



Climate Ready Oak Park

Executive Summary

July 2022

Introduction: Our Time Is Now

The decisions we make today will determine how climate change will affect us in the future. Climate change presents many interrelated dangers to human and ecosystem health, food and water supply, and transportation and energy reliability. Marginalized communities, who are already coping with systemic inequities, are more likely to be harmed by a climate disaster. If the world continues with “business as usual,” climate change impacts are predicted to become increasingly destabilizing.

Climate Ready Oak Park is a long-range community plan that provides a roadmap to a different future. The actions included will help Oak Park lower greenhouse gases, support biodiversity, and adapt to climate change – and at the same time, grow human connection, support local businesses, and become a more equitable community.

Vision: Oak Park, 2050

As a net-zero greenhouse gas emissions community, Oak Park is doing its part to help the world avoid the worst impacts of climate change. Oak Park’s institutions practice equity by directing resources to those who need it the most, fully including historically underrepresented community members, collaborating with community members as equal partners in decision-making, and creating opportunities that enable historically marginalized community members to benefit fully from sustainable economic development. Oak Park is an environmentally just community, and has strong and mutually beneficial relationships with its neighbors.

Climate Ready Oak Park Commitments

- Decrease community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 60% by 2030, relative to 2019 emission levels.
- Achieve community-wide net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- Establish 30% of Oak Park’s land as green infrastructure or enhanced park management for native plants, wildlife, and people.
- Direct 40% of public climate and sustainability dollars to the most vulnerable and impacted community members.
- Partner with frontline organizations and the most impacted community members to create climate and sustainability policies and programs.

Purchase of voluntary RECs (Renewable Energy Certificates) must not be used in attempt to invalidly subtract from actual emissions. Voluntary RECs are only records of production. They are only records which document that 1,000 kWh of electricity was produced from renewable sources. Voluntary RECs are not equivalent to Carbon Offsets and do not cause removal of existing emissions from the atmosphere. The claim of voluntary RECs as Carbon Offsets would do harm because it would make our emissions inventory inaccurate, would mislead the public, and would detract from taking actions that have real impact on emissions reductions.

Meet Us in Oak Park!

We will add dates for Commission and Board meetings when they are scheduled.

Hosting your own climate event in the Village? Leading a DIY Meeting Kit discussion? We would be happy to promote it right here! Please contact us at climateplan@oak-park.us.

4 DECEMBER 2021	26 APRIL 2022
7 DECEMBER 2021	29 APRIL 2022
8 FEBRUARY 2022	9 MAY 2022
28 FEBRUARY 2022	21 MAY 2022
5 APRIL 2022	5 JUNE 2022
7 APRIL 2022	14 JUNE 2022
12 APRIL 2022	27 JUNE 2022
13 APRIL 2022	

Above: Event Calendar from the Community Engagement Website

Community Involvement Process

The Climate Ready Oak Park community involvement process occurred over a 7-month period, from December 2021 to May 2022. The community involvement strategy focused primarily on achieving procedural equity – processes which ensure the inclusion of two-way communication with underrepresented populations, and considers linguistic, cultural, and other needs for participation.

The process incorporated the expressed priorities and visions of five affinity groups, three human-centered design sessions, four community events, numerous citizen commission meetings, community group and institutional meetings, and website engagement from 17,019 unique users. Community input was reviewed and evaluated for consistency, conflict, and alignment. Several major themes emerged that guided the final Impact Areas, Goals, and Implementation Actions which comprise Climate Ready Oak Park. Further details can be found here: [Climate Ready Oak Park full plan \(arcgis.com\)](#)

Climate Hazards

Climate Hazard Maps

The Climate Hazard Assessment includes maps for the following environmental conditions:

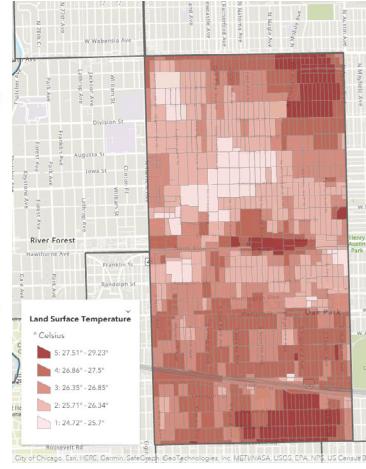
- Tree Canopy Cover
- Impervious Surface Cover
- Flood Risk Cover
- Land Surface Temperature
- Average Daily Traffic Volume
- Air Pollution: Ozone
- Air Pollution: PM 2.5
- Traffic Fatalities & Serious Injuries
- Community-Reported Transportation Hazards

Each map also has two overlay buttons: "CVI Layer" and "SVI Layer." The CVI Layer shows the results of the Climate Vulnerability Index analysis: the areas of the village which have the highest negative impact from all environmental hazards combined. The SVI Layer shows the results of the Social Vulnerability Index analysis: the areas of the village which have the most social vulnerability, based on all demographic factors combined.

