



Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Executive Director's Report • September 2014

COMMITTEE WORK HEART OF COG OUTREACH MEDIA EVENTS/MEETINGS

Policy Board & Committee Work

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

At its July meeting, the TPB approved \$420,000 in technical assistance under its Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program. The funding will support nine planning studies or preliminary engineering projects for improvements that would enhance the safety and convenience of travel by bicycle or on foot, especially to nearby bus or rail transit stations. The TPB also welcomed Fauquier County, Virginia, as its newest voting member.

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIR QUALITY COMMITTEE

The Committee heard a final presentation and approved the *2014 Gold Book*, a compilation of state and local government initiatives to clean the air. The book, which will be officially released later this month, improves awareness of initiatives around the region and identifies opportunities for their expansion.

(committee work continued on next page)



The July Region Forward Coalition meeting, hosted in Rockville, included a tour of the Town Square and remarks by Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton.

Heart of COG: Emergency Preparedness

TIM SCHAIBLE, NCR HOMELAND SECURITY PROGRAM MANAGEMENT OFFICE



For more than a decade since 9/11, governments, nonprofits, and private partners have worked together to significantly increase our region's ability to detect, prepare, train for, and respond to terrorist and natural threats. Much of this regional coordination takes place at COG, where our professional staff members like Tim Schaible help leaders identify and prioritize gaps in our emergency preparedness capabilities.

Determining how to best use federal homeland security funding at times can be a challenge among governments with different needs. Tim and his colleagues help remedy this by showing how projects correspond to the region's Homeland Security Strategic Plan. Tim is also part of the continuous assessment of emerging threats and hazards to our region.

Tim staffs the COG Fire Chiefs Committee and their subcommittees as well as the Emergency Managers Committee. He also helps these committees stay involved with trainings and exercises being funded by grants for the region. Tim recently started a new position as Homeland Security Program Analyst for the National Capital Region Homeland Security Program Management Office at COG. Tim, along with Director Mary Anne McKown and other staff, will help the PMO build on COG's success in supporting executive level decision-makers and subject matter experts in executing Strategic Plan priorities and associated programs and, in turn, ensuring a safer region for all residents.

- Chuck Bean, Executive Director

CHESAPEAKE BAY AND WATER RESOURCES POLICY COMMITTEE

- In July, the CBPC endorsed plans for COG staff to advance several water infrastructure initiatives, including providing additional input on the COG Board Regional Infrastructure report, partnering with the Board of Trade to hold a stormwater workshop this fall, and holding a Water Infrastructure Summit in April 2015.
- The CBPC also held its 4th Annual Bay and Local Water Quality Forum with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the states. EPA acknowledged the significant roles and responsibilities that local governments have in implementing the practices needed to meet the goals of the Bay Agreement. COG staff will continue discussions with forum participants to identify actions related to issues such as stormwater permitting, climate change, and public messaging for further CBPC action or endorsement.

CLIMATE ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

Officials from National Aeronautics and Space Administration gave a presentation on building climate resiliency in the region. COG has partnered with NASA and other federal agencies to help agencies and local organizations identify and address their vulnerabilities and advance climate adaptation planning.

REGION FORWARD COALITION

The Coalition discussed two major regional studies focused on housing and employment challenges facing lower income residents—*Housing Security in the Washington Region* and *Bursting the Bubble: The Challenges of Working and Living in the National Capital Region*.



Clockwise from top left:

Region Forward Coalition tour of **Rockville Town Square**; WTOP's Bob Marbourg speaks at **Commuter Connections 40th Anniversary Reception**; staff, officials, friends and family dedicate the **Ronald F. Kirby Training Center**, one of COG's most important meeting spaces.

COG/MPO WEST COAST VISITS

COG Executive Director Chuck Bean and Transportation Planning Director Kanti Srikanth visited regional councils and metropolitan planning organizations in Seattle, San Francisco, Sacramento to share ideas and learn about innovative programs and plans in those regions.

