



Mayors Climate Protection Center

Taking Local Action

# Mayors and Climate Protection Best Practices

June 2023

17<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Winners  
Mayors' Climate Protection Awards



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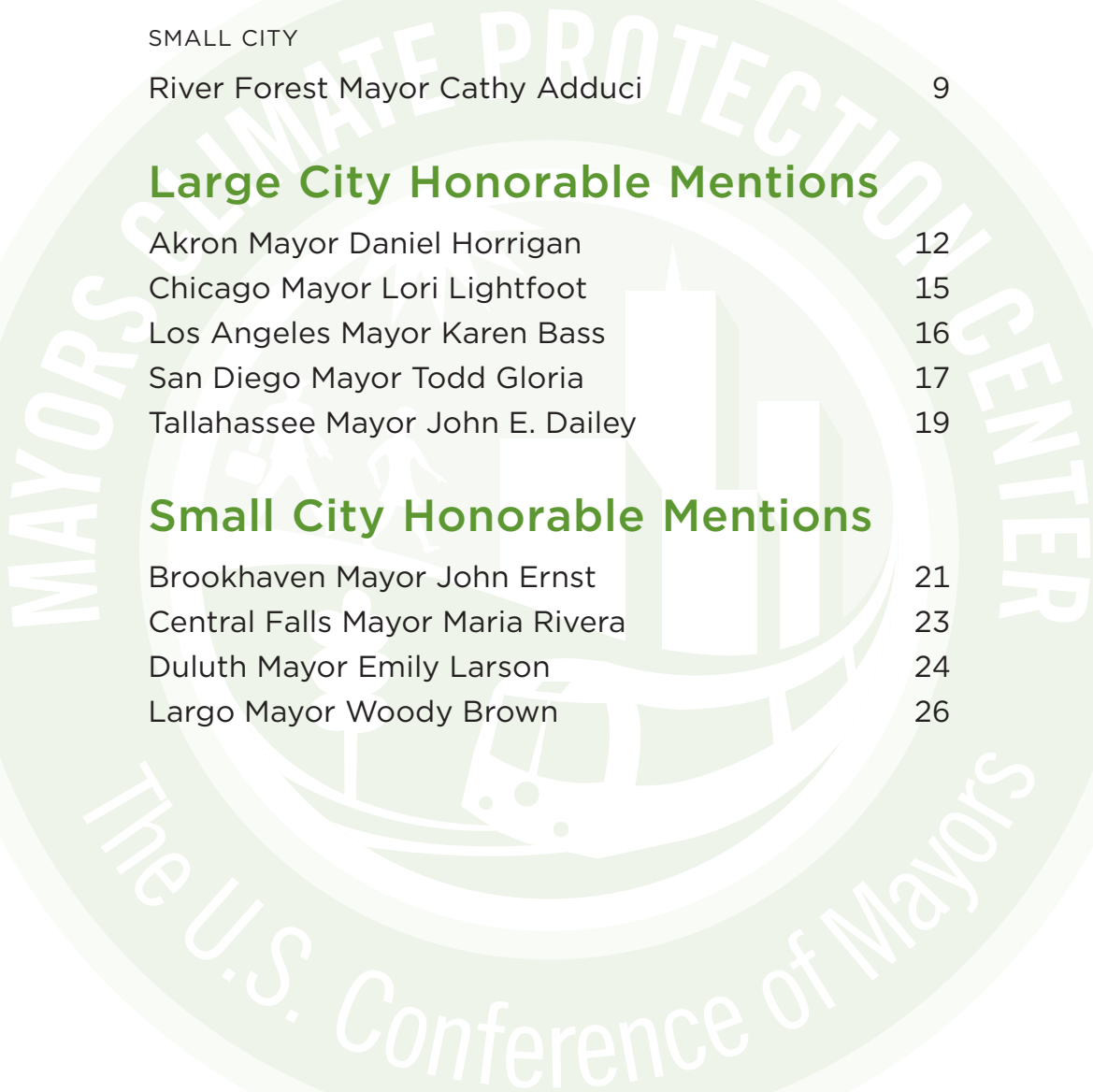
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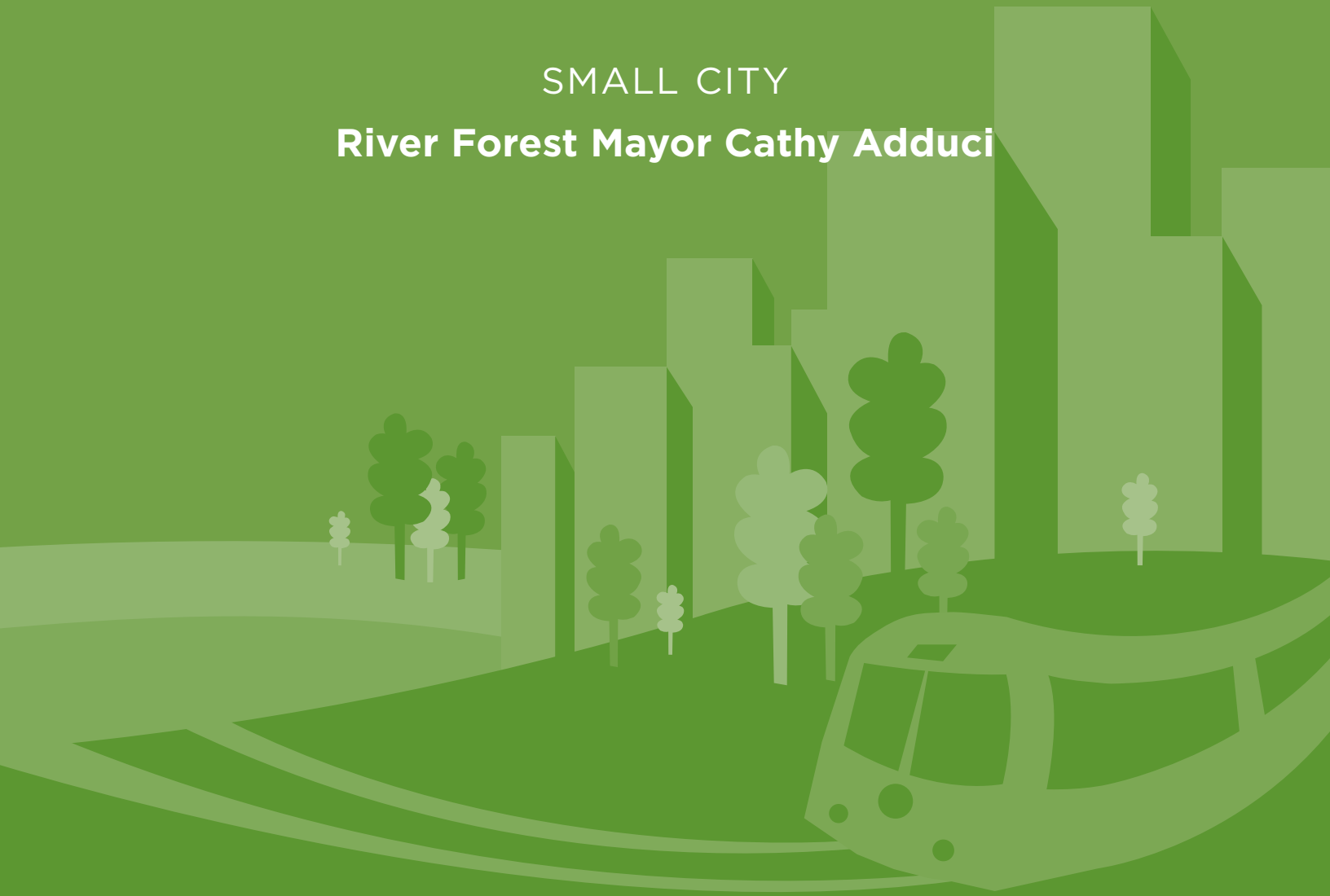
# First Place Award Winners