Land Surface Temperature

Key Points

- The land surface temperature taken during a sunny day shows neighborhood “hot spots” in Oak Park.
- The areas shown as darkest red had the highest temperature - up to 84.6 degrees Fahrenheit. The hottest areas are in the northeast and southeast corners of the village, and along the CTA Green Line.
- The areas shown as lightest red had the lowest temperature - as low as 76.5 degrees Fahrenheit. The areas are concentrated mainly in north-central Oak Park.
- These temperatures were not taken on an extreme heat day, meaning the possible temperatures on such an extreme heat day could be significantly hotter.



Above: Climate Ready Oak Park Climate Hazard and Social Vulnerability Assessment online

Climate Hazard and Social Vulnerability Assessment

The Climate Hazard and Vulnerability Assessment illustrates the existing environmental and social conditions in Oak Park. The assessment identifies locations of greater climate hazard and the populations that are most vulnerable to climate impacts. This assessment should direct which locations, populations, and environmental issues should be prioritized for climate and sustainability investments. The assessment can be found here: [Existing Conditions & Vulnerability Assessment \(arcgis.com\)](#)

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Greenhouse gases (GHGs) trap heat in the Earth's atmosphere, resulting in climate change. Human activities are responsible for the increase in greenhouse gases that has occurred since the Industrial Revolution. Human activities both add GHGs to the atmosphere, and reduce the ability of natural "carbon sinks", like forests and soils, to remove and store GHGs from the atmosphere. The combustion of fossil fuel is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States.

2019 Oak Park GHG Emissions by Category

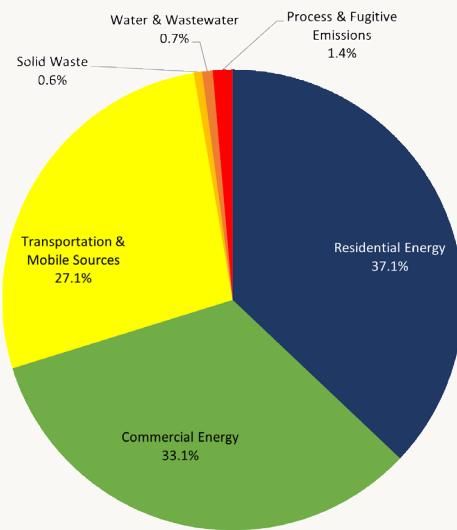


Figure 1: Breakdown of Oak Park's GHG emissions in 2019, by category

Figure 1 shows the breakdown of Oak Park's community greenhouse gas sources, by category. Municipal government operations account for about 1% of all greenhouse gases generated in Oak Park. The three largest sources are 1.) Energy used by residential buildings (37%); 2.) Energy used by commercial buildings (33%); and 3.) Energy used for transportation, mainly personal vehicles (27%). These three categories, when combined, are responsible for more than 97% of Oak Park's greenhouse gas emissions.

In order to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, global greenhouse gas emissions need to be reduced by 50% by 2030, and reach carbon neutrality by no later than 2050. Carbon neutrality, or "net zero," is when the amount of carbon released is balanced with an equivalent amount of carbon sequestered.

Oak Park's "fair share" of greenhouse gas reduction, in accordance with the Paris Agreement, is 1.) Reduce community greenhouse gas reduction by 60% by 2030, based on 2019 emissions levels, and 2.) Reach carbon neutrality not later than 2050.

Figure 2 illustrates the Climate Ready Oak Park greenhouse gas reduction path (dashed line). It also shows the forecasted "business as usual" greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2050, if Oak Park doesn't take action to reduce emissions now. The forecast is used to quantify the emissions reductions needed to meet the 2030 and 2050 goals. Oak Park must reduce emissions by 280,235 MTCO₂e by 2030. Oak Park must reduce emissions by 468,582 MTCO₂e by 2050.

