



**SUSTAINABLE
COLUMBUS**

ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

2024 Annual Report



Photo courtesy of American Forests and Green Columbus.

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Message from the Mayor



Dear Friends and Neighbors:

I am proud to report that in 2024, the City of Columbus continued to make impressive strides towards meeting our sustainability goals and achieving environmental justice for all. Through strong collaboration with our Columbus community, we are moving toward achieving a carbon neutral Columbus by 2050 and combating climate change.

This past year, Columbus had the honor of being selected as one of 25 cities to join the Bloomberg American Sustainable Cities initiative. This three-year program will utilize \$200 million to boost the sustainability initiatives of local governments across the nation, including our own. As part of the initiative, the City has created an Innovation team with dedicated staff that will focus on the connections between climate and racial wealth justice, with a special focus on the American Addition neighborhood and creation of a Net-Zero neighborhood.

The City of Columbus was also honored to be selected as one of over 100 cities internationally to participate in the first-ever Bloomberg Philanthropies Youth Climate Action Fund. Recognizing youth involvement in climate action as a cornerstone of sustainability and environmental justice, Columbus received \$50,000 to start a micro-grant program for youth-led climate projects. By supporting the visions of youth groups across the city, we are empowering the next generation of climate leaders and creating a healthier and safer Columbus now and into the future.

Several initiatives we've undertaken are already making a difference. Clean Energy Columbus aggregation program is providing 100% clean

energy to Columbus's residents and saved participating residents more than \$8.7 million. Meanwhile, residents served by the Columbus Division of Power can now benefit from a new net metering policy adopted this past year, which allows homes with solar panels to receive credit on their energy bill for the power produced - effectively reducing those customers' electric bills. Finally, Columbus's second reuse convenience center opened on Georgesville Road providing yet another outlet for organics and hard to recycle waste to help keep our community sustainable.

Collaboration continues to remain a vital component of meeting our Climate Action Plan goals. That is why Sustainable Columbus partnered with the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, Power a Clean Future Ohio, IMPACT Community Action, and The Ohio State University to develop the Central Ohio Climate Action Plan. Like the Columbus Climate Action Plan, this plan bolsters sustainability efforts across the 10-county central Ohio region and prioritizes low-income communities that are most affected by climate change. This past year also saw unprecedented support from our Columbus community in moving toward more sustainable, pollution-free transportation through the passage of Issue 47 and support for LinkUs. This transportation and growth plan - a collaboration between the City of Columbus, COTA, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, Franklin County Board of Commissions, and the Columbus Partnership - will expand COTA transit service and make historic investments into sidewalks, bikeways and trails throughout the region to create more walkable, connected communities and increase opportunity for all.

I am incredibly proud of the accomplishments this city has achieved this year, and I am confident that our city's sustainability achievements will only continue to flourish and grow over time. I remain committed to creating a healthier, more equitable, and safer Columbus for all.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Andrew J. Ginther
Mayor, City of Columbus

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Andrew J. Ginther".

2

Year in Review

2024 saw the City of Columbus and regional partners receive approximately **\$140 million** in grant funding support for work that furthers goals and strategies within the **Columbus Climate Action Plan.**

The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) continued to provide significant opportunity for Federal funding and support on climate. Sustainable Columbus actively monitored and championed these opportunities within the City and wider Columbus community.

Solar for All

The Industrial Heartland Solar Coalition, comprised of 18 Midwest cities including Columbus, received a \$156 million US EPA Solar for All grant award to deploy a solar program for low-moderate income communities. Columbus will use its \$15M share of the funding for a residential rooftop solar program and for a 5MW community solar array for the Division of Power. The community solar program will offer a solar subscription service to Division of Power customers, providing clean energy and lower utility bills without the need to invest in individual home installations.

Climate Pollution Reduction Grant

In 2024 Sustainable Columbus continued to lead a multi-partner team to create a regional climate action plan due to the \$1 million Climate Pollution Reduction Grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This grant is assisting Central Ohio in establishing its first-ever regional climate action plan and will support updating the Columbus Climate Action Plan.

Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant

Sustainable Columbus received nearly \$800,000 in grant funding from the Department of Energy through the Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant program. The funding is intended to reduce energy use, improve efficiency, reduce fossil fuel emissions, and build a clean and equitable energy economy. Sustainable Columbus is utilizing the funding to partner with the Human Service Chamber (HSC) to provide commercial building energy audits and technical assistance to area nonprofit organizations. This collaboration supports Columbus Climate Action Plan goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while keeping equity and environmental justice at the center. The program is planned to launch in 2025.

3 Climate Solutions: The Columbus Way

Empowering a Community of
Climate Leaders, Developing a Clean
Energy Economy, and Enhancing
Partnerships for Success.

Bloomberg Sustainable Cities Initiative

Columbus was selected by Bloomberg Philanthropies as one of 25 U.S. cities to join [Bloomberg American Sustainable Cities](#). Bloomberg American Sustainable Cities is a three-year, \$200 million initiative to provide deep support to selected cities to pursue transformative solutions in climate and racial wealth building through partnerships with [PolicyLink](#), [Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation at Johns Hopkins University](#), and [Natural Resources Defense Council](#).

By participating in Bloomberg American Sustainable Cities, Columbus will receive a Bloomberg Philanthropies-funded [innovation team \(i-team\)](#) with up to three dedicated staff. The city will also receive multi-year, in-depth, customized policy and technical assistance in collaboration with community-based organizations to mobilize public, private, and philanthropic investments. In 2024 an i-team Director was hired, and began a deep focus on working with the American Addition neighborhood and community partners to create a net-zero neighborhood.

3

Bloomberg American Cities will
fund up to three dedicated staff
for the innovation team (i-team)

\$50,000

Received in funding from the
Bloomberg Foundation.

10

Youth-led climate projects were funded.

