



METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIR QUALITY COMMITTEE (MWAQC)

December 16, 2020
12:00 P.M. – 2:00 P.M.
Webinar

Chairman: Brandon Todd, District of Columbia

MEETING SUMMARY

MWAQC MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES

Brandon Todd, District of Columbia (Chair)
Robert Day, City of College Park (Vice Chair)
Kambiz Agazi, Fairfax County
Tom Ballou, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
Kenny Boddye, Prince William County
Anita Bonds, District of Columbia
Collin Burrell, District of Columbia
Peggy Courtright, Maryland Department of the Environment
Kelly Crawford, District Department of Energy and Environment
Michelle Davis-Younger, City of Manassas
Tom Dernoga, Prince George's County
Stan Edwards, Montgomery County
Sylvia Glass, Loudoun County
Penny Gross, Fairfax County
Jason Groth, Charles County
Dawn Hawkins-Nixon, Prince George's County
Richard Jackson, District of Columbia
Peter Kovar, City of Takoma Park
Leta Mach, City of Greenbelt
Del Pepper, City of Alexandria
Jim Ponticello, Virginia Department of Transportation
Tom Ross, City of Fairfax
Dave Snyder, City of Falls Church
Kari Snyder, Maryland Department of Transportation
Dan Storck, Fairfax County

Ram Tangirala, District Department of Energy and Environment
Tamara Toles O'Laughlin, ACPAC Chair
James Walkinshaw, Fairfax County

OTHERS

Kathleen Field, Maryland Department of the Environment
Regina Moore, Virginia Department of Transportation
Karl Munder, Maryland Department of the Environment
Camela Speer, Fairfax County
Marcia Ways, Maryland Department of the Environment
Hannah Ashenafi, District Department of Energy and Environment
Grace Barnhill, Arlington County
Michele Blair, City of Laurel
Alexandra Brun, Maryland Department of the Environment
Samuel Gaber, Fairfax County
Joseph Jakuta, District Department of Energy and Environment
Irene Kang, District of Columbia
Takis Karantonis, Arlington County
Mary Travaglini, Montgomery County
Dolly Turner, District of Columbia
Norman Whitaker, Virginia Department of Transportation

COG STAFF

Chuck Bean, COG Executive Office
Leah Boggs, COG Department of Environmental Programs
Stacy Cook, COG Department of Transportation Planning
Jen Desimone, COG Department of Environmental Programs
Lyn Erickson, COG Department of Transportation Planning
Jeff King, COG Department of Environmental Programs
Sunil Kumar, COG Department of Environmental Programs
Tim Masters, COG Department of Environmental Programs

Mark Moran, COG Department of Transportation Planning
Erin Morrow, COG Department of Transportation Planning
Wanda Owens, COG Department of Transportation Planning
Jane Posey, COG Department of Transportation Planning
Nick Ramfos, COG Department of Transportation Planning
Kanti Srikanth, COG Department of Transportation Planning
Dusan Vuksan, COG Department of Transportation Planning
Steve Walz, COG Department of Environmental Programs

1. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD, APPROVE MINUTES, CHAIR'S REMARKS

Brandon Todd, MWAQC Chair

Chair Brandon Todd called the meeting to order. There were no public comments. The September meeting summary was approved without any changes.

2. COMMITTEE REPORTS

MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) – Tom Ballou

The MWAQC-TAC held a call on December 8 to discuss the following:

- COG staff provided an update on the impact of COVID-19 on air quality, transportation and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the metropolitan Washington region.
- Members discussed 2020 vehicle registration data used for air quality and transportation planning, namely the process for the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia to supply this data for all the jurisdictions involved.
- Members discussed the new MOVES model released by the EPA, which is used for transportation emissions modeling. The updated model reflects some of the recent federal policies, such as the SAFE Vehicle Rule, as well as updates to datasets, such as fuel data. The implications of these changes are yet to be determined.
- The EPA's proposed revised Cross-State Air Pollution Rule (CSAPR) was also discussed.

Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC) – Tamara Toles O'Laughlin

ACPAC held its final meeting of the year on November 16 to discuss the following:

- COG Environmental Programs staff updated the committee on anticipated actions to adopt the final 2030 Climate and Energy Action Plan and next steps.
- COG Transportation Planning staff provided an update on the Transportation and Climate Initiative's cap and invest program. CEEPC received a presentation on this initiative from the Georgetown Climate Center in January at the Washington Auto Show. The cap and invest program is a multi-state, regional program to regulate motor vehicle gasoline and on-road diesel fuel destined for final sale or consumption in the 13 participating jurisdictions or states (including the District of Columbia, VA and MD). TCI released a draft MOU in December 2019

outlining a proposal for the program. This program caps carbon emissions from transportation fuels and invests the revenue into programs and policies to further reduce GHG emissions. Carbon emissions from motor fuels will be capped and decline each year at a rate chosen by TCI's jurisdictions. The final MOU deadline was pushed back to late this fall due to COVID-19. The final MOU is pending approval, after which, participating jurisdictions will develop a "model rule" for the cap-and-invest program. The program could begin as early as January 2022.

- ACPAC will elect a new chair and vice chair at the January 25, 2021 meeting. New member recruitment is also underway. There are several vacancies open and COG staff are looking for references. The deadline to submit an application is December 18.

MWAQC Executive Committee – Jen Desimone

The MWAQC Executive Committee held a meeting in October to discuss the following:

- MWAQC Executive Committee met in October to approve DC's and VA's baseyear inventory for the 2015 ozone NAAQS following the completion of DOEE's and VDEQ's public comment process. No public comments were received.
- The Committee voted and unanimously approved the final inventories for submittal to EPA.

Clean Air Partners – Jen Desimone

Clean Air Partners have been involved in the following:

- Clean Air Partners held its 10th annual slogan contest for local middle and elementary students. Students in grades 4-8 were asked to submit a creative slogan that brings to light solutions to air pollution and climate change and inspire people to take actions to improve our region's air quality. Winners are:
 - Category 1 (Grades 4-6): Anne Arundel County, MD, Logan Jones, Severna Park Middle School, "Small changes by many = Large changes for our future"
 - Category 2 (Grades 7-8): Prince George's County, Anna Newman, Benjamin Tasker Middle School "Every extra step you take, a better world it will make."
- Clean Air Partners participated in fall and winter outreach activities.
 - Children's Environmental Health Day - Clean Air Partners was an official partner with the Children's Environmental Health Network on their annual Children's Environmental Health Day (October 8, 2020). CEH held a day-long virtual event that included a live stream event and Twitter Chat that helped CAP promote the On the Air education curriculum.
 - Travel Clean Tuesday Campaign - This year, Clean Air Partners hosted an eco-driving campaign - designating Tuesdays between November 10 – December 22 as Travel Clean Tuesday. Each Tuesday, CAP provided tips to help residents travel in a safe and eco-friendly way – per CDC guidelines.
 - The campaign included partnering with local digital ambassadors ("social media street teams") –to promote content through Instagram and Facebook.
 - Media Coverage – Received media coverage during the campaign.

Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) – Jeff King

CEEPC held its final meeting of the year on November 18 to discuss the following:

- The focus of CEEPC in 2020 was working on the new 2030 Climate and Energy Action Plan. The COG Board of Directors adopted new 2030 goals in their October meeting, including a new GHG reduction goal for 2030, which is a 50 percent reduction below 2005 levels by 2030, as well as resilience goals to become a Climate Ready Region and making significant progress to

be a Climate Resilient Region by 2030. This means local governments will be assessing current and future climate risks and actively integrating climate planning across government plans, operations and communications.

- At CEEPC's November meeting, COG staff brought the Climate and Energy Action Plan document to the committee and presented members with an overview of the plan. The plan includes 25 mitigation actions aimed at reducing GHG emissions across all sectors, as well as 10 climate resilience actions. CEEPC adopted the plan. The next task is looking to 2021 to begin supporting implementation of the various actions in the plan.