Oak Park GHG Emissions Forecast and Targets

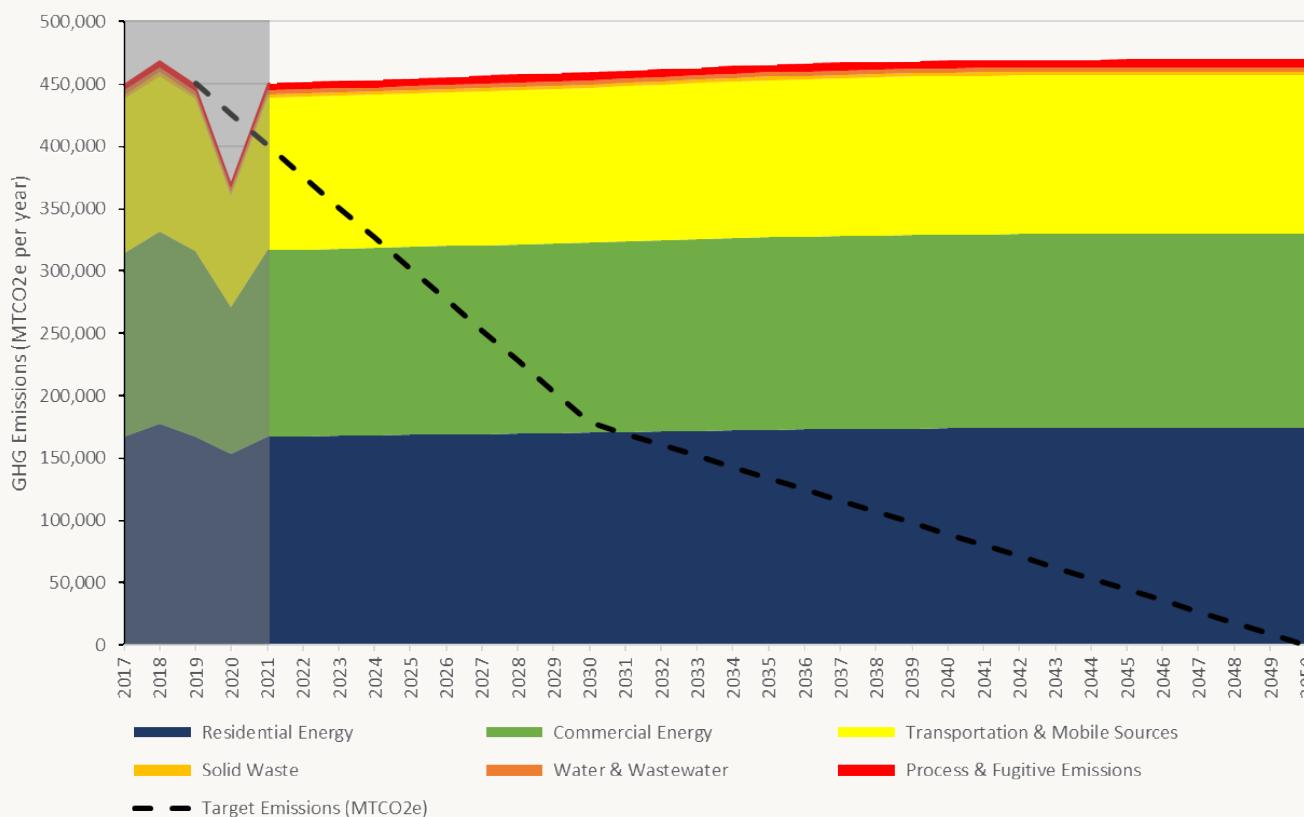
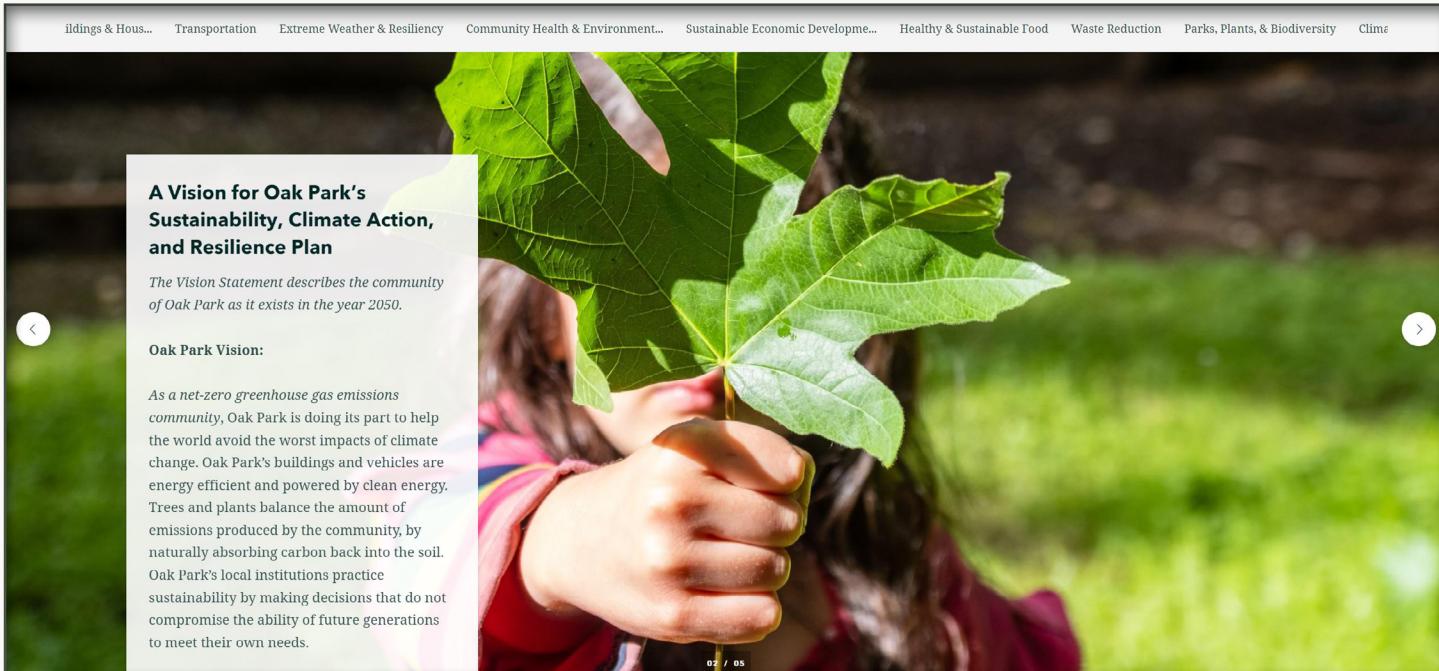


