



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND**

**AB 6123
July 19, 2022
Regular Business**

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 6123: Climate Action Plan Update	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Receive report on Climate Action Plan progress to date and provide initial direction on the draft goals and actions, updated project schedule, and draft survey questions.	

DEPARTMENT:	Public Works
STAFF:	Jason Kintner, Chief of Operations Ross Freeman, Sustainability Analyst
COUNCIL LIAISON:	Jake Jacobson Craig Reynolds Ted Weinberg
EXHIBITS:	1. Draft Goals and Targets List 2. Draft Strategies and Actions List 3. GHG Inventory Snapshot 4. GHG Wedge Analysis Snapshot 5. Statistical Survey Mockup
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	1. Prepare for the impacts of growth and change with a continued consideration on environmental sustainability.

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ n/a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda bill is to provide an update on Mercer Island’s Climate Action Plan (CAP) to date and receive City Council feedback regarding the Draft Goals and Actions.

- The City’s Climate Action Plan (CAP) process launched in December 2021 with a community kickoff meeting during which attendees provided early input on the vision, goals, and desired Greenhouse Gas (GHG) actions for Plan.
- Cascadia Consulting Group (CCG) was hired in early 2022 to develop a range of foundational products that will ultimately inform the drafting of the entire Plan.
- The City continues to use its Let’s Talk public engagement website to publish CAP documents, solicit feedback, and make announcements (see: <https://letstalk.mercergov.org/climate-action-plan>). A feedback form is currently accepting comments on the draft list of goals, strategies, and actions.
- The presentation will provide a general update on the planning work to date and also introduce two new CAP elements: an updated GHG inventory for Mercer Island using data through 2020 depicting the current emissions trajectory; and an interactive “wedge analysis” that assesses the GHG

contribution of different sectors of the economy and allows the exploration of various emission scenarios.

BACKGROUND

In 2007, the City adopted a GHG reduction target of 25% by 2020, 50% by 2030 and 80% by 2050 (compared to a 2007 baseline). In 2011, Mercer Island became a founding member of the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C). This alliance of 20 local governments helps support climate solutions, share success stories, advocate for legislation, and coordinate multi-city initiatives to achieve shared climate goals and targets.

In June 2021, King County's Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) updated countywide planning policies that tightened the 2050 emissions target to a 95% reduction. The Mercer Island City Council ratified this, and other, new policies, with [Resolution 1620](#) on March 1, 2022, and it took effect on April 6, 2022.

The City's Climate Action Plan will provide a long-term cohesive planning document that organizes Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reduction and adaptation actions and programs in a strategic manner, ranks implementation priorities, identifies a protocol for tracking progress on a regular schedule, and enhances the City's existing GHG Dashboard webpage. The outcomes of the CAP will be adopted into the City's Comprehensive Plan, for which an update is currently underway.

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

Since May, the City Council Sustainability Committee has been meeting every few weeks to review key work products that are included in tonight's materials.

Exhibit 1 - Draft Goals and Targets: This list was developed with consideration given to the City's prior climate commitments, to existing emissions targets at the regional or King County level, and to the effects of state or federal legislation. Staff are seeking initial feedback from the City Council on the Draft Goals.

Exhibit 2 - Draft Strategies and Actions: This list of approximately 60 greenhouse gas reduction, mitigation, and resiliency measures is the result of existing City climate commitments, the City's updated emissions trajectory, other recent Climate Action Plans on the West Coast, guidance from regional climate plan toolkits, current best practices, and suggestions from the public.

Ranking Process for Draft Strategies and Actions

The City's consulting team further annotated Exhibit 2 using relative ranking criteria (on a scale of 1= low and 5 = high) based on best professional judgement. They attributed an estimated cost (to the City or a participant) and estimated impact (i.e. GHG benefits or resiliency gains) to each strategy and action.

In order to facilitate tonight's discussion, the Council Sustainability Committee used these rankings, and other information over the past few weeks, to divide the list into three categories using the following rubric:

1. *Yes, keep this action in the CAP;*
2. *Maybe, but needs more discussion or research;*
3. *Explore this action in the future.*

The summary of the Committee's recommendation appears in the right hand, gold columns in Exhibit 2, where a combined grade of "A" signifies strong support, "B" moderate support, and "C" signifies less support at this time.

