

Progress update on "Accelerating Iowa City's Climate Actions" as of 10-28-20

Action	New/ Next Step	Plan Alignment	Month to Initiate	Workplan	Equity Focus	Status	
Buildings							
BPP-1	Solar Partnership with MidAmerican	New	1.5	April	Brought forward one project to City Council in April and was not approved. Will assess opportunities as locations or chances present themselves. Discussions could be community-initiated, such as the interest from JCED proposal to create a solar placement study for Iowa City to engage community in conceptual conversations and planning for potential solar sites. Commission recommended JCED approach Council for further consideration. Council agreed that staff should explore the project with community stakeholders. Meeting forthcoming in Nov.	If the City pursued a plan to site solar infrastructure, the plan would require examination of equity throughout process.	Underway
BE-3	Encourage the Local Realtor Community to Include Energy Performance in the Multiple Listing Services (MLS) Property Inventory	New	1.1 & 1.6	May	Staff met with local realtors from ICAAR about housing trends and potential for education and cooperation on energy efficiency and projects benefitting residential properties. ICAAR and City exploring example programs and will return to meet again later this year. In the interim, City staff is collating information about assistance programs, many of which enhance climate action initiatives. ICAAR is supportive of sharing these programs with the community. Working groups may identify additional suggestions or examples from successful programs elsewhere. ICAAR shared that several initiatives supporting sustainability measures are in development.	Benefits for informed buying/selling, may need incentive assistance later on, if concentration of activity falls within only a few neighborhoods or stakeholder interest lacking. Education for all residents and renters about housing with energy efficiency and indoor air quality speaks to equity concerns. Commission and Working Group recommendations and feedback needed.	Underway
BI-4	Launch a TIF-funded climate action incentive program aimed at reducing industrial energy consumption	New	1.2 & 5.4	May	In August Council finalized approved establishing and approving Urban Renewal Areas at Heinz, Sycamore, and Scott Six and approved changes to downtown URA in Sept. 2020. Staff is beginning to engage with businesses in these areas and is encouraging them to take advantage of funding assistance in remaining years of the TIF agreement.		Underway
BCP-1	Advocate for State Adoption of Advanced Energy Codes	New	1.1 – 1.4	May	Asked State contacts about progress for rule making process. Response was that due to COVID, the spring 2020 meeting was delayed with hopes to reconvene in fall. City staff preparing communications with elected officials for delivery pre-2021 session. Timing may require advocacy efforts expanded into 2021.	Could support these efforts with help from education and advocacy from underserved groups that directly benefit from housing improvements. Staff reached out to several aligned groups in September but did not hear back. A second attempt will be made.	Underway
BCP-2	Advocate for Aggressive Energy Code Development and Adoption *(New)	New	1.1 – 1.4	May	Eligible staff voted for adoption of new IECC codes earlier in 2020. This action also requires letters to and engagement with elected officials. Advocacy efforts expanded into 2021.	Could support these efforts with help from education and advocacy from underserved groups that directly benefit from housing improvements. Staff reached out to several aligned groups in September but did not hear back. A second attempt will be made.	Underway

BE-1	Promote Energy Efficiency and Performance Tips to the Public	Next	1.1 – 1.2, 1.6	June	Initiate planning and needs assessment. Identify resources, contacts, and content. Assess web access and source development, method of dissemination. Support eventual actions with strategy from communications plan (Action 5.1 - EDU); Communications RFP proposals received and in review for consultant selection. Priority issues can be established prior to work by selected consultant. Staff discussions with community groups are positive and developing ideas. Will bring concepts to Commission in Dec. for refinement.	Imperative. Review of equity report and assistance from EHR staff essential. Commission and Working Group recommendations and feedback needed.	In Development
BE-2	Partner with Stakeholders to Promote Green Building and Rehabilitation	New	1.1-1.4	June	Started introduction to organizations, several more meetings and expansion of contacts necessary. Met with City development staff and Home Builders Association. Plan to engage small group of stakeholders to discuss barriers and interest in pursuing green build strategies to create new alliances/education opportunities. A few ideas in development. Support more actions with strategy from eventual communications plan (Action 5.1 - EDU).	Use equity report to ensure stakeholders from impacted groups are represented, and feedback is shared with development community, landlords, and builders. Commission and Working Group recommendations and feedback needed.	Underway
