

ITEM 7 – Action
October 20, 2021

Optimizing Land Use Around High Capacity Transit
and Elevating Equity Emphasis Areas

Action: Approve Resolution R4-2022 to adopt HCTs and EEAs as planning constructs for the region to optimize land use around transit and elevate equity.

Background: At their annual retreat this past July, the COG Board of Directors and policy committee leadership discussed optimizing the land use around High-Capacity Transit Station areas (HCTs) in ways that could advance the regional goals related to Equity, Housing, and Climate Change. Participants also discussed ways to prioritize and elevate Equity Emphasis Areas (EEAs) as a decision-making consideration. HCTs and EEAs are both TPB planning products and part of TPB’s planning priorities. The COG Board will consider resolutions at the October 13 meeting to adopt regional priorities for optimizing land use around HCTs and elevating Equity Emphasis Areas throughout all of COG’s planning. The TPB will consider endorsing the COG resolutions recognizing these as unified planning constructs for regional planning.

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

**RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF
GOVERNMENTS' COMMITMENT TO PRIORITIZE HIGH-CAPACITY TRANSIT STATION AREAS
AND EQUITY EMPHASIS AREAS IN PLANNING DECISIONS**

WHEREAS, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the National Capital Region, has the responsibility under the provisions of Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act to carry out continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive metropolitan transportation planning for the Region; and

WHEREAS, the TPB, as part of its metropolitan planning process, develops a fiscally constrained long-range transportation plan (presently called Visualize 2045) based on a set of priorities as articulated in its policy documents, The Vision, Regional Transportation Priorities Plan, and Aspirational Initiatives; and

WHEREAS, the priorities include (but are not limited to) developing an interconnected multimodal transportation system that enhances quality of life, promotes a strong economy, and enhances and protects the region's environment, with better coordination of transportation and land use planning, while providing reasonable access at reasonable cost to everyone in the region, and reducing congestion with an emphasis on projects and programs that reduce reliance on single-occupant vehicles and increase transit, ridesharing, walking, and bicycle modes of travel; and

WHEREAS, the above policy priorities were reaffirmed in a set of recent resolutions starting with TPB Resolutions R8-2018 and R12-2018 that adopted the Aspirational Initiatives to inform future long-range transportation plans, including an initiative which specifically called attention to land use as a transportation strategy by 'Bringing Jobs and Housing Closer Together; and

WHEREAS, the TPB called for, in TPB Resolution R10-2019, and completed work that has identified existing high-capacity transit (HCT) stations and those planned to be built, and called for members to prioritize these station areas for locating jobs and housing and also to prioritize projects that would make these stations more accessible through non-motorized modes of travel including via the National Capital Trail Network; and

WHEREAS, the TPB is housed by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) and works closely with COG's Board of Directors ("COG Board") and its regional policy advisory committees, including the COG Planning and Housing Directors, and

WHEREAS, the COG Board working with its Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee pursued the TPB's Aspirational Initiative of 'Bringing Jobs and Housing Closer Together' in regional activity centers (RAC) and near HCT stations and, in 2019 adopted regional housing amount, accessibility, and affordability targets, stating that at least 320,000 housing units

should be added in the region by 2030, with at least 75 percent built in ACs or near HCT stations, and 75 percent affordable to low- to middle-income households; and

WHEREAS, the COG board recognizes that optimizing land use in HCTs means building communities that have a variety of services and amenities through mixed-land use, within walk, bike, or micro-transit distances, with housing that is affordable at all income levels, jobs, access to fresh food, health services, education, and other needs; and

WHEREAS, optimizing the land use in HCT station areas also means providing the community with safe and convenient access to HCT stations, which can increase transit usage, reduce greenhouse gasses, reduce household transportation costs, and provide a wider range of travel options for residents and workers, particularly essential workers; and

WHEREAS, on October 13, 2021 the COG board adopted Resolution, R46-2021, endorsing HCT station areas as a key planning concept and tool to inform decision making and action; and

