

To: City Council

From: Climate and Environment Commission

Date: August 24, 2021

Subject: Input on Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Budget

In a recent statement, UN Secretary-General António Guterres declared the following:

“Today’s IPCC Working Group 1 report is a code red for humanity. The alarm bells are deafening, and the evidence is irrefutable: greenhouse-gas emissions from fossil-fuel burning and deforestation are choking our planet and putting billions of people at immediate risk. Global heating is affecting every region on Earth, with many of the changes becoming irreversible.

The internationally agreed threshold of 1.5°C is perilously close. We are at imminent risk of hitting 1.5°C in the near term. The only way to prevent exceeding this threshold is by urgently stepping up our efforts and pursuing the most ambitious path.

We must act decisively now to keep 1.5°C alive. We are already at 1.2°C and rising. Warming has accelerated in recent decades. Every fraction of a degree counts. Greenhouse-gas concentrations are at record levels. Extreme weather and climate disasters are increasing in frequency and intensity. That is why this year’s United Nations climate conference in Glasgow is so important.”

It is with this perspective in mind that the Climate and Environment Commission has reviewed the proposed FY2022 Budget and found positive steps but not the necessary bold and transformative steps toward mitigating greenhouse gas emissions. In this input we have also identified some areas where action can possibly be taken with management action. We also recognize that all city actions that support the CAAP for FY22 are not identified in the budget.

The Climate and Environment Commission previously provided input for the FY 2022 in the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) Annual Report. Those priorities are listed again for your convenience in Attachment 2.

The Commission is pleased to observe the increase in the number of mentions of the CAAP, climate action steps and inclusion of Strategic Plan Reliable Infrastructure Outcome Objective #3: “Prepare Columbia's natural and built environments for the impacts of climate change”. However there is still a lack of specificity regarding how Columbia is investing to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and in some instances planning for adaptation. A summary of the specific CAAP or climate related items extracted by department from the budget is included in Attachment 1 for your reference.

The Commission will provide input regarding the investments with the American Rescue Plan Act funding in a separate memo.

Below are some thoughts from the Commission on what is missing from the proposed budget and where we collectively need to do more. The Commission recognizes climate action is a long term effort and wants to prioritize some steps in FY22 or the next.

Transportation

Public Works - Streets & Engineering

Identification of funds to support the development of an updated complete streets policy to support the modal shift to bicycling and walking (T-1.1.2)

Public Works: Transit

In the following quoted passage it is unclear if there is a commitment to electric vehicles in the bus and van replacements or energy efficiency upgrades to the Grissum Building.

“The City will use funding from the FTA - 5307 grant on capital expenses in both FY 20 and FY 21 for projects including bus replacements, para-transit van replacements, and several projects at the Grissum Building over the next four years.”

Public Works - Non-Motorized Grant

Are there any recommendations from the completed project to support the shift to walking and bicycling? If so, they are not readily apparent in the proposed budget. The CAAP has significant goals to shift from 78% single occupancy vehicle share to only 40% by 2035. Biking share needs to increase to 10% and walking to 13% by 2035. The Commission would like additional financial support directed towards the transportation mode shift goals.

Public Works: Parking Utility

The pilot of two electric vehicle charging stations in the Short Street garage is good news. However, the Commission recommends a more rapid deployment of electric vehicle charging stations and to more city locations than is currently identified in the budget.

An analysis from the Yale School of the Environment says “Given the huge number of new EV models now promised by automakers, charging infrastructure is taking center stage as the crucial bottleneck for faster EV adoption. The “chicken and egg” line with respect to EVs and charging infrastructure is often cited, but a more fitting analogy (thanks to the movie, “Field of Dreams”) might be, “If you build it, they will come.””

The Commission recommends the city could investigate EV charging stations as another way to promote people existing I-70 and Hwy 63 to stop for a while and spend their money in Columbia for economic development as well as a way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Vehicle & Equipment Replacement Fund (VERF)

Provide funding and resources to support staff to implement the plan for fleet electrification and consider total costs of ownership in future purchases. (T-2.1.1)

Regional Airport Fund and Public Safety

The budget mentions that natural gas (Methane) connections are being installed in the airport. However, the CAAP has a goal of transitioning homes and buildings to be fossil fuel free for heating, cooling and other needs. (H-1.5) Multiple new buildings or building renovations are listed in the budget for 2022 and beyond. Therefore, the Commission would like to ask the Council and the City Manager to

prioritize a policy or a management direction that new buildings not utilize fossil gas and that building remodeling projects eliminate fossil gas when possible.

