

Town of Bar Harbor Climate Action Plan

December 17, 2024

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Glossary

CAP - Climate Action Plan
CETF - Climate Emergency Task Force
CRP – Community Resilience Partner/Partnership
CO₂ - Carbon dioxide
DOE - Department of Energy
EV - Electric vehicle
GHG - greenhouse gas
MW - Megawatt
MWh - Megawatt-hour
LUO - Land Use Ordinance

Key Terms

Greenhouse gas emissions: The release of human-caused carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and other planet-warming gasses as the result of burning fossil fuels (coal, oil, and gas) and land degradation.

Greenhouse gas inventory: A list of greenhouse gas emissions sources and quantities of emissions released by the activities of a specific entity, such as a business or town, quantified using standardized methods.

Net-zero emissions: A state of balance where the amount of greenhouse gasses produced is equal to the amount of greenhouse gasses removed from the atmosphere through the natural global carbon cycle.

Renewable electricity: Electricity generated from renewable resources such as solar or wind.

A Letter to the Community from the Bar Harbor Task Force on the Climate Emergency

The Bar Harbor Climate Emergency Task Force has developed the Town of Bar Harbor Climate Action Plan (CAP) to provide a comprehensive set of strategies, actions, and recommended implementation pathways towards the goal of minimizing greenhouse gas emissions across our community by 2030.

The original version of the CAP (November 2021) was a five-year plan that identified five priority strategies to mitigate GHG emissions associated with Bar Harbor’s municipal operations and the Mount Desert Island Regional School System. This plan detailed Task Force

recommendations to reduce GHG emissions from municipal operations, facilitate community engagement and action on climate issues, and integrate sustainability considerations into Town government operations and procedures.

The current revision of the CAP (May 2024), called “CAP 2.0”, contains numerous critical updates to these strategies based on new emissions data, stakeholder engagement, and additional research. Most importantly, CAP 2.0 now has an expanded focus on pathways to minimize community-wide GHG emissions in addition to municipal operations.

Overall, CAP 2.0 represents a roadmap for our community to implement top priorities of climate action for Bar Harbor over the next five years. This plan has identified recommended ways to reduce GHG emissions while simultaneously providing demonstrable economic, social, and health benefits to our community.

CAP 2.0 is intended to be a “living document” – one that is regularly updated with additional strategies, goals, and actions as the Town works to reduce its climate impacts. In collaboration with the Town staff, community stakeholders, and Bar Harbor residents, the Climate Emergency Task Force will continue to develop and implement further strategies towards the goal of minimizing community-wide GHG emissions by 2030.

Introduction: Climate Action in Bar Harbor

To date, the Town of Bar Harbor has initiated [several projects](#) with the goal of reducing fossil fuel use while increasing local renewable energy generation. In November 2019, the Town of Bar Harbor passed a [Climate Emergency Declaration](#)¹, brought to them by the youth-led Climate Emergency Action Coalition. The Declaration they passed acknowledged that climate change is a crisis that threatens our Town.

In January 2020, the Town created the Task Force on the Climate Emergency (CETF), an advisory group of eight volunteer residents of Bar Harbor, one student representative and one Town Councilor. The stated mission of the CETF is to “define and recommend climate goals with the objective of drawing down carbon from the atmosphere and reducing community-wide GHG emissions by December 31, 2030. Key responsibilities of the CETF listed in its [official bylaws](#) include:

- Exploring and identifying the most effective and economically beneficial opportunities for emergency-speed GHG emissions reductions across the community.

¹ A climate emergency declaration is a formal proclamation made by a governmental body that recognizes the urgent threat posed by climate change and commits to taking action to address it.

- Developing a comprehensive Bar Harbor “Climate Mobilization Action Plan” addressing climate mitigation, climate adaptation, and community education.
- Educating and engaging Bar Harbor residents about the climate emergency and the broader ecological crisis, as well as actions they can take to address the impacts and causes of the climate emergency.
- Providing significant opportunities for public input into strategic planning, project development for GHG emissions reductions, and all other investigations and work of the Task Force.