WHEREAS, equity has been a policy priority for the TPB and is reflected in its 1995 Vision statement that calls for a transportation system that is affordable and accessible to all, including persons with special accessibility needs, recently affirmed in TPB's enhanced Environmental Justice Analysis of its 2018 Visualize 2045 plan that identified census tracts in the region with higher than average concentrations of low-income and racial/ethnic minority populations as Equity Emphasis Areas (EEA), and

WHEREAS, this commitment to equity was reaffirmed in July 2020 when the TPB adopted its Equity statement, TPB Resolution R1-2021, establishing equity as a fundamental value and integral part of all TPB's work activities, and

WHEREAS, given COG's commitment to integrate equity considerations in all of its work activities, using the EEA planning construct along with the RACs and HCTs is a way to enable equity considerations in land use, environment and transportation planning to advance the region's housing, transportation, and climate change mitigation goals; and

WHEREAS, on October 13, 2021 the COG board adopted Resolution R47-2021, endorsing EEAs as a key planning concept and tool to inform decision making and calling to make prioritize EEAs for special consideration in regional and local planning and decision making; and

WHEREAS, the TPB believes that the COG board action calling for optimizing the land use and transportation around HCT station areas and elevating the EEAs as a planning construct for decision making advances the TPB's transportation planning priorities and will help provide for a more efficient, safe, affordable, multi-modal, and equitable transportation system.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD:

1. Endorses COG board Resolution R46-2021 adopting High-Capacity Transit (HCT) station areas as a key planning concept and tool to inform decision making and action; and
2. Endorses COG board Resolution R47-2021 adopting Equity Emphasis Areas (EEAs) as a key planning concept and tool to inform decision making and action; and
3. Calls upon its member agencies to adopt the principles of the above two resolutions while making transportation planning and programming decisions for future updates to the TPB's long-range transportation plan and transportation improvement programs.

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
777 NORTH CAPITOL STREET, NE
WASHINGTON, DC 20002

RESOLUTION ENDORSING HIGH-CAPACITY TRANSIT STATION AREAS AS A KEY PLANNING CONCEPT
AND TOOL TO INFORM DECISION MAKING AND ACTION

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) comprises the region's 24 local governments and their governing officials, plus area members of the Maryland and Virginia legislatures and the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, and COG provides a focus for action on issues of regional concern; and

WHEREAS, area jurisdictions have a shared vision, *Region Forward*, for a more prosperous, accessible, livable, and sustainable future which has guided the region's evolution over the past two decades into a national leader in transit-oriented development; and

WHEREAS, the region has adopted a set of goals and targets to realize its aspiration for an equitable, prosperous, and sustainable region including in the areas of housing, climate change, and accessibility; and

WHEREAS, the COG Board has articulated building transit-oriented communities as a multi-sectoral planning priority to achieve multiple regional goals including those in housing, climate change, and accessibility; and

WHEREAS, the region's Transportation Planning Board (TPB) in 2018 identified the need for additional housing units and bringing housing closer to jobs as land use and transportation strategies to advance the region's accessibility and climate change goals while also optimizing transportation system performance, and recommended that COG advance land use solutions to address this need; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the COG Board adopted regional housing amount, accessibility, and affordability targets, stating that at least 320,000 housing units should be added in the region by 2030, with at least 75 percent built in Regional Activity Centers (RACs) or near High-Capacity Transit Station Areas (HCTs), and 75 percent accessible to low- to middle-income households; and

WHEREAS, the region has a well-established system of HCTs that includes heavy urban and commuter rail, light rail, streetcar, and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) services; and

WHEREAS, local governments have supported these HCTs through their zoning and land use planning decisions, identifying them as good locations to concentrate future growth to promote desirable development patterns; and

WHEREAS, the TPB has identified 225 areas (occupying just 10 percent of the region's land area), which currently serve as or are planned to serve as HCTs by 2030 (to be updated periodically), as opportune locations to optimize land use and transportation system connectivity; and

WHEREAS, the COG draft Round 9.2 Cooperative Forecasts project that between 2020 and 2030 the region will add 406,000 jobs to the existing 3.4 million, 592,000 more residents to the existing 5.7 million, and 250,000 more households to the existing 2.1 million, and further that 55 percent of new job growth, 39 percent of new population growth, and 42 percent of new household growth will occur within one-half mile of the 225 HCT stations; and

WHEREAS, at the COG Leadership Retreat in July 2021, the board engaged in discussions on optimizing land use around the 225 HCTs, and connecting them to their surrounding communities, both to get the most out of the infrastructure investments already made and to build successful mixed-use, mixed-income transit-oriented communities as a means to achieve the region's housing, climate change, and accessibility goals in an equitable manner; and

WHEREAS, optimizing the land use in HCTs means building equitable and successful communities that have a variety of services and amenities, within walk, bike, or micro-transit distances, such as housing that is affordable at all income levels, jobs, access to fresh food, health services, education, and other needs through mixed-land use; and

WHEREAS, optimizing the land use in HCTs also means providing the community with safe and convenient access to HCTs, particularly those within an RAC, which can increase transit usage, reduce household transportation costs, particularly to the transit-dependent population groups, and provide a wider range of travel options for residents and workers (particularly essential workers); and

WHEREAS, the TPB has further identified two specific initiatives that support both the goal to provide better connectivity within and between transit-oriented communities and access to HCTs, one which includes removing barriers to walking to the HCT stations and the second to complete the National Capital Trail Network (NCTN), a 1,400 mile network of region-wide trails suitable for non-motorized use, of which about 50 percent exists today; and

WHEREAS, to plan for the expected growth in the region in a way that advances multiple regional goals and prioritizes opportunities for affordable and effective means of mobility for all people, the region must optimize its land use and transportation systems to develop communities that leverage current and planned assets.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS THAT:

1. HCTs should be prioritized for special consideration in land use and transportation planning and programming decision making at local and regional levels to achieve our housing, accessibility, transportation, and climate change goals in an equitable manner.
2. COG committees and staff should discuss and consider strategies, as appropriate, to optimize land use and transportation systems in and around HCTs anticipated by 2030, in regional planning and programming activities.
3. Local governments should commit to provide safe and convenient walk, bike, and micro-transit access to HCTs as a means to make transit a viable mode of travel for all trip purposes and reduce automobile travel and related greenhouse gas emissions.

4. Local governments should commit to complete the NCTN as a means to connect communities in and around HCTs and provide active modes of transportation to access a variety of economic opportunities and help reduce automobile travel and related greenhouse gas emissions.
5. Local governments should strongly consider adopting local resolutions committing to optimizing access improvements to HCTs, including completing the NCTN, in all local planning efforts.

**I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT the foregoing resolution was adopted by the COG Board of Directors
October 13, 2021
Janele Partman
COG Communications Specialist**

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
777 NORTH CAPITOL STREET, NE
WASHINGTON, DC 20002**

**RESOLUTION ENDORSING EQUITY EMPHASIS AREAS AS A KEY PLANNING CONCEPT AND TOOL TO
INFORM DECISION MAKING AND ACTION**

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) comprises the region's 24 local governments and their governing officials, plus area members of the Maryland and Virginia legislatures and the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, and COG provides a focus for action on issues of regional concern; and

WHEREAS, in July 2020 the COG Board passed Resolution R26-2020, affirming that its work together will be anti-racist and will advance equity, and that equity will be woven into COG's *Region Forward Vision* to ensure a more prosperous, accessible, livable, sustainable, and equitable future for all area residents and throughout COG's analyses, operations, procurement, programs, and priorities; and

WHEREAS, in 2018 the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) adopted a methodology to identify census tracts in the region that contain higher concentrations of low-income or racial or ethnic minorities compared to the rest of the region, to ensure its long-range plan does not have disproportionate adverse impacts on these communities; and

WHEREAS, the most recent analysis revealed that 351 of the 1,222 census tracts across the region (a number that will be updated periodically) meet the adopted low-income and racial or ethnic minority concentration thresholds and have been identified as Equity Emphasis Areas (EEAs); and

WHEREAS, these 351 EEAs constitute about 10 percent of the region's land area and house about 30 percent of the region's population, with 214 EEAs located within one-half mile of High-Capacity Transit Station Areas (HCTs) and 340 located within one mile of a Regional Activity Center (RAC); and

WHEREAS, COG's multi-faceted regional planning efforts extend beyond transportation and include housing, health, and environment; and

