RVAgreen 2050 Environment Working Group
3/22/2021

Finalizing draft strategies for community engagement

City of Richmond
RVAgreen 2050

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
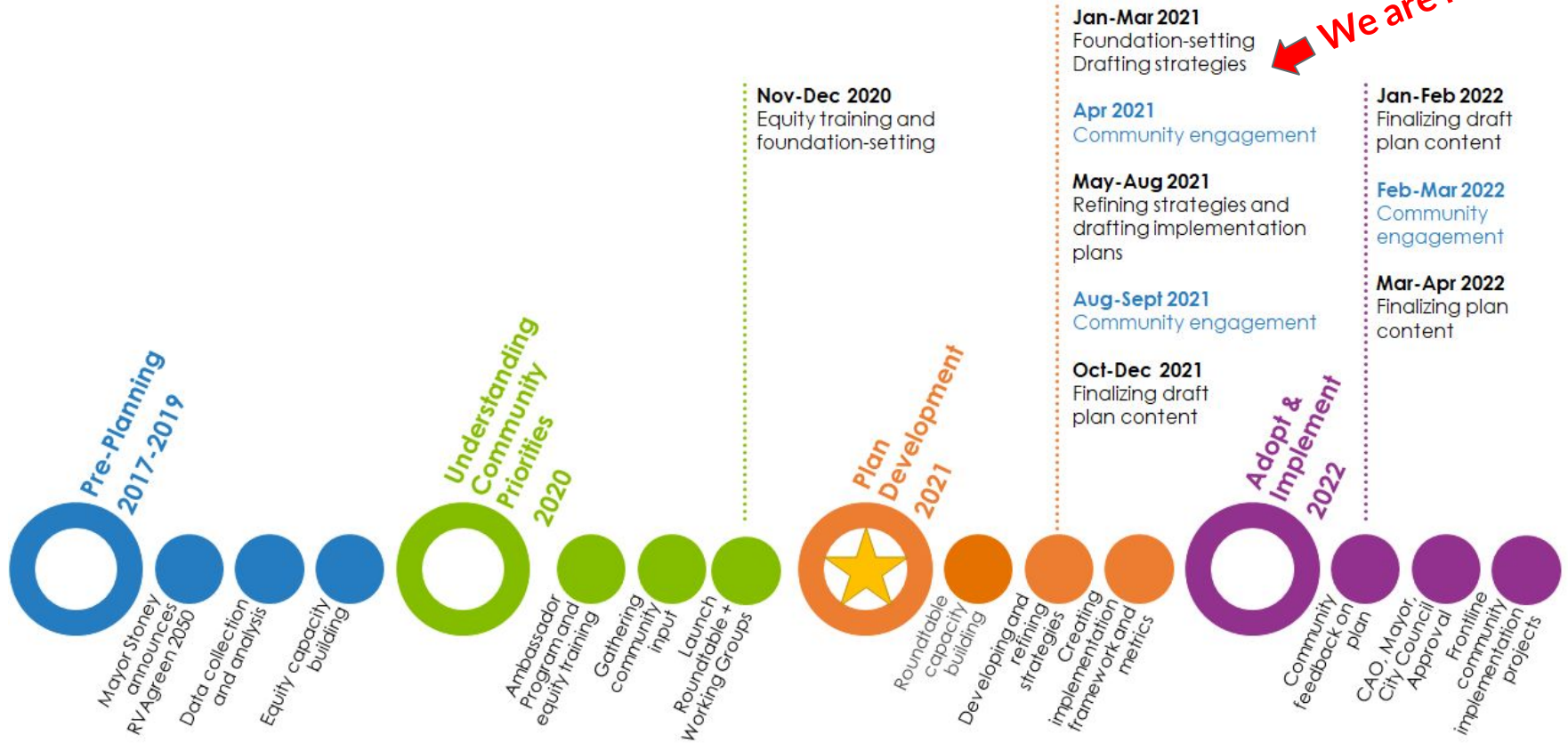
Today's Objectives

- 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

- RESPECT
- Be present
- All participate, no one dominates
- Be additive, not repetitive
- Aim for consensus ("I can live with that")
- Be open to new ideas
- Bring a problem? Bring a solution
- Separate people from the problem
- Speak for yourself, from your own experience
- Thumb rule -> Zoom reactions
- ELMO: Enough, Let's Move On
- Make space
- **New ones?**

Process Overview

We are here!

