COMMUTER CONNECTIONS
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COMMUTER CONNECTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
DRAFT MEETING HIGHLIGHTS
September 15, 2026

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

1. INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was brought to order by the subcommittee Chair, Wendy Klancher, Arlington County. Chair Klancher asked new attendees participating in the Webex and in-person attendees to introduce themselves. Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, introduced Landon Coley, the new Commuter Connections Senior Program Specialist, who joined the team in August.

2. JULY 21, 2026 MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights of the prior subcommittee meeting were displayed for members to review. Chair Klancher requested a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Commuter Connections Subcommittee meeting. Katy Lang, DDOT made a motion to approve the meeting highlights; Janiece Timmons, WMATA, seconded the motion. The highlights were approved.

3. CHANGE OF CHAIRPERSONS

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, thanked the subcommittee Chair, Wendy Klancher, for her service throughout FY2026. Katy Lang, Commuter Connections Subcommittee Vice Chair, transitioned to the Chair role. The Vice Chair Nominating Committee announced Sande Brecher, MCDOT, as the FY2027 Vice Chair for the subcommittee. Mr. Sheehan asked the Chair to request a motion to accept Sande Brecher as the new subcommittee Vice Chair.

Chair Lang requested the motion. Wendy Klancher, Arlington County, motioned for the subcommittee to accept Sande Brecher as the new Commuter Connections Subcommittee Vice Chair. Judy Galen, Loudoun County, seconded. The motion carried.

4. TDM EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Foursquare ITP and Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, opened by recapping the triennial TDM evaluation, now in its final year and covering each element of the Commuter Connections program, including Employer Outreach, Regional Marketing, and Commuter Program Operations. Data collection is complete, and analysis and reporting are underway. The Retention Rate Survey closed June 30 with about 650 responses (a 1.9% response rate). The subcommittee will receive the draft Retention Rate Survey report and TDM Analysis in January 2027 and will be asked to endorse them in March 2027. Staff also noted a fall/winter 2026 task to update the Commuter Connections Dashboard, including a data download feature and back-end improvements.

Looking ahead to the evaluation cycle beginning in 2027, the Foursquare ITP presented evidence that survey response rates are declining both nationally and for Commuter Connections surveys. The State of the Commute Survey shows a clear steady decline, and telephone refusal rates have risen. Data precision has been maintained so far through oversampling, multiple rounds of sampling, and weighting, so no drastic changes are needed now. Staff proposed proactively exploring alternatives: using the dashboard for more continuous monitoring, building on the more established CommuterCash app, and using the customized OneCommute CRM. The main proposal was microsurveys, which are short, in-app surveys tied to existing account data and incentivized with CommuterCash points. They could replace long instruments like the 46-question, 11-minute Guaranteed Ride Home survey. Staff emphasized that the State of the Commute Survey is not part of this discussion and that this year's task is to develop a methodology and implementation plan.

Subcommittee members responded with strong support. One member gave a "green light," citing private-sector best practice. Another said declining participation has led elected officials to question survey reliability. Members also suggested shorter surveys, surveys triggered soon after registration, and faster feedback loops. Staff noted that a survey module already built for the new website and the goDMV microsurveys align with this approach, and could let jurisdictional administrators run targeted surveys. Concerns included survey fatigue and deterrence from participating, whether microsurveys would stay statistically comparable or representative (particularly for past program participants who are not in the app), and the need to define which decisions the data should inform. Staff acknowledged these open questions and committed to prioritizing essential data. A discussion poll showed most respondents saw added value in more frequent TDM analysis reporting. The TDM Evaluation Work Group will reconvene in spring 2027 to continue planning.

5. FY2026 GRH CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY REPORT

Tas Hossain, COG/TPB staff, presented the FY2026 GRH Customer Satisfaction Survey Report. GRH provides registered commuters with a ride home during emergencies, illness, or unscheduled overtime. For the first time in several years, enough Baltimore-region responses were received to include Baltimore results alongside metropolitan Washington in the full report. In the metropolitan Washington region, 153 of 1,256 surveys were completed (12%), and in Baltimore, 23 of 143 were completed (16%). Results were strongly positive. Overall satisfaction was rated good or excellent by 92% of metropolitan Washington respondents and 87% of Baltimore respondents. Reservation staff were rated favorably by 94% and 87%, respectively, and transportation service by 85% and 91%. Response time was rated favorably by 92% in both regions, with average waits of about 12 minutes in metropolitan Washington and 13 in Baltimore. Personal illness was the most common reason for using GRH in metropolitan Washington, while unscheduled overtime led in Baltimore.

Written comments were mostly positive, praising reservation staff, speed of service, and the peace of mind GRH provides. Many respondents said it gives them greater confidence to use transit, carpooling, and other alternative commute options. The most common concerns involved transportation providers, and staff said the feedback will continue to inform program improvements. A member asked for a mode breakdown of the 23 Baltimore respondents, such as MARC versus local MTA riders. Staff said the survey doesn't ask about mode, but each commuter's typical mode is on file in their account, so the information could be retrieved.

6. FY2026 Q4 CCWP BUDGET REPORT, PROGRESS REPORT, AND ANNUAL REPORT

Dan Sheehan, COG/TPB staff, referred committee members to review the quarterly and annual reports posted to the meeting page on the COG website. The program expended about 86% of its

budget in FY2026. The ride matching database surpassed 16,000 for the first time since the pandemic, a post-pandemic high. Website impressions roughly doubled, from about 300,000 last fiscal year to about 600,000 this year, with interest spiking in the spring amid higher gas prices and combined marketing outreach. Staff also reported growth in goDMV, and noted that Bike to Work Day registrations grew year-over-year for the first time since the pandemic.

7. STAFF UPDATES

A. I-66 Slugging Challenge. CommuterCash is being used as the trip tracking mechanism for FHWA's I-66 Slugging Challenge campaign. The campaign kicked off yesterday and will operate over the next 66 days.

B. TDM2 & Carpool Bonus. The new Ridematching system and carpool program are pending public launch, and will be detailed at the September Ridematching Committee meeting.

C. Employer Outreach Leveling Changes. The Employer Outreach Committee will be presented a draft of updated Employer Participation Levels to be integrated into the OneCommute Regional Employer Database. The committee will be provided an opportunity to comment and feedback on the changes.

D. Car Free Day / Week Without Driving. WMATA is sponsoring Car Free Day and Week Without Driving beginning September 22. Commuter connections will be co-promoting the campaigns.

E. Bike to Work Update. The first Bike to Work Day Steering Committee meeting for the 2027 event was held last week. Staff are currently drafting the event report for the 2026 event.

F. 2027 Committee Meeting Schedule. Commuter Connections Ridematching, Employer Outreach, and Regional Marketing committees will meet triannually in 2027, on the third Tuesday of March, July, and November. The subcommittee schedule will remain bimonthly, with an in-person attendance option during the dates of the other committee meetings.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

The Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) Chesapeake Chapter will be hosting a "Fall Into a Sea of TDM" event at COG on October 7-8. The event will feature speakers and content from throughout the Chesapeake chapter and beyond. Subcommittee members were invited to register for the event

9. ADJOURN

The next meeting of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee will be held on November 17, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The meeting will be a Microsoft Teams web-conference, with no in-person attendance available.