3. LOCAL AND STATE UPDATES

Local Members and State Air Agencies

- Mary Travaglini (Montgomery County) said that the county will have its first "Go Electric" event, tentatively scheduled for May 1, 2021. This may be pushed back due to COVID-19. The initial idea was to encourage people to recycle and turn in gas-powered yard equipment. Participants would receive discounts on electric yard equipment from vendors willing to provide them. This idea has been expanded to include solar power, lightbulb exchanges, appliances, electric cars. The county is also looking at funding to provide subsidies to those who have income barriers and wish to switch to electric equipment. The county is seeking partners for this event.
- Takis Karantonis (Arlington County) said that since Virginia is a Dillon Rule state, the county is seeking ways to incentivize greener building standards. The county recently approved a green building incentive policy that has a strong focus on reducing GHG emissions, establishes LEED Gold as the baseline requirement for additional building density, increases energy efficiency requirements, sets a 15 percent EV-ready parking space requirement, requires on-site or off-site solar energy and where this is not feasible, requires contributions to the green building fund. The new policy also has equity considerations included. This policy will be reviewed every three years.
- Kelly Crawford (DOEE) said that the District submitted comments and oral testimony regarding CSAPR update. DOEE is also in the process of stakeholder engagement regarding a multi-state medium- and heavy-duty diesel, zero emissions vehicle MOU that the District signed onto in July of 2020. They are working with NASCAUM to reach out to more environmental justice groups for feedback on the MOU. They expect to see action on this in the spring, 2021. Lastly, the District submitted the baseyear inventory setup, as approved by the committee.
- Kenny Boddye (Prince William County) said that the county is looking to implement a C-PACE program. The county is also working on establishing a joint sustainability task force to focus on sustainability issues. The county has also been looking into their vehicle fleet and public buildings with the aim to improve energy efficiency. For the first time in the county's history, a resolution was passed that includes 2030 and 2050 GHG emission reduction goals that align with COG's climate goals that were passed last month. The county is also looking at ways to incorporate equity and environmental justice into their comprehensive plan, including their community energy master plan. The county partnered with SolSmart, Sun Tribe Solar, and other community partners to work on solar advocacy and accessibility to county residents.
- Dave Snyder (City of Falls Church) said that the city's renovated city hall building achieved LEED Silver and the city is in the process of completing their high school building, which will have geothermal energy.

4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Brandon Todd, MWAQC Chair

The 2021 MWAQC slate of officers were presented to the committee for approval. The nominating committee included Brandon Todd representing the District of Columbia, Leta Mach representing the State of Maryland, and Del Pepper representing the Commonwealth of Virginia. The proposed slate of officers was sent to MWAQC members earlier this month and was posted on the COG website. The

committee has nominated the following slate of officers: MWAQC Chair, Robert Day (City of College Park), the District of Columbia MWAQC Vice Chair, Anita Bonds (District of Columbia), Maryland MWAQC Vice Chair, Peter Kovar (City of Takoma Park), and Virginia MWAQC Vice Chair, Takis Karantonis (Arlington County). The slate of officers was approved unanimously.

5. IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON REGIONAL AIR QUALITY AND TELEWORK

Sunil Kumar, COG Environmental Engineer

Sunil Kumar presented an analysis of the impact of COVID-19 related behavior changes on regional air quality. Ozone and fine particulate matter levels have been lower this year compared to 2019 due to COVID-19 restrictions and closures, as well as weather factors that were unfavorable to the formation and build-up of pollutants. COG has calculated GHG emission reduction estimates based on limited data (better data will become available next year for more detailed analysis). COG's estimates show a 40 percent average reduction in transportation emissions from the on-road sector (based on an annualized 12 percent decrease in traffic volume), a 7.9 percent average reduction in the electricity sector (based on an annualized 2.4 percent drop in electricity consumption), and a 65 percent average reduction from the aviation sector (based on an annualized 65 percent decrease in flights). Total GHG emission reductions for 2020 are estimated to be around 5.4 percent below business-as-usual. This estimate is based on data from the period between mid-March and mid-July. COG staff will update this estimate as more data becomes available. Regarding on road transportation, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) dropped most dramatically in April but was back to a similar pre-COVID-level by July. Nationally and regionally, truck travel decreased in April as well, but not as significantly as passenger vehicle travel. Truck travel was back to normal levels by June. Average roadway speeds increased in March due to lower traffic volumes. Average roadway speeds have begun to drop back down since then, as traffic increased, but it has remained above the average roadway speeds seen pre-pandemic. Metrorail ridership fell by 87 percent in March/April. Metrobus ridership fell by 60 percent in the same timeframe. Ridership for both are steadily rising but are still far below pre-pandemic levels. In a comparison of the 10 largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas, the metropolitan Washington region experienced the least amount of non-farm job losses between March and April this year. The unemployment rate tripled from 3.3 percent to 9.8 percent between March and April but has slowly decreased to around 6.6 percent as of October 2020. The 12-month total of new housing units authorized in the COG region has decreased since July 2019, falling far below the adopted COG target of 32,000 new housing units (as of October 2020, the 12-month total is at 19,667). Office vacancy rates have increased slightly in the region. Regarding air travel, monthly air enplanements fell dramatically between February and April. Since then, there has been a gradual recovery, but monthly enplanements remain far below 2019 levels.

