

RVAgreen 2050 Community Working Group

3/26/2021

Finalizing draft strategies for community engagement



Equitable climate action for a healthy and resilient Richmond

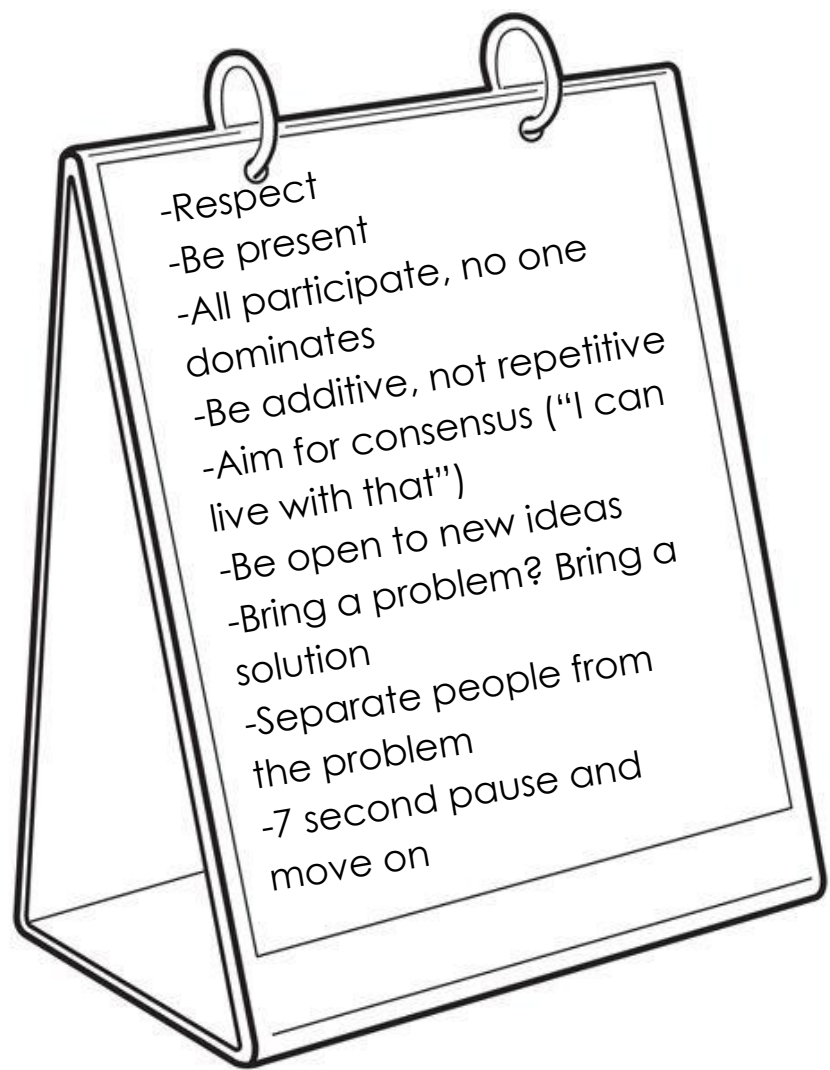
Agenda

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

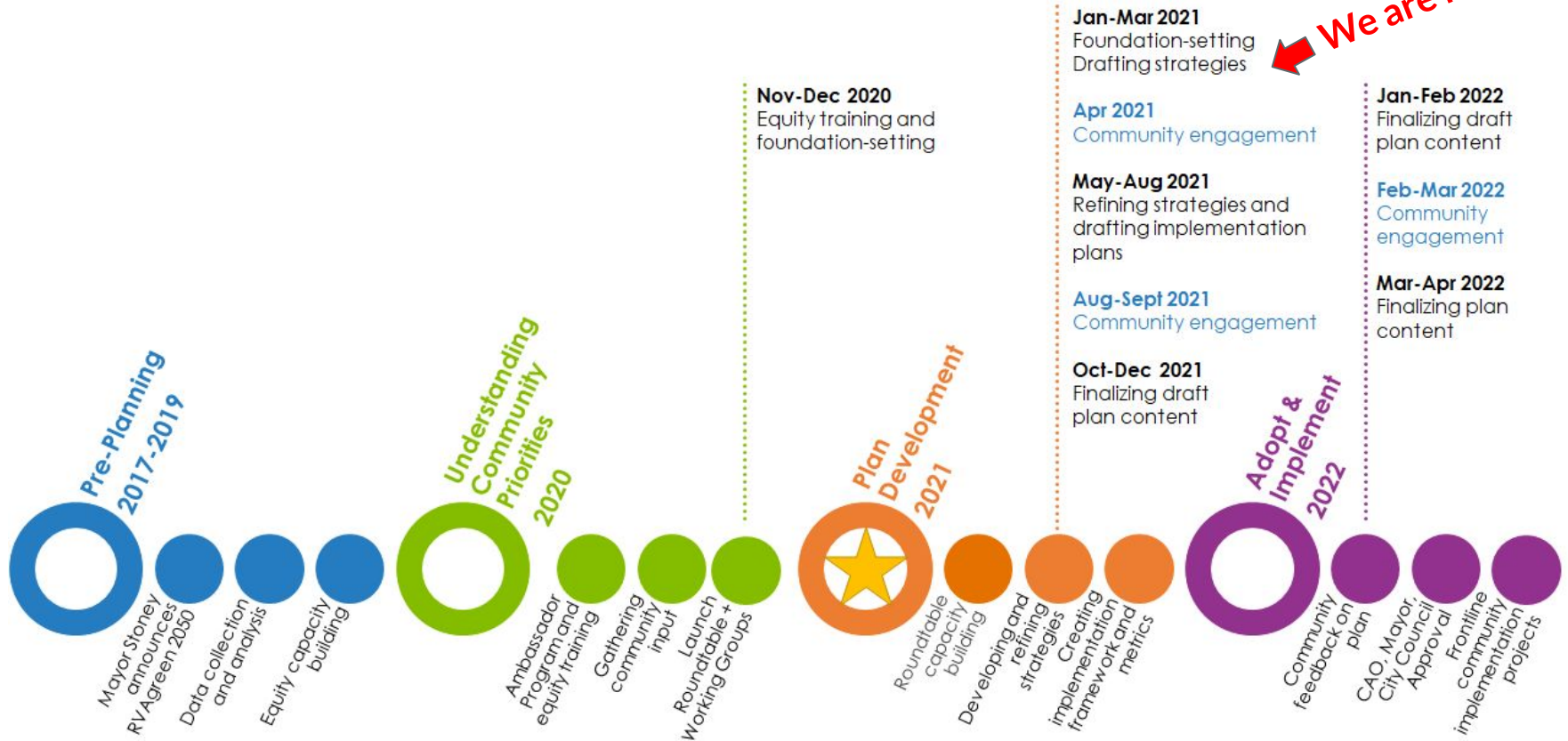
Today's Objectives

- 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
 - Implementation
 - Accountability

Objective 1: Ensure that historically disinvested communities that are most affected by local climate impacts are centered and involved in the processes of developing, implementing, and evaluating solutions as a result of equitable communication and engagement strategies.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- Develop community benefit agreements with target community members, which could include items such as creating jobs, utilizing local workforce development agencies to assist with hiring local, creating public open space, creating climate resilient low-income housing, and more.
- Develop public scorecard to evaluate projects with SMARTIE strategies and mandate XX equity goals, including items such as ensuring residents within a community are first hired/considered for development projects and the inclusion of a funded maintenance plan.
- Ensure that funding priorities are based on priorities established by neighborhood participation and allocated by a commission/board/entity with community representation.

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COMMUNICATIONS

- Develop a set of unique and targeting engagement methods, beyond conventional surveys and town halls, to engage traditionally under-represented groups in the planning process.
- Host quarterly events about RVAgreen 2050 to ensure Richmond's existing and new residents are aware of the visions, goals, objectives, and strategies outlined in the plan.
- Improve communications infrastructure by expanding broadband internet access, focusing on low-income areas (Goal 11).
- Engage residents with culturally relevant material available in multiple languages including braille.
- Implement engagement strategies that focus on information sharing media (virtual and physical) where target communities already engage. In partnership with TV services providers, radio stations, local print, social media create media focused on climate action and resilience (podcast, educational videos) that reach target populations.
- Develop guidelines for digital/virtual media development and uses that includes mobile optimization for all virtual media developed including: recording, interpretation (including American Sign Language), and graphics.
- Leverage existing community connections (such as community ambassadors, local celebrities, and other trusted groups) to provide and receive information about resources and environmental threats to build trust.

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ENGAGEMENT

- Increase education and outreach efforts regarding the preservation of neighborhood character and available incentive programs for historic preservation, adaptive reuse, and place based economic development.
- Create a Richmond planning, climate action, climate resilience knowledge program administered by the Office of Sustainability for everyday Richmonders to learn about the planning process and understand how their voices can be incorporated into the planning decision-making processes both local and state level.
- Create a business guide to help new and small businesses navigate City incentive programs and permitting, building code, zoning, and licensing processes.
- Ensure that climate action and resilience projects include prioritization education and identify communities most impacted by climate change and establish objective guidelines for geographic placement of projects and funding. Develop planning on how neighborhood prioritization is established.
- Develop guidelines for visual communication development and make sure that members of the target community are included (if not in control) of the strategy.

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FUNDING

- Advocate for a tax fund to help qualifying low income residents remain in their homes as their assessments increase.
- Provide a grant program through the creation of a climate impact fund to help target communities recover from extreme weather events, weatherization of homes, and appliance ownership and provide grant opportunities for local nonprofits to work on climate action and resilience projects in target neighborhoods.
- Establish budget guidelines for engagement and education funding to keep residents informed on RVAgreen 2050 strategies and establish payments for residents to work with RVAgreen 2050
- Levy a tax businesses larger than XX employees that do not facilitate telework on full-time or rotational basis or offset the cost of alternative transportation options.
- Identify sources of funding for climate action and resilience projects that include but are not limited to: CDFIs, bank loans with low interest rates, partnership with businesses to fund projects in targeted communities.
- Increase funding for and transparency of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and develop and fund a housing policy educational program for newly elected officials and City staff involved in planning, housing, climate resilience, and community development activities.

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PARTNERSHIPS

- Encourage organizations (higher education, Richmond Public Schools, early education groups) to create neighborhood partnerships to develop local climate programs (horticulture, health, urban design), liaison with communities, and engage in action-learning climate projects within communities.
- Expand partnerships serving the homeless to provide small year-round emergency housing facilities in areas of high climate vulnerability for all homeless populations that include supportive services and food.
- Establish a partnership with Richmond Public Libraries to offer relevant programming and book recommendations to help connect residents to climate action and resilience goals.
- Partner with the Office of Public Engagement to utilize Community Foundation's Hands On site to help organizations identify projects that align with the objectives and strategies of RVAgreen 2050 to identify and streamline partnerships, volunteer opportunities, and community priorities - focus on businesses that provide a livable wage to employees.
- Identify City of Richmond departments and offices to partner and align goals of RVAgreen 2050.

Objective 2: Increase the Richmond community's social resilience to climate change

PLANNING & PARTNERSHIPS

- In addition to strategies contained in the Richmond 300 Master Plan to increase emergency housing facilities, work with relevant city departments and partner organizations to protect the houseless population during extreme weather events, including education and awareness-building among staff and residents.
- Identify, evaluate, improve where needed, and market existing programs to assist residents before, during, and after extreme weather events, including those addressing human health impacts from chronic issues such as moisture and mold.
- Evaluate existing City operations plans for and build staff capacity for responding to issues related to climate resilience and emergency preparedness. This should include adding a Heat Emergency Action Plan to the existing emergency operations plan.
- Broaden the review of the city's Emergency Operations Plan and related documents to include community stakeholders and subject matter experts to ensure that disaster related response and recovery efforts are inclusive and equitable regardless of the emergency.
- Establish a permanent fund - either within the City budget or through a regional partnership such as with the Community Foundation - to provide direct and immediate assistance to community organizations that assist residents before, during, and after extreme weather events. Eligible expenses should include home repairs, healthcare costs, among others.
- Pay community members from historically disenfranchised communities that will be most impacted by climate change for their expertise and time in the process of developing, implementing and evaluating solutions as community leaders on climate action and resilience.
- Connect community leaders, public health and healthcare infrastructure, local nonprofits, and businesses to one another to collaboratively identify neighborhood resources for emergencies and develop community asset maps to increase climate resilience.
- Partner with rental property management companies and individuals to provide efficient cooling equipment to residents and explore creating and/or advocating for a mandate that landlords provide air conditioning in all rental properties.

Objective 2: Increase the Richmond community's social resilience to climate change

EDUCATION & AWARENESS

- Encourage citizens to check on family, friends, and neighbors during extreme heat events and natural disasters (look at expanding existing the existing Community Emergency Response Teams program).
- Host "resilience fairs" where residents and connect with information and services at regular intervals, particularly in communities on the frontlines of climate change.
- Build capacity among healthcare professionals, health-related and neighborhood volunteer networks, and others to communicate about respond to climate-related health issues.

Objective 2: Increase the Richmond community's social resilience to climate change

FACILITIES

- Identify community facilities, such as community centers and libraries, to serve as resilience hubs and provide funding to provide these as resources to the community.
- Identify locations to serve as permanent community cooling centers, particularly in areas with low-income, elderly, young, and homeless populations.

POLL

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



Activity

Our ask: share opportunities to provide feedback with your community

Breakout room discussion (15 minutes):

- What are your ideas for engaging your communities (professional and personal)? -> Record on the sticky notes
- What are your ideas for engaging vulnerable communities? -> 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

5-minute break

*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? What are your ideas for engaging vulnerable communities? What skills can you offer?

In vulnerable communities we should offer a gift card raffle(?) for answered surveys. Make posters with links and qr code that we can post in surrounding neighborhoods. Yard sign with partial questions.

Using social media

We need to engage the community by having real conversations about how they feel about our strategies and goals. It will educate them.

Connecting with city council members that have neighbors with higher historically marginalized people to share the information through their networks

Checking with tenant councils and civic groups to find out about existing events that RVA Green 2050 could attend/ inform people

Reach out to community leaders (community advocates, faith leaders, etc.) and equip them with necessary tools to engage if they are interested

community members could be engaged to select small local resilience building projects that would benefit their neighborhood

Non-digital resources like flyers and/or door hangers to reach folks who do not regularly use the internet

Breakout Room 1

Drag stars to ideas you can use in your community:



What are your ideas for engaging your communities? What are your ideas for engaging vulnerable communities? What skills can you offer?

Pre-paid postage on door hangers or postcard surveys.



Adult education programs, libraries, YMCA, other community organizations



RPS Newsletters or CIS: Offer a Gift Card Raffle for any youth over the age of 15 yr old or parents that does a submits a survey.



Flyers handed out at Covid testing sites or Vaccination site about filling out the surveys.



Partner with Latino Markets and have them give out paper surveys that they submit at the store. (And offer a gift card giveaway)



A more informal version of the application-based Ambassador program where folks know what information they need to share to their community group (book club, church group, fitness class, etc.) about RVAgreen



Find a Partner that can raffle gift cards and pay them to some community outreach.



Partner with Sportsbackers & GRTC (sustainable transportation angle)





Breakout Room 2

Drag stars to ideas you can use in your community:



What are your ideas for engaging your communities? What are your ideas for engaging vulnerable communities? What skills can you offer?


Big 6 communities 


Boards w/ velcro answers & laptops [w/sanitizing b/w users] for feedback vs paper surveys at community events 


East end churches - partnerships with vulnerable communities

Community garden workdays and converse with gardeners

Museum District Association, Fan Neighborhood Association - both have websites, monthly publications

I speak Spanish & Portuguese to help with engagement [Anja] 

Street team - door to door to explain to them what we are doing and why we want them to be part of the process 

30 sec to one minute videos explaining strategies, climate resilience, etc 

Breakout Room 2

Drag stars to ideas you can use in your community:



What are your ideas for engaging your communities? What are your ideas for engaging vulnerable communities? What skills can you offer?

Charette - east end revitalization would be a good way to get their feedback and introduction to the process

Partner w/OCWB and community ambassadors to get information to residents in the Big 6.

Community Cookout once the pandemic is over/things opens back up. We could share information.

COVID vaccine networks

Partner w/ RPS to insert multiple-language flyers in lunches they distribute via buses

Booth at farmer's markets

Multiple-language posters at libraries and notices/links to surveys on their websites/in newsletter


Make RVAgreen 2050 website/ newsletter available in Spanish [NextUp RVA site has right-click menu option to translate]

Breakout Room 2

Drag stars to ideas you can use in your community:



What are your ideas for engaging your communities? What are your ideas for engaging vulnerable communities? What skills can you offer?

Targeted talking points for different communities 

Utilities mailers - not free

YMCA, etc

Elected officials -

network/partner local, state, etc (targeted for Richmond & surrounding counties [people who work in RVA] only)

'Advertise' on VPM/PBS/NPR [<https://vpm.org/science-matters-community-calendar>], and Angel Limb does community announcements]

Targeted Chambers of commerce [hispanic, African-American]

Social media - facebook photo frames to spread awareness 

Ethnic/ neighborhood Grocery stores and restaurants

Exit breakout rooms!

Group discussion: share your ideas!



Looking ahead



Working Group activities May - August will include:

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

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