AGENDA

Eau Claire County

• Sustainability Advisory Committee •

Date: January 17th

Time: 5:00 PM

721 Oxford Avenue, Room 3312, Eau Claire, WI

**Event link below can be used to connect to meeting and interact (by the chair) from computer or through the WebEx Meeting smartphone app.*

Join WebEx Meeting:

https://eauclairecounty.webex.com/eauclairecounty/j.php?MTID=m2e51fc393f1a7300bcf274fd06c54492

Meeting number: 2531 384 5816 Meeting password: 8Cq4YJbEMK2

**Meeting audio can be listened to using this Audio conference dial in information.*

***Audio conference**: 1-415-655-0001, Access Code:* 2531 384 5816

For those wishing to make public comment, you must e-mail Regan Watts at Regan.watts@eauclairecounty.gov ***at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting. You will be called on during the public session to make your comments.***

AGENDA

1. Call to order
2. Roll Call
3. Confirmation of Compliance with Open Meeting Law
4. Review/Approve Meeting Minutes from November 15th pages 2-3
5. Public Comment Period (15 minute maximum)
6. Community Climate Action & Resilience Plan Draft - Discussion/Action pages 4-43
7. Members, Staff and Agency Updates-Discussion
    a. Home Composter sale ends January 26th
    b. Eau Claire County's first EV fleet vehicle
    c. EV bill - SB791
8. Items for the Next Agenda
9. Next Meeting - Community Open Houses (choose dates)
10. Adjourn

Prepared by: Regan Watts

Please note: Upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of disabled individuals through sign language, interpreters or other auxiliary aids. For additional information or to request the service, contact the County ADA Coordinator at 715-839-6945 (FAX) 715-839-1669 or (TDD) 715-839-4735 or by writing to the ADA Coordinator, Human Resources Department, Eau Claire County Courthouse, 721 Oxford Ave., Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54703.

MINUTES

Eau Claire County
Sustainability Advisory Committee
Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at
11:00 a.m.

Present: Tami Schraufnagel, Jim Dunning, Amy Alpine, Nathan Anderson, Kathy Campbell, Cathy Lea, Eleanor Wolf, Jeni Thorpe, Lily Strehlow,

Absent: Tim Davis

Others: Regan Watts – Committee Clerk, Matt Michels -P&D, Rod Eslinger - P&D, Chad Berge-P&D, Tim Wucherer-P&D, Ben Young-P&D, Mary Anderson-DNR, Kolby Grant-NRCS, Kristin Boerhinger-NRCS, Dwayne Klindworth,

Call to Order and confirmation of meeting notice.

Chair Schraufnagel called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and confirmed that the meeting was noticed.

Roll Call

The roll was called by the clerk, and it is noted above under present. A quorum was confirmed.

Public Comment

Review/Approve meeting minutes from September 13th

Motion by Bethke. Second by White. Minutes approved.

Staff Presentation

Regan provided an overview of the CARP planning process and what feedback the committee hoped to gain during the meeting.

Stakeholder Discussion

Members of the public and staff discussed a variety of topics related to agriculture and climate change including current projects and programs, issues/challenges within the industry, and how they envision Eau Claire County being part of the solution. Staff will take feedback and incorporate into the plan draft.

Staff Updates

none.

Next Meeting Date

The Committee agreed on the next meeting to be held January 10th, 5PM, at Eau Claire County Government Center.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Regan Watts

Regan Watts – Clerk, Recycling & Sustainability Coordinator

Eau Claire
COUNTY

Community Climate Action & Resilience Plan (CARP)

2024-2030

Adopted: XXX

Table of Contents

Land Recognition Statement

Eau Claire County acknowledges the County of Eau Claire occupies the sacred and ancestral lands of indigenous people of the Ojibwe and Dakota Nations. You can view a detailed map of Tribal Lands in Wisconsin at https://wisconsinfirstnations.org/map/

Acknowledgements

Eau Claire County acknowledges the County Board, Staff, and the Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC), and the community for their efforts and work to create an increasingly sustainable county and for their work to create the Community Climate Action and Resiliency Plan (CARP). Thank you to the following individuals for their contributions:

Eau Claire County Staff

Regan Watts - Recycling & Sustainability Coordinator
Ben Young - Recycling & Sustainability Intern
Matt Michels - Senior Planner
Rod Eslinger - Planning & Development Director

Sustainability Advisory Committee

Tami Schraufnagel - Chair
Jim Dunning - Vice Chair
Amy Alpine
Nathan Anderson
Jeni Thorpe
Kathy Campbell
Tim Davis
Cathy Lea
Lily Strehlow
Jeff White
Eleanor Wolf

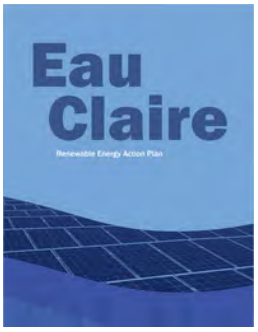
County Board

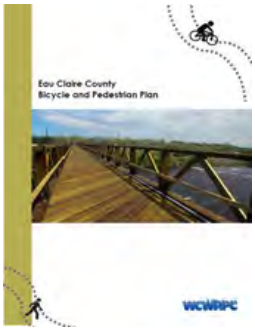
District 1: Todd Meyer
District 2: Amanda Babb
District 3: Joe Knight
District 4: Stella Pagonis
District 5: Larry Hoekstra
District 6: Dane Zook
District 7: Steve Chilson
District 8: Cory Sisk
District 9: Allen Myren
District 10: Nancy Coffey (Board Chair)
District 11: Nathan Otto
District 12: Brett Geboy
District 13: Connie Russell
District 14: Kirk Dahl
District 15: Nick Smiar
District 16: David Hirsch
District 17: Thomas Vue
District 18: Jim Dunning
District 19: Gerald "Jerry" Wilkie
District 20: John Folstad
District 21: Mark Beckfield
District 22: Dr. Katherine Schneider
District 23: Robin Leary
District 24: Heather DeLuka
District 25: Jodi Lepsch
District 26: Tami Schraufnagel
District 27: Kyle Johnson
District 28: Kimberly Cronk
District 29: Missy Christopherson

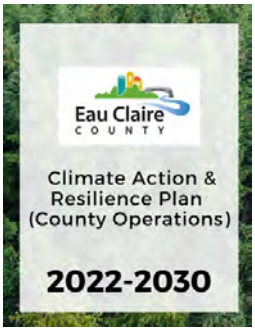
Introduction

The Community Climate Action and Resiliency Plan (CARP) is the complementary plan to Eau Claire County's Operational CARP. Within the Operational CARP County staff outlined strategies to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and increase renewable energy within Eau Claire County's facilities and operations. **The Community CARP outlines strategies and action steps to leverage the current work being done in the community and how Eau Claire County can support community action to reach net zero emissions and 100% renewable energy by 2050.**

This plan focuses on strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while leveraging the existing work happening in our community by utilities, municipalities, residents, non-profits, businesses, etc. Achieving these goals will require significant investment. Each implementation strategy will aim to have a potential funding source, program cost, and staff time allocation estimated in order to plan for enough resources for plan implementation. This plan will serve as a "living document" that can be updated and adapted to new technologies, funding sources, and opportunities that were not present during the time of plan development. Below are some of the community plans that were referenced during plan development. If viewing digitally you can click each image to see each plan in detail.







Historical & Projected Climate Change in Wisconsin

Since 1950, statewide temperatures have risen approximately three degrees Fahrenheit and will continue to rise according to projections made by the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts (WICCI). Precipitation has also increased 17% in that time. This means warmer winters, wetter springs and more extreme weather events will occur. This is having a significant impact on agricultural practices in the state as it is harder to keep soil in place and protect water quality. Warmer winters has also reduced snowpack in the state of Wisconsin resulting in summer droughts and change in growing seasons.

Forest ecosystems are being stressed due to increased temperatures which increased new pests and diseases. This has caused the decline of species within the forest which it relies on to keep an ecosystem-wide balance. Paper birches are one of the species which are in jeopardy due to climate change. Forest management and companies which use the forest as a resource like the logging industry now face uncertainty due to climate change.

Climate change also affects human health. Extreme heat has become increasingly common. Days over 90 degrees in Wisconsin historically have been around 10 days per year. By mid-century extreme heat days over 90 degrees Fahrenheit in Wisconsin will likely triple (WICCI). Anyone can be harmed by extreme heat but older adults and those with chronic conditions are at increased risk for heat stroke and dehydration.

An average increase of between 4.4-4.7 degrees Fahrenheit by 2050 . This rise in temperature is rapidly occurring. This will affect the local ecosystems as plants and animals rely on certain weather conditions which may be disrupted to know when to migrate, reproduce, and hibernate. Weather patterns would shift as well due to the flux in climate. Severe storms and resulting storm damage from floods and hail would increase in severity with change in climate. Agricultural patterns would also change as crops could be affected by drought.

+4.7°

Average daily temperature in Eau Claire County projected to increase by **4.4-4.7° F**

+7°

Average winter nighttime temperature in Eau Claire projected to increase by **6-7° F**

+10

Number of extremely hot days expected to increase from 5-15 per year to **15-25** extremely hot days in Eau Claire on average

Impacts of Climate Change

In September of 2016, one severe storm and subsequent flooding in Eau Claire caused approximately $300,000 in damage to public property, with additional costs to private individuals (Eau Claire County 9/21/16 Storm Damage Estimates). Roadways and other infrastructure were inundated, washed out, and even collapsed in some cases, while water levels rose in Lakes Eau Claire and Altoona by 4.5’ and 2’ respectively.

