

Posted: _____



Town of New Castle
450 W. Main Street
PO Box 90
New Castle, CO 81647

Administration Department
Phone: (970) 984-2311
Fax: (970) 984-2716
www.newcastlecolorado.org

Agenda

New Castle Climate and Environment Commission Work Session
Thursday, February 17, 2022, 3:30 PM

Due to concerns related to COVID-19, this meeting will be open to the public as a virtual meeting only.

[To join by computer, smart phone or tablet click HERE](#)

If you prefer to telephone in:
Please call: 1-346-248-7799
Meeting ID: 709 658 8400

Follow the prompts as directed. Be sure to set your phone to mute until called on.

- 1. Discussion: Earth Day Activities**
- [2.](#) Discussion: 2021 CEC Activities for Council Presentation**
- [3.](#) Discussion: 2022 CEC Work Plan**
- 4. Items for the March 17, 2022 Work Session**

Brief list of CEC accomplishments in 2021

Attended the Boy Scout tree planting activity for Earth Day

Met with Zuleika Pevec, Clean Energy Program Coordinator, CLEER to learn more about efforts to encourage rooftop solar. Helped inform residents about the Garfield Clean Energy Solarwise program through door hangers and the newsletter. The result was 12 new rooftop solar installations in New Castle, second only to Carbondale.

Through the newsletter, door hangers, social media, and educational materials given at the Community Market and during the parade, helped inform residents and children about wildfire dangers, the need to sign up for Reverse 911, the meaning of red flag and fire ban warnings, prepare for a quick evacuation, and how to avoid or minimize fire dangers in homes. Over 500 educational materials were distributed.

Produced two fire awareness videos and posted them on the town website.

Participated in the Burning Mountain Festival parade, distributing pollinator-friendly wildflower seeds as well as fire educational materials for children and adults. Approximately 200 seed packets with Reverse 911 cards were given along the parade route.

Created a banner to use during community events.

Met with town administrators to talk about the feasibility of a pollinator garden. Pollinator-supporting bushes and flowers were planted in the Rollie Gordon planters and along the Alder Park drainage. Plans for pollinator-education signage, using the Town's format and signs, are underway.

Worked with bilingual educators to distribute Smokey the Bear educational storybooks to children at the library.

Met with Alyssa Reindel, EverGreen ZeroWaste to consider bringing a residential curbside composting service to the town.

Met with Mountain Waste Recycling to learn about recycling and waste management challenges and how to help educate residents. This was followed by several short newsletter articles on the "dos and don'ts" of recycling.

Established an email (CEC@newcastlecolorado.org) where residents could express their interest in volunteering.

Welcomed two new commissioners.

Revised and updated the workplan for 2022.

Climate and Environment Commission Plan for Future Actions (updated for 2022)

History of the Climate Action Plan

On April 3, 2007, Mayor Frank Breslin signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement as the Town Council fully committed to developing and implementing strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Climate Action Advisory Commission, later named the Climate and Environment Commission (CEC), was created to help the town pursue the goals of this agreement. The goals included inventorying greenhouse gas emissions in city operations; adopting land-use policies that reduce sprawl, preserve open space; promote greener transportation options, such as bicycle trails and incentives for public transit or carpooling; making energy efficiency a priority through building code improvements, upgrades to water and wastewater treatment facilities, and purchases of vehicles and equipment; promoting tree planting for shading and carbon dioxide absorption; educating the public, schools, businesses, and the community about reducing greenhouse gasses.

Over the next thirteen years, the town made strides in addressing these goals, by installing roof-top solar on municipal buildings, installing electric vehicle charging stations, adopting efficient building codes, planting trees, gaining efficiencies at wastewater and water treatment facilities, and more. In 2020, the CEC decided build upon these goals, and the work continues in 2022.

CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT GOALS

1. Advise the council and educate the community about environmental issues, including climate change and its effects.
2. Provide guidance on individual and community activities that serve to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect the environment.
3. Advise and assist the town and community in transitioning to a more renewable and energy efficient future.
4. Advise the town in planning for and mitigating climate change impacts.

