



REGULAR MEETING – AD HOC SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE COMMITTEE AGENDA

JULY 9, 2025, 6:00 PM
BY ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING

To allow public access, anyone may access a meeting by telephone and/or Zoom, or a recording in the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. Specific instructions and links can be found at norwalkct.gov/meetings.



Members of the public may call in to participate. Callers will not be able to see the meeting participants. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, dial *9 on the phone and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide "live comments" may also use the Zoom meeting platform. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, click the "raise your hand indicator" and you will be called by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be included into the record, they must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Please email Katie O'Leary at koleary@norwalkct.gov with the subject line "Public Comment" to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**
- II. **ROLL CALL**
- III. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- IV. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**
 - A. **Regular Meeting: June 11, 2025**
- V. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. **Community Sustainability and Resilience Task Force**
- VI. **ADJOURNMENT**

**CITY OF NORWALK
AD HOC SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 11, 2025
VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

ATTENDANCE: Johan Lopez: Chair, Josh Goldstein. Nora Niedzielski-Eichner, Margaret (Lisa) Shanahan

STAFF: Jodi Trendler

OTHER: Tom Livingston

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Lopez called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

The roll was called as reflected above.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Diane Laurella
21 Little Fox Lane

Ms. Lauricella addressed the committee supporting the proposed Community Sustainability Task Force. She referenced her prior involvement in forming the Mayor’s Energy and Environmental Task Force under Mayor Rilling, which included volunteers from the Board of Education and city agencies. She stated that the task force lasted approximately a year and a half and undertook a few initiatives before disbanding. She emphasized the value of public engagement and events like the Earth Day energy forum. She expressed interest in discussing future programming related to solar and geothermal solutions with Jodi Trendler.

IV. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. AD HOC SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING

**CITY OF NORWALK
AD HOC SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 11, 2025**

5:00 PM, MAY 14, 2025

- ** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES.
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Community Task Force Structure Discussion

Ms. Trendler provided an update and expanded on the previously proposed task force structure. She emphasized that sustainability requires engagement across three pillars: human, environmental, and economic. She noted that many of the city's 48 boards and commissions already align with one of these pillars, while others fall under governance and operations.

Ms. Trendler proposed that the task force could take one of two forms:

- A coalition comprised of chairs from existing relevant boards and commissions, allows better coordination, information sharing, and strategic planning.
- A broader, newly-formed sustainability commission structured around specific focus areas such as energy, transportation, waste, building and development, natural resources, and community wealth building.

Ms. Trendler shared a visual classification of city boards and commissions by sustainability pillar and identified a critical gap in energy representation. She noted one of the current boards or commissions does not specifically address energy, which she stated will be central to the climate resilience and sustainability plan.

Ms. Trendler opened the floor for input on which structure the committee preferred and how best to ensure coordination without inefficiency.

Mr. Lopez responded in support of a representative model where chairs of each group participate in a larger sustainability body, promoting transparency, collaboration, and shared goals. He also recommended including residents who are not currently members of boards or commissions but are active in relevant community efforts.

Ms. Shanahan raised the question of whether external environmental groups in Norwalk would be invited to participate. Ms. Trendler clarified that the current structure focused solely on internal city boards and commissions.

Ms. Shanahan addressed concerns about the potential size and complexity of the task force. One member questioned how such a large group could remain effective and whether the task force's

focus would be narrowed. Ms. Trendler explained that the climate action and sustainability resilience plan would serve as the main driver of tasks and targets, especially related to emissions reductions. However, she acknowledged the importance of also addressing broader human factors such as health and safety.

Ms. Trendler requested additional feedback and ideas from the committee on how best to structure the task force moving forward.

Mr. Lopez continued the discussion on creating a collaborative task force composed of members from various boards and commissions. Ms. Shanahan acknowledged the number of organizations involved and expressed concerns about the group's potential unwieldiness. Ms. Trendler clarified that the list presented was a preliminary overview and could be consolidated based on urgency and other factors. Outreach to additional community organizations was also confirmed.

Mr. Goldstein added that while the goal was commendable, bringing too many people together might reduce efficacy. He likened the idea to an "Avengers of committees" but cautioned that it would require careful planning and structure to be effective. He reiterated that even having just the chairs from each group could still be too many participants. Not all committees intersect meaningfully with sustainability efforts, and refining the list would be necessary.

Ms. Trendler explained that the purpose behind the proposed task force was not just coordination but also tracking and data integration. She stated the goal is to ensure that if sustainability-related initiatives are happening within one board or commission, others are not aware and that this work contributes to a holistic city-wide strategy. She emphasized the importance of data collection in monitoring and measuring climate efforts, such as emissions reductions from scooter programs.

Ms. Trendler described how in her previous roles, such task forces operated largely through subcommittees focusing on specific issues like natural resources, which would then report back periodically to a larger group, possibly every month. This would allow focused work while keeping communication channels open across the broader body.

Mr. Lopez recommended that subcommittees report through designated representatives or chairs to keep the overall group manageable. This idea was supported as a functional structure.

