

# A REGION WHERE EVERYONE CAN THRIVE

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## An Introduction to COG

Tom Gates  
Deputy Executive Director

Steve Walz  
Director, Environmental Programs

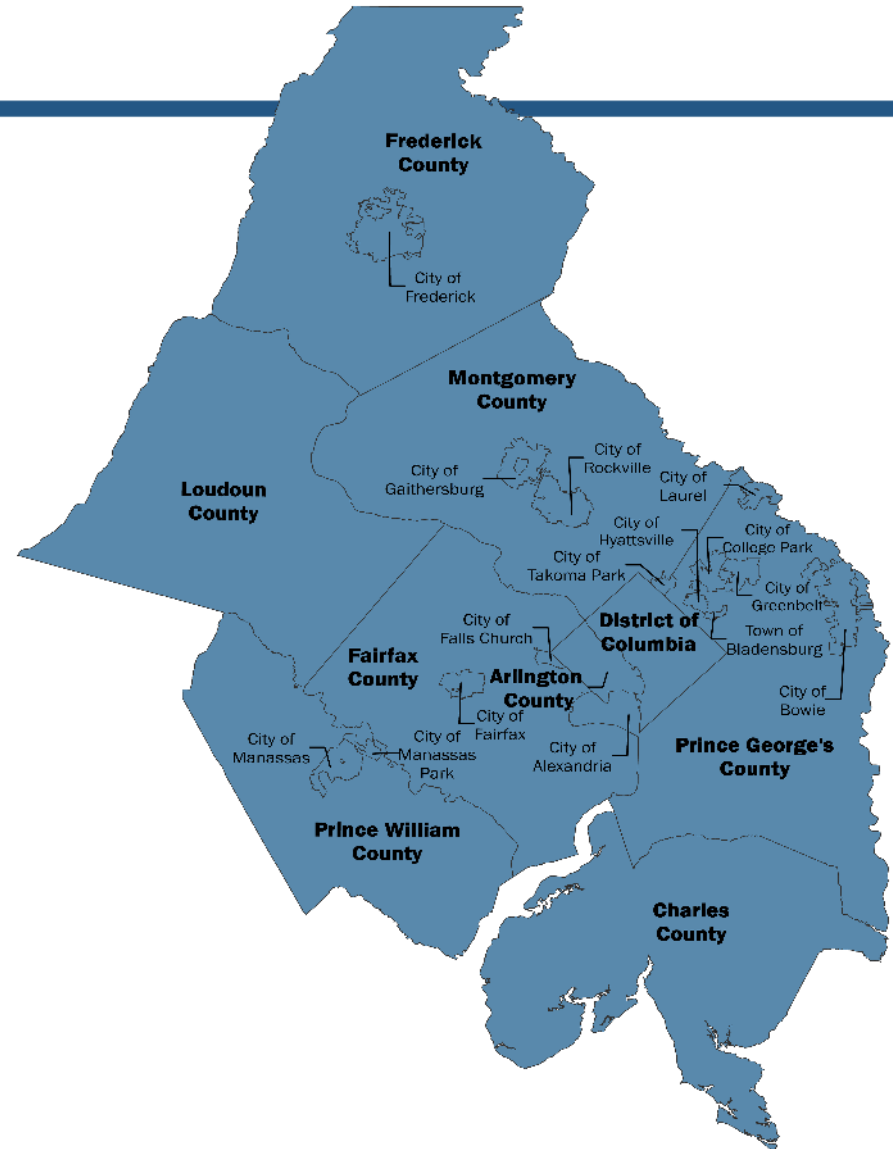
FARM Ad Hoc Committee New Member Orientation  
November 13, 2020



Metropolitan Washington  
Council of Governments

# About COG

- An independent, nonprofit association founded in 1957.
- Brings area leaders together to address regional issues.
- Membership comprised of 300 elected officials from 24 local governments, the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, and U.S. Congress.
- 125+ staff.
- Region Forward Vision.



# Hub for Regional Partnership

- Elected officials
- City and county managers
- Police, fire chiefs, and emergency managers
- Housing directors
- Environmental experts
- Transportation planners
- Local government staff
- Private, nonprofit partners





## Home to the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

- Transportation Planning Board (TPB), one of 300+ MPOs in the nation.
- Prepares programs, plans the federal government must approve for the region to receive federal funds.



# Advancing Regionalism



# Advancing Regionalism

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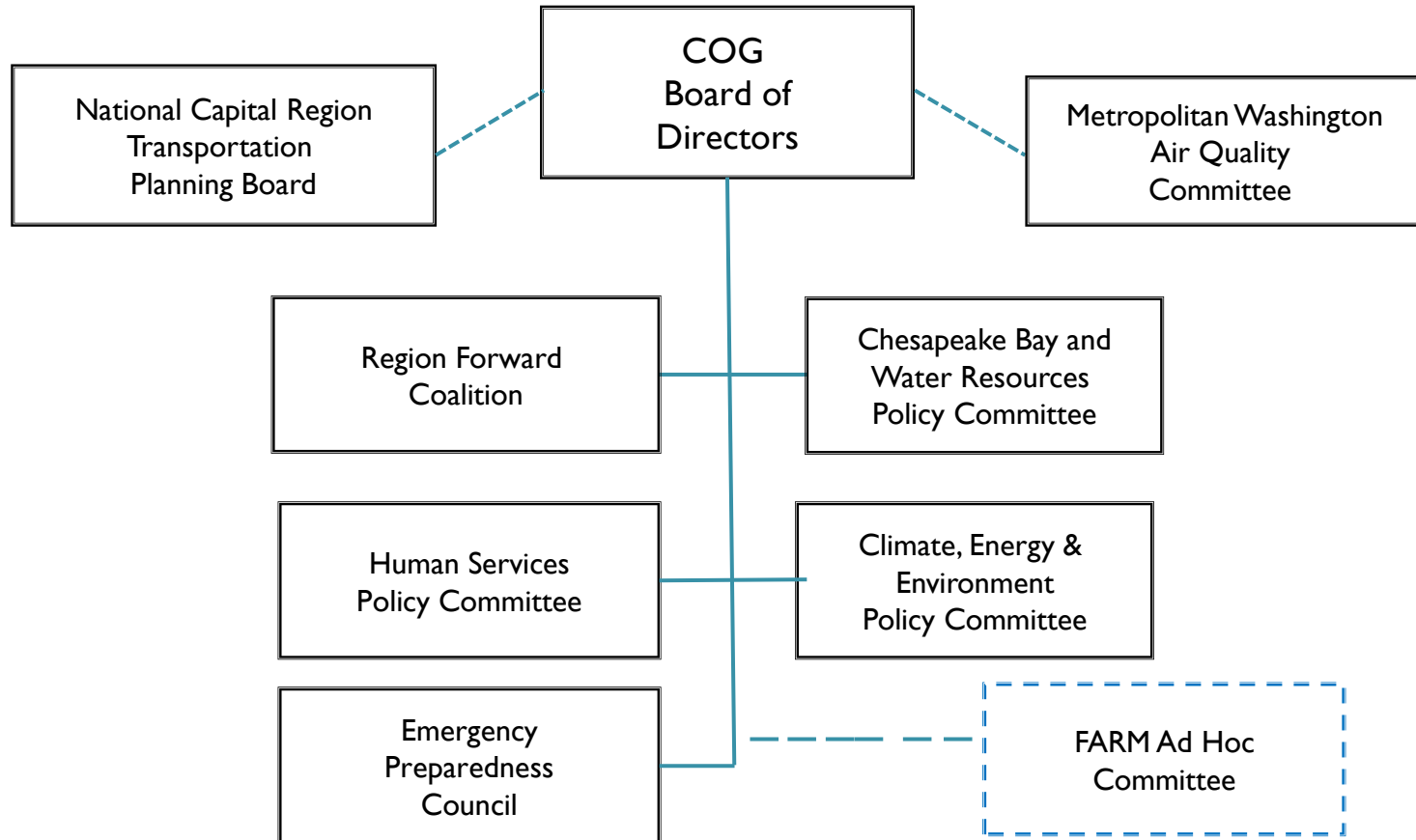
## COG WORK PROGRAM

- Transportation Planning
- Environmental Programs
- Community Planning and Services
- Homeland Security and Public Safety
- Cooperative Purchasing, Other Member Services