September 22, 2016. CTH Q East of CTH K.

September 22, 2016. CTH G near Hathaway

Once rare extreme weather events are becoming more commonplace in Eau Claire County. In July of 2019, two derechos hit Wisconsin, damaging forests across the state with particular devastation to Northeastern Wisconsin. These storms damaged 63,000 acres of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, disrupting supply chains, degrading lumber quality, and dropping the price of wood from people selling trees felled by the storm before they rot. Between 2011 and 2021, severe storms and droughts caused an estimate $110 billion in damage to the state of Wisconsin (WIsconsin Clean Energy Plan). Due to climate change, these events and similar events are likely to continue to increase in regularity. This will impact farmers, local businesses, and the people who live in Eau Claire County.

$110 billion in damages to Wisconsin from 2011-2021

July 2019 Derecho. For the Journal Sentinel by Larry Parnass

July 2019 Derecho. For US Forest Service, from Jon Lampereur

Community Engagement

Community engagement has been and will continue to be an important part of climate action in Eau Claire County. To reach a goal of carbon neutrality by 2050, perspectives and lived experiences from all areas and backgrounds need to be heard. Working with the residents, businesses, community organizations, and education institutions will help to successfully implement the Community CARP.

Throughout 2022 and 2023, stakeholders and community members were given numerous opportunities to express their opinions through a community survey, community input sessions in Augusta and the Town of Washington, and topic specific focus groups with industry experts.

County staff also engaged the community and youth at community events, career fairs, etc. where individuals could describe what they felt a sustainable community in Eau Claire County looks like to them.

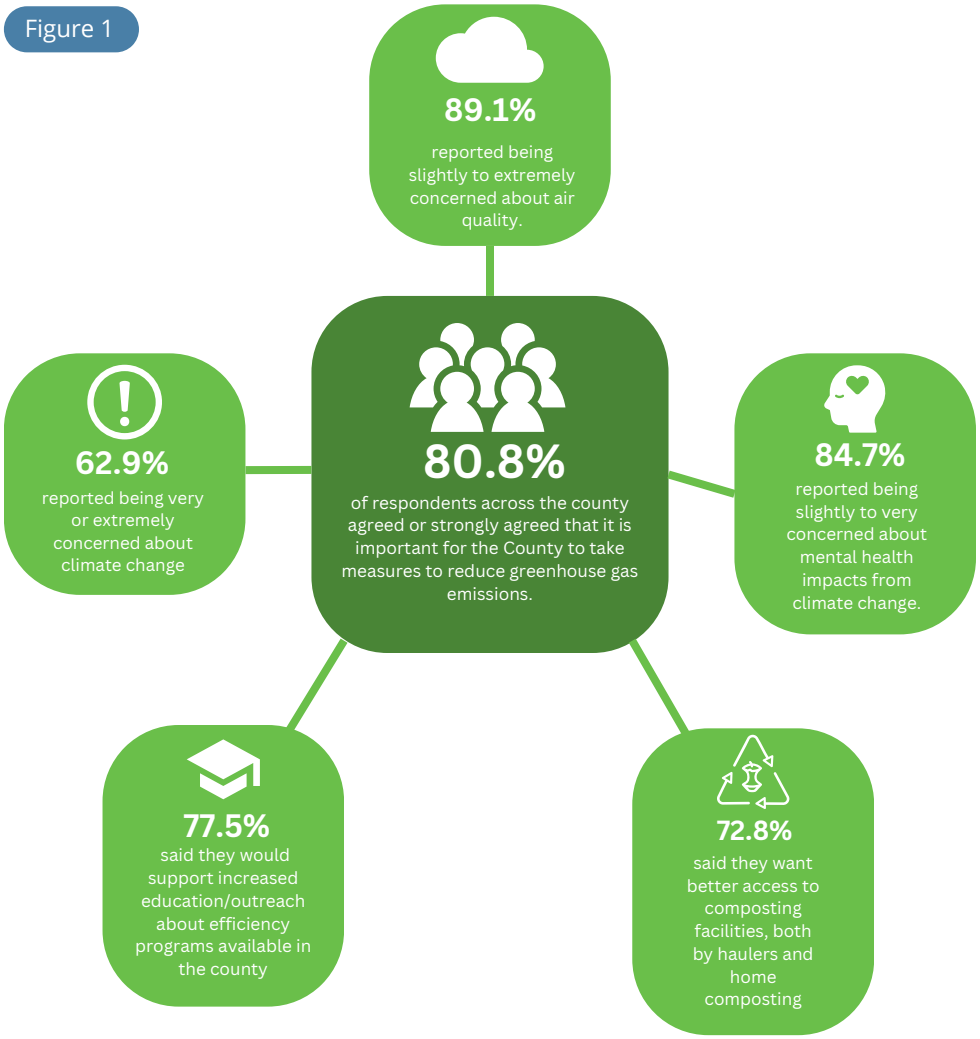
All this input allowed the Sustainability Advisory Committee and staff to develop a plan that addresses the needs and concerns of the community in relation to climate change and sustainability.

- **April 2022** — Community survey distributed
- **July 2022** — GHG Inventories completed
- **November 2022** — Operational CARP approved
- **January 2023** — Sustainability Advisory Comittee Appointed
- **April 2023** — Community forums hosted throughout the County.
- **May-Nov. 2023** — Plan development & stakeholder engagement
- **Dec 2023-Jan 2024** — Plan writing & revision
- **February 2024** — Open houses & community engagement
- **March 2024** — Committee & County board adoption

Community Engagement

Educating the community about the county's goals and gaining their insight on how Eau Claire County should be tackling the issue of climate change as a community was an essential first step in developing this plan. In April of 2022 a community survey was released to gather resident input on a variety of topics regarding climate change and sustainability. The survey received 151 responses from all areas of the County. The full survey report can be found in the Appendix.

Figure 1



Key Values

Eau Claire County defines sustainability as the practice of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. There are three main pillars: People, Planet, and Profit (Economy). Sustainability is a balance between all three pillars.

Working alongside these ideas, Eau Claire County has created a plan to eliminate GHG emissions, work with community groups and businesses to educate about sustainability and help to generate renewable energies for the county.

Figure 2

Eau Claire County is committed to sustainability goals which align with key themes and values highlighted in this CARP. Those values are:

Eau Claire County will consider the environmental impacts of decisions, policies, and processes.

Eau Claire County will consider the impact of decisions, policies, and processes on all members of Eau Claire County and strive to implement equitable, diverse, and inclusive solutions for sustainability.

Eau Claire County will consider the fiscal impact that all decisions, policies, and processes have on the community and County budget.

Key Themes

During the community and stakeholder engagement sessions three themes were brought to light throughout the process that guided the development of the strategies and action steps identified in this plan.

Education and community engagement are already an integral part of the Recycling & Sustainability program, but with new technologies, grants, incentives, and tax credits available to residents, businesses, local governments, and community-based organizations, a more expansive education and community engagement program is needed to reach the variety of sectors in the community that can leverage resources that will move the needle toward the county's sustainability goals.

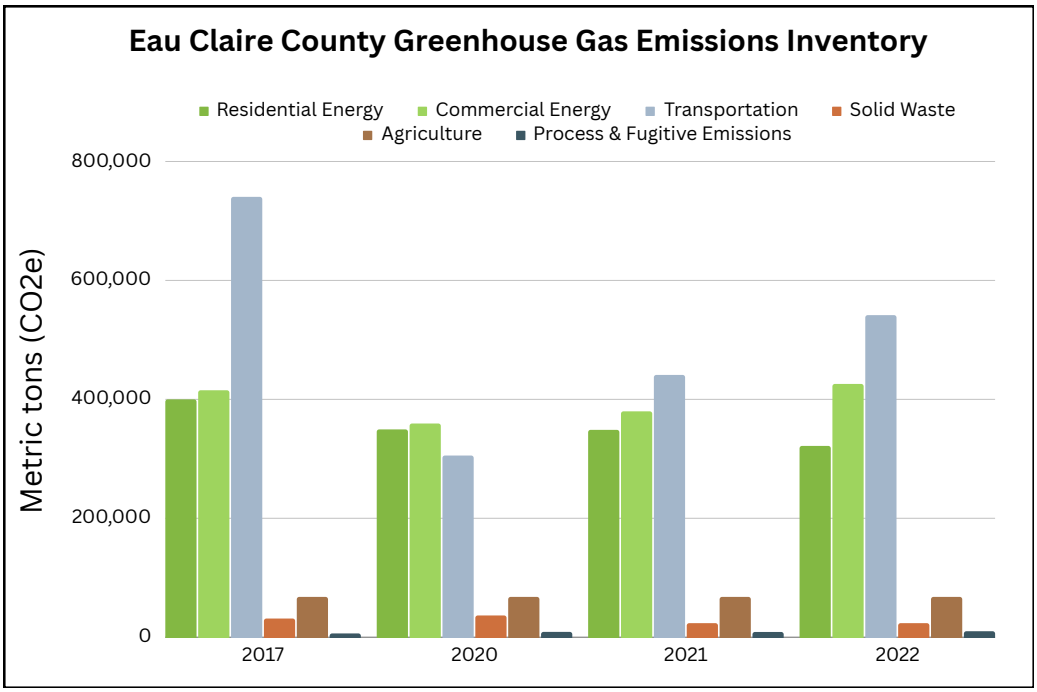
Eau Claire County acknowledges the work that is being done by members of the community to advance climate action and improve our local environment. Eau Claire County should work to leverage the momentum in the community and support and incentivize others to adopt these practices.

