

Vision, Goals, and Guiding Principles

Draft for August 29 Steering Committee Meeting

August 21, 2019

Background

One of the key tasks of the Climate Advisory Workgroup is to develop and recommend a vision statement, goals, and guiding principles for the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan (TCMP). The Steering Committee will approve the final version to be included in the plan.

- At their May 22 meeting, the Steering Committee reviewed the 2018 Climate Adaptation Plan’s overarching policy language as a foundation to develop the Mitigation Plan’s vision and guiding principles.
- Based on their initial feedback, TRPC staff developed the draft goals and principles below for discussion by the Climate Advisory Workgroup.
- The Workgroup first reviewed the draft Vision, Goals, and Principles at their June 11 meeting, and had a follow up discussion at their meeting on July 18.
- In August, staff will present the draft goals and guiding principles to the Steering Committee for review and approval.

Vision Statement

The Vision Statement developed for the Climate Adaptation Plan focused on adaptation and resilience.

“In addition to doing its part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the Thurston County region will remain resilient in the face of climate change impacts during the 21st century and beyond.”

Steering Committee members requested that the vision statement for the TCMP place the need for mitigation up front and use stronger language that communicates a sense of urgency driving the need for action.

Revised DRAFT Vision Statement for Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan

“Thurston County, Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater and surrounding tribes recognize the urgent threat and opportunity that climate change poses to our community’s economy, public health, public safety, and environment, ~~and economy~~. We will work together to identify and implement the most effective, efficient, and equitable actions to reduce locally generated greenhouse gas emissions to protect current and future generations from the most significant impacts of climate change.”

Climate Advisory Workgroup Feedback

- Emphasize potential opportunities to thrive in the future, and not only focus on the threats.
- Add reference to the people of these jurisdictions, people who commute into region and work here, and local tribes. As written, the “we” of the vision is only the jurisdictions. Further discussion with Steering Committee needed to determine appropriate focus, since the scope of the TCMP is to develop a plan primarily for the four jurisdictions.

- CAW members discussed which to list first: public health, public safety, environment, or economy.
- Some members would like to remove the phrase “locally generated” to include consideration of emissions produced outside Thurston County for goods consumed locally. Others support retaining “locally generated” to keep the scope of the TCMP more focused.
The current scope of this project is to focus on locally generated emissions – expanding the scope to address a broader range of emissions categories would require a change to the timeline and tasks, or could be considered as part of a future phase.
- Members noted that climate impacts will affect current as well as future generations, and so both should be called out as worthy of protection.
- Some members would like to remove the phrase “most significant” because it infers there will be less significant impacts we overlook. Others want to keep this phrase in recognition that (1) local mitigation actions alone will not address all the latent impacts of climate change, and that adaptation actions are also necessary, and (2) the plan should be strategic and prioritized.

Goals

The Thurston Climate Adaptation Plan’s goals drew extensively from TRPC’s 2013 *Creating Places – Preserving Spaces: A Sustainable Development Plan for the Thurston Region (Sustainable Thurston)*. There was general agreement among the Steering Committee members to maintain these goals and the nexus with *Sustainable Thurston* for the Mitigation Plan. While the regional goals emphasize the co-benefits of mitigation actions, there was a suggestion to highlight the mitigation target as a standalone goal for this process.

Adopted Regional Goals

1. Create vibrant centers, corridors and neighborhoods while accommodating growth;
2. Preserve environmentally sensitive lands, farmlands, forest lands, prairies, and rural lands, and develop compact urban areas;
3. Create a robust economy;
4. Protect and improve water quality, including groundwater, rivers, streams, lakes and Puget Sound;
5. Plan and act toward zero waste in the region;
6. Ensure that residents have the resources to meet their daily needs;
7. Support a local food system to increase community resilience, health and economic prosperity;
8. Ensure that the region’s water supply sustains people in perpetuity while protecting the environment;
9. Move toward a carbon-neutral community;
10. Maintain air quality standards;
11. Provide opportunities for everyone in the Thurston Region to learn about and practice sustainability;
12. Make strategic investments to advance sustainability regionally.

DRAFT Climate Mitigation Target Goal

Reduce [net](#) communitywide greenhouse gas emissions 45% below 2015 levels by 2030 and 85% below 2015 levels by 2050 to ensure that local communities do their part to keep the global average temperature from rising more than 2° Celsius (3.6° F) above historic levels.

