

## VII. Implementation and Next Steps

### City Implementation

Developing Rockville's Climate Action Plan is just the beginning of the work. Without dedicated leadership and resources, the Plan will not automatically reduce emissions, protect the community from climate impacts, or foster equity. Rather, the CAP sets a foundation for climate action in the months and years ahead. Implementing many of the actions in this plan will require community conversations, leveraging of private and public resources, advocacy of policy changes beyond Rockville's borders, and difficult decisions and trade-offs based on community values. The City must move with determination to align and orient staffing, technical capacity, resources, and decision-making to address climate change and protect vulnerable communities. The City will need to experiment with new approaches, technologies, partnerships, and processes and be able to make nimble adjustments to make progress and adjust to our ever-evolving world.

Rockville's first Climate Action Plan charts an aspirational course for achieving a 50% or more reduction from 2005 emissions by 2030 - the first phase in a path to carbon neutrality by mid-century - and enhanced climate resilience with an equity-centered approach. The actions listed are not meant to be prescriptive, but a starting point to set in motion the programs, plans, and projects that reduce emissions and foster resilience. This plan is meant to be flexible to take advantage of new technologies and other opportunities as they arise. Additional actions at the federal, state, and county level could be leveraged to support the success of this plan. Many actions are under the City's authority yet achieving this goal will require everyone's involvement. As a starting point, the *What Can I Do* section on the following pages lists actions individuals can take that make a difference, with links to resources.

This plan is preceded by Rockville's active sustainability program. Some activities are already underway, and some can be initiated on a limited basis with current resources. Several actions require additional resources to move forward and are dependent on budget appropriation. Appendix A provides an overall summary of the CAP, outlining anticipated benefits, lead organization, partner organization(s), and preliminary cost and resource estimates for City implementation. Appendix B provides a CAP Implementation Summary by action type (project, program, policy, etc.) and includes proposed implementation timeframes for actions, which may change based on budget appropriation and federal funding opportunities.

Appendix C summarizes actions for future monitoring that were identified during the public comment period. This list of potential actions could further contribute to Rockville's climate, resiliency, and equity goals, but require additional monitoring, changes to public policies, coordination with outside entities, and/or further evaluation before incorporating them into the plan for implementation. The City will continue to monitor the following actions for consideration of potential future implementation.

Developing a system for regular monitoring of progress should be balanced with the need to focus on implementation. This plan could be updated every ten years, with progress updates submitted annually. Assessing progress on GHG reduction is dependent on COG's coordination of community-wide GHG emissions inventories. This process currently occurs once every three years and often lags a year because of extensive data collection requirements. Since climate mitigation and adaptation touch every department, successful plan adoption also entails identifying training needs and laying the groundwork to support interdepartmental coordination and other capacity-building activities.

Although implementation requires resources, especially for the many actions that extend beyond current departmental capacity, many of these actions constitute good stewardship and make financial sense. Many other City initiatives and plans already set in motion have climate rewards. Saving energy reduces operating costs over the long term and preparing for extreme events reduces their impacts. In some cases, incremental grants or financing structures may be available to help offset upfront costs. These actions also have many community benefits such as a cleaner environment, job creation, beautification, and quality of life. Each action will be designed and implemented with the goal of ensuring equity and protecting vulnerable workers and residents. Investing in Rockville's future will reap benefits far beyond those articulated in this plan.

## What Can I Do?

Everyone can play a role in contributing to Rockville's Climate Action Plan. It requires both system level changes and individual actions to address climate change. Each person, household, business, or organization has a unique carbon footprint and set of opportunities. The actions each of us can take are different, but the goals are the same: Conserve energy, support renewable energy sources, consider your transportation options, reduce waste, look for ways to enjoy and protect nature, volunteer, and be prepared for changing weather.

Start by calculating your carbon footprint and learn easy first steps by visiting the EPA's Carbon Footprint Calculator (<https://www3.epa.gov/carbon-footprint-calculator/>) or the quick **ENERGY STAR**® Home Energy Yardstick (<https://www.energystar.gov/campaign/home-energy-yardstick>).

Establish a personal or household greenhouse gas reduction goal. Consider a few ideas below to reduce your carbon footprint and join with others in your community to do the same. Even small steps can make a difference!

Subscribe to the City's Environment & Sustainability email newsletter at <http://eepurl.com/dtJySD> to receive seasonal sustainability tips, reminders, and program updates.



## Getting Around

**Walk more** for your health and the environment. You can even **Plog** (pick up litter) while you are walking to help keep our neighborhoods clean.

**Take a bike** or scooter to your destination to reduce car emissions and get some exercise. **More resources:** [www.rockvillemd.gov/319/Bicycles](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/319/Bicycles)

**Take Public Transit** to reduce air pollution and be more fuel efficient.

**Drive smart** by reducing idling, servicing your car, or switching to an electric or hybrid car.

**Drive less** by combining errands, car sharing, vacationing closer to home, or teleworking one or more days a week.

**Visit** [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/commute](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/commute) to learn more about the public transit, car sharing, bike programs, and other ways to reduce your car emissions.

**Take one less flight a year** and take "staycations" to visit locations closer to home, such as state or national parks, to save money, reduce stress, and significantly reduce your carbon footprint.



## Energy Efficiency

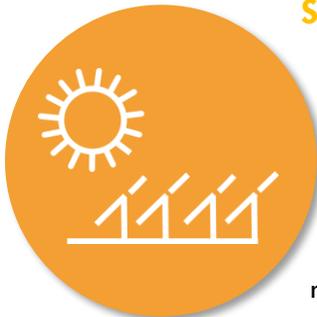
**Schedule an energy assessment** to receive ideas for home comfort upgrades to make your home more energy efficient. See <https://montgomeryenergyconnection.org/> for energy resources.

