

RVAgreen 2050 Buildings & Energy Working Group

3/24/2021

Finalizing draft strategies for community engagement



Equitable climate action for a healthy and resilient Richmond

Agenda

- Settling in and ground rules
- Where we are now
- Review “final” draft strategies
- April community engagement activities
- Wrap-up and next steps

Today's Objectives

- Achieve consensus (“I can live with this”) on draft content for RVAgreen 2050 outreach in April
- Brainstorm ideas for helping with community-wide engagement

Ground Rules / Group Expectations



Process Overview



RVAgreen 2050 DRAFT Structure

Goals	What is the purpose of RVAgreen 2050?
Vision	What does the ideal future look like when RVAgreen 2050 is implemented?
Community Priorities	What cross-cutting public values do we want to center in our plan?
Pathways	What leverage points will lead us towards realizing and operationalizing the goals and community priorities?
Objectives	What are the long-term aims we want to accomplish, organized into the different pathways?
Strategies	What are the SMARTIE actions that will lead us toward our objectives?
Implementation Plans	How are we going to implement, measure progress, and ensure accountability in this plan?



Strategy Drafting Process

Strategy
inputs and
starting
point
+
preliminary
checklist

Draft ideas
->
staff review

Refining
+
Equity
Screening
Tool

Reviewing
and
incorporating
city staff and
Roundtable
feedback

TODAY

Looking ahead



Working Group activities May - August will include:

- Reviewing community input
- Refining strategies
 - Prioritization
 - Timelines
 - Metrics
 - Accountability

Objective 1: Achieve climate neutrality and increase resilience in government buildings, infrastructure, and operations.

CLEAN ENERGY

Electrification: Catalog and track natural gas usage in all buildings and develop capital improvement plans (CIPs) to convert buildings to clean energy by 2050.

New Construction: Require all new municipal building construction to achieve net zero energy.

Municipal Solar: Develop a municipal renewable energy goal and draft corresponding ordinance for city council adoption.

MUNICIPAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Energy Management Program-Benchmarking: Develop a municipal energy management program to benchmark energy use in all city buildings, set a goal to meet Energy Star certification guidelines, improve building energy use, and make information available in a public portal.

Energy Management Program-Staff: Create cabinet-level Energy Manager position reporting directly to Senior Administration with authority to work across departments and establish partnerships in the community to achieve energy efficiency goals of RVAgreen 2050 and Richmond 300.

Energy Management Program-Retrofits: Prioritize energy efficiency retrofits of city buildings in those that serve the public therefore improving their health, safety, and accessibility while rating the highest return on investment in cost savings and greenhouse gas reductions.

Green Roofs: Evaluate municipal facilities to identify green roof candidates. Develop green roof design standards and install green roofs in areas that will benefit most from increased green space, reduced stormwater runoff, and cost reductions.

LED Streetlights: Convert all city-owned streetlights to LED lighting and identify opportunities for solar panels in the lighting infrastructure. Prioritize improvements in historically disenfranchised neighborhoods.

Objective 1: Achieve climate neutrality and increase resilience in government buildings, infrastructure, and operations.

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Climate Projections- Planning: Incorporate a review of City operations every 5 years to identify opportunities to address climate impacts and incorporate climate projections into land use planning, building regulations, and capital investments prior to implementation.

Climate Projections- Tracking: Create departmental greenhouse gas emissions tracking protocol and identify reduction opportunities. Publicize key performance indicators (KPIs) quarterly and incorporate data and equity into performance based budgeting.

Climate Projections- Contracts: Phase out fossil fuel dependence in all city agreements and contracts by giving preference to companies that reduce the city's energy footprint.

CARBON CAPTURE

Methane Leakage: Minimize methane leakage: (1) Ensure Richmond Gasworks leaks identified in leak surveys are addressed quickly in order to minimize leakage and improve resilience. (2) Assign staff responsible for tracking and advocating for the reduction of upstream methane leakage.

Carbon Offsets: Develop criteria to determine which buildings cannot be made neutral and identify carbon offsets in lieu of retrofits.

RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

Climate Vulnerability & Risk Assessment: Conduct a climate vulnerability and risk assessment of all city property (including buildings and parcels). Identify and prioritize properties for specific resilience projects.

Workforce Development: Provide local job training and employment opportunities related to resilient infrastructure (e.g., conducting resilience audits, hotline operations).

EDUCATION & AWARENESS

Energy Resource Center: Establish a Local Energy Resource Center and online hub through partnerships with utilities, educational institutions, and other organizations to provide centralized clean energy information and workforce development training programs for well-paying clean energy jobs.

Objective 2: Maximize energy efficiency, performance and resilience in all existing buildings.

CLEAN ENERGY

Electrification: Promote the benefits of electric-only commercial and residential retrofits by sharing targeted case studies in the areas of highest energy burden.

Financing: Divert investment in gas utility upgrades to all-electric conversions.

BUILDING CODES

Energy Code Adoption: Work with allied organizations to encourage the Board of Housing and Community Development to adopt the most recent International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) for all commercial and residential buildings.

Enforcement: Train building inspectors and cultivate the department's capacity to enforce letter and spirit of current building code provisions related to energy efficiency requirements during plan review.

RESIDENTIAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Energy Efficiency Assistance: Aid households that have the highest energy burden with energy efficiency upgrades through community-based programs, advocacy, partnerships, and Residential PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy)

Energy Reporting: Advocate for the General Assembly to adopt enabling legislation allowing localities to require residential energy benchmarking and public disclosure, and adopt a local ordinance.

COMMERCIAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Energy Reporting: Benchmark existing commercial buildings (before and after retrofits) to establish a baseline and conduct ongoing measuring/tracking in conjunction with energy audits.

Performance Standards: Require an equitable building performance standard for existing commercial buildings over 5,000 sf through a phased-approach. Offer assistance and technical expertise to those that are financially challenged and facilitate workforce development.

Objective 2: Maximize energy efficiency, performance and resilience in all existing buildings.

COMMERCIAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Retrocommissioning: Require retrocommissioning for existing commercial buildings to improve the efficiency of a building's equipment and systems. Offer assistance and technical expertise to those that are financially challenged and facilitate workforce development.

Energy Efficiency Financing: Create a Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (CPACE) program or join the statewide program when launched. Encourage builders and developers to hire Small, Women-owned and Minority-owned businesses (SWaM).

Green Business Challenge: Develop and promote a voluntary green business challenge and/or certification program that prioritizes small businesses in underserved communities.

Combined Heat & Power: Promote the use of combined heat and power (CHP) in industrial facilities and the use of PACE to finance CHP systems while considering environmental impacts to neighboring communities.

CARBON CAPTURE

Education-Refrigerant Recycling: Work with refrigerant recycling and disposal operators to promote the benefits of switching to cost-effective alternatives to hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) refrigerants.

RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

Equitable Thermal Comfort: Establish partnerships and identify existing programs to provide immediate cooling relief in the way of equipment, tree canopy, and utility bill assistance to low income residents and/or residents of formerly redlined neighborhoods and heat islands.

EDUCATION & AWARENESS

Energy Resource Guide: Develop a community energy resource guide that is equitable and accessible.

Objective 3: Ensure all Richmonders have equitable access to affordable and renewable clean energy.

RESIDENTIAL SOLAR

Solar Installations: Provide financial assistance and education for clean energy upgrades and retrofits to make their homes and businesses healthy, safe, and affordable, focusing on frontline communities and reduce disproportionately high energy burden in these neighborhoods.

COMMUNITY SOLAR

Microgrids: Increase funding for community-based organizations to adopt carbon-free microgrids and battery backup for energy storage, particularly in frontline communities.

Ground-Mounted Solar: Incentivize increased opportunities for local ground-mounted solar and community solar farms on parking lots, non-buildable, or previously disturbed land, with access to community solar for energy-burdened communities.

Incentives: Adopt an ordinance to fully exempt solar from property tax increases, per VA state energy code Section 58.1-3660 and 3661.

Accessibility: Review existing zoning and policy for impediments to renewable energy and revise them to reduce all barriers (e.g., revise zoning ordinances to allow solar and battery storage to be placed in more places).

RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

Workforce Development: Establish training programs, apprenticeships and a conservation corps/job placement program in low-income and diverse neighborhoods for solar installation and maintenance as well as weatherization upgrades and energy efficiency auditing (e.g., prison to solar training).

ENERGY & AWARENESS

Energy Education: Monitor, track, and publish Richmond's energy use by source, making data more accessible for education, accountability, and transparency purposes.

Objective 4: Achieve climate neutrality and maximize resilience in all new buildings.

BUILDING CODES

Net Zero Energy Design: Promote legislation that allows for adoption of building codes requiring all new buildings to be powered by clean energy with the goal of net-zero energy design.

Solar Readiness: Have a solar readiness requirement for all new buildings.

GREEN BUILDING

Financing: Develop a central repository of funding opportunities and incentives for green and net-zero construction that supports the local labor workforce with a focus on affordable housing in frontline neighborhoods.

RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

Design Guidelines: Develop Resilient Design Guidelines and encourage builders to incorporate design measures to reflect a changing climate, increased precipitation and flooding in concert with a public education campaign to convey the benefits of adaptive and resilient buildings.

Utility Resilience: Advocate for and require the inclusion of climate resilience measures with clear procedures to combat extreme precipitation and flooding in all Dominion Energy infrastructure improvements.

EDUCATION & AWARENESS

Demonstration Project: Partner with developers to help finance and construct a demonstration project, ideally a municipal building, that provides proof of concept in designing and building a net zero building using established programs and methods (e.g. LEED, Passive House, Green Globes, etc).

Next up! Community-wide engagement

- April 7-30: seeking input on **draft vision, objectives, and strategies** from the entire community
- Things that will happen:
 - April 7 Mayor's announcement during weekly press briefing
 - Online PDF document for public comment
 - Online and paper survey
 - Weekly newsletters
 - Engagement Toolkit to be shared with partners (social media graphics, content, materials, etc.)
 - Weekly RVAgreen Gab events - Thursdays 5-6:30 p.m.
- Stay up to date on events and opportunities via email, newsletter, social media, and website



Examples of Roundtable engagement plans

- Hosting a community yard sale to bring people together to learn about RVAgreen 2050 (possibly using proceeds for a raffle prize)
- Canvassing neighborhoods with door hangers and flyers
- Engaging business owners and leaving materials in shops, offices, etc.
- Direct outreach to business customers
- Church conversations
- Pop-up picnics and meet-ups in parks
- Social media engagement - Facebook rooms, direct questions, etc.



Activity

Our ask: share opportunities to provide feedback with your community

Breakout room discussion (15-20 minutes):

- What are your ideas for engaging your communities (professional and personal)? -> *Record on the sticky notes*
- How can the Office of Sustainability support you? (materials, content, etc.) -> *Add to slide notes*
- Do you (or someone you know) have specific skills/knowledge/contacts that can help us with community engagement (now or later)? -> *Add to slide notes*

*Go into breakout
rooms!*



Breakout Room 1

Drag stars to ideas you can use in your community:

What are your ideas for engaging your communities?

All HOAs and civic associations

City Council regular district meetings (have WG members represent/ be available)

Institutions of higher education

VCU Health-director of Sustainability

Ask Secretary of Natural Resources to amplify

Feet on the street in RRHA communities (I know you have one volunteer)

Should we consider social media to reach a large group relatively easily

Apartment /landlord associations ; RRHA

Style Weekly, RRichmond Free Press, WRIR-Municipal Mania show

GIS/map materials-- reach out to Richmond300 and demographer

Listing of environmental non-profits (James River Association, etc.) with active memberships and mailing lists?

Are we linked up with the Climate Scientist at the science museum---yes

Post notices with QR codes that immediately engage

Is there a listing of faith based organizations in disenfranchised neighborhoods to leverage?



Drag stars to ideas you can use in your community:



Breakout Room 2

What are your ideas for engaging your communities?

Link to RPS for Supt to put in daily email; on RPS web site

VCU push out

Specific call to action to get focused results

Opportunity for public comment in RTD

Wavelength, intranet to engage COR workforce

GRTC bus ads

Neighborhood associations ; list maintained by COR

Push out to Cap1, Interfaith Power & Light, UR

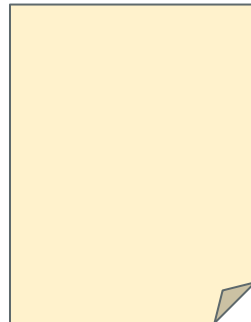
Informal networks, e.g., Marcus David Peters Circle

RTD press release? After Mayor's announcement?

City Council members & Liaisons push message out w/ link

Short video to get attention, engage to provide feedback for COR workforce

RPS flyers distributed with meals



Exit breakout rooms!

Group discussion: share your ideas!



Looking ahead



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 - Metrics
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Wrap-up and next steps

- Homework: Continue to provide any feedback on strategies by **Monday, March 29, 9 a.m.**
- Next meeting: Mid-May
- Logistical notes:
 - We'll be switching from Zoom to Microsoft Teams (will provide training/resources)
 - Does this meeting day and time generally work for you moving forward (thinking about summer schedules)?
- NOW:
 - Fill out feedback survey
 - Share updates, upcoming events, and resources in the chat

5-minute break