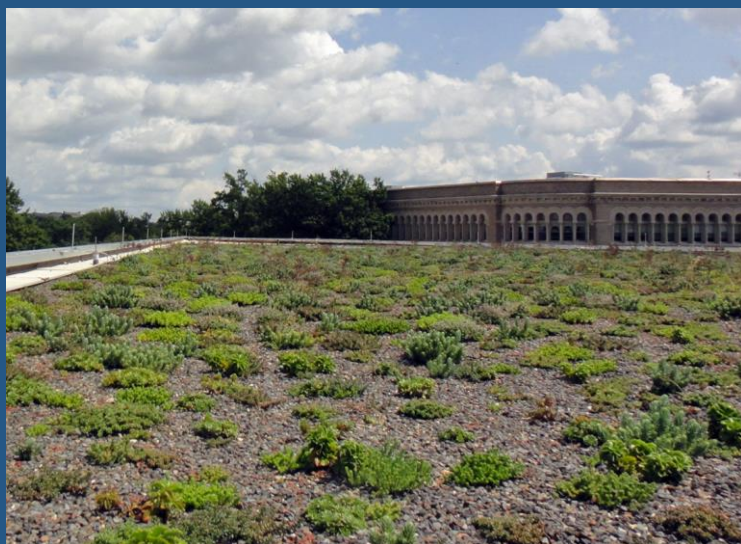
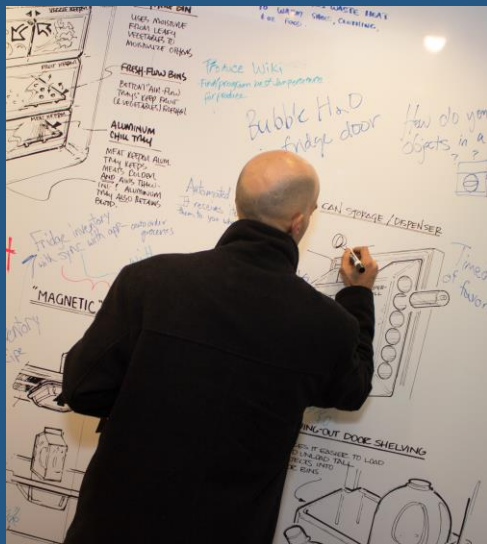


LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Investing in Metro Safety, Encouraging Innovation, and Supporting the Region's Infrastructure and Workforce

January 2016



Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

ABOUT COG

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is an independent, nonprofit association that brings area leaders together to address major regional issues in the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia. COG's membership is comprised of 300 elected officials from 22 local governments, the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, and U.S. Congress.

CREDITS

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Cover Photos (Left to Right): Tech Co., Matt Johnson, Payton Chung, and The City Project.

ACCOMMODATIONS

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CERTAINTY AND ADEQUACY OF TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

Support State Safety Oversight Committees

Expedite developing MAP-21 legislation to provide immediate enhanced authority for State Safety Oversight Agencies (SSOA) for Metro and increase federal funding to support SSOA operations.



Credit: Jim Larrison, Flickr

Support Funding of Metro's Strategic Plan (Momentum Priority Target Areas)

Identify and enact means of additional federal and state funding for Metro's strategic plan, Momentum, in order to improve and expand the Metro system over the next ten years to keep up with projected growth and demand throughout the region. Metro's strategic plan elements are designed to address the region's transit system needs that are currently unmet, including adding core capacity to the system, which affects service quality, reliability, and safety.

Support Transportation Infrastructure Investment

The transportation system in the national capital region is critical to the nation's safety and economy. The region's aging transportation infrastructure is in urgent need of reconstruction and major rehabilitation that goes beyond routine maintenance and upkeep. Federal funding for these efforts has continued to decrease and is currently substantially inadequate and should be increased.

Ensure Continuation of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act

Ensure the continuation and full funding of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA) of 2008 beyond 2020 and through 2040 to ensure maintenance of the Metro system in a state of good repair.

WATER QUALITY PROTECTION

Support Investments in Water Infrastructure

Support mechanisms such as tax credits, infrastructure banking, Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) funding, state revolving funds (SRFs), and maintain tax exemption status for municipal bonds. Ensure that local infrastructure investments built to meet water permit load allocations, as well as to handle future growth, continue to be recognized.



Credit: Chesapeake Bay Program, Flickr

Ensure Stormwater Regulatory Feasibility

Endorse legislation that supports a feasible pace for MS4 stormwater permits, and applies the “Maximum Extent Practicable” standard. Ensure that the burden does not increase for local governments to compensate for delayed issuance of stormwater permits. Support flexibility for generating local funding for stormwater management and ensure that reporting requirements are reasonable.

Support Climate Resiliency Initiatives

Support funding for technical support including robust climate change analysis, adaptation and resiliency planning, and local implementation.

Ensure Local Government Input

Ensure that local governments are given opportunities to provide timely and meaningful input on management decisions about the Chesapeake Bay and local water quality.

Support Affordability and Regulatory Flexibility

Support cost-effective approaches for scheduling and financing water quality programs, including efforts for streamlining and prioritizing permits.

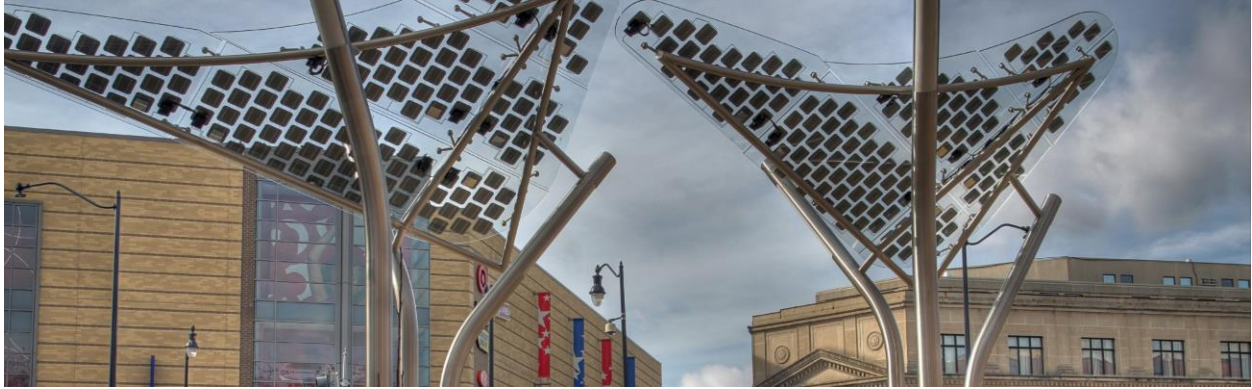
Support Water Security

Support water quality and drinking water security and resiliency research, planning, and programmatic support.

CLIMATE AND ENERGY INNOVATION AND AIR QUALITY PROTECTION

Support Energy Innovation

Encourage investment in energy-sector innovation by utilities and private companies to increase energy efficiency performance and renewable energy deployment. Support regulatory and policy changes to improve transparency and access to data and enable business model innovation. Examples include new energy generating or monitoring technology, alternative financing mechanisms, and performance-based utility compensation. Work with other sectors, such as water and wastewater utilities, to support use of energy efficient technologies and recognize cross-cutting benefits.



Credit: Mr. Tim DC, Flickr

Deploy Clean, Distributed Energy Generation Technology

Support policies that encourage deployment of clean, distributed energy generation technologies and infrastructure. Examples include stronger renewable portfolio standards, less restrictive net energy metering caps, improvement of the effectiveness of renewable energy credit (REC) trading markets, and support for low and zero-emission vehicles and infrastructure.

Expand Clean Energy Finance

Expand options for and improve access to clean energy finance at the state and local levels through measures such as Green Banks, on-bill financing, Energy Savings Performance Contracts, and credit enhancement mechanisms. Establish or enable sustainable clean energy incentive programs, and remove barriers to third-party ownership models.

Improve Grid Resilience

Prioritize funding for energy-sector infrastructure to improve grid resilience and reliability. Support policies and funding for energy security improvements such as microgrids, district energy systems, and storage technology, especially when coupled with clean energy generation. Support community-based efforts and public-private partnerships to improve climate and energy resilience at the local level.

Further Improve Air Quality

Support policies and funding to strengthen the region's ability to meet current and future air quality standards for pollutants including ozone, particulate matter, and carbon dioxide. The region has made significant progress in reducing pollution—in 2015 it met the 2008 ground-level ozone NAAQS and recorded a third straight summer with No Code Red unhealthy air days—but more stringent ozone standards are now in effect that will take additional work to meet and further protect public health.

Ensure Local Government Input

Ensure that local governments are recognized as partners and are given opportunities to provide timely and meaningful input on development of state plans implementing the Clean Power Plan and updates to state energy plans.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN SERVICES

Align Education and Job Creation

Encourage the executive and legislative branches to support legislation and programs that fund local job development, career and technical education, and overall more closely align education and job creation.



Credit: Chris Hsia, Flickr

Support Workforce Development at the Local Level

Support federal legislation and the Skills for America's Future initiative to focus on workforce development and job creation at the local level, and efforts to develop industry standard credentialing and skills programs for sectors experiencing job growth in the COG region.

Support Local Governments and Activity Centers

Work with local governments to support sound land use planning that focuses on employer retention and new job growth in the region's mixed use Activity Centers.

Increase Availability of and Access to Mental Health Services

Work with local, state, and federal partners to increase access to and availability of mental health services throughout the region to include psychiatric hospital beds, drug treatment programs, counseling, and other outpatient services; continued expansion of crisis intervention, mental health courts, and diversion programs where treatment is indicated rather than incarceration; and re-entry programs to reduce recidivism rates of mental health consumers.

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