



Agenda Item Summary Report

Meeting Date:
October 20, 2025

Submitted by:
Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Town Administrator

Item Title: Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG) Update | October 2025

This is an update on Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG) Meetings and activities that the Town Administrator attended.

**Work Session Item [X]
Council Meeting Item [X]**

Documentation Attached:

Recommended Action:

INFORMATION ONLY: This has been provided to the Council, and the community has been informed of the Council's and staff's actions.

SUMMARY

The Town Administrator attended the Chief Administrative Officers (CAO) Committee Meeting held in person on October 1, 2025, at the Washington Council of Governments (COG) headquarters. The meeting covered regional updates related to human resources, transportation equity, and homeland security funding.

Call to Order & Opening Business

- COG announced the upcoming Human Resources (HR) Conference, "*Rekindle the HR Connection: Elevating HR Professionals*," scheduled for October 22, 2025, at COG offices.
 - Action Item: COG will share registration details for the conference; CAOs may forward the invitation to staff.

Metro Lift Briefing

Tracey Foster, WMATA's Regional Fare Programs Director, presented updates on **Metro Lift**, a reduced-fare program for **SNAP recipients** across Maryland, DC, and Virginia. The program offers a 50% fare reduction for Metrobus and Metrorail users.

- Enrollment remains low (6% of eligible adults).
- WMATA requested local support for outreach to increase participation and improve transit equity.
- Examples of successful partnerships included community-based enrollment programs through DC agencies.
- Action Items:
 - Jurisdictions may email Metrolift@wmata.com to participate in *Train the Trainer* sessions.
 - Contact Tracey Foster (tafoster@wmata.com) for partnership opportunities.

The **Homeland Security Executive Committee (HSEC)** briefed attendees on significant changes in **Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI)** grant funding.

- The National Capital Region (NCR)'s FY 2025 award dropped nearly 90%, from approximately \$45 million to \$4.4 million.
- This reduction will affect the sustainment of regional public safety programs and may have downstream impacts on local budgets.
- The HSEC is evaluating options to freeze most UASI-related hiring and spending while reassessing priorities and transition plans.
- Action Item: The HSEC Strategy Group will meet the week of October 6, 2025, to revise the funding strategy and timeline, with an expectation to define FY 2026 budget impacts within 45 days.

Next Steps & Concluding Remarks

The next CAO Committee meeting will take place on **November 5, 2025**, at 10:00 a.m.

The meeting emphasized the importance of regional collaboration and communication among jurisdictions, particularly in addressing shared funding challenges and promoting equitable access to programs such as Metro Lift. The Town of Bladensburg will continue to stay engaged through COG forums to ensure that local needs and perspectives are represented in regional planning and resource allocation.

The town administrator is available to provide further insights if you have any questions or would like additional details.

Budgeted Item: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA Budgeted Amount: One-Time Cost: NA Ongoing Cost: NA	Continued Date:
Council Priority: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Approved Date: