

RVAgreen 2050 Environment Working Group

Monday, May 24th, 2021

*Community Engagement Results &
Strategy Prioritization*



Equitable climate action for a healthy and resilient Richmond

Agenda

- I. Settling in & ground rules
- II. Community engagement results
- III. VCU Equity Assessment
- IV. Prioritization - what gets us to our 2030 goal?
- V. Wrap-up and next steps

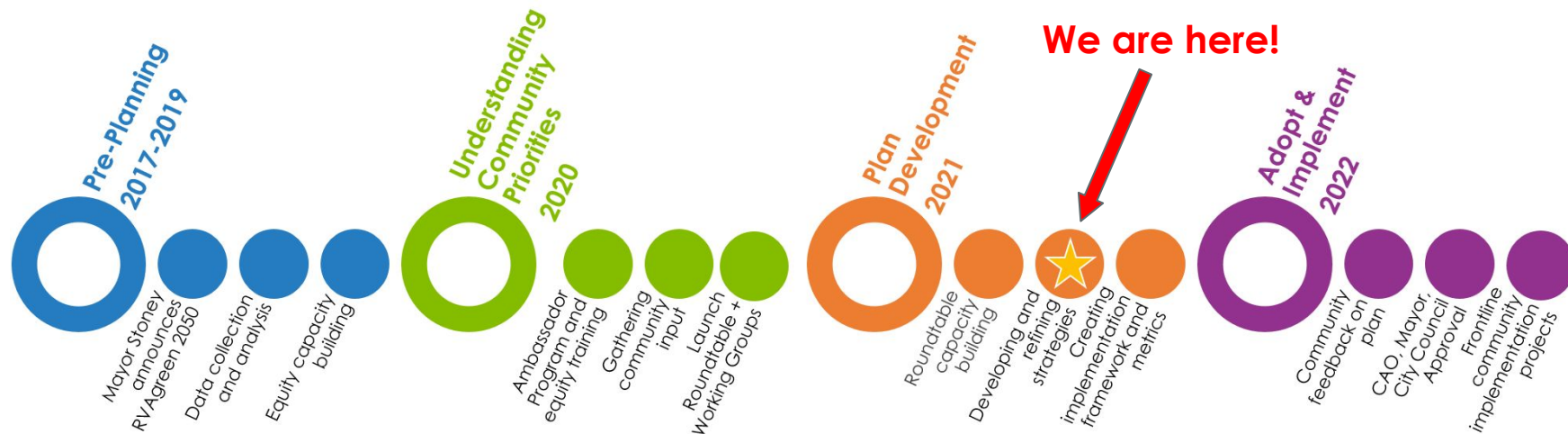
Today's Objectives

- Understand the community's feedback on our draft strategies - ***How does this feedback inform next steps?***
- Agree on a prioritization scheme for the strategies to see which ones "rise to the top" - ***Which strategies should we elevate as top priorities and how should that be decided?***

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 Refinement Process Summer 2021



June 14

July 12 &
August 2

Community engagement
and feedback

Prioritization

Indicators and
impacts

Implementation and
accountability

- 10-, 30-minute surveys
- Direct response to draft vision, objectives, and strategies

