

AGENDA ITEM #2A
April 27, 2010

MEMORANDUM

April 23, 2010

TO: County Council

FROM: Marlene Michaelson, Senior Legislative Analyst *MM*

SUBJECT: COG Region Forward Report

The Council was briefed on the Council of Governments (COG) report "Region Forward – Greater Washington 2050: COG's Vision for the National Capital Region in the Twenty-First Century" on April 20, 2010. A color copy of the report is available on-line at:

www.greaterwashington2050.org

The report recommends that local governments endorse a compact agreeing to certain goals (see © 3 to 10). Attached on © 1-2 is a resolution endorsing the compact that was introduced last week. Staff recommends approval.

Resolution No.: _____
Introduced: April 20, 2010
Adopted: _____

**COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

By: County Council

SUBJECT: Greater Washington 2050 Compact

Background

1. Montgomery County recognizes and values its status as part of the economically vibrant and socially diverse National Capital Region.
2. Montgomery County takes part in regional planning and activities through its participation in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG).
3. In January 2008, COG established the Greater Washington 2050 Coalition, a public-private advisory panel, consisting of local government officials, representatives of the Region's business and environmental sectors, and members of the public representing numerous and diverse civic interests, to help shape the Region.
4. The Coalition sought to leverage existing regional and local vision plans and reach regional agreement on local actions that can help achieve common regional goals.
5. The Coalition examined how other regions have approached similar efforts, sponsored a workshop on future economic, environmental, and demographic trends and changes that could affect the National Capital Region, and commissioned and published a survey of public opinion on regional matters in 2008 and 2009.
6. After almost two years of work, the Coalition unanimously approved its final report, *Region Forward – A Comprehensive Guide for Regional Planning and Measuring Progress in the 21st Century*, which includes nine regional goals in four themes of accessibility, sustainability, prosperity, and livability; and establishes regional performance targets and indicators to measure required progress toward goals.
7. The COG Board approved the *Region Forward* report in January 2010, and recommended that local governments execute a voluntary regional compact incorporating

these regional goals and commit to consider regional implications in their local decisions and actions.

8. The Montgomery County Council, after review and consideration of these goals and their potential benefit to the Region and to the residents and businesses of Montgomery County, believes adoption of the voluntary *Greater Washington 2050 Compact* to be in the public interest of Montgomery County.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

1. Montgomery County hereby endorses the voluntary *Greater Washington 2050 Compact* and, within Montgomery County's legal, financial, and political limitations, commits to follow the principles and goals therein in its decisions and actions.
2. Staff of Montgomery County Government and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission are hereby directed to familiarize themselves with the voluntary *Greater Washington 2050 Compact* and to alert the Montgomery County Executive and Council on significant regional implications of proposed decisions or actions.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

Linda M. Lauer, Clerk of the Council

Appendix A

Greater Washington 2050 Compact

The Compact is the first agreement on a comprehensive vision for the National Capital Region and will serve as a guide to help regional leaders make decisions and create a framework for future policy.

GREATER WASHINGTON 2050 COMPACT: Achieving a Vision for the National Capital Region In the Middle Twenty-first Century

The Greater Washington 2050 Compact sets forth a common vision for the National Capital Region at mid-century and the goals that define that vision.

It demonstrates endorsement and support of these goals by the Region's local governments, by major business organizations, and by a number of the Region's civic organizations, through separate, optional, and voluntary Agreements.

These Agreements set forth broad strategies that local governments and other regional stakeholders may utilize in furtherance of their commitment to the improvement of the National Capital Region.

These Agreements will be used as a guiding tool to make public decisions and set priorities, positioning the region to remain competitive and capitalize on future opportunities.

These Agreements will establish where possible quantitative targets to meet our goals and create a process to measure success.

JURISDICTIONAL COMMITMENT
A Political Agreement among Local Governments
to Implement the Greater Washington 2050 Compact

WE, the Counties and Municipalities of the National Capital Region, comprise a region endowed with a strong economy, a highly-educated workforce, vigorous institutions, and natural resources and parks that enhance the quality of life of our residents.

We are at a moment in history, however, when we face major challenges, both in preserving what is best about our region and in continuing its growth. We must address the causes and effects of climate change while we improve transportation, renew our infrastructure, expand the supply of reasonably-priced housing, and ensure that the benefits of our prosperity reach all of our residents.

