**Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG)**

**Draft Climate and Energy Leadership Awards Program Concept**

**July 18, 2013**

**Background:** The CEEPC and Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC) members have expressed interest in COG developing an environmental awards program to promote the 2013-2016 Climate, Energy and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) Action Plan. This document outlines an initial concept for a Climate and Energy Leadership Awards Program that could be developed in FY 2014.

**Purpose:** To motivate and recognize local jurisdictions in the National Capital Region (NCR) that implement projects and programs that work to achieve local and regional climate and energy goals.

**Applicants and Categories:**

Option 1: Three award categories are proposed below - small communities, medium communities, and large communities (see Figure 1). One jurisdiction per category will be awarded each year.

Option 2: Three topic areas will be chosen from the 2013-2016 CEEPC Action Plan each year, such as Greenhouse Gas Inventories and Plans, Renewable Energy, and Land Use.

Option 3: Both option 1 & option 2.

All of COG’s 22 member jurisdictions would be eligible to apply to their appropriate category. Different jurisdictions would have the opportunity to win the award every year. Applicants would self-nominate through an easily accessible online system.

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| **Figure 1. Proposed Population Breakdown for Award Categories** |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Population** |  |
| Town of Bladensburg |  9,328  | Under 50K |
| City of Falls Church |  13,229  |
| City of Manassas Park  |  15,798  |
| City of Takoma Park |  17,205  |
| City of Fairfax  |  23,461  |
| City of Greenbelt |  23,541  |
| City of College Park |  31,208  |
| City of Manassas |  40,605  |
| City of Bowie |  56,129  | 50K - 200K |
| City of Gaithersburg |  62,794  |
| City of Rockville |  63,244  |
| City of Frederick |  66,382  |
| City of Alexandria |  146,294  |
| Charles County  |  150,592  |
| Frederick County  |  173,200  |
| Arlington County |  221,045  | Over 200K |
| Loudoun County |  336,898  |
| Prince William County  |  430,289  |
| District of Columbia |  632,323  |
| Prince George's County  |  760,932  |
| Montgomery County  |  861,466  |
| Fairfax County  |  1,118,602  |

**Criteria, Selection, and Recognition**: A joint CEEPC/ACPAC task force will develop criteria. The following metrics could be used: CEEPC Survey, COG utility energy survey, existing benchmarking programs such as LEED, Energy Star, ICLEI, etc.

As the citizen advisory committee that advises CEEPC on climate and energy issues, ACPAC could serve as the judges for the awards. ACPAC has equal representation on the committee from across the region (6 members from the District of Columbia, 6 from suburban Maryland, and 6 from northern Virginia). ACPAC members also have a diverse set of backgrounds including business/industry, education/scientific, environmental/health and civic organizations.

Awardees will be recognized at a CEEPC meeting with a press release, blog, social media and a plaque or certificate.

**Materials:** COG would need to develop program materials and promote the program to COG members. A key element of the program will be the development of new webpages on the COG website that would include information about the program, a simple and brief online entry form, and a page(s) to highlight awardees.

**Program Development Timeline:** The development of the Climate and Energy Leadership Awards Program could begin in the fall 2013 and the first set of awards could be recognized by summer 2014.

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| **Month**  | **Tasks**  |
| Fall 2013  | * Propose awards program concept to CEEPC
* Create CEEPC Awards Committee to develop program specifics, timeline
* Feedback from ACPAC
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| Winter 2013/2014  | * CEEPC finalizes award program
* Staff develops draft program materials (flyer, power point, webpages, etc)
* CEEPC, ACPAC review program materials
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| Spring 2014  | * CEEPC finalizes program materials
* CEEPC announces launch of award program
* Host webinar for potential applicants
* CEEPC, ACPAC promote award program
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| Summer 2014 | * ACPAC judges award entries
* Awardees Announced/Recognized
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