Tool Kit for Equity & Justice in Local Climate Action Planning
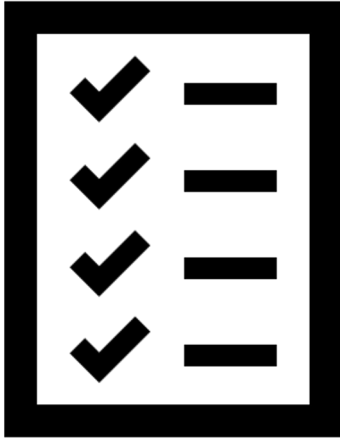
Wisconsin Climate Table: Community Commitments Campaign

Stephanie Robinson, 350 Wisconsin
Susan Gaeddert, 1000 Friends of Wisconsin
Keviea Guiden, Wisconsin Climate Table Project Coordinator

Introduction

- Wisconsin Climate Table–Community Commitments Campaign
- Tool Kit for Equity in Climate Action Planning
- Stories of Energy Burden and Climate Impact

Wisconsin Climate Table

WHAT WE ARE

- Network of 30+ organizations in Wisconsin
- North star goal of equitably eliminating GHG emissions by 2050
- Currently funded with a grant from the RE-AMP Network (reamp.org)

WHO WE ARE

- Organizations with expertise in renewable energy, environmental justice, interfaith organizing, grassroots organizing, public health, climate policy, and more
- Internal-facing organization

HOW WE WORK

- Strategic collaboration & collective knowledge
- Share resources & amplify strategies
- Develop tools & reports

WISCONSIN CLEAN ENERGY TOOLKIT

https://wisconsinclimatetable.org

Community Commitments Campaign (CCC)

Formed to support localities passing climate resolutions

Released Local Government Clean Energy Tool Kit

Hired Keviea Guiden to do grassroots organizing in MKE/SE Wisconsin

| 2019 | 2019-2020 | 2022 | 2022-2023 |

Uplifted role of local governments in Gov's Climate Change Task Force

Developed tool kit for equity in local climate action planning

Tool Kit for Equity & Justice in Climate Action Planning

WCT CCC members involved in Tool Kit development

1000 Friends of Wisconsin

350 Wisconsin

Citizen Action of Wisconsin

Clean Wisconsin

Elevate

RENEW Wisconsin

Waukesha County Green Team

Wisconsin Health Professionals for Climate Action

Wisconsin Local Government Climate Coalition (WLGCC)

Dane County, City of La Crosse, City of Sun Prairie gave us feedback on the tool as well.

What is the purpose of the tool kit?

The Tool Kit is a Wisconsin-specific guide to braiding equity into climate policies, plans, and programs at the local level. It is intended for municipal staff, policy makers, and advocates.

- **Ensure equity is a focal point** of local climate planning regardless of size, demographics, geography or resources.

- **Support communities** at all stages of climate readiness.

- **Create a Community of Practice** for Wisconsin municipalities around equitable climate planning.

- **Prepare for funding** opportunities (IIJA/IRA).

- **Create a living tool** that will continue to feature the good work of Wisconsin's communities.

How did we approach equity in the tool kit?

- **Prioritize historically marginalized and frontline communities**: maximize benefits and minimize further harms.

- **Use a broad lens:** processes & participation, distribution of benefits, and historical & structural barriers.

- **Address intersectionality**: marginalized communities often experience climate impacts in multiple ways that are compounded.

- **Connect** lived experiences with policy.

Wisconsin Climate Table

The Wisconsin Climate Table is a network of more than 30 diverse member organizations from across Wisconsin working together for equitable solutions to the climate crisis. We share the common goal to equitably eliminate greenhouse gas emissions in Wisconsin by the year 2050.
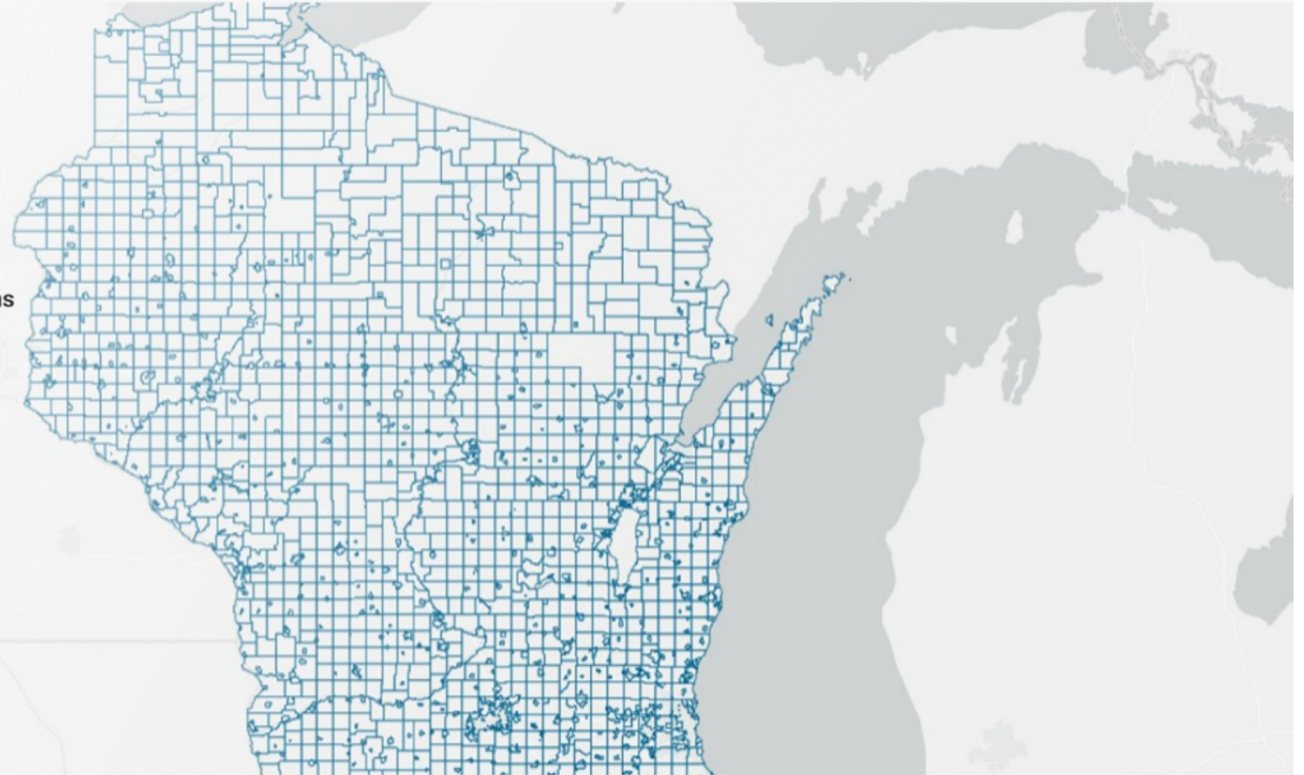
Who We Are

Members of the Climate Table represent a range of expertise in environmental justice, renewable energy, public interest advocacy, interfaith organizing, grassroots organizing, public health, climate policy, conservation, and more. The Wisconsin Climate Table continues to grow and diversify our membership. If you would like to learn more about the Climate Table or join as a member organization, contact us.

How We Work

Tool Kit for Equity & Justice in Local Climate Action Planning

We want your feedback! *We see the Tool Kit as a living document, and as such, we welcome input on its content and udpates from Wisconsin communities who are incorporating equity into their own climate planning. Use* this form to complete a short survey *by June 30, 2023, or* contact us *at any time.*

A growing number of local governments in Wisconsin are adopting plans and policies to address climate change. Members of the Wisconsin Climate Table developed this Tool Kit to provide a resource for municipalities to center equity in their climate plans and policies, regardless of their size, budget, geography, or demographics. It is meant to ensure that historically marginalized communities will benefit first from climate policies and programs.

Municipal staff, policymakers, and local elected officials can use the strategies and resources in the Tool Kit to prioritize equity and prepare for potential funding opportunities that require adherence to environmental justice principles such as Justice 40.

The Tool Kit has four main components, which can be accessed through the links below. The **Strategy Guide** is the heart of the Tool Kit, and rather than a step-by-step guide or checklist, it offers a menu of options to choose from based on the unique characteristics of a community. Annotated lists of **municipal examples** from around Wisconsin and the United States offer a curated list of best practices that can serve as models for communities looking to form or update their own climate policies and plans. Finally, a comprehensive list of **resources** such as guides and data tools are available in a fourth module. Planners and policymakers are invited to explore the Tool Kit from any starting point they choose.

