



MEMORANDUM

TO: COG Board of Directors
FROM: Chuck Bean, COG Executive Director
SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report – October 2020
DATE: October 7, 2020

POLICY BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) – At its September meeting, the TPB approved an amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program for the District of Columbia to fund highway, rail, bus, streetcar and other state and local transportation projects. The board also received briefings covering the process to set Transit Safety Targets as part of Performance Based Planning and Programming, and updates on the TPB Participation Plan, Visualize 2045, and an employer survey on telework during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) – At its September meeting, MWAQC members focused on the region's progress towards meeting the federal health standard for ground-level ozone. Members were briefed on this season's ozone summary and how the region only had two Code Orange, unhealthy air days. However, metropolitan Washington does not yet meet the 2015 ozone standard and MWAQC will continue to focus on measures to reduce emissions at future meetings.

Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources Policy Committee (CBPC) – In September, the CBPC held their annual Water Quality Forum, engaging in discussion with representatives from Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia. CBPC members stated the importance of agency alignment and the need for flexible and integrated regulatory and financing approaches, emphasizing that more must be done to address the pressing issues of climate resiliency and environmental equity. The committee also announced its 2nd annual Academic Paper Competition for 2020-2021.

Human Services Policy Committee (HSPC) – At its September meeting, the committee discussed forming a regional agreement allowing jurisdictions to share and analyze data across jurisdictions, to identify gaps in both emergency shelter and housing and effectively advocate for resources to bring



RECAP: COG/TPB TOWN HALL SERIES

The first town hall, facilitated by University of North Carolina's Jim Johnson and Jeanne Milliken Bonds, focused on the impact of disruptive events and changing demographics on the economy and society. Upcoming sessions will explore strategies to help local leaders navigate a 'new normal' in 2021

[Register and watch the recap video](#)

an end to homelessness in the region. The COG Board will have an opportunity to provide feedback on the draft agreement during the November 12 meeting with the final agreement expected in early 2021.

Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) – At its September meeting, CEEPC members approved sending a draft resolution to the COG Board on a new 2030 regional climate goal and reviewed the draft 2030 Climate and Energy Action Plan. The draft plan’s comment period is open through October 16, 2020.

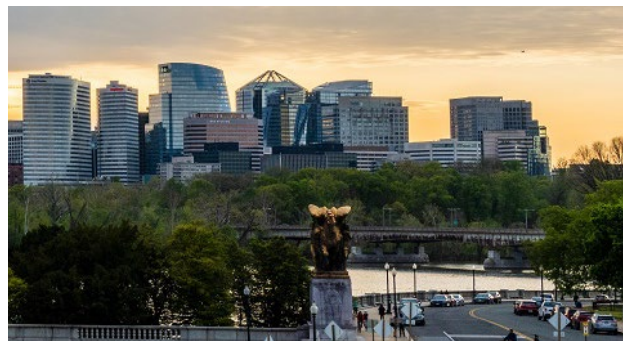
OUTREACH & PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

COG Presentations – COG Executive Director Chuck Bean spoke before the Gaithersburg City Council, and to the new Leadership Greater Washington class and the District of Columbia Committee of 100 about the challenges the region is facing in 2020, and several opportunities for regional collaboration ahead. COG Community and Planning Services Director Paul DesJardin and Planning Data and Research Program Director Timothy Canan participated on a ULI Washington Leadership Institute Panel on regional economic and transportation trends and planning initiatives.

Infrastructure Week 2020 – COG partnered with local water and wastewater utilities to celebrate this year’s infrastructure week with a video highlighting how essential water is to keeping metropolitan Washington healthy and safe.

Car Free Day 2020 – Despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, residents, workers, and students participated in the annual Car Free Day on September 22 organized by COG’s Commuter Connections program. Residents participated by opting to take transit, carpool, bike, walk, or telework.

Visualize 2045 Public Opinion Survey – The TPB is conducting a public opinion survey to inform the 2022 update to Visualize 2045, the region’s long-range transportation plan. More than 24,000 people were invited to participate. As of October 5, nearly 1,300 people had completed the survey. The survey asks about changes in travel habits during the pandemic, and explores what residents want their transportation future to look like. Staff plan to present the findings to the TPB in December.



OZONE SEASON SUMMARY REVEALS RECORD LOW POLLUTION LEVELS

The region recorded just two days of unhealthy ‘Code Orange’ air quality in 2020 due to ground-level ozone and, including this year, has gone four out of the last five years without a Code Red day for ozone pollution.

[Read the news release](#)

Anacostia Watershed Survey – Members of COG's Anacostia Watershed Restoration Partnership are asking residents to take a brief survey about their local environment, to better understand residents' opinions and knowledge. The survey, open through October 19, will inform how the group communicates with residents. Take the [survey](#).

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

Survey finds telework is here to stay even after the pandemic – COG Commuter Connections Director Nicholas Ramfos highlights the results of the program's telework survey and what employers anticipate workplace operations to look like after the pandemic.

[WUSA9 story](#)

Local council of governments grapples with cross-jurisdiction contact tracing – COG Principal Health Planner Jennifer Schitter discusses how contact tracing data is being collected and shared across the region and what efforts are being made to enhance the process.

[WTOP story](#)