Public Engagement & Oversight

Conduct inclusive and equitable public engagement and establish systems for monitoring and accountability to encourage participation and support plan success.

Action C-25	Work with community partners to conduct an inclusive public engagement campaign to reduce emissions and adapt to the impacts from climate change		
Objective	Elevate education and engagement around CAP goals and actions		
Metrics	Number of community impressions, number of participants in CAP programs		
Target	Supports all actions	**Development Stage**	Proposed expansion of various programs
Lead	Public Information Office, Public Works	**City Upfront Cost**	-
Partners	Various Departments, Montgomery County, Boards and Commissions, Stakeholders	**City Operating Cost**	Staff/contracted engagement support Cost share: C-02, C-05, C-09, C-13, C-17, C-18, C-19, C-21, C-24

GHG Benefit	Resiliency	Feasibility	Health	Equity	Co-Benefits
++	++	++	+	+	Informed & Engaged Residents

CAP public engagement doesn't end with plan adoption, success depends on the degree to which community members are actively engaged and empowered to take action to meet CAP goals. The City must collaborate with regional partners and representatives from boards and commissions, the business community, the faith community, neighborhood groups and civic associations, and other community organizations. CAP engagement will require:

- **Community Engagement and Empowerment:** Implementing community actions relies on guidance and involvement from Rockville residents, visitors, business owners and property owners to be successful. Rockville will need to develop an inclusive public engagement campaign that meets people where they are and integrates climate-related needs and opportunities within city program communications and public touchpoints. Engagement can take the form of face-to-face or virtual interaction, mailers, community forums, social media outreach, Rockville Reports, participating in community meetings, and other forums, depending on the needs of the action. Community engagement and empowerment campaigns must also address data/digital poverty. This includes individuals who cannot afford mobile data or internet to meet their essential needs. This impacts equity because it significantly reduces the ability of these individuals to access important materials related to climate change decisions and to fully participate in publicly available government decision making processes.

Equity Considerations

Communication and engagement plans can take into account that different cultures and communities, of which the City has many, have different needs and ways of sharing information and participating. To achieve broad resonance, messaging must be culturally relevant, translated into multiple languages, and conducted on a regular basis, and must include various forms of media and approaches to ensure accessibility for diverse audiences.

The City could also consider accommodations for low income or minority residents to allow them to participate in public meetings and programs.

- **GHG Mitigation**: The City will need to initiate several campaigns to support residents and property owners to invest in climate mitigating home energy efficiency improvements, solar and renewable energy system, and electric vehicles as well as choose to incorporate environmentally friendly landscape, solid waste, and transportations practices into their daily lives. This requires staff and marketing resources for at least six different campaigns that need to be designed to meet diverse audiences.

- **Resiliency**: This City will also need to help community members understand relevant climate risks and participate in programs to help them adapt and be resilient to changes, such as the National Flood Insurance program, emergency warning system, preparing for extreme weather events, improve drainage, locating nearest cooling centers and other ways to reduce health risks on high heat days, strengthening community connections and support systems (such as Rockville's Villages program).

- **Partnerships**: Ultimately, no one person or group or city can solve climate change alone – it will take collaborative action. Rockville often coordinates with Montgomery County, COG, boards and commissions, nonprofits, civic associations, homeowners associations, the "Villages" network, and other State programs to share effective strategies and work with the community. Montgomery County will be a critical partner in the effort. The County is planning to include CAP education and and outreach opportunities in programs at the public school, libraries and Montgomery College. The County will also provide outreach on programs that benefit Rockville, such as building energy benchmarking and energy performance standards, potential building electrification initiatives, Community Choice Energy, solar co-op, transit programs, EV purchasing cooperative, and emergency services. Additionally public engagement on many CAP actions intersect with other quality-of-life, such as health, housing, traffic safety, racial equity, community services that rely on other community partners for outreach.
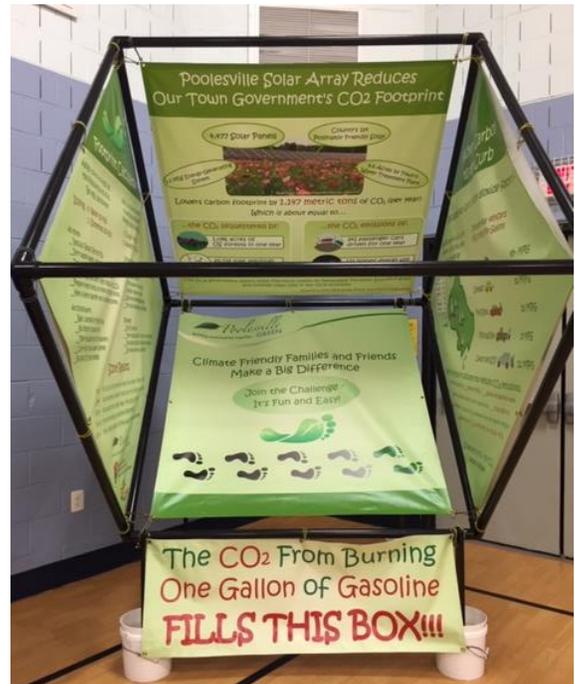
Action C-26	Develop metrics and performance indicators for climate actions to establish a data-driven assessment and reporting process				
Objective	Develop an approach to measuring and tracking process with periodic reporting to gauge plan performance, identify challenges, and showcase wins				
Metrics	Milestone/Status update				
Target	All actions		**Development Stage**	Proposed	
Lead	Public Works		**City Upfront Cost**	-	
Partners	All City Departments, COG, Utilities, Montgomery County		**City Operating Cost**	Reporting metrics of some actions may require coordination with the City's ERP	

