Climate Council Meeting – Process Wrap-Up
Wednesday, January 20, 2020 – 1-3 PM

1) **Welcome** (Mayor Indya Kincannon)
   a) Attendees
      i. Mayor Indya Kincannon, City of Knoxville
      ii. Amy Hathaway, Forest Heights Neighborhood Association
      iii. Isabella Killius, Sunrise Knoxville
      iv. Nancy Nabors, Knoxville Chamber of Commerce
      v. Stephen Smith, SACE
      vi. George Wallace, Coldwell Banker Wallace & Wallace
      vii. Stan Johnson, SEEED
      viii. Liz Upchurch, TVA
      ix. Gabriel Bolas, KUB
      x. Brian Hann, Dewhirst Properties
      xi. Erin Gill, City of Knoxville
      xii. Brian Blackmon, City of Knoxville
      xiii. Luke Gebhard, Milepost Consulting
      xiv. Erin Rose, Three[3]

2) **Equity Working Group Update** (Erin Rose, Three[3])
   a) Outcomes (measurable and subjective)
      i) Trying to stay in the bounds of climate actions: trying to understand the multiple benefits strategies could have across sectors.
      ii) For informing action, gathered feedback on proposed climate strategies and their anticipated impacts on affected communities and groups.
      iii) There was significant alignment between the Equity Working Group and the Waste Technical Working Group on rankings of strategies. May suggest re-ordering a few and adding a few, but no major changes.
      iv) Next step: creating document that captures all survey responses across the various sectors.
         (1) Energy survey: focused on magnitude and impacts of energy burden.
         (2) Transportation survey: barriers to transportation, walkability challenges, whether KAT currently meets needs.
         (3) Assessment/evaluation of strategies: questions used to guide the work came from first few meetings to identify what matters to the group and the communities they serve. This will be shared in the draft case study document.
   b) Erin Gill: integration of equity in climate planning is relatively new, we are learning to incorporate it as well. This will be a learning process that can be clunky, but will get better with time.

3) **Waste Working Group Recap** (Brian Blackmon, City of Knoxville)
   a) Met on 12/8, 13 participants (excluding facilitators and staff).
   b) Discussed strategies at a high level and heard feedback on additional considerations.
   c) Follow-up survey asking for further ranking of strategies based on those definitions and any additional insights.

4) **Climate Council process recap** (Brian Blackmon, City of Knoxville)

a) Review of original meeting plan
b) technical working groups had a lot to discuss, which led to multiple working group meetings for each sector.
c) Summary
    i) 64 participants over 9 months.
    ii) Over 35 community organizations.
    iii) 14 meetings to date (conversations ongoing).
    iv) 5 subject matter surveys.
d) Proposal: Extending the Climate Council process.
    i) Originally discussed calling everyone back in the spring 2021 to present a plan. Main reasons to extend:
        (1) Additional time for working groups to meet (especially Equity Working Group)
        (2) Additional time to incorporate feedback into the work plan update. Would be able to bring our work plan to Council for additional feedback on short-term priorities.
        (3) Additional time to develop and distribute a survey to get some general public feedback. It's important to understand hot-button issues and potential pitfalls from the public. This would boil down our actions into accessible language and get input.
    ii) Proposal:
        (1) Conclude working group discussions (through March).
        (2) Issue general public survey for networks and general public to provide feedback (February).
        (3) Incorporate feedback into Sustainability Work Plan.
        (4) Come back in early May 2021 with work plan for your review and comment.

