



Environmental Regulations and Policy Review Project Update

May 12, 2026

Agenda

- Review project objectives and potential outcomes
- Update on project progress
 - Highlighting overlap with/implementation of the City's Climate Program
- Next steps

Project Objectives

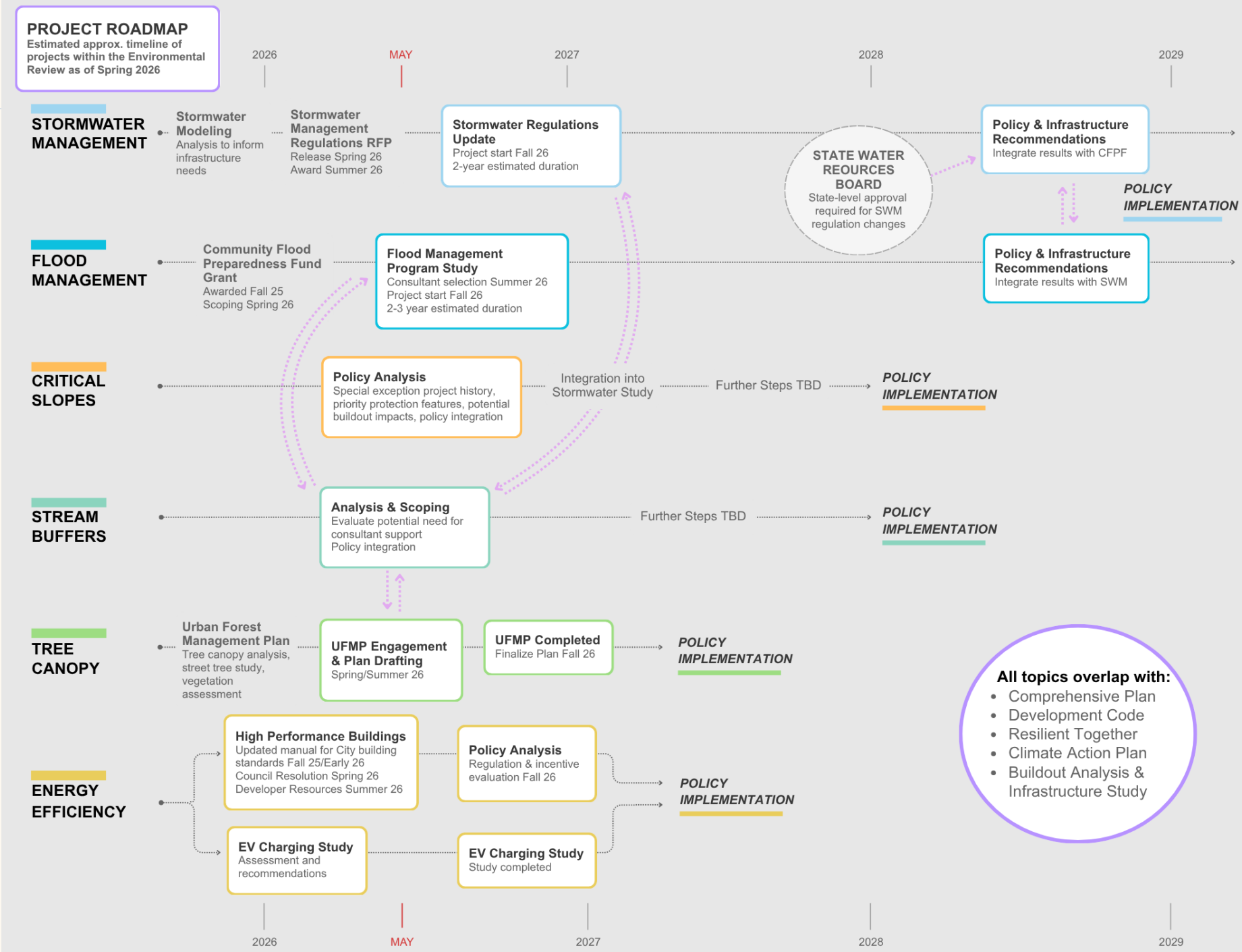
- **Objectives**
 - Balance community and Comprehensive Plan priorities of housing/by-right density with protecting the natural and built environments
 - Increase community resilience, including to increased flooding and extreme heat risks
 - Ensure alignment between regulations across topics (e.g., stormwater management and flood management)
 - Use an equitable framework for prioritization and implementation
- **Potential project outcomes**
 - City Code updates, including the Development Code
 - Updated policies for the 5-year Comprehensive Plan review
 - Updates to City programs and policies
 - Coordination on related projects and plans

