



Climate Resiliency Forum

Tuesday, September 26th, 2023 – 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM
Region 1 Planning Council

AGENDA

1) **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 pm

2) **Roll Call**

Members Present: Collin Belle, City of Rockford Planning and Zoning; Neely Erickson, Illinois Realtors; Tim Bragg, Rockford Park District; Brad Roos, Sustain Rockford; Ann Wasser, Severson Dells; Mike Bacon, Climate Reality Project; Alan Branhagen, Natural Land Institute; Dennis Anthony, Winnebago County Soil & Water Conservation District; Amanda Mehl, Boone County Health Department; Todd Marshall, Winnebago County Health Department; Sean Von Bergen, Winnebago County Highway Department; Jeff Bailey, West Gate Coalition

Staff Present: Sydney Turner, Gabrielle Gamily, Austin Powell, Lauren Kleve, Juliana Charlebois-Berg, Eric Tison, Nathan Larsen, Seth Boswell

3) **Public Comment**

a) No public comment

4) **Action Items**

a) **Approval of the Meeting Minutes of September 26th, 2023**

i) Motion by Sustain Rockford, Seconded by Climate Reality Project, Minutes Approved

5) **Presentation: Climate Resiliency Forum – SWOT Survey Results**

a) R1 Staff gave a presentation on a prioritization survey which asked forum members to prioritize the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for three categories in the region. These priorities include air quality & emissions, natural & working lands, and water.

6) **Presentation: Update on the Planning Process**

a) R1 Staff gave a presentation updating the creation of three core planning documents: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), and the Climate Action Plan (CAP). Six workshops were held to further the creation of



these documents, with 107 attendees in total. Additionally, more than 20 community leaders who serve on the R1 Governing Board were also interviewed.

- b) The results of these workshops and interviews will be organized to create a regional assessment document for public use. R1 staff is currently drafting the narrative on sections that do not include additional research or public engagement.
- c) Severson Dells asked about the creation of a Land Use and Development Plan. Some topics of focus to this plan include increasing density as well as ensuring greenways are not impacted by new development. Additional considerations include the potential use of a development boundary to limit urban sprawl.
- d) Climate Reality Project asked about how R1 anticipates integrating all three documents together. R1 Staff reinforced the simultaneous creation of these documents will further its joint and further use.

7) Discussion: 2025 Climate Action Plan – Goals and Strategies

- a) A discussion was held on seven drafted strategies:
 - i) Improve the region’s air quality and reduce GHG emissions
 - ii) Provide strategic and climate-resilient development within the built environment
 - Discussion was held about whether or not equity would be included in this section, with R1 staff responding that equity will be included throughout all portions of the Climate Action Plan.
 - iii) Improve energy resilience by advancing clean energy and energy efficiency efforts
 - One comment was raised about changing the language of “educational initiatives” due to its overtly technical nature.
 - iv) Cultivate a conservation mindset to preserve, restore, and sustainably manage natural and working lands
 - One comment included adding “preserve” to Strategy 4.2
 - v) Promote sustainable waste management practices and technology
 - One question centered around the boundaries that would be considered for waste management. These boundaries will be limited to Boone and Winnebago Counties.
 - vi) Support water resource management
 - One attendee stressed the need for consistent monitoring programs, with Illinois Realtors stressing the need for funding to back this program.
 - vii) Support communities in preparing for the current and future effects of climate change
 - Attendees requested a definition on what a climate haven is. Discussion was then held about if the region is already experiencing these effects and to appropriately respond.



- b) Sustain Rockford asked about the process by which the goals and strategies were drafted. R1 staff responded this effort was done in-house through extensive research of completed climate action plans across the United States, academic research, staff expertise, and community member feedback.
- c) One attendee raised the need to link the narrative of the goals and strategies to national and international goals such as the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

8) Staff Reports

- a) No staff reports were provided.

9) Agency Reports

- a) Sustain Rockford held a meeting on 11/6 related to composting and food waste reduction. Further discussions will be held on encouraging food waste diversion from hospitals and other entities.
- b) Severson Dells will be holding a compost workshop in the first week of December. In addition, stormwater management education will be provided to elementary schools in Rockford.
- c) Natural Land Institute has a new executive director.
- d) Illinois Relators held a sustainability forum with Region 1 Planning Council and are looking to have a second event next year.

10) Other Business

- a) R1 Staff provided a list of proposed calendar dates for hosting the resiliency forum for 2024.

11) Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 5:04 pm

Meeting minutes prepared by: ATP
Minutes approved by action of the Forum: 11/7