



COG REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTERS

Round 10.0 Update

Greg Goodwin
Regional Planner

Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee
October 20, 2023



Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

Agenda Item #4

Commonly Asked Questions

What is an Activity Centers?

- Activity Centers are locally-identified existing urban centers, priority growth areas, traditional towns, and/or transit hubs.
- Generally one-half mile from a transit-station or central point where there is a local commitment to developing more housing, jobs, services and amenities to meet day-to-day needs of residents through a walkable environment.



City of Frederick



Reston Town Center



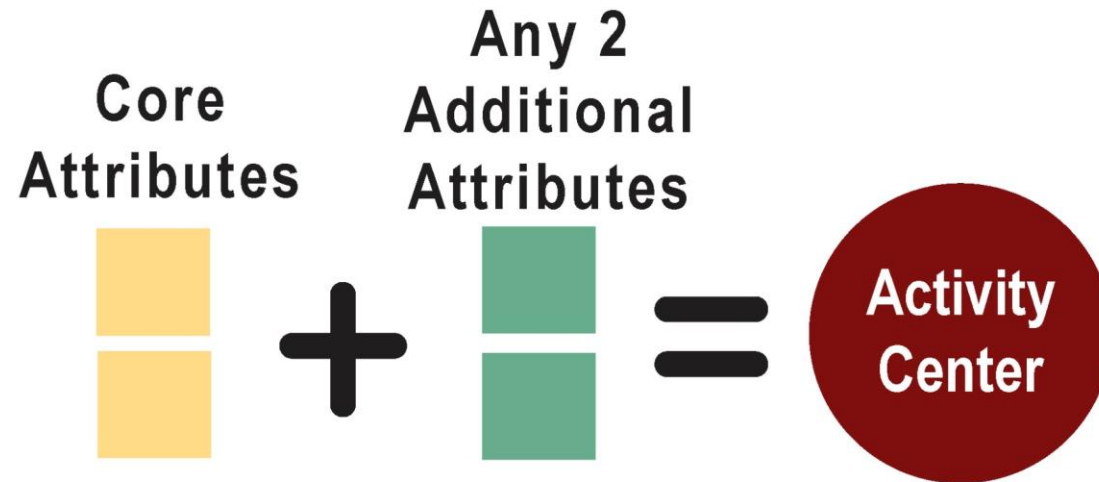
Commonly Asked Questions

What does it mean to be designated an Activity Center?

- Activity Centers designation represents a locally-identified priority for growth and informs COG and other regional agencies, which places desire support.

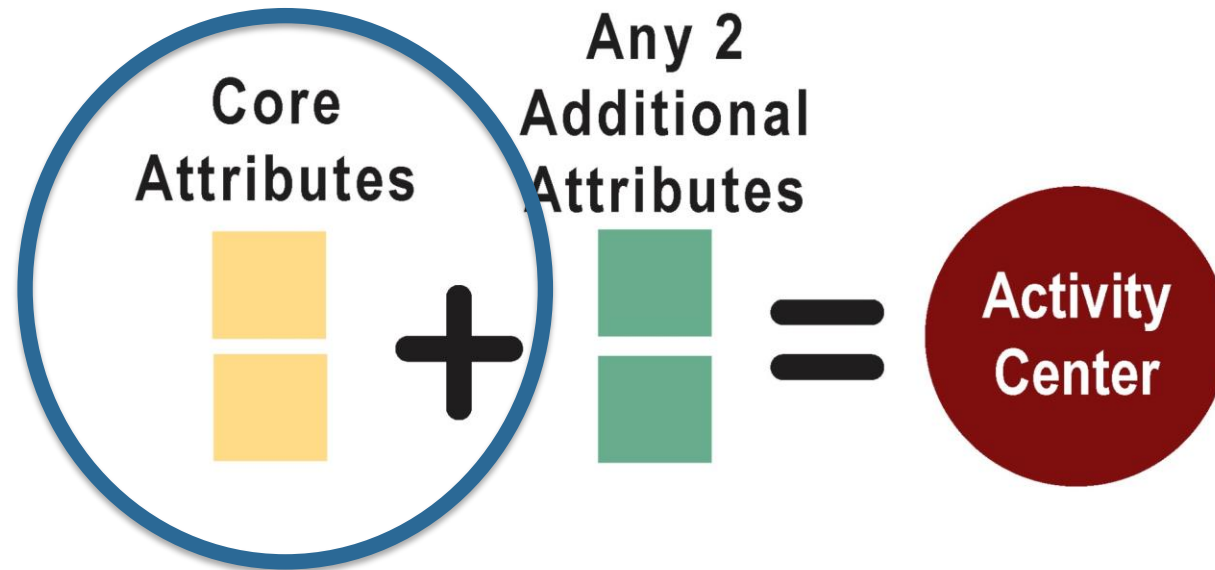
How were Centers Identified?

