

# Activity Centers

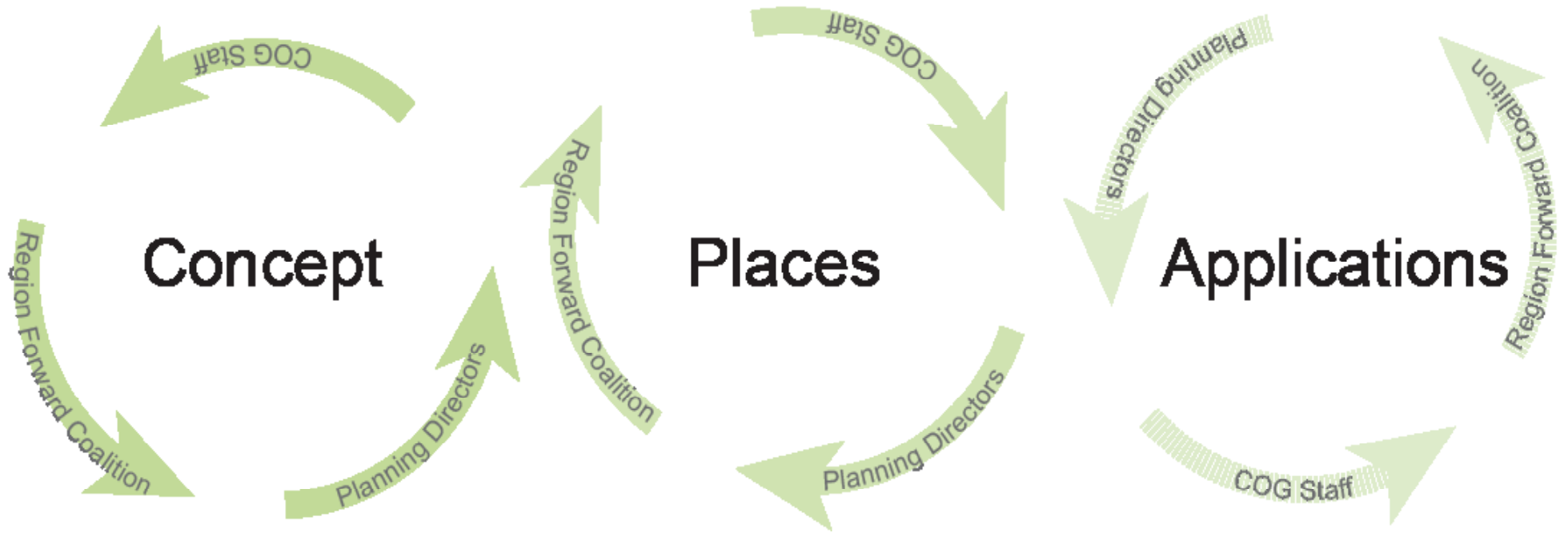
2012 Update

Activity Centers are the locations that will accommodate the majority of the region's future growth. They include existing urban centers, priority growth areas, traditional towns, and transit hubs. Together, Activity Centers will play a central role in achieving *Region Forward's* prosperity, sustainability, accessibility, and livability goals.



METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON  
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Version 1  
7/17/2012



- Hybrid Policy/Technical Approach
- Grounded in Local Planning
- Reinforces *Region Forward*
- Aligned with Existing and Planned Transportation System
- Consistent with Environmental Goals

- Existing Urban Centers
- Priority Development Areas
- Traditional Town Centers
- Employment Centers

