



## Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee

### DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY: MAY 24, 2023

#### **CEEPC MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

- Hon. Takis Karantonis, Arlington County (Chair)
- Hon. Monique Ashton, City of Rockville
- Hon. Sarah Bagley, City of Alexandria
- Hon. Al Carr, District of Columbia
- Hon. Kate Doyle Feingold, City of Fairfax
- Hon. Cindy Dyballa, City of Takoma Park
- Hon. Evan Glass, Montgomery County
- Hon. Jolene Ivey, Prince George's County
- Hon. Tom Osina, City of Manassas
- Hon. Dave Snyder, City of Falls Church
- Erica Bannerman, Prince George's County
- Michael Barancewicz, Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS)
- Michele Blair, City of Laurel
- Amanda Campbell, City of Rockville
- Eric Coffman, Maryland Energy Administration (MEA)
- Randy Freed, Citizens' Climate Lobby
- Kim Goddu-Alexander, Bethesda Green
- Beth Groth, Charles County
- Jenn Hatch, District Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE)
- Maureen Holman, DC Water
- John Lord, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS)
- Demetra McBride, Arlington County
- Shannon Moore, Frederick County
- Era Pandya, Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC)
- Scott Pomeroy, Scalable Strategies
- Jim Ponticello, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
- Matt Ries, DC Water
- Julie Rosenburg, Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions
- Antoine Thompson, Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition (GWRCCC)
- Luke Wisniewski, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)

#### **ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES:**

- Hon. MC Keegan-Ayer, Frederick County
- Dawn Ashbacher, Frederick County
- Virginia Burke, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
- Andrea Crooms, Prince George's County
- Rich Dooley, Arlington County
- Bill Eger, Arlington County
- Michael Knapp, Montgomery County
- David Lorenzo, Councilmember Glass' Legislative Assistant
- Debra Maes, FCPS
- Matthew Meyers, Fairfax County
- Regina Moore, VDOT
- Adam Riedel, Arlington County
- Kate Roetzer, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)
- John Sheridan, Prince George's County
- Regina Weil, Fairfax County
- Brittany Whited, DOEE

#### **COG STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:**

- Leah Boggs, COG Environmental Programs
- Robert Christopher, COG Environmental Programs
- Maia Davis, COG Environmental Programs
- Jeff King, COG Director Climate, Energy and Air Programs
- Brian LeCouteur, COG Environmental Programs
- Wyetha Lipford, COG Environmental Programs
- Tim Masters, COG Environmental Programs
- Clark Mercer, COG Executive Director
- Mark Moran, COG Transportation Planning
- Erin Morrow, COG Transportation Planning
- Kanti Srikanth, COG Deputy Executive Director for Metropolitan Planning
- Dusan Vuksan, COG Transportation Planning

## 1. WELCOME AND MEETING SUMMARY

*Takis Karantonis, CEEPC Chair*

Climate, Energy, and Environmental Policy Committee (CEEPC) Chair Takis Karantonis called the May CEEPC meeting to order. Chair Karantonis noted the submittal of a public comment letter to CEEPC available under [meeting materials](#). The March CEEPC Meeting Summary was approved.

## 2. COMMITTEE AND MEMBER UPDATES

### A. Built Environment Energy Advisory Committee (BEEAC)

*Dawn Ashbacher, Frederick County*

- BEEAC's annual survey identified three priority areas for the committee this year. The first priority area is funding for projects. There is a lot of funding coming down from the federal level. For example, the US Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program. COG staff provided an update on the requirements for this grant at the March BEEAC meeting. There is also the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), which will provide grants to states and local governments support for climate planning and implementation. COG members are looking to maximize resources and efforts by going after funds as individual jurisdictions or working collaboratively with each other and with COG to go after funding. A second priority area from BEEAC's survey is energy equity. Many of the funding opportunities require meeting the Justice40 initiative where 40 percent of the benefits of federal investments must flow to disadvantaged communities. BEEAC hopes to look at how to effectively do that and how to measure energy equity benefits. The final priority area for BEEAC this year is looking at how to work collaboratively with the new Regional Electric Vehicle Deployment (REVD) Working Group. Many BEEAC members have worked on EV issues for years and remain involved in planning and implementation.
- BEEAC's next meeting is June 17, 2023. The meeting will focus on grid optimization.

