

EQAC 2022 Annual Report on the Environment

Priority Recommendations for Implementation

The 2022 ARE was presented to the Board of Supervisors Environmental Committee at its December 13, 2022 meeting. At that meeting, it was requested that the Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination work closely with EQAC to identify their top three to five priority recommendations and to develop proposals for implementation, with support from relevant county agencies, and report back to future Board of Supervisors Environmental Committee meetings in 2023.

EQAC members voted to select the following recommendations as priorities for implementation at their January 11, 2023 meeting (Table 1). The selected priorities were based on recommendations where staff support may make progress on implementation. Consequently, recommendations that require a Board action such as recommending additional staff or funding were removed from consideration.

Three of the four recommendations (Priority Recommendations 1-3) address a similar topic of improving the protection and conservation of natural resources in the county. While they are unique recommendations in the 2022 ARE, it is proposed that these three recommendations be addressed as a group. Specifically, there may be an opportunity to bring these recommendations to the attention of the Environmental Policy Review as part of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment process that is scheduled to start in 2023. This proposed approach is described in the table below.

The full 2022 ARE may be downloaded from the following website, https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/environment-energy-coordination/sites/environment-energy-coordination/files/Assets/ARE-all-chapters-v5--2022-11-01%20FINAL%20DRAFT%20-%20508%20compliant_A-1a.pdf.

Priority Recommendation Number	2022 ARE Reference Recommendation Number	Recommendation	Rationale	Proposed Approach for Implementation
1	1LU-2019.3	Improve Processes to Minimize Ecological Degradation from Development Pressure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See ARE 2021 Staff Response to recommendation • Supported by Resilient Fairfax, CECAP, Environmental Vision, Carbon Neutral Counties Declaration • Natural resources act as a sink for carbon, mitigating the impacts from climate change along with other co-benefits of addressing stormwater runoff and urban heat island, supporting ecosystem diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify EQAC members to lead effort, supported by OEEC • Meet with DPD and OEEC (Resilient Fairfax, CECAP) to identify how recommendation may be enveloped as part of Environmental Policy Review process • Request DPD (and LDS?) presentation on environmental considerations during land development process and regulations (by-right and entitlement).¹ • Build on case study examples to evaluate how current land development process impacts ecological resources (net loss, net gain, status quo).
2	3C-W-2021	Support and enhance policies and ordinances protecting streams, floodplains and designated Environmental Quality Corridors (EQCs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Response to 2021 ARE, the term “net environmental benefit” is used specifically in the Comprehensive Plan in the context if EQCs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate with above recommendation 1 where case study examples include EQCs • Desired outcome to quantify net environmental benefit through case study evaluations to determine if the current policies and regulations

¹ See Joint Board and EQAC meeting in July 9, 2019 and presentation by Barbara Byron, <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boardofsupervisors/board-supervisors-joint-meeting-environmental-quality-advisory-council-july-9-2019>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past county actions to strengthen policy plan amendments and site-specific plan amendments 	are sufficient or if changes via the Environmental Policy Review of proposed legislative changes are needed.
3	5PER-2021.2	Improve the Land Development Process by Prioritizing Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as #1 above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in Community of Trees meeting scheduled for 3/8/2023 & discuss opportunities challenges identified at 3/8/2023 EQAC meeting • Follow #1 above
4	6CE-2022.2	Adopt a Climate Plan for public consumption that shows how CECAP, Resilient Fairfax and other Climate related effort, such as VCEA, are being implemented and the progress being made towards achieving goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Action Dashboard will be updated first quarter 2023 and will be a user-friendly interface to provide updates on CECAP and Resilient Fairfax. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EQAC provide a sounding-board for Climate Action Dashboard and recommendations for future updates • Evaluate how to incorporate future ARE information as part of Dashboard given topics such as waste reduction, GHG emissions reductions and other overlap with objectives of Dashboard.