Morrisville Environment and Stormwater Committee

Environment and Stormwater Committee Meeting
November 4, 2026, 6:00 PM

1. **Call to Order**

2. **Adoption of Agenda**

3. **Approval of Minutes**

   3.a October
   Oct 7 2026 Minutes_Final.pdf

4. **Presentations**
   HCC Native Plant Garden - Angie Ortiz
   Plant-Based Treaty - Emanuela Elias
   MSP 2.0 Scope - Kimberly Conley, Sustainability Coordinator

   4.a HCC Native Plant Garden - Angie Ortiz
   Historic_Church_Pollinator_Garden_MESC.pdf

   4.b Plant-Based Treaty - Emanuela Elias
   Morrisville November 2026 - MESC Presentation.pdf

   4.c MSP Phase II - Scope
   MESC Scope 20261026.pdf

5. **Public Comment**

6. **Old Business**

7. **New Business**
   Student Art Poster Contest Winner Confirmation
   Chair and Vice Chair Nominations

8. **Staff Comments**
   Confirmation of MESC 2027 Calendar
   Council to Join - February 3

9. **Committee Comments**

10. Upcoming Events

Toys for Tots Holiday Toy Drive - Fire Stations 1,2 & 3 (11/2-12/10)
Green Day - Morrisville Community Park 8a-12n 11/14
Student Art Poster & Advisory Committee Recognition - Town Council meeting 12/8 5:30 start

11. Adjournment

Morrisville Environment and Stormwater Committee

Historic Christian Church
October 7, 2026, 6:00 p.m.

NOTE: Minutes are summaries only, reflecting committee action and main points of discussion. For the meeting agenda, presentations and other related agenda materials, visit the Town website.

1. **Call to order**

Chair Simmons called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. A committee roll call was conducted.

Members Present

Chair Jim Simmons
Vice Chair Fiona Susie
Member Bhavana Veeravalli
Member Bharath Somasundaram
Member Marilyn Weisz
Member Donna Willard
Member Ikong Fu
Member The'Shaun Jones

Member Absent

Member Nirajan Aryal
Member Sandra Christian
Member Susan Juncosa

Staff present

John Letteney, *Assistant Town Manager*
Matt Wetherell, *Public Works Director*
Kimberly Conley, *Sustainability Coordinator*
Ben Mills, *Stormwater Engineering Manager*
Narayan Nyaupane, *Stormwater Engineer*

Public Comment

Tom Riley
Shishir R. Raval

2. **Adoption of Agenda**

Motion: Member Willard
Second: Member Veeravalli
Vote: Passes via unanimous vote.

3. **Approval of Minutes**

September 2 Minutes
Motion: Member Willard
Second: Member Veeravalli
Vote: Passes via unanimous vote.

4. **Presentations**

Stormwater Division Overview - Ben Mills, Stormwater Engineering Manager

Staff member Mills provided a comprehensive overview of the Town's Stormwater Division, its organizational structure, and core responsibilities. He began by outlining the division's mission to protect community water resources, improve water quality and aquatic habitats, and effectively manage floodplain areas. He described the team's structure, which includes two stormwater engineers and an environmental specialist working within the Engineering Department. He reviewed the division's role in development review, explaining that all public and private development proposals undergo stormwater compliance evaluation, including analysis of drainage patterns, impervious surface impacts, and the need for stormwater and floodplain permits. He explained the Town's obligations under its federally mandated Phase II MS4 permit, including public education, public involvement, illicit discharge detection, construction oversight, post-construction stormwater management, and municipal stormwater system operations. He noted that the Town can be audited by the State or the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Staff member Mills also described the illicit discharge detection program, common sources of violations, and enforcement actions. He explained the division's growing stormwater infrastructure inspection program supported by a GIS-based dashboard that identifies system conditions and maintenance needs. He highlighted recent capital projects and those underway as part of the 2021 Stormwater Master Plan, noting that the Town has secured several grants to help implement priority upgrades that address flooding and capacity issues. He discussed ongoing floodplain management efforts following updated state flood maps, and he reviewed upcoming nutrient rule requirements for the Neuse and Jordan watersheds. He also explained how the stormwater utility fund operates, including Equivalent Residential Unit or ERU-based billing for residential and commercial properties, which generates approximately $1.2 million annually. Finally, staff member Mills described the Town's street-sweeping program, which exceeds state requirements and removes substantial debris to improve water quality. He concluded with a Q&A session addressing funding, interjurisdictional watershed impacts, inspections, and long-term infrastructure needs.

5. **Public Comment**

Shishir Raval introduced himself as a Morrisville resident. He shared that he is a retired professor at NC State with a background in sustainability and expressed enthusiasm for the Committee's work. He stated that he looks forward to attending future meetings and contributing to the Town's sustainability efforts as he becomes more familiar with the Committee's activities.

6. **Old Business**

Student Art Poster Contest- Gifts, volunteer sign-up

The Committee received an update on the 21st Annual Student Art Poster Contest, with preparations well underway. Proposed grand prizes include a family membership to the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, along with a potential donated restaurant dinner for four. Gift bags for first, second, and third place winners in each K–5 grade level will again include ice cream tokens and customized playing cards featuring this year's contest theme.

Staff member Conley asked for volunteer support that is still needed for organizing, scanning, and categorizing contest submissions, and a sign-up link will be redistributed to ensure adequate coverage. The recognition event is scheduled for December 8, where volunteers will be needed to help guide students on and off the stage, assist with photos, and support general event flow. The committee noted its ongoing partnership with the Morrisville Community Library, which has been promoting contest activities and will later display the winning posters.