Summary of Potential Project Outcomes

Topic	Potential Outcomes
Stormwater Management	• Updates to stormwater management regulations that improve the feasibility of infill development while also increasing the use of onsite measures for water quality (e.g. rain barrels, green roofs) • Data to support future infrastructure needs and a long-range Stormwater Capital Improvement Plan
Flood Management	• Coordination on Community Flood Preparedness Fund grant for a more robust flood management program • Updated regulations and standards for development in the floodplain • Participation in the Community Rating System
Tree Canopy and Preservation	• Updated landscaping requirements such as tree canopy, street trees, and tree preservation bonus • Updated guidance for tree planting and health • Recommendations to increase tree canopy (including street trees) in coordination with the Urban Forest Management Plan
Stream Buffers	• Updates to the Water Protection Ordinance requirements • Additional or revised incentives and voluntary measures to protect existing trees and vegetation along waterways and to plant additional trees and vegetation
Critical Slopes	• Updated review criteria for critical slopes special exceptions • More clear guidance in the Comprehensive Plan, which could inform updates to critical slopes regulations
Energy Efficiency	• High Performance Building Standards / update to the 2008 Green Building Policy • High Performance Buildings best practices and potential regulations/incentives for private sector • Community Electric vehicle (EV) charging plan • Public right of way policy for EV charging

Project Roadmap

As staff identifies standalone projects by topic, staff anticipates transitioning the Environmental Review into these individual projects, with continued collaboration across project teams.



City Project Partners

Departments collaborating on this project include:

