



# Clackamas County Climate Actions

August 2020

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*By January 2022, a Climate Action Plan is adopted for our community with specific recommendations to reach the goal of being carbon neutral by 2050.*

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Clackamas County is committed to addressing climate change as a way to support the long-term prosperity and security of our community. As a large, complex challenge, the County is approaching this work with both long-term planning and immediate action. This summary tracks policy actions taken by the Board of County Commissioners, the various groups of staff and community members working to develop the county-wide climate action plan, and actions currently underway to reduce the County's greenhouse gas emissions. **Staff will update this summary each month, with new content highlighted in dark red, and summarized below.**

## **New in August:**

- Clackamas County is in the process of finalizing a contract to develop the climate action plan. On August 4, the County announced an *Intent to Award* to contract with the Sustainability Solutions Group (SSG).
- The Department of Transportation and Development is working with PGE to analyze the County fleet for opportunities to reduce our carbon footprint through electrification options. We will then expand the analysis to evaluate other opportunities to reduce fleet emissions.

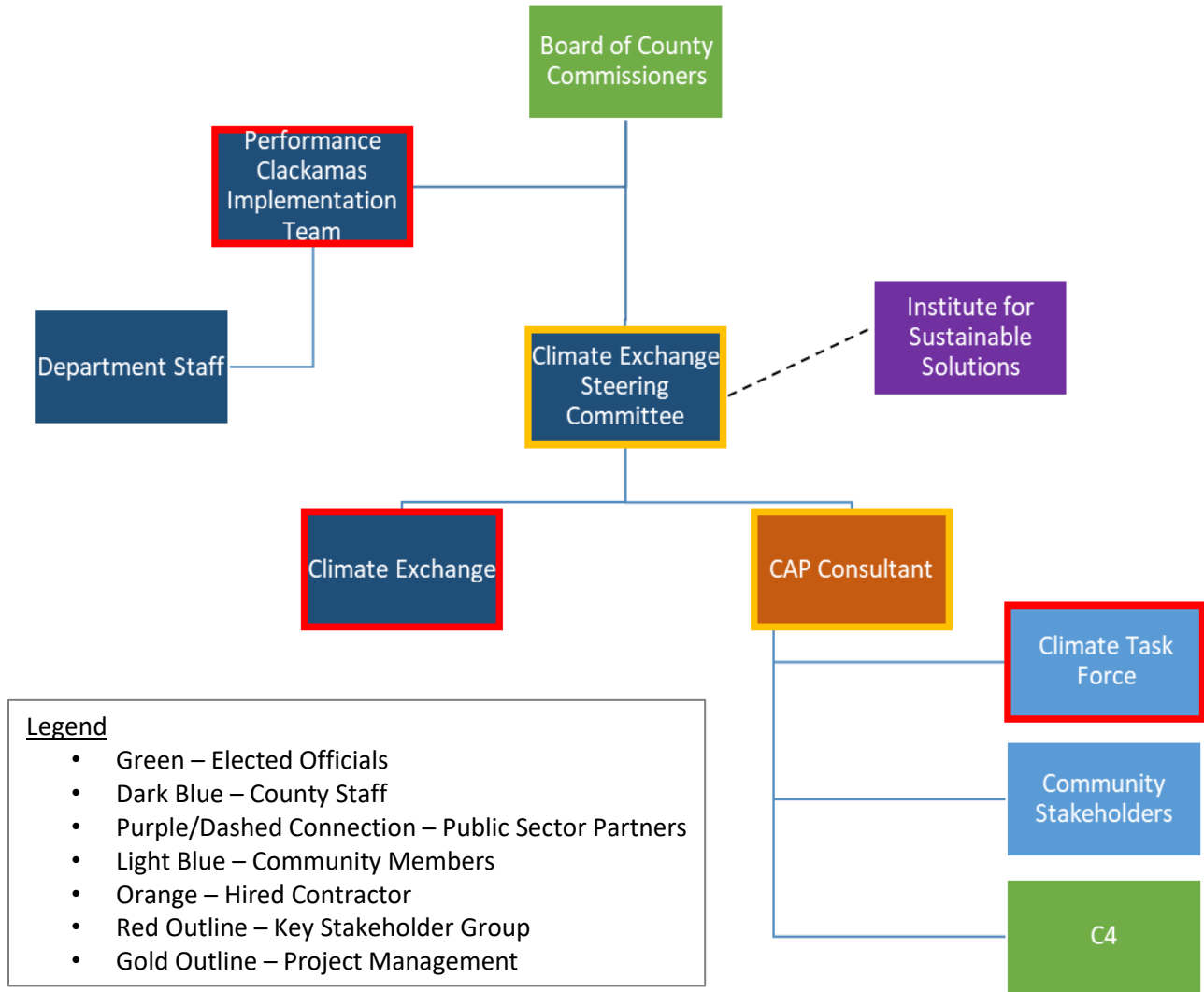
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## Board of County Commissioner Climate Decisions and Policy Sessions

