

ROUND 10.0 REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTER MAP

Staff Memo to Committee for Approval

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Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee
March 21, 2025



Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

Final Selection of Round 10.0 Regional Activity Centers Memo

- Greg Goodwin circulated staff memo to PDTAC on March 17
- Memo details work done by PDTAC and COG Staff
 - Final list of 145 selected Round 10.0 RACs
 - Jurisdictions can still submit name changes, if desired
 - Draft of Official Map for COG Board approval

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee
FROM: John Kent
CC: Kariti Srikanth, Tim Canan, Paul Desjardin, Greg Goodwin
SUBJECT: Final Selection of Round 10.0 Regional Activity Centers
DATE: March 21, 2025

The Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee has selected 145 Regional Activity Centers (RACs) for the Round 10.0 Cooperative Forecast. This memo documents the process for final approval of the new Regional Activity Centers. A copy of the new map is attached.

Background

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) first called for the creation of a map of Regional Activity Centers in 2000, as a tool to better coordinate land use and transportation planning. At the direction of the COG Board the Planning Directors worked to develop the framework for designating community level geographic areas within the COG and TPB planning area as Regional Activity Centers. The first set of RACs was adopted by COG board in 2002 and updated in 2007. In 2012 the RACs were formally included as a key element of COG's Regional Forward planning framework. The RACs have been widely used by COG member-jurisdictions as the focus for future regional growth since its adoption. Planning activities both at COG and the TPB have also used RACs, including in COG's work on regional Housing Targets (2019), the competitive Housing Affordability Planning Program (HAPP) Grants (2021), and the TPB in its various technical assistance grants, including Transportation and Land Use Connections (2007) and Transportation Alternative Program (2013).

Given that RACs are grounded in current and forecast growth (in population, employment and land use density), in approving the current map of Regional Activity Centers in January 2013, the COG Board and the TPB also approved Resolution R13-02, which requires COG to review and amend (as needed) the Regional Activity Centers maps following the adoption of each new major round of the Cooperative Forecasts. The existing RACs map is based upon the Round 8.0 Cooperative Forecast and was adopted by the COG Board in January 2013. The RACs were not updated with Round 9.0 given that the changes was not considered significant and because the region's Planning Directors partnered with the General Services Administration (GSA) to develop a regional map of "Central Business Areas" that would assist GSA with identifying preferred locations for federal facilities.

Table 1 (below) shows the history of all versions of the Regional Activity Centers maps. The current update is based upon the Round 10.0 Cooperative Forecast of population, households, and employment, which the COG Board adopted in June of 2022; upon the anticipated approval by the Board this year, it will become the fourth official version of the Regional Activity Centers map.

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Regional Activity Center Name	Jurisdiction
Dulles Town Center	Loudoun County
Dulles/Route 28 Corridor	Fairfax County
Dumfries	Prince William County
East End/Seven Corners	City of Falls Church/Fairfax County
Eisenhower West/Landmark/Van Dorn	City of Alexandria
Fairfax Center	Fairfax County
Fairfax City	City of Fairfax
Falls Grove and Research Boulevard	City of Rockville
Former Walter Reed/Upper Georgia Ave	District of Columbia
Fort Belvoir North	Fairfax County
Franciscus-Springfield	Fairfax County
Frederick Ave Corridor/Lakeforest Mall	City of Gaithersburg
Friendship Heights/Tenleytown	District of Columbia/Montgomery County
Gainesville	Prince William County
George Mason University	Fairfax County
Georgetown	District of Columbia
Germanatown	Montgomery County
Glenmont	Montgomery County
Golden Triangle	District of Columbia
Greenbelt	City of Greenbelt
Grosvonor	Montgomery County
H Street	District of Columbia
Hemdon Metro	Fairfax County
Huntington-Penn Daw	Fairfax County
Hyattsville Crossing	City of Hyattsville/Prince George's County
Hyle Valley-Dum Springs	Fairfax County
Innovation Park Town Center	Prince William County
Kensington	Montgomery County
Kentlands	City of Gaithersburg
King Farm/Shady Grove Metro	City of Rockville
La Plata	Charles County
Landover Gateway	Prince George's County
Landover Metro	Prince George's County
Langston Boulevard	Arlington County
Largo Town Center	Prince George's County
Laurel	City of Laurel
Leesburg Core	Loudoun County