Eau Claire County should continue to be a leader within the community in regard to sustainability. Ensuring that county policies are created to support climate action rather than serve as a barrier. The County should continue to advocate for state policies that support local government climate action.

Figure 3 shows GHG emissions in Eau Claire County by sector. A detailed explanation of the protocol followed for the community level GHG inventory can be found at https://icleiusa.org/us-community-protocol/

Based on the inventory data priority areas and highest impact actions will take place in the transportation, residential, and commercial sectors.

Figure 3



In 2020, with the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw a noticeable shift in emissions. Analyzing the graph, there was a dramatic shift in transportation emissions. This is likely correlated to the shift in lifestyle which so many had to quickly adopt during the pandemic which resulted in more people working remote. Transportation emissions have continued to rise post pandemic but have not gone back to 2017 levels. Commercial and residential energy have mostly remained steady. The decrease in residential energy in 2022 is due to improved data collection from Eau Claire Energy Cooperative which now separates residential and commercial energy usage which is part of the reason for the increase in commercial energy emissions in 2022.

ENERGY

Community Invested in Sustainability

Eau Claire County is one of the many stakeholders in the community with renewable energy and carbon neutrality goals. The City of Eau Claire, Xcel Energy, and Eau Claire Area School District, and University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire (UWEC) have goals of carbon neutrality by 2050. Dairyland Power, energy provider for Eau Claire Energy Cooperative, has a goal of reducing carbon intensity by 50% by 2030. Leveraging the momentum in the community and supporting the climate action initiatives of these stakeholders will move the needle much quicker and this plan aims to put emphasize collaboration as an essential component to achieving these goals.

Energy Goals

Reduce residential energy use by 20% by 2030.

Generate 50% of community energy from renewable resources by 2030.

Reduce commercial energy use by 20% by 2030.

A Clean Future for All

Eau Claire County is committed to ensuring all County residents have opportunities to access renewable and affordable energy. Local area businesses are partnering with Eau Claire County sustainability staff to increase residential awareness about participation in energy efficiency and beneficial electrification resources and incentive programs. Using customized tools, resources and financing mechanisms, renewable energy options are becoming increasingly more available for those in the community. Renewable energy is affordable and available for all in Eau Claire County.

Energy Goals

Goal 1: Generate 50% of community energy from renewable resources by 2030.

- **Key Indicators**
  - Annual energy mix reported by utilities.
  - Energy burden
  - Low- and moderate-income home energy efficiency data completed through programs like Western Dairyland.
- **Supporting Indicators**
  - Number of homes built solar-ready.
  - Kilowatts of solar installed in the County.
  - Number of subscribers to community solar projects
  - Number of solar permits issued.

Goal 2: Reduce residential energy use by 20% by 2030.

- **Key Indicator**
  - Residential energy use
- **Supporting Indicators**
  - Number of residents using Focus on Energy (FOE) and utility incentives
  - Estimated savings from FOE and utility programs
  - Number of utility incentives claimed.

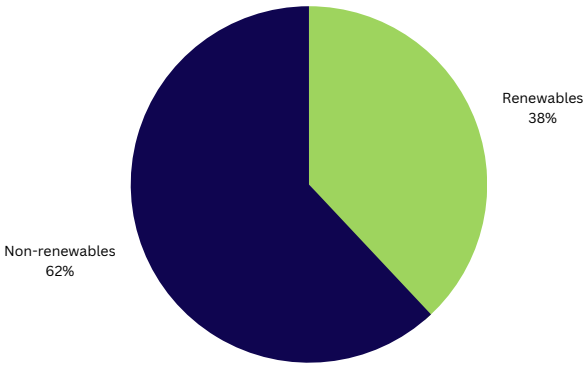
Goal 3: Reduce commercial energy use by 20% by 2030.

- **Key Indicator**
  - Commercial energy use
- **Supporting Indicators**
  - Number of businesses using FOE and utility incentives
  - Estimated savings from FOE and utility programs
  - Number of businesses using PACE Loan program

Energy Baseline Indicator Data

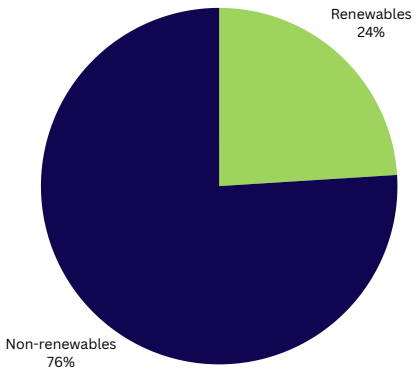
Annual Electricity Generation Mix

Figure 4



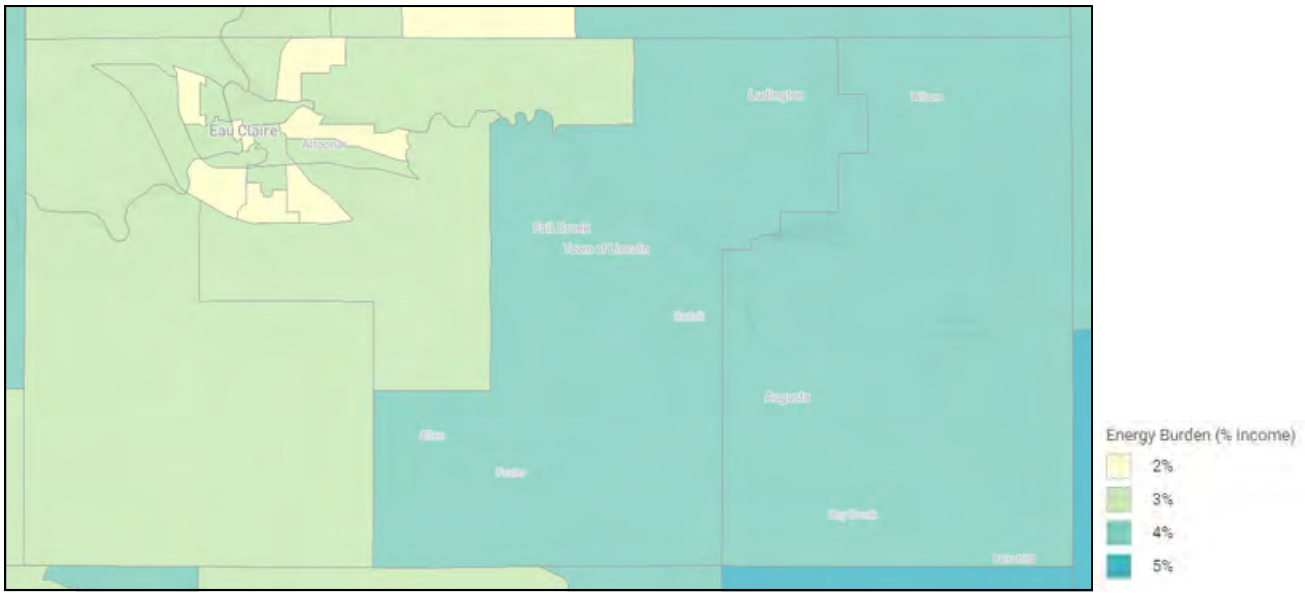
2022 Xcel Energy Wisconsin Energy Mix

Figure 5



2023 Dairyland Power Cooperative Energy Mix

Energy Burden



Energy burden by census tract based on 2020 ACS data. Source: US Department of Energy LEAD Tool

Homes built solar-ready

Not previously reported.

Kilowatts of solar installed

not previously reported.

Number of subscribers to community solar projects (2022)

Xcel Energy: 12 business, 33 residential
Eau Claire Energy Cooperative: 11 business, 245 residential,

Number of solar permits issued (2022)

City of Eau Claire: 37
City of Altoona: 3
Eau Claire County: 54

Energy Use

Figure 6

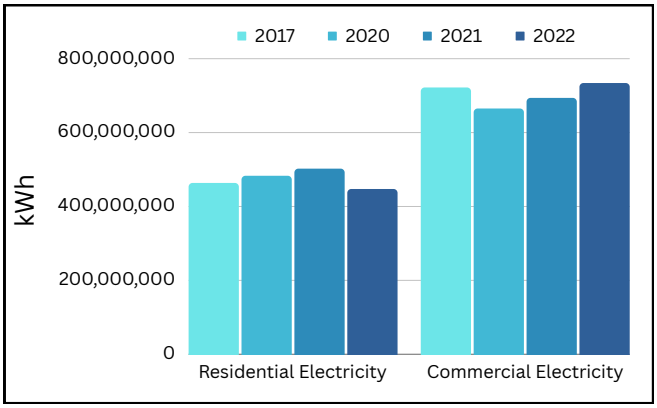
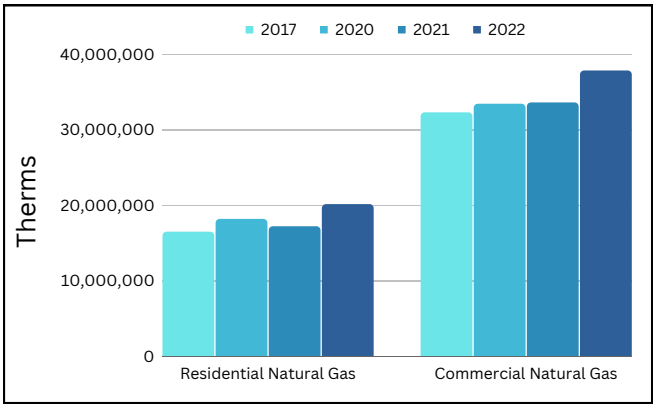


Figure 7



Data provided by Xcel Energy and Eau Claire Energy Cooperative (ECEC). *Until 2021 all ECEC data is reported under residential.

