

20 CAAP Action Items as Prioritized by the Grand Rapids City Commission

Energy Systems Strategy 1, Action 2 (pg. 47)

Partner with energy utilities serving the community (Consumers Energy, DTE Energy, Vicinity Energy) to enhance access to, as well as awareness and understanding of, their existing services, programs and compliance with renewable/clean energy and other climate related commitments, with a special emphasis on offerings designed to help vulnerable populations, small businesses/organizations and essential services.

Energy Systems Strategy 2, Action 2 (pg. 48)

Continue to advocate for federal and state legislation that keeps the federal and state government at the forefront of sustainable and climate focused energy systems, including bills that support privately owned community solar arrays allowing individual or organizational ownership and wealth generating opportunities.

Energy Systems Strategy 3, Action 4 (pg. 49)

Leverage funding sources, including local green banks and on-bill financing, to expand access to low and no cost financing for on-site renewable energy and/or other low-to-no emissions energy technology (e.g. combined heat and power, geothermal, etc.).

Energy Systems Strategy 7, Action 8 (pg. 51)

Identify and support active community hubs to transition to resilience hubs prioritizing NOFs.

Residential Homes Strategy 3, Action 3 (pg. 60)

Explore the feasibility of innovative financing solutions like creating a green revolving fund, green cost share program, buy-down options, on-bill financing, or other sustainable public financing programs that help residents finance home energy updates while investing in serving additional households.

Residential Homes Strategy 5, Action 2 (pg. 61)

Assess and reduce barriers to innovative housing solutions (such as modular construction, tiny homes, prefabricated materials, and new building methods).

- Encourage manufacturers to meet with the City's Planning Department to discuss design standards at the front-end of a project.

Residential Homes Strategy 5, Action 3 (pg. 61)

Explore tools and strategies for protecting residents at risk of displacement.

- Support and coordinate holding land in reserve for affordable housing via community land trusts or land banks.

Buildings & Industry Strategy 1, Action 1 (pg. 67)

Help building stakeholders (developers, owners, operators, tenants), especially small and minority-owned businesses, access funding and financing to implement energy efficiency, renewable energy, climate resilient and sustainable and healthy projects (utility rebates, PACE, on-bill financing, grants, green revolving fund, tax incentives, low to no-cost loans, etc.), prioritize sustainable funding mechanisms, and ensure they are on the most cost-effective rates.

- Partner with Corridor Improvement Authorities to provide education and resources

Buildings & Industry Strategy 1, Action 2 (pg. 67)

Enhance access to and use of actual data (energy use, cost, emissions) in building development, design, construction and operation decisions

- Partner with utilities to improve streamlined access to data at the building, company and census tract level.
- Educate and support businesses and organizations reporting data via the free U.S. EPA Energy Star Portfolio Manager program, enrolling in the free GR2030 program and considering GR2030's low-cost Automated Benchmarking Service (ABS).
- Educate building stakeholders on services that support evaluating the actual performance of buildings and improvements, including return on investment, avoided costs, and emissions reductions.

Buildings & Industry Strategy 4, Action 3 (pg. 70)

Partner with Vicinity Energy to continue to implement efficiency projects and pursue electrification of steam generation and the sourcing of renewable energy as a strategy to reduce process emissions as well as help their downtown customers achieve building-related emissions reductions.

Transportation Strategy 2, Action 5 (pg. 75)

Add new pedestrian amenities that incorporate accessibility.

- Partner with The Rapid to increase bus stop amenities (e.g. benches, glass shelters, shade trees or structures, etc.).
- Explore implementing a pedestrian only street downtown.

Transportation Strategy 3, Action 2 (pg. 75)

Install and expand new separated/protected bike lanes and safety infrastructure on major streets (e.g. reflective cones, bollards)

Transportation Strategy 6, Action 4 (pg. 77)

Expand and promote the DART EV carshare pilot program.

Nature Based Solutions Strategy 1, Action 1 (pg. 82)

Prioritize neighborhoods with a low tree equity score, low-canopy neighborhoods and neighborhoods with populations at higher risk of adverse outcomes of urban heat island effects and outdoor air pollution, for tree plantings and habitat restoration.

Nature Based Solutions Strategy 4, Action 1 (pg. 85)

Pursue an update to the zoning ordinance to include native and native-adapted plantings by adopting a Landscape Manual to capture evolving best practices and provide guidance for all projects subject to landscaping standards.

- Evaluate recommended plantings and include plants that are suited for warmer climates, to account for climate change.

Food Systems Strategy 1, Action 1 (pg. 91)

Adopt the recommendations of the Urban Agriculture Committee to reduce barriers in the code to greenhouses and hoop houses to grow food within city limits, including:

- Classify greenhouses and hoop houses, not as an accessory structure.

- Establish building material standards for greenhouses/hoop houses.
- Establish maximum size of greenhouses/hoop houses.
- Create a straightforward permit application process for greenhouses/hoop houses.

Food Systems Strategy 2, Action 9 (pg. 93)

Pursue a pilot program to utilize food scrap, mulch, and wood waste in the creation of compost soil and bio-char.

Food Systems Strategy 3, Action 1 (pg. 93)

Review ordinance language and identify opportunities to reduce barriers to composting

Food Systems Strategy 3, Action 4 (pg. 93)

Increase public access to composting services through:

- Establishing neighborhood compost sites and drop-off locations through partnerships with local organizations and community gardens.
- Establishing an education campaign to teach how to compost and prevent contamination.
- Identify ways to install compost bins next to trash and recycling bins in public spaces that minimize contamination (e.g. In business districts, food courts and food halls, farmers markets, and areas with a high density of mobile food vendors).
- Identify opportunities to increase equitable access to composting.
- Explore the practicality of a curbside composting program and incentives for composting.

Food Systems Strategy 4, Action 1 (pg. 94)

Pursue recommendations of the Urban Agriculture Committee to reduce barriers to backyard livestock and edible trees and shrubs, including:

- Create a permit process for backyard livestock similar to the chicken permit process. Specify which animals are permitted or prohibited based on health & safety standards for residents and animal rights for enough space. Establish defined number of animals permitted by right, noise/hygiene, enclosure/lot line regulations and slaughter regulations etc.
- Add edible trees and shrubs to the approved street tree list for city plantings with approved maintenance plans.
- Require that 10 percent of any plantings be edibles, preferably edible perennials, within required Parks and Open Spaces (as defined by the Community Master Plan).
- Create signage for edible trees to eliminate stigma and encourage picking.