Bloomberg Youth Climate Action Fund Microgrants

The City of Columbus, through Sustainable Columbus, was one of over 100 cities globally to receive \$50,000 in funding from the Bloomberg Foundation to launch the Youth Climate Action Fund grant program. This grant program provided micro-grants ranging from \$1,000-\$5,000 to youth aged 15-24 for projects addressing climate change, environmental justice and community engagement. Ten youth-led climate projects were funded ranging from tree plantings, to a transportation education event, a climate tech hackathon, a mobile textile waste upcycling cart, and more. The program will continue in 2025 helping empower the next generation of climate leaders while meeting our Columbus Climate Action Plan goals.

The UN Association at Ohio State held a transportation and climate education event with their grant award.



GreenSpot

The GreenSpot program celebrated its 16th year in 2024, continuing its mission to educate, inspire, and recognize Columbus residents, businesses, and community groups committed to sustainability. Since its founding in 2008, the free membership has grown to over 26,000. This year also saw the inaugural Columbus ArborFest, hosted by Clintonville GreenSpot, which expanded community engagement around environmental sustainability.

Green SpotLight Award Winners

Each year the GreenSpotLight awards recognize a large, medium and small Columbus organization for outstanding sustainability practices. Bath & Body Works received the large business award for their dedication to reducing transportation emissions as well as coming up with creative reuse solutions regarding waste diversion. Kimley-Horn and Ohio Native Concepts were recognized as the medium and small business winners, respectively.

The event was hosted at Grange Insurance Audubon Center, with Councilmember Emmanuel Remy and Director Kristen Atha sharing a few words with our 100 guests.

Community Backyards Rebates

In partnership with Franklin Soil & Water Conservation District and SWACO, GreenSpot had a great year with its Community Backyards program. Community Backyards offers one rebate voucher per household per year for the purchase of an eligible, approved backyard conservation item to residents in Franklin County and/or participating communities. Additionally, to receive the rebate, community members learn about water and soil conservation methods for their own backyards. Thousands of Columbus residents participated in the program, all of whom became GreenSpot community members. Through the program, the City of Columbus provided hundreds of rebates for rain barrels and native plants and trees.

Empowered! Program

Sustainable Columbus has partners with non-profit IMPACT Community Action to impart environmental justice and ensure climate benefits for communities of color, low-income residents and women. With funding from Sustainable Columbus, IMPACT administers the 12-week Empowered! Program — a clean energy and climate jobs training program focused on young people in the target demographic. In 2024, there were three cohorts with 40 participants, including 87% being from communities of color and 40% women. Graduates have obtained good-paying jobs with employers in sectors such as utilities, affordable housing manufacturing, solar panel manufacturing, construction and weatherization.



Lawnmower Exchange

Old, gas-powered lawnmowers contribute to climate change and air pollution through emissions at the ground level of nitrogen oxide, volatile organic compounds, and other pollutants. To address this issue, Columbus Public Health, Columbus GreenSpot, Franklin County Public Health, Lowe’s Home Improvement and Ace Iron & Metal teamed up in 2024 to offer deep discounts on electric mowers to residents of Columbus in exchange for their old, gas-powered lawn mowers. Almost 100 Columbus residents took advantage of this program and secured new electric, environmentally friendly lawnmowers.

Green Jobs Study

The Columbus Climate Action Plan has a strong focus on developing a clean energy economy. As part of moving toward Climate Action Plan goals, a green jobs study began in 2024 and completed in early 2025. Green jobs are those that benefit the environment or conserve natural resources. There are currently 19,400 green jobs in Columbus, based on our local definition and statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The study revealed a majority of green jobs are staffed by those with at least a high school diploma. Some green jobs require additional specialized training or certification. Furthermore, approximately 37% of green jobs are staffed by college degree holders while fewer than 9% of workers in green jobs lack a high school diploma.

19,400
Current
Green Jobs

Green Employment by Industry (%)



- Professional Services (20)
- Transport (15)
- Manufacturing (15)
- Trade (13)
- Arts/Recreation (8)
- Public Administration (8)
- Construction (7)
- Admin/Waste Services (6)
- Other* (8)

Educational Attainment in Green Industries (%)



- High School Diploma (31)
- Some College (23)
- Associate's Degree (9)
- Bachelor's Degree (20)
- Master's Degree (7)
- Doctoral/Professional (1)
- Less than High School (9)

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Sustainable Neighborhoods

Supporting a Healthy & Resilient Community, Implementing Strategies for Healthy Ecosystems, and Preparing for Warmer and Wetter Seasons.

Urban Forestry Master Plan

The Columbus Urban Forestry Master Plan (UFMP) is the first Citywide, strategic plan to invest long-term in Columbus' trees. Columbus Recreation and Parks Department collaborated with Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District to fund a pilot program to plant native trees on private property in Columbus. A total of \$10,000 in grant funding was awarded to Village at Willow Brook, the Charles School, Franklinton Area Neighbors and Final Third Foundation. With this funding, these organizations planted 101 larger-sized native trees, and the program will continue with additional funding.

Additionally, the Tree Technical Manual supports the updated public tree code, serving as the rules and regulations for public trees.

This how-to guide assists city departments, construction professionals and property owners in meeting the care standards for public trees. The new tree code and manual went into effect on Aug. 1, 2024.

To prepare for the new public tree code going into effect, the Forestry section led 19 training sessions over the summer with stakeholders, trained 400 people across City departments, private utilities, the development community and the tree care industry. [Online resources](#) include a Public Tree Plan template, updated standard notes and details and the Forestry permit. You can also check out the [new public tree inventory map](#) to see what trees are in your neighborhood.

In 2024, the department published the first county-wide assessment of the city's trees. Columbus' tree canopy grew by 2.4% over a 10-year period, from 19.6% in 2011 to 22% in 2021. There are approximately 4.8 million trees growing within Columbus boundaries, meaning there are five trees for every Columbus resident.



Planting trees at Columbus Africentric Early College High School at an event with American Forests and Green Columbus. Photo courtesy of American Forests and Green Columbus.