LARGE CITY

**Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock**

SMALL CITY

**River Forest Mayor Cathy Adduci**



# Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock

## Climate Protection Fund

Denver's Climate Protection Fund (CPF) is a taxpayer-supported fund dedicated to climate action. Through a 0.25% sales tax, the CPF generates \$40 million or more each year to make investments in the areas of Adaptation and Resiliency, Buildings and Homes, Environmental Justice, Renewable Energy, Sustainable Transportation, and Workforce Development. Across each of the focus areas, the CPF must also ensure at least 50% of the investments benefit Denver's most climate-vulnerable communities, specifically people of color and Indigenous people, communities where the majority of residents have low incomes, people living with chronic health conditions or disabilities, babies, children, and older adults.

Climate change is already causing health, social, economic, and environmental impacts in communities worldwide, and since cities account for 70% of the world's population, cities must lead the charge in rapidly reducing greenhouse gas emissions and transitioning to renewable energy sources. Cities must also be mindful that those least equipped to respond to and weather climate change impacts are at the highest risk, and local governments need to be prepared to adapt and absorb those shocks. Cities also recognize that climate action strategies often come with costly upfront investments that are out of reach for many, if not most, residents. The Climate Protection Fund bridges that gap by providing funding and resources to support the city's ambitious climate, adaptation, and mitigation goals, with direct and measurable benefits that go first to those most in need.

The idea to fund climate action through a sales tax was identified in 2020 by the city's Climate Action Task Force. This was a group of 25 external stakeholders selected to represent all of Denver – community-based organizations, environmental advocates, business representatives, the oil and gas sector, the local utility, people of color and Indigenous people, climate researchers – to consider how Denver should take more aggressive action on climate change. In addition to programmatic and policy recommendations, the task force also recommended strategies to fund the work. The sales tax was determined to be the least regressive option, since in Denver, residents pay about 35% of the sales tax revenue, with the balance coming from visitors. Additionally, groceries and certain personal products are exempt from the sales tax.

Every city's first challenge in tackling climate change is funding. Denver is truly blessed with a population that is largely supportive of climate action driving the city toward a healthier and more sustainable future. The sales tax behind the CPF was approved by 65% of Denver voters. Not only has this provided funding for projects – like scores of solar arrays and thousands of e-bikes – it also funds the staff needed to implement the work.

The next challenge is the need to collaborate and reach consensus on the strategies to achieve the goal of completely eliminating emissions by 2040, and doing so with the city's most climate-vulnerable communities at the center. Localized and government-led climate action takes time to have influence and disrupt the status quo. The CPF is managed by Denver's Office of Climate Action, Sustainability, and Resiliency (CASR), which has established a culture of innovation focused on 'getting to yes' through mutual understanding and compromise with fellow agencies and external stakeholders. CASR has a robust routine of leading multi-agency efforts to steer public policy changes, and external stakeholder engagement through its Sustainability Advisory Council.

In many cities, political will is a challenge, but not in Denver. Mayor Michael Hancock has been steadfast in his commitment to tackling the city's biggest challenges, and climate change is no exception. Even before the CPF sales tax was approved by voters, Mayor Hancock provided the CASR office with perennial funding from the city's General Fund, with enough support for over 20 full time positions, more staff than many cities much larger than Denver. He created the CASR office in 2020 in partnership with City Council and resident activists. He founded the Climate Action Task Force which produced a report of recommendations for how Denver should take action on climate, and he has enacted many of them. He remodeled the Sustainability Advisory Council on the success of the Climate Action Task Force, and it now engages more than 100 residents, advocates, businesspeople, and scientists monthly to ensure that the city's climate agenda is on track to meet its goals. Mayor Hancock's leadership has been pivotal to the city's successful efforts to be a national leader on local climate action.

The fund is already helping reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the city:

- The 11 new community solar gardens will produce 9.6 million kWh per year, avoiding emissions equivalent to taking 1,000 cars off the road.
- On a per mile basis, e-bikes produce 1% of the emissions of a gasoline vehicles. Based on a survey of our voucher recipients and app tracking data, Denver residents who purchased an e-bike through this program are riding their e-bikes 26 miles and replacing 3.4 vehicle trips each week. Across all participants e-bikes are replacing 100,000 vehicle miles traveled and reducing 48 tons of GHGs each week. The program is also creating new cyclists in Denver, with 29% of participants indicating they were new bike riders.
- The \$30M+ for energy retrofits in commercial buildings will drive this sector toward the net zero emissions goal by 2040, with a 30% reduction in emissions by 2030.

Within the six categories of allowable uses of the fund, there is tremendous flexibility. Here are some examples:

- Offering the e-bike vouchers at the point-of-sale is the major innovation that made this program so popular. It reduces the upfront cost to the consumer rather than them paying the full price upfront and getting the rebate paid back later.
- Planting 2,200 trees on private property in low-income neighborhoods with low tree canopy.
- Installing 15MW of solar power across 11 arrays on government-owned property, with 30% of the power subsidizing and reducing the monthly bills for hundreds of low-income households.
- Fully electrifying the homes of 200 low-income households in apartments and single family homes.
- Subsidizing the cost for homeowners to retire 425 gas furnaces and replace them with heat pumps.
- Subsidizing 1,000 workforce training positions from career exploration for high school students through paid, on the job apprenticeships in solar installation, HVAC and mechanical trades, and natural areas management.
- Funding micro-transit services (neighborhood circulators) in low-income communities, filling gaps not served by the area's mass transit system.

- Conducting 50 neighborhood-based focus groups with over 500 attendees, including youth, in Denver's 10 most climate-vulnerable communities, to identify their climate solutions and shape Environmental Justice programs to be funded by the CPF.
- Providing mini-grants to small, community-based non-profits to educate residents about how to engage in regulatory procedures so they can advocate for themselves.

The Climate Protection Fund was created by a 0.25% sales tax, approved by 65% of the voters. In 2021 it generated \$41.3M and \$47.8M in 2022. The funds are non-lapsing and there is no sunset on the tax.

While the city is cutting its carbon emissions, it is growing public support for these fund-supported investments. Consider the words of two e-bike voucher recipients:

*"I commute every day to work...I absolutely love this program. It made my decision to sell my car and only use my bicycle from now on so much easier."*

*"I put 700 miles on my e-bike in about 10 weeks...I use it to haul kids, groceries, etc. We sold our Subaru Forester to afford my new e-cargo bike and I LOVE it! Our family is now down to one car and two e-cargo bikes, and it's been great!"*

Another example of the fund's benefits is its impact on workforce development programs that pay more than minimum wage and give trainees a pathway to permanent jobs paying family-sustaining wages, with benefits:

- GRID Alternatives' Solar Accelerator Internship offers trainees a pathway into solar management and pays \$27/hr.
- Groundwork Denver's Green Infrastructure Training (GRIT) program pays \$20/hr, on-the-job training for Opportunity Youth (18–24 yrs) in green infrastructure design, implementation, and management in urban ecosystems.
- The Park People's TreeForce Pre-Apprenticeship pays \$20/hr to justice-involved individuals in urban forestry and arboriculture.

