

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SUBCOMMITTEE

Draft Meeting Summary: March 26, 2025

<p><b>EJ Subcommittee Members in Attendance:</b></p> <p>Hon. Dave Snyder, Co-Chair  Hon. Kristin Mink, Co-Chair  Hon. Tom Dernoga, Prince George's County  Danielle Sims, Virginia DEQ  Joseph Jakuta, DDOT  Julie Kimmel, ACPAC  Noble Smith, MDE  William Washburn, ACPAC</p> <p><b>Additional Attendees:</b></p> <p>David Hondowicz, Office of Councilmember Mink  Doris McLeod, Virginia DEQ  Gwendolin McCrea, Virginia DEQ  Lauren Paulet, City of Frederick  Tad Aburn, EJAT  Tauhirah Abdul-Matin, AECOM  Wes Darden, Office of Councilmember Mink</p>	<p><b>COG Staff:</b></p> <p>Alissa Boggs, COG DEP  Heidi Bonnaffon, COG DEP  Leah Boggs, COG DEP  Robert Christopher, COG DEP  Robert d'Abadie COG DTP  Jeff King, COG DEP  Jen Desimone, COG DEP</p>
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### 1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, APPROVAL OF MEETING SUMMARY, FOCUS AND PURPOSE OF MEETING – DISCUSS FEEDBACK FROM MWAQC-TAC

*Kristin Mink, Co-Chair*

At the start of the meeting, the co-chairs welcomed everyone and waited briefly for additional participants before officially beginning. They then reviewed and approved the previous meeting's summary, with no corrections or changes requested. The co-chairs highlighted that the main purpose of the session was to discuss feedback on the draft Environmental Justice Action Plan, emphasizing the importance of member input and collective engagement. Their goal was to refine the plan and outline concrete next steps, expressing appreciation for attendees' time and dedication.

### 2. PUBLIC COMMENT

During Agenda Item 2, the chair opened the floor for public comment and heard from one community member who praised the group's inclusive process but expressed concerns that the draft Action Plan lacked clear goals, specific target areas, commitments, deadlines, and an accountability framework. The commenter recommended stronger emphasis on local partnerships and highlighted the importance of real-world examples—citing improvements achieved through common-sense approaches in Cheverly, Maryland. He urged the subcommittee to ensure the plan drives actual emission reductions, implement a phased approach with measurable goals, and hold additional stakeholder meetings before final approval.

### 3. DISCUSSION OF MWAQC-TAC FEEDBACK

*MWAQC Staff, Co-chairs and Members*

Staff began by recapping stakeholder feedback on the draft Environmental Justice Action Plan, noting calls for clearer definitions, consistent use of equity terminology, and stronger citations throughout the document. Many comments also focused on clarifying the division of responsibilities—particularly distinguishing between local, state, and regional authority—and ensuring effective public outreach. Contributors emphasized the importance of hyperlocal air quality monitoring and robust community engagement, urging the plan to highlight partnerships with organizations already doing work in disadvantaged neighborhoods. The group also heard feedback about the need to provide more specific guidance for implementation, clarify technical terms such as “hotspots” and “fugitive dust,” and maintain a consistent equity lens throughout.

Subcommittee members then wrestled with balancing the desire for a comprehensive, action-oriented plan against current funding constraints and shifting federal priorities. They agreed to finalize a “foundation” document that incorporates key edits—such as local success stories, clearer definitions, and concrete suggestions for monitoring—while also committing to a follow-up phase. This next stage would specify accountability measures and outline how participating agencies and communities can work together on tangible emission reductions. The group reached consensus that releasing a refined, practical resource now would keep momentum strong, with details of a phased, more detailed implementation strategy to come later.

#### **4. PUBLIC FEEDBACK/INPUT ON MEETING DISCUSSION**

*Subcommittee Co-Chairs and Members, Interested Stakeholders and the Public*

Members of the public were invited once more to share input on the day’s discussion. A key commenter reiterated that, despite federal-level uncertainties and funding challenges, local and state leadership can and should continue advancing environmental justice goals. He underscored that the draft plan needs clearer accountability measures and urged immediate, common-sense strategies—such as redirecting enforcement efforts and expanding low-cost, community-based air monitoring networks—so communities can see tangible pollution reductions right away.

Subcommittee members agreed that early, practical steps are critical to building trust and momentum. They recognized the importance of not allowing federal shifts to overshadow local progress and noted that including success stories (like Cheverly’s emission-reduction efforts) could help demonstrate the viability of focused, community-driven initiatives. The conversation concluded with a commitment to incorporate public feedback into next steps and maintain open lines of communication as the plan transitions toward implementation.

#### **5. ADJOURNMENT**

*Kristin Mink, Co-Chair*

After confirming there were no additional comments or questions, the co-chair thanked everyone for their input and reaffirmed the subcommittee’s commitment to refining and finalizing the Environmental Justice Action Plan. Members were reminded of the next meeting date—April 23—and then the session was formally adjourned.

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

<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2025/4/23/mwaqc-environmental-justice-subcommittee/>

***The next EJ Subcommittee meeting is April 23, 2025.***

Reasonable accommodations are provided upon request, including alternative formats of meeting materials. For more information, visit: [www.mwcog.org/accommodations](http://www.mwcog.org/accommodations) or call (202) 962-3300 or (202) 962-3213 (TDD)