

A COMMITMENT TO A VIBRANT FUTURE



2007
ANNUAL REPORT



METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

A Regional Partnership

For 50 years, local officials have been doing business at COG.
Wednesday, November 14, 2007; A18

IT WAS 1957, and local officials from the Washington region had gathered to talk about common problems. First, though, they had to introduce themselves to each other. From that inauspicious beginning rose an important partnership among unlikely governments -- one that has helped to shape the capital region. The 50th anniversary of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments is occasion to celebrate its accomplishments, and to goad it to meet future challenges.

COG truly has come a long way from that day in April 1957 when leaders from the District of Columbia and its then largely rural surroundings exchanged names and wondered about their differences. Today, it is the only

forum in which public officials from the District, Maryland and Virginia come together regularly to talk about complex regional issues. Its contributions in areas such as transportation and growth, water and air quality, and social issues have been immeasurable. Consider its leadership in pushing for the Metro subway and bus system or its wisdom in seeing the need for an airport at Dulles when doubters could see only farmland. COG pushed for home rule for the District, and it focused early attention on HIV-AIDS and homelessness.

There are, of course, limits to COG's effectiveness. No group representing 21 governments from two states and the District is going to be able to reach consensus all the time. Regionalism does, alas, give way to parochialism, but

we shudder to think what kind of public discourse there would be without COG. The problems that confront the area demand the kind of forward-looking research, analysis and discussion that have been a hallmark of the council. In fact, COG officials are using the anniversary as a call to arms on issues that need addressing, both in the short term and over the next half-century. Among those are winning a dedicated revenue source for Metro, preserving open spaces, providing more affordable housing and developing a regional approach to climate change. That ambitiousness is yet another affirmation of the Council of Governments' importance to the area. May it have many happy returns.



BACKGROUND

For 50 years, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, known as COG, has helped develop solutions to issues of regional importance. The organization is comprised of elected officials from 21 local governments, members of the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, and

members of the U.S. Congress. Policies are set through the COG Board of Directors, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board and the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee. These three boards meet on a monthly basis and are responsible for a broad range of issues under the

COG umbrella. Supporting committees help shape programs through the dedicated work of a wide array of public servants, from police chiefs to social workers.

MISSION

COG is the premier forum to resolve regional issues by convening local governments and other stakeholders.

It is the place where intergovernmental plans are developed to enhance the quality of life in the National Capital Region.

VISION

The elected officials of COG envision the National Capital Region as the best place to live, work, play and learn.

COG fosters regionalism by promoting regional partnerships, developing best practices, applying cutting-edge technologies, and providing a forum for decision-making.



Message from the Executive Director



DAVID J ROBERTSON

In my 20 years at COG-five of which I have served as executive director-I have seen firsthand the positive role this organization has played in shaping the National Capital Region.

Throughout our 50th anniversary year, the tremendous support from our friends in the private and nonprofit sectors, the participation of current and past Board Members, who took the lead role in planning our festivities, the very favorable

editorial in The Washington Post-all of these things underscore the high regard area leaders have for COG.

I cannot thank enough our diverse group of anniversary sponsors. Their generosity was a testament to the wonderful public-private partnerships that have been COG's hallmark for 50 years.

As great as it was to reflect on our many achievements over the years, we all know that this organization is

at its best when looking forward. I am confident that through our legacy of cooperation, clear vision and mission, proactive Board of Directors and talented staff, COG will continue working to ensure the long-term vitality, prosperity and sustainability of this remarkable region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David J. Robertson". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

David J. Robertson
Executive Director

Message from the Board Chair



MICHAEL KNAPP

In 2007, COG celebrated its 50th anniversary with an elegant dinner dance and put together a forum of experts to consider how the region is likely to grow over the next half century. Throughout the year, we were reminded how bold action by creative and farsighted leaders shaped the region we live in today. Long-term regional planning efforts of the past have led to many major projects that now greatly influence the quality of life of each resident in the metropolitan Washington area.

About 50 years ago, planning was underway for the Beltway, and 40 years ago plans were being made to construct Metro.

Today, area leaders are committed to the Greater Washington 2050 initiative in which we must envision ways to ensure that this area remains a vibrant, efficient and coordinated region-with all of our jurisdictions working together, not as 21 individual entities.

Not all of the important needs for the next 50 years will involve major projects or even highly noticeable ones. What matters most in planning for our future is that we identify essential projects of all shapes and sizes-whether on the ground or still on paper-and focus on them now.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Knapp', written over a white background.

Michael Knapp
2008 Board of Directors Chair

The future is COG's business. For 50 years, through its population, employment and housing forecasts, its long-range transportation plans, and long-term Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts, COG has been a consistent voice encouraging its member governments to focus on the decades ahead.

In addition to the region's traditional issues associated with growth—traffic congestion, a lack of affordable housing, and air and water pollution—new challenges are emerging. How area leaders respond to topics like energy use, climate change, and the availability of broadband internet access will determine what kind of region future generations will inherit.

While 2007 was a year to celebrate a 50th anniversary and past successes, COG also moved forward with an ambitious agenda featuring several new programs and initiatives. Whether in transportation planning or public safety communications, environmental programs or housing, COG's ability to innovate, evolve, and bring diverse groups together will help the region meet its long-term goals.

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CLIMATE CHANGE

Coastal flooding. Prolonged heat waves and severe droughts. More intense hurricanes. New diseases. Any or all of these scenarios could threaten the National Capital Region unless progress is made to limit the impacts of climate change.

Fortunately, COG and its member governments are joining a growing network of communities across the country and world that are making climate change a top priority. In April, the COG Board of Directors launched one of the nation's first regional climate change initiatives to focus on controlling greenhouse gas emissions locally. Through the new Climate Change Steering Committee chaired by Montgomery County Council Member Nancy Floreen, COG

is focused on measuring local greenhouse gas emissions, establishing a reduction goal for the region, and preparing a catalogue of current activities and best practices currently underway in the area.

A COG study found that greenhouse gases are forecast to rise 35 percent by 2030 and 44 percent by 2050 if action is not taken to reduce them. The climate change initiative builds upon COG's Strategic Energy Plan and established programs by area governments such as energy efficiency programs, cooperative wind energy, alternative fuel and hybrid vehicle purchases, green building incentives and public education. Several COG members have also joined national initiatives like Cool Counties.



GREEN BUILDING

The COG Board of Directors approved green building standards for area governments to lessen the impact of growth and development on the region's natural resources. The Board became one of the first regional bodies to adopt the environmentally-friendly guidelines set by the U.S. Green Building Council known as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). COG is urging its member jurisdictions to apply the "LEED Silver" standards for the construction of new government

buildings and "LEED Certified Plus" for commercial structures. Green buildings use designs that are energy efficient, control storm-water runoff, and reduce construction-related waste.

COG's Intergovernmental Green Building Group reported that buildings are responsible for 70 percent of electricity use and 38 percent of carbon dioxide emissions. While the COG action applies only to most new government buildings, excluding schools, and to new

commercial properties, the Board is also examining green building standards for existing buildings, schools and residential properties. Several localities including Montgomery, Fairfax, and Arlington Counties and the District of Columbia already have adopted green building standards. Once considered too expensive, area officials are turning to green buildings as a cost-effective solution because of their highly efficient heating and cooling systems, the use of renewable energy, and automatic water faucets and toilets.

AIR QUALITY

Area governments continue to make great progress in reducing harmful ground-level ozone from the air, which is welcome news to residents with respiratory ailments. The Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC), an independent policy board staffed by COG and charged with creating air quality plans for the region, approved a new State Implementation Plan that shows that the region will meet the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's tougher standards for ozone by the fall of 2009.

The plan contains a list of measures to reduce pollution from ozone-forming gases. In addition to federal and state measures, local governments and agencies in the region are expanding their purchases of wind energy and low emissions vehicles, and are building upon their energy efficiency programs. Light-emitting diode (LED) traffic signals that are being installed throughout the region will also save energy and help lower smog levels. MWAQC also continued to work on a plan to meet the EPA's standard for fine particles, another harmful air pollutant. Levels of fine particle pollution have been declining in the region since 2005, and under the new plan, these levels are expected to continue to decrease.