7. **New Business**

8. **Staff Comments**

Sustainability Plan Next Gen - Kimberly Conley, Sustainability Coordinator

The committee reviewed several upcoming initiatives, beginning with the next-generation Master Sustainability Plan. Many existing goals expire in FY26, so FY27 will serve as a planning year to redefine priorities and expand the plan's scope from municipal operations to the broader community. The consultant, HDR, will develop a scope of work, and committee members may receive training as "climate ambassadors" to help engage residents in the planning process.

Chair / Vice Chair Nominations Introduction

Staff member Conley clarified procedures for submitting agenda items, noting that items requiring formal inclusion must be submitted approximately 1.5 weeks in advance for approval, while general discussion topics may still be raised during committee comment time.

The Committee also discussed the new standardized nomination and election process for Chair and Vice Chair positions. Members interested in serving were encouraged to complete the nomination form, with brief candidate statements planned for November and elections scheduled for December.

9. **Committee Comments**

Giant Soils and Plastics Recycling Exhibit Extravaganza - James Simmons, Chair

Chair Simmons shared updates and reflections related to recent environmental news and ongoing educational efforts. He highlighted the growing scientific focus on soil health, referencing a recent study that used buried clothing to measure decomposition rates, which gained notable attention and reinforced global interest in soil science and sustainability practices. Chair Simmons also discussed progress on

the plastics recycling exhibit he has been developing, noting recent updates to the display board that explain how different plastic classifications work and what materials. He emphasized that these educational tools are intended to help residents make more informed recycling decisions and deepen understanding of environmental impacts. These updates were shared as part of his broader effort to bring relevant sustainability news, scientific developments, and practical recycling guidance to the committee for awareness and community outreach.

Council to Join MESC - February 3
Staff Member Conley informed the Committee that the Town Council will attend the MESC meeting on February 3 as part of their annual visits to advisory committees. This session will provide an opportunity for MESC to present its recent accomplishments, discuss ongoing initiatives, and share priorities for the upcoming year. Members should anticipate preparing materials and coordinating talking points ahead of the visit to ensure a productive discussion with Council.

Plant-Based Treaty Request to Present – November
The Committee revisited the request from representatives of the Plant-Based Treaty initiative to give a formal presentation at an upcoming meeting. Members discussed both the potential educational value and the need to balance perspectives within the community. The Committee noted that the presentation would be time-limited to ensure the agenda remains manageable. After brief deliberation, the Committee agreed that welcoming the organization to present would be beneficial and voted accordingly.

Motion: Member Veeravalli
Second: Member Jones
Vote: Passes via unanimous vote.

Morrisville Land Plan - Bhavana Veeravilli, Member
Committee member Veeravilli shared insights from her review of the Morrisville Land Use Plan, highlighting how its goals, particularly environmental stewardship, sustainable development, and community image, align with MESC's mission. She noted recurring themes in the plan related to reducing the visual and environmental impact of parking lots, strengthening pedestrian connectivity, and increasing conservation-focused development. she also emphasized the importance of understanding existing zoning patterns, especially the separation between residential and commercial areas, to better identify opportunities for sustainable, transit-oriented, and environmentally conscious growth. She encouraged committee members to explore these planning documents as the town's broader sustainability strategy evolves.

10. **Upcoming Events**
Green Day – Saturday, November 14 th 8a.m.-12p.m.
The Committee reviewed details for the upcoming Green Day event, scheduled for Saturday, November 14th from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Morrisville Community Park. This

event will offer multiple recycling and disposal stations, including electronics, textiles, fats/oils/grease, batteries, pumpkins for composting, paper shredding, and medication take-back supported by the Police Department. Goodwill will also be onsite collecting reusable household items, clothing, and furniture. Volunteers are encouraged to sign up to assist with traffic flow, collection stations, and general event support. The committee emphasized the value of Green Day as a convenient, one-stop sustainability service for residents and encouraged broad community participation.

11. Adjournment

Motion: Member Willard
Second: Member Fiona
Vote: Passes via unanimous vote.

