



## Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee

### DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY: SEPTEMBER 24, 2025

#### CEEPC MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

- Hon. Sarah Bagley, City of Alexandria (Chair)
- Hon. Susan Cunningham, Arlington County
- Hon. Cindy Dyballa, City of Takoma Park
- Hon. M.C. Keegan-Ayer, Frederick County
- Hon. Tom Osina, City of Manassas
- Erica Bannerman, Prince George's County
- Mike Barancewicz, Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS)
- Michele Blair, City of Laurel
- Danielle Freedman, Pepco
- Susan Gerson, LCPS
- Jenn Hatch, District Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE)
- Giulia Manno, Prince William County
- Shannon Moore, Frederick County
- Jim Ponticello, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
- Dr. Dann Sklarew, George Mason University
- Maria Sinner, VDOT
- William Washburn, ACPAC Chair
- Brittany Whited, DOEE
- Jenny Willoughby, City of Frederick

#### ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES:

- Hon. Monique Ashton, City of Rockville
- Mati Bazurto, City of Bowie
- Anna Bower, WMATA
- Amanda Campbell, City of Rockville
- Emily Carr, ICF
- Peter Claggett, U.S. Geological Survey
- Ed Cronin, Virginia Energy
- Richard Dooley, Arlington County
- Jennifer Fioretti, Arlington County
- Valerie Fitton-Kane, Casey Trees
- Ryan Freed, City of Alexandria

- Tianni Ivey, Office of Supervisor Koran T. Saines
- Hokuma Karimova, City of Gaithersburg
- Brian Keightley, Fairfax County
- Elliott Kurtz, Chesapeake Conservancy
- Kurt Lawrence, City of Falls Church
- Elizabeth Lovinggood, WMATA
- Julie Mawhorter, U.S. Forest Service
- Matt Meyers, Fairfax County
- Regina Moore, VDOT
- Mike Sandler, Loudoun County
- Bryan Scrafford, Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions (FACS)
- Andrew Schichtel, Casey Trees
- Lindsey Shaw, Montgomery County
- John Silcox, Fairfax County
- Yi Sun, Prince William County
- Elizabeth Thurber, Arlington County
- Fiona Wissell, ICF

#### COG STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

- Laura Bachle, COG Transportation Planning
- Alissa Boggs, COG Environmental Programs
- Leah Boggs, COG Environmental Programs
- Heidi Bonnaffon, COG Environmental Programs
- Robert Christopher, COG Environmental Programs
- Maia Davis, COG Environmental Programs
- Jeff King, COG Director Climate, Energy and Air Programs
- John Snarr, COG Environmental Programs
- Dusan Vuksan, COG Transportation Planning

## **1. WELCOME AND MEETING SUMMARY**

*Sarah Bagley, CEEPC Chair*

Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) Chair Sarah Bagley called the September CEEPC meeting to order. The July CEEPC Meeting Summary was approved.

## **2. CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM'S 2021-2022 LAND USE COVER AND TREE CANOPY ASSESSMENT**

*Peter Claggett, U.S. Geological Survey, Research Geographer*

The Chesapeake Bay Program's ongoing work focuses on developing high-resolution land use and land cover data for the entire Chesapeake Bay watershed. Since 2015, the program has collaborated with partners including the Chesapeake Conservancy, the University of Vermont, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and others to produce consistent datasets at one-meter resolution. These datasets have expanded from 16 land cover classes in 2017 to 56 in the most recent 2021–2022 release. Each update requires revisiting earlier datasets to ensure comparability over time, enabling accurate monitoring of changes in tree canopy, impervious surfaces, and other land uses.

The program distinguishes between tree canopy (all visible tree cover) and forest extent (tree canopy with unmanaged understory or natural succession). Data shows that the greatest canopy losses have occurred in counties experiencing significant development. Tools such as the Chesapeake Conservancy's online viewer and jurisdiction-fact sheets allow local governments to visualize canopy change, identify patterns, and download data for further analysis.

While the data quantifies where canopy is lost or gained, it does not explain the underlying causes or the condition of the trees. Ongoing work with satellite imagery aims to provide more insight into forest health and age. The datasets, change matrices, and fact sheets are publicly available and support applications ranging from greenhouse gas inventories to regional climate and land-use planning.

## **3. COMPREHENSIVE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN**

*Fiona Wissell, ICF*

*Emily Carr, ICF*

The Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP), developed under EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG) program analyzes the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The required elements of the CCAP includes greenhouse gas (GHG) mitigation measures and models their potential reductions across all sectors, a "What would it take" scenario and model to reach net-zero emissions by 2050, a co-pollutant benefits analysis, and a workforce assessment.

