

Member Benefits

Working together at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), area leaders set priorities and produce results that improve our region's quality of life.

- ▶ COG ensures all major **transportation projects** receive federal funding and approvals. These projects must be included in the Visualize plan of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) at COG, the region's federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization.
- ▶ COG coordinates **air quality planning** and monitors pollution, issuing air quality forecasts and health advisories to the public when the air is unhealthy.
- ▶ COG establishes **mutual aid agreements** for local governments to ensure first responders and resources are available during emergencies, in real time, to help neighboring jurisdictions.
- ▶ COG advances regional **water quality initiatives**. For example, under an agreement it brokered and manages, COG provides support to users of the Blue Plains Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant, which treats approximately 50 percent of the region's wastewater.
- ▶ COG leads **homeland security** planning by helping officials continually assess risks and make investments to enhance preparedness, including facilitation of the \$50M-a-year, federal Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) program.
- ▶ COG is mobilizing action on **climate change**, demonstrated by the region's attainment of its 2020 greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal and recognition by the Global Covenant of Mayors for leading the country in climate planning.
- ▶ COG is preparing the region for **public health** emergencies, building on its extensive coordination during the pandemic as well as new tools to share health and hospital data.
- ▶ COG is helping local governments advance **racial equity** within their jurisdictions by providing regional training opportunities and resources like the Equity Emphasis Areas planning tool to inform planning and budgetary decisions.
- ▶ COG is supporting expanded deployment of **electric vehicles** (EVs) through a new working group focused on planning a more consistent system regionwide.



Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments



The COG Network

COG is the one place that regularly connects area leaders, across various disciplines, to develop solutions to the region's biggest challenges. Our network includes:

- ▶ A membership of 24 local governments, 300 elected officials
- ▶ 1,500+ government staff & partners engaged in 100+ regional boards, committees, and working groups
- ▶ 125 COG staff



Goal Setting

At COG, area elected officials have set regional priorities and staff have developed tools to link land use, growth, and transportation, to support planning at the local level.

- ▶ COG is advancing a shared vision for growth through its *Region Forward* plan as well as its *Region United* framework for 2030.
- ▶ Regional housing targets and climate change goals are unprecedented efforts by local leaders to reach consensus and strive toward shared objectives.
- ▶ COG tools like Activity Centers, Equity Emphasis Areas, and High-Capacity Transit Station Areas are becoming part of the region's planning vocabulary and informing investment decisions.



Programs & Services

COG provides a wide range of programs and services for its members, partners, and area residents.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

- ▶ **National Capital Region Transportation Plan (NC RTP):** The TPB at COG develops the region's federally mandated plan that spans 20 years. The current *Visualize* NC RTP includes \$223B in funding for projects and programs.
- ▶ **Travel demand modeling:** TPB modeling is used by member governments in highway and transit project development needed for state and federal approval.
- ▶ **Technical assistance:** The TPB offers \$1M+ in annual funding for planning and design of local transportation projects through the Transportation Land-Use Connections (TLC), Transit Within Reach (TWR), and Roadway Safety (RRSP) grant programs.
- ▶ **Commuter Connections:** COG provides free services and programs to assist employers and commuters with making smart choices about their commuting needs, including ridesharing, transit, bicycling, and teleworking.
- ▶ **Street Smart:** COG manages the region's public awareness campaign for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists to improve roadway safety.
- ▶ **Bike to Work Day:** COG organizes the annual event encouraging green, cost-efficient commutes and featuring 100+ "pit stops" regionwide.
- ▶ **MATOC:** COG convenes the Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination program, a partnership of transportation agencies focused on sharing real-time information and helping agencies coordinate to better manage incidents.
- ▶ **Airport access:** COG forecasts future air passenger and cargo needs, developing plans for improving how people and goods get to and from the region's three major airports.

Financial grants: The TPB selects projects for the FTA's Enhanced Mobility program for specialized transportation for older adults and person with disabilities (\$10M biennially) as well as the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside program for non-highway projects (more than \$6.5M annually).





ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

- ▶ Chesapeake Bay & Potomac River restoration: COG helps members voice local concerns, measure progress, and share best practices related to wastewater treatment and stormwater management through its Water Resources program.
- ▶ Water security: COG maintains the *Metropolitan Washington Water Supply and Drought Awareness Response Plan* and supports coordinated regional response during incidents.
- ▶ Environmental outreach: COG supports the Clean Air Partners public education program as well as campaigns to promote recycling and protect household plumbing.
- ▶ Anacostia Watershed Restoration Partnership: COG leads a consortium of government agencies, partner organizations, and residents taking action to create a healthier watershed.
- ▶ Climate change: COG is supporting the development of local climate action plans, emphasizing both mitigation and resiliency, providing technical data analysis, and leading public outreach through resources like the DMV Climate Partners website.
- ▶ Food system resilience: COG coordinates efforts to improve food security and grow a more connected food and farm economy.
- ▶ Urban forestry: COG works with members to develop tree canopy preservation and enhancement strategies and monitors conditions in the region.

Solar energy: COG is working with members and partners to accelerate the deployment of solar installations regionwide and advance COG's 2030 solar goals.

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND SERVICES

- ▶ Housing Affordability Planning Program grants: COG awards funding to local governments to support planning for affordably priced housing near transit.
- ▶ Fair housing: COG focuses on creating more inclusive communities through efforts like the *Regional Fair Housing Plan*, the first joint effort of its kind in 25 years.
- ▶ Foster Parents of the Year: COG coordinates and awards local efforts to recruit, support, and retain foster parents in the community.

Cooperative forecasts: COG develops long-range population, employment, and household forecasts for the region, enabling COG and its members to coordinate planning activities using common assumptions about future growth.

HOMELAND SECURITY & PUBLIC SAFETY

- ▶ RICCS: COG runs the regional 24/7 notification system that allows area officials at the local, state, and federal levels to communicate during emergencies.
- ▶ ROCC Liaison Officer: A COG contractor serves as a liaison at the WMATA Rail Operations Control Center (ROCC) to coordinate fire and rescue activities.
- ▶ Winter weather coordination: COG oversees planning and convenes “snow calls” that include OPM, the National Weather Service, transportation agencies, and COG members.

Regional public safety programs: COG manages cross-jurisdictional public safety information sharing projects like fingerprint identification systems, license plate readers, and the LinX program providing rapid electronic access to public safety data for nearly 200 federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies.



Research & Data

COG staff are a trusted source of regional information, providing members with data and tools to inform decision-making, including:

- ▶ Commuting and travel trends, like the *State of the Commute Survey* and *Regional Travel Survey*.
- ▶ The Regional Transportation Data Clearinghouse, an online resource for transportation data, maps, and applications of the Transportation Planning Board.
- ▶ Federally required point-in-time count of people experiencing homelessness and annual report.
- ▶ Annual reports on crime and impaired driving.
- ▶ Air and water quality progress reports and greenhouse gas emissions inventories.
- ▶ Monthly economic reports, including inflation rates, job growth, and new housing permits.
- ▶ Annual reports on multifamily housing and commercial construction.
- ▶ Drinking water supply monitoring and drought reports.

Electric Vehicle Clearinghouse: COG maintains an online resource on EV funding, incentives, laws and regulations, local plans, and a charging station locator.

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is an independent, nonprofit association that brings DC/MD/VA leaders together to address regional issues and plan for the future.

mwcog.org



Cooperative Purchasing

COG members save money and time through regional bulk purchasing and contracting opportunities.

- ▶ Member-only cooperative contracts result in larger volume and better unit pricing.
- ▶ The COG Rider Clause allows members to join thousands of existing contracts and avoid the need to do in-house bidding.
- ▶ Contracts are available for items such as road salt and diesel fuel to self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBAs) and radio systems for public safety agencies.

COG member Arlington County saved \$800,000 on replacing its SCBAs



Professional Development

COG helps prepare future leaders through a variety of learning opportunities that build stronger connections among local government professionals in the region.

- ▶ Racial Equity Learning Cohort: A yearlong program with Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE).
- ▶ Public Safety Leadership: Three-part seminar for homeland security and public safety professionals.
- ▶ Institute for Regional Excellence (IRE): A yearlong program of COG and The George Washington University—graduates become Certified Public Managers.

Since 2002, more than 450 local government managers have graduated from IRE.

Member Dues

COG's member dues unlock the variety of benefits highlighted here and much more. The \$5.1M in dues leverage more than \$31M in federal and state funding and accounted for just 9 percent of COG's overall budget in FY 2024.

