



TOWN OF CARRBORO

TRANSMITTAL

Manager's Office

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To: Richard J. White III, Town Manager

From: Laura Janway, Environmental Sustainability Coordinator
Patricia McGuire, Planning Director

Date: February 28, 2023

Subject: Implementation Update: Energy and Climate Protection Plan (2014)
& Community Climate Action Plan (2017)

Summary

The purpose of this memo is to provide the Council with a progress report on implementation of the Energy and Climate Protection Plan (ECPP), adopted May 28, 2014, and the Community Climate Action Plan (CCAP), adopted January 24, 2017. Both plans were updated in 2020 with goals to reduce 2010 levels of municipal and per capita community greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2030. Town staff are examining and pursuing several initiatives to reach the emissions reductions goals.

Staff have continued to implement the ECPP through a grant from Orange County's Community Climate Action Grant Program to fund a west roof solar array and educational display for the 203 Project. Staff released a Request for Proposals in January 2023 for an alternative fuels analysis for the municipal fleet and are moving forward to install several solar arrays on Town properties, leveraging rebates from Duke Energy and funding available through the Inflation Reduction Act.

Recent CCAP implementation measures include outreach for the Solarize the Triangle campaign, the completion of a racial equity analysis for the Green Neighborhoods Grant Program, analysis of Town-wide composting program options moving forward, and plans for invasive species removal and outreach.

Energy and Climate Protection Plan

Town Fleet Electrification and Alternative Fuels Exploration

- *Policy Connections:* ECPP Section 2.C (Fleet Replacement and Efficiency)

The Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Fleet Alternative Fuels Feasibility Analysis was released on January 27, 2023. Staff will be moving forward to evaluate submitted proposals after the RFP's closing date on February 24th, 2023.

Request for Proposals: Renewable Energy Procurement and Installation

• *Policy Connections:* ECPP Section 2.B.ii Facility Energy Efficiency, 3.C Renewable Portfolio
In February 2022, Town staff released a Request for Proposals for the phased implementation of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems at the following properties:

The 203 Building	203 S. Greensboro Street
Fire Station 1	301 W. Main Street
Century Center	100 N. Greensboro Street
Public Works	100 Public Works Drive
Anderson Community Park	302 Highway 54 West

Staff reviewed the return on investment and greenhouse gas emissions reduction associated with each system. The Town has decided to move forward with solar PV systems at Public Works, Fire Station 1, and the 203 Building west roof in order to take advantage of 2022 rebates offered by Duke Energy as well as funding available through the Inflation Reduction Act.

Community Climate Action Plan

Community Integration

Solarize the Triangle

- *Policy Connections:* CCAP Community Integration Recommendation #6: Facilitate Low Cost Financing for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Projects

Staff held an outreach session for the 2022 Solarize the Triangle campaign in December 2022 with assistance from members of the Climate Action Team. The deadline for enrollment for a free solar evaluation from the program's contractor, Yes Solar Solutions, was December 31st, 2022. A total of 1,500 people signed up for free evaluations throughout the Triangle, setting a national record as the largest Solarize program in the country. After their evaluations, residential customers must sign a contract by March 31, 2023 in order to move forward. The deadline for commercial and non-profit contracts is June 30, 2023. The campaign held an open house on February 18th, 2023, allowing participants an opportunity to view a solar and battery installation in-person.

Due to popular demand, the Triangle Sustainability Partnership and Solar Crowdsource plan to launch a 2023 Solarize the Triangle campaign later this spring.

Green Neighborhoods Grant Program

- *Policy Connections:* CCAP Community Integration Recommendation #3: Create Participatory Green Neighborhood Budgeting Program to Reduce Carbon Emissions, Build Community, Save Money, and Reallocate Savings to New Green Project Initiatives

Staff have completed a racial equity analysis for this program. The analysis has been reviewed by the GARE Core Team as well as the Racial Equity Commission. Staff provided a presentation to the Racial Equity Commission to answer questions on February 22, 2023.

Staff anticipate that the program will be open for applications in spring 2023. As part of the program's outreach campaign, staff plan to hold several information sessions for potential applicants, including pop-up information sessions throughout the Town. Staff also plan to deliver targeted engagement to several Carrboro neighborhoods utilizing approaches centered on equity employed by the Town during Comprehensive Plan development.

Modules Project

- *Policy Connections:* CCAP Community Integration Recommendation #5: Expand Capacity

Staff have continued to refine and update the current modules and have begun utilizing modules at outreach events. Staff held a virtual presentation of the Ecosystem Module on February 23, 2023 to celebrate National Invasive Species Awareness Week.

Orange County Community Climate Action Grant Program

- *Policy Connections:* CCAP Buildings Recommendation #1: 80% Challenge; Ecosystem Recommendation #3: Accelerate/Expand Organic Waste Collection/Composting; ECPP Recommendation 3.C: Renewable Portfolio

Staff submitted a proposal to the FY22-23 Orange County Community Climate Action Grant Program in August 2022 to fund solar photovoltaic panels on the west roof and an educational display for the 203 Project. Staff were notified in February 2023 that the Town was awarded \$40,575 to fund these projects.

Staff are working to finalize the compost monitor position description and hire a part-time staff member using FY21-22 funding awarded through this program.

