

# City of Alexandria Energy and Climate Change Action Plan (ECCAP)

Community Engagement Strategy

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## Background

The City of Alexandria is undergoing a process to update the City's Energy and Climate Action Plan (ECCAP) to guide the City's response to climate change impacts and environmental emergencies in alignment with the [Environmental Action Plan 2040 \(EAP2040\)](#). The EAP2040's targets include reducing community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 and 80 to 100% by 2050, supported by significant state and federal contributions. The ECCAP builds upon existing City energy, greenhouse gas reduction, and climate action efforts, and leverages regional priority actions identified in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) [2030 Climate and Energy Action Plan](#), as well as the climate action planning efforts underway or completed by the City's regional and national peers.

On September 22, the Alexandria City Council approved [Resolution 2958](#) to establish an Energy and Climate Change Task Force (ECCTF). The ECCTF serves to provide guidance to the City of Alexandria during the process to update the ECCAP. This guidance includes providing feedback on analyses of community greenhouse gas emissions; understanding climate change vulnerabilities, and public health and economic implications; and evaluating climate adaptation opportunities. Moreover, the Task Force will support the City's identification, evaluation, and prioritization of recommendations for policy, programmatic, or technology actions to achieve specific, science-based emissions reductions consistent with the [Environmental Action Plan 2040 \(EAP2040\)](#)'s targets and goals.

A community engagement process accompanies and supports the ECCAP's update. This community engagement process serves to engage with residents, businesses, institutions, and other community stakeholders to identify, prioritize, and coordinate the needs, opportunities, and concerns of the Alexandria community in context of equitable climate mitigation, and adaptation and resiliency actions. This Community Engagement Strategy (CES) provides a framework for communication and public engagement throughout the City's ECCAP update process, including *informing, consulting, collaborating, and working through a shared decision-making* process. This CES outlines community engagement goals, stakeholders, and strategies to engage the Alexandria public and solicit feedback.

## Community Engagement Goals

The City is committed to providing an open and inclusive community engagement process. The community engagement process includes opportunities to involve the Alexandria community to inform the ECCAP update process. The following goals support the ECCAP community engagement process:

- Goal 1: Expand the Alexandria community's knowledge of the City's climate change mitigation actions, vulnerabilities, and adaptation actions. (*Inform*)
- Goal 2: Obtain community feedback on ECCAP priorities, including community objectives, issues, benefits, and needs. (*consult, collaborate*)
- Goal 3: Coordinate a shared decision-making of community ECCAP priority actions, facilitate a final decisions of priorities for ECCAP adoption, and establish a plan for implementation. (*Shared decision making*)

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## Stakeholders

The City seeks to engage a representative cross-section of the Alexandria community throughout the ECCAP update process. Stakeholders include Alexandria community members, representatives from City agencies and peer organizations, community organizations, and many external organizations which may support and influence many of the City’s considerations within the ECCAP update.

Primary stakeholders for the ECCAP include, but are not limited to:

<b>Alexandria Community Members</b>	<b>City Organization</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria City Council</li> <li>• Energy and Climate Change Task Force</li> <li>• City Commissions (including the Environmental Policy Commission, Planning Commission, Transportation Commission, and others critical to the success of the planning and implementation of the ECCAP)</li> <li>• Alexandria community members, including residents, businesses, and institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Alexandria staff (including City Manager’s Office, Office of Management and Budget, Office of Communications and Public Information, and City Attorney’s Office)</li> <li>• Independent City subdivisions, including Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS), Alexandria Health Department (AHD), Alexandria Renew Enterprises (ARE), Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA)</li> </ul>
<b>Community Organizations</b>	<b>External Stakeholders</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community associations</li> <li>• Equity advocacy organizations</li> <li>• Environmental and climate advocacy organizations</li> <li>• Business associations</li> <li>• Relevant community non-profits/organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG)</li> <li>• Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC)</li> <li>• ICLEI</li> <li>• Regional peer communities (eg. Arlington, Fairfax, DC, Montgomery County, Prince Georges County, Richmond, Charlottesville, Blacksburg, etc.)</li> <li>• Utilities</li> <li>• State agencies</li> <li>• As available &amp; applicable:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Federal agencies</li> <li>○ Regional and national scientific, research, advocacy, and think tank partners</li> <li>○ Local universities</li> <li>○ National peer communities</li> <li>○ Other partners</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Community Engagement Strategies