One Water Wins

The City of Columbus has adopted a One Water approach to viewing, valuing and managing water. A One Water approach manages all water – whether from the tap, a stream, a storm, an aquifer, or a sewer – in a collaborative, integrated, inclusive and holistic manner. As part of this approach and through the City’s membership with the U.S. Water Alliance, the Department of Public Utilities has joined the U.S. Water Affordability Taskforce. This 24-month initiative began in the fall of 2024 and brings together a cross-departmental team with area non-profits to address water affordability in our community.

Further demonstrating its commitment to a One Water approach, the Department of Public Utilities unveiled a public mural on a sanitary pump station along the Olentangy Trail in the fall. The mural, titled Full Circle, was done by local artist Nick Stull in partnership with Friends of the Lower Olentangy (FLOW). The project was a result of a public art design contest on social media following a call for artists. The goal of the project was to creatively use educational art to promote clean water, beautify utility infrastructure, and reduce graffiti. This project was the first of its kind for the Department of Public Utilities with more planned in the future.



The mural, titled Full Circle, was done by local artist Nick Stull in partnership with Friends of the Lower Olentangy (FLOW).

Blueprint Columbus

Blueprint Columbus, approved in 2015, uses greener alternatives and residential infrastructure improvements to solve wet weather issues, rather than constructing costly sewer tunnels. The plan’s four pillars include: sewer lateral lining, roof water redirection, sump pumps, and green infrastructure. An example is the Palmetto/Westgate Green Infrastructure project, which helps capture and treat removed inflow/infiltration from the sanitary system in the Hilltop. Alongside other efforts, it helps relieve basement flooding and supports sanitary reliefs.

The project’s final design included 21 rain gardens, 13 regional basin features, and nearly 4,000 feet of new 12-inch storm sewers to improve drainage and address ponding or flooding. Completed in September 2024, it is now in its second and final monitoring stage, ending in October 2025.

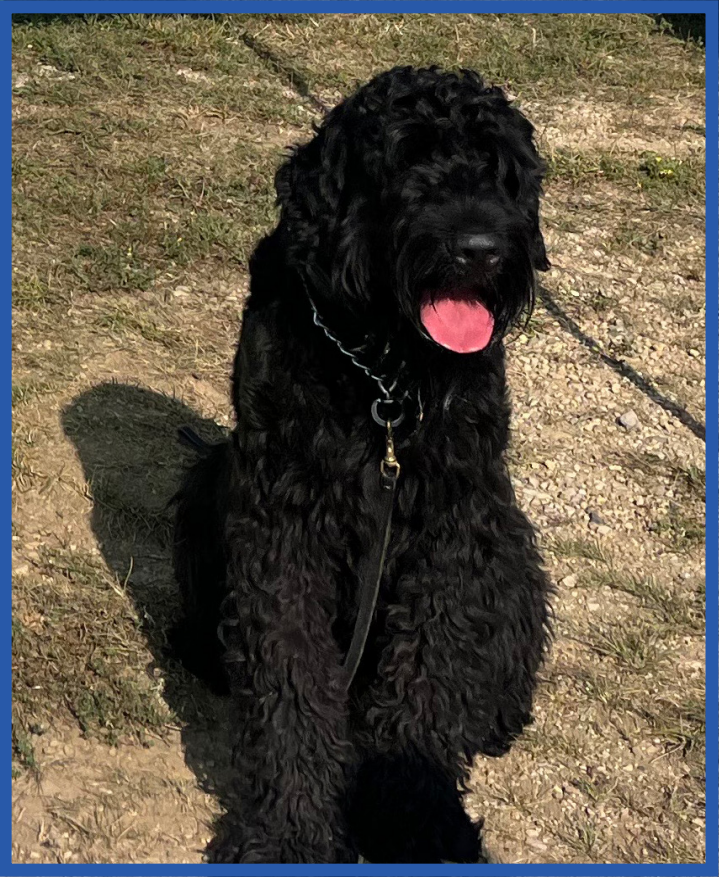
Zone In Columbus

Zone In Columbus is a comprehensive initiative to update the city’s zoning code, which regulates land use and shapes where we live, work, and travel. Zoning can attract businesses, support housing, and protect resources. Title 34, or the 2024 Zoning Code, was adopted on July 29, 2024, following two years of community engagement and over 1,900 public comments. This first iteration introduces new districts and rules for priority areas, such as main street corridors. About 12,300 parcels are recommended for one of six new zoning districts, based on current development, neighborhood plans, future projections, and community input.

Each district defines what can be built—such as height, street setbacks, and window requirements. These standards help create attractive, walkable neighborhoods, expand housing and business options, and make development more predictable for property owners and communities alike.

PUP (Pick Up Poop)

To support clean water efforts and increase community resilience, the Department of Public Utilities manages the [Pick Up Poop \(PUP\) program](#). Dog feces is highly acidic and pollutes communities and water. This program collaborates across sections within the Department and with the Department of Recreation and Parks to educate and encourage residents to pick up dog poop in Columbus. This past year, DPU contracted with an outreach vendor to increase PUP’s presence in the community and reach more neighbors. Wooli, a Black Russian Terrier mascot, now educates community members about the program and assists in signing people up for the pledge. Wooli was introduced to Columbus in August 2024 and made special appearances at Westgate Wags & Whiskers and Bark Bash. In its first year, more than 150 residents signed up for PUP. The Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District (FSWCD) received about 70 pledges for the County while DPU received approximately 80 pledges for Columbus.