Ms. Trendler emphasized that the current list was simply an overview to illustrate existing resources. She stated the structure would be built to facilitate collaboration and manage efforts better. Mr. Goldstein commended the data-collection focus, noting frequent communication gaps between departments and highlighting the importance of having IT infrastructure to support the initiative.

Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner was acknowledged for suggesting that planning commissions should come together at least occasionally to address overlaps, gaps, and potential consolidations, stressing the need not to limit participation to currently existing commissions alone.

B. Global Covenant of Mayors Commitment

Ms. Trendler presented the next phase of climate action and sustainability planning. She explained that Norwalk has already completed a baseline greenhouse gas emissions inventory and must now set reduction targets and identify effective strategies across various sectors. This ties into the task force structure and the role of boards and commissions.

Ms. Trendler introduced the Global Covenant of Mayors as a global effort uniting municipal leaders committed to ambitious and measurable climate action. She noted over 14,000 cities are currently signed on. She noted The initiative was originally started in Europe and later joined by Mayor Bloomberg, eventually merging to form a unified movement supported by organizations such as C40 Cities, ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability), and the UN.

Ms. Trendler noted the covenant supports cities through programs including Data for Cities (a tool for monitoring emissions), Innovate for Cities (focused on urban planning), and Invest for Cities (funding support). She indicated by joining, cities improve access to technical assistance and funding.

Ms. Trendler indicated the commitment involves the mayor signing a pledge affirming the city's intent to reduce emissions, increase sustainable energy use, enhance resilience through adaptation and mitigation, and regularly report on progress. He reassured the commission that Norwalk is already aligned with many of these requirements through its existing sustainability efforts, including the resilience plan and the greenhouse gas inventory.

Ms. Trendler provided an overview of the implementation steps following the City's recent progress on climate planning. She stated the City has already completed a greenhouse gas inventory and hazard evaluation, with further analysis underway through the upcoming Community Flood Resilience Plan. She noted any components have been addressed in prior plans. He explained the next phase includes setting augmented targets, assessing vulnerabilities, creating an action plan, and establishing monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

Ms. Trendler noted currently, New Haven and Bridgeport are the only two Connecticut cities to have signed on to the initiative. She explained the benefits, including alignment with Sustainable CT and access to financial support, tools, and resources. She emphasized that joining the commitment demonstrates accountability and a genuine dedication to sustainability rather than greenwashing.

Ms. Shanahan asked whether the proposal required formal action. Ms. Trendler responded that it must be discussed with the Mayor and approved by the Council before submission to the U.S. oversight committee for the C40 Cities network.

Mr. Lopez raises a question about the ability to modify the commitment letter. Ms. Trendler clarified that the letter is a standardized document and must be agreed to as-is. She stated it

CITY OF NORWALK

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outlines required deliverables within three years, including a community-scale greenhouse gas inventory, assessment of climate vulnerabilities, ambitious emissions reduction targets, adaptation goals based on scientific evidence, improved access to affordable sustainable energy, and formally adopted climate plans. She noted some components are already in place, while others are being developed.

Mr. Livingston emphasized the importance of gaining Council support, noting the Mayor would not sign the commitment without Council backing. He suggested a resolution might be needed to demonstrate unified support, as the actions will require ongoing coordination across city departments.

Niedzielski-Eichner, unable to raise her hand, texted a question asking whether any of the commitment actions would take place before the next election. Ms. Trendler responded that the timing is ideal but dependent on the Commission and Council's engagement.

Ms. Lopez discussed his recent visit to the Ridgefield Recycling Center, highlighting its organic recycling program managed in collaboration with the Housatonic Resources Recovery Authority (HRRA), which partners with approximately 28 municipalities. He noted the tour provided insight into the Center's processing of residential organic waste into compost using a smart machine, with compost offered back to residents. Drop-off fees are \$20 for residents and \$50 for non-residents. He stated the program was praised for its effectiveness and scalability. Attendees included representatives from DEEP and local organizations.

Mr. Lopez invited anyone interested in visiting the facility to coordinate a future tour, describing the experience as both educational and impactful.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
China Mayhew
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF NORWALK
AD HOC SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 11, 2025**

**CITY OF NORWALK, CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

PROCLAMATION by the Mayor or Common Council of the City of Norwalk?

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NORWALK SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY TASK FORCE

WHEREAS, the City of Norwalk recognizes the urgent need to address the challenges of climate change, environmental degradation, and community resilience, and to align with local, state, and global goals for a sustainable future; and

WHEREAS, Norwalk's Climate Action and Resilience Plan establishes a vision for a thriving and environmentally responsible community, requiring collaborative action among municipal leadership, expert stakeholders, and the community at large; and

WHEREAS, it is in the interest of the City to engage many perspectives, professional expertise, and the passion of its residents in shaping and advancing sustainability initiatives; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a Sustainability Advisory Task Force will provide a structured forum for community members, local organizations, and subject matter experts to advise the City on the implementation of policies and programs that promote environmental stewardship, economic vitality, and social thriving for all; and

WHEREAS, this Task Force will include subcommittees to focus on priority areas critical to Norwalk's sustainability and resilience, namely:

- **Energy** – advancing renewable energy and energy efficiency initiatives;
- **Transportation** – promoting safe, accessible, and low-emission mobility options;
- **Building and Development** – fostering sustainable land use, low-carbon buildings and resilient infrastructure;
- **Natural Resources** – protecting and enhancing Norwalk's ecosystems and biodiversity;
- **Waste** – supporting a zero-waste future through reduction, reuse, and recycling;
- **Human Health, Food Security, and Housing** – ensuring access to healthy food, affordable housing, and a safe living environment;
- **Circular Economic Development** – stimulating local, sustainable economic opportunities;

- **Safety, Emergency Preparedness, and Recovery** – building capacity for climate and disaster resilience;
- **Community Outreach** – engaging, educating, and empowering Norwalk residents and businesses in sustainability efforts;

● **PURPOSE:** The purpose of the Norwalk Sustainability Advisory Task Force is to serve as a community-driven advisory body to support the development, coordination, and advancement of sustainability and climate resilience initiatives across the city. The Task Force may evolve, subject to City approval, into a more formal commission or independent nonprofit organization to support long-term sustainability efforts and funding opportunities.

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NOW, THEREFORE, I, [.....], Mayor of the City of Norwalk, by the authority vested in me, do hereby proclaim the official establishment of the **Norwalk Sustainability Advisory Task Force**, and direct that:

1. The Task Force shall be open to participation by all interested residents, local stakeholders, and subject matter experts who represent the various knowledge, skills, and abilities of the Norwalk community. Participation shall not require appointment by the Mayor and will encourage broad community engagement and collaboration across all subcommittees.
2. The Task Force shall advise the City on the development, implementation, and evaluation of sustainability policies and programs, with attention to advancing human wellbeing, environmental health, and economic resilience.
3. The Task Force shall organize itself into the aforementioned subcommittees to ensure focused attention on key areas of sustainability and may create additional subcommittees as needed.
4. The Task Force shall serve as a conduit for public input and engagement, fostering collaboration between residents, businesses, civic organizations, and City leadership.
5. The Task Force shall provide periodic reports and recommendations, at least every six months, to the Mayor and Common Council to inform decision-making and track progress toward Norwalk’s sustainability goals.
6. The Task Force shall function solely in an advisory capacity and shall not possess regulatory, budgetary, or decision-making authority. Its purpose is to inform and support the City’s sustainability efforts through community collaboration, education, expertise, and public engagement.

Norwalk Sustainability and Resilience Task Force



The Norwalk Sustainability and Resilience Task Force is a volunteer-led advisory group committed to supporting the City of Norwalk in the implementation of its Sustainability and Resilience Plan (SRP). Through collaboration, community engagement, and expert insight, the Task Force aims to strengthen community resilience by researching, advising on, and promoting climate-smart policies and practices that:

- Reduce emissions
- Protect natural resources
- Enhance public health
- Support the local economy
- Strengthen community resilience

