



Resilient Washtenaw:

Washtenaw County's Climate Action Plan

Presentation to Ann Arbor Energy Commission

June 14, 2022

ANDREW DELEEUW

DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC PLANNING, WASHTENAW COUNTY

DELEEUWA@WASHTENAW.ORG, 734 945 0935



CLIMATE ACTION PLAN:

RESILIENT WASHTENAW

A way to get to net zero emissions *and* plan for providing service and infrastructure in a changing climate.

Scope:

- Net Zero County Operations by 2030
- Net Zero County by 2035

Will include:

- Climate Information of the County: history, current conditions, evolving trends, future projections
- Greenhouse Gas Inventory: the sources and causes of the emissions from the county, and projections of future emissions based on growth and technology changes
- Vulnerability Assessment: identification of the people and places most at risk from climate change in our county
- Strategies and Actions: the specific things that will be done to reach net zero emissions
- Implementation Recommendations: staffing, financing, reporting, and governance



CLIMATE ACTION PLAN:

WHY ARE WE DOING IT?

GOOD GOVERNMENT

PAST ACTIONS INSUFFICIENT

SIZE AND COMPLEXITY OF CLIMATE CHANGE

UNIQUE ROLE OF COUNTY

BOARD DIRECTION

COMMUNITY DEMAND



CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: *KEY COMPONENTS*

Both the organization and community

- Organization – the Government itself: everything it takes to run the organization
- Community – who the government serves: everything inside of County borders

Both mitigation and adaptation

- Mitigation - taking action to minimize and stop climate change
- Adaptation - preparing for the impacts of climate change

Alignment with existing plans, services, and priorities of the County

- E.G. – consideration of how climate change impacts public health outcomes

Equity Based: focuses on areas of greatest need and those most likely to be harmed

Collaborative: built through extensive discussion and engagement

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN:
PROJECT TEAM



BETH GIBBONS



CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: *ENGAGEMENT*

Local Governments and Institutions

- Supporting and Complementing their plans
- Encouraging their own planning
- Reflective of the diversity of the county

Within the County Government

- Staff
- Boards, Committees, and Commissions

Community Groups

General Public

Advisory Bodies:

- Washtenaw County Environmental Council – Direction and input on Community Portion
- Staff Steering Committee – Direction and input on Organizational Portion

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN:

<https://www.resilientwashtenaw.org/>



The screenshot shows an interactive map interface for Washtenaw County, Michigan. The map displays various townships and cities, with several colored markers indicating climate action projects: red squares for "Share Your Climate Impacts", orange squares for "My Vision for Climate Action", and blue squares for "Way Cool Climate Projects". A legend in the top right corner identifies these markers. On the left side, there is a sidebar with a "Comment on the map" button, a "Subscribed" status, and a "Share" button. Below this, there are sorting options for comments (Most recent) and a category filter (All). A comment by Kristine Olsson from Jan 3, 2022, discusses a proposed 1200-acre Washtenaw Solar Energy Center (WSEC) with a capacity of 150 Megawatts. A "SUPPORT" button is visible below the comment. Another comment by Kristine Olsson from Jan 3, 2022, mentions affordable housing projects. A "POST REPLY" button is also present.



CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: *TIMELINE*

ONGOING:

engagement and communication with public, partners, and organization

JUNE – AUGUST:

strategy and action refinement, quantification, prioritization

LATE AUGUST/ SEPTEMBER:

draft plan published, comment period open, Board of Commissioners Working session presentation

OCTOBER:

comment period closed, possible amendment and revision based on comment

NOVEMBER :

presentation of plan to Board of Commissioners for consideration

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: *DRAFT PLAN FRAMEWORK*

STRATEGIES:

FOCUS AREAS OF CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

DO IMPACT CARBON LEVELS

HEALTH

ENERGY TRANSITION

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

MOBILITY ACCESS - TRANSPORTATION

WORKING FARMS & NATURAL AREAS

PRINCIPLES:

OTHER COUNTY PRIORITIES

DO NOT IMPACT CARBON LEVELS

RACIAL EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

JUST TRANSITION

RESILIENT ECONOMY

SUPPORT PUBLIC HEALTH

COMMUNITY SUPPORT & PARTNERSHIP

HIGH COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT

ACTIONS: 5-10 per strategy, each of which connect to the plan principles, and which cumulatively would achieve the carbon neutrality goals

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: *DRAFT FRAMEWORK*



GOALS are the outcomes that the plan is designed to achieve.

For the County Climate Action Plan the goals have been established by the Board of Commissioners who desire that Washtenaw County as an organization be carbon neutral by 2030, and that the entire county be carbon neutral by 2035.

PRINCIPLES are other desired priorities beyond carbon neutrality which are important to the County.

Principles include other community and organizational priorities and have been developed from discussion and input with the general public and interested partners. The County is interested in a climate action plan that is complementary to and consistent with other planning happening in the County, and that the climate action plan should support those other priorities when possible and appropriate.