Attribute Menu



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How were Centers Identified?

Core Attributes (both required)



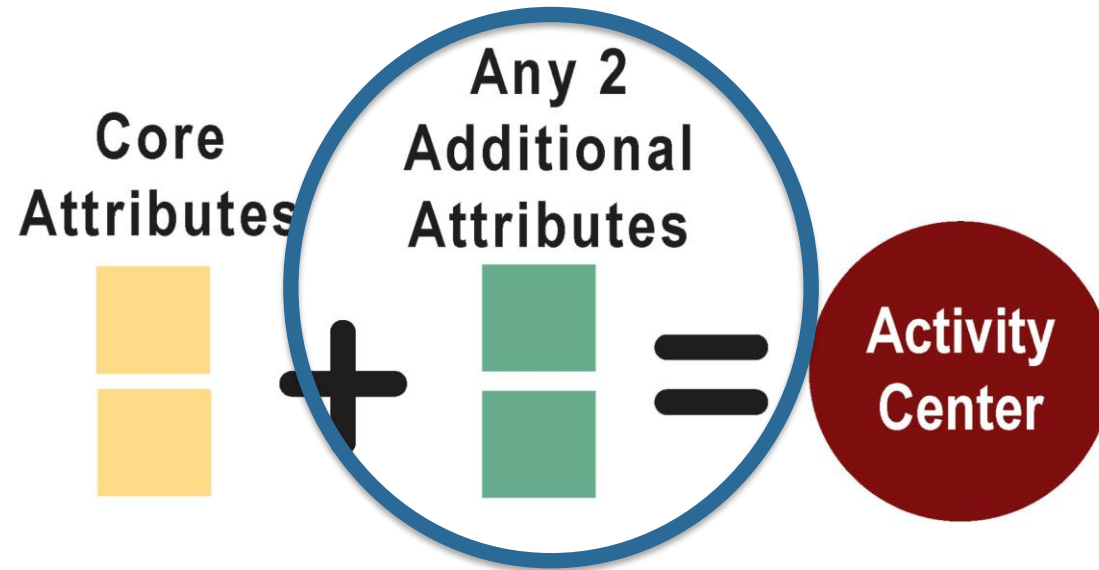
Policy: In 2012, the center or priority growth area should be designated in a jurisdiction's adopted comprehensive/general plan or other locally-adopted land use plan.



Density: By 2040, have a person per acre density (employment + population) that falls within the top one-half of densities within the jurisdiction.

How were Centers Identified?

Attribute Menu



How were Centers Identified?

Additional Attributes (any 2 Require)



Intersection Density: In 2012, have at least 55 intersections per square mile.



Transit Capacity: In 2012, have

- Existing high-capacity/performance transit (e.g. Metrorail, BRT, commuter rail, or light rail) OR
- a planned transit station identified in the Financially Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) OR
- a planned transit station with dedicated local funding



Land Use Mix: In 2012, have a locally-adopted land use plan/ordinance that encourages mixed-use development (e.g. through a mixed-use designation, form-based codes, or overlay zoning).

