



Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY: MARCH 25, 2026

CEEPC MEMBERS AND STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

- Hon. Cindy Dyballa, City of Takoma Park (Chair)
- Hon. Sarah Bagley, City of Alexandria
- Hon. Susan Cunningham, Arlington County
- Hon. Frankie Fritz, City of Greenbelt
- Hon. Alan Hew, City of College Park
- Hon. Kelly Jordan, City of College Park
- Hon. Tom Osina, City of Manassas
- Hon. Tom Peterson, City of Fairfax
- Valerie Amor, City of Alexandria
- Al Carr, DOEE
- Richard Dooley, Arlington County
- Valerie Fitton Kane, Casey Trees
- Jennifer Fioretti, Arlington County
- Allyson Frantz, VA DEQ
- Randy Freed, Citizens' Climate Lobby
- Ryan Freed, City of Alexandria
- Beth Groth, Charles County
- Anthony Inhorn, DOEE
- Hokuma Karimova, City of Gaithersburg
- Sarah Kogel-Smucker, Montgomery County
- Kurt Lawrence, City of Falls Church
- Andrea Lizarzaburu, City of Takoma Park
- Ava Lovain, VA DEQ
- Giulia Manno, Prince William County
- Ian Marcus, ACPAC Chair
- Matt Meyers, Fairfax County
- Danielle Miller Wagner, Prince George's County
- Mike Sandler, Loudoun County
- Yi Sun, Prince William County
- Antoine Thompson, GWRCCC

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

- Hon. Penny Gross, Fairfax County (retired)
- Hon. Takis Karantonis, Arlington County
- Ra Amin, Vice Chair, TPB-CAC
- Uwe Brandes, Chair, DC Commission on Climate Change
- Bill Eger, ETHOS Sustainability
- Deb Harris, ICF
- Jim Kinter, George Mason University
- Saul Kinter, DC Water
- George Nichols, Retired COG
- Kim Pezza, Comptroller of Maryland
- Bill Pugh, Coalition for Smarter Growth

COG STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

- Alissa Boggs, COG Environmental Programs
- Leah Boggs, COG Environmental Programs
- Heidi Bonnaffon, COG Environmental Programs
- Robert Christopher, COG Environmental Programs
- Maia Davis, COG Environmental Programs
- Jeff King, COG Director Climate, Energy and Air Programs
- Clark Mercer, COG Executive Director
- Caroline Sherman, COG Environmental Programs
- Sydney Wright, COG Office of Communications

1. WELCOME AND MEETING SUMMARY

Cindy Dyballa, CEEPC Chair

Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) Chair Cindy Dyballa called the March CEEPC meeting to order. The January CEEPC Meeting Summary was approved.

2. MEMBER SHARINGS & NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

CEEPC members and guests

Maia Davis, COG Senior Planner

CEEPC members shared climate wins and Earth Day plans in their jurisdictions.

- A. District of Columbia
 - a. The DC Commission on Climate Change and Resiliency published its [Third Report](#) in February 2026.
- B. Charles County
 - a. The County's Climate Resilience and Sustainability Officer position was created through employee advocacy and now has expanded the Office of Climate Resilience and Sustainability to employ multiple people.
- C. Montgomery County
 - a. The County has so far received 13 of the 73 zero emission buses currently contracted.
 - b. The Zero-Emission Bus Depot will operate on a solar powered microgrid and produce green hydrogen on site.
 - c. [Green Fest](#) on April 25th.
- D. Gaithersburg
 - a. The City is currently working on its Climate Action Plan.
 - b. [Green Month Events](#).
- E. Takoma Park
 - a. [Earth Day Celebration](#) on April 12th.
 - b. The City is launching its Climate Action Dashboard powered by ClearPath 2.0.
 - c. The Cities of Takoma Park, Bowie, and Gaithersburg are collaborating on an [Earth Day event](#) to discuss climate action in small cities.
- F. Prince George's County
 - a. The County created an interagency climate committee across all County agencies.
 - b. The County is updating its local government operations GHG inventory.
 - c. The County is developing climate implementation strategies.
 - d. The Community Resilience Hub Grant Program was created in collaboration with the Chesapeake Bay Trust, with grantees to be announced in March.
- G. Greenbelt
 - a. The City installed two electric vehicle charging stations.
 - b. The City is currently at 62% tree canopy coverage.
- H. Commonwealth of Virginia
 - a. The statewide Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) will be submitted to EPA by June 2026.
 - b. The State's two Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG) Program Implementation projects are underway.
- I. City of Alexandria
 - a. GHGs from buildings are down 46 percent from 2005.