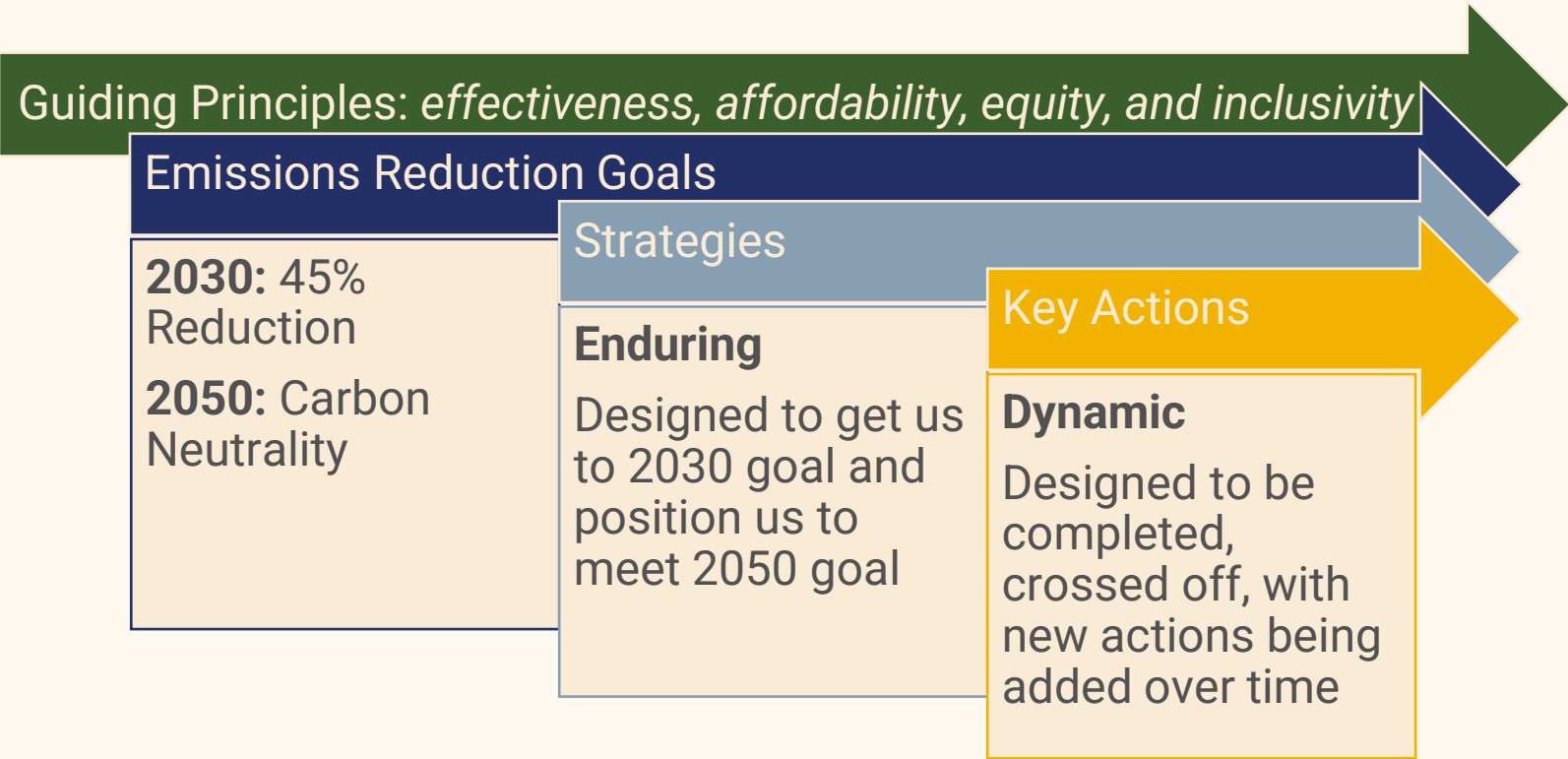
- Neighborhood Development Services
- Office of Sustainability
- Public Works / Engineering
- Utilities
- Parks & Recreation
- Additional departments involved at key points



Eco Fair Spring Festival
Photo Credit: Botanical Garden of the Piedmont

Charlottesville's Community Climate Action Plan

Adopted in 2023 as an amendment to the City's Comprehensive Plan, the Climate Action Plan is a strategic roadmap for helping guide action towards our **emissions reduction targets**.

