

09-25-2019 Town Council Meeting Responses to Council Questions

ITEM #10: Update on Climate Action and Response Plan

Council Question:

Could you please share more detail about what is involved and what steps are being taken as part of the emissions inventories?

Staff Response:

We are asking the consultant to develop updated greenhouse gas emissions inventories for both Town operations and the community at large. These inventories will use data from calendar year 2018. The inventories will meet standard protocols and will look at emissions in terms of energy sources (e.g., electricity, natural gas, fuel) and by sector (e.g., residential, commercial, institutional). The consultant will also look to compare the new information to earlier inventories from 2005—the base year for the Town’s current emissions goal. In addition to establishing updated inventories, the consultant will also use this information to understand the Town’s local emissions profile in order to identify the action steps with the greatest impact potential.

Council Question:

I understand we had interns from UNC supporting this effort over the summer. Could you share what they did/learned? Will they continue over the school year?

Staff Response:

The Town hosted two interns from the UNC Chapel Hill APPLES internship program this summer. The interns helped with a variety of projects throughout the summer, including transitioning us from beta to launch for the new sustainability website, assisting with a waste audit, and reviewing and evaluating policy and grant program opportunities (e.g., VW Settlement, Green Fleets Policy, Green Purchasing). The internship ended in August.

Council Question:

Could you please provide an update on the county climate committee to which we appointed members in June? Is the committee meeting? What role might the committee have in helping to shape/support the Town's plan?

Staff Response:

The first meeting of the County Climate Committee is Tuesday, September 24 at 4 pm. The first agenda includes the following items:

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1. *Ensure the Climate Council includes the key representatives and perspectives needed to ensure equitable climate action.*
2. *Discuss our initial focus areas and approach*
3. *Set up our meeting schedule*
4. *Other items as determined by the members*

Staff will be in attendance and can share more about that Committee and its relationship to the Climate Action and Response Plan as part of the next quarterly project update in November.

Council Question:

Has a consultant been selected yet?

Staff Response:

Yes. The Town has selected [Planning Communities](#) and [Kim Lundgren Associates](#) (KLA) as the consulting team for this project. Planning Communities is based out of Raleigh and is part of the team that is currently assisting the City of Raleigh with their Community-wide Climate Action Plan. KLA is based out of Boston and has extensive experience assisting local governments throughout the country with climate action planning and greenhouse gas emissions accounting. In fact, several members of the KLA team originally worked for and were involved in the development of programs and tools at ICLEI USA. Planning Communities and KLA describe themselves as small, woman-owned firms with a deep commitment to sustainability in their own organization as well as for their clients.

Council Question:

What will be the exact role of the consultant?

Staff Response:

The consulting team described above will assist the Town with the following tasks:

- *Greenhouse gas emissions inventories (both for Town operations and community wide)*
- *Community engagement (sharing results from the inventories; hosting stakeholder meetings that focus on strategies for both emissions reduction and climate adaptation/resilience)*
- *Drafting a plan that identifies the top 10+ actions that can be taken at the community and operations level to reduce emissions and build climate resiliency over the next five years (to be shared and reviewed by the Council, boards and the community)*
- *Finalizing a plan by June 2020 (based on Council direction and input)*

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Council Question:

What kind of data will be gathered?

Staff Response:

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Council Question:

Which community partners will be engaged?

Staff Response:

Similar to other projects that span the full community, our plan is to continue reaching out to partners like UNC Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, local non-profit organizations and the business community. Our project team is consulting with other staff that have led/currently lead community-wide projects to see recent examples of possible key partners and stakeholders. We are very interested in any feedback or direction the Council may have about key partnerships.