



MEMORANDUM

TO: COG Board of Directors
FROM: Chuck Bean, COG Executive Director
SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report – November 2021
DATE: November 3, 2021

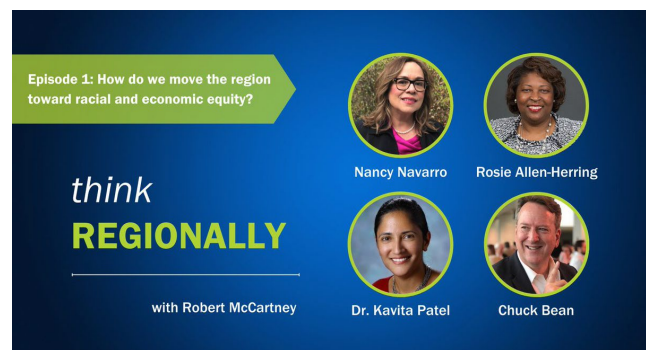
POLICY BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) – At its October meeting, the TPB approved a resolution endorsing the optimization of land use around High-Capacity Transit Station Areas and the elevation of Equity Emphasis Areas in the regional planning. Board members also discussed TPB research on equity issues that informed new bus services and fare policies in the region. In addition, the committee received briefings on the upcoming approvals of Enhanced Mobility grants and transit safety targets.

Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) – In October, MWAQC received a presentation on the 2021 ozone season in the region, which had eight Code Orange unhealthy air days and none of the more serious Code Red days. Members were also briefed on a recent regional analysis of air quality, health, and equity from George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health.

Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources Policy Committee (CBPC) – CBPC and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation organized a Potomac River boat tour in October for members to learn about the river's biodiversity and water quality.

Region Forward Coalition (RFC) – At its October meeting, the RFC focused on sustainability, receiving briefings from COG's Department of Environmental Programs staff on the Metropolitan Washington 2030 Climate and Energy Action Plan and findings from a regional climate risk and vulnerability assessment.



PODCAST: MOVING TOWARD RACIAL AND ECONOMIC EQUITY

COG has launched a new podcast hosted by former Washington Post columnist, Robert McCartney, to raise awareness about the region's biggest challenges and focus on solutions. The inaugural episode of *Think Regionally* features area leaders like Montgomery County Councilmember Nancy Navarro, and explores the social, economic, and racial divisions within metropolitan Washington.

[Listen to Episode One or read the transcript](#)

OUTREACH & PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

COG presentations – In October, COG Water Resources Program Director Steve Bieber traveled to Turkey to present at the *Terrorism Experts Conference and Executive Level Defence Against Terrorism Seminar 2021*. Bieber briefed the group on improving resilience to water threats and emergencies.

Several Department of Transportation Planning staff, including Tim Canan, Charlene Howard, John Swanson, and Nicholas Ramfos, participated in the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) 2021 Annual Conference in Arizona and presented on a variety of timely transportation planning topics like transit access, return to the office commuting, and Big Data.



TPB STUDY INFORMS FARE-FREE BUS POLICY
Research from the TPB's Transportation Land-Use Connections (TLC) program played an important role in the City of Alexandria's decision to eliminate all fares on its DASH bus system.

[Learn more about the study](#)

Drug Take Back Day 2021 – COG promoted the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency's annual National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, reminding residents of the importance of safe and proper medication disposal.

Anacostia Watershed Survey – In partnership with COG, The Anacostia Watershed Restoration Partnership hosted a survey for residents of D.C., Prince George's County, and Montgomery County to help understand residents' opinions and knowledge about the local environment and track progress.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

D.C.-area leaders prioritize equity in transportation, housing and funding decisions – Features endorsement of transit and equity planning principles during the October COG Board meeting—several board members quoted.

[The Washington Post](#)

Amazon backs grant program to spur affordable development near D.C.-area transit – Quotes several board members discussing COG's new Housing Affordability Planning Program with Amazon as well as transit and equity planning principles.

[Washington Business Journal](#)

The pandemic intensified hunger in the D.C. region. Now, there's a push to end it for good. – References the establishment of COG's Food and Agriculture Regional Member Policy committee.

[The Washington Post](#)