The Tool Kit was developed through a collaborative process with members of the Wisconsin Climate Table's Community Commitments Campaign through volunteer and pro bono support, research and review of best practices to underpin proposed strategies and national examples, and input from municipal staff and community leaders. As such, we see the Tool Kit as a living document, and invite planners and policymakers to offer suggestions and share the work from their communities using the contact form.

Learn more about the Tool Kit

Watch the March 2023 webinar to see what's included in the Tool Kit:

The Toolkit:

Strategy Guide

The Strategy Guide is a menu of strategies that municipalities can consider based on their unique circumstances and characteristics, including staff and budgetary resources, environmental conditions, population, and community resources and priorities.

Wisconsin Examples – Local Climate Action

A growing number of local governments in Wisconsin are adopting plans and policies to address climate change. See a comprehensive list of local climate plans and policies in Wisconsin with a summary of each and link to the full documents.

U.S. Examples – Climate Action Plans

A collection of exemplary Climate Action Plans from around the United States. This is not a comprehensive list, but rather an aspirational collection of best practices.

Resources

The resources listed are a collection of guides, reports, and data tools for further support and assistance in climate planning.

Local Climate Action in Wisconsin Examples

A growing number of local governments in Wisconsin are adopting plans and policies to address climate change. Below is a comprehensive list of local climate plans and policies in Wisconsin with a summary of each and link to the full documents. If your community has adopted a climate plan or policy not on this list, please contact us.

Dane County: Climate Action Plan	+

City of Eau Claire: Renewable Energy Action Plan	+

Eau Claire County: 100% Renewable Energy Resolution	+

City of Fitchburg: Clean Energy Resolution	+

City of La Crosse: Climate Action Plan	+

City of Madison: 100% Renewable Madison	+

City of Madison: Climate Forward Agenda	+

City of Madison: Sustainability Plan	+

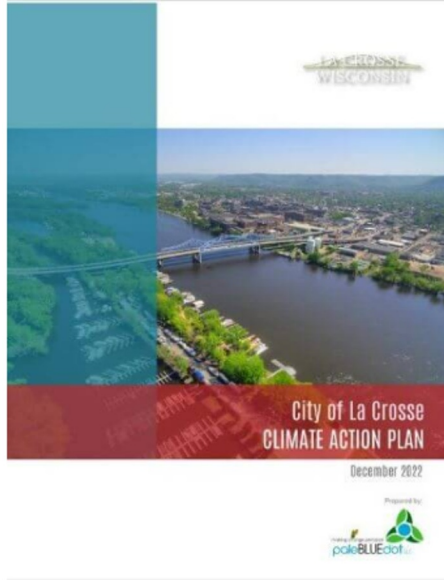| City of Madison: Building Energy Saving Program	+

City of Middleton: Sustainable City Plan	+

- **Climate Action Planning Tool Kit**
  - Strategy Guide
  - Climate Action Plans from the US
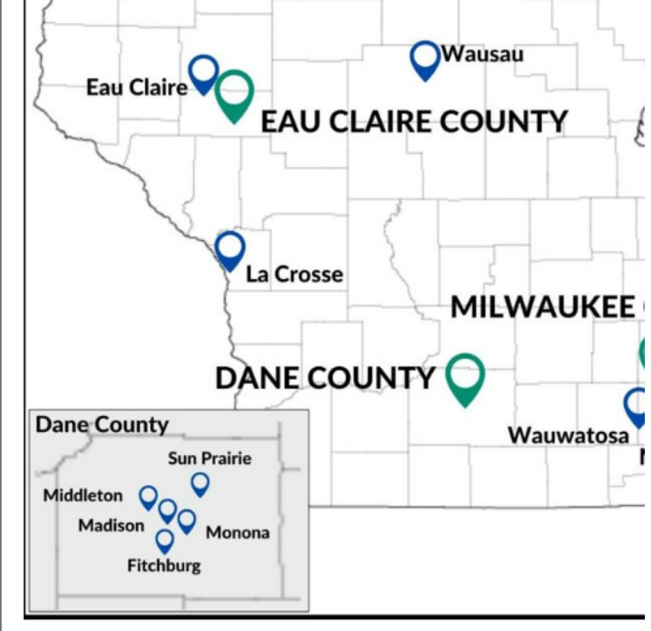 - Resources

CLIMATE PLANS & POLICIES

Climate Action Plan – *adopted January 2023*

City of La Crosse
CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

December 2022

Prepared by:
paleBLUEdot

Summary +

Statement on Equity +

Equitable Process (Community Engagement) +

Metrics +

Municipal Climate Action Plans From Around the US

Below is a collection of exemplary Climate Action Plans from around the United States. This is not a comprehensive list, but rather an aspirational collection of best practices. Please note that not all strategies in these Plans are applicable in Wisconsin, based on variance in state laws and practices.