Norwalk Sustainability and Resilience Task Force



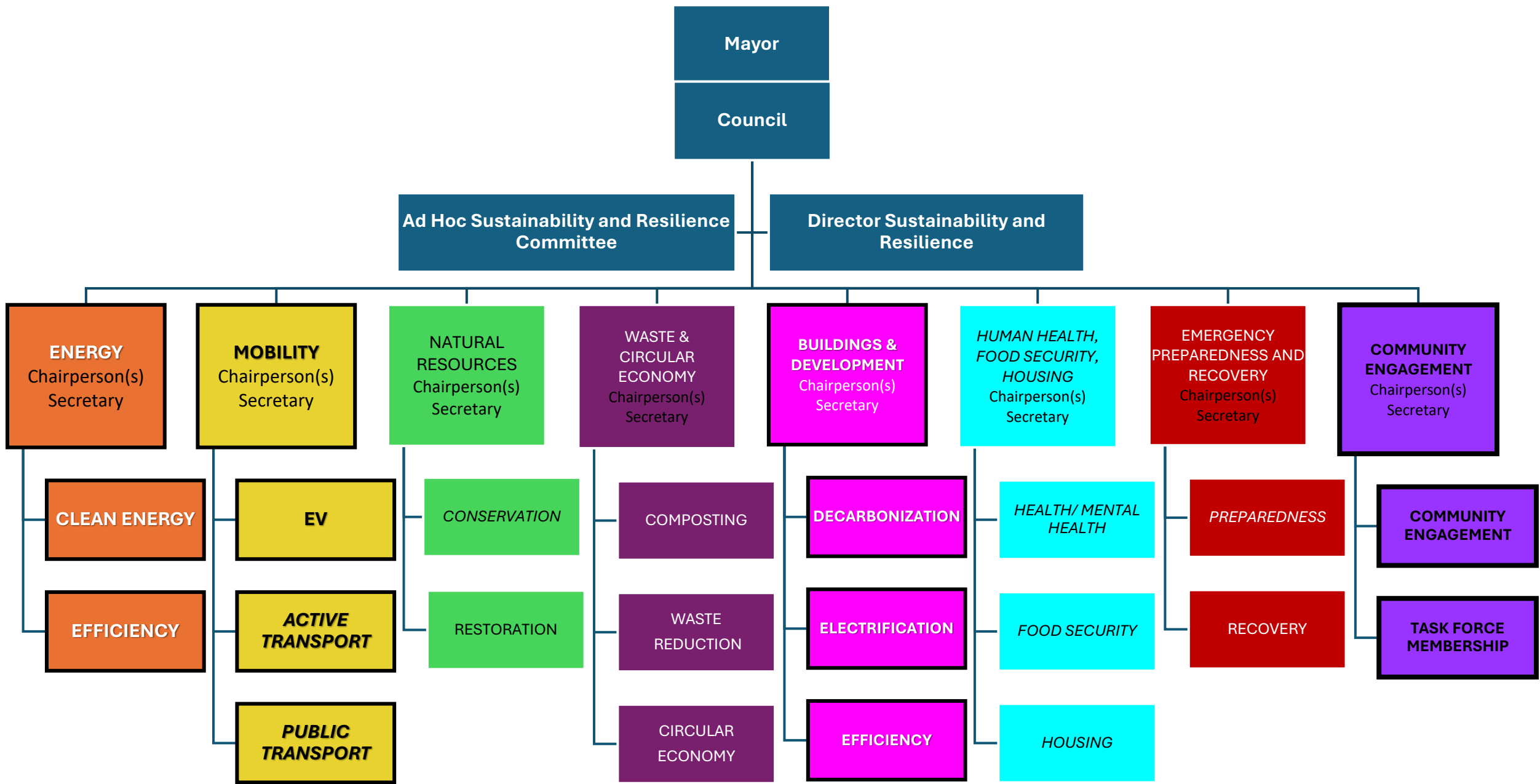
Sustainability aims for long-term viability by meeting present needs without compromising future generations.

Resilience emphasizes the ability to bounce back from disruptions and adapt to changing conditions.

Sustainability focuses on maintaining a system, while resilience focuses on recovering from a shock

Benefits of a Sustainability Community Task Force

Benefit	Description	Supported By
1. Local Implementation of Global Goals	Helps align local actions with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (e.g., climate action, sustainable cities).	United Nations (UNDP, UN Habitat), SDGs
2. Community Engagement & Ownership	Builds public trust, ensures that policies are co-created with residents, and promotes social inclusion.	World Bank, UNDP, OECD
3. Local Data & Knowledge	Gathers local insights and environmental data to inform effective, context-specific decision-making.	UNEP, World Bank, UNDRR
4. Access to Climate Funding	Makes it easier to meet criteria for grants and funding (e.g., from Green Climate Fund, World Bank, USAID).	World Bank, GCF, CIF
5. Cross-sector Collaboration	Brings together diverse stakeholders (residents, businesses, local government, nonprofits) for joint solutions.	ICLEI, UN-Habitat, World Resources Institute
6. Capacity Building	Build civic leadership pipelines. Empowers local leaders through education, civic training, and skill-building in sustainability planning.	UNDP, WRI, World Bank
7. Crisis Preparedness	Improves local response to climate change, extreme weather, and environmental risks.	UNDRR, World Bank
8. Transparency & Accountability	Enables ongoing monitoring of progress and keeps local government accountable on climate and equity goals.	World Bank, OECD, ICLEI



Sub-committee Structure

- Chairperson(s)
- Secretary
- (Bi)Monthly Meetings;
Monthly General Meeting

Sustainable Goals	Issues/Obstacles/ Critical Assumptions	Expected Outcomes	Outputs/ Milestones	Actual Outcomes
Statement of first country goal Indicator Baseline: xxxx (2005) Target: xxxx (2010) Additional/alternative indicator Baseline: xxxx (2005) Target: xxxx (2010) [continue with additional indicators or move to next goal]	[critical issues and obstacles to achieving country development goals]	Statement of first outcome Indicator Baseline: xxxx (2005) Midline: xxxx (2007) Target: xxxx (2010) Additional/alternative indicator Baseline: xxxx (2005) Midline: xxxx (2007) Target: xxxx (2010) [continue with additional indicators or move to next outcome]	Statement of first output/milestone to be realized within the time of the results framework Indicator (if quantitative milestone) Baseline: xxxx (2005) Target: xxxx (2006) xxxx (2007) xxxx (2008) xxxx (2009) xxxx (2010) Additional/alternative indicator (if quantitative) [continue with additional indicators or move to next milestone]	