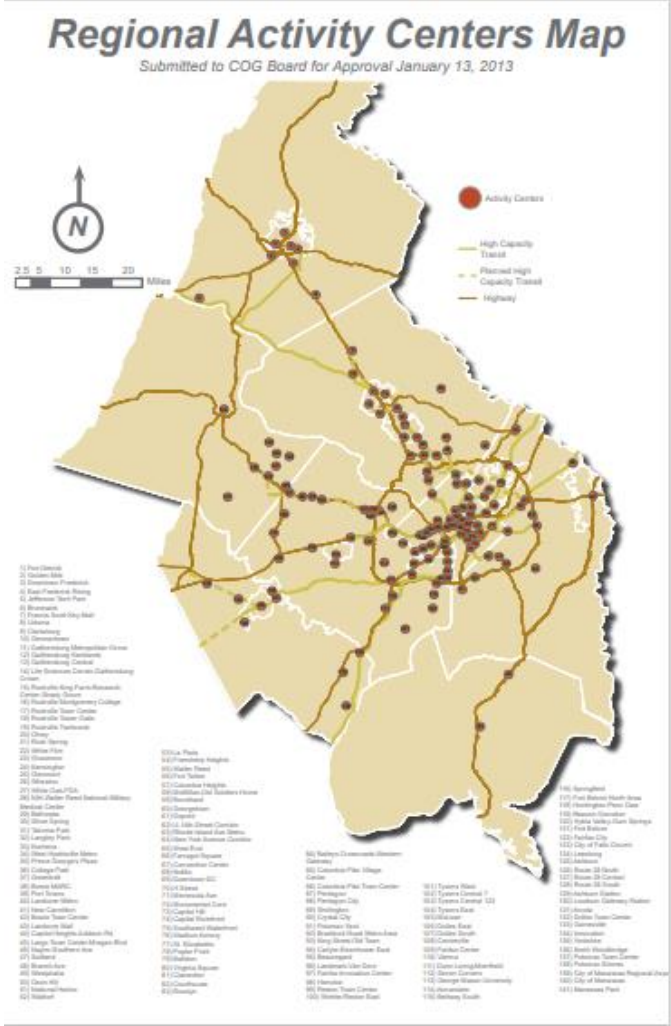


Housing & Transportation Affordability: Combined housing and transportation costs do not exceed 45% of regional median income as measured by the H + T Index.



The Current Activity Centers Map

- The current Activity Centers Map, developed with local planning officials and the Region Forward Coalition, was approved by the COG Board in 2013.
- Visit the [Activity Centers document page](#) for the official adopted version and past versions of the map.



Activity Centers

2012 Update

Activity Centers are the locations that will accommodate the majority of the region's future growth. They include existing urban centers, priority growth areas, traditional towns, and transit hubs. Together, Activity Centers will play a central role in achieving *Region Forward's* prosperity, sustainability, accessibility, and livability goals.



METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Version 1
7/17/2012

Concept

Core
Attributes



Any 2
Additional
Attributes



Background

Activity Centers originally emerged from the Transportation Planning Board's (TPB) vision for the region, adopted in 1998. Among other things, the vision and its related goals and objectives called for better interjurisdictional coordination of transportation and land use planning through the development of a regional map that identified Activity Centers and major transportation corridors.

The first Activity Centers map was approved in 2002, and a second version of the map was adopted in 2007. The 59 Activity Centers on that map were identified based on job concentrations in COG's Cooperative Forecasts and reflected major employment centers in the region. For the past ten years, COG and the TPB have used Activity Centers for technical purposes, including growth forecasts and scenario analysis for transportation planning.

A New Selection Approach

For the 2012 update, COG developed a new approach to identify Activity Centers. As the spatial component of *Region Forward*, Activity Centers will be used as both a technical *and* policy tool. Aligning Activity Centers with *Region Forward* will help ensure that the dramatic growth anticipated through 2050 will enhance the region's prosperity and sustainability. Consequently, the selection criteria for the 2012 update are a hybrid of policy-oriented measures and technical guidelines.

The criteria also provide flexibility in how places can qualify as Activity Centers, and are designed to be consistent with local planning priorities. As a result, the new Activity Centers are diverse, including existing urban centers, priority growth areas, historic towns, and transit hubs in jurisdictions throughout the region.

To qualify as an Activity Center, some of the needed attributes must be present today, while others must be accomplished by 2040. A location must meet both of the two core attributes and at least two additional attributes by the noted year (either 2012 or 2040).

Core Attributes (required)



Policy: In 2012, the center or priority growth area should be designated in a jurisdiction's adopted comprehensive/general plan or other locally-adopted land use plan.



Density: By 2040, have a persons per acre density (employment + population) that falls within the top one-half of densities within the jurisdiction.

Additional Attributes (any 2 required)



Intersection Density: In 2012, have at least 55 intersections per square mile.



Land Use Mix: In 2012, have a locally-adopted land use plan/ordinance that encourages mixed-use development through such features as a mixed-use designation, form-based codes, or overlay zoning.



Transit Capacity: In 2012, have existing high-capacity/performance transit (e.g. Metrorail, commuter rail, light rail, or bus rapid transit), have a planned transit station identified in the CLRP, or have a planned transit station with a dedicated local funding source. *(Region Forward Target)*



Housing & Transportation Affordability: In 2012, demonstrate combined housing and transportation costs of no more than 45% of regional median income, as measured by the H + T Index. *(Region Forward Target)*

