

# Fairfax County Community-Wide Energy and Climate Action Plan (CECAP) CECAP Report Draft Discussion Meeting Notes

Tuesday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Held electronically via WebEx and Mural

Fairfax County held a CECAP Working Group Meeting on June 8<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-8:30pm. The meeting was held electronically via WebEx.

Recordings of the meeting and meeting materials, including the full WebEx chat transcript, [are available online](#).

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

## Welcome and Overview (Michelle Paul Heelan, ICF and Maya Dhavale, FFX)

Legal requirements: A script was read to cover several legal requirements for holding electronic meetings. 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 CECAP Working Group's functions.

The meeting purpose was reviewed, focusing on the following goals:

- Provide a summary of the public feedback received in May.
- Provide an overview of the changes made to the draft report based on the May meetings.
- Discuss the natural resources sector-based goal.
- Discuss the inclusion of renewable natural gas in Strategy 6.
- Revisit the transportation EV sector-based goal percentage.
- Discuss your feedback on the draft of Part II of CECAP.
- Preview the designed templates for CECAP.

Michelle Paul Heelan then reviewed tips for using the WebEx chat function and ground rules for open discussion.

Slides are available here: [CECAP Working Group Meeting - June 8, 2021 | Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#)

#### Summary of Public Feedback from May (Maya Dhavale, FFX)

Maya Dhavale provided an overview of the CECAP process, and redefined key terms such as Goals, Strategies, and Actions. She noted that the Working Group is providing feedback on the full CECAP report, and in July the final draft will be presented to the BOS Environmental Committee.

Maya Dhavale also discussed how the input from the Working Group so far was reviewed and incorporated into revisions to the report. She then provided a summary of feedback received and how it was addressed in the report.

See the presentation slides for more detail: [CECAP Working Group Meeting - June 8, 2021 | Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#)

Question: The word equity was used throughout the report, but where was the input from diverse and non-English speaking communities?

- We translated our surveys and did targeted outreach in multiple languages. We also attempted to use some of the existing infrastructure within Fairfax County for outreach. We were somewhat successful in getting more information out to communities, but we didn't have a lot of participation. We hope that the return to in person events and relationship building will improve our ability to engage different communities in the implementation phase.

Question: Does "unknown" equity impacts mean it is not possible to know? How do we brainstorm what the impacts could be? Is uncertain a better term?

- We were trying to capture the fact that there are so many variables with equity it is difficult to quantify. We wanted to acknowledge that, and the word "uncertain" could also work for that.

#### Natural Resources Goal Discussion & Verbal Vote (Adam Agalloco and Michelle Paul Heelan, ICF)

Michelle Paul Heelan reviewed aspects of goal setting and how to set a "SMART" goal. Maya Dhavale reviewed input on Strategy 12 and suggested a new action (12c) to address concerns shared about the natural resources strategy. The suggestion for Action 12c was, "Cross-disciplinary county staff team to analyze existing programs and policies across county to evaluate where climate change and natural resources intersect, and what can be added or strengthened to create a comprehensive climate (mitigation plus adaptation/resiliency) approach."

Additionally, Michelle Paul Heelan facilitated a discussion on a sector goal for natural resources.

Comment: A tree canopy goal is a measurable goal that is indicative of the broader natural resources strategy. It is something that came up as a point of interest in the Mural board.

Comment: One potential goal is to expand the tree canopy to 60% with minimum 40% tree canopy coverage in every census block by 2030, with a goal of minimum 50% coverage in every block 2050.

Comment: It would be good to acknowledge as the amount (increase) in impervious surface in the county, makes it's harder to meet these goals. Connection to land use here is important.

- Exactly, and having a blanket goal for every district is not necessarily equitable because there is preexisting development that we can't necessarily change. It is important to target areas that have opportunities as well as vulnerable areas to ensure an equitable approach. These goals are set as a minimum not a ceiling, and as we move forward, we can update goals.

Comment: This has to be tied into GHG reduction. The co-benefits are great, but we need to stay focused on GHG mitigation.

- We did model tree canopy in the GHG reduction pathway modeling.
- The Natural Resources strategy results in GHG reductions of 250,748 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2050. This strategy is anticipated to account for 2.9% of emissions reductions needed to achieve the long-term carbon neutrality goal by 2050.

Comment: Isn't including the goal of 50% coverage in every block equity?

- That isn't taking into consideration where vulnerable populations are located, or where existing developments are. An analysis to overlay the tree canopy with the vulnerable populations would allow us to be more targeted.

Comment: I would recommend language that identifies the census tracts with less tree canopy and work with the local residents to identify where, what, how to plant so that it makes sense to the residents and reduces GHG emissions by absorbing carbon.

- We did make the determination to include a sector-based goal, and that equity should be a major component. At this point it is looking like we will need a meeting on Thursday so let's move on to the report discussion and come back to this having pulled together a proposal using the recommended language/ideas here and take a vote.

### [Inclusion of Renewable Natural Gas in Strategy 6 \(Adam Agalloco and Michelle Paul Heelan, ICF\)](#)

Adam Agalloco provided an overview of renewable natural gas and how it is used. He noted that renewable natural gas strategy was de-prioritized through the

strategy selection process, but that it is worthwhile to keep in the report because it is an important pathway for hard to decarbonize buildings.

Comment: What is power to gas? It is not explained anywhere in the report. Although it is not prioritized there could be a lot more discussion about using biogas or biodigesters for waste rather than just burning it, so it also fits into waste management.

- Thanks, and we can add in power to gas definitions. Power-to-gas refers to the process of converting renewable energy to a gas, such as renewable hydrogen or natural gas (methane). We did not include power-to-gas in our modeling; our modeling is based on renewable natural gas generated from sources like landfill gas.

Comment: Renewable natural gas is not renewable energy; it is smart resource recovery.

- The current proposal is to retain this and rename it, as well as to say that the Working Group is leaving it in but that it was deprioritized, and all other options should be explored.

#### Revisit Transportation EV Sector-Based Goal Percentage (Michelle Paul Heelan, ICF)

Adam Agalloco provided an overview of the suggested revision to the electric vehicle (EV) goal. The revision proposed increasing the percentage in the goal from at least 9% to at least 15%. He noted that it would take us from about 700,000 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> annually in 2050 up to almost double that. Michelle Paul Heelan facilitated a discussion about the proposed revision, which was broadly supported by the Working Group members. The final goal selected was Increase plug-in electric vehicles (PHEVs) and battery electric vehicles (BEVs) to at least 15% of all light-duty vehicle registrations by 2030.

#### Feedback on Draft of Part II of CECAP (Michelle Paul Heelan, ICF)

Comment: There are best practices throughout section 7, and there are also goals and subsector goals. What is not clear is are we recommending that they do all of those in order to reach the GHG reductions associated with each section? There is a disconnect between the good ideas in the best practices and the potential GHG reductions.

- Really what we are saying is that all of these actions, and all of the best practices associated with these actions, need to happen to achieve these goals. With a goal of carbon neutrality there is no shortcut to the work outlined there. What is challenging there is what comes first, and part of that depends on resource allocation and funding and things that will come during the implementation process. What we may need to clarify is that all the best

practices there are really meant to be implemented in order to meet the goals.

Comment: Looking at Figure 4, the chart shows them all flowing in and still not reaching our goal. Why have we not considered moving all the strategy implementation up five years; we would be meeting the goal until 2045 at which point, we would have run out of things to do by 2050.

- We are already hitting technical potentials by 2050. There may be ways that Fairfax could implement some of these things faster, but it will ultimately depend on available resources, technical potential, as well as emerging technologies.

Comment: Telecommuting can have economic impacts, and we should also consider the fact that a lot of tax revenue comes from building taxes in Fairfax County.

Comment: I don't see a quantification of reduction in vehicles miles traveled (VMT); I know some of us asked for a goal for that, but I don't see it in there.

- Ok. Showing a percentage decrease by 2030 and 2040 would be helpful and that is something we can pull out from the modeling.

[Preview of Designed Templates for CECAP \(Michelle Paul Heelan, ICF\)](#)

This discussion was postponed until the Thursday meeting.

[Wrap Up & Next Steps \(Michelle Paul Heelan, ICF and Maya Dhavale, FFX\)](#)

Michelle Paul Heelan closed out the meeting and noted that the discussion will be resumed at the next meeting on Thursday, June 10<sup>th</sup> from 6-8:30pm.