### B. Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC)

*Era Pandya, ACPAC Chair*

- The committee's main update is the [2023 Climate and Energy Leadership Awards Campaign](#) launched on Earth Day and runs until June 30, 2023. The awards program is in its ninth year, continuing to highlight role models that have implemented innovative climate stewardship projects and programs, particularly those that engage and serve the region's underserved communities. There are three award categories. ACPAC is accepting nominations now. A Climate Awards Overview Flyer has been included in the [meeting materials](#). Some examples of past winners are below:
  1. In the education sector, [Fairfax County Public Schools](#) won in 2016 for their Get2Green program, which was a program to promote student learning and action using the environment as a foundation.
  2. In the government category, the [Prince George's County Sustainable Energy Program](#) won in 2018. This program involved offering comprehensive energy solutions that enhance quality of life and maximize energy savings in underserved communities.
  3. In the non-government organization category, the [Rise N Shine Foundation, Inc. "Can We Do Something About Food Waste?" Project](#) won last year. This was an innovative student led project called "Can We Do Something About Food Waste?" which aims to divert food waste

from incinerators or landfills to compost facilities and save food from restaurants and grocery stores from becoming food waste and provide it to vulnerable members of the community with food insecurity.

- ACPAC's next meeting is July 17, 2023.

#### C. Regional Electric Vehicle Deployment (REVD) Working Group

*Virginia Burke, MDOT*

- The last REVD meeting focused on a recently developed EV Ready Checklist, which is currently in draft form. The checklist aims to assist local jurisdictions in preparing for EV infrastructure deployment by addressing various planning areas. The checklist currently covers seven areas: Community Planning, Zoning, Building Codes, Permitting and Inspections, Government Fleets, Public Education and Outreach, and Public Safety and Security. During the meeting, there were discussions and breakout groups to determine if the checklist contained the right resources and information, and if additional training was necessary. Comments on the checklist are being accepted until the end of the month. CEEPC members raised the issue of power availability/reliability with increasing EV deployment.
- Additionally, the City of Laurel and Fairfax County delivered presentations on their experiences and insights related to EV infrastructure deployment. These presentations provided valuable information and facilitated knowledge sharing among working group members.
- Looking ahead, the working group will commence the development of a regional infrastructure implementation strategy during the summer. Updates on this initiative are expected to be shared in future meetings. The group's primary focus is on information exchange, sharing stories, and learning from one another to enhance the deployment of EV infrastructure in the region.

#### D. Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition (GWRCCC)

*Antoine Thompson, GWRCCC*

- GWRCCC, together with COG, hosted a successful event focused on expanding charging infrastructure in the region last month. The event had a diverse group of attendees from utility companies and industry stakeholders.
- GWRCCC has an upcoming Port listening session that will cover not only the electrification of ports, but also explore the electrification of commercial and recreational boats. The purpose is to understand the region's progress in this area, identify support and incentives needed, and drive further energy toward electrifying ports and boats.
- GWRCCC highlighted the availability of federal funding opportunities and encouraged members to collaborate on going after federal funding. A \$100 million funding opportunity from the U.S. Department of Energy's Vehicle Technologies Office was announced recently, which encourages collaboration with Clean Cities programs.
- GWRCCC also highlighted their Future Green Leaders Program, which provides leadership training on environmental stewardship, green careers, and financial literacy to high school students. The program will conclude with two scholarships named after Ron Flowers, a former Executive Director of GWRCCC.
- GWRCCC will host a hydrogen summit in July. Further information is forthcoming.

#### E. Regional Tree Canopy Sub-Committee (RTCS)

*Michael Knapp, RTCS*

- The RTCS is currently focused on finalizing a three-part report to recommend a regional tree canopy goal and levels for major land use categories. The report emphasizes the importance of conserving trees and forests in metropolitan Washington and presents key reasons and collaborative management approaches for tree conservation. The report will be updated with the

latest tree canopy data. The subcommittee intends to host a webinar or briefing to directly share their work with stakeholders.