Here are other examples of how these resources are improving the lives of Denver's residents:

- The majority of homes and apartments in Denver do not have air conditioning. With an increase in extreme heat events, reliable and efficient cooling at home is critical for personal and community climate resiliency, including protection from wildfire smoke. Replacing gas furnaces with air source heat pumps, as the fund now incentivizes, provides both heating and cooling, and moves the grid closer to the city's goal of 100% renewable by 2030, eliminating emissions from electricity.
- Free and on-demand micro-transit shuttles close the gap between home and transit, expanding the mobility of entire under-resourced neighborhoods.
- Investing in Environmental Justice communities empowers the residents to have a voice in regulatory proceedings, amplifying the urgent need to improve the health and quality of life through mitigation and pollution prevention.



# River Forest Mayor Cathy Adduci

## Cross Community Climate Collaborative

The Cross Community Climate Collaborative (C4) is a project of the Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC)-led Urban Efficiency Group (UEG), Seven Generations Ahead (SGA) and the mayors of Oak Park, IL, Broadview, IL and River Forest, IL and 14 total mayors/communities that have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to work together to address the climate crisis and achieve equity and sustainability outcomes.

The project supports BIPOC and other communities with fewer resources by implementing strategies, providing replicable project and policy toolkits, developing large-scale projects, and advancing policies and securing program funding resources for initiatives that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and create jobs for BIPOC and Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) residents. C4 has energy projects including: a) connecting up to 1,000 BIPOC/LMI residents to reduced rate solar electricity through the IL Solar for All Program; b) assessing C4 community buildings for solar array capacity and jump starting on-site solar developments; c) exploring development of a multi-institution RFP for community solar procurement; d) siting potential large-scale community solar projects; and e) connecting C4 institutions to energy efficiency programs and rebates from local utilities, and state and federal grant programs.

The Village of River Forest has partnered with the Village of Oak Park for a decade on implementing a two-community sustainability plan and saw the opportunity and need to collaborate even further across its own borders to establish a mutually beneficial partnership with multiple west suburban Cook County communities that cross racial, ethnic and income lines. The villages of River Forest, Oak Park and Broadview saw the collective need to work together to drive replicable projects across multiple communities and to seek federal and other funding support to bring resources to communities with fewer resources.

The project has faced the issue of bandwidth among elected officials and has dealt with this issue by creating sustainability working groups within each community to drive projects; and by asking mayors, superintendents, and other CEOs to identify staff that can move forward projects once they have been agreed upon.

Community institutions in River Forest and Oak Park have reduced GHG emissions annually by 33,669 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> by purchasing solar and renewable electricity through community solar

projects and through Community Choice Municipal Aggregation; installing on-site solar arrays; and making energy efficiency upgrades through the ComEd LED: Lighting Program and New Construction and Major Renovation Program. Two community institutions have received \$2,600,000 to build/retrofit buildings that produce net zero energy.

What makes C4 unique and innovative is that it is bringing together BIPOC and non-minority communities together to collaborate, replicate and develop projects that move the needle on GHG emissions reductions and equity and sustainability outcomes, while providing in-depth hands-on support. The project recognizes that while some communities have the resources and knowledge to drive climate planning and implementation, many communities don't, and they need support, guidance, and peer collaboration to address these issues. The project supports underserved communities with developing and facilitating sustainability working groups/commissions to provide an ongoing internal vehicle for individual communities to drive climate, equity, and sustainability solutions. The project also works beyond municipal governments within communities, and engages park districts, K-12 schools, libraries, universities, hospitals and other community institutions – ensuring a comprehensive multi-community and multi-institution approach to climate solutions.

General operations for C4 have been funded through the Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation, the Funders' Network's Partners for Places Program and the U.S. Conference of Mayors Childhood Obesity Prevention/Environmental Health and Sustainability Awards. Additional funding to support projects has been provided through a USDA composting and recycling grant; workforce development funding; and a USDA farm-to-school grant. C4's upcoming GreenTown Conference is being financially supported by the Village of Oak Park and other community and private sector sponsors.

This program has improved the quality of life of area residents by providing reduced-rate solar electricity to low-income residents, enabling them to participate in the clean energy economy while lessening their utility burden. Training low-income residents on energy efficiency audits and upgrades through UEG's workforce development work is providing skills development and jobs to

low-income residents. Linking institutions to solar energy procurement and on-site development opportunities reduces GHG emissions which if not abated adversely impacts low-income residents.

C4's vision for success and desired outcomes includes being on pace with a 45% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030. The success will manifest in maximizing on-site solar/renewable energy within communities (measured by the number of projects and volume of kWhs generated); community solar through Illinois' "Solar for All" program that provides reduced-rate electricity for low-to-moderate income (LMI) residents (measured by the number of low-income residents receiving reduced-rate solar electricity from new IL projects); large-scale municipal aggregation/community solar that "bundles" subscriptions to renewable energy for whole communities (measured by the volume of kWhs procured); EV Infrastructure plans and funding for C4 communities (measured by the number EV charging stations installed in BIPOC and other C4 communities); Work Force Development training and jobs for BIPOC residents related to solar and EV project development (measured by the number of BIPOC/LMI residents receiving jobs); Residential curbside food scrap collection and school-based Zero Waste Schools program implementation and food scrap collection/composting systems implemented (measured by the number of communities and schools with new systems/programs and volume of material diverted); Sustainability working groups/commissions established in C4 communities to ensure community engagement (number of working groups); and step-by-step process training for communities on GHG inventories and metrics tracking (number of communities establishing GHG emissions inventories).

# Large City Honorable Mentions

Population Over 100,000

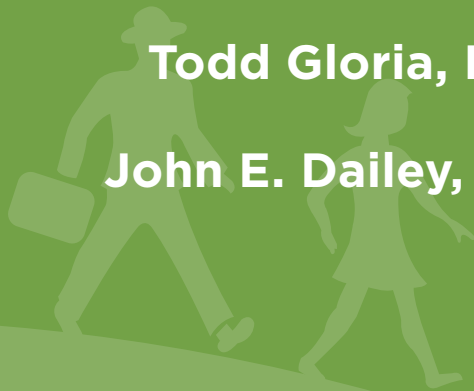
**Daniel Horrigan, Mayor of Akron**

**Lori Lightfoot, Mayor of Chicago**

**Karen Bass, Mayor of Los Angeles**

**Todd Gloria, Mayor of San Diego**

**John E. Dailey, Mayor of Tallahassee**



# Akron Mayor Daniel Horrigan

## Modernizing Akron's District Energy Steam Plant

Once known as Recycle Energy Systems, a waste-to-energy incineration plant that caught fire thirteen times in fifteen months in the 1980s, the City of Akron's district energy steam plant has turned into a climate success story. Over the past nine years, Akron Energy Systems has slowly transformed the city's waste-to-energy power plant from a dangerous, poorly run trash-incineration facility to a safe, cost-effective power-generating operation. In 2018, shortly after Mayor Horrigan's administration taking the helm, Akron City Council authorized a \$25.4 million renovation for the plant, which allowed AES to:

- Install steam-generation equipment with three new boilers;
- Construct water treatment to accommodate expansion and ensure longevity of new equipment;
- Incorporate renewable energy and water-conservation technology;
- Include reliability enhancements for hospitals;
- Construct a new staff building; and
- Demolish the existing boiler building and repurpose remaining buildings for other city use.

Since taking control of the plant's operations, AES has reduced fuel consumption by 46 percent, and reduced water use by 30 million gallons per year. As the City of Akron's community energy system operator, AES delivers a finished heating and cooling product to buildings in the city's downtown business district, including its hospitals.

