



**City of Charlottesville
Office of Sustainability**

PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION

Subject: Draft Charlottesville Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan

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Background

In 2017, the City of Charlottesville formally joined the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, which committed the City to plan for both the causes and effects of climate change. Staff set to work addressing the causes first – bringing forward the City’s current climate pollution reduction targets for adoption in 2019 and a community Climate Action Plan (CAP), focused on reducing greenhouse gases, in 2023.

In 2021, while the CAP was still in development, the City conducted a Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA) as the first step in beginning to plan for the effects of climate change. That study identified the specific climate-driven hazards and vulnerabilities expected to impact the Charlottesville area. During the same timeframe, Albemarle County’s Climate Program conducted a similar assessment for the County. Because the impacts of climate change will affect our jurisdictions similarly, the decision was made to work collaboratively on regional climate adaptation and resilience planning. City and County Climate Program staff reached out to UVA Office for Sustainability staff and invited the University to join the collaborative planning work. The resulting collaborative Resilient Together project was formally launched in September 2023.

From the outset, Resilient Together aimed to produce separate but complimentary Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plans (CARPs) for each organization. Like the CAP, the CARP is intended to be adopted as an amendment to the City’s Comprehensive Plan. Charlottesville’s plan development is nearing completion and the draft is being

shared with the community for public review and comment. It will be available on the Connect Charlottesville website and staff will conduct a series of in-person and virtual informational events.

In November 2024, City and County Planning Commissioners received a mid-point presentation about the resilience planning project at a joint meeting. The purpose of this work session is to provide an update on the Resilient Together project and to present the draft Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan to the Planning Commission.

Staff Analysis

The attached presentation provides an overview of the development of the Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan, including history and background of the Resilient Together project, content and examples from the plan, and its relationship to other City Plans and projects.

The Resilience Plan features 16 broad strategies to be initiated over the next ten years that will strengthen our community systems as the shocks and stressors of climate change intensify. The strategy topics are variable, with some addressing multiple hazards and others addressing a single hazard. Each strategy includes implementation projects that have been organized by the estimated timeframe to begin work on them. Lead departments, internal and external partners, level of staff effort, and funding sources have also been identified for each project.

The projects identified in the CARP are intended to be primarily led by the City, and in some cases partner organizations. However, durable resilience is not something a local government can do to or for a community. The work of resilience building must be taken up collaboratively and at the individual, household, neighborhood, and community level. In service to this idea, each strategy also includes a “Community Action” section that shares information and resources to support community-led resilience building. Many of the City-led implementation projects are designed to support community members in household and community resilience-building.

The development of the CARP was informed by multiple rounds of engagement efforts to collect community-member, partner organization, staff, and subject-matter expert input. The strategy topics were chosen based on local context, lessons learned from peer communities, and community-member input. The implementation projects associated with each strategy were identified and developed by inter-organizational staff working groups and then refined by Charlottesville staff from across departments.

This work session is intended to share the draft plan with the Planning Commission and seek initial endorsement or suggested changes. Staff will hold a similar work session with

City Council in November. Specifically, we are looking for feedback guided by the following questions:

- Are there any major strategy topic areas missing that belong in this plan?
- Does this plan adequately bring the lens of climate change preparedness to the City's Comprehensive Plan and other planning efforts?

After the public comment period closes in mid-November, project staff will work to integrate feedback and will bring a final draft to the Planning Commission for a public hearing in January 2027. Staff will seek the Commission's recommendation to Council for plan approval and amendment to the Comprehensive Plan at that meeting.

Staff Recommendation

Staff is asking for the Planning Commission's feedback and initial endorsement of the draft Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan.

Attachments

- A. Draft Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan
- B. Presentation for October 13, 2026