MITIGATION

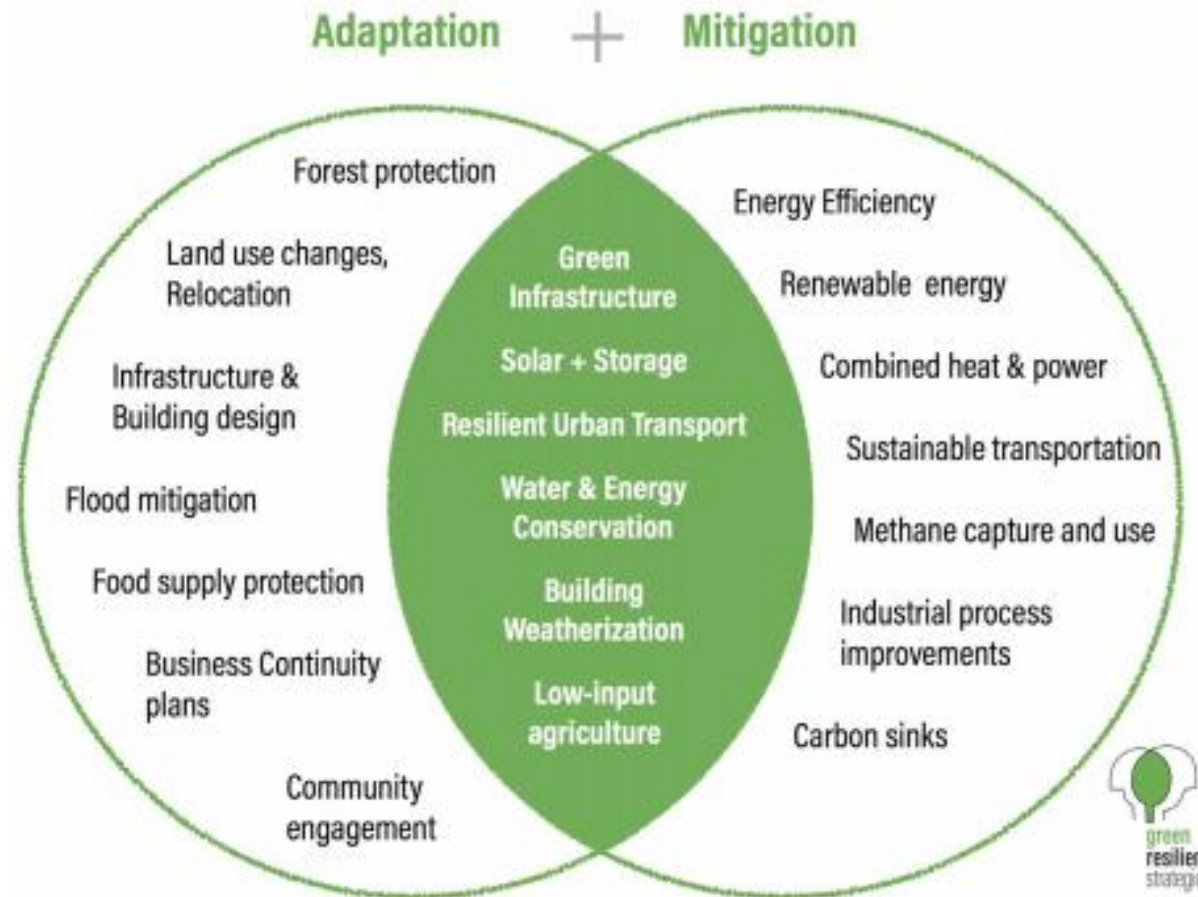
Climate mitigation refers to actions that reduce or prevent the emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs) into the atmosphere. **The goal of mitigation is to address the root causes of climate change by slowing down or reversing the buildup of GHGs.** Examples include increasing energy efficiency, transitioning to renewable energy, protecting and expanding forests (carbon sinks), and adopting low-carbon transportation systems.