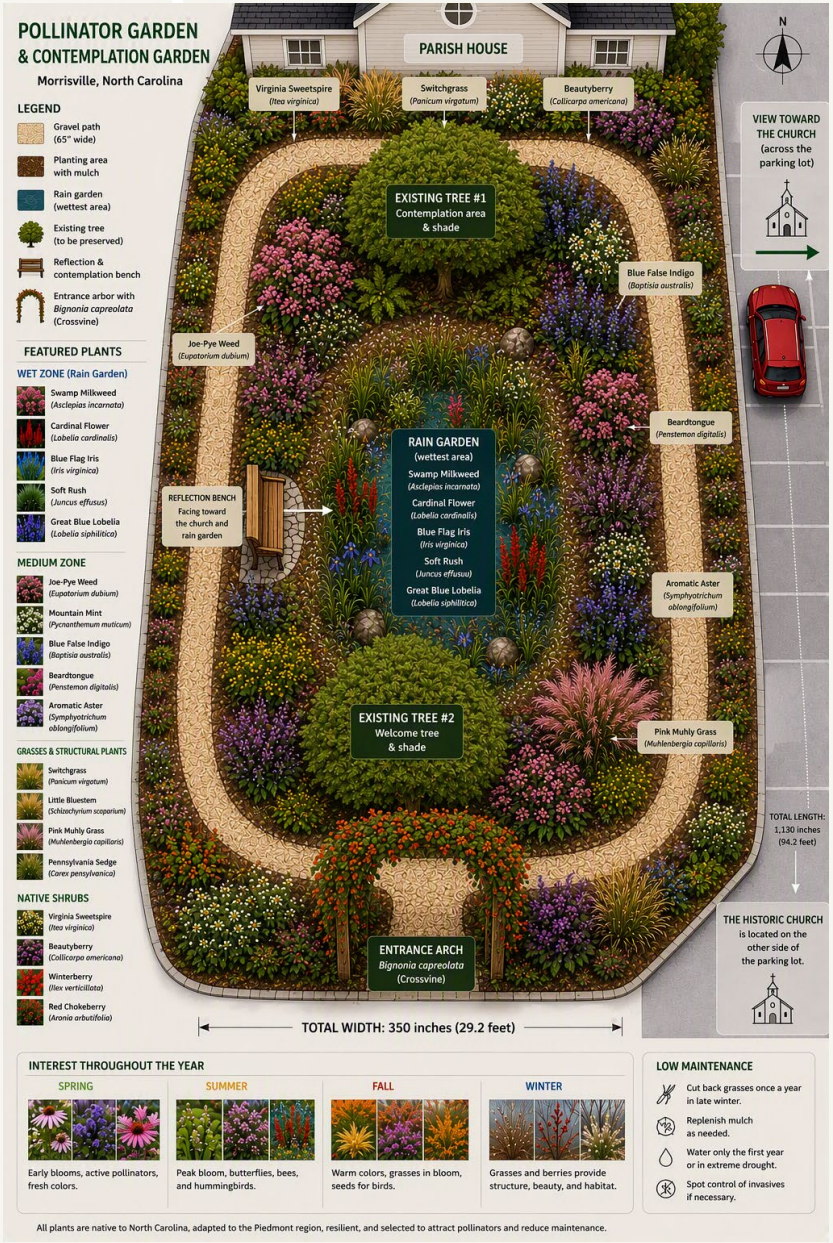
Chair Simmons adjourned the meeting at 7:38 p.m.

_____	_____
Chair	Support Staff Liaison
_____	_____
Date	Date

HISTORIC CHURCH POLLINATOR GARDEN

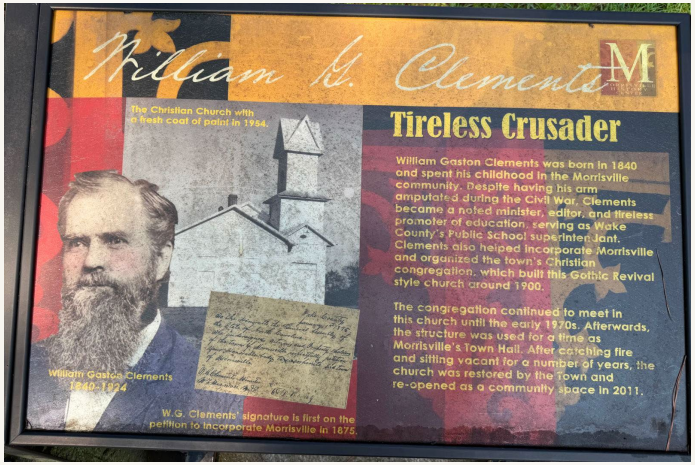
A Community Stewardship Initiative
Morrisville Christian Church Historic Landmark
226 Church Street, Morrisville, NC

Presented by Angelica Ortiz









Why This Place Matters

The Morrisville Christian Church property is a historic community asset. The proposed garden would honor the site's character while adding environmental education, native habitat, and a welcoming public landscape.



