



BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BEEAC)

Draft Webinar Meeting Summary: November 21, 2024

BEEAC Local and State Government Members in Attendance:

- Andy Young, Falls Church (Chair)
- Mati Bazurto, City of Bowie, MD (Co-Vice Chair)
- Al Carr, DOEE, (Co-Vice Chair)
- Amanda Campbell, City of Rockville
- Ben Burrows, Frederick County
- Debra Maes, Fairfax County Public Schools
- Dory Estrada, City of Takoma Park
- Emil King, DOEE
- Erica Bannerman, Prince George's County
- Jeremy Good, Montgomery County
- Joy Togo, City of Takoma Park
- Kate Roetzer, WMATA
- Kathie Hoekstra, City of Alexandria
- Kevin Smith, Fairfax County
- Marguerite Guarino, Fairfax County
- Matt Meyers, Fairfax County
- Michelle Smyk, Prince William County
- Najib Salehi, Loudoun County
- Neely Law, Fairfax County
- Rich Dooley, Arlington County
- Ronald Williams, DC
- Shawn O'Neill, Fairfax County

- Valerie Amor, City of Alexandria

Additional Attendees:

- Deb Harris, ICF
- Hakeem Mumford, Pepco
- Ivan Lanier, Pepco
- Linda Greenan, Exelon
- Marc Ferere, Exelon
- Meryem Labriny, Pepco
- Michael Christopher Warren, Pepco
- Parker Wright, Pepco
- Poetri Deal, Pepco
- Rene Alvarado, Exelon
- Ron Anderson, Exelon

COG Staff:

- Alissa Boggs, COG DEP
- Leah Boggs, COG DEP
- Heidi Bonnaffon, COG DEP
- Robert Christopher, COG DEP
- Maia Davis, COG DEP
- Tim Masters, COG DEP



1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Andy Young, Interim Deputy City Manager, City of Falls Church and Chair

Chair Andy Young called the meeting to order, and introductions were given.

2. APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 19, 2024 MEETING SUMMARY

Andy Young, BEEAC Chair

The September 19, 2024 BEEAC meeting summary was approved with one amendment.

3. JURISDICTION ROUNDTABLE AND PEER EXCHANGE

BEEAC Committee Members

The discussion focused on a jurisdiction round table and peer exchange, where participants shared their thoughts on undergrounding power lines and solar deployment. Here are the key points:

Virginia Local Governments:

- **Loudoun County** mentioned that most of their power lines are already underground due to the county being relatively new, which has minimized power outages.
- **Fairfax County** shared that they paid Dominion to underground circuits supplying power to their largest water plant about 15 years ago. They have several areas with undergrounded substations and pumping stations, with a few remaining areas needing undergrounding.
- **City of Falls Church** highlighted resident interest in undergrounding power lines, especially after storms. They have had success in undergrounding lines during redevelopment projects, which also helps with ADA issues related to sidewalks.

Maryland Local Governments:

- **City of Bowie** stated that all new developments underground utilities, but older neighborhoods with above-ground utilities in backyards pose logistical challenges. They focus on ensuring new projects go underground.
- **Rockville** discussed challenges with residential rooftop solar, including hesitancy due to costs and trust issues with contractors. They are working on implementing solar parking lot canopies but face slow permitting processes and tree-related issues. They suggested green purchasing and procurement training for officials to help with these new initiatives.

District of Columbia:

- **District Department of Energy Environment** emphasized the city's support for undergrounding efforts for resilience. On the solar side, they have strong economic and funding support, streamlined permitting, and are focused on scaling big projects and community solar projects despite challenges with geographic space and interconnection.

Pepco

- **Pepco** mentioned the DC plug initiative and planned to share more details in a PowerPoint presentation later in the meeting

Overall, the discussion highlighted the progress and challenges faced by different jurisdictions in undergrounding power lines and deploying solar energy, with a focus on collaboration and sharing best practices.

