

Cozen Cities - January 17, 2024

Gig Economy & Technology

CHICAGO — After Latest Shooting, Rideshare Drivers Protest Outside Midway Airport for Change

Several rideshare drivers protested outside Midway Airport last Friday for better safety and stable pay. The Chicago Police Department has issued a community alert on armed robberies of rideshare drivers in neighborhoods throughout the city.

SEATTLE — Minimum-Pay Law for Delivery-App Drivers Goes Into Effect

Delivery app drivers are now entitled to minimum pay, as a law passed by City Council in 2022 took effect. The law requires app companies to pay 44 cents per minute plus 74 cents per mile during orders, or at least \$5 per order.

Labor & Employment

DETROIT — Tesla Raising Factory Worker Pay Across U.S. Following UAW Victories in Detroit

Tesla is rolling out “market adjustment” pay increases this month to many of its factory workers across the U.S., according to notices posted at the company’s vehicle assembly plant in Fremont, California.

DETROIT — Mayor Duggan, DDOT, Bus Drivers Union Announce Pay Raise Agreement, Increase Attendance Bonus

Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT) bus drivers will see an immediate \$3-per-hour wage increase under a new memorandum of understanding between the City and Amalgamated Transit Union Local 26 as announced by Mayor Mike Duggan, Interim Transit Director Michael Staley, and union President Schetrone Collier.

LOS ANGELES — Mayor Bass Convenes Small Business Cabinet

Mayor Karen Bass established a new Small Business Cabinet to serve as a platform for collaboration and dialogue, making sure that the City is responsive to the needs of more than 450,000 small businesses and supporting the shared goal of building a robust and thriving economy in Los Angeles.

LOS ANGELES — L.A. Reaches Tentative Agreement to Pay City Workers 24% Raises Over Several Years

If ratified, a tentative agreement between the City of Los Angeles and thousands of its employees would result in pay raises totaling about 24% over the next several years.

RICHMOND — City, Municipal Workers' Union Reach Tentative Agreement

The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Virginia 512 chapter and the City of Richmond reached a tentative three-year labor contract for nearly 1,000 members in the administrative and technical unit, featuring salary increases of almost 11%.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Telework Policy for D.C. Government Office Workers Revised



Rose Christ

Co-Chair, New York Practice, Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies

rchrist@cozen.com
Phone: (212) 883-2248
Fax: (646) 880-3654



John F. Dunn

Member

jdunn@cozen.com
Phone: (312) 382-3165
Fax: (312) 382-8910



Joseph Hill

Managing Director, Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies

jhill@cozen.com
Phone: (215) 665-2065
Fax: (215) 665-2013



Katie Schwab

Co-Chair, New York Practice, Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies

kschwab@cozen.com
Phone: (212) 883-4913
Fax: (646) 880-3652

Related Practice Areas

- Government Relations - Cozen

Starting in March, D.C. local government will limit remote work for its office employees to one day per week, citing the need for a more visible and engaged presence in the community.

Policy & Politics

BALTIMORE – Councilmember Cohen to Vye for Council Presidency

Baltimore City Councilmember Zeke Cohen discusses his current campaign for City Council President in the latest installment of WYPR's Conversations with the Candidates.

CHICAGO – Mayor Johnson, Metropolitan Mayors Caucus Convene Regional Mayors for New Arrivals Strategy Session

Mayor Brandon Johnson and the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus met with regional municipal leaders this week to discuss the current state of the region's new arrival mission, Chicago and Cook County operations, the implementation of bus ordinances, and regional coordination and advocacy opportunities.

NEW YORK – Mayor Adams Brings Lawsuit Against Charter Bus Companies Transporting Migrants

Mayor Eric Adams announced a \$708 million lawsuit against 17 charter bus and transportation companies bringing migrants to the city, alleging violations of state law.

PHILADELPHIA – City Commissioner Sabir New Chair of Elections Oversight Board

City Commissioner Omar Sabir was appointed chair of the three-member elections oversight body, replacing Commissioner Lisa Deeley. Commissioners Sabir and Seth Bluestein also voted for rule changes including the decentralization of power and the ability for each commissioner to hire staff and set salaries.

PHILADELPHIA – Former Mayor Jim Kenney “Pocket Vetoed” Several Bills

Former Mayor Jim Kenney reportedly “pocket vetoed” — or declined to sign passed legislation into law — several bills on his way out of office, including a plastic bag ban.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – D.C. Council Postpones Vote on Sentencing Commission Contentious Nominee

The D.C. Council delayed the vote on Joel Castón's nomination to the city's criminal sentencing commission after criticism that his 27-year prison history for murder should preclude him from serving on a panel that shapes sentencing guidelines used by D.C. Superior Court judges.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – D.C. SNAP Recipients to Receive Temporary Boost

D.C. households receiving food assistance will receive a temporary increase in benefits — up to 10% of a family's federal maximum allotment — starting in late February, ending a standoff between Mayor Muriel Bowser's administration and the D.C. Council.

Public Health & Safety

BOSTON – Murder Rate Hits Historic Low

Suffolk District Attorney's office reported 37 homicides in 2023, down from 180 in 2022 and 274 in 2020. There has also been a 20% reduction in shootings in the city year over year.

DETROIT – Detroit Ended 2023 With Fewest Homicides in 57 Years

Detroit finished 2023 with 252 homicides, the fewest recorded since 1966. The city also saw a 16% reduction in nonfatal shootings and a 34% reduction in carjackings, a coalition of local, state and federal partners announced.