Orange County Climate Council

Town staff are working with Orange County, Chapel Hill, and Hillsborough staff to finalize a draft Memorandum of Understanding for the Orange County Climate Council.

Building Energy Efficiency Measures

Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund (EERLF)

- *Policy Connections:* Buildings Recommendation #1: Reduce Emissions Attributed to Carrboro Buildings by 80% by 2030, #2: Energy Audit/Performance Rating; Community Integration Recommendation #4: Integrate Climate Action with Local Living Economy, #6: Facilitate Low Cost Financing for Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy Projects

Staff have held meetings and discussions regarding the planned updates to this program. Staff are now working to draft new program guidelines and will also examine opportunities to leverage this funding with larger-scale Federal programs.

Transportation

Volkswagen (VW) Settlement Phase 1 – Level 2 Charging Station

- *Policy Connections:* ECPP Goals; CCAP Transportation Recommendation #1: Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Motor Vehicle Use by 80% by 2030.

Staff worked to meet the final grant requirements and the stations are currently operational. Staff completed a racial equity lens analyzing the potential for expanding the Town's charging station network, which has been reviewed by the Town's GARE Core Team. Staff are exploring programs through Phase 2 of the VW Settlement and have worked to identify several locations for new stations.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Grant – Fresh Starts Project

- *Policy Connections:* CCAP Transportation Recommendation #4: Further Promote Walking, Biking, Transit

The Fresh Starts Project involves a partnership between the Center for Advanced Hindsight (CAH), the Town of Carrboro, and Orange County to design and study the efficacy of transportation welcome packets for new residents.

CAH staff have completed data collection and are working on a final report for the project. CAH has donated the remaining boxes to the Town and provided examples of materials included in the boxes. Staff are working to incorporate these boxes into the Town's current Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program and outreach events.

Ecosystem Protection and Enhancement

Bee City USA, Mayors' Monarch Pledge

Staff finalized the annual report for the Mayors' Monarch Pledge in December 2022 and will submit the annual report for Bee City USA participation by the end of February 2023.

Invasive Species Volunteer Events

- *Policy Connections:* Ecosystem Recommendation #5: Improve Regulations and Community Capacity to Discourage Invasive Plants and Encourage Native Plants

Staff are finalizing the documents, requirements, and protocols for a potential new volunteer program to allow independent volunteer work to remove invasive species. Staff have worked to ensure this initiative aligns with the Town's existing volunteer programs and are currently working on a racial equity lens analysis for the program.

On February 25th, staff plan to hold an invasive species removal volunteer event to celebrate National Invasive Species Awareness Week.

Composting

Staff have evaluated necessary components and a potential budget for a curbside composting program in Carrboro under the Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) grant parameters. The components of such a program would entail purchasing a new collection truck, hiring multiple new staff members, purchasing/distributing bins, locating/contracting with a facility to take the organic materials, and a targeted outreach campaign. The Town will need to collect data on diversion rates of organic material before implementing an every-other-week garbage collection program. Staff decided not to proceed with an application for a SWIFR grant this year in order to ensure our program aligns with the County's future composting plans.

The County plans to release their Zero Waste Master Plan this summer. By next year, staff will have more information regarding the County's plans for composting. Town staff can also further explore options with potential partners, such as OWASA, and can dedicate time to evaluating the program's racial equity considerations. In addition, the Town of Chapel Hill is also waiting for the County's plans to be released before deciding how to proceed.

Developing a Town composting program can be a component of the FY23-24 Environmental Sustainability Work Plan. Staff will refine the program's preliminary budget estimate and will determine which program components may need Town funding long-term. The Town's 2017 Solid Waste Study focused on single-family collection and staff will need to further examine the design for a multifamily composting program for Carrboro. Staff will be able to incorporate findings from the County's multifamily composting pilot program to facilitate this design. Additionally, staff will be able to utilize the results of the 2023 Fleet Alternative Fuels Feasibility Analysis to inform which type of collection vehicle to pursue. Staff can explore an application for the next round of SWIFR funding in FY23-24.

There is funding in the climate action budget for a food waste reduction project this year (FY22-23). Staff are exploring a multifamily composting pilot/educational campaign and plan to move forward hiring the compost monitor for the Farmers' Market Food Waste collection using FY21-22 Orange County Community Climate Action Grant funding.

Carrboro will need focused communication with interlocal partners throughout the year through Public Works and Planning staff as well as Public Officials/Town's Solid Waste Advisory Group (SWAG) representative.

Staff are planning a larger-scale educational campaign, including the release of a composting video and advertisement of bin sales in May (Compost Awareness Week). Staff will also focus on other ways of reducing food waste using the EPA's hierarchy of food waste management and can consider additional grant opportunities as well to support food waste reduction, outreach, and education.

Food Choice Measures

Climate-Friendly Cookbook

- *Policy Connections:* CCAP Food Choice Recommendation #1: Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Diets by 80% by 2030

Staff are currently soliciting recipes from Carrboro residents to create a climate-friendly cookbook and will allow residents to share recipes with their community. Staff are working to plan for additional outreach in 2023.

Inflation Reduction Act

Staff continue to explore ways in which the Town can leverage funding from the Inflation Reduction Act as more information continues to be released.