2020	<b>June 9:</b> Held a Policy Session on Greenhouse Gas Inventory - <a href="https://www.clackamas.us/meetings/bcc/presentation/2020-06-09-0">https://www.clackamas.us/meetings/bcc/presentation/2020-06-09-0</a>
	<b>April 28:</b> Held a Policy Session on Proposed Renewable Electricity for County Operations - <a href="https://www.clackamas.us/meetings/bcc/presentation/2020-04-28-1">https://www.clackamas.us/meetings/bcc/presentation/2020-04-28-1</a>
	<b>Jan. 15:</b> Held a Planning Meeting on Climate Action Plan Development - <a href="https://www.clackamas.us/meetings/bcc/presentation/2020-01-15">https://www.clackamas.us/meetings/bcc/presentation/2020-01-15</a>
2019	Added a specific goal about climate action to the county's updated Performance Clackamas strategic plan: <i>By January 2022, a Climate Action Plan is adopted for our community with specific recommendations to reach the goal of being carbon neutral by 2050.</i>
	<b>Sept. 4:</b> Board of Commissioners Policy Session on Climate Action Planning - <a href="https://www.clackamas.us/meetings/bcc/presentation/2019-09-04-0">https://www.clackamas.us/meetings/bcc/presentation/2019-09-04-0</a>
2018	Directed staff to develop an updated countywide climate action plan.
2017	Reaffirmed the county's climate goals.
2008	Adopted the U.S Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration and a resolution on climate change.

## Teams Involved in the Climate Action Plan Process



### Climate Exchange

The Climate Exchange was formed in 2018. This group of staff members from across County departments meets monthly to support the development of the climate action plan and to facilitate greater coordination between departments on climate action. As of August 2020, six departments participate in the Climate Exchange:

- Transportation and Development (DTD)
- Water Environment Services (WES)
- Health, Housing, and Human Services (H3S)
- Disaster Management (DM)
- Business and Community Services (BCS)
- Public and Government Affairs (PGA)

This group produced a lunch and learn series in 2019 to share how different departments are grappling with climate change, and provided significant input into the climate action plan scope of work.

### **Climate Exchange Steering Committee**

The Climate Exchange Steering Committee was formed in 2019 as a small focused group of Climate Exchange Members to provide direction and produce work products in support of the climate action plan. This group will serve as the core project management group for the climate action plan.

### **Implementation Team**

The Performance Clackamas Implementation Team for the climate action plan was formed in 2019, after the Board of County Commissioners adopted the strategic initiative “By January 2022, a Climate Action Plan is adopted for our community with specific recommendations to reach the goal of being carbon neutral by 2050.” This group of department directors and staff supports the development of the climate action plan as department leadership, providing input to the planning process and allocating resources for its successful adoption and implementation.

### **Consultant (pending)**

As of August 2020, Clackamas County is in the process of finalizing a contract to develop the climate action plan. On August 4, the County announced an *Intent to Award* to contract with the Sustainability Solutions Group (SSG). The consultant team will provide technical analysis, community engagement, and synthesis with County direction to produce the climate action plan, implementation plans, and supporting documents.

### **Task Force (pending)**

Development of a community task force for the climate action plan will be one of the first tasks for the consultant. This group will provide in-depth guidance from community members and partners to complement broad community engagement. Members of the task force will commit to regular meetings for the 18 months of the plan development, significantly influencing the strategy. We anticipate opportunities for subject matter experts and community members with specific interests to participate in subcommittees or other groups that focus on particular topic areas, and require less of a time commitment.

