



MEMORANDUM

TO: COG Board
FROM: Kanti Srikanth, COG Deputy Executive Director
SUBJECT: Update to Regional Activity Centers - Cooperative Forecasts Round 10.0
DATE: May 7, 2025

.

SUMMARY

The COG Board is being asked to review and adopt the updated Regional Activity Centers (RACs) map (attached). Consistent with its Strategic Plan, COG developed Regional Activity Centers as a policy tool in 2002 in its effort to promote balanced, sustainable, and livable communities, and to better coordinate land use and transportation planning. The RAC map has been updated periodically to reflect major updates to the region's forecast of population, employment, and household growth. The existing RACs map is based upon the Round 8.0 Cooperative Forecast and was adopted by the COG Board in January 2013. This 2025 update corresponds to the Round 10.0 Cooperative Forecast of growth and changes to member jurisdictions' planning priorities since 2013. COG's Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee (PDTAC) completed its update of the RAC earlier this year and unanimously approved recommending the COG board adopt the updated map.

BACKGROUND

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), in 1998, proposed the idea of targeting geographic areas in the region to focus the region's future growth as a tool to better coordinate land use and transportation planning. At the direction of the Board, COG's PDTAC undertook this task and developed RACs and the Board adopted the first RAC map in 2002. The RAC map was subsequently updated in 2007, and 2013 with major updates to the region's growth forecasts, Round 7.0 and 8.0 respectively. The COG Board also integrated RACs into its regional comprehensive guide for planning, Region Forward, in 2010, by tying various targets under its Accessibility goal to RACs.

Since then, RACs have become widely used by COG member jurisdictions, the TPB and COG in its planning and programming activities. Most recently COG has used RACs as a preferred location for locating additional affordable housing in the COG Housing Targets (2019) and also as the preferred location for planning funds from COG's competitive Housing Affordability Planning Program (HAPP) Grants.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTER DESIGNATION

The COG board has previously adopted the criteria and process by which planning areas would be designed as a Regional Activity Center. A RAC designation would be consistent with local jurisdiction's planning priorities and not preclude jurisdictions' ability identify other areas as local activity centers. The PDTAC reviewed the COG Board-approved criteria for designating RACs during the December 2023 PDTAC meeting and decided that no changes to the Board-approved methodology would be proposed for this update.

The adopted methodology calls for any geographic area to meet the following two core attributes plus any two of the four secondary attributes:

1. **Policy Core Attribute** - The center or priority growth area should be designated in a jurisdiction's adopted comprehensive/general plan or other locally adopted land use plan.
2. **Density Core Attribute** - In the Round 10.0 Cooperative Forecast, the potential RAC must have a persons per acre density (employment + population) that falls within the top one-half of densities within the jurisdiction in the 2050 forecast year.

In addition, the potential RAC must also fulfill at least two of the following four secondary attributes:

1. **Intersection Density** Additional Attribute - Have at least 55 intersections per square mile.
2. **Transit Capacity** Additional Attribute - Have an existing high-capacity/performance transit (e.g. Metrorail, BRT, commuter rail, OR light rail), or have planned station with dedicated local funding or that is identified in the constrained element of Visualize 2045.
3. **Land Use Mix** Additional Attribute - 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).
4. **Housing and Transportation Affordability** Additional Attribute - Combined housing and transportation costs within the potential RAC do not exceed 45% of regional median income, as measured by the Center for Neighborhood Technology's H + T Index.

Analysis and Selection of Round 10.0 Regional Activity Centers

COG staff worked collaboratively with member-jurisdiction planning department staff in 2024 to select Regional Activity Centers for Round 10.0. The technical work included an examination of adopted comprehensive/general plans and small area plans to identify the latest center or priority growth areas and advice from member-jurisdiction planning staff on selecting the appropriate geographies upon which to apply the adopted methodology.

While this update reflects the most recent local plans it does not result in any substantial changes in the distribution pattern of the current RACs. This update results in 145 RACs compared to 141 RACs in the current (Round 8.0) RAC map. Listed below are all the geographic areas in the COG region and a map of the updated RAC is provided.

Table 1. Round 10.0 Regional Activity Centers

Regional Activity Center Name	Jurisdiction
AlexWest-Beauregard	City of Alexandria
Braddock Road Metro	City of Alexandria
Carlyle-Eisenhower East	City of Alexandria
Eisenhower West/Landmark/Van Dorn	City of Alexandria
Old Town Alexandria/Old Town North	City of Alexandria
Potomac Yard	City of Alexandria
Ballston	Arlington County
Clarendon	Arlington County
Columbia Pike	Arlington County
Court House	Arlington County
Crystal City	Arlington County
Langston Boulevard	Arlington County
Pentagon	Arlington County
Pentagon City	Arlington County
Rosslyn	Arlington County
Shirlington	Arlington County
Virginia Square	Arlington County
Port Towns	Town of Bladensburg/Prince George's County
Bowie	City of Bowie
La Plata	Charles County
Waldorf	Charles County
College Park Metro	City of College Park
UMD Purple Line	City of College Park
Adams Morgan/Dupont	District of Columbia
Anacostia/Poplar Point/St. Elizabeths	District of Columbia
Brookland/Catholic University	District of Columbia
Capitol Hill	District of Columbia
Capitol Riverfront	District of Columbia
Columbia Heights	District of Columbia
Convention Center/Shaw	District of Columbia
Downtown DC	District of Columbia
Downtown East DC	District of Columbia
Former Walter Reed/Upper Georgia Ave	District of Columbia
Georgetown	District of Columbia
Golden Triangle	District of Columbia

Regional Activity Center Name	Jurisdiction
H Street	District of Columbia
Minnesota Ave and Benning Road Metro	District of Columbia
Monumental Core	District of Columbia
New York Ave NE	District of Columbia
NoMA	District of Columbia
North Capitol Crossroads	District of Columbia
Petworth/Parkview	District of Columbia
Rhode Island Ave Metro	District of Columbia
Southwest Waterfront	District of Columbia
Stadium-Armory	District of Columbia
U Street/Howard University	District of Columbia
West End	District of Columbia
Friendship Heights/Tenleytown	District of Columbia/Montgomery County
Fairfax City	City of Fairfax
Annandale	Fairfax County
Beacon-Groveton	Fairfax County
Beltway South	Fairfax County
Bush Hill/Van Dorn Street Metro	Fairfax County
Centreville	Fairfax County
Dulles/Route 28 Corridor	Fairfax County
Fairfax Center	Fairfax County
Fort Belvoir North	Fairfax County
Franconia-Springfield	Fairfax County
George Mason University	Fairfax County
Herndon Metro	Fairfax County
Huntington-Penn Daw	Fairfax County
Hybla Valley-Gum Springs	Fairfax County
Lorton	Fairfax County
McLean	Fairfax County
Merrifield	Fairfax County
Reston Town Center	Fairfax County
Town of Herndon	Fairfax County
Town of Vienna	Fairfax County
Tysons	Fairfax County
Vienna Metro	Fairfax County
Wiehle-Reston East	Fairfax County
Bailey's Crossroads-Western Gateway	Fairfax County/Arlington County

Regional Activity Center Name	Jurisdiction
Washington Street/East Falls Church Metro	City of Falls Church/Arlington County
East End/Seven Corners	City of Falls Church/Fairfax County
West Falls Church/West Broad Street	City of Falls Church/Fairfax County
Downtown Frederick	City of Frederick
Northeast Frederick	City of Frederick
The Golden Mile	City of Frederick
Ballenger Creek	Frederick County
South Frederick	Frederick County
Urbana	Frederick County
Brunswick	Frederick County
Frederick Ave Corridor/Lakeforest Mall	City of Gaithersburg
Kentlands	City of Gaithersburg
Metropolitan Grove	City of Gaithersburg
Olde Towne Gaithersburg	City of Gaithersburg
Life Sciences Center/Crown Farm	City of Gaithersburg/Montgomery County
Greenbelt	City of Greenbelt
Hyattsville Crossing	City of Hyattsville/Prince George's County
West Hyattsville Metro	City of Hyattsville/Prince George's County
Laurel	City of Laurel
Arcola	Loudoun County
Ashburn Station/Loudoun Gateway	Loudoun County
Dulles Town Center	Loudoun County
Leesburg Core	Loudoun County
North Ashburn	Loudoun County
Route 28 Central	Loudoun County
Route 28 North	Loudoun County
Route 28 South	Loudoun County
Downtown Manassas	City of Manassas
Manassas Park	City of Manassas Park
Bethesda	Montgomery County
Clarksburg	Montgomery County
Germantown	Montgomery County
Glenmont	Montgomery County
Grosvenor	Montgomery County
Kensington	Montgomery County
Medical Center/NIH	Montgomery County
North Bethesda	Montgomery County

Regional Activity Center Name	Jurisdiction
Rock Spring	Montgomery County
Shady Grove	Montgomery County
Silver Spring	Montgomery County
Wheaton	Montgomery County
White Oak	Montgomery County
Branch Ave	Prince George's County
Capitol Heights-Addison Road	Prince George's County
Landover Gateway	Prince George's County
Landover Metro	Prince George's County
Largo Town Center	Prince George's County
Morgan Boulevard	Prince George's County
National Harbor	Prince George's County
Naylor Rd-Southern Ave	Prince George's County
New Carrollton	Prince George's County
Oxon Hill	Prince George's County
Suitland	Prince George's County
Westphalia Town Center	Prince George's County
Fettler Park/Dumfries	Prince William County
Gainesville	Prince William County
Innovation Park Town Center	Prince William County
North Woodbridge Town Center	Prince William County
Potomac Mills	Prince William County
Potomac Shores	Prince William County
Potomac Town Center	Prince William County
Quartz District	Prince William County
Sudley	Prince William County
The Landing at Prince William	Prince William County
Yorkshire	Prince William County
Fallsgrove and Research Boulevard	City of Rockville
King Farm/Shady Grove Metro	City of Rockville
Montgomery College-Rockville	City of Rockville
Rockville Town Center	City of Rockville
Tower Oaks	City of Rockville
Twinbrook and Rockville Pike	City of Rockville/Montgomery County
Takoma Metro	City of Takoma Park/District of Columbia
Takoma/Langley Crossroads	City of Takoma Park/Prince George's County