



Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Executive Director's Report • June 2014

COMMITTEE WORK HEART OF COG OUTREACH MEDIA EVENTS/MEETINGS

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

At its May meeting, the Board approved a [letter to Congress urging immediate action to replenish the federal Highway Trust Fund](#) and to secure more reliable, long-term sources of revenue to support ongoing transportation investments into the future. Federal officials anticipate that the fund, from which nearly all federal aid for road and transit projects flows, will become insolvent by the end of August.

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIR QUALITY COMMITTEE

The Committee heard a presentation on the health effects of ground-level ozone on the region's residents from Dr. Janet Phoenix of the George Washington University School of Public Health & Health Services.

CHESAPEAKE BAY AND WATER RESOURCES POLICY COMMITTEE

The Committee held a water infrastructure panel discussion with invited leaders from the American Water Works Association, the National Association of Clean Water Agencies, and the Water Environment Federation, which focused on infrastructure financing, the future of utility staffing, and messaging for the public and the media. Over the coming months, COG staff will quantify water infrastructure investments and needs on a regional level.

CLIMATE ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

The Committee discussed how metropolitan Washington compares favorably to others across the country in terms of climate and energy action plans. For example, the region ranks first in number of LEED Certified Buildings and EPA Green Power Partners.

Heart of COG: Cleaning the Air One Partnership at a Time

JEFF KING, DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS



Cleaning the region's air has long been a priority at the Council of Governments. We are known for our air quality planning at the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee, air quality forecasting, and educating the public through Clean Air Partners. Building on this reputation, COG set out on another air quality project—identifying old, polluting engines and equipment and helping owners find sustainable solutions.

Through his combination of technical know-how and collaborative and entrepreneurial spirit, Jeff King turned this off-road diesel emission reduction initiative into a regional success. In 2006, he worked with partners at EPA's Region 3 office to hold an inaugural Mid Atlantic Diesel Collaborative meeting at COG. The meeting brought together leaders

like our current Chairman Phil Mendelson for a discussion about funding options, incentives, and partnership opportunities.

King then successfully pursued funding from EPA's Diesel Emissions Reduction Act and managed a variety of projects benefitting the entire region, including the installation of particulate filters at landfills in Prince William County and engine upgrades of construction equipment in Maryland. After witnessing a boat puffing a big plume of smoke, King contacted tour boat owners, which led to [repower projects in Alexandria and the District](#). A trainmen's union sought out King's help to [repower Amtrak switcher locomotives at Union Station](#). We recently unveiled one on Earth Day. Identifying opportunities, networking, and bringing diverse interests together to solve problems... Jeff King's work is an example of what COG does best.

- Chuck Bean, Executive Director

PRESENTATION TO GAITHERSBURG

In May, Executive Director Chuck Bean gave a presentation on COG and its work program to the Gaithersburg City Council.

TAP WATER TALK AT SMITHSONIAN EVENT

Fairfax County Supervisor and COG Chesapeake Bay Policy Committee Chair Penny Gross spoke at Smithsonian Garden Fest as part of National Drinking Water Week. Gross also recognized the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History as the newest member of TapIt Metro DC, a network of businesses and institutions providing free tap water refills to the public



Marlo Watson (Prince William County Service Authority), Heidi Bonnaffon (COG), Penny Gross (Fairfax County), and Jeanne Bailey (Fairfax Water)

CORRECTIONS OFFICERS CEREMONY

The COG Corrections Chiefs Committee sponsored the 23rd Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony in honor of fallen corrections officers at the National Law Enforcement Memorial. The event brought together local officials from Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia as well as correctional employees and their families from around the United States. COG Executive Director Chuck Bean and Assistant U.S. Attorney General Karol Mason joined officials in giving remarks.



Craig Floyd (National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund Executive Director), SGT Aaron Livell, SGT Earnest Capitulo, CPL Killian Hayter (3rd US Infantry Regiment- Arlington National Cemetery), and Thomas Faust (DC Dept. of Corrections & COG Corrections Chief Committee Chair)

HOUSING & PLACEMAKING DISCUSSIONS

Chuck Bean moderated two panels at the 23rd Annual Affordable Housing Conference of Montgomery County. Environmental Programs Director Steve Walz and Community Planning and Services Director Paul DesJardin participated in the Fairfax County Healthy Community Design Leadership Briefing. Regional Planner Sophie Mintier served as a panelist, discussing economic benefits of place-making, at an event organized by Alliance for Housing Solutions in Arlington County.

INFRASTRUCTURE WEEK ACTIVITIES

As part of Infrastructure Week, the Brookings Institution hosted a forum to address both the challenges and opportunities for magnetic levitation (maglev) in the U.S. today, as well as transportation technology as a new area for U.S.-Japan collaboration. Chuck Bean served as a panelist and discussed the region's transportation priorities and infrastructure needs.



Connie Crawford (The Louis Berger Group) and Chuck Bean at Brookings Maglev Talk.

DATA HONORS RON KIRBY

At the 28th Annual Dulles Area Transportation Association (DATA) Awards, the transportation management association posthumously honored Ron Kirby with a Career Achievement award. Chuck Bean accepted the award on Kirby's behalf.

BTWD 2014: +16,700 COMMUTERS REGISTER

Despite the inclement weather, thousands of area commuters participated in Bike to Work Day on May 16 and a record number--more than 16,700 people--registered in advance of the event. U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx was among the dignitaries celebrating the event, which featured 79 pit stops throughout the region. The event was coordinated by COG's Commuter Connections program and the Washington Area Bicyclist Association. Numerous articles, blogs, and social media posts provided coverage before and during the event, including a [WTOP story about COG employees that bike to work and our building's bike-friendly amenities](#).



Foxx and Bean at Freedom Plaza in D.C. for Bike to Work Day

COG RELEASES REPORT ON HOMELESSNESS

According to an annual report by COG, there are 11,946 homeless people living in the region – a 3.5 percent increase from 2013. The report, which was covered by [The Washington Post](#), [The Gazette](#), and several other media outlets, stressed the greatest barrier to ending homelessness in our communities is a lack of fixed, affordable permanent housing opportunities for the lowest income households.

ENERGY TALK FOCUSES ON INFRASTRUCTURE, RELIABILITY, AND EFFICIENCY

Area leaders turned their attention to energy for the next installment of COG's 2014 Regional Infrastructure Series. During the May Board meeting, utility officials and experts led a wide-ranging discussion on more than \$5.5 billion in investments over the next five years to replace and upgrade aging natural gas pipes and electric power lines as well as new technologies to improve reliability. The meeting was covered by the [Washington Business Journal](#) and CTV.

MARC, VRE DISCUSS LONG-RANGE PLANS AT TPB

Members of the Transportation Planning Board received briefings on the region's commuter rail services, MARC and VRE. [WTOP](#) covered their presentations.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD -
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18

HUMAN SERVICES & PUBLIC SAFETY POLICY COMMITTEE -
FRIDAY, JUNE 20

COG LEADERSHIP PLANNING & WORK SESSION -
FRIDAY, JULY 25 – SUNDAY, JULY 27 – CAMBRIDGE, MD

For more information about these events and other COG meetings, visit www.mwcog.org/calendar