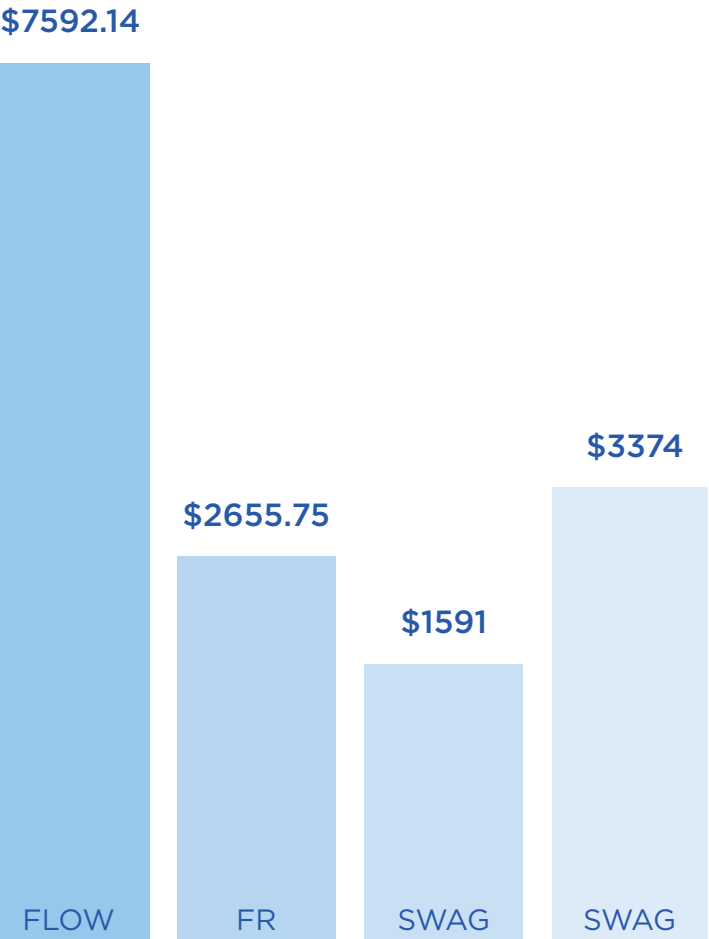


Meet Wooli the Black Russian Terrier - the PUP program’s new mascot and pupfluencer!

Watershed Partnership Service Agreements

The Department of Public Utilities worked with the Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District (FSWCD) to give money to local watershed groups to implement and carry out projects related to water quality. DPU provided more than \$15,000 to the following watershed groups and their projects to help keep Columbus’ waterways and their surrounding areas pristine:

- Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW) - \$7,592.14**
Outreach and Implementation Supplies
- Friends of the Ravine (FR) - \$2,655.75**
Erosion Mitigation in Glen Echo Ravine
- Scioto Watershed Action Group (SWAG) - \$1,591.00**
Educational Outreach
- Scioto Watershed Action Group (SWAG) - \$3,374.00**
501(c)3 Attainment



Lead Replacement

The [Lead Service Line Replacement \(LSLR\) Program](#) proactively prevents lead exposure by removing public and private water service lines made of lead and galvanized steel. Like many cities across the U.S., some water service lines in Columbus are more than a century old. Due to our exceptional water treatment program, these service lines have lasted well beyond their expected life.

Since 1996, Columbus has replaced all public service lines with lead components as we’ve encountered them. Columbus now has a mandate to proactively replace 40,000 to 50,000 lead and galvanized service lines by 2037 with copper pipes.

In 2025, Columbus will start replacing lead and galvanized service lines during capital improvement projects and by scheduling historically underserved areas for replacement. Community feedback has guided this prioritization schedule to ensure the program is fair and equitable. Replacement within capital improvement projects and scheduled work comes at no cost to homeowners. The city will have multiple programs available in the coming months for residents that would like to replace their line before the city reaches them and for those whose line breaks. LSLR Program updates will be provided [here](#).

The first step of the project is to identify the material of water service lines. The city must create an inventory of every public and private water service line in our distribution system. Residents can identify and share the material of their line through a quick [online form here](#).

By the end of 2024, **11,800 out of 58,000** total streetlights were converted to LED.

LED Streetlights

Smart Lighting software is a way of connecting Columbus as it moves forward toward its goals related to sustainability. The use of Smart Lighting enables the city to lower energy use. The City of Columbus Division of Power aims to continue improvements with regards to energy efficiency and meet the City’s Climate Action Plan goals. This can be achieved in part through the increased installation and use of LED luminaires, which have a longer life and reduced energy consumption compared to older high pressure sodium luminaires.

Additionally, the development of Smart Lighting enables the City of Columbus to manage the streetlighting system via a centralized control center allowing staff to control the lighting system remotely, receive notifications of outages, provide remote alarms and system troubleshooting, plus adjust brightness settings dependent upon the light’s application. Smart Lighting software allows for crews to conduct circuit maintenance more easily, without relying on the public for notification of a problem. In addition to the Smart Lighting Plan, all newly installed streetlights and streetlights replaced by maintenance are required to be LED.

There are approximately 58,000 streetlights within the City of Columbus. As of the end of 2024, about 20% of the city’s streetlight system were LED (approximately 11,800). The City of Columbus is working to change all low-pressure sodium and high-pressure sodium lights to LEDs based on the Smart Lighting Plan, which will implement the conversions in phases. At the end of 2024, Hilltop Phase One converted approximately 4,000 lights to LED and was 99% complete.

Residential Energy Efficiency

Despite a growing population in Columbus, residential carbon emissions are below two million tons for the first time in recent years. To further energy efficiency and equity goals within the Climate Action Plan, Sustainable Columbus supports IMPACT in administering an energy efficient appliance replacement program for income qualified residents. The Clean Clothes initiative replaces and provides new energy efficient washers and dryers. In 2024, 162 households benefited from this program. The program also provides replacement of refrigerators, freezers, and stoves with gas stoves replaced with electric. Last year, 167 homes received these appliances. Over 90% of residents served through this program are Black and female-headed households.

Sustainable Columbus also supports the expansion of [IMPACT’s Home Weatherization Assistance Program \(HWAP\)](#). Expansion of the HWAP program ensures residents in Columbus between 200-300% of the Federal Poverty Level are eligible for the program. In 2024, 17 homes benefitted from home energy efficiency and repair measures such as insulation, ASHRAE fans, window sealing and replacement, roof repair, chimney sealant and more.



