

**COMMUTER CONNECTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING HIGHLIGHTS
September 17, 2024**

1. INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was brought to order by Janiece Timmons, WMATA. Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, asked new attendees participating in the Webex and in-person attendees to introduce themselves.

2. MINUTES OF THE JULY 16, 2024 MEETING

Minutes of the prior Subcommittee meeting were displayed for members to review. Janiece Timmons, WMATA, requested a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Commuter Connections Subcommittee meeting. Brandon Brown, PGC DPWT, made a motion to approve the minutes; Leigh Anderson, GWRideConnect, seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

3. CHANGE OF CHAIRS

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, commended the Chair for her efforts to lead the Subcommittee for the past year. Christian Bacon, PGC DPWT, was elevated from the Vice Chair to the Chair position. The Vice Chair position is vacant; however, a search is ongoing to fill the position.

4. TDM EVALUATION WORK GROUP

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, provided an overview of the Commuter Connections Regional TDM Evaluation project. Commuter Connections evaluates its programs and their impacts as part of a triennial cycle. This is supplemental to the State of the Commute Survey and Technical Report, which takes place every three years. Mr. Sheehan outlined the survey schedule for the next three years and noted that the State of the Commute survey is expected to commence in early 2025. Once a TDM Evaluation Contractor is identified, the work group will convene to discuss evaluation methodology and survey questionnaires.

5. COMMUTER CONNECTIONS 50TH ANNIVERSARY AND EMPLOYER AWARDS

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the upcoming 50th Anniversary celebration scheduled for October 2, 2024. The program and its many successes will be honored with a keynote address by Mayor Bowser. VDOT Chief of Policy, Angel Deem, and MDOT Chief of Planning, Programming, and Project Delivery at the Secretary's Office, Geoff Anderson, will offer a retrospective of the program over the past 50 years. Winners of the Employer awards and COG awards will be announced. COG's Executive Director is expected to announce CommuterCash as the next advancement in the Commuter Connections family of TDM programs.

Communications materials for the event are still in development. Materials include a press release, awards program booklet, timeline brochure, commemorative video, and news highlight story.

6. COMMUTERCASH RELEASE DETAILS

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, presented a phased approach to the CommuterCash launch. Having recently received the application source code in July, the Commuter Connections TDM Technology Developer will need a few months to rehabilitate the code to fit within the Commuter Connections TDM System. The core components of CommuterCash, featuring a trip planner, commute logger, gamification elements, points redemptions, and trip history is expected to be released in December 2024. Supplemental phased releases with additional functionality are schedule for February 2025, which will include Employer Commuter Challenge features, and June 2025, which is expected to include corridor challenges, flextime rewards, public challenges, and Reach a Ride integration.

A transition plan is currently in-the-works. Existing incenTrip accounts will be ported to CommuterCash; a completely new download of the app will be required. All Commuter Connections and MDOT program elements will be removed form incenTrip by January 1, 2025. Paid marketing for CommuterCash is expected to commence in late winter 2025.

7. REGIONAL EMPLOYER COMMUTER CHALLENGE UPDATE

James Davenport, COG/TPB staff, provided an update on discussions recently held by the Regional Employer Commuter Challenge work group. Commuter Connections will be collaborating with its local partners to conduct a Regional Employer Commuter Challenge in the spring of next year. This past spring, two independent Challenges occurred among Commuter Connections stakeholders: (1) goDCgo's Employer Challenge, and (2) the Ride for the Region Employer Challenge organized by a WMATA task force. Commuter Connections network members identified an opportunity to merge the Challenges, which are similar in scope, into a regional Challenge.

The intent of the regional challenge is to sell sustainable commuting culture. The campaign seeks to make it fun through friendly competition and incentives. It will also be an opportunity for employers to pride themselves in doing something good for the community where they are located.

A workgroup was established and held its first meeting a little over a month ago. It was a brainstorming exercise in which members proposed ideas for different elements of a potential challenge including participation eligibility, how points accumulate for each participant, and day-to-day expectations of participants.

For the next meeting, work group members commented and discussed the goals, objectives, structure, and guidelines of the Challenge as proposed in a draft plan. The purpose of the meeting will be to finalize these elements. A few remaining items for discussion at the next meeting include marketing/outreach, budget, and reporting evaluation criteria.

The structure of the Challenge is expected to be formalized by the work group in October.

(POST-MEETING NOTE: A [memo](#) detailing the Challenge's structure, objectives, goals, and other elements was created for the Employer Outreach Committee and is posted to their October 15, 2024 meeting page.)

8. 'POOL REWARDS PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, presented tentative program guideline updates for the carpool incentive portion of the 'pool Rewards program. Modifications will likely include the ability to earn up

to \$5 per day per carpool member, more frequent payments, and a strategic future integration with CommuterCash. The Subcommittee was invited to provide comments on the changes through October 1, 2024. A final version of the updated guidelines is expected to be presented for endorsement to the Subcommittee at the November meeting.

9. COMMUTER CONNECTIONS STRATEGIC PLAN AND FY2026 WORK PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, shared the existing Commuter Connections strategic plan. Mr. Sheehan recommended maintaining the vast majority of the strategic plan, but suggested further examination of Commuter Connections' role in telework. The Subcommittee noted that telework needs to be acknowledged as a key element of TDM that compliments the promotion of sustainable commuting, but also acknowledged that its widespread adoption means there is less of a need to "sell" it to employers.

Mr. Sheehan shared a timeline for CCWP development and adoption. An outline of program elements was then shared and discussed; proposed changes from staff were discussed. An updated version of the CCWP will be presented to the Subcommittee in November, whereupon members may issue formal comment.

10. FY2024 4TH QUARTER CCWP BUDGET REPORT, FY2024 Q4 PROGRESS REPORT, AND FY2024 CCWP ANNUAL REPORT

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the FY2024 CCWP 4th Quarter Budget Report, FY2024 Q4 Progress Report, and FY2024 CCWP Annual Report. The program saw marginal growth throughout the fiscal year.

11. STAFF UPDATES

A. 9/23 Car Free Day Event. The regional Car Free Day event is scheduled to be held on Monday, September 23, 2024.

B. CommuterConnections.org Website Update. The Commuter Connections website is undergoing a refresh. An updated design is expected to be presented at the November Subcommittee meeting.

C. Commuter Connections Program Manager Recruitment. Commuter Connections expects to recruit a program manager soon; the Subcommittee will be alerted as to when the posting is active.

D. CCWP Amendment for MDOT Commuter Incentive Program. Earlier in the month, the TPB Steering Committee approved a contract amendment for the FY2025 CCWP to include the MDOT Key Bridge Emergency TDM program. The TPB is likely to formally approve the amendment tomorrow; project implementation could start as early as fall 2024.

12. OTHER BUSINESS

Brandon Brown, PGC DPWT, suggested including a Best Practices session to help boost numbers in the CCWP report.

13. ADJOURN

The next meeting of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee meeting will be held on November 19, 2024, from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.