## Climate Action Plan Development and Foundation Building

### RFP

Clackamas County has developed a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the county-wide climate action plan to achieve the goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2050. This contract will include:

- the community engagement and analysis to develop the plan,
- the climate action plan itself,
- a series of 2-year implementation plans, and
- a climate lens for County activities beyond those included in the climate action plan.

The plan will address both the County as an organization and the wider community, while recognizing that many partners are needed to truly address climate change. The plan will establish strategies to reduce the county's greenhouse gas emissions, increase our ability to pull carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and increase our resilience to the impacts of climate change, which are already occurring.

The climate action plan will provide an overall strategy for achieving the goal of carbon neutrality. The three implementation plans will detail specific actions that the County will undertake over 2-year timeframes. This will allow the County to focus resources strategically and adapt to changing circumstances or information over time. The climate lens will be a tool to evaluate County projects and priorities for their impact (both positive and negative) on climate change.

The RFP lays out the following criteria for success for the climate action plan:

- **Meaningful** – with implementable, measurable goals, milestones, and actions that will place our community on a path to becoming carbon neutral by 2050.
- **Data-driven** – aligned with best available science; based on an analysis of our baseline carbon footprint, data about our community's demographics, economy and ecosystems, and the effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and benefits of mitigation and adaptation actions.
- **Integrated** – with strategies to reduce our carbon footprint and adapt to a changing climate embedded in the work of the County departments, and institutionalized through relevant plans and policies, including Performance Clackamas.
- **Transparent & accountable** – with community access and input into plan development, implementation, progress reports, and updates, such as through an advisory board.
- **Coordinated** – with interdisciplinary efforts and actions to reduce our carbon footprint and build resilience efficiently and effectively, sharing a coherent story that all County's departments can share.
- **Enabling of early action** – with some visible actions that the County can take quickly, while understanding that other actions take significant time to plan and implement.
- **Equitable** – inclusive, sharing the benefits of climate action widely, and engaging and accounting for those in the community who may be disproportionately impacted and/or have less opportunity to advocate for their own interests.
- **Supported** – by identifying the resources needed to implement the plan, and how the plan and/or actions may be eligible for potential federal, state, or local resources that might be available for mitigation and adaptation.

The RFP includes direction that development of the climate action plan must consider resilience and just transition. As stated in the request for proposals:

*One way of embodying the commitment to equity outlined above is by following the principles of a just transition. This means that the County's climate plan recognizes that these changes have different potential impacts on people, and works to support transitions from systems and practices that contribute to climate change, rather than imposing mandates, especially for individuals and communities with fewer resources.*

*Another way to embody a commitment to equity is to acknowledge that the impacts of climate change are and will be felt more keenly by some people than others in our community. As we seek to create a community that is more resilient to climate change, the County should be inclusive of those who are more vulnerable or who have strong vested interests in specific aspects of resilience to climate within our economy and natural systems.*

As departments seek to add actions to their own strategic plans in support and alignment to the Board's goal, the final climate action plan will serve as a resource in determining the actions to take, and milestones to establish.

#### **Quarterly Board Liaison updates**

In addition to policy and planning sessions, Sustainability and Solid Waste staff provides updates to two commissioner liaisons every quarter. These updates allow commissioners to keep up to date on climate work and learn more about areas of interest.

#### **ISS work**

The Institute for Sustainable Solutions is a Portland State University organization that applies academic skills and resources to real-world problems. They have supported the County's climate work through research into best practices, facilitating internal interviews to better understand the priorities and needs of various departments, and providing real-time evaluation processes to keep the climate work on track.