Table 1. Updates to the Regional Activity Center Map

Cooperative Forecast Round	Board Approval	Number of Regional Activity Centers
6.2	2002	58
7.0	2007	59
8.0	2013	141
10.0	2025 (expected)	145

Eligibility Criteria for Regional Activity Center Designation

This update of the Regional Activity Center map began with the Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee's (PDATAC) review of the COG Board-approved criteria for designating RACs during the January 2024 PDATAC meeting. The Committee decided that no changes to the Board-approved methodology would be proposed at this time and advised COG staff in the Department of Community Planning and Technical Services (DCPS) to begin the analysis using Round 10.0 data and the adopted methodology.

The adopted methodology calls for any geographic area to meet the following two core attributes plus any two of the four secondary attributes:

1. **Policy Core Attribute** - The center or priority growth area should be designated in a jurisdiction's adopted comprehensive/general plan or other locally adopted land use plan.
2. **Density Core Attribute** - In the Round 10.0 Cooperative Forecast, the potential RAC must have a persons per acre density (employment + population) that falls within the top one-half of densities within the jurisdiction in the 2050 forecast year.

In addition, the potential RAC must also fulfill at least two of the following four secondary attributes:

1. **Intersection Density Additional Attribute** - Have at least 55 intersections per square mile.
2. **Transit Capacity Additional Attribute** - Have an existing high-capacity/performance transit (e.g. Metrorail, BRT, commuter rail, OR light rail), or have planned station with dedicated local funding or that is identified in the constrained element of Visualize 2045
3. **Land Use Mix Additional Attribute** - Have a locally adopted land use plan/or ordinance that encourages mixed-use development (e.g. through a mixed-use designation, form-based codes, or overlay zoning)
4. **Housing and Transportation Affordability Additional Attribute** - Combined housing and transportation costs within the potential RAC do not exceed 45% of regional median income, as measured by the Center for Neighborhood Technology's H + T Index.

Analysis and Selection of Round 10.0 Regional Activity Centers

COG staff worked collaboratively with member-jurisdiction planning department staff in 2024 to select Regional Activity Centers for Round 10.0. As with the 2013 map, each new Regional Activity Center is represented conceptually by a circle with a radius of a half-mile. While the half-mile circles portray the location of the RACs at a regional scale, COG staff worked closely with each local planning department to define the actual geographic areas for each RAC through a synthesis of local

planning data and maps. The geographic area used corresponds to the transportation analysis zones (TAZs) defined in the TPB's travel demand model to retain the founding aim of the linkage between transportation and land use.

Listed below in alphabetical order, Table 2, and seen in the attached map are all the geographic areas in the COG region determined to meet RAC criteria in the Round 10.0 Cooperative Forecasts. As can be seen in the accompanying map, the official numbering for the RACs follows the long-standing TPB policy for analytical geographies that begins in the core of the District, then roughly proceeds clockwise into the Maryland and Northern Virginia jurisdictions.

Round 10.0 Regional Activity Center Analysis Framework and Approval Process

Throughout the process, COG staff provided the PDATAC with monthly updates and solicited input on the selection progress.

