



COG CLIMATE & ENERGY PROJECT UPDATES

5/22/2019

Metropolitan Washington Racial Equity Learning Cohort

Through the Chief Administrative Officer's Racial Equity Work Group, COG is partnering with the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) to develop a Regional Racial Equity Learning Cohort. The inaugural 10-month learning cohort will begin in September 2019 and culminate in June 2020. This cohort will be for COG jurisdictions beginning to work on racial equity and building the foundation to build operational capacity and achieve community-level outcomes. Jurisdictions can make use of the field of practice and begin and expand work on institutional and structural equity. Based on the experiences of leaders, the new cohorts will participate in a structured curriculum that focuses on strategies that normalize conversations about race, operationalize new policies and cultures, and organize to achieve racial equity.

Registration for jurisdictions to participate is currently open. The learning cohort is designed for mid-level and senior-level local government staff. Thus far the following jurisdictions are planning to participate: City of Alexandria, Arlington County, Charles County, City of College Park, District of Columbia, Fairfax County, City of Gaithersburg, Loudoun County, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, and the City of Takoma Park. For more information, contact Monica Beyrouiti Nuñez, COG's Government Relations Supervisor, at mbeyrouiti@mwkog.org.

Program to Facilitate LED Streetlighting Conversions by Local Governments

The Maryland and Virginia Program to Facilitate LED Streetlighting Conversion by Local Governments is a U.S. Department of Energy grant funded project. The project team is led by the Maryland Energy Administration and the team includes Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy (VA DMME), Clean Energy Solutions Inc, National Association of State Energy Offices, Northern Virginia Regional Commission, and COG. The project will involve providing technical support to local jurisdictions in their efforts to convert existing streetlights to more efficient LED technology. Local governments that are not already involved and interested in receiving support can contact Jeff King at jking@mwkog.org.

Climate and Energy Leadership Awards

The 2019 application period for COG's Climate and Energy Leadership Awards is now open through June 28, 2019. The Awards recognize organizations that develop climate stewardship projects and programs that engage and serve the region's underserved communities. Government Agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations, and Educational Institutions are encouraged to apply. Applications can be submitted at www.mwcog.org/climateawards or emailed to mdavis@mwkog.org. Applications must include a 1-3-page project summary file that gives clear description on how it meets the four judging criteria: Engagement, Results, Creativity, and Model. Engagement will be weighed more heavily and account for 40% of the total score and the other categories will account for 20% each.

US EPA Diesel Emission Reduction Act Funding Assistance Opportunity

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has opened its next round of Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA) funding opportunities. COG is currently repowering switcher locomotives at Union Station and marine passenger vessels operating on the Potomac River. For more information, please contact Jeff King at jking@mwkog.org.

Tree Canopy Work Group

Last year, the Regional Tree Canopy Workgroup developed a Regional Tree Canopy Management Strategy document in cooperation with local forestry staff in the region. This document is a guideline for local government staff to assist in the management and enhancement of forest cover at the community level. Furthermore, recommendations in the report are designed to support Region Forward Sustainability Goals for regional forest cover management, state and local initiatives to continue to improve air quality, and the Chesapeake Bay Program's targets and indicators to protect water quality and support a healthy regional green infrastructure. COG staff have identified key regional participants for the subcommittee's composition. Invitations have been sent and replies are being processed. Prospective meeting dates are proposed for June as meeting space is at a premium in May. Other initial meeting preparations are underway. For more information, contact Brian LeCouteur at blecouteur@mwcog.org.

US Army Corps of Engineers Coastal Storm Risk Management Study

COG is pleased to report that the Commonwealth of Virginia has identified and authorized use of funds to help support the Northern Virginia Coastal study. There are now enough funds to cover the first two-thirds of the 50/50 cost-shared study focused on the northern Virginia tidal areas. COG is the non-federal sponsor for the study and is coordinating with the Army Corps of Engineers Baltimore District and local cost-share partners (Fairfax County and the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority) to plan the study re-launch.

The 3-year, \$3.4M effort will evaluate the performance of current flood protection infrastructure along the northern Virginia bank of the Potomac, now and decades into the future, given increasing downpours, sea level rise, and storm surge due to climate change. After analyzing tidal flooding risks, the Corps will develop designs for new flood protection systems – including green and gray infrastructure – to reduce to risk to northern Virginia communities and built assets. Such a 'feasibility study' must be completed for northern Virginia to be eligible for 65/35 federal cost-share funding for construction of coastal flood protection systems. For more information, contact Steve Walz swalz@mwcog.org or Amanda Campbell acampbell@mwcog.org.

Utility Energy Registry

COG is a partner on the U.S. Department of Energy-funded Utility Energy Registry (UER) pilot project to develop a publicly accessible online platform of community-scale utility energy data. The UER will provide communities with essential information to support clean energy planning, implementation, and assessment of locally-defined clean energy initiatives. COG partnered with University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center, District Department of Energy and Environment, Maryland Energy Administration, Climate Action Associates, NYSERDA, Great Plains Institute, and State of Minnesota to pilot state-level utility data protocols and platform development. COG has received utility energy data in the UER template and is beginning the process of organizing and analyzing this data for local government member use. For more information, contact Maia Davis at mdavis@mwcog.org.

DC Circulator Electric Bus and Facility Tour

On March 26, COG hosted the DC Circulator Electric Bus and Charging Facility Tour. The event included presentations by Circe Torruellas (DDOT) who spoke about origins of DC's electric bus program, and Erik Belmont (DDOT) who spoke about the Circulator electric bus pilot project and its development and initial findings. Ira Dorfman (GWRCCC) and Leah Boggs (COG) facilitated a lunchtime discussion and Q&A session before participants were transported, by Circulator electric bus, to the South Capitol Street facility and given a tour of the charging facility. For more information, contact COG staff, Leah Boggs at lboggs@mwkog.org.

2019 Washington Auto Show

CEEPCC held its April meeting at the 2019 Washington Auto Show. COG hosted an industry-government electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure roundtable where industry experts and local government representatives were invited to discuss the challenges and opportunities with EV infrastructure deployment in metropolitan Washington. The discussion focused on developing a better understanding of the factors driving or restricting more rapid EV market development. Some key priorities that were identified include addressing the needs of the rideshare community, planning site locations for charging infrastructure, streamlining permit and approval processes across the region, and developing smart incentives for EV adoption in the region. After the roundtable, participants were invited to the Electric Vehicle Track Experience, presented by EZ-EV and Exelon. Participants were provided access to the indoor EV track where they were encouraged to ride in the available EVs. For more information, contact Jeff King at jking@mwkog.org.