BI-2	Enhance Energy Standards for City Rehabilitation Projects	Next	1.1	June	Received updated report from NDS on current activity and efforts. Staff currently exploring alternatives for rehab projects and ability for City to support incentives or supplemented energy efficient equipment if homeowners cannot/won't pay the difference to upgrade. Have met with two local HVAC providers to identify key issues and ideal projects. Proposal still in development; will bring to Commission for feedback and further guidance. Education components also necessary - communications strategy outcomes. Equity mapping started.	Assisted households currently meet federal income requirements. Establish a mapped GIS inventory of energy efficiency assessments and investments. Ensure access to energy efficiency and other sustainable design elements in each project through education and engagement.	Underway
BR-1	Create a More Robust Energy Code Inspection Program	New	1.1 -1.2	June	Additional inspector budgeted in FY21. Met with NDS staff in September to review items staff will be looking at and addressing through compliance checks, such as pre-drywall conditions, R and U values of walls and windows. Altered inspections program and initial education about necessary inspections planned for initiation shortly after additional inspector hired.	Commission/Working Groups should assist with how they would like to measure equity and what should be reported to show progress.	Underway
BI-5	Develop or Partner with Local Stakeholders on a Comprehensive Climate Action Rehabilitation Program	New	1.1 – 1.4	July	As discussions with community organizations progress, new ideas for how to accomplish this task are being generated. Commission will need to weigh in on neighborhood pilot program/s which are in conceptual development. Explore RFQ for external partner/s to implement a program. GIA crew started again in late September, conducted first in-home energy assessments in late October and plan to continue with safety protocols.	Approach to populations served critical. Commission and Working Group recommendations and feedback needed for further development.	In Development

BR-2	Incorporate Stricter Energy Standards into Tax Increment Financing Policies	New	1.3 – 1.4	Aug	Begin review of options, develop revisions to policy, introduce for Council adoption. Stakeholder process required. Buildings Working Group and Commission involvement in policy review. Currently working on expansion of additional areas for energy efficiency improvements funded by remaining TIF. While codifying these efforts is not fully in motion, staff continues to encourage actions informally through development process. Elements of recent development approvals require energy efficiency measures, including LEED Silver standard build (minimum of 8 points from energy category), rooftop solar, low flow fixtures, and incorporated stormwater improvements.	Greater equity can be achieved through a geographic distribution of benefits. Education and advocacy could benefit populations impacted and served by policy implementation.	In Development
BI-1	Offer Free Home Energy Assessments through Green Iowa AmeriCorps	Next	1.1	Sept	Energy Assessments with the Green Iowa AmeriCorps team look slightly different this year but still are included in their responsibilities. Supplemental weatherization kits available through GIA, available to IC residents. Exploring non-AmeriCorps group to perform other weatherization services. GIA crew begins in late September; opportunities for training supplement to pursue enhanced energy assessments and community education.	AmeriCorps is focused on certain groups - seniors, low income, veterans. Not sure how they track or report these demographics. May need to get creative in how audits are performed in light of Covid-19. Education delivery and equipment installation/provision alternatives probably needed in short term. Establish a mapped GIS inventory of energy efficiency assessments and investments.	Underway
BI-3	Coordinate Neighborhood Energy Blitz Events	New	1.1	Fall	Coordinate efforts with Neighborhood Planner, Recreation, and community organizations; Support actions with strategy from communications plan (Action 5.1 - EDU); will likely align this action with introduction of Climate Ambassador program. Party in the Park efforts cancelled due to COVID-19. Climate Action Grant awarded to Green Iowa AmeriCorps for a lightbulb exchange, which should be taking place in fall. Staff discussions in progress, will bring concepts to Commission for feedback and review. Root for Trees one model for potential program, learning and using to shape new, tiered programs focused on buildings and energy.	Assess equity report to determine any areas of focus. NDS can assist with housing/permit data that can help focus on neighborhoods with less efficient housing stock. Outreach to underserved groups may spur interest in blitz programs or projects. Working Group recommendations and feedback needed.	In Development
Additional Notes					Commission	Working Group	