Figure 2: Oak Park GHG Emissions Forecast and 2030-2050 Reduction Targets



Above: Climate Ready Oak Park Full Plan online

Eight Impact Areas

The Climate Ready community engagement process resulted in 44 overarching Goals (see attachment) and 162 implementation Actions, organized according to 8 Impact Areas. See all Actions here: [Climate Ready Oak Park Full Plan \(arcgis.com\)](#).

- Buildings & Housing
- Transportation
- Resilience & Extreme Weather
- Community Health & Environmental Quality
- Sustainable Economic Development
- Healthy & Sustainable Food
- Waste Reduction
- Parks, Plants, & Biodiversity

Climate Action Key Strategies

The Buildings and Transportation Impact Areas contain the actions with the highest potential for greenhouse gas reductions, termed “High Impact Actions” (HIA). These actions are essential for achieving [Climate Ready Commitments 1 and 2](#) (60% greenhouse gas reduction by 2030; Carbon neutrality by 2050).

In order to achieve the 2030 Climate Action Goal, residential buildings, commercial buildings, and transportation must each reduce emissions by approximately 90,000 MTCO₂e (Metric tons of “carbon dioxide equivalent,” or greenhouse gases).

Figures 3 and 4 show scenarios for how to achieve this reduction. Each HIA is expressed in terms of a percentage, with 100% symbolizing the 90,000 MTCO₂e required to meet the 2030 climate action goal. These are two possible scenarios, but actual percentages and greenhouse gas reductions may be adjusted as new opportunities are presented.

2030 Emissions Reduction Scenario Estimate:
Energy Use in Buildings & Housing

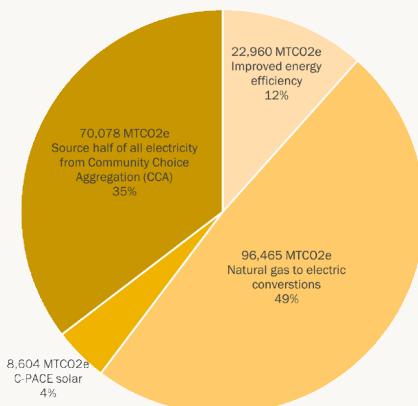


Figure 3: Energy HIA breakdown to meet 60% emissions reduction by 2030

2030 Emissions Reduction Scenario Estimate:
Transportation Actions

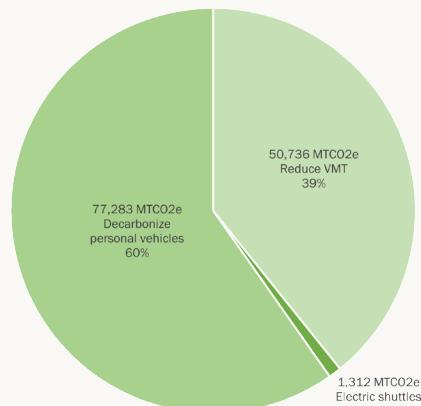


Figure 4: Transportation HIA breakdown to meet 60% emissions reduction by 2030



Photo Source: davidwilson1949 on Flickr

High Impact Actions: Buildings

Action: Set a goal to transition natural gas units in all existing buildings across the Village to electric units. Include language in all projects with Village involvement or funds addressing building energy use.