Community energy systems allow municipalities, medical complexes, and university campuses to realize significant water and energy savings. Instead of discharging the steam condensate to the sewer after use, it can be used by the end user for thermal energy or returned to the community energy plant for reuse. Akron Children's Hospital is one of Akron Energy Systems' largest customers. The hospital uses steam produced and delivered by Akron Energy Systems for heating the buildings on their sprawling downtown Akron campus. When the steam has been used, condensation occurs, and steam condenses back into tiny water droplets. Those drops of water are called condensate. Akron Energy Systems recovers the water from Akron Children's Hospital through a condensate return process. This process allows water to

be returned to the district energy production plant through underground piping that runs parallel to our steam and chilled water lines. Once returned to the plant, the water is treated and reused to produce steam. In the two years since the City of Akron's new community energy system has come online in 2020, Akron Children's Hospital has seen positive results in water conservation, heat recovery, and carbon savings related to condensate return recovery. For instance, this past year, water conservation exceeded 28 million gallons, total condensate heat recovery exceeded 21 million BTU, and CO<sub>2</sub> reduction hit more than 1,400 metric tons.

The need for this project was substantiated by earlier analysis, specifically the city's baseline greenhouse gas emissions inventory it undertook in 2005 and, again, in 2009. In 2005, the carbon emissions inventory from government operations were 255,012 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e. By 2009, the city had already reduced its inventory to 222,532 metric tons, which represents a 13% decrease. The categories of emissions from governmental sources included the City of Akron steam plant, governmental buildings & facilities, streetlights & traffic signals, water delivery facilities, wastewater facilities, solid waste facilities, the city vehicle fleet and the employee commute. By far, the source of the greatest metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2009 was the City's steam plant with 113,733 out of a total for all categories of emissions of 222,533 CO<sub>2</sub>e. In 2020, Akron Energy Systems, the City's steam plant delivering heat and cooling to downtown Akron businesses and hospitals, transitioned to high efficiency natural gas boilers. Today, the steam plant has reduced its GHG contributions to 43,111 CO<sub>2</sub>e, which is a 62% decrease. With the City's improvements to the steam plant alone, Akron has reduced its governmental operations emissions by 31% from its 2009 levels and by 40% from its 2005 levels.

This plant has faced an incredible number of challenges since its inception in the 1970s. The Akron Beacon Journal profiled its troubled history through 2013 as follows:

- 1976: Construction begins on Recycle Energy System plant, and city issues \$46 million in bonds for project.
- 1979: Plant opens, operated by Teledyne National.
- 1980: Frequent shutdowns because of design problems and equipment breakdowns.

- 1981: With the city on verge of defaulting on the bonds, state provides about \$16 million, including \$11 million to redesign the plant; city borrows another \$8.6 million for operations and bond payments; and Tricil Resources Inc. receives \$19 million, 10-year contract to operate plant.
- 1984: Federal and state governments provide another \$36 million to save city from default; and on December 20, explosion kills three workers, and cause traced to shipment from New Jersey of sawdust mixed with oil and paint.
- 1985: City buys out Tricil contract for \$2.4 million and hires wTe Corp. to serve as financial and technical consultant.
- Over next 11 years, city uses \$17.7 million from the general fund to cover operating losses.
- 1993: Beacon Journal study shows the plant emits large amounts of heavy metals, making it one of the biggest polluters in Ohio.
- 1994: Explosion closes the plant for several days; a scam to avoid paying fees results in arrests of a dozen employees and haulers.
- 1995: City stops burning trash rather than spend \$30 million to meet federal clean-air requirements; city contracts with Thermal Ventures of Youngstown to operate plant and burn primarily wood chips and coal; and Company loses up to \$3.3 million a year because of three-year rate freeze.
- 2004: Thermal Ventures II buys Akron Thermal from Thermal Ventures.
- 2005: With Thermal's debts mounting, Akron hires firm to review company's ownership structure and finances; Thermal owes creditors (Akron, Summit County, Ohio and FirstEnergy Corp.) about \$13 million.
- 2007: Akron Thermal files for bankruptcy, with creditors owed \$20 million.
- 2008: Voters reject a ballot issue to allow Akron to lease its sewers to fund scholarships and approve an issue requiring voter approval to lease, sell or transfer any city-owned utility.
- 2009: Akron Thermal ceases operations and turns plant back over to Akron; city contracts with Akron Energy Systems LLC to run the plant; and University of Akron drops off the system, using its own boilers.
- 2010: Voters reject a charter amendment that would allow the city to lease or sell the steam system.
- 2013: City proposes donating steam plant to Akron Children's Hospital and puts an issue on the November 5 ballot.

A community energy plant produces high-pressure steam with natural gas-fired boilers before distributing lower pressure steam to its customers. Akron Energy Systems utilizes an energy recovery generator to capture the excess thermal energy for reuse. This valuable resource that would otherwise be emitted into the atmosphere is captured and converted into an energy source. Not only does this process improve the system's overall efficiency, but it lowers the production plant's CO2 emissions. In Akron, we have already reduced governmental emissions by 40% since 2005 simply due to our investment in our Steam Plant.

Turning around a plagued waste-to-energy plant into a climate success story is a true rust belt innovation story. In many ways, the innovation lies in a community that was unwilling to give up hope of a governmental utility. Our steam plant needed great leadership and management instead of a quick sale. Now, Akron Energy Systems has produced the shining star of Akron's climate emissions reductions and community pride.

The 2018 plant renovation totaling \$25.4 million didn't cost the city anything, because it would be paid for through certificates of participation purchased by investors. The certificates did not impact the City's bond rating or limits and are paid for with money generated through incremental operational efficiencies, and by investments in the final phase of the deal.

The city's district energy system has helped revitalize its downtown. The City of Akron completed the final stage of the 1.4-mile Main Street improvement project in 2022. The \$45 million federally funded project took place in four phases over four years. It included new infrastructure, improved roadways, and increased pedestrian walkways for the Main Street corridor in Downtown Akron. The installation of new underground steam, chilled water, and condensate return piping has allowed Akron Energy Systems to improve system efficiencies and prepare for future growth. Several AES customers can now recycle steam condensate from their steam heating systems with the improvements. The condensate is diverted back to Akron Energy Systems' production facility for reuse. As a result, Akron Energy Systems can recycle over 30 million gallons of water annually. Just in 2022, Akron's District Energy System accomplished the following for our community:

- 140,000 Tons per year of reduced greenhouse gas emissions;
- 97% reduction in air pollutants;
- 46% improvement in energy efficiency;
- 99.999% reliability of system operations;
- 27 jobs were retained and 10 new jobs created;
- Added 6 new customers to the system;
- 50% increase in cooling sales; and
- \$155 million in community investment savings.

In addition, AES conducts community outreach work that brings the community together, including:

- AES “Cool Zone” Misting Stations;
- Akron Art Museum – Family Days Events;
- Akron Pride Lock 3 Event;
- Akron All-American Soap Box Derby;
- Akron Marathon Race Series;
- Bounce Innovation Event Sponsorships;
- First Tee Sponsorship;
- Elves & More Northeast Ohio Charity Bike Giveaway;
- St. Bernard’s Food Pantry;
- Community Centers Christmas Gift Giveaway (Summit Lake, Reservoir Park, Joy Park);
- Joy Park Kaboom Food Donation; and
- Joy Park Federation & Zion Baptist Church Thanksgiving Charity.

# Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot

## 100% Renewable Power for City Operations by 2025

In 2022, the City of Chicago signed a new electricity supply contract, delivering on its promise to supply municipal operations with 100% renewable power by 2025. In reaching this milestone, Mayor Lightfoot met a commitment spanning two administrations and nearly 3 years of project development. Starting on January 1, 2025, 70% of Chicago's electricity needs will be powered with Illinois solar energy at the now under construction Swift Current Double Black Diamond solar facility in central Illinois. The City will purchase Renewable Energy Credits for the remaining 30% of its 100% Renewable commitment and will increasingly look to local renewables over time for this portion of its needs, such as the Library Solar project which puts rooftop solar on neighborhood libraries. To give a sense of scale, the City consumes on average less than a terawatt hour of power each year (that's 1 million megawatt hours), and runs large, critical facilities such as O'Hare and Midway International Airports and Jardine Purification Plant, the world's largest water purification plant. The solar project will utilize primarily American-made solar panels, other equipment will be finished right in Chicago and the developer has committed that at least 10% of project workers will be equity eligible as defined by Illinois law.

As one of the first U.S. cities to develop a Climate Action Plan, Chicago has long believed it is imperative to lead in the fight against climate change. Given our important role as a large electricity customer, we decided to use our buying power to support the clean energy transition in a way that would support a regional clean energy economy, including with strong labor and equity standards.

The city navigated many challenges in developing this program. The project proceeded in the face of very volatile energy markets during the Covid-19 pandemic. Hundreds of hours were spent by the City project team navigating complex procurement questions and contract negotiation. Most importantly, the city faced important questions concerning how to cost effectively procure a very large supply of power in a time of tight budgets while still delivering a new renewable project in the region built with a focus on community and equitable co-benefits.

Through this project, Chicago is expected to reduce its carbon footprint by more than 290,000 metric tons each year, equivalent to emissions associated with 62,000 passenger vehicles.

Chicago's program is innovative and outstanding because we delivered an intentional community-benefit driven approach to our 100% renewable energy commitment. Starting in 2025, we'll be one of the biggest cities to meet such a commitment. But we did not do so simply by purchasing tradeable renewable credits. We did so by supporting our state's solar development. We did so by successfully pushing for commitments like prevailing wage, a project labor agreement and a minimum level of diverse worker participation. And we did so by scoring respondents in our procurement not just on price but on how their proposal offered community benefits, resulting in annual funding from the contractor, Constellation, and developer, Swift Current, for the length of the off-take to fund workforce development and other equity clean energy projects in Chicago.

The program will be financed through normal city corporate operating funds in the annual budgetary allocation for electricity. The city is also hopeful that the project will qualify for an annual state refund credit due to its incorporation of labor and equity standards, partially off-setting some of its cost.

The program improves the life of the community in several ways. It supports local clean energy manufacturing as noted above. It serves as a large-scale example of how to clean up power generation and improve air quality, which if taken up by other large organizations will improve air quality in neighborhoods overburdened by air pollution. It will allow for funding of clean energy workforce programs and will be a potential work opportunity for diverse contractors in Chicago.

# Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass

## Just Transition Strategy

The City of Los Angeles is home to the largest urban oil field in the world. Many of the roughly 2,930 active and idle oil wells in the city and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County are located in residential neighborhoods, near community parks and schools.

As the city and county worked to advance policies to phase out oil drilling through ordinances approved in 2022 and 2023, a key consideration was to ensure that impacted workers and communities would not be left behind. Understanding that most successful economic outcomes occur when local governments plan early and take a community-centered approach, the city partnered with the county to establish a Just Transition Task Force. The Task Force is made up of labor groups, workforce development experts, environmental justice leaders, the oil industry, Tribal Nations, academic institutions, and state and local governments and was tasked with developing recommendations for meeting the needs of impacted workers and communities throughout the phase-out.

In 2022, the Task Force released L.A.'s first-ever Just Transition Strategy, which includes 19 specific recommendations for workers in oil drilling to find new employment, properly remediating closing oil wells and engaging frontline communities in land use redevelopment planning and leveraging public and private funds to finance the transition.

In developing its recommendations, the Task Force prioritized engaging workers who would be directly impacted by the phase-out to ensure they could share their experiences and recommendations for an equitable transition. Data was collected from 176 workers across four large oil production sites via interviews, listening sessions

and surveys, in partnership with their employers, the oil companies, and unions. Through this process, we uncovered key information about the workers themselves and misconceptions around the impacts of a just transition by both the workers and the Task Force. For example, 63% of workers selected "green energy" as their #1 preference for new employment. We also learned that many of the workers' skill sets were transferable to the renewable energy, transportation electrification, and water and wastewater management sectors. And ultimately, the workers we engaged were excited to play an active role in shaping their future.

One of the challenges we faced was engaging Task Force members who did not see eye-to-eye on the fossil fuel transition. However, despite differing perspectives, one common thread was to ensure that workers and communities would be heard. By bringing these stakeholder groups together, we were able to uncover real issues and identify the most promising just transition strategies.

The work of the Task Force was very important to the city and county's ability to pass policies to phase out oil extraction, which will improve air quality and health outcomes in neighborhoods across the city and county. The Just Transition Strategy will serve as a model for L.A.'s fossil fuel transition more broadly as well as for other cities around the country and the world who are undergoing an economic transition.



# San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria

## Climate Action Plan

The City of San Diego has one of the most ambitious Climate Action Plans in the country and is well poised to act efficiently and effectively to achieve its goal of net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2035. This unique plan goes beyond the strategies, goals, and measures of the 2022 Climate Action Plan (CAP) by providing supplementary documents, such as the Implementation Plan, Cost Analysis, and Climate Equity Index report, that form a comprehensive approach to equitable climate policy and action. The Climate Action Implementation Plan thoroughly organizes the city's processes and governance around climate action. It includes cost estimates and Council-driven prioritization scores to inform all budgeting decisions. Additionally, it outlines responsibilities to be carried forward by departments and reported through annual work plans created by departmental liaisons required by administrative regulation. The Climate Equity Index analyzes environmental and socioeconomic data to identify Communities of Concern so that the city can direct funding where it is needed most. Together, these tools help define each department's implementation work, prioritize climate action, and further integrate equity into climate-related initiatives.

The city recognizes that there is a climate emergency; therefore, as a large metropolitan center, the City of San Diego considers climate action a moral imperative. The science is clear that both mitigation and adaptation must be a priority in order to address the irreversible impacts of climate change. While the city got a head start by investing in climate action early with a plan in 2015, it knew that it had to go further and faster to prevent irrevocable harm. Setting a new target based on the available data led to an updated 2022 Climate Action Plan, but the city is deliberately focusing its efforts on the most vulnerable populations that are already feeling the impacts of climate change. To equitably pursue its commitment to net zero greenhouse gas emissions, it is prioritizing action and investment where the need is greatest and ensuring integration of the voices of communities impacted by climate change into city processes through continual community-based partnerships. Climate equity is a critical lens throughout the 2022 CAP built on inclusive community engagement processes. The city was able to reach over 4,400 community members during engagement focused on the CAP 2022 update, which was focused on integrating social equity and environmental justice.

Climate change is a complex problem that requires complex solutions. In order to break down silos and foster collaboration across the city, it worked to center its governance structure around the strategies of the CAP through the Implementation Plan, annual department work plans, review of staff reports, ongoing fiscal planning, and sustainability roundtables that create space for interagency coordination. This information is challenging to synthesize, but the city is currently working on data visualization and storytelling as there are successes to celebrate. It has found that breaking down programs and projects in bite-sized pieces with an umbrella branding strategy has helped our constituents digest the information from various sources in a cohesive way.