- Analysis
- Planning
- Investment

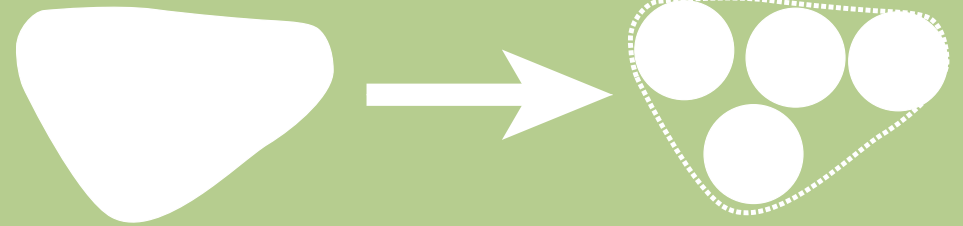
# Key Outcomes of the 2012 Update

## More, Smaller Centers

Current: 59; New: 136

Most centers located within current center boundaries

Better scale for implementation

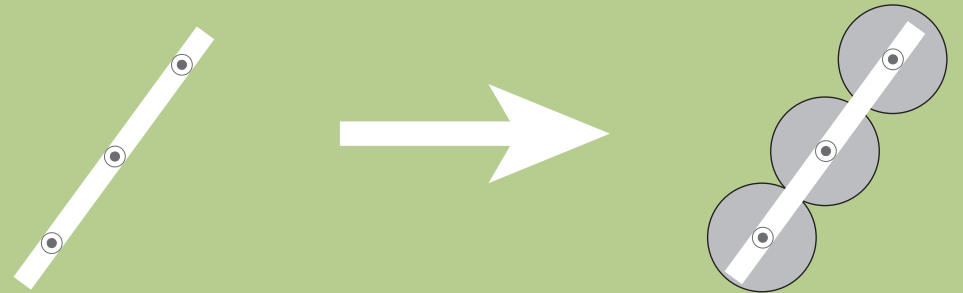


## Aligned with Major Infrastructure

Include several additional Metro and rail stations as centers

70% of new centers served by transit by 2040

Aligned with major highway network



## Links Local and Regional Priorities

Selection criteria includes *Region Forward* priorities

Provides tool for local governments to support regional goals

Supports local and regional environmental goals



# Concept

Core  
Attributes



Any 2  
Additional  
Attributes



## Background

Activity Centers originally emerged from the Transportation Planning Board's (TPB) vision for the region, adopted in 1998. Among other things, the vision and its related goals and objectives called for better interjurisdictional coordination of transportation and land use planning through the development of a regional map that identified Activity Centers and major transportation corridors.

The first Activity Centers map was approved in 2002, and a second version of the map was adopted in 2007. The 59 Activity Centers on that map were identified based on job concentrations in COG's Cooperative Forecasts and reflected major employment centers in the region. For the past ten years, COG and the TPB have used Activity Centers for technical purposes, including growth forecasts and scenario analysis for transportation planning.

## A New Selection Approach

For the 2012 update, COG developed a new approach to identify Activity Centers. As the spatial component of *Region Forward*, Activity Centers will be used as both a technical *and* policy tool. Aligning Activity Centers with *Region Forward* will help ensure that the dramatic growth anticipated through 2050 will enhance the region's prosperity and sustainability. Consequently, the selection criteria for the 2012 update are a hybrid of policy-oriented measures and technical guidelines.

The criteria also provide flexibility in how places can qualify as Activity Centers, and are designed to be consistent with local planning priorities. As a result, the new Activity Centers are diverse, including existing urban centers, priority growth areas, historic towns, and transit hubs in jurisdictions throughout the region.

To qualify as an Activity Center, some of the needed attributes must be present today, while others must be accomplished by 2040. A location must meet both of the two core attributes and at least two additional attributes by the noted year (either 2012 or 2040).

## Core Attributes (required)



**Policy:** In 2012, the center or priority growth area should be designated in a jurisdiction's adopted comprehensive/general plan or other locally-adopted land use plan.



**Density:** By 2040, have a persons per acre density (employment + population) that falls within the top one-half of densities within the jurisdiction.

## Additional Attributes (any 2 required)



**Intersection Density:** In 2012, have at least 55 intersections per square mile.



**Land Use Mix:** In 2012, have a locally-adopted land use plan/ordinance that encourages mixed-use development through such features as a mixed-use designation, form-based codes, or overlay zoning.



**Transit Capacity:** In 2012, have existing high-capacity/performance transit (e.g. Metrorail, commuter rail, light rail, or bus rapid transit), have a planned transit station identified in the CLRP, or have a planned transit station with a dedicated local funding source. *(Region Forward Target)*



**Housing & Transportation Affordability:** In 2012, demonstrate combined housing and transportation costs of no more than 45% of regional median income, as measured by the H + T Index. *(Region Forward Target)*

