

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

UNLOCKING THE REGION'S POTENTIAL



Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

Overview

In 2021, metropolitan Washington continued to face the serious challenge of responding to COVID-19. COG again served as the forum for communication among the leaders on the front lines of addressing this public health crisis. And, COG and its members stepped-up efforts to combat food insecurity at the regional level, including creating a permanent committee dedicated to this work.

At the same time, area leaders continued to lay the groundwork to help the region plan for the future. In recent years, the COG Board has focused on transit-oriented communities (TOCs), recognizing their potential for advancing our shared equity, transit and land-use, housing, and climate goals. The board endorsed two planning concepts—High-Capacity Transit Station Areas and Equity Emphasis Areas—to help the region leverage its tremendous investment in transit and create communities that are more accessible and affordable to all residents. In addition, technical assistance opportunities, like COG's new Housing Affordability Planning Program grants funded by Amazon, are just one way the region can put these principles into action.

Thanks to the hard work of COG and its members, 2022 is shaping up to be another important year for regional partnership and collaboration. The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) will complete its four-year update to the Visualize 2045 long-range transportation plan. COG's forthcoming Regional Housing Equity Plan will ensure that the region can expand housing choices for all. And, COG will continue to support area governments on climate and energy plans and expanding electric vehicle use.

Thank you for your partnership, support, and big ideas in 2021.



Visit mwcog.org/2021COG to hear local leaders talk about planning principles to help the region create more inclusive, sustainable, transit-oriented communities. (Clockwise from top left: 2021 COG Board Chair Robert C. White Jr., COG Board Vice Chair Christian Dorsey, COG Executive Director Chuck Bean, and COG Board Vice Chair Kate Stewart.)

225 HCTs

High-Capacity Transit Station Areas (HCTs) are 225 locations around Metrorail, commuter rail, light rail, bus rapid transit, and streetcar stations that are in place or will be by 2030.

350 EEAs

Equity Emphasis Areas (EEAs) are approximately 350 of the region's more than 1,200 census tracts with high concentrations of traditionally underserved communities.



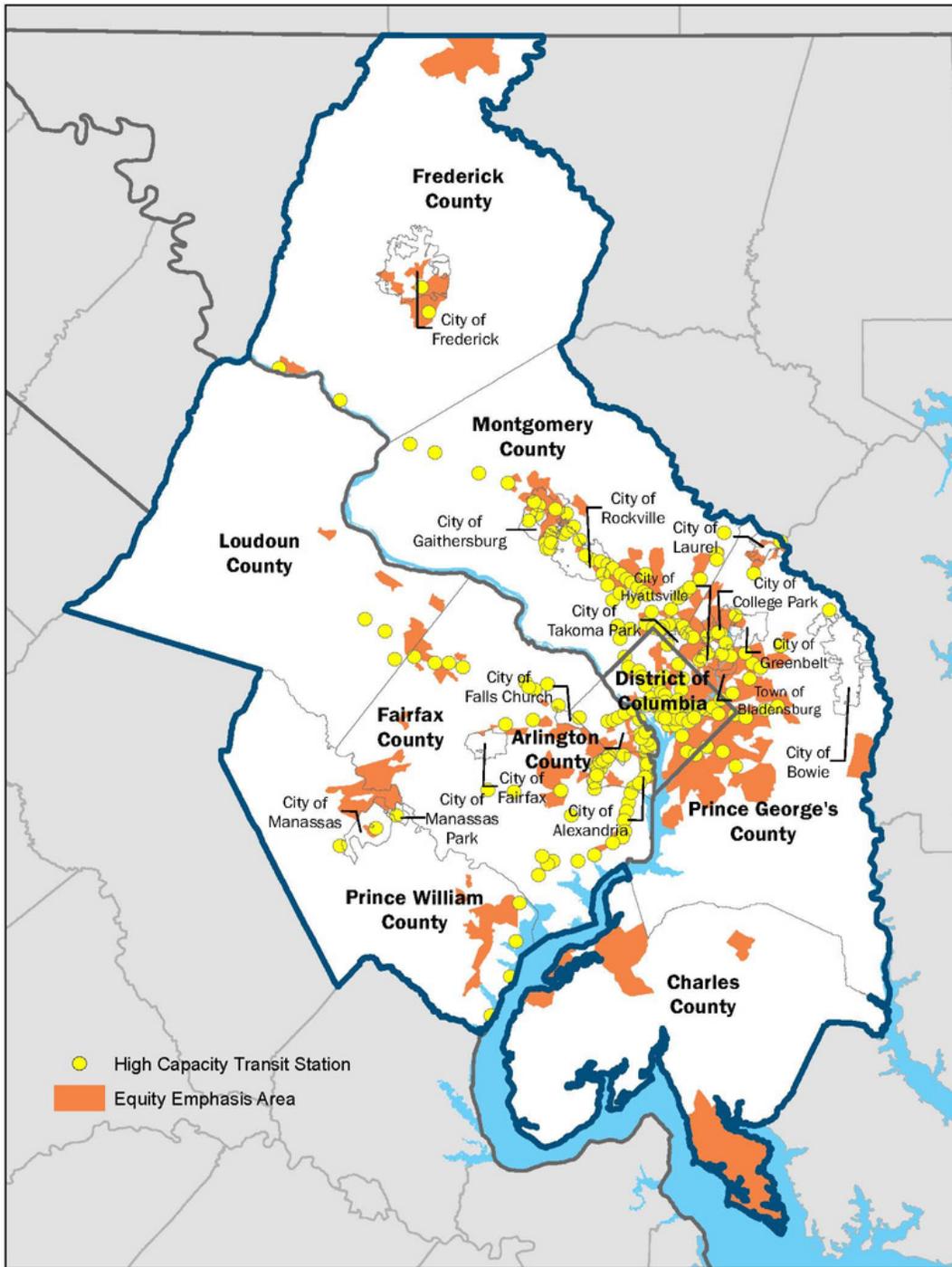
The COG Board endorsed HCTs and EEAs as key planning concepts and tools through 2030 to help create stronger transit-oriented communities (TOCs) and help the region achieve multiple shared goals, including those related to housing affordability and climate change.