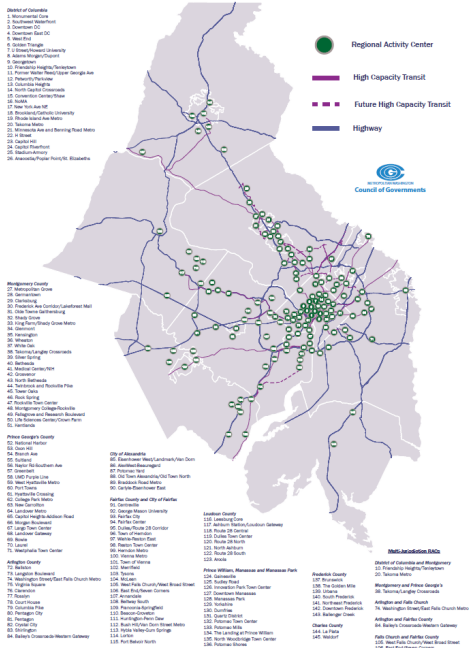
- **Q4 2023:** presented a proposed schedule for development of the Round 10.0 Regional Activity Centers map to the PDATAC
- **Q1 and Q2 2024:** examined adopted local comprehensive/general plans and small area plans to identify the latest center or priority growth areas.
- **Q2 and Q3 2024:** met one-on-one with member-jurisdiction planning staff to select the appropriate geographies upon which to apply the adopted methodology.
- **Q3 2024:** analyzed planning areas around the region using the approved eligibility criteria.
- **Q3 and Q4 2024:** presented eligible Regional Activity Centers to member-jurisdiction planning staff in one-on-one meetings. Jurisdiction staff provided feedback on alternative geographies or names for potential RACs, and on the suitability of cross-jurisdictional RAC boundaries. When appropriate, COG staff re-analyzed areas to see if requested geographies met the eligibility criteria.
- **Q4 2024 and Q1 2025:** COG staff transmitted memoranda to each member-jurisdiction identifying the selected Round 10.0 Regional Activity Centers, including maps showing the location and boundaries of each.

The Planning Directors are scheduled to approve the new Round 10.0 Activity Centers map during the March 21 meeting, after which the COG Board is expected to review and approve the draft map.

Table 2. Round 10.0 Regional Activity Centers

Regional Activity Center Name	Jurisdiction
Adams Morgan/Dupont	District of Columbia
AlexWest-Beauregard	City of Alexandria
Anacostia/Poplar Point/St. Elizabeths	District of Columbia
Annandale	Fairfax County
Arcola	Loudoun County
Ashburn Station/Loudoun Gateway	Loudoun County
Bailey's Crossroads-Western Gateway	Fairfax County/Arlington County
Balenger Creek	Frederick County
Ballston	Arlington County
Beacon-Groveton	Fairfax County
Beltsville South	Fairfax County
Bethesda	Montgomery County
Bowie	City of Bowie
Braddock Road Metro	City of Alexandria
Branch Ave	Prince George's County
Brookland/Catholic University	District of Columbia
Brunswick	City of Frederick
Bush Hill/Van Dom Street Metro	Fairfax County
Capitol Heights-Addison Road	Prince George's County
Capitol Hill	Montgomery County
Capitol Riverfront	District of Columbia
Carlyle-Eisenhower East	City of Alexandria
Centreville	Fairfax County
Clarendon	Arlington County
Clarksburg	Montgomery County
College Park Metro	City of College Park
Columbia Heights	District of Columbia
Columbia Pike	Arlington County
Convention Center/Shaw	District of Columbia
Court House	Arlington County
Crystal City	Arlington County
Downtown DC	District of Columbia
Downtown East DC	District of Columbia
Downtown Frederick	City of Frederick
Downtown Manassas	City of Manassas