We see these challenges as an opportunity for leadership – in the public, business, and civic sectors of our communities.

We intend that the National Capital Region continue to be an exceptional place to work, play and learn; a welcoming place for a skilled workforce to live, raise families, and enjoy successful careers; and an ideal place to start, run or expand a small or a large business.

WE, the Counties and Municipalities of the National Capital Region, share a vision supported by our local comprehensive plans of sustainable communities and shared prosperity.

GOALS FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

After input from government officials, business executives, civic leaders, and the public at large, and consideration of the recommendations of its participating jurisdictions, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments adopted a concise series of goals that define a common vision for the Region in 2050.

They delineate the ongoing nature and purpose of governmental decisions over the next four decades necessary to achieve our common vision. They are supported by broad strategies available to local governments and a set of targets and indicators to measure progress in years ahead. The goals are reflected in the comprehensive plans of our Region's jurisdictions and in current and historic policy documents of regional organizations that have studied challenges and possible solutions. These goals have also been identified and prioritized in surveys and community recommendations addressing our Region's needs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS

We seek effective coordination of land use and transportation planning resulting in an integration of land use, transportation, environmental, and energy decisions.

The National Capital Region's Land Use Goals

- We seek the enhancement of established neighborhoods of differing densities with compact, walkable infill development, rehabilitation and retention of historic sites and districts, and preservation of open space, farmland and environmental resource land in rural areas.
- We seek transit-oriented and mixed-use communities emerging in regional activity centers that will capture new employment and household growth.

The National Capital Region's Transportation Goals

- We seek a broad range of public and private transportation choices for our Region which maximizes accessibility and affordability to everyone and minimizes reliance upon single occupancy use of the automobile.
- We seek a transportation system that maximizes community connectivity and walkability, and minimizes ecological harm to the Region and world beyond.

The National Capital Region's Environmental Goals

- We seek to maximize protection and enhancement of the Region's environmental resources by meeting and exceeding standards for our air, water, and land.
- We seek preservation and enhancement of our Region's open space, green space, and wildlife preserves.

The National Capital Region's Climate and Energy Goals

- We seek a significant decrease in greenhouse gas emissions, with substantial reductions from the built environment and transportation sector.
- We seek efficient public and private use of energy Region-wide, with reliance upon renewable energy and alternative fuels for buildings, vehicles, and public transportation.

SOCIAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

We seek a vibrant economy, supporting quality health, education, and social services, and a stock of varied housing opportunities, distributed equitably throughout our Region.

The National Capital Region's Economic Goals

- We seek a diversified, stable, and competitive economy, with a wide range of employment opportunities and a focus on sustainable economic development.
- We seek to minimize economic disparities and enhance the prosperity of each jurisdiction and the Region as a whole through balanced growth and access to high-quality jobs for everyone.
- We seek to fully recognize and enhance the benefits that accrue to the region as the seat of the National government and as a world capital.

The National Capital Region's Housing Goals

- We seek a variety of housing types and choices in diverse, vibrant, safe, healthy, and sustainable neighborhoods, affordable to persons at all income levels.
- We seek to make the production, preservation, and distribution of affordable housing a priority throughout the Region.

The National Capital Region's Health and Human Services Goals

- We seek healthy communities with greater access to quality health care and a focus on wellness and prevention.
- We seek to provide access and delivery of quality social services to all residents.

The National Capital Region's Education Goals

- We seek to provide greater access to the best education at all levels, from pre-kindergarten to graduate school.
- We seek to make our Region a pre-eminent knowledge hub, through educational venues, workforce development, and institutional collaboration.

The National Capital Region's Public Safety Goals

- We seek safe communities for residents and visitors.
- We seek partnerships that manage emergencies, protect the public health, safety, welfare, and preserve the lives, property and economic well-being of the Region and its residents.

These individual goals cannot be viewed in isolation. Actions designed to implement one goal will have impacts on others – sometimes positive; occasionally negative. Under certain circumstances, success of one particular goal will require addressing other goals as prerequisites or even necessary components. We acknowledge that to fully realize the promise of the Compact, we will need to consider the interrelated impacts of our actions and decisions on all the goals and on their relationships.

We, the Counties and Municipalities of the National Capital Region, hereby adopt the Greater Washington 2050 Compact, and endorse the goals therein as policies governing our public actions and decisions.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The Greater Washington 2050 Compact Goals are supported by broad strategies, which in turn can be implemented by our local governments. The success of our actions implementing many of these strategies can be determined by specific indicators, some narrative and subjective, others numerical and objective. Periodic review of these indicators will validate regional actions taken or will focus public attention on goals yet to be reached.