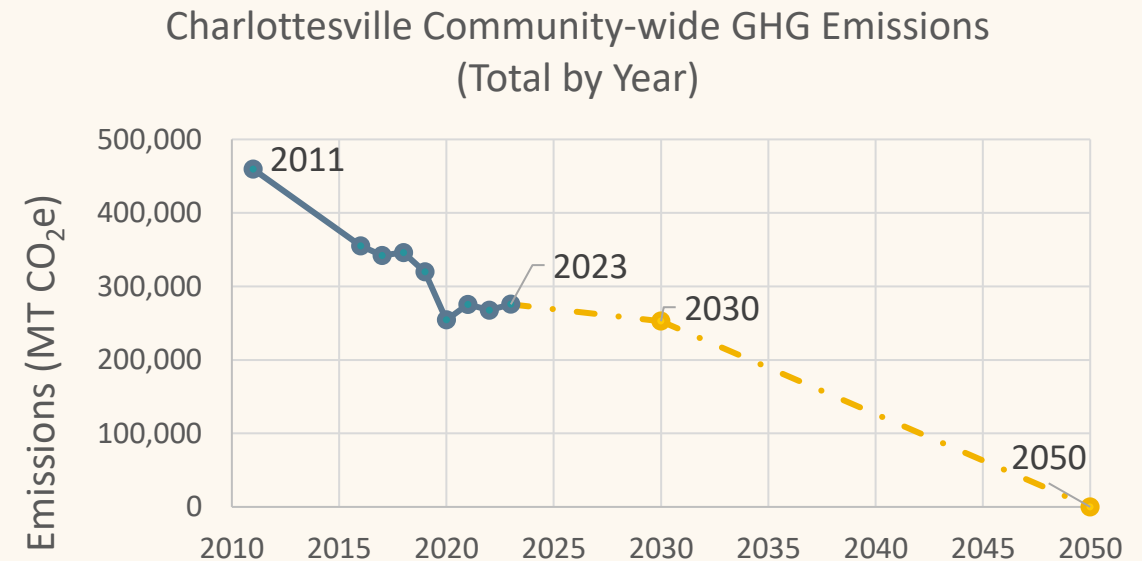


Key Actions support the strategies, which are grouped by sector:

- **Community Emissions**
 - Buildings & Energy
 - Transportation
 - Waste
 - Nature-based Solutions
 - Funding & Financing
- **Municipal Emissions**
 - Buildings & Energy
 - Streetlights & Traffic Signals
 - Transportation & Mobile Assets

Implementing the Climate Action Plan

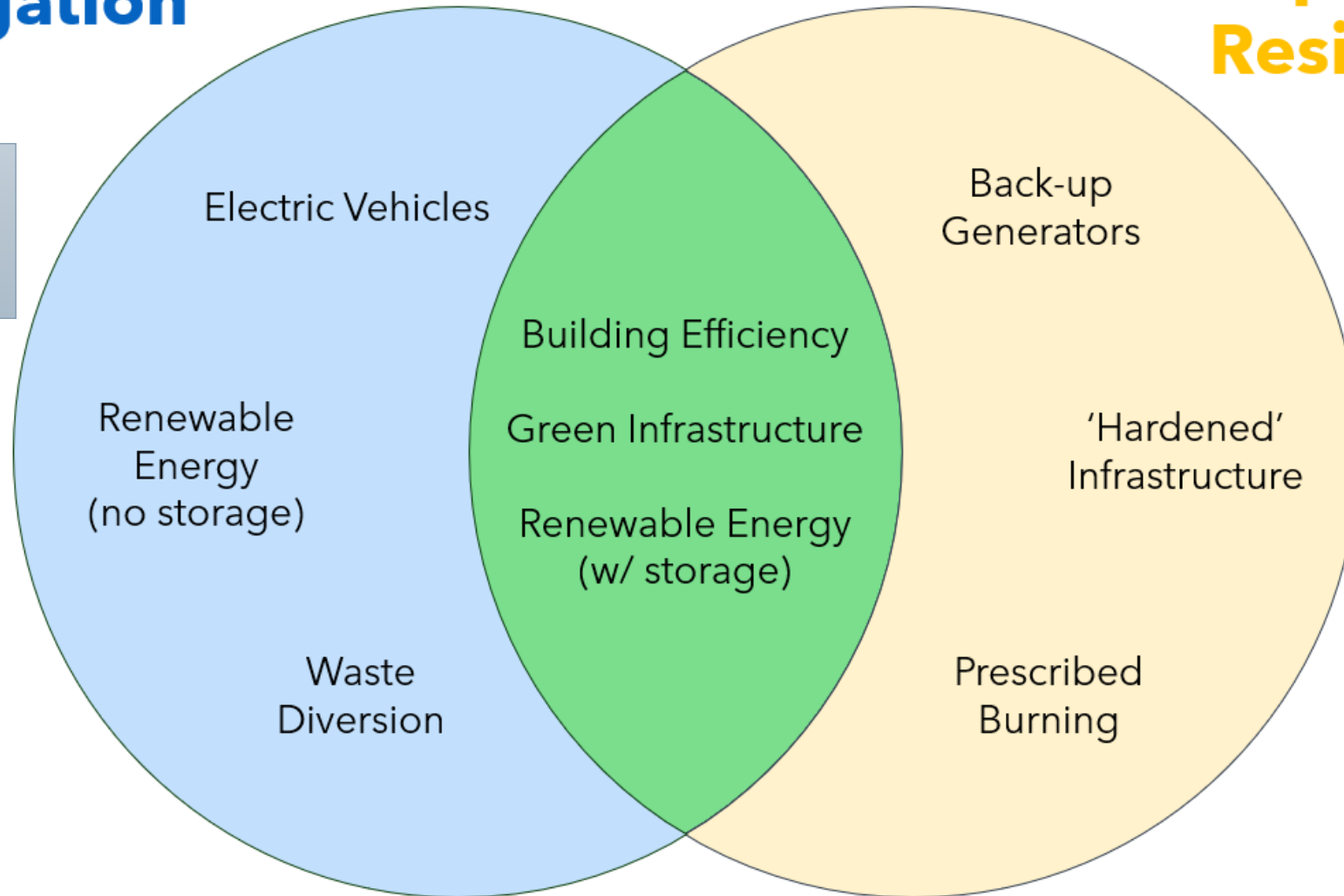
- Each Fiscal Year, the Climate Program develops a cross-departmental workplan to support implementation of the Climate Action Plan.
- The workplan is organized by outcome area:
 - Resilience Building
 - Municipal Energy Efficiency & Use Reduction
 - Community Energy Efficiency & Use Reduction
 - Municipal Transportation Electrification
 - Community Transportation Electrification
 - Community Transportation Improvement
 - Nature Based Solutions
 - Community Waste Reduction
 - Other Programmatic Activities
- Workplan activities can include program delivery, projects, or policy improvements



