

**ITEM 9 – Information**  
**May 21, 2025**

Regional Activity Centers Update

**Background:** The Committee will be briefed on the draft update of COG's Regional Activity Centers, which have been prepared in consultation with and under the oversight of COG's Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee.



## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Transportation Planning Board  
**FROM:** Timothy Canan, TPB Planning Data and Research Program Director  
**SUBJECT:** Regional Activity Centers – Cooperative Forecasts Round 10.0  
**DATE:** May 15, 2025

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## **SUMMARY**

On May 14, 2025, the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) adopted 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 prior RACs map was 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.

## **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 COG Board, COG's Planning Director's Technical Advisory Committee (PDTAC) undertook this task and developed RACs and the Board adopted the first RAC map in 2002. The RAC map subsequently was updated in 2007 and 2013 following 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 their planning and programming activities. For TPB, RACs have become an important tool applied across numerous programs and activities supporting metropolitan transportation planning. In the development of the region's transportation plan, staff use RACs as part of the plan's performance analysis, which assesses how well the plan advances TPB's policies. For example, one of the current plan's aspirational initiatives, "Bring jobs and housing closer," seeks to promote development patterns that reduce dependence on single-occupancy vehicular travel, provide travel options for people to improve their accessibility and mobility, and provide housing options for people who want to live closer to where jobs are located. When conducting the performance analysis, staff assesses how well the region is moving toward this goal by analyzing how well the plan will provide these options in areas served by transit as well as areas in or near Regional Activity Centers.

As part of the project submission process, staff asks agencies that propose projects for the metropolitan transportation plan and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to identify whether these projects are located in Regional Activity Centers to help support staff's performance analysis of the plan and assess whether new plans and TIPs advance regional policies and aspirations.

Regional Activity Centers are also used as criteria to assess the merits of projects proposed for funding through TPB's technical assistance grant programs. These programs include The Transportation Land-use Connections (TLC) Program, the Regional Roadway Safety Program (RRSP), and the Transit Within Reach (TWR) Program. Projects that are located within or promote RACs are given more favorable consideration for technical assistance funding under these programs.

The updated Regional Activity Centers map is based the latest major regional growth assumptions contained in the Round 10.0 Cooperative Forecasts. These assumptions are consistent with comprehensive jurisdictional and small-area plans of COG's member local governments. This update results in 145 RACs located throughout the region compared to 141 RACs that existed under the prior update. While this update reflects the most recent local plans, it does not result in any substantial changes in the distribution pattern of the RACs.

Staff will brief the TPB on the updated Regional Activity Centers at its May 21, 2025 meeting.

ATTACHMENT

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
777 NORTH CAPITOL STREET, NE  
WASHINGTON, DC 20002**

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE UPDATED REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTERS MAP BASED ON COG'S ROUND 10.0  
COOPERATIVE FORECASTS**

**WHEREAS**, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) comprises the 24 jurisdictions of the metropolitan Washington region's local governments and their governing officials, plus area members of the Maryland and Virginia legislatures and the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, and COG provides a focus for action on issues of regional concern; and

**WHEREAS**, COG is responsible for assisting local governments in the metropolitan Washington region with the identification, analysis and resolution of problems and issues related to growth and development; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization, responsible for directing the continuing transportation planning process carried on cooperatively by the states and local governments in the metropolitan Washington region; and

**WHEREAS**, consistent with long-standing policy for integrating regional development with transportation plans and programs, the COG Board of Directors (COG Board), with the technical support of the Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee (PDTAC) is responsible for developing Cooperative Forecasts of employment, population and households for the region through the Cooperative Forecasting process; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1998 the TPB adopted its Transportation Vision, a broad-based vision planning process that, among its objectives, recommended the identification of locations called Activity Centers in the region targeted for the region's future growth as a tool to better coordinate land use and transportation planning; and creation of a map of regional activity centers; and

**WHEREAS**, the PDTAC developed the first Regional Activity Centers Map which was approved by the COG Board in 2002 based on Round 6.1 Cooperative Forecasts; and

**WHEREAS**, in approving the 2002 map, the COG Board directed that the PDTAC consider updates to the Regional Activity Centers map upon adoption of new major rounds of Cooperative Forecasts; and

**WHEREAS**, the PDTAC developed 2 updates to the Round 6.1 Activity Centers map based, respectively, on the Round 7.0 and Round 8.0 Cooperative Forecasts, and which were approved by the COG Board in 2007 and 2013; and

**WHEREAS**, Regional Activity Centers include existing urban centers, priority growth areas, traditional towns, and transit hubs throughout the region as identified in local government plans; and

**WHEREAS**, Region Forward, COG's Comprehensive Vision for Regional Planning and Measuring Progress, includes goals and targets tied to Regional Activity Centers, specifically the share of household and employment growth to be concentrated in regional Activity Centers; and

**WHEREAS**, Regional Activity Centers are used by the TPB and COG in planning and programming activities including COG's Amazon-funded Housing Affordability Planning (HAPP) Program, and the TPB's Transportation and Land Use Connections, Transportation Alternatives Program, Regional Roadway Safety Program technical assistance grants; and

**WHEREAS**, in June 2023, the COG Board approved the Round 10.0 Cooperative Forecasts of population, households and employment to the year 2050; and

**WHEREAS**, in December 2023, the PDTAC approved technical criteria and a work plan to update the Regional Activity Centers map, reflecting local land use and the approved Round 10.0 Forecasts; and

**WHEREAS**, following extensive coordination between COG staff and each member local planning department, the PDTAC approved the new map of Regional Activity Centers at their March 2025 meeting.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS THAT:**

1. The board approves the new map of Regional Activity Centers based on the Round 10.0 Cooperative Forecasts.
2. The board commends the work of PDTAC members and COG staff for development of the map.
3. The board requests that PDTAC and COG staff continue to monitor the adoption of new local land use plans, as well as emerging economic and demographic trends that might warrant future Activity Center map revisions.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT Resolution R14-2025 was approved by the COG Board of Directors on May 14, 2025

Kayla Joyner  
Government Relations Associate

# Regional Activity Centers Map

## based on the COG Round 10.0 Cooperative Forecast

### Approved May 14, 2025 by COG Board of Directors

#### District of Columbia

1. Monumental Core
2. Southwest Waterfront
3. Downtown DC
4. Downtown East DC
5. West End
6. Golden Triangle
7. U Street/Howard University
8. Adams Morgan/Dupont
9. Georgetown
10. Friendship Heights/Tenleytown
11. Former Walter Reed/Upper Georgia Ave
12. Petworth/Parkview
13. Columbia Heights
14. North Capitol Crossroads
15. Convention Center/Shaw
16. NoMA
17. New York Ave NE
18. Brookland/Catholic University
19. Rhode Island Ave Metro
20. Takoma Metro
21. Minnesota Ave and Benning Road Metro
22. H Street
23. Capitol Hill
24. Capitol Riverfront
25. Stadium-Armory
26. Anacostia/Poplar Point/St. Elizabeths

#### Montgomery County

27. Metropolitan Grove
28. Germantown
29. Clarksburg
30. Frederick Ave Corridor/Lakeforest Mall
31. Olde Towne Gaithersburg
32. Shady Grove
33. King Farm/Shady Grove Metro
34. Glenmont
35. Kensington
36. Wheaton
37. White Oak
38. Takoma/Langley Crossroads
39. Silver Spring
40. Bethesda
41. Medical Center/NIH
42. Grosvenor
43. North Bethesda
44. Twinbrook and Rockville Pike
45. Tower Oaks
46. Rock Spring
47. Rockville Town Center
48. Montgomery College-Rockville
49. Falls Grove and Research Boulevard
50. Life Sciences Center/Crown Farm
51. Kentlands

#### Prince George's County

52. National Harbor
53. Oxon Hill
54. Branch Ave
55. Suitland
56. Naylor Rd-Southern Ave
57. Greenbelt
58. UMD Purple Line
59. West Hyattsville Metro
60. Port Towns
61. Hyattsville Crossing
62. College Park Metro
63. New Carrollton
64. Landover Metro
65. Capitol Heights-Addison Road
66. Morgan Boulevard
67. Largo Town Center
68. Landover Gateway
69. Bowie
70. Laurel
71. Westphalia Town Center

#### Arlington County

72. Ballston
73. Langston Boulevard
74. Washington Street/East Falls Church Metro
75. Virginia Square
76. Clarendon
77. Rosslyn
78. Court House
79. Columbia Pike
80. Pentagon City
81. Pentagon
82. Crystal City
83. Shirlington
84. Bailey's Crossroads-Western Gateway

#### City of Alexandria

85. Eisenhower West/Landmark/Van Dorn
86. AlexWest-Beauregard
87. Potomac Yard
88. Old Town Alexandria/Old Town North
89. Braddock Road Metro
90. Carlyle-Eisenhower East

#### Fairfax County, Falls Church and City of Fairfax

91. Centreville
92. George Mason University
93. Fairfax City
94. Fairfax Center
95. Dulles/Route 28 Corridor
96. Town of Herndon
97. Wiehle-Reston East
98. Reston Town Center
99. Herndon Metro
100. Vienna Metro
101. Town of Vienna
102. Merrifield
103. Tysons
104. McLean
105. West Falls Church/West Broad Street
106. East End/Seven Corners
107. Annandale
108. Beltway South
109. Franconia-Springfield
110. Beacon-Groveton
111. Huntington-Penn Daw
112. Bush Hill/Van Dorn Street Metro
113. Hybla Valley-Gum Springs
114. Lorton
115. Fort Belvoir North

#### Loudoun County

116. Leesburg Core
117. Ashburn Station/Loudoun Gateway
118. Route 28 Central
119. Dulles Town Center
120. Route 28 North
121. North Ashburn
122. Route 28 South
123. Arcola

#### Prince William, Manassas and Manassas Park

124. Gainesville
125. Sudley
126. Innovation Park Town Center
127. Downtown Manassas
128. Manassas Park
129. Yorkshire
130. Fettler Park/Dumfries
131. Quartz District
132. Potomac Town Center
133. Potomac Mills
134. The Landing at Prince William
135. North Woodbridge Town Center
136. Potomac Shores



Regional Activity Center



High Capacity Transit



Future High Capacity Transit



Highway



Metropolitan Washington  
Council of Governments

Each half-mile circle represents the approximate location of a Regional Activity Center. Some circle locations have been adjusted to increase map legibility and avoid overlapping.

#### Multi-Jurisdiction RACs

- District of Columbia and Montgomery**
10. Friendship Heights/Tenleytown
  20. Takoma Metro

- Montgomery and Prince George's**
38. Takoma/Langley Crossroads

- Arlington and Falls Church**
74. Washington Street/East Falls Church Metro

- Arlington and Fairfax County**
84. Bailey's Crossroads-Western Gateway

- Falls Church and Fairfax County**
105. West Falls Church/West Broad Street
  106. East End/Seven Corners

#### Frederick County

137. Brunswick
138. The Golden Mile
139. Urbana
140. South Frederick
141. Northeast Frederick
142. Downtown Frederick
143. Ballenger Creek

#### Charles County

144. La Plata
145. Waldorf