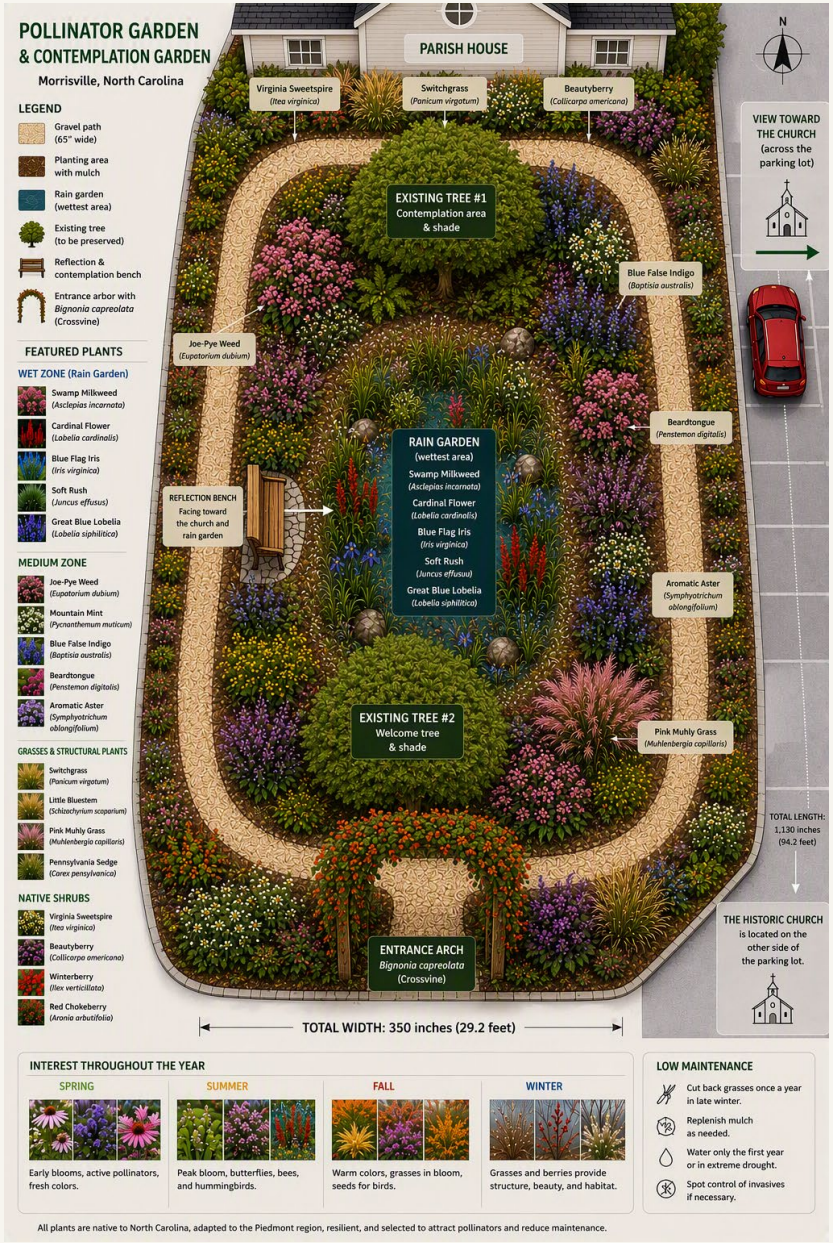
The Opportunity

Existing site conditions

- Approx. 1,176 m^2 (12,650 sq. ft.)
- Existing lawn and mature trees
- Access from parking and sidewalks
- High visibility for residents and visitors

Opportunity

Transform an underused lawn into a visible community asset that connects history, habitat, and education.



Proposed Garden Vision

- **Native plants**
  Habitat adapted to local conditions
- **Pollinator support**
  Food and shelter across seasons
- **Education**
  Outdoor learning and interpretation
- **Historic character**
  A landscape that complements the church
- **Community use**
  A place for reflection and engagement

Why Native Plants?

POLLINATORS Support bees, butterflies, and beneficial insects

RESILIENCE Adapted to regional weather and soils

EFFICIENCY Lower irrigation and fertilizer needs

BIODIVERSITY Provide layered habitat and seasonal resources

Featured palette: milkweed • cardinal flower • blue false indigo • Joe-Pye weed • pink muhly grass • Virginia sweetspire



What Could This Garden Become?



TODAY



A PROVEN NORTH CAROLINA EXAMPLE

Native plant communities become richer and more ecologically valuable as they mature.

Why This Project Can Succeed



Community reforestation



Environmental education



Habitat stewardship



Regional relationships

Professional Development & Certifications









Relevant focus areas Landscape design • native plant communities • pollinator habitat • environmental education • sustainable stewardship

Community Support Network









NC STATE UNIVERSITY



Existing relationships

- Trees for the Triangle
- Pittsboro Pollinator Garden
- North Carolina Pollinator Conservation Alliance
- Fundación Ecología con Amor

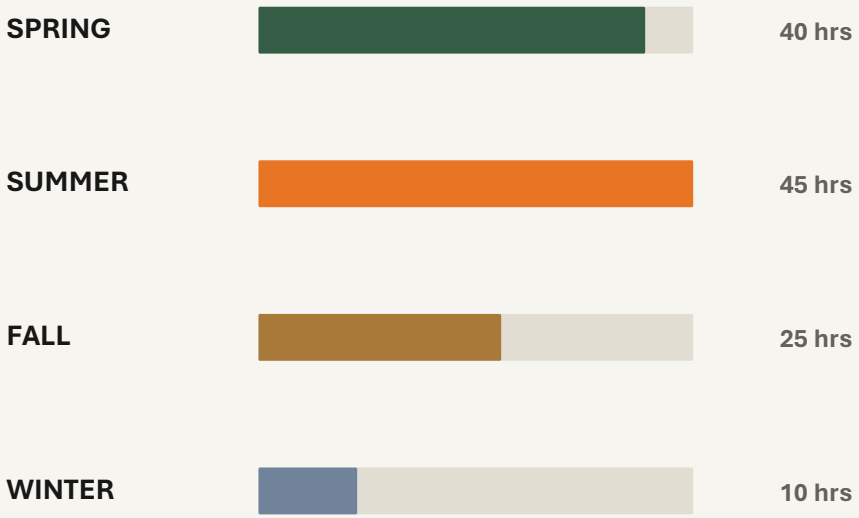
Future collaboration

Outreach has been initiated with NC State University College of Design to explore educational and community engagement opportunities.

Long-Term Maintenance Plan



≈ 10 hours per month



Shared stewardship

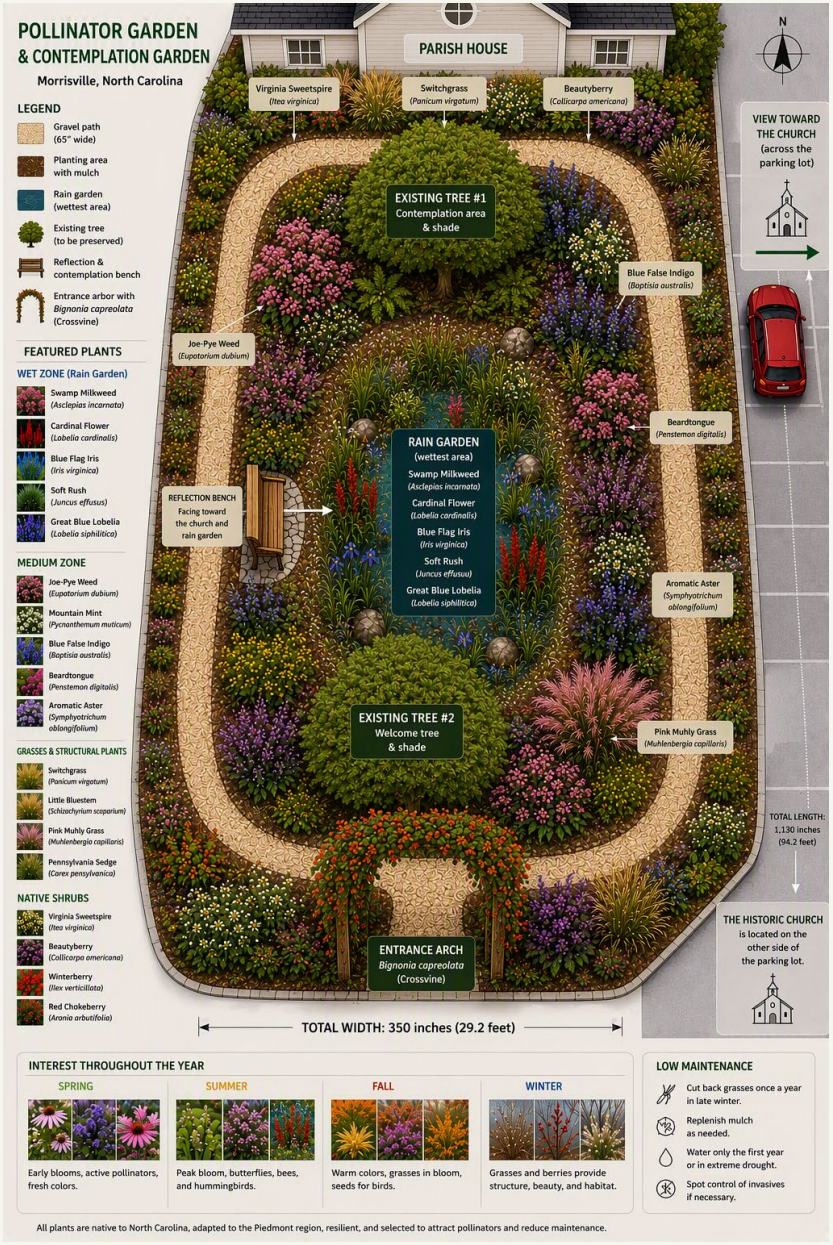
MESC participation can be combined with volunteer workdays, community partners, and educational engagement.

REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

I respectfully request MESC's support to move forward with the Historic Church Pollinator Garden and participate in a shared stewardship model.

PRESERVING HISTORY
SUPPORTING POLLINATORS
BUILDING COMMUNITY

Angelica Ortiz





An opportunity to expand Morrisville's sustainability efforts to include food systems

Building on Morrisville's Sustainability Efforts

Morrisville's Master Sustainability Plan already addresses:

- Transportation emissions, including hybrid and electric vehicles
- Food waste and composting programs
- Protecting trees and natural areas

Another opportunity: The food we choose to eat and serve.

ANIMALS PRODUCTS PROVIDE JUST

37% GLOBAL PROTEIN

18% GLOBAL CALORIES

YET ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR



FARMED LAND USE



AND 71% OF GLOBAL DEFORESTATION

What is the Plant Based Treaty?



The Plant Based Treaty is a global initiative that encourages governments to work together to address the environmental impact of our food systems.

Similar to how the Paris Climate Agreement focuses on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the Plant Based Treaty calls for a global agreement focused specifically on food production.

It gives governments a framework for addressing the environmental impact of animal agriculture and supporting more sustainable food systems.

What Does It Mean for a Town or City to Endorse the Treaty?



Endorsing the Plant Based Treaty means a town:

- Acknowledges that changing our food systems can help address climate change
- Expresses support for the Treaty's goals
- Supports the call for governments to address food systems through a global agreement

What Have Other Cities Done?

Somerville, Massachusetts

- Endorsed the Plant Based Treaty in April 2026
- Held a Plant-Based Restaurant Week
- 19 local restaurants participated, offering plant-based dishes, specials, and discounts

West Hollywood, California

- Adopted a policy in June 2024 making plant-based food the default at city-sponsored events. (Guests can still request meals containing animal products.)
- Launched a public Veganuary awareness campaign in January 2025.
- Promoted local restaurants offering plant-based meals.

Columbus, Ohio

- First US Capitol to endorse
- Implemented city-wide education program
- Added low carbon food policy in climate action plan
- City hosted vegan dining week

Ideas for Morrisville

Educational Programs

An educational booth at the Morrisville Farmers Market to share the environmental benefits of plant-based foods. Using Educational Choices free courses in schools.

Plant-Based Food Guidelines

Explore making plant-based meals the default at town-sponsored events and meetings, with other options available upon request. Alternatively, consider a guideline where at least two-thirds of the food options offered are plant-based.

Plant-Based Cooking Demonstrations

Offer cooking demonstrations to introduce residents to preparing and cooking plant-based meals.

What We'd Like to Explore with MESC

Plant Based Treaty Endorsement

1. Support a recommendation for Morrisville Town Council to endorse the Plant Based Treaty.

Master Sustainability Plan

1. Incorporate food systems into the MSP and explore plant-based initiatives that fit Morrisville's sustainability goals.

ENDORSE THE PLANT BASED TREATY

Scan the QR code!
TO ENDORSE THE TREATY

EAT PLANTS, PLANT TREES.