- **Scenario:** A 50% transition from natural gas equipment to electric equipment, and an equivalent increase of renewable energy on the grid. (49% of 2030 Climate Action Goal)

Action: Negotiate a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) service agreement that requires 100% renewable energy.

- **Scenario:** Source half of Oak Park's electricity from 100% renewable CCA. (35% of 2030 Climate Action Goal)

Action: Set a percent goal for energy efficiency to update existing housing stock and commercial buildings and to build to higher than required by current code. Include language in all projects with Village involvement or funds addressing energy efficiency criteria.

- **Scenario:** A 10% increase in energy efficiency across all Oak Park residential and commercial buildings. (12% of 2030 Climate Action Goal)

Action: Launch an outreach and technical assistance program to increase the number of buildings participating in the Cook County Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) program.

- **Scenario:** Institutional buildings install larger solar arrays on rooftops, parking lots, and parking structures. (4% of 2030 Climate Action Goal)

See the full Climate Ready Oak Park plan for the [Buildings scenario methodology](#)

2030 Emissions Reduction Scenario Estimate: Energy Use in Buildings & Housing

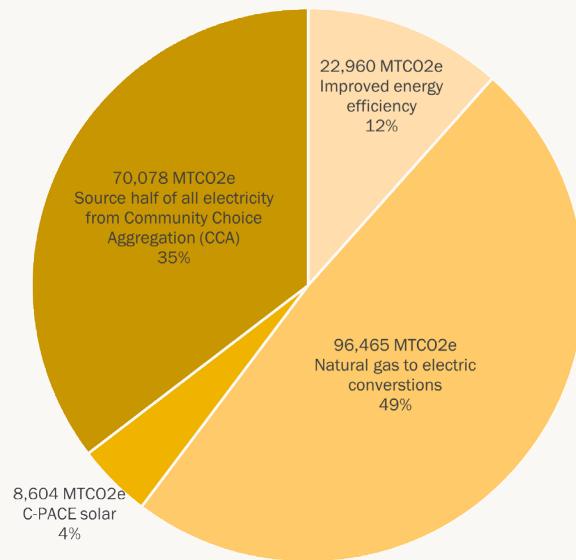


Figure 3: Energy HIA breakdown to meet 60% emissions reduction by 2030



Photo Source: Village of Oak Park

High Impact Actions: Transportation

Action: Pursue Federal and State funding, financing, and technical assistance to transition fleets to zero-carbon vehicles. Earmark a percentage of revenue for zero-carbon transportation options

Action: Implement an outreach and education program to raise awareness and connect residents, businesses, institutions, and property owners with technical and financial assistance to transition personal vehicles to socially and environmentally responsible zero-carbon vehicles, inclusive of transit and active transportation, including through shared-mobility programs.

- **Scenario:** 50% of passenger, gasoline-powered vehicles are transitioned to electric vehicles (EVs) powered by 100% renewable energy. (60% of 2030 Climate Action Goal)

Action: Include a priority criterion to reduce vehicle emissions into capital planning, operations, and maintenance decisions.

Action: Conduct public outreach and engagement to encourage use of public transit as an emissions reduction tool and work with transit agencies to expand transit stops, accessibility, and frequency to serve resident needs.

Action: Continually improve service and reliability for traffic safety infrastructure including crossing signals, traffic signage, and other modern safety solutions, including Vision Zero and updates to the Bike Plan. Address safer crossings to transit stations, vehicle speeds at uncontrolled intersections and thru streets, and vehicle conflicts with pedestrians and bicyclists.

- **Scenario:** A 50% reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) from passenger, gasoline-powered vehicles, and an equivalent shift to train passenger miles. (39% of 2030 Climate Action Goal)

Action: Assess the feasibility of reintroducing the Oak Park shuttle with an all-electric fleet.

- **Scenario:** Operation of ten electric shuttles buses, each with a capacity of 84 passengers, with an equivalent reduction in gasoline-powered passenger vehicles (1% of 2030 Climate Action Goal)

2030 Emissions Reduction Scenario Estimate: Transportation Actions

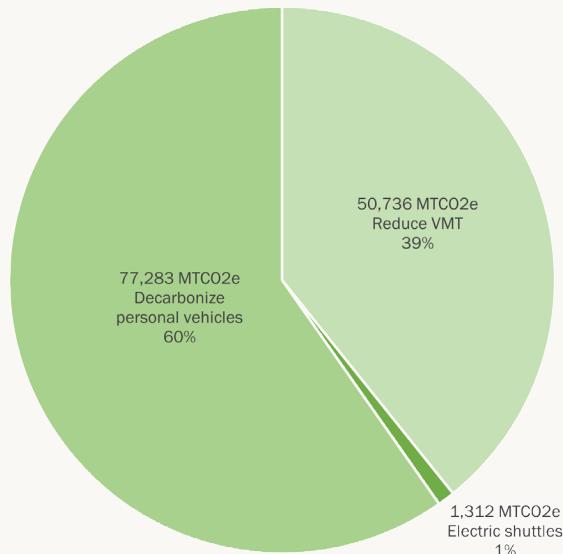


Figure 4: Transportation HIA breakdown to meet 60% emissions reduction by 2030

See the full Climate Ready Oak Park plan for the [Transportation scenario methodology](#)