WHEREAS, at the COG Leadership Retreat in July 2021 the board took an in-depth look at the TPB's EEA designations and engaged in discussions on how EEAs can be used to advance racial equity in local and regional planning, project implementation, and decision making across all sectors of COG work; and

WHEREAS, given COG's commitment to integrate equity considerations in all of its work activities, using the EEA planning construct along with the RACs and HCTs is a way to enable equity considerations in land use and environment and transportation planning to advance the region's housing, transportation, and climate change goals; and

WHEREAS, COG member jurisdictions could also use EEAs in a wide range of their jurisdictional activities and services such as housing, education/employment opportunities, environment, and livability, to cultivate a deeper understanding of the nature and magnitude of equity disparities across their jurisdiction and help inform important policy discussions that seek to address disparities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS THAT:

1. EEAs should be prioritized for special consideration in regional and local planning and decision making as a means to further the *Region Forward Vision* for an accessible, livable, sustainable, and prosperous region.
2. COG committees and staff should explore and implement strategies, as appropriate, to further incorporate the consideration of EEAs in planning areas including but not limited to transportation, land-use, housing, climate, and water resources and COG should serve as a forum to elevate the conversation around these topics to provide regional thought leadership and demonstrate the connection between equity and greater prosperity for all.
3. Local governments should prioritize efforts that provide safe and convenient walk, bicycle, and micro-transit access to all of the HCTs and to complete the National Capital Trail Network as a means to provide enhanced mobility and accessibility options to the traditionally underserved population groups in the EEAs.
4. Local governments should consider adopting local resolutions committing to prioritizing EEAs identified within their jurisdiction.

**I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT the foregoing resolution was adopted by the COG Board of Directors
October 13, 2021
Janele Partman
COG Communications Specialist**

OPTIMIZING HCT STATION AREAS ELEVATING EQUITY EMPHASIS AREAS

Unified Planning Construct

Kanti Srikanth
Director, TPB

Transportation Planning Board
October 20, 2021



Unified Planning Framework FOR 2030

**OPTIMIZE HIGH-CAPACITY
TRANSIT**



**ELEVATE EQUITY
EMPHASIS AREAS**



**MEET REGIONAL
CLIMATE GOALS**



**ACHIEVE REGIONAL
HOUSING TARGETS**



COG RESOLUTION: R46-2021

HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT STATION AREAS

1. Should be prioritized for special consideration in land use and transportationdecision making at local and regional levels to achieve our **housing, accessibility, transportation,** and **climate change** goals in an **equitable** manner.
2. COG committees and staff should discuss and consider strategies, ... to optimize land use and transportation ..in and around HCTs
3. Local governments should commit to provide safe and convenient walk, bike, and micro-transit access to HCTs.....
4. Local governments should commit to complete the NCTN ...to connect communities in and around HCTs ...to access a variety of economic opportunities ..reduce ... travel and ...greenhouse gas emissions.
5. Local governments should strongly consider adopting local resolutions committing to optimizing access improvements to HCTs, including completing the NCTN, in all local planning efforts.



COG RESOLUTION R47-2021: EQUITY EMPHASIS AREAS

1. Should be prioritized for special consideration in regional and local planning and decision making ..to further the Region Forward Vision for an accessible, livable, sustainable, and prosperous region.
2. COG committees and staff should explore and implement strategies.. to further incorporate the consideration of EEAs in planning areas including but not limited to transportation, land-use, housing, climate, and water resources and COG should serve as a forum to elevate the conversation around these topics to provide regional thought leadership.....
3. Local governments should prioritize efforts that provide safe and convenient walk, bicycle, and micro-transit access to all of the HCTs and to complete the National Capital Trail Network ..to provide enhanced mobility and accessibility ..to the traditionally underserved population groups ...
4. Local governments should consider adopting local resolutions committing to prioritizing EEAs identified within their jurisdiction.



TPB RESOLUTION R4-2022:

1. Endorses COG board Resolution R46-2021 adopting High-Capacity Transit (HCT) station areas as a key planning concept and tool to inform decision making and action; and
2. Endorses COG board Resolution R47-2021 adopting Equity Emphasis Areas (EEAs) as a key planning concept and tool to inform decision making and action; and
3. Calls upon its member agencies to adopt the principles of the above two resolutions while making transportation planning and programming decisions for future updates to the TPB's long-range transportation plan and transportation improvement programs.



