











STAFF REPORT – APRIL 2026 CLIMATE ACTION UPDATE TO COUNCIL

The actions are implemented across several Town departments. This report was produced by the Town’s Office of Sustainability and Resilience, with department support.


April 15, 2026





Buildings & Energy Actions		
Action	Benefits / Results	Status / Target Date
1. Participate in Joint Letter to North Carolina Utilities Commission re: Duke Energy’s Latest Carbon Plan	Signing on to a joint letter with multiple local governments across the state serves as advocacy for a more transparent, affordable and accelerated Carbon Plan that supports the Council’s Climate Action policy 	✓ March 25, 2026 (Sustainability) <i>Note: On behalf of the Town, Mayor signed joint letter that included 12 other local governments from North Carolina including Raleigh, Durham, Wilmington, Orange and Mecklenburg Counties</i>
2. Launch a Regional Electrify Program with Central Pines	A regional Electrify program will support electrification and energy efficiency upgrades to homes, including solar and battery storage, HVAC, appliances, lawn equipment and EV charging 	Sustainability staff is coordinating with Central Pines and other participating municipalities to finalize scope, contracts and vendor selection FY26, Q4
3. Conduct Assessment of Sustainable Technologies at Town Facilities 	Identifies investment opportunities in solar, battery storage, EV charging, and rainwater capture to make Town facilities more sustainable and resilient; positions the Town to take advantage of federal grants and IRA direct pay benefits 	Vendor now under contract and performing work (project delayed due to spending pause at the end of FY25) FY26, Q4 (orig. FY25, Q2)






-  Remaining 2021 priority
-  Council Strategic Priority
-  High impact (carbon)
-  High impact (people)





Action	Benefits / Results	Status / Target Date
4. Develop a Promotional Strategy for C-PACE	A promotional strategy would help connect local commercial property owners and businesses with low-cost, long-term financing for sustainability and resiliency upgrades	Economic Development and Sustainability staff are working with UNC Impact Consulting Studio students to develop a "C-PACE Playbook" to guide program promotion FY26, Q4




Transportation + Land Use Actions





Action	Benefits / Results	Status / Target Date
1. Purchase 3 More Electric Fleet Vehicles in FY25 ★	These EVs will generate 53% or lower carbon emissions and save a projected 5 metric tons per year or more	✓ March 11, 2026 (Public Works)
2. Begin Piloting Staff E-Bike Pilot Program ★	Reduces emissions from fleet transportation and supports wellness	✓ April 6, 2026 (Sustainability)
3. Begin Piloting EV Refuse Vehicle ★	Reduces emissions from vehicle and provides operational insights into heavy duty vehicle electrification and fast charging infrastructure	Vehicle delivered; Public Works finalizing punch list items and training before putting vehicle into service this April/May (additional vendor delay) FY26, Q3 (orig. FY24, Q4)
4. Streamline EV Charging Station Permitting Process in Collaboration with Planning and Inspections	Reduces permitting soft costs and enables faster deployment of public and private EV charging stations to support community-wide transition to electric vehicles 	Sustainability staff finalizing internal reviews and developing new options FY26, Q4 (orig. FY24, Q3)

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Action	Benefits / Results	Status / Target Date
5. Complete Feasibility Study of the Everywhere-to-Everywhere Greenway Network ★	Enables future projects that reduce emissions by providing transportation options that don't require a car  	Office of Mobility and Greenways - project underway FY25-27
6. Begin Piloting New Wayfinding Strategy	Supports build-out of Town-wide Mobility Plan and reduces emissions by increasing use of existing trails, paths, bike lanes	Office of Mobility and Greenways and Sustainability finalizing options for pilot; currently aligning with feedback from Downtown Wayfinding Study, and the streetscape planning completed by Economic Development FY27, Q2 (orig. FY24, Q4)
7. Design Bolin Creek Greenway Extension (Umstead to Estes Ext.)	Reduces emissions by providing more transportation options that don't require a car 	Office of Mobility and Greenways - design and engineering underway FY25-27
8. Design Estes Drive Extension (MLK to Carrboro)	Reduces emissions by providing more transportation options that don't require a car 	Office of Mobility and Greenways - design and engineering underway; funding through NCDOT delayed to 2031 FY25-31 (orig. FY25-27)
9. Design and Construction of Cameron Ave Protected Bike Lanes	Reduces emissions by providing more transportation options that don't require a car 	Office of Mobility and Greenways - design and engineering underway FY25-27 (orig. FY25-26)

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10. Design of Tanyard Branch Trace Neighborhood Connector (formerly Campus-to-Campus)	Reduces emissions by providing more transportation options that don't require a car 	Office of Mobility and Greenways – design and engineering underway FY26-27 (orig. FY26, Q2)
11. Implement Safe Streets for All Grants	Two federal planning and demonstration grants that reduce emissions by providing plans and demonstration projects to improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians and access to transit	Grants unfrozen and Office of Mobility and Greenways staff is waiting to hear next steps from Federal Highway Administration FY25-27 (orig. FY25-26)
12. Work with NCDOT to Secure Funding for North-South BRT Project	Enables bus rapid transit project to move forward 	Transit's work continues to secure about \$5.5M in non-federal funds to support federal investments in NSBRT
13. Participate in LUMO Rewrite Visioning ★	Provides Town with updated sustainable development and redevelopment practices (projected benefits TBD) 	Sustainability and Planning staff actively exploring ways to include development practices that support Town's Climate Action Plan Ongoing
14. Participate in J Branch Trail Feasibility Study	The study will assess the feasibility of a community vision for a reimagined "J Branch" railroad spur that serves the University's CoGeneration plant. The vision could include a new north-south multi-modal trail.	Office of Mobility and Greenways and Sustainability staff are actively participating in the study FY28, Q2
15. Apply for Clean Fuels Advanced Technology Grant from NC Clean Energy Technology Center ★	Grant would provide up to \$170,777 to install more EV charging stations at the new Police Station, including a fast-charging station; requires a cost share of \$42,944 which can be covered by the climate action budget.	Sustainability applied in 2025 and received conditional local approval pending Federal Highway Administration approval TBD