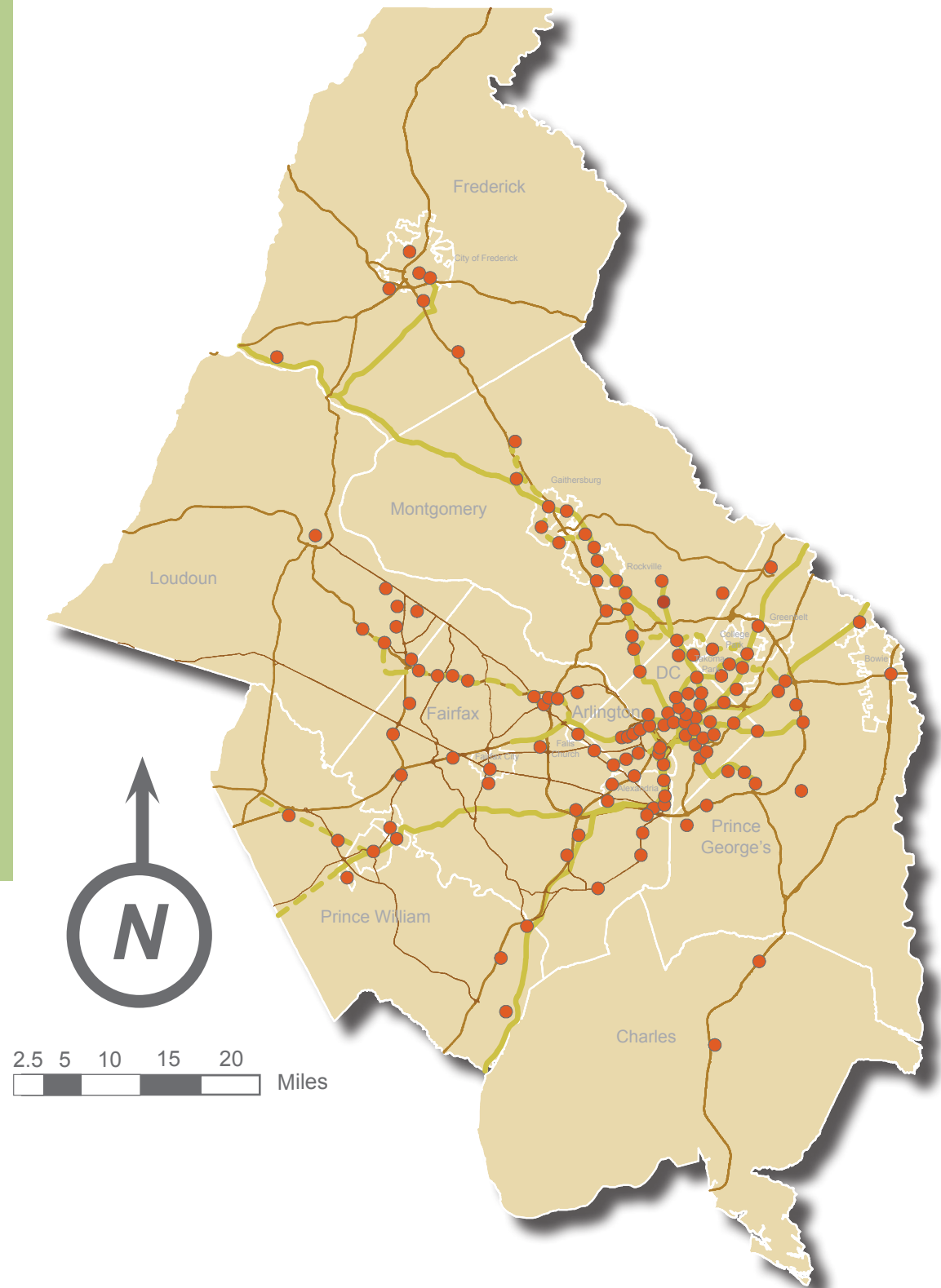
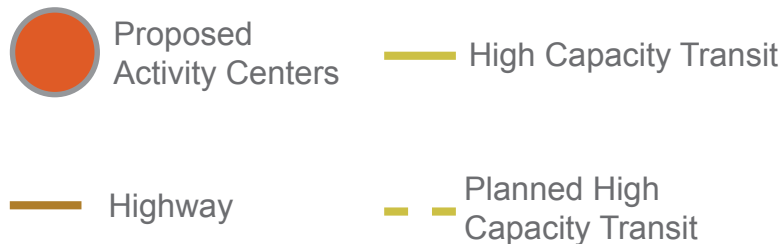
# Places

Activity Centers are the locations that will accommodate the majority of our region's growth in the coming decades. As such, they play a central role in fulfilling the vision of *Region Forward*. They include existing urban centers, priority growth areas, traditional downtowns, and transit hubs. Centers include established communities like Georgetown, as well as newly emerging places like Wheaton. A majority of these Activity Centers are mixed-use communities. Others are primarily employment centers or are dominated by major civic or federal facilities.