“Negotiations were completed with Ameren to install natural gas for all tenants including the new terminal. Staff expects this project will be completed in the fall of 2021.”

Community Development: Neighborhood Services

- Provide funding and resources for developing, communicating and promoting an energy efficiency standards program for rental housing to landlords, property owners, tenants and other interested parties. (H-1.1.3)
- Provide funding and resources for developing, communicating and promoting to sellers, buyers, home owners, real estate agents, developers and other interested parties an energy performance rating/labeling programs for homes at the time of sales and upon rental license renewal. (H-1.1.4)

Utilities: Water

- Provide increased funding and resources for the promotion of water conservation programs. (NR-2.1.3)
- Update the water rate structure for W&L customers to lower the base rate and shift the true cost of high volume water users including peak summer water plant capacity to those high volume users through the Tier 3 rate. Provide funding to conduct necessary studies to make the change to the base rate possible. Provide funding for outreach to the community and all customers regarding the rate changes.(NR-2.1.1)

The Commission appreciates the opportunity to provide input to the budget.

Attachment 1 Excerpts from City of Columbia FY 2022 Proposed Budget that relate to the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan

Remarks by John Glascock, City Manager - 2022 Budget

“Over the past year, our Solid Waste Utility has implemented changes to a Pay-As-You-Throw program. This program has greatly reduced the amount of refuse being put into our landfill and increased recycling, this aligns with our Climate Action and Adaptation Plan.”

“As we explore how we can improve our services, it is a priority for the City to tie these improvements to our Climate Action and Adaptation Plan and the City’s Strategic Plan. We need to take the findings from these plans and implement them into our existing and changing infrastructure to meet our goals toward creating a sustainable and equitable environment. This will help us mitigate the effects of pollution and create a safer place for future generations in Columbia.”

City Manager

The City Manager’s office will assist with the implementation of the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, led by the Office of Sustainability. Expected implementation activities include: preparation of annual CAAP progress report, the formation of an internal climate action group, and developing a process for requiring mitigation, adaptation and climate-equity impact assessments for all new projects that meet threshold criteria (such as cost burden, vulnerability of increase to net emissions).

American Rescue Plan Act

Stormwater Projects - There are several identified Stormwater Capital Projects that aim to reduce pollutants in the Hinkson Creek as well as mitigate flooding on Quail Drive and Vandiver Drive roadways. These projects are in line with the City’s Climate Action & Adaptation Plan and support the Collaborative Adaptive Management (CAM) agreement to improve water quality in the Hinkson Creek. The proposed projects include the creation of a detention basin that would help prevent flooding as well as improve water quality by holding stormwater long enough to allow sediments and pollutants to drop out into the basin.

Office of Sustainability

Department Objectives

Continue supporting the implementation efforts of the Climate Action & Adaptation Plan (CAAP) including, but not limited to the following:

- Implementing CAAP actions through the work of inter-departmental teams and developing a process for assessing mitigation, adaptation, and climate-equity impacts of internal programs and policies.
- Maintaining a public-facing dashboard with performance indicators of local climate action progress.
- Developing, coordinating, and implementing environmental education with community and regional partners to meet the goals of the CAAP.

Highlights/Significant Changes

This budget continues to reflect the evolution beyond education and outreach to measurement and verification of our organization's resilience and mitigation efforts. After the adoption of the Climate Action & Adaptation Plan (CAAP) by policy resolution PR-89-19, the City Manager tasked the Office of Sustainability to propose the additions to the budget to measure and communicate to the City Council and community current efforts. These include:

- Upgraded computer workstation equipped to process Geographic Information Systems technology to support CAAP implementation with expanded carbon inventory analysis, exploratory projects and specialized research.
- New web-based software to enable consistent financial, energy, labor, and emissions analysis and tracking at the project, building, and portfolio level.
- Continued support and maintenance of CoMoClimateAction.org website.
- Advertising purchases, social media and newsletter software to expand our audience and allow refinement in:

Demographics – The software will allow staff to run specific ads to our audience based on their interests or behaviors online.

Newsletter – Updates on our city-wide sustainability efforts. Motivate citizens to take action, get involved and stay up to date on the latest news from the Sustainability Office.

Website Visitors – By adding retargeting pixels to our website, recent visitors can receive direct messaging and be added to the monthly newsletter.

Community Development

In FY 22 the ability to meet in person again will enable the Division to pursue adoption of two critical goals:

- Pursue, along with the Building Construction Codes Commission, the adoption of the 2021 International Code Council family of building codes. This work, particularly the 2021 International Energy Conservation Code, is an Action Item of the City Strategic Plan, Reliable Infrastructure, Outcome Objective Three "Prepare Columbia's natural and built environments for the impacts of climate change."
- The City Arborist will be responsible for data to measure changes in the urban tree canopy in keeping with Strategic Plan Priority Reliable Infrastructure, Outcome Objective Three.

The UDC amendment process is anticipated to continue into the future on a rolling 6-month schedule allowing text changes to be presented more incrementally on a priority basis. This work will include actions related to Strategic Plan Priority Infrastructure Outcome Objective Three "Prepare Columbia's natural and built environments for the impacts of climate change."

Parks and Recreation – General Fund Operations

The Parks and Recreation Department budget was cut substantially in FY2020 to help offset the City's anticipated loss of revenue resulting from the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. These cuts are being sustained for FY2022 with the exception of the following:

- Personnel - Restoration of the Natural Resources Supervisor (\$82,315) and temporary staffing (\$1,507).
- Travel and Training - Restoration of approximately \$1,800 to allow for necessary staff certifications and training for required licensing.
- Utilities - Restoration of \$3,500 to return to the normal operating season for the free spraygrounds (May 1st to September 30th).
- Personnel - Due the change of budgeting at the midpoint the expense for personnel will increase approximately 1%.
- Capital - Fleet replacements were moved to a new fleet fund created by the Finance Department and are not included in the Parks and Recreation budget.

While this position addresses workforce development and service to the community, it specifically addresses the Reliable Infrastructure's Outcome Objective #3: "Prepare Columbia's natural and built environments for the impacts of climate change." This position will be a key contributor to meeting the guidelines established by the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan which is supported by increasing a healthy tree canopy, preserving natural areas, and increasing the use of renewable energy sources.

Public Works: Fleet Operations

Strategic Priority: Reliable Infrastructure:

In accordance with the Mayor's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, the Fleet Manager serves on the plan committee and is also implementing the new AVL (Automated Vehicle Locator) that will allow for better asset tracking and also reduction in engine idle times. This will benefit the organization across all departments in a reduction in fuel costs and maintenance as well as it will reduce emissions, which will have a positive impact on the entire community.

Vehicle & Equipment Replacement Fund (VERF)

Promote the use of fuel-efficient equipment, and incorporate vehicles powered by alternative fuels into the fleet when feasible.

Public Works - Streets & Engineering

Strategic Priority: Reliable Infrastructure

- Street Division continues to transition to a managed native vegetation centric approach for right of ways and properties maintained by Street Division. Street Division began parts of this process 12 years ago and over the last three years in coordination with the Office of Sustainability, Office of Neighborhood Services and Utilities Department has been able to ramp up the conversion of more mowed turf areas to native vegetation and wildflower areas. In addition to providing habitat, the City will be saving money for fuel, reducing worker hours and reducing our municipal carbon emissions.

Street Division has currently converted over 5 acres of mowed area to native pollinators. Analysis is ongoing, but savings are being realized in worker hour requirements. Instead of mowing, workers are able to be better utilized to perform other right of way maintenance functions. There are safety benefits for workers as well by reducing exposure to some high traffic areas. This initiative is in line with goals within the CAAP and Strategic Plan Reliable Infrastructure Goal 3 and therefore the Department will continue to work with Sustainability to both document the process and expand to areas where appropriate.

The following projects are planned to be bid in FY 22: 4th and Broadway Crossing, Walnut Street (College to Old Highway 63)

The following ongoing projects include:

Neighborhood Traffic Calming program projects, Americans with Disabilities (ADA) sidewalk/curb ramp improvements (Reliable Infrastructure Goal 2: Construct/Repair Sidewalk), bus shelter pads, and audible pedestrian signal improvements.

Public Works: Transit

The City has been awarded a LoNo Grant for (4) thirty-foot electric buses, (1) forty-foot CNG bus and (2) thirty-five foot CNG buses. These buses should be received during FY 21. This same grant will replace seven aged Paratransit vans.

A Transit Fare Free Pilot Program which was adopted in the FY 21 budget is proposed to continue in FY 22.

Public Works - Non-Motorized Grant

The Non-Motorized Grant Section (GetAbout Columbia) is a pilot project mandated by federal legislation to develop a network of transportation facilities, including sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and pedestrian and bicycle trails with the purpose of demonstrating how much walking and bicycling can replace car trips. From FY 13 through FY 20, revenues and expenses related to this program were reflected in this special revenue fund.

