

Climate Action 2050 Plan Updates

Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

Committee on Community, Environment, and Economic Development (CEED)

May 18, 2026

Grant Helle, Director
Office of Sustainability
DAS – Facilities Management



Overview

Climate Action 2050 Plan Background

Implementation Updates

Risks and Challenges

Actions for Sustained Progress



Policy

[File No. 21-389](#)

Commits Milwaukee County operations to become carbon neutral by 2050 and requests the Sustainability Director to develop and administer a strategic plan to achieve carbon neutrality in Milwaukee County facilities and operations by 2050.

[File No. 25-262](#)

Requesting approval of the Climate Action 2050 Plan.

[File No. 26-338](#)

Reaffirming Milwaukee County's commitment to the principles and goals of the Paris Agreement and affirming support for the scientific conclusions of the Greenhouse Gas Endangerment Finding.



Policy



April 25, 2025: CA50 Plan File Signing

Carbon Neutral Operations → 2050!

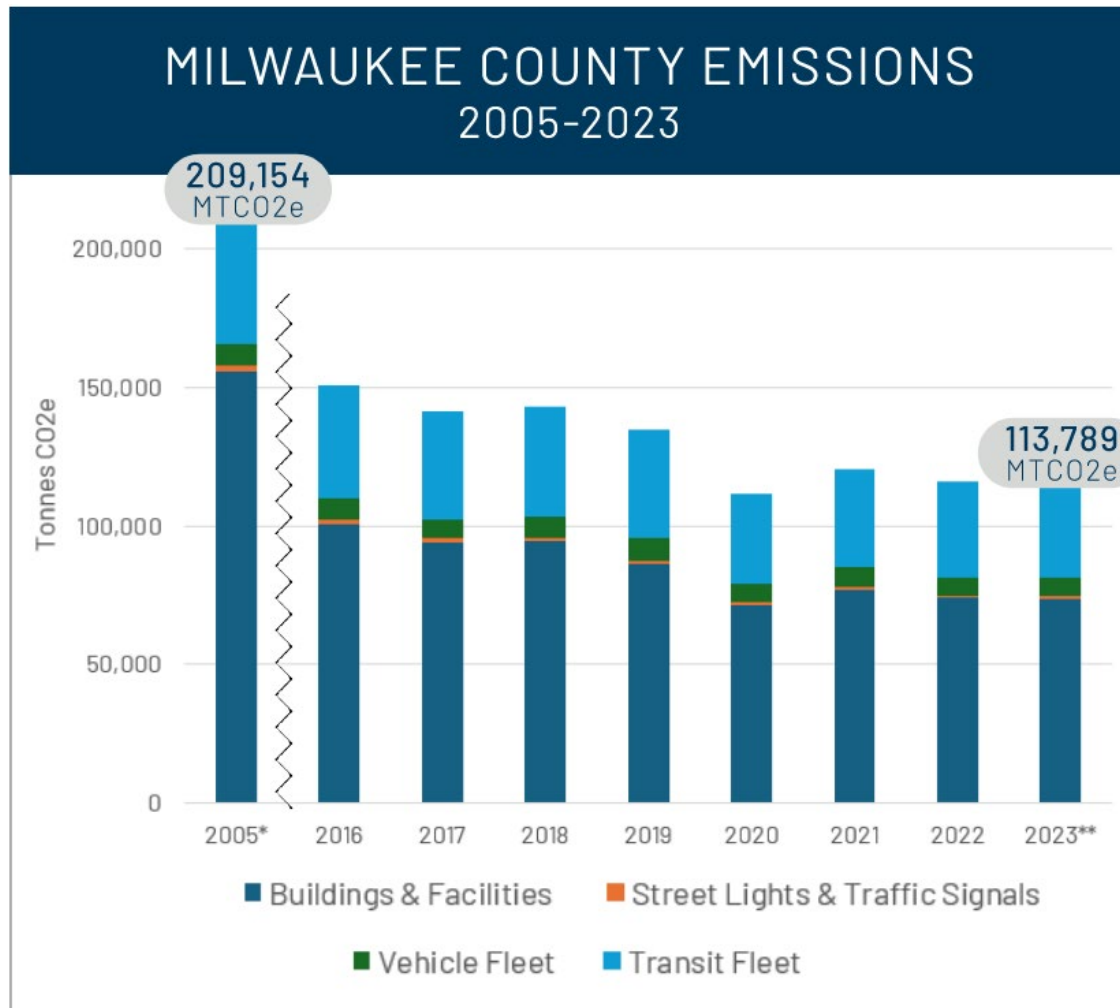


April 1, 2026: Recommitment File Signing

County Recommitting to:

