



2030 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

APRIL 2026

CITY *of* BOSTON

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE MAYOR..... 4

LETTER FROM ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY, AND OPEN SPACE CABINET LEADERSHIP 5

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 6

KEY TERMS AND ACRONYMS 8

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 12

CLIMATE CONTEXT 22

 Commitment to Climate Leadership..... 24

 Climate Action Across City Government 28

 Visioning 2030 32

CROSS-CUTTING BENEFITS OF CLIMATE ACTION 44

 Improving Public Health Outcomes 45

 Advancing Climate Justice 47

 Connecting Climate Mitigation and Resilience 51

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT 52

 Community Sessions 56

 Turning Lessons Learned Into Action..... 57

ALL-OF-CITY APPROACH TO CLIMATE ACTION 58

 Empowering Community Climate Action 60

 Mobilizing Stakeholder Climate Action 61

 State and Federal Impacts on Boston’s Climate Goals..... 62

TRACKING PROGRESS THROUGH 2030 64

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN STRATEGIES 72

HOW TO READ THIS PLAN 94

STRATEGIES TO REDUCE EMISSIONS 96

 Municipal Operations..... 97

 Buildings 103

 Transportation..... 118

 Energy 136

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE RESILIENCE 148

 Heat..... 149

 Stormwater & Inland Flooding..... 161

 Coastal Flooding..... 168

 Cross-Hazard Climate Risks..... 174

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT THE GREEN ECONOMIC ENGINE 182

 Workforce Development 183

 Funding & Financing..... 190

CONCLUSION..... 194

APPENDIX 199

APPENDIX A. GHG MODELING & METHODOLOGY 200

APPENDIX B. PRIORITIZATION METHODOLOGY..... 209

APPENDIX C. COMMENT FEEDBACK SYNTHESIS..... 212

Implementation Roadmap

Supplementary to this 2030 Climate Action Plan is the Implementation Roadmap. The Roadmap outlines how the City and its partners will translate the Climate Action Plan into coordinated, measurable action. The City will release an updated Implementation Roadmap annually to share anticipated actions and priorities for the year ahead. The 2026 - 2027 Roadmap and following roadmaps can be found at boston.gov/climate-action-plan.

LETTER FROM THE MAYOR

Dear neighbors,

I am proud to share the City of Boston's 2030 Climate Action Plan—a roadmap to tackle climate change that creates jobs, improves public health, and protects our residents from extreme weather.

The effects of global warming disproportionately impact low-income and minority neighborhoods. And those effects are worsening: we've experienced severe storms, destructive flash flooding, and unprecedented summer temperatures over the past few years. That is why Boston is taking bold action to ensure our communities can thrive for generations to come.

The City's Climate Action Plan lays out a path to achieve our goal of making Boston entirely carbon neutral by 2050. It will also make our coastline more resilient to flooding, curb the effects of extreme heat, and expand our urban tree canopy.

A greener Boston is a more prosperous Boston. The Climate Action Plan will lower energy and transportation costs, increase job opportunities, and make our public transportation system more environmentally sustainable and reliable. The Plan brings together City departments and community partners to deliver real results for our residents' health and economic security.

250 years ago, Boston stood up together for what was right, even when the odds seemed impossible. Today, we're bringing that same spirit to the fight for environmental justice and our work to make our city a home for everyone.

Thank you to the many residents and community partners who contributed to the Plan over the past year. This wouldn't have been possible without you—and I'm grateful to work alongside you as we build a more fair, just, and climate-ready Boston.

Sincerely,

Mayor Michelle Wu



LETTER FROM ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY, AND OPEN SPACE CABINET LEADERSHIP

Dear Boston,

After robust community engagement, stakeholder collaboration, and technical analysis, the City of Boston now has a roadmap to achieve our ambitious climate action and resilience goals for the next five years. With the release of the 2030 Climate Action Plan, we have reached a pivotal moment here in Boston, transitioning from planning into the implementation phase of our work. This is Boston's first Climate Action Plan that integrates greenhouse gas reductions and resilience while targeting justice, health, and quality-of-life outcomes. It is also our city's first Climate Action Plan that welcomes in the broad, diverse coalition of community groups, businesses, institutions, and other partners to share in owning action and accountability.

Achieving our 2030 and 2050 emissions goals will benefit every neighborhood in Boston through energy affordability, good paying jobs, less pollution, safer streets, and improved public health. It will simultaneously demonstrate to other cities around the country and world that decarbonization, economic prosperity, affordability, and climate justice can and must be accomplished together. This roadmap also details how we will protect our neighborhoods from major climate hazards: extreme heat, stormwater flooding, and coastal flooding. These hazards pose challenges to our communities today. Taking action will not only protect our residents and critical infrastructure but also ensure our neighborhoods are wonderful places to call home for generations to come.

We are deeply grateful for the collaboration and feedback that made this plan a reality.

Boston's 2030 Climate Action Plan is a direct result of our community and business partnerships; our vital local, state, and federal partners; inter-departmental collaboration within City government, and Mayor Michelle Wu's commitment to making Boston a global climate leader.

In Boston, we are guided by climate science and the realities on the ground in our communities. Boston will continue to deliver results to meet our climate action goals regardless of national politics. We thank all of our collaborators for their partnership in delivering a decarbonized, resilient, just and affordable Boston for all. Our collective future depends on it.

Onwards,



Brian Swett
Chief Climate Officer



Oliver Sellers-Garcia
Environment Commissioner
& Green New Deal Director



Chris Osgood
Director of the Office of
Climate Resilience

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The development of the Climate Action Plan is overseen by the Environment Department with input and direction from Boston’s Climate Council:

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Climate Action Plan Community Partners

From early 2025 through the release of the Plan, these organizations engaged their neighbors and communities to gather input and inform its development. They will continue to play an important role in shaping implementation.

Action for Boston Community Development, Inc
Alternatives For Community & Environment (ACE)
Boston Children’s Museum
Boston Food Forest Coalition
Boston Park Advocates
Boston Society for Architecture
Boston Society of Landscape Architects
Building Decarbonization Coalition
Chinatown Community Land Trust
Charles River Watershed Association
Dominican Development Center, Inc.
Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative
Eastie Farm
Esplanade Association
Fairmount Indigo CDC Collaborative
Fenway Community Development Corporation

Greater Mattapan Neighborhood Council
HEET
Longwood Collective
Mass Audubon’s Boston Nature Center
Maverick Landing Community Services
Mothers Out Front
Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay
Neponset River Watershed Association
Northeastern University
Sierra Club
South Boston Neighborhood Development Corporation
The Greenway Conservancy
TransitMatters
Tree Eastie
Wharf District Council

Additional Organizations

A Better City
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Boston Climate Action Network
Boston Children’s Hospital
Boston Medical Center
Boston University
Codman Square NDC
Community Labor United
Conservation Law Foundation
Environmental League of Massachusetts

Green Energy Consumers Alliance
Green Ribbon Commission
IBEW Local 103
LISC
MassCEC
NAIOP Massachusetts
Resonant Energy
Spoonfuls
Sustainable Solutions Lab, UMass Boston
Trustees of Reservations
Vicinity Energy

KEY TERMS AND ACRONYMS

10-year storm: A precipitation event whose 24-hour rainfall total has a 10 percent (one-in-ten years) chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.

100-year storm: A precipitation event whose 24-hour rainfall total has a one percent (one-in-one-hundred) chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.

Adaptive reuse: The process of repurposing an existing building for a new function, for example, repurposing under-utilized office buildings for housing.

Apprenticeship programs: Structured, paid, multi-year programs that combine on-the-job and classroom training to prepare enrolled apprentices for skilled careers and long-term employment.

Article 80 Development Review: Boston’s zoning code process for large-scale development projects (over 20,000 sq ft or 15+ housing units), requiring review of its impacts on transportation, public realm, the environment, and historic resources.

BERDO: Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance.

BERDO Review Board: Nine-member independent board of volunteers who oversee the implementation of BERDO and work to ensure environmental justice communities benefit from BERDO decarbonization efforts.

Bikeshare: Service providing bicycles or e-bikes for short-term rental for trips within the city.

Building Energy Code: Massachusetts’ building energy code framework includes three tiers: the Base Energy Code, the Stretch Code, and the Specialized Energy Code. The tiers were designed to give municipalities an opt-in alternative to the Base Energy Code, with more stringent requirements for energy efficiency and building performance. The Specialized Energy Code builds upon the Stretch Code by allowing communities to adopt even higher performance standards. Boston is a Specialized Energy Code community, reflecting the City’s commitment to advancing leading-edge building performance and emissions reduction strategies.

Building retrofits: Upgrades to existing building structures focused on energy consumption, electrification (moving from gas to electric heat pumps), improving efficiency, and decarbonization to meet energy consumption targets and climate goals.

CAP: Climate Action Plan; used throughout this document to refer specifically to Boston’s 2030 Climate Action Plan.

CDP: The Carbon Disclosure Project is an international nonprofit organization that provides a global platform for climate action reporting by cities worldwide.

CFROD: The Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District identifies areas of the City that could be inundated during a major coastal storm event, beyond what FEMA flood maps encompass. The zoning overlay provides rules and standards for coastal resilient planning.

Circular economy: Circular economy is a way to describe the innovative actions of companies and industries that take those discarded materials and make them useful again. Materials like paper, glass, plastic, metal, and wood are reused on the other end of the recycle bin to make another product, “closing the circle” of stuff by recovering them for their next use.

Climate justice: Climate justice is a concept and social movement that recognizes climate change as not only an environmental problem, but as an issue of social justice. The climate justice framework for Boston’s Climate Action Plan

acknowledges that climate change disproportionately burdens the most vulnerable and underserved communities; climate programs can produce benefits and burdens that are not distributed equitably; and that climate action can help us move towards repairing historic inequities. Read more in the Climate Context section.

Climate technology: Also known as “climate tech”, refers to technologies and innovations designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or help communities adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Coastal flooding: The inundation of normally dry, low-lying coastal land by seawater, primarily driven by severe weather events, high tides, or long-term sea-level rise.

Coastal resilience: Resilience is generally defined as the ability of a system (such as a city) to prepare for, withstand, and recover quickly from a disaster. Coastal Resilience is the ability of a community to adapt and respond to the chronic stresses and acute shocks resulting from climate change, specifically sea level rise and coastal storms.

Combined sewer overflows: A combined sewer overflow (CSO) occurs when a large storm overwhelms the combined sewerage system causing rainwater to mix with wastewater and discharge to a nearby water body.

Complete Streets: Boston Complete Streets initiative provides policy and design guidance that places pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users on equal footing with motor vehicle users to ensure that Boston’s streets are green, smart, and safe for users of every mode of transportation.

Cool roof: A roof designed to reflect more sunlight and absorb less heat than conventional dark roofs, keeping buildings cooler, lowering energy costs, and combating the urban heat island effect.

Core Connected Bikeway Network: Boston’s Core Connected Bikeway Network, also known as [Boston Green Links](#), is a strategic plan to create safe, connected bicycle routes linking all neighborhoods to greenways, parks, and transit, expanding existing paths like the East Boston Greenway and Southwest Corridor with new separated lanes, improving connectivity for commuters, and integrating with the regional network.

DCFC EV charging: Direct current fast charging (DCFC) equipment offers rapid charging along heavy-traffic corridors at installed stations.

Displacement: Occurs as a result of gentrification where residents move out of their community to another. This outcome is typically involuntary and occurs when residents can no longer afford to live in their neighborhoods/communities. Displacement can also occur if the character of the neighborhood transforms and remaining residents feel a sense of dislocation despite remaining in the neighborhood. Displacement can also occur to local businesses for similar reasons.

Distributed energy resources: Distributed Energy Resources (DERs) include district thermal systems, microgrids, nanogrids, photovoltaic (PV) systems, and/or energy storage systems, that promote reliability, resilience, efficiency, and decarbonization for a cluster of buildings.

District energy systems: District energy systems (DES) provide heating, cooling, and hot water to multiple buildings from a central plant via underground pipes. They can serve urban areas, campuses, hospitals and industrial sites.

EV: Electric vehicles.

FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency.

First-or-last-mile: Refers to the initial and final stages of a journey when people move from their origin to the main transport hub (first mile) or from the hub to the final destination (last mile).

Fossil gas: Usually called ‘natural gas’, fossil gas is a fossil fuel primarily composed of methane. In Boston, it is a major energy source for heating buildings and generating electricity.

Geothermal energy: Highly efficient renewable heating technology and source of energy that uses the ground temperature to provide heating and cooling to buildings through an underground piping network. The underground temperature serves as a heat source during winter and transfers indoor heat to the ground for cooling during the summer.

GHG: Greenhouse gas.

Gray infrastructure: In stormwater management, gray infrastructure is traditional stormwater infrastructure in the built environment such as gutters, drains, catch basins, pipes, outfalls, and storage chambers.

Green gentrification: occurs when investments in green upgrades, such as new open space or building upgrades, can lead to rising property values and living costs, ultimately contributing to the displacement of existing residents, particularly low-income communities and communities of color.

Green infrastructure: Green Infrastructure (GI) is an umbrella term for stormwater management features that use plants, soil and other natural materials to remove pollutants and allow stormwater to absorb back into the ground. These features help prevent flooding and reduce the amount of polluted water that goes to the City's water bodies. GI also has many environmental, social and economic benefits.

Grid-Interactive Efficient Buildings (GEBS): An energy-efficient building that uses smart end-use equipment to provide demand flexibility, adjusting when and how energy is used, lowering costs, supporting the electric grid, and meeting occupant needs.

Heat vulnerability: How likely someone is to experience heat-related health problems.

Heat related illness: Illness caused by high temperatures and humidity, which can include symptoms like muscle spasms, headaches, and dizziness. The most common heat-related illnesses include heat rash, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke, with additional physical and mental illnesses including kidney disease, asthma, increased substance use and overdose, birth outcomes, increased anxiety, and lower sleep quality.¹

Heat resilience: Under Boston's Heat Resilience Plan, heat resilience means preparing people, buildings, infrastructure, and the public realm to withstand extreme heat events.

Historic preservation: The practice of promoting, protecting, and maintaining cultural and historic resources, including buildings, while supporting their continued use.

Historic Tax Credits: Federal or state incentive program that offers tax credits for the rehabilitation of historic, income-producing properties.

Inland flooding: Occurs when the volume of water on land exceeds the capacity of natural and built drainage systems.

Level 2 EV charging: Higher-rate electrical vehicle charging than Level 1. Common for home, workplace, and public charging. Level 2 chargers can charge a battery electric vehicle to 80 percent from empty in 4-10 hours and a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle in 1-2 hours.

MA Class I RECs: Massachusetts Class I Renewable Energy Certificates are generated by renewable energy facilities in New England, and used by electricity suppliers in Boston to meet Massachusetts' Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) requirements for increasing renewable energy usage. Buying MA Class I RECs is a way for building owners to reduce the emissions from a building's electricity use.

Massachusetts Renewable Portfolio Standard: State program that requires retail electricity suppliers (both regulated distribution utilities and competitive suppliers) obtain a percentage of the electricity they serve to their customers from qualifying renewable energy facilities.²

MBTA: Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

Mode shift: Change in how people get around in the City (e.g.: shifting from commuting by driving to public transit).

MOH: Mayor's Office of Housing.

Municipal aggregation program: Process by which a municipality (meaning a town or city) purchases electricity in bulk from a competitive supplier on behalf of the residents and businesses within the City.

Open space: Lands that are not developed for building purposes that are permanently protected and publicly accessible, such as urban wilds and conservation lands, plazas places with sports and other recreational opportunities, and landscaped areas with seating.

Outfall: The point where a pipe, drain, or sewer discharges water, such as stormwater, or wastewater, into a natural body of water to prevent flooding.

Passenger vehicles: Vehicles primarily designed to transport people, not goods, including cars, SUVs, vans, and light trucks.

Power purchase agreements: A contract between the electricity buyer and the company that makes the electricity. Building owners can get renewable energy through PPAs at stable prices without owning or running the energy equipment themselves.

Public shade tree: All trees within a public way or on the boundaries thereof, as defined by and subject to the legal protections of M.G.L. Chapter 87 Shade Trees.

Property Assessed Clean Energy program: A financing program administered by MassDevelopment and the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) that allows commercial, industrial, and multi-family property owners to fund comprehensive energy upgrades, such as HVAC or lighting upgrades, through voluntary property tax assessments.

Rapid transit: Includes subway, trolley and silver line bus rapid transit that operate in the city, managed by the MBTA.

Sea-level rise: Rise in sea level over time relative to the land at a given location, primarily due to heat-trapping greenhouse gases that are absorbed by the ocean. As this heat is absorbed, ocean temperatures rise, polar ice melts, and water expands.

Storm surge: an abnormal rise in seawater level generated by a storm that exceeds the tide.

Street tree: Trees along the public right-of-way.

Thermal energy: The energy stored in heat, which can be captured, transferred, and used for heating or cooling buildings and other applications. Examples of thermal energy sources include geothermal, wastewater, water bodies, and biomass.

Third-party electricity supply: A company licensed by state energy regulators to sell electricity.

Urban agriculture: the practice of producing food in urban areas to give better access to fresh, healthy, and affordable food, such as community and rooftop gardens, food forests, and bee keeping.

Urban heat island effect: Urban areas that experience higher temperatures than outlying areas (buildings and roads absorb the sun's heat more than forests or water bodies).

Utilidor: "Utility corridor" - a shared underground or above-ground corridor that houses utility infrastructure, such as fiber, energy, or water systems, so it can be installed, maintained, and upgraded without repeated street construction.

ZEVs: Zero-emission vehicles.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHAT CLIMATE ACTION MEANS FOR BOSTON

The City of Boston has a long-standing history of climate leadership, pairing ambitious goals with decisive local action to reduce greenhouse emissions and increase resilience against climate hazards. The 2030 Climate Action Plan is the City of Boston's roadmap for achieving these ambitious climate goals and targets while advancing affordability and creating healthier places to live, work, and learn for all Bostonians - outcomes that go hand in hand with effective climate action.

This Plan is grounded in two core and interconnected areas of work: mitigation and resilience - which frame every strategy and action included. Mitigation efforts focus on rapidly reducing emissions from the sectors that contribute most to Boston's carbon footprint, particularly buildings, transportation, and energy. Resilience strategies are designed to protect people, infrastructure including new, existing, and historic assets, open space, and neighborhoods from the growing impacts of climate change, while strengthening the City's ability to adapt over time and creating pathways to good green jobs that support resilience and mitigation investments.

In addition to tracking progress on mitigation and resilience, we acknowledge the broader impacts of climate work across three deeply interconnected areas: public health outcomes, climate justice, and the intersection of mitigation and resilience benefits. This approach recognizes that effective climate action must deliver healthier living and working environments, address historic inequities, and maximize co-benefits, ensuring that investments reduce emissions while also protecting communities most exposed to climate risks. Climate justice is embedded throughout the Plan, recognizing that the impacts of climate change will not affect neighborhoods equally and that climate action presents an opportunity to correct past harms. Communities that have been and will be adversely affected by climate change must be prioritized in both decision-making and investment.

As part of the 2030 Climate Action Plan, the City is releasing its first Climate Justice Framework, a vision and set of principles to guide the City of Boston's climate action efforts.

The City of Boston's vision is to center climate justice in all our work. **First**, this means recognizing that:

- Climate change does not impact everyone in the same way and is likely to continue historical patterns that have benefited some at the cost of others.
- Climate action can produce benefits and burdens, distribute resources, and impact our environment with inequitable consequences across communities.
- Climate action can be used to repair past harm and contribute to a more just and prosperous Boston for our people and environment.

Second, it means grounding our work in the following key principles, which describe the future we want for Bostonians ...

A HEALTHY CITY

Improving everyone's health and quality of life

A FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY

Sharing benefits and burdens in a fair way

A CARE-FULL CITY

Caring for each other

A SHARED CITY

Knowing and doing together

A GREEN CITY

Respecting and connecting with nature

The City will continue to engage residents on the Climate Justice Framework to determine how to utilize them in practice and keep the City and its implementation partners accountable for equitable climate action.

The 2030 Climate Action Plan was developed through an all-of-city approach that reflects all Bostonians. No single City department, organization, sector, or community can deliver climate solutions alone. The City worked in close collaboration with residents, institutional partners, community-based organizations, advocates, and technical experts to shape the strategies outlined in this document. This collaborative process helped ensure that the Plan responds to on-the-ground realities, aligns with community priorities, and leverages the strengths of partners across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to accelerate implementation. The priorities outlined in this Plan intersect with and reinforce other City initiatives, ensuring that climate action is integrated into how Boston plans, builds, and governs.

This Plan introduces several important updates that reflect how Boston's approach to climate action has evolved since prior Climate Action Plans. Together, these updates strengthen accountability, better integrate equity, and provide a clearer foundation for implementation.

- First fully integrated Climate Action Plan that addresses climate mitigation, climate resilience, and climate justice together in a single, coordinated framework
- Climate justice centered throughout the Plan, elevating equity impacts of strategies and actions
- Multi-draft, iterative planning process that creates intentional opportunities for reflection, community input, and refinement ahead of the final Plan
- Metrics that track progress toward climate goals while also measuring impacts on residents' health, affordability, and daily lived experience

How the Climate Action Plan is Structured

1 Goals

The outcomes the City aims to achieve by 2030 to advance emissions reductions, resilience, and climate justice.

2 Targets

Sector-specific, quantitative benchmarks that define what success looks like by 2030.

3 Strategies & Actions

The priority areas of work the City and its partners will advance over the next five years to meet these targets.

4 Metrics

The indicators the City will track annually to measure progress, assess impacts, and ensure accountability.

Climate justice is embedded throughout the Plan, from how we define our goals to how we will be tracking success.

GOALS AND TARGETS THROUGH 2030

To understand where Boston stands today and where action is most needed, the City relied on a combination of data analysis and modeling, cross-departmental coordination, and extensive community engagement. Engagement efforts were designed to reflect neighborhood-specific priorities and lived experiences, with workshops and discussions conducted primarily in environmental justice neighborhoods. These discussions were designed to elevate community-identified concerns related to heat, flooding, housing conditions, energy affordability, public health, public transportation, and other topics to ensure that the Plan responds to the impacts of climate change as they are truly experienced by Boston residents across neighborhoods and sets quantitative targets accordingly.



CLIMATE MITIGATION

Reduce community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by **50% in 2030 and 100% in 2050** Reduce municipal carbon emissions by **60% in 2030 and 100% in 2050**



CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Implement coastal resilience projects to close near-term flood pathways along Boston's

47 miles of coastline



Reduce urban heat & expand cooling access



Minimize disruptions from severe precipitation



CLIMATE JUSTICE

Mitigate the impacts of climate change across all neighborhoods and prioritize resources and investments where most in need, with a focus on climate justice communities

Climate Mitigation

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is central to Boston's climate strategy. While Boston's emissions alone will not determine global climate outcomes, the City's actions play a critical role in demonstrating what is possible. By clearly showing how deep emissions reductions can be achieved in a dense, historic, and economically diverse city, Boston helps set expectations for the private sector and provides a replicable model for other cities. This leadership is essential to accelerating broader emissions reductions beyond Boston's borders.

Boston's emissions primarily come from buildings and transportation, with smaller contributions from waste and wastewater. Because waste contributes only a small share of Boston's overall emissions, the Climate Action Plan includes relatively few waste-focused strategies, prioritizing high-impact actions that deliver meaningful emissions reductions. The waste strategies that are included provide meaningful co-benefits and lie at the intersection of climate mitigation and resilience, primarily focusing on building resilient local food systems and advancing the construction, deconstruction, and reuse of buildings. Driven by strong local and state policies, Boston has already reduced citywide emissions by 22.4 percent compared to 2005 levels, based on the most recent annual community-wide greenhouse gas inventory.¹

¹ City of Boston. [Boston's Carbon Emissions](#).

Despite this progress, current trends show that Boston is not yet on track to meet its 2030 climate goal. To better understand the scale of action needed over the next five years, the City modeled three emissions scenarios:

- **Boston's Emissions Without Climate Action:** This scenario shows what future emissions would look like without climate policies that are currently underway. It highlights the significant impact of existing programs and underscores how much higher emissions would be without them.
- **Meeting Existing Goals and Targets:** This scenario reflects projected emissions through 2050 if Boston continues with the programs and policies already in place today. It represents where we are headed based on our current efforts.
- **2030 Climate Action Plan Pathway:** This scenario shows the path to meeting Boston's 2030 goal. It assumes that both our existing programs continue to be implemented and expanded, alongside additional actions outlined in this Plan that are expected to further reduce emissions.

These three scenarios highlight the impact of Boston's climate action to date and the additional work still needed. The City has implemented programs and initiatives, such as the Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance and the Zero Emission Vehicle Roadmap, that are critical to reducing community-wide emissions. As reflected in the **Meeting Existing Goals and Targets** scenario, full implementation of these programs is projected to reduce emissions by approximately 48 percent by 2030, bringing the City within reach of its 50 percent reduction target.

By contrast, the **Boston's Emissions Without Climate Action** scenario shows that without these foundational policies, emissions would decline by only about 28 percent by 2030, underscoring the significant progress already underway. Building on this foundation, the **2030 Climate Action Plan Pathway** illustrates how the City and its partners can work to close the remaining gap by fully delivering existing programs while advancing additional actions identified in the Plan. This approach focuses on implementation that is equitable, effective, and designed to serve all residents.

Boston's Projected Greenhouse Gas Emissions

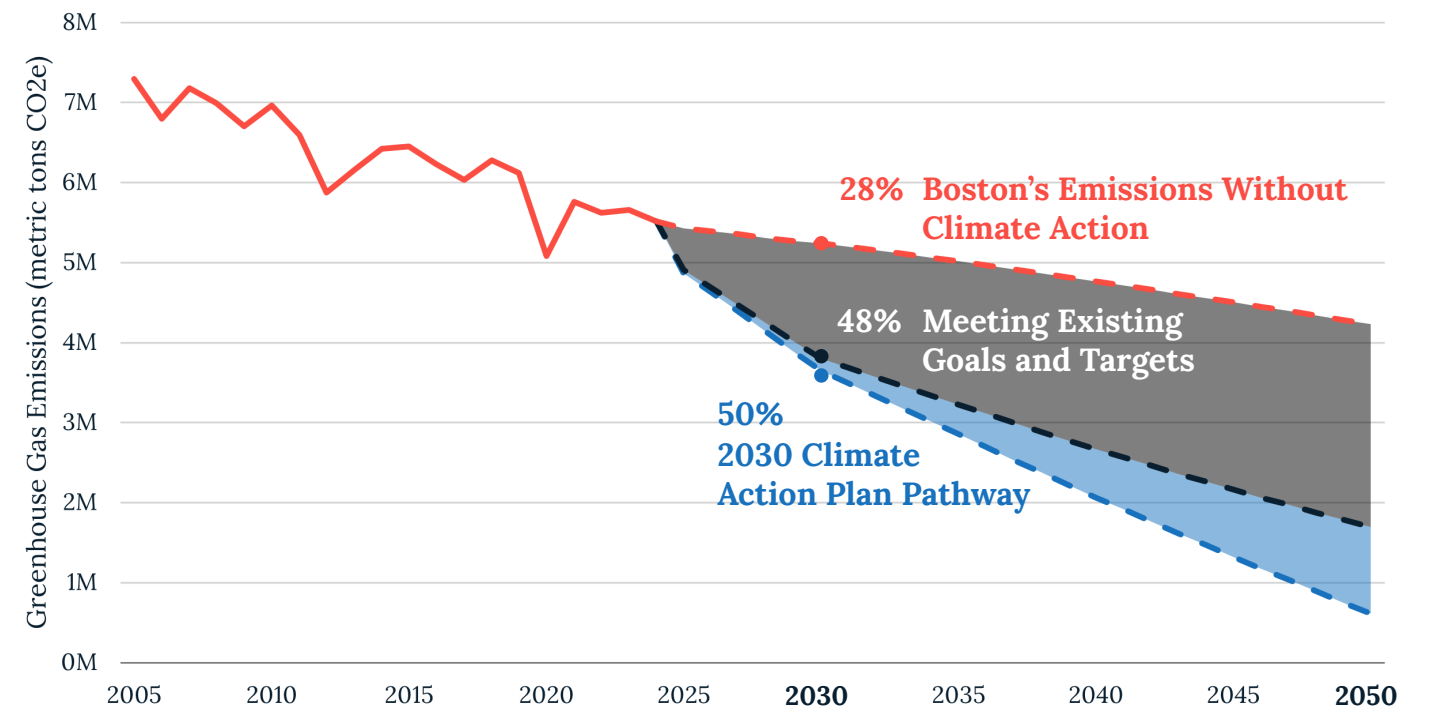


Figure 1: Boston's historical and projected greenhouse gas emissions through 2050. Percentages represent emissions reductions compared to the 2005 baseline.

The Climate Action Plan focuses on accelerating action in the sectors with the greatest potential for near-term emissions reductions. Buildings, both large and small, must significantly increase efficiency and reduce on-site fossil fuel use. Transportation strategies must go beyond electrification alone, expanding mode shift, increasing electric vehicle adoption, and reducing emissions from both passenger and heavy-duty vehicles.

The Plan builds on established targets while identifying additional actions needed to reach the full 50 percent emissions reduction by 2030 and stay on course for carbon neutrality by 2050. By prioritizing high-impact strategies and scaling proven solutions, Boston is positioning this decade as the decisive window for delivering deep emissions reductions across the city.

Boston's Climate Mitigation Targets		
Sector	Baseline	2030 Target
Buildings	No baseline	Buildings covered by BERDO achieve a 100% compliance rate through emissions reductions
	Buildings not covered by BERDO consumed 19,341,210 MMBtu of fossil fuels in 2005	Buildings not covered by BERDO achieve a 37% reduction in fossil fuel use from a 2005 baseline
Transportation	1% of passenger vehicles were EVs in 2022	Achieve a 20% increase in electric passenger vehicles
	In 2024, 31% trips were Bostonians driving alone, down from 39% in 2017	Increase the shift away from passenger vehicles to walking, biking, and public transit by 30%



Climate Resilience

Unlike emissions targets that can be aggregated to track progress through greenhouse gas emissions, resilience targets are inherently more complex. Climate resilience cannot be measured through one indicator alone, because it reflects how people, neighborhoods, and systems experience climate risk and withstand climate impacts. Many resilience efforts are ultimately about preventing harm - keeping people safe during heat waves, storms, and flooding - which makes success harder to measure, as it is not defined by events that happen, but by impacts that are avoided. As a result, Boston's resilience targets are designed to track progress across multiple indicators that together show how the City is reducing risk and strengthening resilience in neighborhoods through the three key hazards that Bostonians face: heat, stormwater and inland flooding, and coastal flooding. A fourth category, cross-hazard climate risks, acknowledges that the impacts of the three aforementioned hazards often overlap, so tracking progress through holistic targets can provide a more complete picture of neighborhood resilience.

Boston's Climate Resilience Targets			
Climate Hazard	Target	2026 Baseline	2030 Target
Heat	Heat-related emergency department (ED) visits per 100,000 residents during heat events	Approximately 100	25% reduction
	Minimum neighborhood tree canopy coverage	Some neighborhoods have less than <20% tree canopy coverage; The citywide average is 27.2%	Build on progress from the 2019-2024 Tree Canopy Assessment: increase Citywide average by +0.5%
Stormwater and Inland Flooding	Greened acres on public and private land	Existing installations	300 acres added (roughly 1% of the land area of the City of Boston)
Coastal Flooding	Number of residents protected from 2030 coastal flood pathways	Approximately 16,000 residents are exposed to a major flooding event	Protect at least 10,000 of those residents
Cross-Hazard	City capital projects screened for future climate risk	No baseline	100% screened
	Neighborhoods with certified Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs)	Partial coverage	100% of neighborhoods



BOSTON'S CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGIES AND METRICS

Boston's Climate Action Plan translates goals and targets into action through a set of high-impact strategies and measurable metrics. Strategies encompass the priority actions that the City and its partners will advance across sectors, with some led directly by the City and others driven in collaboration with external partners. The City will work closely with our community partners to ensure that programs remain accessible, responsive, and grounded in the needs of Boston's residents.

Metrics track progress over time and help ensure accountability. Reported annually, they will be used not only to understand how Boston is reducing emissions and strengthening resilience, but also how climate action is translating into real, tangible benefits for residents. Together, these strategies and metrics provide a clear roadmap for how Boston will deliver effective, equitable climate action across the city.

Strategies to Reduce Emissions		
Sector	Strategy	Potential Impact ¹
Municipal Operations	COB1. Lead by example to reduce GHG emissions and prioritize healthy, high-performing environments in all municipal buildings and assets.	
	COB2. Facilitate the transition to electric zero-emission vehicles by leading by example with the municipal fleet.	
	COB3. Improve practices for long-term sustainability of our parks.	
Buildings	B1. Expand support structures for implementing the City's Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO).	
	B2. Expand building decarbonization support for small buildings.	
	B3. Expand current initiatives that support low-income and affordable housing building decarbonization efforts.	
	B4. Identify challenges and opportunities for reducing emissions in hard-to-decarbonize buildings.	
	B5. Promote healthier, more efficient homes.	
	B6. Reduce embodied carbon through low-carbon new construction, adaptive reuse of existing structures, and responsible deconstruction, rehabilitation, and reconstruction practices.	
Transportation	T1. Encourage bus use with improvements to affordability, convenience, and accessibility.	
	T2. Encourage walking, biking, and other forms of active transportation by improving safety, ease, and comfort for everyone on Boston streets.	
	T3. Orient land use planning towards vehicle miles traveled reduction.	
	T4. Advocate for and assess policies and funding opportunities to ensure Boston's transportation systems are accessible, affordable, and equitable.	
	T5. Improve first mile/last mile transit connections.	
	T6. Facilitate the transition to electric zero-emission vehicles by improving public access to charging infrastructure and tackling hard-to-decarbonize sectors such as medium/ heavy-duty vehicles.	

¹ The impact of each strategy is based on community-wide greenhouse gas emission reduction potential, resilience benefits, climate justice impacts, co-benefits, and efficacy - rated as Low, Medium, and High.

Strategies to Reduce Emissions, continued		
Sector	Strategy	Potential Impact
Energy	E1. Increase the amount of renewable energy supplied to Boston's electric grid.	
	E2. Advance short-term energy infrastructure safety and process improvements to support long-term resilient grid planning.	
	E3. Deliver district-scale energy solutions.	
	E4. Enable a just transition to a clean, resilient, and affordable energy system.	

How are we reducing emissions?		
Metric	Neighborhood-Level Data	Strategies Influencing this Metric
BERDO Compliance Rate and Emissions Reductions	✓	B1
Funding Awarded and Expected Emissions Avoided from Equitable Emissions Investment Fund Projects	✓	B1
Number of Heat Pumps Installed in Residential and Commercial Buildings	✓	B1, B2, B3
Number of Small Buildings Weatherized or Electrified through Boston Energy Saver		B2, B3
Monthly Public Transit Ridership		T1, T5
Number of Bluebike Trips		T2
Number of Pedestrian and Cyclist Incidents	✓	T2, T3
Percentage of Zero-Emission Vehicles in City of Boston's Light-Duty Fleet		COB2
Estimated Annual Vehicle Miles Traveled		T1, T2, T3, T4, T5
Percentage of Zero-Emission Vehicles Registered in Boston		T6
Number of Publicly-Accessible EV Charging Ports	✓	T6
Boston Community Choice Electricity Enrollment		E1
Percentage of Electricity Supplied to Boston from Renewable Sources		E1, E2
Estimated Energy Cost Savings from Boston Community Choice Electricity		E1

Strategies to Improve Resilience		
Hazard	Strategy	Potential Impact
Heat	H1. Expand the City's extreme heat interventions.	
	H2. Strengthen tree policies to protect existing canopy, expand tree planting, and ensure long-term maintenance.	
	H3. Keep workers safe during heat emergencies.	
	H4. Safeguard residents at home during extreme heat emergencies.	
	H5. Combat the impacts of extreme heat through design review.	
Stormwater & Inland Flooding	S1. Advance green infrastructure projects, incorporating gray infrastructure solutions as necessary.	
	S2. Expand open and green space through strategic land use planning.	
Coastal Flooding	C1. Close long-term flood pathways.	
	C2. Reduce immediate flood risk and costs.	
	C3. Strengthen coastal resilience through zoning.	
Cross-Hazard Climate Risks	X1. Expand the City's capacity to deliver.	
	X2. Support community-led resilience and preparedness.	
	X3. Protect vulnerable homes from flooding through targeted retrofits.	
	X4. Strengthen and scale innovative resilience solutions.	
	X5. Expand strategies to ensure nutritious, culturally relevant food reaches communities, contributing to a food system with less waste.	
	X6. Strengthen food system resilience.	

Strategies to Support the Green Economic Engine		
Topic	Strategy	Potential Impact
Workforce Development	W1. Grow Boston's green workforce.	
	W2. Explore and expand on opportunities to address barriers to accessing green jobs training programs.	
	W3. Use procurement and policy tools to drive good jobs and an expanded labor market.	
Funding & Financing	F1. Mainstream climate goals into City governance processes.	
	F2. Explore financing mechanisms for building decarbonization.	
	F3. Explore long-term funding options to support large-scale climate resilience projects.	
	F4. Leverage philanthropic funds for climate action.	

How are we improving resilience?		
Metric	Neighborhood-Level Data	Strategies Influencing this Metric
Net Streets and Parks Trees Planted and Estimated Cooling Benefits	✓	H1, H2, S1
Percentage of Boston Residents Within a 10-minute Walk from Cooling Facilities	✓	H1, X2
Emergency Department Visits for Heat-Related Illnesses	✓	H3, H4
Cumulative Greened Acres	✓	S1, S2
Coastal Resilience Project Statuses	✓	C1, C2
Building Square Footage in Compliance with the Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District	✓	C3
Percentage of Households in Flood Zones Enrolled in a National Flood Insurance Program Policy		C2
Number of Certified Emergency Response Team Volunteers		X2

How are we supporting the green economic engine?		
Metric	Neighborhood-Level Data	Strategies Influencing this Metric
Number of Individuals Enrolled, Graduated and Job-Placed from City of Boston Training Programs		W1, W2

MOVING TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION

Over the next five years, the focus is implementation. The City will work alongside community partners, residents, institutions, and other stakeholders to accelerate the actions outlined in this Plan and turn commitments into on-the-ground results.

The Climate Action Plan is intended to be a living document. As implementation progresses, strategies and actions may be refined, updated, or added, particularly as new City initiatives are developed and opportunities for greater impact emerge. In the same way, metrics will continue to evolve over time as more data becomes available, allowing for more granular tracking and a deeper understanding of progress and outcomes. The City will also continue to refine how climate justice is implemented in practice, ensuring that equity remains central as programs are delivered and improved.

Success will depend on coordinated action across sectors, sustained investment, and a shared commitment to equitable climate action that delivers measurable improvements in affordability, public health, and quality of life for all Bostonians. The City will regularly report on progress and share updates as implementation advances and new priorities emerge. As we move toward 2030, stay connected and learn more at boston.gov/climate-action-plan.



