



# County of Fairfax, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** November 30, 2020

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Bryan J. Hill *[Signature]*  
County Executive

**SUBJECT:** Community-wide Energy and Climate Action Plan: Fourth Update

This memo provides a more detailed explanation of the Community-wide Energy and Climate Action Plan (CECAP) planning process change presented to the Board of Supervisors at the October 27, 2020 Environmental Committee meeting. It also responds to Board member inquiries regarding the process change and communications.

### **Background**

At the October 27, 2020 meeting of the Environmental Committee, and in a memorandum to the Board dated October 28, 2020, staff of the Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination (OEEC) described a needed process change to transition from a model consisting of a Task Force and nine district-level Focus Groups to a Working Group model. This process change was intended to promote a more efficient process with an increase in engagement and equitable participation for all members.

To date, the CECAP planning process has completed the technical work required to produce the greenhouse gas (GHG) emission inventory and various scenarios related to goal-setting and has solicited public feedback through both online meetings and an online survey. After considering the information provided, the CECAP Task Force set a goal for Fairfax County to be carbon neutral by 2050 with a total elimination of 87 percent of emissions. The Task Force elected to determine sector-based goals and a 2040 interim goal at a future meeting; these will be discussed in the sector-based subgroups as well as with the Working Group as a whole. Now the planning process turns to its next task: setting strategies and identifying the voluntary actions community members can take to help meet the CECAP goal.

### **Framework of the Working Group Model and Sector-Based Workgroups**

#### *Working Group Function and Purpose*

The Working Group model merges the members of the Task Force and Focus Groups to form a new group: the CECAP Working Group. The Working Group is charged with developing recommendations for goals, strategies, and actions to reduce GHG emissions in Fairfax County for presentation to the Board of Supervisors. All Working Group members will be asked to

review information provided by county staff and the CECAP consultants and to make recommendations for inclusion in the CECAP report.

Working Group Structure and Composition

All former Focus Group and Task Force members have been invited to take part in the Working Group. All members have an identical decision-making role, similar to the role of Task Force members in the previous iteration of the process.

At this time, there are 70 members of the Working Group, including two new members who responded to Chairman McKay's recent invitation. All members of the Task Force and Focus Groups that did not respond to the initial request have been contacted again; a second non-response is considered to be a decline.

All members of the CECAP Working Group will be divided into sector-specific subgroups for meetings scheduled in December 2020, January 2021 and March 2021 during which sector-specific strategies will be discussed. It is a recognized best practice for climate planning purposes to address sectors individually, as this approach facilitates targeted and productive discussions of sector-specific strategies. This strategy is also employed with other Fairfax County efforts, such as the Joint Environmental Task Force (JET).

The Working Group will consist of two sector-based subgroups: (1) an energy group focusing on efficiency, renewables, generation and supply, with minor consideration of external variables; and (2) a transportation, land use policy, and solid waste and wastewater group. Establishing two sector-based subgroups allows for an equal distribution of substantive work while also providing for a group size that will encourage robust discussion. Additionally, the division into two groups allows for related topics to be considered holistically rather than piecemeal across many groups.

Each member was asked to indicate their sector preferences for use in subgroup placement from the following options: residential and commercial building energy use, transportation and mobile emissions, renewable energy, solid waste and wastewater treatment, county operations, no preference, and other. These categories were selected based on both the original GHG inventory emission sectors as well as preferences stated during the Task Force meetings. To ensure the subgroups do not grow too large to allow for constructive discussion, and to ensure that each member has an equal voice, each member may only participate in one of the subgroups. However, every Working Group member is invited to observe the other subgroup and offer thoughts in the same manner as a member of the public.

Working Group Timeline and Work Process

The subgroups will begin meeting in December, with additional meetings scheduled for January and March. Feedback will be solicited from the subgroup members and if a need for additional or longer meetings is identified, the schedule for one or both of the subgroups may be altered. Once the strategies discussion has concluded, the Working Group will meet as whole to review the draft and final CECAP in April and June, 2021. Staff anticipates being able to hold closely to the original timeline for the adoption of CECAP, unless either the Board or the Working Group/subgroups identify a need for additional meetings.