Since its creation, the Bar Harbor Task Force on the Climate Emergency has worked with Town staff, committees, and council members, as well as consultants, local stakeholders, and industry experts to research and develop a comprehensive set of policy and strategic recommendations for community-wide climate action, culminating in the *Town of Bar Harbor Climate Action Plan* (November 2021) and subsequent revision (July 2024). CETF members have also supported several town-wide climate projects while developing the Bar Harbor CAP, including:

- Development of initial climate recommendations for the Town Council;
- Conducting two annual GHG audit² of municipal buildings and vehicles, with the intention to further investigate indirect emissions from material use and Town employee travel in the future;
- Co-hosting two public presentations on sea level rise and the local impacts of climate change with students from Mount Desert Island High School’s AP Environmental Science class and A Climate to Thrive;
- Working with a “Community Based Climate Solutions” class from the College of the Atlantic to provide input, feedback and outreach on their projects;
- Helping the Town of Bar Harbor become a “Community Resilience Partner” (CRP) with the state of Maine, which makes us eligible to apply for CRP grants;
- Application and receipt of a regional CRP grant in 2021 of \$150,000 to fund the installation of EV chargers and educational programs in the town;
- Application and receipt of a town CRP grant in 2022 of \$50,000 to fund an energy audit of the Municipal building;
- Ongoing research and collaboration with Town staff, committees, and council members towards implementation of priority strategies for climate action in Bar Harbor.

The Bar Harbor Town Council has also integrated key sustainability goals into its strategic goals, planning processes, and initiatives. In April 2021, the Town Council updated its [Council Goals](#)

² A greenhouse gas audit is an assessment of the emissions of greenhouse gasses (such as carbon dioxide, methane, or nitrous oxide) from the operations and activities of a company, organization, or other entity. These audits allow Bar Harbor to collect data on current emissions and identify the best ways to reduce them.

and Strategy: FY21 – FY26 to include additional climate and sustainability actions under “Goal 2: Create effective plans for a Sustainable Future Strategy” (see Table 1). The Comprehensive Planning Committee has also identified the CETF as a key stakeholder in the development of the 2035 Bar Harbor Comprehensive Plan.

<i>Goal 2: Create effective plans for a Sustainable Future Strategy (April 2021)</i>
<p>2a: Address the climate change emergency with meaningful energy conservation efforts, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a strategic education program to improve Town Council’s climate literacy³ in preparation for adopting a Climate Action Plan. (2021) ● Develop a Climate Action Plan reducing greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 12/31/2030. (Fall 2021) ● Prepare a solar ordinance that will allow free-standing, primary use solar arrays on public and private land. (Town meeting, November 2021) ● Develop a community solar farm on the Higgins Pit lot to power all town facilities and schools and offer low-cost power for nonprofit organizations and low to moderate income households. (2022) ● Replace town vehicles with electric vehicles as vehicle life is reached and suitable vehicles are available. ● Increase electric vehicle charging stations in Bar Harbor. ● Include climate standards for buildings, energy use and transportation in the update of the Bar Harbor Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Ordinance (LUO). ● Develop mitigation strategies for projected impacts of sea level rise to protect municipal infrastructure and public and private property.
<p>2d: Position Bar Harbor as a green tourism⁴ destination/climate leader through collaboration with the business community, major non-profits, local residents and other stakeholders to develop environmental standards.</p>

The Climate Emergency in Maine

Since the Industrial Revolution, humans have released increasing amounts of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other planet-warming greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere, primarily through the

³ Climate literacy means having a functional understanding of climate science, the ability to process climate information, and the knowledge to take meaningful action on mitigating and adapting to climate change.

⁴ Green tourism refers to sustainable travel practices that minimize environmental impacts and educate travelers on sustainable practices while benefiting local communities.

burning of fossil fuels such as coal, oil, and gas. Due to the greenhouse effect, higher GHG concentrations in the atmosphere have resulted in warmer global average temperatures as more solar energy is trapped as heat within the planet's atmosphere.

Climate stability is critical to the health of communities, ecosystems, and the economy across coastal Maine, where fishing, forestry, tourism, and agriculture serve as our economic backbone. Local impacts of climate change and future climate scenarios across the state have been extensively researched by the Climate Change Institute at the University of Maine, and Bar Harbor faces numerous climate threats. Our community has already begun to experience the impacts of increasing frequency and intensity of precipitation events, increase in droughts and drought intensity, and rising winter temperatures leading to decreased snowfall. The temperature of the Gulf of Maine is increasing more rapidly than most water bodies on Earth⁵, with far-reaching consequences for ocean ecosystems, as well as increased risk of flooding and erosion due to sea level rise. Ocean acidification⁶ due to increased absorption of CO₂ into our waters is also now a concern for the long-term health and survival of local shellfish species.

Our community is facing a climate emergency. International, national, and state efforts to reduce GHG emissions and limit climate change are currently insufficient. It is clear that local, community-wide action to reduce GHG emissions is also necessary to prevent the worst impacts of climate change from harming our community, and to ensure a sustainable, prosperous future for Bar Harbor.

