An aerial photograph of Columbus, Ohio, showing the downtown skyline with various skyscrapers and buildings. In the foreground, there is a wide river (the Scioto River) with a bridge crossing it. The riverbanks are lined with green trees and grass. The sky is clear and blue.

COLUMBUS[★] CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



**SUSTAINABLE
COLUMBUS[★]**

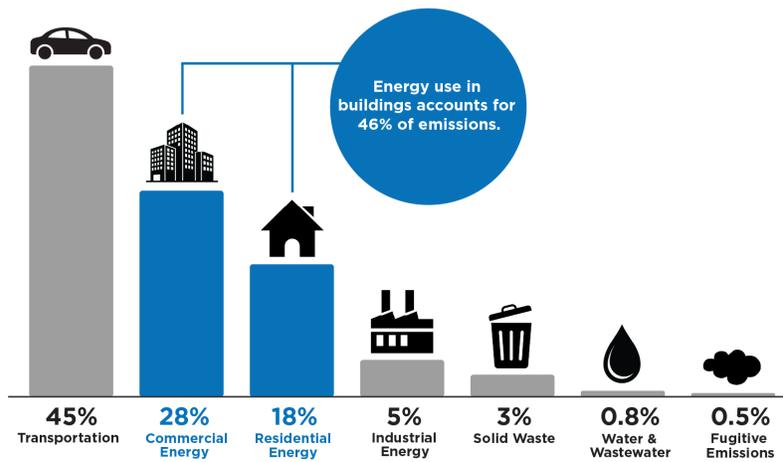
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

OVERVIEW

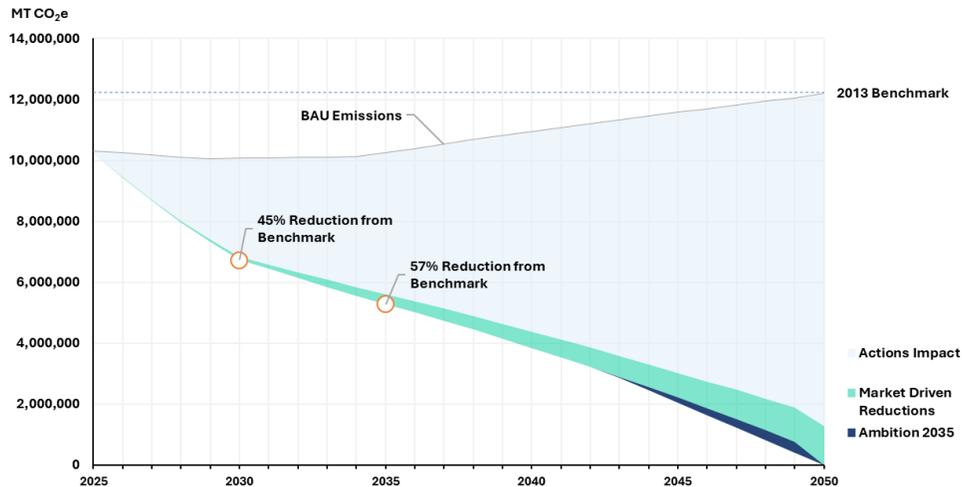
Columbus' Climate Action Plan (CAP) is a coordinated, living document to ensure the City is doing its part to combat the effects of climate change while imparting equity and environmental justice to disproportionately affected community members. Summer heat emergencies, more frequent flooding, and increasingly stronger storms are stressing infrastructure, endangering human life and increasing the cost of living in Columbus.

The CAP lays out a thoughtful set of actions that City government, private businesses, organizations and residents can implement to reach the 2050 carbon neutrality goal. The five sections of the CAP outline 13 strategies that have 32 quantifiable actions which can significantly reduce the community's greenhouse gas (GHG) footprint, while also creating a more equitable and resilient community.

Community-Scale CO₂e Emissions



Modeled Emissions Potential of Climate Actions



UPDATED GOALS

The City of Columbus is proud to renew its commitment to achieving our community's climate goals. To keep Columbus on track to reach a 45% reduction in greenhouse gases by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2050, the City is updating the Columbus Climate Action Plan. The update to the Plan includes adjusting each of our community's climate actions to ensure we're achieving our 2030 climate goals, and aligning the plan with the progress we have made towards our climate goals. Changes include:

- **Climate Action 8.1: Reducing energy use in homes by 25% by 2030, a 5% increase.**
- **Climate Action 8.1: Reducing energy use in commercial buildings by 20% by 2030, a 5% increase.**
- **Climate Action 6.2: Carbon storage by the tree canopy is now included. The current canopy (22%) will be maintained through 2030 and expanded to 40% coverage by 2050.**
- **Climate Action 3.3: Aligning the City of Columbus Climate Action Plan with the regional Central Ohio Climate Action Plan to achieve 50% emissions reduction by 2035.**

PROGRESS TO DATE



97 graduates from the EMPOWERED! Program, 60% employed in green jobs. Since 2021, the Columbus Region Green Fund has invested \$9 million in local clean energy projects.



In 2024, the City began modernizing the zoning code for the first time in 70 years, prioritizing development density and sustainable transit options. The Columbus Urban Forestry Master Plan was adopted in 2021 to preserve the nearly 5 million trees growing in our city.



Columbus residents voted to approve the City's 100% clean energy aggregation program, saving residents over \$47.8 million on their utility bills since 2021. Columbus is the only City in Ohio with a benchmarking program, reducing energy usage in large buildings by 7% on average.



LinkUS will invest in the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) bus system to expand service by 45%. Over 500 miles of new bikeways are planned through the new BikePlus plan adopted in 2024.



9 food waste drop off sites across the city allow residents to easily compost their table scraps and avert them from the landfill. The City now collects household recycling weekly!

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Sustainable Columbus used multiple approaches to get targeted feedback for the 2025 Columbus Climate Action Plan update. Sustainable Columbus surveyed over 450 residents to understand how climate change is impacting them and their community needs for climate action.

450+

Community Survey
Participants

140+

Comments Received

130+

Community Leader
Engagements



1. Increased Tree Cover



4. Increased Public Transit



2. Increased Energy Efficiency
in Homes and Businesses



5. Food Waste Reduction
and Composting



3. Increased Access to
Recycling



6. Increased Installation of
Solar Energy Systems



LEADING WITH EQUITY

Low to Moderate Income Solar Co-op Pilot Program

The City of Columbus launched a Low to Moderate Income Solar Co-op pilot program. Free solar systems and battery backups were given to 17 income qualified households. These households will receive the health and financial benefits of solar without the upfront costs.

American Addition: Net-Zero Neighborhood

The City of Columbus is embedding equity at the center of the City's climate action efforts, as showcased by a net-zero neighborhood project in American Addition, among the oldest African American communities in Ohio and a historically under-resourced neighborhood.

Learn More: www.columbus.gov/sustainable/cap