The ECCAP update process employs community engagement strategies to achieve four community engagement types: to inform, to consult, to collaborate, and to share in decision-making. Various stakeholders may participate in one or more of the four engagement types and strategies.

Engagement Type	Engagement Purpose	Engagement Strategies
Inform	Educate stakeholders about the City’s climate change actions, relevant City goals and policies, and the ECCAP update process including issues being considered and opportunities to provide input.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City website &amp; newsletters</li> <li>• Social media posts</li> <li>• Partner communications</li> <li>• Community workshops</li> <li>• Energy and Climate Change Task Force</li> </ul>
Consult	<p>Gather information and request input from stakeholders to assist in the ECCAP update, including identifying, prioritizing, and coordinating the needs, opportunities, and concerns of the Alexandria community in context of equitable climate mitigation, and adaptation and resiliency actions.</p> <p>Leverage guidance on analyses of community greenhouse gas emissions; understanding climate change vulnerabilities, and public health and economic implications; and evaluating climate adaptation opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings, interviews, projects, workshops, etc.<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• Community workshops</li> <li>• Public surveys</li> <li>• City Commissions engagement</li> <li>• Energy and Climate Change Task Force</li> </ul>
Collaborate	Work together to identify, evaluate, and prioritize recommendations for policy, programmatic, or technology actions for ECCAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy and Climate Change Task Force</li> </ul>
Shared Decision-Making	Work with key decision makers to make final decisions to adopt updated ECCAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy and Climate Change Task Force</li> <li>• City staff leadership</li> <li>• Alexandria City Council</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> This includes, for example, City staff coordination within City agencies and partners, participating in regional and state information and collaboration meetings and planning efforts, ICLEI Integrated Climate Action Planning (ICAP) cohorts, learning webinars, meeting with external organizations, etc.

### City Website & Newsletters / Social Media posts

City staff will post education information, ECCAP process updates, ECCTF meeting information and results, and notices on workshops and surveys to the City’s website, and as available, through City e-Newsletters and through social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) posts. In addition, City staff will coordinate distribution through email list notifications to targeted stakeholder groups.

In coordination with the Office of Community and Public Information, the Office of Racial and Social Equity, and across City agencies, City staff will attempt to translate information into additional languages (eg Spanish, Amharic, Arabic, etc.) as resources and processes are available.

### Community workshops

The City will facilitate three community workshops to *inform* and *consult* Alexandria community members, including resident, business, and institutional attendees, and other stakeholders. An example community workshop agenda framework is shown below:

Time	Agenda Item
0:00 – 0:10	Welcome
0:10 – 0:25	Framing/What is the City Doing?
0:25 – 0:35	External Organization (eg. ICLEI)
0:35 – 0:45	Equity Framing
0:45 – 0:55	Community Member Perspective
0:55 – 1:00	Break
1:00 – 1:40	Breakout Group Activity
1:40 – 1:50	Breakout Group Reporting
1:50 – 2:00	Concluding Remarks

City staff will coordinate with two (2) Energy and Climate Change Task Force member liaisons to develop specific workshop agendas.

### Community Workshop #1

- Topics:
  - Alexandria’s greenhouse gas inventory
  - Alexandria’s greenhouse gas emission projections
  - Greenhouse gas mitigation actions
  - Greenhouse gas mitigation and equity considerations
- Projected Date: October 2021
- Goal: Present information from the Mitigation meetings
- Logistics and Target Audience: In-person meeting / community wide
- Notes: Education / Mitigation - What's being done, what task force said, solicit feedback

### Community Workshop #2

- Topics:
  - Review vulnerability and adaptation scenarios
  - Review adaptation and resilience practices
  - Review preliminary actions and recommendations

- Projected Date: December 2021
- Goal: Present information from the Vulnerability / Adaptation meetings
- Logistics and Target Audience: In-person meeting / community wide
- Notes: Education / Vulnerability / Adaptation - What's being done, what task force said, solicit feedback via survey

### Community Workshop #3

- Topics:
  - Present Energy and Climate Action Plan updates
  - Public comment
- Projected Date: April 2022
- Goal: Evaluate draft plan

In coordination with the Office of Community and Public Information, the Office of Racial and Social Equity, and across City agencies, City staff will attempt to translate information into additional languages (eg Spanish, Amharic, Arabic, etc.) as resources and processes are available.

### Energy and Climate Change Task Force

City staff are supported through *collaboration* and *shared decision making* by the Energy and Climate Change Task Force (ECCTF). The purpose of the Task Force is to provide guidance to the City’s effort to update the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan. This guidance includes feedback on various analyses – including greenhouse gas emissions and climate change vulnerabilities – and in consideration of implementing the EAP040’s actions as well as the identification, evaluation, and prioritization of recommendations for additional policy, programmatic, or technology actions to achieve specific, science-based emissions reductions consistent with the EAP2040’s targets and goals. Such actions may include, but are not limited to, efforts that:

- 1) increase of renewable energy production and availability for city residents/businesses;
- 2) work to curtail consumption of fossil fuels;
- 3) engage Alexandria residents and businesses in emissions-reducing actions;
- 4) identify opportunities for climate adaptation policies and practices.

Additionally, the Task Force will be requested to provide guidance on an Energy and Climate Change Action Plan implementation roadmap, including identifying and evaluating funding and budgeting strategies, specific implementation steps and approaches, and methods to measure and track progress against time-specific goals consistent with the EAP2040. The Energy and Climate Change Task Force will meet a minimum of 5 times starting in May 2021.

Energy and Climate Change Task Force meetings are open to the public and community members may share feedback using the “Chat” function in Zoom or during the “Open Comment” period during the end of each public Task Force meeting. Feedback will be heard during the meetings, recorded on the Zoom meeting recording, and considered by the Task Force. Comments received in the “Chat” function are posted with the meeting summary online and the meeting recordings are posted online. Information received during public meetings are considered public information.

Meeting	Proposed Dates
Task Force - Meeting #1 (Introduction / Education)	May 4, 2021

Task Force - Meeting #2 (Mitigation1)	July 27, 2021
Task Force - Meeting #3 (Mitigation2)	Sept. 28, 2021
Task Force - Meeting #4 (Vulnerability / Adaptation)	Nov. 30, 2021
Task Force - Meeting #5 (Priorities and Recommendations)	Feb. 1, 2022
Task Force - Meeting #6 (ECCAP Review)	May 10, 2022

### Community surveys

City staff will develop and distribute community surveys to solicit feedback and input from community stakeholders on community objectives, priorities, benefits, and needs. Surveys will be distributed in coordination with the Climate Change Mitigation Planning, Climate Change Vulnerability, and Climate Change Adaptation and Resiliency Planning tasks to provide further input and prioritization consideration.

City staff will coordinate with two (2) Energy and Climate Change Task Force member liaisons to develop specific workshop agendas.

In addition, City staff developed an on-line open-access feedback form to help gather input from the community as a follow-up to ECCTF meetings and for general collection of community input in an easy-to-use and easily accessible survey form format. Feedback received will be collected over the course of developing the ECCAP and will be shared with the ECCTF Co-Chairs and ECCTF on a rolling basis. It is anticipated that feedback will be responded to as the plan development process proceeds.

### Eco-City Ambassadors

TBD

### Partner communications

TBD

### City Commissions engagement

TBD

### Other

TBD