Focus on Energy participants

Figure 8

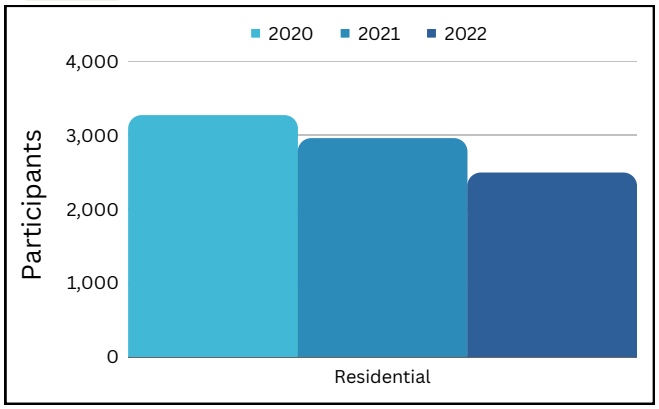
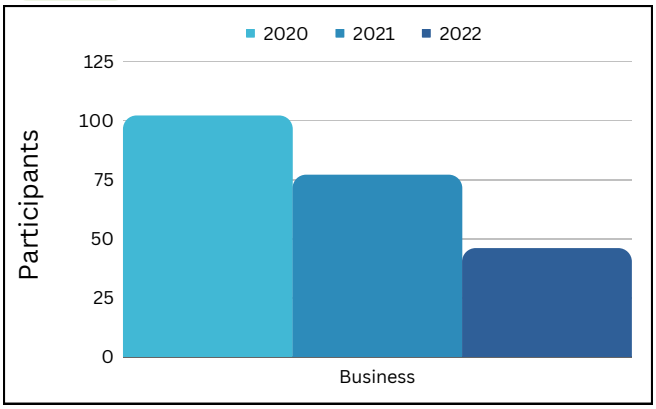


Figure 9



Focus on Energy estimated energy savings

Figure 10

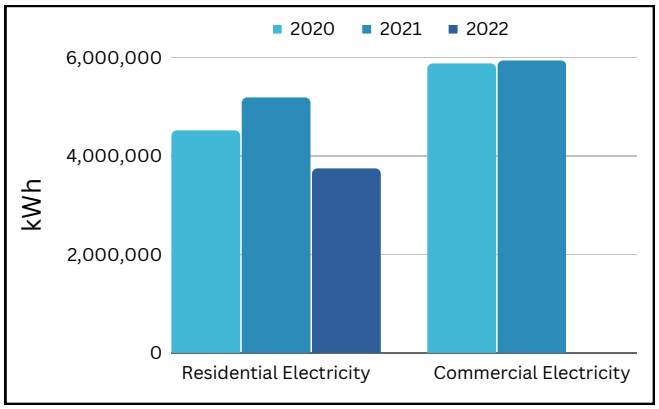
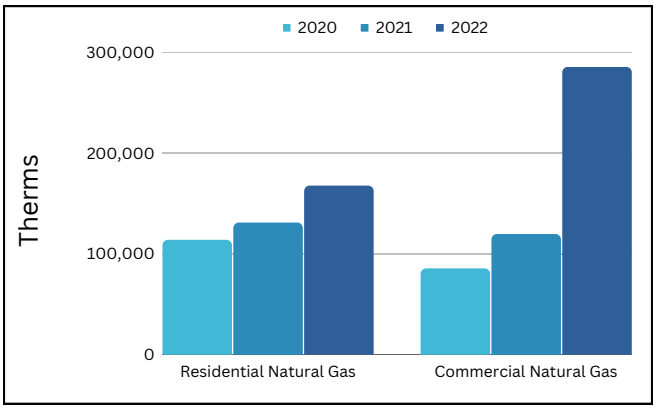


Figure 11



All data on this page is provided by Focus on Energy.

Community Highlight - ECEC MemberSolar

Eau Claire Energy Cooperative brought its 872 kW community solar array online in January of 2016 and quickly energized the community. Approximately 230 Cooperative members voluntarily subscribe by purchasing production credits. Each production credit subscription produces around 400 kWh per year. In its first year the solar array generated enough kilowatt hours to offset the carbon emissions from 85,881 gallons of gasoline.

Since the panels are mounted near the ground, they require vegetation management in the spring, summer, and fall. Eau Claire Energy Cooperative partners with Lambalot Acres in Augusta on a mutually beneficial arrangement that provides 5 acres of grazing land for the sheep herd while controlling vegetation growth around the solar panels.

Energy Implementation Strategies

The implementation strategies work to achieve the goals outlined through the key and supporting indicators.

Objective 1: Increase infrastructure to support expanded use and transmission of renewable energy.

Strategy 1.1: Assess public policies to identify barriers and facilitate implementation.

Strategy 1.2: Work with local utilities to determine infrastructure gaps in the community and identify solutions.

Strategy 1.3: Advocate for public policies that update the Universal Dwelling Code and Energy Code through the Wisconsin Local Government Climate Coalition.

Objective 2: Ensure all County residents have opportunities to access renewable and affordable energy.

Strategy 2.1: Identify and pursue opportunities for public and private renewable energy development, including on-site, community, and centralized systems.

Strategy 2.2: Promote solar-ready buildings in new construction.

Strategy 2.3: Pass a Home Energy Rating Ordinance

Objective 3: Increase residential awareness and participation in energy efficiency and beneficial electrification resources and incentive programs.

Strategy 3.1: Employ a targeted outreach program to engage property owners.

Strategy 3.2: Assemble customized tools, resources, and financing mechanisms for energy efficiency upgrades.

Strategy 3.3: Coordinate with community organizations, businesses, etc. to distribute information and accelerate implementation.

Objective 4: Increase commercial and contractor awareness and participation in energy efficiency and beneficial electrification resources and incentive programs.

Strategy 4.1: Partner with business organizations, utilities, and FOE to promote incentives for businesses and trainings for contractors on new technologies.

Strategy 4.2: Develop a "Sustainable Business" program to acknowledge and support businesses looking to invest in sustainable business practices.

Strategy 4.3: Adopt a Building Performance Policy for commercial buildings.

Blower door test being performed.

Eau Claire Energy Cooperative's 872 kW community solar array.

Energy Supporting Strategies

The supporting strategies work across multiple objectives to facilitate successful implementation.

Collaboration

C.1: Leverage programs, funding, and resources from state, federal, and non-profit agencies.
C.2: Provide grant writing support to rural municipalities within the County on sustainability focused projects.
C.3: Work with municipalities, education institutions, businesses, and community organizations to support existing initiatives in the community.
C.4: Continue membership in Wisconsin Local Government Climate Coalition and Green Tier Legacy Communities.

Education & Outreach

E.1: Promote the benefits of renewable energy, energy efficiency, and beneficial electrification. Provide information and resources to support access.
E.2: Promote the benefits of green building and sustainable site design, including benefits to public health, community cohesion, and the natural environment.

Tools & Technology

T.1: Develop an interactive sustainability dashboard that demonstrates progress toward goals and provides real time data.
T.2: Monitor emerging technologies and best practices for green building and sustainable site development.

Research & Tracking

R.1: Monitor community-wide energy data including overall energy use, renewable energy generation, incentive program participation, and energy costs.
R.2: Research opportunities to develop financial incentives to improve building efficiency and improve access to beneficial electrification and renewable energy.
R.3: Research feasibility of a Building Performance policy and collect stakeholder feedback.

Recycling & Sustainability educational workshop.

Earth Week Open House 2023

Solid Waste in Eau Claire County

Solid waste is a pressing issue in Eau Claire County due to the Seven Mile Creek Landfill, located near the Town of Seymour. In 2022, the landfill emitted 23,622 metric tons of greenhouse gases. The landfill has also gone through several expansions in the past two decades. To preserve the lifespan of the landfill and reduce its impact on the community it is important to divert waste and increase the rate of recycling and composting in the community.
According to the community survey, the primary way residents engage in waste reduction is through traditional recycling.

When asked about new initiatives they would participate in reducing single use plastics and streamlining recycling of non-traditional recycling. Residents preferred these programs to be funded primarily through grant funding and user fees rather than additional taxes.

Solid Waste Goals

Divert 50% of organic material from the waste stream by 2030.

Increase recycling and waste diversion opportunities and participation in the community.

Minimizing Waste in Eau Claire County: A Community Effort

Reducing waste is a crucial step that everyone can take part in. There are a variety of community groups and businesses working to reduce the waste they produce or help others reduce their waste. Eua Claire County should continue to leverage and expand these partnerships and support expanded waste diversion services in the community.

Solid Waste Goals

Goal 1: Divert 50% of organic material from the waste stream by 2030.

- **Key Indicators**
  - Cubic yards of compost processed.
- **Supporting Indicators**
  - Number of public events offering composting
  - Number of residents who subscribe to curbside composting services.
  - Number of businesses, churches, and other institutions composting.
  - Number of compost bins sold.

Goal 2: Improve the community's waste infrastructure to encourage waste diversion and recycling.