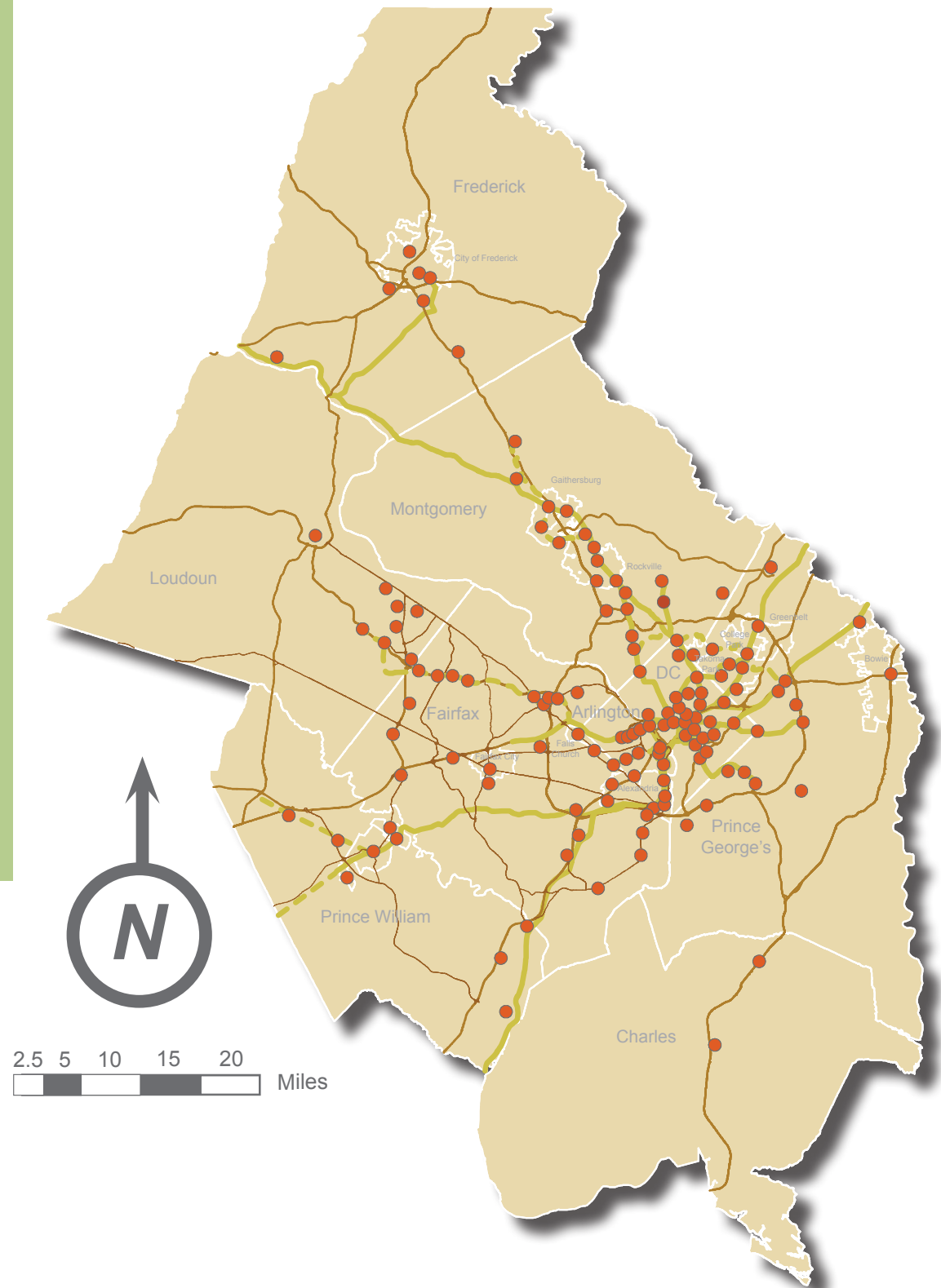
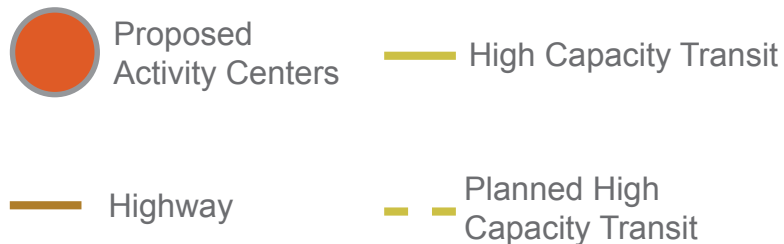
Places

Activity Centers are the locations that will accommodate the majority of our region's growth in the coming decades. As such, they play a central role in fulfilling the vision of *Region Forward*. They include existing urban centers, priority growth areas, traditional downtowns, and transit hubs. Centers include established communities like Georgetown, as well as newly emerging places like Wheaton. A majority of these Activity Centers are mixed-use communities. Others are primarily employment centers or are dominated by major civic or federal facilities.

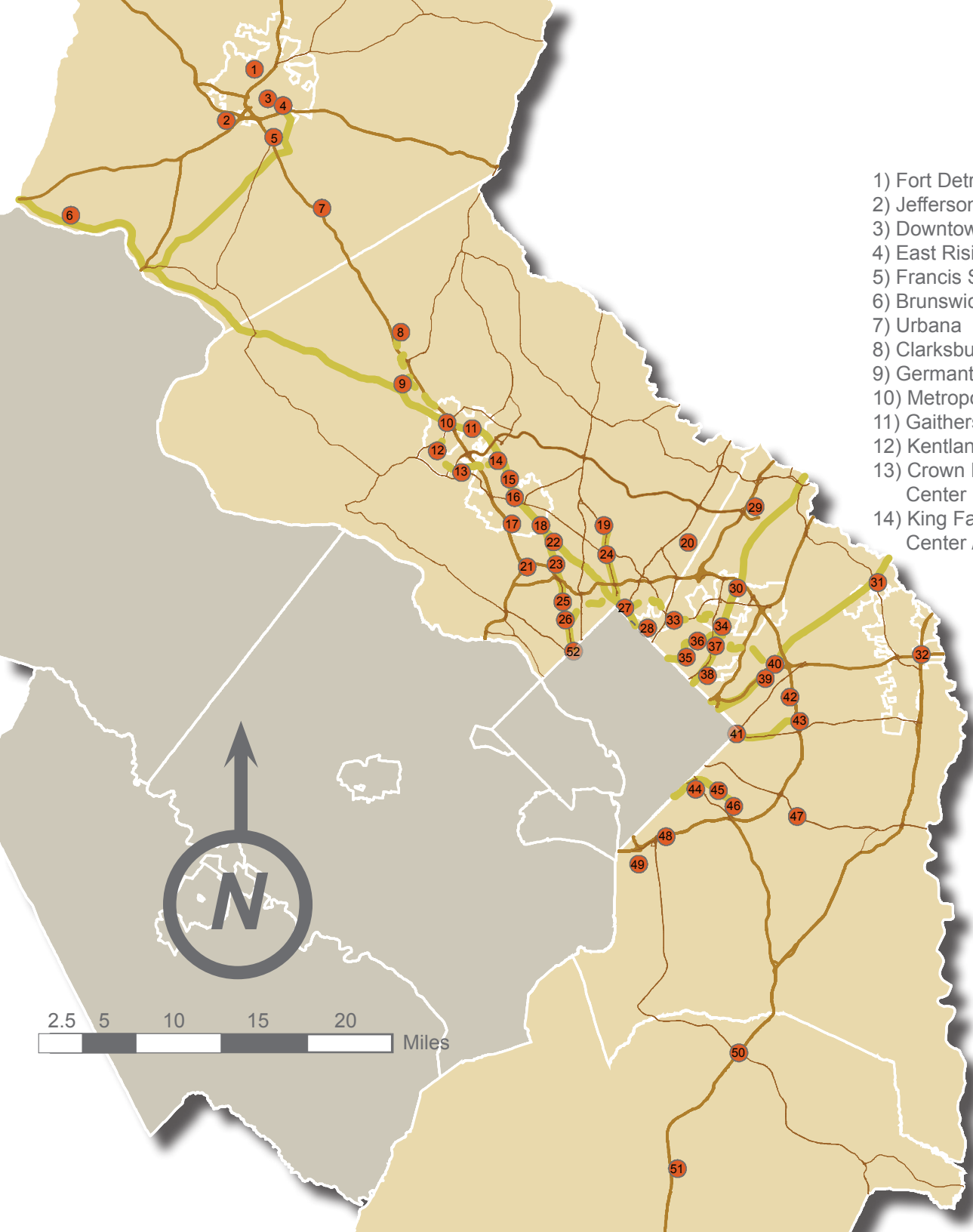
Activity Centers provide a way for all jurisdictions to contribute to our shared regional goals.

Key Facts

- There are 136 Activity Centers
- Centers are located in every COG member jurisdiction
- 67% of centers are served by high-capacity transit
- 60% fall within old Activity Center boundaries



Maryland



- 1) Fort Detrick
- 2) Jefferson Tech Park
- 3) Downtown Frederick
- 4) East Rising
- 5) Francis Scott Key Mall
- 6) Brunswick
- 7) Urbana
- 8) Clarksburg
- 9) Germantown
- 10) Metropolitan Grove
- 11) Gaithersburg
- 12) Kentlands
- 13) Crown Farm/ Life Sciences Center
- 14) King Farm / Rockville Research Center / Shady Grove
- 15) Montgomery College
- 16) Rockville
- 17) Tower Oaks
- 18) Twinbrook
- 19) Glenmont
- 20) White Oak
- 21) Rock Spring
- 22) White Flint
- 23) Grosvenor
- 24) Wheaton
- 25) National Institutes of Health
- 26) Bethesda
- 27) Silver Spring
- 28) Takoma Park*
- 29) Konterra
- 30) Greenbelt
- 31) Bowie MARC
- 32) Bowie Town Center
- 33) Langley Park
- 34) College Park
- 35) West Hyattsville Metro
- 36) Prince George's Plaza
- 37) Riverdale MARC
- 38) Port Towns
- 39) Landover Metro
- 40) New Carrollton
- 41) Capitol Heights / Addison Road*
- 42) Landover Mall
- 43) Largo Town Center / Morgan Blvd
- 44) Naylor / Southern Ave
- 45) Suitland
- 46) Branch Ave
- 47) Westphalia
- 48) Oxon Hill
- 49) National Harbor
- 50) Waldorf
- 51) La Plata
- 52) Friendship Heights*