- b. City Hall is undergoing renovations which include energy efficiency improvements and geothermal energy for the HVAC system.
 - c. Earth Day [EV Ride and Drive Event](#) on April 11th.
 - d. [Green Building Plan](#) updates standards to include metrics like EUI targets instead of third party certifications.
 - e. [Alexandria Dog Walk and Sustainability Festival](#) on April 18th promotes plastic-free, sustainable living, and animal welfare.
- J. Arlington County
 - a. The County formed a strategic partnership with CERES for the development and implementation of the [Arlington Corporate Climate Leaders \(ACCL\) program](#).
 - b. [Earth Month Events](#) include youth programs, volunteer invasive plant removal events, and a campfire.
- K. Fairfax County
 - a. The County's Community-Wide Energy and Climate Action Plan (CECAP) has helped residents navigate home energy efficiency and renewable energy.
- L. Falls Church
 - a. The City amended its zoning code to include minimum tree canopy of 10 percent in non-residential zoning districts.
 - b. [Earth Month](#) events.
- M. Loudoun County
 - a. The 2023 County Energy Strategy 2023 created a "to do list" for the County to implement.
 - b. Exploring the potential to partner with data centers for a heat reuse project.
 - c. [Earth Day](#) Festival.
- N. Manassas
 - a. There has been a proliferation of recycling/reuse shops in downtown Manassas.
 - b. [Earth Day "Take and Make" Event](#) on April 22nd.
- O. Prince William County
 - a. The County is finalizing its first Annual Environmental Sustainability Report, which includes a Local Government Operations GHG Inventory.
- P. Casey Trees
 - a. Casey Trees was awarded nearly \$500,000 to create wildlife corridors in Washington, DC.
 - b. Casey Trees is planting over 10,000 trees to reforest the former Lake Arbor Golf Course in Prince George's County.
 - c. Earth Week and Arbor Day [volunteer tree plantings](#).
- Q. Center for Climate Strategies
 - a. Launched the Maryland Cost of Climate Change Study.
- R. Coalition for Smarter Growth
 - a. Maryland is considering a bill ([SB0389](#)) to support transit-oriented development.
- S. Comptroller of Maryland
 - a. Maryland approved the Cost of Climate Change Study.
- T. George Mason University
 - a. Published the first [Virginia Climate Assessment](#) as a part of the Virginia Climate Center.
- U. ICF
 - a. Holding Climate Education Seminars on changes in Federal policy.

New Member Orientation:

COG is an independent, nonprofit association that brings area leaders together to address regional issues and plan for the future. CEEPC was created by the COG Board of Directors in 2009 and reports to and advises the COG Board of Directors. CEEPC's purpose is to provide leadership on climate change, energy, green buildings, alternative fuels, solid waste and recycling issues. The committees that advise CEEPC and support the implementation of its goals are: Solid Waste and Recycling Committees, CEEPC Legislative Committee, Built Environment and Energy Advisory Committee (BEEAC), Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC), Regional Tree Canopy Sub-Committee (RTCS), and Regional Electric Vehicle Deployment (REVD) Working Group. Per the bylaws, CEEPC membership is comprised of elected officials from each COG local government, representatives from state government, and stakeholders such as utilities, environmental groups, schools, and federal/regional agencies. To vote on anything there must be a quorum, which means one third of voting members or alternates are present.

3. GREENHOUSE GASES AND CLIMATE PROGRESS

Maia Davis, COG Senior Planner

The Midcourse Review assesses the status of regional climate goals, key performance indicators, and implementation levels of key actions to provide direction setting for regional action. The COG Board's goals and priorities related to climate and energy are: greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 20 percent below 2005 levels by 2020 and 50 percent by 2030, 250,000 solar rooftops by 2030, maintaining minimum tree canopy coverage of 50 percent, and electric vehicle (EV) deployment as a priority.

The results of the Midcourse Review are as follows:

- Metropolitan Washington reduced net GHG emissions by 20% from 2005 levels in 2023, with the main drivers decreasing emissions being a cleaner grid, cleaner cars, and decreased vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per person.
- The region has increased grid connected renewable energy systems from less than 500 in 2009 to over 93,000 systems in 2024, totaling to over 1 GW of capacity.
- Green building certifications and ratings in the region (including LEED, ENERGY STAR, Design to Earn ENERGY STAR, EarthCraft, Green Globes, Passive House, and LFI) have increased from only 88 buildings in 2005, to over 7,800 in 2024.
- EV ownership in the region increased from less than 12,000 hybrid (non-PHEV) vehicles in 2005, to over 335,000 hybrid (non-PHEV) and electric (BEV and PHEV) vehicles in 2024.
- EV charging ports in the region have grown from less than 700 ports in 2013 to over 6,800 ports in 2025.
- VMT per capita in the region has been slowly decreasing since 2005 (with a large drop in 2020 and steady recovery in the following years).
- Regional annual transit ridership has been slowly recovering after the 2020 pandemic.
- Regional waste diversion rates steadily increased from 2005 to 2013 but have seen a slight decrease between 2015 and 2023. There are many factors that may contribute to this trend including the economy and the decline in the weight of recyclable materials (lighter packaging and shipping materials, more plastic, less glass).
- As of 2021 the region had a 50% tree canopy. The regional tree canopy experienced a net loss of 28,377 acres between 2014 and 2021.