**Monitor your thermostat** and set your temperatures slightly higher in the summer and lower in winter. Upgrading to a programmable or smart thermostat can help you monitor your energy usage and save money.

**Switch to LED lighting.** LED lights use up to 85% less energy and last up to 25 times longer than incandescent lights.

**Look for the ENERGY STAR® symbol when buying new appliances.** At the end of your appliance's useful life, transition to electric appliances in anticipation of the electric grid becoming greener.

**Wash smart and save energy** by taking shorter showers, washing laundry with cold water, using a dryer ball, and running the dishwasher only when full. Use larger appliances like washing machines at off-peak hours to lower the energy demand.



## Sustainable Energy

**Switch to clean or renewable energy sources.** You can choose your energy supplier in Maryland, including renewable energy sources such as wind and solar. Ensure that you choose a verified clean energy producer by using Green-e, the trusted global leader in clean energy certification.

**Consider divesting from fossil fuels.** If you hold stocks in particular companies, you can sell stocks that involve the oil and gas industry and reinvest in more socially responsible companies.

**Go solar** by joining a solar-coop to install rooftop solar. If your home isn't right for solar, consider community, or shared, solar to receive the same benefits by subscribing to a large commercial project in your utility area.

**Visit** <https://montgomeryenergyconnection.org/> to learn more about how to choose a renewable energy supplier and find solar programs and financing options.



## Sustainable Gardening and Lawns

**Plant native plants and trees** for a biodiverse and resilient ecosystem that absorbs carbon, provides shade, reduces air and water pollution, and provides habitat for native wildlife. Remove non-native invasive plants that crowd out native plants and reduce biodiversity. Plant a mixture of species, including food-bearing (e.g., fruit and nuts) trees and shrubs. Create spaces where you can ‘leave your leaves’

<https://www.nwf.org/Magazines/National-Wildlife/2015/OctNov/Gardening/Leave-the-Leaves>.

**Install RainScapes projects** such as rain gardens, conservation landscapes, rain barrels, permeable pavers, and pavement removal. Save money by applying for RainScapes Rebates at [www.rockvillemd.gov/rainscapes](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/rainscapes).

**Practice sustainable lawn and garden care** by reducing synthetic pesticide and fertilizer use, practicing organic lawn care, reducing the size of your lawn, electrifying lawnmowers and leafblowers if feasible, and composting yard trim. Learn more at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/lawns/>.

**Shop at the Farmers Market.** The farm-fresh fruits, vegetables, plants, cut flowers, preserves, honey, herbs, baked goods and other items that you find at the Rockville Farmers Market are fresher and travel a shorter distance than similar grocery store products. You can find more information at <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/664/Farmers-Market>.

**Join a CSA,** or Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), to get a once-a-week or biweekly box full of local fruits and veggies that are in season delivered to your door or that you pick up. Learn more at <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/agservices/farm-to-table.html>.



## Reduce Waste and Consumption

**Reduce and reuse** by avoiding single use materials, donating, shopping at second-hand stores, yard sales, and using neighborhood free or buy/sell/trade groups.

**Recycle right** by learning what items can be recycled at [www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-refuse](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-refuse). When in doubt, throw it out. Make sure hazardous waste, electronics and metal are disposed of properly.

**Gift differently** by giving experiences, buying local, volunteering or donating in someone’s name, and minimizing wrapping waste.

**Reduce food waste and save money** by meal planning, only buying the ingredients you need, and using reusable meal containers. Learn more about food composting at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/sws/foodwaste/>.

**Practice Meatless Mondays.** Every Monday, choose a vegetarian meal over a meal that includes meat. A complete plant-based diet is not for everyone, but a small reduction in meat consumption one day a week can be a healthy choice that’s also good for the environment.



## Volunteer

**Help Rockville's environment** by joining stream and trail cleanups, non-native invasive removals, and other nature-based volunteer opportunities.

**Join a city board or commission** to lend your expertise, thoughts, ideas, and opinions to shape Rockville's future.

**Help a neighbor, senior or other vulnerable community members by joining** or starting a "Rockville Village" to foster social connections and coordinate volunteer help. Learn more at [www.rockvillemd.gov/villages](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/villages).

**Volunteer or donate to local assistance programs and social and environmental justice efforts.** Underserved communities are disproportionately affected by climate change. For a list of City assistance programs, visit <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/385/Donation-Sponsorship-Programs>.

**Visit** [www.rockvillemd.gov/volunteer](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/volunteer) to find volunteer opportunities with the city.



## Plan

**Purchase flood insurance and flood-proof your home.** Visit the National Flood Insurance Program at <https://www.floodsmart.gov/> to evaluate your risk and then, depending on what you learn, buy insurance, and make home improvements.

**Build an emergency preparedness kit** to prepare for climate disasters by having basic household items on hand, such as nonperishable food, water, a battery-operated radio, a flashlight, first aid materials, extra batteries, and a backup of critical files.

**Stay informed and reduce risks** from high heat days, storms, insect borne illnesses and harmful algae blooms. Register with the Alert Montgomery System for immediate emergency notifications. Follow City of Rockville and Montgomery County on social media for non-emergency updates.

**Build community connections** to help vulnerable neighbors, support community shelters and cooling centers, and ensure pets are hydrated and cared for.

**Visit** [www.rockvillemd.gov/272/Emergency-Preparedness](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/272/Emergency-Preparedness) for emergency preparedness tips.