

# Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

## 2009 State Policy Platform

### Virginia

#### Energy and Climate Change

##### **Policy Statement**

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COG endorses strategies that address the region's diversity of energy sources, help manage its energy demand, mitigate the effects of energy disruptions, and enhance overall environmental quality. The region will benefit most from policies and practices that significantly increase the energy and fuel efficiency of vehicles, appliances, and buildings. These strategies include aggressive initiatives for increased energy efficiency, promoting awareness of energy users in both public and private sectors, and support for the adoption and implementation of green building standards. The *National Capital Region Climate Change Report* contains a range of policy positions for creating incentives to implement energy efficiency and financing of greenhouse gas emission reduction measures.

##### **Strategic Plan Relationship**

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COG promotes and supports implementation of technologies that foster a diverse supply of reliable, affordable, and environmentally sound energy sources for the National Capital Region.

##### **COG History**

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COG has a history of supporting a clean and sustainable environment through efforts such as the Green Building Program, Energy Star, Alternative Fuels Clean Cities Partnership, Clean Air Partners, Wise Water Use Program, and others. In 2007 COG approved the creation of a Climate Change initiative and establishing a Climate Change Steering Committee. The Committee has released the *National Capital Region Climate Report* that includes significant greenhouse gas reduction goals for the region and a series of recommendations to help area leaders and citizens meet the targets.

#### Chesapeake Bay and Potomac River

##### **Policy Statement**

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COG supports legislation that would ensure adequate funding levels for waste water and storm water management to meet the clean-up goals and targets for the Chesapeake Bay and Potomac River, including programs to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution. COG also recommends adequate funding for agricultural conservation practices in rural areas, given the significant share of agricultural nutrient loads to the bay.

##### **Strategic Plan Relationship**

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COG promotes sound management and stewardship of all the environmental resources of the National Capital Region, through analysis, monitoring, policy development, planning, advocacy, support for regional agreements, and promotion of best practices.

##### **COG History**

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COG Board action in support of Chesapeake Bay restoration dates back to 1986 and is grounded in (R25-97) a resolution establishing four policy principles to guide regional involvement in this area. In pursuit of the equity principle, COG has advocated for funding from federal and state sources. The Board established the Chesapeake Bay Policy Committee in 1998 to track developments and make recommendations to the Board on regional Bay policies. The CBPC has brought recommendations on various state and federal fiscal initiatives to the Board in recent years.

## Growth

### **Policy Statement**

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COG supports legislation that would promote balanced, sustainable growth and livable communities and enable both the state and local governments the ability to coordinate land use, transportation and environmental decisions.

### **Strategic Plan Relationship**

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COG promotes balanced, sustainable growth and livable communities.

### **COG History**

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In 1996, COG prepared the first regional Composite Map of Adopted Land Use Plans to assist local government coordination on land use planning. A Cooperative Forecasting Program was established to develop neighborhood, jurisdictional and regional long-range growth forecasts based upon local plans and common regional assumptions concerning population, housing and the economy. Using the Cooperative Forecasts, COG developed Regional Activity Centers and Clusters maps as a tool to guide the linkage between land use and transportation.

## Housing

### **Policy Statement**

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COG supports legislation that minimizes the disruption and impact of home foreclosures on its residents. Legislation should also recognize the critical need for affordable and work force housing for both government employees and the general public.

### **Strategic Plan Relationship**

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COG promotes creative initiatives to increase the supply and equitable distribution of affordable housing units in the NCR.

### **COG History**

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Since the 1970's COG has supported regional "fair share" goals for affordable housing units. In 1991, COG established the Washington Area Housing Partnership (WAHP) advocate for the need for affordable housing. This year, COG convened a regional summit to address housing foreclosure, commissioned research to document the extent of the issues, and provided small grants to community organizations that are assisting homeowners.

## Homeland Security

### **Policy Statement**

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COG supports legislation that would define local government first responders, mobilized during a state declared emergency, as state employees under EMAC. COG further supports legislation that maintains current levels of state funding and ensure that federal funding received for homeland security and emergency preparedness flows through to local governments to offset costs.

### **Strategic Plan Relationship**

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COG promotes regional emergency response coordination planning, training, exercises, education, and communication for the NCR through convening and facilitating the efforts of local governments and other regional stakeholders. COG provides professional, technical, and secretariat support to 21 local jurisdictions, MD, VA, DC, private, and nonprofit organizations to improve homeland security preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities in the National Capital Region.

### **COG History**

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COG has a distinguished history of working with key officials in MD, VA, and DC to improve emergency preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities in the National Capital Region. In September 2002, COG adopted the Regional Emergency Coordination Plan (RECP) and established the Regional Incident Communication and Coordination System (RICCS). Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) funds provided to COG by the Senior Policy Group and the Chief Administrative Officers since 2003 continue to contribute to enhanced regional preparedness.

## Transportation

### **Policy Statement**

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COG urges the Virginia General Assembly to adopt legislation that would ensure the annual appropriation of \$50 million for the capital and preventative maintenance needs of WMATA so that the region can benefit from recently authorized federal matching funds.

### **Strategic Plan Relationship**

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COG promotes a multi-modal transportation system that: gives priority to management, performance, maintenance, and safety of all modes and facilities, supports a balance of transit and roads initiatives, provides efficient movement of people and goods, provides reasonable access at reasonable cost, and promotes a safe pedestrian environment.

### **COG History**

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In 2004, COG, the Greater Washington Board of Trade, and the Federal City Council jointly established a special panel to examine Metro's future funding needs and recommended that Metro compact jurisdictions implement a regional dedicated revenue source to address projected shortfalls for capital maintenance and system enhancements, and further recommended that the federal government participate significantly in addressing projected shortfalls.