The 2020 MSA GHG inventory identified on-road transportation as the largest source of emissions (33 percent), followed by commercial buildings (24 percent), while natural and working lands serve as a net carbon sink. Business-as-usual projections show emissions declining modestly over time due to cleaner electricity from state renewable portfolio standards, but transportation remains the largest source through 2050.

The measures analysis shows that the most significant reductions by 2050 come from zero-emission vehicle adoption, followed by building energy efficiency and electrification. Together with additional measures such as rooftop solar, waste reduction, and land management strategies. Co-pollutant modeling indicates that implementing these measures would also reduce harmful air pollutants, leading to fewer cases of respiratory and cardiovascular illness, fewer hospital visits, and lower mortality. The associated health co-benefits could save the region hundreds of millions of dollars annually in avoided healthcare costs.

The workforce assessment found that the regional labor market is generally balanced, with no major shortages across most occupations. However, potential gaps may emerge in specialized areas such as electric vehicle maintenance and energy auditing. Training capacity is strong in building trades and electrical work, but stakeholders emphasized the need for equitable access to training, competitive pay, and retention strategies. Local programs, such as Montgomery County's apprenticeship initiative in emerging transportation technologies, demonstrate effective models that could be scaled across the region. Overall, the CCAP concludes that with coordinated action, the region can achieve deep emissions reductions, deliver substantial public health benefits, and prepare its workforce for the transition to a clean energy economy.

#### **4. MID-COURSE REVIEW: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

*Maia Davis, COG Senior Environmental Planner*

*Alissa Boggs, COG Environmental Planner*

The mid-course review (MCR) is assessing progress toward the region's 2030 climate and energy goals, which were adopted in 2020. The MCR compiles greenhouse gas inventories, renewable energy data, and local government implementation surveys to provide a clear picture of whether the region is on track. The MCR is organized around the same sectors as the 2030 plan – Greenhouse Gases, Clean Electricity, Zero Energy Buildings, Zero Emissions Vehicles, Mode Shift and Travel Behavior, Zero Waste, and Sequestration - and will highlight one to three key performance indicators for each.

Recent findings show strong growth in green building certifications, from fewer than 100 in 2005 to more than 7,800 by 2024. Grid-connected renewable energy systems have expanded rapidly, surpassing the 2017 goal of 30,000 systems and reaching more than 93,000 systems by 2024, with a long-term target of 250,000 by 2030. Electricity use has remained relatively flat in most jurisdictions, while commercial demand in Northern Virginia has grown due to data center expansion. Natural gas use continues to fluctuate with winter weather.

Case studies highlighted local leadership, including Rockville's climate action dashboard, the District of Columbia's annual greenhouse gas inventories and Sustainable DC 2.0 dashboard, regional solar co-ops, and Prince George's County's clean energy siting analysis and pilot programs. Additional examples included net-zero schools in Alexandria and Arlington, as well as tree planting initiatives in Bowie and Fairfax that combine canopy expansion with workforce development.

**Discussion:** Members emphasized the importance of evaluating whether current progress is sufficient to meet 2030 targets. Staff noted that while achievements such as 93,000 solar systems and widespread green building adoption are significant, reaching the 2030 goals—such as 250,000 solar systems and a 50 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions—remains a major challenge. The draft mid-course review report will be released in early 2026 to provide a comprehensive assessment of progress and identify areas where additional action is needed.

## 5. COMMITTEE AND MEMBER UPDATES

*Written updates provided in advance*

### A. Member Updates

- The

### B. Built Environment Energy Advisory Committee (BEEAC)

- The September 18<sup>th</sup> BEEAC meeting focused on the 2024 utility data analysis, the draft Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) and draft workforce development analysis, and the mid-course review case studies. Members articulated the following areas of interests and follow-up:
  - i. What are the potential adverse impacts of EPA's proposal to amend the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program on future GHG inventories.
  - ii. Include electrification of existing buildings in the mid-course jurisdiction case studies.
  - iii. The City of Frederick has a rideable contract with [Compost Crew](#) that other jurisdictions can use to support low cost or free curbside composting pickup for neighborhoods.
- The recording and related materials can be found on the [meeting page](#). The next BEEAC meeting is November 20.

### C. Air And Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC)

- The September 15<sup>th</sup> ACPAC meeting covered the mid-course review key performance indicators, jurisdiction case studies and the draft CCAP. From those discussion topics, ACPAC members identified areas of interest and potential follow up:
  - i. The need to advocate for more grid-connected renewable energy.
  - ii. The environmental impacts of data centers use natural gas turbines for on-site generation.
  - iii. Customer electric utility cost increases due to data centers is an equity issue.
  - iv. Include battery storage permitting as a key performance indicator in the mid-course review.
  - v. A COG response letter to EPA's proposal to rescind the 2009 Endangerment Finding should include a statement about the widespread adverse health impacts on vulnerable populations.
- The next ACPAC meeting is November 17.

