



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** COG Board of Directors  
**FROM:** Clark Mercer, COG Executive Director  
**SUBJECT:** Executive Director's Report – February 2024  
**DATE:** February 7, 2024

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## POLICY BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES

**National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB)** – At the January TPB meeting, Chair Christina Henderson announced board focus areas: the Visualize 2050 plan, Metro funding, greenhouse gas emission reduction, electric vehicle network advancement, roadway safety, and continued planning to improve transportation access and safety for Equity Emphasis Areas. Staff provided updates on the FY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program, the National Capital Trail Network, and the TPB's Transportation Resiliency Planning Program.

**Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources Policy Committee (CBPC)** – The January CBPC meeting was devoted to a briefing about the Tree Canopy Subcommittee's proposed recommendations for developing a regional tree canopy goal. Members were also briefed on federal and state legislation, with a special focus on alignment with COG's Legislative Priorities for water.

**Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC)** – At the January CEEPC meeting, CEEPC subcommittees and members shared updates and the new Chair Jolene Ivey outlined 2024 CEEPC priorities for action on climate and energy initiatives. COG staff discussed the priority bills to track in the Virginia and Maryland legislative sessions and the committee received an update on the EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant.

**Human Services Policy Committee** – At the January meeting, COG Police Chiefs Committee Chair Chief Russell Hamill presented the Crime and Crime Control report findings. COG staff also discussed options for developing public service messages to prevent scams that target older adults. To end the meeting, HSPC Chair Rodney Lusk discussed meeting priorities and led a roundtable giving members



### Eight area governments finalize Regional Fair Housing Plan

The updated Regional Fair Housing Plan marks the first time in 25 years that local jurisdictions have joined together to reduce housing discrimination and improve access to opportunity for all current and future residents.

[Learn more about the plan](#)

the opportunity to share human services initiatives and challenges within their respective jurisdictions.

**Region Forward Coalition** – In January, RFC members were briefed on findings from the Federal Workplace Scenario Planning Project that seeks to assess the potential future space needs of the federal government due to changes in space utilization, workforce, and telecommuting. Dr. Terry Clower from George Mason University’s Center for Regional Analysis presented on emerging economic trends in metropolitan Washington and members also heard the local perspectives on how to address current economic challenges from a panel comprised of local planning, economic development, and business improvement district representatives.

## OUTREACH & PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

**Transportation Planning** – TPB is accepting applications for FY 2025 Transportation Land-Use Connections and Regional Roadway Safety Programs. The programs offer short-term technical assistance up to \$80,000 for planning projects and up to \$100,000 for design projects. Any local jurisdiction in the National Capital Region that is a member of the TPB is eligible to apply. Applications are due March 8, 2024. [Apply for the two local technical assistance programs.](#)

**Public Safety** – On January 9, the COG 911 Directors Committee conducted a tour of the new Metro Integrated Command and Communications Center (MICC) and discussed methods to increase collaboration between the region’s Emergency Communications Centers and WMATA. On January 17, COG, with the support from the DHS Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, hosted a cybersecurity tabletop exercise with the COG Chief Information Security Officer Subcommittee and the Public Information Officers Committee. On January 15 and 18, COG facilitated two regional coordination calls to share information and discuss operational postures in preparation for forecasted severe winter weather.

**Water Resources** – COG’s Community Engagement Campaign (CEC) has been airing a WAMU radio PSA about winter salting, directing listeners to COG’s Salt Smart webpage for tips on how to salt efficiently and protect water quality, and the CEC has been promoting a regional One Water Art Contest for high school students.



### Accelerating Action on Electric Vehicles

At the Public Policy Day of the Washington Auto Show, COG partnered with the Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition to host a meeting on accelerating electric vehicle deployment in the region. The region is working together to identify opportunities and challenges to ensure a robust, efficient, and equitable charging EV network.

[Learn more about COG’s EV work.](#)

## MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

**Metro** – COG Executive Director Clark Mercer discussed regional coordination on the WMATA budget in news stories by Virginia Mercury, Fox 5, Loudoun Times-Mirror, DCist, Richmond Times Dispatch, and WMAL. COG's Workgroup report on the WMATA budget was also referenced in stories by The Washington Post and Connection Newspapers.

[Virginia Mercury](#) – quotes COG Executive Director Clark Mercer, references COG Workgroup report on the WMATA budget

[DCist](#) – quotes COG Board Chair Charles Allen and COG Executive Director Clark Mercer

**Regional Fair Housing Plan** – The recently finalized COG Regional Fair Housing Plan was referenced in stories by My MC Media and FFX Now.

[My MC Media](#)

**“How Safe Are Our Roads?”** – The COG/WRAP annual report on the impact of drunk and drugged driving received coverage from WTOP.

[WTOP](#) – quotes Kurt Erickson, the president of the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP)



### WAMU Politics Hour

On February 19, COG Executive Director Mercer chatted with Kojo Nnamdi and Tom Sherwood on the Politics Hour. The discussion delved into COG's programs and services, the WMATA budget, and the growth and development of the DMV.

[Listen to the interview](#)