

To: Council Members, City of Falls Church

March 5, 2019

Subject: 2018 Annual Report

This report summarizes activities of the City's Environmental Sustainability Council (ESC) in 2018. The ESC advises the City Council on a range of environmental issues affecting our City. It meets monthly and has nine positions, of which seven are currently filled. In 2018, Cory Weiss was the Chair of the ESC, and Thomas Cash was Vice Chair. This year the ESC has three high-school student participants.

Three ESC sub-committees also advance environmental progress in Falls Church: the Energy Transition Sub-Committee (ETS), led by Tim Stevens; the Education Task Group (ETG), led by Sarah Bayldon; and the Habitat Restoration Task Group (HRTG), led by Melissa Teates. Membership in these sub-committees is open to any city resident, and there are 13 non-ESC member participants. Kate Walker, the City's Environmental Programs Coordinator, serves as staff liaison for the ESC, ETS and ETG. Jeremy Edwards, from the City's Green Space crew is staff liaison for the HRTG. See Appendix A for an organizational chart as of year-end 2018.

In 2018, the ESC worked towards supporting the goals we adopted in 2016, which can be found in Appendix B. Once the Natural Resources Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is updated, the ESC will likely adjust its own goals to support the advancement of what we hope will be a robust new environmental sustainability strategy for the City of Falls Church. Following are highlights from 2018.

- **Natural Resources Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan:** The ESC dedicated significant effort towards contributing to the update of the Natural Resources Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. This included several workshop sessions, involving both ESC members and members of the public who attended ESC meetings, on the high level topics that should be addressed in the chapter, as well as goals and top priority action items. We also supported public engagement on the plan update, including by participating in the August public meeting and supporting outreach by joining the Environmental Program Coordinator's booth at the Saturday farmer's market. We submitted formal input to the chapter update in January of this year, which is attached in Appendix C. Our top priority action items are highlighted on page 8.
- **Sustainable Building Policy:** The ESC continued working on a proposed Sustainable Building Policy in the early part of the year, including drafting proposed changes to the special exceptions process to create stronger incentives for high LEED certified or Net Zero buildings. After the City began work on updating the Natural Resources chapter of the comprehensive plan, the ESC shelved further work on a Sustainable Building Policy. Our hope is that the City will include development of a Sustainable Building Policy as a short-term goal in the Natural Resources chapter, thereby enabling City staff to dedicate resources to the development of such a policy, including any attendant ordinance changes. The ESC intends to continue work on advancing a Sustainable Building Policy once the Natural Resources chapter has been updated. In the absence of such a policy,

the ESC continued to provide input to enhance the sustainability of projects in the Special Exceptions process, including the Founders Row project

- **West End Economic Development Project RFP:** The ESC advised the City to adopt robust sustainability and resilience goals in the RFP for the West End Economic Development Project. The ESC's work included hosting two expert panel discussions on sustainable and resilient development: one in February, featuring developers of regional sustainable projects, and one in May, featuring experts on sustainable energy and water strategies. In addition, the ESC hosted a tour of Washington DC's Canal Park as an example of the value that sustainable green spaces can provide to a municipality. The ESC was pleased that the final RFDP included the following goals in the project's requirements: LEED Gold certified buildings, LEED ND certified community, and stormwater design that includes green infrastructure and tree canopy, in addition to walkability and bike infrastructure. We were also encouraged to see that the Desired Features included low Energy Usage Intensity, Net Zero design, and resilient design. Given the high likelihood that temperatures and precipitation will increase during the useful life of this project, however, we would have preferred to see a more robust incorporation of climate resilience goals. The ESC hopes the City determines, as short-term action items in the Natural Resources chapter of the comprehensive plan, that it will conduct a climate risk assessment and develop a climate resilience plan.
- **Sustainable mobility:** The ESC continues to encourage low or no-carbon modes of travel. The ESC hosted a joint meeting with the Citizens Advisory Council on Transportation in April, during which we explored the potential for reviving a shuttle service in Falls Church. We heard from Councilmember David Snyder about the history of the George bus and heard a presentation from an AECOM engineer about the current state of the autonomous shuttle market. In May, the ESC hosted a tour of the Local Motors facility in National Harbor to learn more about the current technical and regulatory state of autonomous shuttles and the potential to adopt these shuttles in Falls Church. In addition, the ESC supported the City's initiative to launch a bike share program and supported the City's grant application for a transportation upgrade to the Broad Street and Haycock intersection.
- **Solid waste:** The ESC hosted a conversation with (now former) solid waste manager Chris McGough about Zero Waste goals in other U.S. municipalities and explored the potential of adopting such a goal in Falls Church, which is encouraged by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government's most recent Climate Regional Climate and Energy Action Plan. Mr. McGough advised the ESC that the City's solid waste management plan will expire in 2020. The ESC expressed interest in developing a Zero Waste goal and plan for the City.

Throughout the year, the ESC was pleased to hear updates from city staff and citizens on a range of other issues, including stormwater management, FCCPS Daycare's Zero Waste day initiative, urban gardening and Scout projects. The ESC also provided input to the City's legislative agenda as well as the Affordable Living Policy.

The **Education Task Group** continued supporting the Operation EarthWatch environmental education program. Approximately 170 students participated in Operation EarthWatch in the 2017-2018 school year (140 completed all 6 month's activities and earned a t-shirt). The Education Task Group closed out the 2017-2018 school year with a successful Operation EarthWatch 25th Anniversary Party in May 2018. Over 70 students and family members attended the party, which was funded by donations from 11 local businesses and nonprofits. Operation EarthWatch continued operating in the three elementary schools (Mt. Daniel, Thomas Jefferson, and Saint James) and the Mary Riley Styles Library in the 2018-2019 school year. Newly offered starting in October 2018 was the option of online submission, which appears to have increased participation by 10-15%.

After a year of discussions internally and with external partners, in November 2018 the ESC endorsed a recommendation by the City's Environmental Programs Coordinator and the Operation EarthWatch volunteers to transfer administration of Operation EarthWatch from the City to a nonprofit partner. Five (5) nonprofit partners in Falls Church were considered and scored against a Decision-Making Rubric that had been earlier approved by the ESC. The Village Preservation and Improvement Society (VPIS) was recommended as the new partner. In December 2018 VPIS took over fiscal management of the program, and fundraising letters announced the partnership and directed all donations be made through VPIS. VPIS/Operation EarthWatch and the City will partner to ensure that the Program contributes to educating Falls Church residents and students about the City's Environmental Vision and Goals (in 2018 the Program focused on recycling, composting, and encouraging families to appreciate, protect, and nurture City parks, open spaces, and waterways).

The **Energy Transition Sub-Committee** continued its work on energy efficiency and renewable energy issues affecting the City. The goals of the committee continue from previous years as follows:

- Reduction in community-wide greenhouse gas emissions
- Expansion of renewable energy
- Recommendation of positions to City Council on energy issues
- Dissemination of information on energy issues
- Interaction and cooperation with other groups in the City (e.g. boards and commissions, civic groups such as VPIS, etc.), with neighboring jurisdictions, and regional organizations (Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and Northern Virginia Regional Commission)

2018 highlights include:

- Completion of city-wide greenhouse gas inventory and presentation to City Council
- Assess NVRC proposal for Large Scale Renewable Energy concept used by large businesses
- Promote conversion to LED streetlights in city

- Continued support of geothermal, net zero-ready and LEED Gold for GMHS
- Establish action plan for expanded use of EVs in the city (including detailed work on charge stations for City Hall, and parking lot behind Clare & Don's, personal property tax abatement for EV owners, pursue funding from DEQ for EV school buses, etc.)
- Education and implementation of Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy program, including background research on development of a city ordinance
- Promotion of Solar Freedom legislation in City's legislative program
- Advocate LEED Silver certification for MRS library
- Continued support of Solarize program, and background research on SolSmart
- Analyze Dominion's "Community Solar" offering for possible recommendation
- Provide input to Climate & Air section of Chapter 5 Comprehensive Plan update

The **Habitat Restoration Task Group** conducted a total of nine community planting and invasive removals projects in 2018: four in the spring and five in the fall, with approximately 110 volunteers participating. A new native display garden, a Girl Scout Gold Project complete with a brochure, was successfully planted in Cherry Hill Park across from the library. The garden highlights plants that are attractive and would thrive in residential yards. The HRTG worked with many groups, including the Arlington Master Naturalists, local girl scout troops, Earth Sangha, and the George Mason High School environmental club, to increase volunteers for our events.

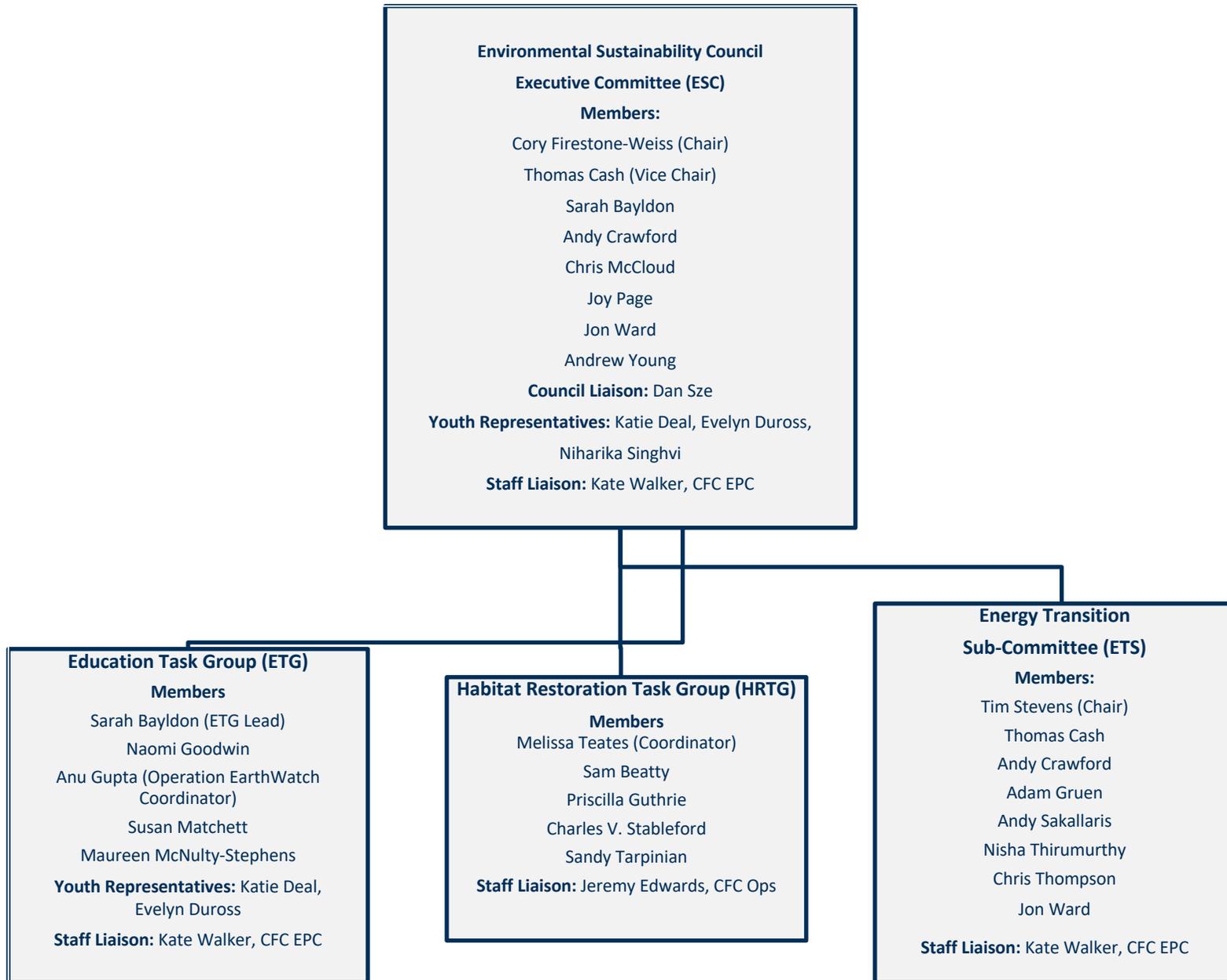
In 2019, the ESC and its sub-committees look forward to continuing to work towards a sustainable and resilient future for Falls Church City.

Cory Firestone Weiss

Chair, Environmental Sustainability Council

Cc: Members of the ESC

Appendix A – ESC Organizational Chart as of December 2018



Appendix B – ESC Vision and Goals

City of Falls Church Environmental Sustainability Council Vision October 2016

The Falls Church City’s Environmental Sustainability Council (ESC) seeks to help the City achieve the environmental vision set forth by City Council:

Falls Church City Council Environmental Vision

The people of Falls Church believe protecting and nurturing a healthy natural environment is one of their highest callings. The city's public and private development reflect this belief in tangible ways. Parks, open spaces, and clean waterways are valued as recreational, ecological, and economic resources. Environmentally friendly residential and commercial buildings throughout the city incorporate nationally accepted benchmarks for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings. The city integrates sustainability into all of its operations, including a strong emphasis on reducing dependence on fossil fuels.

The ESC believes that achieving this environmental vision is a necessary component of the long-term economic growth of our city and well-being of our citizens. The committee aims for the City to build on its record as a local and state-wide leader on environmental issues.

To continue bringing the City’s Environmental Vision to life, the ESC believes the City should make a concerted effort to meet or exceed the five environmental goals set forth by the Village Preservation and Improvement Society in its *Five Environmental Goals for Falls Church: A Progress Report for 2015*. The ESC will help the City target the following goals:

1. Maintain existing levels of tree canopy by 2025¹. As of 2016, tree canopy is 46%.
2. Increase residential solid waste recycling to 75% by 2020, from a baseline of 68% in 2016.
3. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20% below the 2008 baseline of 138,000 tons CO₂e by 2020².
4. Increase effective pervious surface to 65% by 2020 from a 2012 baseline of 59% to reduce stormwater runoff.
5. Achieve LEED Silver ratings for all new and 15% of existing large commercial and multi-family residential buildings by 2020, and achieve LEED or equivalent third party certification for all new development or major redevelopment of single family homes. As of September 2016, the City of Falls Church has five LEED certified commercial or multi-family residential buildings. As of 2016, 20 single family homes have participated in the City’s Green Homes Award Program, which recognizes third party energy certifications.

¹ VPIS sets a goal of 40% tree canopy by 2025. ESC prefers to maintain current canopy levels, which are higher.

² Based on data gathered by City of Falls Church staff and volunteers on the Energy Efficiency Climate Change Task Group.

Appendix B – ESC Vision and Goals

The ESC will help the City to make progress towards the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government’s Climate Energy and Environment Policy Committee Action Plan. The City should leverage any resources that MWCOG or others may provide to help meet our environmental goals.

In addition, the ESC will help the City monitor progress and seek to achieve best regional practice with respect to other environmental concerns, such as invasive plants, light pollution or the loss of pollinators.

Finally, the City should report progress against these goals on an annual basis along with plans for making progress in the future.

The ESC will develop periodic work plans to guide its work advising the City on how it may achieve these goals, with a specific focus on:

- Ensuring that public facilities, including the schools, are designed, built, and operated in a manner consistent with the City’s goals, including those outlined in this vision statement.
- Achieving high environmental standards in all new development within the City, both large and small scale.
- Encouraging the attainment of high environmental standards among existing facilities within the City, including commercial and residential.
- Educating Falls Church residents and businesses on the value of achieving these goals and how they may do so.

ESC will collaborate with Falls Church City residents, the City Council and City government staff, businesses and organizations such as the Village Preservation and Improvement Society and others to help the City achieve its vision. Its members will approach their work with mutual respect and a commitment to serving the public interest.

Appendix C – ESC Input to Update of Natural Resources Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan

ESC Contributions to Chapter 5 Natural Resources and the Environment

Bulleted items are Objectives under the listed Goals. Action items are numbered.

Prioritized Goals/Action Items (most are repeated within text below)

1. Develop a Green Building Policy
 - a. Update the Special Exceptions process to incentivize green buildings
 - b. Encourage sustainable, energy efficient design in all building sectors, including single family residential
2. Develop a sustainable energy policy for public buildings, including schools, that:
 - a. Regularly tracks and publicly discloses energy performance of public buildings
 - b. Installs renewable energy systems on all public buildings, including schools
3. Conduct a climate risk assessment and develop a climate resilience plan
4. Incorporate climate change forecasts (increases in heat and precipitation) into:
 - a. Stormwater infrastructure planning
 - b. Building standards/codes
 - c. Emergency management planning
5. Develop a green infrastructure plan
6. Increase the amount of greenspace as our population increases
7. Provide or promote programs to encourage commuters and employers to use alternatives to single occupancy vehicles
8. Continue to expand bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to reduce dependence on cars
9. Adopt a zero waste goal
10. Launch a Community Environment Network or other program to engage the Falls Church community on environmental issues, including through public forums to educate the community and encourage environmentally responsible actions by residents
11. Actively promote and enforce anti-idling regulations
12. Provide an annual report on the City's sustainability performance

Note: This chapter should incorporate all goals targeted for 100% adoption in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government's most recent [Regional Climate and Energy Action Plan](#).

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CLIMATE AND AIR

Goal: Increase the City's resilience to the impacts of climate change.

- The City explicitly evaluates and mitigates climate risks to the city's social and physical infrastructure (community members; all new major construction (infrastructure and buildings, city-owned and private), etc.)

Actions:

- 1) conduct a climate risk assessment (short-term)
- 2) develop a climate resilience plan

Goal: Reduce citywide 2050 greenhouse gas emissions by 80% from baseline 2005

- Increase the proportion of energy sourced from clean and renewable supplies.
 - By 2025, 30% of municipal building energy needs will be sourced by renewable energy
 - Incentivize renewable energy deployment on private property

Actions:

1. Install renewable energy systems on local government property [COG 2-a] including schools
2. Provide or promote incentives for building-level renewable technologies or energy storage systems. [COG 2-b]
 - a. Implement a Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy program to lower the cost of financing energy improvements for private building owners
 - b. Encourage use of Power Purchase Agreements
3. Provide public education and outreach on renewable technologies. [COG 2-c] by continuing to support Solarize and identifying other opportunities
4. Support cost-effective renewable energy incentives and financing mechanisms for distributed generation at utility, state, and national levels. [COG 2-d]
5. Achieve and maintain EPA green power partnership for government operations. [COG 2-f]
6. Explore teaming with other jurisdictions to invest in solar farms (referred to as Large Off-Site Renewable Energy) that permit the City to obtain credit for the solar energy generated

- Increase energy efficiency of public facilities and operations, including schools

Actions:

1. Prepare GHG emission inventories and reduction plans for government operations. / Develop methodology for quickly quantifying last-year emissions so that City staff can monitor progress vs. planned policy effects.
2. Regularly track/benchmark and publicly disclose energy performance at government facilities
3. Prepare an energy plan for local government facilities and operations.
4. Perform walk-through energy audits of local government facilities and implement recommendations.

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5. Implement employee challenges or education programs on energy and sustainability policies and practices at work and home.
6. Fully deploy high efficiency public lighting solutions.
7. Explore use of Energy Performance Contracting to improve energy efficiency in buildings
(Actions 1-5 are from COG (1a-e), with goal of 100% implementation by COG jurisdictions)

- Encourage energy efficiency throughout the City of Falls Church, including businesses, residents and non-profits.

Actions:

1. Launch citywide educational campaign to lower citywide energy use (including e.g., green business or home challenges, awards, etc.) to encourage energy efficiency.

Goal: Reduce air pollution (including GHG emissions) through transportation upgrades and strategies.

- [Increase use of mass transit] The City will actively encourage the use of mass and shared transportation as a method of reducing congestion, air pollution, and GHG emissions.

Actions:

1. Continued partnership with WMATA
2. Conduct a study of opportunities for increased shared transport / last mile solutions
3. Provide or promote travel demand management programs (e.g., Commuter Connections) to encourage citizens to take alternative commute options and to help employers offer alternative commute options to their employees. [COG 3-q]
4. Continue supporting transit-oriented development

- Reduce emissions from public fleet and employee travel

Actions:

1. Adopt a municipal green fleet policy or fleet management plan aimed at improving fleet efficiency and reducing emissions of GHGs and other pollutants. [COG 3-a]
2. Adopt anti-idling policies for public fleets and off-road equipment. [COG 3-b]
3. Incentivize or encourage alternative trip modes for work trips as an alternative to expanding fleet (e.g., car share membership, bike sharing programs, transit incentives, etc.). [COG 3-d]
4. Offer a commute options program for government employees (e.g., telework, flex-time, alternative work schedule, car pool, van pool, guaranteed ride home, bike/pedestrian, or financial incentive). [COG 3-p]

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- [Increase use of Electric Vehicles] The city will encourage/incentivize/influence the transition to electric vehicles across its municipal fleet school buses, City fleets) as well as throughout the commercial and residential communities
Actions:
 1. Conduct a study of EV infrastructure needs and develop a plan to expand EV charging infrastructure in the City
 2. Add charging equipment and infrastructure to public sector fueling facilities. Retrofit garages and refueling facilities, as needed [COG 3-c w/ alt fuels deleted].
 3. Update comprehensive, small area, and development plans to provide guidance for EV and shared transit infrastructure locations. [COG 3-k, modified to replace alt fuel w/ shared transit]
 4. Provide or promote incentives for electric vehicles and charging stations [COG 3-l]
 5. Conduct a study to evaluate the risks and opportunities of Autonomous Vehicles, and adopt a policy stating that AV use in the city shall be electrified and shared [longer term action]

- The City will become more walkable and bikeable
Actions:
 1. Adopt a bicycle and pedestrian plan that works towards providing convenient accessibility and an interconnected system to reduce reliance on automobiles. [COG 3-r]
 2. Continue to expand bike infrastructure (improve bicycle network, capital bikeshare, etc.)
 3. Program crosswalks and traffic lights for improved safety and convenience of pedestrians and cyclists.
 4. Prioritize integration of walkable spaces into future development projects within the city
 5. Ensure that school children can safely walk or bicycle to school and encourage non-motorized transport to school

- Reduce community exposure to air pollution
Actions:
 1. Actively promote and enforce community-wide anti-idling regulations (adopted locally or by state) [COG 3-j].
 2. Conduct an assessment of vulnerable populations' exposure to air quality health risks and develop a plan in response to findings
 3. Support MWCOG Air Quality initiatives

Appendix C – ESC Input to Update of Natural Resources Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan

BUILT ENVIRONMENT –

Buildings & infrastructure contribute to CFC enviro goals

- Improve the sustainability performance of existing buildings. By 2030, retrofit 100% of existing commercial and multi-family buildings to achieve net-zero energy standards
Actions:
 1. Build public private partnerships to expand best practices for building operations and maintenance
 2. Provide local energy efficiency incentives to residents and businesses, including Implement Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy program to lower the cost of financing energy improvements for private building owners, and promote federal, state, and utility incentives. Ensure opportunities are accessible by vulnerable populations. * [COG 1-j with CPACE added]
 3. Implement residential and commercial engagement programs (e.g., green business or home challenges, awards, etc.) to encourage energy efficiency. [COG 1-k]
 4. Continue to support and expand programs that implement energy efficiency improvements for affordable housing (e.g., Home Performance with ENERGY STAR, weatherization, etc.). [COG 1-m]

- Apply the highest standards of green building design for new construction. (By 2030, meet net-zero energy use standards with all new construction projects.)
Actions:
 1. Incorporate high performance building goals and strategies in into special exceptions process and small area plans [COG 1-q modified]
 2. Develop a green building policy to incentivize attainment of Net Zero energy and/or higher levels of LEED construction, with third party certification, for new commercial, mixed use and multi-family residential construction [mix of COG 1-r and 1-s]. Encourage Net Zero energy and sustainable, energy efficient design in residential construction.
 3. Monitor ongoing utilities usage in new developments to confirm it is meeting modeled / expected / promised performance.
 4. Update Special Exceptions process to incorporate climate, waste, water and urban forest goals
 5. Apply climate resilience strategies to new construction

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WASTE

Zero Waste is a COG goal. Zero Waste is set of principles, defined by Zero Waste International Alliance and adopted by the US Green Building Council for certification of individual facilities, that seeks to minimize waste generation and maximize diversion, usually to about 80% - 90% (rather than 100% reduction). **Zero Waste Community Principles** can be found [here](#). The EPA maintains a list of U.S. municipalities that have adopted Zero Waste goals (with varying definitions), including a [resolution](#) by the **U.S. Conference of Mayors** supporting Zero Waste principles. **Washington DC's Zero Waste DC** plan has a [goal](#) of 80% diversion. **Arlington County Board** approved a [resolution](#) in 2015 to develop a Zero Waste Plan

- Maintain the City's leadership position within the State of Virginia with respect to recycling, composting, and overall waste diversion by developing and implementing a Zero Waste goal (e.g. increasing diversion to 80-90%)
- Reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions associated with municipal waste in alignment with City's 80% GHG reduction by 2050 goal

Actions:

1. Hire a consultant to assess city's waste policies/practices/generation baseline and develop a zero-waste plan (including incentives for advancing zero waste-related goal).
2. Expand education and outreach initiatives on zero waste and what this means.
3. Increase outreach to Falls Church business community to increase diversion rates and increase enforcement of recycling by commercial operations
4. Implement Zero Waste goals across all public facilities (including schools)
5. Integrate Zero Waste certification goals into Special Exceptions process for new commercial, mixed use and residential development
6. Institute a quarterly audit of the City's waste collections to identify opportunities for improve and compliance.
7. Expand City's composting program to include 75% of residential properties. Devise a solution for commercial and multi-family property participation.

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STORMWATER

See climate resilience; see built environment.

Current stormwater plans do not factor in projected increases in precipitation and extreme weather events from climate change, posing financial and physical risks to City. See [NYC Climate Resiliency Design Guidelines](#) for practical approach to evaluating climate risks to infrastructure, including cost-benefit analysis of design interventions. [Green infrastructure](#), e.g. trees, rain gardens, bioswales, contributes to stormwater goals as well as other Falls Church goals (tree canopy, healthy community, economic development, GHG reduction).

Goal: Implement a climate-resilient watershed management plan

- Improve storm water retention capabilities by considering forward-looking projections of precipitations increases due to climate change
- Increase effective pervious surface to 65% by 2030 from a 2012 baseline of xx
- Reduce the potential for stormwater threats to public health, safety and property, considering projections of increased precipitation and extreme weather events
- Reduce the impacts of urban development and redevelopment on local streams, the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay
- Comply with all relevant state and federal regulations

Actions:

1. Update Stormwater Management Plan, reflecting current City boundaries, Chesapeake Bay regulations and projected increases in precipitation and extreme weather events due to climate change.
2. Develop a Green Infrastructure plan, identifying and implementing opportunities to install trees and other low impact design stormwater best management practices across the city [relates to COG 4-e]
3. Integrate stormwater goals into Special Exceptions process, incentivizing SITES certification and maximizing on-site stormwater capture in new commercial and mixed-use development³
4. Review the effectiveness of the city's current storm water tax on real estate and recommend adjustments to drive policy goals
5. Identify additional funding sources to encourage green infrastructure retrofits (e.g. NVSWCD CAP, SLAF, grant funding, impact bonds)
6. Protect and restore local streams
7. Convert floodplain properties to protected areas and buffer zones to enhance stormwater retention.
8. Provide ongoing public outreach, education and volunteer monitoring opportunities
9. Comply with MS4 permit and Chesapeake Bay TMDL regulations
10. Leverage land-use in flood plains and with respect to SWM for resilience.

³ SITES certification encourages green infrastructure and sustainable land use. <http://www.sustainablesites.org/sites-right-tool-green-infrastructure>

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11. Incentives for flood resilience on private property.
12. Increase water efficient landscaping on residential, commercial, and public parcels throughout the city.

Goal: Future-proof water and sewer infrastructure to reduce energy usage and future infrastructure demands.

- By 2030, City will reduce water consumption by [??%].
- Ensure water supply & sewer capacity supports future population growth and increased precipitation

Actions:

1. Develop sanitary sewer and water distribution master plans
2. Set a water conservation goal for all public/municipal facilities, including schools and publicly owned land.
3. Develop education programs to inform residents on how to conserve water in their homes and properties.
4. Incentivize new commercial/MUD projects to pursue water conservation credits while pursuing LEED certification. Note that PACE financing can be used to support efforts to increase water efficiency.
5. Discuss with Fairfax County Water Authority their long-term plans for distribution upgrades and whether FCWA would provide financial or other incentives for reducing total or peak water consumption in the City.

URBAN FOREST & BIODIVERSITY

Trees for clean air & urban heat island <https://global.nature.org/content/healthyair>

Goal: Protect and expand mature tree cover and sustainable landscapes, creating integrated natural areas across the city

- Maintain tree canopy coverage of at least 45%.
- Preserve mature tree canopy.
- Protect and expand parks & open green spaces within the city

Actions:

1. Develop an urban forestry management plan.
2. Adopt a formal policy that only native plants and sustainable landscaping practices will be used on public property with the only exceptions being “historic” plantings at Cherry Hill Farmhouse and Frady Park
3. Review current zoning policies for new development and re-development in regard to tree coverage to see if developers and property owners can be better incentivized to keep mature trees and install sustainable landscaping, e.g. incentivize SITES certified landscapes.
4. Develop innovative ways to increase green spaces on commercial and mixed-use properties, e.g. integrate SITES certification into Special Exceptions process,
5. Incentivize contribution to Stormwater Fund to compensate for lost ecosystem services

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6. Re-zone all parks to be consistent with their uses.
7. Re-zone all paper streets to be consistent with their designated land use as parks/trails.
8. Put signage and trails on paper streets to ensure the public knows they are available as pedestrian and bike-way
9. Implement plan(s) to preserve and enhance ecologically valuable green spaces (such as forests, wetlands, stream buffers) in urban, suburban and rural areas (e.g., green infrastructure plan, natural resource management plan, or green space plan). [COG 4-e] / identify and purchase properties near parks to extend green space, especially properties in the flood zone.
10. Use sustainable landscaping practices on all public property and incentivize such practices on private property
11. maintain Tree City USA designation [COG4-g]
12. Establish or expand urban heat island mitigation programs. [COG 4-i]
13. Create a fund specifically for tree enhancement

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & WELL-BEING

Goal: Transparently and equitably engage and educate all members of the community, including residents, businesses, non-profits and schools, on environmental issues.

Actions:

1. Provide meaningful engagement forums and community leadership development opportunities to enhance citizens' knowledge on the local environmental planning process, how to influence environmental decision-making, and how to access data, technical assistance, and resources. [COG 7-h]
2. Encourage and support environmental education programs in Falls Church City schools, including Operation Earth Watch
3. Integrate equity and health considerations and strategies into climate and energy policies, plans, and programs. Identify impacts of policies and programs to underserved populations and communities and how to maximize positive impacts and minimize negative impacts. [COG 7-c]
4. Report at least annually on progress against environmental goals annually and share real time data when feasible.
5. Create organizational changes, such as an Office of Sustainability, to drive better coordination and communication across city government offices with respect to environmental goals.

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Goal: Build a healthy, walkable, resilient, community.

While the City was named US News & World Report’s healthiest city, we scored quite low on air quality. We also face [health & mortality risks](#) due to increasing temperatures from climate change.

Actions:

1. Identify environmental health risks to Falls Church City residents (e.g. air quality, light pollution, increasing temperatures) and develop a strategy to mitigate those risks
2. Enhance access to parks and open spaces for all residents
3. Provide support or incentives for urban agriculture (e.g., edible landscaping, school and community gardens, urban farming [COG 4-k])
4. Encourage commercial and institutional buildings in Falls Church to achieve WELL Certification, which evaluates the impacts of building design on human health and well-being.

Appendix D – ETS Goals

The goals of the Energy Transition Sub-committee are:

- Reduction in community-wide energy use
- Expansion of renewable energy
- Recommendation of positions to City Council on energy issues
- Dissemination of information on energy issues
- Interaction and cooperation with other groups in the City (e.g. boards and commissions, civic groups such as VPIS, etc.), with neighboring jurisdictions, and regional organizations (Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and Northern Virginia Regional Commission)