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GREATER WASHINGTON

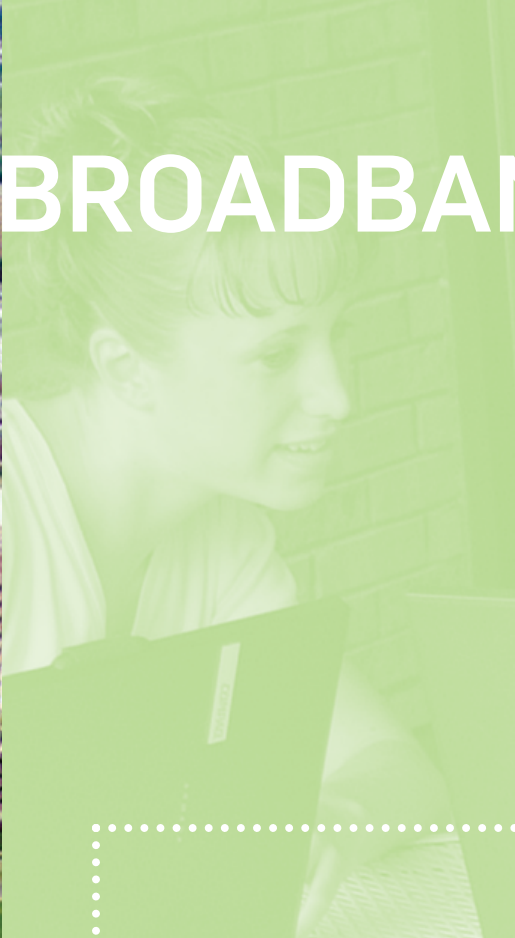
2050

The COG Board launched an ambitious work program for Greater Washington 2050, an initiative that will guide regional and Mid-Atlantic development for decades. Through the initiative, members of the Greater Washington 2050 Coalition—including key government, business and civic

leaders—will create a compact of regional planning goals to shape development and transportation investments, circulate new growth scenarios of what the region will look like a half century from now, and listen and respond to the diverse voices that have a stake in the region's future.



BROADBAND ACCESS



Quality of life can be measured in the way people work each day and how much time they have for recreation. Reforms ended the seven-day work week early in the 20th century and later, the availability of household appliances had an impact. Now, the National Capital Region is ready to benefit from the rapid development and delivery of computer technology

and its power to again change life at work and at home.

The COG Board took a step toward that future when it adopted a report calling for faster Internet access to be made available to most households in the region. The Broadband Access Task Force recommended that local governments provide Internet connections at the speed of

1 gigabit - equal to one billion bits of information transferred per second - to every household by the year 2015.

Task force members, including Chair Lori Waters of Loudoun County, said the move will require partnering with the private sector to remove governmental barriers. The goals: keeping a competitive edge and enhancing residents' quality of life.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN



The 2007 long-range transportation plan, approved by the TPB in January 2008, included two notable highway projects in Virginia—High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes on I-95/I-395 and spot improvements to I-66 inside the Beltway. The I-95/I-395 project

would take the existing High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) carpool lanes between Eads Street in Arlington County and the Town of Dumfries in Prince William County and construct HOT lanes. The tolls are set to change based on the time of day, day of week and level of

congestion in order to improve the flow of traffic. The I-66 project will widen three spots on westbound I-66 inside the Beltway from two to three lanes.

MOBILITY STUDY



Current trends suggest a daunting future characterized by many hours of driving in stop-and-go congestion as commuters travel longer distances between work and home. Through the Regional Mobility & Accessibility Study, the TPB is asking questions like, "What if more

households were added to the core of the region?" or "What if all the transit projects and studies currently being considered were actually built?" The study consists of several detailed scenarios that would help decrease traffic congestion and increase transit use, walking and biking. The TPB has actively shared its findings

through a number of well-attended public outreach meetings across the region and has encouraged area officials, planners and citizens to think about how the region should plan for the future.

