



Southwest Transit “Fall Back on Us” 2020 Ridership Promotion

Presented By:

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About Southwest Transit

- Began service as an “Opt-Out” system in 1986
- Provides express and demand-responsive services within Carver County, Chaska, Chanhassen and Eden Prairie areas to local/regional destinations
- 7-Member Commission with one elected official, 1 appointed citizen from each community and ridership representative
- Newly-remodeled Administrative/Bus Garage/Maintenance Facility in Eden Prairie and five (5) park-and-ride locations
- 63 Coaches/24 Demand-Response Vehicles





Southwest Transit Services

- Express Buses to Downtown Minneapolis and U of M
- Local routes to Best Buy Headquarters, Normandale Community College and Southdale Mall (MOA, MSP and Shakopee to be added in 2021)
- Demand/Responsive services (SW Prime) throughout the service delivery area
- Contracted services to Carver and Victoria
- Prime MD (new service began in 2019)

Southwest Transit Facilities

- Newly-remodeled Administrative/Bus Garage/Maintenance Facility in Eden Prairie and five (5) park-and-ride locations:
 - Southwest Station (Eden Prairie)
 - Southwest Village (Chanhassen)
 - East Creek Station (Chaska)
 - Chanhassen Transit Station
 - Carver Station

Southwest Transit Facilities



Southwest Ridership

- **2019:**

- Express: 998,654 riders
- Demand Responsive: 108,801 riders

2020 since COVID restrictions:

- Express passengers down 90-95%
- Prime passengers down 80% early on, as of September 2020 down 50%





Priorities During Pandemic

- Reassure riders that SW is doing all it can to keep vehicles, passengers and drivers safe in a clean environment
- Continue to provide excellent customer service
- Keep SW name and reputation out there for our communities and passengers when they are ready to come back onboard

Fall 2020 Promotion Objectives

- Target customers that would likely return post-pandemic
- Identify rider concerns and provide timely information
- Address riders' personal safety and cleanliness concerns
- Determine what items might be useful for isolated customers
- Keep to a consistent, upbeat and seasonal message/theme
- Provide an attractive, value-added and cost-effective set of incentives to our riders



What We Did

- Focused on riders who would use local service vs. downtown destinations
- Reviewed ridership pick up and destinations from local route and demand/responsive service to determine best promo areas
- Ensured parity existed by spreading the promotion among riders in each of three main Southwest service areas
- Developed theme, identified potential promotional items and potential partners/sponsors





How We Did It

- Contacted managers of senior active living locations to ask if the promotion would be of benefit and welcome to residents
- Worked with local Senior Community Coordinators to better understand needs and interests at this time
- Obtained estimate of number of promotional items needed
- Identified which items Southwest could provide
- Identified and solicited promotional goods from local businesses as partners
- Developed a reasonable timeline and estimated delivery date to provide sufficient procurement time

Planning

- Set a target of October 1 to stuff and deliver 250 “fall swag bags” to 4 locations with their permission
- Identified numerous promotional items for Southwest to contribute directly which were already available (masks, basting brushes, free ride coupons, etc.)
- Contacted and obtained donations from a variety of local/regional sponsors, especially grocery stores, small businesses and local nurseries/orchards



A green tote bag is filled with various items. On the left, a 2019 Annual Report is visible. In the center, there is a large bag of White Cheddar Cheese popcorn from Kowalski's Markets. To the right of the popcorn is a black bag with the Southwest Transit logo. In the foreground, there is a box of Cracker Jack Original, a bottle of water, and a small red container. The bag is also filled with other miscellaneous items like a small black bag and a clear plastic bag.

Gift Tag

FALL BACK ON SOUTHWEST TRANSIT!!

We know it has been a rough time for our friends and neighbors these past few months and we want you to know we are here to help. Did you know that Southwest Prime can provide you with a safe, clean ride with one easy online reservation? Just download the FREE Southwest Transit rider app at [swtransit.org](https://www.swtransit.org) or call Southwest at **952-797-7463** and we can provide easy directions on how simple it is to book your door-to-door ride anywhere in our Eden Prairie, Chaska and Chanhassen service areas! It's safe, easy and convenient!

SO PLEASE, FALL BACK ON US!!

We are sanitizing our buses and facilities each and every day, our friendly bus drivers and staff are wearing masks and socially distancing (but in a pleasant way!) from passengers, and we've made it simple and convenient to book and pay for your ride without risk. More importantly, we are constantly monitoring our passenger loads to ensure your safety each and every time you ride!

Whether you need to go shopping, visit a friend, see the doctor or dentist, or just stroll about town, we can help. In the meantime, we hope you enjoy this reusable bag of goodies as our way of wishing your well and introducing you to Southwest Prime. Find out more about how to ride Southwest Prime to get around town for any reason at [swtransit.org](https://www.swtransit.org) or by calling us at **952-797-7463**.

Please keep us in mind for your next outing, and use the enclosed

FREE TRANSIT PASS - ON US!!!



CONTENTS OF THIS GIFT BAG HAVE BEEN GENEROUSLY DONATED BY THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS: Please continue to support them.



Southwest 2020 “Fall Swag Bags”

Total bags delivered = 220

- 65 @ Centennial Hills Senior Apts.-
Chanhassen
- 65 @ Chaska Heights Senior Living -
Chaska
- 50 @ Edendale Residence – Eden Prairie
- 40 @ Chanhassen Senior Center (two
events)





Promotion Cost

- Staff time to identify customer targets, determine locations and develop theme/messaging
- Promotional items from Southwest's on-hand supplies
- Purchase of hand sanitizer/caramel apple dip
- Printing of gift tags and labels with specific message and sponsor information

Out of Pocket Promo Expense: \$900



Lessons Learned

- It is an enjoyable effort to solicit and put together a thoughtful, useful gift for our customers facing difficult times for staff/employee engagement
- Costs for a shared promotional effort are not expensive
- Donations from the private sector are generous—if they understand the reason for doing so and the target market, they are quick to donate and happy to do so
- The key to making the gift interesting and exciting is to have a targeted message and nice gift wrapping, unexpected delivery
- It's a wonderful exercise in community-building

Contact



To learn more about our marketing and promotional efforts, please contact Southwest Transit:

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