Resilience Hubs

Resilience Hubs are safe, supported, and socially connected resident facilities intended to serve communities by bolstering climate change mitigation in the form of natural disaster preparedness, resource distribution, and pollution reduction.

In July, Sustainable Columbus entered into a contract with the Human Services Chamber (HSC) to develop an implementation plan for priority resilience hub locations by June 2025. HSC and Sustainable Columbus provided climate resilience awareness and education among members to gauge community-based organizations’ risk awareness.

HSC also works with Sustainable Columbus, the City of Columbus, Columbus Public Health, Franklin County Public Health, and others to support winter warming centers and summer cooling centers. Further, HSC is part of the City of Columbus’ Extreme Weather Planning Team and is enshrined in the City’s soon-to-be-codified Extreme Weather Coordination Procedures. These partnerships would not be possible without Sustainable Columbus’s support.

5 Buildings

Increasing Renewable Energy,
Increasing Building Efficiency,
and Adopting Net Zero & Resilient
Building Standards.

Benchmarking Program

The City of Columbus has an active [benchmarking program](#) administered by the Department of Building & Zoning Services. Benchmarking is an easy way for building owners to measure and manage their energy and water use. Tracking this information enables more informed decision-making regarding energy use along with weatherization improvements and energy efficiency upgrades.

There are 1,017 buildings in Columbus that are 50,000 square feet or larger that are in compliance with Columbus' benchmarking ordinance and program. According to a report by the [American Cities Climate Challenge](#), buildings that benchmark consistently save on average seven percent energy usage over a three-year period. These compliant buildings account for a total of 149,464,986 square feet of space and have resulted in a total energy use of more than 316 million units of energy. Additionally, the program's help desk has handled over 320 phone calls and screenshare meetings, sent more than 11,000 emails, and distributed over 4,000 mailers to assist building owners and managers.

Buildings that
benchmark consistently
save on average **7%**
energy usage over a
three-year-period.

Columbus Solar Co-ops

Sustainable Columbus continued its partnership with Solar United Neighbors to offer Solar Co-Ops that support residents in going solar. The Solar Co-Op brings residents together, provides education, and works with participants to select an installer. Co-Op members then work with the installer to determine if solar is a good fit for them. In 2024, there were 94 members and 13 installations. Since the Co-Ops began in 2021, the program has educated over 600 residents on the benefits of solar and installed 670 kW of new solar in the community.

Sustainable Columbus also continued to partner with the non-profit organization Solar United Neighbors, IMPACT Community Action, and the Division of Power on a Pilot Low-Moderate Income Solar Co-Op. The pilot is providing 23 income-qualified homes with free solar and battery backup, creating clean energy ambassadors in communities of color. Eleven homes are under contract and installations have begun. The effort will continue into 2025 and provide insights on challenges and strategies to ensure vulnerable communities benefit from clean energy.



Columbus City Councilmember Chris Wyche, Bexley Mayor Ben Kessler, and Columbus Department of Public Utilities Director Kristen Atha, along with staff from MORPC, Green Columbus, IMPACT, and Solar United Neighbors at the home of a former Solar Co-Op participant to launch the 2024 Solar Co-Op program.

94

13

Solar
Installations

Solar Co-op
Members

Columbus Division of Power Progress

The City’s Division of Power celebrated a milestone anniversary in 2024. The division has been powering and lighting Columbus for 125 years.

In 2024, the Columbus Division of Power (DPU) received notification that it would be a sub-awardee under the Industrial Heartland Coalition Solar for All grant. DPU is committing to build, own and operate a five-megawatt community solar array on DPU-owned property near the Southerly Water Reclamation Facility using these grant funds and the Inflation Reduction Act direct pay tax credits.

This community solar array will satisfy a Division of Power commitment to creating a community solar plan. The power generated from this facility will be available to the Division’s low-income residential customers at a discount of 20%. To continue the momentum gained in 2024, DPU will be issuing a request for proposal in 2025 for the design and construction of the community solar array.

In 2024 all three solar arrays at the Parsons project completed testing and calibration. Full production on the 27 MW system started in the spring and the Division of Power has been enjoying the savings, particularly on the capacity and transmission costs, ever since. In 2024, over 25,000,000 kWh of green power was added to the DOP grid from this project. The Jackson Pike solar project also made great progress in its construction. This additional 18 MW on two arrays is anticipated to be online in the spring of 2025.

New Net Metering Policy

In 2024, the Columbus Public Utilities Division of Power (DOP) developed and put in place a new net metering policy. Net metering will allow Division of Power customers to connect to the utility’s distribution system and get credit for the electricity they generate. The benefits of net metering include making solar energy more financially viable for customers, reducing the demand on the electric grid and power plants, and increasing energy security and resilience by acquiring and using energy from multiple sources.

Clean Energy Columbus

[Clean Energy Columbus](#) is Columbus’ aggregation program, which was voted on by its residents and implemented in November 2021. In the program’s fourth year, Clean Energy Columbus has saved residents and small businesses more than \$8.7 million. The average monthly savings for residents was between \$8.32 and \$10.49, for an average of \$100 in bill savings per year for a participating household. Total savings over the lifetime of the Clean Energy Columbus program is more than \$47.8 million. In 2024, the [National Renewable Energy Lab \(NREL\)](#) ranked Columbus #4 in Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) Green Power Sales and #10 in CCA Green Power Participants, making it one of the largest programs in the country.



CLEAN ENERGY COLUMBUS
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

Ranked 10th
for
CCA Green Power Customers



National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL)



CLEAN ENERGY COLUMBUS
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

Ranked 4th
for
CCA Green Power Sales



National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL)



Work on the Jackson Pike Solar project, which will provide 18 MW of clean energy for the Columbus Division of Power.

6

Transportation

Enabling Carbon Free Vehicles and Supporting Equitable Mode Shift.

Bike Plus

The Bike Plus planning initiative is a citywide effort to modernize the city's bikeways plan, which was adopted in 2008. Through the 2024 Bike Plus plan, the Department of Public Service is actively engaged in making Columbus a city where people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds are able to bike and use other forms of micromobility safely and comfortably for any transportation or recreation need.