- **Key Indicators**
  - Tons of recycling collected from households and rural drop sites.
  - Number of residents served by curbside recycling.
  - Tons of recycling collected through special programs (Clean Sweep, electronics, etc.)
- **Supporting Indicators**
  - Number of new programs, waste diversion/recycling locations, etc.

Community Highlight - Fighting Food Waste

Earthbound Environmental is a waste hauling company that offers curbside composting services in addition to recycling and garbage hauling. Since they opened in 2016, they have diverted over 700 tons of organic matter from the landfill.

In an effort to increase organic diversion in the community, Earthbound Environmental, Eau Claire County, and JONAH Environmental Taskforce partnered on a 2 year grant opportunity through the USDA.

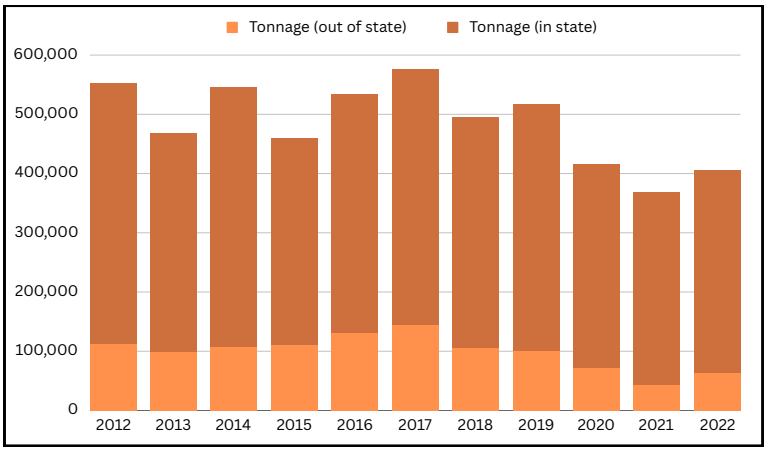
This program will promote composting and food waste education, at home composting, and provide direct funding to schools throughout the community to implement composting.

At the end of 2023 this private-public partnership resulted in:

- 300+ Home Composter bins sold at reduced price.
- 6-$1,000 grants to schools in the County to implement composting.
- Rental of screening equipment to distribute free compost to residents, community gardens, and community based organizations.

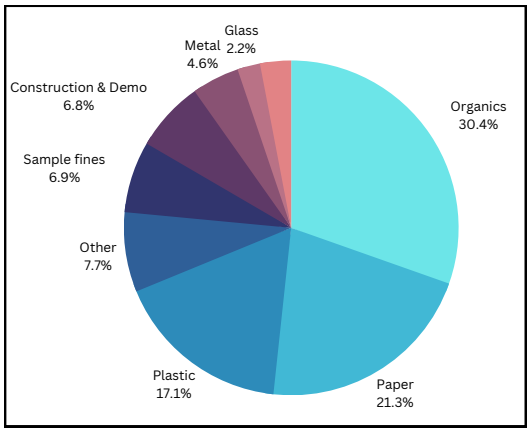
Solid Waste Baseline Indicator Data

Figure 13



Data from Wisconsin DNR Landfill Tonnage reports.

Figure 14



Landfill waste composition from Wisconsin DNR Waste Characterization Study.

Organics Waste Diverted

716 tons of organics collected through composting services since 2016

Public Events with composting

Not previously tracked

Residential curbside compost subscribers

Not previously tracked

Non-residential curbside compost subscribers

Not previously tracked

Compost bins sold

2023: 310

Residential Recycling

2022: 6,149 tons collected through curbside and drop-off sites

Specialty Recycling Programs

Mattress

- 2022: 220 mattresses and box springs

Household Hazardous Waste

- 2022: 62,629 pounds
- 2023: 47,429 pounds

Electronics Recycling

- 2022: 492,575 pounds
- 2023: 691,164 pounds

Solid Waste Implementation Strategies

Objective 1: Increase awareness and access to composting in the County.
- **Strategy 1.1:** Identify options for curbside and drop site composting services.
- **Strategy 1.2:** Promote at home and business composting.
- **Strategy 1.3:** Increase number of community events offering composting.

Objective 2: Increase amount of waste diverted through specialty recycling programs.
- **Strategy 2.1:** Identify and pursue opportunities for new public and private partnerships that divert problematic waste streams.
- **Strategy 2.2:** Evaluate community access to existing programs and identify ways to increase access.

Objective 3: Increase residential awareness and participation recycling programs and events.
- **Strategy 3.1:** Employ a targeted outreach program to engage property owners.
- **Strategy 3.2:** Partner with community organizations to provide community outreach about recycling programs.

Objective 4: Increase commercial participation and compliance with recycling programs and regulations.
- **Strategy 4.1:** Develop resources and assistance for businesses looking to reduce their waste.
- **Strategy 4.2:** Develop a "Sustainable Business" program to acknowledge and support businesses looking to invest in sustainable business practices.

Objective 5: Establish plan for a Waste Recovery Center
- **Strategy 5.1:** Perform feasibility study, gain stakeholder feedback, and identify partners.
- **Strategy 5.2:** Develop plan for Waste Recovery Center.

Volunteers at 2022 mattress collection event.

Workers at Clean Sweep sorting chemicals.

Solid Waste Supporting Strategies

The supporting strategies work across multiple objectives to facilitate successful implementation.

Collaboration

C.1: Leverage programs, funding, and resources from state, federal, and non-profit agencies.
C.2: Work with municipalities, education institutions, businesses, and community organizations to support existing and new initiatives in the community.

Education & Outreach

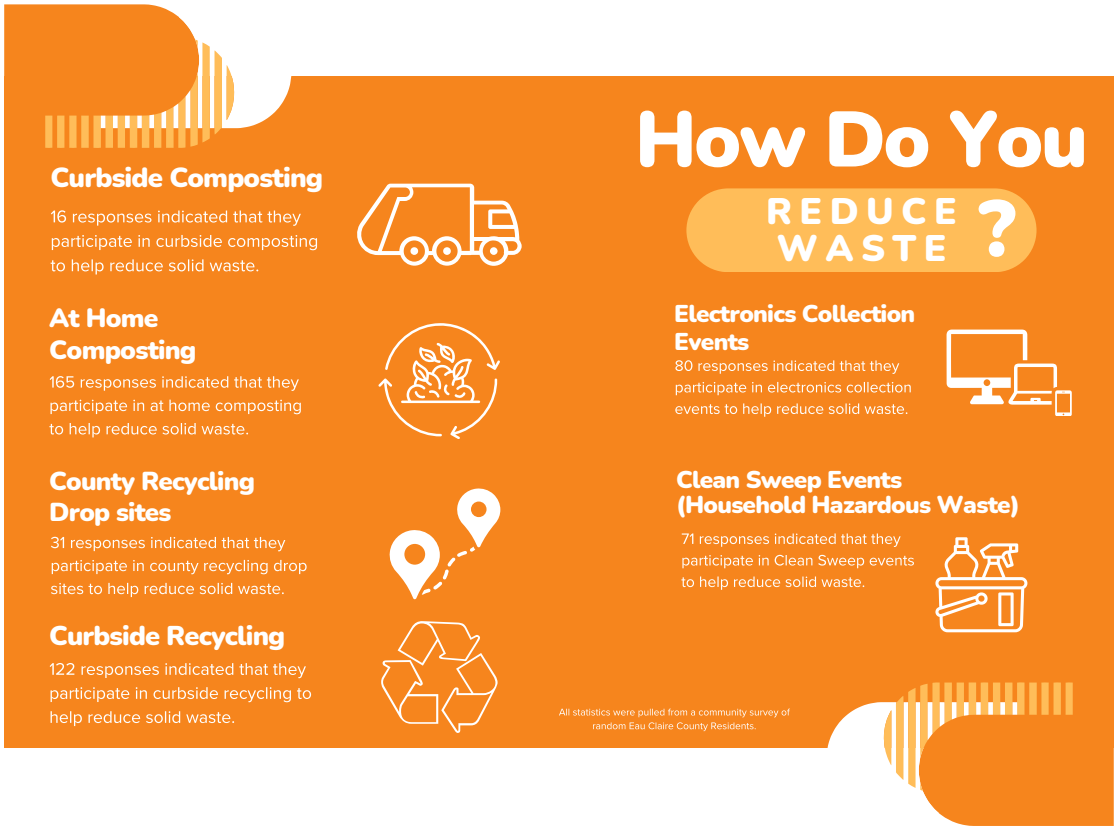
E.1: Promote the benefits of recycling, composting, and waste reduction. Provide information and resources to support access.

Tools & Technology

T.1: Monitor emerging technologies and best practices in the waste industry.

Research & Tracking

R.1: Monitor recycling rates, program participation, and annual landfill tonnage to gauge impact of program.
R.2: Research opportunities to develop divert additional waste streams that are common or problematic.



TRANSPORTATION

Transportation in Eau Claire County

Transportation is among the leading causes of emissions in Eau Claire County. The large majority of community members get around via personal vehicle. However, during the community input sessions there was a lot of discussion about the need to expand transportation options in the eastern portion of the county as it has the highest proportion of households without a vehicle within the rural portions of the County. An aging population also indicates that the need for affordable transportation options in the rural portions of the county should be a priority.