This report finds that the region is currently meeting GHG emissions reduction goals through positive trends in decarbonizing the electric grid, solar development, green buildings, cleaner cars, and EV chargers. The challenges the region faces to meet its goals are high energy intensive industries (such

as data centers), COVID impacts on VMT and transit, COVID impacts and industry shifts in waste diversion, and tree canopy loss. Continued exponential improvement in all positive sectors is needed to meet 2030 goals.

Discussion:

- The CEEPC Chair recognized that a comment letter on the Midcourse Review was submitted by the Coalition for Smarter Growth.
- Stakeholders commented that the report recognizes that the region has made a lot of progress but also urged that the report needs to be clear that more needs to be done to be on track towards regional 2030 goals.
- The report needs to inform on what CEEPC members can do together between now and 2030 to ramp up climate action.
- Cross-sectoral action is important, for instance with sustainable housing and transportation. Climate planning should not happen in isolation.
- Stakeholders noted COG can play an ongoing role in highlighting best practices and providing guidance
- It was asked that the report identify data centers contribution to GHG emissions.
- Stakeholders recommended that COG continue to support strategizing on mitigating the impacts of data centers.
- For waste data, consider using a per capita measurement.
- Stakeholders asked about GHG emissions forecasting. Forecasting is available in the Metropolitan Washington 2030 Climate and Energy Action Plan (CEAP), published in 2020, and the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) published in November 2025. The report could refer to these forecasts that identify a pathway to meeting 2030 goals.
- One stakeholder pointed out the need to “future proof” policy, through reaching out to the private sector for long-range planning purposes.

4. RECAP OF DATA CENTER FORUMS AND BOARD INTERESTS

Jeff King, COG Climate, Energy, Air Program Director

COG hosted two forums on data centers in the DMV, one focused on energy and the other on water, with a third forum on economic development and land use planned for the spring. The DMV is a prime data center market due to its proximity to end users, land availability, tax and regulatory incentives, regional water and power capacity, and extensive fiber infrastructure. Approximately 25 percent of data center capacity in the Americas is located in northern Virginia, accounting for about four GW of electricity demand today, with Dominion planning for as much as 25 GW by 2031. Data center demand is growing exponentially, driven largely by the expansion of artificial intelligence (AI) and cloud computing.

The forums highlighted that the scale and pace of data center growth present significant challenges for regional energy and water infrastructure. On the energy side, data centers place demands far beyond those of typical commercial users, raising concerns about grid reliability and electricity affordability while systems scale up. On the water side, risks are driven primarily by peak demand and cumulative regional impacts, particularly during hot and dry periods, underscoring the need for basin-wide coordination around shared resources like the Potomac River. Overall, the forums emphasized the importance of regional coordination, transparency, and proactive planning to balance the economic and technological benefits of data centers with community priorities and environmental sustainability.

Discussion: Members requested a special legislative debrief on data center policies from the current legislative session and emphasized that the third forum on economic development/land use should focus on socioeconomic impacts.

5. COMMITTEE UPDATES

Written updates provided in advance

- A. Built Environment Energy Advisory Committee (BEEAC)
 - The February 19th meeting was a working group session through the Homeowner Hub modules. Local governments engaged in discussion on the modules, providing feedback on their effectiveness to advance regional electrification in the residential market.
 - The highest ranked modules were:
 - i. Vetted contractor list
 - ii. Information by project, including average cost, savings, lifespan, and difficulty and
 - iii. Information on products and services.
 - The ranking will be used to determine featured elements on the Homeowners Hub.
 - BEEAC's next meeting is April 16.
- B. Air And Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC)
 - Amendments to ACPAC's bylaws were approved by the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee Executive Committee at its February meeting. At the March 16 meeting COG staff conducted member orientation. Members also discussed COG's February 25th data center energy forum with comments focused on the following points:
 - i. Air pollution related issues should be part of the analysis and a factor when local governments consider if data centers should be located in their jurisdictions
 - ii. Growing concern over the use of behind the meter non-renewable energy sources to power data centers and
 - iii. Growing concern over the cost of more data centers connecting to the grid, additional electric infrastructure needs, and higher electricity rates passed on to residential customers.
 - ACPAC's next meeting is May 16.
- C. Regional Electric Vehicle Deployment (REVD) Working Group
 - The REVD Working Group convened on March 19, 2026, chaired by Amy Posner, Electric Vehicle Planner for Alexandria. The session opened with an Office Hours segment, providing members with an opportunity to share updates and exchange insights on EV programs including implementation challenges, funding resources, and lessons learned from the field. Delaney Dixon from NASEO presented on EV charging permitting and zoning, walking the group through best practices for streamlining the approval process for EV charging infrastructure. The meeting concluded with presentations on EV charging as a service from Spark Charge and Electrada. Each outlined the company's approaches to helping organizations adopt a charging-as-a-service model to advance transportation electrification.
- D. Recycling Committee
 - No updates. The committee's next meeting is in April.
- E. Regional Tree Canopy Subcommittee (RTCS)
 - The Regional Tree Canopy Subcommittee is working on their Action Plan strategies. The April meeting will focus on the many Partnerships for tree canopy.
- F. Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition
 - No update.
- G. Staff Updates
 - a. Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grant Phase I – Planning