Nicholas Ramfos, COG Transportation Operations Program Director

Nicholas Ramfos presented the results from the Commuter Connections 2020 Employer Telework Survey. The survey was conducted in the spring of 2020. The survey is conducted every three years to define the portion of teleworking influenced by assistance that is provided by COG to employers in the region. The survey was expanded this year to include questions on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teleworking. The survey was undertaken via email and postal mail invitations for the internet-based survey. The survey was followed up with a telephone survey. It was challenging to conduct, as many people were not in their offices or they had gone out of business. The survey had a 4 percent response rate; 180 employers out of 4,539 responded. A briefing report is available with in-depth survey response details. COG staff did not calculate any statistically significant confidence levels due to the low response rate. The survey results can be categorized as a "very large focus group". The 180 respondents were distributed throughout the region and represented a wide range of employer sizes and types. 96 percent of worksites shut down or reduced on-site operation either completely (81 percent) or partially (15 percent) since the pandemic began. 97 percent of worksites had at least some telework measures in place since the pandemic began. For 55 percent of worksites, telework was full-time for all employees. This is no surprise for the COG region, as the region is telework ready. Many

large employers work in the region, as well as federal government agencies. They were able to easily pivot to telework. At the time of the survey, 95 percent of worksites had telework. Telework was common pre-pandemic too with 76 percent of respondents having some telework before. The average percentage of employees teleworking before the pandemic was 36 percent. During the pandemic, the average percentage of employees teleworking grew to 82 percent. During the pandemic, 14 percent of worksites developed a formal telework program or policy. 61 percent of worksites already had a formal program or policy in place before the pandemic. 25 percent of worksite said that they had no formal telework program or policy. 62 percent of worksites with a telework program made changes to accommodate the pandemic; most making an expansion to telework eligibility. 92 percent of respondents said their organizations anticipated the continuation of telework after the stay at home restrictions were lifted. About a third of the employers said that they had considered or discussed other virus prevention strategies at the worksite such as providing masks and other personal protective equipment, as well as social distancing measures. 50 percent of employers noted a “significant” telework issue, the key issues included issues with child/dependent care, as well as employee isolation. 80 percent of employers said managers reported benefits of managing remotely, such as increased worker productivity and increased worker/manager communication. Several studies have already shown that remote workers tend to be more productive and remote working can lead to better communication. 92 percent of employers said that employees reported benefits of teleworking.

Discussion:

- The survey did not include questions about the Paycheck Protection Program.
- The childcare piece is of particular importance. There have been several people in other committees discussing the challenges of both working and looking after children/dependents.
- To summarize both presentations in the context of air quality, teleworking is clearly up and likely to continue, while GHG emissions are down. The use of transit and public transportation is also down, while use of four-wheel vehicles is rising and truck traffic never really declined. Teleworking needs to be encouraged, as well as public transportation.
- The District’s Mobile Sources Committee for Ozone Transport Commission has also formed a telework subgroup that is working on recommendations for air quality impacts of telework.
- COG staff are conducting an analysis of how the pandemic has changed travel behavior and this work will be more focused on commuters.