This project ended at the end of FY 20.

Public Works: Parking Utility

The Parking Utility is currently in the process of converting a large portion of old garage lighting to more efficient LED light fixtures. This project is projected to reduce the department's energy consumption by 166,361 kWh per year, as well as save the Parking Utility \$16,636.11 per year in electric costs. The conversions are scheduled to be completed by September 2021.

- The Parking Utility is currently working with Blink Charging on the possibility of securing a pilot program to install 2 electric vehicle charging stations in the Short Street garage. With the increase in demand for electric vehicles, the Parking Utility recognizes the need for infrastructure to support that demand and hopes to have working charging stations installed in FY 22.

Utilities: Electric

Strategic Priority Area: Reliable Infrastructure

Outcome Objective Three:

Prepare Columbia's natural and built environments for the impacts of climate change

Performance Measure:

Increase electricity from renewable energy sources to 100% from the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) by 2035

Utilities: Sanitary Sewer

The Sewer Utility is currently under contract with a consultant to provide a Cost of Service Study to evaluate the costs of current services and to evaluate the additional costs associated with the implementation of the Wastewater and Stormwater Integrated Management Plan and the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan. This study will be used to inform future sewer revenue increases.

Utilities: Solid Waste

The Solid Waste Utility is currently under contract with a consultant to provide a Cost of Service Study to evaluate the costs of current services and to evaluate the additional costs associated with the implementation of the Wastewater and Stormwater Integrated Management Plan and the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan. This study will be used to inform future sewer revenue increases.

Utilities: Storm Water

The Storm Water Utility is currently under contract with a consultant to provide a Cost of Service Study to evaluate the costs of current services and to evaluate the additional costs associated with the implementation of the Wastewater and Stormwater Integrated Management Plan and the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan. This study will be used to inform future sewer revenue increases.

Attachment 2 A Recap of the 2022 the CAAP Annual Report

Implementation

- Each relevant department to identify projects in the FY 2022 budget to accomplish CAAP goals, strategies or action items. (I-2.2.1)
- Provide funding or resources to prepare a report to include in the City Manager's proposed FY 2022 budget on the existing and proposed projects that improve mitigation and adaptation efforts. (I-2.2.2)
- Provide funding and resources to implement the Triple Bottom Line project evaluation process. Using Triple Bottom Line model means considering impacts on the environment and people as well as looking at the financial cost/benefit trade-off. (I-2.1.3, I-2.1.4)
- Provide additional funding and resources for the Office of Sustainability to coordinate and drive CAAP implementation across all departments. (I-3.4)

Housing, Buildings and Development

- Provide funding and resources for deployment of an energy efficiency standards program for rental housing. (H-1.1.3)
- Provide funding and resources for the deployment of an energy performance rating/labeling programs for homes at the time of sales and upon rental license renewal. (H-1.1.4)
- Provide additional funding and resources to measure and improve energy usage in every city building and benchmark the buildings with an energy score rating. (H-1.3.4)

Transportation

- Provide funding to support staff involvement in an extensive public input process to develop a new street design standards policy that is consistent with community-identified needs and national best practices for Complete Streets policies. This item will help with making the streets friendlier to pedestrians and bicyclists. (T-1.1.2)
- Funding for a pop-up traffic calming program (e.g., equipment and staff coordination) as an intermediary safety improvement measure while the new street design standards policy is being developed. (T-1.1.2)
- Provide funding and resources to support staff to develop a comprehensive plan to achieve the goals of a fleet electrification policy. (T-2.1.1)
- Provide funding to add Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations to public parking garages and public parking spaces possibly in parks. (T-2.1.2)

Natural Resources

- Provide funding and resources for the promotion of water conservation programs and promotion of incentives for water conservation from Water and Light (W&L). (NR-2.1.3)
- Update the water rate structure for W&L customers to lower the base rate and shift the true cost of high volume water users including peak summer water plant capacity to those high volume users through the Tier 3 rate. Provide funding to conduct necessary studies to make the change to the base rate possible. Provide funding for outreach to the community and all customers regarding the rate changes.(NR-2.1.1)

Health, Safety and Well-Being

- Provide resources to continue the pilot Climate Ambassadors program and expand it to additional neighborhoods (CAAP I-3.3.4) and leverage this program to identify and support community-led, neighborhood-focused resilience actions (eg. identifying best practices, establishing resilience hubs and implementing neighbor-based emergency response. (HS-1.1.4)

Energy

- Support achieving 100% clean renewable energy for electricity generation by 2035.