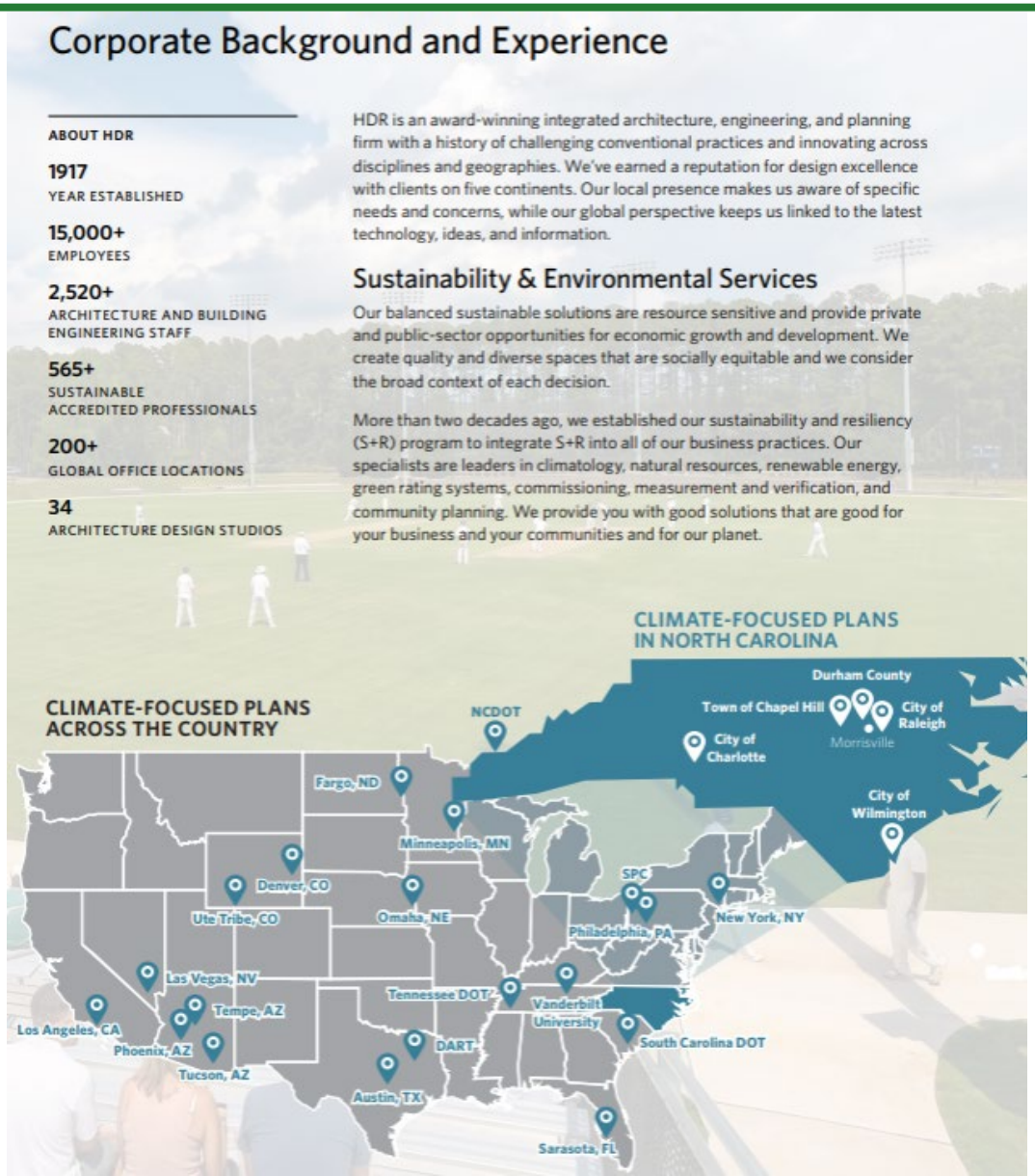
plantbasedtreaty.org

pbtnctriangle@gmail.com

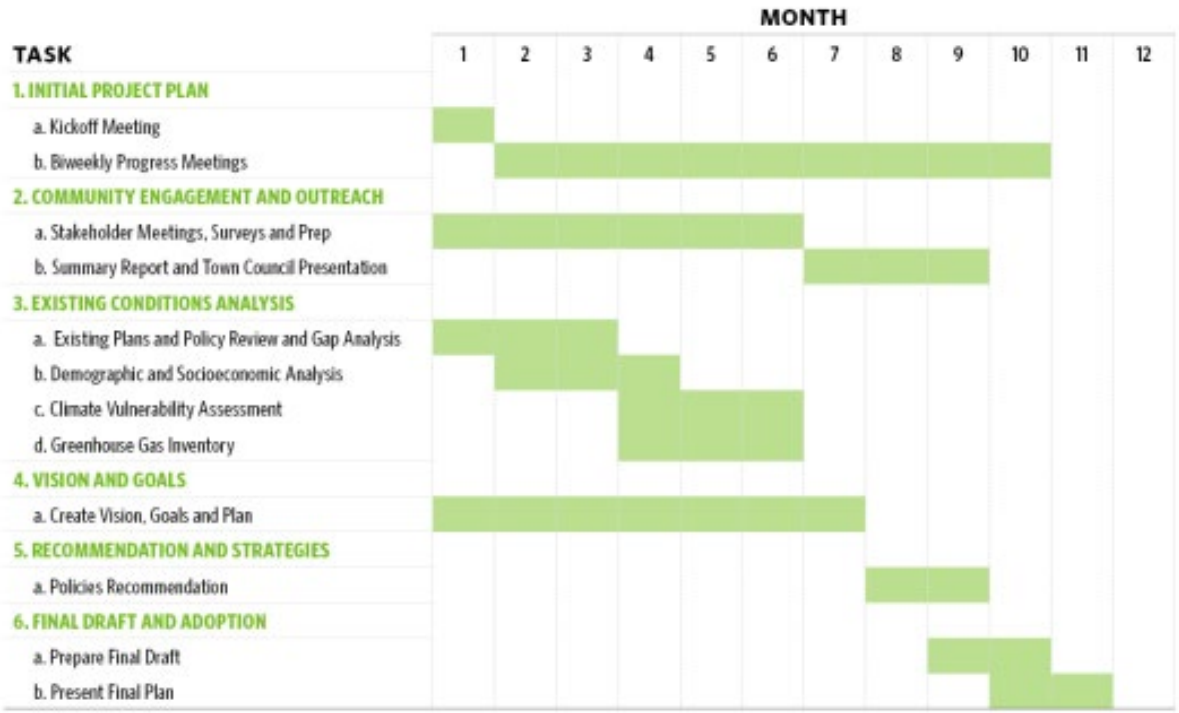
MESC
Master Sustainability Plan
Phase II
Scope
11/4/26

