

# Mecklenburg County

## Environmental Leadership Update



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Public Policy Workshop  
March 24, 2026

# BOCC FY27 Budget Retreat: Discussion Topics

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- **Net Zero Carbon**
  - Reset Target or Extend Timeframe
  - Renewable Energy Credits (RECs)
  - Green Source Advantage Express
- **Park Land Acquisition**
  - New Strategic Approach
- **Sustainable Funding Model**
  - Statutory Advocacy for Local Air Quality Fee
  - Annual Fee Increases: Solid Waste & Storm Water
- **SMART Goals**
  - Performance Metrics & Targets



## BOCC FY27 Budget Retreat Feedback: Net Zero Carbon

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- **Policy Question: Based on costs, available options and timeline, is there a willingness to either extend the timeline for achieving net zero carbon goal and reset actual target for 2035?**
  - *Interest in knowing more about budget constraints.*
  - *Open to resetting target, depending on costs and competing interest.*
  - *Maintain the goal as aspirational.*
- **Policy Question: Is there still an openness in exploring the option of purchasing regional renewable energy credits to achieve net zero carbon?**
  - *General openness to exploring purchasing renewable energy credits, if there are local/regional benefits and funding doesn't impact other priorities.*
- **Policy Question: Should the County participate in Duke Energy's Green Source Advantage Express program as a strategy to offset the organization's overall carbon footprint (emissions) by 10%?**
  - *There was general support for this idea.*

# Net Zero Carbon: Strategy & Action

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- The aspirational goal is currently for the County to achieve a net zero use of carbon energy sources by 2035.
- Energy efficiency capital improvement projects, including deep energy retrofits and solar installation must yield a positive return on investment (ROI).
- Deep energy retrofit projects will replace equipment that has reached the end of its life cycle.
- Electric Vehicles (EVs) will be acquired as vehicles in the fleet reach end of life cycle for replacement. The goal is for the cost of most vehicles to be comparable to the price for the gas-powered option.
- The County will participate in Duke Energy's Green Source Advantage Express program. The \$70K annual cost will be absorbed by savings realized from deep energy retrofits and solar panel installations.



## BOCC FY27 Budget Retreat Feedback: Land Acquisition

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- **Policy Question: As we update Meck Playbook, the Park & Rec master plan, is there support for exploring new land acquisition funding strategies and goals to balance competing needs with available resources and market conditions?**
  - *Openness to exploring new land acquisition strategies.*
  - *Purchases should align to the master plan and funding strategies.*
- **Policy Question: As land availability and acquisition become more challenging, should the County revisit our site development strategy to include proactively collaborating with partners on future purchases, land use, and design as well as being open to nontraditional opportunities?**
  - *General openness to proactive collaborations and non-traditional opportunities.*

# Park Land Acquisition: Strategy & Action

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- Meck Playbook, the Park & Rec master plan, will guide areas of focus for land acquisitions to improve access to parks, open space, greenways, and recreational amenities as well as preserving natural resources.
- The County will explore joint venture land acquisition and collaborative planning site development opportunities.





# Net Zero Carbon

Efficiency • Results-Oriented

# FY27 Deep Energy Retrofit & Solar Panel Projects

Project Type	Project Description	Replacement Cost	Energy Efficiency Cost	Total Project Cost
DER	Spratt A – Deep Energy Retrofit	\$3,323,647	\$212,000	\$3,535,647
DER	LUESA Suttle Avenue – Deep Energy Retrofit	\$3,858,546	\$180,000	\$4,038,546
DER	Hwy 16 Park & Rec AOB – Deep Energy Retrofit	\$1,951,000	\$152,000	\$2,103,000
DER	Medical Examiner’s Office – Deep Energy Retrofit	\$835,128	\$90,000	\$925,128
Solar	Bette Rae Thomas Rec Center – Solar Panels	\$0	\$977,706	\$977,706
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>		<b>\$9,968,321</b>	<b>\$1,611,706</b>	<b>\$11,580,027</b>

Total Cost of **DER** projects only: **\$10,602,320**

- Replacement cost: \$ 9,968,320 **(94%)**
- Energy Efficiency cost: \$ 634,000 **(6%)**

Total Cost of Solar Panel project **\$ 977,706**



# Electric Vehicles & Charging Stations

## Current State

Fiscal Year	EVs Count	Charger Count
2021	9	6 *
2022	22	20
2023	26	82
2024	69	58 *
2025	68	6
2026	34	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>232</b>

\* (Includes LUESA-Suttle Ave)

**21.4%** of fleet will be electrified by the end of FY26

**About 16%** of fleet (large vehicles) have no electric alternatives that will meet business needs

## Future State

Fiscal Year	EVs Count	Charger Count
<b>2027</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>40</b>
2028	115	48
2029	115	92
2030	115	24
2031	105	30
2032	104	30
2033	100	0
2034	90	0
2035	23	0
<b>Cumulative Total</b>	<b>1066</b>	<b>496</b>

### FY27 Approach:

- **71** vehicles to be purchased: **\$2,485,000**
- **40** charging stations to be installed (already funded)
- **48** charging stations – FY27 funding request: **\$2,447,000**



# Net Zero Carbon: Next Steps

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- In FY27, an internal review will be conducted to evaluate the feasibility of achieving long-term environmental leadership goals and develop a corresponding plan with recommendations.

In interim, only design work will occur on previously approved energy efficiency projects, and construction will be deferred until decisions are made on long-term environmental leadership goals.

- The current five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) financial model and implementation plan will also be reviewed and updated in FY27.

**New** energy efficiency projects requested in FY27-31 CIP will be deferred until new five-year CIP plan is approved.

- SMART Goals (achievable long-term targets) will be set based on the outcome of the internal review and funding appropriated for deep energy retrofits, solar panel installations, purchase of electric vehicles (EV)s, and deployment of EV chargers.



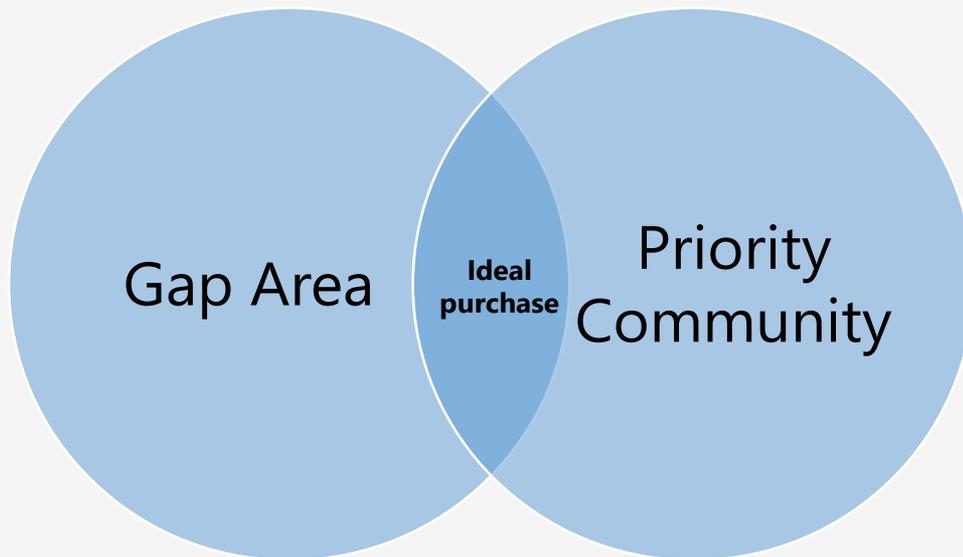


# Park Land Acquisition

Sustainable & Scalable

## Playbook Strategy: Tier I & II

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**Gap Areas** are defined as areas of Mecklenburg County where residents do not live within a 10-minute walk of a County-owned or municipal park.

**Priority Communities** are areas of the County where two or more of the following factors overlap:

- Areas of the County with above average youth and senior populations
- People of color
- Residents experiencing poverty
- Residents who rent rather than own property
- Residents with limited access to cars

## Other Important Factors in Land Acquisition: Tier III

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- **Proximity to another park property**

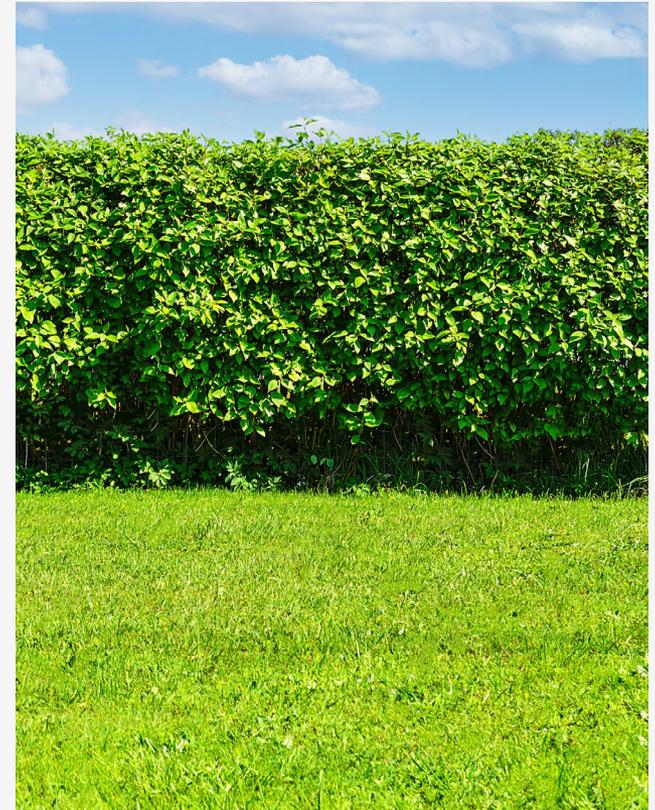
- Allow connection and/or buffer parkland and residential/commercial property.

- **Greenway access**

- Either easements or parcels which allow connection or extension in accordance with Greenway Master Plan.

- **Other needs**

- Nature preserves or other properties where purchase would protect vital ecosystems, biodiversity, or water supply.
- Site large enough for recreation purposes: centers, athletic fields, sports courts, special use facilities.
- CMS, Library, CPCC or Housing & Community Development projects where land could accommodate multiple needs.



# Alternative Approaches

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- **Joint Ventures:**

- City, Town or CMS participation in land acquisition and development.
- Collaborative planning with CMS, CPCC, CRCs, Libraries, Housing & Community Development

- **Site Development:**

- Creation of a “developer package” showing the ways that parks could be developed as a part of a rezoning or County participation request
- Recreation Easements: Asking partners such as CMS, churches and other non-profits to consider leasing space on their property for County Parks
- Non-traditional site selection: Identify locations where County would consider “un-developing” already paved and built sites.



# Park Land Acquisition: Next Steps

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- In FY27, an internal financial analysis will be completed to determine the long-term strategy for land acquisition. In the interim, the current strategy aligned to Meck Playbook will continue.
- SMART goals will be set factoring the pace of growth in population and building development.



# Mecklenburg County

## Environmental Leadership

