

Infrastructure and Corporate Services Committee

To: Chair and Members
Infrastructure and Corporate Services Committee

From: Kelly Scherr, P.Eng., MBA, FEC
Deputy City Manager, Environment & Infrastructure

Subject: Smart Commute London: Additional Details and MOU Extension

Date: March 23, 2026

Recommendation

That on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Environment & Infrastructure, with respect to the Council resolution dated February 11, 2026, to refer the “Smart Commute MOU Extension” report to a future meeting of the Infrastructure and Corporate Services Committee, to allow Civic Administration to provide more information to the Committee with respect to this program:

- a) This report **BE RECEIVED** for information;
- b) The Deputy City Manager of Environment and Infrastructure **BE AUTHORIZED** to approve and execute the upcoming Smart Commute Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Amendment and Extension Agreement and any future Smart Commute Association MOUs; and
- c) Civic Administration report back in March 2027 with an update regarding the effectiveness of the Smart Commute London program.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Committee and Council more information with respect to the Smart Commute London program, as per Council’s resolution on February 11, 2026, as well as to seek authorization for the Deputy City Manager of Environment and Infrastructure to sign the upcoming Amendment and Extension Agreement to the existing Smart Commute Association MOU.

London is investing \$454 million in the three approved Rapid Transit corridors. This includes \$167 million from senior levels of government. Over the last five years, London has also invested in walking and cycling infrastructure, including 35 km of sidewalks and 41 km of cycling facilities. These infrastructure investments help manage congestion, support mobility options, and increase trips made by sustainable modes of transportation.

A feasibility study related to Transportation Demand Management in 2020 recommended the implementation of a Transportation Management Association (TMA) in London to encourage employees and residents to use these City’s infrastructure investments where they can. This includes choosing carpooling, transit, cycling, walking as options to get to work, school, and around the city. Promoting commuting options also contributes to equity and inclusion as not everyone can afford a car or has a license to drive.

Purpose of Smart Commute

The Smart Commute London program was launched in May 2024 as a cost-effective form of a TMA and is still in its growth phase (i.e., ongoing active employer membership recruiting).

The Smart Commute London program currently supports London employers with commuting support services for their employees such as:

- Access to the Smart Commute trip planning and carpool ride-matching app;
- Emergency Ride Home service for employees who do leave their car at home;

- Advice and resources for employers to deliver employee commuting supports; and
- Employee engagement campaigns three times a year.

Results to Date

Key results of the Smart Commute London program to date include:

- Enrolment of 22 employer members, including London Health Sciences Centre, Enbridge Gas, London Hydro, St. Joseph's Health Care, London Public Library, and Middlesex London Health Unit, as well as the City of London itself. Recruitment efforts have also been focused on industrial parks, with membership including Voyago and OES Inc. The 22 members represent approximately 28,000 employees who are eligible for program supports across London. Discussions continue with other employers, including Western University and 3M. Post-secondary institutions are also a priority for enrollment.
- A total of 5,779 trips logged using the Smart Commute app to the end of January 2026. This figure represents only a portion of program results connected to the three annual employee engagement campaigns. Employees may not track all their sustainable commuting trips. For example, once a carpool is established, individual trips may not be logged.

The City of London has provided a community-wide carpool-matching service via an app since 2007. Work is underway to expand some of the program services, such as expanding the carpool ride matching function community-wide to help more Londoners use it for non-employment travel.

The Smart Commute app is just one component of the program. In addition, Civic Administration benefit from regular, direct communications with member employers, including going out and talking with their employees about commuting challenges and available solutions to reduce barriers and increase participation.

Civic Administration also receives benefits from being part of the broader Smart Commute Association by receiving access to:

- Access to a significantly discounted trip planning and carpool ride-matching app;
- Shared employer and employee engagement materials;
- Shared employee engagement service providers; and
- A forum for municipal staff to discuss TDM solutions.

When Council approved joining the Smart Commute Association and launching the London program in 2023, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by the Mayor and Deputy City Clerk, allowing collaboration with several similar-sized municipalities in delivering Smart Commute. The original MOU was executed in 2021 by a core group of municipalities and allows for additional municipalities to join by subscription, as well as for extensions of the agreement by written amendment. This MOU lapsed on December 31, 2025.

It is recommended that the City of London extend its membership in Smart Commute by signing an updated MOU to continue to receive the benefits of the program and maintain relationships with established member-employer organizations.

Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

Municipal Council continues to recognize the importance of providing transportation options and the need for a more sustainable and resilient city in its 2023-2027 Strategic Plan for the City of London. Specifically, in the following areas of focus:

- Reconciliation, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion
- Safe London for Women, Girls, and Gender-Diverse and Trans People
- Wellbeing and Safety

- Economic Growth, Culture, and Prosperity
- Mobility and Transportation
- Climate Action and Sustainable Growth
- Well-Run City

The CEAP was approved by Council in April 2022 following the declaration of a climate emergency in 2019. The CEAP's Area of Focus 4 – Transforming Transportation and Mobility includes the following action:

4 a. Establish a Transportation Management Association (TMA) for London employers to support and encourage employees to commute by walk/bike, transit, carpool, and support remote work options.

The Mobility Master Plan includes Transportation Demand Management, and specifically Smart Commute London, as a key component in the area of focus, Manage Road Capacity Strategically (see page 62):

Managing road capacity strategically also means significant TDM programming to manage demand for travel by personal vehicle and increase the use of walking, cycling, and transit.

Analysis

1.0 Background Information

1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

Relevant reports that can be found at www.london.ca under Council meetings:

- February 2, 2026, Smart Commute Association Memorandum of Understanding Extension, Report to Infrastructure and Corporate Services Committee (ICSC), Agenda Item 2.6
- October 4, 2023, Joining the Smart Commute Program, Report to Civic Works Committee (CWC), Agenda Item 4.1

1.2 Definitions

Smart Commute London is the local program to deliver commuter supports to member employers and their employees.

Smart Commute Association is the group of Ontario municipalities offering local Smart Commute programs.

1.3 Context

According to TomTom's Traffic Index, in 2025, London ranked as the 8th most congested city in Canada, with drivers losing approximately 72 hours due to congestion over the year. Reducing traffic congestion relies on two primary strategies:

- Investing in infrastructure (transit, cycling, pedestrian), and
- Managing the demand for road space (i.e., Transportation Demand Management strategies, programs and policies).

1.4 Mobility Master Plan

The Mobility Master Plan sets out target mode shares that include 32.5 percent of trips be made by walking, cycling and transit, and 15 percent be made by carpooling by 2050. It also recognizes:

The desired London of the future will be the result of many people making different mobility choices than they make today. TDM actions and programs will play an essential role in increasing walking, cycling and transit.

In response to these factors, London is investing \$454 million in the three approved Rapid Transit corridors. This includes \$167 million from senior levels of government. Over the last five years, London has also invested in walking and cycling infrastructure, including 35 km of sidewalks and 41 km of cycling facilities. These infrastructure investments help reduce congestion by increasing trips made by more sustainable modes of transportation.

Since launching, Smart Commute London has been incorporated into the Mobility Master Plan as one of the City's key Transportation Demand Management strategies for reducing vehicle trips (see p. 62 of [Mobility Master Plan](#)).

1.5 Transportation Management Association

Over the past 20-plus years, as part of the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) portfolio, City staff have been engaging with workplaces in London about transportation options for their employees. TDM encourages behaviour change and encourages various options for commuters so that Londoners take advantage of the City's infrastructure investments and achieve the goals set out by the MMP to reduce congestion during peak traffic hours.

The City of London has provided a community-wide carpool-matching service since 2007. When Commute Ontario launched in 2019, the locally run Regional Rideshare program was absorbed into that program. Users did not see a change. However, funding ran out for Commute Ontario and the program ended in 2021. This resulted in the cancellation of Regional Rideshare, which left London without a community-wide carpool-matching service.

Learnings from these projects and programs pointed to the advantages of, and potential for London to launch a locally run Transportation Management Association (TMA), a partnership between local government and employers to provide commuter information and services to make it easier for employees to leave the car at home for more trips. TMAs have been commonplace in North American municipalities for the past 25 years, starting in Ontario in 2001.

In 2020, a TMA feasibility study was completed for London that included surveys of employers and Londoners. Of the employers surveyed, only 12 per cent said they offered programs that encouraged their employees to drive alone less often. Reducing vehicle trips in rush hour is important to managing traffic congestion. The feasibility study concluded that a TMA for London should be launched with membership from local employers to support additional commuting options, including walking, cycling, transit and carpooling. Further, access to reliable transportation to work remains a recruitment concern for many London-area employers.

1.6 Why Smart Commute?

Smart Commute has been around since the early 2000s, when it was launched in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) with Transport Canada support. In 2023, the Smart Commute Association was looking to expand into other areas of Ontario. The timing aligned with the decision to launch a TMA in London, as joining the Smart Commute Association would allow City staff to learn from others' experiences, use the brand, and develop and share resources together.

In the fall of 2023, City Council approved joining the Smart Commute Association and in late May 2024, the Smart Commute London program officially launched. The Smart Commute Association now includes the City of Hamilton, City of Toronto, York Region, Durham Region, Halton Region municipalities, City of Greater Sudbury, Bruce County, Peel Region, and the City of London. Membership in the Smart Commute Association is formalized through the Memorandum of Understanding between all

participating municipalities. Membership in the Smart Commute Association provides the following benefits to the City of London:

- Access to a significantly discounted Smart Commute trip planning and carpool ride-matching app;
- Access to shared employer and employee engagement materials;
- Access to shared employee engagement service providers (Point A); and
- Provides a forum for municipal staff to discuss TDM solutions.

The Smart Commute app is just one tool in the program to promote carpooling, transit, walking, and cycling to/from work. However, public transit is not always an option to get to workplaces, especially in industrial parks on the outskirts of the city. Helping employees find carpool partners through the Smart Commute app is an important tool and key component of the program.

2.0 Discussion and Considerations

2.1 Current Program Status

Since launching in May 2024, Smart Commute London program efforts have been focused on engaging and onboarding employers and their employees. It takes time to establish a new program and build participation and momentum.

City staff continue to work with supporting local agencies, such as the London Chamber of Commerce, London Economic Development Corporation, and Green Economy London, to promote the program and the benefits of joining.

To join, Smart Commute London employers sign a Letter of Agreement with the City and assign a Workplace Champion to be the point of contact for communication and program promotion. It is free to join and free for their employees to use the supports.

There are currently 22 employer members of Smart Commute London, including London Health Sciences Centre, Enbridge Gas, London Hydro, St. Joseph's Health Care, London Public Library, and Middlesex London Health Unit. Others located in industrial parks include Voyago and OES Inc. Discussions continue with other employers, including large, well-established employers, such as London's major educational institutions.

Other data points include:

- Total number of employees that are eligible for program supports is 28,000;
- Total trips logged to the end of January 2026 was 5,779;
- City staff have held 11 pop-up workplace engagement sessions; and
- Promoted 19 webinars on a variety of sustainable commuting topics to member organizations.

Additional benefits of being a member-employer include:

City staff provide one-on-one advice and tailored resources to employer members, learning sessions for employees, and incentives to continue to use sustainable options or try a new sustainable option to get to work.

- The Emergency Ride Home program is an emergency taxi or bus service available to member employees who choose a sustainable option. While this program has not been tapped into to date, its value is in providing peace of mind that carpoolers, transit riders, pedestrians and cyclists can get home in case of a family emergency or overtime.
- The Business Bike Rack Program provides employer members with a discounted bike rack and access to funding to support secure bike parking improvements.

- Direct contact between City Staff and employer Workplace Champions at least three times a year to further explore how to support sustainable commuting behaviours and increase participation at the workplace.
- City staff have started to provide employer members with employee supports tailored to their particular context (including geography, working hours, employee make-up, etc.). Items such as preferential carpool parking signage, carpool mix-and-mingles (an engagement model used by Smart Commute partners in the GTA), transit information, secure bike parking support, and bike locks and lights are being offered.

The benefit of Smart Commute is that it is an established program in Ontario and London's program is already launched and growing. The Smart Commute brand, app (carpool-matching tool), related campaigns, and the province-wide connections and opportunities to cost-share and develop further tools of use to London employers are foundational pieces of the TMA.

Plans are underway to expand promotion of Smart Commute London's carpool-matching service community-wide in May 2026. In addition to Londoners looking for carpool rides to their jobs, this tool can also be used by post-secondary students looking for rides to school or members of a religious congregation looking for rides to their place of worship.

2.2 Challenges

City staff's experiences with the program to date have shown that some aspects could be improved. For example, targeting employers located in London's industrial areas is a priority. Through strengthening relationships with organizations such as the London Economic Development Corporation (itself a new Smart Commute London member), staff expect increased success bringing industrial park workplaces on board.

City staff are working with Smart Commute Association colleagues and the app provider (RideShark) to make improvements to the app's functionality and user experience, and to implement new features and incentives to encourage ongoing trip tracking.

3.0 Financial Impact/Considerations

The annual cost to be part of the Smart Commute Association is \$15,000. This cost covers the annual licensing fee for the Smart Commute app as well as access to shared employer and employee engagement materials and employee engagement service providers. As mentioned above, the City of London has supported a carpool app since 2007 for a similar cost.

4.0 Next Steps

Civic Administration seeks Council Approval for London to continue to participate in the Smart Commute Association.

In 2026, Civic Administration will continue to work with local agencies, such as LEDC and London Chamber of Commerce, to reach employers, with a focus on those located in industrial areas. Staff also plan to meet with London Transit, determine their role in the program, and explore mutually beneficial actions (e.g. support for employees in industrial areas, employer-sponsored bus pass program).

The carpool-matching app will also be expanded with promotion to all Londoners, with a focus on post-secondary students and families commuting to school.

With Council's authorization, Civic Administration will ensure the upcoming Amendment and Extension Agreement to the Smart Commute Association MOU is signed by the Deputy City Manager of Environment & Infrastructure.

Civic Administration would then provide a Smart Commute London program update in one year to track the continued progress of the program in March 2027, including recommendations for addressing the sustainability of the program.

Conclusion

Civic Administration recommends the Deputy City Manager be delegated authority to sign the updated MOU, all to continue participating in the Smart Commute London program to support London employers and their employees, while expanding the services to help more Londoners get around for other trip purposes.

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