This row shares more information for Commission members, including probable action steps and questions from staff. For reference, follow up items are started with the Action code (far left of charts) (i.e. "BI3" (Building Incentives, project 3))					BE1 & BE2 discuss plans for educating and engaging residents and business; BI2 - await staff proposal for enhancing Energy standards for City rehabilitation projects; BI3 - direction on neighborhood energy blitz programs, including type, scale, areas of focus for programs	BR1 - define how City should measure equity in housing inspection program; BI5 - Recommendations needed to develop comprehensive energy efficiency building rehab programs, identify best practices, suggest example programs, assist with equity efforts; BR2 - involvement in stakeholder review when proposal shared later in year	
Action	New/Next Step	Plan Alignment	Month to Initiate	Workplan	Equity Focus	Status	
Transportation							
TPP-1	Complete the Transit Study and Implement Recommendations to Bolster Service and Increase Ridership	New	2.1	Ongoing	Completed study in early fall; was somewhat delayed from Covid-19. Presentation of proposed measures went to City Council for initial discussion on October 6. Interest in moving forward with recommended system route changes, more information coming this fall for consideration of service expansions and rate changes. Primary implementation of recommendations to begin in 2021.	Dependent upon study recommendations and selected actions for implementation. Goal is to serve residents most needing transit service. Commission and Working Group recommendations needed.	Underway

TCP-1	Establish an Electric and Fuel-Efficient Vehicle Purchasing Policy	New	2.2	May	Written policy completed in Sept. New text includes preference for EVs, describes process by which new vehicle purchases are considered and directs purchase when multiple factors determine EV appropriate option and available for needs. Included in Nov 2020 CAC agenda for reference.	Although every vehicle the City purchases cannot be EV at this time, continually increasing the presence of non-emitting vehicles creates a healthier air quality as City vehicles move about and provide services in the community.	Complete
TCP-1	Track Adherence to City Idling Policy	Next	2.7	May	AVL equipment provides idling data. 37 vehicles currently have the technology and another AVL for another 60 will be ordered in FY2021. Reformatting reports to make it easier to read for improved use and analysis. Staff will compile data and CAO will assist with reporting. Transportation Working Group needs to define and clarify their recommendation before staff can pursue exploration of technology.		Underway
TE-1	Significant Transportation Education and Outreach Campaigns	New	2.3	August	Transportation metrics are defined. Some of the metrics are not yet available from the 2019 Census. Climate Ambassador program is underway. Must continue to identify how we will engage all residents.	Review equity Report to identify groups and locations to focus attention. Somewhat reliant upon recommendations of transit study. Explore language translations. Commission and Working Group recommendations and feedback needed.	Underway
Additional Notes					Commission:	Working Group:	
This row shares more information for Commission members, including probable action steps and questions from staff. For reference, follow up items are started with the Action code (far left of charts) (i.e. "BI3" (Building Incentives, project 3))					TPP1 - Continued feedback on proposed Transit Study	TPP1 - Continued feedback on proposed Transit Study	
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Waste							
WP-1	Initiate a Methane Feasibility Study	Next	3.7-3.8	May	Preliminary models discussed by staff in September. Plans and estimated costs are being refined and should be presented to Council by year end. Study is near completion and staff project budget discussions upcoming.	Consideration will be given after final recommendations, to impacts on fiscal health of Enterprise funds and needs to supplement with rate changes over time.	Underway
WE-1	Engage the Public to Compost Organic Waste	Next	3.2	June	Resource Management and NDS engaged in composting education. Course materials created for educators Determine how to tailor it with equity in mind. Expand opportunities with local businesses. Tie into carbon sequestration project underway. Plans for increased downtown access to composting in development. An education unit for Climate Ambassadors focused on waste.	Focus is reliant upon meetings with staff, current efforts, working Equity Working Group, equity report, translations services available, and outcomes from Communications strategy.	Underway
WCP-1	Require All Park/Public Space Rentals to Recycle and Use "Green" Event Best Practices.	New	3.5	June	Staff reconnected for this project and finalized simple agreements for sports organizations renting athletic facilities. Community education needed. Testing results with athletics first but the next step to general facility rental requirements will require community and equity input.	Must assess whether new requirements impact populations differently. Working Group recommendations needed.	Underway