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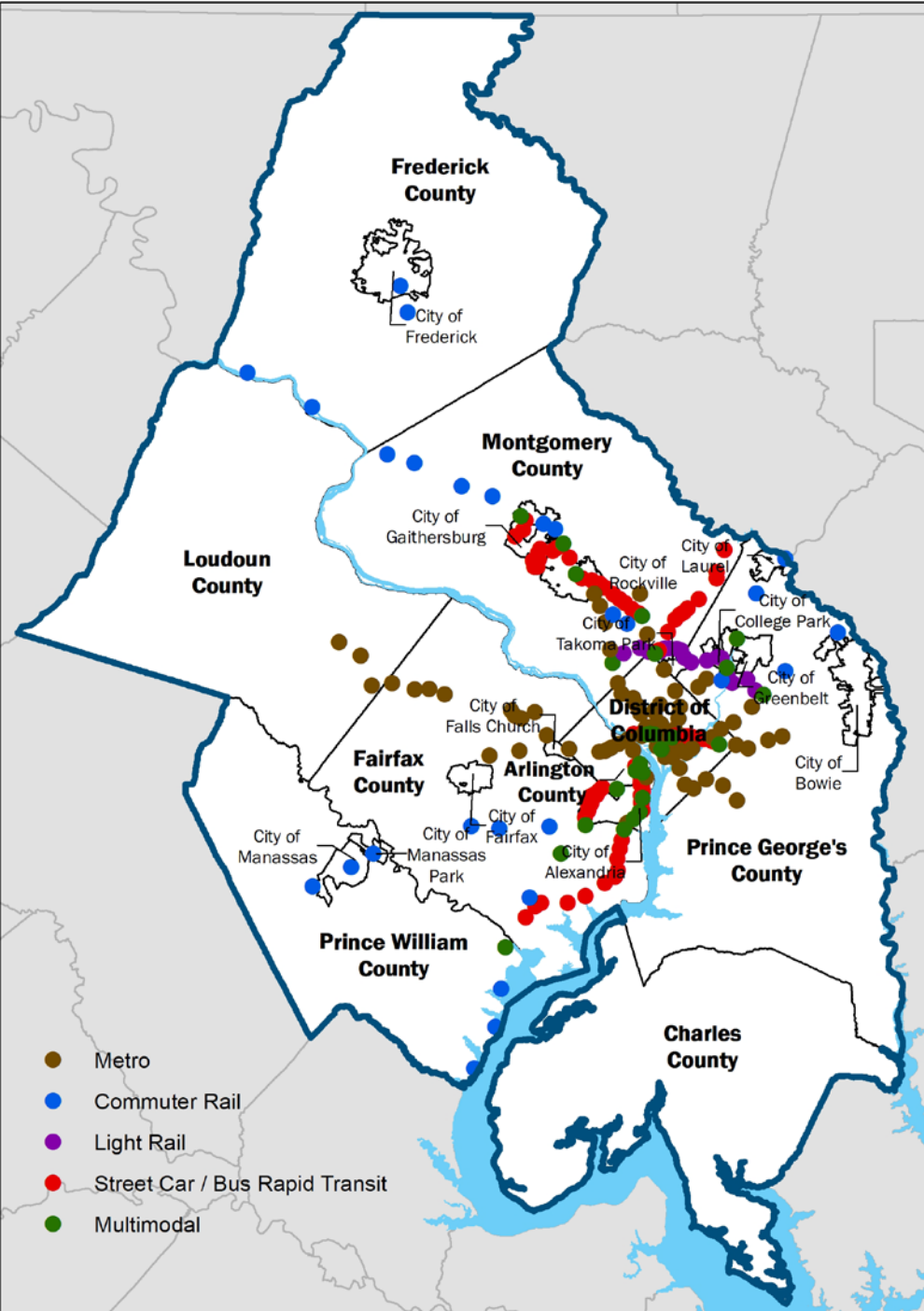


