



RECOMMENDATION FOR A CLIMATE RETREAT

Climate Change
Advisory Committee

Adopted, March 27, 2025



Recommendation for a Climate Retreat

RESOLVED,

that the Board of Commissioners **authorize planning to begin for a climate change retreat**—agenda and date to be determined—on the impacts of climate change occurring in Chatham County, appropriate responses, and resources for the development of a climate action plan.

PURPOSE:

To undertake a deep dive into current and likely near-future impacts of the climate crisis in Chatham County, to receive a briefing on elements of **local government climate action plans**, and to identify appropriate funding sources and personnel for development of a climate action plan.

PARTICIPANTS:

Interested Commissioners, relevant County staff, invited experts, representatives from the Climate Change Advisory Committee, and knowledgeable area individuals.



Two questions about a Climate Retreat:

1. **Why Now?**

Why plan for a climate retreat now?

2. **Why a *Climate Action Plan*?**

What about the Comprehensive Plan?



Why a Climate Retreat Now?

1. **URGENCY:**

Extreme weather and hotter temperatures are adversely impacting more and more individuals, communities, and family farms in Chatham County:

- **Dangerous heat** for outdoor workers
- **Drought**, drier growing conditions for crops
- Escalating **utility bills** for cooling
- Extended **disease-carrying mosquito and tick** season



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2. GROWTH:

*Population growth, land loss, and increasing GHG emissions are now **exacerbating** climate impacts:*

- NC Climate Office projects the state to warm an additional **six to ten degrees (F)** by 2100
- Changes to our climate in this century will be larger than anything experienced in North Carolina's historical past.



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- NC Climate Office projects the state to warm an additional **six to ten degrees (F)** by 2100
 - "The changes to our climate in this century will be larger than anything experienced in North Carolina's historical past."
- LOCAL GOVERNMENTS are on the front lines**

With the abject failure of the Administration, local cities and counties as "first responders."



Why a *Climate* Action Plan?

While incorporating elements of *Plan Chatham*, a climate action plan enables the County to respond more comprehensively to the climate crisis by:

- (1) Identifying gaps and important stakeholders in the County,
- (2) Increasing specificity and accountability, and
- (3) Integrating the latest science and best practices for emissions controls and adaptation.

(1) IDENTIFY GAPS and broaden climate elements of *Plan Chatham*

(Incl. new opportunities for electrification and “smart energy homes.” Also gives attention to major challenges for the County in:

- Preserving the **rural character** of Chatham County, its agriculture, and forests,
- Nurturing **climate-resilient** communities,
- Engaging **people, businesses, and communities** in responding to the climate crisis, and
- Securing a **livable climate for future** generations.



Why a *Climate* Action Plan?

(2) INCREASE SPECIFICITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY *with detailed, measurable objectives and timelines.*

For example, **Durham's climate action plan** explicitly commits the city to measurable goals, including:

Transition fleet vehicles to zero emissions by 2040, reduce energy consumption in city buildings by at least 30% by 2040, power city operations and facilities with 80%

(3) INTEGRATE THE LATEST SCIENCE AND BEST PRACTICES for emissions controls and adaptation.

- **New sources** for alternative energies and approaches for sequestering carbon as well as for community preparedness.
- **Local governments have moved in this direction.** Raleigh, Chapel Hill, Hillsborough, Carrboro, New Bern, and Asheville as well as Orange County have adopted climate, resiliency, or sustainability action plans.



By dedicating attention to local, specific impacts of climate change, by receiving briefings on other local governments' plans, Chatham County can develop a **measurable, actionable climate plan** that will contribute to a more resilient and sustainable future for County residents, farmers, businesses, and generations to come.

Our Advisory Committee, therefore, urges this Board to **authorize and set in motion plans** for a climate retreat.