

EAP STEERING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

SEPTEMBER 16, 2024

Ad-Hoc Group Members:

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Environmental Policy Commission

Agenda

1. Context
2. Problem Statement
3. Peer City Benchmarking
4. Recommendations and Proposed Next Steps
5. Open Discussion on Potential Strategies for FY25

Context

EAP Steering Committee

- Alexandria Environmental Action Plan Steering Committee (also called the Eco-City Steering Committee) was established to help implement Phase 2 of the EAP.¹
- This was before the OCA was formed. OCA plans to review and update the EAP in FY26.

(Inactive) Members of the EAP Steering Committee:

- Councilmember Bagley ([link](#))
- Councilmember McPike ([link](#))
- Councilmember Chapman ([link](#))

Ad-Hoc Working Group

- During the Annual EPC Retreat (4/27/2024), it was discussed that the EPC could resurrect the EAP Steering Committee as a way to engage City Council.
- At the June 17 EPC meeting, we formed a working group to determine best path forward for the EAP Steering Committee.

Working Group Members:

- Julia Slayden, Kishla Askins, Philip Mobilia, Kathie Hoekstra
- We met twice to discuss this issue, 8/1/2024 and 9/11/2024.

Problem Statement

Purpose of Ad-Hoc Working Group



Challenges

Develop ideas for EPC involvement and engagement in the EAP development and with City Council

- 1 Too Early Stage**
EAP planning has not started yet (it will not be updated until FY26), so it is difficult to determine how EPC can be engaged. OCA's focus recently has been on the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan.
- 2 Lack of Need**
Unclear need for EAP Steering Committee, as OCA would do much of the work previously driven by the EAP Steering Committee.
- 3 Need to Clarify 2025 EPC Priorities**
Need to define 2025 strategic priorities for EPC to understand desired engagement level with EAP (this will also help identify EPC priority areas that should be included in EAP).

Peer City Benchmarking

Peer Cities ¹	Population	Median Income	Climate Roadmap?	Steering/Advisory Committee?	Recurring Council Engagement?
Fairfax, VA	1.148M	\$65k	✓ Community-Wide Energy & Climate Plan (CECAP)	✓ Nine ad-hoc focus groups comprised a Working Group that developed the CECAP (link)	✓ Annual report to Board of Sup
Arlington, VA	0.24M	\$82k	✓ Community Energy Plan (CEP)	✓ Advised by Climate Change, Energy, & Environment Commission (link)	✗ No recurring meeting
Cambridge, MA	0.18M	\$59k	✓ Climate Action Plan (CAP)	✓ Advised by Cambridge Climate Committee (link)	✓ Engage Council via letters
San Mateo, CA	0.10M	\$70k	✓ Community Climate Action Plan (CCAP)	✓ Two ad-hoc advisory committees (technical and steering committee) (link)	✗ No recurring meeting
Alexandria, VA	0.16M	\$71k	✓ Environmental Action Plan (EAP)	✓ Alexandria's EAP Steering Committee is only city to include City Council Members	✓ Annual report to Council

1. Peer cities determined from the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago Peer Identification Tool, excluding Fairfax (which was chosen for geographical proximity). Peer cities are determined based on a number of criteria, including unemployment rate, median family income, share of metropolitan area population, homeownership rate, poverty rate, etc.

Recommendation and Next Steps

Recommendation

At this time, the Ad-Hoc Working Group believes that the EAP Steering Committee is **not** needed.

Proposed Next Steps

1

Develop EPC FY25 Strategic Priorities

- Establish EPC's strategic priorities for 2025, including determining level of EPC engagement in the EAP that will be updated by OCA in FY26.
- See memo from Commissioner Kishla Askins for proposal on how to do the above.

2

Develop Communication and Engagement Approach

- Assign an EPC Commissioner owner to each EPC strategic priority (including EAP engagement if that is decided to be a priority)
- EPC Commissioners individually drive their assigned strategic priority forward, including establishing contact with City Council members as needed.

3

Engage City Council

- EPC Commissioners engage City Council on its strategic priorities through the following mechanisms:
 - Letters to City Council
 - Inviting City Council members to EPC meetings when relevant topics are covered
 - Developing individual relationships with City Council members as needed



Potential Strategic Priorities for FY25

Not final – to be discussed by the group

- 1 Develop Strategic Environmental Goals**
 - Identify and prioritize key focus areas for the EPC, including green building initiatives, sustainable transportation, and enhanced advisory roles.
- 2 Foster Collaboration and Partnerships**
 - Strengthen partnerships with the Office of Climate Action, other city commissions, and regional entities to promote cohesive and effective environmental policies.
- 3 Enhance Community Engagement and Communication**
 - Develop and implement a comprehensive communication strategy to engage with the public, increase awareness, and garner support for environmental initiatives.
- 4 Establish Clear Metrics and Accountability**
 - Develop measurable goals and performance indicators to track the progress of EPC initiatives and ensure accountability

Does this require standing up another working group, or should this be done as part of the broader EPC? Are there people interested in supporting this effort?



Questions/Comments?