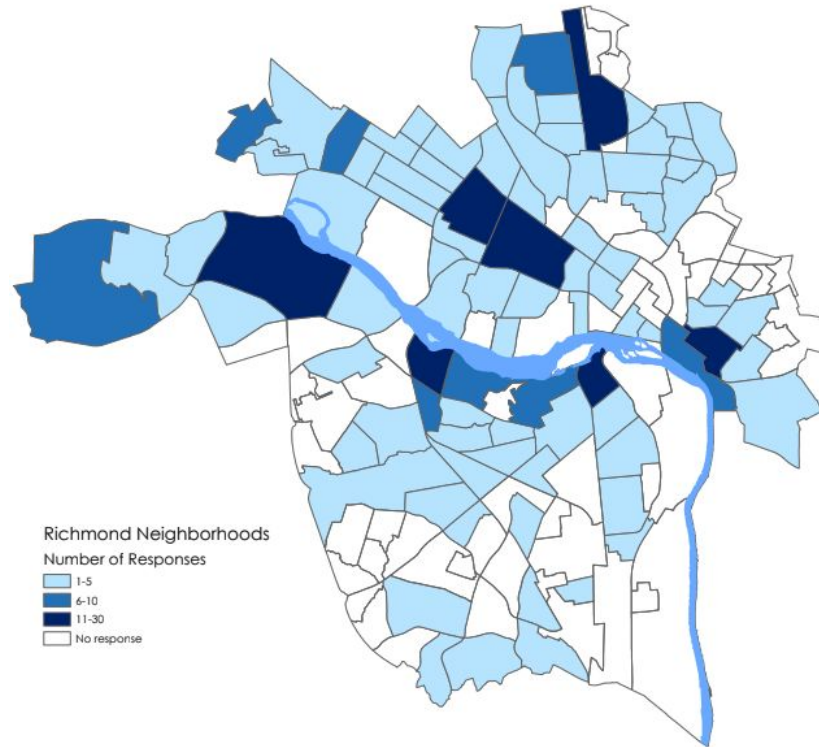
- What values do we want reflected in our plan (via selection of objectives & strategies)?
- What strategies will most help us achieve our 2030 goals?

- What is our shared understanding of what is achievable and what success looks like for each strategy?
- What are the indicators that we will use to measure the success of our objectives?

- How will we equitably implement the plan?
- How will we ensure accountability and transparency in implementation?

Community engagement results

Overview of Engagement




Survey Feedback

-  **1. Green Spaces & Trees:** Partner with the community to increase outdoor space and natural resources access, and reduce impacts of extreme heat
-  **2. Planning & Operations:** Maintain existing and create new public outdoor space
-  **3. Urban Agriculture:** Increase access to healthy foods
-  **4. Air Quality:** Identify air pollution sources and opportunities for reduction
-  **5. Complete Streets:** Improve and increase pedestrian infrastructure
-  **6. Composting:** Create organic waste diversion programs city-wide (i.e. food waste and yard debris)
-  **7. Environmental Justice:** Eliminate the impacts of illegal dumping and industrial pollution on neighboring communities
-  **8. Connectivity:** Increase pedestrian infrastructure that connects people to jobs, schools, business, etc.
-  **9. Resilience Planning:** Prioritize historically disenfranchised communities in planning for climate impacts
-  **10. Engagement:** Increase resident engagement and access to outdoor space
-  **11. Public Transit:** Expand the bike share program and increase GRTC access, frequency, reliability, and convenience
-  **12. Community Solar:** Increase incentives and remove barriers to community solar
-  **13. Government Operations:** Integrate climate action and resilience in all city plans and processes

How did the Environment strategies rank?



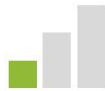











 Strategy Bucket	Ranking
Green Spaces & Trees	88
Planning & Operations	86
Urban Agriculture	86
Air Quality	85
Engagement	83
Land & Development	78
Carbon Sequestration	77
Stormwater Management	76
Water	70
Partnerships	68

Draft Strategies- Public Engagement



Environment

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

Topic	Strategy	Potential GHG Reduction Impact	Potential Climate Resilience Impact	Potential Community Priorities Impact
Planning & Operations	Parks Master Plan: 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.			
	Green Infrastructure Fund: 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.			
	Staffing: Create a permanent office/position within the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities to manage partnership and volunteer programs.			
Engagement	Private Property: Generate "rubber-stamped" park and green infrastructure that can be installed by community members by-right on private property.			

