

Building Bridges for a Stronger DMV Region



Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

2024
Annual
Report

Messages from the COG Board Chair and Executive Director

As our region enters what will certainly be another eventful year, I am eager and honored to serve as Chair of the COG Board of Directors. I joined the COG Board in 2020 and have since witnessed the incredible dedication from leaders across the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia as, collectively, we have turned challenges into opportunities to shape a better region.

This is the best place in the country to live, work, and raise a family, and I am excited to work with my counterparts here in DC, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia to make our region even stronger—bringing to the table our shared and individual challenges as we collaborate on common solutions.

There are rarely easy answers, but COG provides a critical forum for frank and honest discussions. It is in this difficult work where the greatest transformation happens, where we find ways to innovate and more adequately respond to the needs and desires of our residents.

Together, we've embarked on several significant undertakings: seeking to secure long-term success for the region's transit network, responding to the impacts of climate change, supporting our regional economy, and more. This spirit of collaboration embraced by my COG Board counterparts, as well as our members, partners, and staff, is helping build bridges toward our shared pursuit of a thriving, sustainable, and equitable region.

Rodney Lusk
2025 COG Board Chair



Looking back on the past year, it's clear that area officials are committed to taking on some of the most difficult issues in the DMV. At COG, we're harnessing that energy to make the most impact for our region's six million residents as well as future generations who will live and work here.

Partnership is at the heart of COG's work, and in 2024, we launched some of our most ambitious collaborations yet. For our DMVMoves initiative with Metro and transit operators throughout the region, we have engaged an incredibly wide group of leaders, making sure that government, business, and community partners all have a seat at the table. We're also proud of our recent collaborative work to ensure a resilient water supply, expand our electric vehicle charging network, and provide more affordable housing options.

We're building on these cross-sector collaborations, like our relaunch of the Potomac Conference and ongoing partnership with the Board of Trade, Greater Washington Partnership, and Consortium of Universities. Last year, we gathered leaders to focus on public safety, and this year, we will work together to develop a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

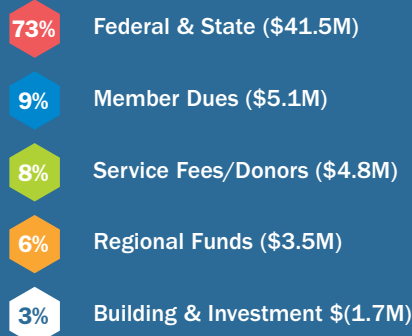
When we work together as one region, we can grow our economy, protect our environment, ensure safer communities, and so much more. Onwards!

Clark Mercer
COG Executive Director

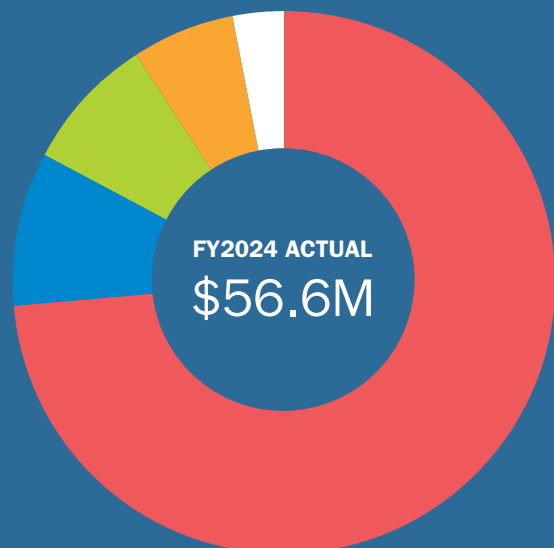


COG Budget

REVENUES BY SOURCE



Includes subrecipient pass-thru revenue



Featured Programs & Initiatives



Commuter Connections Anniversary

COG's Commuter Connections program marked 50 years of helping commuters find smarter ways to get to work while reducing traffic and air pollution. Area officials, including DC Mayor Muriel Bowser, gathered at the National Press Club to celebrate the anniversary and preview new incentive programs like CommuterCash.

Tree Canopy Goal

The COG Board of Directors adopted a first-ever tree canopy goal to maintain a minimum tree canopy coverage of 50 percent across the region. The board also called on local jurisdictions to use COG's report, *Conserving Trees and Forests in Metropolitan Washington*, as a resource supporting this work.



Visualize 2050 Development

The development of the Visualize 2050 plan continued to progress. The Transportation Planning Board at COG held a public comment period and approved project inputs for its Air Quality Conformity Analysis. Transportation projects must be included in Visualize 2050 to receive federal funding and approvals.

