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**GREATER WASHINGTON 2050 COMPACT:  
Achieving a Vision for the National Capital Region  
In the Middle Twenty-first Century**

*The Greater Washington 2050 Compact sets forth a common vision for the National Capital Region at mid-century and the goals that define that vision.*

*It demonstrates endorsement and support of these goals by the Region's local governments, by major business organizations, and by a number of the Region's civic organizations, through separate, optional, and voluntary Agreements.*

*These Agreements set forth broad strategies that local governments and other regional stakeholders may utilize in furtherance of their commitment to the improvement of the National Capital Region.*

*These Agreements will be used as a guiding tool to make public decisions and set priorities, positioning the region to remain competitive and capitalize on future opportunities.*

*These Agreements will establish where possible quantitative targets to meet our goals and create a process to measure success.*



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**JURISDICTIONAL COMMITMENT**  
**A Political Agreement among Local Governments**  
**to Implement the Greater Washington 2050 Compact**

**WE, the Counties and Municipalities of the National Capital Region,** comprise a region endowed with a strong economy, a highly-educated workforce, vigorous institutions, and natural resources and parks that enhance the quality of life of our residents.

We are at a moment in history, however, when we face major challenges, both in preserving what is best about our region and in continuing its growth. We must address the causes and effects of climate change while we improve transportation, renew our infrastructure, expand the supply of reasonably-priced housing, and ensure that the benefits of our prosperity reach all of our residents.

We see these challenges as an opportunity for leadership – in the public, business, and civic sectors of our communities.

We intend that the National Capital Region continue to be an exceptional place to work, play and learn; a welcoming place for a skilled workforce to live, raise families, and enjoy successful careers; and an ideal place to start, run or expand a small or a large business.

**WE, the Counties and Municipalities of the National Capital Region,** share a vision supported by our local comprehensive plans of sustainable communities and shared prosperity.



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**GREATER WASHINGTON 2050 COMPACT:  
GOALS FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION**

After input from government officials, business executives, civic leaders, and the public at large, and consideration of the recommendations of its participating jurisdictions, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments adopted a concise series of goals that define a common vision for the 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.



- 101 • We seek transit-oriented and mixed-use communities emerging in regional  
102 activity centers that will capture new employment and household growth.

103

104 **The National Capital Region’s Transportation Goals**

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

110

111 **The National Capital Region’s Environmental Goals**

- 112 • We seek to maximize protection and enhancement of the Region’s  
113 environmental resources by meeting and exceeding standards for our air, water,  
114 and land.
- 115 • We seek preservation and enhancement of our Region’s open space, green  
116 space, and wildlife preserves.

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118 **The National Capital Region’s Climate and Energy Goals**

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

124

125 **SOCIAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

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

128

129 **The National Capital Region’s Economic Goals**



- 130 • We seek a diversified, stable, and competitive economy, with a wide range of  
131 employment opportunities and a focus on sustainable economic development.
- 132 • We seek to enhance the economic prosperity of each jurisdiction and the Region  
133 as a whole through balanced growth and access to high-quality jobs for everyone.
- 134 • We seek to fully recognize and enhance the benefits that accrue to the region as  
135 the seat of the National government and as a world capital.

136

137 **The National Capital Region’s Housing Goals**

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

142

143 **The National Capital Region’s Health and Human Services Goals**

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

147

148 **The National Capital Region’s Education Goals**

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

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154 **The National Capital Region’s Public Safety Goals**

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



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160 These individual goals cannot be viewed in isolation. Actions designed to implement  
161 one goal will have impacts on others – sometimes positive; occasionally negative.  
162 Under certain circumstances, success of one particular goal will require addressing  
163 other goals as prerequisites or even necessary components. We acknowledge that to  
164 fully realize the promise of the Compact, we will need to consider the interrelated  
165 impacts of our actions and decisions on all the goals and on their relationships.

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167

168 **We, the Counties and Municipalities of the National Capital Region**, hereby adopt  
169 the Greater Washington 2050 Compact, and endorse the goals therein as policies  
170 governing our public actions and decisions.

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**GREATER WASHINGTON 2050:**

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**LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

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175 The Greater Washington 2050 Compact Goals are supported by broad strategies, which  
176 in turn can be implemented by our local governments. The success of our actions  
177 implementing many of these strategies can be determined by specific indicators, some  
178 narrative and subjective, others numerical and objective. Periodic review of these  
179 indicators will validate regional actions taken or will focus public attention on goals yet to  
180 be reached.

