



July 15, 2025

CLIMATE ACTION & ADAPTATION PLAN

Updates and Next Steps Discussion
Committee of the Whole

Annabelle Wilkinson
Chief Sustainability Officer
(she/her)



Agenda

- 01 CAAP Overview
- 02 Commission Priorities
- 03 Staff Recommendations
- 04 Plan Updates
- 05 CAAP Next Step Options





What is the Grand Rapids Climate Action & Adaptation Plan?

A Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) is a roadmap for how the community of Grand Rapids will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the impacts of climate change. The CAAP was co-created in partnership with the community stakeholders and based on resident feedback and data from the City's GHG Emissions Inventory and Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment to meet **our community-wide science-based targets**:

- **62.8% per capita GHG reduction community-wide by 2030 from 2019 emissions, and**
- **100% per capita GHG reduction by 2050 from 2019 emissions.**

The City of Grand Rapids is committed to working towards the goals, strategies and actions outlined within this plan to achieve the adopted community-wide science-based targets. However, achieving the targets will only be made possible with community buy-in and proceeding action.

The City will act as a leader for this work by:

- Modeling emissions reductions in municipal facilities and fleet
- Implement actions under local control (ex. land use)
- Acting as a convener for community stakeholders to move innovative solutions and community progress
- Advocate for legislative and regulatory changes



Why create a CAAP?



Climate change is one of the most pressing challenges facing the world today.

- **Paris Climate Agreement**

- Based on Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports assessing the state of climate change knowledge in the scientific community and next steps.
- Committed to keep warming below 2.7°F to avoid increasingly devastating and irreversible impacts of climate change

- **State of Michigan**

- MI Healthy Climate Plan lays out a pathway for Michigan to reach 100% carbon neutrality by 2050

- **City Commission Resolution**

- On September 28, 2021, the City Commission passed a resolution declaring climate change a crisis, which committed to creating a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan with the inclusion of community-wide science-based targets

- **Strategic Plan**

- HE O1 – Reduce carbon emissions, support climate adaptation and increase climate resiliency.
- HE O1 S5 - Create and begin implementing a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) in partnership with the community that works in parallel and complements the new Community Master Plan



Total Participation

- **Over 1,600 people engaged during CAAP process in a variety of formats from 2023-2025**
- However, CMP data was sourced specifically from the CMP's second round of engagement, which included over 1,800 participants and held workshops on the topics of climate mitigation, adaptation, and environmental justice.
 - The CAAP includes 54 strategies and actions that correspond directly with Community Master Plan recommendations
- Targeted universalism approach increased community ownership, removed barriers to participation in in-person events and were intentionally located and marketed to residents in the neighborhoods of focus.



Commission Priorities (14 Total)



Results from May 13th Commission CAAP Prioritization Session of 197 actions in the CAAP.

6 of 7 supported

Food Systems S1 Action 1

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: [CMP 1.C.6]

- 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.

5 of 7 supported

Residential Homes S5 Action 2

Assess and reduce barriers to innovative housing solutions (such as modular construction, tiny homes, prefabricated materials, and new building methods). [CMP 1.B.4]

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

Commission Priorities

4 of 7 supported



T S3 Action 2

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

BI S1 Action 1

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

FS S4 Action 1

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.

NBS S1 Action 1

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.

FS S3 Action 1

Review ordinance language and identify opportunities to reduce barriers to composting

NBS S4 Action 1

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. [CMP 1.C.9]

Commission Priorities

3 of 7 supported



ES S3 Action 4

Leverage funding sources, including local green banks and onbill 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.).

RH S5 Action 3

Explore tools and strategies for protecting residents at risk of displacement. [CMP 1.A.5]

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

FS S3 Action 4

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.

BI S4 Action 3

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.

T S6 Action 4

Expand and promote the DART EV carshare pilot program

FS S2 Action 9

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



Staff Recommendations (6 Total)

Staff recommendations focus on balancing commission priorities with the GHG Emission Inventory and Climate Risk & Vulnerability Assessment analysis.

ES S1 Action 2

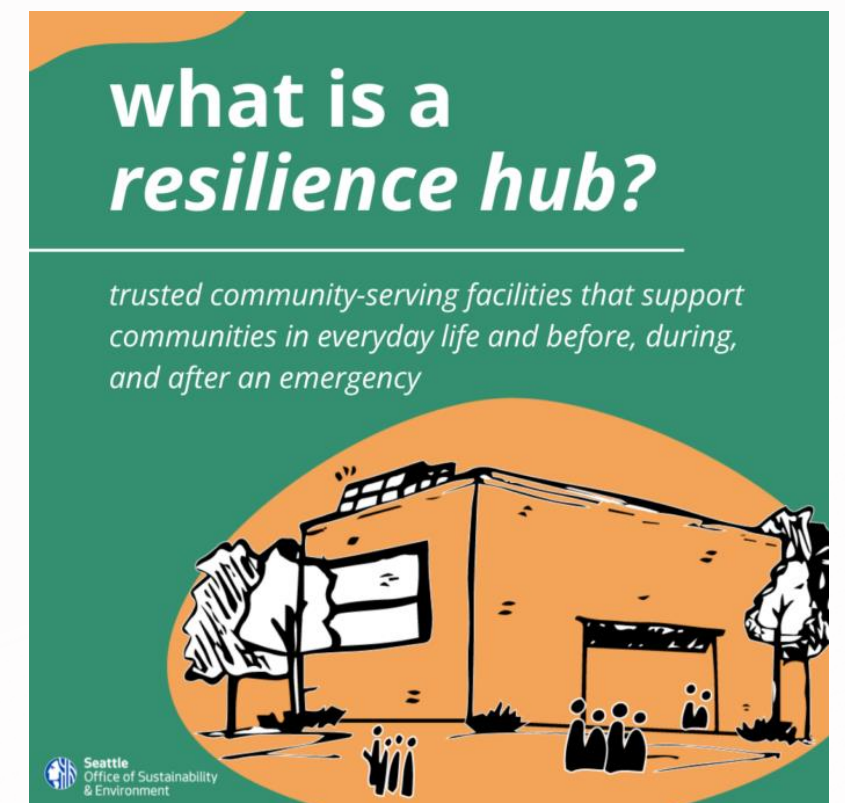
Partner with energy utilities serving the community (Consumers Energy, DTE Energy, Vicinity Energy) to enhance access to, as well as awareness and understanding of, their existing services, programs and compliance with renewable/clean energy and other climate related commitments, with a special emphasis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

ES S2 Action 2

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.

ES S7 Action 8

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



Staff Recommendations



Staff recommendations focus on balancing commission priorities with the GHG Emission Inventory and Climate Risk & Vulnerability Assessment analysis.

RH S3 Action 3

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.
[CMP 1.C.7]

T S2 Action 5

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.

BI S1 Action 2

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.

