

**Memorandum**

**March 5, 2014**

**TO: COG Board of Directors**

**FROM: Chuck Bean **  
**Executive Director**

**SUBJECT: Regional Infrastructure – 2014 Board Focus**

District of Columbia  
Bladensburg\*  
Bowie  
Charles County  
College Park  
Frederick  
Frederick County  
Gaithersburg  
Greenbelt  
Montgomery County  
Prince George's County  
Rockville  
Takoma Park  
Alexandria  
Arlington County  
Fairfax  
Fairfax County  
Falls Church  
Loudoun County  
Manassas  
Manassas Park  
Prince William County

\*Adjunct Member

**Background, Goals and Outcomes**

In support of COG's broad vision under *Region Forward*, and as outlined in the 2014 Board Work Plan adopted on February 12, 2014, one of the three focus areas this year is "Regional Infrastructure."

The Board identified regional infrastructure in recognition of its inherent and critical role in supporting the region's future prosperity, accessibility, livability and sustainability.

The "focus on infrastructure" is expected to yield essential information on what defines and distinguishes our region's infrastructure, who owns and manages it, what it costs to maintain, what the future needs will be; how it is currently paid for and future financing/funding options; and where COG can add value to the dialogue through policy and advocacy, as well as in its role as an expert information resource.

To support the Board, a cross-agency staff "Infrastructure Team" has been created, led by Stuart Freudberg, Senior Director. The staff team reflects COG's core competencies in transportation, water resources, energy, and public safety; and will draw on additional resources as appropriate in these and other areas throughout the year, particularly with regard to financial data and analysis, as well as communications and health.

**Approach for 2014**

At each Board meeting, a different infrastructure sector will be highlighted, using a common approach and unifying themes. Topics to be covered are expected to include:

- Ownership/operations: public, private, public/private, governance
- Facilities: type and number, statistics (illustrative) such as miles of pipe, rail lines or highways, bridges, treatment plants, energy generation facilities, etc.
- Financial: annual capital & operating costs, fees, rates, funding sources, financing mechanisms
- Linkages: infrastructure sector interrelationships and interdependencies
- Policy and advocacy: policies, legislation, actions or advocacy positions

- Outreach and education: sharing what the Board learned with members, policy-makers, and the public
- Challenges: affordability, regulatory requirements, competing priorities
- Opportunities: financing mechanisms, innovative practices, shared services, and other opportunities to be identified during the course of the year

### **Infrastructure Sectors**

Transportation, Water, Energy, and Public Safety fall within COG's core competencies, defined roles, and active regional programs – with direct participation by public and private stakeholders. Communication, health, and finance are also fundamental areas where COG has capacity while additional engagement with partners and stakeholders is anticipated to supplement COG's capabilities.

### **Schedule**

In February, the Board focused on the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan as well as the METRO system and adopted a policy position in support of the METRO Momentum Plan and federal funding for transportation. For the next three months, the expected areas of focus are likely to include:

**April** – Drinking Water and Water Security

**May** – Financing

**June** – Energy or Communications

Based on Board input and guidance, the schedule will be fleshed out for the balance of the year. It is also anticipated that the COG Leadership Retreat will include a major component on regional infrastructure, and a fall conference or workshop will be developed with a regional infrastructure theme. Board guidance, as well as feedback and input from other policy boards and committees, and external stakeholders will be solicited to help shape the program moving forward.

### **Next Steps**

The Board is requested to discuss the approach outlined in this memorandum at its meeting on March 12, 2014, and provide direction and guidance to the staff as it implements this year's focus on regional infrastructure.

The staff looks forward to working with the Board on this very important and exciting initiative.