

04-17-2019 Town Council Meeting
Responses to Council Questions

ITEM #3: Update on Next Steps for Draft Climate Action Framework and County-wide Collaboration

What is the purpose of the draft framework? How does it relate to an official climate action plan?

The draft framework was created by the Mayor's Office and Manager's Office to set a course for continued climate action implementation in FY20. At the same time, staff is proposing to develop an official climate action plan that will include more extensive community, board and Council input. Depending on how it comes together, the official plan may also include some of the categories and work described in the draft framework. This two-pronged approach aims to balance the need to continue taking action in FY20 while at the same time developing a thoughtful, multi-year strategy that can be used as a planning and budgeting tool for years to come.

Following initial Council feedback, staff plans to take the draft framework to the Environmental Stewardship Advisory Board for review and feedback.

Council Question: As we have deliberated on the new FLUM, there has been a lot of discussion about the relationship between land use regulations and addressing climate change. The framework that we've received seems to be silent on this. What is the thinking here?

Staff Response: *Because the purpose of the framework is to highlight areas of action in FY20 (and possibly beyond), a new category heading for land use and/or more explicit language about the connections to land use regulations and related projects (e.g., Future Land Use Map, LUMO Re-write) seem like good additions to the draft. While some climate action plans look specifically to land use as a focus area, others integrate it within categories like energy for building and transportation. The draft framework does talk about new policies for development and redevelopment projects (6.c.) and increasing multi-modal connections and opportunities (5.c).*

Council Question: There doesn't seem to be anything about the overall contribution of transportation to greenhouse gas emissions and the possible desire to wean people away from private cars and towards alternate means of transportation.

Staff Response: *The draft framework points to increased multi-modal connections and opportunities (5.c) and general education and advocacy around the different categories, which are intended to create additional low-no carbon transportation options. That said, the draft framework does not specifically describe the carbon footprint associated with most*

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transportation options and the reduction benefits of low-no carbon alternatives. These points could be good additions to the draft.

Council Question: For the Transportation Infrastructure, where or how do we talk about expansion of service, increase ability for people to get out of their cars, etc.?

Staff Response: *Building on the answer above, a look at service expansion and education could be made more explicit within the draft framework. Similarly, service expansion may be an important topic for the official plan.*

Council Question: For Building efficiency, don't we need to break this out into town development versus requirements for those who come for an SUP and/or rezoning? We need a list here or things we should or could require of developers and ourselves; has the ESAB not done something like this? Can we have a sample list to respond to?

Staff Response: *We agree that it would be helpful to make a distinction between Town projects and general development. For instance, the Council recently added AIA 2030 to the standard for Town buildings and the Environmental Stewardship Advisory Board (ESAB) has a petition returning to Council on April 24th regarding a requirement for rooftop solar. While these types of activities may continue in FY20, it seems like this is action that could also be part of the official plan.*

The ESAB does have a list of sustainable design criteria that it uses to review Special Use Permits (see attached).

Council Question: Of the example plans given on the cover page, what are we reading for? What does staff think are parts we should consider from each? Are we looking for structure, content, both? Need staff review of the plans, not just a list of links, please.

Staff Response: *We will have some additional information to share at tonight's meeting.*

Council Question: How are we talking about community targets? Can we have info on our carbon emissions? How do we make sure we are doing this in very close partnership with the University?

Staff Response: *The Town currently has two emissions targets:*

- *Town Operations: 60% below 2005 levels by 2050 (est. 2006)*
- *Community: 26-28% below 2005 levels by 2025 (est. 2017)*

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In terms of setting new and/or longer-term emissions reduction targets, we see that happening as part of an exercise within the process to create an official Climate Action Plan. In addition to updating the emissions inventories for Town operations and the community, this work would include calculations that show how certain action can reduce emissions compared to a “business as usual” forecast. By the most recent counts, emissions are as follows:

- *Town Operations: 15,000 metric tons*
- *Community: 1,280,000 metric tons*

Staff has started discussions with UNC Sustainability staff about ways of collaborating on a Climate Action Planning process, including possible areas of overlap regarding carbon emissions accounting.

Council Question: I heard the SWAG discussed composting a few weeks ago; can we have an update on that initiative?

Staff Response: *From item #9 of the 03/27/19 SWAG meeting summary:*

Mayor Hemminger asked to have organics composting and digesters on the agenda for the next meeting. She asked if there could be an increase in options for composting. She noted that we need more places for organics to be dropped off and asked if organics collection containers could be added at parks. She said we could also spread the word about private haulers collecting organics.

Council Question: How are we getting all these proposed partners to the table?

Staff Response: *We see opportunities for collaboration and discussion as part of the new Climate Committee that is being formed at the county level. For implementation of a draft framework over the next fiscal year, we were imagining that meetings would begin at the staff level in order to explore what’s possible across the different action areas. As new action items and partnership possibilities become more solidified, that’s the point at which staff sees these meetings advancing to the board and Council levels for feedback and additional direction.*

Council Question: Has ESAB given comment/input? I understand that they acted on a petition to advocate for the development of a climate action plan and offered their ongoing assistance, but what input have they had so far? Will other boards give input?

Staff Response: *Our thinking was to begin by getting Council feedback on the draft framework and overall approach. Our plan is to then take the draft framework to the ESAB for their review*

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and feedback. If the Council would like staff to seek the input from other boards as well, we can do that, too.

Council Question: How will this process work with the LUMO re-write?

Staff Response: *As stated in an answer above, a new category heading for land use and/or more explicit language about the connections to land use regulations and related projects (e.g., Future Land Use Map, LUMO Re-write) seem like good additions to the draft framework. Staff are also exploring a land use and scenario planning tool that includes access to carbon accounting software and a forecasting tool. Staff from the FLUM and Climate Action Planning projects intend to coordinate through the use of these types of tools.*

Council Question: What is the Tree Replenishment Committee? When was it formed and who is on it? Was Council informed and/or given an opportunity to weigh in on it?

Staff Response: *The Tree Replenishment Committee is a proposal from the Mayor's Office to establish a volunteer committee that will combine education and best practices to expand tree plantings throughout Chapel Hill. The proposal is modelled after successful programs in other cities (e.g., Grand Rapids, MI). The Committee concept includes three main focus areas: (1) park plantings, (2) neighborhood plantings, and (3) a legacy tree program to honor community leaders. An education component could be designed to encourage people to plant native species and help ensure viability and strong growth of our trees over time. The vision is that the Committee could begin in June and that new plantings could occur as part of the Town's Arbor Day celebration in the fall. Funding opportunities include scholarships and grants.*

- A. Does the project promote alternative modes of transportation?
- Are greenway corridors integrated?
 - Is there access to public transportation?
 - Can pedestrians access and move throughout the property?
 - Is there access to bicycle facilities and/or parking on the property?
 - Does the project provide increased bike/ped connectivity outside of the development envelope?
- B. Does the project demonstrate a commitment to energy management?
- Does it meet the Council policy to exceed ASHRAE standards by 20%?
 - Will it be [Energy Star](#) certified?
 - Does the project incorporate passive solar or geothermal?
 - Is vegetation maintained or added to lower energy consumption?
 - Will the project reduce the urban heat island effect by using reflective pavement materials or vegetation?
 - Does the project incorporate alternative energy (e.g., solar panels)?
 - Is there a commitment to LED lighting?
 - Is the project designed to work toward zero net energy?
- C. Are you pursuing Green Building Certification for this project?
- Certified [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design \(LEED\)](#)?
 - Certified [Green Globes](#)?
 - Certified [Living Building Challenge](#)?
 - Certified [SITES](#)?
- D. Will the project manage water quantity and improve water quality?
- Will the project capture and reuse water on-site?
 - Does the design protect and/or restore existing hydrologic functions?
 - Are low flow fixtures (e.g., Water Sense) incorporated?
 - Will the project improve water quality through the use of stormwater BMP's?
 - Will all stormwater be managed on site to reduce runoff from the property?
- E. How will the project incorporate green building materials?
- Have you considered adaptive re-use for existing buildings and structures?
 - Will you be reusing or repurposing any materials?
 - Are you using durable materials that will ensure a long-lasting building?
 - Have you considered the life cycle cost of the materials you're using?
 - Are you using materials that are locally and sustainably sourced?

F. How is the proposed project sustainable from a land development perspective?

- Are you minimizing the amount of grading and land disturbance?
- Are you protecting existing native vegetation?
- Are you controlling for and/or removing invasive species?
- Will the project restore or provide landscape enhancement areas?
- Will the project include native or drought tolerant plant species?
- Will the project exceed minimum tree canopy requirements?

G. How is the project working to manage and minimize waste?

- Will the project achieve zero net waste?
- Will it provide integrated recycling facilities on site?

H. How is environmental equity and culture being incorporated into the project?

- How will the project contribute to positive environmental health impacts?
- How will it minimize displacement of people, wildlife, etc?
- Will it create new access to natural resources for recreation?
- Will it promote a greater sense of community?
- Will there be new stewardship opportunities on site?