WE-2	Education Campaigns for Neighborhoods to Reduce Waste/Consumption at the Source	Next	3.3	July	Met with Resource Management to assess current materials. Staff is coordinating efforts with Neighborhood Planner, local schools, and other City staff to share information. Specific messaging about reduced consumption or minimizing waste at the source forthcoming, ideas welcome.	Focus reliant upon meetings with staff, current efforts, working Equity Working Group, equity report, translations services available, and outcomes from Communications strategy.	Underway

Additional Notes					Commission:	Working Group:	
This row shares more information for Commission members, including probable action steps and questions from staff. For reference, follow up items are started with the Action code (far left of charts) (i.e. "BI3" (Building Incentives, project 3))					WP1 - When project is presented to Council, Commission members may consider preparing a response or recommendation	WCP1 - Review new contracts for parks athletics use and provide guidance for general parks rentals, including equity review; WE1 and WE2 - feedback or direction on how these programs are going	
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Adaptation							
AE-1	Develop Climate Amassador Team	New	4.2	May	Program is in progress with 10 participants, as well as participation by the Green Iowa AmeriCorps team. Initial cohort runs into December, with another application period and new cohort starting in early 2021.	Development of program includes application process not reliant upon technology to participate. If tech is necessary, will purchase tablets or other device to loan to ambassador participants for training activities. Special attention paid to connection with local groups that can recommend ambassador applicants. Initial cohort varied in background and experience.	Complete
APP-2	Continue Implementation of the Natural Areas Management Plan	New	4.5-4.6	May	Work agreement executed with AES in May. Significant follow up with neighborhoods required during process. Planned concentration on intensive maintenance in neighborhood park prairies. Education needed about purpose, need and care for natural areas; build community partnerships with advocacy groups. About 60 acres of public land areas were prepared for prairie plantings this fall.	Geographic distribution, education variables dependent on groups impacted. Engage natural area advocacy groups that can assist with public education.	Underway
APP-4	Equity Review of Neighborhood and Population Outreach; Develop Outreach Plan for Populations Highly Impacted by Climate Change	Next	4.1-4.2	May	Equity Working Group will review Equity Report and determine further action. Commission review of project equity review tool for City and other community climate projects. Staff has created a basic mapping tool/resource requested by Equity Working Group. Additionally, staff is exploring better documentation for City climate equity efforts.	Emphasis on highly impacted groups, targeted outreach and collaboration for development and implementation of each climate action.	Underway
APP-1	Flood Mitigation and Stormwater Management Programs/Projects; Buyouts	Next	4.5	June	Met with Stormwater Team. Collect and review current volunteer lists. Assess if we need to promote existing program. Assess creek clean up volunteer process.	Involving various community groups dependent on makeup of existing volunteer listing and schedules. Review equity report to verify benefits and participation equitable.	Underway
AE-1	Partner with Project Green on a Tree Planting Partnership; Incentives for Private Tree Planting	New	4.6	July	<i>Root for Trees</i> tree planting program began in October with high interest and over 250 vouchers requested. Residents are able to use a voucher for a discount on tree purchase from Iowa City nurseries. Low income residents are permitted greater discount for tree purchase. Parks and Recreation Department is managing program and will conduct targeted interpersonal and neighborhood outreach. Need to connect with Project Green for additional opportunities for education and outreach programs.	Commission provided recommendations and feedback on program proposal. Income eligible properties will be permitted a greater discount. City is tracking planting addresses (but no other identifying information) to monitor geographic distribution. Additionally, staff engagement will be focused in areas that have less tree canopy than other parts of town. Engagement will also provide an opportunity to inform about the utility discount program.	Underway
AR-1	Street Tree Ordinance	Next	4.6	August	NDS will draft ordinance. Research has begun but drafting will take place shortly after engagement with stakeholders, planned late this fall.	New Ordinance will apply to new developments.	In Development

APP-3	Expand Public Tree Planting	Next	4.6	September	Provided Tree Canopy memo in 9-17-20 Information Packet for Council review and discussion; demonstrates need for incremental tree canopy replacement activities. Possible small group discussion with impacted groups - residents, landlords, City staff, businesses or development groups. Address negative perceptions through modifications or education.	Review inventory maps, locate areas in need, target workplan outreach accordingly. Emphasis on benefits of tree canopy in low-mod neighborhoods.	In Development