#### F. Recycling Committee

*Adam Riedel, Arlington County*

- The Recycling Committee has been involved in various initiatives over the past few months. They recently held a meeting to discuss innovative ways to manage curbside bulk materials and heard from representatives of Bloomington, Minnesota, and Oceanside, California, who shared successful programs for reusing bulky items instead of sending them to landfills.
- The committee also launched a battery management campaign to address the risk of fires caused by lithium-ion batteries improperly disposed of in recycling or trash facilities. They organized an event in partnership with Montgomery County to demonstrate the dangers of lithium-ion batteries that are crushed or damaged in this manner.
- The committee is planning another outreach campaign focused on reinforcing recycling messages throughout the region and participated in a panel hosted by the Federal Trade Commission to provide insights on recycling systems and claims.
- The next Recycling Committee meeting is scheduled for June 15, 2023.

#### G. Member and Staff Updates

*Demetra McBride, Arlington County*

Arlington County is working with COG on federal grants, such as the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) and Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) grant programs. The county has already submitted an EPA Environmental Justice Government-to-Government (EJG2G) program. Arlington County is finishing off their feasibility study to propose a transition framework for electrification. The county is looking at financing mechanisms with regard to renewable energy, utility-scale deployment, community choice aggregation, and multi-jurisdictional purchases. The county is also updating their green building code.

*John Lord, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS)*

For any jurisdictions looking to do distributed renewable energy generation projects, like solar panels on facilities for example, Dominion Energy created a set of interconnect requirements last December. It has killed at least one project that FCPS was exploring. For the group's awareness, any interconnect agreement that is signed with Dominion is at risk and will likely not be approved without extensive upgrades to the transmission system that can cost several \$100,000 per project.

### **3. FY24 WORK PROGRAM AND BUDGET**

*Jeff King, COG Climate, Energy and Air Program Director*

The Regional Environmental Fund work program and budget for the upcoming fiscal year was presented. The program aims to retain core elements, meet new challenges, and support the 2030 goal of 50 percent emissions reduction below 2005 levels. The focus is on accelerating action and implementation, with a shift towards projects and taking advantage of increased sustainability efforts and resources from federal and state governments. The proposed work program includes initiatives focused on EV infrastructure, energy infrastructure, energy efficiency, renewables, adaptation and resilience, recycling and solid waste management, regional agriculture and forestry, and water quality. Funding has been allocated for policy development, climate energy projects, and ongoing support for various committees. The budget reflects a sustained effort to support infrastructure, enhance efficiency, and deploy renewables. The focus on EV infrastructure includes the development of a regional [EV Deployment Clearinghouse](#) and collaboration through the REVD Working Group. The proposed budget allocates resources based on the board's priorities, including a

significant investment in EV infrastructure. Overall, the work program and budget align with the region's greenhouse goals, prioritize implementation, and build capacity.

Discussion:

- The Environmental Justice (EJ) Toolkit developed by ACPAC in 2017 is being updated with a focus on implementation and actions for both the COG Board and COG members. The idea of a regional approach is still being explored, and input and further ideas are welcome. Leveraging federal funding for the region's equity emphasis areas, as well as looking to the broader region for climate planning successes and lessons will be important.
- Electrification of transportation is heavily emphasized in this work program, which members appreciate, but broader building electrification should also be an important long-term goal for work programs in future years.
- Transit is a critical part of both climate action, as well as equity. This is also something to keep in mind for work activities in coming years.

**Action:** The FY24 Work Program and Budget were approved unanimously.

#### **4. JOINT COMMENT LETTERS ON GREENHOUSE GAS VEHICLE STANDARDS**

*Tim Masters, COG Environmental Programs*

US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced two Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRMs) to strengthen greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions standards for light- (LDVs) and medium-duty vehicles (MDVs), as well as heavy-duty vehicles (HDVs) for 2027-2032. Two joint comment letters were proposed with the CEEPC, the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC), and Transportation Planning Board (TPB). These can be found under the [meeting materials](#). Comments for the LDV and MDV proposed rule are due by July 5, 2023. Comments for the HDV proposed rule are due by June 16, 2023.

**Action Item:** Both joint comment letters were approved unanimously. Before being submitted, these letters will be conveyed to the MWAQC for approval later today, and then to the TPB's Steering Committee on June 2, 2023, for their approval.

#### **5. FEDERAL CLIMATE GRANT AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

*Erin Morrow, COG Transportation Planning*

President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) are opening grant and funding opportunities to support implementation of climate action in metropolitan Washington. COG and TPB are coordinating with members to pursue opportunities benefiting the region, including the US EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Program and the FHWA Carbon Reduction Program (CRP). The CRP, established by the BIL, provides funds to reduce transportation emissions. States are required to develop a Carbon Reduction Strategy (CRS) by November 15, 2023, in consultation with Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). The CRS should identify projects and strategies to reduce emissions, such as promoting alternative modes of transportation and utilizing low-emission vehicles and construction practices. The program allocates \$6.4 billion in formula funding from FY 2022 to FY 2026, with 65% allocated to areas based on population and 35% available for statewide use. The funds can be used for eligible projects to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Coordination discussions have begun between the TPB and state DOTs, with meetings planned to develop the process for project selection and funding. State DOTs will have the opportunity to present their Carbon Reduction Strategies to the TPB before submission to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The CRS must be updated at least once every four

years, and states are encouraged to integrate it into their transportation planning processes, including the state and MPO long-range transportation plans.

*Maia Davis, COG Environmental Programs*

The CPRG program, established by the IRA, provides funding to states, regions, and local governments for greenhouse gas emissions reduction and air pollution projects. The program consists of two stages: non-competitive planning grants totaling \$250 million and competitive implementation grants totaling \$4.6 billion. COG, through coordination discussions, will need to engage with jurisdictions in the broader Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) outside of COG region. The project will involve the development of a Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP) and a Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP), including GHG inventories, reduction measures, benefits analysis, and a review of authority to implement. The CCAP will also include GHG emissions projections, reduction targets, co-pollutant analysis, low-income community benefits analysis, and workforce planning analysis. The CPRG Phase II implementation grants will be awarded through a competitive process to entities covered by plans developed with planning grants.

Discussion:

- In summary, more information about the CPRG competitive grants will be available in the fall, and the PCAP is due in March. Projects identified in the PCAP will be eligible for the first round of implementation funding. COG will be evaluated on whether they fulfilled the requirements in subsequent funding rounds, and ongoing reporting and analysis will be necessary for continued eligibility.
- A call for projects will be issued for the entire MSA to ensure inclusivity and representation of both urban and rural projects. Efforts will be made to involve all local jurisdictions in the MSA, although participation will be voluntary.
- The 40 percent mentioned in the presentation refers to the Justice40 initiative, which aims to ensure that 40 percent of the benefits of measures, strategies, and projects in the plan are directed towards vulnerable communities. The exact methodologies for determining these benefits have not been released yet. It is expected that implementation grants will also require 40 percent of project benefits to support and show benefits to EJ communities.
- COG has not received additional guidance on the criteria for ranking projects or programs in the planning phase. It's important to consider that not every project will receive competitive funding, as the focus may be on larger impactful initiatives. While it may not be possible to develop perfect criteria by the March deadline, we can start thinking about the types of projects that would be competitive for funding.
- Any local government can apply for the competitive grants once the project is included in the regional plan. There may be restrictions and eligibility criteria, but it opens up the opportunity for various organizations and agencies to lead grant applications.

**5. ADJOURN**

*Takis Karantonis, CEEPC Chair*

Chair Karantonis adjourned the meeting. Upcoming CEEPC meeting dates for 2023 include:

- Wednesday, July 26, 2023 – virtual only
- Wednesday, September 27, 2023 – in person with virtual option
- Wednesday, November 15, 2023 – virtual only

*All meeting materials including speaker presentations can be found on the COG website or by clicking the link below –*  
<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2023/5/24/climate-energy-and-environment-policy-committee/>