

April 19, 2022  
City Council Meeting  
Comment

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**O1 – Receive the Bridge to 2023 Priorities Plan status update**

***COMMENT ONLY***

**Catherine Clarkin (Naperville Environment and Sustainability Task Force)** As co-chairs of the Naperville Environment and Sustainability Task Force we would like to wish you all a happy Earth Day. Since the first Earth Day in 1970, visionary leaders and citizen action lead to the passage of the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, fuel efficiency standards, the cleanup of polluted lakes and rivers, and countless other laws and regulations that mean we can breathe (relatively) clean air and drink clean water. Here in Naperville, our City government has expressed a commitment to environmental sustainability, most recently with the Sustainability Workshop on August 31 of last year and the adoption of Naperville’s strategic plan. Tonight, you will hear an update on progress on some of the City’s sustainability efforts. NEST has appreciated the opportunity to have a seat at the table as Naperville implements these various efforts. Sustainability means leaving future generations the same access to opportunities and resources that we enjoy today. This is something that we all want! And looking at Naperville’s strategic plan, sustainability is stated as a guiding principle. But, looking forward, as City Council considers how to make a deeper commitment to sustainability, setting specific, measurable goals is required. Swift action to address climate change is needed if the planet AND Naperville are to avoid further climate catastrophe. The current sustainability work plan is a checklist of sustainability initiatives. However, if the City sets a goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030, in line with international goals, then sustainability and climate change start to be something that is considered across the board in every government policy and project. Each project, each ordinance has a new metric to consider - what is its impact on our greenhouse gas emissions goal? This shift in thinking will allow Naperville to make meaningful progress and do our part as a member of the global community to address climate change. Other cities in our region and across the country are making commitments to greenhouse gas reduction goals. We can join them and also show the way for others. We can also prioritize and set other goals that will guide us towards sustainable action, for example, waste diversion, solar adoption, electric vehicle infrastructure goals. You will also be hearing tonight about the metrics that the City will be tracking that relate to sustainability and climate change. Tracking these in light of progress towards our goals to become more sustainable, resilient, and address climate change is what makes all that data meaningful. If we are not making progress towards our goals, we know that something needs to change. Let’s take the next step together to deepen Naperville’s commitment to creating a truly sustainable, resilient community. Thank you, and once again, happy Earth Day! Cathy Clarkin Carl VanDril NEST Co-Chairs