



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 24-064, **Version:** 1

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### Memorandum of Understanding Creating the Intergovernmental Climate Council of Orange County

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this agenda item is to request that the Town Council consider the attached resolution to authorize the Mayor to enter a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Town of Chapel Hill, Town of Hillsborough, and Orange County that creates an Intergovernmental Climate Council of Orange County.

**DEPARTMENT:** Planning

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** Laura Janway, Environmental Sustainability Coordinator, [ljanway@townofcarrboro.org](mailto:ljanway@townofcarrboro.org), (919) 918-7326; Patricia McGuire, Planning Director, [pmcguire@townofcarrboro.org](mailto:pmcguire@townofcarrboro.org), (919) 918-7327

**COUNCIL DIRECTION:**

☒ Race/Equity ☒ Climate ☒ Comprehensive Plan ☐ Other

The purpose of this MOU is to bring together public officials from local governments and other organizations in a formal way with staff to share information related to the impacts of climate change and the mitigation of those impacts in Orange County. The MOU addresses Community Integration Recommendation #2 from its Community Climate Action Plan, which recommends expanding public partnerships to consider climate action more explicitly.

The MOU will create a formal group that will work to address one of the foundational themes of the Carrboro Connects Comprehensive Plan, climate action.

The Town's work to address climate action will benefit historically marginalized communities, who suffer and will suffer disproportionately larger impacts due to climate disruption. Racial Equity Pocket Questions are provided as Attachment C.

**INFORMATION:** The Orange County Climate Council began as an informal Climate Change Committee composed of four elected officials. The Committee provided a report to the Assembly of Governments meeting in January 2019 where the concept of establishing a more formal committee structure was discussed. Following this meeting, each jurisdiction took different approaches to their appointments to the Climate Council. At this point, there was no formulating document and no structure or agreement in place. Orange County provided staff and organized meetings. Staff from all participating local governments attended as well.

In December 2021, the Climate Council submitted a letter to the Mayors, Chair, and Managers requesting a process to develop a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that would govern the work of the Climate Council moving forward.

As a result, the Board of Commissioners created a Climate Council Review Subcommittee to review the Climate Council. Based on feedback from current and former Climate Council members, the subcommittee recognized the value of an intergovernmental group focused on information sharing and collaboration. The subcommittee recommended using the Intergovernmental Parks Work Group (IPWG) as a model for the Climate Council moving forward and that the participating jurisdictions create an MOU to formulate/manage the new Climate Council.

At the April 26, 2022 Orange County Board of Commissioners meeting, the Board voted to suspend the Climate Council and asked staff to draft an MOU for a restructured Climate Council based on the organization of the IPWG. Staff from Carrboro, Hillsborough, Chapel Hill, and Orange County worked to draft the attached MOU (Attachment B).

The Chapel Hill Town Council authorized the Chapel Hill Mayor to enter the MOU on February 22, 2023.

The Hillsborough Town Council authorized the Hillsborough Mayor to enter the MOU on March 13, 2023.

The Carrboro Town Council considered a resolution to authorize the Mayor to enter into the MOU at the [April 18, 2023 <https://carrboro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6172356&GUID=478143D8-9F42-49A0-A556-6A01681F06DC&Options=&Search=>](https://carrboro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6172356&GUID=478143D8-9F42-49A0-A556-6A01681F06DC&Options=&Search=>) Town Council meeting. The Council considered requesting that the other parties to the MOU amend the agreement as follows:

- Consider representation from other community organizations to further the diversity of board membership
- Consider meeting more frequently

A draft letter summarizing these comments was prepared. Communication of the comments to the other parties has not been able to be verified.

The Orange County Board of Commissioners authorized the their Chair to enter the MOU on June 20, 2023.

All three current parties to the MOU plan to move forward to hold a meeting of the Orange County Climate Council in May 2024.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** Orange County staff will be responsible for administration, agenda preparation, meeting coordination, and meeting notes with support from other Town staff. Town staff will attend the two meetings of the Intergovernmental Climate Council each year.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Town Manager recommends that the Town Council consider the attached resolution (Attachment A) authorizing the Mayor to enter a Memorandum of Understanding with the Town of Chapel Hill, Town of Hillsborough, and Orange County to create the Intergovernmental Climate Council of Orange County.