PLANNING TOOLS TO ACCELERATE ACTION

In addition to endorsing the planning concepts, COG announced a new Housing Affordability Planning Program (HAPP) made possible with \$500,000 in funding from the Amazon Housing Equity Fund. HAPP will provide grants to local governments and non-profit developers engaged in the planning, approval, or development of housing near transit.

The grants will provide each recipient up to \$75,000 towards design work, feasibility studies, and zoning analyses to help jumpstart developments. HAPP joins a portfolio of programs at COG, like Transit Within Reach and the Transportation Land Use Connections Program, which support efforts to create TOCs.





NEW TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

The TPB awarded over \$240,000 in technical assistance to three local projects that could make it easier to bike and walk to transit. The projects are the first funded under the TPB's new Transit Within Reach Program.

This year, the TPB's Regional Roadway Safety Program also awarded a total of \$500,000 in funding to help area jurisdictions plan and design 10 road safety projects.



(Prince George's County)

VOICES OF THE REGION

The TPB conducted public engagement to gather input on the region's transportation system through its Voices of the Region survey of more than 2,400 area residents, eleven focus groups comprised of traditionally underserved populations, and a virtual activity. This information helped inform the update to the region's long-range transportation plan, Visualize 2045, to be completed in 2022.

The role of the Voices of the Region survey was to gather public opinion on issues important to the TPB, provide a more nuanced understanding how regional transportation policies affect people in our region, and to highlight voices that have been underrepresented in the past.

visualize 2045

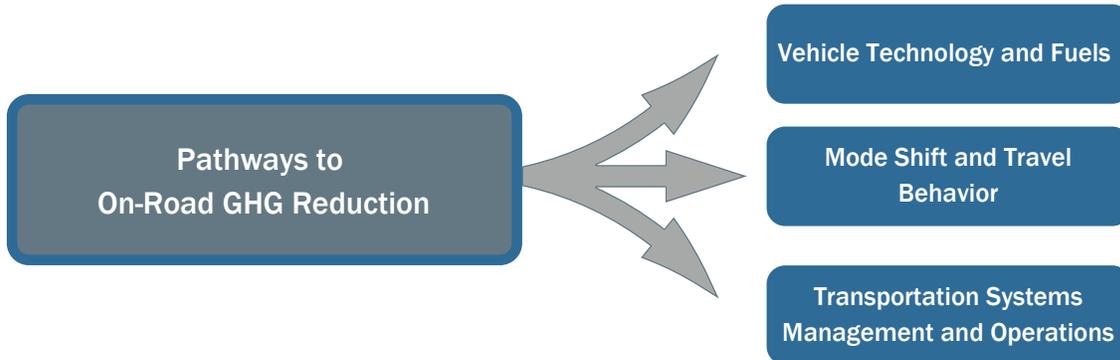
Visit www.visualize2045.org/voices for the survey results and more on public participation related to Visualize 2045.



COG also launched the DMV Climate Partners website, climatepartners.org, a platform to educate area leaders and residents about efforts underway to fight climate change and spur further action. The site also highlights climate accomplishments and connects people to events, funding opportunities, and other resources.

In addition, the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM) awarded “Mitigation” and “Adaptation” achievement badges in recognition of COG's regional greenhouse gas emission reduction goals and the Metropolitan Washington 2030 Climate and Energy Action Plan's full compliance with the global standards of best practices for climate planning.

TPB CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION STUDY OF 2021



The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) conducted, with consultant assistance, a scenario study to assess ways to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the on-road transportation sector. The study, which is informing the TPB's planning work, assessed the types of transportation-related actions, and their levels of implementation, that might be needed to reduce GHG emissions to meet regional goals for 2030 and 2050.



Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeffrey McKay presented COG's Kirby Award to Fairfax County Chief Equity Officer Karla Bruce, who chaired the CEOC in its inaugural year.

EQUITY INITIATIVES

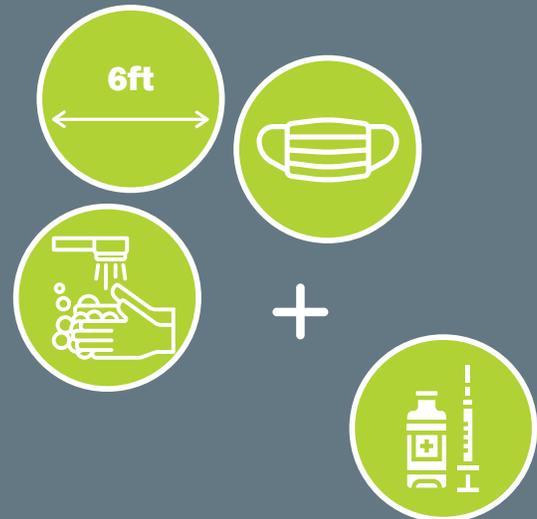
COG, in partnership with the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), launched a second regional learning cohort convening managers and staff from 11 jurisdictions, plus a COG staff team, to participate in a yearlong racial equity education program. In addition, COG created a permanent Chief Equity Officers Committee (CEOC) to convene government leaders advancing equity plans throughout the region.

Visit mwcog.org/equity for more on the cohorts, CEOC, and related work to advance equity.

COVID COORDINATION

COG continued to support the regional response to COVID-19 by convening area leaders, including health officials and emergency managers, to share information and enhance efforts in their home jurisdictions. In addition, COG developed a new tool to map data on COVID variants to assist epidemiologists in their research and provided procurement support to ensure jurisdictions had an adequate supply of testing kits.

Regarding vaccines, COG shared regular updates on the region's progress and best practices on distribution during briefings to the COG Board of Directors as well as a special webinar series. The COG Public Information Officers Committee also developed vaccine messages to complement and amplify local and state outreach initiatives.



HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS

COG's Homeless Services Committee, with the support of the Greater Washington Community Foundation, is leading a Regional Homeless Services Racial Equity and Systems Analysis, a collaboration to ensure that racial equity guides its focus within housing and efforts to end the experience of homelessness in the region.

COG's 2021 annual point-in-time count recorded 8,309 persons experiencing homelessness in the region, the lowest recorded since the region began coordinating on the effort in 2001.

REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY

The new Food and Agricultural Regional Member (FARM) Committee supports development of a more resilient, connected food and farm economy across the region by improving food security, supporting Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) and small farmers, focusing on farmland preservation, land use, environmental sustainability and resilience, and leveraging procurement to support equity in the region's food and farm economy.

(DC Central Kitchen/Flickr)





DC STATEHOOD

Local elected officials from Maryland and Virginia joined District of Columbia counterparts in a unanimous approval of a COG Board resolution urging Congress to “establish the state of Washington, D.C. without delay.”

“Residents of the District of Columbia have fought in our nation’s wars like full citizens, have paid taxes like full citizens, have acted like full citizens in every respect, but we are not treated as full citizens,” said 2021 COG Board Chair and D.C. Councilmember Robert C. White Jr.

think REGIONALLY



COG’s new Think Regionally podcast, launched this year, raises awareness about our region’s biggest challenges and focuses on solutions. Local government, business, and non-profit leaders join host Robert McCartney, former Washington Post columnist, for conversations about equity, transit access, food insecurity, and more.



Visit mwcog.org/thinkregionally to listen and learn more!

COG Financial Highlights

FY21 Total Revenue: \$37,754,900

Member Dues - 12%

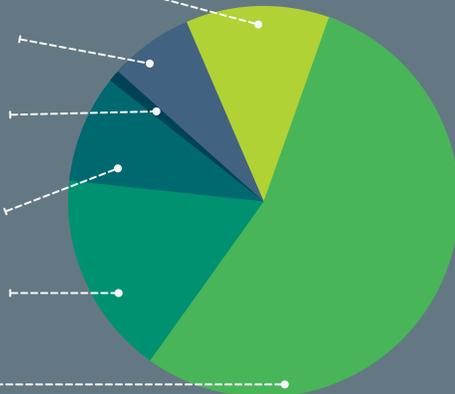
Regional Funds & User Fees - 7%

Building & Investment - 1%

Service Fees, Donors, & Misc. - 9%

State & District - 17%

Federal - 55%



About the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG)

COG is an independent, nonprofit association that brings area leaders together to address major regional issues in the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia. COG's membership is comprised of 300 elected officials from 24 local governments, the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, and U.S. Congress.

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