Changing the way, you get around

This shift towards more sustainable transportation options has the potential to not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but also improve the overall health and well-being of the community. By encouraging more active modes of transportation, such as walking and biking, residents can increase their physical activity levels and reduce their risk of chronic diseases. Additionally, investments in public transportation infrastructure can improve access to job opportunities and essential services for those who may not have access to a personal vehicle. As the county continues to prioritize sustainability and the health of its residents, these transportation initiatives will play a key role in achieving these goals.

Transportation Goals

Have 10,000 registered EVs in Eau Claire County by 2030.

Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled by 143,130,000 miles

TAKE CHARGE OF CHANGE!

Investing in infrastructure like EV charging and renewable energy in a way that ensures equitable access is important to 72% of Eau Claire County residents who responded to the community input survey in 2022.

Transportation Goals

Goal 1: Have 10,000 registered EVs in Eau Claire County by 2030.

- **Key Indicators**
  - Number of registered EVs in Eau Claire County
  - Publicly accessible and ADA accessible charging stations (50:1 ratio)
- **Supporting Indicators**
  - Number of education/outreach events promoting EVs

Goal 2: Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by 143,130,000 miles.

- **Key Indicator**
  - Total community VMT
- **Supporting Indicator**
  - Miles of expanded shoulders completed to create bike friendly roads.
  - Number of public rural transportation options within the County
  - Participation in ADRC transportation programs

Community Highlight - A Cycling Community

Eau Claire County, which is located in the Chippewa Valley, contains numerous bike trails for those looking for alternative transportation methods near their place of residence. There are resources available online for those looking to make routes for road biking, mountain biking, and snow biking. The map also contains resources for bike shops in the Chippewa Valley.

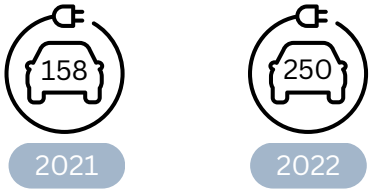
Bike Chippewa Valley along with several other organizations work in the community to educate on safe cycling, resources for cyclists (like the map to the right), while also providing valet bike parking at community events to promote cycling instead of driving.

Transportation Baseline Indicator Data

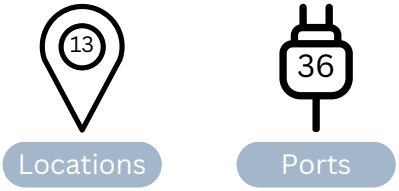
County Highway Shoulder Expansions

Eau Claire County Highway Department has expanded 8.95 miles of shoulder in the past few years as part of the Bike & Pedestrian Plan . A map can also be found at the link below that shows preferred biking paths and roads within the Eau Claire metro area.
http://bikechippewavalley.com/cvbikemap/2021_Chippewa_Valley_Bike_Map.pdf

Registered Electric Vehicles



Public Electric Vehicle Charging (2022)



Community VMT

2022: 1,356,553,862 vehicle miles traveled. Based on Google Environmental Insights Explorer data.

Alternative transportation options

To date most of the alternative transportation options available to people are through ADRC or the private sector like Abby Vans. There are a few bus stops with in the City of Eau Claire Transit system that go beyond the City boundary but none that go into the rural parts of the County.

Transportation Implementation Strategies

Objective 1: Collaborate on implementation of City of Eau Claire's EV Roadmap.
- **Strategy 1.1:** Establish policies or amend current ones to encourage EV infrastructure development.
- **Strategy 1.2:** Implement relevant recommendations.

Objective 2: Support continued implementation of County Bike & Pedestrian Plan
- **Strategy 2.1:** Expand shoulders on County highways during eligible improvement projects.
- **Strategy 2.2:** Collaborate with community organizations to promote existing and new bike friendly roadways and community events around cycling.

Objective 3: Support expansion of transportation options within the County including passenger rail, expanded bus service, on-demand micro-transit, etc.
- **Strategy 3.1:** Promote carpooling and "Park & Ride" locations.
- **Strategy 3.2:** Support the expansion of passenger rail into the community.
- **Strategy 3.3:** Provide education and outreach opportunities around alternative transportation options within Eau Claire County.
- **Strategy 3.4:** Work with municipalities and private sector to expand affordable rural transportation options.

AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

WICCI 2021 report sheds light on the impact of climate change on Wisconsin agriculture. According to the report, Wisconsin's agriculture sector is experiencing the effects of climate change. The report indicates that land, water, and built environment in the state will be negatively impacted as Wisconsin's climate continues to rise. It also includes responses to these changes and the implementation process.

Warmer and wetter weather patterns in Wisconsin have led to management and economic difficulties for producers, causing delays in planting and harvesting, harming water quality, and reducing milk production. Implementing climate smart agricultural and conservation practices can reduce emissions and support improved carbon storage, soil health, and water quality.

Agriculture & Natural Resources Goals

Increase native habitat and tree canopy within the County.

Increase participation in programs that support climate smart agriculture, energy savings, etc.

Increase enrollment in Farmland Preservation Program & Ag Enterprise Area

The goals and strategies in this section of the plan aim to support initiatives that encourage producers and landowners to implement practices that are mutually beneficial to soil health, water quality, biodiversity, and when applicable a producer's revenue. While there is a heavy emphasis on the agriculture sector, it is important to acknowledge the impact that impervious surfaces in the built environment have on soil health, water quality, and biodiversity. This section is also not all encompassing of the conservation efforts already established in other plans within Eau Claire County but instead highlights areas of existing initiatives and how this plan could support those initiatives.

Agriculture & Natural Resources Goals & Targets

Goal 1: Increase enrollment in Farmland Preservation Program and Ag Enterprise Area

- **Key Indicators**
  - Acres enrolled in Ag Enterprise Area
  - Acres enrolled in Farmland Preservation
  - Farmers with up to date and compliant Nutrient Management Plans

Goal 2: Increase participation in programs that support climate smart agriculture, energy savings, etc.

- **Key Indicators**
  - Number of participants
  - Estimated energy savings.
  - Estimated environmental impact related to improved farming practices.
  - Money received by producers from programming.

Goal 3: Increase native habitat and tree canopy within the County.

- **Key Indicators**
  - Number of native plants and trees sold
  - Acres of native plants planted with No-Till Drill and other programs.
  - Total acres of County Forest land

Community Highlight - No Till Drill

Farmers in Eau Claire County can rent a 10-foot-wide Great Plains No-Till Drill from the Land Conservation Division. In 2023, 28 renters and seeded approximately 605 acres of farmland in Eau Claire County with a cover crops, native plantings, and row crops.

No-till farming is a conservation technique that involves refraining from tillage operations before planting a crop. The practice of no-till planting has numerous advantages for both the soil and the cultivated crop. Firstly, it helps to maintain the soil structure by reducing the amount of disturbance it undergoes. Additionally, it preserves residue on top of the soil, which acts as a protective layer against wind and rain. Once a successful no-till system is established, many farmers report increased yield and profitability on their farms.

Agriculture & Natural Resources Baseline Indicator Data

Farmland Preservation Program (acreage)

2021

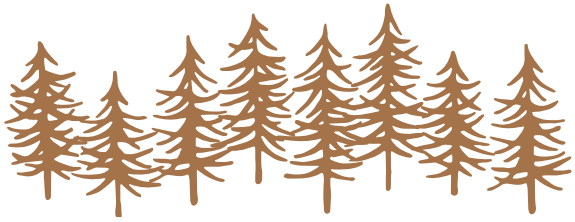
2022

The Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) provides landowners with an opportunity to claim an income tax credit by meeting soil and water conservation standards. For participants of the FPP with Agricultural Preservation zoning (AP), they can receive an income tax credit of $7.50 per acre. Additionally, those within the Golden Triangle Ag Enterprise Area who sign a 15-year Farmland Preservation Agreement can receive further income tax credits.

In Eau Claire County, there are a total of **246 participants** and **45,456 acres enrolled in FPP**. To date, the Farmland Preservation Tax Credit has returned almost $10 million in income tax credits to Eau Claire County landowners since its inception in 1977.

County Forest

57,712 acres managed for public recreation, wildlife habitat development, and timber production



Ag Enterprise Area (Golden Triangle)

7,618 acres enrolled

2022

over 30%

total land located in the Golden Triangle AEA.

Since 2016, Eau Claire County farmers have established the Golden Triangle as an Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA). The staff has since worked with landowners to sign a voluntary 15-year farmland preservation agreement in these designated areas. Currently, **7,618** acres of land are under this agreement, accounting for over 30% of the total land area in the Golden Triangle AEA. Thanks to these agreements, the local farms receive an additional $20,226 in tax credits every year.

Nutrient Management Planning

8 workshops hosted, 37 farmers

40+ Plans with over 15,000 acres in 2022

No-Till Drill Program

28 renters

605 acres planted

Tree & Native Plant Sale

1.1 million+ trees since 1982

2,000+ native plants since 2019

Agriculture & Natural Resources Implementation Strategies

Objective 1: Retain, restore, and enhance natural spaces.

Strategy 1.1: Support Land Stewardship Committee and expansion of County Parks & Forest land

Strategy 1.2: Promote County and community native plant and tree sales.

Strategy 1.3: Collaborate with community organizations to provide education & outreach about native plants, alternative lawns, natural buffers, rain gardens, etc.

Objective 2: Educate landowners on the ins and outs of solar energy development to encourage landowner confidence and protections when approached by developers.