LOS ANGELES — LAPD Chief to Step Down in February

Los Angeles Police (LAPD) Chief Michel Moore announced that he will step down at the end of next month, a surprise announcement that immediately sets off a search for his successor even as city leaders grapple with an understaffed police force beset with a host of other challenges.

PHILADELPHIA — Mayor Parker Appoints New Deputy Police Commissioner to Lead Kensington Strategy

Mayor Cherelle Parker appointed deputy commissioner Pedro Rosario, the first Latino to hold the position, to head the Philadelphia Police Department's strategy in Kensington.

SAN DIEGO — State of City "Getting Stronger Every Day"

In his fourth State of the City address, Mayor Todd Gloria detailed the considerable progress his administration has made on the issues that concern San Diegans the most — public safety, homelessness, housing affordability and infrastructure — and plans to build on that progress in the coming years.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — D.C. to Consider New Public Safety Bill

Local lawmakers in Washington, D.C. introduced a public safety bill to address rising violent crime rates by consolidating previous proposals and temporary anti-crime legislation, including stricter penalties for gun-related offenses and increased leeway for judges to detain suspects before trial.

Real Estate Development

BALTIMORE — New Coalition Vows to Fight Mayor's Inner Harbor Redevelopment Plan

Mayor Brandon Scott's plan to redevelop the Inner Harbor is facing opposition from a coalition that vows to fight the high-rise development, citing concerns about secrecy, lack of public input, and the impact on the iconic Inner Harbor space.

BOSTON — Mayor Wu Pledges to Eliminate Barriers to Build ADUs

In her annual State of the City address, Mayor Michelle Wu pledged to eliminate barriers to building accessory dwelling units in the city, changing zoning to make these small homes as-of-right citywide.

CHICAGO — BOMA Asks Judge to Block Real Estate Transfer Tax Referendum

In a lawsuit filed Friday, January 5 in Cook County Circuit Court, a plaintiff group led by the Chicago Building Owners & Managers Association (BOMA) took aim at the wording of a referendum question set to go before city voters on a March 19 primary election ballot.

CHICAGO — Downtown Office Vacancy Ended 2023 at Another Record High

The share of available office space in the central business district at the end of the year inched up to an all-time high of 23.8%, from 23.7% at the end of the third quarter, according to data from real estate services firm Chicago Commercial Real Estate (CBRE).

DETROIT — Mayor Duggan, DEGC Announce \$14.5 Million in Grants to Move Five Key Neighborhood Developments Forward

The Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC) was awarded \$14.5 million by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to support five major mixed-use development projects in downtown Detroit and key neighborhood commercial corridors.

RICHMOND — Richmond Seeks More Power to Help Residents Cover Housing Costs

The Richmond City Council and Mayor Levar Stoney are seeking approval from the Virginia General Assembly for changes to the city's charter, including the ability to provide grants or loans to low- and moderate-income residents for property purchases, grants to landlords for unpaid rent, and deferral of property taxes for such residents.

SAN DIEGO — San Diego County Awards \$42 Million to Nine Affordable Housing Developments

San Diego County has awarded \$42 million to nine affordable housing developments intended to provide 872 new homes. The developments came from a pool of 24 proposal requests totaling more than \$89 million for affordable housing across the region.

Taxes & Spending

CHICAGO — City Taps \$95 Million in Federal COVID-19 Relief Funds for Migrant Housing Costs

Mayor Johnson's top aides acknowledged that an accounting shift made possible by a budget surplus won't move the needle in a crisis pushing city resources to the limit.

NEW YORK — Governor Hochul Proposes \$233B FY25 Executive Budget

Governor Hochul released her \$233B FY25 Executive Budget, including \$2.4B to assist NYC with costs associated with accommodating asylum seekers.

RICHMOND — After Local Outcry, Richmond Proposes Changes to Meals Tax Collection Policies

The City of Richmond is proposing changes to its meals tax collection policies, including improvements to the online payment system, allowing residents and businesses to look up accounts, balances, and payments through RVAPay, and more.

SAN DIEGO — Sales Tax for Transit Will Hit San Diego's November Ballot

The county registrar determined that a citizens' initiative collected enough signatures to qualify for the November ballot, putting a half-cent sales tax increase for transit, highway, road and infrastructure projects before voters.

Transportation & Mobility

CHICAGO — Record Number of Divvy Rides, More Bike Lanes Made 2023 an "Incredible" Year for Cycling in Chicago

Chicago is coming off an "incredible year for cycling," after installing 27 miles of "new and upgraded protected bike lanes," building 18 miles of neighborhood greenways, distributing 1,900 free bikes and racking up a record 6.6 million trips on Divvy bikes, a city official said Wednesday.

DETROIT — Behind the Wheel of Detroit's New Self-Driving Shuttle Program

The Detroit Automated Driving System is meant to give independence to the city's older adults and people with disabilities who lack adequate transportation.

LOS ANGELES — L.A. Port Leader Outlines Ambitious Infrastructure Plans

Port of Los Angeles Executive Director Gene Seroka laid out plans for infrastructure improvements, community attractions on both the Wilmington and San Pedro waterfronts, and an expectation of cargo numbers rebounding through 2024.

LOS ANGELES — L.A. Metro Balances Its Budget

L.A. Metro faces budget challenges in the next few months as managers seek ways to tackle escalating operating costs and revenue shortages to make up for Metro's loss of federal pandemic

bailout dollars that helped them balance the last three budgets.

PHILADELPHIA — SEPTA Considers Service Cuts, Fare Increases Due to Chronic Underfunding

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) is facing the potential of deep service cuts and fare increases due to severe underfunding at the state level.