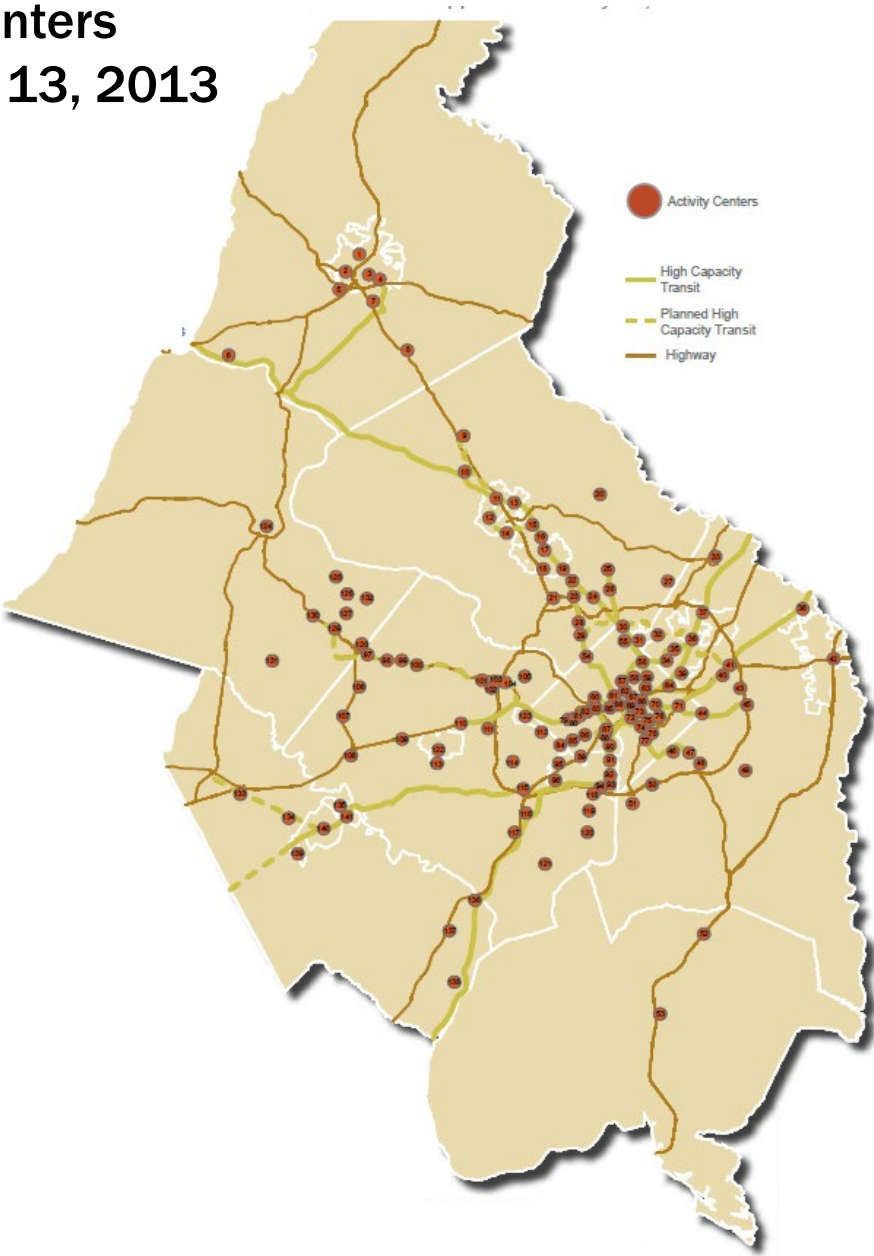
Regional Activity Centers Map
based on the COG Round 10.0 Cooperative Forecast
Draft for PDATAC, March 21, 2025