- i) The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) awarded \$3.9 million to COG through the CFI Program to support the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in partnership with Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, and Manassas and Arlington, Fairfax, Frederick, Prince George’s Counties and the Greater Washington Clean Cities Coalition (GWRCCC). Phase I Pre-Construction funds, in which 15% of the total funds have been obligated, is currently underway and involves completion of the NEPA Categorical Exclusion (CE) process for all 37 proposed EV charging locations included in this project, developing equitable engagement and workforce development opportunities. The first NEPA submission for the City of Manassas EV charging stations is currently under review by FHWA and the remaining submissions are under development. The following engagement and workforce development activities have taken place this far in Phase I:
 - (1) GWRCCC Job Fair was held on September 30, 2025, at Westphalia Community Center in Upper Marlboro, MD.
 - (2) On October 7, 2025, an electric vehicle community listening session was held at the Sherwood Community Center in Fairfax, Virginia in partnership with GWRCCC and the City and County of Fairfax.
 - (3) On November 12, 2025, an electric vehicle community listening session was held at the Lorton Library in Lorton, Virginia in partnership with GWRCCC and the City and County of Fairfax.
 - (4) On January 22, 2026, on Public Policy Day at the Washington Auto Show, COG and GWRCCC hosted a cross-sectoral government and industry training event titled Charging Ahead: Reliable, Accessible, and Equitable EV Charging in Metropolitan Washington forum where regional partners discussed advancing dependable, community-serving EV charging infrastructure across metropolitan Washington.
 - (5) On February 25, 2026, Arlington County hosted an event to kick off the County's climate action plan and featured a tabling event (including climate and EV focused tables), a small EV showcase, a climate literature nook hosted by the library, and an author's speech and booking signing. The County, COG, and GWRCCC hosted a table gathering public feedback on existing EV chargers at County facilities and types of curbside EV charging the public may prefer in residential areas as well as apartments, condos, and shops. The County and GWRCCC brought EVs for the EV showcase.
 - (6) The City of Manassas First Friday event on March 6, 2026, theme was Go Green and featured a Sustainable Transportation Tabling Event with the City of Manassas, OmniRide, VRE, and COG. COG solicited input on what the community sees as barriers to EVs and where in the community they would like to see EV charging stations.
- ii) Upcoming engagement events this spring include the Thurmont Green Fest with Frederick County on April 18, 2026, and the [City of Alexandria's Electric Vehicle Ride and Drive and Showcase](#) on April 11, 2026.
- b. Midcourse Review
 - i) The Draft Midcourse Review Report is available for CEEPC comment now through April 8, 2026. Please submit comments to Maia Davis (mdavis@mwkog.org).
- c. Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventories
 - i) The 2023 GHG Inventory Fact Sheets have been published for all COG member jurisdictions, northern Virginia, and the COG region along with an associated video and methodology guide. For more information, please see: <https://www.mwkog.org/environment/planning-areas/climate-and-energy/greenhouse-gas-inventories/>.

- d. ElectrifyDC Homeowners Hub
 - i) COG collected and aggregated housing data across the region. The tracked data included occupied housing units, owner-occupied housing units, and ownership-occupation rate. The average ownership-occupation rate in the region is 53%. The collected data is expected to help determine the level of effort needed to support electrification of the residential sector across the region.

6. CELEBRATION: VIDEO & REMARKS

CEEPC members watched a [video](#) on COG's greenhouse gas inventory and mid-course review work.

7. ADJOURN

Cindy Dyballa, CEEPC Chair

Chair Dyballa adjourned the meeting. Upcoming CEEPC meeting dates for 2026 include:

- Wednesday May 27, 2026
- Wednesday July 29, 2026
- Wednesday September 23, 2026
- Wednesday November 18, 2026

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

<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2026/3/25/climate-energy-and-environment-policy-committee/>