The draft strategies and actions list will be refined several more times before the full draft of the CAP is written and then circulated widely for public feedback in early fall.

Additionally, the City will also be mailing a statistically significant survey (scheduled to be released in late August) to approximately 2,500 randomly selected Mercer Island households to gain a better sense of community support for each action. These survey results will be incorporated into the final draft CAP.

Exhibit 3 - Updated GHG inventory: This exhibit provides a snapshot of Mercer Island's emissions trajectory through 2020 (both municipal operations and community), using the last 4 years of data collected. While the City has continued to collect and tabulate raw data since 2016, a full calculation of total and per capita emissions (in Carbon Dioxide equivalent, or CO₂e) has not been performed since 2016.

Based on the current regional practices of cities (both large and small) that report publicly on their GHG inventory, staff anticipate publishing a full inventory update every 2-3 years going forward. Several of the datasets that underpin inventory calculations are only produced annually, and the skilled work required to produce and cross-check a full GHG inventory is quite significant. Note that the City will continue to publish annually on its website various climate-related key performance indicators (KPI's) such as raw gas/electric usage, solar installations, electric vehicle ownership, green power purchases, etc. In addition, staff currently expect to produce an annual report on Climate Action Plan achievements.

Exhibit 4 - GHG Wedge Analysis: The Sustainability Committee participated in a live demonstration of the wedge tool at its June 16 meeting and the consultant will conduct a similar demonstration for the entire City Council. A static snapshot depicting an example wedge output is available as Exhibit 4.

This tool graphically depicts the relative contribution of various GHG reduction or mitigation actions at the federal, state, and local level, and also the amount of reduction that is yet to be attained by Mercer Island in order to meet its adopted emissions goals through 2050. Unlike other recent CAP's in the region, this City's version is a more customizable product benefitting from the consultant's parallel work on a wedge for the entire 3-County region (Puget Sound Regional Emissions Analysis – PSREA).

Due to its custom nature, the Mercer Island Wedge can be toggled to emphasize different sectors of the economy. This tool will help the City evaluate different GHG reduction scenarios and will provide another means to determine which actions have the greatest potential impact.

Updated CAP Schedule

The schedule to complete the CAP has been adjusted and now reflects a Q1 completion date. This adjustment allows for the completion of the statistically valid survey and accommodates Sustainability Committee meetings and community outreach this fall:

- July 19 – City Council update regarding the CAP: GHG wedge demo, solicit initial Council input on draft goals/strategies, and discuss future public engagement opportunities in Q3/Q4.
- July Sustainability Committee meeting – Final review of statistical survey questions and process; continued input on reduced number of goals/actions.
- End of August to mid-September – Statistically valid survey on Goals/Actions.
- September Sustainability Committee Meetings – Review survey results, update drafted goals/actions and fine-tune language in Draft CAP plan.
- October – Community Meeting (postponed from June) to solicit community feedback on the Draft CAP.

- October – Present Draft CAP to the City Council for review and feedback.
- October/November - Additional public engagement activities if needed with direction from City Council.
- November/December/January – Complete public engagement and Finalize CAP for adoption.
- February 2023 – Present Final CAP to City Council for adoption.

Exhibit 5 – STATISTICAL SURVEY: In order to better gauge the level of community support and willingness to participate in a particular GHG reduction program or action, the City Council requested a statistically valid survey be conducted later this summer. The full text of the draft questions proposed for use in the mailed survey are included as Exhibit 5; note that these will be laid out graphically in the actual mailed survey document. The last two pages of Exhibit 5 also depict examples of the layout to be used for the online version.

Similar to other recent City surveys, by mailing to a randomly selected subset of 2,500 Island addresses, the City can achieve a 95% level of confidence, assuming 400 surveys are returned. Recipients will have the option to mail the survey back in a prepaid envelope or take the survey online using a one-time code for access. Other community members will also be able to take the online survey, hosted on the City’s Let’s Talk platform, if they wish, although these results will not be considered statistically representative of the Island as a whole.

NEXT STEPS

At this time, the next scheduled CAP presentation before City Council is set for October 18, 2022, when Council will review the results of the statistical survey and receive an update on plan development.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Receive report on Climate Action Plan progress to date and provide initial direction on the draft goals and actions, updated project schedule, and draft survey questions.