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Building Bridges for a Stronger DMV Region



Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

2024
Annual
Report

Featured Programs & Initiatives



Commuter Connections Anniversary

COG's Commuter Connections program marked 50 years of helping commuters find smarter ways to get to work while reducing traffic and air pollution. Area officials, including DC Mayor Muriel Bowser, gathered at the National Press Club to celebrate the anniversary and preview new incentive programs like CommuterCash.

Tree Canopy Goal

The COG Board of Directors adopted a first-ever tree canopy goal to maintain a minimum tree canopy coverage of 50 percent across the region. The board also called on local jurisdictions to use COG's report, *Conserving Trees and Forests in Metropolitan Washington*, as a resource supporting this work.



Visualize 2050 Development

The development of the Visualize 2050 plan continued to progress. The Transportation Planning Board at COG held a public comment period and approved project inputs for its Air Quality Conformity Analysis. Transportation projects must be included in Visualize 2050 to receive federal funding and approvals.

DMVMoves Initiative

Following the successful coordination to address Metro's FY 2025 budget, area officials called for a more comprehensive effort to focus on long-term transit needs and the longstanding, systemic funding challenges facing Metro and the region's other transit systems. As a first step, the COG and Metro Boards of Directors held a historic joint meeting in May and agreed to partner on a new initiative, DMVMoves, to create a unified vision and sustainable funding model for the region's transit network.

A task force of officials appointed by COG and Metro are guiding this initiative alongside two advisory groups representing area jurisdictions, transit service providers and agencies, and business, labor, and community organizations. This unprecedented collaboration is taking a holistic view of the transit network (which includes more than a dozen bus and rail systems) and working to forge consensus on how to best plan, coordinate, deliver, manage, and fund transit regionally. The task force is working toward developing policy recommendations and a final plan in 2025.



Messages from the COG Board Chair and Executive Director

As our region enters what will certainly be another eventful year, I am eager and honored to serve as Chair of the COG Board of Directors. I joined the COG Board in 2020 and have since witnessed the incredible dedication from leaders across the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia as, collectively, we have turned challenges into opportunities to shape a better region.

This is the best place in the country to live, work, and raise a family, and I am excited to work with my counterparts here in DC, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia to make our region even stronger—bringing to the table our shared and individual challenges as we collaborate on common solutions.

There are rarely easy answers, but COG provides a critical forum for frank and honest discussions. It is in this difficult work where the greatest transformation happens, where we find ways to innovate and more adequately respond to the needs and desires of our residents.

Together, we've embarked on several significant undertakings: seeking to secure long-term success for the region's transit network, responding to the impacts of climate change, supporting our regional economy, and more. This spirit of collaboration embraced by my COG Board counterparts, as well as our members, partners, and staff, is helping build bridges toward our shared pursuit of a thriving, sustainable, and equitable region.



Rodney Lusk
2025 COG Board Chair

Looking back on the past year, it's clear that area officials are committed to taking on some of the most difficult issues in the DMV. At COG, we're harnessing that energy to make the most impact for our region's six million residents as well as future generations who will live and work here.



Partnership is at the heart of COG's work, and in 2024, we launched some of our most ambitious collaborations yet. For our DMVMoves initiative with Metro and transit operators throughout the region, we have engaged an incredibly wide group of leaders, making sure that government, business, and community partners all have a seat at the table. We're also proud of our recent collaborative work to ensure a resilient water supply, expand our electric vehicle charging network, and provide more affordable housing options.

We're building on these cross-sector collaborations, like our relaunch of the Potomac Conference and ongoing partnership with the Board of Trade, Greater Washington Partnership, and Consortium of Universities. Last year, we gathered leaders to focus on public safety, and this year, we will work together to develop a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

When we work together as one region, we can grow our economy, protect our environment, ensure safer communities, and so much more. Onwards!

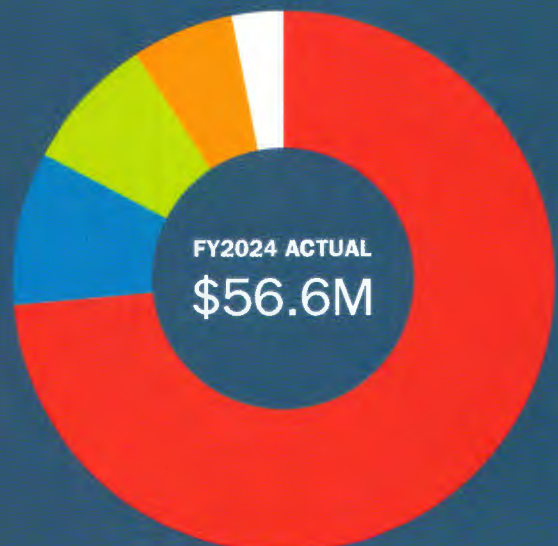
Clark Mercer
COG Executive Director

COG Budget

REVENUES BY SOURCE



Includes subrecipient pass-thru revenue



Affordable Housing Grant

COG received a \$3.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to help improve access to affordable housing in the region. The grant will help COG and nine area jurisdictions accelerate implementation of the Regional Fair Housing Plan.



EV Charging Infrastructure

The Federal Highway Administration awarded \$3.9 million to COG to support the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure across the region. In addition, COG finalized a Regional Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Implementation Strategy to help advance the region's ongoing initiatives to expand EV use.

Transportation Resilience Plan

The TPB approved a Transportation Resilience Improvement Plan (TRIP) to strengthen the preparedness and resilience of the region's transportation network to the impacts of climate change. The TRIP includes a vulnerability assessment and web mapping tool of risks posed by natural hazards on local transportation assets.

Photo Credit: Ted Eytan/Flickr

Public Safety Coordination

COG partnered with the Board of Trade, Greater Washington Partnership, and Consortium of Universities to reconvene the Potomac Conference and bring together government, business, and university leaders to more holistically address regional issues. The focus of the 2024 conference was public safety—providing a forum for area leaders to discuss and collaborate on crime reduction initiatives.

The event included briefings on recent trends, initiatives, and the public perception of crime in the region. Officials noted that even when rates are relatively low, the perception of crime shapes everything from how safe residents feel in their communities to how CEOs make business decisions. While 2023 saw a spike in violent crime in the region, 2024 trends significantly improved. In support of greater collaboration, COG has also been working with area police departments to develop a regional, real-time crime dashboard, a much-needed resource that will be launched in early 2025.

Photo Credit: BOT





Anacostia Watershed Cleanup

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration awarded COG a grant of approximately \$1 million for a new project to remove an estimated 60,000 pounds of large debris and 33 abandoned or derelict vessels from marinas along the river, in collaboration with the Anacostia Riverkeeper.

Photo Credit: Dylan Alvarez



Public Safety Exercises

COG helped convene emergency exercises focused on coordinating across multiple agencies on a variety of topics, including cybersecurity and protecting critical infrastructure. COG also organized a Fire Health & Safety Symposium, sharing valuable, life-saving information for the region's firefighters.

Roadway Safety Summit

The Transportation Planning Board convened a summit to help mobilize new action to improve roadway safety, including plans for the TPB to join the new USDOT Allies in Action initiative, enhance data analysis, and partner regionally to ensure that dangerous drivers are held accountable for their actions.



Water Supply Planning

After a stretch of unusually dry conditions in the region, COG declared a Drought Watch this summer in coordination with the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB), local water utilities, and federal and regional partners. Officials encouraged the public to take voluntary measures to conserve water and help reduce demand on the region's water supply systems. The Drought Watch, which remained in effect through the end of 2024, was shared widely by COG member governments and partner agencies and earned widespread media coverage.

