



City of Avondale

Energy, Environment, & Natural Resources Commission



[Link to Summary of Actions](#)



[Link to Meeting Minutes](#)



**The Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Commission
Online Meeting**

Wednesday, March 24, 2021 at 6:30 P.M.

Summary of Actions

- 1. Call to Order at 6:30 PM**
- 2. Roll Call by Staff Liaison**
- 3. Approval of January 27, 2021 Minutes (For Action) – Approved**
- 4. Unscheduled Public Appearances – None**
- 5. Presentation on General Plan Update – Presented**
- 6. Discussion of General Plan Update Sustainable Development Theme–Discussed**
- 7. Discussion of Youth Engagement Opportunities – Discussed**
- 8. Update on Municipal Sustainability Plan – Presented**
- 9. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 7:53 PM**

Members will attend either in person or by telephone conference call.

Los miembros asistirán en persona o vía teleconferencia.

Individuals with special accessibility needs, including sight or hearing impaired, large print, or interpreter, should contact the City Clerk at 623-333-1200 or TDD 623-333-0010 at least two business days prior to the meeting.

Personas con necesidades especiales de accesibilidad, incluyendo personas con impedimentos de vista u oído, o con necesidad de impresión grande o intérprete, deben comunicarse con la Secretaría de la Ciudad al 623-333-1200 o TDD 623-333-0010 cuando menos dos días hábiles antes de la junta.



**The Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Commission
Online Meeting via Zoom
Wednesday, March 24, 2021 at 6:30 P.M.**

Minutes

1. Call to Order at 6:30 PM

2. Roll Call by Staff Liaison

Commissioners Present: Vice Chair Paul Lemmon, Litzy Hernandez, Daniel Schuh, Thomas Albrigo, Alejandro Arreguin, and Elizabeth Valencia. Bernadette Barba arrived at 6:34.

Commissioners Absent: Chair Billy Vaughan (excused), Kim Avila (excused), and Rebecca Forstner (excused)

Other Municipal Officials Present: Rick Carr, Assistant Director of Development and Engineering Services; Danae Presler, Sustainability Officer; Brian Craig, Planning Manager; Christina Sexton, Planner

3. Approval of January 27, 2021 Minutes (For Action)

Motion was made by Commissioner Schuh, seconded by Commissioner Hernandez to approve the January 27, 2021 Meeting Minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Unscheduled Public Appearances

None.

5. Presentation on General Plan Update

Commission received presentation on General Plan Update from City's Planning Manager Brian Craig and Planner Chris Sexton. Ms. Sexton explained that Arizona State Statute requires every municipality to have a General Plan and complete regular updates. The General Plan is a broad planning guide for the City's future growth and development. The City of Avondale formally adopted its first General Plan in 1990, which was updated in 2002 and 2012. The City is preparing the next General Plan Update for voter ratification in 2022, which will be a 'minor' update as opposed to a comprehensive update. The General Plan consists of eight (8) different Themes, of which the Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Commission is focused on providing input to inform updates to the Sustainable Development Theme.

Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2021
Page 2 of 6

Vice Chair Lemmon inquired if City staff have already begun updating data such as graphs and other material that are now outdated. Mr. Craig affirmed that City staff have begun updating the data and statistics for the General Plan Update with current information.

Vice Chair Lemmon asked if a preview of the General Plan Update will be made available to the Commission later in the year? Mr. Craig confirmed that a full draft will be posted to the City website and distributed to Commissions either at the end of this year or early next year. Vice Chair Lemmon noted his desire to review the draft and potentially receive a follow-up presentation when its available.

Commissioner Albrigo asked for clarification regarding what is included in a minor Update to the General Plan. Mr. Craig replied that a minor update will not neglect anything that needs updating but the City will not be overhauling the land use strategy.

Commissioner Albrigo suggested including changes to the recycling situation, impacts of methane, changes to Colorado River allotment, encouraging greywater use in new residential and commercial construction, and piloting hydrogen fuel cell vehicles, such as a hydrogen fuel cell bus. Mr. Craig shared that recycling will be addressed in the Community Services Theme. Staff noted these items for further research and consideration.

6. Discussion of General Plan Update Sustainable Development Theme

Ms. Presler provided an overview of the current Sustainable Development Theme, and its two elements, Energy, and Environmental Planning and Conservation, as well as update on global and national sustainable development milestones that have happened in the years since the last General Plan Update was adopted in 2012. The Commission then discussed what they wanted to see kept in the current General Plan Update, what they would like to see changed, what is missing, and if the goals are still relevant.

Vice Chair Lemmon recommended keeping the charts in the Theme but updating the information. Commissioner Schuh agreed.

Commissioner Hernandez suggested including subsections within the elements to make the document easier to navigate. Commissioner Hernandez is also interested in knowing more about what goal areas the City has had success in since the last plan and what has failed and why it wasn't successful.

Vice Chair Lemmon supported keeping the description of the City's water resources in the General Plan Update, recommended changing emphasis from decreasing dependency on cars to promoting electric vehicles, including the Green Business Program, researching solar adoption rates in the City, better integrating electric power line corridors and infrastructure into future developments, and having solar pre-installed in new communities.

Commissioner Barba supported having builders offer solar for new homes and also suggested inviting community members who have had solar installed on their homes to share their experience and the costs and savings in order to educate other community members.