Strategy Feedback - External Responses

Strategy Bucket	Strategy	Comment/Question	Response or Action Step(s)
Engagement	Private Property - Generate “rubber-stamped” park and green infrastructure that can be installed by community members by-right on private property.	The area Bally Casino have should be a natural habit. It has wildlife, wetlands and plenty of natural forest to contribute to the oxygen that is being depleted by development.	To be considered during implementation.
Engagement	Private Property - Generate “rubber-stamped” park and green infrastructure that can be installed by community members by-right on private property.	Is this saying that private property owners could allow the public to use their land as parks, and the city would endorse this in a standardized way?	To be considered during implementation discussions.
Engagement	Private Property - Generate “rubber-stamped” park and green infrastructure that can be installed by community members by-right on private property.	Consider creating a Sustainable Backyards program like the City of Chicago. They give residents 50% (up to \$60 rebate) off any locally- purchased native plants.	Thanks for pointing us in that direction! We will bring this idea to the next Working Group meetings.
Engagement	Awareness - 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.	Could this just consist of increasing funding to Parks, and specifically James River Parks, so that they have the resources to do more outreach?	To be considered during implementation.
Engagement	Awareness - 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.	The city should also bring awareness to the impact of diet on climate change. The special report on climate change and land by the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) describes plant-based diets as a major opportunity for mitigating and adapting to climate change — and includes a policy recommendation to reduce meat consumption.	Thanks for this perspective. This concept is addressed in Upstream Emissions (Waste Obj. #2 under the Circular Economy strategy bucket), but we will also bring this idea to the next Working Group meetings.
Engagement	Enrichmond Tree Lab - Develop a program in partnership with Enrichmond Tree Lab for residents and neighborhoods to “report” desire for things like more street trees and plantings.	Tree issues are reportable in RVA311. Instead of sending residents in different directions to report things, refer residents to RVA311 and share the data with Enrichmond. As written, this Tree Lab item sounds like an inefficient use of city residents’ and staff time.	To be considered during implementation.
Engagement	Enrichmond Tree Lab - Develop a program in partnership with Enrichmond Tree Lab for residents and neighborhoods to “report” desire for things like more street trees and plantings.	Is there a consolidated effort to increase green space in areas most affected by heat-island effect? What about a collaboration with Groundwork RVA? (https://www.groundworkrva.org/)	This concept is addressed in Urban Heat Islands (Environment Obj. #2 under the Planning and Operations strategy bucket).
Partnerships	Public-Private - 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).	These partnerships already exist (Friends of the James River Park, Friends of William Byrd Park, Friends of Bryant Park, etc.). Let’s not waste city resources on duplicating services. Perhaps some city parks don’t already have such an association, but please check with the surrounding civic associations before reinventing the wheel.	This concept is addressed in Community Ambassadors (Community Obj. #1 under the Communications strategy bucket).

Strategy Feedback - Internal Process

Strategy Bucket	Strategy	Feedback Type	Comment	Milestone/Indicator								Action Items
				Financing	Community Support	New Strategy	Existing Strategy	Revise Str. Language	Innovative Concept			
Engagement	Private Property - Generate “rubber-stamped” park and green infrastructure that can be installed by community members by-right on private property.	Question	Is this saying that private property owners could allow the public to use their land as parks, and the city would endorse this in a standardized way?						✓		Clarify or define this concept	
Engagement	Private Property - Generate “rubber-stamped” park and green infrastructure that can be installed by community members by-right on private property.	Suggestion	Consider creating a Sustainable Backyards program like the City of Chicago. They give residents 50% (up to \$60 rebate) off any locally-purchased native plants.							✓	Investigate Sustainable Backyards	
Engagement	Awareness - 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.	Question	Could this just consist of increasing funding to Parks, and specifically James River Parks, so that they have the resources to do more outreach?		✓						Where is the budget for this being allocated?	
Engagement	Awareness - 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.	Suggestion	The city should also bring awareness to the impact of diet on climate change. The special report on climate change and land by the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) describes plant-based diets as a major opportunity for mitigating and adapting to climate change — and includes a policy recommendation to reduce meat consumption.				✓				Diet - meat vs. vegetable diets and impacts on emissions; perhaps tie to circular economy	
Engagement	Enrichmond Tree Lab - Develop a program in partnership with Enrichmond Tree Lab for residents and neighborhoods to "report" desire for things like more street trees and plantings.	Suggestion	Tree issues are reportable in RVA311. Instead of sending residents in different directions to report things, refer residents to RVA311 and share the data with Enrichmond. As written, this Tree Lab item sounds like an inefficient use of city residents' and staff time.						✓		Clarify if/how this could be implemented within 311	

