



# County of Fairfax, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** January 21, 2021

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Bryan J. Hill  
County Executive 

**SUBJECT:** Community-wide Energy and Climate Action Plan: Fifth Update

This memorandum describes the Community-wide Energy and Climate Action Plan (CECAP) public education and engagement campaigns slated for February, March, and early April 2021.

### **Background**

Development of the Community-wide Energy and Climate Action Plan (CECAP) depends on the input and involvement of community stakeholders from across Fairfax County. Three distinct phases of public outreach and engagement are included in the planning process. The first phase, which sought public input on a variety of potential emission reduction strategies, took place in August and September of 2020. It included an extensive public survey and three virtual facilitated public meetings.

The second phase of public outreach is slated for February – March of 2021, with some elements of the outreach campaign extending into early April. This second phase is focused on examining the gap between public awareness and public action on climate issues. This phase will include new and different educational and engagement elements designed to reach specific audiences and to draw out more detailed and focused feedback.

In May 2021, a final phase of public engagement will be conducted to assess public opinion of the final draft of the CECAP before it is presented to the Board of Supervisors for approval in July.

### **Overview of Phase 2 Public Education Campaign**

The foundation of the CECAP public education campaign is a coordinated set of message points developed with current research on climate communications in mind. Three lines of messaging will be mixed and matched in various campaign materials to raise public awareness of climate issues generally and to call attention to the need for local climate planning and voluntary action.

The first line of messaging provides basic, foundational information about climate change, presented in an apolitical, matter-of-fact tone. The second line of messaging is regionally-specific and includes value statements, such as, “We have a responsibility to do our part as individuals to reduce the risks posed by climate change. Taking action now is the right thing to do for the future of Fairfax County.”

The third line of messaging provides high-level information about what CECAP is, why we are doing it, and how to get involved.

The messaging described above will be delivered to the community using a variety of media, including articles, social media content, still graphics, motion graphics, videos, and presentations.

### **Overview of Phase 2 Public Engagement Campaign**

*Direct Outreach to Organizational and Individual Partners:* The February/March 2021 public engagement campaign will rely heavily on the goodwill and partnership of dozens of individuals and organizations in and around Fairfax County to spread pre-prepared content to their networks. The OEEC has conducted outreach to a list of nearly 900 individual and organizational contacts to seek their support in this effort. Information sessions for potential promotional partners will be held in late January. Appropriate staff in all Board offices have received invitations to these briefings and will be provided with promotional materials to share.

*Online Surveys:* A series of online public surveys will be used to gather specific information and feedback from members of the public and targeted audiences. A total of five surveys have been developed and will be released in late February. These include:

- A public survey on energy-related issues.
- A public survey on transportation, development, and waste-related issues.
- A public survey with open-ended questions on the CECAP in general.
- A targeted survey for the business community that will be distributed to specific individuals including those identified as appropriate contacts by the Economic Development Authority.
- A targeted survey for leaders of organizations serving frontline communities in Fairfax County.

*Facilitated Meetings:* In Phase 1, the OEEC hosted three identical virtual public meetings in support of the CECAP. In this round of engagement, the OEEC will host two public meetings, one dedicated to energy issues and the other dedicated to transportation, development, and waste issues.

To cultivate the input of two key audiences within the county, the OEEC will host two invitation-only facilitated meetings, or roundtables. These 60-minute meetings will be executive-level engagement opportunities that will be held virtually. The aim of these meetings is to collect feedback from participants on steps the county can take to support their voluntary engagement with CECAP. The two planned target audiences are (1) senior management or executive level leadership from the largest and most influential companies headquartered or based in Fairfax County; and (2) decision makers from community organizations serving low-income or underrepresented populations within the county.

*Community Briefings:* To share pertinent, topical information with the community in a format that is accessible, the OEEC will host a series of online community briefings. These briefings will last 30 minutes each and will allow individuals to attend in real time and offer commentary in a WebEx chat. These will not be interactive events, however, as presenters will not answer questions posed by attendees.

Each briefing will be composed of three parts, corresponding to the public education messaging strategy. Each part will take ten minutes or less. The first part will be a technical or fact-based

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presentation from the county's consultant, ICF, on the topic at hand. The second part will be presented by COG staff and address "What's in it for Fairfax County?" or "Why here, why now?" The third part will be a CECAP planning overview presented by staff, with information on where to find county resources on the particular topic.

The briefings will be recorded. Following each briefing, the video will be made available as a whole and in three separate segments online for on-demand viewing and sharing.

Staff will continue to periodically update the Board of Supervisors on the CECAP process. Supervisors who have any questions about this update or the CECAP should contact Kambiz Agazi at 703-324-1788 or at [Kambiz.Agazi@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Kambiz.Agazi@fairfaxcounty.gov). Between updates, Supervisors and their staff can monitor CECAP progress and review documents at the [OEEC CECAP website](#).

cc: Joseph M. Mondoro, Chief Financial Officer  
Kambiz Agazi, Director, Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination