



TOWN OF

Winchester MASSACHUSETTS

Climate Action Plan Executive Summary | 2020

Carbon Pollution:

Carbon pollution refers to those emissions of carbon dioxide (one of several greenhouse gases (GHGs) and by far the largest contributor to climate change) that are created through human activities, such as burning fossil fuels, and are emitted into the atmosphere at a rate faster than they are absorbed by oceans and other carbon sinks. This is leading to an increased warming of the planet which disrupts climate cycles, endangering the health and welfare of all living creatures on Earth.

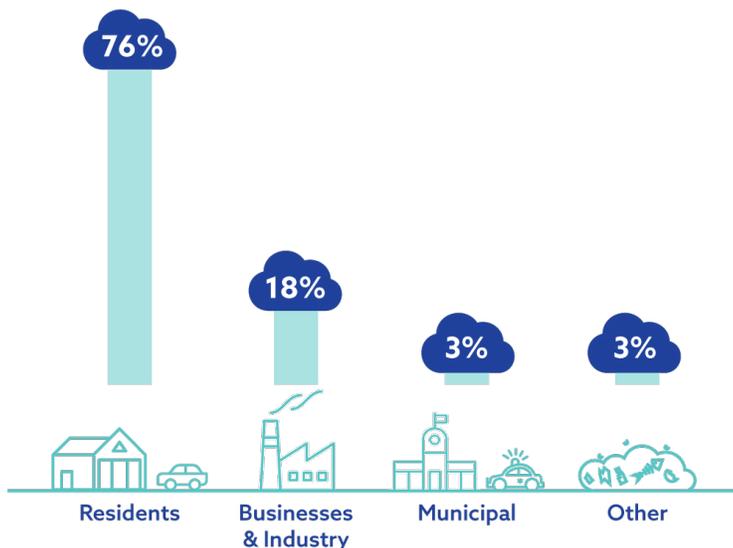
From more intense storm events causing flooding to high heat days leading to poor air quality, our small town is already experiencing the impacts of climate change. These impacts have resulted in unacceptable risks and costs to the Town government, as well as to residents and businesses.

We can minimize these risks and costs by reducing the carbon pollution created when we burn fossil fuels such as coal, oil, and natural gas that still power and heat most of our buildings and vehicles. However, due to the ability of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide to remain in the atmosphere for decades, we must prepare ourselves for the impacts that will come with the changes we are already committed to from past activities. Enhancing our entire community's resilience to these changes will be essential.



The Winchester 2020 Climate Action Plan has two overarching goals:

1. **Reduce carbon pollution**
2. **Enhance community resilience**



CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS



EXTREME HEAT



DROUGHT



INTENSE STORMS



FLOODING

Overarching Goal 1: Reduce Carbon Pollution



ENERGY SUPPLY

Goal: Increase supply of carbon-free electricity

STRATEGIES

EN1: Convert Municipal electricity supply to 100% carbon-free by 2035

EN2: Increase WinPower default electricity supply to 100% carbon-free by 2035

EN3: Advocate for a 5% annual increase in the Massachusetts Renewable Portfolio Standard



BUILDINGS

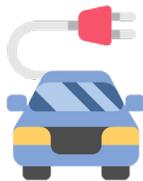
Goal: Improve energy efficiency and eliminate the use of fossil fuels in new and existing buildings

STRATEGIES

BD1: Improve energy efficiency in existing buildings

BD2: Transition to zero fossil fuels and promote onsite solar in existing buildings

BD3: Require new development meet new energy and fossil fuel free standards



TRANSPORTATION

Goal: Reduce gasoline- and diesel-powered vehicle miles traveled and transition to electric vehicles

STRATEGIES

TR1: Transition to electric vehicles

TR2: Promote safe alternative modes of transportation in and around town such as walking, biking, and shuttle services

TR3: Advocate for state/federal clean transportation legislation and funding opportunities and enhanced public transportation services



SOLID WASTE

Goal: Reduce waste disposal 30% by 2030 and 90% by 2050

STRATEGIES

SW1: Assess options for and implement town-wide programs to achieve waste reduction goals

SW2: Educate and engage residents and businesses on waste reduction strategies

SW3: Advocate and promote at the State and regional levels for regionally focused solid waste legislation and resources that focus on waste minimization



Overarching Goal 2: Enhance Community Resilience

CR1

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

Goal: Reduce health risks due to climate change

CR2

RESILIENT TOWN OPERATIONS

Goal: Ensure the principles of resiliency are integrated into the daily operations of the Town government

CR3

SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

Goal: Develop sustainable funding mechanisms to ensure ongoing climate-preparedness

CR4

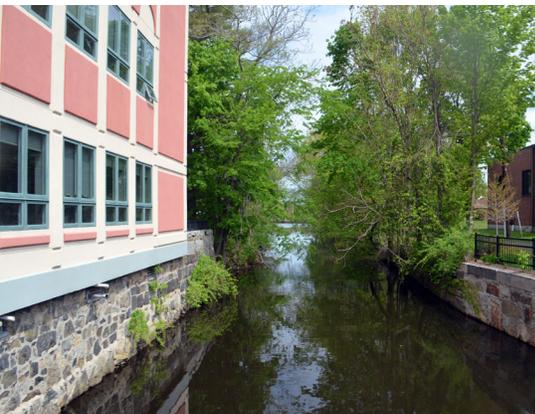
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal: Prioritize and incentivize green infrastructure and low impact development practices

Hiring a Sustainability Director

The Climate Action Committee has identified the hiring of a Sustainability Director as an urgent priority of the Winchester 2020 Climate Action Plan. Winchester’s Sustainability Director will increase the Town’s resiliency to the impacts of climate change on health, safety, and property. The Sustainability Director will work with Town departments, committees, residents, businesses, and State and regional agencies to develop and direct actions that mitigate risk due to more frequent heat waves, extreme storms, flooding, insect-borne diseases and other effects of climate change. Additional anticipated benefits include:

- » Protect residents, businesses, workers, and visitors from the broadening impacts of climate change
- » Increase grant funding for local projects benefiting quality of life
- » Achieve Winchester’s commitment to reduce GHG emissions
- » Align Winchester with regional, state, and global initiatives
- » Protect the local economy by protecting infrastructure and natural features that attract visitors
- » Avoid overburdening staff with additional work
- » Maintain leadership role as a Green Community
- » Meet Winchester’s responsibility to address climate change



Implementing the Climate Action Plan

The Town of Winchester is committed to taking action to meet its 80% GHG reduction target by 2050 and to enhance community resilience to climate change. Collectively, these actions will significantly reduce risks to our community. The recommendations in this Climate Action Plan will help get us there. It will take action from all sectors - municipal, commercial, and residential to make this a reality. We all have to step up and do our part to implement the Climate Action Plan in order to meet our two overarching goals to reduce our GHG emissions and to increase community resilience.



Implementation Steps

- Present draft Plan to Select Board for Approval
- Hire a Sustainability Director to drive implementation from the municipal side
- Create the Climate Action Committee to oversee implementation of the Climate Action Plan
- Establish a Comprehensive Climate Communications Strategy to educate the community regarding climate action and plan implementation
- Prioritize actions for the next fiscal year's budget
- Identify community partners to take the lead on the implementation of key actions

FOR MORE
INFORMATION
PLEASE CONTACT:

The Winchester
Climate Action
Committee (CAC)