Biodiversity Key Strategies

The Resilience and Parks, Plants, and Biodiversity Impact Areas contain the actions with the highest potential for creating green infrastructure and enhanced park management, termed “Biodiversity Key Strategies.” These actions are essential for achieving Climate Ready Commitment 3 (30% of Oak Park land by 2030).

Action: Pursue opportunities, including incentives, for installation of high-quality green infrastructure and stormwater best management practices on private lands and public rights-of-way, institutional buildings and land, and underutilized parcels.

Action: Require green infrastructure best management practices and native plants for landscaping requirements on parcels seeking building permits.

Action: Enhance institutional and public campuses through turf removal or reduction where appropriate, introduction of native species, green infrastructure including bioswales, organic soil amendments, and new forested areas.

Action: Establish and implement a green space access goal for Oak Park that increases safe and equitable access to healthy green space and allows passage of wildlife, especially pollinators and migratory birds.

Equity Key Strategies

Every Impact Area contains actions to advance equity during the implementation of Climate Ready Oak Park, termed “Equity Key Strategies.” These actions are essential for achieving Climate Ready Commitments 4 and 5 (40% of funding directed to most-impacted; Partner with frontline communities).

Action: Conduct an Equity Impact Analysis, authentic community engagement, and user-centered design for programs funded by public dollars. (All Impact Areas)

Action: Pursue opportunities to collaborate with neighboring jurisdictions. (All Impact Areas)

Action: Dedicate at least 40 percent of Community Choice Aggregation revenue to clean energy and climate retrofits for highly vulnerable community members.

Action: Host inclusive, community-led walking surveys and mobility events to identify locations and culturally-significant sites that need improvements for pedestrians, centering the experiences of individuals with disabilities and other underrepresented populations.

Action: Coordinate disaster response and evacuation procedures to identify and support individuals at increased risk to impacts from life-threatening events through disaster preparedness planning in collaboration with affected groups such as those with disabilities, older adults, individuals experiencing housing insecurity, and linguistically isolated populations.

Action: Develop permanent and pop-up resilient climate hubs in high vulnerability areas where individuals can receive emergency assistance and temporary shelter during climate disasters. Include feasibility assessment for microgrids.

Action: Develop and implement a percentage of contracts to be awarded to disadvantaged business enterprises.

Action: Prepare a Food Justice Plan that assesses the current state of the local food system, food access and insecurity, and provides recommendations to create an equitable, resilient food system.

Action: Identify options to change waste programs, water/sewer rates, and water conservation program to a progressive rate structure that increases affordability for lower-income residents.

Action: Establish and implement an equitable urban forestry plan.

Plan Implementation

Climate Ready Oak Park is a visionary, long-range, whole-community plan. It will take action from every part of Oak Park - the governing partners, community groups, local institutions, and businesses – to achieve the Climate Ready commitments.

The cost of “business as usual,” though hard to quantify, cannot be ignored. Allowing climate change to continue unchecked will harm our social, environmental, and economic wellbeing. To prevent the worst, we must take action now to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, we must make investments that help buildings, neighborhoods, and infrastructure adjust to climate change impacts that have already started. Funding from a variety of sources within and outside Oak Park, and innovative financing, can help achieve Climate Ready goals while maintaining community affordability.

When making decisions about how to invest in our community, we must consider not only the costs, but also the savings and benefits. Investing \$1 dollar in climate action yields \$4 dollars in benefits ([source](#)). These benefits include avoided damage from extreme weather, more efficient infrastructure services, stronger local food systems and biodiversity, lower housing costs, a more vibrant local economy, and a healthier community.

Climate Ready Oak Park is our road map for imagining and creating a more equitable, sustainable, and resilient community.

Climate Plan Implementation:

Energy Use in Buildings & Housing Goals

Vision: Oak Park's buildings are powered by locally-generated renewable energy. New developments are built sustainably, and most older buildings are preserved and renovated to be carbon neutral. Renewable energy is accessible and affordable to all within the community. Sufficient high-quality, permanently affordable, sustainable housing is available. All community members have access to quality, affordable, energy efficient housing support during times of transition or need. Historic and cultural assets are protected, inclusive of all backgrounds, and acknowledge historical inequities.

