



CITY OF HARRISONBURG  
**PUBLIC  
WORKS**

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TO: Ande Banks, City Manager  
FROM: Keith Thomas, Sustainability and Environmental Manager  
DATE: October 24, 2023  
RE: Addition of Community Goals for City Environmental Action Plan

**Summary:**

The Public Works Department will present six new community goals to be added into the Environmental Action Plan (EAP).

**Background:**

The overarching principle of community goals is to empower our entire community to work together to slow the effects of climate change. Reaching the necessary greenhouse gas reduction goals will be reliant on choices made within the community including lifestyle changes in how we live, work, and travel. These community goals should be used to inform future implementation of climate and environmental action. The addition of community goals in the Environmental Action Plan adds clarity about our overall goals. In addition, the community goals expand the EAP from being largely focused on municipal operations to adding focus to our community. The community goals also establish a community-wide greenhouse gas reduction goal in our EAP. Specifically, a reduction of 45% in GHG emissions from 2016 levels by 2030 and reaching carbon neutrality by 2050 is needed in order to limit warming to 1.5-2°C (2.7-3.6°F) by 2050.

The following are the six new community goals:

1. Promote reducing GHG emissions at a speed and scale consistent with current science.
2. Ensure that the transition to a low carbon future is effective, affordable, equitable and inclusive and prioritize actions that increase financial stability of Harrisonburg households and businesses.
3. Promote adoption of clean, renewable energy.
4. Prioritize actions that have intersectional benefits with other environmental and City priorities.
5. Promote public engagement in GHG reduction emission planning including increasing public education, awareness, and involvement.
6. Promote local climate resiliency and adaptation measures.

**Key Issues:**

Sustainability, Environmental Action Plan, Greenhouse Gas Reduction

**Environmental Impact:**

Promote environmental action in our community.

**Fiscal Impact:**

N/A

**Prior Actions:**

This addendum is in response to a July 2022 City Council motion to develop community goals.

In 2020 City Council adopted Phase 1 of the Environmental Action Plan. In June 2022 City Council adopted Phase 2 and 3 for Focus Area 4, Sustainable Transportation, of the Environmental Action Plan which established targets for transportation related goals.

**Alternatives:**

Do not accept the Community Goals Addendum.

**Community Engagement:**

N/A- It is important to note that these community goals are the City of Harrisonburg's aspirational vision for our community. These do not represent community goals as voiced by the community through public engagement. During the development of Phase I of the EAP, a traditional community engagement process was conducted. An additional updated community engagement process will be an important future iteration of the Environmental Action Plan.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends City Council to adopt the Community Goals as an addition to the Environmental Action Plan.

EPSAC voted unanimously in July 2023 to recommend that City Council adopt the Community Goals.

**Attachments:**

1. Community Goals Addendum to the Environmental Action Plan

**Review:**