In partnership with ICPRB, COG also helped unveil a new report highlighting the significant and dire financial consequences facing the DC region in the event of a disruption to the area's water supply. The ICPRB report showed economic losses could quickly surpass \$15 billion in gross regional product, among other impacts. The report and drought underscored the importance of the new backup water source study that COG and partners kicked off with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to ensure greater water supply resiliency.



2024 COG Leadership

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Andrea Bailey

VA General Assembly
Mark Sickles

COG STAFF

Clark Mercer
Executive Director

About the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG)

COG is an independent, nonprofit association that brings area leaders from the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia together to address regional issues and plan for the future. COG's membership is comprised of 300 elected officials from 24 local governments, the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, and U.S. Congress.

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Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

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Front cover (clockwise from left): Loudoun County Chair At-Large Phyllis Randall, recipient of the 2024 COG Scull Award; US Capitol Chief of Police J. Thomas Manger at an Inauguration security briefing for COG Board; Street Smart safety campaign launch; DMVMoves Government Partners Advisory Committee meeting; and DMVMoves Task Force meeting

homeland security
policy development

transportation
planning

growth
forecasts

Anacostia Watershed
restoration

Commuter
Connections

water supply planning

Street Smart safety campaign

COG MEMBER BENEFITS

food security

regional snow calls

mutual aid agreements

air quality
forecasts & alerts

travel demand modeling

electric vehicle clearinghouse

homeless services
coordination

cooperative
purchasing

Bike to Work Day



Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

March
2025

ABOUT COG

In the DMV, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is the one place that regularly connects area leaders—across jurisdictions and disciplines—to address regional issues and plan for the future. COG is an association of 24 local governments with a membership of 300 local, state, and federal elected officials. We invite you to learn more about COG's wide range of programs and services for its member governments, partner organizations, and the public.



24
LOCAL GOVERNMENTS



300
ELECTED OFFICIALS

Transportation Planning

▶ **Transportation Planning Board**—COG ensures major transportation projects receive federal funding and approvals. These projects must be included in the National Capital Region Transportation Plan (NCRTP) of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) at COG, the region's federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization.

NEW

▶ **Visualize 2050**—The current NCRTP plan, *Visualize 2045*, includes \$223B in funding for projects and programs. The next version of this plan, *Visualize 2050*, is under development and scheduled to be approved in 2025.

▶ **Travel demand modeling**—TPB modeling provides officials with a picture of future travel in the region to inform the development of transportation projects and decision-making.

NEW

▶ **DMVMoves**—A COG/WMATA collaboration, including bus and rail service providers, area jurisdictions, business, labor, and community organizations, to create a unified vision and sustainable funding model for the region's transit network.

▶ **Commuter Connections**—COG provides free services and programs to assist employers and commuters with making smart choices about their commuting needs, including ridematching, transit, bicycling, and teleworking.

▶ **Bike to Work Day**—COG organizes the annual event encouraging green, cost-efficient commutes and featuring 100+ "pit stops" regionwide.

▶ **Street Smart**—COG manages the region's public awareness campaign for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists to improve roadway safety.

▶ **MATOC**—COG convenes the Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) program, a partnership of transportation agencies sharing real-time information to enhance incident management.

▶ **Airport access**—COG forecasts future air passenger and cargo needs, developing plans for improving how people and goods get to and from the region's three major airports.

NEW

▶ **Transportation resilience**—With a new resilience plan and mapping tool, the TPB is working with its members to help identify and reduce risks posed by natural hazards to transportation infrastructure.

▶ **Enhanced Mobility**—The TPB selects projects for the FTA program for specialized transportation for older adults and people with disabilities (\$10M, biennially).