Climate Advisory Workgroup Feedback

- CAW members discussed the value of maintaining the regional goals as written, since they have existing targets and metrics, and already have been approved by the partner jurisdictions. An ongoing plan to monitor progress toward these goals should be included in the plan as a set of actions, and there should be a mechanism to review and update the regional goals as the plan is implemented.
- Members suggested the mitigation-specific target should address “net” emissions, to ensure that carbon sequestration actions like forestry and agriculture practices have a place in the plan.

Guiding Principles

The planning process for the Thurston Climate Adaptation Plan was governed by nine guiding principles, many of which may be applicable to the Mitigation Plan. TRPC staff modified these based on input from the Steering Committee and the Advisory Workgroup’s June 11 stakeholder discussion. Although the Guiding Principles are numbered, they are not in ranked order – each is considered equally important for the planning process.

| Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan DRAFT Guiding Principles | Considerations & CAW Feedback |
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| 1. Systems approach Holistic . Think in terms of multiple generations and connected built and natural systems, as well as view local and regional decisions through the lens of social, economic, and environmental sustainability; | This principle is taken from the Adaptation Plan. A CAW member suggested using the word “holistic” rather than “systems.” |
| 2. Action-oriented . Develop actions and strategies that are meaningful and realistic: go beyond general guidance to identify the specific steps needed to make effective changes that <u>are effective at reducing</u> greenhouse gas emissions <u>below the emission targets</u> ; | Revised to address input from Workgroup – keywords include realistic, strong, clear, meaningful, tangible, effective. CAW members requested that this principle be more specific about what constitutes “effective” by referencing the emission reduction target. |
| 3. Adaptive . Consider both the short- and long-term impacts of climate change, and review and revise targets and approaches as needed to address emerging information about the timing and severity of climate impacts or the effectiveness of policies; | Revised to consider both need for longer time frame and adaptive approach to targets and opportunities. This principle addresses a desire of the Steering Committee for a process to review the targets, as well as Workgroup interest in effective actions. CAW members requested more specificity about when the plan and targets would be reviewed – this could be addressed as an action in the Plan itself. |
| 4. Co-benefits . Identify and leverage climate change mitigation strategies and actions that offer other benefits to the community, such as increasing resilience or access to resources, reducing energy or other costs, improving health outcomes, or addressing equity; | Revised to focus on climate mitigation strategies that offer “community co-benefits.” CAW members requested that this principles reflect broader costs to the community beyond energy costs. |
| 5. Science-based . Utilize sound scientific research, scenarios modeling, economic analysis, and other | Revised to focus on qualitative and quantitative analysis of mitigation activities to reduce GHG emissions. CAW |

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| <p>tools to analyze-understand the outcomes of strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;</p> | <p>members requested that the “science-based” language be retained, and that the focus be on increasing understanding.</p> |
| <p>6. Track record. Incorporate and complement work produced by others, including successful examples from existing local and regional climate action plans;</p> | <p>Revised to address Workgroup comments about learning from and building on other local climate mitigation planning efforts.</p> |
| <p>7. Equity. Consider how the costs and benefits of mitigation actions will be shared across all urban and rural communities: — especially for <u>including both urban and rural areas</u>, low-income households, communities of color, and other vulnerable populations <u>that historically have been impacted by environmental hazards or are otherwise vulnerable to climate impacts</u>;</p> | <p>Revised to change “adaptation” to mitigation and increase focus on equity issues in our analysis. CAW members suggested adding emphasis on environmental justice and calling out populations that have been historically impacted by environmental hazards.</p> |
| <p>8. Tribal sovereignty. Recognize and strive to<u>support</u> <u>protection of</u> local indigenous tribes’ community health and well-being, including natural resources security and self-determination;</p> | <p>This principle was developed for the Adaptation Plan. Some (non-tribal) CAW members suggested language be strengthened. Final wording will be reviewed by tribal representatives.</p> |
| <p>9. Public engagement. Seek broad community input, as well as educate residents about climate change and inspire them to take action.</p> | <p>This principle is unmodified from the Adaptation Plan.</p> |
| <p>10. Readiness. <u>Consider and prioritize strategies that can be launched and realized quickly using existing resources and/or networks.</u></p> | <p>CAW members suggested adding a new Guiding Principle around prioritization that emphasizes a focus on reaching for the low-hanging fruit, or actions that can be quickly implemented.</p> |