Reducing Emissions AND Adapting to Impacts

Mitigation

Climate
Action Plan



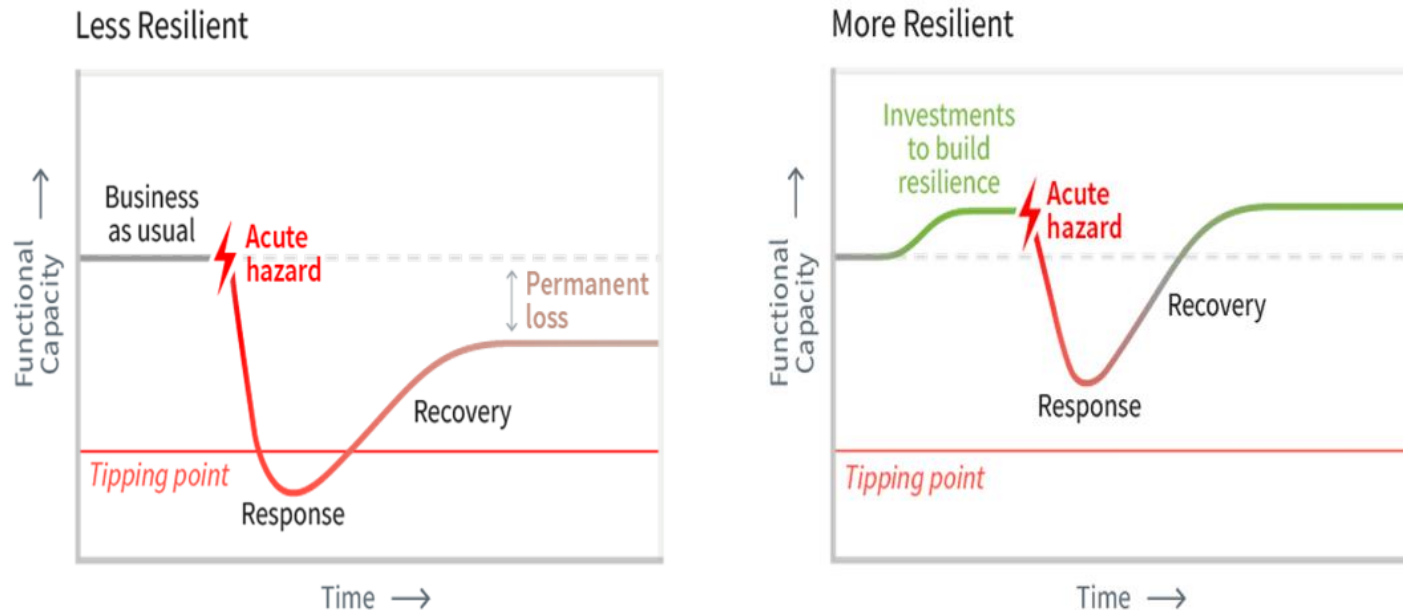
Adaptation & Resilience

Adaptation & Resilience
Plan

Resilient Together: Developing a Climate Adaptation & Resilience Plan

Resilient together is a joint planning and community engagement process through which the City, UVA, and Albemarle County have worked in parallel to develop Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plans for each entity.

The City's Plan is currently in the first round of internal review.



18 Strategy Areas:

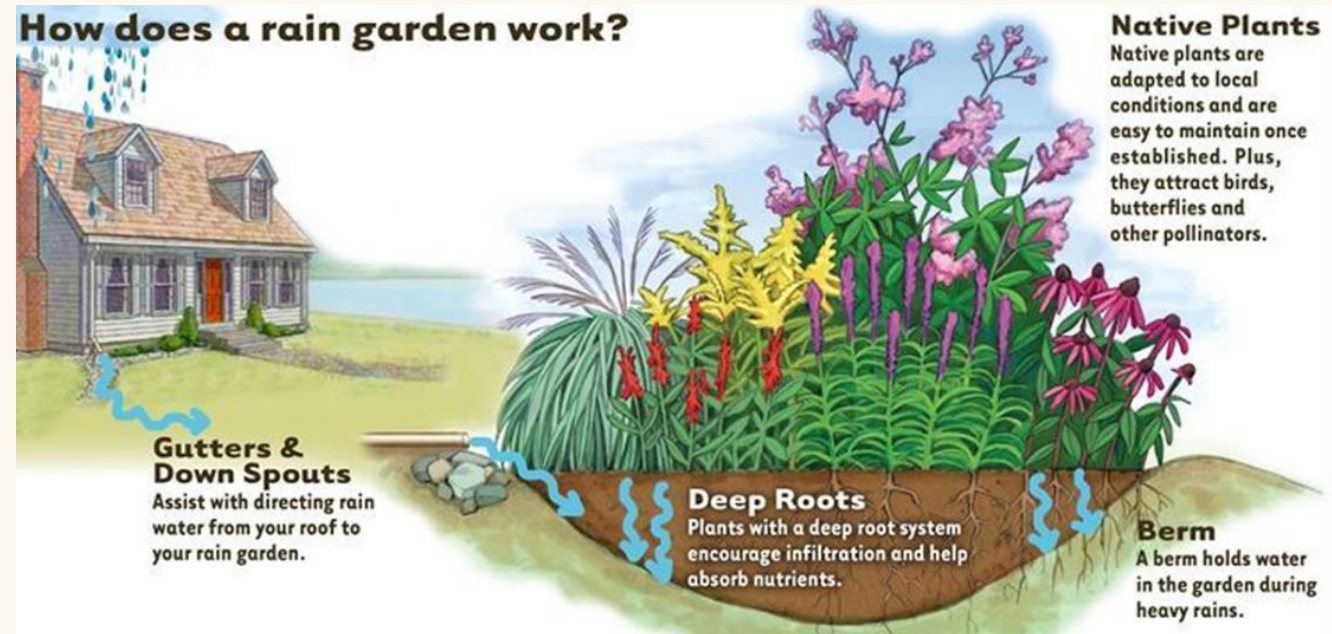
- Biodiversity
- Buildings
- Communications & Information
- Community Training & Partnerships
- Emergency Alerts
- Emergency Response Capacity
- Electric Energy Infrastructure
- Food System
- Hazard Monitoring
- Resilience Hubs
- Small Business Resilience
- State Support for Local Resilience
- Stream Corridors & Floodplains
- Transportation
- Urban Heat Islands
- Urban Stormwater
- Water Supply & Conservation
- Wildfire Preparedness