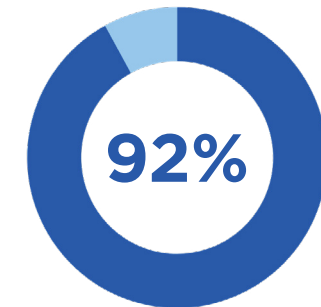
Bike Plus is one of the many strategies the city is using to make Columbus a healthy, equitable, resilient and economically strong community. Biking is a healthy, low-cost option that helps meet Climate Action Plan goals. Investment in safe bicycle infrastructure also supports the city's Vision Zero Action Plan, which aims to eliminate fatal and serious injury crashes on Columbus streets. The Bike Plus planning effort also aligns with the city's goals to become a more walkable and transit-friendly city by supporting the Zone In and LinkUS initiatives.

Community outreach is foundational to the Bike Plus plan's Vision Network and strategies. Throughout the plan process, the Bike Plus team had over 11,000 engagement touchpoints including nearly 100 in-person events, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, public open houses, area commission and local organization presentations, conference sessions and intercept surveys at high-travel areas like bus stops, parks and community centers. In-person engagement was used in tandem with interactive webmaps and surveys that also collected over 5,000 pieces of input. These touchpoints and more were used alongside technical analysis in decision making throughout the Bike Plus process, including guidance from a technical working group consisting of multiple City department representatives.

The Bike Plus plan includes a long-range vision for future bike infrastructure, as well as a short-term goal to implement key bikeways in the next five years. The long-term plan envisions nearly 500 miles of new bikeways to be implemented throughout Columbus in the coming decades. The "near term network" aims to add 20 miles of new bikeways by 2029. The Department of Public Service is committed to providing a safe and connected network for all users, and Bike Plus is the first large policy step

11,000

Engagements touchpoints formed Bike Plus



Of survey respondents want protected bike infrastructure



Director Kelly Scocco, Department of Public Service, with City staff that led the Bike Plus planning process.



Nearly 500 miles of proposed bikeways

A long-term vision to a safe and connected network.

E-bike Rebates

Columbus’s Resident E-Bike Subsidy Program offers a small number of discounts to qualifying Columbus residents in order to make e-bikes more affordable to more people. Those who receive a subsidy can purchase an e-bike from a participating local bike shop. The program was launched in 2023 by Smart Columbus, on behalf of Columbus City Council, and received 3,739 applications in the first two rounds.

To date, 555 e-bikes have been distributed to Columbus residents, expanding transportation access and reducing car trips. Columbus received more than 3,700 applications to the program and more than 8,500 survey submissions about residents who were interested in the E-Bike Subsidy Program. Among the reasons from those surveyed, 18% of Columbus residents purchased an E-Bike to reduce their carbon footprint, 85% did so to replace car trips, including taxis and rideshares, and 92% would not have purchased an E-Bike without a subsidy.

3,700+

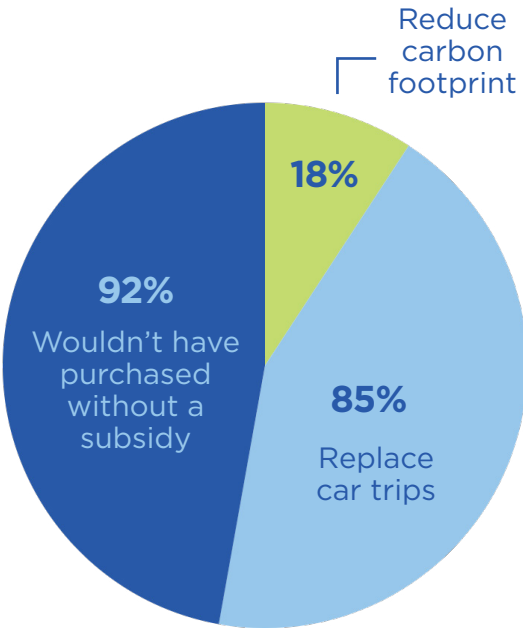
Applications

555

E-bikes to
Columbus
residents

8,500+

Survey
Submissions



Reasons why e-bikes were purchased.

Green Fleet Action Plan

The City of Columbus Fleet Management Division developed a Green Fleet Action Plan that serves as a strategic roadmap for reducing the environmental impact of the city's vehicles. The primary objective of this plan is to reduce overall fleet emissions and transition toward cleaner, more sustainable transportation solutions.

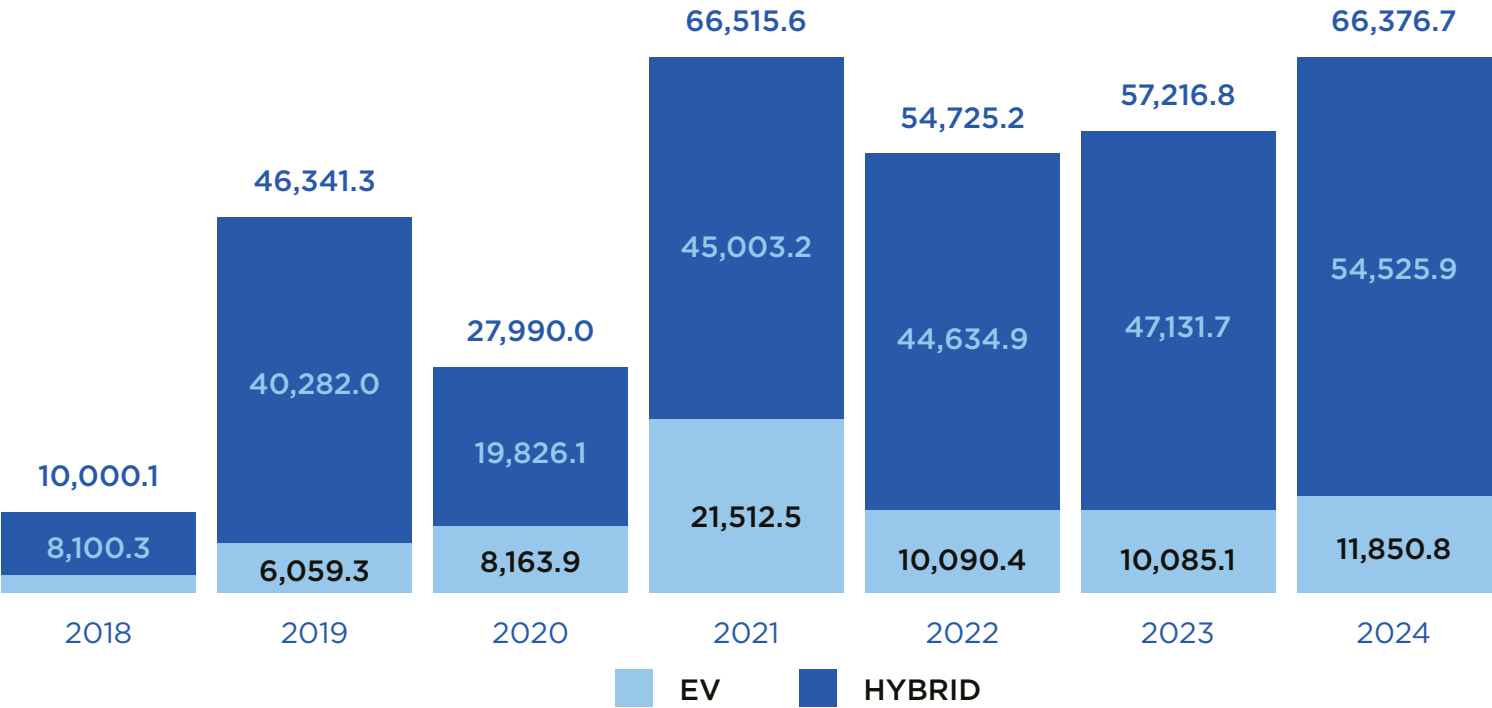
Currently, Fleet Management is partnering with a vendor to develop a comprehensive dashboard. This tool will provide a detailed breakdown of Greenhouse Gas emissions by fuel type and vehicle category, while also estimating cost avoidance achieved through the use of alternative fuels and vehicles. The dashboard will support data-driven decisions that further our sustainability goals and enhance transparency.

Columbus currently has 210 combined battery electric vehicles (BEV) and hybrid electric (PHEV) vehicles in service. Together, these vehicles saved Columbus over 66,376 gallons of gas in 2024, resulting in fuel savings of approximately \$150,000 compared to their gasoline powered equivalents. They also reduced our GHG emissions by 583.5 metric tons this year, which is like removing 136 gasoline powered cars from the road for a year.

