

Local Actions to Mitigate and Build Resilience to Climate Change*

This list presents only some of the many steps you can take locally to prepare your community for climate change, to help mitigate impacts, and to build a cleaner future for your residents. Some will be more suitable to your particular needs than others. Remember to engage your residents along the way!

CONTENTS

[Energy/Buildings](#)

[Transportation](#)

[Land Use](#)

[Water Conservation](#)

[Waste Reduction](#)

[Economic Development](#)

[Protect Equity and Health](#)

[Resilience and Adaptation](#)

[Regional Coordination and Engagement](#)

[Engage the Community](#)

Energy/Buildings

1. Increase the **energy efficiency of public facilities**, schools and operations
2. **Coordinate with local school districts and colleges** to conserve energy at educational facilities within the community
3. Increase the number of **high performance buildings** within the community
4. Increase the **energy efficiency of appliances** in residential, commercial, and industrial buildings
5. Promote programs that provide **free or low-cost energy efficiency audits and financing assistance** for energy efficient appliances
6. Promote workforce training and financial **assistance for insulation and weatherization efforts**, especially for low income residents
7. Seek funding to **expand the retrofit of affordable housing units** for energy efficiency
8. Install **renewable energy systems with high visibility** on government property
9. Provide incentives for **renewable technologies or energy storage systems** in buildings
10. Connect property owners with **low-interest financing opportunities for renewable energy installations**

*Some of these steps were adapted from the existing climate plans of several local governments, including the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government's 2017-2020 [Regional Climate and Energy Action Plan](#) and Santa Rosa, California's 2012 [Climate Action Plan](#)

11. Develop a **clean tech branding** and marketing strategy
12. Support **state and federal incentive programs** for green and clean tech activities
13. Encourage new buildings to provide **electrical outlets on the exterior**
14. Encourage the replacement of existing high maintenance and high water use landscapes with **low water use vegetation**
15. Require or provide incentives for all **new construction to use net zero electricity**
16. Create a **renter's energy efficiency** informational brochure or website
17. Require new construction and major remodels to install **real-time energy monitors** that allow building users to track energy use
18. Require new sidewalks, crosswalks, and parking lots to be made of **cool paving materials** with a high solar reflectivity
19. Create and **prioritize community projects** that incorporate or generate renewable energy
20. Collaborate with the county and neighboring jurisdictions to explore the feasibility and cost of a [Community Choice Aggregation program](#)

Grow The Clean Economy

1. Adopt **environmentally preferable purchasing policies**
2. Increase the percentage of **government spending** on climate-friendly products or services
3. Encourage government vendors and businesses in the community to **minimize the carbon intensity** of their supply chain
4. Avoid the use of on-site generators by connecting to grid electricity or utilizing **solar-powered equipment**
5. Support vocational **training at community colleges for the clean economy**

Transportation

1. Provide **bike safety training** to residents, employees, and motorists
2. Implement a **bike-share program**
3. Update bicycle parking regulations for multi-family homes and commercial businesses to **increase bicycle parking**
4. Implement a **"no-idling" policy** for city, county and [school fleets](#)
5. Create a program at local schools to encourage parents and guardians to **shut off their cars** when waiting to pick up children
6. Increase the **fuel efficiency of public sector fleets**
7. Evaluate **transportation system performance** on an ongoing basis and adjust service as needed
8. Provide **transportation demand management programs**; have employers compete for innovative ways to reduce employee vehicle use

9. Improve the **active transportation network** serving common destinations in the community
10. Provide **affordable housing development near transit** stops and centers in the community
11. Seek funding and work with local colleges and school districts to provide **subsidized transit passes** to junior college and high school students
12. Explore **solar canopies** for parking lots
13. Limit the amount of **free parking in high traffic areas**
14. Work with neighboring local governments to **pool procurement of electric vehicles** to lower costs
15. Explore ways to **unbundle parking costs from rent or property costs** for new development; reduce parking requirements for new construction on transit corridors
16. Install **traffic calming features** like bulb-outs, median barriers, and striped crosswalks
17. Work with car-sharing companies to establish a **car-sharing operation** in the community
18. Work with large employers in the community to create rideshare programs, or to provide **subsidized or free transit passes** to employees
19. Provide recognition, awards, competitions, or other **incentives related to employee commutes** for non-single-occupancy vehicle use
20. Encourage new developments with a high number of on-site employees to provide subsidized or **free transit passes to employees**
21. Provide **prioritized parking spots to electric and hybrid vehicles** in community parking lots
22. Increase the number of **EV charging stations** and allow EV charging stations as permitted uses in larger parking lots
23. Require **new refueling stations** to provide biodiesel fuel, electric vehicle charging stations, or other alternative fuels
24. Consider a grant or low cost loan program to **retrofit diesel equipment**
25. Work with local colleges to increase participation in **alternative fuel technology classes**
26. Consider establishing a **car-free Sunday community event** to demonstrate non-vehicular uses for streets
27. Encourage the development of **remote work centers**, neighborhood co-working spaces, and telecommuting practices
28. Work with new, major employers to ensure that **everyday services are on-site** or near the place of employment

Land Use

1. Develop a **tree inventory** that identifies the types, ages, number, and location of trees in the community
2. Develop a crowd-sourced web application allowing the community to enter information about public and private trees into a **community-wide database**
3. Collaborate with youth programs, scout troops, and neighborhoods for **tree planting programs**
4. Require **new development to supply** an adequate number of street and private trees
5. Create a **community greening policy**
6. **Reduce loss of resource lands**, canopy, and vegetation from development
7. Plan for a **variety of complementary land uses** within walking distance of each
8. Increase the amount of food grown and consumed locally, **establish community gardens and farms throughout the community**
9. Promote the growing of **fruits and vegetables in front yards**
10. Encourage the use of **electrified and higher-efficiency lawn and garden equipment**, in residential areas, and in the construction/landscaping business
11. Consider public land suitable for **low cost leases for solar arrays**
12. Facilitate **sustainable development patterns**

Water Conservation

1. Implement **water conservation efforts** including water-efficient landscaping, rainwater harvesting, and high-efficiency appliance and fixture installations
2. Encourage existing development, and require new development, to utilize **smart water meters**
3. Require new development to **reduce potable water use**
4. Improve the **efficiency of water and wastewater facilities** and operations serving the community
5. Expand the infrastructure network to **deliver recycled water for use at businesses**, parks, facilities, and common area residential landscapes
6. Require new development in areas anticipated to receive future recycled water to meet **on-site meter separation requirements to allow for recycled water use**
7. Develop a volunteer **river keeper or storm drain monitor program** to keep streams clean and stormwater drains clear

Waste Reduction

1. Develop a **zero waste policy for public** operations and facilities
2. Develop a **zero waste policy in the community**
3. Consider **incentives for companies that innovate in waste reduction**/local sourcing of materials and support the “circular economy”
4. Work with local waste haulers to **improve the amount and types of waste that are accepted** for curbside recycling and green waste pickup
5. Encourage/incent **food composting for homes and restaurants**
6. Encourage **reusable yard waste containers** or tarps
7. Discourage (and ban if possible) the use of **Styrofoam containers and plastic bags**
8. Encourage local businesses to **reduce amounts of packaging** used
9. **Discourage the use of bottled water** at community events
10. Sponsor an **Innovation Contest** for creative reuse/recycling of materials

Economic Development

1. Commit to **divest from fossil fuels** over the long-term
2. Incorporate **climate resilience strategies** into capital improvement plans and projects
3. Update **economic development workforce plans** to incorporate strategies that support emerging green or clean tech industries to incorporate training and strategies that support
4. Consider subsidies or expedited permitting for **eco-friendly construction**
5. During the development review process, **consider the possible impacts of climate change** on the project or plan area
6. Consider low interest loans, innovation districts, and workforce training to **encourage clean tech startups and employment**
7. Expand opportunities for **minority and women-owned businesses** to participate in clean economy initiatives
8. Provide shared space and develop **incentives for green businesses** to locate within the community
9. **Include green purchasing requirements** for suppliers and contractors, like reusable or recyclable packaging, less toxic cleaning and office supplies, and efficient electronics and appliances
10. Elevate suppliers’ and contractors’ **sustainability commitments and practices**

Protect Equity And Health

1. Identify the community's priorities for **equitable environmental improvements**
2. Conduct cumulative **environmental and health impact assessments** in underserved communities
3. Integrate **equity and health considerations** into climate and energy policies
4. Establish **cooling centers and/or clean air centers of refuge** in public buildings around the community
5. Develop a **healthy food access or food security plan**; identify and decrease food deserts
6. Direct **environmental incentives** toward vulnerable populations
7. Provide training to local government staff on successful **public engagement techniques**, equity, and diversity
8. Provide **educational forums and leadership development opportunities** on the local environmental planning process
9. **Work across sectors** (business, faith, academia, healthcare, government), whenever possible, to build leadership that is knowledgeable about the intersectional impacts of resilience planning on housing, employment, racial equity, prosperity, health, etc.
10. Work with local schools and universities to **implement climate curricula** suitable for varying ages

Resilience And Adaptation

1. Assess vulnerability of critical infrastructure and **revise design standards** for resiliency in water, communication, transportation, energy generation, and utility system assets
2. Update zoning, building codes, ordinances, or the development review process to ensure new development is more **resilient to local climate impacts**
3. Implement energy, water supply, and heat protection measures at **vulnerable critical facilities and infrastructure sites**
4. Implement a **buy-out program** in high risk flood zones
5. Design new **public buildings to continue operations** during extended power outages
6. Work with emergency responders to plan for **severe weather impacts and climate refugees**

Regional Coordination And Engagement

1. Join regional **adaptation and resiliency task forces**
2. Appoint a staff liaison to attend and participate in **regional meetings focusing on adaptation** and to report to staff on a regular basis
3. Identify existing local organizations working on climate and resilience and convene a **stakeholders group to encourage broad engagement**
4. **Work across sectors** to convene government, faith, health, academic, and community leaders to share best practices and provide input and support
5. Work with local media and encourage blog posts, op-eds, and a series of stories about **successful local climate and resilience measures**
6. Restore and manage natural ecosystem functions to **increase adaptive capacity**, for flood mitigation, water filtration, urban heat islands, etc.
7. Revise **infrastructure design standards** to be more resilient to climate impacts
8. Implement **energy, water supply, and heat protection measures** at vulnerable critical facilities and infrastructure sites

Engage The Community

1. Educate the community about the best ways to help prepare: **convene stakeholders of local climate organizations, government, faith, health, academic and community leaders** to share best practices and provide input and support.
2. **START WITH PEOPLE, STAY WITH PEOPLE:** Build an inclusive, broad public engagement program with local partners to grow public support and political will for climate action. ecoAmerica can help!

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