### D. Regional Electric Vehicle Deployment (REVD) Working Group

- The next REVD meeting is on October 23<sup>rd</sup> and will cover local food truck electrification and multifamily electric vehicle charging efforts.

### E. Recycling Committee

- In September, the Recycling Committee held its annual in-person meeting on Composting featuring speakers from New York City, the City of Laurel, the State of Vermont, Ocean City, and the University of Maryland. The meeting covered topics such as how to deliver mandatory curbside organics collection service to residents, how to stimulate the establishment of composting infrastructure, and how to use the latest technology to connect unwanted food with those in need. The December 4 in-person meeting will address the topic Navigating Regulatory and Funding Changes.
- The committee will be promoting its annual local contest with school and resident prizes to celebrate America Recycles Day, which is November 15.

### F. Regional Tree Canopy Subcommittee (RTCS)

- RTCS is reviewing the recently released Chesapeake Bay Program's 2021-2022 Land Use/Land Cover data to examine changes to tree canopy and forest acres compared to prior assessments.
- G. Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition
- Upcoming GWRCCC events:
    - i. Drive Electric Event with EVADC & Drive Electric DC, September 28, 2025, 10 am-3 pm, National Mall, 3rd Street and Madison Drive, Washington, DC
    - ii. GWRCCC Job Fair, September 30, 2025, 10 am – 1 pm, Westphalia Community Center, Upper Marlboro, Maryland. <https://Sept302025-JobFair-UpperMarlboro.eventbrite.com>
    - iii. GWRCCC Annual Conference, October 23, 2025, 9 am – 6 pm, Martin's Crosswinds, Greenbelt, Maryland. <https://gwrccc.org/annual-conference/>
- H. Staff Updates
- a. Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Program
    - i) The CCAP for the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is currently under development. Key elements of the plan include an MSA GHG inventory, GHG projections, GHG reduction measures, a net zero GHG emissions scenario, a co-pollutant benefits analysis, and workforce development analysis. The draft plan will be available for public comment this October and a final plan submitted to EPA by December 1, 2025.
  - b. Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Discretionary Grant Program
    - i) On August 27, 2024, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) awarded \$3.9 million to COG through the CFI Program to support the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. For the Round 1B award, COG partnered with the Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, and Manassas and Arlington, Fairfax, Frederick, and Prince George's Counties to deploy publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure at local government facilities in their communities. The majority of the sites are in or near historically disadvantaged communities, closing the gaps in the existing charging network and bringing greater opportunity to communities most impacted by the effects of climate change. COG has also partnered with the Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition (GWRCCC) on equitable engagement and workforce development opportunities, including listening sessions with disadvantaged communities, job fairs, and EV infrastructure trainings.
    - ii) The FHWA-COG CFI agreement was signed by FHWA and fully executed as of January 12, 2025. The signing of the agreement obligated Phase I Pre-Construction funds, which is 15% of the total funds. At this time Phase II funds have not been obligated. Phase I includes initial design plans for EV infrastructure and completion of the NEPA Categorical Exclusion (CE) process for all locations included in this project as well as initial equitable engagement and workforce development activities. Thus far, 6 of the 8 sub-grantee agreements have been executed, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) project updates have been made, NEPA CE documentation has begun, and 3 GWRCCC led events will be held this fall, including:
      - (1) GWRCCC is seeking employers with any kind of job opportunities, as well as training providers, to participate in the Job Fair being held on September 30, 2025, at Westphalia Community Center in Upper Marlboro, MD. Register [here](#).
      - (2) On October 7, 2025, from 6:30-8pm an electric vehicle community listening session will be held at the Sherwood Community Center in Fairfax, Virginia in partnership with the City and County of Fairfax.
      - (3) On November 12, 2025, an electric vehicle community listening session will be held at the Lorton Library in Lorton, Virginia in partnership with Fairfax County.

c. Endangerment Finding Repeal

- EPA has announced an attempt to roll back the Endangerment Finding, which was issued in 2009 and allows EPA to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act due to their threat to public health and welfare. CEEPC wrote a letter in opposition to the repeal.

**6. ADJOURN**

*Sarah Bagley, CEEPC Chair*

Chair Bagley adjourned the meeting. Upcoming CEEPC meeting dates for 2025 include:

- Wednesday, November 19, 2025

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

<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2025/9/24/climate-energy-and-environment-policy-committee/>