GHG Benefit	Resiliency	Feasibility	Health	Equity	Co-Benefits
+	+	++	N	N	Good Governance

It is important to establish metrics, or indicators, to not only track and report progress to leadership and the public, but also to make course corrections and adjustments when needed. Ongoing monitoring and reporting will help support all the actions adopted in the CAP to reach greenhouse gas, resiliency, and equity goals and improve accountability. The City will need to develop a set of metrics that are based on easily-trackable sources of data and a periodic reporting process that balances the need to measure progress with the need to focus the most time and effort on doing the actions in the plan and moving forward. Outcomes-based indicators are preferred when practical, but in many cases, qualitative updates, project status, percent completed or estimated quantities reached may suffice. Example of metrics include:

- **System-Level Metrics**: Measure the overall impact of a combination of strategies (e.g, total residential energy use, community GHG emissions, vehicle miles traveled).
- **Program-Level Metrics**: Measure the impact of a specific activity/program (e.g., facility energy retrofits and energy savings, number of homes receiving weatherization incentives or Rainscapes Rebates, percent of fleet that are ultra-low emission vehicles, number EV charging stations installed, number of solar installations, number of streetlights retrofitted to LED and kWh savings, miles of bike lanes installed, etc.).
- **Milestone/Status Updates**: Illustrate whether or not an action or project has been completed (e.g., adoption of net zero building codes or adoption of Pedestrian Master Plan).

Reporting of metrics, milestones and plan progress may take different forms. Internally, some CAP metrics can be incorporated into the City's annual operating budget and capital improvements program and the City's Fiscal Year Annual Report. Additionally, a few key project status updates can be provided to the Mayor and Council by the Public Works Director or other departments that serve as the lead for action implementation.

Developing transparent metrics should align with the City's current external tracking and disclosure programs, including the Sustainable Maryland Certification program, Maryland Smart Energy Communities program, Energy CAP building energy use software, ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager building energy benchmarking for City properties, U.S. Environmental Protection

Equity Considerations

Include metrics that focus on equity and services/actions supporting socially vulnerable populations.

Agencies' Green Power Community Program, and the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) Community Energy Scorecard.

It is important to note that the City relies on a variety of data sources (both internal and external) and some entities have time lags for collection and reporting. For example, the City's communitywide GHG emissions inventory, is currently only updated by COG once every three years. Data on energy efficiency programs depends on utility reporting cycles (Pepco and Washington Gas) and building energy benchmarking data that is collected and reported by Montgomery County. As the City embarks on Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system in the future, some current metrics such as green buildings, solar installations, fleet fuel use, or RainScapes implementation may be included in system setup to more efficiently and effectively collect, store, manage and interpret data from many City activities.

As state and federal climate policies evolve and more cities develop climate action plans, there may be more opportunities and improved systems to measure, manage and disclose environmental data to track progress on climate commitments. Rockville's data is currently included in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) climate reporting process. COG conducts greenhouse gas inventories for regional jurisdictions, maintains a regional climate and energy dashboard, and reports data to the international Climate Disclosure Project (CDP), a not-for-profit organization that runs the global disclosure system for companies, cities, states and others to manage their environmental impacts. As the City's performance management and data analytics capabilities evolve, there may be more opportunities to develop cross-department user-friendly and informative CAP performance reporting mechanisms.