Even though the CAP was only formally adopted in August of 2022, more than 50 of the identified actions are already in progress, and 22 of them are considered complete! Our annual GHG inventories are showing incremental progress that inspires us to keep up the good work. The city's 2022 CAP lays out 6 strategies, 21 measures, 17 performance targets, and 190 actions and supporting actions to achieve our interim 2030 fair-share reduction goal and ambitious 2035 goal of net zero GHG emissions. The strategies include quantified performance targets, outlining how the city will track progress and achieve its goals. The city provides annual reports and is also developing an interactive dashboard to allow real-time access to CAP progress.

This is not just another Climate Action Plan. This plan integrates climate action planning into the very fiber of the city's governance structure. While it simultaneously coordinates its interdepartmental implementation of climate actions, it also continues to convene a Climate Equity Working Group, made up of many diverse community-based organizations directly serving Communities of Concern, to promote accountability, build trusting relationships, and provide transparency into a very complex process. The Climate Action Plan is now an integral part of every legislative item that goes before the Council as an assessment must be conducted to acknowledge the climate impacts of each item. The CAP is woven into the budget process from start to finish – from Annual Departmental Work Plans to slides dedicated to CAP activities in each budget hearing. The Department also conducts a budget analysis to attribute spending allocations related to the CAP, so the public can actively participate in the process. San Diego has truly broken down silos to rethink its approach to climate action holistically across all city operations.

The City of San Diego has dedicated resources, including general fund and other external contributors, to prioritize climate action planning and implementation. Not only did the city compensate community representatives for their time conducting outreach on our behalf during the planning process, but it also invested in a robust climate action implementation plan that accounts for the estimated costs of all 190+ actions over the next five years. These costs are broken down by action, implementing department, partnerships, type (personnel, capital, or otherwise), and fiscal year. The city is now well-positioned to request accurate funding for implementation as grants or other innovative funding strategies become available. Furthermore, the city also devoted funding to the growth of its climate action team, doubling its staff and expanding the capacity needed to continue operationalizing this work on a citywide scale.

The City of San Diego considers a clean and healthy environment a right and is committed to creating a sustainable city for all residents, workers, and visitors. The newly integrated CAP prioritizes the most vulnerable populations first and foremost by acknowledging the disparities that are apparent through our Climate Equity Index (CEI). By rolling out climate actions in neighborhoods with the most need, the city improves the quality of life and economic well-being of every resident. It is also increasing accountability and transparency through tools like the Implementation Cost Analysis, annual department work plans, Climate Action Implementation Plan, and ongoing coordination with the Climate Equity Working Group. Additionally, the Department of Race and Equity's implementation of a Tactical Equity Budgeting process ensures that processes are conducted with an equity lens at the forefront of decision-making.

# Tallahassee Mayor John E. Dailey

## City Farm TLH

City Farm TLH is an innovative, multi-faceted program that transforms vacant properties in Tallahassee's areas of low food access into carbon sequestering urban farms. The program spurs entrepreneurship while fostering food sovereignty within economically-disadvantaged neighborhoods. In partnership with farmers and local higher education institutions, the city developed an intensive 12-week Urban Farming & Entrepreneurship training program that provides participants with the knowledge and resources to launch their own urban farm. The city also established a pilot farm to serve as a training ground for participants. Upon graduation, trainees qualify for a paid 120-hour apprenticeship with an experienced farmer to further develop their skills. Trainees may also qualify to use city-owned land to start their own urban farm, further increasing food security, reducing blight, and limiting carbon emissions by placing local food sources throughout underserved portions of the city.

The lack of access to healthy food in some areas contributes to multiple socio-economic and health-related disparities. Additionally, vacant parcels can represent neighborhood nuisances and attract unwanted activities. By developing these lots into farms and providing the hands-on training necessary to see them thrive, the city is increasing food security, providing economic opportunities, sequestering carbon through crop production, and reducing carbon emissions associated with the transportation of food.

Having never embarked on such an endeavor, the city had to build partnerships and develop curriculum, as well as ensure the buy-in of neighborhoods. As a pilot program, staff had to work within existing city regulations and procedures that never contemplated such a program or use of city-owned land. Through diligence and stakeholder buy-in, the city was able to forge numerous partnerships to ensure the success of the program.

Since the city began calculating City Farm-related carbon sequestration 11 months ago, the planting of crops and trees by the city and its partners has offset an estimated 22,300 pounds of carbon. As more city-owned lots enter cultivation, climate benefits are expected to improve further. Additionally, produce grown at the city's pilot farm has been sold at the city-sponsored Southside Farmers Market that is regularly held a few blocks away.

Currently, City Farm TLH is the only known program of its kind in Florida, and one of only a handful in the nation. The program has successfully graduated 80 trainees since its inception in 2021. The city is actively removing barriers by providing tuition fees, transportation, internet access for online classes, paying wages for apprenticeships, and prioritizing the utilization of vacant city-owned property to establish additional farming opportunities for graduates.

In 2019, the city was awarded \$150,000 from the Knight Foundation to fund the development and ongoing costs of the pilot farm, training program curriculum, and part-time staff support. In 2022, the city was awarded \$48,000 from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to fund 60 trainee scholarships and 20 paid apprenticeships. City funds are utilized for staff time, marketing, maintenance, and related ongoing expenses.

The pilot farm has become a focal point in the neighborhood and has transformed a once vacant city-owned lot into a vibrant community resource. Providing trainees the skills and resources needed to grow and sell fresh produce within their community has increased food access while providing economic opportunities for the community's residents and reducing the carbon associated with traditional food transportation.

# Small City Honorable Mentions

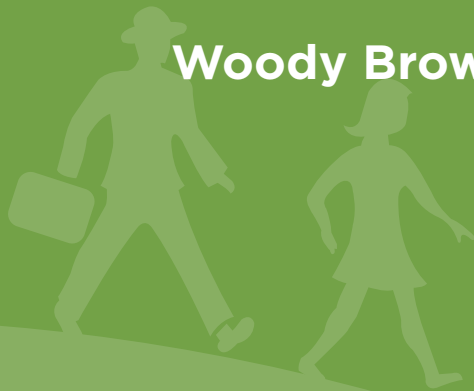
Population Under 100,000

**John Ernst, Mayor of Brookhaven**

**Maria Rivera, Mayor of Central Falls**

**Emily Larson, Mayor of Duluth**

**Woody Brown, Mayor of Largo**



# Brookhaven Mayor John Ernst

## Tree Canopy Sustainability and Growth Program

The City of Brookhaven's Tree Canopy Sustainability and Growth Program began at its founding--many would say when Council planted four Cherry Trees outside their new city hall and named the Cherry the official tree of the city. Since then, actions taken by this densely populated and heavily commercialized city of 56,000+ have kept focus on its commitment to greenspace and climate action. The program works on multiple fronts to offset damage to the canopy and encourage growth. Brookhaven has sought to retain its canopy in the face of significant commercial development, including the growth of the 70-acre Children's Healthcare of Atlanta campus.

From the start, Brookhaven works with developers to ensure progress equals improvements in the community's carbon footprint. In fact, the Children's campus will open in 2024 with 4 times the number of trees that were present prior to construction, and 20 acres of greenspace. Working in tandem with the Brookhaven Tree Conservancy group, the City Council revamped its 2014 tree ordinance in 2021 focusing on tree replacement and strengthening preservation and growth. Among other innovative actions, the revised ordinance lists and protects specimen trees, requiring a variance to permit removal, and limits the number of trees a property owner can remove in an 18-month period. In order to highlight responsible actions during development, it contains negligent driving consequences for heavy equipment damage to trees and tree roots.