FOUR KEY STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS

1. Leading by example. Municipal government will continue to make its buildings and operations a model of energy efficiency and renewable energy while reducing energy costs.
2. Strengthening communication and education efforts of the CEC. The CEC should provide accurate and helpful information regarding climate change and environmental protection to stakeholders.
3. Networking with local and regional partners to provide incentives for wiser energy use, to increase local renewable energy supplies, and to encourage public awareness of likely impacts of a warming world.
4. Collaborating to acquire funding. The CEC and the Town Council will collaborate to seek funding to carry out environmental protection and climate mitigation goals.

ACTION STEPS TO MEET THE LONG-TERM GOALS

- 1. Providing educational programs and outreach**

- a. Create and implement educational programs for the public

Measurement of progress: development of an educational program about climate change and environmental protection that can be shared with community groups

Measurement of progress: development of an Earth Day activity, partnering with local organizations

- b. Serve as a resource for individuals seeking more information about the topics of climate change, environmental protection, energy conservation.

Measurement of progress: in consultation with the town, provide additions to the CEC website and information for residents in the monthly town newsletter and weekly on-line newsletter

- c. Provide educational materials during the parade and community activities.

Measurement of progress: distributing age-appropriate materials to children about wildfires from the USFS and other government sources, distributing information to adults about wildfires, solar energy, pollinator gardens and other topics related to the CEC goals.

2. Creating opportunities for individual and collective action

- a. Explore opportunities for planting of appropriate tree and vegetation species, with guidance on use of water-saving mulches and soil amendments, and encouraging citizens to protect pollinators

Measurement of progress: Find resources on native trees and vegetation, as well soil amendments, irrigation techniques, and proper planting procedures to reduce water consumption

Measurement of progress: Encouraging and educating residents about the value of native vegetation and the importance of pollinators, such as native bees

Measurement of progress: Enhance networks with the Garden Club and other organizations

Measurement of progress: look for more opportunities to enhance pollinator gardens created in 2021 and place educational signs, approved by the town, along pollinator-friendly vegetation

- b. Explore opportunities for composting and encourage effective recycling

Measurement of progress: establishing partnerships with local or regional organizations to increase composting and reduce waste

Measurement of progress: distributing educational materials about the environmental and community benefits of composting and effective recycling

Measurement of progress: seek to establish a curbside composting program for town residents

3. Transitioning to a more renewable and energy efficient future

- a. Encouraging energy efficiency activities and audits by homeowners

Measurement of progress: Encourage homeowners to have an energy audit and inform homeowners of free or low-cost energy audits

Measurement of progress: Connect and coordinate with regional partners such as GCE, CLEER, and CORE and inform the public through various communication avenues about cost-effective ways to reduce energy use

b. Encouraging energy efficiency audits by businesses

Measurement of progress: Encourage business owners to have an energy audit and inform business owners of access to free or low-cost energy audits, incentives, and rebates

Measurement of progress: Connect and coordinate with regional partners such as GCE, CLEER, CORE regarding effective ways to work with local businesses

c. Communicating with stakeholders regarding incentives for renewable energy, addition of insulations, storm windows, electric vehicles, residential solar panels, lighting, air conditioners, and other ways to save costs

Measurement of progress: Communicate information in town newsletter, website, and other appropriate media

Measurement of progress: work with GCE and other organizations to promote the Solarwise program and other programs as appropriate

4. Planning for and mitigating climate change and environmental impacts

a. Understanding the increased risk of wildfires and how to mitigate and respond

Measurement of progress: Meet with appropriate town and fire officials to learn how to prepare and to improve fire-mitigation/prevention around homes and businesses

Measurement of progress: Communicate and offer guidance to residents. Consult with fire officials on how to best provide information to the community regarding fire dangers and how to minimize fire risk. Offer at least one outreach and educational program in 2022.

Measurement of progress: explore programs underway in other communities, including the Clearance Evacuation Time planning and other similar measures, that help ensure a safe and timely evacuation

b. Understanding the increased risk of drought and how to mitigate and respond

Measurement of progress: Meet with appropriate town officials and water conservationists to learn about how to prepare and minimize water usage among the public and the town

Measurement of progress: Understand the potential risk of water insufficiency with increasing town population and explore water conservation planning efforts underway in the town, considering the likely impacts of climate change

c. Fine-tune use of water and other environmental resources by town and community

Measurement of progress: Communicate with residents regarding most effective and efficient yard watering strategies through the CEC website and other communication avenues

Measurement of progress: Communicate and offer guidance for residents on water conservation