



## Takoma Park City Council Meeting – October 7, 2020 Agenda Item 4

### **Work Session**

Climate Emergency Response Framework Update

### **Recommended Council Action**

Receive presentation and discuss

### **Context with Key Issues**

On March 04, 2020 City Council adopted the Climate Emergency Response Framework, recognizing that we are in state of emergency with devastating consequences for inaction. Trends for our region include more severe weather events more often, continued increases in annual rainfall, and more frequent and prolonged stretches of extreme heat. These changes inflict substantial and catastrophic damage to our physical, social, and economic well-being. Takoma Park is taking the steps necessary to address this challenge locally utilizing best practices as well as coordination with efforts of others. The City will also need to model new solutions in order to meet its goal of net zero greenhouse gas emissions city-wide by 2035.

The Climate Emergency Response Framework, adopted before the pandemic, directed the Sustainability Manager to prepare options for short term proposed actions such as improving energy efficiency in buildings for Council consideration by December 2020, as feasible. Immediately following the adoption of the resolution, the City, and world, entered into crisis mode due to Covid-19. Due to this, the timeline for completing the implementation plans has been affected. In particular, robust community outreach, especially to engage those most affected by climate change, has been challenging. There has been progress to date on climate efforts related to the framework, in particular cooperative efforts with Montgomery County. This includes engagement with the County on building performance standards, benchmarking, the International Green Construction Code, and education and outreach planning. Regional climate planning is also occurring through MWCOG and staff has been advocating for strong regional goals to reflect the goals of Takoma Park and Montgomery County region-wide.

Additional work has been accomplished including:

- Reporting to Carbon Disclosure Project as required
- Forestry Protocol cohort to include urban forest in the City's greenhouse gas inventory
- Regional climate planning via MWCOG
- Sustainable Maryland recertification
- Racial Equity training through Urban Sustainability Directors Network, developed with GARE
- City Sustainability Grants program for residents, businesses, and multifamily buildings
- Curbside EV charging permit pilot
- Engaging with the library architects on green building

### **Next Steps**

Establishing the Sustainability Assistance Fund, as called for in the Framework. Similar to the Tree

Fund, the Sustainability Assistance Fund will ensure that the funding available to assist low income residents and businesses is not subject to yearly budget changes and potential “use it or lose it” cuts should funding needs not coincide with fiscal cycles.

A series of carefully planned community sessions for each Framework strategy will be organized. The categories in the Framework include buildings, transportation, fossil fuel elimination, and renewable energy, in addition to trees and sequestration. Learning from multifamily outreach efforts during the pandemic, local activist groups and the City's work to engage residents in the New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center process, the community sessions will be intentionally planned to engage people from all parts of the community, and enable community-driven implementation recommendations. Strategies to reach residents in all parts of the City and from all walks of life will include special additions to the Takoma Park Newsletter, surveys, community information centers, and targeted outreach efforts to particular groups.

A pilot project encouraging benchmarking of all types of buildings in Takoma Park will provide experience and data to inform the development of implementation recommendations.

### **Council Priority**

Environmentally Sustainable Community

### **Environmental Considerations**

Greenhouse gas emissions, sustainability, energy efficiency

### **Fiscal Considerations**

Fiscal impacts of climate change include declining economic resiliency; short and long term budget impacts of more frequent and severe weather events; increased health costs due to climate change; lost economic productivity and tax revenue.

### **Racial Equity Considerations**

In order to achieve climate goals, we must address racial equity in our climate programs. Communities most vulnerable to climate impacts tend to be the least resourced to manage and recover from the physical, economic, mental, and social devastation climate change can cause. Children, the elderly, and those with preexisting health conditions are especially vulnerable to climate disruptions such as flooding, dangerous heat, drought, and poor air quality (*American Journal of Public Health*). In our community, that suggests special attention to the concerns of renters, lower income residents, and people of color.

### **Attachments and Links**

Presentation

2020 Climate Emergency Response Framework

<https://documents.takomaparkmd.gov/government/city-council/resolutions/2020/resolution-2020-06.pdf>