The city has commissioned two Tree Canopy studies (2015 and 2019) finding that the city's canopy had dropped from a high of 53% in 2017 to a low of 44% in 2019. Even adjusted for annexed areas with lower density, and a trend in "tear and build" residential, the loss was significant. Much could be attributed to large commercial development that over time would replace the loss. However, city leaders saw this as a basis for action and a focus on tree preservation transcending decision-making.

Brookhaven is committed to smart commercial growth and values its partnerships with the business community. There is no question that tree preservation is an added expense. Citizens were generally united in their efforts to ban tree removal, however a compromise was needed to ensure equity between existing residents and the business community. City staff worked closely with business leaders,

community members, and developers to hone an ordinance that would represent all priorities and support canopy, residential and commercial growth.

This initiative is already producing results. In a study to be published this year, it is estimated that the city has experienced a 4% growth in tree canopy between 2019 – when the decrease was initially recognized – and 2021, the last year for which analysis is available. This increase is despite ongoing developments and the new ordinance not taking effect until 2021. From 2020- 2023 the City of Brookhaven has proactively planted 465 trees within the city limits. A conservative number from Onetreeplanted.org, demonstrates that over the first 20 years of life at tree will average removal of 22 lbs. of carbon annually. Once mature, it will remove 48 lbs. annually according to the U.S. Forestry Service. At this time, those trees are actively removing 10,230 lbs. of carbon dioxide per year. If only 80% of those trees survive to full maturity, the aggregate annual amount will increase to 17,865 lbs.

Innovative partnerships are critical to any successful policy, and a series of actions, rather than one sweeping motion is necessary to move environmental initiatives forward. In 2016, Brookhaven recognized the importance of preserving one of the last urban forests in Metro Atlanta. The city partnered with the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) and acquired the 33-acre forest, preserving it in perpetuity through conservation easement as Brookhaven's Ashford Forest Preserve. The city financed the purchase of the Ashford Forest Preserve via a GEFA low-interest \$5.7 million loan offset by a \$500,000 grant. The loan is paid via the city's storm water fund.

In 2020, the city removed 50 native specimen trees from the Children's Healthcare development site, replanting a portion along the newly constructed Peachtree Creek Greenway and within the newly designated Langford Park.

In 2021 the Tree Ordinance update closed traditional loopholes in a way that clearly defines actions, consequences, expectations, and guidelines so that confusion and frustration for builders and homeowners is minimized.

In 2022, Brookhaven expanded their existing Trees Atlanta partnership and introduced the Front Yard Tree program. The city covers the cost for any Brookhaven homeowner to have a tree planted by the organization in their front yard. In two years, 160 trees have been planted.

In 2023, Brookhaven opened a tree nursery at Osborne Park where the planting of 225 trees is currently underway. Each of these actions involved business and community outreach and innovative solutions.

The City of Brookhaven's Tree Fund is incorporated into the Tree Ordinance and managed by the Community Development Department under the policy direction of Council. It is used exclusively "for the preservation, replacement, and management of the city's urban forest." The Canopy Program and studies are program are funded entirely through the Tree Fund.

The acquisition of Ashford Forest Preserve brought an environmental campus to the community. On any given day, families and neighbors can be seen walking the trails, birdwatching, or simply enjoying nature. Additionally, the property mitigates storm water management issues. A greener, more environmentally friendly urban community brings welcome beauty, shade, and healthier air for all. The trees rescued from the Children's Healthcare development and replanted along the Peachtree Creek Greenway replaced acres of invasive species that were choking out native plants and wildlife. The Georgia Audubon Society has noted the return of native species there and in 2020 began a series of on-line bird walks streaming bird sightings on the Greenway. Moreover, a community that is united behind the preservation and growth of its tree canopy takes pride not only in the increasing beauty of the environment but in the combined community action taken to move forward.

In addition to aggressively moving toward prioritizing preservation over replacement and, when necessary, receiving contributions to the tree fund and enforcing robust replacement, the city is averaging over 100 additional planted trees annually through nursery programs and the Trees Atlanta partnership. This preservation, replacement and addition strategy is intended not only to restore Brookhaven's canopy to surpass its known previous high of 53%. The city now employs three full-time arborists in order to provide outstanding expertise as well as customer service to community partners as it moves toward a more sustainable and beautiful community.

# Central Falls Mayor Maria Rivera

## Catalyzing Climate Action in Low-Income Multilingual Communities

Since emerging from federal bankruptcy and state receivership, Central Falls, RI has stabilized its city finances, restored city services and invested in open and transparent government. However, the threat of climate change in this historic environmental justice community, bordered on two sides by the historic Blackstone River, looms large. As a small city with a poverty rate of almost 30%, Central Falls still has financial challenges to overcome. This, along with the low ownership and high absentee rate of landlords of homes by Central Falls citizens, makes financial challenges one of the main priorities in addressing climate change disruption.

For small, low-income cities like Central Falls, climate change can no longer be ignored. With extreme flooding stopping vehicles from moving through the streets and sea level rise threatening businesses and homes lining the Blackstone River, the impacts are becoming real from this long hypothesized global shift. Low-lying roads and buildings are subject to erosion, water damage, and flooding. Lack of viable physical and public transportation infrastructure cuts individuals off from natural access to green space. Impervious roads and lack of green space lead to standing floods and important infrastructure like the police department is in a floodplain. Houses lack infrastructure to protect against sea level rise and extreme weather conditions. Finally, the Environmental Protection Agency has deemed Central Falls as a high area for concern regarding many modern problems of climate change: ozone pollution, diesel pollution, toxic cancer risk, lead paint exposure, asthma rate and superfund proximity.

When Mayor Maria Rivera, the state's first Latina Mayor, took office in 2021, Central Falls had been hard at work on isolated climate action projects from joining the Rhode Island Energy Aggregation Program which mandates all municipal buildings be powered from renewable sources, to launching a citywide residential community aggregation program to support more renewable, affordable energy for Central Falls households, to building new energy-efficient homes to hosting community-based Municipal Resilience Workshops.

However, the Mayor realized that there needed to be a strategic plan tying all of these initiatives together. She commissioned the Central Falls Climate Action Plan to bring each component part together whether projected storm surges, new construction standards, stormwater requirements, hurricane preparedness, lead paint poisoning prevention and asthma rates.

The requested funding will bring this Plan to life through the hiring of a Sustainability Officer. The city's Sustainability Officer will lead a tri-lingual (English, Spanish and Portuguese) campaign to implement the city's Plan. Between a \$20,000 legal settlement targeting environmental issues and a \$30,000 investment of the city's ARPA monies, two-thirds of the proposed \$75,000 annual budget for the Sustainability Officer has already been financed. Ultimately, this innovative program will demonstrate how a fiscally-strapped city government of a low-income, immigrant community can prioritize and successfully tackle the challenges of climate change through targeted and direct investment in climate resilience.