Resilient Together: Example of Project Overlap

Urban Stormwater section of Resilient Together: Urban stormwater management facilities and infrastructure that can withstand projections for severe precipitation and population growth, prioritizing nature-based solutions

Action:

- Through the **Environmental Review Project**, update relevant sections of code to facilitate the implementation of best practices for green stormwater infrastructure. In particular, develop standards and policy for on-site and site-adjacent green stormwater infrastructure to help address the tension between stormwater regulations and desire for increased density on small parcels.



Credit: Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources

Project Progress

Request for Proposals (RFP) for Stormwater Management regulations project

Lead departments: Public Works and Neighborhood Development Services

- Stormwater management regulations update RFP: anticipated early May release with mid-June closing
- Review committee will review RFP's and select a consultant this summer; project will kick off late summer/early fall
- Project purpose: increasing the feasibility of smaller infill developments (land disturbance under 10,000 sq ft), balancing Comp Plan goals of density/housing choice with a protected and restored natural environment
- Project scope includes:
 - Develop updates to the City's stormwater management requirements
 - Develop associated technical reports and toolkits
 - Significant community engagement and information-sharing



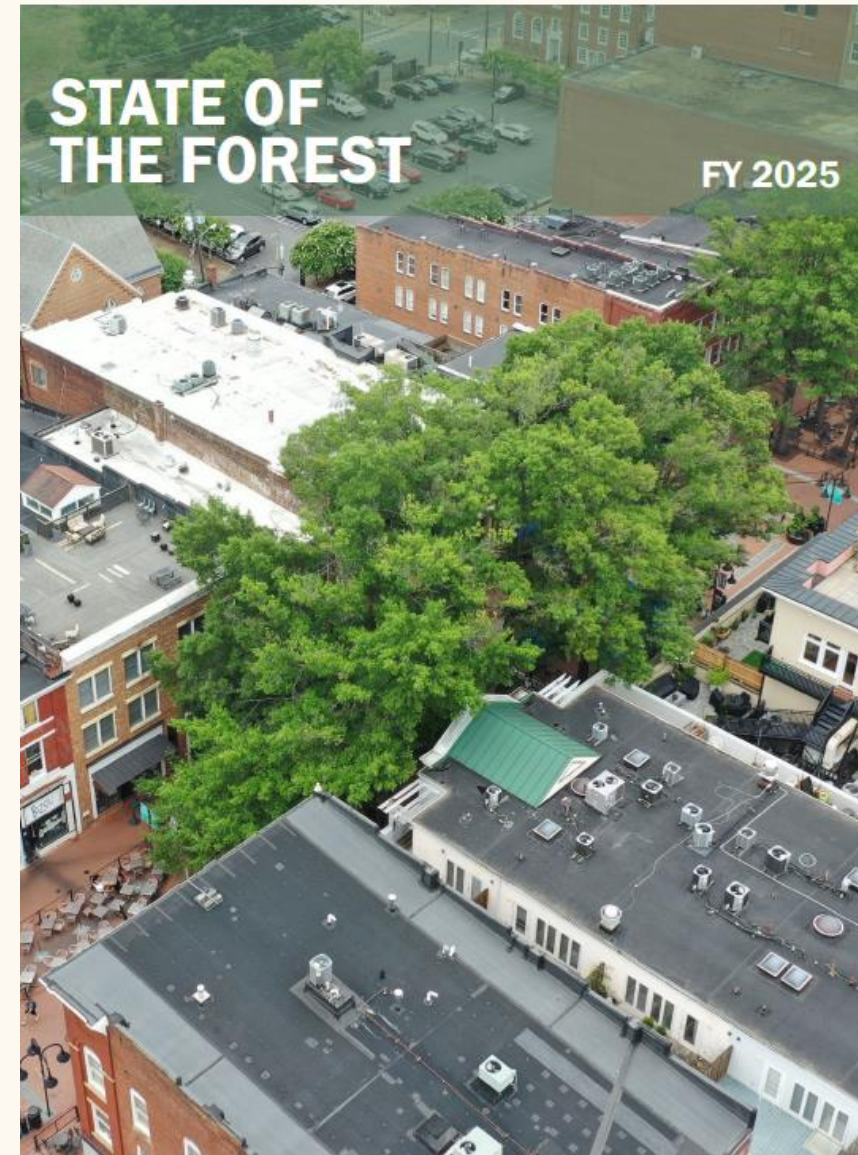
Rainwater harvesting
Credit: VA Soil and Water
Conservation Districts

