

Summary of Mayor and Council Comments on Rockville Climate Action Plan (11/15/2021 draft)

#	Name	Page/Action #	Topic	Comment	Staff Comments	Revision to 1/10/2022 Draft Climate Action Plan
Comments shared prior to and during the 11/15/2021 M&C meeting						
1	Councilmember (Dr.) Myles	11/15/2021 M&C Packet Page: 17/18	Goal	Why just a 50% (as opposed to 100%) reduction by 2030? (pp44 20-30% of people thought that our goals are not ambitious enough. Why not at least follow the County's plan of 80% reduction by 2027 and 100% reduction by 2035? Should we use the Paris Agreement as a benchmark given that it has a goal of reducing temperature rise to no more than 1.5C? We haven't quite gotten to 1.5C and we're already suffering from historic climate catastrophes.	Without any federal or state requirements for local jurisdictions, communities can establish their own CAP goals. In the draft plan, 50% is proposed as it is aligned with Maryland and COG and is close to the Paris Agreement goals (translated to Rockville). This goal is also bounded by some realism through the consultant's modeling and local considerations. Achieving this goal is still ambitious and requires City investment and extensive community participation to achieve results. Some other communities, like Montgomery County, set higher goals that are more aspirational. During initial CAP discussions with the Mayor and Council, several members expressed the desire for the CAP to take an ambitious, yet reasonable/achievable approach. However, the Mayor and Council may provide more guidance on this goal setting approach. The City could aspire to achieve faster results above and beyond 50%. The goal could also be adjusted in the future, if, for example, county, state, and federal actions are stronger than anticipated.	Revise goal: achieve 'at least' 50% by 2030 in the goal statements in the plan. Reference opportunities to collaborate with the County on transportation, renewable energy and energy efficiency programs that could result in larger emissions reductions before 2045.
2	Councilmember (Dr.) Myles	11/15/2021 M&C Packet Page: pp17 & pp20 & pp48	Goal	Does this 50% reduction include emissions over which we have no control (e.g. 270, 355, 586, airplane/helicopter emissions)?	Yes. The way COG calculates local inventories, State, federal, and county rules, incentives, and programs have a big influence. The inventory includes factors for regional air travel, trains, electricity fuel mix, and national HFC and natural gas leaks scaled to Rockville. Rockville can support many of the needed actions through advocacy and local actions, and the City's actions are crucial to success.	No changes proposed.
3	Councilmember (Dr.) Myles	11/15/2021 M&C Packet Page: pp18, pp32 & pp51	Goal	Why do we use 2005 as the year from which to base our goals?	This is a common baseline used in many climate action plans throughout the country. COG uses a 2005 baseline for all of the local government inventories in the region. A 2005 (2006 in Maryland's case) baseline is also used in the U.S. greenhouse gas goal.	No changes proposed.
4	Councilmember (Dr.) Myles	pp21	Renewable Energy	Under orange--"renewable energy" what about either eliminating gas lines in new construction or, at a minimum, mandating electric options be provided in all new construction (very expensive to install a 220V circuit board for a boiler, cooktop, dryer, etc.).	Montgomery County explored this action; however, they found state-level preemption issues that constrain the County's ability to ban natural gas in new construction. Therefore, the County is focusing on developing alternative strategies to a disincentivize fossil fuels or incentivize electrification. Following their model, the draft CAP includes Action C-06: Coordinate with Montgomery County on electrification incentives for existing building systems. Additionally, since the full benefits of electrification cannot be achieved until the electric grid is decarbonized, the draft CAP includes several actions (C-07 and C-08 in the green section) to move us in that direction. This item would be added to a "monitoring" list for the future. The speed of what is feasible will depend on complex interrelated policy, economic and technology considerations.	Revise C-06 to clarify constraints and opportunities. Add action to new Appendix C: Actions for the City to Monitor for Future Consideration.