- Paris Agreement
- Greenhouse Gas Endangerment Finding

Carbon Neutrality Commitment



Includes:

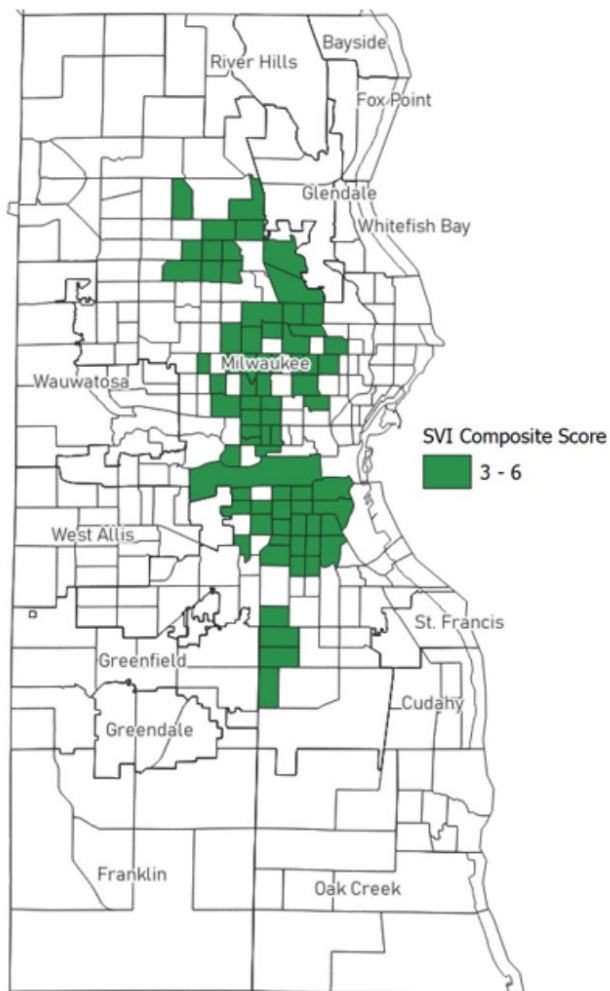
- Scope 1 and 2 emissions
- Specifically attributed to County operations

Excludes:

- Scope 3 emissions
- Non-County operations



CA50 Plan Background



Why is Milwaukee County concerned about carbon emissions?

Carbon emissions accelerate and intensify climate change affecting our most vulnerable populations

Climate Change is a health equity issue!

Critical Concerns:

- Heat Waves/ Extreme Heat Events
- Flooding
- Acute Air Quality Hazards

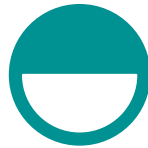


CA50 Plan Background



Project Development

Collaborate with all County departments to develop projects and emissions reduction targets



Community Engagement

Hold series of meetings with community stakeholders to collect feedback



Develop CA50 Plan

Report including individual department plans and County-wide strategy to achieve Carbon Neutrality



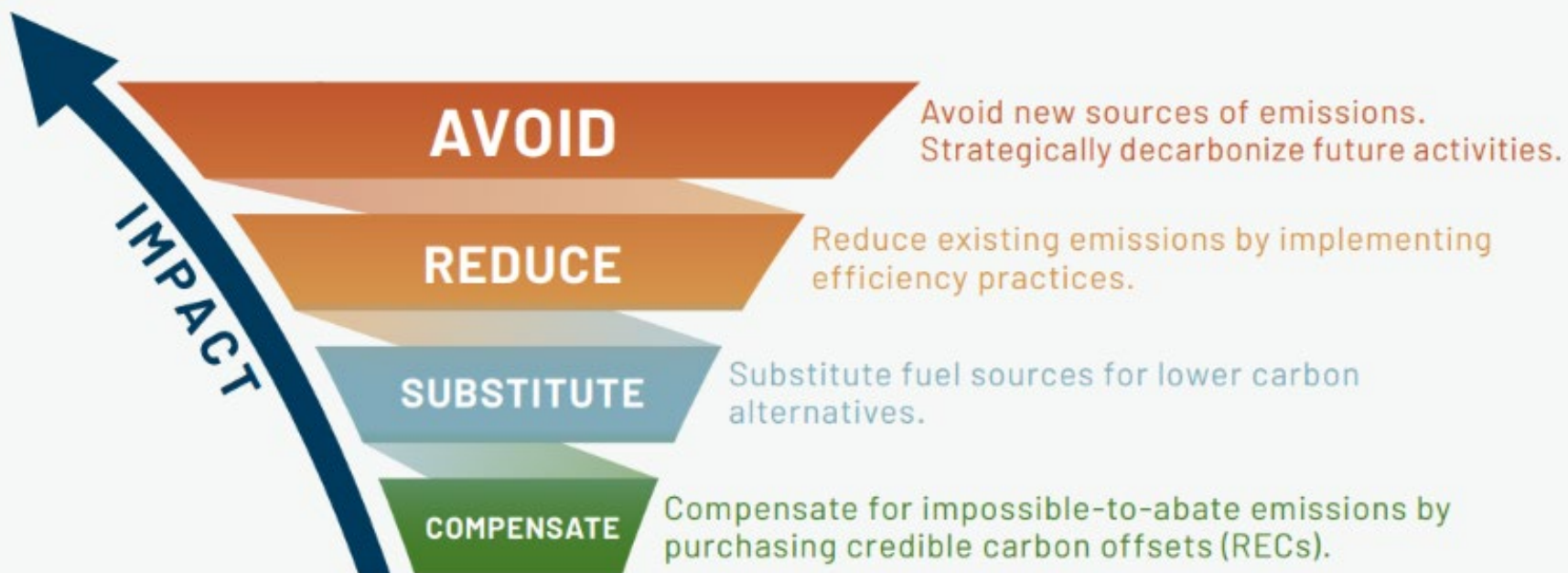
Report to Leadership

Present findings to County leadership for input, approval and ultimately adoption



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CA50 Plan Background - How?



Examples:

Sustainable Design Standards (SDS)

Equipment & Efficiency Upgrades

Steam + Gas → Electricity

RECs & Carbon Offsets

Climate Action Progress

Energy Efficiency

- Projects: LED lighting conversions, HVAC upgrades, retro-commissioning planning, steam trap surveys, and more
- Completed by [DAS](#), [MCTS](#), [Airport](#), [DHHS](#), [CRC](#), and others
- ex: Zoo stood up 3 new animal habitats with high-efficiency designs

Clean Energy Deployment

- [DAS](#) + [DHHS](#) collaborated on additional clean energy feasibility studies
- State and federal funding leveraged with support from [SBP](#)
- ex: 50kW Solar PV system installed atop new Marcia P. Coggs Center

Fleet Optimization

- [MCDOT](#) continued EV pilots, hybrid/electric vehicle transitions, and efforts to right-size fleet
- [MCTS](#) continued to operate fleet of battery electric buses (BEBs)

Climate Action Progress



Solar Specs:

- 50kW System
- 86 Solar Panels
- Saving Milwaukee County \$9,146 annually



Fully Electric MCSO Squad Vehicle

Climate Action Progress

Resilience

- County-wide climate resilience, disaster recovery, and emergency coordination initiatives completed and continuing
- Led by [OEM](#) with support from multiple County departments