* Cross-jurisdictional center with the District of Columbia

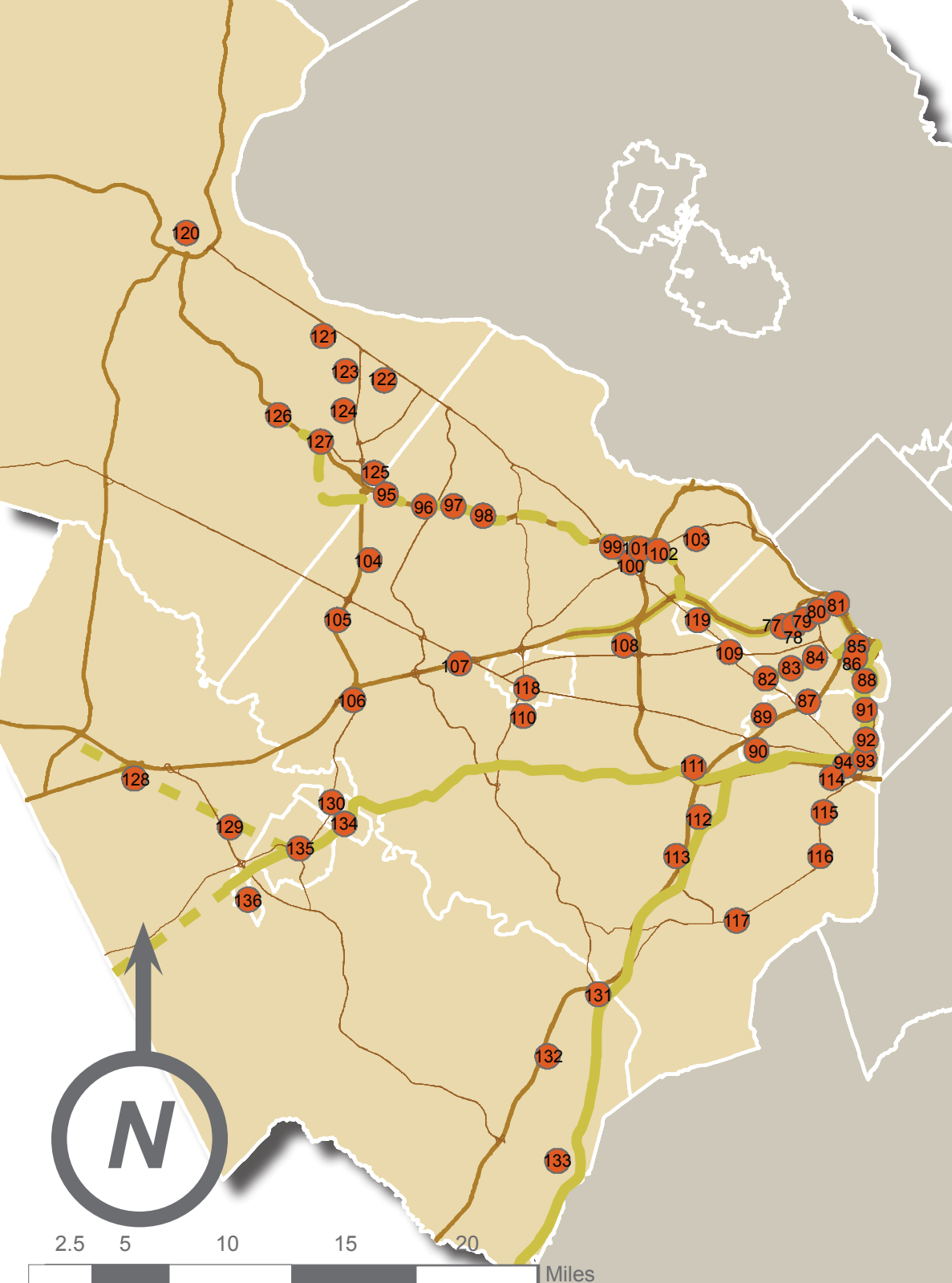
District of Columbia

- 28) Takoma Park*
- 41) Capitol Heights / Addison Road*
- 52) Friendship Heights*
- 53) Walter Reed
- 54) Columbia Heights
- 55) McMillan / Old Soldiers Home
- 56) Fort Totten
- 57) Brookland
- 58) Georgetown
- 59) Dupont
- 60) U / 14th Street Corridor
- 61) Rhode Island Ave Metro
- 62) New York Avenue Corridor
- 63) West End
- 64) Farragut Square
- 65) Convention Center
- 66) Downtown DC
- 67) NoMa
- 68) H Street
- 69) Minnesota Ave
- 70) Monumental Core
- 71) Capitol Hill
- 72) Southwest Waterfront
- 73) Capital Riverfront
- 74) Stadium Armory
- 75) St. Elizabeth's
- 76) Poplar Point

* Cross-jurisdictional center with Maryland



Virginia



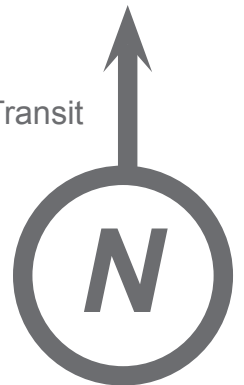
- 77) Ballston
- 78) Virginia Square
- 79) Clarendon
- 80) Courthouse
- 81) Rosslyn
- 82) Bailey's Crossroads / Western Gateway
- 83) Columbia Pike Village Center
- 84) Columbia Pike Town Center
- 85) Pentagon
- 86) Pentagon City
- 87) Shirlington
- 88) Crystal City
- 89) Beauregard
- 90) Landmark / Van Dorn
- 91) Potomac Yard
- 92) Braddock Road Metro Area
- 93) King Street / Old Town
- 94) Carlyle / Eisenhower East
- 95) Dulles Corner / CIT
- 96) Herndon / Monroe
- 97) Reston West
- 98) Reston East
- 99) Tysons West
- 100) Tysons Central 7
- 101) Tysons Central 123
- 102) Tysons East
- 103) McLean
- 104) Dulles East
- 105) Dulles South
- 106) Centreville
- 107) Fairfax Center
- 108) Merrifield / Dunn Loring
- 109) Seven Corners
- 110) George Mason University
- 111) Beltway South
- 112) Springfield
- 113) Engineers Proving Ground
- 114) Huntington/ Penn Daw
- 115) Beacon / Groveton
- 116) Hybla Valley/ Gum Springs
- 117) Fort Belvoir
- 118) Fairfax City
- 119) City of Falls Church
- 120) Leesburg
- 121) One Loudoun
- 122) Dulles Town Center
- 123) Route 28 North
- 124) Route 28 Central
- 125) Route 28 South
- 126) Route 772 Transit Area
- 127) Route 606 Transit Area