Consultant Selection Process

- Released RFQ: 7/10
- Submittals Due: 8/10
- Selection Team: Public Works, Engineering, Finance, Planning & Administration
  Interviews/Selection: [HDR, Inc.]



Task 1 – Initial Project Plan/Management



- 11-month schedule
- Kick-off meeting
- Bi-weekly coordination w/Town staff
- Sharing of datasets (access to Enpira), planning documents, including Strategic Plan

Morrisville

Task 2 – Community Engagement/Outreach

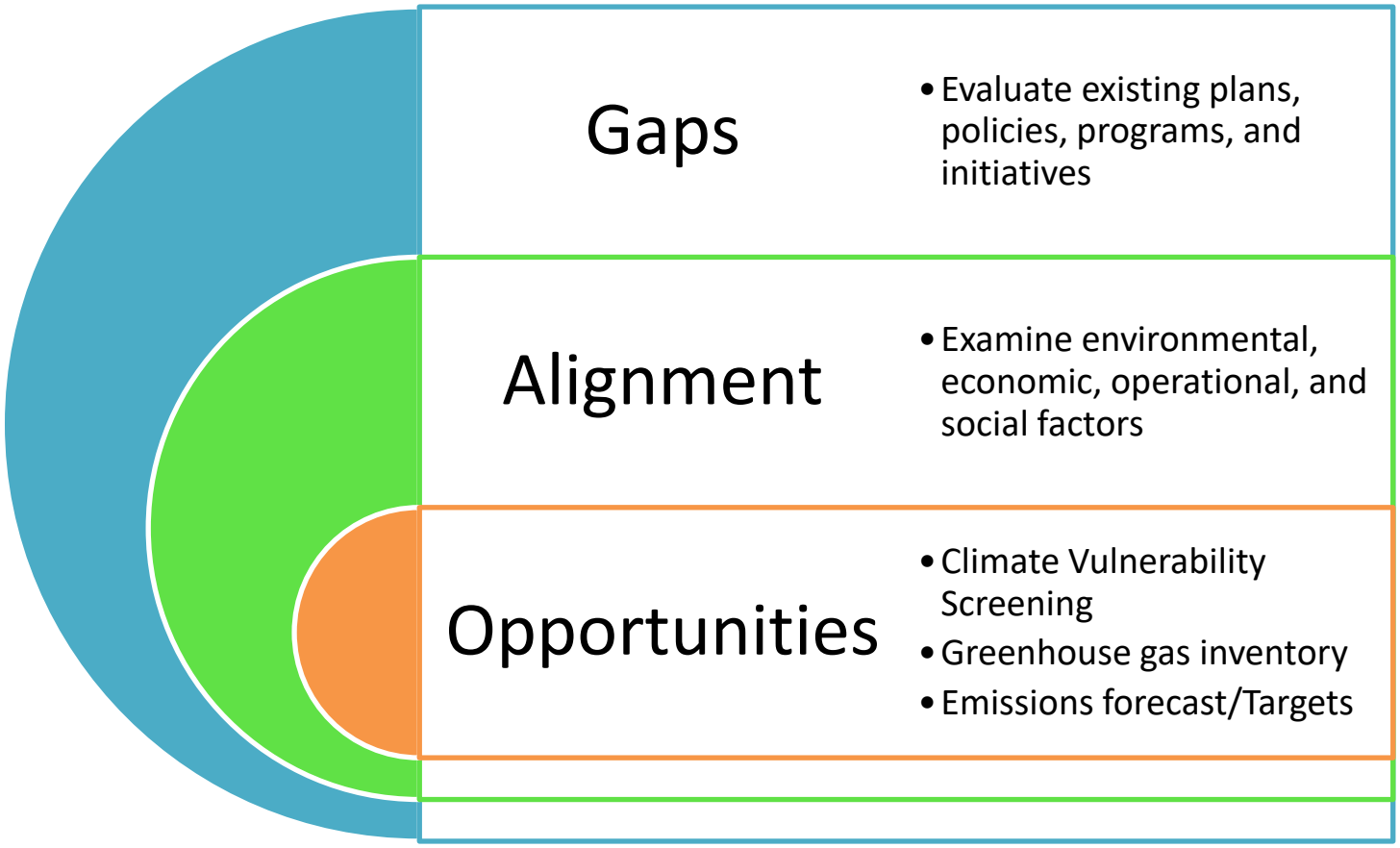
EVENT	DAY/TIME	ATTENDEES	VIRTUAL or IN PERSON	PLAN STAGE
Morrisville Environment & Stormwater Committee & all Advisory Comms / Sustainability Task Force (internal)	1/6 6-7p	Lead citizen advisory committee	In Person	Planning/Training for Community Climate Connectors
Council Work Session	1/12 (tent.) 6:30-7:30p	Council	In Person	Planning
Farmers Markets	1/16,1/30	Public	In Person	Planning/Survey
Rotary Club	TBD			
***Senior Center**	Jan-Feb (TBD)	Seniors	In Person	Planning/Survey
Morrisville Chamber of Commerce	Feb (TBD)	Chamber members	In Person	Planning/Survey
***Holi**	3/13, 12-3p	Public	In Person	Prioritize/Align Solutions
Farmers Markets	2/27, 3/13	Public	In Person	Prioritize/Align Solutions
Recommendations Share Out	July (TBD)	All	Virtual	Recommendations
Town Council Recommendations	July (TBD)	Council	In Person & Virtual	Recommendations

