

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION



MEETING DATE: August 25, 2020

ITEM NUMBER: 12.C

SECOND READING: Click or tap here to enter text. `{{customfields.ResoOrdNumber}}`

TYPE OF ITEM: General Business

PRESENTED BY:

Dale Rademacher, City Manager's Office, Dale.Rademacher@longmontcolorado.gov
Annie Noble, PWNR Environmental Services, annie.noble@longmontcolorado.gov
Francie Jaffe, PWNR Environmental Services, francie.jaffe@longmontcolorado.gov

SUBJECT/AGENDA TITLE:

Climate Action Task Force Recommendations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In response to Council's October 8, 2019 resolution declaring a climate emergency, a Climate Action Task Force (CATF) was convened by Council to develop recommendations to address the climate crisis. Working in parallel to the CATF, a Just Transition Plan Committee (JTP Committee), which is comprised of members of the community that are most vulnerable to climate impacts, was assembled by staff to focus on how best to integrate and evaluate equity in climate action. The CATF identified 27 recommendations that fall within six categories. The CATF identified equity as a critical component of climate action and determined that it would be integrated into all of the recommendations, rather than being a stand-alone topic area. The JTP Committee developed two sets of recommendations, the Equity Assessment and Overarching Equitable Climate Action Recommendations, which can be used as a checklist when implementing the CATF recommendations to help enable equitable access for all members of the community.

Staff is requesting direction from City Council on the implementation of the Climate Action Recommendations Report that was presented to Council on June 30 and July 7, 2020. At the July 7, 2020 meeting, Council directed staff to take the recommendations to relevant advisory boards and bring the comments and feedback back to Council for further discussion. Council also provided written comments following the July 7 meeting. The report recommendations have been presented to the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB), Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB), Water Board, and Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB), and feedback has been received from the Longmont Downtown Development Authority (LDDA). Staff is seeking Council's input on which recommendations should move forward as stated in the report, which need further analysis and which, if any, should be eliminated from further consideration. Once Council has approved the final recommendations, it is staff's intent to conduct an evaluation of cost, greenhouse gas reduction potential, community and equity

impacts, and resource needs and timelines in order to provide Council with information to prioritize the implementation of the approved recommendations.

Staff is also seeking Council's direction on how to embed these recommendations into City plans and policies. The Task Force recommended that oversight of the recommendations become the responsibility of the Sustainability Advisory Board, with the formation of ad-hoc committees as needed to support the implementation of specific recommendations. Many climate action recommendations are already part of the Sustainability Plan. Several of these efforts are currently underway and are included in various departmental work plans for 2020 and proposed in 2021. Staff proposes incorporating Council approved recommendations into the Sustainability Plan and conducting an audit of Envision Longmont to identify policy areas that need to be added or strengthened to support climate action. After further analysis of recommendations, staff will return to Council with a proposed prioritization and timeline of actions to be incorporated into City work plans. Staff intends to continue to provide quarterly updates to Council on sustainability efforts.

COUNCIL OPTIONS:

1. Direct staff to proceed with the next steps of implementation of Climate Action Recommendations
2. Provide staff with additional feedback or direction
3. Direct staff to hold or not proceed

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS:

Option 1

FISCAL IMPACT & FUND SOURCE FOR RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Each recommendation included in the Climate Action Recommendations Report includes a section with high-level information on financial resources that will likely be needed for the implementation of that recommendation. However, additional work will be required to clarify and refine more detailed estimates on the fiscal impact of recommendations, as well as to determine the overall social and environmental value. Potential revenue and fund sources will be identified in that process. There will need to be continued investment in each area in order to advance recommendations and realize climate action goals and intended benefits of these outcomes.