Commissioner Hernandez advocated for building more walkable communities.

Vice Chair Lemmon requested the City reexplore vertical developments and apartments in the City and investigate sustainability of small homes and small lots. Commissioners Schuh and Barba do not support development of small homes with high densities.

Commissioner Albrigo requested that the City explore opportunities to harness energy from biomass and ensure resilience of the electrical grid and municipal infrastructure.

Commissioner Barba voiced importance of sharing the Native American history and culture of Avondale, as well as the value of wildlife. Additionally, she advocated for incentivizing builders be LEED certified and use sustainable materials.

Commissioner Lemmon felt the goals were still relevant but recommended updating the language. Commissioners Valencia and Schuh agreed.

Commissioner Hernandez supported greater connectivity between the community and natural open spaces such as the Tres Rios to promote environmental protection.

Ms. Presler inquired if the Commission would be supportive of greater emphasis on resilience and equity in the next General Plan Update, in alignment with current global and national priorities in sustainability. Commissioner Barba voiced support. Commissioner Hernandez agreed and noted that raising awareness on equity issues can drive more action.

Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2021
Page 4 of 6

7. Discussion of Youth Engagement Opportunities

Ms. Presler reminded the Commission of the adopted goal to engage youth through presentation to school group, community cleanup, participation in City event, and/or connecting with Avondale Youth Commission with the anticipation completion in April.

Ms. Presler shared that Chair Vaughan, former Chair Hernandez and she presented to the Avondale Youth Advisory Commission earlier this week and invited interested members to apply for the Youth Member position with EENRC, which is currently vacant.

Commissioner Hernandez noted that there was a good response from the Avondale Youth Advisory Commission, with some Commissioners asking for details on how to apply.

Ms. Presler shared two upcoming opportunities to engage with youth in April for the Commission's consideration:

1. The Avondale Youth Advisory Commission is mobilizing youth to support the virtual Rio Earth Day Cleanup Week, April 17-24. The EENRC
2. Avondale KidFest will be held on April 10 at Friendship Park. The event runs from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. KidFest is a free event that showcases community groups dedicated to families and children while celebrating the value and importance of families as a key part of a healthy and safe community. The EENRC could host a table and/or volunteer to help with the event.

The EENRC is interested in promoting the Rio Earth Day Cleanup Week and volunteering for KidFest. Ms. Presler will follow-up to provide logistics.

8. Update on Municipal Sustainability Plan

Ms. Presler presented the results from the assessment of progress on the Municipal Sustainability Plan completed this year. The presentation included a brief history of the Municipal Sustainability Plan, status of actions, key achievements, and actions currently in progress.

Avondale City Council adopted the Municipal Sustainability Plan in 2014, which included 90 actions across 11 Impact Areas. Of the 90 actions, 78% of actions have been implemented, 10% are in progress, and 12% have not yet been implemented. Progress has been made in each of the 11 Impact Areas. Current initiatives are underway in the Transportation, Energy and Climate, Ecosystems, Buildings and Maintenance, and Procurement, Materials and Waste Impact Areas.

Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2021
Page **5** of **6**

Key achievements highlighted included the City's solar demonstration project, LED streetlight conversion, clean hydropower agreement, fleet electrification, Street Tree Master Plan, Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventories, Green Business Program, EENRC, updated Design Manuals, and the Green Waste Program.

Current actions in progress include benchmarking energy consumption for City facilities, updating the General Plan, river revitalization, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, heat mitigation, and evaluating green building standards for City facilities. The EENRC is engaged with several of these efforts.

Commissioner Barba asked how many electric vehicles we currently have in the City fleet and how many we're projected to have in the next two years. Ms. Presler responded that the City currently has three electric fleet vehicles and is working on developing a plan to add more.

Commissioner Lemmon asked if the new City Hall Annex would be a LEED certified building. Ms. Presler responded that the City is evaluating LEED certification as well as Green Globes and ENERGY STAR. Rick Carr, Assistant Director of Development and Engineering Services, added that the City is looking to do as many sustainable features as the budget allows and that the facility will include electric vehicle charging stations and parking canopy that is ready for outfitting with solar in the future when there's an opportunity to add them.

Commissioner Schuh noted that the General Plan Update set a goal to strive to attain a LEED Silver standard or equivalent for City facilities and commended the City for this effort but recognized that it can be cost prohibitive.

Commissioner Lemmon advocated for the BLVD to be as ecofriendly and sustainable as possible.

Commissioner Arreguin asked how the electric vehicle charging stations are being powered. Ms. Presler responded that the charging stations are tied into the energy grid.

Commissioner Albrigo asked if any of the actions that haven't been started yet are of concern. Ms. Presler stated that the high priority actions are either in progress or have been implemented.

Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2021
Page 6 of 6

9. Adjournment

The next Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Commission Regular Meeting is scheduled for May 26, 2021 at 6:30 P.M.

Motion by Commissioner Hernandez, seconded by Commissioner Schuh, to adjourn the meeting.

There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 7:53 PM.

Billy Vaughan

Danae Presler
Sustainability Officer as Staff Liaison

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the meeting held on the 24th day of March 2021. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that the quorum was present.

Danae Presler
Sustainability Officer as Staff Liaison