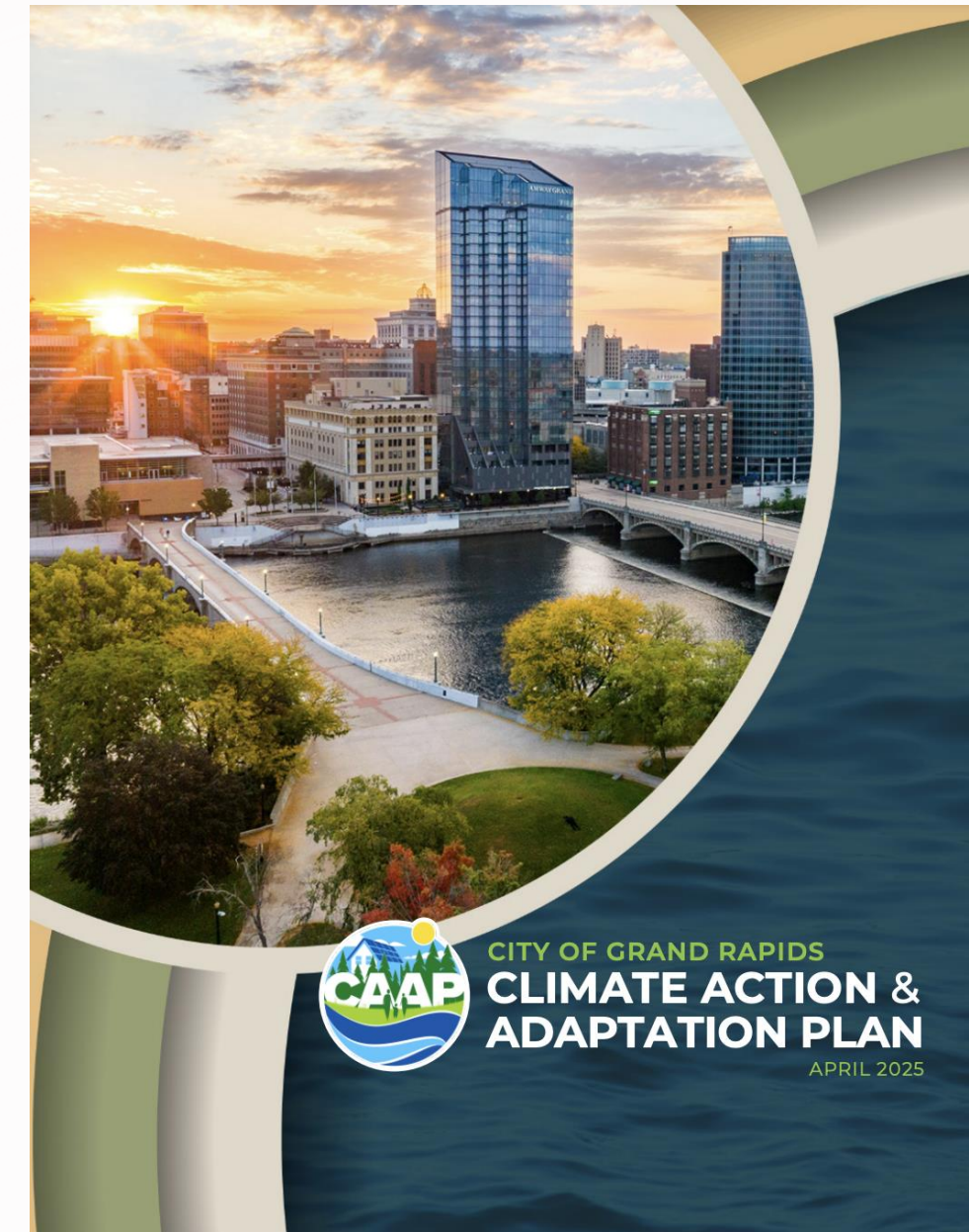


Plan Updates

Adjustments to Plan

- 44 minor text alterations were included in the CAAP for clarity
- Substantive change:
 - Text change of “Goals” to “Community Goals”

Are there any other collective adjustments to the plan or the priorities the Commission would like?



NEXT STEPS

Option #1

CAAP Adoption

Est. August 12, 2025
Adopt the plan with priorities and updates established today.

Option #2

Priorities Adoption

Est. August 12, 2025
Adopt the 20 priorities established today.

Option #3

Implementation Analysis

Est. November 13, 2025
Review potential adoption of CAAP when implementation analysis is completed.

- Determine responsible parties
- Assess funding cost, GHG emission reduction and co-benefits for actions
- Establish short, medium and long-term timelines for strategies and actions



THANK YOU

Annabelle Wilkinson

-  616-456-3686
-  awilkinson@grcity.us
-  www.grandrapidsmi.gov/
-  1 Monroe Center St
LO83
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