The subgroups and the Working Group as a whole will meet to review information that is prepared by the consultants, and to make recommendations on the course of action. The process is determined by the input of each of the members, based on a consensus vote. Each member will have a vote and will be able to comment as an individual and on their experiences and perspectives.

Staff expects discussion in the Working Group and subgroup meetings to be robust. All comments will be captured, whether through notes taken during the discussion or the transcript of the recorded meeting, or through active monitoring of the “chat” function in the electronic meetings. Staff also anticipates continuing to use evolving technology, such as a virtual whiteboarding application, to facilitate increased participation and to enhance the ease of decision making. While all comments will be given due consideration, not every comment made by a Working Group participant will be reflected in the final CECAP. With several dozen Working Group participants, critical mass is a factor in staff and consultant decision-making about which comments warrant inclusion in final materials. All Working Group members will have the power to vote and the consensus vote of the group on key points will drive the process forward.

#### **Updated Communications Plan and Website**

Staff recognizes the importance of regular, organized, and meaningful communication with CECAP Working Group participants. Under the previous model, Task Force and Focus Group members received updates and information via periodic emails and from the OEEC website. The new Working Group model will streamline communications with one email per week to include pertinent information and links to the newly created [Working Group web page](#). Additional resources may be shared as attachments, which will also be posted to the website. An example includes this [CECAP Working Group FAQ](#).

In a shift from the previous communications model, Working Group members can expect the weekly emails they receive to include only the top-line messages they need for the coming week. Additional context, information, and materials for their review will be available on the Working Group web page. Members will be expected to click thru any links provided in weekly emails, and to proactively visit the website for more information. Members seeking reference material from past Focus Group and Task Force meetings will find links to Focus Group and Task Force resources on the new Working Group page.

Meeting agendas and materials will be made available to all Working Group members at least one week in advance of a planned meeting. These materials will be posted to the Working Group web page on specific meeting pages by date. Notification that these materials are available will be sent to all members via the planned weekly emails. Each weekly email will include a brief overview of the content that will be shared in the next email, so that members are aware of the intended flow of information.

A public link to each WebEx meeting will be posted on the Working Group page and will be available via the public meeting calendar. As always, Supervisor district staff are welcome to observe any and all Working Group meetings, as are members of the public.

Public-facing CECAP communications include a monthly article update on the OEEC website, a monthly email newsletter, and a publicly available inbox ([cecapoutreach@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:cecapoutreach@fairfaxcounty.gov)) for direct, personal communication.

**Next Steps**

The timeline and deliverables for the remainder of the CECAP process are as follows:

December 2020	Two Working Group subgroup meetings (December 1 and December 2 from 6:00 – 8:30 PM)
January 2021	Two Working Group subgroup meetings (Dates TBD)
February 2021	Round two of public engagement, to include a public survey and public meetings (Dates TBD)
March 2021	Two Working Group subgroup meetings (Dates TBD)
April 2021	A draft CECAP report A Working Group meeting to review progress to date, public feedback, and the draft report (Date TBD)
May 2021	Round three of public engagement, to include a public survey and public meetings (Dates TBD)
June 2021	A Working Group meeting to review the draft CECAP and make final recommendations (Date TBD) Presentation to Board of Supervisors Environmental Committee
July 2021	Final CECAP is presented to the Board of Supervisors for adoption

As noted above, this schedule is subject to change given feedback either from the subgroups/Working Groups or the Board of Supervisors.

Staff will continue to send update memos or present updates to the Board of Supervisors' Environmental Committee with any pertinent updates on the CECAP process. Supervisors who have any questions about this update or the CECAP should contact Kambiz Agazi at 703-324-1788 or at [Kambiz.Agazi@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Kambiz.Agazi@fairfaxcounty.gov). Between updates, Supervisors and their staff can monitor CECAP progress and review documents at the [OEEC CECAP website](#).

cc: Joseph M. Mondoro, Chief Financial Officer  
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