**PREVENT &
MINIMIZE GHG**

ADAPTATION

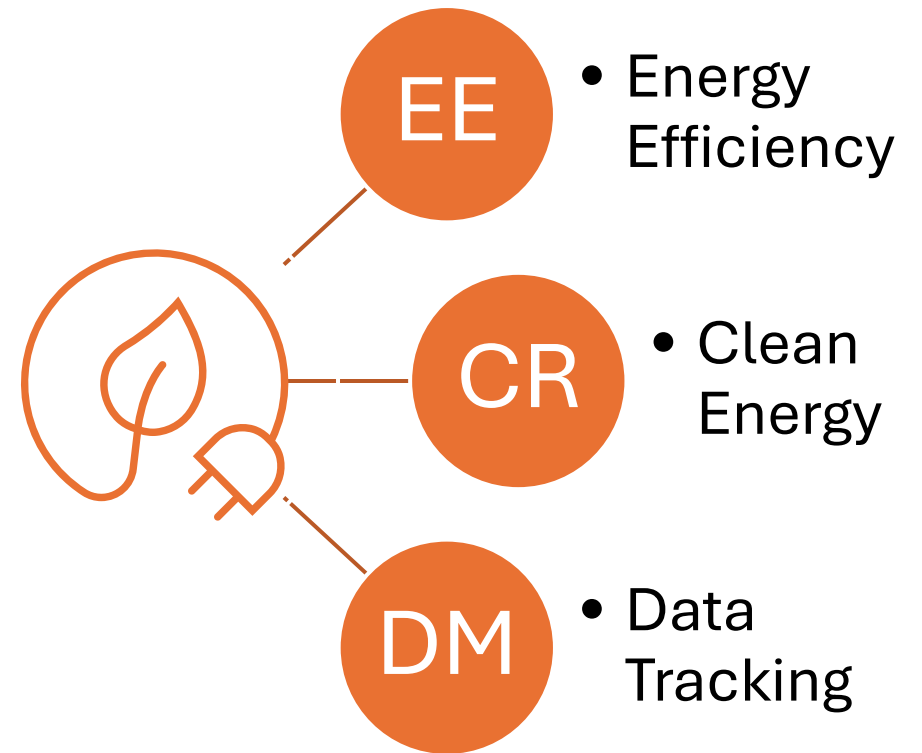
Climate adaptation involves **making adjustments to social, economic, and environmental systems to minimize the harm caused by current or expected impacts of climate change.** Adaptation prepares communities for changes like rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and shifting ecosystems. Examples include building flood defenses, modifying building codes for heat resilience, redesigning infrastructure, and implementing drought-resistant landscaping.

**MINIMIZE
HARM**



Energy Subcommittee

- *Mission:* To accelerate Norwalk's transition to clean, efficient, and affordable energy systems by promoting renewable energy adoption, energy efficiency programs, and access to energy-saving solutions for residents and businesses.
- **Promote & Track Residential & Commercial Energy Efficiency Retrofits**
 - Partner with utilities, State, local businesses, consultants, and community organizations to increase participation in weatherization and energy efficiency rebate programs.
- **Support & Track Community Solar, Onsite Renewables, and Storage**
 - Facilitate access to renewable energy through outreach for Sol Smart, shared solar programs, incentives, and bulk purchase initiatives.



Community Engagement Subcommittee

Mission:

To foster transparent, and accessible public participation in Norwalk's sustainability and resilience efforts by building community awareness, trust, and ownership in climate solutions. This subcommittee supports the visibility, accessibility, and success of all other Task Force sustainability efforts by centering the voices and values of Norwalk's entire community.

- **Outreach & Education Campaigns**

- **Design multilingual, multimedia outreach materials about sustainability initiatives, rebates, and ways to get involved.**
- **Host community workshops, neighborhood pop-ups, and town hall events to explain programs and gather feedback.**

- Targeted Engagement

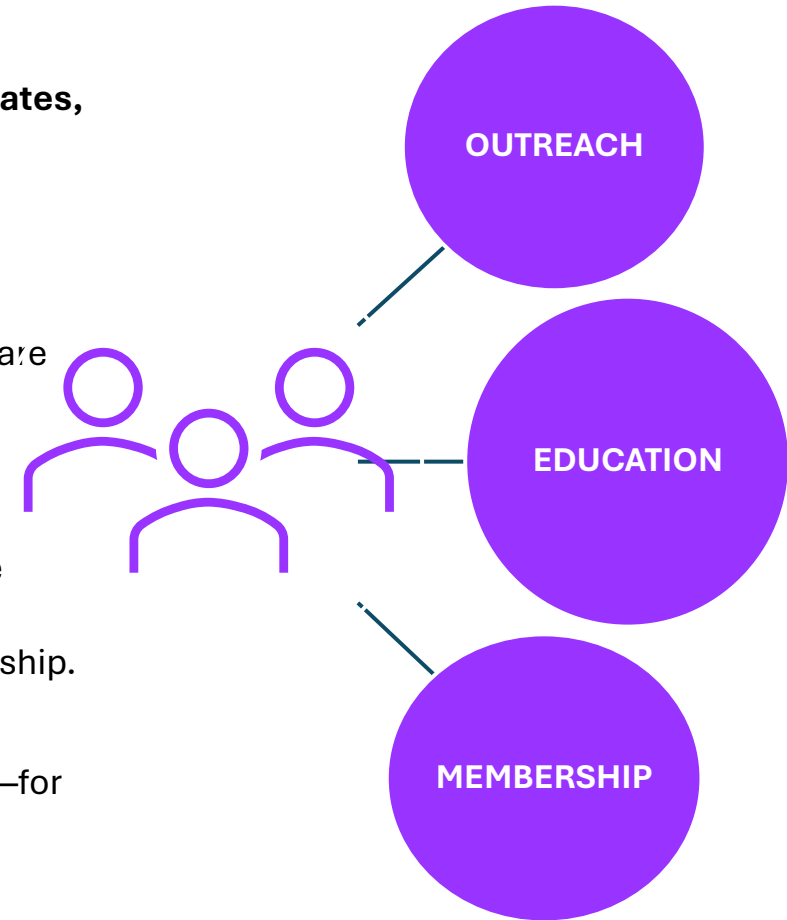
- Partner with trusted community organizations and leaders to ensure that all neighborhoods are informed, heard, and included in decision-making.
- Develop outreach strategies and materials tailored to all demographics.

