

**COMMUTER CONNECTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING HIGHLIGHTS
November 19, 2024**

1. INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was brought to order by the Subcommittee Chair, Christian Bacon, PGC DPWT. Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, asked new attendees participating in the Webex and in-person attendees to introduce themselves.

2. SEPTEMBER 17, 2024 MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Minutes of the prior Subcommittee meeting were displayed for members to review. Chair Bacon requested a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Commuter Connections Subcommittee meeting. Wendy Klancher, Arlington County, made a motion to approve the minutes; Janiece Simmons, WMATA, seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

3. 'POOL REWARDS CARPOOL INCENTIVE PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, presented program guideline updates for the carpool incentive portion of the 'Pool Rewards program. The updated program guidelines were previously presented to the Subcommittee at the September 17, 2024 meeting, where Subcommittee members were invited to submit comments on the updates. No comments were received.

Modifications to the guidelines include the ability to earn up to \$5 per day per carpool member, more frequent payments, removal of trip log minimums, removal of supervisor requirement for registration, and a strategic future integration with CommuterCash.

Chair Bacon requested a motion to approve the changes to the program guidelines. Wendy Klancher, Arlington County, made a motion to approve the new 'Pool Rewards Carpool Incentive Program Guidelines. Janiece Timmons, WMATA, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The updated guidelines will be posted to the Commuter Connections website and put to effect beginning January 2025.

4. 2024 CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROCESS TECHNICAL REPORT

Andrew Meese, COG/TPB staff, highlighted elements of the 2024 Congestion Management Process (CMP) Technical Report. The CMP is a mandated element of metropolitan transportation planning that supports the National Capital Region Transportation Plan (Visualize 2050) and is developed biennially. The report was accepted as final by the TPB Technical Committee on November 1, 2024.

The report identifies Commuter Connections as the centerpiece of the region's TDM efforts that are essential to satisfy federal CMP requirements. Commuter Connections' robust program evaluation efforts is critical for quantifying the impacts of the program, which lend credibility to the program's effect on congestion management. The report also identifies other congestion management

strategies, such as public transportation improvements, Advanced Travel Information Systems, and Incident Management and Coordination as useful congestion management approaches.

The report found that congestion levels rebounded in 2023, but to levels still below pre-pandemic norms; travel demand strategies remain critical for congestion mitigation. Continuing the Commuter Connections program was the top recommendation of the report, alongside other recommendations to continue and enhance the MATOC program and continued encouragement to integrate operations management and travel demand management components of congestion management for more efficient use of the existing transportation network, among other recommendations.

A CMP overview is included as a [webpage](#) on the MWCOG website, where the full [technical report](#) is also posted.

5. 2024 BIKE TO WORK DAY EVENT REPORT

Mark Hersey, COG/TPB staff, presented a draft of the Bike to Work Day 2024 Event Report. The report included contributions and pit-stop recaps from the Bike to Work Day Steering Committee. The report provides background on activity from the May 2024 event including registration numbers by pit stop, sponsorships, local pit stop recaps, employer participation, promotional activities, media coverage and other pertinent items. The Subcommittee was invited to provide comments on the report through December 13, 2024.

6. 2024 CAR FREE DAY EVENT RESULTS

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, presented results from the 2024 Car Free Day event. The event offers prize drawings and other rewards for participants who pledge to go car free for the day. There were 4,064 total unique pledges for the event. Nearly 60% of pledgers indicated walking or running in lieu of driving alone; other top modes used on Car Free Day include Bicycle/Scooter and Telework, each of which had 40% of pledges. Participants could pledge multiple travel modes. Nearly 70,000 vehicle miles travelled (VMT) were reduced by participants. 27.8% of participants indicated they normally use an SOV but opted to go car free because of the event.

7. COMMUTER CONNECTIONS WEBSITE REFRESH

James Davenport, COG/TPB staff, demonstrated the updated commuterconnections.org website. The website is currently in staging to be migrated to production, likely to occur in the next couple weeks. The website update features consolidated webpages, improved graphics, and adjusted use of accordions. Website updates will continue after the new layout is published.

8. COMMUTER CONNECTIONS FY2026 WORK PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, provided an overview of the FY2026 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP). The CCWP is the guiding document for work activities related to the Commuter Connections program. The document is updated annually based on recommendations by COG/TPB staff, the State TDM Work Group, and the Commuter Connections Subcommittee.

The FY2026 CCWP features an extensive update from past work programs. The layout and organization of the document has been updated. The word count within the document was reduced from 20,000 to 11,000 (40%). Some tasks are proposed to be consolidated, and nearly all work

elements have revamped descriptions. Notable deviations and differences from prior years' work programs include:

- Expansion of operations budget and activities; largely reallocating marketing dollars to properly account for program administration costs.
- Addition of MDOT Commuter Incentive Program for Key Bridge Emergency TDM.
- Stabilization effort of federal grants as they wind down; fully integrating pilot projects into CCWP.
- Addition of the SchoolPool program.
- Scale-down of the Car Free Day event. The event will no longer be considered a signature Commuter Connections event, but will be lightly promoted as part of general TDM Marketing and Outreach.
- Discontinuation of the CarpoolNow program; reallocation of resources into CommuterCash.
- Addition of the Regional Employer Commuter Competition campaign.

Subcommittee members were invited to offer comments and feedback on the document through December 13, 2024. COG/TPB staff will modify the CCWP based on comments received from the Subcommittee, where necessary, and present an updated version of the FY2026 CCWP to the Subcommittee for endorsement at the January 21, 2025 meeting.

9. FY2025 1ST QUARTER CCWP BUDGET REPORT AND FY2025 Q1 PROGRESS REPORT

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the FY2025 CCWP 1st Quarter Budget Report, and the FY2025 CCWP Q1 Progress Report. Program spending is nearly the same as last year to date. The progress report format was updated for FY2025. The end-goal of the report is to have a concise, informative document that demonstrates program accomplishments.

10. STAFF UPDATES

A. Regional Employer Commuter Competition. The competition has been branded as the “goDMV Commuter Competition.” Employer recruitment commences in January. A handout to help generate employer interest was developed by goDCgo and can be shared with employers regardless of their workplace location.

B. TPB Curbside Management Forum Recommendations. The TPB hosted a Regional Curbside Management Forum in August 2024. Curbside management is relevant to TDM due to potential regulation of curbside space for TNC drop-off/pickups, bike lanes, parking, micromobility usage, etc. The report, which is [posted](#) to the COG website, covers attendees, participation, agenda highlights, and participant feedback.

C. TDM Evaluation Project Update. The TDM Evaluation Project has been delayed due to procurement and contracting challenges. However, recent progress seems to indicate the project will commence in December, three months after the original planned commencement date. As such, a revised timeline for project implementation will be developed for FY2025 TDM Evaluation efforts. A work group will be convened to review project priorities.

D. Commuter Connections Program Manager Recruitment. Recruitment is ongoing for the Commuter Connections Program Manager. Several applications have been received and interviews are underway.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

No discussion.

12. ADJOURN

The next meeting of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee meeting will be held on January 21, 2025, from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.