VCU Equity Assessment

Example recommendations:

- *Diversify Working Groups*, incorporate youth engagement, and attend existing community meetings to retain newly established frontline community partnerships
- Enhance the Working Groups with their own *dedicated [equity] facilitators and trainers* to expand capacity building beyond the Roundtable members
- Consider *quantifying co-benefits* in order to focus on the strategies that will have the greatest impact
- Define and publish a series of *equity-related indicators* to center the plan's implementation around continued equity

An Equity-focused Assessment of
the City of Richmond's RVAgreen 2050
Planning Process

May 2021

Report Prepared By:

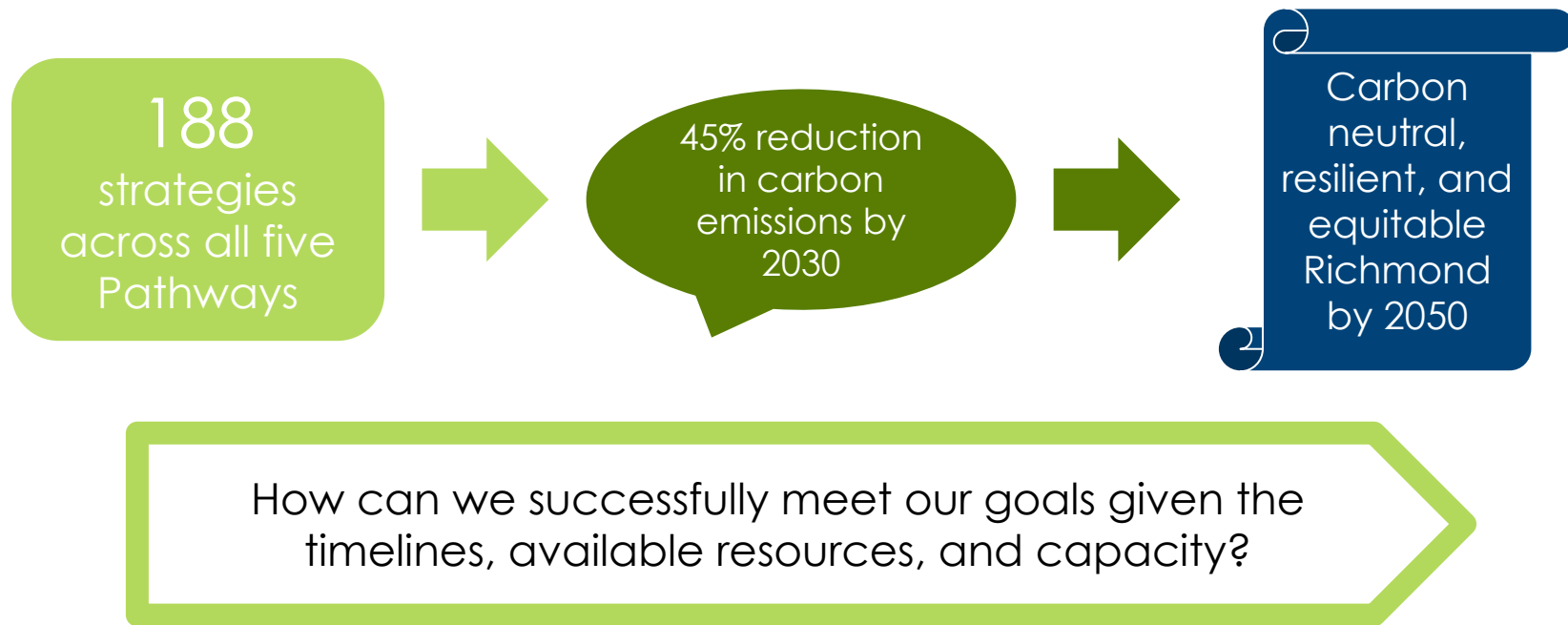
URSP 637: Sustainable Community Development

L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs




















Virginia Commonwealth University















Prioritization

Why do we need to prioritize?