Municipal Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment

Energy benchmarking is the process of identifying the emissions produced by a town in a set time period. The CETF completed energy benchmarking of the municipal operations for the 2019-2020 fiscal year (July '19 to June '20), including Conners-Emerson Elementary School. This data does not necessarily represent current emissions, but gives a solid benchmark against which to compare our current and future emissions in order to see the impacts of past initiatives.

Major themes and patterns from this data are displayed in the charts below.

⁵ Over the past decade, sea surface temperatures in the Gulf of Maine increased faster than 99% of the global ocean. Taken from Pershing et al., "[Slow adaptation in the face of rapid warming leads to collapse of the Gulf of Maine cod fishery](#)", *Science*, Vol. 350, No. 6262, October 29, 2015.

⁶ Ocean acidification refers to the ongoing decrease in the pH of the Earth's oceans, caused by the uptake of carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere. Increased ocean acidity makes it more difficult for marine organisms like clams, oysters, lobsters, and plankton to build their shells and skeletal structures, which can threaten entire marine food chains.

CO2 Emissions by Fuel Type

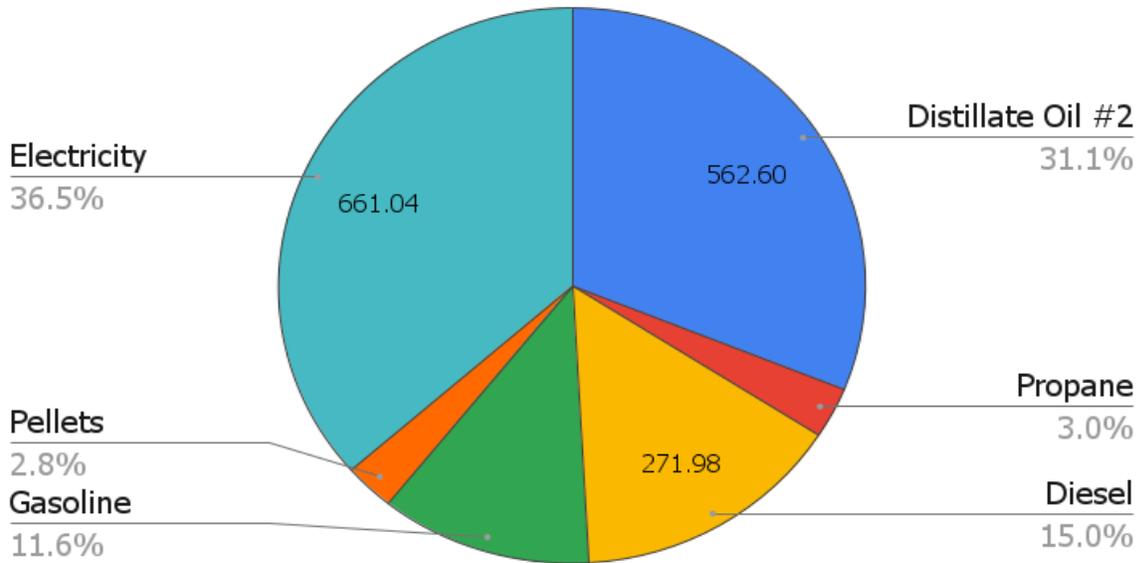


Figure 1: This graph shows the carbon emissions from municipal operations by fuel type. Distillate oil, or fuel oil #2 is used for heating buildings, while diesel and gasoline primarily represent vehicle emissions. Electricity has many varied uses throughout town operations.

Total CO2 Emissions by Department

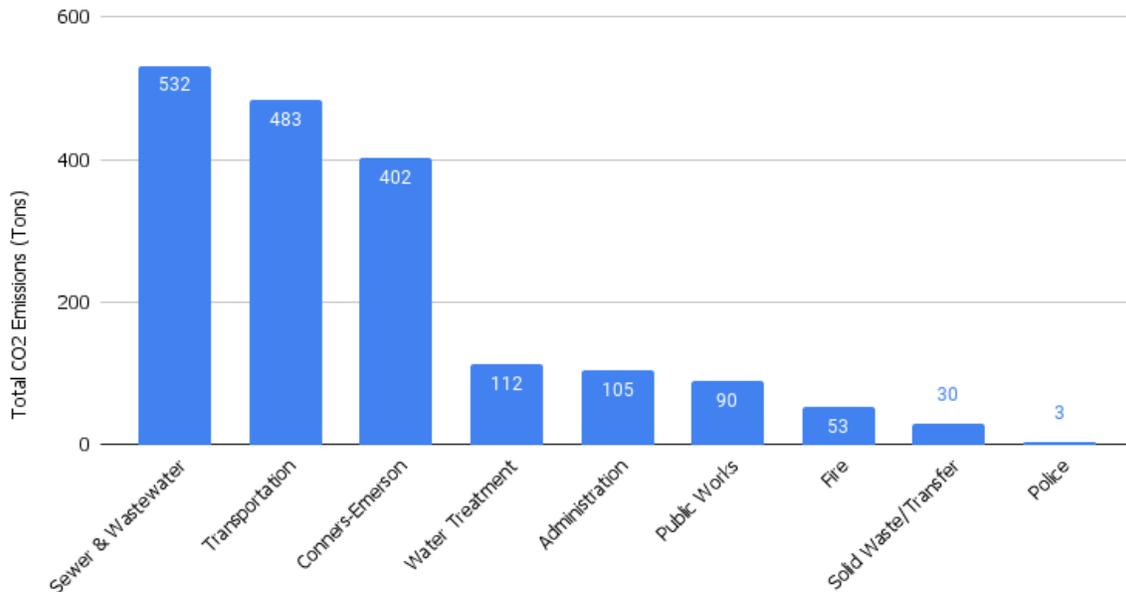


Figure 2: This graph shows carbon emissions by Town Department, with “Transportation”

pulled out as a separate column.

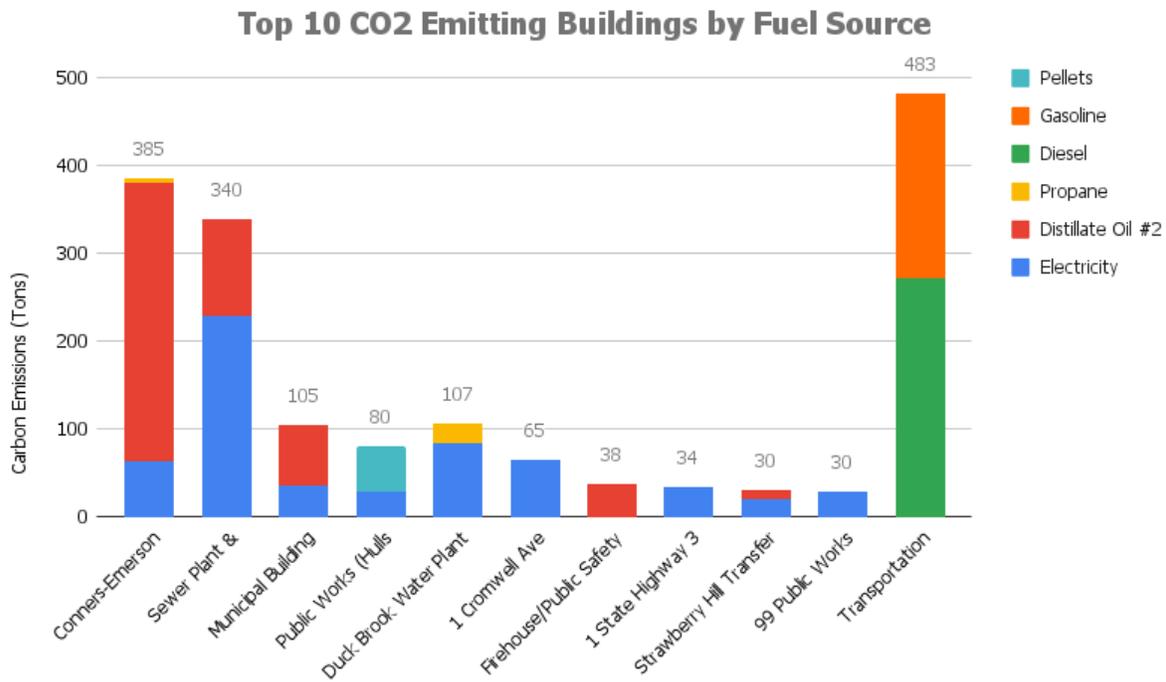


Figure 3: This figure provides an analysis of the carbon emissions by building with the type of energy displayed in the legend. Only the top 10 emitting buildings are displayed. Again, transportation is pulled out in its own bar to give a sense of scale.

Takeaways: The Town of Bar Harbor municipal operations (including the elementary school), emitted about **1,810 tons** of CO₂ in the 2019-2020 fiscal year. About one third of town emissions originated from electricity use, another third from fuel oil, and one quarter from vehicle fuel use. Sewer and wastewater treatment account for the highest portion of emissions at about 532 tons of CO₂. Vehicle emissions associated with school buses, public works, policing, etc. are the second highest source of emissions at 483 tons of CO₂. The Conners-Emerson Elementary School building is the third largest emitter at 402 tons of CO₂. The Municipal Building, or town administration operations are the next highest source of emissions at 105 tons of CO₂. There are many other, smaller sources of CO₂ in municipal operations, which account for the remaining 288 tons of emissions.

Bar Harbor Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies

Strategy 1: Sustainable Transportation

Goals

1. Support the development of safe, accessible, zero-emissions transportation systems across MDI, prioritizing public and active transit.
2. Electrify all municipal and school vehicle fleets to the greatest extent possible by 2030.
3. For municipal and school vehicles that cannot be replaced by electric options, minimize GHG emissions to the greatest extent possible by 2030.
4. Establish a widely used, accessible EV charging network across Bar Harbor by 2030.

Actions

Municipal

- A. Undertake an all-staff transportation survey in order to assess GHG emissions from Town employee commuting, as well as major barriers to adoption of sustainable transit alternatives by Town employees.
- B. Implement education and incentives programs to support the use of low-emissions, public, and active transit methods among Town employees.
 - a. Expand installation of [Level 3 EV chargers](#) and designated EV-only parking spaces to all Town buildings.
 - b. Provide publicly accessible charge points for EBikes and electric scooters at the Municipal building.
 - c. Develop a remote/hybrid working policy for Town employees and support Town employee carpooling efforts.
- B. Establish municipal fleet electrification requirements within the Equipment Replacement Schedule of the Capital Improvement Plan.
 - a. Require replacement of all light-duty municipal and school fleet vehicles with electric vehicle alternatives as existing vehicle lives are reached.
 - b. Require replacement of all medium- and heavy-duty municipal and school fleet vehicles with available suitable electric alternatives as existing vehicle lives are reached.
 - c. When it is impossible to replace vehicles with full EVs, prioritize hybrid and low-emission vehicle replacements as existing vehicle lives are reached.

- C. Identify and utilize key sources of state and philanthropic funding to support municipal fleet electrification and EV infrastructure expansion.

Community-wide

- A. Undertake a community-wide comprehensive transportation study to determine top sources of GHG emissions from the Town’s transportation systems, major barriers to adoption of electric, active, and public transit by residents and visitors, and key opportunities to improve electric, public, and active transit infrastructure, such as priority placement of bikeways, more busses, etc.
- B. Adopt a “[Complete Streets](#)”⁷ policy to guide design and implementation of all future transportation projects, reduce traffic, improve traffic safety and local air quality, and ensure equitable access to local businesses and essential services.
- C. Expand installation of publicly accessible Level 2 and Level 3 EV chargers at designated EV-only public parking spaces.
 - a. Prioritize installation of EV chargers in kiosk public parking lots in downtown Bar Harbor.
 - b. Establish at minimum 2 EV-only public parking spaces in kiosk public parking lots in downtown Bar Harbor.
- D. Collaborate with local business owners and other key community stakeholders to identify additional sites for the installation of Level 3 EV charging stations at major destinations.*
- E. Identify sites for installation of public charging outlets for EBike and electric scooter charging.
- F. Publicize local EV charging availability to community members and visitors.
- G. Support and promote community-wide use of EVs and other sustainable transit methods, including through community-wide education regarding existing state and national incentives programs.
- H. Publicize and enforce the current Idling Ordinance restricting non-emergency vehicle idling to 5 minutes.

⁷ “Complete Streets is an approach to planning, designing, building, operating, and maintaining streets that enables safe access for all people who need to use them, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.” - Smart Growth America

* Indicates that recommended goal or action corresponds to an existing Town Council goal or project.

Strategy 2: Building Electrification and Energy Efficiency

Goals

1. Electrify municipal building heating and cooling systems and maximize energy efficiency across municipal operations by 2030.
2. Support and promote residential and commercial building electrification and energy efficiency initiatives across Bar Harbor in order to minimize community-wide fossil fuel use.

Actions

Municipal

- A. Conduct energy audits across all town and school facilities, including wastewater treatment systems, in order to identify high-energy use buildings and efficiency upgrades.
- B. Minimize fossil fuel use within municipal and school building heating systems.
 - a. Replace #2 distillate oil⁸ with sustainably sourced biofuels across municipal and school building heating systems, including backup heating systems, where feasible, as an interim measure to reduce GHG emissions from heating oil.
- C. Electrify municipal and school building heating systems.
 - a. Replace all fossil-fueled HVAC and water heating systems in all town and school buildings with electric heat pump systems.
 - b. Integrate ongoing electrification efforts into the Equipment Replacement Schedule of the Capital Improvement Plan such that all uses of fossil fuels be replaced unless proven unfeasible.
- D. Complete energy efficiency upgrades for all town and school facilities, beginning with least efficient buildings.
- E. Establish energy use monitoring systems across all town and school buildings to identify and implement additional town building-use and system modifications to support energy conservation and improved efficiency.