Total Cost Range:	Impact:
\$\$\$ = \$1.5 Million+	● = Very High ● = High ● = Moderate
\$\$ = \$500,000-1.5 Million	○ = Low ○ = None
\$ = Under \$500,000	

Impact Areas and Co-Benefits



Climate Plan Implementation:

Transportation

Vision: Oak Park's transportation is safe, accessible to people with disabilities, and reliable. All destinations in Oak Park can be reached sustainably and affordably without pollution. All community members have access to carbon neutral, minimal-pollution transportation options, regardless of living situation or income. Community members enjoy choosing public transportation or active options, like cycling, for local trips and daily commutes. Local government proudly uses carbon neutral vehicles. Local freight deliveries are zero-emission and managed to minimize pollution. Pedestrian and cyclist deaths are eliminated.

Total Cost Range:		
\$ \$ \$	= \$1.5 Million+	
\$ \$	= \$500,000 - 1.5 Million	
\$	= Under \$500,000	

Impact:		
● = Very High	● = High	● = Moderate
○ = Low	○ = None	

Impact Areas and Co-Benefits



Climate Plan Implementation:

Extreme Weather & Resiliency

Vision: When extreme weather hits Oak Park, the community is prepared to adapt and respond. Weather impacts are diminished through a combination of neighborhood-wide green infrastructure, resilient building techniques, and community support systems. All community members have safe shelter that provides for their needs. Emergency information is widely communicated, ensuring that it reaches people with disabilities, older adults and children, those who speak another language, and those experiencing resource or home insecurity. Income, race, ethnicity, age, ability, occupation, and place of residence do not predict a higher risk of danger or cost from extreme weather in Oak Park.

Total Cost Range:		
\$\$\$	= \$1.5 Million+	
\$\$	= \$500,000 - 1.5 Million	
\$	= Under \$500,000	

Impact:		
● = Very High	● = High	● = Moderate
○ = Low	○ = None	

Impact Areas and Co-Benefits



Climate Plan Implementation:

Community Health & Environmental Quality

Vision: Community members have equitable access to affordable and sufficient clean air, land, and drinking water. Drinking water infrastructure, from water treatment plant to tap, is free of harmful contamination. Healthy homes and neighborhoods support a high quality of life for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

Total Cost Range:		
\$ \$ \$	= \$1.5 Million+	
\$ \$	= \$500,000-1.5 Million	
\$	= Under \$500,000	

Impact:		
● = Very High	● = High	● = Moderate
● = Low	● = None	

Impact Areas and Co-Benefits



Climate Plan Implementation:

Sustainable Economic Development

Vision: The local economy provides green job opportunities, living wages for workers, and is continuously strengthened for future generations. The environment in Oak Park does not adversely expose workers to climate hazards. Municipal and private revenue streams are sustainable and equitable. Economic development efforts support a local and regional green economy.

Total Cost Range:			Impact:		
\$ \$ \$	=	\$1.5 Million+	Very High	High	Moderate
\$ \$	=	\$500,000-1.5 Million	Low	None	
\$	=	Under \$500,000			

Impact Areas and Co-Benefits



Climate Plan Implementation:

Healthy & Sustainable Food

Vision: Oak Park has a zero-carbon, circular food system that eliminates food insecurity and relies heavily on food both grown and processed within the region. Food supply in the Village contributes to positive health conditions for community members.

Total Cost Range:		
\$ \$ \$	= \$1.5 Million+	
\$ \$	= \$500,000 - 1.5 Million	
\$	= Under \$500,000	