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5	Councilmember (Dr.) Myles	pp18/21 & 103	Transportation	If changing modes of transportation (e.g. prioritizing mass transit) is part of what will help us achieve this goal, what can we do to ensure that the preferred alternative is safe and reliable? In other words, how do we hold WMATA/METRO/Ride On accountable?	We agree that ensuring safe and reliable mass transit is very important for our community. The Comprehensive Plan (C-16) contains several policies and actions aimed at coordinating with these agencies to improve service. For example Comprehensive Plan Policy 6: Actively support the transit services provided by WMATA, Montgomery County government, the State of Maryland, and Amtrak.	No changes proposed.
6	Councilmember (Dr.) Myles	pp22 C-21	Resiliency	It seems as though this would require additional resources and, thus should be bolded. Am I wrong? pp165 speaks to that too.	It is correct to note that Rockville needs additional resources to evaluate and address flooding risks. This would essentially be a new program for Rockville. Flooding is factored into several actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Action C-21 (Partner with FEMA to update the Flood Insurance Rate Maps used to implement the National Flood Insurance Program) is currently on Environmental Management’s workplan. The City is currently coordinating with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and Montgomery County to update Federal flood risk maps to better align with current conditions. FEMA is conducting the bulk of the technical map amendments and we will be assisting with community engagement and administration. •Action M-13 (Assess Rockville’s risk of flooding and develop a Flood Mitigation Plan to reduce or mitigate flooding impacts) goes beyond action C-21 and requires more resources. This allows us to go beyond basic FEMA floodplain mapping and work with a consultant to analyze risk for future climate precipitation scenarios and look at flood risks to streams that fall below the FEMA threshold and potential overland flooding and develop a mitigation plan to reduce flood risks. •Action M-12 (Advocate for state and federal authorities to update stormwater infrastructure design, operations and maintenance standards to accommodate new rainfall/storm event projects and help reduce projected flooding issues). This is under review by MDE and it is not certain when changes may be proposed and if resources will be needed. 	Revise pages 39 and 40 to clarify process and needs, with footnote on pending updates on FEMA maps.
7	Councilmember (Dr.) Myles	pp22 & 33	Resiliency	Would add a section that would essentially assess all communities—particularly those close to potentially hazardous material (i.e. Lincoln Parks’ proximity to a Washington Gas utility center) to determine if extreme weather events would put such communities in particular danger	This concept could be included future Hazard Mitigation Plan discussions (Action M-11). This may require outside technical expertise to assess this risk and/or coordination with Washington Gas.	Add language to M-11 action and narrative to include assessing vulnerability of neighborhoods for hazardous risks.
8	Councilmember (Dr.) Myles	pp23	Public Engagement and Oversight	Could we add fossil fuel divestment (of city funds) to the public engagement & oversight section?	This could be added to the list of ideas to be monitored/explored further if it is the desire of Mayor and Council. For personal actions, this could be included as an item in the “What Can Do?” section beginning on pp151. For City funds, it would require careful consideration and may require review and input from the Retirement Board.	Add voluntary measure in "What can I do" section. Add action to new Appendix C: Actions for the City to Monitor for Future Consideration.

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9	Councilmember (Dr.) Myles	pp50/pp92	Energy Efficiency	Do we have any say over what types of bulbs/fixtures used for PEPSCO-owned street lights?	Rockville and many other localities have advocated to the Public Service Commission for Pepco's plans to include local input to brightness and color temperature of LED streetlights in our jurisdictions. Action M-03 seeks to address this issue but more clarification can be added.	Add to Action M-03: "...and to be effective, should accommodate local needs and preferences for brightness and color temperatures to ensure a safe, efficient, and comfortable experience for road users and adjacent residents and businesses."
10	Councilmember (Dr.) Myles	pp55	Renewable Energy	If we increase green power purchases, we could get closer to our reduction goal sooner?	No, because emissions reductions from cleaner electricity sources is nearly maxed out in our pathway model. Green power purchase is a near term measure. Most of the rest of the reductions beyond this 2030 pathway would need to come from transportation fuels and natural gas use. Energy efficiency is a key piece to support the transition of the electricity grid and the feasibility of electrification.	No changes proposed.