181

182 **We, the Counties and Municipalities of the National Capital Region**, acknowledge  
183 that the strategies available to each are governed by its organic authority. Whether  
184 found in state constitutional provisions, state or federal statute, charter, or local  
185 ordinances or policies, jurisdictional powers are both authorized or constrained by law.  
186 As a result, not all strategies are equally available to all the Region's local governments  
187 and, even where equally available, may not present equally effective means to reach a  
188 goal.



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Local government powers to affect its community and its region fall within four categories. Each of these presents opportunities to develop or enhance a goal or a combination of goals.

- **Regulatory.** By exercise of the general police power, our jurisdictions can regulate the control of private conduct or activity. Examples include planning, zoning, subdivision, building codes, environmental restrictions. Use of such power can both deter and incentivize.
- **Executive.** Our jurisdictions are themselves operating entities. They own property, construct and locate facilities, direct the conduct of their employees. Executive action or inaction can result in permanent changes to the community landscape. Examples include the timing, location, and size of public buildings and infrastructure.
- **Fiscal.** By the expenditure of public funds, both operating and capital, our jurisdictions establish priorities and set the agenda for community growth and activities. By use of the taxing power, they can encourage or discourage private activity in manners which enhance community goals. Public choices among fees and *ad valorem* taxes retard or spur private decisions.
- **Education.** Our jurisdictions educate the public by specific informational programs, by example, and by the “bully pulpit.” Public attitudes and often individual and institutional actions can be changed by conscious programs of public education.

The powers may often be used in conjunction in developing and implementing a strategy designed to reach one or more goals of the Compact. Our jurisdictions can



218 individually and jointly utilize their various authorities in support of these regional  
219 strategies.

220

221 To determine whether utilized strategies are effective – and whether the Region is  
222 moving in the right direction to meet the goals – we will periodically review our progress  
223 by analyzing certain indicators. These indicators will measure progress towards our  
224 Regional pledge. By comparing such measurements against a baseline or against  
225 specific targets we can determine the success in furthering our goals and common  
226 vision.

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228 A description of potential indicators, baselines and targets is attached as Appendix to  
229 this Commitment.

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### **FEDERAL AND STATE SUPPORT**

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

242

243 We also solicit the involvement of the federal government, and in fact, already have  
244 such involvement through the active participation of the National Capital Planning  
245 Commission. There is no doubt that the federal government has always and will always  
246 provide the major growth engine for the National Capital Region. It may do so through a  
247 growth in direct federal employment in the future, or as in the past 25 years, primarily



248 through the very substantial growth of federal contracts and contract workers, or  
249 through some combination of the same in the years ahead. Regardless of the  
250 configuration of this growth, we seek the involvement of the federal government in the  
251 implementation of this compact, be it through the National Capital Planning  
252 Commission, the Executive Office of the President, or federal departments and  
253 agencies.

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### INVITATION TO OTHER JURISDICTIONS

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258 Political jurisdictions within the National Capital Region, but not parties to the Greater  
259 Washington 2050 Compact, are invited to study and consider these Goals and  
260 commitments, and to become Parties to the Compact. Political jurisdictions outside the  
261 National Capital Region, but which share a boundary or major infrastructure element,  
262 and who's environmental, financial, and demographic futures are intertwined with the  
263 Region are also invited to become Parties to the Compact.

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### OBLIGATIONS OF THE PARTIES

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267 The jurisdictions that execute this Compact endorse the goals herein. Our public  
268 officials will strive to realize our common vision for the Region. While we agree to the  
269 Compact goals, the methods available of ensuring the vision they espouse may differ  
270 from jurisdiction to jurisdiction based upon statutory law, history of development,  
271 demographics, and economic capability. We will consider the Compact's goals and,  
272 where consistent with our authorities and capabilities, will utilize them to guide our  
273 public decisions. We pledge to use our best efforts within our own legal, political, and  
274 financial structure to advance with the Compact.

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276 **We, the Counties and Municipalities of the National Capital Region,** commit to this  
277 Compact not because its actions are currently required, or may well become required by  
278 any future regulatory mandate but because they will enhance our region’s quality of life,  
279 be good for every resident, and be good for businesses and employers. We make this  
280 commitment because business as usual on our part will not be enough to achieve these  
281 goals.

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284 **Signatures**

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