## RECENT BOARD FOCUS AREAS

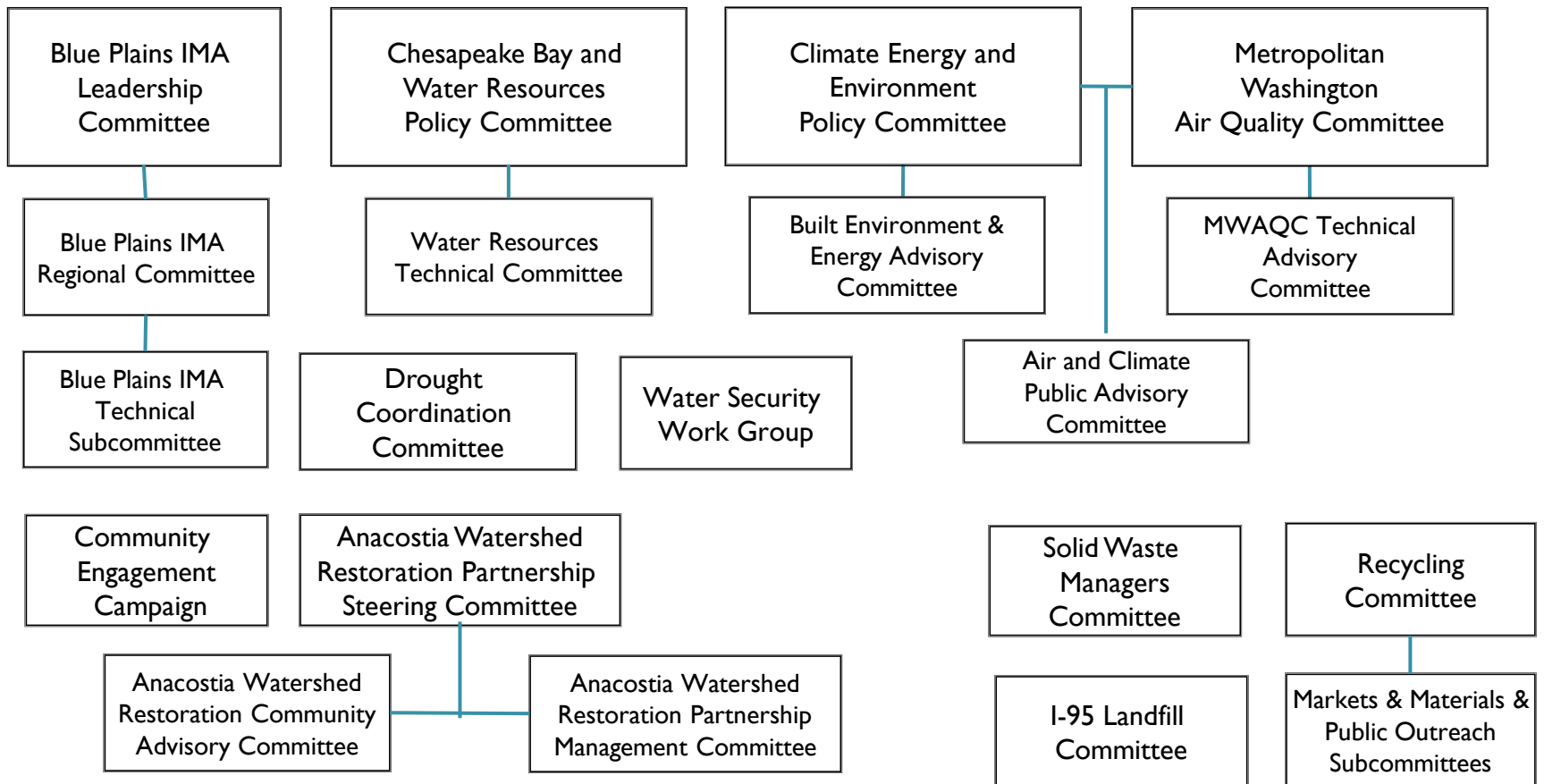
- Metro Funding, Safety
- Economic Competitiveness
- Regional Housing Targets, Transit-Oriented Communities
- Climate Change
- Racial Equity
- COVID-19
  - Food security

# COG Policy Committee Structure



# Environmental Programs

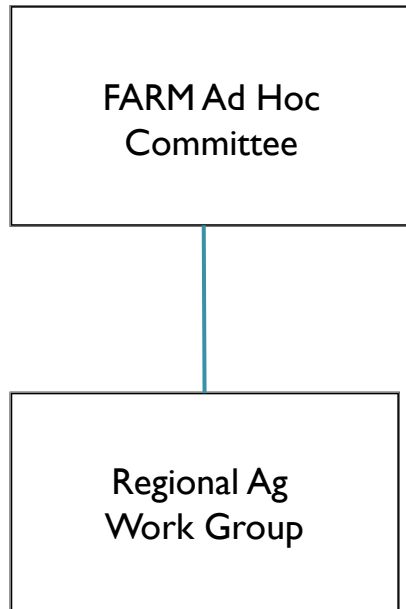
## Committees





# Environmental Programs

## Committees Continued



## Resources

Lindsay Smith, Regional Food Systems Coordinator/Consultant  
*Committee contact*

Christine Howard, Environmental Analyst/Programmer  
*Meeting support*

### *Additional expertise*

Brian LeCouteur, Agricultural Programs Manager

Steve Bieber, Water Resources Program Director

Steve Walz, Director  
Environmental Programs

Tom Gates, Deputy Executive Director

# Environmental Goals

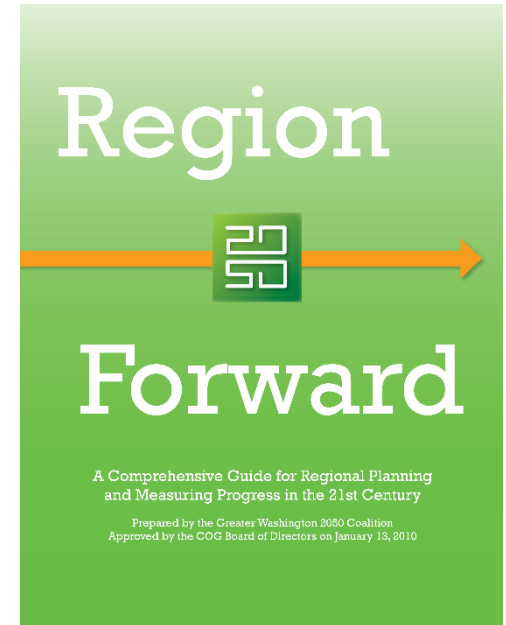
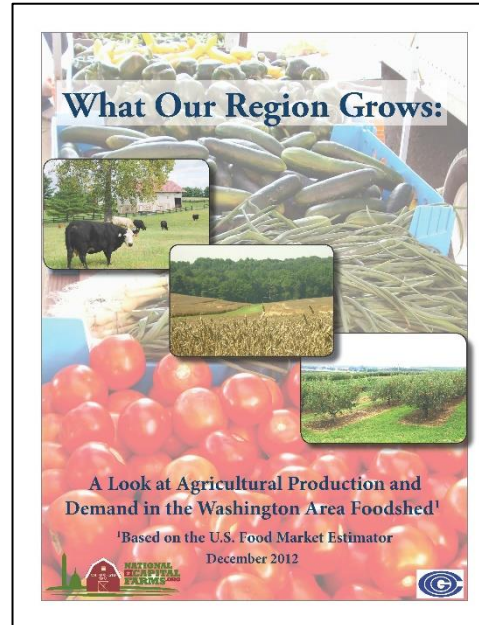
**WATER QUALITY**

**AIR QUALITY**

**ENERGY AND CLIMATE**

**WASTE MANAGEMENT**

**GREEN  
INFRASTRUCTURE**  
(includes agriculture)



Left: COG's first *What Our Region Grows* report (2012) on agricultural production in the region. Right: *Region Forward* focuses on creating a more prosperous, accessible, livable, and sustainable metropolitan Washington.

# COG Legislative Priorities

## Protect Healthy Food Access and the Region's Farm and Food Economy

With the 2018 reauthorization of the Farm Bill and uncertainty about when the Childhood Nutrition Reauthorization Act may be taken up again, support protecting, fully funding, and improving access to programs within these bills including the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), the Women Infants and Children (WIC) Program, and the National School Lunch Program that serve vulnerable low-income individuals and families in the region. Support strengthening programs that advance regional food systems development, on-farm conservation and connections between farmers and consumers of all income levels.

**LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**  
Supporting the region's transportation funding, housing, water quality, climate and energy innovation, air quality, human services, emergency preparedness, infrastructure investment and local government input across all sectors  
January 2020

Metropolitan Washington  
Council of Governments

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# Photo Credits

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- Slide 5: Opening Day - Rhode Island (Larry Levine/[WMATA](#))
- Slide 5: H Street NE (Ted Eytan/[Flickr](#))

