

COMMUTER CONNECTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING HIGHLIGHTS January 21, 2025

The [meeting recording](#) is available to rostered committee members. Contact the Subcommittee's Staff Lead, Dan Sheehan (dsheehan@mwccog.org), for the password to view the meeting recording.

1. INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was brought to order by the Subcommittee Chair, Christian Bacon, PGC DPWT. Chair Bacon asked new attendees participating in the Webex and in-person attendees to introduce themselves. The group remembered Mark Hersey, former Commuter Connections team member, who passed away unexpectedly in December.

2. NOVEMBER 19, 2024 MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights 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. George Clark, TCCSMD, made a motion to approve the minutes; Janiece Simmons, WMATA, seconded the motion. The highlights were approved.

3. VICE CHAIR APPOINTMENT

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, explained that a new Vice Chair for the Subcommittee is typically announced by the Vice Chair Nominating Committee at the Subcommittee's September meeting. This year, however, the jurisdiction responsible for identifying a staff member was in the middle of a leadership change in September. As such, the Vice Chair nomination was delayed.

Wendy Klancher, Section Head, Arlington County Commuter Services, was nominated to serve as Vice Chair for the Subcommittee. Mr. Sheehan asked the Chair to request a motion to appoint Wendy Klancher as the Subcommittee's Vice Chair for the remainder of the fiscal year. Chair Bacon requested the motion. George Clark, TCCSMD, motioned to appoint Wendy Klancher as the Subcommittee's Vice Chair for the remainder of the fiscal year. Leigh Anderson, GWRideConnect, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

4. FY2026 COMMUTER CONNECTIONS WORK PROGRAM (CCWP)

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, presented the draft FY2026 CCWP to the Subcommittee and identified notable modifications from the prior version presented at the November 19, 2024 meeting. There was one comment received by a Subcommittee member (a COG/TPB staff member) during the open comment period, which questioned the effectiveness for the Strategic Marketing Plan and Resource Guide (SMP) that Commuter Connections publishes annually. After discussing with the STDM Work Group, it was decided that the SMP would be discontinued in FY2026 and a crowdsourced marketing schedule would be maintained by COG/TPB staff in conjunction with the Regional TDM Marketing Work Group. Additional changes included an increased overall budget of around \$8,000 due to a

change in COG administrative overhead rates, and more detailed work items associated with the TDM Evaluation project. Mr. Sheehan asked the Chair to request a motion to endorse the FY2026 CCWP for release to the TPB.

Chair Bacon requested the motion. Leigh Anderson, GWRideConnect, motioned for the Subcommittee to endorse the FY2026 CCWP for release to the TPB. Judy Galen, Loudoun County, seconded. The motion carried. The FY2026 will be presented to the TPB Technical Committee and the TPB in February and March, which final approval will be requested.

5. 2024 BIKE TO WORK DAY EVENT REPORT

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, presented the updated draft 2024 Bike to Work Day Event Report. Content for the report was compiled by COG/TPB staff, with substantial contributions from pit stop managers in the Bike to Work Day Steering Committee. The report was previously presented to the Subcommittee on November 19, 2024. A comment period was established through December 13, 2024. Updates to the report include additional information related to Arlington pit stops. Mr. Franklin asked the Chair to request a motion to endorse the 2024 Bike to Work Day Event Report for release and publication.

Chair Bacon requested the motion. George Clark, TCCSMD, motioned for the Subcommittee to endorse the 2024 Bike to Work Day Event Report for release and publication. Traci McPhail, NBTMD, seconded. The motion carried. The report will be finalized and published on the Commuter Connections website.

6. FY2024 GUARANTEED RIDE HOME (GRH) CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on customers' experience with the GRH program. GRH participants are surveyed following their rides home. Survey responses are analyzed annually. Results for the Washington program indicate that 94% of respondents rated the service as excellent or good. High ratings were also received for reservation staff, service providers, and wait times. Isolated complaints primarily revolved around drivers. The results are included in a report that is [posted](#) to the meeting webpage on the COG website. Subcommittee members were invited to comment on the report through Tuesday, February 18 by emailing feedback to docomments@mwccog.org. Additionally, a memo noting low response rate for the Baltimore program was discussed. The Subcommittee considered ways of boosting response rates for surveys, including sending reminders.