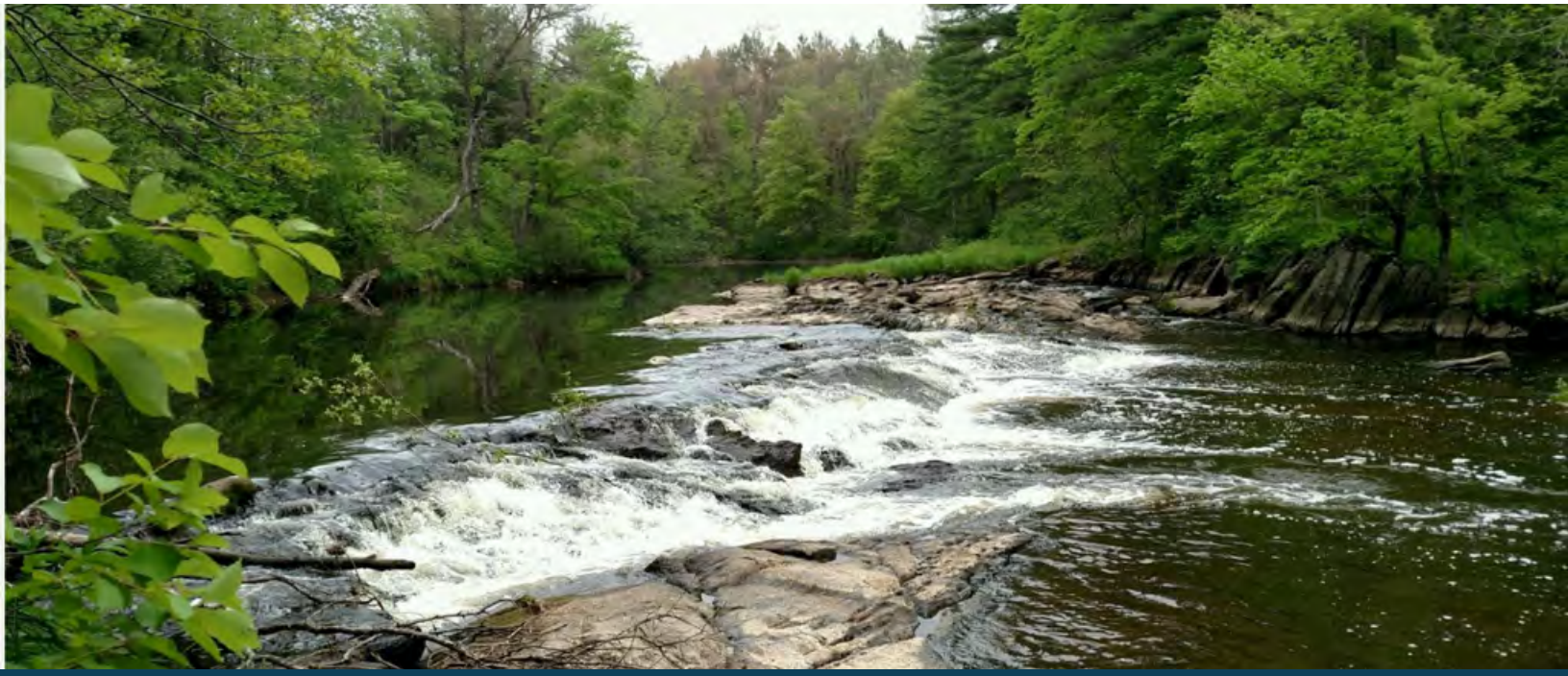
Strategy 2.1: Provide guides and resources online.

Strategy 2.2: Host workshops and seminars with industry experts.

Objective 3: Support the implementation of the Land, Water, and Resource Management (LWRM) Plan.

Strategy 3.1: Partner with organizations like National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), FOE, and LCD to distribute information to agriculture community through a variety of methods.

Strategy 3.2: Increase awareness and participation in agriculture programs and incentives.



ACTION STEPS

After identifying the goals for each focus area, ___ action steps have been identified that will guide plan implementation. If the plan is implemented as described the action steps will create capacity within the community and the County to achieve the goals outlined throughout this plan.

These action steps are separated by phase one, which will be from 2024 to 2026, and phase 2, which will be from 2027 to 2030. The implementation of the action steps will require the involvement of various stakeholders, including community members, non-profit organizations, and local government agencies.

To ensure that the action steps are effectively implemented, clear communication channels will be established, and progress will be regularly assessed. The success of the plan will be measured by the achievement of the annual GHG inventory, identified goals, as well as the key and supporting indicators.

By working together, the community of Eau Claire County can take significant steps towards achieving a more sustainable and equitable future for all its residents.

Allocating Resources

Each action step and will need time and funding in order for them to be successful. To show the level of funding and time needed per action step, there are two icons (shown below) which show the amount of time and funding required. The more symbols there are in the category, the more time or funding it will require.

$ $0-$50,000; also includes projects that only require staff time.	0-0.2 FTE/year; includes passive projects that will be ongoing.
$$ $50,001-$250,000	0.2-0.4 FTE/year; also includes projects that will go across 1-2 years
$$$ $250,000 +	0.4 FTE +/year; also includes projects that will require an additional staff person or consulting services to be implemented.

Action Steps Phase 1 (2024-2026)

Energy

Strategy	Action Steps	Cost	Staff Time
1.1, 1.3	Participate in the State's climate and clean energy action planning process. **Potential Funding Sources:** Staff time	$	clock
2.2, 3.2	Develop a Solar 101 guide for residents specific to Eau Claire County **Potential Funding Sources:** Staff time	$	clock
1.2, 2.1	Investigate options for additional community solar developments, especially for low-income households. **Potential Funding Sources:** GHG Reduction Fund, Community Power Accelerator Prize	$	clock
2.2	Explore feasibility of incentive program for homes that are built solar-ready. **Potential Funding Sources:** GHG Reduction Fund, Community Power Accelerator Prize	$ $	clock
2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1	Leverage grant funding and community partnerships, to develop a program that provides direct funding to residents to improve energy efficiency, beneficial electrification, and comfort of older and low-income homes. **Potential Funding Sources:** Energy Improvements in Rural and Remote Area Program, CPRG, and various other programs.	$ $ $	clock clock clock
3.1, 3.3, 4.1	Host workshops for businesses and residents focused on energy efficiency, incentives, etc. **Potential Funding Sources:** Staff time	$	clock
4.2	Develop a "Sustainable Business" program in collaboration with community organizations and stakeholders. **Potential Funding Sources:** Staff time, program budget	$	clock clock

Action Steps Phase 1 (2024-2026)

Solid Waste

Strategy	Action Steps	Cost	Staff Time
2.1	Collaborate with businesses and community partners to bring back mattress recycling options to residents. **Potential Funding Sources:** User fees	$	🕒
1.3, 4.1	Coordinate with community events to increase recycling and composting rates. **Potential Funding Sources:** Existing budget, CFWR pilot program	$	🕒
2.1, 3.1	Collaborate with community groups on waste reduction efforts. (Bring your own container, Plastic Free July, etc.) **Potential Funding Sources:** Existing budget	$	🕒
3.1, 4.1	Update County recycling code. **Potential Funding Sources:** Staff time	$	🕒 🕒
1.1	Establish community compost drop-off sites **Potential Funding Sources:** CFWR Pilot (new application), user fees, and/or existing budget.	$ $	🕒
1.1, 2.2	Continue implementation of food waste reduction pilot. **Funding Sources:** CFWR Pilot Program (received 2023)	$	🕒

Transportation

1.1, 1.2	Assess County policies and align to promote EV readiness and Bike & Pedestrian plan. **Potential Funding Sources:** Staff time	$	🕒
3.1	Identify locations for “Park & Rides” in rural parts of county. **Potential Funding Sources:** Public private partnerships, sustainability program budget	$	🕒
2.2,3.3	Promote County and City bike systems and public transportation. **Potential Funding Sources:** Sustainability program budget	$	🕒
1.1	Identify opportunities for public charging infrastructure in rural communities and pursue funding. **Potential Funding Sources:** Private public partnership, user fees	$ $	🕒
3.4	Work with existing transportation services to provide fixed route services in rural parts of the County. **Potential Funding Sources:** public private partnership, sustainability program budget, user fees.	$ $	🕒 🕒

Action Steps Phase 1 (2024-2026)

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Strategy	Action Steps	Cost	Staff Time
1.1	Establish a funding source to aid Land Stewardship Committee in land acquisition. **Potential Funding Sources:** Future Parks & Forest revenue	$$$	$
1.3	Work with partners to raise awareness within the community on the benefits of native plants, trees, alternative lawns, etc. **Potential Funding Sources:** Existing budget	$	$
2.1, 2.2	Develop resources and provide workshops for landowners on the ins and outs of solar energy development. **Potential Funding Sources:** Staff time	$	$
3.1, 3.2	Collaborate with community partners to distribute information about programs and incentives to producers and landowners. **Potential Funding Sources:** Staff time	$	$

Tour of Huntsinger Farms' solar array at Farm Tech Days 2021.

