



Minutes

EPC RETREAT MEETING

May 3, 2025

City Hall, Sister Cities Conference Room 1101

8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Attendance

EPC Members (11)	Status	Staff
Dan Beattie	P	Melissa Atwood, T&ES
Eldon Boes	P	Erin Bevis-Carver, T&ES
Benjamin Cuddy, Vice-Chair	P	Ryan Freed, Office of Climate Action
Jennifer Debias	P	
Charlie Garlow	P	
Kathie Hoekstra	P	
Perrin Krisko	P	
Philip Mobilia	P	Guests
Marta Schantz, Chair	P	See Attached Guest List
Julia Slayden	P	
Yanique Revers	A	

P: Present; **PR:** Present Remotely; **A:** Absent - Unexcused; **E:** Absent – Excused; **N:** Not a Member

1. Welcome & Introductions

Chair Marta Schantz called the meeting to order and provided an overview of topics to be covered. Introductions were completed for all attendees.

2. Office of Climate Action Plans for FY26

Mr. Ryan Freed discussed the Office of Climate Action plans for FY26, which focus on connecting programs and initiatives to three guiding principles: (1) advancing environmental justice; (2) moving the needle (investments that matter); and (3) advancing the EAP & ECCAP across all city departments. Discussion focused on one program in each of the four following categories, including their respective tie into the guiding principles.

- Buildings: Multi-Family Health and Energy Program (CHAMPs).
- Electric Vehicles: Plugin Alexandria.
- City Policies & Processes: EAP Refresh & Climate Budgeting.
- Outreach & Education: Eco-City Ambassadors.

3. Discussion with City Council

Councilman Abdel Elnoubi, Councilwoman Jacinta Greene, and Vice-Mayor Sarah Bagley joined the EPC to discuss how the EPC can best provide insights to Council, especially around EPC priorities of climate and interests in the city.

Some of the Council discussions included DASH's bus sustainability and expanding free rides, preserving and expanding green space, environmental justice around climate and heat islands in disadvantaged area, supporting the office of climate action, and healthy homes.

There was a discussion on the recent budget process and FY26 add/delete budget session, including contingency budget.

Session included discussion on ways to improve continual engagement between EPC and councilmembers. Ideas looked at quarterly email updates, meeting to discuss, or attending Saturday public hearings. For Saturday hearings, the first 15 speakers can talk about whatever they want, so EPC would have 3 minutes to provide updates to all 7 councilmembers every month. Another idea voiced was to work with youth and have their voice in front of Council since it generally is received with significant impact.

To that note, EPC discussed the possible consideration of adding a youth position to the EPC member body as an official commissioner or just as an active youth involved.

4. EAP2040 Goals Progress Report

Mr. Ryan Freed provided a review of the annual progress report for the EAP 2040 actions and goals, followed by the forward moving plan for an EAP 2040 refresh with the Eco-City Coordinating Group. The EAP 2040 includes overarching goals and various actions/goals, but didn't include metrics to evaluate how individual actions get us closer to achieving the overall goals identified.

Moving forward, the EAP 2040 will be looked at from the chapter level goals, versus every action identified, to give a better perspective of how the city is moving forward with the overarching goals of the EAP. This allows staff more autonomy and authority over how the goals are achieved, versus being driven by specific actions identified years ago and possibly no longer as effective as new actions. Plans for the EAP refresh including the addition of tracking mechanisms for each ECCAP metric, to identify city programs/operations that impact all the EAP metrics, and to report progress regularly to Council and the community.

The City is working on incorporating a climate action and race and social equity review of work plans generated by each department and adding information related to how it helps achieve climate and race and social equity goals, as well as working toward city and council goals and priorities.

The Eco-City Coordinating Group is an internal group of staff, originally including departments that are clearly focused on the climate and environment and now expanding to include most departments in the city. This group will be actively involved in the EAP 2040 refresh.

EPC discussion included “opportunity cost” in prioritizing climate actions; that every dollar and hour spent on something is dollar/hour not spent on something else.