Action M-15: Incorporate climate mitigation, resiliency, and equity considerations into the City's budget process

Objective	Incorporate climate mitigation and resiliency goals in budget decision-making processes and explore innovative funding strategies.
Metrics	Milestone/Status update

Target	Supports action implementation	**Development Stage**	Proposed
Lead	Finance	**City Upfront Cost**	To Be Determined
Partners	All Departments	**City Operating Cost**	To Be Determined

GHG Benefit	Resiliency	Feasibility	Health	Equity	Co-Benefits
+	+	+	N	N	Good Governance, Fiscal Responsibility

The costs of climate mitigation and resiliency actions can have important implications for local budgets that already face many pressures; however, the cost of inaction is greater. Financial markets are beginning to recognize the importance of communities assessing and strategically planning to reduce climate risks. For example, S&P's 2016 ratings criteria for U.S. municipal waterworks, sanitary and drainage utility systems consider specific climate risk assessment strategies, such as supply planning and flood protection, in its assessment of asset adequacy and identification of operational risks. In 2017, the global credit rating agency Moody's Investor Services announced that analysts weigh the impact of climate risks with states' and municipalities' preparedness and planning for these changes when they analyze credit ratings. One Maryland community, Charles County, received a higher bond rating upon adoption of a climate resiliency plan. Having a proactive and multipronged approach to climate change is indicative of City leaderships' overall long-term planning strategy. To implement Rockville's CAP, the City will need to pursue:

- **Innovative funding strategies:** Fully implementing the actions in the CAP will require leveraging traditional and innovative funding streams from both the public and private sectors. Such programs may include, but are not limited to partnerships with other local government on climate energy education and outreach, partnerships with local utilities or other entities for EV charging stations, maximizing EmPOWER Maryland program funds, Federal transportation grants infrastructure funding, FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Program, technical assistance support, or utilizing a solar power purchase agreement to finance solar installations to access Federal tax incentives.

- **Linking climate considerations into the budget process for all departments:** Along with social and racial equity considerations, climate change considerations should be incorporated into budget decision processes across City government coordinated through the City Manager's Office and Finance. New plans, policies and projects can be examined to determine how they affect GHG emissions; how they can be modified to reduce GHG emissions where possible; how they are affected by climate change (now and over the program/project lifespan); and how they could be designed to increase resiliency.

> **Equity Considerations**
>
> Screening policies, projects and programs for positive and negative effects on climate emissions and resilience should include examining impact on equity.

Action M-16: Develop an interdepartmental climate action team to implement and track plan progress

Objective	Create a team that meets quarterly to coordinate CAP implementation and assess progress.
Metrics	Milestone/Status update

Target	Oversee all actions	**Development Stage**	Proposed
Lead	Public Works	**City Upfront Cost**	To Be Determined
Partners	All Departments	**City Operating Cost**	To Be Determined

GHG Benefit	Resiliency	Feasibility	Health	Equity	Co-Benefits
+	+	++	+	+	Good Governance

Many cities have found that creating an interdepartmental work group or leadership team is helpful to implement climate action plans because the causes and impacts of climate change involve every department in local government. Rockville's CAP includes actions to enhance climate change awareness, knowledge, and technical capacity among City staff and the community. The CAP also includes actions to institutionalize climate change considerations within government processes and actions to implement approaches to measure and report on progress. Responsibility for initiating and ultimately implementing many of the actions will need to be shared and rely on leadership from managers and employees across various City departments. Often there's a learning curve with new initiatives and climate action will be no different. In some case, new staff or training will be needed to implement the actions, in other cases, actions are part of regular business, but involve changes to current processes and practices. Coordination with the City Manager's Office will help ensure that all departments are receiving the support they need, monitoring progress, and that project leads are accountable.

Cooperation on many fronts will be essential to foster opportunities for creativity, collaboration, and innovation among City staff and community partners. Not only is internal coordination needed, but Rockville's team will also need to collaborate with state and regional agencies. For instance, team members will need to coordinate with the following to support broader climate goals and programs.

- **Montgomery County Climate Leadership Team**: Includes key staff from various Montgomery County departments, independent agencies, and municipalities that play important roles in combatting climate change through their programs, services, and operations.
- **Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Climate Energy and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC)**: Serves as the principal policy adviser on climate change, energy, green building, alternate fuels, solid waste and recycling policy issues, and is responsible for managing implementation of the national capital region climate plan.
- **Maryland Climate Leadership Academy**: Created to increase the capacity of government agencies, infrastructure organizations and businesses to develop and implement sound climate change initiatives.

> **Equity Considerations**
>
> Equity in implementation and program design should be integrated into new processes and practices and can be built upon through the climate leadership team.