Community-wide

⁸ Distillate oil is produced through the distillation of crude oil. #2 distillate oil specifically refers to a distillate fuel oil that falls within a certain viscosity range and is used for heating purposes.

*Indicates that recommended goal or action corresponds to an existing Town Council goal or project.

- A. Strengthen municipal building and energy codes in order to minimize GHG emissions in new residential and commercial buildings.
 - a. Adopt the 2021 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) “stretch” building codes concerning the “solar ready, EV-ready and Net Zero” appendices to establish energy efficiency and net-zero-carbon energy requirements for all new building construction.
- B. Support and promote [beneficial electrification](#), weatherization, and efficiency upgrades for existing residential and commercial buildings.
 - a. Educate community members about existing local, state, and national incentives programs for energy efficiency.
 - i. Support a community-wide bulk purchasing program¹⁰ for residential energy efficiency retrofits.
 - b. Investigate electrification financing programs and partnership with organizations such as [BlocPower](#)¹¹ in order to equitably and effectively electrify existing residential and commercial buildings in Bar Harbor.
 - c. Research and implement methods to help support and incentivise the improvements listed above for rental and commercial properties.

Strategy 3: Renewable Energy

Goals

1. Municipal Operations: Achieve 100% renewable electricity, with a preference for locally generated renewable power by 2026.¹²
2. Community-Wide: Achieve 100% renewable electricity use across the Bar Harbor community by 2030.¹³
3. Establish 10 MW of local renewable energy generation capacity by 2030.

Actions

Municipal

¹⁰ Such programs enable community members to join together to purchase renewables in bulk to obtain lower prices. ACTT is the lead

¹¹ [BlocPower](#) is a company working in Ithaca, the Bronx, and other communities on equitable and affordable community-wide building decarbonization.

¹² Municipal GHG audit data shows that the Town of Bar Harbor used 1,874 MWh of electricity in FY2020.

¹³ According to local climate advocacy organization A Climate To Thrive, Mount Desert Island has a peak electricity demand of about 10 MW in winter, and 16 MW in summer.

- A. Transition to locally-generated renewable electricity use across municipal operations and schools.
 - a. Eliminate GHG emissions from municipal electricity use through purchasing electricity generated from renewable sources.
 - i. Investigate switching current municipal electricity supply provided through Versant Power to a 100% renewable Competitive Electricity Provider (CEP) for near-term reductions, with the ultimate goal of transitioning renewable electricity sources to be as local as possible.
 - b. Identify, assess, and prioritize additional suitable locations for rooftop and ground-mounted solar photovoltaic installations on Town property.
 - i. Commission updated feasibility assessments and issue requests for proposal (RFPs)¹⁴ for additional priority municipal rooftop solar photovoltaic arrays.
 - c. Collaborate with towns across Mount Desert Island to investigate feasibility of a shared municipal solar photovoltaic power project and development of a regional microgrid pilot program.

Community-wide

- A. Actively support expansion of local renewable energy generation capacity in Bar Harbor, such as rooftop and ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays.
 - a. Adopt Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE and C-PACE) ordinances¹⁵ to allow homeowners and business owners across the Town to access upfront federal financing for photovoltaic solar installations.
 - b. Support the development of community-owned solar farms on Town property in order to provide low-cost, renewable power to low- and moderate-income households, small businesses, and nonprofit organizations across the Town.
 - c. Collaborate with local property owners, community groups, and solar developers to identify and assess suitability of privately-owned rooftops and disused land for community renewable energy projects.
 - d. Support and promote benefits of transitioning to renewable energy, including through community-wide education regarding existing state and national incentives programs.

¹⁴ A request for proposal solicits bids from suppliers, in this case solar companies, for a project.

¹⁵ Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) and Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) are mechanisms that allow property owners to finance energy efficiency and renewable energy projects through property assessments.

- B. Advocate for state policy and support regional action towards a 100% renewable energy Mount Desert Island, including:
 - a. Grid modernization to support renewable energy integration, open access to grid capacity maps, demand-side management of resources, and renewable energy access equity for all Mainers.
 - b. Enforcement of state renewable portfolio standards (RPS) to ensure electricity suppliers rapidly transition to the state goals of 80% renewable electricity production by 2030 and 100% by 2050.
 - c. Development of additional state incentives for local and community-owned renewable energy installations.

Strategy 4: Land Use

Goals

- 1. Support sustainable, low-carbon, and resilient land use and development across Bar Harbor.