# Duluth Mayor Emily Larson

## Progress Up North: Duluth's Climate Action Work Plan

Since Mayor Larson took office in 2016, the city has achieved a 32% reduction in municipal emissions. However, the newly-published Climate Action Work Plan gives a framework for continuing to take bold action on climate. In February 2022, the City of Duluth launched its first Climate Action Work Plan. The Climate Action Work Plan is organized around four objectives: reducing municipal emissions, strengthening community resilience, eliminating barriers, and creating financial opportunities. After the first year of implementation, our Climate Action Progress Report showed that Departments have made significant progress on over 30% of the actions, and significant external funding (\$33M) has been secured for sustainability projects related to energy, transportation, and water infrastructure. Link to Climate Action Work Plan: [https://duluthmn.gov/media/12752/duluth-cawp\\_final\\_and\\_financememo.pdf](https://duluthmn.gov/media/12752/duluth-cawp_final_and_financememo.pdf)

Climate commitments by Mayor Larson and the City Council, along with strong support from residents, multiple City departments, and community partners, paved the way for the Plan. After signing on to America's Pledge on Climate Change in June of 2017, Mayor Larson joined the Race to Zero in 2021, committing the City to a goal of carbon neutrality by 2050. Also in 2021, Duluth City Council passed a resolution declaring a Climate Emergency, and a community-based Citizens' Climate Action Work Plan was published. These frameworks, and the factors inspiring them (including more frequent and intense storms and aging City infrastructure) demonstrated a distinct need for a Climate Action Work Plan.

One key challenge for planning climate action was the lack of capacity for hosting cross-departmental visioning and alignment. To address this, the newly-hired Sustainability Officer, Mindy Granley, with the support of Mayor Larson, created the City Sustainability Advisory Team (C-SAT) in February 2021. C-SAT is an evolving team of 18 members across 11 departments, which was created to craft a cross-Departmental vision for sustainability and climate action. It continues to meet today. Resources were needed to convene City stakeholders around the issue of climate and determine the City's previously undefined role in climate action. Collaboration and funding with the Minnesota Lake Superior Coastal Program and Great Lakes Integrated Sciences and Assessments (GLISA) filled this gap through the hiring of a consultant to write the Plan (Great Plains Institute.)

The City of Duluth's Climate Action Work Plan created actionable steps for our climate change commitments. The Plan aligned City Departments and solidified agreement on actions to both mitigate and adapt to climate change. Since 2016, under the leadership of Mayor Larson, the city has reduced municipal carbon emissions by over 6,000 MT, or a 32% reduction. These reductions were in large part due to increasing efficiency in water & wastewater pumping and treatment such as main replacements and repairs, resulting in more efficient energy consumption. After one year, the Climate Action Progress Report shows significant progress on nearly 30% of actions. Through implementation of the Climate Action Work Plan, the city has applied for and been awarded \$33 million for projects focused on sustainability, including transportation, infrastructure, and renewable energy planning. Link to the 2022 Climate Action Progress Report: [https://duluthmn.gov/media/14651/2022-climate-action-progress-report\\_finalpptx.pdf](https://duluthmn.gov/media/14651/2022-climate-action-progress-report_finalpptx.pdf).

As cities seek to find and plan their levers for climate action, the City of Duluth's story may serve as an early example. The League of Minnesota Cities recently honored the City of Duluth with the 2022 Sustainable City Award for the creation of the Climate Action Work Plan. The City's Sustainability Officer – a position created by Mayor Larson – Mindy Granley, was recently honored with the 2023 Individual Adaptation Award by the University of Minnesota Climate Adaptation Partnership for her outstanding work within the State of Minnesota. By aligning our Climate Action Work Plan across Departments, we have also been successful in pursuing funding to advance sustainability in our infrastructure and programs.

Creation of the Climate Action Work Plan was assisted by collaboration and financial support from the Minnesota Lake Superior Coastal Program and GLISA. However, implementation of climate action has been funded through a mix of both external and internal funding. Internally, a Sustainability Fund was allocated to use as leverage and match for sources of external funding, cooperating across several Departments. For example, the Sustainability Fund provided \$37,500 in matching funds for grants for forestry work to address Emerald Ash Borer infestation. Another \$200,000 was set aside to cover the gap in costs related to purchasing hybrid and EV vehicles. Other projects include \$100,000 in matching funding for upgraded street sweepers to protect water quality, and \$250,000 for building efficiency projects to reduce



energy use. The city has also been successful in bringing in \$33 million in external grant funding for sustainable infrastructure upgrades, including in transportation, water, and energy.

The Climate Action Work Plan serves to increase the resilience, safety, and efficiency of Duluth, with an eye towards equity. In updating our infrastructure through projects such as water plant upgrades to ensure access during power outages, a \$25 million reconstruction of a key transportation corridor within an Environmental Justice neighborhood, a reinforcement of coastal infrastructure to protect against flooding emergencies, and others guided by the Plan, we are better serving our community. In providing key action steps the city will take to address our changing climate, the Climate Action Work Plan demonstrates climate priorities to residents and places sustainability, resilience, and quality of life at the forefront of development.

More information on the City of Duluth, including its Climate Action Work Plan and Progress Reports, can be found at: <https://duluthmn.gov/sustain>

## Largo Mayor Woody Brown

### **Sustainability Grant Program Funds Employee Ideas to Improve Resilience and Sustainability**

As a High-Performance Organization (HPO), the city of Largo recognizes that every employee brings unique perspectives and ideas to our workforce. Whether in the field or in a management position, each staff member is an expert in their role and is the best source of innovative ideas to improve public service. These ideas often reduce the city's greenhouse gas emissions, increase resilience, and improve community wellbeing. However, due to financial constraints or an employee's perceived lack of influence, many of these ideas may not make it into their department's adopted budget.

To recognize and capture these great ideas, the city created a sustainability grant opportunity to any staff member with an idea that will improve the resilience and sustainability of Largo's municipal operations and community. An internal committee reviews grant applications on a quarterly basis, with an amount of \$20,000 available from the city's general fund each fiscal year. To ensure that employees are aware of the funding opportunity on an on-going basis, an informative webpage was created on the city's intranet and the grant is advertised in multiple locations, both in break rooms and in weekly city-staff email blasts.

Additionally, the city strives to empower staff to recognize themselves as experts and bring their excellent ideas forward. This funding opportunity encourages solution-oriented thinking and provides an opportunity to every employee to positively affect their organization, reinforcing Largo's HPO philosophy of "leaders at all levels". Every staff member is encouraged to participate in multiple training opportunities on the values and philosophies of

a High-Performance Organization and, while these trainings were not created solely to advance the sustainability grant, they certainly benefit the quality and number of submissions.

Since its start in 2020, the grant has funded a variety of sustainability solutions that work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the city's operations and across the Largo community. The grant allowed Largo's Fire Department to purchase battery-powered firefighting equipment, decreasing their gasoline consumption and reducing the risk of gas spillage which could prove harmful to the environment, or rescuer when the equipment is contacted by protective gear or skin. Similarly, the city's Police Department decreased the fuel consumption of its fleet by using the grant to purchase the first fully electric motorcycles, improving local air quality all the while increasing the public's awareness of electric vehicle benefits. The sustainability grant has also been used to by the city's Engineering department to planting native trees at various stormwater ponds, helping to sequester carbon, improve water quality, and provide habitat to Largo's wildlife.

Finally, the sustainability grant opportunity also acts as a form of pilot project, allowing a single project to demonstrate its success so that it might be replicated and incorporated into the department's adopted budget in the future. The accomplishments enabled through this grant, coupled with the consistent dedication and leadership demonstrated by our Team Largo staff, make us proud to be the Community of Choice in Tampa Bay.





THE UNITED STATES  
CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

*Tom Cochran*

**Tom Cochran**, CEO and Executive Director

1620 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20006  
Tel: 202.293.7330

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