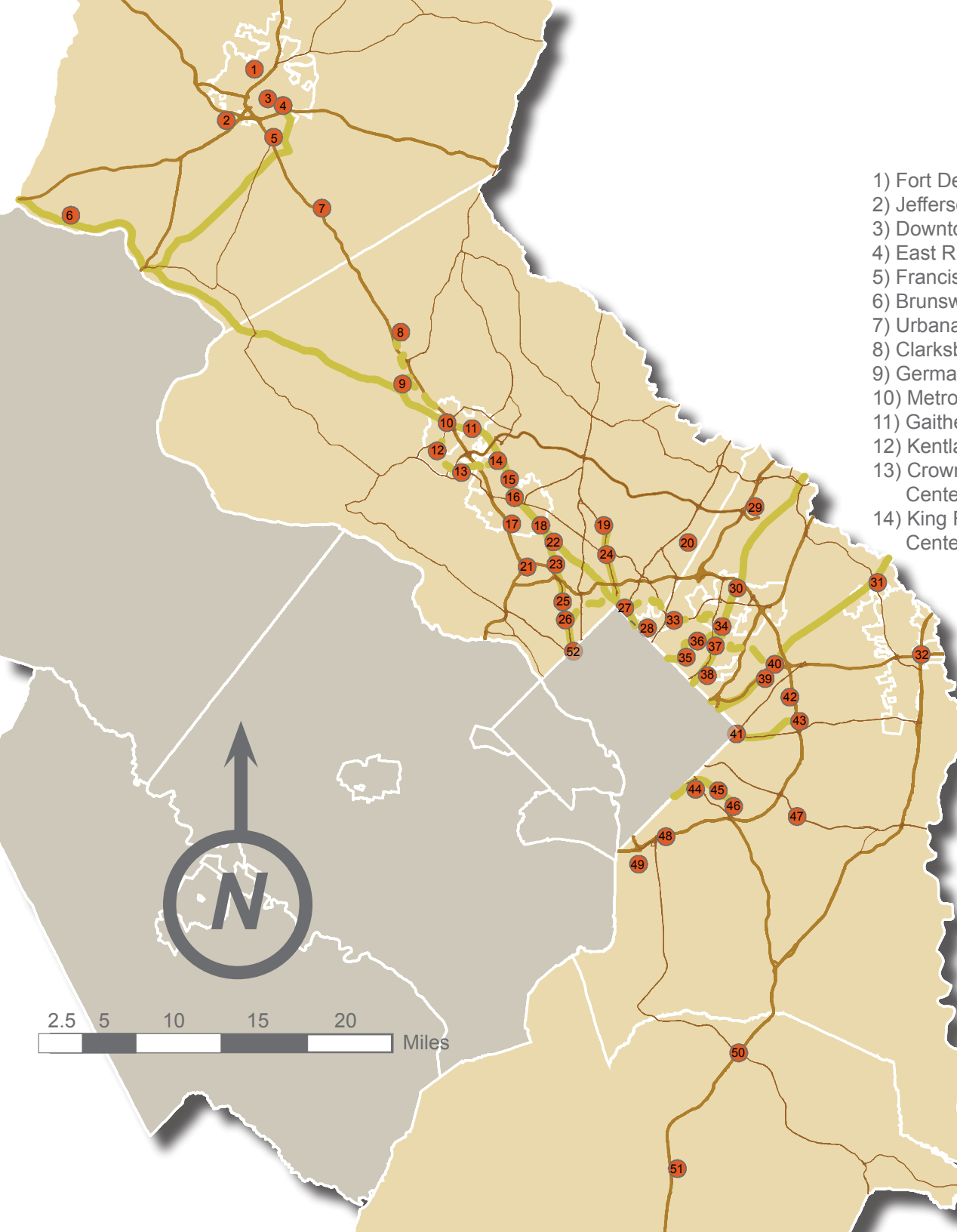
Activity Centers provide a way for all jurisdictions to contribute to our shared regional goals.