CLIMATE CONTEXT

Since its founding in 1630, Boston has been shaped by its geography, its people, and the ingenuity of its communities. Originally a small peninsula surrounded by tidal marshes, rivers, and the harbor, the city has grown into a dense, dynamic urban center through centuries of land reclamation, industrial development, and ambitious infrastructure projects. Boston's shoreline has been filled and reshaped multiple times to accommodate housing, commerce, and infrastructure, including transformative undertakings like the Big Dig. These changes reflect a history of adaptation and resilience, but also of vulnerability, particularly along the coastline and in low-lying neighborhoods, and of inequity, especially in historically disinvested Black and brown communities.

Underlying these growing risks is the global challenge of climate change, driven primarily by greenhouse gas emissions from the burning of fossil fuels. These gases trap heat in the atmosphere, accelerating warming and intensifying its impacts on people and infrastructure.³

Over the past century, the city has experienced profound environmental changes intensified by climate change. Rising temperatures have made heat waves more frequent and severe, threatening public health and straining energy systems. Changes in precipitation patterns have increased heavy rainfall events, overwhelming drainage systems and heightening the risk of flooding in coastal and inland areas. Sea levels are rising at an unprecedented pace, with Boston among the fastest relative rates on the East Coast, compounding the risk of coastal flooding, storm surges, and erosion.

Boston is already experiencing the effects of climate change:

- On January 28, 2022, a record 23.6 inches of snow fell in a single day.
- Heavy rain in May 2025 brought on by a nor'easter shut down part of the MBTA's Orange Line near Ruggles Station. Projections indicate the city could face up to three feet of sea level rise by 2070.
- June 24, 2025, marked Boston's hottest June day on record at 102 degrees, with forecasts suggesting up to 40 days over 90 degrees annually by 2030.

These environmental shifts intersect with social and infrastructural vulnerabilities. Heat and poor air quality disproportionately affect older adults, children, and residents with preexisting conditions, while urban heat islands exacerbate the impact of extreme temperatures in dense neighborhoods. Coastal areas and historic infrastructure face growing threats from flooding and storms, requiring innovative, large-scale solutions. Flooding, heat, and other climate hazards also worsen housing insecurity, disrupt transit, and strain public health resources, highlighting the need for equity-centered strategies that prioritize the most vulnerable communities.

Building on Boston's legacy of adaptation, the 2030 Climate Action Plan (the Plan) charts a path for Boston to drastically reduce its emissions and confront the accelerating impacts of climate change while advancing equity and long-term resilience. The 2030 Climate Action Plan responds to these challenges with clear, actionable strategies grounded in data, measurable targets, and accountability. It recognizes that the burning of fossil fuels is the primary driver of climate change and calls for bold action to both reduce emissions and prepare our communities for its impacts. The Plan also highlights how climate action can directly enhance quality of life and affordability. By investing in solutions such as energy efficiency, electrification, and neighborhood-level resilience measures, Boston can cut emissions, protect residents from climate hazards and displacement, and reduce household energy burdens.

While the risks are significant, it is not too late to act - but we must act now, and aggressively. Addressing climate change is an all-of-city problem that requires an all-of-city solution, engaging residents, businesses, institutions, and government. By understanding how climate change affects the city through rising seas, extreme weather, heat, and quality of life challenges, Boston can take decisive steps to plan for a future that is more resilient, equitable, and sustainable. The strategies outlined in this document are built on that understanding, aiming to protect residents, preserve Boston's unique character, and ensure the city thrives in the face of a changing climate.

COMMITMENT TO CLIMATE LEADERSHIP

From America's oldest public park to the nation's first subway system, the city has a long history of innovation and tackling complex problems. Leadership has long defined Boston, and that same leadership now drives the City's dedication to climate action.

Boston's commitment to climate leadership goes back to 2000, when Boston joined the Cities for Climate Protection Campaign as part of an international network of local governments committed to sustainable development. As part of that initiative, Boston released its first community-wide greenhouse gas inventory in 2007, which informed the development of the City's first Climate Action Plan. That plan proposed ambitious policies to reduce emissions from buildings, transportation, waste, and municipal operations. Since then, Boston has released an updated greenhouse gas inventory each year and three additional Climate Action Plans, each evolving to meet resident needs and urgency of climate change. With each Climate Action Plan, the City of Boston has pushed ambition further, strengthening its approach and setting a model for other cities.

Boston's last Climate Action Plan was released in 2019, and in the years since, the City has achieved landmark milestones across emissions reduction and climate resilience, laying a strong foundation for meeting its 2030 carbon neutrality and resilience goals.

In 2021, Mayor Michelle Wu advanced this progress by committing to a Green New Deal for Boston, setting a bold vision for addressing the climate crisis that centers economic, social, and racial inequities. Climate solutions should be designed to support affordability and strengthen neighborhoods, helping Bostonians continue to thrive in their communities. As rising temperatures, extreme weather, and sea level rise increasingly affect neighborhoods across the city, Boston is committed to continuing the long tradition of bold and science-based action.

In light of the evolving climate landscape and growing urgency to address the impacts of climate change, it is critical that the City regularly adapts to drive progress towards our collective carbon neutrality, climate resilience, and climate



CLIMATE MITIGATION

Reduce community-wide GHG emissions by

50% in 2030 and
100% in 2050

Reduce municipal GHG emissions by

60% in 2030 and
100% in 2050



CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Implement coastal resilience projects to close near-term flood pathways along Boston's

47 miles of coastline



Reduce urban heat & expand cooling access



Minimize disruptions from severe precipitation



CLIMATE JUSTICE

Mitigate the impacts of climate change across all neighborhoods and prioritize resources and investments where most in need, with a focus on climate justice communities

Boston's Climate Milestones Since the 2019 Climate Action Plan

2020

BOSTON ENACTS THE BUILDING EMISSIONS REDUCTION AND DISCLOSURE ORDINANCE (BERDO)
Boston becomes one of the first cities in the nation to impose mandatory emissions performance standards on existing buildings.

BOSTON ADOPTS THE COASTAL FLOOD RESILIENCE OVERLAY DISTRICT (CFROD)
This is now a national model for climate-resilient zoning that requires future flood-proofing of new buildings based on projected sea level rise.

2021

BOSTON LAUNCHES RENEW BOSTON TRUST
a City program that conducts energy audits and invests in energy efficiency upgrades in municipal buildings.

BOSTON WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION DEVELOPED ITS FIRST INUNDATION MODEL
To predict flooding under various wet weather and coastal storm scenarios, including sea level rise and storm surge, across the City's coastal areas. The model is now being updated to better identify vulnerable inland areas and inform solutions to address flooding

2022

MAYOR WU SIGNS THE FOSSIL FUEL-FREE EXECUTIVE ORDER
requiring all new municipal buildings - and major renovations - to be designed and constructed without on-site fossil fuel use.

STATE LEGISLATURE AND GOVERNOR CREATE A PERMANENT CITY OF BOSTON SEAT ON THE MBTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
for the first time, after years of advocacy from the city.

BOSTON LAUNCHES POWERCORPSBOS,
the City's premier "earn-and-learn" workforce development program for young adults interested in jobs in the green industry.

BOSTON LAUNCHES THE FARE-FREE BUS PILOT,
making Routes 23, 28, and 29 fare-free until 2026. Boston's fare-free bus pilot became a national model for expanding access to public transit while advancing climate and equity goals.

2023

BOSTON WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION COMPLETED A COASTAL STORMWATER DISCHARGE ANALYSIS
to identify which of its outfalls are most likely to be affected by higher tides and large storms, and developed conceptual solutions that maintain the ability to discharge stormwater through outfalls during future conditions,

THE MAYOR'S OFFICE OF HOUSING REQUIRES ALL-ELECTRIC AND FOSSIL-FUEL FREE DESIGNS
for all new affordable housing projects financed with MOH funds.

2024

BOSTON WINS THE BLOOMBERG PHILANTHROPIES LOCAL LEADERS CLIMATE AWARD
through its leadership in building decarbonization policies.

BOSTON CREATES THE CLIMATE COUNCIL,
a pioneering governance model composed of City leadership that coordinates an all-of-government approach to climate action.

2025

BOSTON LAUNCHES THE NATION'S FIRST BEHIND-THE-METER PUBLIC CURBSIDE CHARGER FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES

BOSTON ESTABLISHES THE OFFICE OF CLIMATE RESILIENCE
to coordinate all-of-city solutions to address major climate hazards.

BOSTON HOSTS ITS FIRST ANNUAL DEPLOYABLES DAY,
a citywide exercise and public resource fair dedicated to temporary flood protection. The first-of-its-kind event showcases deployable flood barriers at City Hall Plaza, Faneuil Hall, coastal MBTA stations, and waterfront buildings across the coastline.

2026

BOSTON IS LISTED ON THE CDP CITIES A LIST
for the eighth year in a row in recognition for its climate policies and progress towards becoming a climate-resilient city.

BOSTON RELEASES ITS UPDATED TREE CANOPY ASSESSMENT
showing a 0.5% absolute increase in the city's urban tree canopy.

justice goals. To prevent more severe climate impacts, Boston must take bold action now to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience, ensuring that every resident is part of creating a healthier, safer, and more just future.

The Plan continues Boston’s legacy of innovation and continuous improvement, articulating an implementation roadmap for the next five years to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, build resilience to climate impacts, and ensure that the benefits of climate action are shared by all. The Plan also establishes clear, measurable targets and metrics that track progress, ensuring accountability and transparency in its implementation. Grounded in climate justice, the implementation of the Plan will reflect the voices of communities most affected by climate change and chart a path toward a healthier, more inclusive, and sustainable future for every Bostonian.

Climate Justice and Environmental Justice

What is climate justice?

Climate justice is a concept and social movement that recognizes climate change as not only an environmental problem, but as an issue of social justice. While climate justice lacks a universal definition, Boston’s climate justice framework starts by acknowledging at least three key factors:

1. Climate change affects everyone, but it disproportionately burdens the most vulnerable and underserved communities.
2. Climate action is not always positive. Climate programs can also produce benefits and burdens that are not distributed equitably.
3. With intentional design, we can leverage climate action to reduce disparities and take steps towards repairing historic inequities.

In Boston, working towards climate justice means recognizing the past and ongoing harms that continue to shape our built environment and way of life, while continuously advancing efforts to build a more just society for Bostonians and our environment.

Climate justice has evolved directly out of the environmental justice movement. For over five decades, environmental justice scholars and advocates have documented how people of color and historically marginalized populations have been disproportionately exposed to environmental hazards, denied environmental benefits, and excluded from decision-making processes. Climate justice expands on the environmental justice movement by highlighting how injustices and structural issues such as environmental racism are also manifested through climate change and climate action.

Identifying climate justice communities in Boston

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts defines environmental justice populations as areas where one or more of the following criteria are true:

- The annual median household income is 65% or less of the statewide annual median household income.
- Minorities make up 40% or more of the population.
- 25% or more of households identify as speaking English less than “very well”.
- Minorities make up 25% or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in which the neighborhood is located does not exceed 150% of the statewide annual median household income.

Under this definition, over 80% of Boston’s residents live in an environmental justice neighborhood. While this is a helpful first step in identifying vulnerable communities in our city, a new definition of **climate justice communities** for Boston may be needed to allow for a more nuanced analysis of the socioeconomic realities faced by Bostonians and map the intersection of multiple energy, climate, and environmental factors.

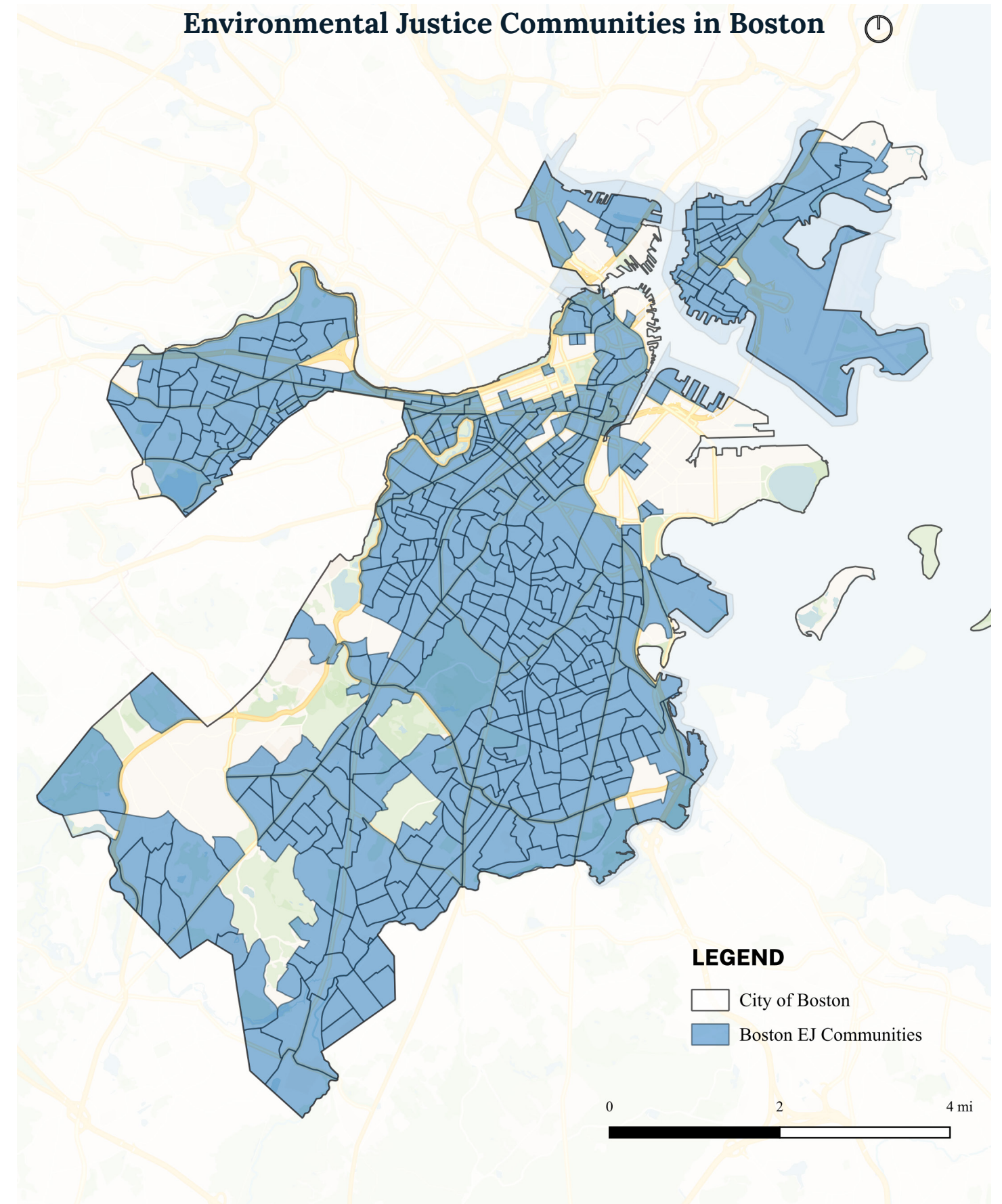


Figure 2: Map of environmental justice communities in Boston, based on Massachusetts environmental justice criteria

CLIMATE ACTION ACROSS CITY GOVERNMENT

Addressing climate change requires coordinated action across every part of City government. The climate is not just an environmental opportunity, but a priority for all of the government as its impacts span across public health, transportation, housing, permitting, emergency management, economic and workforce development, and resilience. The City of Boston is prioritizing climate change through a unified, integrated approach that activates every City department and aligns plans, policies, and implementation pathways.

Boston's Climate Council

The City of Boston has built a strong foundation to support intersectional climate action. Established by Executive Order in 2024, Boston's Climate Council, brings together senior leaders across City departments to advance an all-of-government approach to climate action. The Climate Council is charged with reducing emissions citywide, strengthening resilience to the impacts of climate change, and ensuring the transition to a green economy provides tangible benefits to residents, such as good quality jobs and public health improvements. Initially tasked with shaping and delivering the Climate Action Plan, the Climate Council now serves as the City's central decision-making and accountability supervisory body that ensures climate considerations are embedded in budgeting, capital planning, service delivery, and regulatory reform. The members of the Climate Council include:

- Chief Climate Officer (Co-Chair),
- Green New Deal Director (Co-Chair),
- Administrator of the Boston Housing Authority,
- Chief of Community Engagement,
- Chief of Emergency Preparedness,
- Chief Financial Officer,
- Chief of Housing,
- Chief of Operations,
- Chief of Planning,
- Chief of Streets,
- Chief of Worker Empowerment,
- Executive Director of the Boston Public Health Commission, and
- Executive Director of the Boston Water and Sewer Commission.

This cross-departmental structure allows the City to move beyond individual actions and towards coordinated strategies that are led across departments.

Beyond the Climate Action Plan, the City has numerous planning initiatives that integrate climate action:



Go Boston 2030⁴

The City's transportation plan has driven progress across the sector since 2017 and is currently being re-envisioned to evaluate the successes over the last eight years while defining the path forward and future opportunities. Go Boston 2030 was built with a vision and a list of transformative policies and projects that have clear actions tagged to them. The Climate Action Plan mirrors the goals and targets set that ensure residents have safe, accessible, climate-forward, and equitable transportation choices in the future.



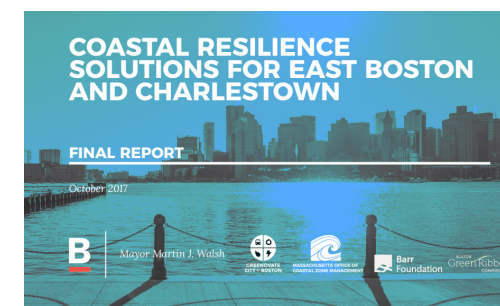
Zero Waste Boston⁵

The City's vision to transform Boston into a zero waste city was launched as a part of the 2014 Climate Action Plan update and has been a key priority in conserving resources through responsible production, consumption, and disposal of all materials. Transforming the City into a zero waste environment can only be sustained through changes to culture, starting at the municipal level and supported by local business development.



Climate Ready Boston⁶

The City's climate resilient plan evaluates how vulnerable the City is to climate factors including, extreme temperatures, sea level rise, extreme precipitation, and storms. The plan outlines the near, mid, and long term impacts of different climate factors on the City's people, buildings, infrastructure, and economy and how the City will better prepare to mitigate these impacts.



Coastal Resilience Solutions Plans⁷

As a part of Climate Ready Boston, the City has completed a coastal resilience plan to study and address coastal flooding along all 47 miles of Boston's coastline. In conjunction with Climate Ready Boston and the Climate Action Plan, the Coastal Resilience Solutions Plans create a vision for the future of the Boston coastline that reduces coastal flood risk, enhances the city's natural ecosystems, and improves connectivity, accessibility, and recreation along the waterfront.



Heat Resilience Solutions for Boston⁸

Boston has been increasingly more vulnerable to extreme heat, averaging more days over 90°F annually. Preparing for hotter summers is critical to public health and safety and the Heat Plan provides a citywide framework to build a more just, equitable, and resilient Boston, which is carried forward into the Climate Action Plan as well.



Urban Forest Plan⁹

This plan outlines a community-informed roadmap to preserve, expand, and distribute Boston’s tree canopy. Trees are essential to the City’s climate and public health goal as trees can reduce extreme heat, improve air quality, mitigate stormwater flooding, strengthen mental health, and support cultural and intergenerational connections to nature. The Climate Action Plan will reemphasize the importance of the Urban Forest Plan’s central goal: forging a path to a sustainable urban forest for all Bostonians.



Boston Housing Strategy¹⁰

Mayor Wu aims to make Boston the best city for families to live, work, and play. To do this, the City of Boston has laid out ambitious housing policies to speed up new housing construction, increase housing protections, increase access to homeownership, preserve affordable housing, and ensure buildings are climate-resilient and carbon-neutral.



Live Long and Well Agenda¹¹

Live Long and Well outlines Boston’s vision for a healthier, more equitable city and the Boston Public Health Commission’s commitment to closing the life expectancy gap by 2035. Grounded in an anti-racism framework and informed by lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic, the initiative focuses on addressing the social and structural drivers of health, reflecting Boston’s broader commitment to advancing health equity through coordinated action on economic opportunity, climate resilience, safe streets, and affordable housing.



Climate Ready Workforce Action Plan¹²

The work outlined in the 2030 Climate Action Plan will require a scaled up workforce and training pathways that lead to high-road green jobs. In 2025, the Office of Worker Empowerment released the Climate Ready Workforce Action Plan, an analysis of the workforce needed to achieve the City’s climate goals and recommended strategies to achieve a just transition to a clean energy economy.



A Place to Thrive: Anti-Displacement Action Plan for Boston¹³

The City released a two year roadmap in 2025 outlining concrete actions to stabilize renters, homeowners, and neighborhood business. Strategies in the Anti-Displacement Action Plan include lowering energy costs and ensuring residents can remain in safe and resilient homes.



Hazard Mitigation Plan¹⁴

The City was awarded funding from FEMA to update its Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan by 2027. This 2030 Climate Action Plan will work in conjunction with the Hazard Mitigation Plan to reduce risks from natural hazards and strengthen Boston’s long-term resilience. The planning process will involve a comprehensive risk assessment, community engagement, and the identification of updated strategies and actions to reduce the impacts of climate-related hazards across Boston.

The City is updating its permitting, planning, and zoning frameworks to remove barriers, create clearer and more predictable processes, and ensure City systems actively support the achievement of Boston’s climate and equity goals:

Permitting Reform¹⁵

Permitting is integral to businesses, homes, and socializing, however the permitting process can be time consuming and frustrating, so the City is leveraging new technologies and updating policies to improve these processes and support Bostonians through it. The Climate Action Plan integrates strategies that rely on the updated permitting processes for success and support the road to 2030.

Article 80 Modernization¹⁶

As a part of the permitting reform, the City of Boston Planning Department is working to improve the City’s Article 80 development review process. Article 80 of the Boston Zoning Code, which sets the rules for the review of proposed real estate development projects, is being updated to create a more modernized process that will support new growth that serves our City while addressing long-standing needs.

Collectively, these plans, policies, and initiatives reflect the coordinated municipal commitment to address climate impacts. The 2030 Climate Action Plan will connect and strengthen these efforts by aligning timelines, adding clear implementation pathways, and highlighting each department’s successes. The Plan will introduce measurable metrics and a database to track accountability over time across each sector, ensuring that all City initiatives operate together to advance Boston’s shared climate and environmental justice goals.



VISIONING 2030

This chapter outlines Boston's 2030 climate vision which is grounded in scientific data and analytical modeling. It describes the data, models, and key assumptions that inform the strategies presented in subsequent chapters. To chart a credible path toward this vision, the City uses historical greenhouse gas inventories to project future emissions and identify the actions required to reduce them, alongside flooding and extreme heat projections to pinpoint areas of greatest vulnerability across Boston. Grounded in science and shaped by community voices and priorities, these analyses are used to establish clear, sector-specific targets and metrics to track progress over the next five years.

OUR VISION FOR 2030

In 2030, the City of Boston should be halfway to achieving our 2050 climate goal of carbon neutrality. This means Boston is emitting half the annual greenhouse gas emissions than it was in 2005, has made meaningful progress on building community resilience to the impacts of climate change, and established a robust climate justice framework that has been adopted and is being implemented by all parts of city government.

2030 Boston is a safer place for all modes of transportation, making it easier for residents to access public transit and have multiple options for moving around the city. Residents will notice more public trees, green infrastructure, and other shade structures to enjoy fresh air and stay cool in all neighborhoods, particularly those who have historically suffered the most from the urban heat island effect. Renters and homeowners understand their home's energy profile and the suite of technical and financial supports that are available to improve indoor air quality and reduce their energy burden. Existing large buildings and campuses are transforming how they operate, driving deep emissions reductions to comply with the Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance and pioneering innovative solutions such as thermal energy networks. At the same time, new large developments are being added to neighborhoods and reshaping Boston's skyline with net-zero buildings enabled by Net Zero Carbon Zoning, creating healthier places for residents to live, work, and play for generations to come. In 2030, Bostonians will enjoy a city where families feel at home, with access to safe environments, clean air, and affordable green living.

Climate action is also an opportunity to advance public health priorities - 2030 will objectively demonstrate a narrowing or closure of health disparity gaps through the thoughtful implementation of climate mitigation and adaptation strategies. Achieving this will require a data-driven understanding of the health impacts of climate change, the development of clear and meaningful evaluation metrics, and the implementation of targeted strategies that prioritize protection for the most at-risk individuals and communities.



Climate Mitigation

Greenhouse gas emissions are the primary driver of climate change, released through activities such as burning fossil fuels for buildings and vehicles, managing waste, and generating electricity. Boston has made measurable progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions across sectors, driven by the regional shift to less polluting sources of electricity, aggressive policies and programs that target building decarbonization and energy efficiency, mode shift and transportation electrification, and waste reduction. The City has conducted an annual emissions inventory since 2005, with the most recent complete data extending through 2023. According to this inventory, Boston has reduced its emissions by 22.4 percent compared to 2005 levels. To achieve our goal of a 50 percent reduction by 2030, we must take bold, targeted action that focuses on the highest-impact opportunities.

Boston's Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory

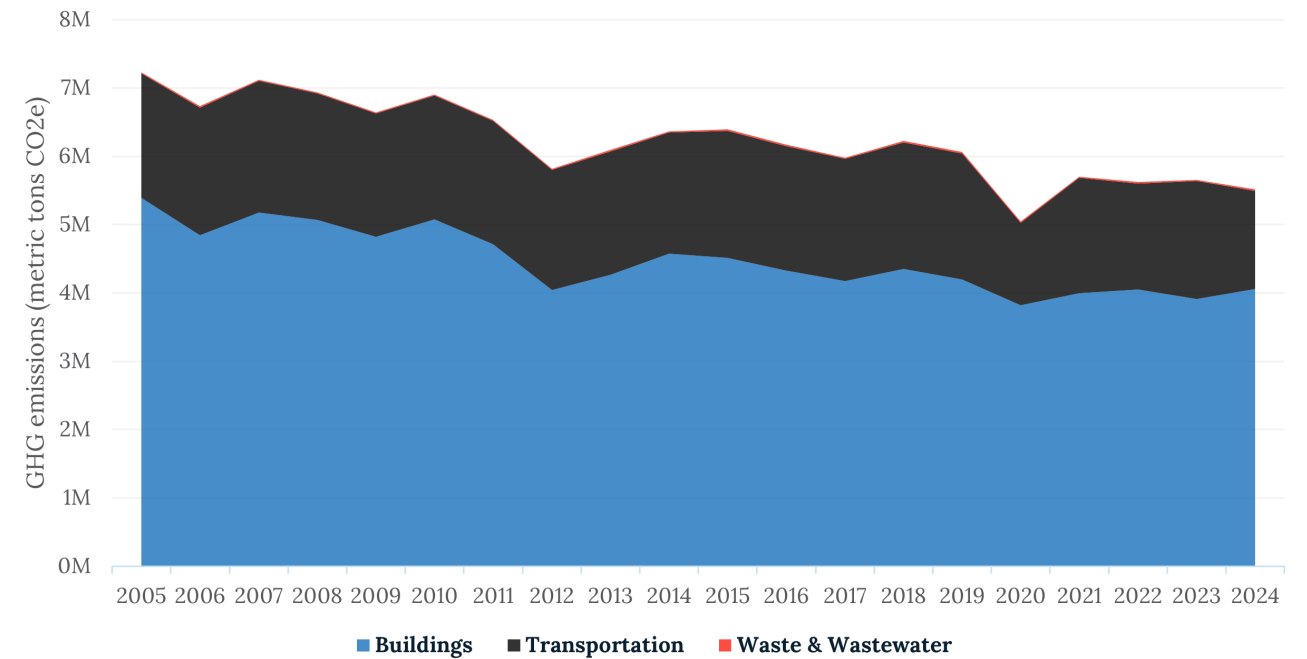


Figure 3: Boston's historic community emissions. (Source: Boston's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory 2023)

As shown in Figure 3, the two largest sources of emissions in the City come from the buildings and transportation sectors, while the waste and wastewater sector accounts for less than 1 percent.

Building emissions come from the energy used in commercial, industrial large residential buildings, and small residential buildings, such as electricity, fossil gas, and delivered fuels. Transportation emissions come from an estimate of vehicle miles traveled across all vehicle types within the City, plus public transportation vehicles and off-road vehicles used at the airport and wastewater treatment plant. Emissions reported in the waste sector refer to emissions from wastewater treatment and compost only. All, or almost all, of Boston's solid waste is sent to Waste To Energy (WTE) incineration plants that feed the electricity grid, so emissions are counted as part of regional electricity generation. Additional information on Boston's community-wide emissions can be found at boston.gov/bostons-carbon-emissions.

The City has conducted an annual emissions inventory since 2005, with the most recent data extending through 2023. The City is also sharing preliminary 2024 emissions estimates. While these figures are not yet complete, they are being incorporated into modeling projections to ensure that strategy development and implementation are guided by the most up-to-date information available. According to the 2023 inventory, Boston has reduced its emissions by 22.4% compared to 2005 levels.

Boston's Waste Reduction Strategies

Zero Waste Boston is the City's long-term strategy to advance responsible production, consumption, and materials management, with a goal of achieving an 80 percent recycling rate by 2035. Boston is a signatory city of C40's Towards Zero Waste Accelerator, a global initiative led by C40 Cities that helps cities design and implement strategies that reduce waste and build more circular materials systems. Led by the Public Works Department, the City expanded diversion programming significantly in 2022 to increase access, participation, and impact. Boston now provides no-fee, on-demand curbside collection of mattresses and textiles to most residents and maintains a network of textile donation drop-off locations citywide. In 2024 alone, 44,000 mattresses—totaling 1,014 tons—were recycled, and 388 tons of textiles were collected for reuse or recycling.

The City's curbside food scraps collection program has also experienced strong growth, with enrollment increasing steadily and annual tonnage doubling year-over-year to reach 6,000 tons collected to date. In parallel, Boston Public Schools has expanded composting programs across multiple schools, fostering waste reduction and environmental stewardship among students.

While the City remains committed to advancing the goals of Zero Waste Boston, emissions associated with the waste sector account for less than one percent of Boston's community-wide greenhouse gas emissions. As a result, materials management and recycling are not emissions-reduction focuses of this Climate Action Plan. However, food waste reduction and diversion present meaningful opportunities for continued progress to reduce urban consumption emissions. Given its emissions reduction potential, strong potential to engage residents and build broader awareness of sustainable practices, food waste reduction remains an important area of focus and related actions are therefore included in this Plan.



Boston has set bold and ambitious climate commitments that require dramatic changes in where our energy comes from, how our buildings work, and how people and goods move around the city. In reaching carbon neutrality, it will be key to shift from fossil fuels to electricity from clean and renewable sources. Based on current emissions and historical trends, a model was created to understand the extent of actions that need to be taken to reach Boston's climate goals.

The City has been making major strides in emissions reduction and has already set several targets by 2030 to further drive emissions reductions. Modeling results, illustrated by the dark blue line in the figure below (**'Meeting Existing Goals and Targets'**), suggest that the City of Boston could expect a 48 percent reduction in emissions below the 2005 baseline in 2030 and 76 percent below 2005 levels by 2050, if all existing goals and targets, such as BERDO compliance and fleet electrification, are fully met. Without these policies and initiatives in place, emissions are expected to reduce only by 23%, demonstrated by the red line (**'Boston's Emissions Without Climate Action'**) in the figure below. **Boston's Emissions Without Climate Action** pathway projection relies only on the impact of policies with high confidence of implementation, such as the cleaning of the grid as mandated by the Massachusetts Renewable Portfolio Standard, and growth in population, households, and jobs. Finally, the light blue line, **'2030 Climate Action Pathway'**, on the chart below illustrates a pathway for achieving our 2030 and 2050 emissions reduction goals.

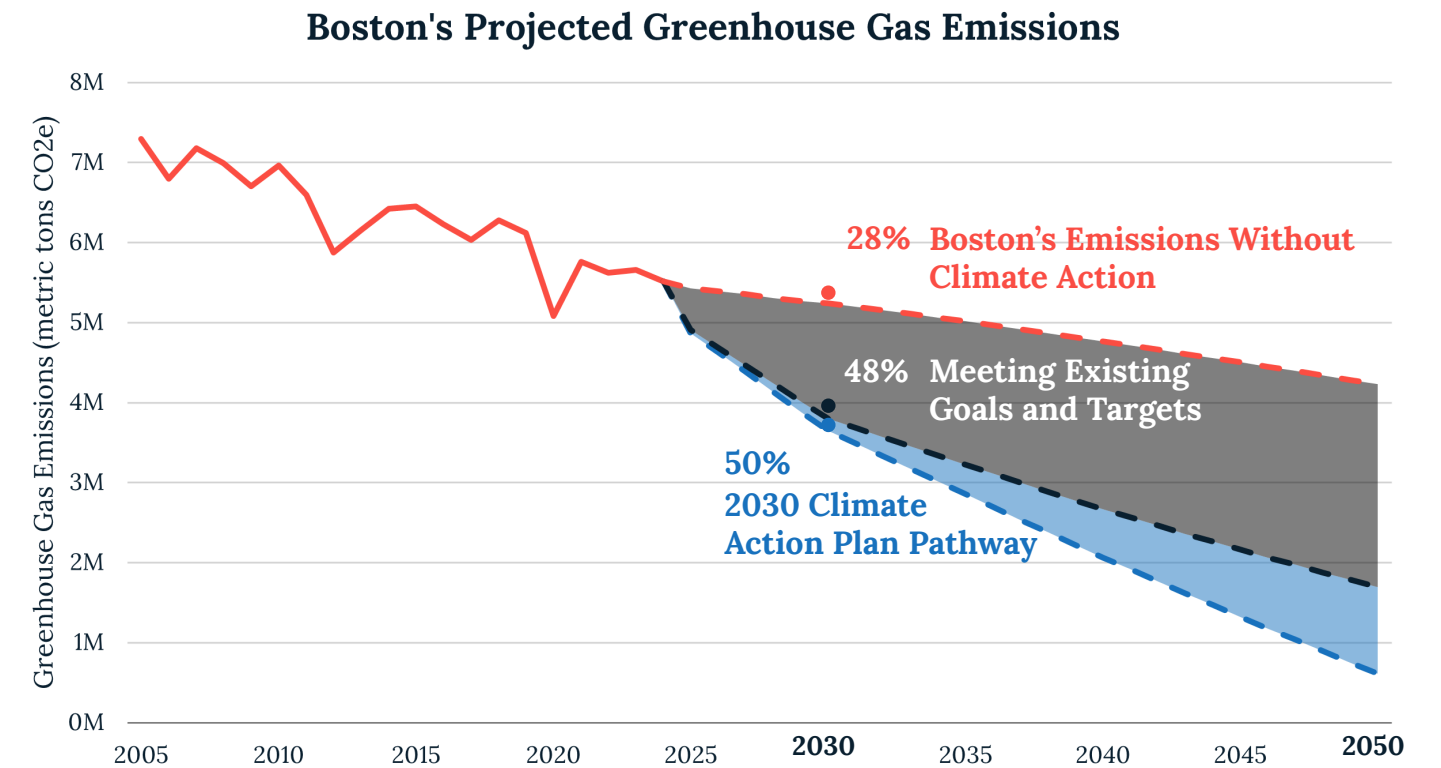


Figure 4: Boston's historical and projected greenhouse gas emissions through 2050. Percentages represent emissions reductions compared to the 2005 baseline.

To achieve our ambitious climate goals, the City must do two key things by 2030: (1) ensure the success of our already established targets to achieve the projected 48 percent emissions reduction; and (2) define and achieve new targets to capture the remaining 6 percent of emissions.

A modeling analysis assessed how Boston's largest sources of emissions contribute to current reduction targets and what additional cuts are needed to reach the City's 50 percent emissions reduction goal by 2030. To close the remaining 2 percent gap, the modeling identified that the City's largest opportunities lie in small building decarbonization and further reductions in passenger travel, with some additional progress needed in emissions associated with heavy-duty vehicles (as shown in Figure 5):

- **Small buildings**, homes under 15 units and commercial spaces under 20,000 square feet, present a unique challenge and emissions reduction opportunity. They make up nearly three quarters of the city's building stock and account for about 30 percent of building emissions.¹⁷ Many are older and rely on fossil fuels or inefficient systems, such as fuel oil and electric resistance heating. The Plan includes strategies to increase access to small building retrofits and cost-saving upgrades.
- **Passenger travel**, the largest source of Boston's transportation emissions, accounts for approximately 25 percent of the city's emissions. A key strategy to reduce these emissions is mode shift: moving people out of single-occupancy vehicles and into public transit, biking, and other sustainable options. This transition must prioritize safety and be supported by regional coordination, recognizing that many commuters travel into and out of the city each day. The Plan emphasizes the importance of coordinating with the MBTA to expand and improve public transit access, alongside strategies to enhance walking and cycling safety and encourage greater use of these modes.
- **Heavy-duty vehicles**, including delivery trucks and school buses, present a more complex challenge. Electric alternatives remain limited and carry higher upfront costs. However, as vehicle technologies advance and charging infrastructure expands, these options are expected to become more accessible and cost-effective over time. The City and Boston Public Schools are exploring procurement strategies for cleaner heavy-duty vehicles, including school buses, while also examining how goods are delivered by trucks throughout the city.