Impact:		
● = Very High	● = High	● = Moderate
○ = Low	○ = None	

Impact Areas and Co-Benefits



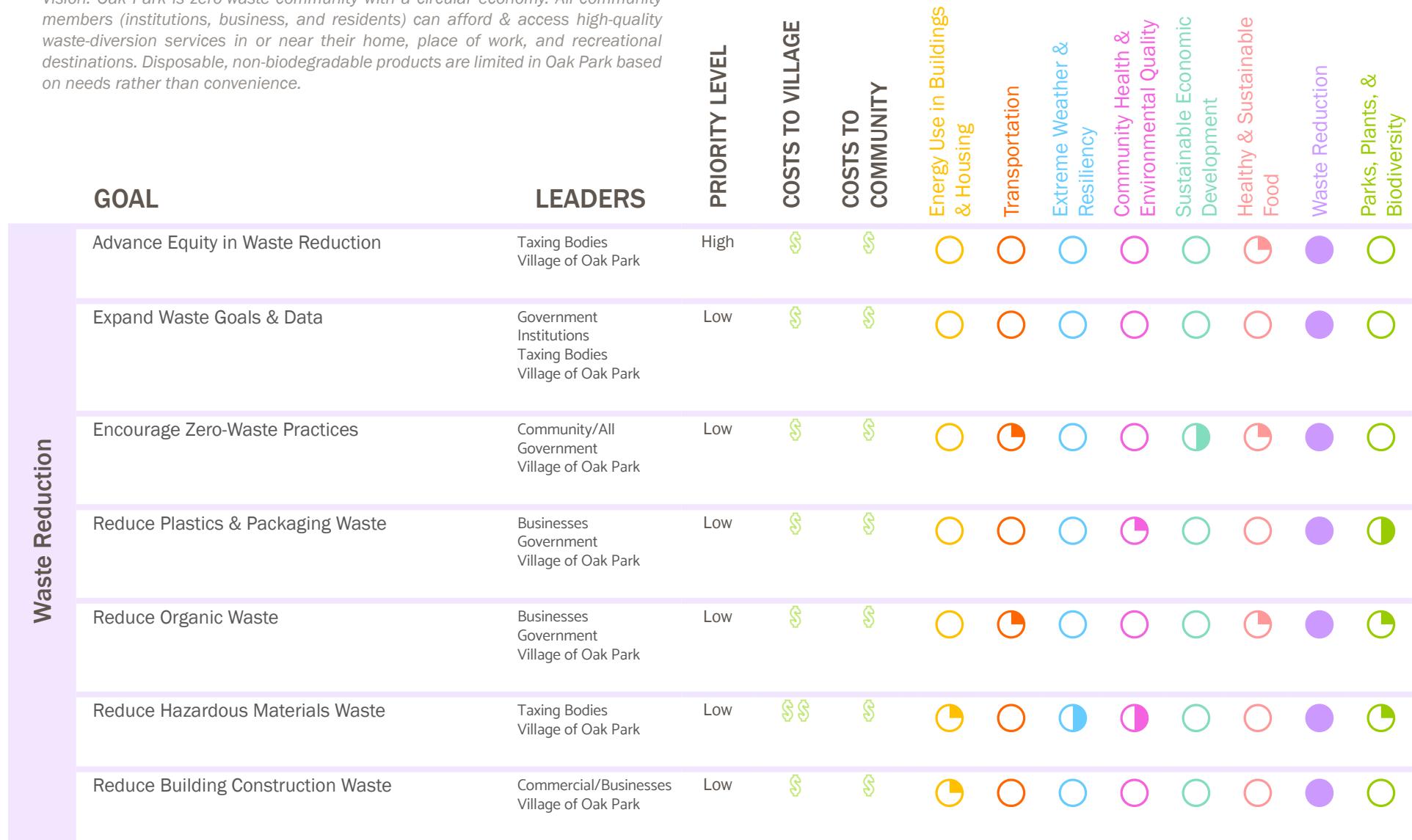
Climate Plan Implementation:

Waste Reduction

Vision: Oak Park is zero-waste community with a circular economy. All community members (institutions, business, and residents) can afford & access high-quality waste-diversion services in or near their home, place of work, and recreational destinations. Disposable, non-biodegradable products are limited in Oak Park based on needs rather than convenience.

Total Cost Range:			Impact:									
\$ \$ \$	= \$1.5 Million+						= Very High = High = Moderate					
\$ \$	= Low = None						= Low = None					
\$	= Under \$500,000											

Impact Areas and Co-Benefits



Climate Plan Implementation:

Parks, Plants, & Biodiversity

Vision: Oak Park residents have equitable access to clean, healthy, and safe natural areas and parks that offer indigenous or non-invasive landscapes and inclusive programming. These areas support native wildlife, are resilient to changing climate conditions, and provide high-quality ecosystem services. Community members have access to high-quality environmental education opportunities through access to and stewardship of the natural environment in vegetated places and parks.

Total Cost Range:		
\$\$\$	= \$1.5 Million+	
\$\$	= \$500,000 - 1.5 Million	
\$	= Under \$500,000	

Impact:		
● = Very High	● = High	● = Moderate
○ = Low	○ = None	

Impact Areas and Co-Benefits



Climate Plan Implementation:

Climate Plan Administration

Total Cost Range:
\$\$\$ = \$1.5 Million+
\$\$ = \$500,000-1.5 Million
\$ = Under \$500,000

GOAL	LEADERS	PRIORITY LEVEL	COSTS TO VILLAGE	
			COSTS TO COMMUNITY	
Share Implementation Responsibilities & Benefits	Community/All Taxing Bodies	High	\$	\$
Activate Community	Community/All Government	High	\$	\$
Connect Resources	Community/All Taxing Bodies	Low	\$	\$
Change Systems	Community/All	Low	\$	\$
Monitor & Update	Village of Oak Park	Low	\$\$	\$