5) **Discussion (all)**
    a) Stephen Smith: How has this process affected this year's budget proposal? My understanding was this process would exert influence on this year's budget.
        i) Brian Blackmon: several departmental directors asked about how they might incorporate Climate Council goals in their budget planning, but can't share detail since budget is currently under review.
        ii) Mayor Kincannon: This process has had an impact, but we are just working on budget now (still under review). We couldn't do a lot last year because we didn't have the capacity and knowledge specifically with the pandemic effects. What that exactly looks like is still TBD in terms of actual numbers – it will continue to inform our discussions.
    b) Stephen Smith: When will the Sustainability Work Plan become visible to this group? Is it possible to involve us early enough in the drafting that we can have input?
        i) Brian Blackmon: My intent is to have a plan with this group's explicit endorsement. The May meeting would be a draft presentation to collect input. Would like to have it adopted by July 2021 ideally.
    c) Liz Upchurch: Is the work plan multi-year? When doing community surveys, ideal would be to cast a really wide net for input.
        i) Brian Blackmon: work plan is revisited every 3 years but looks at all priorities, not just those to be completed in that timeframe.
    d) George Wallace: Would there be an estimated cost in the plan? Without cost, how would this be incorporated into the budget? How is city council involved in this plan?
        i) Brian Blackmon: It would not, it will model prior plans, but hopefully create some projections about carbon reduction impact using the latest research. The plan doesn't put a specific dollar amount on specific actions, it generally lists higher-level goals. For an example, streetlight retrofits didn't even have a dollar amount attached due to changing numbers over the years.
        ii) Erin Gill: This is typically thought of as an internal directive, used to guide where staff spent time. Looking at the HIPs for example, in the past they would be identified as the types of things highlighted, and talked about more in depth within the plan.
    e) Erin Rose: Over time, these issues will likely need ongoing community engagement. How does this participatory action/citizen science/community engagement work get included in the work plan?

      i)   Brian Blackmon: At this stage, once we know more about the Equity Working Group's expectations on ways to engage, we'll shape complementary policy from the City in order to facilitate and support that. We'll be using your input to meet those expectations.

f) Stan Johnson: I'm worried about not including things in the budget/not putting numbers on actions and strategies. My concern is that we don't have enough time to meet climate goals and act with urgency.

      i)   Erin Gill: We have done a lot of work in prioritizing, and now have that knowledge on the types of projects that align with what the community prioritizes. I don't think we've missed the boat on acting, it's a long process. There's a lot of work that goes into guiding what kinds of things staff will focus on. We need to get alignment from this group on what staff should be working on.

      ii)   Brian Blackmon: Your input on prioritizing strategies has direct impact on what our staff will devote time and resources towards. It is difficult to just put a number or dollar amount on every single strategy at this point.

      iii) Mayor Kincannon: A lot of the recommendations are for the City to do, but not all of them. There are other entities that we will need to work with (i.e., community partners, businesses, etc.).

g) Erin Rose: Thinking about external funding opportunities will be important, also where does resilience come into play in this planning process?

      i)   Brian Blackmon: I'll say "soon" on resilience planning. It's a very time-intensive process. We heard a call to get a climate mitigation process underway, and that's where we are right now. For equity, I want to hear from you about issues, frameworks, concerns to inform what we include in the plan.

h) Stephen Smith: If we're going to the public with the survey, this could be an opportunity for education and not just feedback. Make sure there's context/framing around impact and cost in survey. Ideally would provide some data, but it would differ for each question and strategy.

      i)   Brian Blackmon: Good feedback. We drafted this example from another city's climate planning process.

      ii)   Mayor Kincannon: We could have broad, general facts to provide basic context, as well as staying away from technical terms. (e.g., for every X dollar spent on weatherization, there are Y benefits).

i) Erin Rose: When designing the survey, asking about what is best for the community can be loaded and solicit plenty of people who don't value the programs. There might be better opportunity for asking individual-oriented questions.

      i)   Brian Blackmon: One of the big values will be whether we see alignment at a general level of what the community thinks is important and what the Climate Council and working groups think is important. If there's a big delta, that indicates we need to do a better job of education and communicating.

      ii)   Erin Gill: It could be good to translate what these high-level strategies mean for individuals (e.g., instead of asking whether utility-scale solar is something the City should do, ask whether they would want to purchase more solar through their utility.)

j) Nancy Nabors: How do you plan to conduct the survey?

      i)   Brian Blackmon: Online, through typical City distribution channels and community partners.

k) Amy Hathaway: Where do the long-term goals figure into the 3-year work plan?

      i)   Brian Blackmon: The work plan only works on a 3-year update cycle, but projects can span longer and updates are what's referenced in the plan.

l) Brian Blackmon: Would use the survey to get feedback on current actions & priorities, as well as invite additional insights. It would be phrased simply. This is an important public engagement strategy.

m) Brian Blackmon: Want to take a fresh approach to the Sustainability Work Plan

      i)   Embed process feedback into our goal setting.

      ii)   Provide projections of proposed impacts of scale.

      iii) Invite Council review and approval of the work plan before next Fiscal Year (target: May 2021).

6) **Next Steps**

   a) Process Feedback survey.

   b) Poll times for bringing everyone back together.

   c) Draft community input survey to be circulated for comment.