

Climate Action Plan 2025 Annual Report Mayor and Council Q&A

Councilmember Myles Questions (4/22/2026 email)

1. Are there any monetary challenges that will make it difficult to implement the CAP moving forward?

The Climate Action Plan is a high priority for city staff and the Mayor and Council. Staff will continue to prioritize funding for Climate Action Plan implementation and does not anticipate financial challenges moving forward. The FY 2027 budget includes many elements related to climate action, including community engagement related to the Flood Resiliency Master Plan and Green Space Management Plan, three new electric vehicles, and a new CIP project titled Building Energy Performance Improvements. In addition, staff have been successful in obtaining grants and rebates for several climate action and energy efficiency initiatives and will continue to seek outside funding to advance the city's goals, when such resources are available. Beyond FY 2027, some Climate Action Plan actions have financial impacts that are not yet fully defined. These fall into three primary categories: 1) actions and associated costs to be determined following plan adoption (such as implementation of the Flood Resiliency Plan and the Green Space Management Plan); 2) costs that are currently estimated pending completion of proposals or engineering designs (such as multi-site solar and energy efficiency upgrades); and 3) costs that are preliminary projections and expected to evolve as emerging technologies are evaluated for performance and cost (e.g., electric heavy-duty vehicles).

Mayor Ashton Questions (5/4/2026 email)

2. Do we need to update our goals to align with the state? That would make sense to me since the state created them. "Since the plan's adoption, the Maryland General Assembly established a more ambitious goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 60 percent (from 2006) by 2031 and net zero by 2045."

Rockville's Climate Action Plan (CAP) was intentionally designed with flexibility to accommodate evolving policy frameworks. It states a goal to "reduce GHG emissions from the community and municipal government operations **at least** 50 percent below 2005 levels by 2030 to be on track to reach net zero by or **before** 2050."

Maryland adopted more ambitious greenhouse gas reduction goals in 2022, after the Mayor and Council approved the CAP. Rather than formally revising the CAP goals, staff has incorporated the State's targets into implementation and reporting. The State's goals are used as a benchmark in annual reports and are reflected in the greenhouse gas emissions inventory chart. In this way, the CAP already aligns with State targets in practice, while retaining the flexibility built into its original design.

3. How are we complying with the County's building emissions? Do you foresee any issues that we need to address?

Montgomery County's Building Energy Performance Standards (BEPS) regulation applies to commercial and multifamily buildings larger than 25,000 square feet, requiring improved energy efficiency to reduce carbon emissions over time. The regulation requires annual energy benchmarking reports and progressive compliance with established performance standards.

Rockville has met its 2025 benchmarking requirement for all four City-owned buildings: City Hall, the Swim and Fitness Center, 6 Taft Court, and the Senior Center. BEPS reports are due annually by June 1 for the previous calendar year. To meet longer-term performance standards, efficiency planning through the Building Energy Performance Improvement CIP (GA 27) is underway for City Hall and the Swim and Fitness Center, with the goal of achieving the County's interim compliance targets in 2028 and 2029. The Senior Center currently meets both interim and final standards and only needs to maintain performance. 6 Taft Court will be benchmarked after a full calendar year of occupancy; its path to interim and final compliance will be determined based on that initial dataset.

4. Can you confirm that the budget book will be updated to include the 2nd solar installation in FY27. The draft of the budget included design only. Previous budgets had us planning to have 3 by now. Looking forward to the work to plan the future ones as well.

The City intends to award the Multi-Facility Solar RFP in FY 2027 and initiate design. The installation timeline will be further refined based on contractor proposals received through the forthcoming RFP solicitation. The implementation schedule for construction will depend on project costs, grants, vendor capacity, sequencing across locations, procurement timelines, and Pepco interconnection approvals.

The proposed FY 2027 budget takes a significant step forward in implementing facility energy efficiency and solar projects. The budget includes the new Building Energy Performance Improvement (BEPI) CIP (GA 27). Climate Action Plan energy efficiency and solar projects have historically been funded through the operating budget, requiring completion within a single fiscal year. This constraint created challenges in aligning timelines for grant applications and awards as well as procurement, design, permitting and construction schedules. Establishing the BEPI CIP provides a more effective mechanism for delivering complex, multi-year projects and leveraging external funding.

5. What supports are needed to complete the plan? Is there anything that we are missing?

Please refer to the response to question 1 above.