



MEMORANDUM

TO: COG Board of Directors
FROM: Clark Mercer, COG Executive Director
SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report – February 2025
DATE: February 12, 2024

POLICY BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) – In January, the TPB discussed its 2025 focus areas: Visualize 2050 National Capital Region Transportation Plan approval, roadway safety, implementation of climate change recommendations, and bolstering the region's transportation resilience. The board approved nearly \$3 million for DC transportation projects, including \$2.1 million to rehabilitate the Capital Crescent Trail. Other items included the approval of a new TPB Community Advisory Committee cohort, inclusion of Transportation Resilience Improvement Plan (TRIP) projects in Visualize 2045, and review of preliminary 2025 transit asset management targets and the draft FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program.

Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) – At its January meeting, CEEPC discussed the 2025 outlook for the committee, including discussing focus areas and legislative priorities. CEEPC also had in depth discussions on priorities for the new projects, including a climate goals mid-course review, a potential regional climate outreach and education initiative, and engagement for the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant comprehensive climate plan development.

Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources Policy Committee (CBPC) – At its January meeting, the committee received a federal legislative update covering the new Congress, committee assignments, and the upcoming reconciliation package. The committee also received an overview of key legislative issues in Maryland and Virginia, focusing on budget concerns and specific bills that could affect local wastewater, drinking water, and stormwater management. Additionally, there was a presentation on



Building Bridges for a Stronger DMV Region

Partnership is at the heart of the Council of Governments' work, and in 2024, COG launched some of its most ambitious collaborations yet, such as the DMVMoves transit initiative, a major backup water supply study, and new efforts to enhance public safety coordination.

Learn more about this collaborative work and how COG is building on these initiatives in 2025 in COG's annual report and corresponding video.

[View the annual report & video](#)

the Potomac Secondary Source Study, highlighting the project's goals, its current status, and next steps.

Food and Agriculture Regional Member (FARM) Policy Committee – The FARM Chairs reached out to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees in the Virginia General Assembly to highlight budget amendments that would positively impact food security.

Human Services Policy Committee (HSPC) - At the January HSPC meeting, committee members were briefed by representatives from the District of Columbia, Prince George's County, and Virginia Social Services on Kinship Care for families, which focuses on moving from a child welfare system to a "child and family wellbeing system." Members also received an overview of the District of Columbia's Office of the State Superintendent of Education and the Low-Income Investment Fund research detailing childcare infrastructure in the District of Columbia.

OUTREACH & PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Electrifying the Future Forum – On January 30, COG and the Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition hosted a forum, Electrifying the Future: Strategies for Climate Pollution Reduction, at the Washington Auto Show. This event, which brought together more than 100 participants, including elected officials, environmental planners, and fleet managers, examined the current state of vehicle electrification in the metropolitan Washington region and provided an outlook to sustain growth and further expand EV usage.

Winter weather tips - Area utilities on COG's Community Engagement Campaign (CEC) have been raising awareness about the impacts of winter weather on our water resources and infrastructure. With a few simple actions, residents can protect their home's pipes and prevent harmful runoff into the region's streams, rivers, and reservoirs by using winter salts wisely.

Point-in-Time Count - On January 29, COG housing staff joined with volunteers in the District of Columbia to participate in the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count of persons experiencing homelessness. On January 22 and 29, area jurisdictions conducted their annual counts, which are required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and will inform COG's regional report on homelessness that is released in the spring.



Allies in Action

The Transportation Planning Board joined nearly 200 organizations around the country in pledging to be part of the federal Allies in Action initiative. By becoming an ally, the TPB is committed to increasing roadway safety in the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia, while providing \$480,000 in technical assistance grants and continuing to sponsor and implement the Street Smart safety campaign.

[Learn more about the initiative](#)

Application Period Open: Technical Assistance Programs - The TPB is accepting applications for the Transportation Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program and the Regional Roadway Safety Program (RRSP). The programs offer short-term consultant services up to \$80,000 for planning projects and up to \$100,000 for design projects. Any local jurisdiction in the National Capital Region that is a TPB member is eligible to apply. Applications are due March 7, 2025.

[Learn more & apply](#)

Inauguration planning – DHSPS supported information sharing with the region regarding public safety plans and impacts regarding the three National Special Security Events – the 2025 Counting and Certification of Electoral Votes, Former President Carter’s State Funeral, and the 60th Presidential Inauguration. This was the first time in history three of these types of events occurred within the same month.

Winter weather coordination - On January 5-7, the COG Department of Homeland Security and Public Safety (DHSPS) held three conference calls to support regional coordination and collaboration to prepare for, respond to, and recovery from the significant snowfall that widely impacted the NCR. Setting a record high for engagement on COG’s snow calls, 1,000 stakeholders from across the region participated.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

Return-to-office & commuting - COG Executive Director Clark Mercer spoke with WTOP about the impact of federal workers returning to in-person work and how transit and carpooling are excellent options for people to improve their daily commutes.

[WTOP](#)

Water supply planning - In light of the water outage in Richmond, Virginia, COG Water Programs Director Steve Bieber spoke with Fox 5 about how DC area utilities and governments have taken action to prevent disruptions to water supplies and prepare for emergencies.

[Fox 5](#)



DCA mid-air collision

The regional response to the mid-air collision near Reagan National Airport received widespread coverage. Stories referencing the COG National Capital Region Mutual Aid Agreement were featured on outlets like the NBC national news as well as local news sites like FFXNow. In addition, COG and area governments coordinated messaging encouraging residents to call 911 if they find any debris from the accident, which was shared widely on social media as well as media outlets like the Washington Post, WTOP, Inside NoVA, DC News Now, 7 News, CBS News, and several wire stories.

[FFXNow – COG Board Chair Rodney Lusk statement](#)

[DC News Now](#)