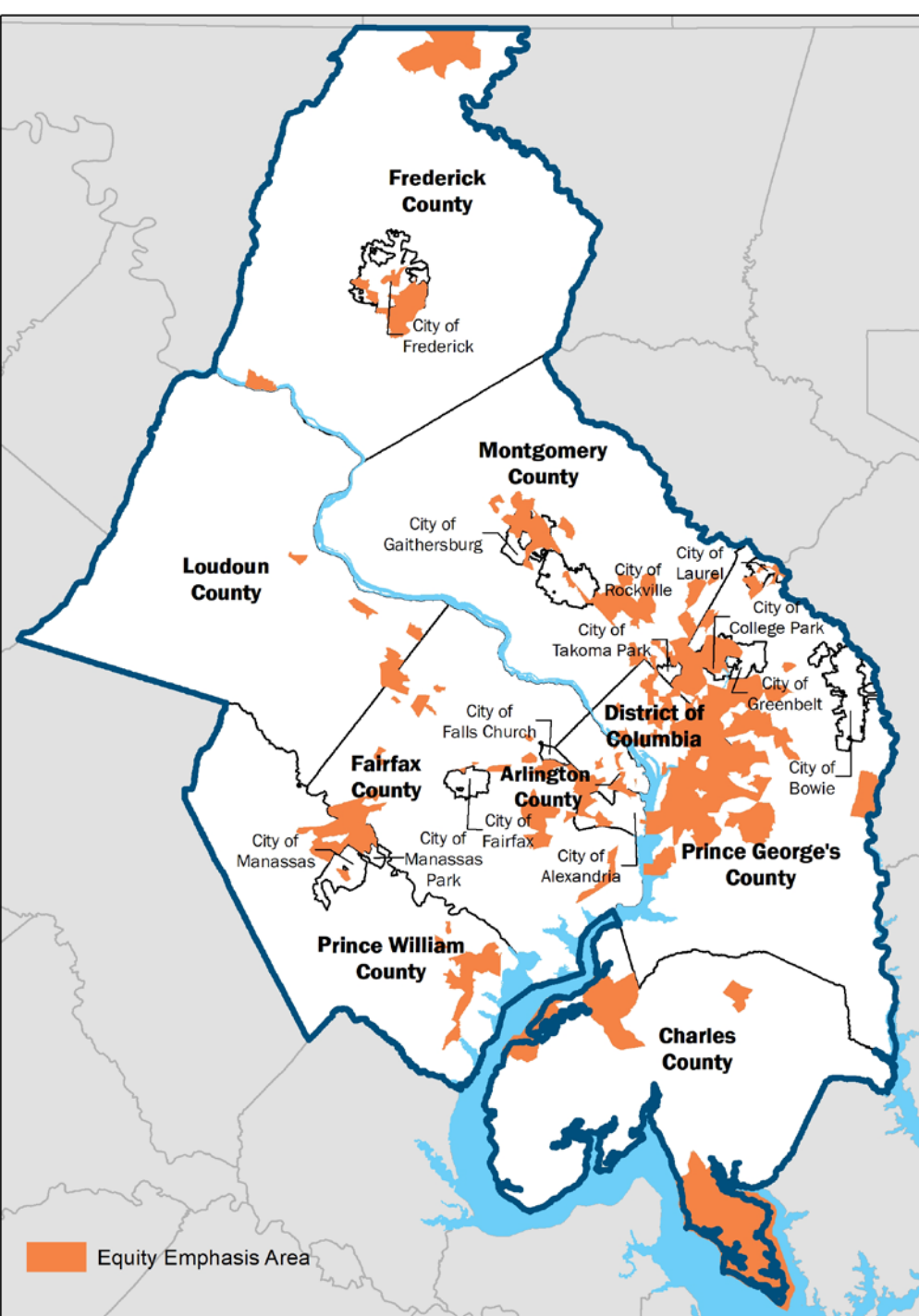
National Capital Region
Transportation Planning Board

Optimize 225 High-Capacity Transit (HCT) Station Areas

Locations around Metrorail, Commuter Rail, Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), and Streetcar.

mwcog.org/highcapacitytransit

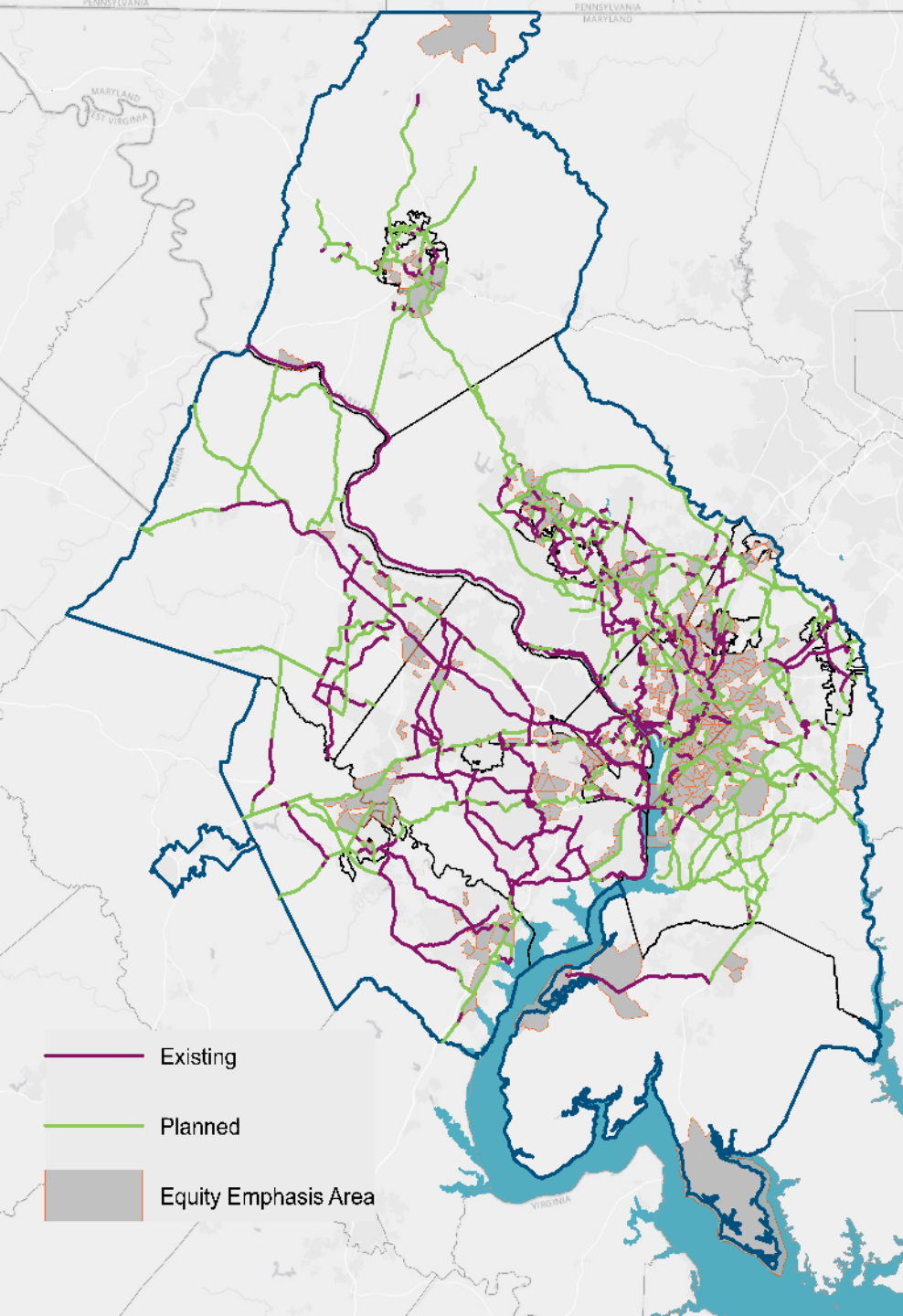




Elevate 350 Equity Emphasis Areas (EEAs)

Areas with high concentrations of underserved groups.

mwcog.org/equityemphasisareas

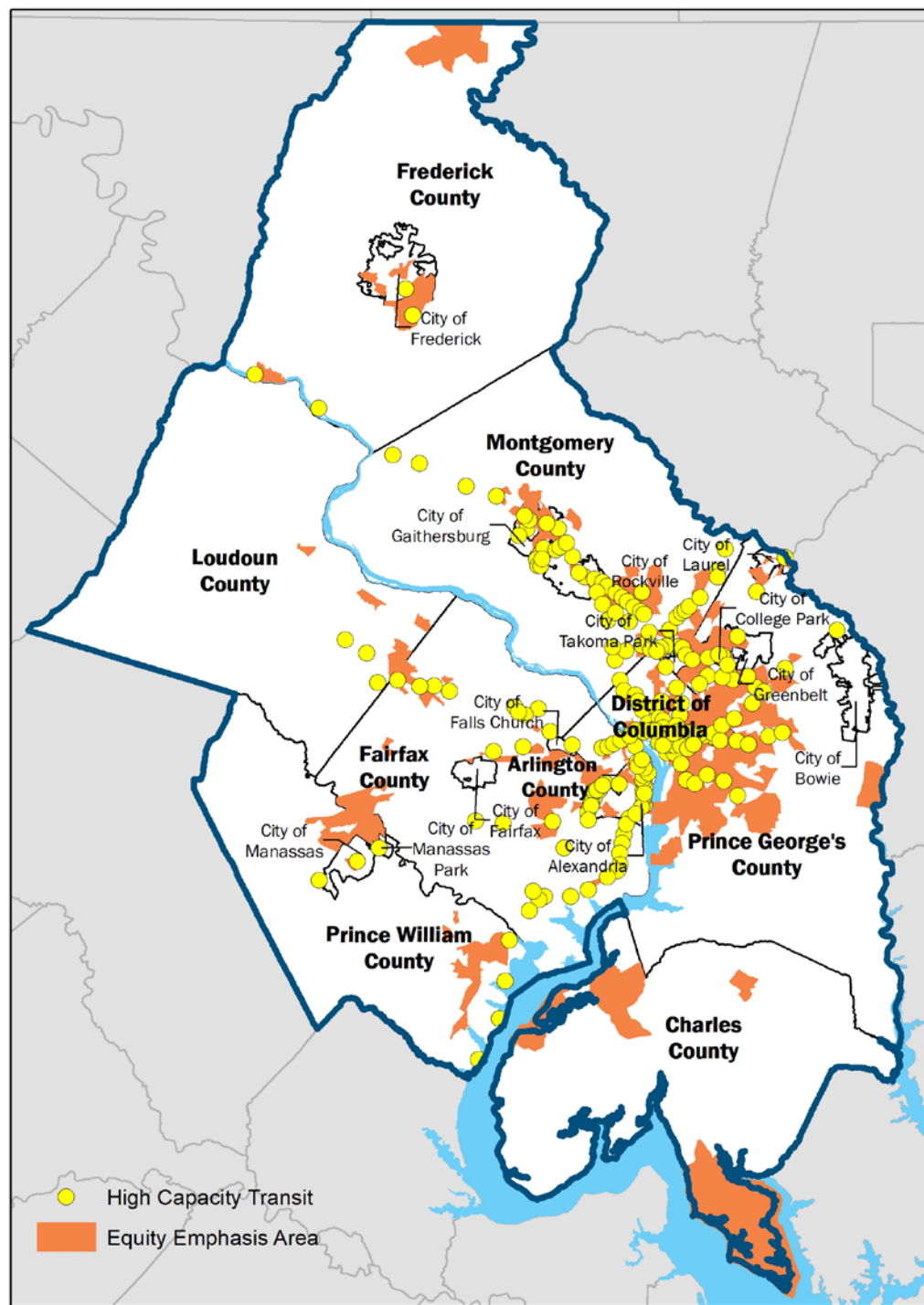


Example: National Capital Trail Network (NCTN)

- Long-distance, off-street trails accessible for people of all ages and abilities and suitable for both transportation and recreation.
- 180 of 225 HCTs are within half a mile.
- 55% of the network is unbuilt.

High- Capacity Transit Station Areas & Equity Emphasis Areas, 2030

mwcog.org/HighCapacityTransit



Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments