



City Council

Climate Program Update

Agenda Date: 7/16/2024
Agenda Item Number: 6.C
File Number:24-0601

Type: information **Version:** 1 **Status:** Other Business

Title

Climate Program Update

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Receive an update on the Olympia Climate Program.

Report

Issue:

Whether to receive an update on Olympia's Climate Program.

Staff Contact:

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Presenter(s):

Pamela Braff, PhD, Director of Climate Programs

Background and Analysis:

Established in 2021, the City of Olympia's Climate Program is responsible for leading and coordinating the implementation of the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan, the Olympia Sea Level Rise Response Plan, and other actions necessary to achieve the City's climate goals. This includes developing programs, plans, and policies to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions (climate mitigation) and prepare for the current and future effects of climate change (climate adaptation).

The Climate Program works across all city departments and with regional partners to advance Olympia's climate goals. Two major regional partnerships include the Thurston Climate Mitigation Collaborative (TCMC) and the Olympia Sea Level Rise Response Collaborative (SLR Collaborative).

Thurston Climate Mitigation Collaborative

Thurston County and the cities of Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater have been working together since 2018 to reduce regional greenhouse emissions. In 2018, the four partner jurisdictions began working together to develop a regional climate mitigation strategy; and adopted shared targets to reduce

locally generated greenhouse gas emissions 45% below 2015 levels by 2030 and 85% below 2015 levels by 2050. In 2020, the partners finalized the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan (TCMP), a regional framework to significantly reduce local greenhouse gas emissions. The TCMP includes more than 20 strategies and 70 actions to reduce local contributions to climate change.

In 2023, the jurisdiction partners updated the TCMP implementation strategy and established the Thurston Climate Mitigation Collaborative (TCMC) to improve ongoing coordination and implementation of the TCMP. A new website for the Collaborative is currently under development and will be available by the end of the year.

The TCMC partners work together on regionally coordinated actions to the greatest extent feasible. The partners are currently working on two regional initiatives:

- Developing a Home Energy Score (HES) Model Ordinance for consideration by the partner jurisdictions. If adopted, the HES standard would require most home sellers to disclose home energy performance information at the time of listing.
- Developing a regional Energy Efficiency and Electrification Campaign for implementation in 2025. The Campaign will build upon the success of Energize Olympia to offer a broader range of energy efficiency and electrification upgrades for residents throughout Thurston County.

Olympia Sea Level Rise Response Collaborative

The Olympia Sea Level Rise (SLR) Response Plan was developed in 2018-2019 through a joint planning effort between the City of Olympia, Port of Olympia, and LOTT Clean Water Alliance. The SLR Plan provides a coordinated strategy to protect downtown Olympia and the Port Peninsula from the impacts of sea level rise through 2100.

In 2021, the City of Olympia, Port, and LOTT established the Olympia Sea Level Rise Response Collaborative to guide and support long-term implementation of the SLR Response Plan. In 2022, Squaxin Island Tribe, Thurston County, and Washington State Department of Enterprise Services (DES) also joined the Collaborative as non-voting members.

The SLR Collaborative partners have nearly completed the implementation of all near-term actions to prepare for up to 6 inches of sea level rise. The partners are now working together to fill informational gaps and prepare for the implementation of future, mid-term adaptation strategies. Some ongoing activities include:

- Evaluating funding and governance strategies for long-term implementation.
- Monitoring the vertical land motion of downtown Olympia and the Port Peninsula.
- Evaluating the impacts of sea level rise on local groundwater conditions.

Implementation Progress

During this presentation, staff will provide an overview of recent Climate Program accomplishments, ongoing work, and anticipated next steps. Highlights include:

- Implementation of the 2024 Energize Olympia Heat Pump Program.
- Development of the Comprehensive Plan Climate Action and Resilience Element.
- Completing Olympia's Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment.
- Completing proposed amendments to the Commercial Energy Code.
- Ongoing regional coordination and collaboration.

Climate Analysis:

All Climate Program initiatives are designed to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions (climate mitigation) and/or prepare for the current and future effects of climate change (climate adaptation) in Olympia.

Equity Analysis:

Climate change affects everyone, but it does not affect all people equally. Some communities experience disproportionate climate impacts due to existing vulnerabilities and socioeconomic disparities, as well as systemic environmental injustices. Low-income communities, people of color, indigenous people, and people with disabilities are often more vulnerable to climate risks and face greater barriers to benefit from climate action.

A key focus of the Climate Program includes supporting a just transition for communities disproportionately impacted by climate change. This is accomplished by regularly evaluating and prioritizing emissions reduction and resilience initiatives that benefit overburdened communities.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

There is considerable community interest in climate action (including greenhouse gas reduction and resilience). Opportunities for community feedback and engagement are provided for all significant projects and/or policy initiatives.

Financial Impact:

None at this time. Long-term costs to achieve Olympia's greenhouse gas reduction targets and prepare for local impacts of climate change are expected to be significant over time. Additional funding will be necessary to achieve these goals.

Options:

1. Receive the briefing.
2. Do not receive the briefing.
3. Receive the briefing at another time.

Attachments:

Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan
Olympia Sea Level Rise Response Plan