PRINCE GEORGE'S CAO OUTREACH

Chuck Bean and Deputy Executive Director Stuart Freudberg gave a presentation on COG and its programs to new Prince George's County Chief Administrative Officer Nicholas Majett.

LISTENING SESSIONS ON NEW PLANS

COG staff held listening sessions on regional transportation goals and the new Regional Transportation Priorities Plan and Place + Opportunity Report with local transportation and planning staff members in Prince George's, Charles, Loudoun, Arlington, Prince William counties as well as officials from the MWAA, Loudoun Chamber of Commerce, NVTAA, AAA, Coalition for Smarter Growth, Safe Routes to School, and the Community Foundation.

STRONGER ACTIVITY CENTERS

Community Planning Director Paul DesJardin participated as a member of the first COG-Urban Land Institute Activity Centers Technical Assistance Panels in Wheaton.

BUS ON SHOULDERS STUDY

Senior Transportation Engineer Dusan Vuksan briefed the Southern Maryland Rapid Transit Study Technical Advisory Working Group on the TPB's Bus on Shoulders report in Greenbelt. He was joined by Paul DesJardin, who gave a presentation on Region Forward and Activity Centers.

NEW HOUSING NETWORK

Paul DesJardin participated as a new member of the Housing Communications Action Network (Housing CAN) Executive Committee in the District of Columbia.

CHARLES COUNTY GREEN EXPO

Senior Environmental Planner Maia Davis participated in the Charles County Green Expo and talked to residents about COG and shared information on several programs, including Clean Air Partners, Commuter Connections, Car Free Day, TapIt, Water Use It Wisely, and EmPOWER Maryland.

COMMUTING PRESENTATIONS

Commuter Connections' Nick Ramfos and Steve Finafrock gave presentations on ridematching and shared use mobility issues for several national associations, including the Association for Commuter Transportation Conference in San Francisco and the Institute for Transportation Engineers Meeting in Seattle.

CHILD WELFARE ACTIVITIES

COG Child Welfare Program hosted fundraisers in Alexandria and Prince William County--which included Supervisor Martin Nohe--on behalf of its Families Like Yours Foster Parent Recruitment Program. In addition, COG co-hosted a Youth Emerging Successfully Conference at Georgetown Law to support children aging out of the foster care system.



Executive Director Chuck Bean and Department of Transportation Programs Director Kanti Srikanth at the Puget Sound Regional Council in Seattle, WA.



COG participated in the Charles County Green Expo at the Southern Maryland Blue Crabs minor league baseball game.

METROWAY OPENS

Officials launched MetroWay on August 23 in Alexandria. The service runs on a transitway built in part with funding from a \$58.8 million federal grant awarded to the Transportation Planning Board at COG to enhance bus transportation along priority corridors in the region. COG Transportation Planning Director Kanti Srikanth and Senior Transportation Engineer Eric Randall were featured in stories by *The Washington Post* and ABC7 on the new service and how it fits with the region's transportation priorities.



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STUDY REVEALS ACUTE NEED FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

A new study, Housing Security in the Washington Region, shows critical gaps in affordable housing across a range of income levels in the region. The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region commissioned the study, which was prepared by the Urban Institute and COG. The study has been covered by *The Washington Post*, WUSA9, DCist, and other media outlets.

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OFFICIALS HIGHLIGHT REGION'S HIGHWAY AND BRIDGE MAINTENANCE NEEDS

As part of its 2014 Infrastructure Series, the COG Board of Directors focused on our highways and bridges in July. An expert panel stressed that a number of interstate highways, major and minor arterial highways, and bridge structures in the region are reaching the end of their intended lifespans and will need major repair, rehabilitation, or full replacement. COG Technical Services Director Bob Griffiths was interviewed by *WTOP* on the discussion.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
SEPTEMBER 17

CHESAPEAKE BAY AND WATER RESOURCES POLICY COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 19

HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY POLICY COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 19

CAR FREE DAY
SEPTEMBER 22

ECODISTRICTS SUMMIT
SEPTEMBER 24-26

For more information about these events and other COG meetings, visit www.mwcog.org/calendar

