



BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BEEAC)

Draft Webinar Meeting Summary: April 14, 2024

BEEAC Local and State Government Members in Attendance:

- Andy Young, Falls Church (Chair)
- Mati Bazaruto, City of Bowie, MD (Co-Vice Chair)
- Al Carr, DOEE, (Co-Vice Chair)
- Adriana Caldarelli, DoE
- Andrea Crooms, Prince George's County
- Ben Burrows, Frederick County
- Beth Groth, Charles County
- Bill Eger, Arlington County
- Bill Pugh, CSG
- Brandon Key, Prince George's County
- Bria Herbert
- Chloe Delhomme, City of Manassas
- Dale Medearis, NVRC
- Dawn Hawkins-Nixon, Prince George's County
- Dawnita Smith, Prince George's County
- Debra Maes, Fairfax County
- Dory Estrada, City of Takoma Park
- Douglas Weisburger, Montgomery County
- Elizabeth Bauch
- Emily Nachbar, Arlington County
- Hamid Omidvar, Montgomery County
- Jaccii jgbarmer@co.pg.md.us
- Jenn Hatch, DOEE
- Jeremy Good, Montgomery County
- Kate Roetzer, WMATA
- Kathie Hoekstra, City of Alexandria
- Kristin Mielcarek, Frederick County
- Luisa Robles, City of Greenbelt
- Matt Meyers, Fairfax County OEEC

- Maya Dhavale, Fairfax County
- Najib M Salehi, Loudoun County
- Rassa Davoodpour, Montgomery County
- Rushane Jones, Prince George's County
- Ryan Freed, City of Alexandria
- Sharon Wongus, Prince George's County
- Sulaiman Almaroof, Prince George's County
- Valerie Amor, City of Alexandria
- Amanda Campbell, City of Rockville

Additional Attendees:

- Dr. Jan Whittington, University of Washington
- Laura Jay, C40
- Adrienne Greve - Cal Poly, SLO
- Sofia Dermisi, University of Washington
- Shawn O'Neill, University of Delaware

COG Staff:

- Kelsey Boatwright, COG DEP
- Alissa Boggs, COG DEP
- Leah Boggs, COG DEP
- Heidi Bonnaffon, COG DEP
- Robert Christopher, COG DEP
- Maia Davis, COG DEP
- Jeff King, COG DEP
- Brian LeCouteur, COG DEP
- Tim Masters, COG DEP
- Steve Bieber, COG



1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Andy Young, Interim Deputy City Manager, City of Falls Church and Chair

Chair Andy Young called the meeting to order, and introductions were given.

2. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 15, 2024 MEETING SUMMARY

Andy Young, BEEAC Chair

The February 15, 2024 BEEAC meeting summary was approved with no amendments.

3. FY 2025 REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES CLIMATE AND ENERGY WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

COG Staff

Staff presented the draft 2024 Regional Environmental Programs Work Plan and Budget. Members were encouraged to provide feedback on committee priorities and request additional review time if necessary. The final deadline for comments is April 30th, with the draft work program and budget available on the meeting's webpage.

Key initiatives and updates include:

- **Climate and Energy:** Focused on policy development and legislative initiatives, with specific groups managing various climate and environmental committees. The work is mainly supported by general funds and the Regional Environmental Fund, supplemented by grants.
- **Climate Budgeting Cohort:** Launching discussions for a new initiative with limited spots for participation.
- **Solar Goal for 2030:** Aiming to install 250,000 solar systems by 2030, with progress updates pending.
- **Tree Canopy Goal:** Recently adopted goal to maintain and potentially increase the regional tree canopy to 50%, with action plans being developed.
- **Climate Pollution Reduction Grants and Comprehensive Climate Action Plan:** New projects and funding opportunities to support local climate action.
- **Local and Regional Greenhouse Gas Inventory for 2023:** Work on the next inventory cycle is scheduled, with results expected by July 2025.
- **Ongoing Environmental Initiatives:** Includes re-powering locomotives at Union Station, promoting recycling campaigns, and launching a battery management campaign in partnership with the Department of Public Safety.

The staff consolidated announcements to allow more time for discussion on these key topics and to align with the region's vision and mission of creating a sustainable and equitable future.

4. CPRG UPDATE

Kelsey Boatwright, COG Staff

COG staff provided an update on the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program, which has been actively pursued since last fall. Here's a brief overview of the team's progress and next steps:

1. **Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP) Submission:** The PCAP was submitted at the beginning of March. This plan incorporates various priority programs and project ideas aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and benefitting low-income and disadvantaged communities. The plan is now available online for detailed review.
2. **Implementation Grant Proposals:** Two proposals for the competitive implementation grants were submitted in early April, aiming to secure funding for projects outlined in the PCAP. Announcements are expected by July, with funds anticipated to be disbursed in October.
3. **Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP):** The team is preparing for the submission of the CCAP next summer. This plan will include extensive community engagement and address all sectors for long-term environmental impact, with preparations commencing this summer.

5. JURISDICTION UPDATES AND ROUNDTABLE PEER EXCHANGE

BEEAC Committee Members

The jurisdiction roundtable exchange focused on two main questions for discussion regarding capital investment planning and climate budgeting in local and state governments. The first question asked jurisdictions to describe strategies they employ to select, prioritize, and finance clean energy and low carbon infrastructure projects. The second question inquired about the barriers faced in budgeting for such projects. The discussion also touched upon how federal funding and internal collaborations within government departments help in implementing and financing these projects. The session concluded with an emphasis on the ongoing need for strategic capital investment planning and climate budgeting as jurisdictions work towards their emission reduction targets.