Pre-Planning 2017-2019
- Mayor Stoney announces RVAgreen 2050
- Data collection and analysis
- Equity capacity building

Understanding Community Priorities 2020
- Ambassador Program and equity training
- Gathering community input
- Launch Roundtable + Working Groups

Nov-Dec 2020 Equity training and foundation-setting

Plan Development 2021
- Roundtable capacity building
- Developing and refining strategies
- Creating implementation framework and metrics

Jan-Mar 2021 Foundation-setting Drafting strategies

Apr 2021 Community engagement

May-Aug 2021 Refining strategies and drafting implementation plans

Aug-Sept 2021 Community engagement

Oct-Dec 2021 Finalizing draft plan content

Adopt & Implement 2022
- Community feedback on plan
- CAO, Mayor City Council Approval
- Frontline community implementation projects

Jan-Feb 2022 Finalizing draft plan content

Feb-Mar 2022 Community engagement

Mar-Apr 2022 Finalizing plan content

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

Jan-Mar 2021
Foundation-setting
Drafting strategies

Nov-Dec 2020
Equity training and
foundation-setting

Apr 2021
Community engagement

May-Aug 2021
Refining strategies and
drafting implementation
plans

Aug-Sept 2021
Community engagement

Oct-Dec 2021
Finalizing draft
plan content

Jan-Feb 2022
Finalizing draft
plan content

Feb-Mar 2022
Community
engagement

Mar-Apr 2022
Finalizing plan
content

Pre-Planning
2017-2019

Mayor Stoney
announces
RVAgreen 2050

Data collection
and analysis

Equity capacity
building

Understanding
Community
Priorities
2020

Ambassador
Program and
equity training

Gathering
community
input

Launch
Roundtable +
Working Groups

Plan
Development
2021

Roundtable
capacity
building

Developing and
refining
strategies

Creating
implementation
framework and
metrics

Adopt &
Implement
2022

Community
feedback on
plan

CAO, Mayor,
City Council
Approval

Frontline
community
implementation
projects

**Working Group activities
May - August will include:**

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

Objective 1: Make sure all residents have the opportunity to engage with healthy natural resources, spaces, and biodiversity.

- ENGAGEMENT
  - Create a program to introduce Richmonders to the city's public green and blue spaces (including how to get to them, how to use them responsibly, etc.) that is tailored to individual interests, physical ability, and other factors.
  - Develop a program in partnership with Enrichmond Tree Lab for residents and neighborhoods to "report" desire for things like more street trees and plantings.
  - Establish the fourth Saturday in September as Richmond Public Lands Day in which residents and city staff are encouraged to enjoy, steward, and celebrate their local park (aligning with national and state public lands days).
  - Expand the City's Adopt-a-Spot Program to include waterways, greenways, and bike lanes.
  - Generate "rubber-stamped" park and green infrastructure that can be installed by community members by-right on private property.
- PARTNERSHIPS
  - Collaborate with surrounding localities to cross-promote public green spaces and parks.
  - Create public-private partnerships to help the City create, maintain, and manage high-quality parks, green infrastructure, and public open space, including a privately-owned public space program to incentivize private land owners and/or developers to include publicly-accessible green/open space in underserved areas (a recreational easement program).
- PLANNING/OPERATIONS
  - Create a permanent office/position within the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities to manage partnership and volunteer programs.
  - Develop a Parks Master Plan providing all Richmonders access to a quality public park that meets the surrounding community's priorities within a 5-minute walk, bike, or bus ride. Prioritize locations based on a set of factors co-created with the community.
  - Establish a fee or fund for parks and green infrastructure maintenance and the acquisition of new green space, such as $0.005 per dollar of real estate taxes or parking fees for non-city residents at high-use locations on summer weekends.
- URBAN AGRICULTURE
  - Develop - and make visible and accessible - an urban agriculture program that partners with food justice community organizations and includes an apprenticeship training program. Identify changes needed in the community garden ordinances for sales and increased funding for staffing, maintenance, and materials needed. Incentivize owners of multifamily dwellings to remove barriers to individuals growing their own food and allow universal access to community gardening and composting.

Objective 2: Reduce risks and impacts to the community and natural environment from extreme heat and drought.

- PLANNING/OPERATIONS
    - Create a citywide definition of quality green space that provides guidance on these and other strategies, which includes information on the types of spaces that provide co-benefits for climate resilience.
    - Develop a study that quantifies the "cost of inaction" on key assets and neighborhoods at risk from extreme heat and drought.
    - Develop an urban heat island readiness and reduction plan with a focus on vulnerable populations and ecosystems. Include tactics such as mandating benches and shade structures at all bus stops and establishing "rubber-stamped" shade structure designs that businesses can build and install in the public right-of-way.
    - Increase city capacity (internally and through community partnerships) for maintenance of existing resources that enhance extreme heat and drought resilience by increasing maintenance budget, hiring more staff (including through a workforce development program), and providing staff training and engagement opportunities to increase buy-in and decrease turnover.
- TREES/GREEN SPACE
    - Conduct an assessment of how climate changes will impact the presence of invasive species and create a plan for control and minimizing presence and impacts.
    - Develop a plan and program for depaving impervious surfaces that includes an ordinance to allow non-DPW entities to conduct depaving projects and standards/guidelines for such projects.
    - Develop an urban forest master plan, engaging the community to develop a set of criteria for places to focus planting efforts (factors such as existing canopy, heat, plantable space, others).
    - Establish requirements for major development related to impervious surface that ensures impervious surface area does not increase during the development or once it is completed.
    - Evaluate the city's Adopt-A-Tree program and identify opportunities for expansion, such as allowing community organizations to buy trees in bulk and committing to caring for the trees.
    - Implement the recommendations of the Mayor's Green Team (2020), including fostering interdepartmental cooperation and coordination on green space and parks projects and adopting the use of proffers or impact fees on new developments to increase green space and tree canopy.
- WATER
    - Incentivize reduced water consumption by revising Dept. of Public Utilities billing structure and methods.

Objective 3: Reduce risks and impacts to the community and natural environment from extreme precipitation and flooding.

- ENGAGEMENT
  - Use community input and data (such as the Climate Equity Index, RVA311, RVAH2O, and other sources) to identify and prioritize neighborhoods for extreme precipitation and flooding resilience projects including green alleyways, stream restoration, and depaving.
- LAND
  - Convert large City-managed non-recreational mown areas, such as floodwall impoundment areas, to native community wildflower/pollinator species meadows, mown or bush-hogged once or twice each year.
  - Create a Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund to encourage and compensate landowners for placing flood-prone private land into conservation easements, prioritizing areas in historically disenfranchised communities.
  - Identify opportunities for the city to acquire flood-prone (and other) land to increase resilience to flooding.
  - Restrict development in riparian areas and identify locations for and engage developers on development of low flood risk areas.
- PLANNING/OPERATIONS
  - Create an integrated project management portal to streamline administration and permitting of public-private partnership projects that increase resilience to the impacts of climate change, such as green infrastructure installations.
  - Create incentives or requirements in zoning and development processes (such as proffers or impact fees) for green infrastructure on new development.
  - Develop a study that quantifies the "cost of inaction" on key assets and neighborhoods at risk from extreme precipitation and flooding.
  - Implement the Green Infrastructure Master Plan to expand green infrastructure on public lands and rights-of-way through city projects and community partnerships, and include public engagement and education programs.
  - Increase city capacity for maintenance of existing resources that enhance flood resilience by increasing maintenance budget, hiring more staff (including through a workforce development program), and providing staff training and engagement opportunities to increase buy-in and decrease turnover.
  - Partner with upstream counties and the Department of Environmental Quality on preserving wetlands to reduce downstream flooding impacts in Richmond.
- STORMWATER
  - Market the City's stormwater credit program, and explore changes to the program to increase its use and encourage more landowners to plant vegetation that reduces the quantity and improves the quality of stormwater runoff (i.e., actions that are qualified Best Management Practices under the Chesapeake Bay Program).

Objective 4: Engage the natural environment to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

- AIR QUALITY
  - Conduct an assessment of sources of air pollution in the city and identify opportunities for reduction through green space, tree, and other projects that also increase access to natural resources in combination with the strategies above.

- CARBON SEQUESTRATION
  - Prioritize deep root, native plantings in parks and other public green spaces, buildings, schools, and public housing to maximize carbon sequestration.
  - Explore potential for carbon farming, sequestration, and removal on vacant public or private land, throughout the City's parks and open space system, and in coordination with other public landowners, prioritizing investments in frontline communities where feasible.
  - Evaluate the potential for a Carbon Sequestration Incubator develop green jobs in urban agriculture, urban forestry, aquatic and riparian restoration, engineering technology, and/or other forms of carbon farming, sequestration, and removal.
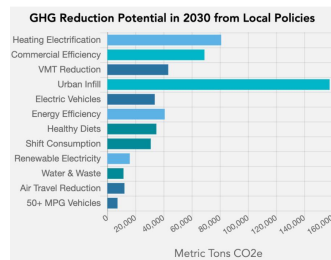

GHG Reduction Potential in 2030 from Local Policies

Heating Electrification
Commercial Efficiency
VMT Reduction
Urban Infill
Electric Vehicles
Energy Efficiency
Healthy Diets
Shift Consumption
Renewable Electricity
Water & Waste
Air Travel Reduction
50+ MPG Vehicles

Metric Tons CO2e

Figure 10: Cool Climate Network, 2018

5-minute break

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 (15-20 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

What are your ideas for engaging your communities?

Drag stars to ideas you can use in your community:

Civic associations (PDR list of emails)

Other organizations' newsletters

Our young folks live in a variety of communities. Creating resources that make sense to and for them to carry will be key.

Again - SIMPLE formatting. And-sharable on Instagram with access to easier survey. With link to full-on if folks want it.

Ta
co
(fa
etc
tar
vu
ne

Parks Friends groups (out of Enrichmond) Schools

Churches
PTAs
Stonewall Sports (LGBTQ+ sports league)
Diversity Richmond

I'd love see some door-to-door efforts in targeted neighborhoods.

Media blast - traditional & non-traditional media sources (Virginia Mercury, Richmond Free Press, VPM, Good Morning RVA, RVA Hub, etc.)

E
w
a
n
p
e
C

Breakout Room 2

What are your ideas for engaging your communities?

Drag stars to ideas you can use in your community:

Our young folks live in a variety of communities. Creating resources that make sense to and for them to carry will be key.

East End: civic associations (Church Hill Association, etc), East End Green Infrastructure Collaborative, community organizations (Neighborhood Resource Center, etc)

Schools: Richmond Public Schools, private education institutions

Social media, facebook, linkedin, twitter, instagram (posts & stories); tictok???

Leverage council member communications with constituents (e-newsletters, etc)

Would also like to see this for neighborhood associations and "Friends of" groups with newsletters

Share elevator pitch so participants in this group can promote at our events (clean ups, volunteer days, etc.)

Churches and other community centers

And other faith centers, please!

Door to door approach

Partner with Richmond Public Libraries. Share fliers with folks who check out books, hold in-person meetings outdoors. Keep in mind some folks can't/won't participate virtually.

Exit breakout rooms!

Group discussion: share your ideas!

Looking ahead

Nov-Dec 2020
Equity training and foundation-setting

Jan-Mar 2021
Foundation-setting
Drafting strategies

Apr 2021
Community engagement

May-Aug 2021
Refining strategies and drafting implementation plans

Aug-Sept 2021
Community engagement

Oct-Dec 2021
Finalizing draft plan content

Jan-Feb 2022
Finalizing draft plan content

Feb-Mar 2022
Community engagement

Mar-Apr 2022
Finalizing plan content

Pre-Planning 2017-2019
- Mayor Stoney announces RVAgreen 2050
- Data collection and analysis
- Equity capacity building

Understanding Community Priorities 2020
- Ambassador Program and equity training
- Gathering community input
- Launch + Roundtable working Groups

Plan Development 2021
- Roundtable capacity building
- Developing and refining strategies
- Creating implementation framework and metrics

Adopt & Implement 2022
- Community feedback on plan
- CAO, Mayor, City Council Approval
- Frontline community implementation projects

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 **[*share April events for RVAgreen 2050 newsletter!]**

...and "see you later" from Brianne!