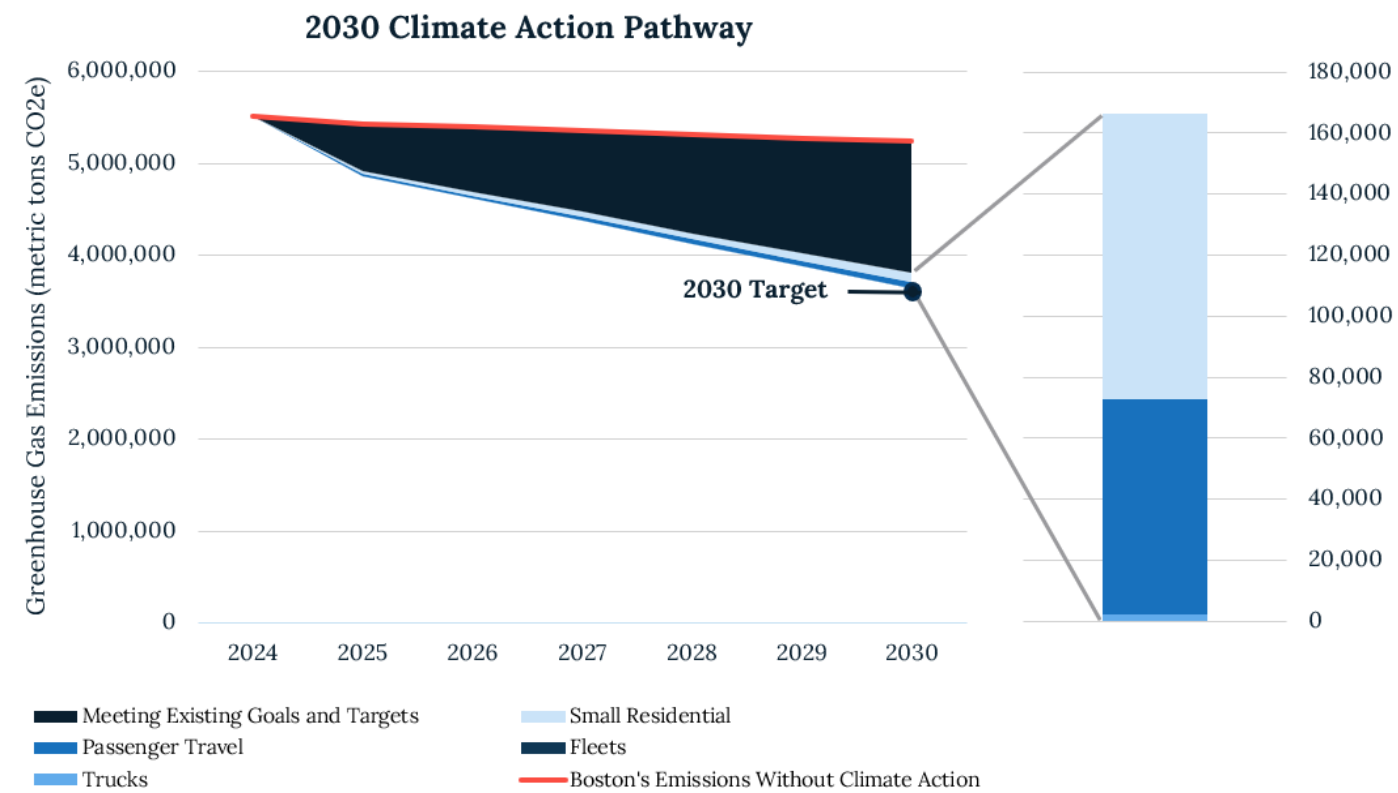
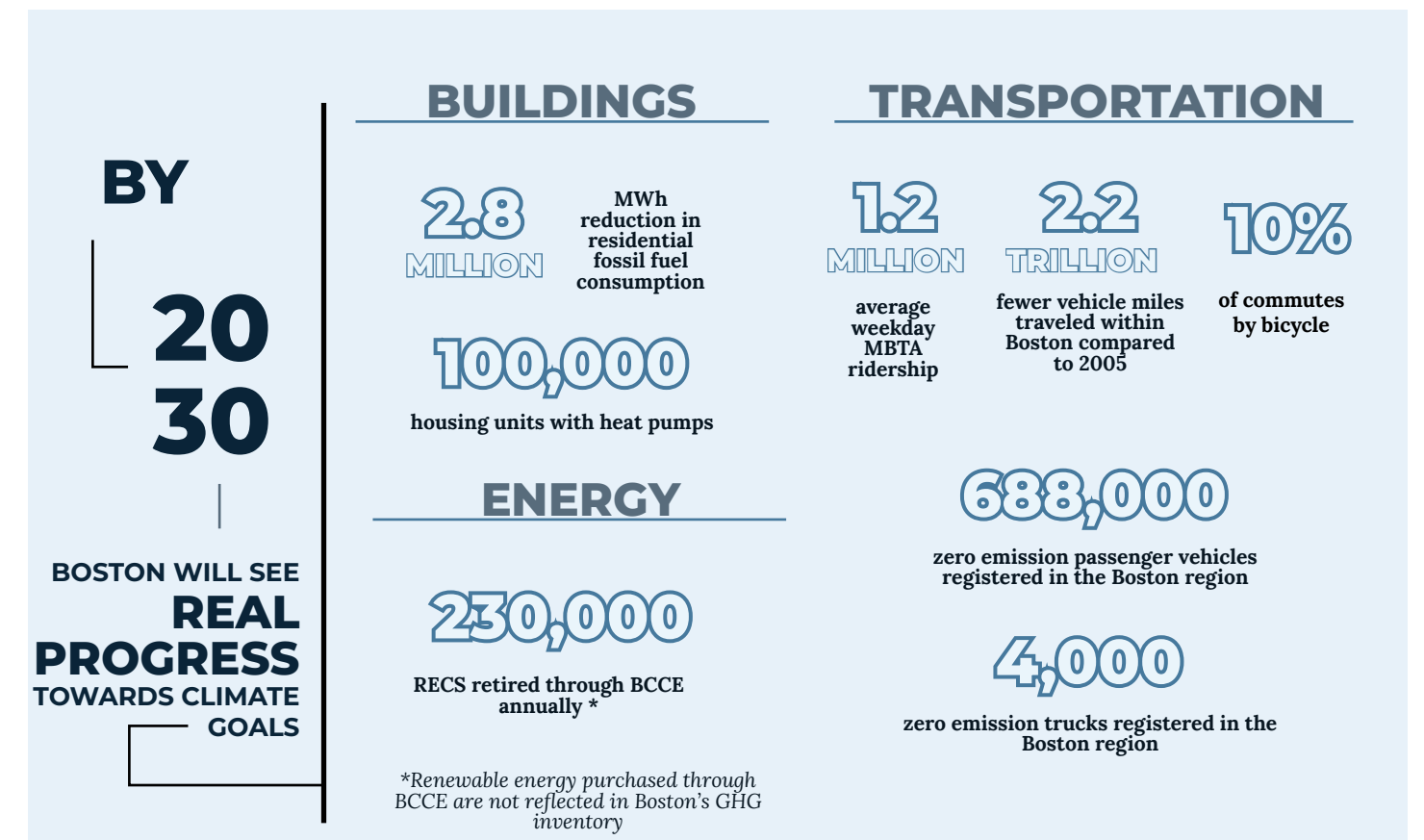


Figure 5: Boston's projected greenhouse gas emissions and estimated reductions by sector.

The table below shows the existing targets used in the "Meeting Targets" 48 percent estimate and the adjusted targets needed to close the gap to 50 percent. The strategies in this Plan support existing targets and identify opportunities for additional reductions.

Target	Meeting Existing Targets	Meeting 50% by 2030
BERDO achieves ...	100% compliance through emission reductions	100% compliance through emission reductions
Buildings not covered by BERDO achieve a ...	21% reduction in fossil fuel use from a 2005 baseline	37% reduction in fossil fuel use from a 2005 baseline
Electric passenger vehicles to increase to a ...	19% share of all vehicles in Boston	21% share of all vehicles in Boston
Increase the shift away from travel by passenger vehicles to walking, biking and public transit by ...	23% compared to business-as-planned	30% compared to business-as-planned
Total GHG Emissions Reductions	48%	50%



Climate Resilience

Intensifying heat, more frequent extreme storms, and sea level rise are increasing risks across our neighborhoods and infrastructure. These shifts threaten Boston’s people, places, and economy. The climate resilience goals for the Plan respond to these challenges by addressing three of Boston’s most pressing climate risks: heat, stormwater and inland flooding, and coastal flooding through a climate justice lens.

While leading the charge on global emissions reductions is critical to curbing rising temperatures, extreme flooding, and sea level rise over the long term, Boston is also taking action to protect residents from the impacts of climate hazards they are already experiencing and expected to experience in the decades to come. As the City shifts from planning to implementation, the Office of Climate Resilience (established in 2024) is primarily tasked with accelerating this progress while ensuring that all Bostonians benefit from resilience investments.

Building on what the City has learned through decades of resilience planning, including the Urban Forest Plan, Climate Ready Boston, and related neighborhood plans, Boston has established clear, quantitative resilience targets across the City’s major climate hazards (heat, stormwater and inland flooding, and coastal flooding) spanning the short, medium, and long term. While this Climate Action Plan focuses on near-term action through 2030, these targets are intentionally set with a longer horizon in mind to ensure Boston is building toward resilience in the decades ahead.

These adaptation targets translate Boston’s qualitative resilience goals into specific, measurable outcomes. They are designed to be clear and time-bound to objectively track progress. By setting targets that can be consistently tracked and communicated, the City can assess what is working, adjust strategies as conditions change, and ensure that resilience investments deliver tangible protection for people, neighborhoods, and critical infrastructure over time.

The targets listed above are supported by the strategies and actions listed in this Plan. Actions are guided by a commitment to inclusion and equity, recognizing that climate risks are not distributed evenly across communities. Metrics of success will closely track progress to the targets and consider both physical, health, and economic outcomes from reduced flooding or cooler streets, and equity outcomes, such as improved access to climate-resilient public spaces and more equitable resource and benefit distribution.

Climate Hazard	Target	2026 Baseline	2030 Target (Short Term)	2040 Target (Medium Term)	2050 Target (Long Term)
Heat	Heat-related emergency department (ED) visits per 100,000 residents during heat events	Tracked by EMS	25% reduction	40% reduction	60% reduction
	Minimum neighborhood tree canopy coverage	Some neighborhoods <20%; Citywide average 27.2%	Build on progress from the 2019-2024 Tree Canopy Assessment: increase Citywide average by +0.5%	No neighborhood below 25%*	Neighborhood minimum of 30%, with citywide average >35%*
Stormwater and Inland Flooding	Greened acres on public and private land	Existing installations	300 acres added (roughly 1% of the land area of the City of Boston)	600 acres added (roughly 2% of the land area of Boston)	1,200 acres added (roughly 4% of the land area of Boston)

Coastal Flooding	Number of residents protected from 2030 and 2050 coastal flood pathways	Approximately 16,000 residents are exposed to a major flooding event	Protect at least 10,000 residents	Protect 20,000 residents**	Protect all residents currently exposed to 2050 flood pathways**
Cross-Hazard	City capital projects screened for future climate risk	No baseline	100% screened	100% designed for future conditions	100% constructed to future standards
	City capital projects screened for future climate risk	Partial coverage	100% of neighborhoods	Maintain coverage	Maintain coverage

*Progress toward this target will depend on the physical characteristics and available public and private land for planting space within each neighborhood. Implementation priority will be given to under-canopied neighborhoods. As we continue to assess site conditions and expand our understanding of feasible and creative planting strategies, we will evaluate and refine this target to reflect unique neighborhood conditions.

**As we move toward 2050, we aim to expand the number of people protected through coastal resilience projects, as more residents are projected to be exposed to 2050 flood pathways and associated coastal risks.

Heat

The last five years have all ranked among Boston’s ten hottest on record, highlighting the city’s rapid warming and increasing exposure to extreme heat.¹⁸ 2025 saw one of the most humid summers on record, made possible by a warming climate that can hold more moisture in the air, and creating more risk for heat-related illnesses.

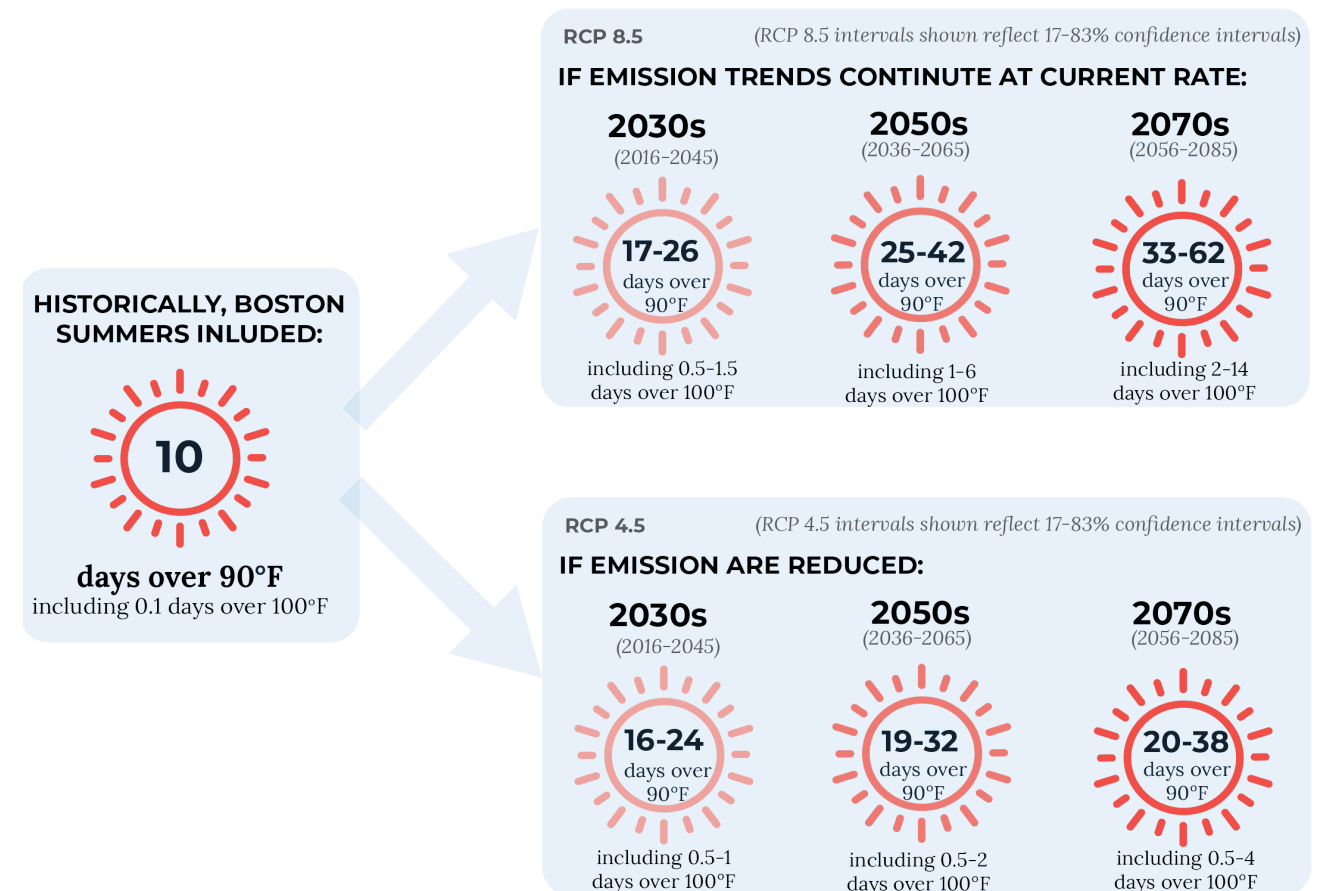


Figure 6: Historic heat trends and heat projections from the Boston Heat Resilience Plan.

In a scenario in which current global emissions trends continue as is, Boston’s average summer temperature, once around 69 °F (1981–2010), could rise to 76 °F by 2050. This warming builds on a recent trend: between 2010 and 2020, Boston experienced more hot days than in any decade over the previous 50 years, and projections suggest that by 2070, the city could see up to 90 days above 90 °F per year - nearly the entire summer.¹⁹ Preparing people, buildings, infrastructure, and the public realm to withstand extreme heat events begins with recognizing that not everyone experiences it the same way. In Boston, heat vulnerability is especially high in neighborhoods with less vegetation, older housing stock, and more impervious surfaces, like Downtown Boston and Chinatown, which can experience temperatures up to 10°F hotter compared to other areas.²⁰

Stormwater and Inland Flooding

In 2015, the Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC) developed a citywide model to simulate flooding in Boston under existing conditions and with potential shoreline or outfall protections, estimating impacts along the city’s coastline.

Inland flooding occurs when intense rainfall overwhelms the City’s drainage system or when rising sea levels prevent stormwater from draining through outfalls into receiving waters such as Boston Harbor. This can cause water to back up into streets, basements, and other low-lying areas, even without extreme rainfall events.

In 2025, the Office of Green Infrastructure (OGI) worked with BWSC to map community-reported flooding across the city. Over the next two years, BWSC, working in partnership with the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, will run an updated model to evaluate the effects of inland flooding resulting from intense precipitation throughout the entire city, not just along the coast. The enhanced model, alongside community-reported flood mapping, will guide where green and gray infrastructure investments are most needed.

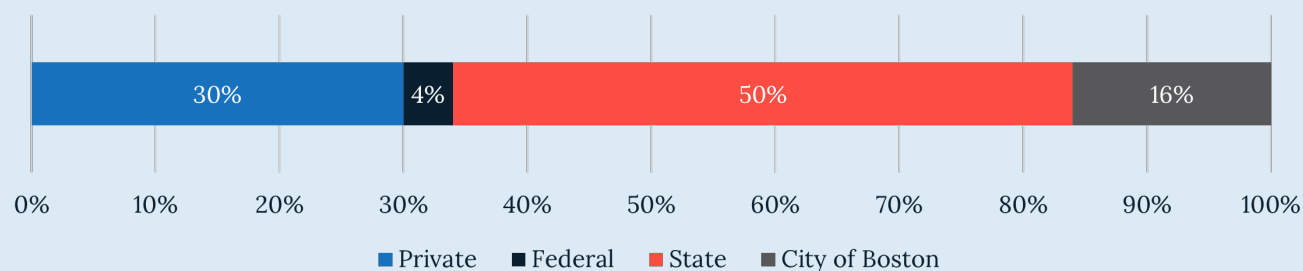
Coastal Flooding

Over the twentieth century, sea levels rose roughly nine inches relative to land, and projections indicate that by 2030 the rate of sea-level rise may accelerate to nearly three times that pace, regardless of the emissions scenario.²¹ While major reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions can significantly limit sea level rise to under two feet by the end of the century, a business-as-usual trajectory could result in more than seven feet of rise.²² Given this reality, Boston must strengthen its ability to adapt and respond to both current and anticipated sea-level rise and coastal storms.

Boston Coast Ownership

Of Boston’s 47 miles of coastline, the City owns approximately 7.5 miles (16%). Because coastal flooding does not follow property boundaries, effective shoreline protection requires coordinated planning and investment across the full waterfront.

Coastal Infrastructure



Boston’s strategies for mitigating hazards include a combination of targeted capital investments, improved data systems, updated design standards, and expanded partnerships.²³ It builds upon the foundational work of Climate Ready Boston (2016) and subsequent plans, incorporating recent initiatives such as the eight neighborhood-level Coastal Resilience Solutions Plans, the Urban Forest Plan, Boston Heat Resilience Plan, and recommendations from the recently created Office of Green Infrastructure.

Coastal resilience planning and implementation in Boston is challenging, as the City owns only a portion of its 47 miles coastline: much of it is controlled by state agencies, private property owners, or quasi-public entities. As a result, effective coastal protection will depend on extensive collaboration and long-term partnerships across public, private, and community stakeholders.

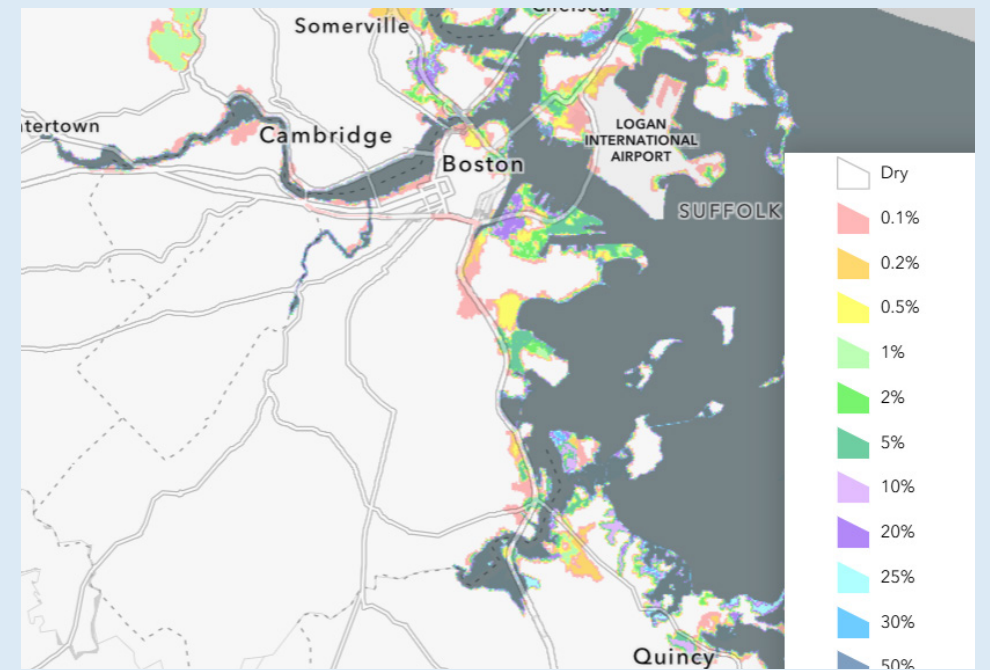
To meet these growing challenges, we must accelerate the implementation of comprehensive coastal resilience strategies that advance flood-protection infrastructure, update flood-pathway modeling, and strengthen community-centered preparedness.

2030 Massachusetts Coast Flood Risk Model

This map shows the projected coastal flooding exposure along Boston’s shoreline by 2030, based on the Massachusetts Coast Flood Risk Model (MC-FRM). The model incorporates expected sea-level rise and storm surge from future coastal storms to estimate how often flooding may occur under a high-emissions scenario. In this near-term model, the majority of the flood risk is concentrated in South Boston, East Boston, Charlestown, and Downtown.

Each color on the map represents a different annual chance of flooding, known as the Coastal Flood Exceedance Probability (CFEP). These probabilities range from 0.1 percent (very rare, about a 1-in-1,000-year event), through one percent to 50 percent, up to 100 percent (flooding expected every year).

This 2030 map helps visualize how different parts of Boston’s coast may experience flooding as rising seas combine with storm surge.



Source: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/23d861b79aed450eb8972013dd28579b/page/MA-Coast-Flood-Risk-Model>

What does climate resilience look like? While the extent of resilience needed will continue to evolve as climate risks change and new information emerges, our vision is to build flexibility into our approach and incorporate additional interventions as needed. By 2030, Bostonians will see the real impact of our climate action work to increase resilience to climate hazards in the following ways:



1 GREEN ROOFS

Cool or green roofs across Boston reduce building and neighborhood temperatures, lower energy use, and help protect residents from extreme heat while also managing stormwater.

2 BUS SHELTER

New bus shelters installed over the next five years provide shade and weather protection, making public transit safer and more comfortable during heat waves, storms, and extreme weather.

3 SIDEWALK SHADING

Continuous shading along the hottest sidewalks lowers surface and air temperatures, improves walkability, and protects pedestrians—especially seniors, children, and outdoor workers—from heat exposure.

4 GREEN & GREY INFRASTRUCTURE

Green and grey infrastructure installed in priority areas identified by the Inundation Model helps absorb, store, and redirect stormwater, reducing flood risk while strengthening neighborhood-scale resilience to future climate impacts.

5 FLOOD PROTECTION

Projects that protect against the 2030 flood pathways are in design, permitting, or construction, reducing the risk of flooding to homes, businesses, critical infrastructure, and evacuation routes during coastal and storm surge events.





CROSS-CUTTING BENEFITS OF CLIMATE ACTION

Boston's 2030 Climate Action Plan builds on the prior plans while also recognizing the intersectionality of climate change. Climate action goes beyond cutting emissions or adapting to climate change - it is a vehicle for improving health, affordability, and economic opportunity for residents. The following desired outcomes of climate action shaped the development of the strategies outlined in the CAP, and will be used by the City and its partners to evaluate its implementation.

IMPROVING PUBLIC HEALTH OUTCOMES

Climate change is impacting, and will continue to impact, the health of Boston residents and the wellbeing of Boston communities. These impacts fall most heavily on people with underlying health conditions, limited access to resources, or those already burdened by multiple environmental stressors and systemic inequities. Infants and young children, pregnant individuals, older adults, people experiencing homelessness, and those with chronic illnesses or disabilities are particularly vulnerable. However, everyone will be affected, directly or indirectly, by climate change.

Many health impacts are immediate, occurring during periods of extreme heat, extreme cold, or severe weather, when risks such as heat stroke, hypothermia, heart attacks, injuries, and violence increase. Energy resilience is also critical to public health: during blackouts, vulnerable populations, particularly those who rely on medical equipment or are homebound, must have access to safety measures and support. There are also many climate-related health impacts that unfold slowly over many years. A warming climate brings longer pollen seasons and worsened outdoor air quality, intensifying asthma and other respiratory conditions. Warmer, wetter conditions expand the range and activity of insects like ticks and mosquitoes that transmit Lyme Disease, West Nile Virus, Eastern Equine Encephalitis, and other illnesses. After extreme precipitation and flooding, residents may face health hazards from mold growth, chemical runoff, or carbon monoxide exposure from generators and pumps used during recovery. Additional indirect impacts include rising food insecurity due to national and global shifts in rainfall and crop production, tourism economy disruptions due to extreme weather incidents and changing climate, higher utility costs, and increased strain on the healthcare system.

In June 2020, the City of Boston declared racism a public health crisis, affirming that systemic inequities shaped by generations of discriminatory policies and practices negatively impact individual health outcomes and life expectancy. This also determines who is most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Communities that have faced historic disinvestment, environmental burdens, and limited access to opportunity are more likely to live in hotter neighborhoods, experience poorer air quality, face flooding risks, and have fewer resources to prepare for or recover from climate-related events. This declaration underscores the City's commitment to addressing the root causes of health inequities and, in doing so, strengthening Boston's overall climate resilience.

Racism and other forms of oppression shape every social driver of health, from housing and employment to environmental exposures and access to care, and these same drivers influence climate vulnerability and adaptive capacity. By working with partners across Boston, the City aims to improve life expectancy, narrow racial and ethnic disparities, and ensure that all residents benefit from healthy, climate-resilient environments and supportive community conditions. The Boston Public Health Commission's Live Long and Well Agenda reflects this commitment and guides efforts to advance racial, health, and climate equity across sectors.



Climate action presents important opportunities not only to avoid negative public health impacts, but to improve the health and wellbeing of Bostonians overall. Expanding green space and tree canopy to cool urban hotspots enhances both physical and mental wellbeing by creating more opportunities for outdoor activity and access to nature. Building retrofits and net-zero carbon new development can lower utility bills and improve indoor air quality. Shifting more trips to walking, biking, and public transit reduces greenhouse gas emissions, improves local air quality, increases physical activity, and helps residents save money. By embedding equity into all climate initiatives, the City can ensure that communities most at risk due to historic and systemic inequities are prioritized. This approach protects the most vulnerable, closes longstanding gaps in exposure and resilience, and advances environmental justice through the co-benefits of this work.

The 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) identified the health needs, strengths, and priorities of Boston's communities.²⁴ Conducted by the Boston Community Health Collaborative every three years, a partnership of health institutions, the Boston Public Health Commission, and community organizations, the CHNA informs decision-making on programs, policies, and investments that support community wellbeing. Its findings shape the Community Health Improvement Plan, grounding public health efforts in community voices and data. Through climate action that prioritizes public health benefits, Boston can create a safer, healthier city where all residents thrive and share in the benefits of a resilient city.

Public Health Tags in the Plan Strategies

The strategies in the 2030 Climate Action Plan are tagged with the public health impacts most relevant to Boston's climate and resilience work.¹ These tags are adapted from the key focus areas identified in the 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) as top priorities for Boston residents and highlight how climate action can advance broader health goals:

1. **Access to Healthy Foods** – Expands access to affordable, nutritious food that supports long-term health.
2. **Chronic Disease Prevention** – Reduces risks and triggers for conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and asthma.
3. **Extreme Heat and Cold Protections** – Lowers residents' exposure to dangerous temperatures through mitigation and preparedness.
4. **Economic and Career Mobility** – Increases access to stable, well-paying jobs and career pathways that support financial wellbeing.
5. **Educational Attainment** – Strengthens pathways to quality education and learning opportunities across all ages.
6. **Housing Affordability and Quality** – Improves access to safe, stable, and healthy housing.
7. **Mental Health and Wellbeing** – Reduces stressors and improves access to supportive, health-promoting environments.
8. **Physical Environment Improvements** – Enhances neighborhood conditions and the broader built environment with benefits such as improved air quality, noise levels, traffic safety, green and open space, and overall environmental quality.
9. **Transportation Affordability and Access** – Expands access to safe, reliable, and affordable transportation options.

¹ Other priorities identified in the 2025 CHNA include: Access to health care, access to physical activity opportunities, cancer, early education and care, maternal and child health, substance use, and violence.

ADVANCING CLIMATE JUSTICE

Climate change affects everyone, but it disproportionately burdens the most vulnerable communities. In Boston, as in many U.S. cities, historical policies and systemic inequities have placed people of color, immigrants, low-income households, and other historically marginalized communities in areas that are more vulnerable to flooding, extreme heat, poor air quality, and other climate hazards.

Boston is a city shaped by segregation, disinvestment, and systemic discrimination. Our residents are now majority people of color, yet Boston remains one of the most racially segregated cities in the country. Neighborhoods like Mattapan, Roxbury, and East Boston continue to face higher rates of chronic disease, lower life expectancies, greater energy burdens, and fewer environmental protections than wealthier, whiter neighborhoods.

Data reflects this stark reality. For example:

- **People of color in Boston are at higher risk of developing chronic diseases:** Black Bostonians face a 37 percent higher rate of heart disease mortality than White Bostonians. Asthma-related emergency visit rates are nearly ten times higher in Mattapan than in West Roxbury. Mattapan has the shortest life expectancy (77.3 years) in Boston, while Back Bay has the longest life expectancy (82.8 years).

Health significantly impacts people's vulnerability to climate change and their ability to adapt and respond to extreme weather events. Boston's persistent health disparities mean that people of color in our city are also more vulnerable to increasing temperatures and persistent air pollution.

- **Boston residents face a high cost of living, especially among renters:** Approximately a quarter of all Boston households are energy-burdened, spending more than 6% of their income on energy bills due to poorly-insulated buildings, aging infrastructure, and continued reliance on inefficient heating and cooling systems that use heating oil and electric resistance. Renters face additional and compounding challenges. 65 percent of Boston residents are renters and half are considered "rent-burdened", meaning that they are paying more than 30 percent of their income on living costs.

In the climate context, this means that many households in Boston have less resources to access climate solutions such as solar panels and EVs and to respond to unexpected events such as heat and flooding emergencies. Social and economic injustices can impact people's ability to access green and healthy housing, affordable and renewable energy, and a clean and resilient environment. Targeted investments can deliver meaningful relief, but only if they are distributed equitably: for example, weatherization upgrades can reduce energy costs for residents who rely on oil heating by 10-20 percent - saving households up to \$380 annually.

- **Green space is not distributed equitably across the city:** Boston neighborhoods that are home to people of color and immigrant communities have less green space and tree canopy coverage than more affluent, White neighborhoods. Dorchester, East Boston, and Mission Hill all have less than 20 percent tree canopy, compared to the citywide average of 27 percent.

This means that certain Bostonians are also more likely to live in areas with a higher Urban Heat Island Index, increasing their exposure to increasing temperatures and exacerbating health problems. Less green space also means more exposure to flooding events, and less opportunities for healthy recreation and community building.

These conditions are not coincidental. From redlining and urban renewal to exclusionary zoning and unequal access to energy programs, racist policies have created unequal foundations for Boston's built environment, creating significant disparities across neighborhoods. Today's climate risks - including extreme heat, flooding, poor air quality, and displacement - compound these injustices and threaten to widen existing disparities even further.

Climate action is not always positive. Climate programs can also produce benefits and burdens that are not equitably distributed. Like many other public policies and programs, climate action can distribute resources, reorganize the built environment, and impact infrastructure with inequitable consequences across communities. This means that even well-intentioned policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address climate risks have the potential to exacerbate persisting racial, economic, and social injustices, or even create new ones.

For instance, while climate action has resulted in the expansion of cleaner technologies such as solar panels and EVs, access to these technical solutions and their enabling infrastructure is often uneven. Across the U.S., access to rooftop solar is directly impacted by income, race, and levels of English proficiency. Similarly, low-income communities across the country are less likely to have access to public EV infrastructure.

Climate efforts will increasingly change our built environment and reshape the ways that we live, work, and play in Boston. Decisions to expand green spaces, increase coastal protections, decarbonize buildings, and improve transportation networks can reproduce historical patterns of injustice if policy efforts continue to drive exclusion over inclusion, prioritize removal over staying-in-place, and reinforce racial and economic hierarchies over equity.

With intentional design, we can leverage climate action to reduce disparities and take steps towards repairing historic inequities. Climate action also brings opportunity if done right. Climate solutions can help reduce air pollution, lower energy burdens, create green jobs, and improve health outcomes and quality of life. Efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change can also expand access to nature, housing stability, and safer streets. These benefits must be distributed equitably, not just to those who can afford to opt in.

To move forward, Boston must acknowledge its history and work to repair harm. This includes valuing local knowledge, investing in the networks of care that already exist in our neighborhoods, and ensuring that communities most affected by injustice are leading the way on solutions.

A climate justice lens guides us toward a just transition - one where the shift to clean energy, healthier buildings, and green infrastructure also addresses rent burden, energy insecurity, and public health gaps. It means investing in communities, not displacing them. It means creating climate policy that builds power in the places that have long been denied it.

As Boston accelerates climate action in the years ahead, we must do so with commitment to justice, repair, and inclusion so that every resident benefits from a healthier, more resilient future. This is why engagement for this Climate Action Plan intentionally centered communities that have historically been excluded from citywide planning processes. Through this process, we sought to identify strategies that deliver the greatest climate justice benefits and with clear metrics to measure progress in advancing our climate justice goals.

To advance our vision to center climate justice in all climate policies, programs, and efforts, the City of Boston developed its first citywide **climate justice principles** that will guide the City and our community partners to integrate equity across all climate efforts, acknowledge past harms, and advance a more equitable Boston.

Our climate justice principles represent the just futures that the City of Boston and our community partners strive to create for all Bostonians through our shared climate work. While these principles set aspirational goals, they should not be seen as an endpoint. Rather, these principles reflect the **continuous process** of reflection, recognition, learning, listening, and correcting that climate justice requires. These principles set the standard to reimagine the ways that we act on climate change and measure success.

Bostonians have repeatedly voiced their priorities. Bostonians are asking for affordable and safe transportation options that mitigate climate change. They want protection from extreme heat and public health issues. Bostonians want improvements to the built environment that benefit and protect low-income residents, renters, and affordable housing. Bostonians welcome climate action but want to be able to stay in place and experience its benefits.

Across all these solutions, Bostonians want actions that are locally contextualized, relational, culturally responsive, and intergenerational. They want policies that reinforce community care, dignity, and social resilience. This calls for climate action that is community-driven and responsive to peoples' lived experiences.

Finally, Bostonians want policies and programs that are tied to accountability mechanisms and impact metrics that communicate success and setbacks transparently.

Boston's 2030 Climate Action Plan embeds climate justice as a guiding framework that shapes how strategies are designed and implemented. This framework is reflected in specific strategies, including:

- Targeting building decarbonization and energy efficiency investments toward affordable housing, rental units, and neighborhoods with high energy burdens to reduce utility costs, improve indoor air quality, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Implementing tree planting, green infrastructure, and cooling interventions in neighborhoods with the highest urban heat island impacts and lowest canopy coverage.
- Investing in habitat restoration projects that enhance public access to nature.
- Integrating green infrastructure into road reconstruction projects.
- Designing coastal resilience and flood protection projects that protect residents and critical infrastructure while minimizing displacement.
- Expanding access to efficient public transportation options in transit-dependent communities to improve mobility and lower household transportation costs.
- Centering workforce development and green jobs pathways in communities historically excluded from economic opportunity, ensuring that climate investments also support economic mobility.



Boston's Climate Justice Principles



A FAIR AND INCLUSIVE CITY

Sharing benefits and burdens in a fair way

Our climate work will recognize our history and seek to distribute benefits equitably, redress harms, and avoid unfair burdens on those who have been, and continue to be, most impacted by local policies.



A SHARED CITY

Knowing and doing together

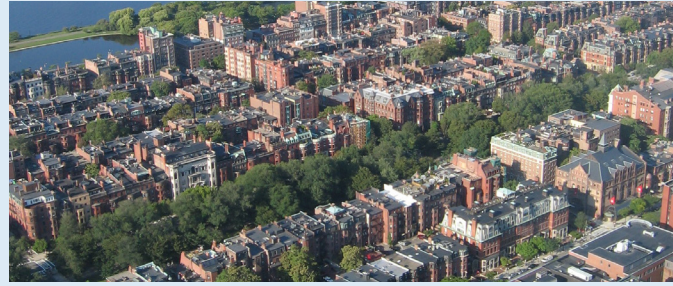
Our climate work will honor and integrate local knowledge and cultural practices, including from Indigenous communities, fostering co-creation and shared accountability for climate action.



A HEALTHY CITY

Improving everyone's health and quality of life

Our climate work will center the wellbeing of all Bostonians and contribute to healthier communities, where everyone has affordable access to quality housing, renewable energy, safe and convenient transportation, and fulfilling jobs, as well as a clean and resilient environment.



A CARE-FULL CITY

Caring for each other

Our climate work will take care of people and promote healing, resilience, empowerment, opportunities, and connection across our communities.



A GREEN CITY

Respecting and connecting with nature

Our climate work will recognize that we share Boston with nature, and respect, protect, and enhance connections to our urban ecosystems and wildlife.

Looking forward: Climate Justice Tools for Implementation

To make our climate justice principles a reality on the ground, the City of Boston will work on developing and delivering tools that can guide and support staff, community-based organization, and delivery in making justice-centered decisions, communicating the justice impacts of policies and programs, and maintaining shared accountability for climate action. While Boston's climate justice toolbox will continue to evolve over time, we have identified the following tools as starting points:

Climate Justice Index - A forthcoming mapping tool to visualize Boston's "climate justice neighborhoods". Expected to be released in 2027, the Climate Justice Index will aggregate multiple metrics to identify neighborhoods at the intersection of multiple social, economic, health and environmental vulnerabilities. This tool can be helpful to strategize where to target policies and programs (where is the most critical need?), for whom (who is most vulnerable?), and with whom (who should be at the table?). Once launched, this regularly updated Climate Justice Index will enable the City and Bostonians to assess changes over time and monitor progress towards our goals.