4. GRID RELIABILITY: UNDERGROUNDING OF POWERLINES

Hakeem Mumford, Pepco

Meryem Labriny, Pepco

Marc Ferere, Pepco

The presentation highlighted the DC PLUG (District of Columbia Power Line Undergrounding) initiative, a \$500 million partnership between Pepco, the District of Columbia, and DDOT to improve the energy grid's reliability and resiliency by undergrounding 20 of the worst-performing feeders in DC's Wards 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8. Key points included:

1. **Goals:** Enhance grid reliability by reducing outages by 95% and limiting the severity of remaining outages.
2. **Selection Criteria:** Feeder prioritization based on performance metrics such as historical reliability, customer minutes of interruptions, and integration with existing infrastructure projects.
3. **Progress:** Three feeders are completed, with civil and electrical construction ongoing or planned for others. Twelve feeders are scheduled for construction in 2025–2026.
4. **Cost Sharing:** Pepco contributes \$250M, the District \$187M, and DDOT \$62M. Key costs include civil construction, project management, and material procurement.
5. **Community Engagement:** Proactive outreach includes door tags, phone calls, ANC meetings, and multilingual campaigns using various media. Outreach aims to prepare communities for construction and outages while raising awareness.
6. **Environmental Considerations:** Projects avoid damaging tree root zones and coordinate closely with utilities like Washington Gas and DC Water. Equipment is designed for resilience but may require future adjustments for evolving conditions like increased water salinity due to climate change.

7. **Questions Raised:** Community members inquired about communication methods (e.g., texts), tree preservation, utility conflicts, and long-term resilience against climate change impacts like rising salinity levels.

The initiative underscores the importance of improving energy resilience while balancing community concerns, environmental stewardship, and forward-looking planning for changing climate conditions.

5. SOLAR FORUM FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION

*Deb Harris, ICF Consulting
BEEAC Members*

The Solar Forum Follow-Up Discussion led by Deb Harris from ICF Consulting focused on reviewing outcomes from the October 28 Solar Forum and soliciting input on the proposed "Roofmap" action framework and next steps. Key points included:

1. **Forum Overview:**
 - Co-hosted by COG and Mason Energy at George Mason University.
 - Around 75 attendees, including local governments, developers, nonprofits, and agencies.
 - Discussed policy landscapes, deployment progress, challenges, and success stories.
2. **Key Deliverables:**
 - A memo detailing challenges, solutions, and case studies from the forum.
 - The development of the "Roofmap" action framework, mapping actions to address regional solar deployment barriers.
3. **Themes Explored:**
 - Project Economics and Funding: Challenges like limited capacity for funding, unclear incentive structures, and evolving grant availability.
 - Permitting and Interconnection: Issues with zoning, staffing limitations, and hosting capacity concerns.
4. **Next Steps:**
 - Ongoing discussions to refine the Roofmap framework.
 - Coordination of stakeholder input and integration into broader climate action plans.
 - Planning a follow-up event in Spring 2025 to review progress and address additional challenges.

The discussion aimed to align regional efforts with existing goals and identify strategies to overcome solar deployment barriers effectively.

6. COG UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

COG Staff

Updates:

CPRG Brief Update

- **Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (C-CAP):**
 - Focuses on long-term actions, expanding on the Priority Climate Action Plan (P-CAP).
 - Engages a robust strategy for outreach and stakeholder engagement.

- Updates greenhouse gas (GHG) projections for 2050 to align regional efforts with future targets.
 - Includes workforce development analysis and a focus on equity and disadvantaged communities.
- **Status of CPRG Funding:**
 - Provides support for advancing local government efforts under the C-CAP framework.

Mid-Course GHG Goal Review

- A mid-course review is planned for 2025 to assess progress toward the 2030 GHG reduction goals.
- This includes:
 - Updating regional inventories.
 - Surveying local governments for ongoing actions and initiatives.
 - Enhancing public communication on regional progress and challenges in meeting GHG targets.

Inventory Update/Reminder

- COG is updating GHG inventories for 2023.
- Data collection includes:
 - Square footage and energy use estimates for specific sectors like data centers.
 - Utility energy trends, including new natural gas plants.
- Incorporating data center and energy generation carve-outs in the inventory to better reflect regional emissions sources.

These updates are part of a broader effort to track progress, refine strategies, and ensure alignment with regional climate and energy goals.

7. 2024 MEETING SCHEDULE AND ADJOURNMENT

Andy Young, Falls Church (BEEAC Chair)

Andy Young announced that it was his last meeting facilitating as Chair of BEEAC. He announced that DC agreed to be the Chair and MD in position a Co-Chair. He called for interest from VA for the second Co-Vice Chair position and said the names would be announce when the position is filled.

2025 BEEAC Meeting Schedule (Virtual meeting only):

- February 20, 2025
- April 17, 2025
- June 19, 2025
- September 18, 2025
- November 20, 2025

Chair Young adjourned the meeting.

All meeting materials including speaker presentations can be found on the MWCOG website by clicking the link below –
<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2024/11/21/built-environment-and-energy-advisory-committee/>

The next BEEAC meeting is February 20, 2025.

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