



# CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota

## City Council Work Session

### September 22, 2020

<b>CALL TO ORDER</b>
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The meeting was called to order by Mayor Regan Gonzalez at 5:46 p.m. virtually via WebEx.

Council Members Present: Maria Regan Gonzalez, Mayor; Ben Whalen; Mary Supple; and Simon Trautmann

Council Members Absent: Edwina Garcia

Staff Present: Katie Rodriguez, City Manager; Rachel Lindholm, Sustainability Specialist; Amy Markle, Recreation Services Director; Blanca Martinez Gavina, Executive Analyst; and Kelly Wynn, Senior Office Assistant.

<b>Item #1</b>	<b>PRESENTATION AND REVIEW OF THE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN (CAP)</b>
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City Manager Rodriguez reviewed how staff and Council make goals and objectives to which included a Climate Action Plan (CAP).

Director Markle expressed excitement to bring this presentation to Council and all the hard work Sustainability Specialist Lindholm has put in around this plan. She then gave an introduction to the plan and the importance of climate action planning and sustainability efforts so far.

Sustainability Specialist Lindholm explained how the Richfield CAP is unique including a five year plan, focused short-term actions and annual revision of the plan.

Director Markle spoke of the CAP creation process including a review of 13 other CAPs, focus areas specific to Richfield and staff review. She then reviewed what is in the Richfield CAP:

- 6 focus areas;
- 18 objectives;
- 80 actions;
- Narrative about previously accomplished efforts; and
- Connections to GreenStep Cities

Sustainability Specialist Lindholm reviewed goal one to develop and promote energy efficiency efforts which includes energy and transportation initiatives. She then moved to goal 2 to promote renewable energy installation and purchasing which includes increase purchasing through Xcel, solar installation/incentives education, research on renewables for municipal sites and solar park lighting. Goal three is to encourage sustainable design and building practices which contains sustainability guide for developers/builders, ARC review opportunities, affordable housing permit fee review, review and revise existing standards and green certification.

Sustainability Specialist Lindholm then spoke of goal four to strengthen and expand natural resource management that includes landscaping and storm water. Goal five touches on reduction of

waste generated and promote responsible disposal that contains partnership programs/education, expand collection access and municipal waste reduction. Goal six is to improve access to local and healthy food which contains community gardens and edible landscaping, animal husbandry ordinance review, support mobile food-sharing efforts, healthy food education and food deserts and access in Richfield.

Sustainability Specialist Lindholm discussed plans for the next five years including start and/or implement action every year, coordinating with other city staff, flexible planning and actions already in progress.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez expressed her excitement for discussion on this topic.

Council Member Whalen asked for follow up on the schedule of the implementation part of the plan.

Sustainability Specialist Lindholm explained how the plan is still being formed and is open to change. The update schedule is also open and dates have not been set but the annual Sustainability Commission update to Council is an option.

City Manager Rodriguez hopes this good work will flow into strategic planning and gives staff a good start in that area.

Council Member Supple has heard from residents they want more trees and is looking forward to exploring the information collected around food deserts and edible landscaping.

Council Member Trautmann thanked staff for their efforts and the holistic approach and making so many considerations.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez wondered what the equity impact component looks like and how it will be included throughout the plan. She also spoke of what a wonderful story this has been as it has been community driven and she would like to leverage the drive for knowledge around this topic.

Sustainability Specialist Lindholm expressed her profound excitement about all the ideas Mayor Regan Gonzalez and all Council spoke about. She is also excited to work with staff on including equity in all of the steps throughout the plan.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez spoke of a food assessment in Richfield and the surrounding cities containing affordability and accessibility.

Council Member Whalen echoed equity comments and agrees that it impacts everyone differently and it does matter. He then asked about work for businesses and the possibility for carbon taxes and incentives along with existing regulations around pollution control.

Sustainability Specialist Lindholm explained there aren't any included in this plan as it is difficult to regulate and would be a state pollution control task.

Council Member Supple thanked Sustainability Specialist Lindholm for her efforts of pulling all departments together in the plan and equity work.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez wondered about an annual celebration to keep this work at the forefront to showcase all the work happening. She also spoke of how to support interest groups and have year round clean ups and utilize the partnerships with schools. She also wondered about more information around the tiny homes concept and the possibility of reducing lot sizes to accommodate those along with rezoning and being able to promote healthy living situations and healthy housing. Mayor Regan Gonzalez also had ideas regarding home owners and renters having availability to

quality living housing, being able to partner with larger institutions and creating a check list for residents to support quality living and the CAP.

Sustainability Specialist Lindholm spoke of options to share all the wonderful information and the possibility of putting together a newsletter for distribution.

Council Member Whalen explained how gradual steps will need to be taken to become more and more green city-wide. He then offered the idea to create friendly competitions to create more sustainable households.

Director Markle confirmed they will add more language around equity within the plan.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez thanked staff again for all their efforts and making this a city-wide initiative.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The work session was adjourned by unanimous consent at 6:46pm

Date Approved: September 22, 2020

  
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Kelly Wynn  
Senior Office Assistant

  
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Maria Regan Gonzalez  
Mayor

  
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Katie Rodriguez  
City Manager