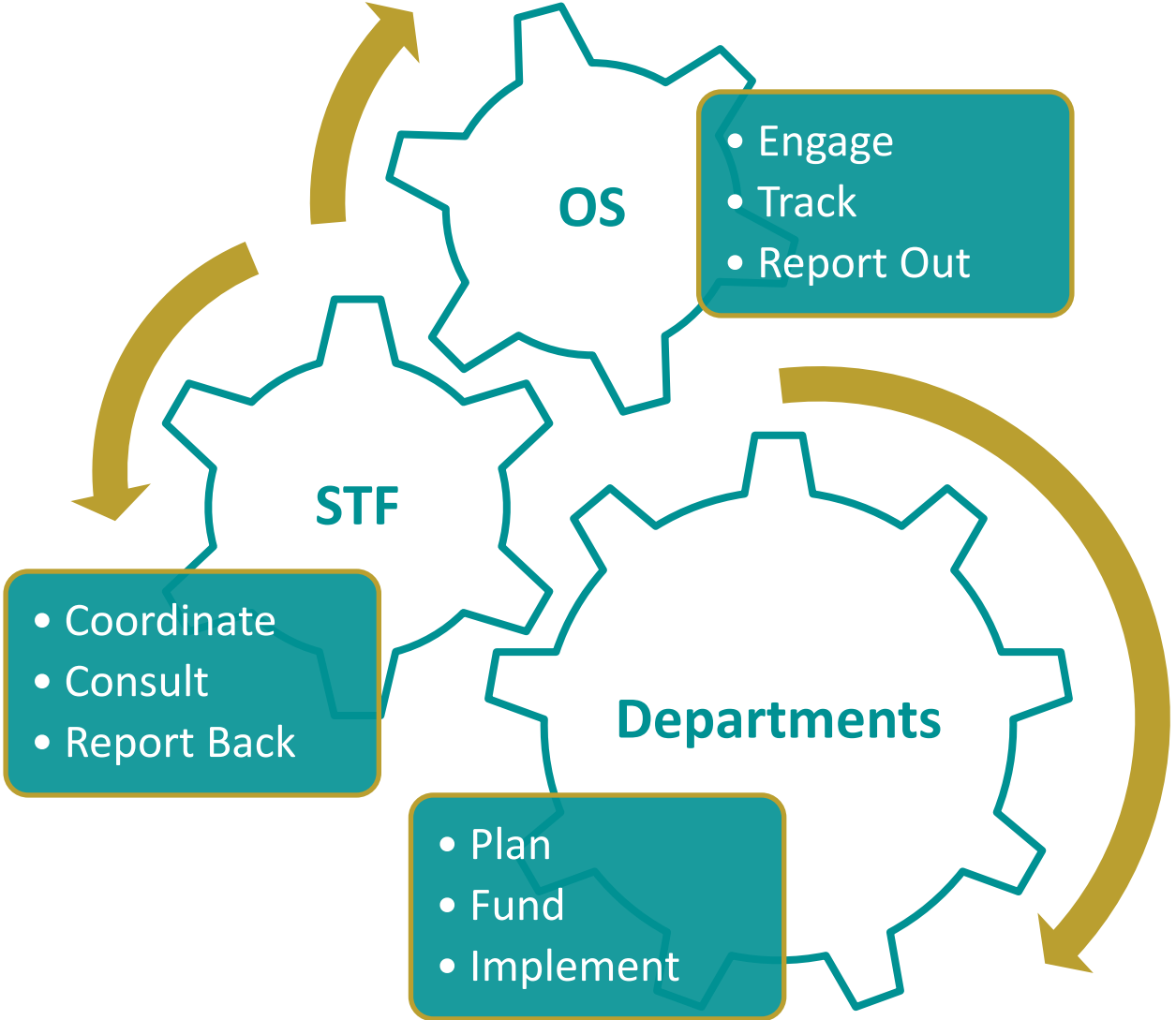
Environmental Stewardship

- Implemented trail conversions, water-reduction measures, occupancy controls upgrades, reforestation and native planting projects
- Completed by [Parks](#), [MCDOT](#), [DHHS](#), and others

Tracking & Reporting

- Reference Appendix A of [File No. 26-415](#) report for complete list of project progress
- GHG emissions inventory update, reporting procedures, and dashboard in progress

Current Focus: Governance & Engagement



Risks & Challenges

Local Utility Reliance

- Portion of emissions reduction success reliant on WEC goals to 'green the grid' and reduce emissions
- Limited control over financial risk associated with energy commodity rates

Aging Buildings, Low Capital, Staffing Constraints

- Competing priorities for capital investments
- Aligning Facility Planning with OS can help maximize climate impact

Tracking and Reporting

- Each department implements differently
- CA50 progress dashboard will improve transparency
- Standardized reporting structure will provide clear path for tracking



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Sustained Progress

ENABLING AND ENCOURAGING ADDITIONAL PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR FUTURE PROJECTS

CA50 PROGRESS DASHBOARD AND REPORTING PROCEDURE ROLL-OUT

CONTINUE ENGAGING THE SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE

ONGOING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND FEEDBACK

Together, we can create a resilient, carbon neutral community for generations to come.

Questions?

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