is needed to receive any municipal contribution

Bryan Davis, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC)

Two case studies of community outreach:

Go! Chittenden County (note: program was sunset when CATMA expanded)

- Federal grant brought partners together in unified one-stop shop TDM program county-wide
- Each partner advanced specific projects under same brand
- To save money, outreach plan and implementation done in-house (limited success)
- Brand messaging: make commute fun! cute visuals, contests, static ads

- Results: mode shift small but in right direction; recession and high gas prices were initial influence; more people drove alone in 2015 but drove fewer miles

Way to Go!

- Various iterations over the years (different campaigns, different target audiences)
- Recent change to focus on schools - that's the lever that results in most increase in participation

Lessons from those case studies:

- Figure out what you want to measure before you start. What does success look like?
- If you don't have the expertise or resources in-house, find the right person/entity
- Are there transportation and/or TDM influencers? Is anyone using them?
- What are ways that people can interact with transportation and/or TDM as a brand?
- How can we encourage behavior change without mode shaming?

Julie Campoli, Sustainable Transportation Vermont

Sustainable Transportation Vermont blog (www.stvt.org/):

- Goal of site is to fundamentally shift people's thinking about our transportation system and what is possible
- Includes success stories, profiles of people to normalize car-lite lifestyle and support better land use patterns

Ways partners can contribute:

- Submit a story! Categories are energy, environment, policy, technology
- Share content via Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, & share mailing lists.
- Comment on stories. Analytics is not a good way to measure your success, best way is to review comments to see how people are engaging with the content.
- Provide feedback. Is it working? Suggestions?

Deb Sachs, Go! Vermont

- Today's meeting was Deb's brainchild.
- Hoping to unify our messaging, share resources and identify what three projects we might advance in 2020.
- See "Partners Marketing TDM Together" worksheet uploaded to VTEN website
- Book recommendation: *"Unprecedented Climate Mobilization"*; Deb draws a lot from that; the success is partners, creativity, unity, rallying behind a brand.

Ross McDonald, Go! Vermont

Redesigned Go! Vermont website—check it out!

Microtransit pilot in Montpelier

- Replacing 3 routes with buses that can be requested by phone and arrive within minutes
- Working Group produced White Paper, Outreach Plan, nation-wide project Assessment, and received "simulations" from two industry leaders (Via and Transloc)
- Many reasons to consider this new service:
 - o Total ridership is stagnant but cost per trip is increasing
 - o Existing technology is not compatible/visible through trip planner
 - o Need all providers, routes, and bus stops operating with the same AVL (real-time location) service and open source data. This would allow for the transit options available on Vermont trip planner to be visible on google trip planner.

- We have complete data, just need a designer
- More convenient?

Integrated trip planner

- Will be launched in November – Agile Mile proposed design
- Open source using the same interface, same Go! Vermont brand

Outreach opportunities

- Launch media campaigns for both Trip Planner and Transit App
- Incorporate Microtransit into Transit App and Trip Planner
- Develop interface so Demand Response (Dial-a-Ride) trips can be revealed in Trip Planner
- Real-time carpooling? Rural “Slug lanes”?
- Opens up empty seats to anyone-they’ll have to pay which will reduce the cost to operate those Medicare trips
- Need help promoting this – Ross and Deb are only half-time
- Use volunteers to fill community needs

Other programs

- Rides to wellness – grants were being reviewed this week
- Recovery rides provide transportation to behavioral health services