TRANSPORTATION/LAND USE PROGRAM

The TPB's new initiative, the Transportation/Land Use Connections (TLC) Program, has provided a spark for jurisdictions wanting to create more vibrant and livable communities.

Several of last year's completed projects will improve pedestrian safety and traffic flow near area transit stations and military bases.

The TLC program provides up to \$20,000 worth of technical assistance to enhance projects that better link transportation and land use. It also shares information about the various projects with regional leaders. Of the five completed TLC

projects, two were located in Maryland, two in Virginia and one in the District. The projects are selected based on their geographic distribution, diversity and need as well as their consistency with other area efforts and potential to be imitated around the region. The TLC Program won the 2007 Outstanding Award for an Implemented Program/Tool from the National Capital Area Chapter of the American Planning Association.

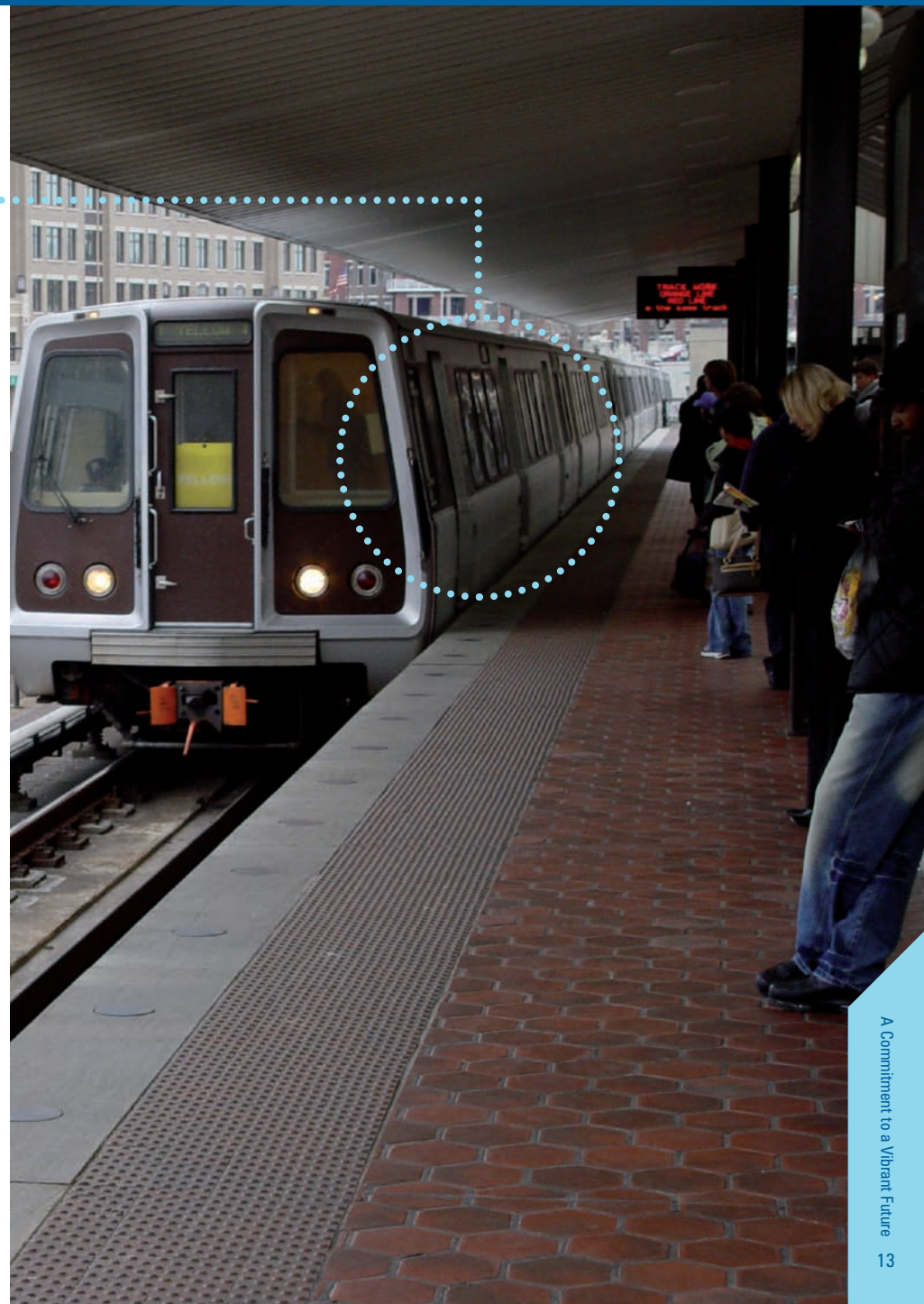


TRAVEL SURVEY

Last year, the TPB undertook the region's first large-scale household travel survey in more than a decade to help guide future regional transportation planning. The TPB's Household Travel Survey assesses the travel behaviors of 10,000 randomly-selected area households to develop new forecasting models for use in future transit and highway planning. The survey will also help local

governments learn which transportation improvement projects will benefit their growing communities most. The survey was given to between 800 and 900 households each month through March 2008. Participants were asked to keep a record of all travel made by family members, from commuting to work and school to trips to ATM machines, for a period of 24 hours.

The survey will also help local governments learn which transportation improvement projects will benefit their growing communities most.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING



Because communities should include people with a variety of jobs and incomes, COG continues to promote affordable housing initiatives. COG's Commuter Connections Program launched Live Near Your Work, an initiative that educates businesses on housing incentives and programs to help employees live closer to their jobs. The initiative also includes an online resource guide that provides commuters with information on

down payment, closing cost and rehabilitation assistance as well as other national, regional, state and local programs.

In addition, the Washington Area Housing Partnership worked to build community support for affordable housing with a media campaign that emphasized "The People You Need, Need You." Only 24 percent of the homes for sale are affordable to people with mid-range incomes,