STRATEGIES are the broad categories of actions to achieve the goals of carbon neutrality.

The specific strategies proposed have been developed through public and internal engagement, in consideration of the sources of emissions and opportunities available for emissions reduction and climate adaptation, to be in alignment with other climate action plans, and to be thoughtful of the responsibilities and programs of the County. Strategies are included as a component of the plan framework to bring organization to the plan and its implementation

ACTIONS are the specific projects or programs needed to achieve goals.

Actions can be defined, assigned, and monitored. Actions will address both mitigation, or reducing emissions in order to slow the pace of climate change, and adaptation, or investing in systems and changes which will lessen the harmful impacts of climate change on Washtenaw County residents. Cumulatively the emissions reductions of the actions if implemented would total the emissions from the county and would be sufficient to meet the carbon neutrality goals.

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: *DRAFT PRINCIPLES (1 OF 2)*



RACIAL EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Racial Equity means the development of policies, practices, and strategic investments to reverse racial disparity trends, eliminate institutional racism, impact structural racism, and ensure that outcome and opportunities for all people are no longer predictable by race.

Environmental Justice is the equitable treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, ability, or income in the development and application of laws, regulations, and policies that affect the environment.

The Climate Action Plan should be considerate of past decisions which have worsened racial disparities with regards to vulnerabilities to climate change, and should support investments that promote racial equity and which focus on minimizing the harm from climate change to the most vulnerable in Washtenaw County.

JUST TRANSITION

Just Transition is the concept that the transition from fossil fuels to clean energy consider impacts to workers.

The Climate Action Plan should consider and try to make whole workers who lose their jobs due to this transition, that workers and communities impacted by the climate crisis should receive targeted support, and that the jobs created carry out this plan should be good jobs with good benefits and which can support a good life in Washtenaw County.

RESILIENT ECONOMY

Resilient Economy is the idea that the transition will impact existing companies and will provide opportunities for economic development.

The Climate Action Plan should consider impacts to companies engaged in a fossil fuel economy, look to help companies transition, and should attempt to support companies working to address climate change within and beyond Washtenaw County.



CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: *DRAFT PRINCIPLES (2 OF 2)*

HEALTH

All residents of Washtenaw County should have the opportunity to achieve optimal health and well being.

Climate change will impact this opportunity for the most vulnerable in the community due to the increase in average temperatures and more extreme weather events.

The Climate Action Plan should consider these impacts, and should propose actions which mitigate negative health impacts for the most vulnerable and the least able to adapt to a warming climate.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Climate change is a complex, urgent problem requiring attention and action of all organizations to appropriately address, and is one of many important issues of concern, and day to day responsibilities of organizations must be met while climate action is pursued.

The Climate Action Plan should be built upon partnership and collaboration with all parts of the Washtenaw County community so as to take advantage of all resource and opportunities available, and to engage many people in this work, to develop the best ideas and actions, and to make the deep changes necessary to successfully transition from fossil fuels.

SUSTAINED COMMUNICATIONS

The Climate Action Plan should include frequent, easy to access, and understandable communication.

This is necessary to sustain interest, attention and action to plan and its goals amidst known and future competing priorities.

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: *DRAFT STRATEGIES*

HEALTH

Provide opportunities to achieve optimal health and well-being and prevent negative public health impacts from changing climate

Reduce Heat Islands and Expand and Maintain County Tree Canopy

Plan and prepare for responses to climate caused emergencies

ENERGY TRANSITION

Increase Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency, and Electrification in all Buildings

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

Plan for and build public improvements that reduce dependency on fossil fuels and prepare the county for more frequent and intense weather events.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Build an Equitable, Low-carbon, and Resilient Circular Economy that manages materials streams for their highest and best use. A circular economy is one that designs out waste, keeps materials in use, and which regenerates natural systems (Ellen MacArthur Foundation)

MOBILITY ACCESS

Reduce emissions from transportation

Support mobility modes that eliminate fossil fuel use over time

WORKING FARMS AND NATURAL AREAS

Preserve 30% of Washtenaw County as working farms or ecologically significant Natural Areas by 2030

Protect County watersheds, surface water, ground water,



CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: *DRAFT ACTION CRITERIA*

ALIGNMENT WITH PLAN FRAMEWORK

CARBON POTENTIAL – MITIGATION

BENEFIT TO AT RISK PEOPLE AND PLACES – ADAPTATION

IMPLEMENTATION VALUE, TIMELINE, AND DIFFICULTY

CO-BENEFITS & TRADEOFFS

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: WHAT COMES AFTER PLANNING?



Board of Commissioners Consideration, Approval

Starting Implementation

Modifications to County Policy, Programming, and Planning

Coordination with efforts outlined other climate and sustainability plans, including A2Zero

Coordination with other local governments



CLIMATE ACTION PLAN:
OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WEBSITE:

ResilientWashtenaw.org

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, REQUESTS:

climate@washtenaw.org