Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY: SEPTEMBER 23, 2026

CEEPC MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

- Hon. Cindy Dyballa, City of Takoma Park (Chair)
- Hon. Sarah Bagley, City of Alexandria
- Hon. Susan Cunningham, Arlington County
- Hon. Frankie Fritz, City of Greenbelt
- Hon. Alan Hew, City of College Park
- Hon. M.C. Keegan-Ayer, Frederick County
- Hon. Tom Osina, City of Manassas
- Hon. Tom Peterson, City of Fairfax
- Hon. George Stewart, Prince William County
- Noelani Brockett, Charles County
- Randy Freed, Citizens' Climate Lobby
- Rachel Healy, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)
- Sarah Kogel-Smucker, Montgomery County
- Giulia Manno, Prince William County
- Alison Riley, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Rob Sandoli, Fairfax County
- Danielle Miller Wagner, Prince George's County
- Brittany Whited, District of Columbia Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE)

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES:

- Amanda Campbell, City of Rockville
- Kelly Collins Choi, Casey Trees
- Richard Dooley, Arlington County
- Dory Estrada, City of Takoma Park
- Jennifer Fioretti, Arlington County
- Ryan Freed, City of Alexandria
- Susan Gerson, Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS)
- Mel Hogg, DOEE
- Hokuma Karimova, City of Gaithersburg
- Kurt Lawrence, City of Falls Church
- Andrea Lizarzaburu, City of Takoma Park
- Matt Meyers, Fairfax County
- Opeoluwa Olawale, Washington Gas
- Maha Saidahmed, Office of Supervisor Laura TeKrony
- Mike Sandler, Loudoun County
- Vanessa Simpson, Fairfax County
- Yi Sun, Prince William County
- Steven Swarr, Loudoun County
- Jennifer Tastad, Arlington County
- Christopher Topoleski, Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions (FACS)
- Sunny Wescott, U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
- Fiona Wissell, ICF

COG STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

- Alissa Boggs, COG Environmental Programs
- Leah Boggs, COG Environmental Programs
- Heidi Bonnaffon, COG Environmental Programs
- Maia Davis, COG Environmental Programs
- Lyn Erickson, COG Transportation Planning
- Sakina Khan, COG Director Community and Economic Services
- Jeff King, COG Director Climate, Energy and Air Programs
- John Snarr, COG Environmental Programs
- Maddie Stoddard, COG Environmental Programs
- Emilio Urteaga, COG Community and Economic Services

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1. WELCOME AND MEETING SUMMARY

Cindy Dyballa, CEEPC Chair

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

2. COMMITTEE AND MEMBER UPDATES

A. Member Updates
- The City of Takoma Park is launching a dashboard to track progress toward greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.
- The City of College Park is hosting the World Quantum Computing Conference.
- Sustainable Maryland has a series of walking tours coming up in October, as well as their 15-year anniversary celebration at the Hyattsville Busboys and Poets on October 15th.

B. Built Environment Energy Advisory Committee (BEEAC)
- At BEEAC's September 17 meeting, COG staff presented findings from the 2025 utility data analysis and provided a preview of the region's new interactive utility data dashboard. As Part I of the Resilience Efforts and Strategies in the Region series, Dr. Jim Kinter, Director of the Virginia Climate Center at George Mason University, provided an overview of the Virginia Climate Assessment and discussed the establishment of Virginia's new State Climate Office. Brandy Espinola, Climate and Sustainability Program Director at the University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center, highlighted the Center's resilience technical assistance programs and shared best practices for developing and operating resilience hubs. Sakina Khan, Director of COG's Community and Economic Services team, presented an overview of the region's first Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy planning effort and discussed how the strategy can help advance coordinated regional economic, resilience, and sustainability priorities. The presentations highlighted ongoing efforts across the region to strengthen climate resilience, support local communities, and improve coordination among governments, institutions, and stakeholders.
- BEEAC's next meeting is November 19.

C. Air And Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC)
- At its September 21 meeting, COG staff presented an overview of regional trends in gas and electric utility disconnections, highlighting recent findings and emerging patterns across the metropolitan Washington region. Laurence Daniels, Director of Litigation Services for the District's Office of the People's Counsel, discussed energy affordability challenges facing District residents and provided an overview of Tracking and Enhancing Energy Affordability for District Residents. His presentation examined factors contributing to energy burden and affordability concerns, as well as recommendations to help improve access to affordable utility services. Committee members also reviewed and discussed a draft memorandum on air quality monitoring that is being prepared for transmittal to the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) and CEEPC. The discussion focused on opportunities to strengthen regional air quality monitoring efforts and support informed decision-making through improved data collection and analysis.
- ACPAC's next meeting is November 16.

D. Regional Electric Vehicle Deployment (REVD) Working Group
- Planning is underway for the upcoming fall and winter meetings. Invitations and agendas will be distributed in advance of each meeting.

E. Recycling Committee

- The Recycling Committee will hold its annual meeting on organics management on September 24 at COG in a hybrid format.
- America Recycles Day (November 15) contest applications are now open, with COG-sponsored prizes available for regional participants.

F. Regional Tree Canopy Subcommittee (RTCS)
- A draft Tree Canopy Action Plan is under RTCS review and plans are to circulate it for CEEPC, and partner review for October.

G. Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition (GWRCCC)
- No updates.

H. Staff Updates
- Data Center Series Summary
    i. The takeaway document from the three-part Data Center Forum Series is now available on the COG website. This document summarizes the key takeaways and highlights from each Forum as well as a series of questions for further consideration.
- EPA Repeal of Power Plant GHG Rule
    i. The partial repeal of the 2024 carbon pollution standards for fossil fuel-fired power plants was finalized on September 14th and issued a supplemental proposal that asserts Section 111 does not authorize the agency to regulate power plant emissions.
    ii. The projected impact of this repeal will be substantial in health costs and climate damage. State-level power-plant requirements are a separate backstop this action doesn't remove, however most energy generated in PJM is outside of DC, Maryland, and Virginia.

3. MONTGOMERY COUNTY'S CLIMATE ACTION PROGRESS
Sarah Kogel-Smucker, Montgomery County Climate Change Officer

Montgomery County continues implementing its Climate Action Plan toward goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent by 2027 and 100 percent by 2035, although the county is not expected to meet its 2027 target. As of FY25, 80 of the plan's 84 actions had been initiated and significant progress had been made or completed on 63 actions.

Clean energy and building efforts include expanding onsite solar at county facilities, installing solar at 24 schools, constructing net-zero county buildings, and implementing Building Energy Performance Standards covering approximately 1,900 buildings. Community programs support residential electrification and climate adaptation, including grants delivered through trusted community organizations to reach underserved households.

Transportation efforts include expanding the public EV charging network to 967 ports and transitioning the county bus fleet toward zero-emission vehicles. Continued challenges include accelerating private EV adoption and securing sufficient funding to expand the planned bus rapid transit network. Tree planting, soil conservation, and natural area restoration have also expanded, although overall gains in tree canopy remain modest.

Climate resilience efforts include expanded emergency alert enrollment, updated flood modeling, deployment of flood sensors, and development of a localized weather monitoring network. Additional

work is underway to address extreme heat and establish resilience hubs. Climate and equity considerations have also been incorporated into the county's budgeting process and public engagement efforts.

Discussion: Members asked about the costs of net-zero construction, streamlined permitting for solar and battery storage, and opportunities to shift trips from single-occupancy vehicles to transit, biking, and walking. Discussion highlighted progress on transit-supportive land use and the need to continue expanding transportation alternatives and residential clean energy implementation.

4. GHG REDUCTIONS MIDCOURSE REVIEW REPORT POLICY DISCUSSION AND DASHBOARD
Maia Davis, COG Senior Planner and Chair Dyballa

The COG Board accepted the Midcourse Review and reaffirmed the region's existing climate goals, while calling for stronger connections between climate and other regional priorities and accelerated and expanded local action. Board discussion emphasized the challenges posed by reduced federal support, the importance of communicating the financial and public health benefits of climate action, and opportunities to streamline permitting and procurement.

A new interactive Climate and Energy Progress Dashboard will allow users to track and compare regional and local progress across greenhouse gas emissions, renewable energy, tree canopy, green buildings, energy consumption, electric vehicle ownership, and charging infrastructure. The dashboard builds on data from the Midcourse Review and is intended to make regional and jurisdiction-level trends more accessible.

Discussion: Members emphasized moving from planning to implementation and helping jurisdictions scale successful climate programs. Potential priorities included regional clean energy procurement, technical assistance, stronger legislative advocacy, support for commercial building electrification, and clearer messaging on the economic benefits of climate investments. Members also emphasized keeping climate issues visible in broader COG discussions and identifying future committee topics that could lead to regional action.

5. COG'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PROCESS
Sakina Khan, Director, COG Community and Economic Services
Emilio Urteaga, COG Senior Economic Planner

A new regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is being developed to strengthen economic opportunity, competitiveness, and resilience in response to significant changes in the regional economy. Recent federal job losses have affected employment, spending, commercial real estate, and revenues across the region, underscoring the need for greater coordination across jurisdictions.

Regional strengths include a highly educated workforce, strong professional and business services sector, innovation economy, tourism industry, and extensive transportation network. Challenges include slower economic and population growth, continued reliance on federal employment, high office vacancy rates, declining commercial construction, persistent economic disparities, and high housing costs.

The year-long planning process will develop a five-year regional strategy in partnership with local governments, businesses, nonprofits, foundations, and other stakeholders. The strategy will be submitted to the U.S. Economic Development Administration and could support designation of the

region as an Economic Development District, providing a framework for greater regional coordination and access to federal economic development funding.

Climate and environmental priorities were identified as important components of long-term economic competitiveness. Reliable and affordable energy infrastructure, clean water, resilient landscapes, and climate preparedness can support economic growth, workforce attraction, public health, and regional resilience.

Discussion: Members emphasized the importance of connecting the economic development strategy with COG's climate, transportation, housing, and land use goals. Additional committee discussion on opportunities, barriers, and climate-related contributions to the regional strategy is expected as development of the plan continues.

6. ADJOURN
Cindy Dyballa, CEEPC Chair

Chair Dyballa adjourned the meeting. Upcoming CEEPC meeting dates for 2026 include:

- Wednesday November 18, 2026 (HYBRID MEETING)

All meeting materials including speaker presentations can be found on the COG website or by clicking the link below –
https://www.mwcog.org/events/2026/9/23/climate-energy-and-environment-policy-committee/