



August 26, 2022

Planning Commissioners and Planning Staff

Prince William County Supervisors: Chair Ann Wheeler, Vice-Chair Margaret Franklin, Mr. Victor Angry, Ms. Andrea Bailey, Mr. Kenny Boddye, Mr. Pete Candland, Ms. Jeanine Lawson, Ms. Yesli Vega

County Executive Elijah Johnson

Deputy County Executive Rebecca Horner

Mr. Alex Vanegas

[all via email]

Subject: Prince William County Sustainability Commission's Comments on *Pathway to 2040*

Dear Planning Commission Officers and Staff, Supervisors, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Horner, and Mr. Vanegas,

On November 17, 2020, the Prince William County Board of Supervisors (BOCS) adopted [Climate Mitigation and Resiliency Goals](#) and authorized the creation of a Sustainability Commission (SC). The BOCS created the SC on December 7, 2021, to guide the county on energy efficiency, greenhouse gases and carbon emission reduction. The SC is charged with advising on potential enhancements to the Community Energy and Sustainability Master Plan (CESMP), which will serve as a roadmap for the county to reach its climate mitigation and resiliency goals.

The goals are as follows:

- Reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emission to 50% below baseline 2005 levels by 2030
- Achieving 100% renewable electricity in Prince William County Government operations by 2030
- Becoming a Climate Ready Region and making significant progress to be a Climate Resilient Region by 2030
- Sourcing 100% of PWC's electricity from renewable sources by 2035
- Achieving 100% carbon neutrality in Prince William County Government operations by 2050.

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWWOG) has developed a GHG inventory for Prince William County (PWC), covering a base year of 2005, plus 2012, 2015, and 2018 (the most recent year available). The results indicate that PWC's emissions increased 19% between 2005 to 2018. Thus, to hit PWC's 50% GHG reduction goal, we will need to reduce emissions by 58% compared to 2018 levels.

Those of us on the SC are acutely aware of the enormity of the challenge ahead if we are to meet the GHG goals. Our primary mandate – advising the BOCS on the CESMP – is on a schedule where it will not be completed until summer 2023.

The ***Pathway to 2040: Comprehensive Plan Update*** is on track to be completed in a much shorter timeframe. It also will have a clear and immediate influence on county policies and operations. Thus,



the SC recognizes the critical importance of aligning the Comp Plan with the climate mitigation and climate resilience goals.

In our meetings to date (which started in May 2022 once all commissioners were finally appointed) we have sought briefings from key county staff involved in the planning process. Given that transportation emissions are the largest source of GHGs in PWC, and these emissions will be strongly influenced by policies in the Land Use and Mobility chapters, we have closely examined those chapters of the Comp Plan to provide early feedback that can better align the Comp Plan with what we anticipate will be in the CESMP.

To that end, in our August 25 2022 meeting, we passed a resolution, with a supporting brief, with comments that urge that the county amend the draft Land Use Chapter and Long Range Land Use Map such that they align with the synthesis of concepts and policies from the Mobility and Housing Plans, so that the Comprehensive Plan will support the MWCOG climate action goals and meaningfully address GHG emissions, energy use, and climate resilience. The resolution and supporting brief are attached.

We note that the latest drafts of the Land Use, Mobility, and Housing chapters were released on the same day as our meeting, so our review comments address the versions of those chapters prior to August 25, 2022.

The SC acknowledges the hard work and thoughtful consideration that are reflected in the Comp Plan to date, and appreciates the efforts that have been made to raise the level of the county's policies and actions in climate, clean energy, and sustainability. Still, we request that you carefully consider our comments; we offer them in the spirit of partnership as we work together to attain our challenging climate goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Pathway to 2040.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randall Freed".

Randall Freed, Chair, Sustainability Commission

Cc: Sustainability Commissioners Chinaka Barbour, Warren Beeton, Joseph Boutte, Demetrius Miguel Brown, Christopher Carroll, Elizabeth Ward, Robert Weir
Energy/ Environmental Sustainability Officer Giulia Manno