



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** COG Board of Directors  
**FROM:** Clark Mercer, COG Executive Director  
**SUBJECT:** Executive Director's Report – May 2026  
**DATE:** May 6, 2026

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## POLICY BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES

**National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB)** – In April, the TPB endorsed a proclamation stating that May 15 will be the region's Bike to Work Day and updated the Transportation Resilience Improvement Plan (TRIP) prioritized project list. The board also reviewed the DMVMoves Work Plan, federal transportation reauthorization, and an Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) Bridges and Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act overview.

**Food and Agriculture Regional Member (FARM) Policy Committee** - FARM's April meeting featured a panel on grocery retail in the region, covering attraction, retention, affordability, pricing, and how federal policy changes could impact retailers and healthy food access. The affect of store closures on emergency food assistance providers was also addressed. The Local Food Procurement Challenge's Community of Practice for local governments also held its first meeting.



**34th Annual COG Wreath Laying Ceremony**  
The 34th COG Annual Corrections Wreath Laying Ceremony honored the vital role of corrections professionals, remembering officers nationwide and from local agencies who died in the line of duty.

[View photos from the event](#)

## **OUTREACH & PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

**Joint Session with Institute for Regional Excellence (IRE) and DC Government - COG**  
Executive Director Clark Mercer joined a joint meeting with the Institute for Regional Excellence and the DC government to discuss progress on the IRE program that is run in partnership with COG and GWU. The groups met to learn together, network, share ideas, and broaden their perspectives about the region.

**Public Safety** – In April, COG advanced regional public safety and collaboration through several key events. COG convened local and state personnel for a joint public safety wellness meeting and partnered with federal and local agencies to discuss coordination of scam prevention messaging. The Homeland Security Executive Committee (HSEC) examined multi-jurisdictional event response to clarify mutual aid expectations. Additionally, COG leadership emphasized regional planning at the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Safety and Security Summit, and staff co-hosted a session on Traffic Incident Management to strengthen local planning across metropolitan Washington.

**Greater Washington Together Update** – COG Executive Director Clark Mercer joined a convening of the Greater Washington Together partnership, a regional effort uniting a growing group of government, employer, education, and nonprofit leaders across Greater Washington to strengthen economic resilience for our region. This meeting allowed our various groups to share ideas and results from different economic initiatives that they have partnered on, including Talent Capital.

**Regional Travel Survey and presentation at University of Maryland's Center for MultiModal Mobility**  
– In April, DTP released the 2026 Regional Travel Survey to gather critical post-pandemic transportation data using a new smartphone app. Highlighting these innovative collection methods, Ken Joh, DTP's Principal Statistical Survey Analyst, recently presented on the evolution of modern travel surveys to University of Maryland's Center for MultiModal Mobility.

**IT and Cybersecurity Public Sector Summit** - John Bayliss, director of the Office of Technology at COG, joined a panel at the Illumio Public Sector Summit to discuss regional cybersecurity funding. He highlighted the necessary transition from federal grants to local investments to sustain critical public safety programs.



**Foster Parents of the Year 2026**

COG honored the 2026 Foster Parents of the Year on May 2, an annual effort recognizing excellence in foster care and aiming to inspire others to become foster parents themselves.

## MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

**Talent Capital update** – COG’s April Board meeting update on Talent Capital was covered by WTOP.

[WTOP](#)

**America250 briefing** – COG’s April Board meeting briefing on America250 planning, events and security was covered by WTOP.

[WTOP](#)

**Regional Roadway Safety study** – TPB’s Regional Roadway Safety study was covered by WUSA9.

[WUSA9](#)

**CEEPC’s 100<sup>th</sup> meeting** – COG’s Climate Energy and Environment Policy Committee’s (CEEPC) 100<sup>th</sup> meeting and climate goal progress was covered by ARLnow.

[ARLnow](#)



**New COG report on region’s economy and federal workforce**

Clark Mercer was interviewed on The Politics Hour on WAMU as well as Fox 5 to discuss the latest economic trends report and talk about how regional leaders have formed new collaborations to strengthen the region’s competitiveness. The report was also covered by 7 News, DC News Now, The Alexandria Brief, ALXnow, WAMU, Washington Business Journal, Inside NoVa, and Falls Church News-Press.

[WAMU](#)