## Key Facts

- There are 136 Activity Centers
- Centers are located in every COG member jurisdiction
- 67% of centers are served by high-capacity transit
- 60% fall within old Activity Center boundaries



# Maryland



- 1) Fort Detrick
- 2) Jefferson Tech Park
- 3) Downtown Frederick
- 4) East Rising
- 5) Francis Scott Key Mall
- 6) Brunswick
- 7) Urbana
- 8) Clarksburg
- 9) Germantown
- 10) Metropolitan Grove
- 11) Gaithersburg
- 12) Kentlands
- 13) Crown Farm/ Life Sciences Center
- 14) King Farm / Rockville Research Center / Shady Grove
- 15) Montgomery College
- 16) Rockville
- 17) Tower Oaks
- 18) Twinbrook
- 19) Glenmont
- 20) White Oak
- 21) Rock Spring
- 22) White Flint
- 23) Grosvenor
- 24) Wheaton
- 25) National Institutes of Health
- 26) Bethesda
- 27) Silver Spring
- 28) Takoma Park\*
- 29) Konterra
- 30) Greenbelt
- 31) Bowie MARC
- 32) Bowie Town Center
- 33) Langley Park
- 34) College Park
- 35) West Hyattsville Metro
- 36) Prince George's Plaza
- 37) Riverdale MARC
- 38) Port Towns
- 39) Landover Metro
- 40) New Carrollton
- 41) Capitol Heights / Addison Road\*
- 42) Landover Mall
- 43) Largo Town Center / Morgan Blvd
- 44) Naylor / Southern Ave
- 45) Suitland
- 46) Branch Ave
- 47) Westphalia
- 48) Oxon Hill
- 49) National Harbor
- 50) Waldorf
- 51) La Plata
- 52) Friendship Heights\*

\* Cross-jurisdictional center with the District of Columbia

# District of Columbia

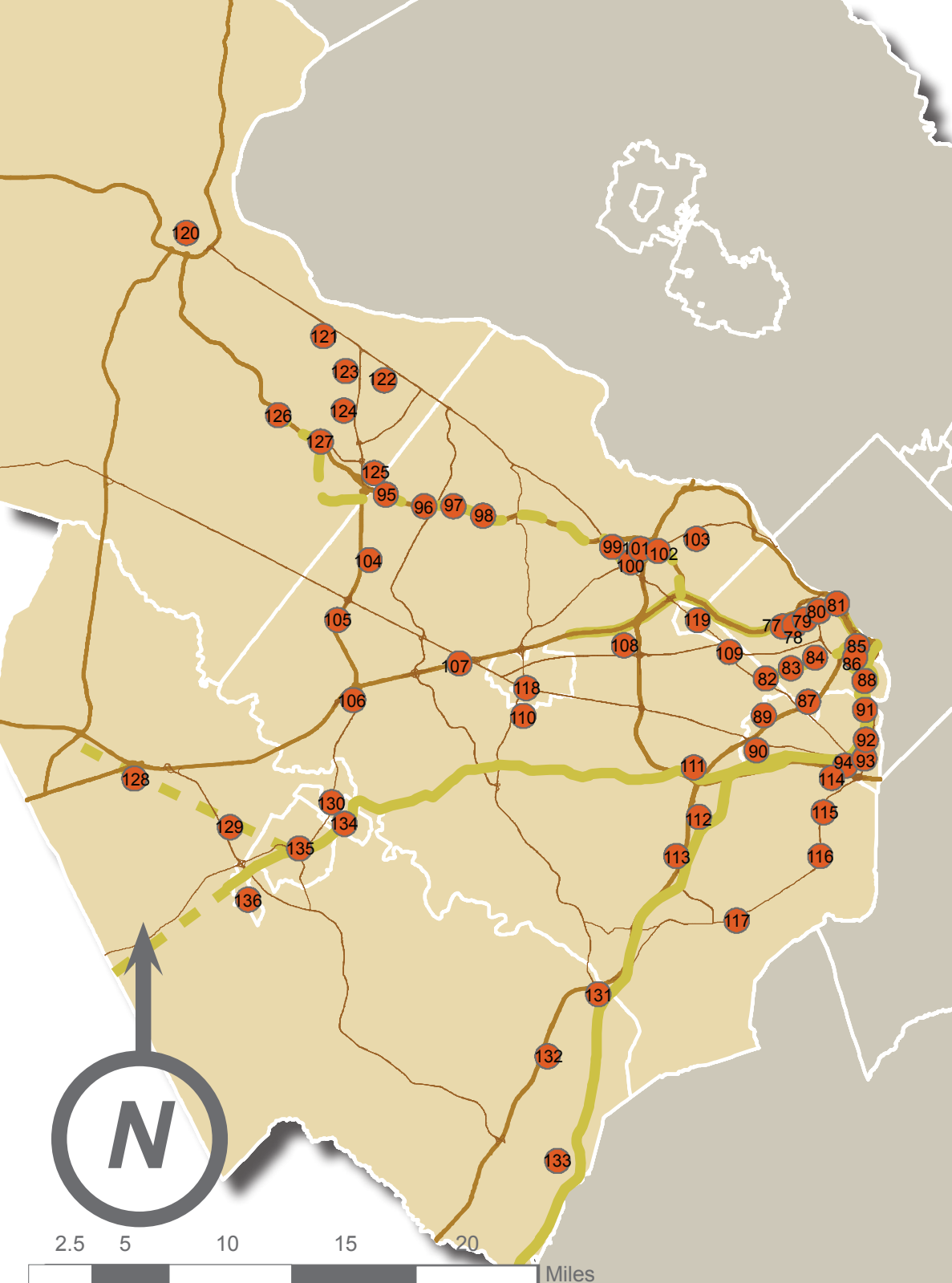
- 28) Takoma Park\*
- 41) Capitol Heights / Addison Road\*
- 52) Friendship Heights\*
- 53) Walter Reed
- 54) Columbia Heights
- 55) McMillan / Old Soldiers Home
- 56) Fort Totten
- 57) Brookland
- 58) Georgetown
- 59) Dupont
- 60) U / 14th Street Corridor
- 61) Rhode Island Ave Metro
- 62) New York Avenue Corridor
- 63) West End
- 64) Farragut Square
- 65) Convention Center
- 66) Downtown DC
- 67) NoMa
- 68) H Street
- 69) Minnesota Ave
- 70) Monumental Core
- 71) Capitol Hill
- 72) Southwest Waterfront
- 73) Capital Riverfront
- 74) Stadium Armory
- 75) St. Elizabeth's
- 76) Poplar Point

\* Cross-jurisdictional center with Maryland





# Virginia



- 77) Ballston
- 78) Virginia Square
- 79) Clarendon
- 80) Courthouse
- 81) Rosslyn
- 82) Bailey's Crossroads / Western Gateway
- 83) Columbia Pike Village Center
- 84) Columbia Pike Town Center
- 85) Pentagon
- 86) Pentagon City
- 87) Shirlington
- 88) Crystal City
- 89) Beauregard
- 90) Landmark / Van Dorn
- 91) Potomac Yard
- 92) Braddock Road Metro Area
- 93) King Street / Old Town
- 94) Carlyle / Eisenhower East
- 95) Dulles Corner / CIT
- 96) Herndon / Monroe
- 97) Reston West
- 98) Reston East
- 99) Tysons West
- 100) Tysons Central 7
- 101) Tysons Central 123
- 102) Tysons East
- 103) McLean
- 104) Dulles East
- 105) Dulles South
- 106) Centreville
- 107) Fairfax Center
- 108) Merrifield / Dunn Loring
- 109) Seven Corners
- 110) George Mason University
- 111) Beltway South
- 112) Springfield
- 113) Engineers Proving Ground
- 114) Huntington/ Penn Daw
- 115) Beacon / Groveton
- 116) Hybla Valley/ Gum Springs
- 117) Fort Belvoir
- 118) Fairfax City
- 119) City of Falls Church
- 120) Leesburg
- 121) One Loudoun
- 122) Dulles Town Center
- 123) Route 28 North
- 124) Route 28 Central
- 125) Route 28 South
- 126) Route 772 Transit Area
- 127) Route 606 Transit Area
- 128) Gainesville
- 129) Innovation
- 130) Yorkshire
- 131) North Woodbridge
- 132) Potomac Town Center
- 133) Potomac Shores
- 134) Manassas Park
- 135) Manassas
- 136) Manassas Airport

**ACTIVITY CENTERS** are places that will have **regional or metropolitan** significance in 2040



- No two Activity Centers are alike
- Each center has unique strengths and opportunities
- The Region Forward Coalition will work with local governments to identify the region's strengths and opportunities
- Then the Coalition will develop tools and strategies to use these assets to help achieve the Region Forward Vision
- These Centers will be updated annually to reflect changes in local planning

## WHAT ARE REGIONAL AND METROPOLITAN CENTERS?

### METROPOLITAN

Places with Metropolitan significance have discernible impacts on the entire metropolitan area. These are the places that most regional residents have visited for work or play.

