

CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA



Agenda Date:	January 19, 2021
Action Required:	Report - No Action Required
Presenter:	Susan Elliott, Climate Protection Program Manager
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Title:	Update on the Climate Action Plan Development Process

Background:

Policy Commitments:

This report provides an update on the City's development of a Climate Action Plan (CAP). Developing a CAP was part of the June 2017 commitment by City Council to the [Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy](#) (the Covenant of Mayors) as part of a *Response to the U.S. Withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement*. The 2017 resolution built on previous commitments and existing efforts of the City through its [Climate Protection Program](#).

By joining the Covenant of Mayors, the City committed to completing specific efforts that result in the development of:

- An adopted and maintained community Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory
- An adopted emissions reductions target commensurate with the scale of the climate challenge
- A CAP for mitigation aligned to achieve the adopted emissions reduction goal
- A Climate Adaptation Plan that addresses the community's climate hazards and vulnerabilities.

Previous Council Direction and Updates:

Past updates on the City's activities pursuant to this commitment were presented to City Council on [November 19, 2018](#), [May 6, 2019](#), [July 1, 2019 \(adopted resolution\)](#), and [October 19, 2020](#). The July 2019 resolution established a new GHG reduction goals (45% reduction by 2030 and carbon neutral by 2050) and several expectations for the mitigation-focused climate action plan process to address.

Per Council direction, the CAP is to demonstrate leadership and tackle the following:

- Front load emission reductions
- Identify sub-goals by sector and by strategy
- Address equity specifically in the goals and climate action plan
- Identify measurement frequency and accountability mechanisms

- Address funding and financing options to support private sector action
- Address the feasibility of integrating zero emission vehicles in the community and municipal fleet
- Work in conjunction with regional partners to implement seamless programs and services

Engagement Process for the CAP Development:

Efforts to initiate a community engagement process in the spring of 2020 to develop the emissions reduction climate action plan were paused due to COVID-19. Planning efforts for an adjusted community engagement process resumed in August/September 2020 and were announced in October 2020. A separate process will be pursued to develop the climate adaptation plan. Both processes will aim to identify points where mitigation and adaptation cross-relate.

The following actions were discussed with City Council in October and were proposed to occur during the following 6 months in continued pursuit of the City’s commitment:

- Climate action planning for emission reductions to include the development and involvement of the following:
 - Climate Action Committee (comprised of executive liaisons and program leads)
 - Topic Core Teams (topics to include buildings, the built environment, transportation systems, and waste)
 - Discussions Groups and Task Forces (topics to include financing, equity, energy sourcing and fuel switching, and draw down/sequestration)
 - Community engagement opportunities with stakeholders, organizations, and the general public

The above are intended to leverage technical expertise and support within the community. A concurrent layered approach of virtual workshop listening sessions, online surveys, and facilitated small group discussions are being offered for community engagement and input to try and reach a broad audience and provide different opportunities for community members to engage.

Key Areas for Emission Reductions:

Reflecting that ~90% of the City’s GHG emissions are generated by energy use from the Residential and Commercial sectors and city-wide Transportation, the process will begin with topics focused on increasing energy performance (energy efficiency and conservation), switching to lower or zero-carbon fuel and energy sources, and incorporating emission reduction strategies into planning and zoning strategies. Later stages of the CAP process will address emissions strategies related to waste, emissions draw down (sequestration, landscape), and upstream topics that are important to our community and global emissions but are not represented in the GHG inventory (such as food and building materials). The themes of equity and financing strategies will be integrated throughout the process to ensure their incorporation in the plan and connection to identified emissions reduction strategies.

Discussion:

This report presentation will provide updates regarding:

- Community engagement activities accomplished to date, scheduled, and anticipated
- Developed resources and materials
- Key themes and topics that have been identified

Alignment with City Council's Vision and Strategic Plan:

These efforts are in alignment with City Council's Green City Vision, the Strategic Plan: Goal 3 – A Beautiful and Sustainable Natural and Built Environment; and the Comprehensive Plan: Chapter 4 (and as proposed in the 2018 update).

Community Engagement:

Consistent community engagement and input has informed the steps leading up to this process. In particular, the July 1, 2019 agenda item includes detailed input received from the community that informed both the City's new GHG reduction goal and the underpinning of key topics the City's climate action plan is expected to address. Community engagement opportunities are structured to incorporate public input in the initial development and review of a draft plan.

A dedicated webpage has been set up to host updates, resources, and information about the City's Climate Action Plan development: charlottesville.gov/climateplan. Additionally, community members can subscribe for push alerts via email or text message when Climate Action updates are posted via [Notify Me](#) (*Climate Action* in the list under "News Flash").

Budgetary Impact:

Funds have already been appropriated as part of the Fiscal Year 2021 budget within the Environmental Sustainability Division cost center to be used for this purpose.

Recommendation:

N/A – No action is required.

Alternatives:

N/A – No action is required.

Attachments:

None.