5. VA League of Conservation Voters Report-Out

Blair St Ledger-Olson, Director of Advocacy and Campaigns for the VA League of Conservation Voters, provided an overview of what occurred during General Assembly this year. The discussion covered a high-level look at what the General Assembly looks like right now, some key dynamics between stakeholders that were themes this session, what happened during the legislative session and during the veto session.

General Assembly is 51 Democrats and 49 Republicans. Leadership was identified, including a couple of new appointments, but mostly the same individuals as last year.

This was the Governor’s last session, and it is a big election year, including all members of the House of Representatives, the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Attorney General. Over 2,000 bills were introduced, 917 were passed, with 386 having an environmental perspective. VA League of Conservation Voters supported 110 and opposed 35 of those bills.

Environmental bills discussed included:

- Water, including Chesapeake Bay funding, foam ban remaining intact, and a tree canopy bill that passed;
- Land use and transportation bills including invasive plants bill that passed and the advanced clean car standards remained; and
- Energy, including Virtual Power Plants and Solar schools, that were signed.

Closed out session with questions and discussion from attendees.

6. Working Session to talk through EPC Strategy

Working session discussion is focused on what we can do as a commission over the next year, knowing our capacity, time, and priorities.

Session reviewed last year’s guiding principles to decarbonize buildings, decarbonize transportation, improve climate resiliency, and focus on environmental justice. Commission will keep these guiding principles for this year.

Session used EPC mission to prioritize areas and activities of impact and identify the next 3 “activities” for the EPC to focus on. Areas of impact identified include advocacy, plan development and influence, information gathering, OCA program support, collaborative activities, City Council/City staff engagement, and public engagement.

Vice-Chair Cuddy will bring a summary of activity results and activities identifies as top priority for EPC to focus on in FY26 at a future EPC meeting.

7. Adjourn

The meeting ended at 2:56p.m.

FY2025 Attendance

Member	Sept 16, 2024	Oct 21, 2024	Nov 18, 2024	Dec 16, 2024	Jan 13, 2025	Feb 10, 2025	Mar 10, 2025	Apr 21, 2025	May 3, 2025 (Retreat)	May 19, 2025	Jun 16, 2025	TOTALS
Kishla Askins	P	P	P	PR	E	PR	E					100%
Dan Beattie	P	P	P	PR	P	P	P	P	P			100%
Eldon Boes	P	P	P	PR	P	A	P	PR	P			89%
Alexander Clark	E	P	E	PR	E	A						83%
Benjamin Cuddy	E	P	P	E	P	P	E	P	P			100%
Jennifer Debias	E	P	PR		PR	P	E	P	P			100%
Charlie Garlow		P	P	PR	P	P	PR	P	P			100%
Kathie Hoekstra	P	PR	P	PR	PR	P	PR	P	P			100%
Perrin Krisko							P	PR	P			100%
Philip Mobilia	P	P	P	PR	P	P	P	P	P			100%
Marta Schantz	P	P	P	PR	P	PR	P	P	P			100%
Julia Slayden	P	P	P	PR	E	P	E	P	P			100%
Yanique Revers				PR	PR	E	P	P	A			83%
James Vandeputte	E											100%

***NOTE: Dec 16, 2024 meeting was virtual only**

Appendix A: Guest Attendance List

VISITORS

EPC Retreat Agenda – Saturday, May 3rd 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM

@ City Hall Sister Cities Conference Room 1101, Alexandria, VA

Name	Organization/Citizen
Larry Zeragaza	EQAC, Rancho County
Charlie Garlow	
Scott Barstow	Build Our Future
Donna Gold	FACS
Denz G. Stoner	citizen.
Deb Roepke	Citizen
John Hill	Alexandria Stormwater Committee
Doug Snoyenber	Arlington C2E2
Jean McIntyre	Arlington C2E2
JEROME CORBIS	Public Health Advisory Comm.
RISHABH "RAY" JUNEJA	GRASSROOTS ALEXANDRIA
Melissa McMahon	Planning Commission
Holly Lennihan	Planning Commission
Steve Watz	citizen/FACS