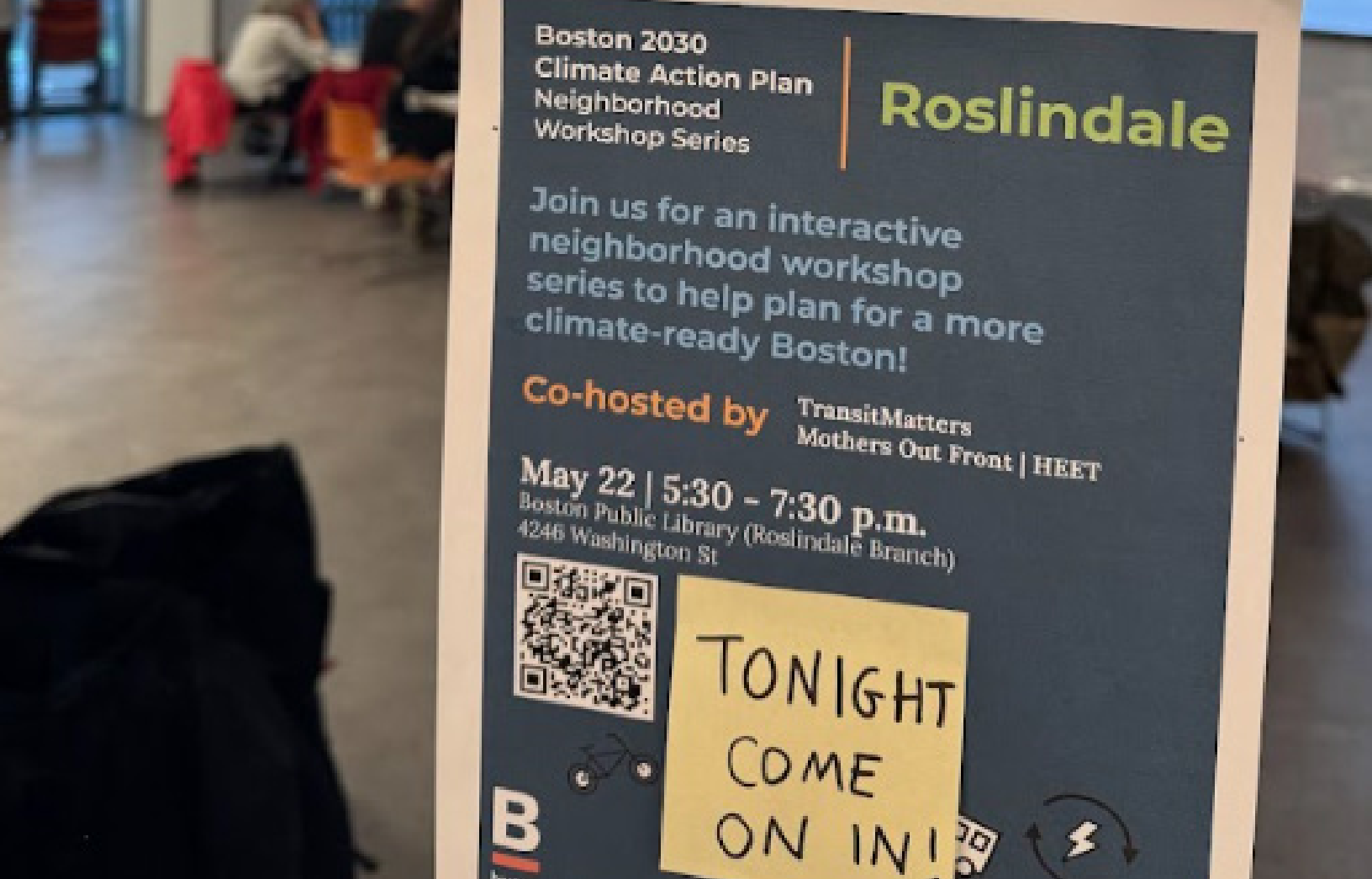
Shared accountability through metrics of success - Throughout this Plan, you will see metrics of success that accompany our climate strategies. These metrics were developed through a justice lens and, whenever possible, will aim to track not only the climate impacts of our climate efforts, but also the justice, equity, and place-based outcomes of our policies and programs. Metrics of success will be a critical tool for the City, community partners, delivery partners, and Bostonians at large to hold each other accountable for climate action and climate justice.

Advisory Committee - In addition to annual reports and regularly updated dashboards, a Climate Action Implementation Advisory Committee will serve as an additional avenue for Bostonians to have a direct channel of communication with the City. An advisory committee provides an opportunity for Bostonians to voice concerns, share their knowledge, and influence decision-making as the Climate Action Plan is implemented. At the same time, the City and partners will gain a channel to constantly ground truth climate efforts and communicate and celebrate progress over time.

CONNECTING CLIMATE MITIGATION AND RESILIENCE

Although mitigation and resilience are presented separately in this document for clarity, they are deeply connected and cannot be achieved in silos. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions helps limit the severity of future climate impacts, while resilience measures prepare the city to withstand impacts that are already unavoidable. For example, redesigning streets for safety and efficiency for multiple modes of transit can simultaneously reduce emissions, improve resilience, and enhance quality of life. These efforts can also be paired with integrating green infrastructure that can manage stormwater, reduce flooding, and cool urban heat islands, making streets more comfortable and resilient to extreme weather events. By coordinating mitigation and resilience strategies across all sectors, Boston can create solutions that are both sustainable and adaptable, ensuring a healthier, safer, and more vibrant city for all residents.

The strategies in the 2030 Climate Action Plan are tagged with the climate justice principle most relevant to Boston's climate and resilience work.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Meaningful community engagement has been central to shaping Boston’s 2030 Climate Action Plan. The City has prioritized listening to residents’ voices, understanding their perspectives, and working alongside trusted partners to ensure that climate strategies reflect the diverse needs of Boston’s neighborhoods. Engagement on climate-related work is conducted regularly and is reflected through other recently-completed initiatives, such as neighborhood resilience plans, permitting reform efforts, and a variety of other citywide planning processes. Building on lessons learned from prior efforts, the Plan’s engagement strategy focused on turning planning into action.

The 2030 Boston Climate Action Plan was guided by a central question: how can the City make climate action tangible, resonant, and seamlessly integrated into the everyday lives of Bostonians?

To gather broad input, the City conducted engagement in three phases:

- **April - May 2025:** A 2030 Climate Action Plan Public Survey was designed to capture how residents perceive climate issues and participate in climate action. This survey established a baseline for public awareness of Boston’s climate initiatives, highlighted community concerns and priorities, identified common barriers to participating in climate-friendly programs and behaviors, and helped determine preferred methods of engagement between the City and residents.
- **May - June 2025:** The City, in collaboration with community partners, held in-person neighborhood workshops where residents could respond directly to proposed strategies and explore how climate solutions could be implemented locally. These workshops were designed to foster dialogue and elevate ideas rooted in each neighborhood’s context.
- **August - September 2025:** After releasing the first draft of the Climate Action Plan in early August, the City convened a series of targeted focus groups, called “Community Sessions”, to gather deeper implementation feedback and engage communities that had been less involved in earlier phases, including older adults and young adults. The City also released a public survey for targeted feedback on the priorities and strategies listed in the first draft of the Plan.

To extend the engagement efforts, the City developed a Community Partner Program. Partner organizations played a critical role by co-hosting and co-designing the neighborhood workshops and connecting with their networks, bringing diverse voices into the conversation, and ensuring equitable participation across the city.

Boston’s 2030 Climate Action Plan Community Partners



We recognize that effective climate action must be grounded in trust, transparency, and partnerships with the people most affected. By facilitating inclusive dialogue, elevating resident voices, and building lasting relationships with community-based organizations, the City of Boston ensures that policies are informed by lived experience.

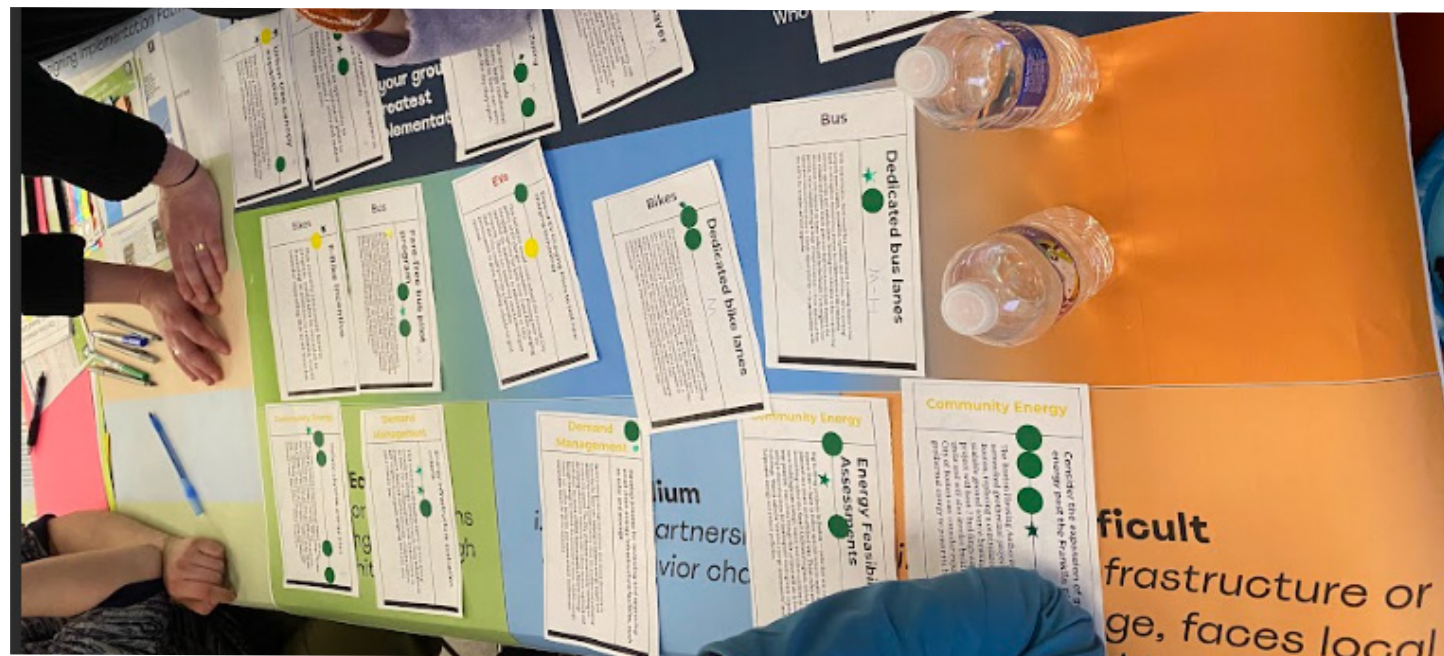
CLIMATE ACTION SURVEY

The first public survey was open from April 11 - May 11, 2025, collecting 208 responses. The survey explored a range of topics, including residents' awareness of climate issues, current climate actions and barriers, neighborhood priorities, and ideas for engagement. It asked participants opportunities for community involvement, while also soliciting personal motivations and creative suggestions for making climate action more meaningful. Responses helped the City better understand how residents perceive climate issues, identify opportunities for collective action, and shape initial strategies and policies that reflect community needs, values, and everyday realities.

NEIGHBORHOOD WORKSHOPS & COMMUNITY-LED ENGAGEMENT

The neighborhood workshops were co-hosted with community partners and focused on communities that have often been underrepresented in past climate planning and where climate solutions can have the greatest positive impact. These workshops took place in Chinatown, Dorchester, East Boston, Mattapan, Roslindale, and Roxbury. The workshops were structured to guide participants from identifying local priorities to shaping actionable, community-driven solutions. It began with an activity inviting residents to reflect on which climate topics or issues matter most to them and their neighbors. Participants then moved into a collaborative brainstorming session focused on generating ideas for local projects or initiatives that could meaningfully support climate action. The final activity asked residents to respond directly to the City's existing strategies, offering insights on how they could be strengthened to better reflect neighborhood needs, identifying who should be engaged or leading this work, and discussing how to ensure all efforts advance fairness and equity through a climate justice lens. This progression ensures the conversation is rooted in lived experience, informed by creativity, and oriented toward shaping just, community-centered climate action.

Community partners also led their own events ranging from youth-focused sessions to hands-on activities and community walks, rooted in their neighborhood expertise. These partners gathered feedback directly from hundreds of residents and shared their findings with the City, ensuring that locally informed perspectives shaped the Climate Action Plan.



Engagement Spotlight: Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative

Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), who participated in the Community Partner Program, hosted a community engagement session at the Dudley Greenhouse on the Roxbury–North Dorchester border. The event brought together 18 residents, predominantly youth participants, to reflect on how climate change is affecting their lives, their neighborhood, and their sense of the future.

Residents identified clear neighborhood priorities, including greener and safer transportation options, better-maintained green spaces, and more accessible climate education through workshops and training. These insights directly informed several strategies and priorities in the Climate Action Plan, such as the prioritization of expanded green space through land acquisition, future expansion of the Urban Wilds Program, and the refinement of the Spaces For You Program. Many of the youth participants described already taking action by raising awareness at school, staying engaged with local organizations, and participating in meetings that influence neighborhood decision-making. At the same time, participants named significant barriers to broader engagement, such as long work hours, lack of motivation stemming from distrust in government processes, and limited opportunities for meaningful involvement. They emphasized that creating more youth-centered “third spaces” would support sustained engagement as the neighborhood becomes more crowded and expensive.



To strengthen future climate action efforts, participants encouraged the City to deepen partnerships with trusted local organizations, including non-profits, churches, farms, and schools, and to prioritize youth voices in planning. Attendees recommended using creative, arts-based communication strategies, offering stipends to support participation, and building intergenerational spaces where young people feel respected. As we move the strategies outlined in the Climate Action Plan into implementation, engagement insights will inform our ongoing outreach strategy, such as including expanding neighborhood-specific engagement approaches throughout the implementation of the Plan and strengthening partnerships with community-based organizations to ensure the CAP reflects community priorities and advances equitable, community-driven climate solutions.

[Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative](#) works to empower residents in Roxbury and Dorchester to organize, plan for, create, and control a vibrant, diverse, and high-quality neighborhood in collaboration with community partners.

COMMUNITY SESSIONS

After releasing the first draft of the Climate Action Plan, the City hosted four targeted Community Sessions for Young Adults, Age Strong members, small businesses, and Hyde Park residents, to gather specific feedback on implementing proposed strategies. These sessions provided participants the opportunity to shape programs and policies, ensuring that community needs and perspectives remain central to their design.

Engagement Spotlight: Age Strong Community Session

The City hosted an Age Strong Community Session, inviting older adults from across Boston to participate in an interactive event and provide feedback on the first draft of the Climate Action Plan. Participants discussed how they are currently engaging with existing programs and policies and shared their perspectives on how these initiatives could be expanded. The session also explored potential new policies and programs as listed in the Plan, evaluating community interest and practical considerations to ensure that proposed strategies are relevant and implementable over the next five years. In addition, participants weighed in on community accountability metrics, offering insights on how residents would like to be engaged and updated on Plan progress throughout the coming five years.

Participants shared feedback across clean energy, workforce, and climate hazards. Residents highlighted the need for more solar power, the importance of regional collaboration to ensure coastal resilience strategies are effective, and greater education needed around tree planting. Extreme heat was a key concern, particularly for older residents unable to travel to cooling centers or with insufficient access to cooling.

Participants emphasized the importance of meaningful engagement, suggesting partnerships with local organizations, schools, and Age Strong. Participants largely supported community-led resilience hubs as a resource during extreme heat events and emphasized the importance of making them well-publicized and accessible to residents across languages. This feedback is being incorporated into the Climate Action Plan to guide strategy design, implementation, and accountability, ensuring the perspectives and experiences of older adults help shape both near-term actions and long-term climate solutions in Boston.

TURNING LESSONS LEARNED INTO ACTION

Community engagement has made it clear: Boston residents are deeply concerned about the impacts of climate change and are ready for bold, community-driven solutions. We have heard that residents want more than technical fixes - they want climate strategies that address everyday realities like housing stability, access to transit, green space, and public health. Many residents also shared that day-to-day responsibilities such as caring for family, working multiple jobs, and keeping food on the table leave limited time and capacity to engage, underscoring the need for cross-cutting climate action that meaningfully support and ease these daily pressures. To ensure strategies are relevant and actionable, the City will lean on community partners who have the expertise to understand their neighbors' needs and to make climate action tangible for residents. This input is helping the City focus on what matters most to residents while aligning climate action with climate justice. It is also helping to guide how strategies are implemented, and which actions are prioritized first, ensuring that the City's efforts are both responsive and impactful.





ALL-OF-CITY APPROACH TO CLIMATE ACTION

Boston's climate goals cannot be achieved only by actions from City Hall. This is not just a City Hall plan, it is an all-of-Boston plan. The impacts of climate change affect every neighborhood, institution, business, and resident in Boston. Success requires shared commitment and partnership across the entire city. Boston depends on collaboration with community-based organizations, neighborhood leaders, and private sector partners to accelerate action and strengthen accountability of the Climate Action Plan. The goal of the Plan is to reflect community priorities and build on progress already achieved through cross-sector partnerships.

Boston's path to a just, resilient, affordable, accessible, and carbon-neutral future will require bold, collective action from every corner of the city - residents, businesses, community organizations, and government. This Climate Action Plan is more than a vision; it's a blueprint to accelerate climate work, close equity gaps, and deliver real, measurable progress in the years ahead. With urgency, transparency, and deep partnerships, strategies will turn into results - building a Boston where every neighborhood can thrive, and where climate solutions mean cleaner air, healthier homes, good jobs, and opportunity for all.

Spotlight: Boston's Climate Leader Awards

In 2025, Boston established the Climate Leader Awards to recognize individuals, organizations, and businesses making meaningful contributions to climate action and environmental justice. These annual awards celebrate local leaders - ranging from community advocates to building owners - who are driving innovation, reducing emissions, and advancing equity in the city. By uplifting these efforts, the City highlights the importance of community and business partnerships and fosters a culture of shared climate leadership.



EMPOWERING COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION

Boston benefits from a strong and established network of community-based organizations that are leading climate action efforts within their neighborhoods. These organizations bring deep knowledge of local conditions, priorities, and challenges, and have been trusted partners to the City in ensuring residents are informed about and connected to available city and state resources. Their on-the-ground leadership plays a critical role in advancing equitable climate action and strengthening community trust and engagement.

Building on this foundation, the Community Partner Program will continue to serve as a key mechanism for collaboration between the City and community-based organizations. Through this program, partners will support the tracking and implementation of the Climate Action Plan by serving as local champions for climate action, elevating community perspectives, and helping to inform and guide City strategies to ensure they are responsive, inclusive, and effective.

Partner Spotlight: Action for Boston Community Development, Inc.

Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD) is one of Boston's most longstanding and impactful community partners, with a mission to empower low-income residents and strengthen neighborhoods across the city and surrounding region. For more than 60 years, ABCD has helped individuals and families transition from poverty to stability through a range of services that address both immediate needs and long-term opportunity. Each year, ABCD serves more than 100,000 residents through programs focused on education, workforce development, health services, housing support, fuel assistance, and more, all rooted in deep neighborhood engagement and trust.

ABCD's work includes climate initiatives that complement Boston's climate goals. As the lead partner for Eversource within the Low-Income Energy Affordability Network (LEAN) and Mass Save programs, ABCD brings energy efficiency upgrades, heat pump installations, and other clean energy solutions to underserved communities, lowering energy burdens and improving building performance for residents who have historically faced disproportionate environmental and economic challenges.

ABCD's community-centered model, anchored in neighborhood service centers and responsive programming, is a strong example of how trusted local organizations can elevate equity in climate action. Their approach not only meets urgent needs but also builds long-term capacity for residents to participate in and benefit from Boston's transition to a more resilient, sustainable future.

[ABCD](#) is a nonprofit organization that helps low-income residents achieve greater economic stability by providing essential services across Boston.

MOBILIZING STAKEHOLDER CLIMATE ACTION

The City of Boston's climate progress is powered by a broad and continually evolving network of delivery partners whose collective expertise, resources, and leadership meaningfully advance the City's goals. While the City provides overall direction, policy frameworks, and accountability, it cannot meet its emissions reduction and resiliency targets alone. Achieving Boston's climate commitments requires an ecosystem of public, private, nonprofit, and institutional partners who are willing to collaborate, experiment, and innovate alongside the City. As the Climate Action Plan is implemented, partnerships and roles will adapt to ensure its success.

The delivery partner landscape is dynamic and still taking shape. It includes private businesses, universities, philanthropic organizations, community-serving organizations, and technical advisory with expertise in building decarbonization, climate resilience, public health, energy systems, and community engagement. Throughout the development process for the Plan, these stakeholders have provided critical and technical insights, facilitated workshops, shared best practices and data, and elevated emerging opportunities. Their participation ensures that strategies are grounded in real-world implementation needs, informed by sector-specific experience, and responsive to the lived realities of Boston's communities.

As discussions evolved around strategies, community and institutional partners also helped shape the CAP's implementation and accountability structures. These partners have identified barriers to progress, surfaced capacity gaps, and advocated for community-driven priorities - especially related to energy affordability, resilience, and equitable access.

Throughout the Climate Action Plan, you will find **Partner Spotlights** highlighting the inaugural set of partners who will help advance the Plan's strategies and actions alongside the City. You will also find specific actions tagged with external partners if they play a leading role and additional organizations and state partners playing a vital role referenced throughout the text. As the Climate Action Plan is implemented, these partners will be critical to the success of its strategies—both by supporting on-the-ground implementation and, in many cases, leading the work themselves as trusted experts in their communities and fields. Partnerships will continue to be defined; the City expects this network to grow over the coming years as additional institutions, businesses, and community organizations support this effort. Continued engagement will be essential to effectively rolling out the Plan, sustaining momentum, and ensuring that climate justice remains centered across all actions.

STATE AND FEDERAL IMPACTS ON BOSTON'S CLIMATE GOALS

Strong climate leadership at each level of government is essential to advancing the City's local climate agenda. While the City continues to implement ambitious strategies to reduce emissions, improve resilience, and center climate justice, progress also depends on policy and funding opportunities outside municipal control.

At the state level, Massachusetts has continued to push legislation and policy that enable climate action and support the City of Boston's own goals and targets. Programs and regulations such as MassSave, SMART 3.0, clean energy siting and permitting reforms, electric vehicle infrastructure standards, and updates to climate funding all shape how quickly Boston can electrify buildings, expand local renewable energy access, and support our residents. The effectiveness of these policies, and the degree to which they prioritize affordability, long term solutions, and environmental justice communities, directly impacts the City's ability to meet the 2030 targets set. Stable state funding for energy efficiency, predictable regulatory pathways, and coordination across the Commonwealth's agencies remain critical for scaling local climate solutions.

At the federal level, climate priorities have shifted with political cycles, creating more uncertainty for long-term local planning. For instance, federal policies and processes play a major role in the pace of offshore wind development, from permitting timelines to transmission planning. When federal priorities shift, it can delay project timelines and impact project viability, impeding on progress that is critical to meeting regional clean energy and emissions reduction goals.

By the end of 2025, Boston had been awarded over \$148 million in federal funding through the Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, providing a historic opportunity to scale emissions reduction and resilience initiatives. However, several previously available competitive grant programs that were structured as multi-year funding streams have stalled, terminated grant awards, or been canceled altogether. Support for community-based organizations, who are essential partners in reaching the City's most energy-burdened residents, remains limited and unpredictable. Changes in federal leadership, delays in grant disbursement, and a retreat from national climate commitments have made it more difficult to depend on federal resources for sustained implementation. An evolving federal landscape increases the City's need for state and community action and has emphasized the need for Boston to be a local climate leader.

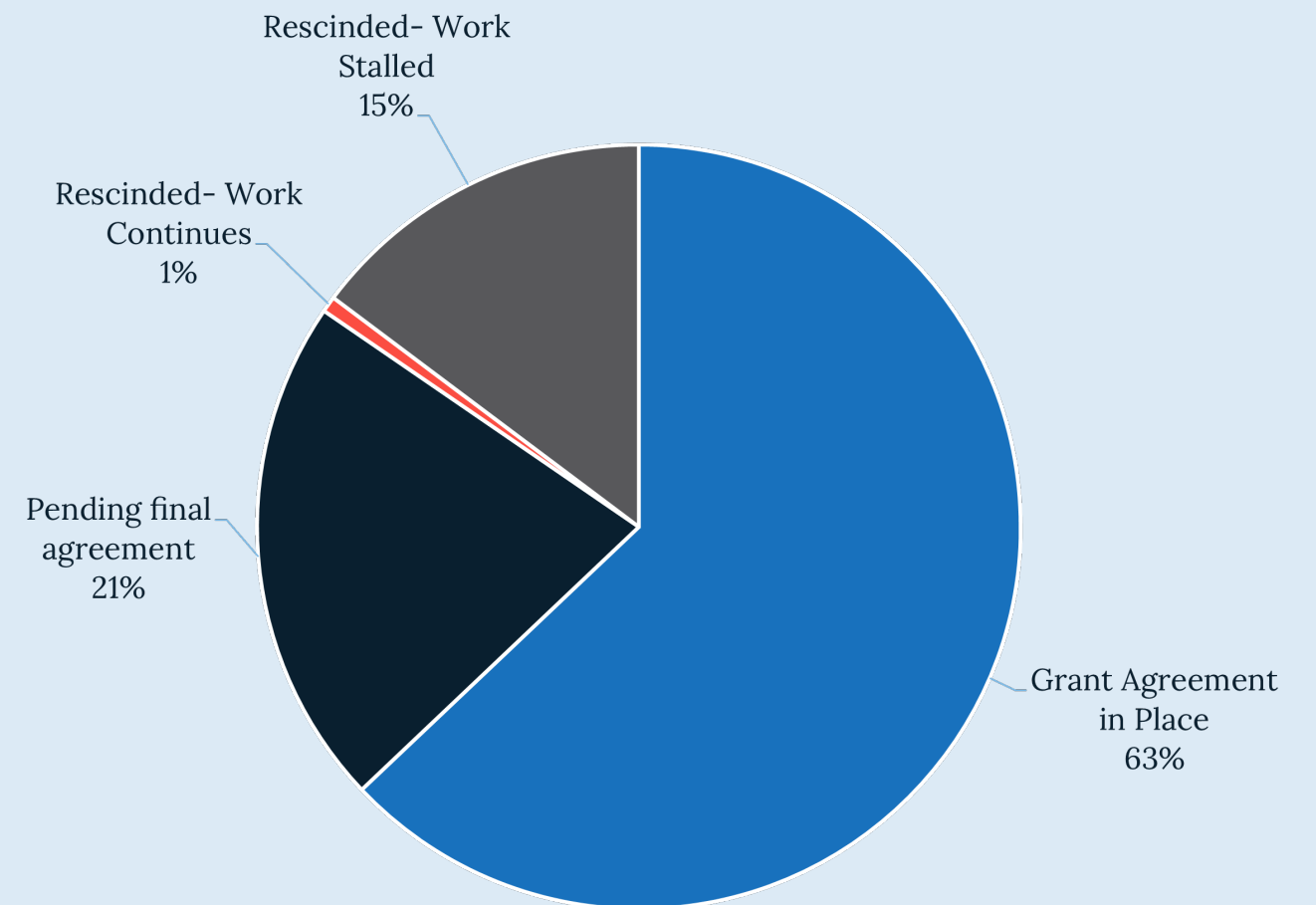


While federal support over the next few years remains uncertain, the City will continue advancing its climate priorities by leveraging existing funds, collaborating with state and private partners, and closely monitoring the status of previously-awarded federal funding.

Together, state and federal actions shape the enabling conditions for Boston's climate progress, and gaps or instability at either level can slow or complicate the City's ability to achieve its climate goals. The City of Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts have consistently shown that innovative policy, community partnership, and strong leadership can keep climate progress moving even amid federal uncertainty.

Boston's Federal Funding

By the end of 2025, the City had a grant agreement in place for 63 percent of its awarded federal funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act, meaning these funds are contractually committed to Boston. Of the remaining funds, 16 percent were rescinded, and 22 percent are still pending final agreement with the relevant federal agency. The City continues to actively engage with federal partners to finalize these agreements and secure full access to the remaining funds, ensuring that all awarded resources are available to support critical climate projects.





TRACKING PROGRESS THROUGH 2030

The City of Boston is committed to tracking progress toward its citywide climate priorities. To do so, the 2030 Climate Action Plan includes metrics that will be used to measure and communicate our progress towards our vision for 2030. These metrics reflect the strategies outlined in this Climate Action Plan and provide a holistic view of how Boston is advancing its climate priorities. Together, they give us the data-driven insights needed to adjust the implementation of the Plan strategies as conditions change and offer a consistent way to monitor our progress over the next five years.

The metrics draw on work conducted by City departments and external partners, as well as state and national data sources, and reflect the most current information available.

The metrics are incorporated along with the strategies in the Plan. The metrics allow us to measure progress towards broad sectoral goals related to climate resilience and emissions reduction. These metrics help us periodically answer key questions: Are we on track to achieve our 2050 goal of carbon neutrality? Are we becoming a city where all families have access to safe environments, clean air, and affordable green living? And are we doing so in a way that addresses the historically disproportionate burdens faced by underserved communities in Boston?

The Climate Action Plan Implementation Dashboard is available now at boston.gov/cap-implementation.

In alignment with the climate justice framework that guided the development of the Plan, certain metrics are marked as having a justice lens. These metrics will help us assess the extent to which the related strategies are advancing racial, social, and economic equity in the context of climate action in Boston. As strategies are implemented and new data become available, additional metrics may be added to the dashboard, accompanied by updated methodological notes.

Are we reducing emissions?				
Metric	Neighborhood-Level Data	Climate Priority	Data Source	Related Strategies
BERDO Compliance Rate and Emissions Reductions	✓	Buildings	City of Boston's Environment Department	B1
The City will track the percentage of covered buildings that submit energy and water use data as required by BERDO, as well as the emissions reduction achieved, by neighborhood and building type. By closely tracking where and what types of buildings are reporting and reducing their emissions, we can identify gaps and target outreach or technical assistance to improve disclosure and emissions compliance.				
Funding Awarded and Expected Emissions Avoided from Equitable Emissions Investment Fund Projects	✓	Buildings	City of Boston's Environment Department	B1
Tracking the awarded amount of Equitable Emissions Investment Fund (EEIF) projects and the associated projected emissions avoided, based on estimated reductions submitted at the time of project approval, provides insight into how public investment drives climate benefits across the city.				
<i>Climate justice lens:</i> Awarded EEIF projects are located in communities disproportionately impacted by climate change				
Number of Heat Pumps Installed in Residential and Commercial Buildings	✓	Buildings	City of Boston's Inspectional Services Department	B1, B2, B3
Heat pumps are a key strategy for reducing building-sector greenhouse gas emissions while improving indoor air quality and reducing long-term energy costs. Tracking the number of heat pump installations for heating and cooling across Boston neighborhoods provides insight into the pace and geographic distribution of building electrification.				
<i>Climate justice lens:</i> By analyzing installations at the neighborhood level, the City can assess whether electrification efforts are reaching historically underserved and environmental justice communities most at risk of facing high energy burden.				

Number of Small Buildings Weatherized or Electrified Through Boston Energy Saver	Buildings	Buildings City of Boston's Environment Department	B2, B3
Small residential buildings and businesses owners often face structural and financial barriers to accessing clean energy upgrades. This metric tracks progress toward the partnership between the City, utilities, and community-based organizations of supporting 10,000 weatherizations and 5,000 heat pump installations in small residential and commercial buildings through Boston Energy Saver.			
<i>Climate justice lens:</i> By tracking participation at the neighborhood and income level, this metric allows to identify gaps in program uptake by focusing on priority buildings and neighborhoods whose residents have historically been underserved by energy efficiency programs. It also allows to identify gaps in program uptake and informs targeted outreach and technical assistance to accelerate equitable decarbonization in Boston's small-building stock.			
Monthly Public Transit Ridership	Transportation	MBTA	T1, T5
Increasing public transit ridership is critical in reducing transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions by shifting trips away from private vehicle use. Disaggregating ridership by transit type (bus, subway, commuter rail, and ferry) allows the City to assess whether transit use is growing or lagging.			
<i>Climate justice lens:</i> This metric allows us to evaluate whether improvements in access, affordability and reliability are supporting mobility, particularly for transit-dependent communities.			
Number of Bluebikes Trips	Transportation	Bluebikes	T2
Bike share is an active, low-carbon transportation option that supports mode shift away from private vehicles. Tracking the total number of trips taken on Bluebikes provides insight into the adoption and use of active transportation across the city. This metric helps assess whether biking infrastructure is effectively advancing emissions reductions and expanding access to clean transportation alternatives.			
Number of Pedestrian and Cyclist Incidents	✓	Transportation	Vision Zero T2, T3
Promoting active transportation, such as walking and cycling, is core to Boston's commitment to eliminate fatal and serious traffic crashes, and essential to achieving a low-carbon transportation system in Boston. This metric helps assess how infrastructure and safety initiatives are improving the ease and comfort of Boston's streets for all users, encouraging more residents to choose more sustainable travel options over private vehicles.			
Percentage of Zero-Emission Vehicles in City of Boston's Light-Duty Fleet	Transportation	City of Boston's Central Fleet Management	COB2
Tracking the percentage of the City of Boston's zero-emission vehicles provides insight into progress towards fleet electrification. This metric helps the City monitor implementation of procurement and replacement strategies in alignment with the climate priorities laid out in this plan			
Estimated Vehicle Miles Traveled	Transportation	Massachusetts' Department of Transportation Mass Vehicle Census	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5
Tracking total vehicle miles traveled in Boston provides insight into the effectiveness of strategies aimed at reducing reliance on passenger vehicles and their associated emissions. The MassDOT Mass Vehicle Census, with data available starting in 2020, allows disaggregating VMT by vehicle fuel type and vehicle class. This helps the City assess progress across Boston's transportation strategies.			

Percentage of Zero-Emission Vehicles Registered in Boston	Transportation	Massachusetts' Department of Transportation Mass Vehicle Census	T6
Increasing the share of zero-emission vehicles among all cars registered in Boston can help reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions. Tracking the proportion of registered zero-emission vehicles provides insight into the pace of EV adoption citywide. This metric helps the City assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at installing charging infrastructure and accelerating the transition to zero-emission vehicles.			
Number of Publicly-Accessible EV Charging Ports	✓	Transportation	City of Boston's Transportation Department & US Department of Energy T6
Publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure supports electric vehicle adoption. This metric will report port counts from City-owned EV stations and port counts from privately owned, publicly available EV stations based on US Department of Energy data. This metric helps the City evaluate progress toward expanding access to charging ports, identify gaps in infrastructure coverage, and support continued growth in electric vehicle use.			
Boston Community Choice Electricity Enrollment	Energy	City of Boston's Environment Department	E1
Tracking the enrollment rate of the Boston Community Choice Electricity program provides insight into participation levels across the three available plans and the reach of the program across Boston.			
<i>Climate justice lens:</i> This metric helps the City assess the effectiveness of outreach efforts and ensure that cleaner, more affordable energy options are reaching energy-burdened communities and residents at risk of predatory third-party energy suppliers.			
Percentage of Electricity Supplied to Boston from Renewable Sources	Energy	City of Boston's Environment Department	E1, E2
This metric tracks the percentage of electricity serving Boston that comes from renewable sources -including contributions from BCCE above the State Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS). It provides insight into progress toward clean energy goals and helps evaluate the impact of electricity procurement strategies aimed at decarbonizing our power supply.			
Estimated Energy Cost Savings from Boston Community Choice Electricity	Energy	City of Boston's Environment Department	E1
BCCE aims to deliver cleaner electricity while reducing energy costs for participating residents. Tracking estimated energy cost savings from BCCE helps measure the economic benefits delivered to residents and businesses from enrollment.			
<i>Climate justice lens:</i> Where possible, this metric will disaggregate cost savings by neighborhood and customer type. This can help assess the extent to which BCCE is delivering affordability benefits to residents and businesses in energy-burdened communities.			




Are we improving resilience?				
Metric	Neighborhood-Level Data	Climate Priority	Data Source	Related Strategies
Net Streets and Parks Trees Planted and Estimated Cooling Benefits	✓	Heat	City of Boston's Parks Department	H1, H2, S1
<p>Trees provide shade that reduce extreme heat exposure, improve air quality, manage stormwater, reduce ambient air temperatures, and sequester carbon. Tracking both the total number of trees planted and the net number of trees in Boston's urban tree canopy, including trees removed or lost due to disease, development, or other causes, provides insight on whether canopy coverage is expanding over time and the extent of additional planting or maintenance efforts needed. To assess cooling benefits, we use the tree canopy assessment, last updated in 2024, by the City of Boston Parks Department as the baseline, and estimate the marginal impacts on air temperature and how many residents benefit once newly-planted street trees reach maturity (three years), using a peer-reviewed model.</p> <p>Climate justice lens: Disaggregating tree planting by neighborhood allows the City to assess and identify potential cooling, air quality, and health benefits. By estimating the cooling benefits that residents can experience from newly planted trees, the City can assess whether urban forestry planting strategies are reaching heat-vulnerable communities.</p>				
Percentage of Boston Residents Within a 10-minute Walk from Cooling Facilities	✓	Heat	City of Boston's Parks Department	H1, X2
<p>This metric tracks the percentage of Boston's population living within a 10-minute walk, approximately a half-mile, of public pools, splashpads, Boston Public Library branches, and Boston Centers for Youth and Families, to assess how many residents live in close proximity to City-provided cooling services.</p> <p>Climate justice lens: This metric helps identify gaps in cooling infrastructure by evaluating access across neighborhoods. It also supports targeted action to improve heat resilience and equitable access to cooling resources for heat-vulnerable populations.</p>				
Emergency Department Visits for Heat-Related Illnesses	✓	Heat	Boston Public Health Commission	H3, H4
<p>This metric tracks the number of emergency department visits for heat-related illness, using data from the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) combined with urban heat island (UHI) mapping from the Heat Resilience Solutions document.</p> <p>Climate justice lens: This metric helps identify which neighborhoods are most impacted by extreme heat and informs targeted interventions such as cooling centers, outreach, and green infrastructure. By analyzing impacts by neighborhood and overlaying with high UHI areas, this metric highlights disproportionate risks faced by vulnerable populations, making it a key climate justice metric.</p>				

Cumulative Greened Acres	✓	Stormwater and Inland Flooding	Boston Water and Sewer Commission	S1, S2
<p>These metrics track the ‘greened acres’ across Boston, defined as management of one inch of precipitation across one acre of impervious surface. Tracking greened acres helps the City and the Boston Water and Sewer Commission understand how effectively green infrastructure investments reduce flooding, protect water quality, and reduce strain on aging drainage systems.</p> <p>Climate justice lens: Disaggregating green infrastructure by public versus private land enables the City to assess where stormwater investments are being made and whether they align with areas facing the greatest flood risk.</p>				
Coastal Resilience Projects Statuses	✓	Coastal Resilience	City of Boston’s Office of Climate Resilience	C1, C2
<p>This metric will measure the cumulative square footage of permitted projects subject to CFROD requirements. Tracking the total square footage of development in compliance with CFROD provides insight into how much of Boston’s built environment is being designed to reduce flood risk, protecting residents, properties, and advancing long-term coastal resilience.</p> <p>Climate justice lens Tracking compliance with CFROD assesses whether new development is contributing to safer, more resilient communities, particularly in coastal areas at greatest risk from sea level rise.</p>				
Building Square Footage in Compliance with the Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District	✓	Coastal Resilience	City of Boston’s Planning Department	C3
<p>This metric will measure the cumulative square footage of permitted projects subject to CFROD requirements. Tracking the total square footage of development in compliance with CFROD provides insight into how much of Boston’s built environment is being designed to reduce flood risk, protecting residents, properties, and advancing long-term coastal resilience.</p> <p>Climate justice lens: Tracking compliance with CFROD assesses whether new development is contributing to safer, more resilient communities, particularly in coastal areas at greatest risk from sea level rise.</p>				
Percentage of Households in Flood Zones Enrolled in a National Flood Insurance Program Policy		Coastal Resilience	Federal Emergency Management Agency	C2
<p>This metric estimates the percentage of households or parcels located within flood zones that are covered by National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policies and, after Boston’s enrollment in FEMA’s Community Rating System (CRS), benefiting from discounted rates.</p> <p>Climate justice lens: Tracking coverage among flood-exposed properties helps the City assess financial preparedness, identify gaps in insurance uptake, and support strategies aimed at increasing equitable access to flood protection and resilience resources.</p>				
Number of Certified Emergency Response Team		Cross-Hazard Climate Risks	City of Boston’s Office of Emergency Management	X2
<p>This metric tracks the number of CERT volunteers, providing insight into local natural disaster response capacity across Boston.</p> <p>Climate justice lens: By examining the distribution of CERTs geographically, the City can identify gaps in emergency readiness and target training, outreach, and resources to strengthen community-level resilience, particularly in neighborhoods facing higher climate risks.</p>				



Are we supporting the green economic engine?				
Metric	Neighborhood-Level Data	Climate Priority	Data Source	Related Strategies
Number of individuals enrolled, graduated and job-placed from City of Boston Training Programs		Workforce	City of Boston’s Office of Workforce Development	W1, W2
<p>This metric tracks the number of individuals enrolled in, graduated from, and placed in jobs through BCJA partnerships, PowerCorpsBOS, and the Youth Climate Corps.</p> <p>Climate justice lens: By monitoring participation and outcomes over time, and disaggregating by neighborhood or demographic characteristics, the City can assess whether climate workforce strategies are promoting equitable access to quality, climate-focused jobs and supporting economic opportunity in communities most impacted by climate change.</p>				





CLIMATE ACTION PLAN STRATEGIES

Sector	Strategy	Strategy Description	Action	Action Description	Continue Start Explore
 <p>Municipal Operations</p>	COB1	Lead by example to reduce GHG emissions and prioritize healthy, high-performing environments in all municipal buildings and assets.	Restructure Renew Boston Trust	The Renew Boston Trust is the City's energy performance contracting program that upgrades municipal buildings to reduce energy and water use. Over the next five years, it will expand to focus on building decarbonization, solar and storage potential, and alignment with BERDO, positioning the City as a leader in cutting emissions from its own facilities.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Grow the City's Demand Response Program	Demand response programs reduce strain on the electric grid by shifting or lowering energy use during peak demand periods. Expanding participation across municipal buildings will lower emissions, reduce energy costs, and strengthen grid reliability while preparing staff to respond effectively during peak events.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Expand Gas Street Lamps Conversion	The City is replacing approximately 2,500 gas-powered street lamps with energy-efficient LED fixtures. Although they make up just 4% of streetlights, gas lamps account for 37% of lighting emissions, so this transition significantly reduces emissions while maintaining historic character and improving reliability.	CONTINUE & SCALE
	COB2	Facilitate the transition to electric-zero emission vehicles by leading by example with the municipal fleet.	Adopt a Zero-Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Purchasing Policy	The City's light-duty municipal fleet includes 800 vehicles, with 6% fully electric and 19% hybrid, supported by expanded charging infrastructure including 71 Level 2 and 7 fast chargers. Beginning in 2026, a zero-emission vehicle purchasing policy will accelerate fleet electrification, reducing emissions, improving air quality, and reinforcing the City's commitment to clean transportation.	START
			Create a Fleet Request Review Body	The City will establish a fleet request review body to ensure that fleet purchases are appropriately sized for operational needs and aligned with the standards outlined in the ZEV Purchasing Policy.	START
	COB3	Improve practices for long-term sustainability of our parks.	Use Greener Maintenance Techniques in our Parks	The City will modernize park and open space management by expanding electric equipment use and strengthening sustainable landscaping practices. These updates will cut emissions from fossil-fuel-powered tools, improve worker health, increase biodiversity, and enhance stormwater management across Boston's parks.	CONTINUE & SCALE
 <p>Buildings</p>	B1	Expand support structures for implementing the City's Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO).	Expand the Impact of the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund	Under BERDO, buildings that exceed emissions limits can make Alternative Compliance Payments into the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund. The Fund supports nonprofit-led projects in Environmental Justice communities that reduce emissions while delivering co-benefits like workforce development, improved air quality, and climate resilience. The City will work to expand and strategically scale the Fund to maximize equitable emissions reductions.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Continue the Building Decarbonization Advisor Program	Launched in 2024, this program helps BERDO-covered building owners in Environmental Justice communities plan emissions reductions strategies through free technical assistance and potential funding support. As resources allow, the City will continue expanding guidance and implementation support to help owners successfully decarbonize their buildings.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Expand Educational and Outreach Efforts & Partnerships	Successful BERDO implementation relies on strong partnerships and accessible education for building owners and industry professionals. Through initiatives like BERDO Fest, neighborhood workshops, and collaborations with organizations such as A Better City, the Green Ribbon Commission, and Built Environment Plus, the City is building a robust support network. Beginning in 2026, Boston will expand guidance materials and targeted outreach to ensure owners have clear, practical pathways to compliance.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Coordinate Bulk Purchasing to Lower Costs and Streamline Retrofits	To make building decarbonization more affordable and accessible, the City will explore bulk contracting for services like energy audits and engineering support. By coordinating demand and leveraging its convening power, Boston can lower costs, reduce administrative barriers, and create simpler, scalable pathways for retrofits citywide.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE



Sector	Strategy	Strategy Description	Action	Action Description	Continue Start Explore
 Buildings	B2	Expand building decarbonization support for small buildings.	Implement and Expand the Boston Energy Saver Program	In 2025, the City partnered with Eversource and National Grid to direct \$150 million in Mass Save funding toward decarbonizing smaller buildings, launching Boston Energy Saver as a one-stop service for renters, homeowners, and small businesses. The program provides technical assistance, coordinates with City financing tools, and will expand in 2026 with community partnership grants to increase outreach and impact.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Incentivize Gas-to-Electric Stove Conversions	Switching to electric stoves reduces pollution, lowers emissions, and can cut energy costs. The City is piloting stove replacements in Dorchester public housing and studied in partnership with Boston University to measure health and cost benefits. Based on the results of the pilot, the City will explore expanding the program to support healthier, energy-efficient homes in communities most affected by pollution.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE
	B3	Expand current initiatives that support low-income and affordable housing building decarbonization efforts.	Deliver on Fossil Fuel-Free Public Housing by 2030	The Boston Housing Authority, Boston's largest housing provider, aims to achieve fossil fuel-free public housing by 2030, with progress in geothermal pilots, solar exploration, and reducing delivered fuels. The City will continue supporting capital projects and partner with local, state, and federal programs to ensure an equitable, healthy, and affordable transition for residents.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Support Affordable Housing Preservation and Decarbonization through the Boston Acquisition Fund	Launched in 2024, the Boston Acquisition Fund is a public-private loan fund that preserves affordable housing and prevents displacement. The City will explore expanding its impact by prioritizing BAF-financed buildings for energy efficiency and electrification upgrades.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Advocate for Support to Preserve and Decarbonize Affordable Housing	Using ARPA and state funding, the City launched programs to decarbonize large affordable housing buildings, including electrification projects at Hano Homes and Mildred C. Hailey Apartments. Lessons from these pilots will guide future support, connecting owners to technical assistance, funding opportunities, and advocacy for expanded resources to scale building decarbonization citywide.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE
	B4	Identify challenges and opportunities for reducing emissions in hard-to-decarbonize buildings.	Establish a Restaurant Decarbonization Task Force	Decarbonizing restaurants is challenging due to reliance on gas, high costs, and space constraints, especially for small or tenant-operated businesses. In 2026, the City will convene a task force of industry representatives and technical experts to identify solutions, with a report expected in 2027 outlining recommendations and next steps for transitioning commercial kitchens to electric systems.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE
			Establish a Historic Properties Decarbonization Task Force	Most of the buildings in the City of Boston will be around for decades to come. The City of Boston will convene a task force to identify ways to decarbonize historic properties while preserving their historical character.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE
	B5	Promote healthier, more efficient homes.	Create a Green Housing Labeling Program	The City will explore a voluntary program that highlights energy efficiency, indoor air quality, and climate resilience for rented and owned homes. In 2026, the City will assess program feasibility with partners, aiming to provide clear information to residents, recognize sustainable property owners, and encourage healthier, more efficient housing across the city.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE



Sector	Strategy	Strategy Description	Action	Action Description	Continue Start Explore
 Buildings	B6	Reduce embodied carbon through low-carbon new construction, adaptive reuse of existing structures, and responsible deconstruction, rehabilitation, and reconstruction practices.	Apply and Evaluate Net Zero Carbon Zoning	In early 2025, the City updated its zoning code to require most new large buildings to achieve net zero emissions at opening and report on embodied carbon for projects over 50,000 square feet. Starting in 2027, the City will explore using this data to develop low-carbon design guidelines, toolkits, and procurement strategies that reduce embodied carbon in citywide projects.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Advance Adaptive Reuse	Launched in 2023, this program encourages adaptive reuse of underutilized office buildings to reduce embodied carbon, increase housing, and maintain Downtown Boston's vibrancy. Participating buildings meet affordability and energy efficiency standards, with over 1,000 units proposed in the first two years, and the City aims for 2,000 new units and 2 million square feet revitalized by 2026. The City aims to continue this program while exploring financial tools to support future conversions.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Develop a Toolkit for Buildings to Navigate the Deconstruction Process	Deconstruction captures materials for reuse, and reconstruction updates existing buildings to improve efficiency and lower emissions. By the end of 2026, the City will create a toolkit for these practices and conduct a market analysis to expand the supply and demand of reusable building materials, supporting climate-resilient construction.	START
 Transportation	T1	Encourage bus use with improvements to affordability, convenience, and accessibility.	Provide Bus Priority in Key Locations	The MBTA's Bus Network Redesign, launched in 2022, aims to modernize Boston's bus system and increase service by 25% by 2029, with new routes rolling out quarterly since 2024. Boston is partnering with the MBTA to implement bus priority measures—dedicated lanes, queue jumps, camera enforcement, and Transit Signal Priority—on key corridors like Blue Hill Avenue, Tremont/Columbus, Route 57, Hyde Park Ave, Rutherford Ave, and North Station–Seaport, improving reliability, reducing travel times, and cutting GHG emissions.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Improve Bus Stops and Shelters	Well-designed shelters protect riders from weather and improve comfort and safety, especially for older adults, people with disabilities, and families. The City will invest in shelters along high-ridership and equity-priority corridors, coordinating with MBTA projects and capital improvements to ensure accessibility and shelter-ready stops. Through a new Street Furniture Contract, the City will add shelters and amenities like benches, real-time arrival screens, and green infrastructure to modernize transit stops citywide.	CONTINUE & SCALE
	T2	Encourage walking, biking, and other forms of active transportation by improving safety, ease, and comfort for everyone on Boston streets.	Continue Delivering on Speed-Reduction Strategies	Boston's Vision Zero strategy aims to eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries by 2030 by redesigning streets to calm traffic, lower speeds, and promote walking, biking, and other sustainable modes. The City focuses on Safer Corridors, reallocating space for bus lanes, protected bike lanes, and safer crossings on major roadways, and Safety Surge, implementing traffic-calming measures like speed humps, raised intersections, and pedestrian islands in neighborhoods.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Expand Safe Routes to Schools	Boston's Safe Routes to Schools programs encourage walking and biking while improving safety and adding resilience features like green infrastructure. The City, Boston Public Health Commission, and Streets Cabinet work with Boston Public Schools to ensure all schools can participate, enhancing access, reducing congestion, and engaging the community in safer routes and youth cycling programs.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Expand Infrastructure, Incentives, and Public Training to Encourage Safe Biking	The City is expanding its cycling network, bike parking, and the Bluebikes system, while offering incentives like e-bike vouchers, membership discounts, and training programs. The City also provides on-bike instruction for all ages and free bike repair clinics to promote safe, accessible, and sustainable cycling.	CONTINUE & SCALE
		Expand Pedestrian Open Spaces	Boston's Open Streets temporarily close streets to cars, creating safe, vibrant spaces for walking, biking, and family activities while supporting local businesses. Launched on Newbury Street in 2016 and expanded citywide in 2022, these events attract thousands of visitors and inspire Neighborhood Street Plazas that turn underused street space into community hubs with climate resilience features. Building on this success, the City will expand pedestrian-only streets, plazas, and low-traffic shared streets to create more accessible, lively public spaces for all ages.	CONTINUE & SCALE	

Sector	Strategy	Strategy Description	Action	Action Description	Continue Start Explore
 Transportation	T3	Orient land use planning towards vehicle miles traveled reduction.	Plan for Density Near Transit and Zone for Walkability	Creating neighborhoods where residents can walk, bike, or take transit to jobs, services, and amenities reduces car dependence while supporting climate, health, and equity goals. Squares + Streets zoning updates enable more housing, strengthen ground-floor uses, and improve public spaces to foster walkable, mixed-use, and climate-resilient neighborhoods.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Continue Work to Revise Transportation Demand Management Measures and Parking Requirements	The City promotes transit and cycling through programs like the Boston Bikes Pass and Learn-to-Bike workshops. Building on this, the City will develop new Transportation Demand Management (TDM) resources for high-impact groups, update bicycle and EV parking guidelines, and implement policies that make shifting to sustainable transportation easier.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Update the City's Transportation Impact Analysis Requirements for Development Review to Equally Focus on Sustainable Alternative Modes	Starting in summer 2026, the City will modernize Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) requirements to focus on urban-scale metrics rather than vehicle-heavy highway analyses. The updates will evaluate safety, walking, biking, and transit access, helping reduce car dependence and align development with the City's climate and mobility goals.	CONTINUE & SCALE
	T4	Advocate for and assess policies and funding opportunities to ensure Boston's transportation systems are accessible, affordable, and equitable.	Continue Fare-Free Bus Routes	In 2022, the City made the 23, 28, and 29 bus routes fare-free using ARPA funding, helping high-ridership corridors recover pre-pandemic use and reduce car dependence. The City plans to secure sustainable funding to make these routes permanently fare-free and explore expanding the program to additional routes.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Improve Access to the Fairmount Line and Other Commuter Rail Services	The Fairmount Line serves Dorchester, Mattapan, and Hyde Park - communities of color that have historically lacked sufficient transit access. The City will continue advocating for greater access and increased frequency, while the MBTA plans to electrify the fleet in 2028 to provide faster, cleaner, and more reliable service.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Advocate for Commuter Rail Fare Policy Improvements	The City will advocate for Zone 1A fares at all city stations and work with the MBTA to improve regional fare equity. These efforts aim to boost rail ridership and reduce car traffic during peak hours.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Advance Sustainable Transportation Funding Through Regional and State Collaboration	The City will work with MassDOT, the MBTA, the MPO, and the State Legislature to develop long-term funding for transit and bikeshare, ensuring reliable service and supporting system-wide electrification. The City will prioritize communities with limited options and encourage trips by transit, walking, biking, and other sustainable modes.	START
			Evaluate Financial Mechanisms to Reduce Single-Occupancy Vehicle Commuting	The City will study financial tools like parking fees, tolls, and congestion charges to discourage private vehicle trips, reduce congestion, and lower emissions. The City will also explore reinvesting revenue into equitable programs that expand low- or no-carbon transportation options.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE
	T5	Improve first mile/last mile transit connections.	Consider First Mile/Last Mile Transit Services to Key Destinations and Neighborhood Resources	The City will pilot bus routes linking residents and visitors to key destinations to improve mobility and reduce reliance on cars. The City will assess the program's impact on ridership and congestion to guide potential expansion and funding.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE



Sector	Strategy	Strategy Description	Action	Action Description	Continue Start Explore
 Transportation	T6	Facilitate the transition to electric-zero emission vehicles by improving public access to charging infrastructure.	Increase Publicly Available Charging Infrastructure Curbside and in Municipally Owned Parking Lots	The City requires new developments to include EV-ready infrastructure, but many residents lack home charging. Over the next five years, the City will expand public charging in municipal lots and curbside locations to ensure every resident is within a five-minute walk of a station by 2030.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Electrify the BPS Bus Fleet	Boston Public School's 750 school buses serve over 200 schools, with 15% already electric as of 2025. BPS will continue transitioning to electric buses and expand charging infrastructure, reducing harmful emissions near schools and pick-up areas and improving health and climate outcomes.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Develop a Sustainable Logistics Plan	Freight and delivery vehicles contribute heavily to emissions and congestion, with e-commerce growth expected to worsen impacts by 2030. The City will develop a Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan with City departments, logistics companies, and community stakeholders to promote zero-emission fleets and reduce traffic, emissions, and impacts on environmental justice communities.	START
			Develop Educational Resources on Electric Vehicles	The City will expand resources to help residents, businesses, and fleet operators understand electric vehicle benefits, incentives, and the transition process. The City will provide multilingual materials, online tools, and community partnerships to reduce barriers and promote equitable ZEV adoption.	START
			Conduct a Market Analysis to Inform How to Encourage Privately-Owned, Publicly Accessible EV Charging	The City will analyze opportunities to expand publicly accessible EV charging on private property, such as underused parking lots. The study will guide strategies like public-private partnerships or incentives to connect landowners with EV charging providers.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE
 Energy	E1	Increase the amount of renewable energy supplied to Boston's electric grid.	Expand Access to Boston Community Choice Electricity	Boston Community Choice Electricity is the City's municipal aggregation program, providing residents and businesses with affordable electricity options that include higher shares of local renewable energy. The program has already avoided nearly 200,000 metric tons of CO ₂ e, and the City will expand outreach and education to increase participation and maximize its climate impact.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Expand Renewable Energy Procurement	The City will continue pursuing offshore wind, onshore wind, and large-scale solar procurements while advocating for stronger municipal involvement in state-led energy and storage efforts. In response to shifting federal support, the City will develop an updated renewable energy strategy to sustain progress in decarbonizing municipal electricity use.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Improve the Permitting Process for Rooftop Solar and Battery Storage on Residential Buildings	The City will identify opportunities to streamline and simplify the permitting process to accelerate the installation of rooftop solar systems and small-scale battery energy storage systems on residential properties, making it easier and faster for homeowners to adopt renewable energy solutions.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Facilitate Access to RECs for BERDO Compliance	To help building owners use Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) for BERDO compliance, the City launched the MA Class I REC BERDO Connector Program in 2026. The program provides guidance, vetted vendors, and market resources to make high-quality local RECs more accessible, especially for smaller property owners without in-house expertise. A Better City is also working with its member organizations and the City of Boston to identify and facilitate the annual reallocation of unused RECs from BERDO-approved power purchase agreements to support compliance across covered buildings.	START
			Pilot Large-Scale, Shared Renewable Energy Procurement for BERDO Buildings	The City will explore a shared, scalable model for bulk renewable energy procurement to help large and mid-sized buildings meet BERDO requirements. In partnership with Veolia and with support from CNCA and USDN, the City will research a joint purchasing framework in 2026 to make large-scale renewable energy more accessible—especially for affordable housing, nonprofits, and community-serving institutions with limited capacity to navigate traditional PPAs.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE

Sector	Strategy	Strategy Description	Action	Action Description	Continue Start Explore
 Energy	E2	Advance short-term energy infrastructure safety and process improvements to support long-term resilient grid planning.	Conduct an Energy Infrastructure Siting and Utility Planning Analysis	Boston's electrification goals will increase electricity demand, requiring new substations and expanded distributed energy resources like solar. By 2026, the City will complete its first equity-driven analysis to guide where new energy infrastructure should be located and strengthen coordination with utilities and the state.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Create a Consolidated Permitting Process for Small Clean Energy Infrastructure	The City will establish expedited, consolidated permitting for small clean energy and storage projects by the end of 2026. A clearer, faster review process will accelerate clean energy development, expand grid capacity, and support a reliable, equitable energy transition.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Organize a Coordinated, Citywide Effort for BESS Emergency Response	Battery energy storage systems improve energy resilience by storing power for use during peak demand, and Boston has developed safety standards and review criteria to make sure these systems are safe. In 2026, the City will integrate this coordinated safety framework into its consolidated permitting process to support responsible BESS deployment.	CONTINUE & SCALE
	E3	Deliver district-scale energy solutions.	Explore Opportunities to Expand Energy Feasibility Assessments	As part of the Article 80 Development Review process, the Boston Smart Utilities Program requires new developments over 1.5 million square feet to conduct district energy feasibility assessments. Over the next five years, the City will consider opportunities to expand the current program and extend the same or similar criteria to existing buildings.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE
	E4	Enable a just transition to a clean, resilient, and affordable energy system.	Conduct Thermal Energy Network Studies and Pilots	In partnership with MassCEC and the Green Ribbon Commission, the City is leading a regional study through 2027 on using thermal energy from local water bodies and subsurface resources to reduce fossil gas reliance. The findings will guide policy, investment, and potential pilot projects to advance clean, networked heating and cooling solutions.	START
Develop a Holistic, Citywide Energy Plan			Building on its energy infrastructure analysis, the City will develop a five-year Energy Plan to guide clean energy investments and coordination with utilities. The plan will advance solar, energy storage, district energy, and a transition from fossil gas while centering equity, public health, workforce impacts, and neighborhood-level planning tools.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE	
 Heat	H1	Expand the City's extreme heat interventions.	Expand Cooling Resources and Infrastructure in Public Spaces	As extreme heat intensifies, Boston will expand cooling infrastructure, such as splash pads, cooling centers, and misting stations, and adjust operations to activate resources earlier and longer each year. These efforts will better protect public health and integrate heat resilience into planning and major events.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Provide Technical Support for Heat Resilience in Critical Private Spaces	The City will help private facilities serving vulnerable populations, like schools and childcare centers, stay safe during extreme heat. This may include technical assistance to improve indoor cooling and guidance for staff on best practices to protect occupants.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Explore Innovative Solutions to Enhance Public Cooling	The City will explore new ways to cool streets and public spaces beyond trees and green roofs, including reflective materials, cool roofs, and shade structures. The City will prioritize solutions that reduce the urban heat island effect and provide immediate, reliable cooling in areas where traditional methods are less effective.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE

Sector	Strategy	Strategy Description	Action	Action Description	Continue Start Explore
	H2	Strengthen tree policies to protect existing canopy, expand tree planting, and ensure long-term maintenance.	Expand the Urban Tree Canopy on Private Land	Boston's gains in public tree plantings have been offset by private tree removals. The City will continue to support planting on private property through the Boston Tree Alliance, an initiative focused on expanding canopy in environmental justice neighborhoods.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Expand the Urban Tree Canopy in Parks and on Streets	The City will invest in tree planting, care, and community engagement, focusing on underserved areas with low canopy cover. The City will integrate green stormwater practices, permeable pavement, and partnerships with public agencies to enhance tree stewardship across public spaces.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Improve Street Tree Growing Conditions	The City will engage in a coordinated effort to align and modernize standard tree planting details and specifications, and do so in a manner that simultaneously supports the goals of accommodating long-term tree health, robust stormwater management, and long-term sidewalk accessibility.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Preserve Existing Tree Canopy	The City will develop strategies to prevent tree loss on small residential properties and new developments, improve coordination across departments, and strengthen standards to preserve trees during construction and infrastructure projects. Guidance will be provided during review processes, and the Urban Forestry Division will be engaged when issues in projects are observed.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE
	H3	Keep workers safe during heat emergencies.	Protect City Workers From Heat-Related Illnesses and Injuries	In August 2025, the City passed an ordinance ensuring employees and contractors are protected from heat-related illness. By Summer 2026, the City will implement a plan detailing covered workers and required protections like water, shade, and rest breaks.	CONTINUE & SCALE
H4	Safeguard residents at home during extreme heat emergencies.	Advocate for Maximum Indoor Air Temperature Standards and Utility Shut-Off Protections	The City will advocate for state policies setting maximum indoor temperatures and utility shut-off moratoriums during heat emergencies. This ensures residents, especially older adults and those with mobility challenges, can stay safely in their homes while the City expands access to cooling centers.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE	
H5	Combat the impacts of extreme heat through design review.	Incorporate Design Review Considerations to Address Extreme Heat	The City will use the design review process to integrate heat-mitigating features, like tree canopy, cool roofs, reflective surfaces, and shading, into new public and private construction to enhance long-term climate resilience.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE	
	S1	Advance green infrastructure projects, incorporating gray infrastructure solutions as necessary.	Incentivize Stormwater Management Practices on Private Property Through the Stormwater Program	In 2024, the Boston Water and Sewer Commission launched a stormwater grant program offering up to \$8,000 to property owners for runoff-reducing projects. The Boston Water and Sewer Commission will clarify eligibility, explore ways to increase interest, and consider incentives for larger private property projects.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Accelerate Green Infrastructure Deployment in Public Spaces	The City is accelerating green infrastructure (GI) citywide by expanding installations beyond standard capital projects. Over the next five years, GI will reduce flooding, improve water quality, lower urban heat, and enhance equitable access to green space. Using a citywide site suitability framework, the City identifies optimal locations based on environmental, resilience, and equity factors, including impervious cover, flood zones, urban heat intensity, tree canopy, and vulnerable populations.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Complete the Citywide Inundation Model to Prioritize and Advance the Design of High Priority Stormwater Projects	The Boston Water and Sewer Commission will release an updated citywide inundation model and site assessment by 2027 to identify flood-prone areas and guide targeted interventions. This will prioritize stormwater management, green infrastructure, and localized flood mitigation, focusing on vulnerable neighborhoods and informing the 2028 Capital Improvement Plan.	START
			Establish a Citywide Green Infrastructure Standard	The City has released design guides to integrate green infrastructure into streets, supporting Complete Streets that manage stormwater and enhance neighborhood resilience. Building on this, the City will establish a citywide standard requiring green infrastructure for major municipal projects, ensuring consistent flood reduction and climate resilience.	START

Sector	Strategy	Strategy Description	Action	Action Description	Continue Start Explore
 Stormwater and Inland Flooding	S2	Expand open and green space through strategic land use planning.	Pursue New Land Acquisition Opportunities Citywide	The City acquires land to expand public access to open space, grow the urban tree canopy, and conserve green areas. The City will continue prioritizing strategic acquisitions in neighborhoods with limited green space or elevated climate risks to ensure long-term public benefit and resilience.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Expand the Urban Wilds Program	The City's Urban Wilds Program protects natural areas like woodlands, wetlands, and meadows to preserve biodiversity, strengthen climate resilience, and provide access to nature. Starting in 2026, the City will conduct a two-year update with research, community engagement, and best-practice analysis to guide improved management, staffing, budgets, and potential land acquisition, ensuring these ecosystems are safeguarded for the future.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Refine the Spaces for You Program	The City's Spaces For You program partners with communities and private property owners to enhance publicly accessible outdoor spaces that foster joy, belonging, and well-being. By 2028, the City will develop a comprehensive plan to guide the creation of inclusive, resilient, and equitable public spaces over the next 15 years, while addressing challenges in privately generated open spaces.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Create Additional Zoning and Regulatory Changes that Address Inland Flooding Risk	The City will create an inland flood resilience overlay to complement existing coastal flood zoning, using updated modeling from the Boston Water and Sewer Commission to identify high-risk areas and guide protective measures. Residents, community groups, property owners, and businesses will help shape the application of these amendments, with adoption targeted by 2030.	START
 Coastal Flooding	C1	Close long-term flood pathways.	Complete the US Army Corps CSRM Study by 2028	The City is partnering with the US Army Corps of Engineers on the Coastal Storm Risk Management study to plan large-scale coastal protection projects eligible for federal funding. Over the next two years, the City will engage communities and property owners to shape long-term resilience projects, coordinating with the Corps to ensure local needs align with study recommendations. The goal is to deliver the study recommendations to Congress by Spring 2028.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Enter into Design Agreement with US Army Corps by 2030	After the Coastal Storm Risk Management study is completed, the next phase of work is Preconstruction, Engineering, and Design (PED). PED, led by the US Army Corps of Engineers in partnership with the City of Boston, begins once funding is appropriated by Congress and the Design Agreement is executed with the City. Expediting the design agreement, to be finalized by 2030, will help us to continue detailed design and construction of long-term coastal protection infrastructure.	CONTINUE & SCALE
	C2	Reduce immediate flood risk and costs.	Complete Critical Flood Infrastructure Planning, Design, and Construction	The City will complete critical infrastructure projects by 2030 to block or redirect the most significant near-term flood pathways in all five coastal neighborhoods. These projects target areas already at risk under current conditions and expected to worsen with early-decade sea level rise, addressing urgent vulnerabilities while complementing long-term coastal transformation efforts.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Implement Deployable Flood Protection Strategies	The City and its partners will use deployable flood protection strategies, like flood walls and gates, to protect vulnerable areas during storms. The Office of Emergency Management will monitor conditions and coordinate with property owners to implement these neighborhood- and building-level protections, reducing immediate flood risks while longer-term coastal projects continue.	START
			Join FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS)	The City will apply to join FEMA's CRS by 2030 to reduce flood insurance premiums for residents and businesses while demonstrating leadership in flood risk management. The City will also work with community groups to increase awareness of flood insurance and broader flood resilience strategies.	START

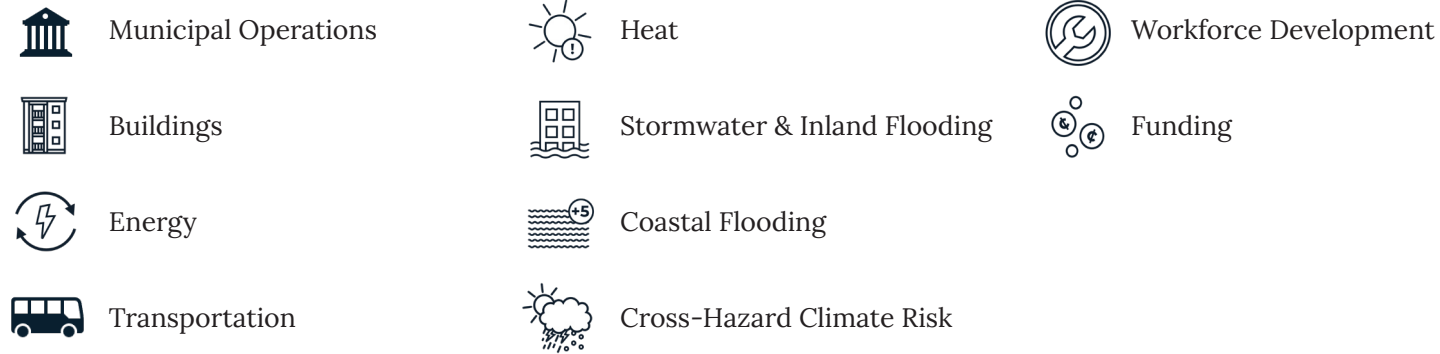
Sector	Strategy	Strategy Description	Action	Action Description	Continue Start Explore
Coastal Flooding	C3	Strengthen coastal resilience through zoning.	Update the Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District	The City's Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District (CFROD) sets zoning standards for new and major redevelopment in coastal flood-prone areas, ensuring buildings withstand future sea level rise and storm surge. Updated in 2024 to cover more properties, the City will continue refining CFROD through 2030 using community input and updated flood modeling to protect residents, infrastructure, and long-term resilience.	CONTINUE & SCALE
 Cross-Hazard Climate Risks	X1	Expand the City's capacity to deliver	Expand the City's Climate Data Network	The City is expanding its climate sensor network, tracking flooding, air quality, and localized temperature, in partnership with universities and private partners. Over the next five years, the City will grow and refine this network and launch a website by 2027 to share research goals and guidance on data transparency and privacy.	CONTINUE & SCALE
	X2	Support community-led resilience and preparedness	Expand and Improve Alert Boston	The City will continue expanding programs that help residents prepare for and respond to extreme weather, such as the Community Emergency Response Team program. These initiatives empower residents to protect themselves, their families, and their communities from climate-related hazards.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Empower Residents Through Emergency Trainings and Engagement	Building on its Ready Boston outreach, the Office of Emergency Management will continue engaging residents to enroll in the Alert Boston communication system. Over the next five years, the City will refine and promote public safety guidance through Alert Boston to ensure residents know how to stay safe during hazards such as extreme heat events and localized flooding.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Empower Trusted Community Spaces to Provide Support During Climate Emergencies	The City will support community-based organizations in serving as resilience hubs, complementing City cooling centers. These local hubs provide resources and guidance before, during, and after extreme weather events, helping neighborhoods prepare and recover. Over the next two years, the City will build partnerships, create a toolkit for establishing hubs, and identify resources and technical support for these community-led spaces.	START
	X3	Protect vulnerable homes from flooding through targeted retrofits	Retrofit Basement-Level Units for Flood Resilience	The City estimates that there are approximately 20,000 basement units across Boston, about 28% of which lay within the CFROD. Bostonians living in basement units and in our floodplains, many of whom are also renters, are particularly vulnerable to flood risk. To begin addressing this, the City will launch a pilot in 2026 focused on homes in Dorchester that are most at risk from coastal flooding. Findings from this pilot will help inform future strategies to reduce flood risk for basement units citywide.	START
	X4	Strengthen and scale innovative resilience solutions	Identify Paths to Reduce Risk in Collaboration with the Insurance Sector	The City will explore with the insurance sector how to best have district-scale coastal resilience projects investments incorporated into flood risk models. The City, in partnership with the Green Ribbon Commission and others, will also explore opportunities for the insurance sector to support district scale risk-reduction projects.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE
Explore Climate Tech Partnerships			The City will advance climate technology innovation by partnering with regional organizations and universities to improve resilience programs in areas like heat mitigation, flooding, and energy reliability. In 2026, the City will convene a working group of staff, partners, and climate tech companies to guide implementation.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE	

Sector	Strategy	Strategy Description	Action	Action Description	Continue Start Explore
 Cross-Hazard Climate Risks	X5	Expand strategies to ensure nutritious, culturally relevant food reaches communities, contributing to a food system with less waste.	Continue Food Recovery Initiatives	The City will reduce food waste and improve food access by scaling food recovery initiatives that ensure surplus food reaches those in need, such as strengthening coordination across Boston's food recovery system and providing technical assistance and shared infrastructure. Food recovery not only reduces greenhouse gas emissions from wasted food but also addresses food insecurity.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Support the Expansion of Food Forests and other Urban Agriculture	The City will expand urban agriculture by creating food forests, community gardens, and urban farms that provide fresh, local food while supporting climate resilience, particularly in neighborhoods with high levels of food insecurity. These spaces increase green space, enhance biodiversity, and help neighborhoods cope with and adapt to extreme heat and flooding. Boston currently has thirteen food forests and will continue to help expand this number through the Grassroots Program, strategic partnerships, and other GrowBoston initiatives.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Increase Access to and Consumption of Healthy, Sustainable Food	The Good Food Purchasing Program aims to increase transparency on where our food comes from, grow market access to small, local, and minority-owned food producers, and reduce the emissions impact of our food systems. Boston Public Schools is actively implementing this framework and addressing barriers. The City will continue to assess future opportunities for growth of the program.	CONTINUE & SCALE
	X6	Strengthen food system resilience.	Increase the Resilience of Boston's Food Systems	The City will strengthen regional food system resilience to reduce disruptions from extreme weather. Building on guidance from the ICIC Resilient Food Systems, Resilient Cities framework, the City will scale efforts across emergency food, urban agriculture, food access, food service, and grocery sectors. Initiatives will focus on climate disaster preparedness and diversifying local food production and distribution infrastructure.	START
 Workforce	W1	Grow Boston's green workforce.	Advance the Boston's Climate Jobs Alliance	The City is advancing equity-centered climate workforce development through the Boston Climate Jobs Alliance (BCJA), funded by NOAA's \$9.8M Climate-Ready Workforce grant. BCJA brings together over 30 stakeholders such as employers, training providers, community partners, and service agencies to create training pathways in coastal and climate resilience occupations. By August 2028, BCJA aims to train 645 people and place 484 in over 1,200 family-sustaining jobs with 13 committed employers. The City will explore expanding BCJA to additional climate-focused sectors like building decarbonization and partner with educational institutions from high school to higher education to grow climate skills education and training opportunities.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Evaluate and Expand Boston's Youth Climate Corps	The City's Boston Climate Youth Corps launched a summer 2025 pilot with partner organizations employing over 200 young people ages 14-24. Participants completed at least 30 hours of paid work, gaining hands-on technical experience, leadership skills, mentorship, and exposure to green career opportunities through site visits and workshops. Future cycles will expand partnerships, strengthen pathways from summer programs to long-term careers, and serve as an entry point into other workforce programs.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Continue PowerCorps Boston	The City's PowerCorpsBOS is a 10-month "earn and learn" green workforce program for young adults ages 18-30, providing training, career readiness support, college credits and certifications, and employer connections in the green sector. The City continues to enhance PowerCorpsBOS, including plans with the Boston Water & Sewer Commission to create a municipal water utilities/stormwater management pathway, expanding career opportunities in climate and resilience-focused fields.	CONTINUE & SCALE
	W2	Explore and expand on opportunities to address barriers to accessing green jobs training programs.	Remove Barriers and Expand Access to Green Jobs Training Programs	The City will expand access to green job training by addressing language, information, and childcare barriers that limit participation for women, people of color, immigrants, and parents. These steps aim to remove barriers, increase participation in green jobs, and create a more equitable workforce pipeline.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE

Sector	Strategy	Strategy Description	Action	Action Description	Continue Start Explore
Workforce	W3	Use procurement and policy tools to drive good jobs and an expanded labor market.	Expand the Use of Project Labor Agreements	The City uses Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) to ensure well-paying, stable union jobs and a skilled workforce on major construction projects. This approach supports workforce development, equitable access to high-quality jobs, and family-friendly workplace policies. The City will continue evaluating how PLAs can meet workforce needs, including their use in the procurement of future large municipal capital projects.	CONTINUE & SCALE
			Drive Good Jobs through BERDO	The City will explore strategies to encourage BERDO-covered building owners to adopt strong labor standards, supporting high-quality, equitable jobs. Combined with small building retrofits, BERDO-related work could generate over 40,000 annual job-years by 2030.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE
 Funding & Financing	F1	Mainstream climate goals into City governance processes.	Integrate Climate Budgeting Framework into the Budget Processes	The City will pilot climate budgeting for Fiscal Year 2027, integrating climate goals into municipal spending and policy decisions. In 2026, the City will release its first annual climate budgeting report alongside the regular budget documents to track climate-related investments, increase transparency, and show how spending advances emissions reduction and resilience goals.	START
	F2	Explore funding mechanisms to support building decarbonization.	Support Exploration of Small Building Catalytic Funding	The City will continue participating in the Boston Foundation's 2026 working group to explore funding solutions for decarbonizing and weatherizing Boston's roughly 70,000 small buildings. Lessons from Boston Energy Saver will help inform potential program design to address deferred maintenance and pre-weatherization barriers in older buildings.	START
			Study Opportunities to Develop Financing Tools for Large Building Decarbonization	BERDO requires large buildings to reduce emissions over time and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. In 2026, the City of Boston will engage with relevant stakeholders to scope out research questions to better understand the financing needs for different types of owners to meet BERDO compliance. The goal of this research will be to inform future financing programs or policy updates to make financing tools more accessible for long-term BERDO compliance.	START
	F3	Explore long-term funding options to support large-scale climate resilience projects.	Conduct a Resilience Revenue Raising Study	The City, in collaboration with the Green Ribbon Commission, will develop a Funding and Financing Blueprint for Coastal Resilience, to be released in 2027. This study will assess the cost and benefits of major adaptation projects, identify funding gaps, and explore new mechanisms to finance Boston's waterfront resilience. It will provide near- and long-term recommendations for leveraging city, state, federal, and private resources to support these multi-billion-dollar projects.	START
F4	Leverage philanthropic funds for climate action.	Explore the Creation of a Local Climate Action Fund and/or Targeted Financing Mechanisms to Fill Funding and Financing Gaps and Scale Impact	To meet the scale and urgency of Boston's climate goals, the City of Boston will partner with Boston's robust set of philanthropic and mission-aligned partners to identify opportunities for collaboration in support for Climate Action Plan implementation. If deemed, the City and its partners will explore the creation of a fund or existing instrument to help scale proven strategies and unlock external support for high-impact climate initiatives.	EVALUATE & EXPLORE	

HOW TO READ THIS PLAN

Focus Areas are the organizing framework for the Climate Action Plan. Action areas encompass a range of topic areas for climate action across mitigation, adaptation, resilience, and climate justice. The action areas include:



Strategies are the initiatives and objectives for the next five years of climate action in Boston. These activities are essential to the successful achievement of our climate goals. Strategies are numbered and categorized by focus area, where each strategy includes relevant Benefit Tags, any reference to related Strategies or key Metrics. Each Strategy was also prioritized in the planning process where final prioritization scores are shared to provide context on the strategy's feasibility and impact.