- 128) Gainesville
- 129) Innovation
- 130) Yorkshire
- 131) North Woodbridge
- 132) Potomac Town Center
- 133) Potomac Shores
- 134) Manassas Park
- 135) Manassas
- 136) Manassas Airport

Montgomery County



COG worked with regional planning directors through the Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee to develop the Activity Center selection method. Then COG worked directly with each jurisdiction's planning department to interpret local planning documents and apply the criteria to identify Activity Centers.

- Planned High Capacity Transit
- High Capacity Transit
- Highway



26 Bethesda

Core Attributes

Policy: The Bethesda CBD Master Plan Adopted in 1994 designates Bethesda as a center

Density: This center has persons density within the top 1/2 for Montgomery County, MD

Additional Attributes

Intersection Density: Bethesda has more than 55 intersections per square mile

Transit Capacity: Bethesda is served by Metro's Red Line

Land Use Mix: Bethesda has mixed use development

Housing & Transportation Affordability: Bethesda has combined housing and transportation costs below 45% of regional median income

27 Silver Spring

Core Attributes

Policy: The 2000 Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan designates the area as a center

Density: This center has persons density within the top 1/2 for Montgomery County, MD

Additional Attributes

Intersection Density: Silver Spring has more than 55 intersections per square mile

Transit Capacity: Silver Spring is Served by Metro's Red Line, the MARC Brunswick Line, and the planned Purple Line

Land Use Mix: Silver Spring includes mixed uses

Housing & Transportation Affordability: Silver Spring has combined housing and transportation costs below 45% of regional median income

24 Wheaton

Core Attributes



Policy: Wheaton is classified as a center by the 2011 Wheaton CBD and Vicinity Plan



Density: This center has persons density within the top 1/2 for Montgomery County, MD