Updates and Peer Exchange

- City of Bowie: Researching. No plans put into place, except tracking energy use for BEPS.
- Takoma Park: Not a lot of new construction. Listening and learning. Green procurement. How to find vendors that use the EPD product declarations in their work.
- City of Greenbelt: Measures energy consumption, but not measuring anything else at this time.
- Prince George's County: Working on CPRG hoping to secure funds to bolster future efforts.
- Frederick County: BEPS focused. Level 2 ASHRAE energy audits. Barrier: Cost

- Rockville: Has points in their Green Code for recycled, reused and sustainably sourced materials. They also recently reduced permit costs for renovations to incentivize them over re-builds.
- DOEE: Funded grants to conduct lifecycle carbon analyses. What are the most appropriate tools? Seeking the best path forward. DCSEU and the DC Green Bank have roles to play.
- Fairfax Water: Level 2 energy audits, led and HVAC controls in buildings. Demand-response program energy rebates. Barriers: Cost
- Falls Church: Energy plans to drive reductions in GHG emissions. New frontier for the city.
- Arlington County: Highlighted their comprehensive approach by referencing their Community Energy Plan and its roadmap, which outlines specific steps towards achieving their energy goals.

6. CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLANNING AND CLIMATE BUDGETING FOR CLEAN ENERGY AND LOW CARBON INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

*Dr. Jan Whittington, University of Washington, Director, Urban Infrastructure Lab
Laura Jay, C40, Regional Director for North America*

Dr. Jan Whittington, Associate Professor at the University of Washington and Director of the Urban Infrastructure Lab, delivered an in-depth presentation. She introduced the Climate Smart Capital Investment Planning Project, a sophisticated tool designed to seamlessly integrate climate considerations into the capital investment planning process.

Dr. Whittington explained that the tool enables local governments to evaluate potential projects based on their greenhouse gas emissions, life-cycle costs, and resilience against climate-related hazards. It comes preloaded with data that helps users simulate different scenarios and assess the environmental and financial impacts of various project designs and technologies. By using this tool, municipalities can make more informed decisions that align with sustainability goals.

During her presentation, Dr. Whittington highlighted specific functionalities of the tool, including its ability to:

- Automate the creation of greenhouse gas emission forecasts for different project proposals.
- Analyze the resilience of projects against a spectrum of climate-related hazards.
- Evaluate the social equity impacts of project decisions, particularly how they affect vulnerable communities.

Dr. Whittington also discussed how the tool is being used in Montgomery County, Maryland, where it aids in quantitatively assessing and improving the racial equity and social justice impacts of public projects. This includes adjustments to project designs to mitigate climate risks and enhance community resilience.

Laura Jay, from a global network of city mayors, shared insights into the integration of climate considerations into budget processes worldwide. Highlighting the critical role of cities in climate action, she emphasized how local governments are instrumental in cutting emissions and enhancing resilience through strategic financial planning.

Laura detailed the concept of climate budgeting as a governance system that embeds climate commitments into government decision-making and budgeting processes. This approach not only aligns financial resources with climate goals but also ensures accountability across various government departments.

She shared examples from cities like New York and Montreal, where climate budgeting has led to substantial infrastructure changes, such as the adoption of heat pumps over traditional heating systems to avoid locking in fossil fuel dependency. The session illustrated that while the approach to climate budgeting can vary by city, the common thread is its potential to drive significant environmental and operational changes within local governments.

The discussion also covered the challenges of integrating climate budgeting, such as the need for climate literacy among finance teams and the importance of political support and leadership buy-in. Laura stressed the importance of a phased and inclusive approach, engaging multiple stakeholders to ensure the success and sustainability of climate budgeting initiatives.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS, 2024 MEETING SCHEDULE AND ADJOURNMENT

Andy Young, Falls Church (BEEAC Chair)

- **Climate Awards:** The Energy Leadership Award will run from Earth Day, April 22nd, to June 30th. It will recognize achievements in different categories: two in the government sector (small jurisdictions with up to 90,000 people and large jurisdictions over 90,000), one for NGOs (excluding for-profit entities), and one for educational institutions.
- **Environmental Justice (EJ) Subcommittee:** The new EJ subcommittee under the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee, co-chaired by representatives from Montgomery County, Falls Church, and DC, is tasked with developing an environmental justice action plan. Additionally, updates to the environmental justice toolkit will focus on improving communication and community engagement with vulnerable populations.
- **ICLEI Climate Cohort:** The climate budgeting cohort is currently enrolling teams, with a limit of 10 and about half the slots filled. This initiative aims to integrate climate considerations into local budgeting processes comprehensively, encouraging timely sign-ups for interested parties.
- **Regional Tree Canopy Goal:** A regional tree canopy goal of 50% coverage was adopted to address the declining canopy rates. The tree canopy workgroup is developing an action plan to help achieve and maintain this goal, focusing on conserving and enhancing tree coverage across the region.

Chair Young adjourned the meeting.

All meeting materials including speaker presentations can be found on the MWCOG website by clicking the link below –

<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2024/4/18/built-environment-and-energy-advisory-committee/>

The next BEEAC meeting is June 20, 2024.

Reasonable accommodations are provided upon request, including alternative formats of meeting materials. For more information, visit: www.mwcog.org/accommodations or call (202) 962-3300 or (202) 962-3213 (TDD)