Actions

- A. Integrate climate mitigation and adaptation as key considerations throughout all Town land use policies and permitting processes.
 - a. Prioritize climate mitigation and adaptation throughout development of the 2035 Bar Harbor Comprehensive Plan, and include a dedicated chapter on local climate change vulnerabilities, GHG mitigation strategies, and adaptation efforts.
 - b. Amend Article I, §125-3 of the LUO, (which states the purposes of the LUO), to add “**W.** Anticipating and responding to the impacts of climate change, including sea level rise, on the Town of Bar Harbor.” as a key purpose of the chapter.
 - c. Amend the Town’s Shoreland Zoning Ordinance and map to account for areas that will be inundated according to likely sea level rise scenarios (~1.6 to 3.9 feet) and increased storm surges.
 - d. Examine existing LUO and permitting processes to identify additional opportunities to reduce GHG emissions and strengthen community climate resilience through zoning, permitting, and municipal codes.

- B. Integrate [“15 minute city”](#)¹⁶ principles throughout future Town land use planning efforts. The goal of this philosophy is to support dwellers in downtown areas in reaching all of their daily needs via a 15-minute bike or walking commute.
 - a. Prioritize mixed-use and high-density residential and commercial development in order to minimize GHG emissions from building energy use and long-distance commuting for work or everyday necessities such as groceries, school, pharmacy, etc.

- C. Protect open space across Bar Harbor while maximizing carbon sequestration capacity¹⁷ of local lands and waters.
 - a. Implement the goals and strategies for natural land and water resource conservation as identified in the 2014 Bar Harbor Open Space Plan.
 - b. Collaborate with Acadia National Park, Maine Coast Heritage Trust and other community stakeholders in order to develop strategies to protect and enhance local natural carbon sinks.

Strategy 5: Resource Consumption and Waste

Goals

1. Achieve a 75% residential and commercial waste diversion rate by 2026.
2. Achieve a 50% construction and municipal waste diversion rate by 2026.
3. Minimize all community-wide waste to the greatest extent possible by 2030.
4. Support the establishment of sustainable local food production and diversion systems across Mount Desert Island.

Actions

Municipal

- A. Adopt an Electronic Documentation Policy to minimize paper use and printed copy requirements across municipal operations and services, such as Town meetings and licensing and permitting services, as allowed by law.

¹⁶ “...all residents should be able to access their daily needs of home, work, education, care, essential shopping, and socializing within the distance of a 15-minute walk or bike ride.” - Earth Island Journal

¹⁷Carbon sequestration capacity is the ability of natural environments such as forests, soils, and aquatic plants to remove and store carbon from the atmosphere.

- B. Adopt a Sustainable Procurement Policy to ensure that relevant municipal purchasing meets green standards including minimum recycled content requirements and local vendor and provider preferences.
- C. Conduct comprehensive municipal waste audits to identify and implement strategies to minimize municipal discarded resources.

Community-wide

- A. Publicize state and local restrictions on plastic bags and single-use containers.
- B. Conduct annual comprehensive community-wide waste audits in order to identify seasons with greatest impact, track progress, and identify and implement strategies to minimize discarded resources.
- C. Establish the systems, policies, and infrastructure necessary to minimize discarded resources and support sustainable materials management across Bar Harbor by 2030, such as:
 - a. Pay as you throw (PAYT) policies that are convenient and sustainable for residents and commercial entities to offset MSW costs.
 - b. A plan to achieve reduction of food waste to 0% of MSW by 2030, coupled with encouraging and building enabling resources (e.g., community compost facilities, food waste haulers, etc.)
 - c. Improvements to current single-stream resource “recycling” system, including diverting glass and other options for “diversion” rather than “recycling”.
 - d. Mandatory recycling requirements for commercial and multi-family residential buildings.
 - e. Implement a swap shop at the town transfer station.

Strategy 6: Sustainable Local Economy

Goals

1. Establish Bar Harbor as a leading green tourism destination by 2030.
2. Promote climate action as a key component of a sustainable, year-round local economy in Bar Harbor.

Actions

Community-wide

1. Build the capacity of local Bar Harbor businesses to take climate action and respond to projected climate impacts.

- a. Provide local business owners with educational resources about existing local, state, and national programs and incentives to support GHG emissions reductions in businesses, such as building energy audits and efficiency upgrades.
2. Support the establishment of a multi-stakeholder Sustainable Tourism and Business advisory group to:
 - a. investigate the environmental impacts of tourism in Bar Harbor,
 - b. identify climate risks to local businesses,
 - c. develop strategies for sustainable tourism, and
 - d. provide direct support to local business owners seeking to take climate action.

Strategy 7: Climate Adaptation and Resilience

Goals

1. Raise public awareness of projected (and current) climate impacts on the Bar Harbor community, including on key industries, critical infrastructure, and public and private property.
2. Pursue and support climate adaptation efforts as necessary to protect Town and community assets and investments.

