

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SUBCOMMITTEE

Draft Meeting Summary: February 21, 2025

<b>EJ Subcommittee Members in Attendance:</b> Hon. Dave Snyder, Co-Chair Hon. Kristin Mink, Co-Chair Hon. Tom Dernoga, Prince George's County Joseph Jakuta, DDOT Julie Kimmel, ACPAC Noble Smith, MDE  <b>Additional Attendees:</b> Wes Darden, Office of Councilmember Mink Gwendolin McCrea, Virginia DEQ	<b>COG Staff:</b> Alissa Boggs, COG DEP Heidi Bonnaffon, COG DEP Robert Christopher, COG DEP Robert d'Abadie COG DTP Jen Desimone, COG DEP Dusan Vuksan, COG DTP
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### 1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, APPROVAL OF MEETING SUMMARY, FOCUS AND PURPOSE OF MEETING – DISCUSS FEEDBACK FROM MWAQC-TAC

*Dave Snyder, Co-Chair*

The meeting was started by Robert Christopher due to the co-chair running late. The focus was to receive a presentation on the draft Action Plan and discuss the timing of feedback and finalizing the document.

### 2. PUBLIC COMMENT

The floor was available, but members of the public provided public comment.

### 3. DISCUSSION OF MWAQC-TAC FEEDBACK

*MWAQC Staff, Co-chairs and Members*

Tauhira from AECOM presented the draft action plan. The draft action plan includes six chapters and two appendices. The chapters cover the importance of air quality, the basics of air quality in the region, concepts around equity and environmental justice, high-level strategies to improve air quality, detailed recommended actions, and a call to action targeting specific stakeholders. The appendices list stakeholders contacted during the engagement process and a complete list of actions for reference. Recommendations from the discussion included clarifying and redefining definitions of marginalized areas, improving communication with communities, developing a collaborative framework for gathering input from transportation and land use agencies, and capturing enforcement limitations to inform advocacy for legislative and funding support.

Key points discussed include:

- The importance of considering air quality and its impacts on health and the environment.
- The framework to guide MWAC members with recommended actions to consider equity and environmental justice in air quality policies and plans.

- The seven types of strategies to address air quality: improving monitoring, fostering partnerships, improving air quality regulation, increasing public outreach, reducing emissions from stationary sources, reducing vehicle emissions, and promoting land use and planning supportive of air quality improvement.
- The criteria used to evaluate the action list priorities, such as improving air quality, benefiting disadvantaged communities, feasibility, enforceability, and economic feasibility.
- The need for feedback on the concepts, explanations, and illustrations in the plan, as well as any additional details required.

Tauhira emphasized the importance of incorporating feedback from the EJ subcommittee, MWAC, and the public to finalize the plan and ensure it meets the needs of all stakeholders. The presentation concluded with an invitation for questions and comments from the EJ subcommittee.

Co-chair Snyder joined the meeting in time to lead the discussion. Key points discussed include:

- The importance of maintaining the quality of the product despite the removal of data from the EPA website. The team agreed to include all useful information and data without downgrading the product.
- The need to emphasize that improving air quality in severely impacted communities benefits everyone. The framing of the report is crucial to reach a larger audience and avoid dismissal.
- The importance of monitoring air quality as a high priority. The team agreed to move monitoring to a higher priority in the action plan.
- The appropriate comment period for the draft report. The team decided on a three-week comment period, with the possibility of extending it if needed.
- The plan to email the draft report to stakeholders and the public to ensure broad engagement and feedback.
- The impact of the new administration's stance on certain terminology. The team discussed the possibility of changing some wording to avoid triggering negative reactions while maintaining the substance of the report.
- The timeline for finalizing the report. The team aims to have the final document ready for the MWAC meeting in May. They will have another EJ subcommittee meeting in March to review comments and possibly an additional meeting in April if needed.

#### **4. PUBLIC FEEDBACK/INPUT ON MEETING DISCUSSION**

*Subcommittee Co-Chairs and Members, Interested Stakeholders and the Public*

No public comment provided.

#### **5. ADJOURNMENT**

*Dave Snyder, Co-Chair*

The chair, Dave Snyder, concluded with a plan to put the draft Action Plan out for public comment, review the comments at the March meeting and have the document finalized for the May MWAQC meeting. Chair Snyder adjourned the meeting.

*All meeting materials including speaker presentations can be found on the MWCOG website by clicking the link below –*

<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2025/2/21/mwaqc-environmental-justice-subcommittee/>

**The next EJ Subcommittee meeting is March 26, 2025.**

Reasonable accommodations are provided upon request, including alternative formats of meeting materials. For more information, visit: [www.mwcog.org/accommodations](http://www.mwcog.org/accommodations) or call (202) 962-3300 or (202) 962-3213 (TDD)