- **Climate Action Planning Tool Kit**
  - Strategy Guide
  - Local Climate Action in Wisconsin
  - Resources

Ann Arbor, MI	+
Baltimore, MD	+
Berkeley, CA	+
Boston, MA	+
Cedar Rapids, IA	+
Cleveland, OH	+
Denver, CO	+
Evanston, IL	+
Flagstaff, AZ	+
Iowa City, IA	+
Oakland, CA	+
Portland, OR	+
Washington, DC	+

Ann Arbor, MI	+

Baltimore, MD	+

Berkeley, CA	+

Boston, MA	+

Cedar Rapids, IA	+

Cleveland, OH	+

Denver, CO	+

Evanston, IL	—

Climate Action and Resilience Plan – *adopted 2018*
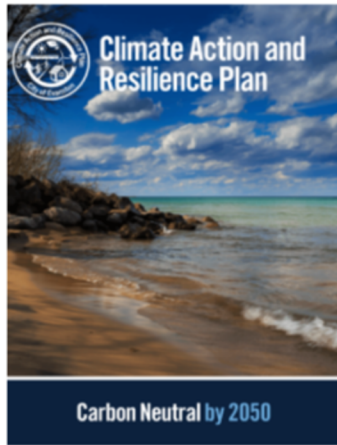
Summary: The Evanston, IL Climate Action Plan lists "equity-centered" as one of three guiding principles. The Plan is strong on outreach and engagement and is notably inclusive of community members, though it does not specify who was involved in the planning process. The Plan lacks specific details for strategies and tactics related to implementation, does not include costs or

Resources

Laws & Policies

Data Tools

Funding Guides

Energy Efficiency & Electrification

Wisconsin-Specific Resources

Disaster/ Emergency Management

Guides & Reports

Engagement, Environmental Justice & Advocacy

Transportation

Resources

The resources listed below are a collection of guides, reports, and data tools for further support and assistance in climate planning. They can be sorted by category or alphabetically by clicking at the top of the columns below; or use the Search box to look for specific resources.

Search: [   ]

Categories ▲	Resources ⇅
Data Tools	Air Quality Index
Data Tools	CDC Social Vulnerability Index
Data Tools	DHS Wisconsin Environmental Public Health Tracker
Data Tools	DNR Forest Canopy data
Data Tools	DNR Impaired Waters data
Data Tools	DNR Public Access to Boat Ramps
Data Tools	DNR Waste Sites data
Data Tools	EPA EJ screening tool
Data Tools	Justice 40 Map Screening Tool (beta version)
Data Tools	National Institute for Transportation and Communities (NITC) Tool for measuring transition to electric transit fleets
Data Tools	State Climate Policy Tracker
Data Tools	US Census Community Resilience Estimates
Data Tools	USDA data on food desert locations

- **Climate Action Planning Tool Kit**
  - Strategy Guide
  - Local Climate Action in Wisconsin
  - Climate Action Plans from the US

Resources

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Search: [   ]

Categories ⬍	Resources ▲
Disaster/Emergency Management	AARP/FEMA: Disaster Resilience Tool Kit
Energy Efficiency & Electrification	ACEEE Leading with Equity
Engagement, Environmental Justice & Advocacy	ACEEE Leading with Equity
Energy Efficiency & Electrification	ACEEE Scorecard
Engagement, Environmental Justice & Advocacy	Action for the Climate Emergency (ACE)
Data Tools	Air Quality Index
General Guides & Reports	American Cities' Climate Challenge
General Guides & Reports	American Planning Association Climate Change Policy Guide
General Guides & Reports	American Planning Association Equity in Zoning Planning Guide
Disaster/Emergency Management	American Planning Association Hazard Mitigation Policy Guide
General Guides & Reports	American Planning Association Hazard Mitigation Policy Guide
Engagement, Environmental	Arrested Mobility Report

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Strategy Guide

The Strategy Guide is not a scorecard, but rather a menu of strategies that municipalities can consider based on their unique circumstances and characteristics, including staff and budgetary resources, environmental conditions, population, and community resources and priorities.