Benefit tags are used to identify public health (blue) and climate justice (red) benefits associated with strategies. Public Health tags are adapted from the key focus areas identified in the 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) as top priorities for Boston residents.¹

ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS	Expands access to affordable, nutritious food that supports long-term health.
EXTREME HEAT & COLD PREVENTION	Lowers residents' exposure to dangerous temperatures through mitigation and preparedness.
HOUSING AFFORDABILITY & QUALITY	Improves access to safe, stable, and healthy housing.
TRANSPORTATION ACCESS	Expands access to safe, reliable, and affordable transportation options.
CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION	Reduces risks and triggers for conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and asthma.
ECONOMIC & CAREER MOBILITY	Increases access to stable, well-paying jobs and career pathways that support financial wellbeing.
MENTAL HEALTH & WELL BEING	Reduces stressors and improves access to supportive, health-promoting environments.
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	Strengthens pathways to quality education and learning opportunities across all ages.
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS	Enhances neighborhood conditions and the broader built environments with benefits such as improved air quality, noise level, traffic safety, green and open space, and overall environmental quality.

¹ Other priorities identified in the 2025 CHNA include: Access to health care, access to physical activity opportunities, cancer, early education and care, maternal and child health, substance use, and violence.

CARE-FULL CITY	Caring for each other.
SHARED CITY	Knowing and doing together.
GREEN CITY	Respecting and connecting with nature.
FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY	Sharing benefits and burdens in a fair way.
HEALTHY CITY	Improving everyone's health and quality of life.

Related strategies and metrics are tagged for each strategy to show interconnected and cross-cutting relation of some climate initiatives and to identify the key metrics that will be used to document ongoing progress.

A link icon () indicates related strategies for reference to other supporting parts of the plan.
 A graph icon () indicates which metric(s) are used to track the outcome of the strategy.

Prioritization scoring was developed to evaluate and elevate recommended strategies. Each strategy was evaluated according to a set of feasibility, implementation, and impact considerations on a Low- Medium - High scale. Feasibility relates to the cost, staff capacity, level of control, and timeline to implement. Impact relates to the GHG emissions reduction potential (and whether direct, indirect, or enabling of reductions), scale of resilience benefits and additional co-benefits, as well as application of climate justice principles.

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ●

IMPACT: ● ● ●

Actions are the detailed steps, programs, and policies that support a strategy and that are needed to meet our climate goals. Each action has a lead department and support department(s) charged with implementation of that strategy. Additionally, each action has a label based on its maturity:

CONTINUE & SCALE	Existing City of Boston initiatives that will be maintained, enhanced, or expanded.
START	Newly proposed strategies designed to address gaps in emissions reduction or climate resilience efforts that the City of Boston is actively looking to launch or initiate.
EVALUATE & EXPLORE	Emerging opportunities the City will assess for feasibility and potential future implementation.

Follow boston.gov/climate-action-plan for the most up-to-date information.



MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS

The City of Boston manages a substantial portfolio of land and a significant municipal vehicle fleet, and is committed to leading by example in reducing emissions - serving as a model for both the private sector and other cities across the nation.

Municipal Greenhouse Gas Emissions

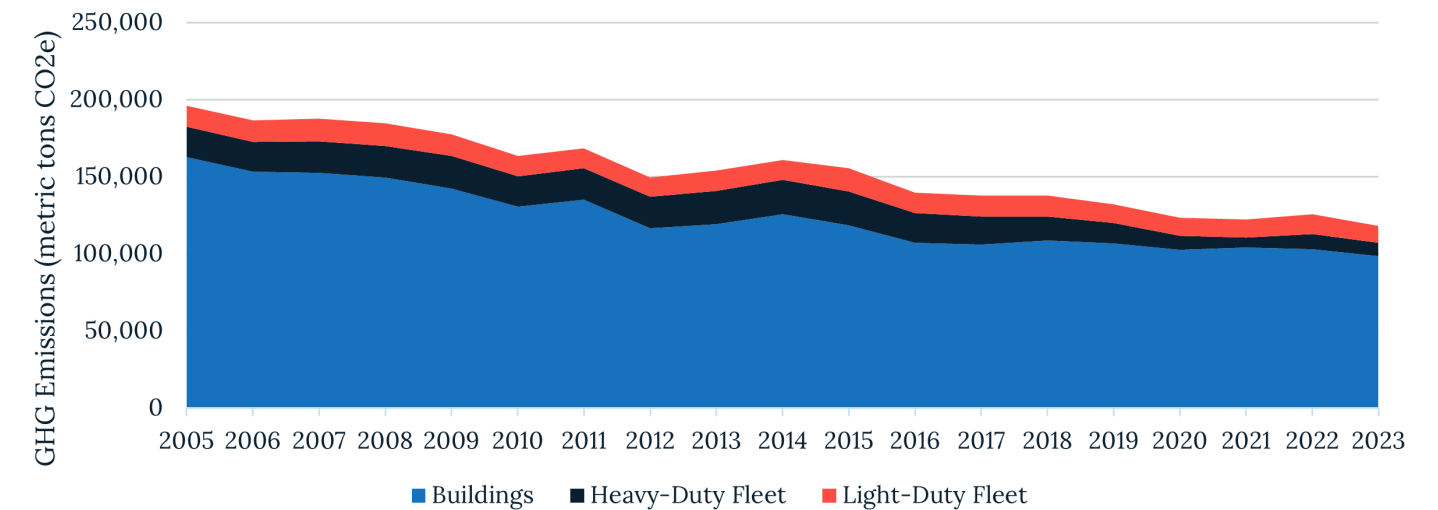


Figure 7: Greenhouse gas emissions from City of Boston Municipal Operations Fiscal Year 2005 to 2023. (Source: City of Boston)

As of fiscal year 2023, the City of Boston has reduced its municipal emissions by 36 percent compared to 2005 levels, at pace with meeting our 60 percent of emissions reduced by 2030 based on 2005 levels. Modeling of emissions from municipal assets, including buildings and vehicles, shows that without further action, the pace of these reductions will slow and level off. Over the next five years, the City's greatest opportunity to meet its emissions targets is through retrofitting and improving the efficiency of municipal buildings, the majority of which are covered by the Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO), to ensure compliance. At the same time, the City is planning for a significant expansion of the light-duty electric vehicle fleet and preparing for the long-term transition to an electrified medium and heavy-duty fleet by 2050 and 2060, respectively, assessing the necessary infrastructure, technology, and operational strategies to support this shift.

STRATEGIES TO REDUCE EMISSIONS

Over the last two decades, Boston has made significant progress in reducing its emissions from three key sources: buildings, transportation, and waste. This progress reflects years of ambitious policies and investment in cleaner technologies and infrastructure. Yet, as the City pursues its goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, further action is needed to accelerate emissions reductions across all sectors. This chapter details how Boston will deepen its climate leadership by decarbonizing buildings, advancing sustainable and equitable transportation, and expanding clean, renewable energy systems to enable a just transition to a low-carbon future.

This chapter outlines the City’s strategies to decarbonize municipal buildings, accelerate fleet electrification, modernize street lighting, and implement sustainable practices in parks and public spaces. These initiatives demonstrate Boston’s commitment to meeting its 2030 climate targets, complying with BERDO, and serving as a national example of municipal climate leadership.

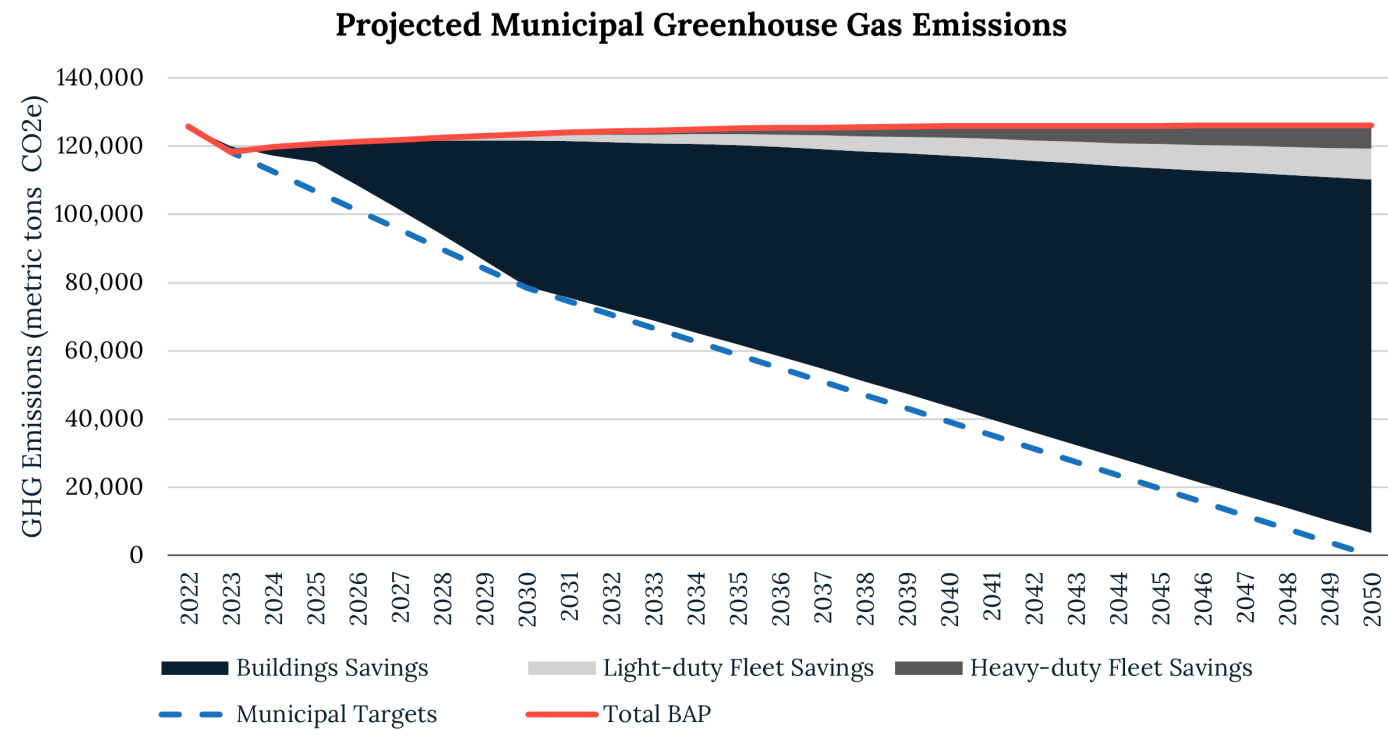


Figure 8: Projected greenhouse gases from City of Boston municipal operations based on climate action goals and strategies. (Source: Climate action plan analysis)

What this section aims to achieve by 2030

- **Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from municipal operations by at least 60% by 2030**, relative to 2005 levels, through comprehensive decarbonization of City buildings, fleet, and infrastructure.
- **Be on track to achieve carbon neutrality across municipal operations by 2050** by transitioning to clean energy sources.
- **Lead by example as a municipal government**, demonstrating scalable, cost-effective decarbonization strategies that can be replicated across Boston.

COB1. Lead by example to reduce GHG emissions and prioritize healthy, high-performing environments in all municipal buildings and assets.

HEALTHY CITY **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS**

PRIORITIZATION
FEASIBILITY: ● ● ●
IMPACT: ● ● ●

2030 ACTIONS

Restructure Renew Boston Trust **CONTINUE & SCALE**

Lead Department(s): Environment Department
 Support Department(s): Boston Public Schools; Public Facilities Department

The Renew Boston Trust (RBT) - the City’s energy savings performance contracting program that identifies and implements cost-effective energy and water upgrades across municipal buildings - will evolve over the next five years to support deeper climate goals. Building on its existing structure, RBT will transition from primarily pursuing efficiency projects to conducting holistic facilities condition assessments, developing decarbonization and recommissioning plans, and prioritizing municipal building upgrades that reduce emissions. This expanded scope will evaluate municipal rooftop space for solar power potential, battery energy storage systems, and cool roofs, help align the City’s building portfolio with BERDO requirements, and demonstrate municipal leadership in building decarbonization.

Grow the City’s Demand Response Program **CONTINUE & SCALE**

Lead Department(s): Environment Department
 Support Department(s): Boston Public Schools; Property Management Department

Demand response programs help reduce strain on the electric grid by encouraging buildings to lower or shift their energy use during times of peak demand. The City will expand its current participation in these programs into a comprehensive municipal effort, increasing the number of municipal buildings enrolled in Eversource and ISO-NE demand response offerings. This expansion will also ensure that staff at each facility are trained and prepared to take the appropriate actions during peak demand events.

Expand Gas Street Lamps Conversion **CONTINUE & SCALE**

Lead Department(s): Environment Department
 Support Department(s): Streets Cabinet; Office of Historic Preservation

Phasing out gas-powered street lamps is a step toward reducing the City’s emissions and lowering energy costs, while replacing them with modern LED fixtures preserves the historic look of Boston’s neighborhoods and provides longer-lasting, more reliable lighting for residents. Although just 4 percent of the City’s street lights are gas-powered, they account for 37 percent of emissions from street lighting. Building on successful conversion efforts in neighborhoods like Bay Village, the City aims to continue phasing out the remaining gas-powered lamps.

Project Spotlight: Bay Village Exterior Lighting Conversions

The Renew Boston Trust Exterior Lighting program focuses on reducing energy use across the City's exterior lighting, which accounts for approximately \$5 million in annual energy consumption from streetlights, traffic signals, sports field lighting, and security lighting. To support this work, the City signed a multi year Investment Grade Audit agreement with vendor Ameresco to inventory the more than 74,000 City-owned exterior lighting assets and identify opportunities to reduce energy use through lighting upgrades and controls.

The Bay Village Neighborhood Park gas lamp conversions were the first project implemented under this program and were completed in December 2025 as an early phase of the park's broader renovation, ahead of additional site work improvements planned for spring and summer 2026. The project scope included the removal of eight gas lamps in and around the park and the installation of five LED fixtures. Work was carried out in coordination with the Public Works Department's Street Lighting and Construction Management Divisions, with input from the Office of Historic Preservation given the park's location within a historic district and the nature of the look of the gas lamps. The project is expected to generate approximately \$3,000 in annual energy savings (about 275 MMBtu, or ~1.6 metric tons CO₂e).

The English High School field lighting upgrades are also an early project under the Renew Boston Trust Exterior Lighting program and are expected to be completed in February 2026. The project upgrades existing field lighting to more energy-efficient fixtures and is being implemented in collaboration with Boston Public Schools and the Boston Parks and Recreation Department. Once complete, the project is projected to reduce electricity use by approximately 23,000 kWh annually, avoiding roughly 6 metric tons of CO₂e and saving an estimated \$6,000 per year in electricity costs, while supporting school athletics and community recreation



COB2. Facilitate the transition to electric-zero emission vehicles by leading by example with the municipal fleet.

HEALTHY CITY PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION

 **Related Metric(s):** Percentage of Zero-Emission Vehicles in City of Boston's Light-Duty Fleet

PRIORITIZATION
FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○
IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Adopt a Zero-Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Purchasing Policy

START

Lead Department(s): Central Fleet Management; Procurement Department

As of January 2026, Boston's light-duty fleet includes 462 light duty vehicles under Central Fleet, with approximately 17 percent fully electric and 25 percent hybrid. In recent years, the City of Boston has increased its EV charging capacity to accommodate our growing municipal electric fleet, including 71 Level 2 and 7 DCFC charging ports installed on Frontage Road by the start of 2026. Charging infrastructure and electric or hybrid vehicle procurement for emergency service department vehicles is the priority for the City's continued efforts. In 2026, the City will implement a ZEV purchasing policy for all future vehicle acquisitions, with limited exceptions for specialized equipment or where no viable alternatives exist, and will develop a supporting plan for EV charging infrastructure to accommodate the new vehicles. This policy will be instrumental in reducing emissions from the municipal fleet, improving local air quality, and demonstrating Boston's commitment to a clean transportation future.

Create a Fleet Request Review Body

START

Lead Department(s): Central Fleet Management; Procurement Department

The City will establish a fleet request review body to ensure that fleet purchases are appropriately sized for operational needs and aligned with the standards outlined in the ZEV Purchasing Policy. Prior to Office of Budget Management (OBM) approval of new lease purchases, the review entity would review departmental requests and provide recommendations to OBM. The review body would also periodically assess the existing fleet to identify opportunities to right-size vehicles, evaluate utilization, and prioritize lower- or zero-emission alternatives when vehicles are replaced, where operationally feasible.

COB3. Improve practices for long-term sustainability of our parks.

HEALTHY CITY FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY SHARED CITY GREEN CITY
 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

PRIORITIZATION
 FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○
 IMPACT: ● ● ○

 Related Metric(s): *In Development*

2030 ACTIONS

Use Greener Maintenance Techniques in our Parks

Lead Department(s): *Parks Department*

CONTINUE & SCALE

The City will learn from current open space practices of civic and institutional partners to identify new methods of green space management that could be adopted across Boston’s parks. Potential opportunities include expanding the electrification of Parks equipment, such as mowers and blowers, particularly for recreational fields, which will directly reduce emissions from fossil-fuel-powered equipment. These improvements will advance the City’s climate goals while also providing health benefits for our workforce. Additionally, the Boston Parks and Recreation Department will consider updates to horticultural policies and protocols to ensure best practices in native plantings, increase biodiversity, and enhance stormwater management to promote healthier, more sustainable urban ecosystems.



There are more than 86,000 buildings totaling over 647 million square feet, and most of them will still be standing in 2050.²⁵ Today, buildings account for 70 percent of Boston’s greenhouse gas emissions, making the built environment one of our most important levers for climate action. In addition to reducing emissions, building decarbonization also delivers significant public health benefits, from cleaner indoor and outdoor air to improved resilience during extreme weather, helping ensure that residents can remain safe and healthy in their homes and communities for generations to come.

Boston has long been a national leader in building emissions reduction policies. In 2013, the City adopted the Building Energy Reporting and Disclosure Ordinance, which required large buildings to report their energy and water use. The data collected helped shape stronger policies, leading to the passage of the Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO) in 2021. Under this new iteration of BERDO, the city’s largest buildings must reach net-zero emissions by 2050, with increasingly stringent emissions limits beginning in 2025. Over 5,000 buildings, comprising over half of the city’s building square footage, are required to reduce their emissions over time to meet BERDO’s standards. Emissions reductions can be achieved by completing building retrofits, improving energy efficiency, switching to electric heating and cooling systems, buying renewable energy, or making Alternative Compliance Payments.²⁶ BERDO is Boston’s most significant policy tool for cutting building emissions, and in 2025, Boston strengthened this foundation by adopting Net Zero Carbon Zoning. Boston became the first city in the nation to require most large new buildings to be emissions-free at opening, ensuring that future development aligns with the City’s long-term climate goals.

BERDO established the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund, which reinvests Alternative Compliance Payments into building decarbonization projects that directly benefit environmental justice communities. The Fund supports mission-driven organizations and affordable housing providers in making energy upgrades that reduce emissions, lower utility costs, and improve indoor air quality, helping ensure that the transition to a cleaner built environment delivers tangible benefits to residents most impacted by climate change and energy burden.

Projected 2025 BERDO Compliance



Figure 9: Based on 2024 BERDO-reported data, the City projects that approximately 84 percent of BERDO-covered buildings will meet their 2025 emissions limits. This projection assumes no participation in BCCE or renewable energy credit (REC) purchases, which buildings can use to reduce their reported emissions.

The first emissions compliance year for residential buildings with 35+ units and non-residential buildings 35,000 square feet or greater is 2025, with reporting and compliance due in 2026. The smaller buildings subject to BERDO will have until 2030 to comply with an emissions limit, but it is essential that those buildings begin planning for emissions reductions now. Approximately half of covered buildings with reported data will need to take action by 2030 compared to just 20 percent of covered buildings with reported data in 2025. The City has a number of programs available to assist building owners comply with BERDO. For more information and resources, please visit boston.gov/berdo.

5 TAKE ACTION

- Building Decarbonization Advisor Program (BDAP)
- Mass Save C&I and multifamily programs
- Equitable Emissions Investment Fund

4 UNDERSTAND YOUR EMISSIONS COMPLIANCE OPTIONS

- Flexibility measures

3 UNDERSTAND YOUR BUILDING'S ENERGY USE & EMISSIONS

- One-on-one building decarbonization consultations

2 COMPLETE REPORTING & THIRD-PARTY VERIFICATION

- Free reporting and verification services for under-resourced buildings

1 LEARN ABOUT BERDO BASICS

- Online resources & guides
- Webinars & in-person neighborhood workshops
- Responsive phone and email helpdesk with office hours and individual meetings

While BERDO applies to the city's largest buildings, most Bostonians live in smaller homes and multifamily buildings not subject to the ordinance, making support for small buildings essential to meeting Boston's climate and equity goals.

Successful implementation of BERDO, Net Zero Carbon Zoning, and related programs will require expanded resources, stronger outreach, and deeper partnerships to ensure that building upgrades are accessible to the residents and owners who need them most. Boston has already begun laying this groundwork. The Wu Administration's commitment with the Boston Housing Authority to transition public housing to fossil fuel-free by 2030 shows what is possible when climate action and equity advance together. In 2025, the City launched Boston Energy Saver with Eversource, National Grid, and community partners to streamline building upgrades, lower energy costs for residents, and ensure that Mass Save programs better serve every Boston community, focusing on smaller buildings that are not covered by BERDO. Together, these efforts illustrate how Boston is creating the foundation for the next generation of climate progress, ensuring residents have access to efficient, healthy living and working environments.

As Boston reduces operating emissions through electrification and efficiency, the climate impact of construction materials becomes increasingly important, making embodied carbon the next frontier of building climate action. When we measure emissions from buildings, historically we have only measured the emissions associated with operating the buildings, such as the electricity, fossil gas, and delivered fuels required to heat and cool homes. Recent research has shown that the embodied carbon and associated emissions in building materials have an outsized impact in the near-term on emissions - 11 percent of global emissions can be attributed to the supply chain of building materials.²⁷ While embodied carbon is not part of the City's baseline emissions accounting, it is an important consideration in Boston's overall emissions reduction strategy.

Changes to the built environment to reduce emissions also create pathways to strengthen Boston's resilience to climate impacts such as helping buildings better withstand extreme heat, flooding, and other hazards that are becoming more frequent with climate change. At the same time, the scale of building upgrades needed across the city to meet our emissions reduction goals will generate significant workforce and economic development opportunities, supporting good, local jobs in construction, electrification, energy efficiency, and building operations. These benefits and broader workforce and resilience strategies are discussed in greater detail in later chapters of this Plan.

Looking ahead to 2030, Boston envisions a city where healthy, energy efficient homes and workplaces are the standard and where every resident can access upgrades, lower their energy costs, and benefit from the economic opportunities of a low-carbon transition. A cleaner, healthier, more equitable built environment is not only possible - it is already taking shape across the city. This chapter outlines the strategies, programs, and policy tools Boston will use over the next five years to cut building emissions, expand access to healthy homes, and unlock the economic and resilience benefits of a cleaner built environment.

What this section aims to achieve by 2030

- **Ensure existing building decarbonization programs drive long-term emissions reductions**, by working with property owners to align compliance pathways with Boston's 2030 and 2050 goals.
- **Provide clear, accessible, and coordinated support to property owners**, enabling cost-effective compliance and long-term planning.
- **Ensure the benefits of building decarbonization are equitably distributed**, including renters, low-income households, affordable housing, and environmental justice communities.
- **Reduce energy burden and improve building quality, delivering safer, more comfortable, and resilient homes and spaces across the City.**

BUILDING OPERATIONS

Boston has an old building stock - nearly 60 percent of all buildings were built before 1950. These aging structures often rely on fossil gas, fuel oil, or electric resistance for heating, have poor insulation, and frequently require costly pre-weatherization upgrades such as replacing knob-and-tube wiring. As a result, almost two-thirds of the city's building-related emissions come from fossil gas and fuel oil use, primarily for heating. These emissions are part of what is known as building operational emissions: the emissions produced from the everyday energy buildings consume for electricity, heating, cooling, hot water, and process loads.

Meeting Boston's 2030 emissions goals requires upgrading buildings at a far faster rate than today's pace. At the same time, the high cost of heating system replacements, pre-weatherization needs, and market confusion present real barriers for residents and small property owners, especially in environmental justice communities. Renters face additional challenges due to limited control over building decisions and the risk of displacement if upgrades are not paired with affordability protections.

Addressing these challenges requires an explicit focus on anti-displacement, as green gentrification remains a real concern. While Mass Save provides some protections for renters, the City will continue to advocate for stronger safeguards. This includes building on models like the Mayor's Office of Housing's Healthy and Green Retrofit Pilot Program, which tied funding to long-term affordability requirements. Under this program, building owners receiving up to \$50,000 for energy and building retrofits committed to maintaining reasonable rents for a period of ten years and ensuring retrofitted units remain affordable to households earning below 80% of Area Median Income (AMI).

To meet Boston's climate goals, significant action is needed over the next five years. By 2030, the City aims to reduce emissions from BERDO-covered buildings by 60 percent and emissions from small buildings by 45 percent from 2005 levels. Continuing business as usual will not achieve these targets. The strategies outlined in this plan focus on both strengthening existing programs and policies such as BERDO to make them work more effectively and equitably, and addressing gaps where new approaches are needed. These gaps include a renewed focus on small building decarbonization, creating support systems for hard-to-decarbonize building types such as restaurants and condominiums, and applying an equity lens to ensure incentives and building upgrades are accessible to renters, low-income and affordable housing tenants, and historic buildings.

As more homes and businesses shift from gas and oil to efficient electric heating, Boston must also work closely with utilities to ensure the grid remains reliable, affordable, and ready for widespread electrification. Accelerating energy efficiency, load management solutions, decarbonizing existing district energy systems, and peak demand reduction will be essential to keeping costs down for all residents. Boston's energy-related strategies are discussed in greater detail in the Energy chapter.

Building Emissions by Fuel Source

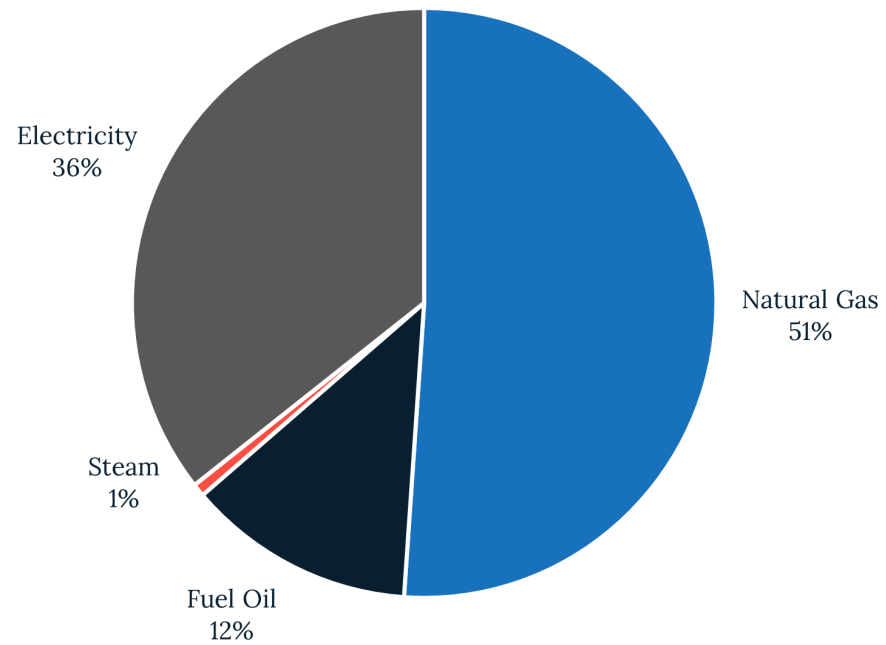


Figure 10: Building Emissions by Fuel Source. (Source: City of Boston)

Strengthening building efficiency and reducing fossil fuel use will not only cut emissions, it will improve indoor air quality, lower energy burdens, and help residents stay safe during extreme heat and cold. Energy efficient programs implemented by the Sponsors of Mass Save alone delivered 74 million MMBtu of energy savings across all fuel types in 2024, accounting for a total of 272,000,000 metric tons of CO₂ avoided. This is the equivalent of removing more than 63 million gas-powered cars off the road for one year. These benefits are central to Boston's vision for an equitable, resilient built environment.

Boston is strengthening its building operations decarbonization efforts by 2030 through a comprehensive set of strategies that improve housing quality and affordability while achieving significant emissions reduction. These strategies include expanding programs and support systems to help large building owners comply with BERDO 2.0 and small building owners navigate complex home upgrades, improving access to energy efficiency upgrades and incentives for building owners and renters typically underserved, accelerating decarbonization in public and affordable housing, and advocating for funding at the state and federal level.





BUILDING OPERATIONS

B1. Expand support structures for implementing the City’s Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO).

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY & QUALITY

CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION

SHARED CITY

FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS

HEALTHY CITY



Related Metric(s): BERDO Compliance Rate and Emissions Reduction; Funding Awarded and Expected Emissions Avoided from Equitable Emissions Investment Fund Projects; Number of Heat Pumps Installed in Residential and Commercial Buildings;



Linked Strategies: B3, B4, E1, W3, F2

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○

IMPACT: ● ● ●

2030 ACTIONS

Expand the Impact of the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund

Lead Department(s): Environment Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

Buildings that exceed their emissions limits can comply with BERDO by making Alternative Compliance Payments, which are directed into the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund. This Fund awards grants annually that supports projects led by nonprofits that reduce building emissions in Environmental Justice communities, while also advancing co-benefits such as workforce development, improved outdoor or indoor air quality, and climate resilience features. The City will work with the BERDO Review Board to identify opportunities to expand the impact of the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund (EEIF) and scale the awarded grants. This will include working with institutional leaders in Boston to co-fund eligible EEIF projects and evaluating the Fund annually to ensure it funds the greatest opportunities to reduce emissions using an equity lens.

Continue the Building Decarbonization Advisor Program

Lead Department(s): Environment Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

Using federal funds and funds from the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund, the Environment Department launched the Building Decarbonization Advisor Program in 2024 to help building owners reduce energy emissions and meet BERDO requirements. Selected participants get free decarbonization planning, expert guidance, and may qualify for additional funding to support their projects. Eligible participants include larger residential properties covered by BERDO in environmental justice neighborhoods that meet affordability, income, or ownership criteria, such as self-managed condos, rental buildings with low-income tenants, deed-restricted affordable housing, and properties owned by small businesses or nonprofits. As budget allows, the City will continue to hire experts to help building owners subject to BERDO with decarbonization planning services, technical assistance, and funding support. The Environment Department will also explore ways to support owners in implementing their plans over time by providing case management, connections to vendors and financing tools, and technical advising.

2030 ACTIONS

Coordinate Bulk Purchasing to Lower Costs and Streamline Retrofits

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

Lead Department(s): Environment Department

Support Department(s): Procurement Department

Lowering the cost and complexity of building retrofits is essential to helping more property owners lower their emissions. To support this, the City of Boston will explore models for bulk contracting of technical services such as energy audits, building assessments, and design or engineering support. By coordinating demand and leveraging the City’s convening power, Boston can lower costs, reduce administrative burdens for building owners, and create streamlined, replicable pathways that make building retrofits easier and more accessible citywide.

Project Spotlight: Equitable Emissions Investment Fund Recipient, Fenway Forward

Launched in 2024, the Fund has awarded seven grants to date, totaling over \$1.5M to support equitable building decarbonization in Boston and empower mission-driven organizations to lead climate action in their communities.

Fenway Forward, a nonprofit that provides affordable housing and resident services in the Fenway neighborhood, received \$245,250 for implementing a “Zero Over Time” decarbonization plan for Burbank Gardens, a 52-unit affordable housing building. The project includes high-impact efficiency and electrification readiness upgrades, such as ENERGY STAR® roof exhaust fans, heat pump water heaters, low-flow showerheads, system efficiency controls, and lighting sensors in common areas, alongside electrical service upgrades to prepare the building for future electrification projects.

Together, these improvements are expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by nearly 40,000 kilograms per year, while delivering tangible benefits for residents through improved indoor air quality and building performance. These investments show how climate action can cut emissions while directly improving housing quality, affordability, and health for Boston residents.

For more information, please visit boston.gov/berdo-fund



Photo Credit: Josh Reynolds

2030 ACTIONS

Expand Educational and Outreach Efforts & Partnerships

CONTINUE & SCALE

Lead Department(s): Environment Department

Successful implementation of BERDO depends on strong partnerships with building owners, City staff, and industry professionals. In 2025, the City of Boston hosted its first annual BERDO Fest, a free event designed to help building owners and property managers connect with experts and professionals across the building decarbonization ecosystem. The Environment Department also regularly hosts neighborhood workshops and webinars to help property owners understand BERDO requirements. Several partners also support a robust learning environment around BERDO including A Better City, the Green Ribbon Commission, and Built Environment Plus. The City will expand educational opportunities and develop additional support materials, such as a BERDO compliance workbook for condominium owners, to ensure building owners have clear guidance on eligibility criteria, available incentives, and the full range of compliance pathways. After each reporting year, the City will evaluate where there is most need to develop targeted outreach and support programs, and will seek community and institutional partners to leverage the existing building decarbonization knowledge base in Boston.

Partner Spotlight: A Better City

[A Better City](#) is a Boston-based nonprofit organization representing a multi-sector group of nearly 130 business leaders united around a common vision to create a more vibrant, competitive, sustainable, and equitable city and region for all. A Better City's mission is to engage the Greater Boston business community and civic institutions in developing solutions and influencing policy through research and collaboration on transportation, climate, and land use issues.

Through initiatives like its [Built-to-Lead: Lessons in Building Decarbonization and Resilience panel series](#), A Better City is showcasing the climate leadership of its member businesses and institutions, uplifting innovative and replicable strategies, and identifying challenges to implementation and scalability. The inaugural series, which included five sessions in 2025 and 2026, created opportunities for peer-to-peer learning among large building owners, operators, and consultants, focused on decarbonizing both existing and new buildings, deconstruction and reducing embodied carbon, emerging technologies such as thermal energy systems, and the intersection of climate mitigation and resilience. The series was well received, and A Better City plans to continue and expand this work in the coming years. By leading these types of learning networks, private sector actors are helping to translate policy into action—demonstrating what decarbonization looks like in practice and enabling broader, market-driven progress toward climate goals.

As a convener of multi-sector businesses and institutions in Boston, A Better City is a vital partner in helping to advance some of the most pressing climate strategies in the Plan—helping to determine how to make BERDO work for large property owners, developing training pathways into the field of building operations with the PowerCorpsBOS program, advancing coastal resilience and heat resilience solutions, and championing increased investment in public and active transportation infrastructure.



BUILDING OPERATIONS

B2. Expand building decarbonization support for small buildings.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY & QUALITY

CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION

SHARED CITY

CARE-FULL CITY

ECONOMIC & CAREER MOBILITY

HEALTHY CITY

FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY



Related Metric(s): Number of Heat Pumps installed in Residential and Commercial Buildings;
Number of Small Buildings Weatherized or Electrified Through Boston Energy Saver

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ●

IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Implement and Expand the Boston Energy Saver Program

CONTINUE & SCALE

Lead Department(s): Environment Department

Support Department(s): Mayor's Office of Housing

In 2025, Boston, Eversource, and National Grid signed an MOU to deploy \$150 million in Mass Save investments to support the decarbonization of smaller buildings not subject to BERDO. This partnership provided the foundation for the launch of Boston Energy Saver, a new City service launched in October 2025 that helps renters, homeowners, landlords, and small businesses upgrade their buildings and reduce energy costs. Boston Energy Saver also coordinates with key City departments and programs, such as the Mayor's Office of Housing's HomeWorks Green Loan Program, to serve as a one-stop shop for small building owners and provides expert technical assistance. The City will look to expand its services through the Boston Energy Saver program and use the lessons learned from working directly with constituents to inform its advocacy to strengthen energy efficiency and decarbonization programs in Boston and statewide.

Incentivize Gas-to-Electric Stove Conversions

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

Lead Department(s): Environment Department

Gas appliances pose significant indoor air quality risks, releasing pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter that can worsen asthma and other respiratory conditions. Switching to electric stoves can improve indoor air quality, lower energy costs, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but upfront costs often create a barrier for many households. The City of Boston will complete a pilot project facilitating the transition from gas to electric induction stoves in public housing in Dorchester, funded by \$1 million from the Pollution Abatement Fund overseen by the City's Air Pollution Control Commission. As part of this project, the City is partnering with Boston University to study the precise changes in indoor air quality and quantify the health and cost benefits for residents. The City will assess the outcomes of the pilot when it concludes in 2027 and explore opportunities to continue the program, such as securing additional funding for more stove replacements, with the goal of promoting healthier, more energy-efficient homes, particularly in communities disproportionately affected by pollution and energy burden.



BUILDING OPERATIONS

B3. Expand current initiatives that support low-income and affordable housing building decarbonization efforts.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY & QUALITY

CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION

HEALTHY CITY

FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY



Related Metric(s): Number of Heat Pumps Installed in Residential and Commercial Buildings



Linked Strategies: B1, B3, F2

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ○ ○

IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Deliver on Fossil Fuel-Free Public Housing by 2030

Lead Department(s): Boston Housing Authority

CONTINUE & SCALE

The Boston Housing Authority (BHA) is the largest housing provider in the city, owning or overseeing approximately 10,000 rental units that are home to more than 17,000 Bostonians. The BHA has set an ambitious goal of achieving fossil fuel-free public housing by 2030, with most of its residential units already subject to the Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO). BHA has made significant progress toward creating healthier, greener living environments—nearly eliminating the use of delivered fuels such as heating oil, piloting geothermal energy in partnership with National Grid, and exploring solar installations on building rooftops. However, funding challenges remain a key barrier. The BHA will continue to advance key capital projects that reduce emissions and improve housing conditions, and work closely with City, state, and federal partners to ensure an equitable transition that prioritizes the health, comfort, and affordability of public housing residents.

Support Affordable Housing Preservation and Decarbonization through the Boston Acquisition Fund

Lead Department(s): Mayor's Office of Housing

CONTINUE & SCALE

Launched in 2024, the Boston Acquisition Fund (BAF) is a public-private revolving loan fund designed to preserve naturally occurring affordable housing and prevent displacement. The City works with responsible investor-owners to purchase tenanted multifamily rental properties and maintain rents affordable for existing residents. The City of Boston will explore opportunities to expand the Fund's impact by prioritizing buildings financed through the BAF for energy efficiency and electrification improvements.

