

CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA



Agenda Date:	October 19, 2020
Action Required:	Presentation Only - No Action Required
Presenter:	Susan Elliott, Climate Protection Program Manager
Staff Contacts:	Susan Elliott, Climate Protection Program Manager Kristel Riddervold, Environmental Sustainability and Facilities Development Division Manager
Title:	<b>Upcoming Climate Action Plan Development Process</b>

**Background:**

This agenda item follows from 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*. This 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 Climate Action Plan (CAP) for mitigation aligned to achieve the adopted emissions reduction goal
- A Climate Adaptation Plan that addresses the community's climate hazards and vulnerabilities.

Past updates on the City's activities pursuant to this commitment were presented to City Council on [November 19, 2018](#), [May 6, 2019](#), and [July 1, 2019 \(adopted resolution\)](#). 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 upcoming climate action plan process 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

Efforts to initiate a community engagement process in the spring of 2020 to develop the mitigation-focused climate action plan were paused due to COVID-19. Planning efforts for an adjusted community engagement process resumed in August/September 2020 and are being announced during 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.

This Council agenda item is one effort to help inform the community of the process and upcoming opportunities for public input. Developing a Climate Action Plan is one of the items submitted by the Department of Public Works as part of the Acting City Manager's 6-month plan.

Additional information will be posted on the City's website ([charlottesville.gov/climate](http://charlottesville.gov/climate)), and community members can sign up to receive alerts when Climate Action updates are available via [Notify Me](#) (*Climate Action* in the list under "News Flash").

### **Discussion:**

The following actions will occur during the next 6 months in continued pursuit of the City's commitment:

- Climate action planning for mitigation 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 layered approach of virtual workshop listening sessions, online surveys, and facilitated small group discussions will be offered for community engagement and input to try and reach a broad audience and provide different opportunities for community members to engage.

The structure for the Climate Action Plan (CAP) will borrow from a strategic plan framework in order to prioritize actions to meet the near term 2030 goal, allow flexibility to incorporate longer term needs aimed at the 2050 goal, and to focus consideration on specific barriers and actions to be achieved within the next several years.

To inform community discussions, staff will be providing data from the City's GHG inventories, relevant resources the Climate Protection Program has developed over the past year, and information on best practices and examples from other communities' climate action plans (including drawing from UVA and Albemarle County).

The CAP process will kick off during October 2020 with multiple community engagement opportunities to be scheduled beginning in November. 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.

This CAP phase aims to produce a draft mitigation-focused report in Spring 2021 to be presented to the City Council for consideration and input, and which will be utilized in bridging climate action planning mitigation and adaptation. Through this process phase, a schedule for adoption of a full CAP by City Council will be further established and refined.

(Note: The completion of this phase is subject to the need to take into consideration COVID-19 measures and accommodations.)

### **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, as evidenced in the previous updates to City Council referenced in this memo's *Background* section. 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.

This agenda item is one effort to help inform the community of the upcoming process and opportunities for public input to develop a Climate Action Plan. Community engagement opportunities are structured to incorporate public input in the initial development and review of a draft plan.

Additional information will be posted on the City's website ([charlottesville.gov/climate](https://charlottesville.gov/climate)), and community members can sign up to receive alerts when Climate Action updates are available 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. No additional budgetary impact is expected for this process.

### **Recommendation:**

N/A – No action is required.

**Alternatives:**

N/A – No action is required.

**Attachments:**

None.