### REGIONAL

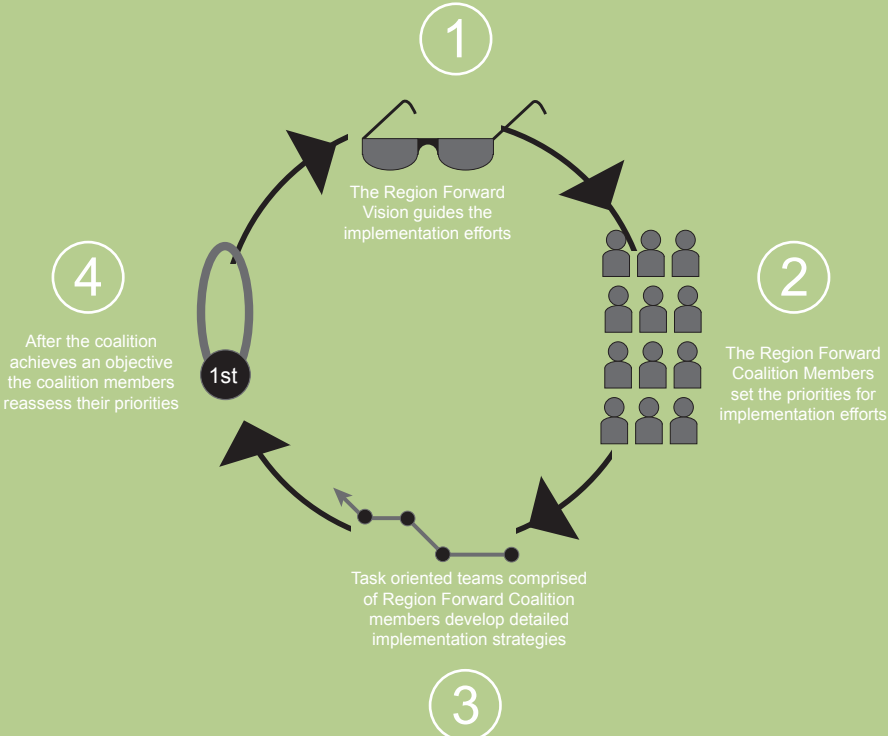
Regionally significant centers have discernible impacts beyond their direct community. Regionally significant centers are characterized by notable concentrations of housing employment, and retail. These are places that residents of surrounding communities will visit several times a year.

### COMMUNITY

Community Centers are places that are significant to surrounding neighborhoods. These centers are characterized by local serving retail centers surrounded by residential neighborhoods. These are places that residents living outside of the surrounding neighborhoods would visit rarely.

# Activity Centers Applications

The Region Forward Coalition will use Activity Centers as a spatial framework to engage regional challenges. Initially the Coalition will use these centers to perform research to identify regional strengths and opportunities. Then the Coalition will work with stakeholders such as the Planning and Housing Directors to develop tools that will help the Region take collective steps toward Achieving the Region Forward Vision.



## STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PLAN

The strategic investment plan will help guide the region's economic development efforts ensuring that our planning and investments account for as many costs and benefits as possible

PHASE 1

## OPPORTUNITY MAPPING

Opportunity Mapping will visualize and cross-reference numerous challenges providing regional leaders accessible tools that will help them build synergistic solutions to our most pressing challenges

PHASE 2

## REGIONAL HOUSING PLAN

The Regional Housing Plan will systematically analyze what types of housing units the region will need and where they are needed.

PHASE 3

## HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Health Impact Assessments will assess social determinants of health, including transportation, housing, and environmental quality in the region.

PHASE 4

# Schedule

## To Date:

- Planning Directors Advisory Committee approved Illustrative Activity Center Map
- Activity Centers introduced to COG Board at annual retreat
- Region Forward Coalition approved centers for public comment

## September – October:

- Present Activity Centers to city councils and county boards
- Launch Strategic Investment Plan work
- Develop technical boundaries

## November:

- COG Board approval of Activity Centers