The Guide can be consulted at any phase of the process, from drafting a resolution, to crafting a plan, through implementation and evaluation, so that future follow-on steps are clear. It should be shared among staff across municipal departments and with elected officials/policy-makers to support collaborative efforts and make sure priorities are aligned.

The Strategy Guide includes the following components: Community Engagement, Mitigation Strategies to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Resiliency Strategies, Workforce, Equitable Access to Resources, Metrics and Evaluation, and Governance.

Each component of the strategy guide is essential to meeting the Toolkit's goal of providing Wisconsin communities a resource for incorporating equity considerations in regard to climate action planning.

- **Climate Action Planning Tool Kit**
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Strategy Guide Components:

Community Engagement

👥 Inclusive Community/Stakeholder Outreach and Input ⌄

Mitigation Strategies to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

〜 **Energy Efficiency** ⌄

☼ **Renewable Energy** ⌄

🚌 **Transportation: Access to Reliable and Safe Transportation** ⌃

Objective: Historically, communities of color and people living in low-income neighborhoods are less likely to own a vehicle. These communities and people living in rural areas are less likely to have access to convenient public transit and safe bicycle and pedestrian networks and are more vulnerable to pedestrian crashes. Additionally, many police departments lack comprehensive methods for accurately recording and reporting pedestrian and bicycle crash data.

> *Do your transportation networks prioritize safe, easy, and convenient access to public transit and multi-modal transportation networks for everyone in your locality, particularly those without access to a vehicle? Do low and moderate income neighborhoods have access to active transportation networks for walking and biking?*

LEARN MORE

Examples of Data Needed for Equitable Strategy Development (Qualitative and Quantitative)

- Do you know where people live who are most likely to lack access to a reliable vehicle?
- Do you have complete GIS data showing sidewalk and pedestrian networks?
- Do you have complete GIS data showing designated bicycle routes, including multi-use trails and marked bike lanes?
- Do you have complete information on police reports of bicycle and pedestrian crashes?
- Are you using crash data to prioritize street and intersection redesign?
- Are you designing transit and micro transit routes using data showing where the most vulnerable populations (rural and urban) in your community need to go?

Examples of Equity-Based Municipal Strategies

Public Transit:

- Employ progressive pricing for public transit
- Prioritize transit routes serving low-income communities
- Plan for transit routes connecting housing with economic/ job centers
- Provide micro transit options (e.g., on-demand shuttles) for low-income rural communities

Active Transportation:

- Provide/expand access for active transportation and micro-mobility options such as biking share/bike trails, scooters, etc.
- Re-connect communities impacted/bisected by past highway projects
- Implement a Complete Streets policy to prioritize transportation modes for people outside of vehicles

Safety:

- Prioritize pedestrian safety improvements in low-income communities
- Ensure community-based climate resiliency plans and evacuation strategies include public

Opportunities

- New funding from federal government under IRA for EV charging
- Review DOT and County road expansion wish lists; encourage scoring systems that channel funding toward fix-it-first, transit expansion, transit electrification
- Support MPOs
- Advocate for community control of charging infrastructure

Obstacles

- PSC regulations
- State DOT has authority to continue investing funds in highway expansion, with its continued adverse effects on emissions goals and air quality impacts on low-income and BIPOC communities
- Communities in WI are precluded from establishing regional transportation agencies (RTAs) by the legislature
- Currently, the only funding allocated by WisDOT for bike/ped infrastructure comes from federal TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program), which is competitive.
- Wisconsin removed Complete Streets language from the administrative code in 2015. There are no state standards for Complete Streets.

Municipal Examples

- Madison

Resources and Contacts for Technical & Policy Support

Energy burden & climate impacts in SE Wisconsin: Connecting lived experience with climate change

Next Steps

- Feedback survey: https://forms.gle/5dCXrrAErtNwu3g76
- Connecting with collaborators to share resources
- Bring us YOUR stories of impact!
- Bring us YOUR climate and equity success stories!

Contact the WCT Coordinator at susan@1kfriends.org

https://wisconsinclimatetable.org
https://wisconsinclimatetable.org/equity-in-climate-action-planning-tool-kit/