6. MARYLAND AFTERMARKET CATALYTIC CONVERTER RULE

Karl Munder, Maryland Department of the Environment

In response to member requests during the September meeting, Karl Munder briefed members on the technical details of Maryland’s Aftermarket Catalytic Converter (AMCC) rule. Over the past month, two important things have happened: Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia have begun discussions on regional adoption of the rule, and the EPA has begun to act. Maryland is in the process of publishing the regulation for comment and adoption. The District has indicated an interest in adopting a similar regulation, and Virginia is interested, but has numerous challenges, including prohibitive legislation affecting its ability to move forward with adopting a similar regulation. On November 23, EPA issued a prepublication copy of a Federal Register notice that discussed potential for a reinvigorated effort to update the EPA 1986 AMCC program to ensure that AMCCs work and reduce emissions. This prepublication was released in the Federal Register on December 14, 2020. This program is much better if required by the EPA. Maryland will move slowly in adopting the AMCC rule with the hope that the EPA solves the problem. Maryland regulation does include a sunset provision should EPA adopt an effective federal program. The region has made great strides towards meeting the 70 parts per billion Ozone Standard. A significant decrease in the number of bad ozone days for Maryland and the COG region started in 2010. This has happened even as the number of days exceeding 90 degrees has increased. The COG region has been close to achieving the 70 parts

per billion Ozone Standard. For the past five to seven years, this level has been hovering around 71 to 72 parts per billion. A regional AMCC policy could be the strategy that allows the area to achieve the Ozone Standard. The changing chemistry of ozone formation offers some good news. In the Mid-Atlantic, NOx reduction efforts seem to be returning unexpected dividends. The regional NOx reductions will clearly reduce ozone levels. It appears that in 2017, enough NOx had been taken out of the system that the chemistry had changed. The region now gets more ozone reduction per ton of NOx that is reduced compared to 2000. CARB AMCCs would offer lower cost options for motorists compared to OEM converters. The region would see a reduction in locally produced NOx and other ozone forming emissions to assist with meeting the federal ozone standard. It would provide consumers assurance that a vehicle's emission control system will be functioning properly after a converter replacement. This policy is supported by manufacturers, particularly the Manufacturers of Emission Controls Association (MECA), which has spoken favorably before at MWAQC meetings, as well as Autocare. This provides momentum for other neighboring states and the EPA to adopt a more consistent policy. There is potential for large regional emission reductions; approximately 3.5 tons per day in the Maryland-DC-Virginia region. Compared to other options, this is a large NOx reduction opportunity. The Maryland AMCC regulation requires a CARB AMCC on all 1996 and newer model year vehicles. No used, recycled or salvaged converters are allowed. Installers, parts manufacturers, and distributors are the responsible entities under the regulation. Non-CARB parts can still be shipped to an in-state distribution center and warehouse, through the state, or sold out of state. The regulation is expected to take effect on October 1, 2023. The regulation does include a sunset provision. This regulation expires when the US EPA adopts a regulation or an enforcement policy that provides for the sale, supply, advertisement, or installation of an AMCC that can reduce vehicle emissions at the same or greater level. Maryland would like to see the AMCC program adopted throughout the DC-Maryland-Virginia non-attainment region. If not by the EPA, then through state regulation. The regulation offers significant NOx reductions, is a cost-effective emission reduction strategy with added consumer protections, it has vocal support from the manufacturers and is also being considered or adopted in many other OTC states.

The committee discussed the feasibility of adopting a similar region-wide regulation:

- Dave Snyder (City of Falls Church) expressed support for a motion to continue the collaboration and noted the importance on this issue. There may be different ways to implement this and MWAQC may want to revisit more specific actions in the future.
- At MWAQC's September meeting, members spoke about the need for a consistent AMCC regulation across the region, starting with an evaluation, which could be done in partnership with the States Air Agencies.

Dave Snyder moved to support continued intensive dialogue and collaboration between the region's three state-level jurisdictions and that this issue be addressed at the next MWAQC meeting for members to discuss additional, detailed action. This was seconded by Tom Dernoga (Prince George's County). The motion was passed unanimously.

7. ADJOURN

This was Brandon Todd's last meeting as MWAQC Chair. This was also Steve Walz' last MWAQC meeting as Director of COG's Department of Environmental Programs. The meeting was adjourned at 11:40am. The next MWAQC meeting is scheduled for February 24, 2021.