2030 ACTIONS

Advocate for Support to Preserve and Decarbonize Affordable Housing

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

Lead Department(s): Mayor's Office of Housing

Support Department(s): Environment Department

Through funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the City launched the Large Building Energy Retrofit Program and the Healthy and Green Retrofit Pilot Program to advance decarbonization and improve health outcomes in Boston's affordable housing. The City also secured state grants through the Affordable Housing Decarbonization Grant Program in 2023 to support large building decarbonization, which funded electrification projects at Hano Homes in Allston and the Mildred C. Hailey Apartments in Jamaica Plain. These pilot initiatives have provided valuable insights into the complex technical, financial, and logistical challenges affordable housing owners face when pursuing building upgrades and electrification.

Building on these findings, the City will consolidate results from both ARPA-funded pilots and explore how to best support affordable housing owners in future decarbonization efforts. This includes connecting them to the Building Decarbonization Advisor Program offered by the Environment Department and to federal and state funding opportunities as they become available, while also advocating for expanded state funding to scale large building decarbonization efforts. The City will evaluate these funding sources and consider future funding and financing models to address remaining gaps and ensure sustained support for affordable housing decarbonization.

Project Spotlight: Upcoming Major Capital Projects at Boston Housing Authority Properties

- *Franklin Field Apartments, Dorchester:* The project, to be completed in partnership with National Grid, will be the first networked geothermal project in the City of Boston. By the end of the project, the seven buildings and 129 apartments in the pilot will transition off of aging gas boilers and window units, and be fossil fuel-free. Residents will benefit from highly-efficient heating and cooling systems and improved indoor air quality.
- *Pond Street Apartments, Jamaica Plain:* Comprehensive updates to a 44-unit garden style elderly apartment complex, featuring geothermal heating, envelope and roofing upgrades to enhance energy efficiency, solar photovoltaic installation and resiliency upgrades to the community center.
- *Doris Bunte Apartments, Roxbury:* Substantial renovation of a historic high-rise elderly apartment building. The unique cylindrical tower in Egleston Square will receive updates to accessibility, building envelope, mechanical, plumbing, and electrical systems, including new air source heat pumps and electrified domestic hot water.
- *Ausonia Apartments, North End:* Renovation and resiliency updates to an 100-unit mid-rise senior housing building. The project will improve accessibility, add community amenities, incorporate flood protection, elevate utilities, and electrify heating and hot water through heat pump systems

B4. Identify challenges and opportunities for reducing emissions in hard-to-decarbonize buildings.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS **HEALTHY CITY**

Linked Strategies: B1

PRIORITIZATION
 FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○
 IMPACT: ● ○ ○

2030 ACTIONS

Establish a Restaurant Decarbonization Task Force

Lead Department(s): Environment Department

Support Department(s): Office of Economic Opportunity & Inclusion

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

Decarbonizing restaurants is challenging due to their heavy reliance on gas for cooking, high upfront costs to transition to electric appliances, and space constraints for electrification upgrades. These barriers are especially difficult for small or tenant-operated businesses without strong incentives or technical support. Small businesses like restaurants have been found to participate in the Mass Save program at much lower rates than larger businesses because of many of these barriers.

Establish a Historic Properties Decarbonization Task Force

Lead Department(s): Office of Historic Preservation

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

Historic properties can leverage the State and Federal Historic Tax Credit Program, one of the most important tools for adaptive reuse, systems upgrades, and rehabilitation projects in historic buildings. While the City will advocate for improvements to the Historic Tax Credit program, such as increasing program caps and expanding eligibility, the City aims to learn how historic properties can continue to pursue rehabilitation projects to decarbonize and improve energy efficiency. The Historic Properties Decarbonization Task Force will discuss barriers and potential strategies for the rehabilitation and decarbonization of historic properties. Recognizing that the vast majority of today's building stock, including designated and older, non-designated historic properties, will remain in use for decades to come, the task force will focus on reducing emissions while preserving cultural, architectural, and community value.

The task force will bring together preservation experts, decarbonization professionals, municipal staff, and community stakeholders to identify best practices and study regulatory and financial barriers, with potential deliverables to include guidance for energy-efficient retrofits that maintain historic character. Emphasis will be placed on ensuring that climate action strengthens, rather than compromises, the integrity and usability of historic properties.

B5. Promote healthier, more efficient homes.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY & QUALITY **CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION**

HEALTHY CITY

PRIORITIZATION
 FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○
 IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Create a Green Housing Labeling

Lead Department(s): Environment Department

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

Improving transparency around building performance can help residents make healthier, more informed choices when renting or buying a home, while also encouraging property owners to invest in energy efficiency and climate resilience. To support this, Boston will explore a voluntary green labeling program for rented and owned homes that highlights energy efficiency, indoor air quality, and climate resilience features. The program would provide clear, accessible information to renters and homebuyers, helping them make informed decisions while recognizing property owners who invest in sustainable upgrades. Labels could be integrated into listing platforms and tied to incentives, technical assistance, or financing options to encourage broad participation and drive demand for healthier, more efficient housing across Boston. Future development could include defining green labeling criteria, exploring effective ways to present and communicate labels to renters and homebuyers, and engaging stakeholders and the community to ensure the program is clear, accessible, actionable, and thoughtfully designed.



BUILDING MATERIALS

Boston released Zero Waste Boston in 2019 to chart a path toward reducing waste, increasing material reuse, and promoting sustainable resource management across the city. Buildings use a lot of material, but they also produce a significant amount of waste during construction, renovation and demolition. Unlike most of Boston's waste, which is recycled or incinerated, building waste tends to go to landfills, and trucking to facilities with capacity means traveling further and further away. This makes it increasingly important to develop markets and uses for building materials that can be reused or recycled. By focusing on the materials used in buildings, including strategies for low-carbon construction, adaptive reuse, and responsible deconstruction, Boston can reduce embodied carbon, limit waste sent to landfills, and support a circular economy.

Over the next five years, Boston aims to be a national leader in the emerging field of building material reuse, reducing embodied carbon while advancing resilient, sustainable development. The City's focus will be on researching and developing the market for reused materials, improving adaptive reuse practices, and building on existing policies like Net Zero Carbon Zoning. These strategies will help support equitable and affordable development, maintain the city's historic and cultural character, and ensure that both new and existing buildings contribute to Boston's climate goals. The strategies below outline how the City will advance these efforts through 2030.

B6. Reduce embodied carbon through low-carbon new construction, adaptive reuse of existing structures, and responsible deconstruction, rehabilitation, and reconstruction practices.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY & QUALITY

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS

HEALTHY CITY

GREEN CITY



Related Metric(s): In Development for Summer 2027

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ●

IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Apply and Evaluate Net Zero Carbon Zoning

Lead Department(s): Environment Department; Planning Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

In early 2025, Mayor Wu announced the approval of an amendment to the City's zoning code to include Net Zero Carbon Zoning, which now requires most new large buildings to emit net zero emissions from the day they open. Net Zero Carbon Zoning also requires large projects over 50,000 gross square footage subject to Article 80B to report on embodied carbon and conduct an embodied carbon assessment of the structure and enclosure. The embodied carbon data collected through Net Zero Carbon Zoning will inform ongoing research and policy efforts to integrate low-carbon design into city standards and practices, and to develop new guidelines that further reduce the carbon footprint of new development.

2030 ACTIONS

Advance Adaptive Reuse

Lead Department(s): Planning Department

Support Department(s): Environment Department; Office of Historic Preservation

CONTINUE & SCALE

Boston launched the Office-to-Residential Conversion Program in 2023 to keep Downtown Boston active and vibrant as demand for office space declines, encouraging the adaptive reuse of under-utilized office buildings instead of demolition. Recognizing that the lowest-carbon building is the one that is already built, the program prioritizes reuse over new construction, reducing embodied carbon while supporting sustainability, affordability, and economic vitality. It streamlines pathways for building reuse by reducing barriers to adapting existing structures, supports Boston's vision for a revitalized Downtown while maintaining the City's historic and cultural character, and increases housing availability for Boston residents. Participating buildings must meet affordability requirements, with at least 17 percent of units designated for residents with an Area Median Income lower than 60 percent, and adhere to energy efficiency standards in line with the Stretch Code. The City has set a goal of creating 2,000 new housing units and revitalizing 2 million square feet of real estate by 2026 through adaptive reuse efforts. Within the first two years of the Office-to-Residential Conversion Program, over 1,000 housing units have already been proposed. The City will continue to monitor and learn from this program to guide future projects and expansion to the program.

Develop a Toolkit for Buildings to Navigate the Deconstruction Process

Lead Department(s): Environment Department

START

Deconstruction is the intentional disassembly of buildings to capture materials for reuse, while reconstruction refers to the process of repairing or rebuilding an existing structure with updated efficiency and embodied carbon standards. These practices reduce construction waste, lower emissions, and support climate-resilient design. To encourage wider adoption, the City will develop a toolkit to guide buildings, including historic buildings, through the deconstruction process, and conduct a market analysis of the reuse market to understand the quality and availability of second-hand building materials in the region. The market analysis will guide additional policies and programs that the City will consider to grow the building material reuse supply and/or demand.



TRANSPORTATION

Boston is working to transform how people and goods move to build a safer, more connected city. By expanding access to reliable and affordable transportation options, redesigning streets to prioritize walking and biking safety, and facilitating the transition to electric vehicles, Boston aims to create a transportation system that works for everyone.

As a regional economic hub, the City's transportation challenges and opportunities are fundamentally regional, covering many municipal and state jurisdictions. Boston has roughly 395,000 daily commuters, and about 60 percent travel in from outside the city. As Boston also aims to support the mobility needs of people commuting into the city, we recognize the supporting and complementary role Bostonians play in many of the systems that can reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector. The City of Boston's strategies focus on strengthening access to regional transit services and reducing car dependency. For those trips that continue to rely on personal vehicles, the City aims to ensure that remaining cars on the road are zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) and that Boston has sufficient charging infrastructure to meet growing demand. These efforts will advance mode shift, reduce reliance on fossil fuels, and create a more connected, equitable, and resilient transportation system for all Bostonians.

Transportation is the second largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Boston, accounting for nearly a third of the city's emissions, with 91 percent of Boston's transportation emissions coming from passenger vehicles. Two-thirds of transportation emissions are estimated to come from commuters coming from out of the city.

Reducing transportation emissions is essential to meeting Boston's carbon neutrality goal, improving air quality, and supporting healthier, more livable neighborhoods. The most effective way to achieve these reductions is by encouraging people to drive less and to rely more on sustainable modes of travel, including walking, biking, and public transit. However, barriers such as limited access to transportation options, high and inequitable costs, and safety concerns can make this shift challenging. A sustainable, comprehensive transportation system is also a more equitable one - ensuring that all Bostonians, regardless of income, neighborhood, disability, or vehicle access have convenient ways to get where they need to go.

Breakdown of Boston's Transportation Emissions (2023)

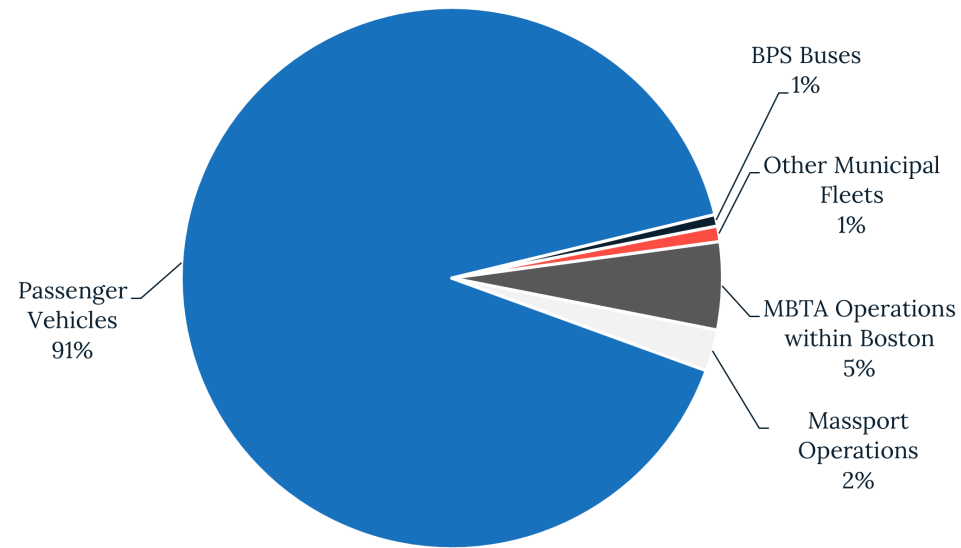


Figure 11: Breakdown of Boston's Transportation Emissions. (Source: 2023 Greenhouse Gas Inventory)

Transportation costs make up an average of 13 percent of household income in Boston - and they are higher for Bostonians who live farther from a rail station or frequent bus route. This geographic affordability gap can be significant even over short distances. For example, residents commuting to Back Bay with a monthly commuter rail pass boarding at Fairmount Station pay \$90, whereas boarding just a half mile away at the Hyde Park Station costs \$214 per month.²⁸

Boston's transportation vision through 2030 prioritizes access - ensuring every resident is within a 5-minute walk of high-quality transit, bikeshare, and electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure. The city's public transit network includes not only the MBTA's five rapid transit lines, but also the commuter rail, and a dense network of bus routes. Some bus routes carry some of the highest ridership of any transit service in the city. Improving service reliability and affordability along frequent bus corridors is central to achieving the City's climate and equity goals.

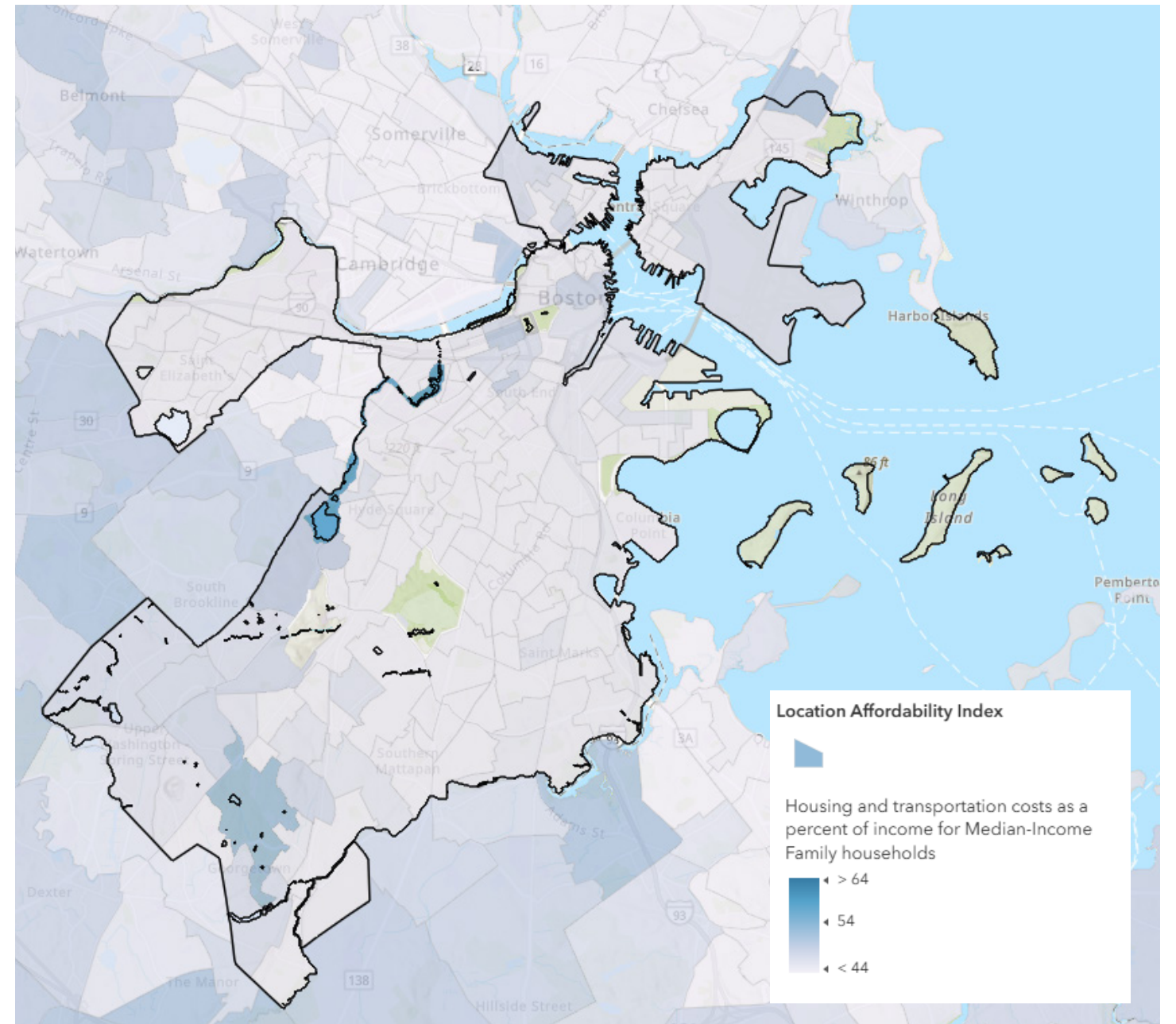


Figure 12: The Location Affordability Index (LAI) is a measure of the combined cost of housing and transportation (Source: US Department of Housing and Urban Development)

To close mobility gaps and make sustainable options more appealing, Boston continues to expand and improve its network of bike infrastructure, including protected bike lanes, shared-use paths, and bike share. Bluebikes ridership has more than doubled in the last five years, reflecting rising demand for accessible transportation options. This growth also reflects the City’s ongoing expansion of the bikeshare system, with 71 new stations added in Boston over the last two years. Safer, connected bike infrastructure enables more people to choose low-emission travel across neighborhoods and first-or-last-mile connections for shorter trips.

Go Boston 2030, Boston’s transportation plan, provides a comprehensive overview of the challenges, opportunities, and priorities for the next five years. The 2030 Climate Action Plan reinforces the vision for an accessible, safe, and reliable transportation system for Boston and complements Go Boston 2030 by outlining strategies that emphasize the importance of working with our regional and state partners to make significant improvements in transportation reliability.

IMPROVING SAFETY

ASPIRATIONAL TARGET

Eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries in Boston

EXPANDING ACCESS

ASPIRATIONAL TARGET

Every Bostonian will be within a 10 minute walk of transit, bikeshare, and carshare

ENSURING RELIABILITY

ASPIRATIONAL TARGET

Bostonians’ average commute to work time will decrease by 10%

REDUCING CAR USE

ASPIRATIONAL TARGET

Reducing drive alone to work rates by 50% and increasing transit use by 33%

REDUCING EMISSIONS

ASPIRATIONAL TARGET

Carbon neutrality by 2050

INCREASING AFFORDABILITY

ASPIRATIONAL TARGET

Reduce the transportation cost burden for very low income individuals to the citywide average for a median household

Figure 13: Aspirational Mobility Targets. (Source: Go Boston 2030)

What this section aims to achieve by 2030

- **Reduce vehicles miles traveled (VMT)**, with a particular focus on decreasing reliance on single-occupancy passenger vehicles and mode-shift.
- **Make walking, biking, and public transit safer, more accessible, and more convenient**, through improved infrastructure, connectivity, and rider experience.
- **Facilitate the electrification of the transportation system**, accelerating the transition to zero-emission vehicles across public and private fleets and expanding access to charging infrastructure.
- **Advance equitable access to transportation options**, ensuring all residents can safely and affordably access jobs, services, and recreation.

REDUCE VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED

Many Bostonians continue to rely on driving to reach their destinations - often because of prolonged wait and travel times or because they live or work in areas with limited transit access. Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) has remained relatively stable since 2005, underscoring the need for continued efforts to expand accessibility of walking, biking, and public transit, improve transit service reliability, and incentivizing a shift toward more sustainable modes of transportation.

Vehicle Miles Traveled

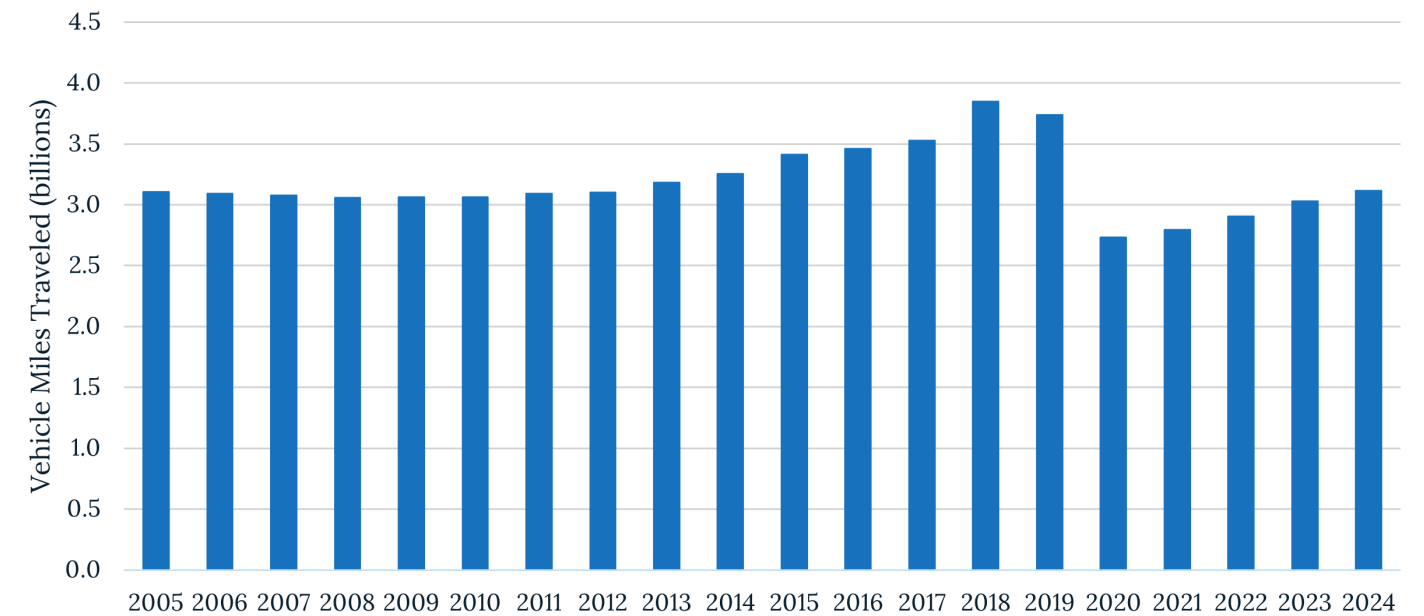


Figure 14: Vehicle Miles Traveled in Boston 2005 to 2024. (Source: CTPS (2005-2019); MVC (2022-2023)²⁹)

Implementing Complete Streets design principles is a key part of this effort. By designing streets to accommodate all users while prioritizing the safety of the most vulnerable users and reliability for transit riders, Complete Streets improve safety, accessibility, and reliability, and comfort across the transportation network. These improvements can include protected bike lanes, wider sidewalks, curb extensions, accessible crosswalks, transit-priority measures, as well as green infrastructure to mitigate heat and manage stormwater. Incorporating Complete Streets into street design and maintenance not only encourages walking, biking, and transit use, but also supports equity by ensuring that streets serve residents of all ages, abilities, and neighborhoods.

The strategies outlined in this chapter aim to reduce vehicle miles traveled by making sustainable, low-carbon modes of transportation more convenient, affordable, and accessible. These actions focus on expanding public transit use, supporting active transportation options such as walking and biking, and aligning land use planning with the City’s climate and mobility goals. By improving safety, connectivity, and comfort across the transportation network - and by collaborating with regional partners to enhance access and equity - Boston will make it easier for residents and visitors to choose cleaner, more efficient ways to move around the city.



REDUCE VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED

T1. Encourage bus use with improvements to affordability, convenience, and accessibility.

CARE-FULL CITY GREEN CITY HEALTHY CITY FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY

TRANSPORTATION AFFORDABILITY & ACCESS PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS ECONOMIC & CAREER MOBILITY

Related Metric(s): Monthly Public Transit Ridership; Estimated Annual Vehicle Miles Traveled

Linked Strategies: T4

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○

IMPACT: ● ● ●

2030 ACTIONS

Provide Bus Priority in Key Locations

Lead Department(s): Transportation Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

In 2022, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Board of Directors authorized the MBTA to begin the Bus Network Redesign (BNR) project. The existing bus network was originally designed to transport residents from their homes to downtown for work. However, population growth, increased congestion, and the emergence of new economic centers across the city have created a pressing need to modernize and update the system. Through BNR, the MBTA will increase bus service by 25 percent with the goal of completing this by 2029. The first new BNR routes were rolled out in 2024, successfully resulting in a 20% year-over-year growth in ridership on Phase I routes, and the MBTA continues to implement BNR segments alongside other seasonal service changes on a quarterly basis.

Transit priority requires street changes that rely on continued strong collaboration between the MBTA, the City of Boston, and funding partners, including the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Strategies include dedicated bus lanes, queue jumps that allow buses to bypass traffic congestion at intersections, camera enforcement for vehicles stopped in a dedicated bus lane, and Transit Signal Priority (TSP) to give buses priority at traffic signals and reduce delays. This will improve transit reliability and reduce travel times, encouraging more trips by transit, thereby reducing VMT and GHG emissions. Key bus priority projects include Blue Hill Avenue, Tremont/Columbus, Lower Broadway/Alford St, Route 57, Hyde Park Ave, Rutherford Ave, and North Station-Seaport Rapid Bus.

2030 ACTIONS

Improve Bus Stops and Shelters

Lead Department(s): Transportation Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

Well-designed shelters provide protection from rain, snow, wind, and extreme heat, making waiting for the bus safer and more comfortable – particularly for older adults, people with disabilities, and families. In the coming years, the City will invest in bus stops throughout Boston, with a particular focus on locations that deliver the greatest equity, accessibility, and operational benefits, in collaboration with the MBTA.

The City and MBTA will work together to identify near-term shelter opportunities along high-ridership and high-impact transit streets, and to coordinate shelter upgrades with capital projects already underway. Major initiatives such as Blue Hill Avenue, Columbia Road, the North Station to Seaport corridor, and upcoming Green Line reconstruction projects all include stop accessibility work that can support future shelters. As new construction or roadway redesigns advance, the City will continue to ensure stops are built to be shelter-ready by incorporating accessible landings, clear paths of travel, utility conduit, and adequate curbside space that aligns with the updated Bus Stop Design Guide requirements.

The City and the MBTA are also investing in other types of bus stop amenities. The City will create a new Street Furniture Contract, an update to an existing contract that dates back to 2001, and look at adding additional shelters and other amenities, such as benches, real time arrival screens, and green infrastructure. The MBTA allocated \$15 million in funding for a new Bus Stop Amenities Program in the FY26-230 Capital Investment Plan, which will result in improvements to approximately 100 bus stops across the network, including accessibility improvements at crossings, wayfinding, shelters, and benches. The City and the MBTA will collaborate to determine locations for the new street furniture and long-term maintenance needs.

Project Spotlight: Rutherford Avenue / Sullivan Square

Through the Rutherford Ave / Sullivan Square project, the City will redesign and reconstruct one of the most critical corridors in Boston. Spanning the length of Charlestown, this corridor, when reconstructed, will feature a safer, more resilient, multi-modal boulevard. Whether traveling by car, bus, bicycle, or on foot, the redesigned roadway will feature improvements to help connect residents with opportunities locally and throughout the region. It will also increase open space and tree canopy in this section of the neighborhood.


Guided by community feedback, the City will be advancing designs in 2026. The roughly \$200 million project has received significant financial support from the Metropolitan Planning Organization. When completed, this project will complement the City's recently completed redesign and reconstruction of the Bill Russell Bridge.

For more information visit: boston.gov/rutherford-avenue-sullivan-square-design-project

REDUCE VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED

T2. Encourage walking, biking, and other forms of active transportation by improving safety, ease, and comfort for everyone on Boston streets.

CARE-FULL CITY FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY SHARED CITY HEALTHY CITY MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING
 TRANSPORTATION AFFORDABILITY & ACCESS CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS

 **Related Metric(s):** Number of Bluebikes Trips;
 Estimated Annual Vehicle Miles Traveled

 **Linked Strategies:** T3

PRIORITIZATION
FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○
IMPACT: ● ● ●

2030 ACTIONS

Continue Delivering on Speed-Reduction Strategies

Lead Department(s): Transportation Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

Vision Zero is Boston's comprehensive strategy for eliminating traffic fatalities and severe injuries by 2030.³⁰ Central to this approach is redesigning streets and public spaces to calm traffic, lower vehicle speeds, and create safer, more comfortable environments that not only improve safety outcomes, but also support climate goals by encouraging more trips by walking, biking, and other sustainable modes. The City's approach to achieving Vision Zero includes two major components:

- **Safer Corridors:** The City prioritizes safety improvements along major roadways, particularly four-lane and wider corridors, which have been shown to experience higher rates of severe crashes. These projects reallocate roadway space to create dedicated bus lanes, protected bike lanes, and safer crossings.
- **Safety Surge:** In residential neighborhoods, the City is implementing comprehensive traffic-calming measures. These may include speed humps, raised intersections, curb extensions (neckdowns), pedestrian islands, and chicanes to slow vehicles and improve safety for people walking and biking.

Vision Zero projects are selected based on safety history, such as using data from Emergency Medical Services that track vehicle, cyclist, and pedestrian incidents, if there are community spaces nearby such as parks, schools, and community centers, as well as resident input.

Expand Safe Routes to Schools

Lead Department(s): Boston Public Schools; Transportation Department; Boston Public Health Commission

Support Department(s): Office of Green Infrastructure

CONTINUE & SCALE

The Safe Routes to Schools programs promotes walking and biking to school, while also making routes to school and intersections safer and implementing resilience features, such as green infrastructure, where feasible. Route improvements to schools can improve bus on-time performance, prioritize reliable access to school, reduce congestion around schools during arrival and dismissal, and engage the community in testing new ideas that prioritize road safety. Co-led by the Boston Public Health Commission and the Streets Cabinet, the City will work with Boston Public Schools to ensure that every school has the opportunity to participate in the Boston Safe Routes to School Program and the In-school Youth Cycling Program.

2030 ACTIONS

Expand Infrastructure, Incentives, and Public Training to Encourage Safe Biking

Lead Department(s): Transportation Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

The City of Boston will continue to connect and expand its cycling network and infrastructure, including the Core Connected Bikeway Network, secure and convenient bike parking, and the public bikeshare system, Bluebikes. Additional incentives could make it easier to own electric bikes (e-bikes), such as continued vouchers for purchasing an e-bike, discounts on annual bike share memberships, and access to on-bike training. The City of Boston will continue to provide on-bike instruction to adults, youth, and children, teaching basic bike skills and safe riding through Learn-to-Bike workshops, the in-school Youth Cycling Program, summer bike programming, and Bike Towns. In addition, the City will continue to run free bike repair clinics for community members.

Expand Pedestrian Open Spaces

Lead Department(s): Transportation Department

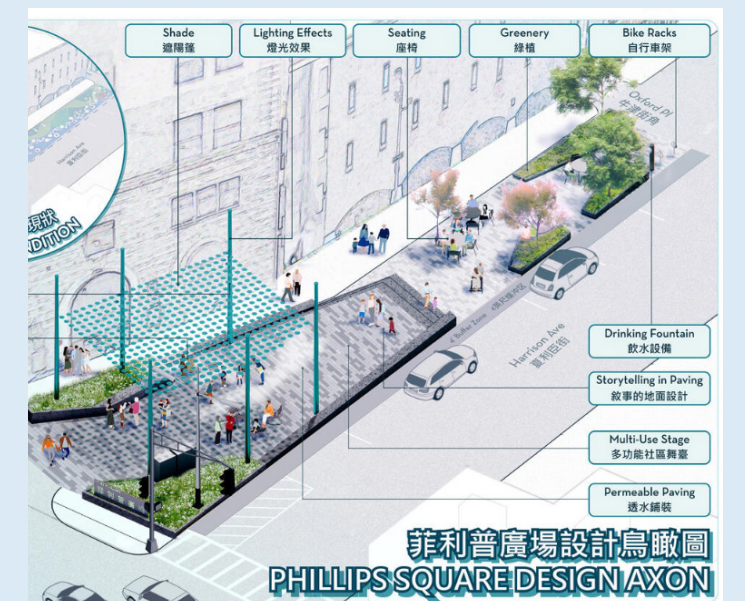
CONTINUE & SCALE

Boston's Open Streets are temporary street closures that re-imagine our busy streets into vibrant, safe spaces for walking, biking, and family-friendly activities. These events enhance safety and support local businesses through increased foot traffic. Boston launched its first Open Streets event on Newbury Street in 2016 and, beginning in 2022 under Mayor Wu, expanded the program to neighborhoods across the city. Open Newbury Street continues to be a successful program that draws over 10,000 residents and visitors per event to explore the eight block, mile long stretch of shops, restaurants, galleries, and activities free from car traffic. Boston's Neighborhood Street Plazas are small public open spaces created from underutilized street space. The City is gathering community input on where these plazas can be integrated to serve as vibrant community spaces, featuring engaging activations and climate resilience elements that encourage walking, neighborhood interaction, and economic activity. Building on the success of Boston's Open Streets and Neighborhood Street Plazas Programs, the City will pursue opportunities to increase the number and frequency of pedestrian-only streets and plazas, low-volume shared streets, and other public open spaces, creating more vibrant, safe, and accessible public spaces for people of all ages.

Project Spotlight: Philips Square Redesign

The Phillips Square redesign builds on the success of the 2019 Tactical Plaza installation, which temporarily reimagined the space and demonstrated its potential as a community gathering place. Through this next phase, the City is converting that tactical intervention into a permanent, thoughtfully designed public plaza. The new plan creates two connected spaces: a flexible stage for performances and cultural events, anchored by artist Wen-ti's Garment Worker statue, and a quieter, greener seating area for everyday use. Expanded planting areas, shade structures, and misting poles provide cooling and comfort, addressing heat while strengthening the plaza's role as a welcoming gateway to Chinatown.

More information on this ongoing project can be found [here](#).



T3. Orient land use planning towards vehicle miles traveled reduction.

HEALTHY CITY SHARED CITY

TRANSPORTATION AFFORDABILITY & ACCESS PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS ECONOMIC & CAREER MOBILITY

 **Related Metric(s):** Estimated Annual Vehicle Miles Traveled

 **Linked Strategies:** T2

PRIORITIZATION
FEASIBILITY: ● ● ●
IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Plan for Density Near Transit and Zone for Walkability

Lead Department(s): Transportation Department; Planning Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

Creating complete, connected neighborhoods is essential to reducing car dependence. When people live near jobs, services, and amenities such as grocery stores, childcare facilities, and community spaces, they can walk, bike, or take transit for most daily needs. This approach not only supports climate goals by reducing vehicle trips, but also advances equitable food access, public health, and gender equity, as caregivers often face complex travel patterns that are better served by nearby, walkable destinations. Squares + Streets zoning advances this vision by modernizing zoning in transit-accessible neighborhood centers and along main streets citywide. The zoning updates are designed to enable more housing, strengthen ground-floor uses like small businesses and arts and cultural spaces, and improve the public realm—supporting walkable, mixed-use districts while addressing climate resilience and local equity goals.

Continue Work to Revise Transportation Demand Management Measures and Parking Requirements

Lead Department(s): Transportation Department; Planning Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

The City will continue to promote transit and bicycle use through outreach, resource creation, and policy updates – collectively known as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies. The City has been offering the Boston Bikes Pass, with discounts for eligible riders as well as Learn-to-Bike workshops to encourage bicycle use. Building on the success of these existing programs, the City will also develop new TDM resources for target demographic groups with greater behavioral change potential, such as new residents. Through bicycle and EV parking guideline updates, the City will continue to provide policies aimed at lowering barriers to mode shift while keeping consistent with projected demand

2030 ACTIONS

Update the City’s Transportation Impact Analysis Requirements for Development Review to Equally Focus on Sustainable Alternative Modes

Lead Department(s): Transportation Department; Planning Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

The City will update and modernize its Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) requirements within the development review process to shift away from only focusing on inaccurately scaled vehicle-oriented metrics intended for regional highway analyses. The new requirements will instead prioritize more appropriately urban scaled metrics for our street network. It will also include more comprehensive evaluations of safety, walking, biking, and transit performance and access. This approach will prioritize better evaluation of impacts on all modes and help reduce car dependence and establish thresholds, site designs, and mitigation measures that better align with the City’s climate and mobility goals.

Partner Spotlight: Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)

The [Metropolitan Area Planning Council \(MAPC\)](#) is the regional planning agency that serves the cities and towns of Greater Boston and works to create a more sustainable, equitable, collaborative, and climate-resilient region.


MAPC provides data analysis, technical assistance, and policy guidance to help municipalities and their partners address shared challenges such as housing affordability, transportation, climate change, and economic development. By coordinating across municipal boundaries, the agency helps ensure that local decisions align with broader regional goals, supporting more equitable and environmentally sustainable outcomes.

As a member of the Metro Mayors Climate Taskforce organized by MAPC, Boston is working alongside peer municipalities to advance coordinated, region-wide climate action. Many of the challenges Boston faces are inherently regional, including transportation patterns shaped by commuters traveling into and out of the city, shared risks like coastal flooding affecting neighboring communities, and the interconnected nature of the region’s energy systems. Looking ahead, the City will deepen its partnership with MAPC on several shared priorities that require regional coordination and learning. This includes collaborating to pilot and scale cool roofs as a strategy to reduce urban heat, facilitating regional procurements for municipal electric medium/heavy-duty vehicles, as well as continuing to support the expansion of the Bluebikes system, for which MAPC serves as the regional coordinator. The partnership can also explore how municipalities across the region can plan for and establish resilience hubs so communities are better prepared for climate-related emergencies, and implement resilience assessment approaches to advance local flood mitigation solutions. MAPC will also continue to work with Boston on ensuring that Mass Save programs are effective and equitable for residents, and will coordinate closely to bring regional municipal perspectives as the next Three-Year Plan is developed. MAPC is well positioned to facilitate peer-to-peer learning, share best practices, and help cities and towns address complex regional challenges, many of which directly affect Boston.

REDUCE VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED

T4. Advocate for and assess policies and funding opportunities to ensure Boston’s transportation systems are accessible, affordable, and equitable.

CARE-FULL CITY HEALTHY CITY FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY
 TRANSPORTATION AFFORDABILITY & ACCESS ECONOMIC & CAREER MOBILITY

 **Related Metric(s):** Monthly Public Transit Ridership; Estimated Annual Vehicle Miles Traveled

 **Linked Strategies:** T1

PRIORITIZATION
FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○
IMPACT: ● ● ●

2030 ACTIONS

Continue Fare-Free Bus Routes

Lead Department(s): Transportation Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

The City of Boston made the 23, 28, and 29 bus routes fare-free in 2022 using funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). This pilot program is expected to conclude in 2026 when the funding expires. These three routes serve some of the highest-ridership bus corridors in the city and have come closer to recovering pre-pandemic ridership levels than most other bus routes. The fare-free pilot has also helped reduce car dependence, with 5 percent of riders reporting that they would have driven if the buses were not free. Most riders on these lines are transit-critical, meaning they are low-income and have limited-to-no access to cars, making reliable, affordable public transit essential for reaching jobs, services, and daily needs.

