



Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY: NOVEMBER 15, 2023

CEEPC MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

- Hon. Takis Karantonis, Arlington County (Chair)
- Hon. Sarah Bagley, City of Alexandria
- Hon. Evan Glass, Montgomery County
- Hon. Penny Gross, Fairfax County
- Hon. Jolene Ivey, Prince George's County
- Hon. Alanna Mensing, City of Manassas Park
- Hon. Tom Osina, City of Manassas
- Hon. Dave Snyder, City of Falls Church
- Valerie Amor, City of Alexandria
- Michele Blair, City of Laurel
- Amanda Campbell, City of Rockville
- Emma Cross, District Department of Transportation (DDOT)
- Dorothy Estrada, City of Takoma Park
- Randy Freed, Citizens' Climate Lobby
- Beth Groth, Charles County
- Stephen Gyor, District of Columbia
- Maureen Holman, DC Water
- Giulia Manno, Prince William County
- Scott Pomeroy, Scalable Strategies
- Jim Ponticello, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
- Julie Rosenburg, Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions
- Luke Wisniewski, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES:

- Dawn Ashbacher, Frederick County
- Noelani Brockett, Charles County
- Virginia Burke, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
- Al Carr, District Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE)

- Rich Dooley, Arlington County
- Bill Eger, Arlington County
- Susan Elliott, ICF
- Deb Harris, ICF
- Jenn Hatch, DOEE
- Samantha Heitsch, City of Alexandria
- Michael Knapp, Regional Tree Canopy Subcommittee (RTCS)
- David Lorenzo, Councilmember Glass' Legislative Assistant
- Demetra McBride, Arlington County
- Naeem Mia, Montgomery County
- Adam Parris, ICF
- Bill Prindle, ICF
- Kate Roetzer, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)
- Lindsey Shaw, Montgomery County
- John Sheridan, Prince George's County

COG STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

- Kelsey Boatwright, COG Environmental Programs
- Alissa Boggs, COG Environmental Programs
- Leah Boggs, COG Environmental Programs
- Jeff King, COG Director Climate, Energy and Air Programs
- Brian LeCouteur, COG Environmental Programs
- Tim Masters, COG Environmental Programs
- Mark Moran, COG Transportation Planning
- Jane Posey, COG Transportation Planning
- John Snarr, COG Environmental Programs
- Dusan Vuksan, COG Transportation Planning

1. WELCOME, MEETING SUMMARY, VICE CHAIR APPOINTMENT, CHAIR REMARKS

Takis Karantonis, CEEPC Chair

Climate, Energy, and Environmental Policy Committee (CEEPC) Chair Takis Karantonis called the November CEEPC meeting to order. Chair Karantonis proposed an amendment to the meeting agenda to appoint Jolene Ivey as the CEEPC Vice Chair, effective immediately. The September CEEPC Meeting Summary was approved.

Action Item: The motion to appoint Jolene Ivey as the CEEPC Vice Chair was approved unanimously.

2. STATE OF THE CLIMATE 2023

Adam Parris, Senior Consultant, ICF

The [Fifth National Climate Assessment](#) was released on November 14, 2023. Overall, the United States is taking substantial action on climate change. From a city and state level, mitigation actions largely outweigh adaptation actions. However, since 2018 adaptation plans and actions have increased by 32 percent. States located along the coasts have been engaging in more adaptation activities since these areas will be affected by sea level rise. The increased risks from extreme weather events demonstrate the need for better adaptation and resiliency measures to be taken. Extreme weather events cost the U.S. about \$150 billion every year. The Northeast has experienced the greatest observed change for both frequency and severity of heavy precipitation events, while a low percentage of housing units have flood insurance in the region, posing a large risk for financial hardship for both individuals and communities. Many Northeastern states are using public funding mechanisms for their resiliency measures. Collaboration and flexibility in governance structures are important to implement adaptation strategies. Systems are currently being changed on an incremental basis rather than on a transformative basis, causing a less effective reduction of risk because of the residual risk that accumulates.

Discussion:

- There was mention of a tool being developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to accurately calculate the number of deaths related to extreme heat events.
- Blue sky functionality refers to how a system is functioning in the absence of any climate hazards.
- As we get better at tracking adaptation actions, we can get better data to determine the effectiveness of certain actions.
- Regarding the magnitude in cost difference between proactive and reactive adaptation, it's typically dependent on the application. There's no specific ratio.

3. PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY'S COMMUNITY ENERGY & SUSTAINABILITY MASTER PLAN (CESMP)

Giulia Manno, Director, Office of Sustainability, Prince William County

The Prince William County Board of Supervisors voted to adopt the [Community Energy and Sustainability Master Plan \(CESMP\)](#). Developing the CESMP created a centralized strategic approach for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and addressing climate resiliency. A collection of many departments across Prince William County government worked together to create and review the content of the plan. A Sustainability Commission was established to provide recommendations

throughout the plan's development. The Joint Environmental Taskforce (JET) was also created for collaboration between the county government and the county public school system. Community engagement was done through online surveys and townhalls, which gave helpful insight on the public's priorities. COG's 2018 GHG inventory for the county guided the prioritization of actions by sectors with the most significant emissions. An emissions forecast was done with both high and low levels of implementation in the county and found that there is a gap between the 2030 emissions goal and the forecasted emissions. Due to this, the county may consider purchasing carbon offsets at that time to fill the gap and meet the 2030 goal. A vulnerability assessment was done on the county's assets to inform the priorities for the adaptation plan. Next steps for the county include integrating the CESMP into the Comprehensive Plan through an amendment, developing a system to track climate metrics, and increasing staff capacity.

4. UTILITY DATA UPDATE

Tim Masters, Environmental Planner, COG Climate, Energy, and Air Team

Each year COG sends out its energy data survey to the utilities that serve the region. The consumption trends show that annual natural gas consumption is much more variable than electricity consumption, this can be attributed to weather impacts. The trends in annual electricity consumption show a generally steady increase from 2009-2022 with a slight plateau from 2011-2017. Residential and commercial natural gas consumption showed similar trends in variation, with residential consumption of natural gas higher than commercial consumption of natural gas in the region. Residential electricity consumption has stayed relatively level since 2005. Commercial electricity consumption steadily increased from 2010-2020. In 2020, commercial electricity consumption started to increase at a higher rate into 2021 and 2022, which can largely be attributed to the increase in data centers in the region. In 2022, the COG region had 72,701 grid-connected renewable energy systems with a capacity of 807 megawatts.

5. EPA CLIMATE POLLUTION REDUCTION GRANT (CPRG) UPDATE

Jeff King, Director, COG Climate, Energy, and Air Team

Deb Harris, ICF

The [Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#) for the implementation grant competition part of the CPRG program was released on September 20, 2023. To be eligible to apply for an implementation grant the project concept must be included in the Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP), applications for these implementation grants are due April 1, 2024. Grants must implement GHG reductions by either reducing GHG emissions or enhancing carbon removal. Analyses on benefits to low income and disadvantaged communities, air pollution benefits, and cost effectiveness must be included in the application. A demonstrated need for funding must be shown in applications, which could be new projects funded by CPRG alone, as well as expansions to ongoing projects that only have partial funding. Awards are separated into five tiers, with an anticipated 30-115 awards ranging between \$2 million and \$500 million. Application evaluation criteria gives preference to projects with higher near-term GHG reductions. An organization may only be the lead applicant on one individual application and one coalition application, however there is no restriction for partnering on multiple coalition applications. The PCAP will build on the COG 2030 Climate and Energy Action Plan and include priority GHG reduction measures identified by the CPRG Steering and Technical committees. Examples of GHG reduction measures include promotion of electric vehicles and installation of renewable energy on municipal facilities. COG is requesting its local governments to submit potential project ideas to ensure that the corresponding measure is included in the PCAP, therefore making the project eligible for implementation funding. A draft of the PCAP will go to the CPRG Technical and Steering committees for review and approval in January 2024 to ensure it is finalized by the deadline

of March 1, 2024.

6. COMMITTEE AND MEMBER UPDATES

Jolene Ivey, Prince George's County

Apartment building plans in District 5 were unable to meet parking lot tree requirements, an alternative compliance pathway was made requiring solar canopies.

Dave Snyder, City of Falls Church

The Falls Church City Council adopted a new goal of net zero emissions by 2050 along with their [Community Energy Action Plan](#) on November 13, 2023. One point of contention was the recommendation to increase density in residential areas, a lesson learned was to get total community buy-in when possible.

Takis Karantonis, CEEPC Chair, Arlington County

After 11 years of deliberation, the Arlington County Board adopted the [Langston Boulevard Area Plan](#), which is its first 'green' urban corridor plan. The plan strengthens the climate resiliency of the corridor through effective stormwater management, improving energy efficiency, and adding quality green spaces.

7. ADJOURN

Takis Karantonis, CEEPC Chair

Chair Karantonis recognized the Honorable Penny Gross for her dedication to the region and her 28 years of public service. Chair Karantonis adjourned the meeting. Upcoming CEEPC meeting dates for 2024 include:

- Wednesday, January 24, 2024

All meeting materials including speaker presentations can be found on the COG website or by clicking the link below –

<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2023/11/15/climate-energy-and-environment-policy-committee/>