Orange highlights opps for citizen advisory committee outreach (MESC) 'Community Climate Connectors', while green is for HDR facilitation.

- Diverse range of perspectives
- Build consensus around shared goals and priorities
- Go to where our communities gather
- Online survey(s)
- Two 'sets' of engagement

Morrisville

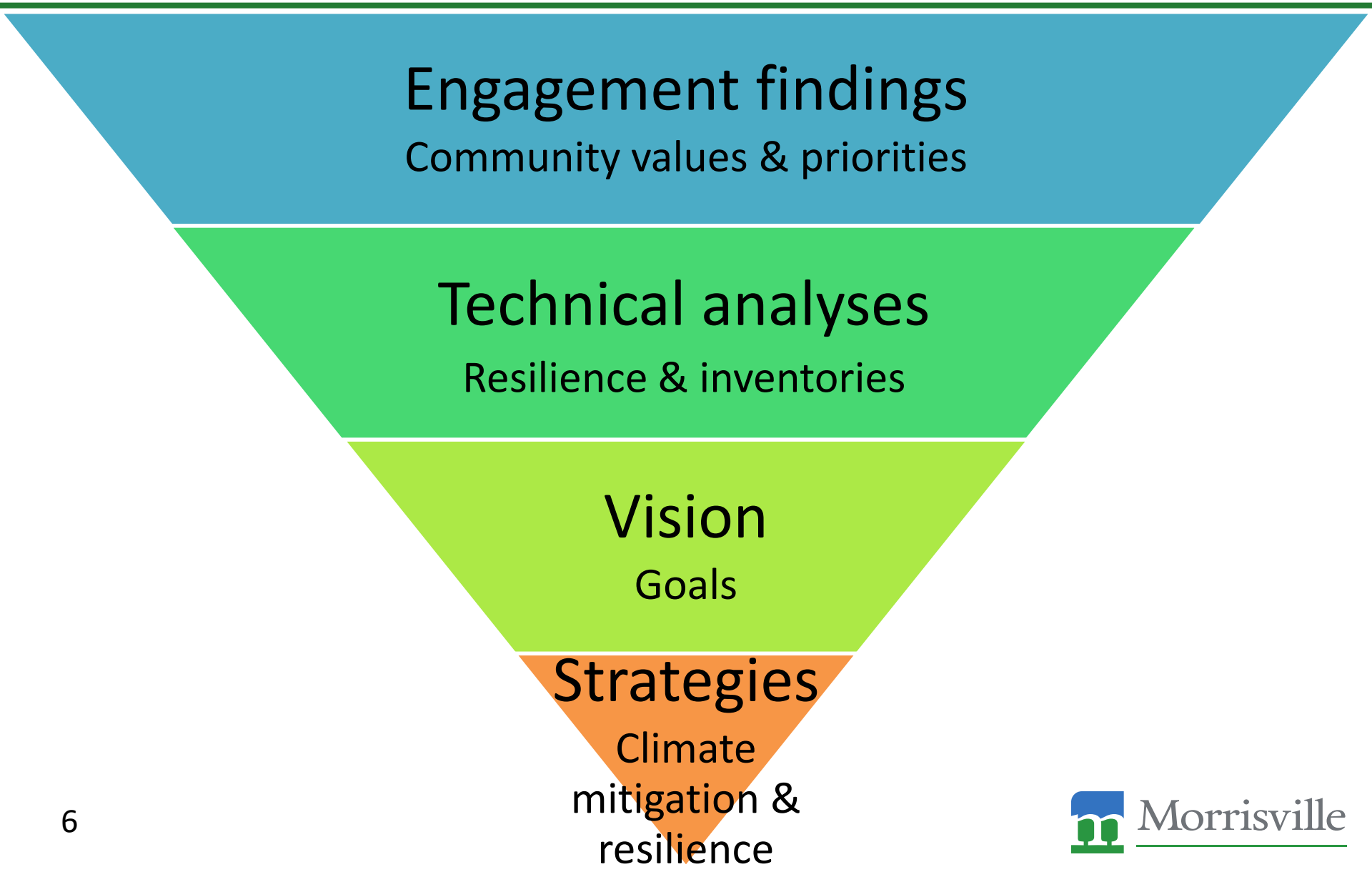
Task 3 – Existing Conditions Analysis



- Development of municipal and community GHG inventory
- Peer benchmarking

Morrisville

Task 4 – Vision and Goals



Morrisville