11	Councilmember (Dr.) Myles	pp72	Resiliency	Why does north Twinbrook have a lower social vulnerability than south Twinbrook?	The difference is subtle in the numbers – northern Twinbrook comes in at .72 and southern at .76 on a scale from 0 to 1. This is a result of the nuances of this index, the way CDC measures it, and the mapping range boundaries.	No changes proposed.
12	Councilmember (Dr.) Myles	pp93	Renewable Energy	That solar array may be from the Tower Oaks office building. I think it was a state partnership that helped with installation. Is the City able to leverage such resources for solar installation?	Yes. Rockville has access to Maryland grants and also Power Purchase Agreements which is a financing mechanism that requires low upfront costs. Many of our buildings are restricted by shade or equipment on the roof but the plan proposes, in Action M-04, to take a closer look at our options, including carports, and leverage other resources when available.	No changes proposed.
13	Councilmember (Dr.) Myles	pp133	Resiliency	Are emergency notifications (weather, heat) given in languages other than English? Want to make sure we're being as inclusive as is possible	According to the Alert Rockville website, there are not options for other languages. Alert Montgomery has a Spanish language alert and provides information on school closures, government closures, gas leaks, severe weather, traffic, park closures, public health and other public emergencies. Providing different language features is something that may be explored further.	Revise M-11 and C-25 to explore what it would take to make alerts in other languages.
14	Councilmember (Dr.) Myles	PP162	Transportation	M-08 the pandemic has taught us how much we really need to be in office. I agree with the goal of increasing teleworking, when applicable, to reduce vehicle miles traveled. (also, incentivizing living locally can help too)	The City's recently revised telework policy considers these tradeoffs to help outline when telework is applicable. Live in Rockville (or near) incentives are included in the description of that action. We can further refine the description for Action M-08 (pp 117) to clarify these concepts in a future revised plan.	Revise M-08 to clarify.
15	Councilmember Ashton		Resiliency	Inquired about why the disaster declaration chart on p. 60 ends at 2016, and if it should include Hurricane Ida.	The chart summarizes presidential disasters. FEMA denied Maryland's request for Ida impacts to be declared a presidential disaster. However, on October 21, the US Small Business Administration approved of an SBA disaster declaration for Maryland.	Clarify disaster declaration chart.

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16	Councilmember Ashton		Resiliency	On p. 64, asked that we include more information about the coming FEMA floodplain map updates in the description and other actions in response to the Ida disaster, and to explain more about why the plan proposes a flood study in addition to that work.	Additional clarification on the FEMA floodplain process and other actions can be provided. See response to comment 6.	Revise pages 39 and 40 to clarify process and needs, with footnote on pending updates on FEMA maps. Update C-20, C-21 and M-13.
17	Councilmember Ashton		General	Which measures in the plan could be considered transformational?	Many of the actions in the plan have the potential to be transformational. Adopting the plan and resourcing the plan would be transformational, especially in the areas of transportation electrification, resiliency, energy efficiency, renewable energy, equity, and public engagement. Additionally, plan adoption sets the City in a good position to apply for federal funding and other grant opportunities.	No changes proposed.
18	Councilmember Ashton	C-02	Energy Efficiency	Is the low- and moderate-income program ready to be proposed for funding in the near term?	This is one measure that is recognized as a priority and is in the preliminary planning stage. More time is required to work with regional energy and housing partners to evaluate current conditions and develop a proposal and scope before it's ready for funding requests. EMD and HCD will need to coordinate to understand program needs, barriers, opportunities, the clients' needs, and identify the best approaches. Staff is also following the County's actions, and researching Green Bank, RHE, and other partnerships or financing opportunities. Staff is aiming to develop a strategy over the next year. This also may be an action that could be involved when monitoring future federal funding opportunities.	No changes proposed.
