



Albemarle County

Legislation Text

File #: 20-514, **Version:** 1

AGENDA DATE: 10/7/2020

TITLE:

Final Phase 1 Climate Action Plan

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Staff requests that the Board adopt the Phase 1 Climate Action Plan.

ITEM TYPE: Regular Action Item

STAFF CONTACT(S): Richardson, Henry, Stewart, Harper, Lowe

PRESENTER (S): Greg Harper

LEGAL REVIEW: Not Required

REVIEWED BY: Jeffrey B. Richardson

BACKGROUND: At its September 6, 2017 meeting, the Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution reaffirming the County's commitment to climate action and directed staff to develop a Climate Action Plan. Staff have been engaged in climate action planning work - in collaboration with partners, stakeholders, and interested members of the public - since that time. On October 16, 2019 the Board passed a resolution establishing community-wide greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets. Staff introduced a draft Climate Action Plan to the public this past spring and presented the draft Plan to the Board on June 17.

STRATEGIC PLAN: Climate Action Planning: Develop/implement phase one of the Climate Action plan to include high level goals & strategies focused around climate protection & resiliency to locally address climate change. Through budget process, develop recommendations for near-term implementation plans 1 following adoption of the phase one climate action plan.

DISCUSSION: As a local government, Albemarle County has a critical role in mitigating climate change through shifting its own operations to be more sustainable and - as importantly - by creating more sustainable choices for everyone who lives in, works in, and visits the County. The County efforts related to climate change to date should be considered the beginning of a permanent, adaptive program that will be critical to adequately addressing the threat of long-term global climate change.

The Climate Action Plan presented here (Attachment A) is the culmination of the first phase of the County's climate action planning process. The primary outcome of this phase is to identify broad strategies and supporting actions that the County government will take in the coming years to reduce the community's contribution to rising concentrations of atmospheric greenhouse gases that cause climate change. Since local government operations comprise only a small fraction of the community's total contribution to climate change, the proposed actions are not limited to changing how the County operates. The plan includes initiatives to engage, inform, motivate, and empower the greater community to take part in addressing this worldwide crisis. Because of the community-wide emphasis, the strategies and actions were developed collaboratively - with extensive community participation and involvement by key County staff, local subject matter experts,

stakeholder groups, and interested individuals.

Staff received an abundance of feedback from the community on the draft plan through the engagement process facilitated last spring via an [online community engagement hub <https://publicinput.com/7926/>](https://publicinput.com/7926/). Staff have subsequently incorporated many community suggestions - and the feedback received from the Board at the June 17 meeting - into the final version of the Plan.

The front sections of the Plan - before the Strategies and Actions sections - were generally reorganized and edited. Major changes include:

- removal of the “At a Glance” section at the beginning
- greater emphasis on the opportunities presented by the challenge of climate change
- a more extensive description of Phase 2 activities

Staff made wide-ranging edits to the strategies and actions in the five major sector categories, including additions and clarifications. These changes are presented in the form of tracked changes in Attachment B.

Following adoption of the Phase 1 Plan, the County will move into the next phase of climate action planning, with an immediate focus on implementing selected actions from the Plan. Phase 2 will also include the completion of an up-to-date greenhouse gas inventory and an assessment of community resiliency to climate change. In addition, we will build on this Plan through a more robust evaluation of the strategies and actions, including a deeper consideration of equitable implementation and additional community benefits.

BUDGET IMPACT: There are no budget impacts associated with the adoption of this Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommend that the Board adopt the Phase 1 Climate Action Plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A - Albemarle County Phase 1 Climate Action Plan

Attachment B - Summary of Changes to the Plan from the Draft Version