

Fairfax County Community-Wide Energy and Climate Action Plan (CECAP) CECAP Working Group Meeting Notes

Energy Subgroup

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

Held electronically via WebEx and Mural

Fairfax County held a CECAP Working Group Energy Subgroup meeting on January 27th, 2021 from 6:00-8:00pm. The meeting was held electronically via WebEx and included a brainstorming session using Mural, an online whiteboard.

Recordings of each meeting and meeting materials [are available online](#).

These meeting notes capture the general activities conducted and discussions that occurred during the meetings. These notes should be viewed in conjunction with the presentation and meeting materials, found at the link above.

Sign-in & Tech Check (Logan Pfeiffer, ICF)

Logan Pfeiffer from ICF provided Mural assistance and tutorials as requested by participants.

Legal Requirements/Roll Call (Candace Cronin, ICF)

A script was read to cover several legal requirements for holding electronic meetings. The script was revised and shortened in response to feedback in coordination with the County Attorneys. The script included conducting a roll call identifying all CECAP Working Group members in attendance and where they were attending from. It was noted that to conduct this meeting electronically, the meeting needs to be clearly audible, publicly accessible, and compelled by emergency circumstances. It was established that this meeting could not be held in person due to the COVID-19 emergency, and that therefore it could instead be held electronically via audio-conferencing. It was also established that this meeting is necessary to move forward the Working Group's functions.

Welcome & Meeting Overview (Candace Cronin, ICF)

Candace Cronin, the ICF facilitator, reviewed the meeting agenda and meeting objectives. Meeting objectives included reviewing outcomes from the December subgroup meetings, continuing the discussion around strategies, and setting the stage for prioritization of strategies. [See the presentation slides for more detail](#).

Review of December Subgroup Meeting (Candace Cronin, ICF)

Candace Cronin provided an overview of outcomes from the December Energy Subgroup meeting. During that meeting, the Working Group used Mural to brainstorm considerations for three categories, Technology & Action, Implementation, and Impact (Cost/GHG/Equity), for the following energy strategies:

- Strategy 1a: Increase energy efficiency and conservation in existing buildings (Residential)
- Strategy 1b: Increase energy efficiency and conservation in existing buildings (Commercial)
- Strategy 2: Pursue beneficial electrification in existing buildings
- Strategy 3: Implement green building standards for new buildings

See the [December Energy Subgroup Meeting page](#) for more detail, including meeting minutes, presentation slides, the WebEx recording, and the Mural board used for brainstorming.

Review of Strategies (Adam Agalloco, ICF)

Adam Agalloco provided an overview of strategies 4-6:

- Strategy 4: Increase renewable energy in grid mix
- Strategy 5: Increase production of onsite renewable energy
- Strategy 6: Increase energy supply from renewable natural gas (RNG), hydrogen, and power-to-gas

He noted that Strategy 6 is about increasing alternative energy supplies for the natural gas system, using renewable natural gas sources such as landfill or biomass based natural gas instead of fossil fuel-based natural gas.

Brainstorming on Mural Board (Candace Cronin, ICF)

Using Mural, the Working Group brainstormed considerations for three categories, *Technology & Action, Implementation, and Impact (Cost/GHG/Equity)*, for the following energy strategies 4-6. [Click here to view the closed Mural board.](#)

Question: Would it be OK to discuss voluntary actions at some point soon? That framework could be valuable as we brainstorm.

Response: The three implementation categories (what the County has authority to do now, what they might be able to do in the future, and State and Federal measures that support County work) are all based on voluntary actions.

Networking Break

Working Group members were given a 10-minute break for networking and discussion via the public and private chat functions of WebEx.

Review and Revise Strategies (Candace Cronin, ICF)

The Working Group reviewed the energy strategies and discussed the following questions:

- Should any strategies be revised, and how?
- Should anything be added?
- Should anything be removed?

Discussion:

Question: Do we need the results of the brainstorming session for Strategies 1-3 for this discussion?

Response: Yes, we are looking at all 6 energy strategies tonight to see if there are any changes or additions needed. If you have thoughts on other sectors (transportation, waste, forestry) you'll have a chance to provide input in the March meetings.

Comment: When you do a greenhouse gas inventory, you look at the whole stream (cradle-to-grave). We need to think about waste and things like refrigerants.

Response: Yes, that's the type of thing we want to be considering. We may want to consider this in each strategy.

Comment: I agree that dealing with refrigerants is very important. I also think the amount of time we had to spend on Strategy 3 was insufficient. Building standards and new building energy efficiency is essential.

Response: [The link to the December Mural Board](#) was provided for Working Group members to see what information Strategy 3 might be missing.

Comment: When ICF models this, you've got to maximize your energy efficiency first, and then go to renewables.

Response: Thank you. That's great feedback.

Comment: We need to understand a full range of impacts including costs in the modeling of these strategies. How do we decide on strategies before seeing costs and benefits?

Response: That is a good point, and as we talk about cost per ton of CO₂e it is important for us to think about the full range of benefits as well. We are recommending these strategies based partially on benchmarks from other plans. We will be developing some cost/benefit indicators for strategies before heading into the March meeting, but we want to ensure that people provide input and are comfortable with the strategies we select for more detailed modeling since this is a community-based plan. We should have a sense of what each category could do in terms of reducing GHG before prioritizing measures.

Comment: What is the boundary of this work? Will we be trying to impact things like meat consumption? How will the costs of these strategies be covered?

Response: We are looking at Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions, with some Scope 3 waste emissions.

Question: We need to forecast new builds to get a grasp of impacts, for Strategy #3 (Implement green building standards for new buildings) especially. Has the County forecast the expected new builds over the next decade?

Response: The way we typically model this type of measure is we look at population growth and additional housing and try to understand what energy use would look like with the status quo energy code versus alternatives.

Comment: What is meant by impacts?

Response: In part we are looking to you all to define that, and we will be taking comments in the Mural board and trying to distill them into categories to understand how to define impacts according to your ideas and the One Fairfax policy.

Comment: How has the pandemic impacted how people live and work, and how has that impacted our choices in strategies?

Response: Great point, and the team is keeping that in mind as well.

Comment: As we focus on climate impacts, we have to remember to evaluate the impacts of these strategies or other areas of the environment, in particular natural resources. On-site solar, for example, needs to be located somewhere, and we need to be sure it isn't doing significant damage to the natural environment.

Response: Those kinds of trade-offs are important to consider. There are some impacts that are specific to individual strategies that we need to be careful to attend to.

Comment: The Montgomery County Climate Action Plan is a great resource.

Setting the Stage for the Next Meeting (Candace Cronin, ICF)

Candace Cronin set the stage for the next meeting, in which Working Group members will discuss prioritization criteria and values, prioritize strategies and actions, and discuss sector-specific goals.

Wrap Up and Next Steps (Candace Cronin, ICF)

Candace Cronin reviewed meeting objectives and next steps, including the following:

- February 2021: Public survey and public feedback sessions
- March 2021: Third round of Working Group subgroup meetings to finalize and prioritize strategies and sector-specific goals.

Feedback was requested via the WebEx chat and cecapoutreach@fairfaxcounty.gov on the meeting, communications, and opportunities for participation. Comments received via WebEx chat are recorded in the WebEx transcript, [available here](#).