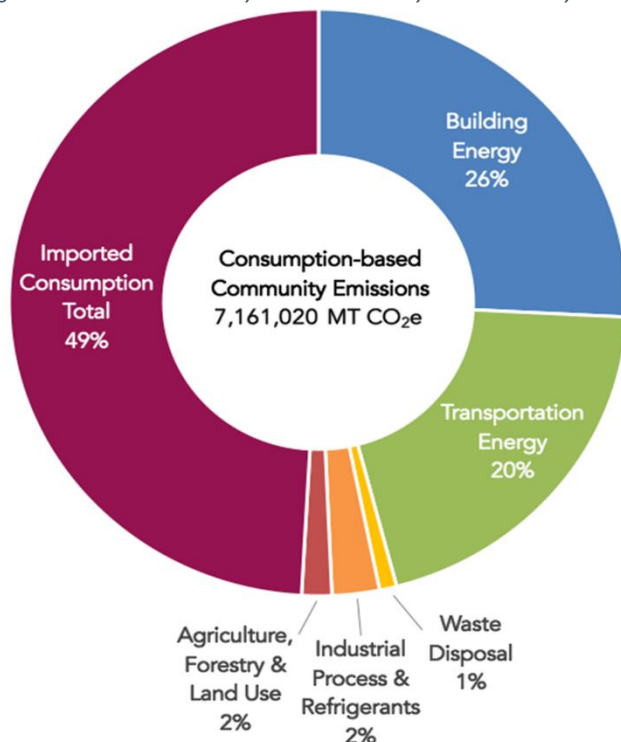
#### **Community GHG Inventory**

The County contracted with Good Company to conduct a greenhouse gas inventory for the community, which was completed in June 2020. This inventory provides a baseline for the estimated emissions of the community in 2018. This baseline helps to identify which climate actions have the most potential to reduce our contribution to climate change, and to compare future years against, tracking progress on reduced emissions.

#### **Website**

In April 2020, the County published a website for community members to find information on the climate action plan

Figure 1 - Clackamas County 2018 Community GHG Inventory Results



(<https://www.clackamas.us/sustainability/climateaction>). This website shares information about any upcoming events and engagement opportunities, milestones in the climate action planning process, a sign-up for our mailing list (more below), and how climate action aligns with the Performance Clackamas priorities.

### **Mailing List**

The climate action plan mailing list is a tool to help us keep community members and partners informed about milestones and upcoming events. People can sign up on the climate action plan website or by emailing [climate@clackamas.us](mailto:climate@clackamas.us).

### **Presentations**

Three community groups have requested presentations on the climate action plan, which Eben Polk, Sustainability Supervisor, has provided. These were all given before the scope of work was finalized, so they included only high-level information. Public policy session presentations are linked above in the first section. County staff presented the results of the community greenhouse gas inventory on June 29 from 6-7:30 via Zoom webinar.

### **City Engagement**

The Clackamas County Coordinating Committee (C4) expressed interest in the County's climate action planning. Staff presented to C4 on June 4, and is working with cities to identify a range of ways that cities may choose to be involved in the project, recognizing that different cities are in different places regarding capacity and priority placed on climate work. Options for city engagement will be presented to the Board before being finalized.

### **Internal Engagement**

County staff are an important community for this plan to engage, as departments across the County will be responsible for implementing the actions in this plan. The lunch and learn series that the Climate Exchange hosted in 2019 was an early type of engagement. Additional engagement opportunities will be incorporated into the climate action plan process for all levels of County staff and all departments.

### **Youth Engagement**

In September of 2019, students from Rex Putnam High School wrote a letter to the Board of County Commissioners about climate action in association with the global youth climate strike. In response to this letter, Sustainability and Solid Waste staff interviewed students from multiple high schools in the county, and invited students to share their hopes and concerns on Instagram. Staff initially planned to bring the students together for an event to discuss climate action, but the closure of schools in response to COVID-19 has postponed those plans until fall 2020.