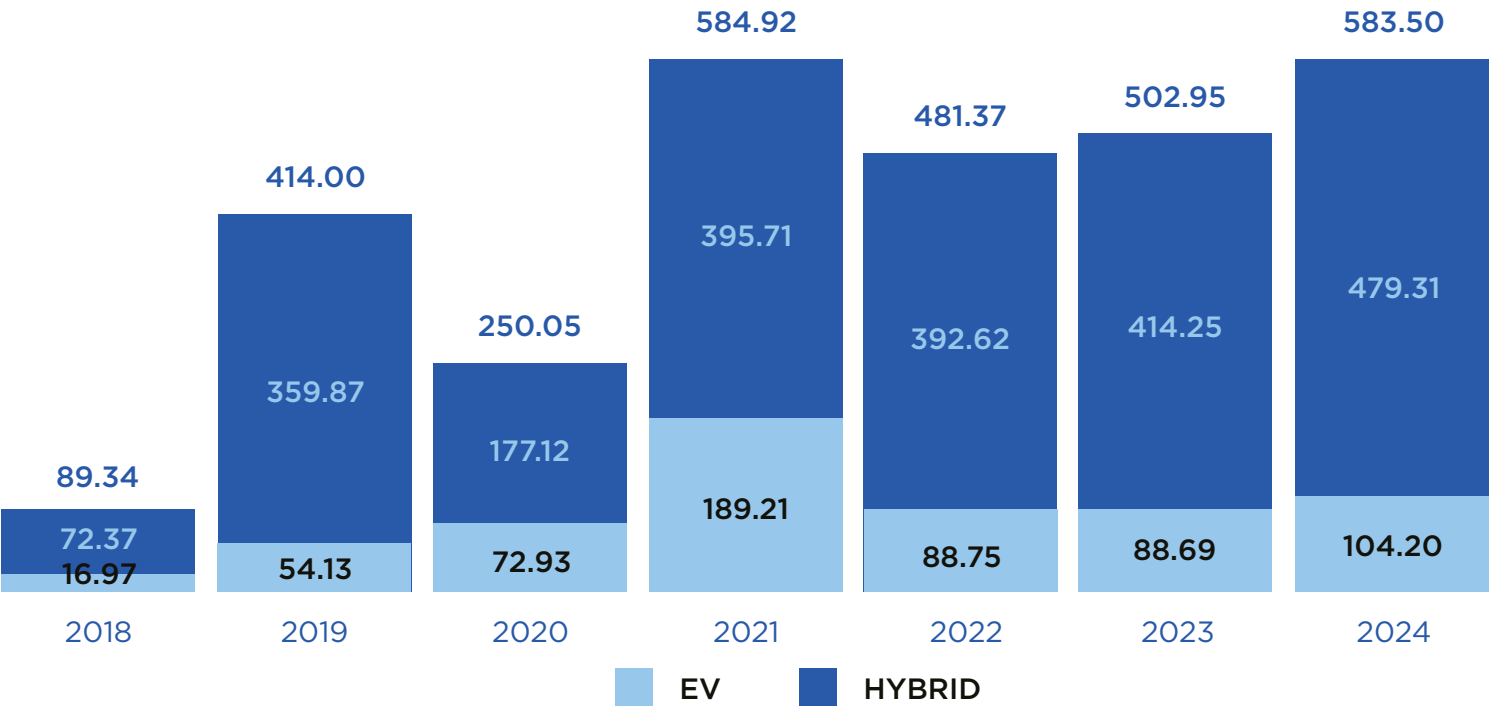


City vehicles charging at Fleet Management

Hybrids & EVs: Fuel Gallons Avoided



Hybrids & EVs: GHG Emissions Avoided



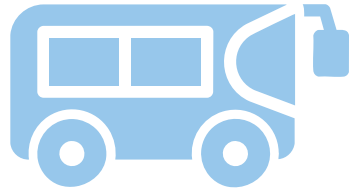
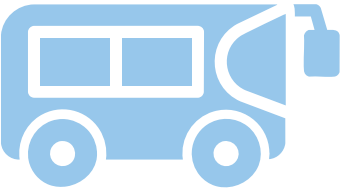
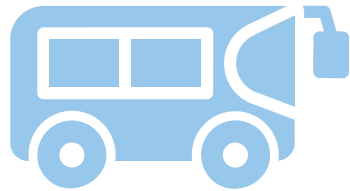
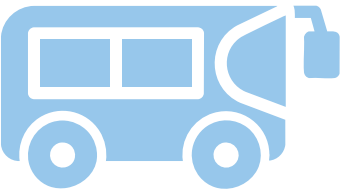
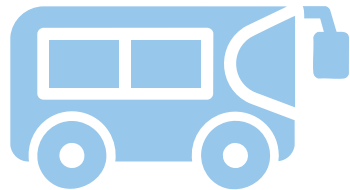
LinkUS

Since 2020, [LinkUS](#) has been Central Ohio’s comprehensive transportation and development initiative to address growth, housing and opportunity gaps in our community. In November 2024, Issue 47 received 57% support from voters in the COTA service area to increase the COTA transit sales tax from 0.5% to 1.0% for build-out and implementation of LinkUS. This continuing funding is projected to generate \$8 billion in new investments by 2050. Of this 0.5% increase, 27.5% is dedicated to sidewalks, bikeways, and trails and is estimated to provide \$60 million annually for this infrastructure.

LinkUS addresses the challenges of growth, housing and opportunity gaps by:

- Increasing transit service hours by 45%, which creates faster, more reliable public transportation and building 5 new rapid transit lines
- Building 500+ miles of sidewalks, bikeways and trails

5 new rapid transit lines



Estimated \$60 million annually dedicated to sidewalks, bikeways, and trails.



LinkUS accomplishments in 2024:

- The West Broad and East Main Street Bus Rapid Transit Corridors were submitted for potential Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Small Starts funding in 2025
- West Broad Street was awarded the following:
 - \$15 million from the Ohio Department of Transportation
 - \$42 million from the U.S. Department of Transportation for the Reconnecting Communities Grant
 - \$1.2 million from the FTA for the [Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development Planning](#)
 - \$900,000 from the FTA for the [Innovative Finance and Asset Concession Grant Program](#) for the Central Market site
- Transit Supportive Infrastructure (TSI) Committees composed of all the jurisdictions within the COTA service area approved a \$250 million 2026-2031 Capital Improvement Plan
 - Represents 150 miles of TSI investments with 40 of those miles in Columbus

West Broad Street Bus Rapid Transit Corridor was awarded the following:

\$42 million

From the U.S. Department of Transportation

\$15 million

From the Ohio Department of Transportation

\$1.2 million

From the FTA

\$900,000

From the FTA



Virtual Reality rendering of a Bus Rapid Transit stop at Westgate and W. Broad St. taken during a LinkUS tour in fall of 2024.

7 Waste

Reducing Waste Generated and
Increasing Landfill Diversion Rates.

Waste Reduction Efforts

The Division of Refuse Collection provided weekly trash collection in 2024 to an average of 355,000 households, in addition to weekly recycling, biweekly yard waste collection, and scheduled bulk pickup.

Collection included 293,963 tons of municipal solid waste, 9,318 tons of bulk items, 2,926 tons of illegal dumping, and 2,626 tires weighing more than 26 tons. Nearly 34,300 tons of recyclable materials and 16,577 tons of yard waste were also picked up.

The division's de-littering crew expanded to 10 staff members in 2024. Their efforts along roadways resulted in cleanup of 11,934 bags of litter, 753 tires and 2,008 bulk items. In addition, Refuse Collection partnered with four local waste haulers, who rotated completing monthly litter cleanups along State Route 104 from I-71 to US-33.

The division opened its second Waste and Reuse Convenience Center to make it easier for Columbus residents to drop off trash, bulk items, recyclables, food scraps, yard waste materials, and some items that cannot be disposed of in residents' city-issued trash containers. Furniture, clothing and bicycles can be donated at both Convenience Centers, located at 1550 Georgesville Rd. and 2100 Alum Creek Dr. They are open Tuesday through Saturday and support the city's Climate Action Plan goals to reduce landfilled waste and illegal dumping and to support new recycling streams.

In 2024, Refuse Collection added four more Food Scraps Drop-Off locations, bringing the total to nine sites across the city for residents' use at no cost. The sites, conveniently located at Columbus Recreation and Parks facilities, support the city's Climate Action Plan goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The division's Keep Columbus Beautiful program had tremendous volunteer support again in 2024 with community litter cleanups. More than 11,500 volunteers devoted nearly 30,000 service hours to cleanups. Volunteers picked up 365,637 pounds of litter in their neighborhoods and throughout Columbus.

The Division of Refuse Collection provided weekly trash collection in 2024 to an average of:

355,000
Households



The City of Columbus now has nine Food Scrap Drop-Off locations, such as the one pictured here.

Through Keep Columbus
Beautiful there was:

30,000
Service hours of cleanups
with
11,500
Volunteers



Photo courtesy of American Forests and Green Columbus.



**SUSTAINABLE
COLUMBUS***

ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR