

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

RESOLUTION ADOPTING REGIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is comprised of 24 jurisdictions of the National Capital Region's 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 adopted Resolution R26-2020, affirming that COG's work will be anti-racist, 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 January 2021 the Chief Administrative Officers Committee established the Chief Equity Officers Committee as a standing technical committee with the purpose of advancing racial equity within COG programs and committees, COG member local governments, and throughout the metropolitan Washington region; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Equity Officers Committee serves as the hub for regional collaboration and coordination on advancing racial equity initiatives throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, in November 2023 COG hosted a Planning for Equitable Development event to bring together local government staff to develop a shared regional vision for equitable growth and prioritizing equity in local planning; and

WHEREAS, the event laid the groundwork for developing ten regional guiding principles, focused on process for planning and policy development and policy outcomes, for local governments to use to advance equity through new policies and implementation of jurisdictions' comprehensive plans; and

WHEREAS, adoption of regional principles for equitable development will establish a foundation and model for local governments to center equity and utilize when updating their respective local plans; and

WHEREAS, the regional principles have been reviewed by the COG Chief Equity Officers Committee, the Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee and the Housing Directors Advisory Committee.

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

The board approves the Regional Principles for Equitable Development and directs COG staff to share the guiding principles with member local governments in an effort to further center equity in local planning processes.

REGIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT

Process principles for planning and policy development:

Acknowledge history and repair past harms

Document the historical harm caused to communities of color by the actions of government through planning, housing and development to identify the connections between those actions and today's racially disparate outcomes.

Practice inclusive and meaningful community engagement

Require local community participation and leadership in decision-making to reflect a diversity of voices, use power mapping with an equity lens to design equitable decision making structures that account for differences in power amongst stakeholders, and include targeted strategies to engage and compensate historically marginalized communities, and voices representing future residents. Build cultural competence into planning processes and design planning processes and materials to be clear, accessible and engaging for culturally diverse stakeholders.

Commit to implementation with internal capacity and community transparency

Implement equitable development policies with sufficient dedicated budget, organizational structures, and staff trained in equitable planning practices to sustain and grow jurisdictions' capacity to follow through on their adopted policies. Develop public facing accountability tools designed with community engagement and tie them to meaningful budget and policy processes to measure jurisdictions' performance and monitor regional racial disparities.

Policy outcomes principles:

Advance economic opportunity and mobility

Promote generational wealth building, local economic development, and entrepreneur opportunities including local minority businesses participating in publicly supported capital projects and real estate development. Work with the private sector to avoid and mitigate displacement of businesses during construction of new projects, enhance community-serving establishments with capital and capacity building supports, and increase career pathways for quality living wage jobs for people in all neighborhoods.

Prevent displacement

Develop government regulations, policies, and programs to mitigate economic pressures and allow anyone who wants to continue living in a community to do so as it grows, especially for residents vulnerable to displacement pressures due to systemic racism and economic insecurity and prevent displacement of small businesses that serve communities experiencing displacement pressure including preventing predatory speculation of property in communities at risk of displacement.

Expand affordable housing options and preserve existing affordability

Create and preserve healthy, safe, and long-term affordable housing for all family sizes, abilities, ages, and incomes to create integrated, inclusive communities in all neighborhoods through a mix of publicly supported strategies scaled to meet the actual housing need of the region's population growth and communities who have experienced housing discrimination.

Support and strengthen diverse community values

Respect the local culture, character, and diverse values of a community by uplifting existing cultural resources as valuable assets of a community.

Promote people-centered multi-modal mobility and connectivity

Prioritize effective, safe, dignified, healthy, and affordable multi-modal transportation choices for all residents. Support transit-dependent communities and provide equitable access to core services and amenities, including employment, education, health and social services.

Develop healthy and safe communities

Design built environments that enhance health opportunities for communities currently experiencing racial disparities in health through public amenities (schools, parks, open spaces, transportation, complete streets, health care, and other services), access to affordable healthy food, physical exercise, improved air quality, and safe and inviting environments.

Promote and regulate for environmental justice

Work across silos within government and across other sectors to eliminate disproportionate and harmful environmental burdens on any community. Enact regulations and secure resources to mitigate and reverse the effects of environmental hazards past and present that have disproportionately harmed communities of color.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT the foregoing resolution was approved by the COG Board of Directors on March 13, 2024.

Amanda Lau COG Communications Specialist I