Quantifying Impacts of Strategies

IMPACT		
Potential Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Impact		
	High Relatively high GHG reduction potential if fully implemented (estimate)	
	Medium Relatively moderate GHG reduction potential if fully implemented (estimate)	
	Low Relatively low GHG reduction potential if fully implemented (estimate)	
Potential Climate Resilience Impact		
	Extreme Heat Potential to reduce impacts from extreme heat and heat waves	 High (direct)  Medium (indirect)  Low
	Severe Weather Potential to reduce impacts from storms / heavy precipitation	 High (direct)  Medium (indirect)  Low
	Flooding Potential to reduce impacts from river, localized, or sea level rise-related flooding	 High (direct)  Medium (indirect)  Low
	Community Potential to increase resilience of the Richmond community	 High (direct)  Medium (indirect)  Low

EQUITY		
Potential Community Priorities Impact		
	Racial Equity & Environmental Justice Potential to promote racial equity and support historically disenfranchised communities	 High (direct)  Medium (indirect)  Low
	Government Accountability Potential to promote government accountability and transparency	 High (direct)  Medium (indirect)  Low
	Community Wealth Potential to build community wealth and increase jobs and education access	 High (direct)  Medium (indirect)  Low
	Housing & Buildings Potential to expand affordable housing and reduce housing cost burden	 High (direct)  Medium (indirect)  Low
	Neighborhoods Potential to support beautiful and safe neighborhoods	 High (direct)  Medium (indirect)  Low
	Health Potential to promote physical and mental health and well-being	 High (direct)  Medium (indirect)  Low
	Engagement & Communications Potential to support equitable engagement and communication	 High (direct)  Medium (indirect)  Low

How are we prioritizing strategies?

IMPACT SCORE

GHG	The amount of GHG emissions reductions	x8
Resilience	Improved resilience to climate change impacts	x4
Feasibility	Barriers and amounts of financial and political capital required	x4
Cost-Effectiveness	The cost of implementation vs. the rate of return	x4
Community Support	Priority rankings from the 30 min survey	x4
Economic Development	The number of jobs created and sustained	x2
6 Criteria		26 Total

EQUITY SCORE

Racial Equity/Env. Justice	x6
Health and Wellbeing	x5
Gov. Accountability	x3
Community Wealth	x3
Housing and Buildings	x3
Neighborhoods	x3
Engagement and Communications	x3
7 Criteria	26 Total

Strategy Prioritization Matrix

Pathway	Objective	Strategy Bucket	Greenlink Policy Action Row #	Strategy	x4	x8	x4	x4	x2	x4	WEIGHTED COMBINED FACT SCORE	% IMPACT SCORE	Racial Equity / Environmental Justice	Health & Well-Being	Govt Accountability	Community Wealth	Housing & Buildings	Neighborhoods	Engagement & Communications	WEIGHTED COMBINED FACT SCORE	% EQUITY SCORE	WEIGHTED COMBINED IMPACT FACT SCORE	% COMBINED SCORE
Transportation	Objective 2	Public Transit	63	Bus Service - Improve public transit frequency, reliability, access, convenience, user experience, and local and regional connectivity. Prioritize underserved communities by connecting high-density housing to shopping and jobs.	1	5	3	4	2	4	92	95%	3	1	1	5	3	3	1	62	94%	154	100%
B&E	Objective 3	Residential Solar	50	Solar Installations: Provide financial assistance and education for clean energy upgrades and retrofits to make homes and small businesses healthy, safe, and affordable, focusing on frontline communities reducing disproportionately high energy burden in these neighborhoods.	15	5	4	4	2	3	94	97%	3	1	3	1	5	1	1	56	86%	150	99%
Environment	Objective 3	Engagement	3	Neighborhood Prioritization - 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 assessing existing stormwater infrastructure, green alleys, stream restoration, and depaving.	3	1	5	3	1	4	70	62%	3	3	5	1	1	3	5	78	100%	148	99%
B&E	Objective 2	Residential Energy Efficiency	7	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)	15	5	3	4	3	4	96	99%	3	1	1	1	5	1	1	50	73%	146	97%
Transportation	Objective 2	Public Transit	62	Bus Stops - Improve and maintain priority transit stops in low-income and low car ownership areas with amenities for enhanced safety, accessibility, convenience, and resilience.	2	5	3	4	2	4	96	99%	3	1	1	1	1	5	1	50	73%	146	97%
Waste	Objective 4	Environmental Justice		Site Plan Review - As part of site plan review, implement measures to identify the potential impacts of new industrial facilities on neighboring communities; identify potential risks of locating hazardous materials in flood-prone areas, and incentivize waste reduction programs and manufacturing processes that minimize greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts.	2	3	5	4	2	5	92	95%	3	3	1	1	1	3	1	54	84%	146	97%
Community	Objective 1	Funding	36	Climate Impact Grant - 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	2	3	2	4	4	4	80	82%	3	3	3	1	3	3	1	66	96%	146	97%
Environment	Objective 2	Planning & Operations	5	Urban Heat Islands - 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.	3	1	4	3	2	5	72	67%	3	3	1	1	3	5	3	72	99%	144	96%
B&E	Objective 3	Community Solar	52	Ground-Mounted Solar: Incentivize 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.	2	5	4	3	3	4	98	100%	3	1	1	1	3	1	1	44	58%	142	95%
Environment	Objective 1	Urban Agriculture		Community Gardening - 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.	15	3	4	4	3	5	88	91%	1	3	1	3	1	3	3	54	84%	142	95%

Ranking Methodology

1	Sort by IMPACT score, informed by equity	✗		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Looked like a traditional climate action plan• Resilience is not prioritized• Equity is not centered
2	Sort by EQUITY score, informed by impact	✗		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Looked like a resilience plan• Mitigation is not prioritized
3	Top IMPACT and EQUITY only	✗		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Too limiting; number of strategies would make it difficult to achieve our 2030 goals
4	Sort by combined IMPACT + EQUITY scores	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Not too hot, not too cold, just right”• Isolate strategies in the top 75th percentile based on combined scores



Top 75th Percentile Strategies by Objective

	Total	Obj 1	Obj 2	Obj 3	Obj 4
B&E	14	4	5	4	1
Community	13	11	2		
Transportation	5	2	3	0	
Environment	11	2	4	3	2
Waste	4	0	1	1	2



Example Environment Strategies

Top 3

Obj. 3	148 (99%)	Neighborhood Prioritization - 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 assessing existing stormwater infrastructure, green alleyways, stream restoration, and depaving.
Obj. 2	144 (96%)	Urban Heat Islands - 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.
Obj. 1	142 (95%)	Community Gardening - 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.

Bottom 3

Obj. 3	86 (11%)	Riparian Development - Restrict development in riparian areas and identify locations for and engage developers on development of low flood risk areas.
Obj. 3	86 (11%)	Reduced Mowing - 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.
Obj. 1	74 (2%)	Regional Collaboration - Collaborate with surrounding localities to cross-promote public green spaces and parks.

Activity

Discuss the strategies based on the IMPACT+EQUITY combined score

Breakout room discussion (15 min. per objective):

1. Do the strategies that “made the cut” seem appropriate to you?
 - Keep in mind our first goal is to reduce carbon emissions by 45% by 2030.
 - Use stars & x’s to show support or recommend the ↑ or ↓ prioritization of a strategy
2. Are we comfortable with the # of strategies to be prioritized?
3. Can we all fully commit to ensuring the success of these strategies?
4. Does it make sense to include this strategy within the timeline of the 2030 goal?

Link to activity

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1z85D4XaPxVSsmVJyOlzNUydY-orq1X8RA7DAWftJxB8/edit#gid=0>

- Breakout Room #1 (Khilia) : Start with Objective 1
- Breakout Room #2 (Dawn) : Start with Objective 2
- Breakout Room #3 (David) : Start with Objective 3

We will rotate every 15 minutes & stay with our groups and facilitator the whole time!

*Go into breakout
rooms!*

Exit breakout rooms!

Wrap-up and next steps

- Next meeting: June 14 @1pm, “RVAgreen2050 Indicators & Impacts”
- NOW:
 - General reflections?
 - Fill out feedback survey
 - Share updates, upcoming events, and resources in the chat

THANK YOU!