



GreaterWashington2050

**GREATER WASHINGTON 2050 GOALS**  
**A Vision of the National Capital Region at Mid-Century**  
**By the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments**

**PREFACE**

The National Capital Region is a great place to live, work, play, and learn.

Currently ranked the fourth largest economy in the nation and seventh in population, our residents have many reasons to be proud of their Region. It offers a strong economy, a highly educated and diverse population, a world-class Metrorail system, natural resources, a renowned system of parks and recreation, and an excellent quality of life.

Slowly chipping away at this success, however, are the issues of aging infrastructure, transportation congestion, rising energy costs, and climate change – each projected to challenge us in the coming decades. Forecasts for our job and population growth show a tremendous influx of people to Washington and its environs in the next half century. These forecasts show that these challenges will be ever greater if current patterns of development remain unchanged. To shape our future and to maintain and improve our quality of life, this Region deserves bold action, not business as usual.

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Government (COG) Greater Washington 2050 Initiative presents an opportunity to create benchmarks for sustainable growth and development over the next 40 years. Inherent in this process is the development of a vision – a set of shared regional goals - to respond to the issues of land use, economic

growth and parity, environmental quality, transportation, affordable housing, population and demographics, education, health, climate and energy. With analysis of future trends, local comprehensive plans or other local and regional policy statements, COG has articulated goals grounded in the core values of equity, efficiency, transparency, sustainability, and accessibility – goals that clearly recognize that business as usual is not an option.

## **GOALS FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION**

A series of goals define our vision for the National Capital Region in 2050. They delineate the ongoing nature and purposes of governmental decisions over the next four decades necessary to achieve our common vision. They are supported by broad strategies available to local governments and a set objectives and indicators to measure progress in years ahead. The goals are reflected in the comprehensive plans of our Region's jurisdictions and in current and historic policy documents of regional organizations that have studied challenges and possible solutions. These goals have also been identified and prioritized in surveys and community recommendations addressing our Region's needs.

### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

We seek effective coordination of land use and transportation planning resulting in an integration of land use, transportation, environmental, and energy decisions.

#### **The National Capital Region's Land Use Goals**

- We seek the enhancement of established neighborhoods of differing densities with compact, walkable infill development and preservation of open space, farmland and environmental resource land in rural areas.
- We seek transit-oriented and mixed-use communities emerging in regional activity centers that will capture new employment and household growth.

### **The National Capital Region's Transportation Goals**

- We seek a broad range of public and private transportation choices for our Region which maximizes accessibility and affordability to everyone and minimizes reliance upon single occupancy use of the automobile.
- We seek a transportation system that maximizes community connectivity and walkability, and minimizes ecological harm to the Region and world beyond.

### **The National Capital Region's Environmental Goals**

- We seek to maximize protection and enhancement of the Region's environmental resources by meeting and exceeding standards for our air, water, and land.
- We seek preservation and enhancement of our Region's open space, green space, and wildlife preserves.

### **The National Capital Region's Climate and Energy Goals**

- We seek a significant decrease in greenhouse gas emissions, with substantial reductions from the built environment and transportation sector.
- We seek efficient public and private use of energy Region-wide, with reliance upon renewable energy and alternative fuels for buildings, vehicles, and public transportation

## **SOCIAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

We seek a vibrant economy, supporting quality health, education, and social services, and a stock of varied housing opportunities, distributed equitably throughout our Region.

### **The National Capital Region's Economic Goals**

- We seek a diversified, stable, and competitive economy, with a wide range of employment opportunities and a focus on sustainable economic development.
- We seek to enhance the economic prosperity of each jurisdiction and the Region as a whole through balanced growth and access to high-quality jobs for everyone.

- We seek to fully recognize and enhance the benefits that accrue to the region as the seat of the National government and as a world capital.

### **The National Capitol Region's Housing Goals**

- We seek a variety of housing types and choices in diverse, vibrant, safe, healthy, and sustainable neighborhoods, affordable to persons at all income levels.
- We seek to make the production, preservation, and distribution of affordable housing a priority throughout the Region.

### **The National Capital Region's Health and Human Services Goals**

- We seek healthy communities with greater access to quality health care and a focus on wellness and prevention.
- We seek to provide access and delivery of quality social services to all residents.

### **The National Capital Region's Education Goals**

- We seek to provide greater access to the best education at all levels, from pre-kindergarten to graduate school.
- We seek to make our Region a pre-eminent knowledge hub, through educational venues, workforce development, and institutional collaboration.

### **The National Capital Region's Public Safety Goals**

- We seek safe communities for residents and visitors
- We seek partnerships that manage emergencies, protect the public health, safety, welfare, and preserve the lives, property and economic well-being of the region and its residents.

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments encourages endorsement and adoption of these goals by its participating jurisdictions and by business and civic stakeholders in the National Capital Region. Concerted action to implement these goals will ensure the National Capital Region is the best place to live, work, play and learn.

## **STATE AND FEDERAL RELATIONSHIPS**

To realize the goals of the Greater Washington 2050 Compact, it is vital that its development and implementation fully engage the State of Maryland and the Commonwealth of Virginia in both their legislative and executive branches. Many of the goals of the Compact are only realizable because of state legislative actions that are already accomplished or may be enacted in the future. Also, many of these goals are continuously being further acted upon through ongoing activities of the executive branches of the District of Columbia and the Maryland and Virginia state government. It is in this spirit that we solicit the participation of these governments in this Compact, now and in the future.

We also solicit the involvement of the federal government, and in fact, already have such involvement through the active participation of the National Capital Planning Commission. There is no doubt that the federal government has always and will always provide the major growth engine for the National Capital Region. It may do so through a growth in direct federal employment in the future, or as in the past 25 years, primarily through the very substantial growth of federal contracts and contract workers, or through some combination of the same in the year's ahead. Regardless of the configuration of this growth, we seek the involvement of the federal government in the implementation of this compact, be it through the National Capital Planning Commission, the Executive Office of the President, or line federal departments and agencies.