7. TDM EVALUATION SCHEDULE MODIFICATIONS AND WORKGROUP

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, announced that work on the FY2025 TDM Evaluation project commenced in December 2024, which is three months later than originally planned. A revised project schedule pushes most deliverables back three months from the original plan. This means the State of the Commute survey will commence data collection in April and conclude in June. A draft report is expected in the fall with a final report expected around January 2026. The TDM Evaluation Methodology Framework is expected to be completed this fiscal year; the GRH Applicant Survey will occur in early FY2026.

Subcommittee members were invited to join the TDM Evaluation Workgroup, which will be convening the inaugural work session immediately following this Subcommittee meeting. The workgroup

provides feedback to the consultant team on the framework methodology and major surveys, such as the State of the Commute. Interested Subcommittee members can email Mr. Sheehan at dsheehan@mwccog.org to be added to the group's roster.

8. VANHOPPR FLEXIBLE VANPOOL

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, introduced the Subcommittee to the VanHoppr program. The program is the outcome of a federal program, Enhancing Mobility Innovations, overseen by the Federal Transit Administration. Commuter Connections received a \$250,000 federal award, commencing in February 2023, to develop a demonstration project for flexible vanpool that targets transportation disadvantaged geographies. A stakeholder group was convened regularly to provide feedback and guidance during the conceptualization period of the project, from May 2023 – February 2024.

Michael Hemry, Media Beef, is the primary software developer and marketer for the project. Mr. Hemry provided an overview of the VanHoppr module functions within the Commuter Connections TDM System from the perspective of a rider, driver, and administrator. Administrators can publish vans and available seats in the platform to be identified by potential riders; riders can request a ride from drivers.

Mr. Hemry outlined a marketing plan to target COG's Equity Emphasis Areas that are not located within half a mile of high-capacity transit; vanpooling is more lucrative in geographies that are not well served by fixed-route transit. A 3-month campaign is in development and will launch this spring.

9. COMMUTERCASH SOFT LAUNCH & GODMV COMMUTER COMPETITION

Michael Hemry, Media Beef, presented updates to the CommuterCash mobile application. Mr. Hemry is President of Media Beef, lead software developers for the application. CommuterCash is the replacement app for incenTrip, a prior Commuter Connections program that was retired at the end of 2024. CommuterCash has three core functions: Trip logger, trip planner/explorer, and rewards redemption. Similar to incenTrip, CommuterCash participants explore their trip options, log their sustainable trips to earn points, and redeem points for cash prizes. These core features were made fully available to Apple users via soft launch in mid-January. The Subcommittee was invited to download the app and provide feedback. Over the next several months, several updates are planned for the app to add additional features. One of the major features is the goDMV Commuter Competition.

James Davenport, COG/TPB staff, provided a briefing on the goDMV Commuter Competition. goDMV is a friendly competition among employers to promote sustainable commuting. The goal is to leverage community connections and existing technologies to encourage the use of alternative commuting options. Employers and commuters can win prizes and incentives for participating, and it is free for both parties. The competition will run from March to May, with monthly themed prizes and special bonuses. Grand prizes for the competition will be awarded at the end.

10. FY2025 2ND QUARTER CCWP BUDGET REPORT

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the FY2025 CCWP 2nd Quarter Budget Report. Total expenses were at 18% as of November 30th. Figures for the full quarter are not yet available and will be presented at the March Subcommittee meeting.

11. STAFF UPDATES

A. 2025 Employer Awards Nominations. Nominations for the 2025 Employer Awards are due January 31, 2025. The nomination form is found on the Commuter Connections [website](#). Each local jurisdiction participating in the Employer Outreach program is asked to nominate at least one employer.

B. Bike to Work Day Sponsorship Drive. Commuter Connections is currently soliciting sponsors for the 2025 Bike to Work Day event. Potential sponsors can learn more by visiting the Bike to Work Day website and reviewing the [sponsorship page](#).

C. Commuter Connections Program Manager Recruitment. Stacey King was announced as the new TDM Program Manager, set to start next week.

12. OTHER BUSINESS

Douglas Franklin, COG/TPB, announced that the required orientation session for new Bike to Work Day Pit Stop managers is scheduled for February 5 at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be hybrid. An announcement will be sent to Bike to Work Day Steering Committee members.

13. ADJOURN

The next meeting of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee meeting will be held on March 18, 2025, from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.