BACKGROUND AND ISSUE ANALYSIS:

On October 8, 2019, the Longmont City Council passed a resolution declaring a climate emergency and establishing Longmont's intent to take immediate and accelerated action to address the climate crisis. The resolution called for convening a climate-working group, named the Climate Action Task Force (CATF) to discuss further steps the City should take to promote a carbon-free, sustainable city. The CATF was composed of community subject

matter experts, partnering agencies, and concerned residents, and was intended to include those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. In addition to the CATF, staff convened the Just Transition Plan Committee (JTP Committee). The JTP Committee was originally envisioned as part of the City's commitment to transition to 100% renewable energy while providing affordable energy to our most under-served and under-represented residents. The scope of the JTP Committee was expanded to include equitable climate action programs after the Climate Emergency Resolution was passed. It is comprised of members of the community that are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change (i.e. frontline communities). The JTP Committee met concurrently during the same period as the Climate Action Task Force. The committee developed 1) a definition of climate equity, 2) an equity analysis tool to aid in evaluating climate action recommendations for equity, and 3) a set of recommendations for how to continue to integrate equity into climate action efforts.

The Climate Action Recommendations Report was presented to City Council over two sessions – June 30, 2020, and July 7, 2020. The Report included 27 recommendations (Attachment A) that are categorized into six topics areas, the JTP Committee Assessment and Overarching Equitable Climate Action Recommendations, and an overview of the community engagement. The CATF six topic areas are:

- Adaptation and Resiliency (AR)
- Building Energy Use (BE)
- Education and Outreach (EO)
- Land Use and Waste Management (LW)
- Renewable Energy (RE)
- Transportation (T)

At the July 7, 2020 meeting, Council directed staff to take the recommendations to relevant advisory boards and bring the comments and feedback back to Council for further discussion. Council also provided written comments following the July 7 meeting (Attached). As part of their written comments, Council members requested that the Boards review each recommendation to determine if it should be approved as written, modified, or rejected, and provide an explanation of their reasoning to modify or reject an action. Council requested a compilation of this information once all of the relevant Boards had an opportunity to meet, but prior to the 2021 budget discussion. Council members expressed support of incorporating the approved recommendations into the comprehensive plan (Envision Longmont) and having the SAB provide oversight of the implementation, with the execution of projects being incorporated into the work plan of the appropriate city work group and staff providing quarterly or semi-annual reports. There was interest by some Council members in having ad-hoc committees working with staff, rather than the SAB, to help support the recommended actions and for the CATF to have continued involvement. Council members also expressed opinions on some of the proposed recommendations and the engagement process.

In July and August, staff presented the Climate Action Recommendations Report to the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB), Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB), Water Board, and Parks & Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB). In addition, staff received feedback from the Longmont Downtown Development Association (LDDA). All recommendations were presented to each Board, but board members only voted on recommendations that fell within their purview. The SAB voted on all of the recommendations and provided high-level comments on the JTP Committee recommendations.

The Boards were generally supportive of the recommendations. However, there were several recommendations that board members felt needed further analysis. A summary of each Board's comments is attached and a compilation of high-level feedback is provided in Attachment B. The following recommendations generated the most significant comments:

AR.2 Water Conservation: Expand and Create new programs and initiatives to achieve a 35-40% reduction in overall water consumption below a 2019 baseline by 2025.

The Water Board, SAB, and PRAB had significant concerns with this recommendation. The Water Board voted to reject it. The SAB and PRAB, while supportive of water conservation, felt the goal was unattainable without extreme fiscal and community impacts. The TAB approved the goal, but wanted to understand better the impacts on right-of-way landscaping.

BE.1 Building Codes: Expand the adoption of the 2021 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) by adding: 1) Solar-ready provisions, 2) EnergyStar rated appliances, and 3) Electric heaters and hot water heaters by the end of 2022.

The SAB supports code for solar readiness and EnergySmart appliances, but has concerns with transitioning to electric heat and hot water due to the expense. They would prefer to have the focus be on efficiency.

BE.2 Electrification: Create an eight person Electrification Feasibility Committee to oversee an 18-month effort to research and develop a phased electrification plan by November 1, 2021.

While the SAB is generally supportive of electrification and voted to approve this recommendation, there is concern about the transition and equity impacts.

LW.1 Extending Agricultural Zoning: Establish code changes to allow for residential agriculture, and develop ongoing programs that incentivize the public to participate in growing and selling their own food by 2023.

The SAB voted not to approve this recommendation. Although the SAB was supportive of local food production and increasing food access, they questioned the overall purpose and intent of this recommendation. Board members agreed that extending agricultural zoning to allow for residential agriculture beyond the current code's provisions would do little to address hunger challenges due to property sizes. They noted that while everyone growing their own food is a nice idea, the amount of gardening and water it would take for people to feed their own households would be far greater than the yield they would receive. It was suggested that supporting and encouraging the local farms that we already have, would be a more effective means to this end. The PRAB also questioned the value of this recommendation and felt it needed further analysis.

LW.3 Downtown Pay For Parking: Implement pay to park requirements in Longmont's downtown by 2023 in a way that encourages alternative modes of transportation and improves the experience and enjoyment of people downtown.

The TAB and LDDA support the goal of paid parking as a longer-term strategy, but were concerned about the impacts to downtown businesses and the lack of alternative mode options. SAB was not in favor of implementing pay-to-park requirements in the downtown area and unanimously voted not to approve this recommendation.

At the August 25, 2020 meeting, staff is seeking Council's input on which recommendations should move forward as stated in the report, which need further analysis, and which, if any, should be eliminated from further consideration. Once Council has approved the final recommendations, it is staff's intent to conduct an evaluation of cost, greenhouse gas reduction potential, community and equity impacts, and resource needs and timelines in order to provide Council with information to prioritize the implementation of the approved recommendations. Staff proposes that the next phase of implementation include continuing dialogue and interaction with the broader public through the community engagement process to complete a proposed prioritization of recommendations and continued engagement with the JTP Committee to apply equity recommendations to the climate actions.

The JTP Committee recommends initially doing this through a two phase process:

- 1) Using the equitable climate action recommendations created by the group, the JTP Committee will create a fillable checklist that City staff and others can use when developing and implementing climate action. The JTP Committee will create a resource guide to go along with this checklist so that those using the list will not need to start from scratch.
- 2) The JTP Committee will use an equity lens to evaluate all Climate Action Task Force recommendations and will provide an equity and frontline community focused priority list to City Council and City staff.

Staff recommends continuing to work with the JTP Committee beyond this initial process to identify how the JTP Committee can further support staff and the local community. The SAB was very supportive of the work of the JTP Committee and expressed high value of their role as part of the community engagement process in applying the equity lens in evaluation and implementation of the climate action recommendations.

Staff is also seeking Council's direction on how to embed these recommendations into City plans and policies. The Task Force recommended that the oversight of the recommendations become the responsibility of the Sustainability Advisory Board, with the formation of ad-hoc committees, as needed, to support the implementation of specific recommendations. Many climate action recommendations are already a part of the Sustainability Plan. Several of these efforts are currently underway and are already included in various departmental work plans for 2020 and proposed in 2021. These efforts include energy efficiency programs, water conservation, flood preparedness, commercial benchmarking, installing smart meters, evaluation of distributed energy resources, and installing electric vehicle charging stations. Staff proposes incorporating Council approved recommendations into the Sustainability Plan and conducting an audit of Envision Longmont to identify policy areas that need to be added or strengthened to support climate action. After further analysis of recommendations, staff will return to Council with a proposed prioritization and timeline of actions to be incorporated into City work plans.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Climate Actions Recommendations Report
- B. List of Climate Action Task Force Recommendations with Board Comments
- C. City Council Responses on Climate Action Recommendations Implementation
- D. Transportation Advisory Board Feedback
- E. Sustainability Advisory Board Feedback
- F. Water Board Feedback
- G. Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Feedback
- H. Longmont Downtown Development Authority Feedback