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Water, Waste & Natural Resources Actions





Action	Benefits / Results	Status / Target Date
1. Scope Expansion of Town Facilities Composting Pilot	Will evaluate the potential to expand the Town Hall and Fire Station #1 waste reduction pilot to other Town facilities	Project delayed due to Sustainability Office staffing turnover; planning to fill position in 2026 and work with summer intern to begin project FY26, Q4
2. Support Tree Planting Initiatives	Trees help to sequester carbon and provide many other environmental benefits for our air, water and soil	Staff are actively coordinating with multiple partners to support tree planting(e.g., Orange County "Free Tree" program, Carolina Beekeeping Club) Ongoing
3. Evaluate NC Land & Water Fund Conservation Easement Program	Could provide long-term protections and compensation for placing Town-owned natural areas into conservation easements	Staff from multiple departments are evaluating the costs and benefits of participation FY27, Q1

Resiliency Actions

Action	Benefits / Results	Status / Target Date
1. Promote "Lights Out for Birds" Outreach (4th year)	Supports biodiversity by helping community members ensure safe passage for birds during the fall migration	✓ March 12, 2026 (Sustainability & Comms)
2. Launch Year 5 of <u>Leave Your Leaves</u> Campaign 	Creates fertile soil and healthy trees, supports local wildlife, reduces flooding and improves water quality, and reduces emissions; 210 new participants in 2025	✓ Campaign ran Oct 1 – Nov 30, with good participation FY26, Q2

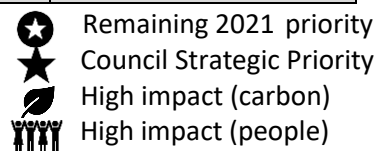
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Action	Benefits / Results	Status / Target Date
3. Resilience Hubs Assessment 	As part of a US Department of Energy Planning Grant with Central Pines, we will explore ways of enhancing three community resilience hubs (Library, Hargraves, Community Center) through community engagement and a technical assessment of the facilities 	<i>Project funding cancelled</i> Sustainability staff exploring new ways of continuing project without federal funding (see item below). Ongoing
4. Apply for Central Pines Resilience Hub Assessment Grant 	Grant would support an energy efficiency and resiliency assessment of one resilience hub location	Staff has submitted a proposal and expects to hear back by May/June
5. Continue Expanding Flood Alert System Sensor Technology 	Enhances early warning flood alert system for low-lying areas of Town 	Sustainability, Public Works, Emergency Management, Technology Solutions staff installed 2 more sensors this spring, making 6 in total; we anticipate adding more this summer to build out the system further FY26, Q4
6. Participate in the Development of the Heat Action Plan of Orange County	Provides information about the rising threat of extreme heat, and actions that can be taken to prepare for and respond the heat season	Sustainability, Emergency Management and Comms staff supported the development of the draft Heat Action Plan that was adopted by Orange County on March 17 (p. 140-188); the plan is on tonight's consent agenda for the Council's possible endorsement FY26, Q3

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Outside Funding Summary

Project	Source	Amount	Match	Status
1. EV Refuse Truck and Fast Charger	NCDEQ, Diesel Emissions Reduction Act Grant Program (DERA)	\$297,400	\$313,498	Awarded and active (<i>vendor delay</i>) Estimated Completion: FY26, Q2(orig. Q1) Reporting: Quarterly to DEQ using prescribed forms
2. EV Refuse Truck and Fast Charger	Orange County Community Climate Action Grant Program	\$50,000	N/A	Awarded and active (<i>vendor delay</i>) Estimated Completion: FY26, Q2 (orig. Q1) Reporting: Quarterly to Orange County using prescribed forms
3. Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Formula Allocation	US Department of Energy, EECBG Grant Program	\$129,010	N/A	Reimbursement filed June 2025; under official review as of March Estimated Completion: FY26 Reporting: TBD
4. IRA Direct Pay Benefit for 2023 Vehicle Purchases (non-Transit)	Internal Revenue Service, Inflation Reduction Act Benefits	\$45,000*	N/A	Applied Nov. 2024 and awaiting refund



Project	Grantor	Amount	Match	Status
5. IRA Direct Pay Benefit for 2023 Transit Vehicle Purchases	Internal Revenue Service, Inflation Reduction Act Benefits	\$40,000*	N/A	Applied Nov. 2024 and awaiting refund
6. IRA Direct Pay Benefit for 2024 Vehicle Purchases (non-Transit)	Internal Revenue Service, Inflation Reduction Act Benefits	\$22,500*	N/A	Applied Nov 2025 and awaiting refund
7. IRA Direct Pay Benefit for 2024 Transit Purchases	Internal Revenue Service, Inflation Reduction Act Benefits	\$200,000*	N/A	Applied Nov 2025 and awaiting refund
8. IRA Direct Pay Benefit for 2025 Vehicle Purchases (non-Transit)	Internal Revenue Service, Inflation Reduction Act Benefits	\$77,500*	N/A	Applying by May 2026
Totals		\$861,410	\$313,498	

* amount is an estimated benefit total subject to IRS review

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