DMVMoves Initiative

Following the successful coordination to address Metro's FY 2025 budget, area officials called for a more comprehensive effort to focus on long-term transit needs and the longstanding, systemic funding challenges facing Metro and the region's other transit systems. As a first step, the COG and Metro Boards of Directors held a historic joint meeting in May and agreed to partner on a new initiative, DMVMoves, to create a unified vision and sustainable funding model for the region's transit network.

A task force of officials appointed by COG and Metro are guiding this initiative alongside two advisory groups representing area jurisdictions, transit service providers and agencies, and business, labor, and community organizations. This unprecedented collaboration is taking a holistic view of the transit network (which includes more than a dozen bus and rail systems) and working to forge consensus on how to best plan, coordinate, deliver, manage, and fund transit regionally. The task force is working toward developing policy recommendations and a final plan in 2025.





Anacostia Watershed Cleanup

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration awarded COG a grant of approximately \$1 million for a new project to remove an estimated 60,000 pounds of large debris and 33 abandoned or derelict vessels from marinas along the river, in collaboration with the Anacostia Riverkeeper.

Photo Credit: Dylan Alvarez



Public Safety Exercises

COG helped convene emergency exercises focused on coordinating across multiple agencies on a variety of topics, including cybersecurity and protecting critical infrastructure. COG also organized a Fire Health & Safety Symposium, sharing valuable, life-saving information for the region's firefighters.

Roadway Safety Summit

The Transportation Planning Board convened a summit to help mobilize new action to improve roadway safety, including plans for the TPB to join the new USDOT Allies in Action initiative, enhance data analysis, and partner regionally to ensure that dangerous drivers are held accountable for their actions.



Water Supply Planning

After a stretch of unusually dry conditions in the region, COG declared a Drought Watch this summer in coordination with the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB), local water utilities, and federal and regional partners. Officials encouraged the public to take voluntary measures to conserve water and help reduce demand on the region's water supply systems. The Drought Watch, which remained in effect through the end of 2024, was shared widely by COG member governments and partner agencies and earned widespread media coverage.

In partnership with ICPRB, COG also helped unveil a new report highlighting the significant and dire financial consequences facing the DC region in the event of a disruption to the area's water supply. The ICPRB report showed economic losses could quickly surpass \$15 billion in gross regional product, among other impacts. The report and drought underscored the importance of the new backup water source study that COG and partners kicked off with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to ensure greater water supply resiliency.



Affordable Housing Grant

COG received a \$3.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to help improve access to affordable housing in the region. The grant will help COG and nine area jurisdictions accelerate implementation of the Regional Fair Housing Plan.



EV Charging Infrastructure

The Federal Highway Administration awarded \$3.9 million to COG to support the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure across the region. In addition, COG finalized a Regional Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Implementation Strategy to help advance the region's ongoing initiatives to expand EV use.

Transportation Resilience Plan

The TPB approved a Transportation Resilience Improvement Plan (TRIP) to strengthen the preparedness and resilience of the region's transportation network to the impacts of climate change. The TRIP includes a vulnerability assessment and web mapping tool of risks posed by natural hazards on local transportation assets.

[Photo Credit: Ted Eytan/Flickr](#)

Public Safety Coordination

COG partnered with the Board of Trade, Greater Washington Partnership, and Consortium of Universities to reconvene the Potomac Conference and bring together government, business, and university leaders to more holistically address regional issues. The focus of the 2024 conference was public safety—providing a forum for area leaders to discuss and collaborate on crime reduction initiatives.

The event included briefings on recent trends, initiatives, and the public perception of crime in the region. Officials noted that even when rates are relatively low, the perception of crime shapes everything from how safe residents feel in their communities to how CEOs make business decisions. While 2023 saw a spike in violent crime in the region, 2024 trends significantly improved. In support of greater collaboration, COG has also been working with area police departments to develop a regional, real-time crime dashboard, a much-needed resource that will be launched in early 2025.

[Photo Credit: BOT](#)



2024 COG Leadership

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COG STAFF

Clark Mercer
Executive Director

About the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG)

COG is an independent, nonprofit association that brings area leaders from the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia together to address regional issues and plan for the future. COG's membership is comprised of 300 elected officials from 24 local governments, the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, and U.S. Congress.

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Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

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Front cover (clockwise from left):
Loudoun County Chair At-Large Phyllis Randall, recipient of the 2024 COG Scull Award; US Capitol Chief of Police J. Thomas Manger at an Inauguration security briefing for COG Board; Street Smart safety campaign launch; DMVMoves Government Partners Advisory Committee meeting; and DMVMoves Task Force meeting