We, the Counties and Municipalities of the National Capital Region, acknowledge that the strategies available to each are governed by its organic authority. Whether found in state constitutional provisions, state or federal statute, charter, or local ordinances or policies, jurisdictional powers are either authorized or constrained by law. As a result, not all strategies are equally available to all the Region's local governments and, even where equally available, may not present equally effective means to reach a goal.

Local government powers to affect its community and its region fall within four categories. Each of these presents opportunities to develop or enhance a goal or a combination of goals.

- **Regulatory.** By exercise of the general police power, our jurisdictions can regulate the control of private conduct or activity. Examples include planning, zoning, subdivision, building codes, environmental restrictions. Use of such power can both deter and incentivize.
- **Executive.** Our jurisdictions are themselves operating entities. They own property, construct and locate facilities, direct the conduct of their employees. Executive action or inaction can result in permanent changes to the community landscape. Examples include the timing, location, and size of public buildings and infrastructure.
- **Fiscal.** By the expenditure of public funds, both operating and capital, our jurisdictions establish priorities and set the agenda for community growth and activities. By use of the taxing power, they can encourage or discourage private activity in manners which enhance community goals. Public choices among fees and ad valorem taxes retard or spur private decisions.
- **Education.** Our jurisdictions educate the public by specific informational programs, by example, and by the “bully pulpit.” Public attitudes and often individual and institutional actions can be changed by conscious programs of public education.

The powers may often be used in conjunction in developing and implementing a strategy designed to reach one or more goals of the Compact. Our jurisdictions can individually and jointly utilize their various authorities in support of these regional strategies.

To determine whether utilized strategies are effective – and whether the Region is moving in the right direction to meet the goals – we will periodically review our progress by analyzing certain indicators. These indicators will measure progress towards our Regional pledge. By comparing such measurements against a baseline or against specific targets we can determine the success in furthering our goals and common vision.



FEDERAL AND STATE SUPPORT

To realize the goals of the Greater Washington 2050 Compact, it is vital that its development and implementation fully engage the District of Columbia, the State of Maryland and the Commonwealth of Virginia in both their legislative and executive branches. Many of the goals of the Compact are only realizable because of state legislative actions that are already accomplished or may be enacted in the future. Also, many of these goals are continuously being further acted upon through ongoing activities of the executive branches of the District of Columbia, and the Maryland and Virginia state government. It is in this spirit that we solicit the participation of these governments in this Compact, now and in the future.

We also solicit the involvement of the federal government, and in fact, already have such involvement through the active participation of the National Capital Planning Commission. There is no doubt that the federal government has always and will always provide the major growth engine for the National Capital Region. It may do so through a growth in direct federal employment in the future, or as in the past 25 years, primarily through the very substantial growth of federal contracts and contract workers, or through some combination of the same in the years ahead. Regardless of the configuration of this growth, we seek the involvement of the federal government in the implementation of this compact, be it through the National Capital Planning Commission, the Executive Office of the President, or federal departments and agencies.

INVITATION TO OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Political jurisdictions within the National Capital Region, but not parties to the Greater Washington 2050 Compact, are invited to study and consider these Goals and commitments, and to become Parties to the Compact. Political jurisdictions outside the National Capital Region, but which share a boundary or major infrastructure element, and whose environmental, financial, and demographic futures are intertwined with the Region are also invited to become Parties to the Compact.

OBLIGATIONS OF THE PARTIES

The jurisdictions that execute this Compact endorse the goals herein. Our public officials will strive to realize our common vision for the Region. While we agree to the Compact goals, the methods available to ensure the vision they espouse may differ from jurisdiction to jurisdiction based upon statutory law, history of development, demographics, and economic capability. We will consider the Compact's goals and, where consistent with our authorities and capabilities, will utilize them to guide our public decisions. We pledge to use our best efforts within our own legal, political, and financial structure to advance with the Compact.

We, the Counties and Municipalities of the National Capital Region, commit to this Compact not because its actions are currently required, or may well become required by any future regulatory mandate but because they will enhance our region's quality of life, be good for every resident, and be good for businesses and employers. We make this commitment because business as usual on our part will not be enough to achieve these goals.