Environmental Programs

- ▶ **Air quality planning/alerts**—COG coordinates air quality planning and monitors pollution, issuing air quality forecasts and health advisories to the public when the air is unhealthy.
- ▶ **Chesapeake Bay & Potomac River restoration**—COG helps members voice local concerns, measure progress, and share best practices related to wastewater treatment and stormwater management.
- ▶ **Anacostia Watershed Restoration Partnership**—COG leads a consortium of government agencies, partner organizations, and residents taking action, including overseeing a major, new four-year cleanup effort.

NEW

- ▶ **Water supply/security**—COG convenes the region's Drought Coordination Committee to issue watches and warnings, supports coordination during emergencies, and is helping lead a new backup water source study for the region.
- ▶ **Regional wastewater agreement**—COG brokered and manages the pact providing support to users of the Blue Plains Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant, which treats approximately 50 percent of the region's wastewater.



VISUALIZE 2050



Enhanced
Mobility

Street
Smart

Commuter
Connections

UNWIND
TOGETHER

CARPOOL
TOGETHER



Everything's better when you share the ride together. FREE carpool ridematching even if you commute just a few days a week!

GET GOING TODAY!

**COMMUTER
CONNECTIONS.**
A SMARTER WAY TO WORK

commuterconnections.org
800.745.7433

Transportation *continued*

- ▶ **Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program**—The TPB selects projects for non-highway, smaller-scale projects (more than \$9M annually) which is part of the Federal Surface Transportation Block Grant Program.
- ▶ **Transportation Land-Use Connections (TLC)**—The TPB's TLC program provides consultant services for small planning projects supporting mixed-use, walkable communities and transportation alternatives. (\$9M since 2007)
- ▶ **Transit Within Reach (TWR)**—The TPB's TWR program funds design and preliminary engineering projects to help improve bike and walk connections to existing and planned high-capacity transit stations. (\$250K, biennially)
- ▶ **Regional Roadway Safety Program (RRSP)**—The TPB's Regional Roadway Safety Program (RRSP) provides technical assistance to local planning and engineering safety-related projects (\$1.7M since 2021).

NEW ▶ **Allies in Action**—The TPB has joined the federal Allies in Action roadway safety initiative, pledging to continue current roadway safety activities, enhance data collection, and strengthen coordination to hold dangerous drivers accountable.



Air Quality Forecasts

Solar Energy Goals
(credit: DCSEU)

Environment *continued*

- ▶ **Climate planning**—Working toward its 2030 regional climate goal, COG is supporting the development of local climate action plans and helping implement actions to reduce emissions and build resiliency.
- ▶ **Electric vehicles**—COG is supporting expanded deployment of electric vehicles through a working group and technical resources focused on planning a more consistent system regionwide and accelerated deployment of charging infrastructure.
- ▶ **Solar energy**—COG is working with members and partners to accelerate the deployment of solar installations regionwide and advance COG's 2030 solar goals.
- ▶ **Food system resilience**—COG coordinates efforts to improve food security and grow a more connected food and farm economy.

NEW

- ▶ **Urban forestry**—Following adoption of new regional tree canopy goals, COG is working with members and partners to develop a Tree Canopy Action Plan and advance preservation and enhancement strategies and monitor conditions in metropolitan Washington.

- ▶ **Environmental outreach**—COG supports the Clean Air Partners public education program, the DMV Climate Partners website on local climate-related activities, as well as campaigns on recycling, battery safety, and protecting household plumbing.

Homeland Security & Public Safety

▶ **Mutual aid**—COG establishes mutual aid agreements for local governments to ensure first responders and resources are available during emergencies, in real time, to help neighboring jurisdictions.

▶ **Public safety briefings/trainings**—COG regularly convenes area officials, including the region's police chiefs, to focus on coordinating across multiple agencies on a variety of planned events as well as emergency scenarios.

NEW

▶ **Crime data sharing**—COG has been working with area police departments to develop a regional crime dashboard for release in early 2025 to provide law enforcement, area leaders, the media, and public with more current, consistent data in one place.

▶ **Regional public safety programs**—COG manages cross-jurisdictional public safety information sharing projects like fingerprint identification systems and license plate readers.

▶ **Homeland security**—COG helps officials continually assess risks and make investments to enhance preparedness, including facilitation of the federal Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) program.

▶ **RICCS**—COG runs the Regional Incident Communication and Coordination System (RICCS) providing 24/7 notifications that allow area officials at the local, state, and federal levels to communicate during emergencies.

▶ **Winter weather coordination**—COG oversees planning and convenes “snow calls” that include OPM, the National Weather Service, transportation agencies, and COG members.



Snow
Calls



Mutual
Aid



Growth
Forecasts

Homeless
Services
(credit:
Pathways to
Housing DC)

Community Planning & Services

- ▶ **Cooperative forecasts**—COG develops long-range population, job, and household forecasts for the region, enabling its members to coordinate planning activities using common assumptions about future growth.
- ▶ **Economic development**—COG is working with partners to develop a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy as well as responding to changes in the federal workforce.
- ▶ **Housing**—Working toward its 2030 housing targets and fair housing goals, COG is supporting its members in implementing strategies to increase affordable and accessible housing regionwide and leveraging funding received from federal grants and the private sector.
- ▶ **Homelessness**—COG supports homeless services coordination among members and is partnering with Community Solutions on the national Built For Zero initiative to apply data-informed strategies to end the experience of homelessness.
- ▶ **Public health**—COG convenes the region's health officials to track trends, promote health in all policy making, and respond to health concerns and emergencies.
- ▶ **Foster Parents of the Year**—COG coordinates and awards local efforts to recruit, support, and retain foster parents in the community.

Research & Data

COG staff are a trusted source of regional information, providing members with data and tools to inform decision-making, including:

- ▶ **Daily newsletter of media stories**, COG's *Regional Roundup*, is provided free to members and partners as well as a variety of monthly newsletters on COG and TPB programs and data.
- ▶ **Economic trends dashboard**, featuring information on employment, inflation rates, and new housing permits.
- ▶ The TPB's **Transportation Resources and Applications (TRAP) page** provides a variety of maps, databases, visualizations, and other resources.
- ▶ **Commuting and travel trends**, like the *State of the Commute Survey* and *Regional Travel Survey*.
- ▶ Federally required **point-in-time count of people experiencing homelessness** and annual report.
- ▶ Drinking water supply monitoring and **drought reports**.
- ▶ **Electric Vehicle Clearinghouse** featuring EV funding, incentives, laws and regulations, local plans, and a charging station locator.

Leadership Development

COG helps prepare future leaders through a variety of learning opportunities that build stronger connections among local government professionals in the region.

- ▶ **Advancing Equity in Local Government Learning Cohort**—A yearlong program with Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE).
- ▶ **Public Safety Leadership**—Three-part seminar for homeland security and public safety professionals.
- ▶ **Institute for Regional Excellence (IRE)**—A yearlong program of COG and The George Washington University—graduates become Certified Public Managers.
- ▶ **Community Leadership Institute (CLI)**—This TPB program teaches community leaders about how, where, and when transportation decisions are made in the region, and encourages them to get involved.

Cooperative Purchasing

COG members save money and time through regional bulk purchasing and contracting opportunities. COG also partners with the Baltimore Metropolitan Council on the Mid-Atlantic Purchasing Team (MAPT) to further expand the program's reach.

- ▶ **Member-only cooperative contracts** result in larger volume and better unit pricing. More than 40 agencies across the region participate in COG's Cooperative Purchasing Program saving more than \$2M annually.
- ▶ The **MAPT Rider Clause** allows members to join hundreds of contracts and avoid the need to do in-house bidding.
- ▶ **Contracts are available** for items such as: Diesel Fuel and Biodiesel; Gasoline; Interoperable Radios; Chemical/HAZMAT equipment; Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Gear.



Community Leadership Institute



SCBA Gear
(credit: Arlington County)



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