forcing those with essential community roles to move farther and farther away from their jobs. COG member governments will also support a larger regional affordable housing loan fund - the OpenDoor Housing Fund - as a result of a merger of two smaller funds, the Washington Area Housing Trust Fund and the Unitarian Universalist Affordable Housing Corporation.

PUBLIC

SAFETY

Quick access to information on a suspect's criminal record and any contact the suspect previously had with law enforcement through other localities is a tool all law enforcement officers need but few have. Last year, a new system-the Law Enforcement Information

Exchange (LInX)-was made available to the region sponsored by the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) of the U.S. Department of the Navy and the COG Police Chiefs Committee. Using a standard web browser, the system provides secure access to data provided by the participating federal, state, county

and municipal law enforcement agencies. Officers around the region can now use the system to search for up-to-date, detailed information about an individual, including any police contact such as incident records, arrest record, traffic stops, booking records, mug shots, and a listing on the sexual offender registry.

HOMELAND SECURITY

Security in our homes and neighborhoods remain key issues, even as the nation continues to recover from the Gulf Coast hurricanes and the 9-11 terrorist attacks. In March, COG's Fire Chiefs Committee held a press conference to showcase an ambulance bus designed to handle 20 patients in stretchers and other new equipment that improves regional emergency preparedness. The equipment was purchased using federal Urban Areas Security

Initiative (UASI) funds. The region received almost \$62 million in UASI funds for FY 2007-an increase in funding from the previous year-but a total still 56 percent short of the total amount requested. The funds will pay to upgrade local bomb squads, complete radio communication upgrades within all underground segments of the WMATA Metrorail tunnels and enhance intelligence and information sharing across the region.





GALA



On November 15, hundreds of area leaders gathered at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium for the COG anniversary gala, where current and past members and special guests commemorated 50 years of regional partnership and progress.



COG's 50th anniversary was an ideal occasion for area leaders and stakeholders to celebrate and promote a half century of cooperation and success in the National Capital Region. COG developed an ambitious agenda for the anniversary year under the direction of a distinguished committee of current and former elected officials, led by District of Columbia Council Member At-Large Carol Schwartz. Through the generous support of an impressive group of 21 major funding sponsors, the 50th Anniversary Committee helped plan a thought-provoking forum in May, a celebratory gala in November, a professionally-produced book on COG's history and a series of public outreach initiatives.