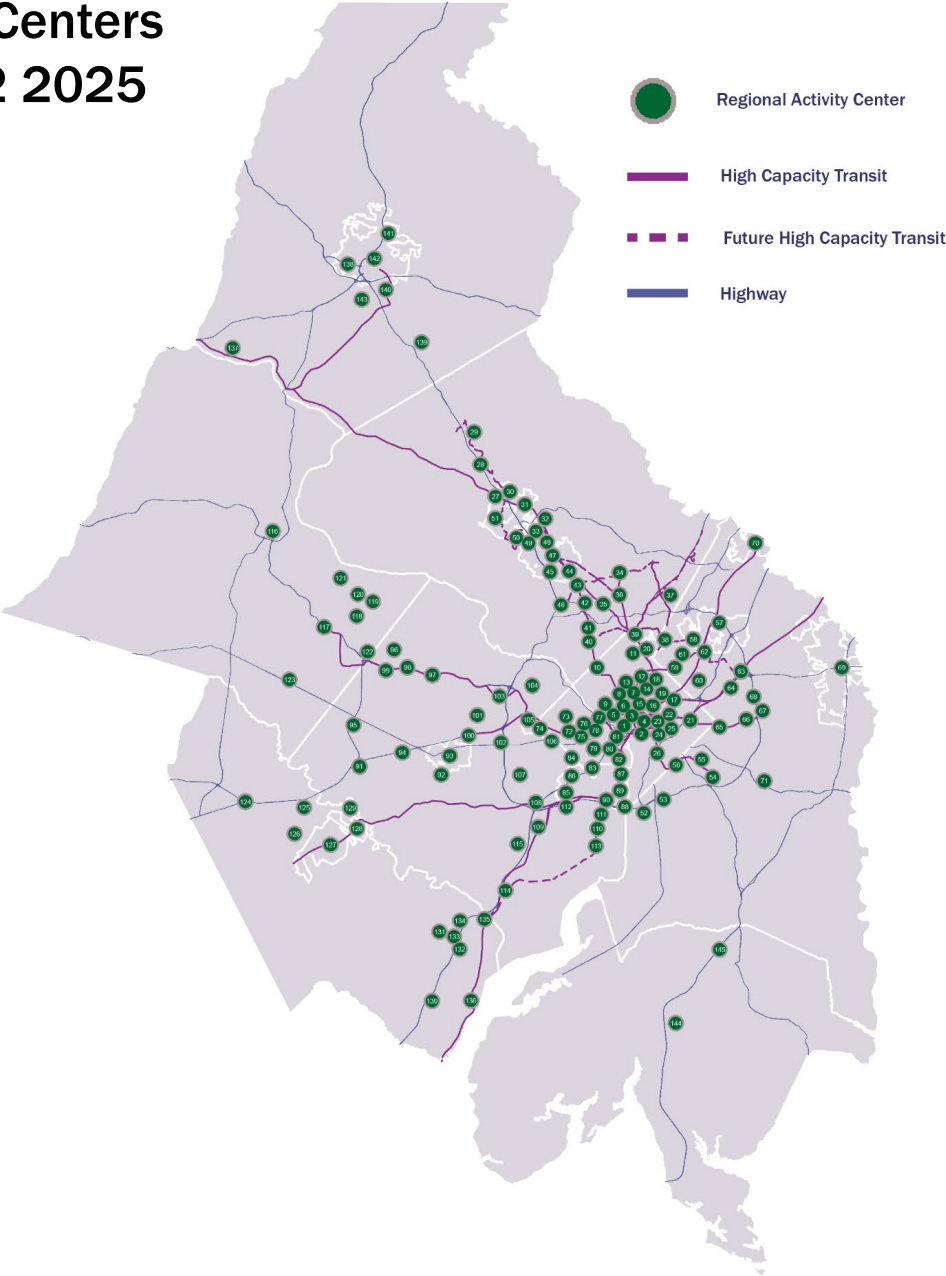
Memo In Brief

- History of PDTAC's work on RACs since 2000
- Details eligibility criteria approved by PDTAC in January 2024
- Schedule of work performed by COG staff and member-jurisdiction planning staff over 2024 and Q1 2025
- Final list of 145 selected Round 10.0 RACs
- Official Round 10.0 Regional Activity Center Map

141 Round 8.0 Regional Activity Centers
approved by COG Board on January 13, 2013



145 Round 10.0 Regional Activity Centers
to be approved by COG Board in Q2 2025



PDTAC March 2025 Action Item

- Approve 145 Regional Activity Centers identified in March 21 memo to committee
 - Member-jurisdictions can still propose name changes to approved RACs
- Approve official Round 10.0 Regional Activity Centers map to be sent to COG Board
 - Any RAC name change will be reflected in final map presented to COG Board

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