Action Steps Phase 2 (2027-2030)

Energy

Strategy	Action Steps	Cost	Staff Time
2.3	Implement Home Energy Rating Ordinance **Potential Funding Sources:** Staff time	$	
3.1, 3.3	Promote energy efficient homes with tours/ local case studies.	$	
4.3	Explore Building Performance policy for commercial buildings.	$	
2.1	Develop community-sited solar and offer subscriptions to residents with a specific allocation for low- to moderate-income housing.	$	

Solid Waste

5.1, 5.2	Feasibility study and develop plan for Waste Recovery Center **Potential Funding Sources:** Private public partnerships,	$ $ $	
1.1	Expand curbside composting services to majority of residents. **Potential Funding Sources:** User fees	$ $	

Action Steps Phase 2 (2027-2030)

Transportation

Strategy	Action Steps	Cost	Staff Time
3.4	Explore feasibility of micro-transit and other solutions for rural community that connect to existing transportation infrastructure. **Potential Funding Source:** RAISE (DOT)	$ $	clock clock clock
1.1, 1.2	Support implementation of the City of Eau Claire's EV Road map	$	clock
1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 3.3	Collaborate with partners on demonstration events for alternative transportation E-bikes, electric cars, public transit, etc.)	$	clock
3.2	Support the expansion of passenger rail service into Eau Claire County	$	clock
2.1	Work with municipalities and highway department to improve connectivity of bikes and trail systems between rural and urban communities.	$ $	clock clock clock

Agriculture and Natural Resources

1.1	Purchase lands to improve continuity and expansion of the County Forest. **Potential Funding Sources:** DNR grants, donations,	$ $ $	clock clock
3.1, 3.2	Support peer to peer education among producers through creation of a producer led group as noted in LWRM plan. **Potential Funding Sources:**	$ $	clock clock clock

Supporting Action Steps

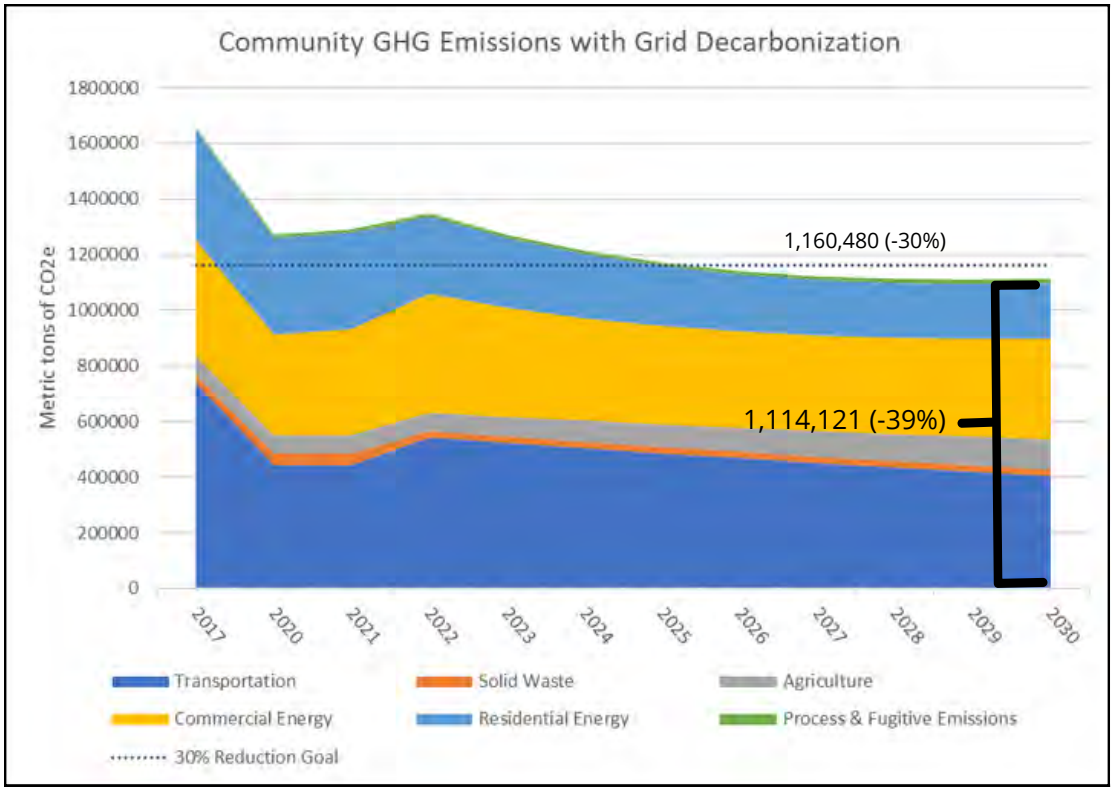
Supporting action steps unless noted otherwise are ongoing or should be implemented within a year of adopting the plan in order to facilitate effective implementation.

Hire a Sustainability Program Assistant **Potential Funding Sources:** Sustainability program budget and grants from various projects if applicable.	
Develop a comprehensive education & outreach campaign for sustainability initiatives and programs. **Potential Funding Sources:** Sustainability program budget and grants from various projects if applicable.	
Support municipalities within Eau Claire County looking to pursue funding or leverage incentives that promote the goals of the CARP. **Potential Funding Sources:** Staff time	
Partner with City of Eau Claire to promote Net Zero Energy Building Guide and EV Roadmap. **Potential Funding Sources:** Staff time	
Allocate funding for sustainability program. While all efforts should be made to leverage grants, partnerships, and other cost saving measures. These often still require matching funds to receive them. **Potential Funding Source:** County budget	

Grid Decarbonization & Transportation

Figure 15 shows the expected community emissions through 2030 based on the grid decarbonization goals set forth by Xcel Energy and Dairyland Power and the federal standards for fuel efficiency. These combined result in a 39% reduction in emissions from 2017-2030.

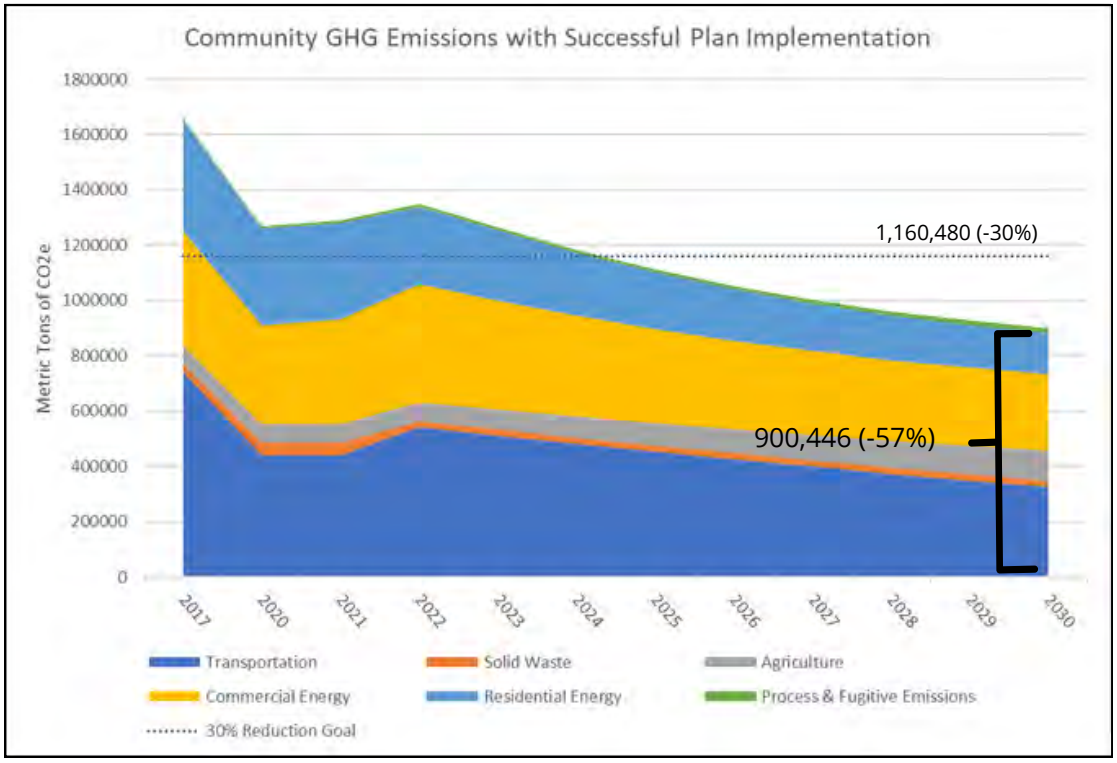
Figure 15



Successful Plan Implementation

Figure 16 shows the expected community emissions through 2030 based on the high impact goals outlined in the plan. This includes a heavy emphasis on commercial and residential energy efficiency, electrification of transportation sector, and investments in renewable energy. If successfully implemented it could result in a 57% reduction in GHG emissions from 2017 levels.

Figure 16



Terms & Definitions

Ag Enterprise Area (AEA): a contiguous land area that is devoted primarily to agricultural use and is locally targeted for agricultural preservation and development.

Carbon neutrality: When the greenhouse gas emissions are equivalent to the emission offsets/sequestration to equal net-zero emissions.

CO2e or CO2 equivalent: A unit of measurement that converts greenhouse gases like methane (CH4), nitrous oxide (NO2), carbon dioxide (CO2) and ozone (O3) to a single unit of measurement in proportion to its impact on global warming.

Energy Burden: Percentage of household income that goes toward energy costs.

Greenhouse gas (GHG): Gases which absorb solar radiation and traps heat through the greenhouse effect. Includes commonly emitted pollutants such as carbon dioxide, methane, ozone, nitrous oxide, and hydrochlorofluorocarbons.

Landfill: Engineered site used for the disposal of solid waste.

MSW: Municipal Solid Waste.

Renewable Energy: Renewable energy is energy produced from sources like the sun and wind that are naturally replenished and do not run out (Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy).

VMTs: Vehicle Miles Traveled

WICCI: Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts

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