ANNIVERSARY



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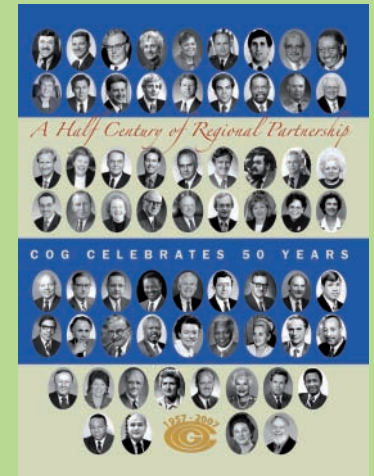


FORUM

Charting the Future of the National Capital Region 1957-2007-2057, a special event of the anniversary, was a lively, thought-provoking forum on the key challenges facing the region in the next half-century. The forum, which was held at The George Washington University, drew 200 public, private, civic and education leaders. Panelists and participants said that area leaders must tackle the affordable housing issue before it becomes a serious crisis, work at a larger planning scale with neighboring regions like Baltimore and Richmond, and make energy use and climate change greater priorities. The discussion that took place at the forum is already influencing new COG initiatives like Greater Washington 2050.

PUBLICATION

In recognition of the anniversary, COG produced a history book with hundreds of photos of past and current members. A Half Century of Regional Partnership: COG Celebrates 50 Years chronicles the interwoven history of COG and the metropolitan Washington area. It was widely distributed to COG members, sponsors and friends and is available to order from the COG web site.



2007 COG EVENTS



10th Anniversary Employer Recognition Awards



Foster Parent Appreciation Gala



10th Anniversary Clean Air Partners



Anacostia River Boat Trip



State-Local Partnership Dinner

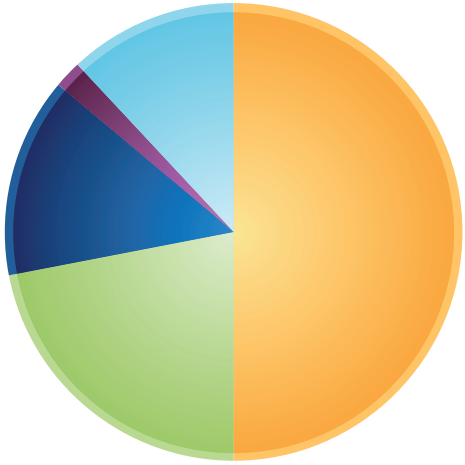
2007 Award Winners

**Arlington County Board Member
Jay Fisette**
*The Elizabeth and David Scull
Metropolitan Public Service Award*

Takoma Park Mayor Kathy Porter
The Career Achievement Award

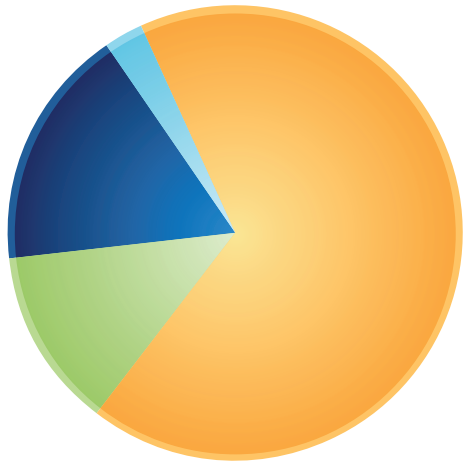
Alice Ferguson Foundation
Regional Partnership Award

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS



FY 2007 Revenue Sources

Source	Amount (\$)
Federal	12,545,990
State	5,521,728
Special Contribution	3,539,678
Other Revenue	540,000
Membership Dues	2,970,824
Total	25,118,220



FY 2007 Revenue by Program

Source	Amount (\$)
Transportation	16,642,000
Human Services, Planning, Public Safety	3,219,297
Environmental	4,382,550
Member Services	874,373
Total	25,118,220

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