Additional Attributes



Intersection Density: Wheaton has more than 55 intersections per square Mile



Transit Capacity: Wheaton is served by Metro's Red Line



Land Use Mix: Wheaton has mixed use development



Housing & Transportation Affordability: Wheaton has combined housing and transportation costs below 45% of regional median income

18 Twinbrook

Core Attributes



Policy: Twinbrook is identified as a center in the 2009 Montgomery County Twinbrook Sector Plan



Density: This center has persons density within the top 1/2 for Montgomery County, MD

Additional Attributes



Intersection Density: Twinbrook has more than 55 intersections per square Mile



Transit Capacity: Twinbrook is served by Metro's Red Line



Land Use Mix: Twinbrook is mixed use



Housing & Transportation Affordability: Twinbrook has combined housing and transportation costs below 45% of regional median income

8 Clarksburg

Core Attributes



Policy: The 1994 Clarksburg Master Plan identifies Clarksburg as a center



Density: This center has persons density within the top 1/2 for Montgomery County, MD

Additional Attributes



Transit Capacity: Clarksburg will be served by the Corridor Cities Transitway



Land Use Mix: Clarksburg is planned for mixed use development

10 Metropolitan Grove

Core Attributes



Policy: Metropolitan Grove is designated as a center in the 2003 Gaithersburg Master Plan



Density: This center has persons density within the top 1/2 for Montgomery County, MD

Additional Attributes



Transit Capacity: Metropolitan Grove is served by the MARC Brunswick Line and the future Corridor Cities Transit Way



Land Use Mix: Metropolitan Grove is planned for mixed use development



Housing & Transportation Affordability: Metropolitan Grove has combined housing and transportation costs below 45% of regional median income

Next Steps

COG and TPB Staff will coordinate and determine next steps prior to the next Planning Directors Meeting scheduled for November 17, 2023

Develop a work plan that may include the following:

- Relevant Discussions/Topics
- Tasks and Products
- Identify the Responsible Party
- Determine Milestones and Timeframe
(Completion No Later Than June 2024)

Potential pre-map products could include:

- Persons per Acre Density Analysis (with Round 10.0 Cooperative Forecasts)
- Intersection Density Analysis
- H + T Affordability Index Analysis

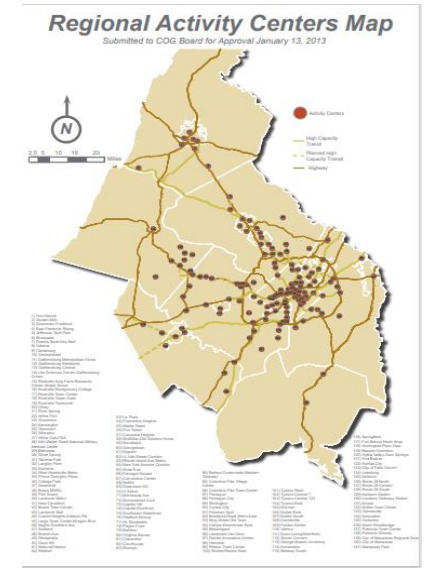
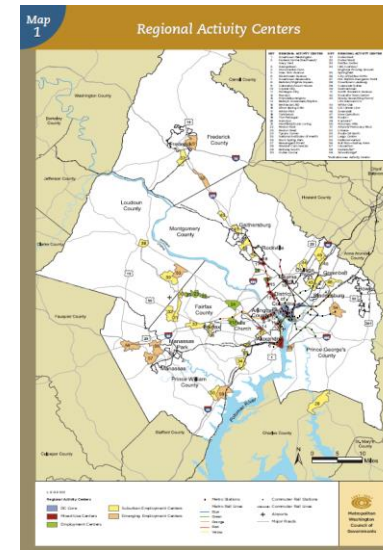
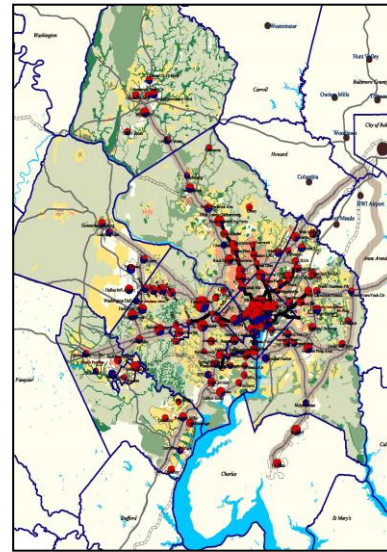
Next Steps



Final Product:

- Updated Regional Activity Centers Map and supporting Data

Approved by the COG Board of Directors



Greg Goodwin

Regional Planner

(202) 962-3274

ggoodwin@mwcog.org

[mwcog.org](https://www.mwcog.org)

777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002