Actions

1. Support efforts to educate community members about projected climate impacts across Bar Harbor, including sea level rise, storm surges, flooding, extreme weather, infrastructure damage, and biodiversity loss.
2. Integrate results and recommendations of the 2021 Bar Harbor [Maine Flood Resilience Checklist](#) into all future community planning efforts.
 - a. Incorporate resiliency criteria and future flood hazard information into the Town's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for municipal infrastructure and facilities.
 - b. Collaborate with MDI towns, local organizations, and regional and state agencies such as the Hancock County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) and the Maine Department of Transportation (DOT) to address climate vulnerabilities and develop a plan to address future flood hazards across the community.
3. Identify and pursue federal and state financial and technical resources to advance local climate adaptation efforts, such as the Maine Coastal Communities Grant Program.

Strategy 8: Public Education and Engagement

Goals

1. Develop a shared, community-wide understanding of the climate emergency and the goals, objectives, and strategies of the Town of Bar Harbor Climate Action Plan.
2. Actively include all Bar Harbor residents and key stakeholders in the development and implementation of the Town of Bar Harbor Climate Action Plan.

Actions

1. Conduct and share an annual GHG audit of both municipal and community-wide emissions.
2. Create a user-friendly, regularly updated “Climate Emergency” webpage on the Town of Bar Harbor website to serve as a centralized location for the CETF and Town staff to collect, organize, and disseminate information and resources to the public regarding the Climate Action Plan and related public events. Include a dashboard to track and display goals, actions, and outcomes.
3. Develop a series of Public Service Announcements on key climate and sustainability topics for Bar Harbor residents and businesses to educate themselves and take key steps to reduce their own climate impact.
4. Continue to actively gather and integrate feedback from Bar Harbor residents throughout CAP implementation and future CAP revisions.
 - a. Organize regular community “Climate Town Hall Meetings” to present the annual GHG audit, share updates and progress on the Climate Action Plan, and gather citizen input on next steps.
 - b. Utilize the Polco civic participation online platform to solicit information and feedback from the public on town-wide climate and sustainability initiatives.
5. Actively participate in and promote community activities and events that highlight climate and sustainability issues, including Earth Day, Maine Recycling Week, National Drive Electric Week, and Bike to Work Day.

Strategy 9: Governance

Goals

1. Integrate sustainability and climate considerations into all Town municipal planning, decision-making, and regional collaboration efforts.

Actions

- A. Establish a Town Sustainability Coordinator staff position to;
 - a. Develop and coordinate town staff efforts to implement the *Town of Bar Harbor Climate Action Plan*,
 - b. Pursuing grant funding for this work
 - c. Oversee Town capital improvement to select the option with the lowest emissions.
 - d. Assist town staff in identifying low or zero emissions solutions to the various town functions. (building audits, EV vehicles, low energy pumps, reduce waste)
 - e. Provide annual report on town's accomplishments around GHG reduction
- B. Regularly track and analyze greenhouse gas emission sources and emission reduction efforts across Bar Harbor.
 - a. Conduct an annual GHG emissions audit across municipal and school operations.
 - b. Conduct a community-wide greenhouse gas emissions audit every three years.
 - c. Utilize a dedicated municipal GHG accounting platform such as ICLEI ClearPath¹⁸ to streamline and communicate the greenhouse gas emissions tracking processes.
- C. Establish and manage a [“Green Revolving Fund”](#) and direct any financial savings from reduced town and school energy bills towards future climate and energy projects.
- D. Ensure that all annual Town budget proposals include proposed funding for municipal and community-wide climate and energy projects, including through distribution of funds from the Parking Fund and Cruise Ship Fund as permitted by law.
- E. Require that all major municipal purchasing proposals, including capital improvement projects, include life cycle costs and estimated greenhouse gas emissions.
- F. Collaborate and share best practices with local governments across Mount Desert Island, Maine, and worldwide towards local climate action.
 - a. Identify and pursue opportunities to align local climate action with the goals and strategies of Maine's four-year state climate action plan, [Maine Won't Wait](#).
 - b. Apply for local and regional funding for implementation of community climate action and outreach through the Maine [Community Resilience Partnership](#) and other public and philanthropic initiatives.
 - c. Join and actively participate in ICLEI's global network.
- G. Review and revise as needed the strategies, goals, and actions within the *Town of Bar Harbor Climate Action Plan* at minimum every five years.*

¹⁸ ICLEI stands for International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives. Its [ClearPath program](#) aims to standardize and streamline the emissions accounting process for local governments to support more data-driven climate action planning and benchmarking.

* Indicates that recommended goal or action corresponds to an existing Town Council goal or project.

References

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