AE-2	Educate and Coordinate with Local Agencies on Health Impacts	Next	4.3	October	Staff held preliminary meeting with Invest Health partner to identify current needs and to explore co-benefits of climate action projects centered on public health issues. Stakeholder group would serve as connection for further meetings with Johnson County Public Health, University of Iowa, etc.	Equity reach will become more clear with agency coordination and partnering. Can use equity scale/report to identify starting agency discussions. If full stakeholder meeting held for Invest Health with focus on climate issues, will seek participation from Commission.	Underway
Additional Notes					Commission:	Working Group:	
					AE2 - attend invitation to public health stakeholder meeting (unscheduled), consider guidance about ideal projects, or other partners	APP4 - guidance on areas of focus or process for equity review; AE1 - could restart discussions with Project Green, Master Gardeners, etc. to plan additional projects	
Action	New/Next Step	Plan Alignment	Month to Initiate	Workplan	Equity Focus	Status	
Sustainable Lifestyle							
SLE-2	Launch a Green Business Program: "Climate Action at Work"	Next	5.5	June	Pilot awards program introduced and received applications in summer 2020. Awarded five businesses. Additional opportunities for business-related programs will be to build a network of businesses with climate interests that can support additional demand and resources for infrastructure and policy upgrades. Program confirmed and content in development with Iowa City Area Business Partnership.	Initial program relies heavily on voluntary participation. Potential for granted funding tied to participation. Will need to make a greater effort to identify and work with businesses with less access to resources. Geographic access and type of business should also be taken into account. Will map geographic participation. Need assistance from Economic Development staff, Equity & Outreach Working Groups, and other econ dev and small business assistance groups. For Climate Action at Work Awards, contacted over 80 community groups with an emphasis on diversity, inviting their participation.	Complete
SLPP-2	Develop a Climate Action Strategic Communications Plan	Next	5.5	June	Released RFP for consultant to develop marketing plan; drafted in June, reviewed by Commission and received proposals in September. Plan will be focused on Iowa City attributes, alignment with current initiatives, focused attention to branding, models for promotional rollout schedules, template materials for modification by project or program, equity and "language" for how to frame climate activities as broadly appealing content.	Application of equity principles will be part of process. Commission member will participate in consultant selection.	Underway
SLE-1	Host Sustainability Forum and Events	Next	5.5	September	Climate Festival held week of Sept 19-25. Activities included digital and written storytelling, coordinated individual/community activities, and expanded local partnerships. Outreach began in June/July, finalized steps and promotions in August. Next significant programs in planning.	Intentional outreach with underserved groups to ensure access to awareness, education, and participation. Staff, planning committee, and CAC Working Group to connect with local organizations willing to partner on activities, promotion, or hosting remote event. Efforts underway to include translated festival materials in digital and print formats.	Complete

SLPP-1	Community Garden Expansion/Additions	Next	5.5	September	Working with Parks Department to see if there are plans for additional community garden areas.	Equity mapping for plot rentals exists. Need to review 2020 rentals, identify gaps in geo coverage and gaps in possible access for certain groups. Need focused outreach to see where needs might be to connect unresourced individuals with plot availability in upcoming years; will assist in identifying needs/potential for pocket gardens in ROW.	In Development
SLI-1	Expand Community Climate Grants	Next	5.4	November	Consider adding non-profit and business categories and define what the new program will look like next year. Identify how grant program ties into other City funding initiatives. Initial discussions underway.	Follow Equity Report recommendations to identify and connect with preferred applicant agencies from first tier needs. Community organizations geared towards underserved and disadvantaged groups could also fall into this expansion or, the next year's funding could be introduced specifically to certain groups from equity report and an info session can be held by invitation for these groups, like HRC and HCDC have done.	In Development
Additional Notes					Commission:	Working Group:	
					SLE1 - Feedback on Climate Festival; SLE2 - Feedback on Climate Action at Work program	SLI1 - WG can offer suggestions or thoughts on grants program focus, eligible entities, increments, etc.	