Project Progress

Urban Forest Management Plan

Lead departments: Parks & Rec and Office of Sustainability

- Community engagement in progress
 - Launched Connect Charlottesville UFMP page
 - Tabling at EcoFair 4/18 and Rivanna RiverFest 5/09
 - **Survey and activity open through 5/24**
- After this round of engagement, the team will review community input and develop the draft UFMP, which will be shared for additional community feedback prior to finalizing the plan
- Tree Commission and Parks & Rec shared the 2025 State of the Forest Report at 4/20 Council meeting
 - Supports UFMP and Environmental Review Project
- NDS and Parks collaborating on improving tree preservation review and enforcement



Downtown Mall Trees (Image source: Wolf Josey Landscape Architects)

Project Progress

Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF) Grant Project

Lead department: Office of Sustainability

- Staff completed the scope of work for the CFPF grant project to build a more robust and future-forward Flood Management Program, and the procurement process has started

Water Protection Ordinance (WPO) Stream Buffers and Critical Slopes

Lead department(s): Needs to be determined

- Reviewed previous critical slopes special exception requests
- Evaluating potential impact of changing regulations for WPO buffers and critical slopes
 - Will compare results from the buildout analysis once that data is available, in part to inform potential prioritization of areas and/or features to protect
- Potential for consultant support once determine remaining funds after selecting stormwater RFP consultant

Project Progress

High Performance Buildings

Lead department: Office of Sustainability

- Council approved High Performance Buildings resolution on 4/06
- Updated High Performance Building Standards for City buildings
- Resources in progress to encourage best practices in the private sector
- Potential for additional incentives for private sector; further study is needed

Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging

Lead department: Office of Sustainability

- Community EV Charging Study completed
- Next steps being determined; recommendations include a residential curbside charging ordinance and options for City fleet vehicle charging

Next Steps

Short-term next steps:

- Review RFPs and select consultant for the stormwater management regulations project
- Select consultant for CFPF grant project: Flood Management Program updates
- Continued UFMP engagement
- High Performance Buildings best practices for the private sector

Additional next steps:

- Identify project leads and funding resources to scope the remaining topic areas
 - Focused on WPO buffers/critical slopes, may also include energy efficiency
- Transition the Environmental Review Project into multiple standalone projects by topic with continued coordination across teams
 - Likely to include individual Connect project pages (see UFMP as example)



Urban Forest Management Plan

Planning for Charlottesville's
Future Urban Forest



Urban Forest Management Plan Connect Page:
connect.charlottesville.gov/urbanforest-managementplan
Survey Open through May 24

Thank You!