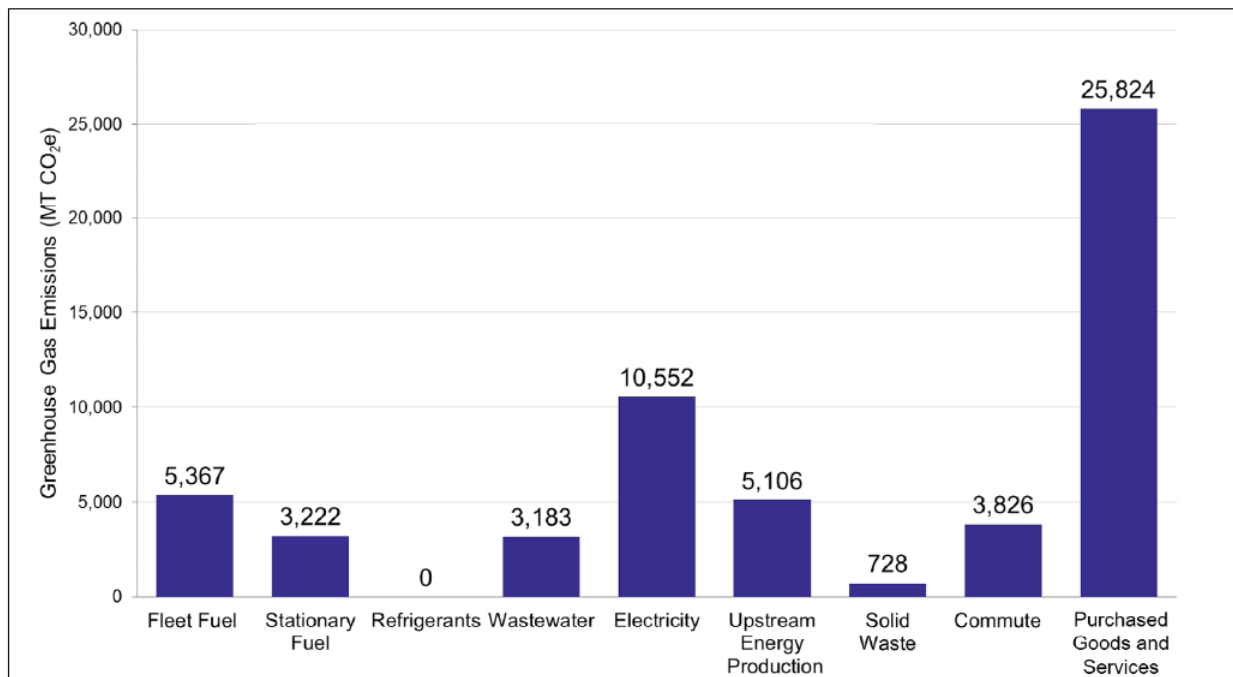


## County Operational GHG Reduction Actions

### Operational GHG Inventory

As a baseline for understanding the greenhouse gas emissions that County operations produce, Sustainability and Solid Waste conducted an operational GHG inventory for the County for the 2017 calendar year. The results of this inventory help identify types of actions that can best reduce the County's carbon footprint. While purchased goods and services are by far the largest contributor to the County's footprint, actions to reduce that footprint are more complex than other action areas, and will likely take longer to implement.

Figure 2 - Clackamas County 2017 Operational GHG Inventory



### Renewable electricity

Electricity is the second largest contributor to the County's carbon footprint, and one of the easiest sources to address. In April 2020, the Board supported a strategy to purchase carbon-free electricity through a combination of tools to minimize the cost of this action. The link to the policy session is in the first section of this report.

### Low-carbon fleet analysis

Fleet fuel is the third largest contributor to the County's carbon footprint. **The Department of Transportation and Development is working with PGE to analyze the County fleet for opportunities to reduce that footprint through electrification options. We will then expand the analysis to evaluate other opportunities to reduce fleet emissions.**

### EV charging stations

The County has four public electric vehicle charging stations and one fleet charger on the Red Soils Campus, and one public charger at the Brooks Building. These charging stations are past their useful life

and have not functioned consistently in recent years. In 2020, these stations will be replaced and upgraded, more than doubling the number of charging ports available for both fleet and public use. This project will support future reduction of fleet emissions, commute emissions, and emissions by guests to County facilities.

### **High Performance Building Policy**

The County has plans to build several new or replacement buildings in the coming decade, with the new County Courthouse likely in the next few years. Facilities and Sustainability and Solid Waste staff have drafted a policy to incorporate energy efficiency and other sustainability considerations into the design and construction of all new County facilities, when it will be the most cost effective and efficient. This policy will reduce the County's carbon footprint and energy costs as new buildings come on line.

### **SEM work**

Energy Trust of Oregon offers Strategic Energy Management, a program to support organizations seeking to voluntarily reduce their energy use through efficiency and conservation efforts. Clackamas County has participated since 2014, saving the County roughly \$585,000 every year in avoided energy costs, which also translate to avoided greenhouse gasses. Additional investment in this program has strong potential to lead to even greater savings and carbon reductions.