19	Councilmember Ashton		Renewable Energy/ Transportation	Asked about how to streamline the process and assist residents and businesses in going solar and installing EV chargers and whether the permit fees could be lowered.	The Mayor and Council recently adopted a resolution that amended the master fees for Public Works and Planning and Development Services. As requested by several councilmembers to help reinforce the City's desire to mitigate climate change and directly impact the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, permit fees for solar panels and electric vehicle charging installations were reduced by approximately 50%. Permits needed for solar installations were also consolidated from two to one. Solar permitting is reportedly a smooth process. EV charger permitting streamlining is contained in C-11 EV Readiness Plan.	Revise C-09 and C-11 to ensure that solar and EV permitting processes and fee are structured equitably and encourage installations.
20	Councilmember Ashton	C-12	Transportation	Discussed ways to require and assist multifamily properties and other new developments to be EV ready.	This will be incorporated into measures C-10, C-11, and C-12 and the City can work with the County and the State to ensure that multi-family properties, existing and new, are able to make the transition without passing on costs to residents.	Include in descriptions of EV-ready actions.

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21	Councilmember Ashton	M-06	Transportation	Suggested that the City draft a resolution to promote electric vehicle purchases for the City fleet.	A draft resolution was reviewed by the Environment Commission and will be proposed along with CAP adoption.	Revise M-06 to include an enhanced option with a more ambitious electrification schedule for light duty vehicles that goes beyond the recommendations of the CFTA study. Revise Table 7/8 to include MEA Study and Enhanced Program. Drafted EV Resolution to support an enhanced electrification option to enable the City to be eligible for state transportation grants.
22	Councilmember Ashton	C-17	Energy Efficiency	The City should support a transition to electric leaf blowers.	This has been a big source of complaints in Rockville and Montgomery County. Montgomery County is developing gas-powered leaf blower legislation. Staff will monitor any proposed legislation to determine if it impacts Rockville or if Rockville has an option to opt in. However, there are several factors to consider, including the feasibility, impacts to both noise and sound pollution, performance, enforcement, and impacts to landscaping businesses. The Environment Commission is also researching options. For voluntary measures, the City includes environmental landscaping education in its current outreach and is partnering with the County on an electrification event in spring of 2022.	Add language on education about electrifying landscaping equipment to Action C-17, in the What You Can Do. Add action to new Appendix C: Actions for the City to Monitor for Future Consideration.
23	Councilmember Ashton	C-09; C-26	Renewable Energy	Asked about solar systems in Rockville and if we can provide solar installation data by year	Yes, we have that data and are in the process of requesting an update to it, and then we can analyze and share it along with other metrics as part of C-26.	No changes proposed.
24	Councilmember Ashton	C-10	Transportation	I-270 - Asked if the plan should include advocacy for the state roads to incentivize clean energy vehicles and find other ways to reduce greenhouse gas impacts from the increase in traffic. Examples: Advocacy to the state, lower tolls or HOV access for EVs	These are policies and actions included in the Comprehensive Plan that the Environment Commission and the City Manager's Office track and recommend annually. These concepts can be clarified C-10 and C-16.	Revise C-10 and C-16 to emphasize the highway part of state advocacy and enablers for transit funding, EV incentives in HOV lanes, etc. Included transportation advocacy related to highways at the state level and include anti-sprawl related state advocacy in C-16. Revised title of C-16: Implement the Comprehensive Plan to steer the most dense development/redevelopment to mixed-use, transit-served locations to reduce VMTs and emissions and conserve/restore environmental areas.

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25	Councilmember Ashton		General	What will be the reporting mechanism for plan progress?	There a several C-26 describes an approach to develop metrics and a reporting mechanism for plan progress. Some metrics are identified in the individual action write-ups, while others will need to be refined as access to data and analysis tools evolve. Staff invites comments or guidance related to specific requests or expectations or questions about how the reporting process is developed.	Revise C-26
26	Councilmember Ashton		General	Asked about the staffing and resource needs of the plan	Resource status and needs estimates for many of the actions are listed in Appendix A. Some actions are already funded and resourced as part of the work plan and others are not. Some actions need more planning to estimate scope, costs, and potential staffing needs. In some cases, partnerships, grants, rebates, incentives or financing could help offset costs. Some actions are being proposed for funding in the near term. A key opportunity this year is to monitor Federal bills for funding opportunities to advance the program.	No changes proposed.
27	Councilmember Pierzchala		Land Management, Transportation	Promote regional policies and work with the region to reduce sprawl, and address development and transportation issues, such as metro station TOD design, encouraging living locally rather than long vehicle commutes, consider reducing asphalt in TOD areas.	C-16 describes supporting the Comprehensive Plan in fostering these types of outcomes. This can be expanded to also emphasize regional coordination.	Revise discussion in C-16
28	Councilmember Pierzchala		Resiliency	What is the fund source for the actions?	Actions relating to flooding resiliency and RainScapes rebates (such as C-17, C-20, C-21, M12, M-13) are the Stormwater Fund. Other actions are General Fund. Funding needs for many of the actions are shown in the table in Appendix A.	No changes proposed.
29	Mayor Newton	C-16	Land Management	Tree ordinance - fix the ordinance to protect more trees	Action C-16 references implementation of the policies and actions in the Comprehensive Plan; which includes an extensive list of goals and actions to protect and enhance trees, including updates to the FTPO. Action C-17 also includes proposals to expand education and incentives to support tree planting.	Revise discussion in C-16 to include the various Comprehensive Plan actions that protect forest stands and/or significant tree canopy.
30	Mayor Newton	C-03	Energy Efficiency	Would like to see a fiscal analysis for net zero buildings to ensure that it is not burdensome and disincentivizes development and re-development.	This is an important question and consideration that would need to be a key component of future building code updates as they move towards net zero codes. The County is tentatively planning to implement Net Zero codes by 2030 and the City can coordinate on this process, which includes assessing the market at the time, working to minimize unintended consequences, and ensuring that costs are not passed along to residents or affect affordable housing. In the near term, Action C-03 recommends strategies to bolster the City's current green building and energy efficiency codes that can be revised to include these considerations. The Environment Commission is also developing a white paper on net zero building codes that can include cost impacts.	Revise C-03 to work with County and other community building partners on fiscal analysis considerations during the building code update process. Modify C-03 to clarify that net zero codes are gradual, long-term action that depends on a number of circumstances: Strengthen green building codes to lead to adopt net zero (or equivalent).
31	Mayor Newton	C-24	Resiliency	Consider implementing high-albedo pavement and cool pavements to reduce heat impacts	This is incorporated in action C-24	No changes proposed.

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32	Mayor Newton		Resiliency	Concerned about toxic silica dust from construction near neighborhoods	The CAP provides baseline data on community vulnerability for the purposes of gauging climate impacts and understanding climate resilience needs. Actions M-11 and C-22 involve community health and resiliency. Normally, air quality and health regulations are handled at the County level.	No changes proposed.
33	Mayor Newton			Wants to show the return on investment of various actions	The table in Appendix A provides a qualitative summary of the benefits (greenhouse gas reduction, equity, health, and resiliency) and a variety of other co-benefits (economy, housing, environment, etc.). A more detailed quantitative assessment for each action exceeded the project's consulting budget. Overall, actions to support county and state initiatives provide the most greenhouse gas benefits per resources invested, followed by simpler regulations and actions to enable community participation such as an EV ready plan. Municipal actions provide the most direct monetary ROI to the city over time (e.g., facility energy efficiency yields electricity and natural gas utility savings). Outreach and incentives tend to be more costly per GHG saved or dollar invested, but participation would save residents and businesses money over time. Several measures are more costly but provide long term community benefits -- climate change is really a co-benefit of these actions: comprehensive plan, transportation investments, green space management plan, investing in LMI communities, and all the resilience actions would save costs in damage prevention.	No changes proposed.
34	Councilmember Ashton		Energy Efficiency	The Low-moderate income action will help address equity and could help support seniors to be able to age in place.	Agree, C-02 can be modified.	Add benefits to C-02 for supporting low-income seniors to age in place.
35	Councilmember Ashton and Mayor Newton		General	Requested information on proposed timing of actions	Timing will be key to any implementation plan. Although it is challenging to gauge timing before plan adoption and resourcing, staff can include general proposed time ranges in Attachment B.	Add a column for proposed implementation timing in Appendix B.