



Environmental Quality & Public Works Committee

June 18, 2024

Summary and Motions

Chair Sheehan called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Committee Members Vice Mayor Wu, Council Members Fogle, Lynch, LeGris, Monarrez, Gray, Worley, and Seigny were present. Committee Member F. Brown was absent.

I. Approval of April 30, 2024 Committee Summary

Motion by Monarrez to approve the April 30, 2024 Environmental Quality & Public Works Committee Summary. Seconded by Gray. Motion passed without dissent.

II. Review of Recycling Practices

This item was postponed to a future Environmental Quality & Public Works Committee meeting.

III. Explore Lexington's Sustainability Options

Jada Griggs, Program Manager Senior in Division of Environmental Services, reviewed the Empower Lexington Plan. The plan was developed over a 3-year period (2009-2012) and was facilitated by LFUCG. The focus was on energy efficiency with a goal to reduce energy use by at least 1% each year. Over 50 members participated in workgroups and there were engagement opportunities from July - August 2023. New sectors align with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for cities certification and work to increase sustainability and climate resiliency. She spoke about LEED for cities and said Lexington was selected as 1 of 13 cities to participate in the leadership cohort program sponsored by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). She spoke about the Solarize Lexington program which is open to Lexington residents, small businesses, non-profits, and places of worship. The Council approved \$1 million for grants to low to moderate-income homeowners. She reviewed the Climate Pollution Reduction Implementation Grant and said applications were due April 1, 2024. Grants will provide funds for GHG reduction measures that will significantly reduce GHG emissions by 2030 and will accelerate decarbonization across one or more major sectors responsible for GHG emissions. She closed by reviewing program highlights and she noted an Environmental Initiatives Specialist was hired in December 2023.

Addressing the climate pollution reduction grant, Griggs said this was just under \$1 million, but an implementation grant would provide more funding. In terms of the Solarize Lexington program, Griggs confirmed that we are projected to use all the funding for the low-income recipients and those funds are available on a first come, first served basis. When asked if there are any strategies to increase tree canopy, Griggs mentioned Lex Grows Trees initiative and the implementation grant. She noted there is a plan for what trees go where and they have a great program for that. Speaking about the Priority Climate Action Plan, Griggs mentioned we did a very detailed and comprehensive piece for Lexington and Fayette County. The Climate Pollution Reduction Implementation Grant is a bigger number that you can throw larger volume dollars at specific things like LexTran for \$11 million to revamp their vehicles. Chris Evilia, Transportation Planning Manager, said the LexTran project is to increase their capability to accommodate additional battery electric vehicles because right now they have a limit for how many they can support and recharge. Part of this issue is providing shelter for the buses because when temperatures are extreme, the operations degrade. Speaking about the regional connections she is involved with, Griggs said she

works with Louisville and Bowling Green because they were the only other Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)s to submit for the grant. When asked how else Council can support this, Griggs said the Climate Pollution Reduction Implementation Grant would allow them to get a lot done. No action was taken on this item.

IV. Greenhouse Gas Inventories

The Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory was presented by Abby Terry, Professional Engineer with the City's consultant, Tetra Tech. Terry explained the GHG effect and how heat is tracked in the earth's atmosphere. She spoke about the first GHG inventory in 2007 which showed municipal emissions totaled approximately 2% of inventory. She reviewed the three key takeaways: per capita emissions have decreased by 26%, municipal operations comprise 2.6% of community-wide emissions, and stationary energy accounts for almost 70% of emissions. Stationary energy accounts for 69.6% of the inventory total and sources include electricity, natural gas, permitted community sources, off road vehicles, and hazardous materials. Transportation is 23.1% of inventory total and those sources include on-road and off-road transportation as well as rail and aviation. Waste makes up 3.4% of inventory total and that includes solid waste, compost, and wastewater. She also pointed out waste that has been diverted: yard waste, recycling, e-waste, tires, paper shred, yard signs, and large appliances. The final 2 sectors of inventory are industry products and product use. These account for 2.9% of inventory total and includes asphalt and substitution of ozone depleting substances. Agriculture, forestry and other land use is 0.9% of inventory total and includes enteric fermentation, manure management, biomass burning, fertilizer application and tree canopy. Finally, she reviewed the trend analysis and highlighted the top 10 electricity users in 2021.

When asked if communities will be using the same methodology so that we know progress is being made, Terry said it wouldn't matter which you use if you are consistent over time. The best way to make comparisons is to yourself over time using the same methodology. A question arose about the acronym C+DD which Terry explained meant Construction and Demolition Debris. There was a comment that plastic was not a bigger piece of the pie chart. Terry spoke about the "business as usual" emissions forecast and said part of the comprehensive climate action plan will be creating a climate view dashboard where we are able to pull different levers and see how different actions or different pieces of legislation will affect our emissions inventory so this will be a good tool to investigate those outcomes. No action was taken on this item.

V. Items Referred to Committee

No Action was taken on this item.

The meeting adjourned at 2:42 p.m.