- Volunteer Recruitment & Coordination

- Organize volunteer days and events that support the work of other subcommittees (e.g., tree planting, compost bin distribution, or bike repair clinics)
- Maintain a community sustainability ambassador program to expand reach and local leadership.

- Public Input and Feedback Loops

- Create consistent mechanisms—such as surveys, listening sessions, and interactive maps—for residents to contribute ideas and report barriers.
- Compile and report community feedback to the task force and city officials to inform implementation actions.



Electric Vehicles (EV) Subcommittee

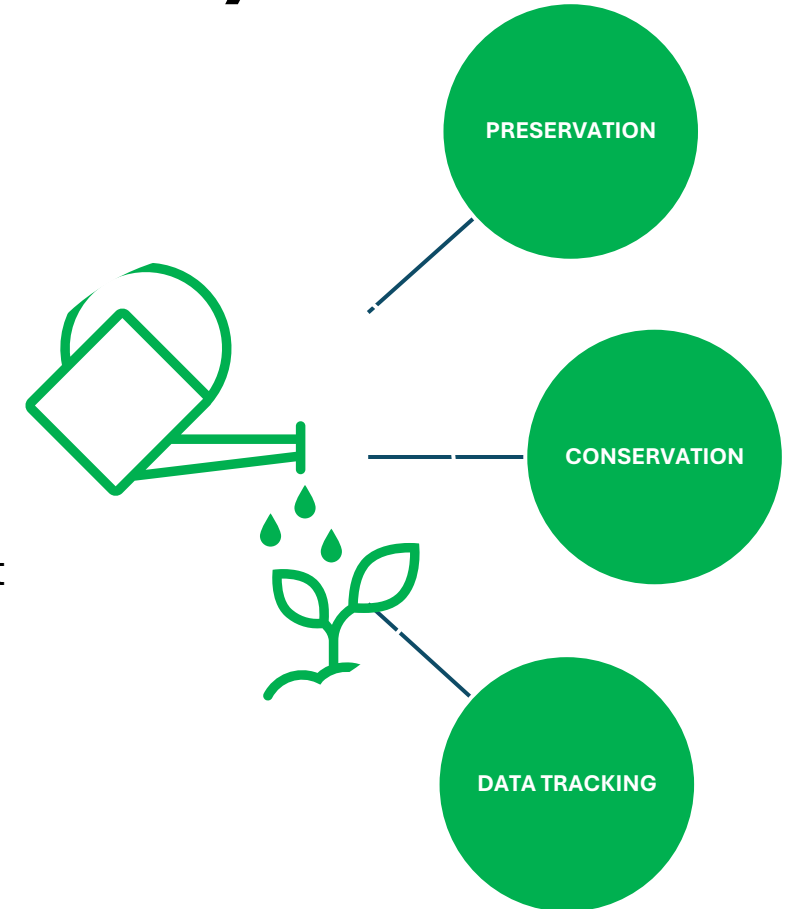
- *Mission:* To support the expansion of electric vehicle infrastructure and education, enabling residents, businesses, and the City to shift to low-emission transportation solutions that improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Promote Expansion of Public and Workplace EV Charging Infrastructure
 - Seek funding to install Level 2 and DC fast chargers in key areas.
 - Engage and educate businesses
- Promote EV Incentives and Awareness Campaigns
 - Create community-facing resources to increase EV adoption among residents and local businesses.
- Partner with Rideshare and Delivery Services to Electrify Fleets
 - Engage private sector partners to accelerate fleet conversions that reduce high-mileage vehicle emissions.

Biking and Walking (Subcommittee)

- *Mission:* To advance safe, accessible, and connected pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure that encourages active transportation, reduces traffic-related emissions, and fosters a more livable, healthy Norwalk for all ages.
- Work with City Staff to Develop and Implement a Low-Carbon Active Transportation Plan
- Expand Safe Routes to School and Neighborhood Connector Programs
 - Reduce car trips by promoting walking and biking to schools through education, and community events.
- Promote Car-Free Days and Incentive Programs
 - Organize local campaigns to encourage walking and biking in place of short vehicle trips.
- Promote Community Ride-share Programs

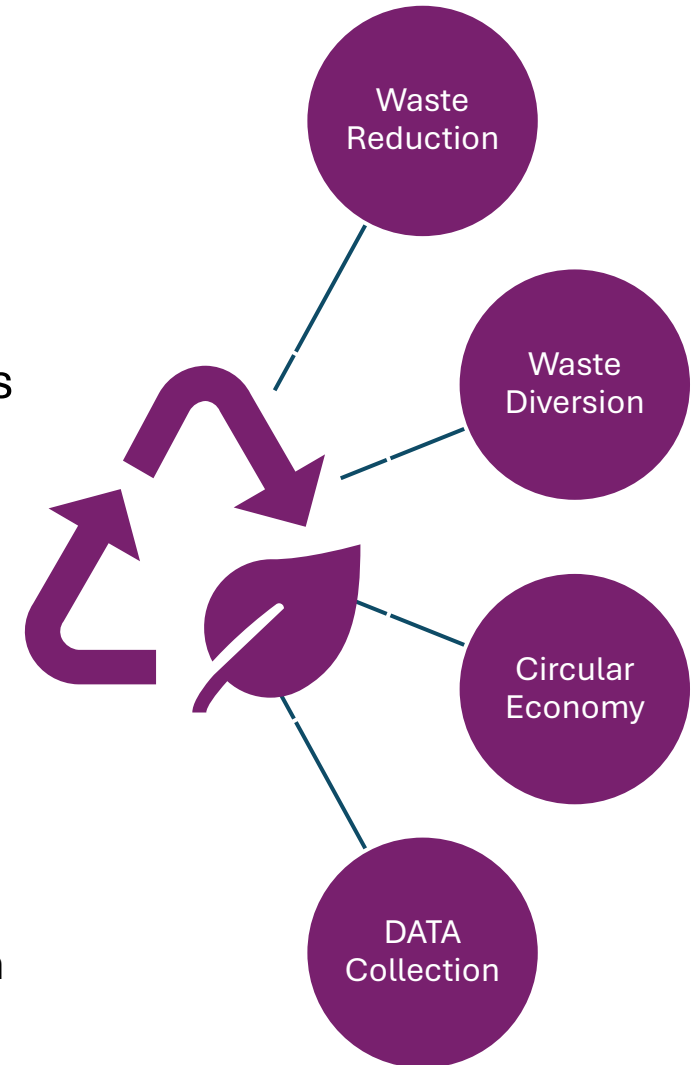
Natural Resources (Subcommittee)

- *Mission:* To protect, restore, and steward Norwalk’s natural systems—including its waterways, forests, open spaces, and biodiversity—through community action and nature-based solutions that enhance resilience and environmental quality.
- Support Advancement of Urban Tree Canopy and Green Infrastructure
 - Plant trees and expand bioswales, rain gardens, and other carbon-sequestering natural systems to reduce heat and absorb stormwater.
- Protect and Restore Coastal Wetlands and Biodiversity
 - Develop community education programs to support conservation efforts that safeguard natural carbon sinks, enhance flood resilience, and support biodiversity.
- Implement Climate-Smart Land and Water Management Practices
 - Promote native plantings, no-mow zones, and low-emission landscaping approaches on public and private lands.
- Reduce Emissions from Yard Waste and Organic Debris
 - Support composting and mulching programs that minimize methane emissions from landfill-bound green waste.
- Compile data on actions



Waste & Circular Economy Subcommittee

- *Mission:* To reduce landfill waste and increase reuse, recycling, and composting through education, infrastructure improvements, and advocacy for circular economy practices that conserve resources and cut emissions.
- Assist with Launch of a Citywide Organics Collection Pilot
 - Reduce landfill methane emissions by diverting food scraps to composting or anaerobic digestion.
- Educate Public about Pay-As-You-Throw and Waste Reduction Incentives
 - Promote volume-based pricing to reduce total waste generation and encourage more recycling.
- Educate Public on How to Phase Out Plastics
 - Create educational campaigns emphasizing limiting disposable packaging and promoting reusable alternatives.
- Support Commercial Waste Audits and Diversion Programs
 - Partner with local businesses to reduce waste-related emissions through recycling and compost infrastructure.
- Identify Opportunities for Economic Development Through Waste as a Resource
 - Work with local businesses and entities to help identify potential resources from waste streams
- Compile Data from Actions



Building and Development Subcommittee

- *Mission:* To support sustainable, climate-resilient building practices and development standards that improve energy performance, reduce emissions, and align with Norwalk's long-term resilience and zoning goals.
- Promote All-Electric New Construction and Deep Energy Retrofits
 - Encourage zero-emission buildings through developer education
- Support Adoption of a Building Performance Standard (BPS) Recommend phased requirements for existing buildings to improve energy use and reduce GHG emissions.
- Educate Developers and Contractors on Low-Carbon Building Materials
 - Promote the use of materials like mass timber, low-carbon concrete, and reused materials.

Food Security Subcommittee

- *Mission:* To promote a healthy, sustainable, and resilient local food system by expanding access to fresh, affordable food; and supporting urban agriculture across Norwalk's neighborhoods.
- Expand Urban Agriculture and Local Food Production
 - Support gardens, greenhouses, and community farms to reduce the emissions from food transport and processing.
- Reduce Food Waste through Recovery and Redistribution
 - Partner with food banks and restaurants to divert surplus food from landfills to people in need.
- Support Plant-Rich Diet Education and Institutional Procurement Shifts
 - Promote sustainable diets in schools and city-run facilities to reduce emissions from meat and dairy production.

NEXT STEPS

- Review Resolution
- Present to Mayor & Council
- Approve through Mayor & Council