

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
777 NORTH CAPITOL STREET, NE  
WASHINGTON, DC 20002**

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING NEW REGIONAL TREE CANOPY GOAL**

**WHEREAS**, in 2020, the Board of Directors in Resolution R45-2020 endorsed an interim climate mitigation goal of 50 percent greenhouse gas emissions reductions below 2005 levels by 2030; and

**WHEREAS**, COG's Region United Framework and the Region Forward Vision considers efforts to meet the goals defined in the Metropolitan Washington 2030 Climate and Energy Action Plan and

**WHEREAS**, COG seeks to support integrated multi-sector approaches to accelerate action on climate change and recognizes that enhancing urban forestry and increasing tree canopy coverage are effective strategies for mitigating the urban heat island effect, improving air quality, and sequestering carbon dioxide emissions, thereby contributing to overall climate resilience and mitigation efforts; and

**WHEREAS**, the Metropolitan Washington 2030 Climate and Energy Action Plan called for the prioritization of expanding tree canopy through strategic planning, enhanced regulations, and improved incentives; and

**WHEREAS**, the COG Board established a Regional Tree Canopy Subcommittee of CEEPC in 2019 by COG Board Resolution R7-2019 to oversee urban forestry initiatives, including the development of a regional urban forest action plan and tree canopy goal; and

**WHEREAS**, the Regional Tree Canopy Subcommittee working with the staff of the COG member agencies has developed resource to assist in the development of an action plan to guide the efforts of COG member agencies to help the region attain the tree canopy goal; and

**WHEREAS**, studies conducted in the Metropolitan Washington region have indicated a steady decline in tree canopy coverage over the last 25 years, underscoring the need for proactive measures to protect, maintain, and enhance the region's tree canopy; and

**WHEREAS**, current tree canopy coverage for entire COG membership (2,213,976 acres) is estimated at 49.6%\* (Chesapeake Bay Program Land Use/Land Cover Project (CBP 2022 LULC Project)); and

**WHEREAS**, a regional COG tree canopy goal would unify efforts across COG jurisdictions, inspiring collective action to protect and enhance urban forests and encourage programs and policies where they currently do not exist;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS THAT:**

1. The Board establishes a regional goal of achieving and maintaining an average tree canopy coverage of 50% across the Metropolitan Washington region by 2050, as recommended by the Regional Tree Canopy Subcommittee (RTCS); and
2. The Board encourages member jurisdictions to develop and implement strategies, policies, and programs to support the achievement of the regional tree canopy goal, including updates to relevant ordinances and the development of tree planting and preservation initiatives and goals.
3. Further, the Board will reassess the regional goal and supporting target goals every five years to evaluate tree canopy cover and monitor progress towards achieving the established tree canopy goal in the Metropolitan Washington region.

DRAFT