The City of Boston seeks to make the 23, 28, and 29 bus routes permanently fare-free by securing sustainable funding and exploring the feasibility of incorporating additional routes in the program.

Improve Access to the Fairmount Line and Other Commuter Rail Services

Lead Department(s): Transportation Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

The [Fairmount Line](#) is a critical commuter rail corridor serving Dorchester, Mattapan, and Hyde Park - communities of color that have historically lacked sufficient transit access. In recent years, the line has seen significant improvements, including the addition of new stations, more weekday daily trips and extended service hours, and expanded access to free transfers. The MBTA has also committed to transitioning the line’s fleet to electric vehicles beginning in 2028. These new cars will deliver faster, quieter, and more reliable service while reducing air pollution in the environmental justice communities the line serves.

The City of Boston will continue to advocate for improved access to Fairmount Line stations and other Commuter Rail stations to ensure more residents can benefit from these services, supporting reductions in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas emissions. The City will also work with the MBTA to explore strategies for increasing service frequency on rail lines serving Boston, with a particular focus on subway-like schedules for the Fairmount Line.

2030 ACTIONS

Advocate for Commuter Rail Fare Policy Improvements

CONTINUE & SCALE

Lead Department(s): Transportation Department

The Commuter Rail, operated by the MBTA, largely services commuters traveling between Downtown Boston and the farthest edges of Boston and nearby cities. A monthly Commuter Rail pass costs differently depending on where you live, even within the City of Boston. The City of Boston will continue urging Zone 1A Commuter Rail fares, the most affordable option, for all Boston stations and will work with the MBTA to explore strategies for improving Commuter Rail fares regionally. These efforts aim to encourage greater ridership on rail lines serving Boston and reduce the number of cars entering the city during peak travel hours.

Program Spotlight: MBTA’s Income-Eligible Reduced Fares

In 2024, the MBTA launched the Income-Eligible Reduced Fares Program, offering approximately half-priced fares across its transit system to Massachusetts residents enrolled in a state assistance program such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and MassHealth. This Program advances fare equity and increases access to the MBTA’s buses, subways, commuter rail, ferries, and paratransit services, saving eligible residents an average of \$720 a year. The MBTA and the City will continue outreach to increase awareness and program participation, helping more residents benefit from affordable, reliable transit while supporting broad mobility and climate goals.

For more information, visit mbta.com/fares/reduced/income-eligible



2030 ACTIONS

Advance Sustainable Transportation Funding Through Regional and State Collaboration

START

Lead Department(s): Transportation Department

The MBTA has major capital projects underway to improve the reliability of the transit network and advance system-wide electrification. Ensuring that the MBTA has sufficient funding to deliver these improvements while continuing to provide consistent, quality service is essential to growing transit ridership over the long term. Similarly, as our region's public bikeshare system has grown and matured, it's become widely recognized as a reliable transportation option deserving of continued investment. The City will collaborate with MassDOT, the MBTA, the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and the State Legislature to develop a long-term, sustainable financing plan for transportation. The City will advocate for a strategy that prioritizes communities with the fewest options and fewest resources while incentivizing trips by transit, walking, biking, and other sustainable modes.

Evaluate Financial Mechanisms to Reduce Commuting in Private Vehicles

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

Lead Department(s): Environment Department

The large volume of trips taken by private vehicles into the City of Boston congests our roads, renders bus service unreliable, and contributes to greenhouse gas emissions. Incentivizing transportation choices aligned with the City's climate and mobility goals is frustrated by the external nature of many of the costs imposed by individual decisions to drive. The City will study financial mechanisms to discourage vehicle trips into Boston, including updates to parking freeze permit fees, parking pricing structures, tolls, and congestion-related fees. By examining these tools, the City can identify the most effective strategies for reducing congestion and encouraging more sustainable travel choices. As part of this work, the City will assess opportunities to reinvest revenue generated from these mechanisms into equitable transportation decarbonization programs and strategies that improve and expand low-or-no carbon travel options.

Project Spotlight: Allston Multimodal Transportation Project

The Allston Multimodal Transportation Project is a long-term, transformative project to reimagine a critical stretch of the I-90 corridor into a safer and more connected transportation network. By replacing aging infrastructure and realigning the highway, the project will unlock new opportunities for improved transit, expanded pedestrian and bicycle access, and enhanced open space along the Charles River. It aims to reduce congestion, improve regional mobility, and better link neighborhoods in Allston, Brighton, and beyond while supporting long-term climate goals.

The City of Boston is working closely with MassDOT and a coalition of community groups and institutional stakeholders to advance a shared vision for the corridor. Through this collaboration, the project integrates multimodal transportation improvements with community priorities, ensuring that investments in infrastructure also deliver benefits for equity, accessibility, and climate resilience.

For more information, visit mass.gov/info-details/about-the-allston-multimodal-transportation-project

REDUCE VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED

T5. Improve first mile/last mile transit connections.

CARE-FULL CITY

HEALTHY CITY


TRANSPORTATION AFFORDABILITY & ACCESS

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○

IMPACT: ● ● ○

 Related Metric(s): Estimated Annual Vehicle Miles Traveled

2030 ACTIONS

Consider First Mile/Last Mile Transit Services to Key Destinations and Neighborhood Resources

Lead Department(s): Transportation Department

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

Train stations don't always get people to exactly where they need to go - limited transit connections can discourage transit use and increase reliance on cars. To tackle this issue, the City will scope a pilot program to establish bus routes connecting residents and tourists to key destinations and resources. This service would improve mobility for visitors, reduce reliance on car trips (particularly single-occupancy vehicles) for neighborhood residents and tourists, and help alleviate congestion-related emissions both downtown and in neighborhood centers. The City will evaluate the results of the pilot program, both on use and impacts on congestion, and evaluate future expansion and funding sources.

"We need reliability and trust that public transit services can get us to major hubs like North Station, South Station, and Seaport" - Resident (edited for clarity)



DECARBONIZE TRANSPORTATION

While Boston’s primary transportation goal is to shift trips away from private vehicles and toward public transit, walking, and biking, the City recognizes that cars will continue to play a role in mobility through 2030. To reduce emissions from those vehicles, Boston is committed to making electric vehicles a practical and accessible choice.

More Bostonians are purchasing EVs, but EV charging infrastructure is not keeping up with the demand. Since 2020, the number of EV registrations have increased six-fold while charging infrastructure remains confined to Downtown Boston.³¹ According to a recent survey of Bostonians, 33 percent of respondents reported that they have not purchased an EV due to limited access to charging, while among current EV owners, nearly 30 percent rely on charging in a garage or parking lot rather than at home. These findings highlight the importance of expanding public and shared charging options - particularly for residents without dedicated off-street parking.³² A key enabling factor in this transition is ensuring that EV charging infrastructure is widely available and equitably distributed.

The strategies outlined below aim to accelerate the transition to zero-emission transportation by expanding access to electric vehicle charging, supporting residents and businesses with the information needed to adopt ZEVs, and addressing emissions from freight and other hard-to-decarbonize sectors.

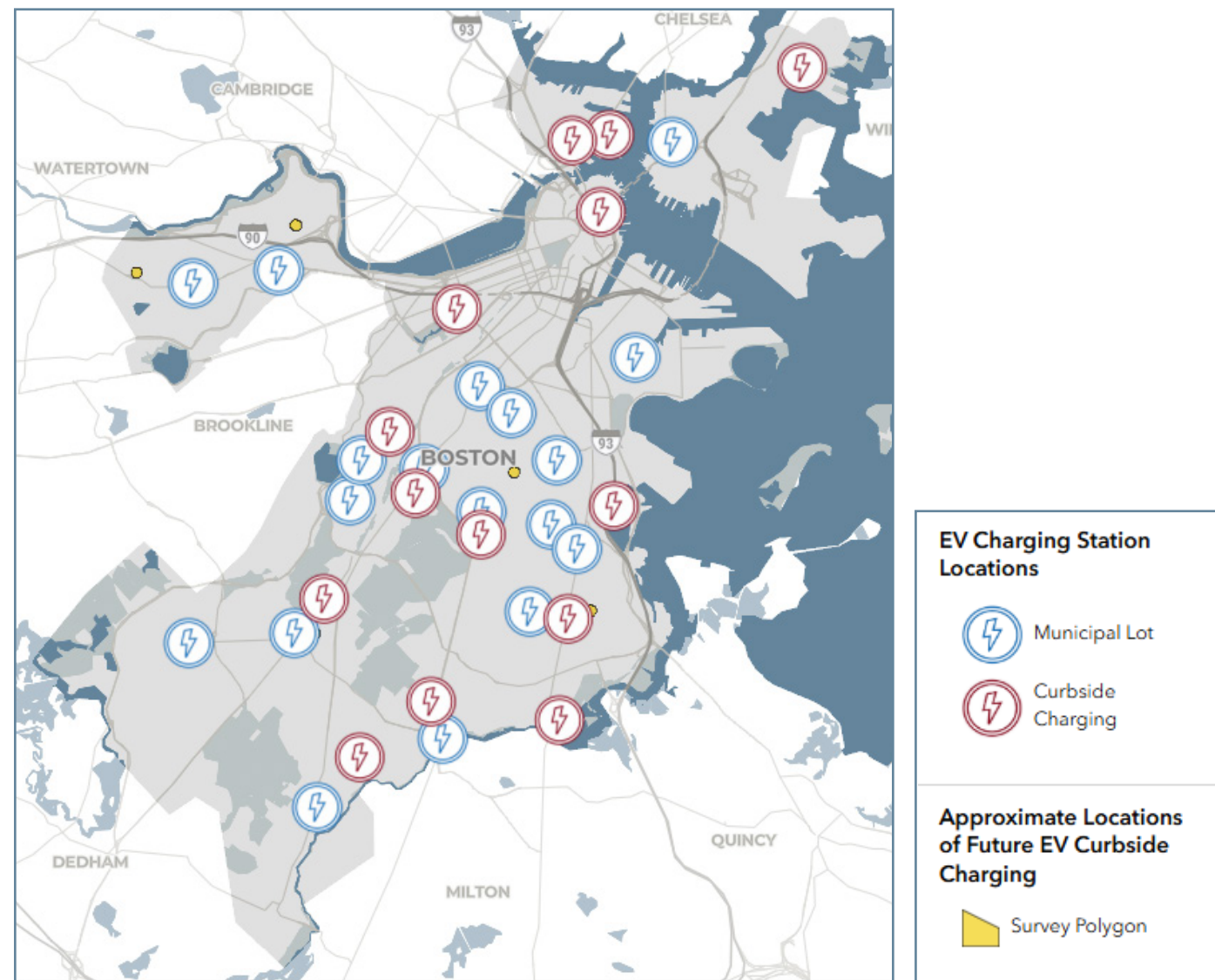


Figure 15: Map of publicly accessible charging station and number of ZEVs registered by zip code in Boston as of January 2026. (Source: Boston’s Transportation Department)

DECARBONIZE TRANSPORTATION

T6. Facilitate the transition to electric zero-emission vehicles by improving public access to charging infrastructure and tackling hard-to-decarbonize sectors such as medium/ heavy-duty vehicles.

HEALTHY CITY FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY SHARED CITY GREEN CITY CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION
 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS TRANSPORTATION AFFORDABILITY & ACCESS

Related Metric(s): Percentage of Zero-Emission Vehicles Registered in Boston;
 Number of Publicly-Accessible EV Charging Ports

PRIORITIZATION
 FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○
 IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Increase Publicly Available Charging Infrastructure Curbside and in Municipally Owned Parking Lots

Lead Department(s): Transportation Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

Boston already requires new developments to include EV-ready infrastructure, with 25 percent of parking spaces equipped with chargers and the remaining 75 percent built to support future installations.³³ However, many residents don’t have access to a private garage or driveway to charge at home (often called “garage orphans”). To close this gap, the City, over the next five years, will work to ensure every resident is within a five-minute walk of a publicly accessible charging station by 2030 by expanding availability to Level 2 and Level 3 charging in municipal lots and along the curb.

Project Spotlight: Curbside EV Charging Pilot Program

The City is actively installing Level 2 and Level 3 electric vehicle charging ports at curbside locations throughout Boston to meet the growing demand for charging infrastructure. Some of these stations will be owned and operated by the City, while others will be public-private partnerships. These two different approaches will help us achieve our goal of having every Boston resident live within a 5-minute walk of an EV charging station.

The City selected private partners to install privately-owned and maintained chargers at no cost to the City. In parallel, Better Together Brain Trust, a Boston-based organization focused on expanding access to clean energy, has partnered with Flo to procure and install chargers near existing public amenities such as parks and libraries, which the City will maintain. Over the next two years, the City and its partners will evaluate the performance of these two models, identify barriers, and determine opportunities to improve or scale the program.

For more information, visit boston.gov/ev-charging

2030 ACTIONS

Electrify the BPS Bus Fleet

Lead Department(s): Boston Public Schools

CONTINUE & SCALE

Approximately 750 school buses transport Boston students to 200+ schools each day— including private, charter and Boston Public Schools. This includes small, medium, and large buses (12-, 30-, and 71-passengers, respectively). Boston Public Schools Department of Transportation (BPS DOT) has already made major progress in cleaning up its fleet. By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, 15 percent of buses will be electric, and another 65 percent propane. Electric school buses mean zero harmful pollutants released near students from the bus tailpipe, helping Boston children with asthma. Further health and climate benefits of electric school buses are detailed on the [BPS website](#). Propane offers some health and air quality benefits compared to diesel, but still emits harmful pollutants and GHGs. BPS will continue transitioning to electric buses and installing the necessary charging infrastructure to ensure cleaner operations while maintaining bus reliability.

Develop a Sustainable Logistics Plan

Lead Department(s): Transportation Department

START

The freight sector is responsible for roughly 40 percent of transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions, and the rapid growth of e-commerce has added to congestion and increased instances of delivery vehicles blocking bus and bike lanes. A recent analysis by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), *Hidden and in Plain Sight: Impacts of E-Commerce in Massachusetts*, estimates that if current trends continue, delivery vehicle volumes on Boston streets could rise by 36 percent by 2030—driving a 32 percent increase in emissions and adding an average of 21 minutes to commute times. To address these impacts, the City will develop a Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan to identify strategies for reducing emissions from last-mile delivery operations. The Plan will be shaped by a focus group of City departments, logistics companies, and community stakeholders to identify barriers, explore incentives, and recommend policies that accelerate the shift to zero-emission delivery fleets while minimizing impacts on traffic, safety, and climate justice communities.

Partner Spotlight: Green Energy Consumers Alliance

For nearly a decade, Green Energy Consumers Alliance has been a trusted leader in educating residents about the benefits of electric vehicles and accelerating the transition to clean transportation. Through webinars, blogs, community events, and their online resources, they have helped thousands of consumers navigate the shift to electric driving with clear, practical guidance.

Over the past several years, Green Energy Consumers Alliance has also hosted educational workshops across Massachusetts focused on EV adoption and the statewide MOR-EV rebate program. Through EV showcases and ride-and-drive events, often in partnership with local community organizations, they have created hands-on opportunities for residents to learn about incentives, ask questions, and experience EVs firsthand.

As the City advances the transportation strategies outlined in its Climate Action Plan, partnerships like this are critical to ensuring residents have the information and access they need to make the switch to clean vehicles. The City of Boston will continue working with Green Energy Consumers Alliance to expand equitable access to electric vehicles and support residents in taking advantage of available rebates and incentives.

[Green Energy Consumers Alliance](#) is a nonprofit that aims to empower consumers and communities to speed a just transition to a zero-carbon world through green energy education, programming, and climate advocacy.

2030 ACTIONS

Develop Educational Resources on Electric Vehicles

Lead Department(s): Transportation Department

START

The City will increase availability and access to educational resources that help residents, businesses, and fleet operators understand the benefits of electric vehicles, available incentives, and the process of transitioning to ZEVs. The City will collaborate with residents who have experience owning or leasing electric vehicles to provide resources including multilingual outreach materials, online tools, and partnerships with community organizations to ensure information is accessible, relevant, and equity centered. This will reduce informational barriers to ZEV use and encourage adoption.

Conduct a Market Analysis to Inform How to Encourage Privately-Owned, Publicly Accessible EV Charging

Lead Department(s): Environment Department; Planning Department

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

The City will conduct a market analysis to assess the business case to encourage privately-owned, publicly accessible electric vehicle charging infrastructure on private property (e.g. under-utilized parking lots). This analysis will inform a planning and economic development strategy which may include public-private partnerships, an incentive program, or another city-managed process for matching interested landowners with EV charging companies.



Boston’s homes, businesses, institutions, and transportation systems all rely on energy for electricity and heating. Today, that energy system reflects decades of infrastructure and regulatory decisions that were not designed to meet modern climate goals, public health needs, or climate justice priorities. Boston continues to face challenges associated with fossil fuel-based infrastructure, including gas leaks that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions, pose safety risks, and impact health outcomes. Over the next five years, the City will work in collaboration with our state and utility partners to lay the groundwork for building out a reliable electric grid and decarbonized thermal energy networks that meet current and future energy demand.

Most electricity used in Boston is supplied through the regional New England electric grid, which is increasingly powered by renewable energy, however, it still relies heavily on fossil fuels. Heating, by contrast, remains dominated by fossil gas delivered through underground pipelines, along with steam-based district energy systems serving large campuses and institutions. While the strategies outlined in the Buildings and Transportation Chapters aim to reduce onsite gas use, this chapter proposes strategies that aim to tackle a complementary challenge: ensuring that the region’s energy systems can support widespread decarbonization by reducing our electric grid’s reliance on fossil gas and enabling the development of large-scale thermal energy networks. Together, these changes are critical to keeping energy reliable, safe, and affordable as Boston’s electricity needs evolve.

Rooftop solar, battery energy and storage systems, electric vehicles, and building electrification are transforming the grid into a more distributed and bidirectional system. This shift is essential to achieving the City’s net zero emission targets, but it also requires modernized infrastructure, Grid-Interactive Efficient Buildings (GEBS), and coordinated planning to right-size the energy system - ensuring the electric grid is appropriately scaled to meet growing and shifting electricity demand while responsibly decommissioning or repurposing gas infrastructure.

Along with the decarbonization of the electric grid, enabling new thermal and district-scale thermal energy networks will play a critical role in decarbonizing dense urban areas, large buildings, and campuses, while maintaining reliability and affordability. Thermal energy networks use a network of pipes that transfer heat between buildings, and can be up to five times more efficient than a conventional gas boiler.³⁴ These systems exchange heat with a number of energy sources, such as the ground, Boston Harbor, wastewater systems, or nearby buildings, providing efficient heating and cooling without burning fossil fuels onsite. Decarbonizing existing district energy systems, including converting steam and hot-water networks to low- or zero-carbon thermal sources, is also a key opportunity to achieve significant emissions reductions at scale.

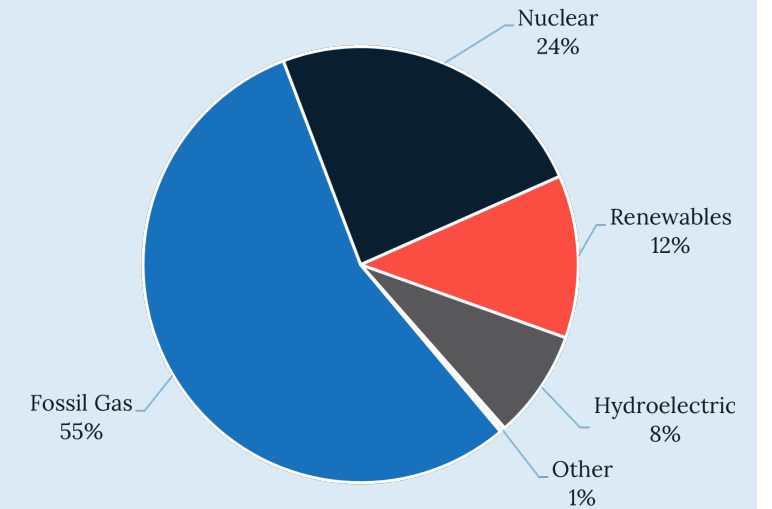
The task at hand is not just about adding clean energy sources to the grid to support existing infrastructure, but to also consider how the grid must grow and adapt to support shifting electricity demand and reduce peak demand. One of the key strategies to reduce emissions is to electrify current uses of fossil fuels. This will include increasing the use of electric vehicles, switching gas and oil boilers to efficient heat pumps, and even switching gas powered streetlights to electric. These transitions will result in an increase in demand for electricity and change when electricity is needed. Currently, Boston’s electric demand peaks during the summer as buildings rely heavily on air conditioning. As heating systems electrify, electricity demand is expected to shift toward the winter months as soon as the 2030’s, underscoring the need for proactive, integrated grid planning that incorporates battery storage and thermal energy networks to reduce baseloads, and grid-interactive building technologies to help decrease peak demand.

Regional Electricity Generation

Data from ISO New England, the regional electric grid operator, shows that fossil gas remains the dominant source of electricity, accounting for just over half of total generation, followed by nuclear power at about one quarter. Renewable* and hydroelectric resources together provide roughly one-fifth of the energy mix, while oil, coal, and other sources contribute only a very small share.³⁵

(Source: ISO-NE, data from 2025)

*ISO New England defines renewable energy as electricity generated from solar, wind, refuse, wood, landfill gas, methane, and steam



Boston’s energy system is shaped not only by physical infrastructure, but also by a complex regulatory environment involving state agencies, utilities, and regional grid operators. While the City does not directly control these systems, Boston is taking a more active leadership role through planning, policy, and partnership.¹ The City is working to align utility investments, state oversight, and local land-use and climate goals. This Climate Action Plan represents a shift toward proactive energy planning, ensuring that grid-scale investments, district-scale thermal energy systems, and site-level actions, such as building electrification, distributed energy resources, and neighborhood resilience, are planned holistically rather than individually.

The City is engaging closely with electric and gas utilities as they plan and invest in critical infrastructure. Every five years, Eversource submits an Electric Sector Modernization Plan (ESMP) to the DPU, detailing the utility’s proposed investments in substations, transmission and distribution upgrades, and distributed energy resource integration to meet short-term and long-term energy demand. Eversource’s ESMP projects that electricity demand in Boston will increase by 33 percent between 2023 and 2033. To meet this growing need, Eversource has outlined a comprehensive set of capital projects, including upgrades to existing substations to ensure short-term capacity and reliability, construction of new substations and its supporting electrical infrastructure to support long-term growth, and deployment of distributed energy resources (DERs) to help ease pressure on the grid during periods of peak demand. The City of Boston is collaborating closely with Eversource to ensure that this energy infrastructure supports the city’s energy demand.

While electricity planning must accommodate growing demand, Boston’s approach to the gas system is focused on managing a deliberate transition away from fossil fuels in order to meet our goal of carbon neutrality by 2050. Every year, National Grid releases the Gas System Enhancement Plan (GSEP) that details how the utility will repair or replace leak-prone pipes and related infrastructure. Rather than continuing to spend resources from resident utility bills on expanding or replacing gas pipelines, the City advocates for the strategic decommissioning of the gas system and repurposing of existing infrastructure for renewable energy, such as thermal energy networks, with these efforts guided by a forthcoming citywide energy plan.

¹ Massachusetts electricity is supplied through the regional New England electric grid, which is managed by Independent System Operator (ISO) New England. In Boston, the electric grid is planned, operated, and maintained by the electric utility Eversource, an Investor-Owned Utility (IOU), under the oversight of the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU), which regulates utility performance, reliability, rates, and major grid modernization plans. National Grid is the primary gas utility in Boston and also operates under the oversight of the DPU.

The City is prioritizing key actions to scale energy solutions across sectors. The transition to clean energy is not just about changing fuels; it is about reshaping how energy systems serve people and communities. As Boston modernizes its energy infrastructure, the City is prioritizing energy affordability, public health and safety, and equity in infrastructure siting and investments. The City is working to ensure the benefits of cleaner energy reach all residents and that future investments correct, rather than reinforce, historical inequities.

What this section aims to achieve by 2030

- **Advance the regional energy system's ability to support widespread electrification**, including buildings and transportation, through grid modernization, capacity planning, and infrastructure upgrades.
- **Play an active role in state and regional energy planning**, advocating for policies, investments, and regulatory frameworks that align with the City's climate and equity goals.
- **Support the acceleration of more clean energy supplied**, reducing reliance on volatile fossil fuels and supporting integration of renewable energy resources.
- **Advance equitable access to affordable, clean energy**, ensuring all residents and businesses can benefit from the energy transition.



DECARBONIZE GENERATION

In Boston, 28 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in 2023 came from electricity used to power buildings. Emissions from the electric grid have steadily declined since 1990 due to the growth of renewable energy resources and the shift from oil and coal to fossil gas. This section focuses on accelerating that progress by expanding renewable energy procurement and generation, and strengthening Boston's programs to increase access to clean, affordable electricity for residents and businesses.

In Massachusetts, the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) has driven much of the adoption of renewable energy as it requires electricity suppliers to provide customers with increasing percentages of renewable energy.³⁶

While the RPS has been effective, it is not sufficient on its own to meet Boston's long-term climate goals; the City must accelerate the transition to cleaner electricity to stay on track for carbon neutrality by 2050. The City's approach to decarbonizing its electricity system begins at the source: how electricity is generated. Central to this strategy is ensuring that all residents, businesses, and institutions can access renewable, non-emitting electricity. The City is advancing this strategy through a variety of actions designed to help households and organizations procure safe, clean, and affordable energy, either by making it easier to generate electricity onsite, such as through rooftop solar, purchasing Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs), or participating in the City's municipal aggregation program, Boston Community Choice Electricity (BCCE). This will build a power system that is less reliant on fossil fuels and more equitable as Boston moves toward 2030 and beyond. The City will continue to lead by example through planning efforts that prioritize access and efficiency to clean energy.

Above all, accessibility is the foundation of this strategy. Decarbonization in the energy sector can only succeed if every Bostonian, particularly those located in neighborhoods overburdened by high energy costs or limited clean energy options, is able to participate and benefit from the transition to renewable energy sources. Ensuring that cleaner electricity reaches every resident and business is one of the City's highest priorities, which is why resources have been dedicated to BCCE and increasing renewable energy procurements.

However, many challenges remain that the City aims to tackle over the next five years. Many residents are currently enrolled in third-party electricity supply contracts that charge higher and volatile rates with limited consumer protections, and often do not deliver meaningful renewable energy benefits. According to a report released by the Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General, Boston residents lost \$394,519 in April 2024 alone as a result of third-party energy supply contracts.³⁷ The report found that residents in Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, Hyde Park, and Mission Hill experienced the highest rates of enrollment in third-party supply contracts, making these communities disproportionately targeted and harmed by the predatory marketing schemes.

Navigating processes like permitting and renewable energy credit (REC) purchases can be challenging. REC transactions involve varying prices, complex rules, and requirements for verifying renewable energy use, making it difficult for buildings and residents to ensure they are truly accessing clean, verifiable electricity. Because renewable energy procurement is a key pathway for BERDO compliance, it is a priority for the City to make this process easier for property owners.

Efforts include advocating for a municipal option to ban third-party electricity suppliers and increasing enrollment in BCCE through outreach and increased accessibility. Permitting improvements are also a priority across the City, with streamlining the solar permitting process remaining a top focus. The City will also explore how it can best support building owners interested in purchasing renewable energy. These actions will lower energy bills, improve consumer protections, and maximize the City's ability to deliver clean, affordable energy citywide.

By centering equity and accessibility in the shift to renewable generation, Boston can achieve emissions reductions while reducing individual household costs and supporting a more just and energy-resilient city.



E1. Increase the amount of renewable energy supplied to Boston’s electric grid.

HEALTHY CITY FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY HOUSING AFFORDABILITY & QUALITY CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION

Related Metric(s): Boston Community Choice Electricity Enrollment; Percentage of Electricity Supplied to Boston from Renewable Sources; Estimated Energy Cost Savings from Boston Community Choice Electricity

Linked Strategies: B1

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ●

IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Expand Access to Boston Community Choice Electricity

CONTINUE & SCALE

Lead Department(s): Environment Department

The Boston Community Choice Electricity (BCCE) program is a municipal aggregation program, a powerful tool in the City’s climate strategy that allows Boston to procure electricity on behalf of residents and businesses and provide more affordable, renewable energy options. Today, BCCE serves over 200,000 customers across its three available products: Basic, which provides electricity at competitive rates; Standard, which includes a higher share of local renewable energy (MA Class I RECs); and Green 100, which guarantees that all electricity comes from local renewable sources. Between 2021 and 2024, the RECs retired through BCCE avoided nearly 200,000 metric tons of CO₂e, the equivalent to decarbonizing heating for about 86,000 Massachusetts homes.¹ Engagement during the Climate Action Plan development process revealed that many residents were unfamiliar with BCCE, unsure how to enroll, or uncertain whether their accounts were already included in the program. To address this, the City will focus on education and outreach of BCCE, while continuing to enhance the program’s effectiveness.

Expand Renewable Energy Procurement

CONTINUE & SCALE

Lead Department(s): Environment Department; Procurement Department

The City will continue to pursue opportunities to participate in renewable energy procurements across multiple sources—including offshore wind, onshore wind, and large-scale solar—such as through the state’s offshore wind procurement process. The City will also advocate for greater municipal involvement in renewable energy and storage procurements led at the state level. While the City has entered into agreements to decarbonize a large portion of its electricity consumption, the changing Federal support for renewable energy requires the City to develop a refreshed renewable energy strategy.

¹ Calculation assumes an average Massachusetts home uses 435 therms of natural gas per heating season. Each therm is converted to CO₂e using a natural gas emission factor of 53.11 kg CO₂e per MMBtu (1 therm = 0.1 MMBtu).

2030 ACTIONS

Improve the Permitting Process for Rooftop Solar on Residential Buildings

CONTINUE & SCALE

Lead Department(s): Environment Department; Inspectional Services Department

The City will identify opportunities to streamline and simplify the permitting process to accelerate the installation of rooftop solar systems on residential properties, making it easier and faster for homeowners to adopt renewable energy solutions.

Facilitate Access to RECs for BERDO Compliance

START

Lead Department(s): Environment Department

While purchasing and retiring unbundled MA Class I RECs offers one of the most flexible and cost-effective BERDO compliance options, smaller building owners and those without renewable energy expertise and energy brokers often face barriers to accessing this market. RECs represent proof that one megawatt-hour of electricity was generated from a qualifying renewable energy source, such as wind or solar. Retiring them helps ensure that high-quality, renewable energy is being produced to offset emissions. To support building owners in meeting BERDO emissions requirements, the City launched the MA Class I REC BERDO Connector Program in 2026 to expand equitable access to Massachusetts Class I Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs). The MA Class I REC BERDO Connector Program involves a website hosted by the City with key information on MA Class I RECs, BERDO requirements associated with MA Class I REC transactions, tips to navigate the MA Class I REC market, and a list of qualified vendors who demonstrate capacity, expertise, and willingness to provide MA Class I REC services for building owners seeking simple, quick, and small volume transactions.

In parallel, A Better City is working with its member organizations that have BERDO approved Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) to understand whether they have unused or excess RECs that could be reallocated across BERDO covered buildings to support compliance. A Better City will help to facilitate REC transactions annually in partnership with the City of Boston, helping to expand access to REC solutions through coordinated, institution-driven approaches.

Pilot Large-Scale, Shared Renewable Energy Procurement for BERDO Buildings

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

Lead Department(s): Environment Department

To help large and medium-sized property owners meet BERDO emissions reduction requirements, the City of Boston will explore ways to facilitate the bulk procurement of large-scale renewable energy through the development of high-quality, scalable power purchase agreements (PPAs). While U.S. cities typically do not directly support private renewable energy procurement, Boston aims to develop an innovative model that demonstrates how municipalities can support third-party-led bulk procurement and leverage strategic public-private partnerships to advance carbon reduction goals. In partnership with Veolia and with funding support from Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance (CNCA) and the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN), the City will research and evaluate models to pilot a shared procurement framework or platform to support property owners interested in participating in joint procurements for large-scale renewable energy projects. This will directly benefit affordable housing developers, nonprofits, and other community-serving institutions that face high energy burdens, are subject to BERDO, and have limited capacity to participate in the traditional PPA market.

RESILIENT & AFFORDABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

The second pillar of Boston's energy transition is building a power system that is both resilient and affordable. Energy infrastructure refers to the equipment, systems, and services that enable the generation, transmission, and distribution of energy. This includes assets such as power transformers, substations, circuits, conductors, and other technologies that support the grid. The reliability of each component is essential to ensuring uninterrupted power for residents and businesses.

As Boston works toward a cleaner energy future, strengthening this infrastructure is a core priority. A resilient grid must withstand increasingly frequent and severe climate impacts, adapt to the fluctuations of energy demand, and integrate more renewable energy resources. Simultaneously, energy affordability remains central. In Massachusetts, most energy infrastructure investments are funded through customers, or ratepayers, meaning that unnecessary or inefficient spending directly affects household and business energy costs. Reducing energy demand of buildings, expanding energy efficiency practices, and optimizing the use of clean technologies can significantly lower systemwide costs and help relieve customer burdens. Boston's approach prioritizes investments that safeguard the grid while keeping the cost of service manageable, supporting an energy system that is more robust and equitable.

Extreme weather events underscore why resilient infrastructure is critical. For example, on the hottest days of the summer, electricity demand surges as buildings rely heavily on cooling systems. This spike creates stress on the grid and increases the likelihood of outages, while also increasing costs. Such outages do not affect all communities equally: neighborhoods with older infrastructure, historically higher energy burdens, or limited access to cooling technologies are more vulnerable to these outages, which have severe public health and safety implications. To manage these peak loads, utilities must maintain sufficient capacity, which often requires additional infrastructure investments and keeping peaking power plants operational. Near term targeted investments must expand short and long-term duration energy storage and renewable energy generation, while also planning for baseload needs through thermal energy expansion. The City will continue to work with utility companies to ensure infrastructure planning is aligned with each neighborhood's unique needs and priorities. The City also plans to intentionally thread together grid-scale and site-level strategies in a way that benefits everyone and reimagines energy infrastructure planning.

Resilient and affordable energy infrastructure is foundational to Boston's climate goals. It enables the integration of renewable energy generation, supports widespread electrification, protects residents during climate-driven emergencies, and reduces long-term energy costs for residents. By evaluating resilience and affordability together, the City can build an energy system that reliably serves every Bostonian, today and in the future.



RESILIENT & AFFORDABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

E2. Advance short-term energy infrastructure safety and process improvements to support long-term resilient grid planning.

HEALTHY CITY

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS

EXTREME HEAT & COLD PROTECTIONS



Related Metric(s): Percent of Electricity Supplied to Boston from Renewable Sources



Linked Strategies: E4

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ●

IMPACT: ● ● ●

2030 ACTIONS

Conduct an Energy Infrastructure Siting and Utility Planning Analysis

CONTINUE & SCALE

Lead Department(s): Environment Department; Planning Department

Boston's ambitious electrification goals, driven largely by building owners transitioning to comply with BERDO and by the growing number of electric vehicles, will significantly increase the city's electricity load. Meeting this demand while advancing an equitable clean energy transition will require new electrical infrastructure, such as substations, as well as distributed energy resources (DERs), including solar installations.

The City is conducting technical analyses and engaging communities to identify appropriate site suitability criteria, while also working with utilities to develop a more equitable framework for infrastructure planning, coordination, and investment. This work will result in Boston's first comprehensive, equity-driven analysis of where new energy infrastructure can be located, which will guide the City's position when working with the state and utilities on project selection and construction.

Create a Consolidated Permitting Process for Small Clean Energy Infrastructure

CONTINUE & SCALE

Lead Department(s): Environment Department, Planning Department

On November 21, 2024, Governor Maura Healey signed into law An Act Promoting a Clean Energy Grid, Advancing Equity, and Protecting Ratepayers, commonly referred to as the 2024 Climate Act. The law requires the Commonwealth to undertake comprehensive reforms to the siting and permitting of clean energy infrastructure, including new obligations for municipalities to streamline their review processes. In line with these requirements, the City will develop clear, expedited criteria and procedures by the end of 2026 for a consolidated permitting process for "small" clean energy facilities, defined as energy generation projects under 25 MW, storage projects under 100 MWh, and smaller transmission or distribution improvements. These projects must be evaluated within 12 months. A more predictable and timely permitting process will help accelerate clean energy development, expand grid capacity, and ensure that Boston is ready to meet growing energy needs with cleaner, more reliable sources.

2030 ACTIONS

Organize a Coordinated, Citywide Effort for BESS Emergency Response

CONTINUE & SCALE

Lead Department(s): Environment Department, Planning Department, Boston Fire Department

Battery energy storage systems (BESS) allow energy to be stored and used when it is needed most, making them an important tool for energy resilience. At the same time, communities have raised valid concerns about safety and potential fire risks associated with the technology. As BESS deployment has expanded nationwide, the technology itself has become more fire-resistant, and cities across the country have begun adopting comprehensive guidance to communicate BESS benefits and establish proactive safety practices that reduce the risk of fires. Boston has established evaluation criteria for BESS and identified the necessary safety and emergency response standards for their deployment across Boston. This work brought together multiple City departments and offices to build a shared understanding of best practices and create a coordinated approach to reviewing BESS proposals.

E3. Deliver district-scale energy solutions.

HEALTHY CITY CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○

IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Explore Opportunities to Expand Energy Feasibility Assessments

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

Lead Department(s): Planning Department

As part of the Article 80 Development Review process, the Boston Smart Utilities Program requires new developments over 1.5 million square feet to conduct district energy feasibility assessments. Over the next five years, the City will consider opportunities to expand the program, including broadening the use of utilidor beyond fiber infrastructure to support additional technologies such as thermal energy networks and other shared utilities. The City will also explore ways to extend utilidor beyond new roadway projects into existing street networks, supported by policy recommendations to guide future implementation.



TRANSITIONING ENERGY SYSTEMS

While the City of Boston does not yet have a citywide energy plan, developing one will be essential to guiding the transition of the entire energy system toward cleaner, more efficient, and more reliable sources. A comprehensive plan would unify Boston's goals for renewable energy procurement, electrification, thermal energy networks, resilient infrastructure and a just transition away from fossil fuels all under a single framework. As one of the central stakeholders in this transition, the City plays a critical role in convening utilities, energy providers, regulators, community organizations, institutions, and businesses in the private sector to ensure the needs of all Bostonians are met.

Transforming an energy system requires sustained, long-term planning rather than short-term fixes. A citywide energy plan would seek to optimize the electric system to match the actual and projected energy demands of the city's needs, while also exploring how to capture heat from the ground and nearby water bodies to provide clean, efficient heating and cooling. Continued investment in fossil gas infrastructure locks in decades of emissions-intensive equipment exposing customers to gas-price volatility. By contrast, planning investment in future net-zero infrastructure, through renewable energy expansion, thermal energy networks, grid modernization, and storage technologies creates a more stable, predictable, and affordable system over time. Transition pathways must prioritize affordability for residents while being reliable in the face of extreme climate impacts.

The transition of Boston's energy system will have broader impacts as well on the city's economy and workforce development. A clean-energy shift requires new skills and new jobs in clean energy sectors including building electrification, renewable energy development, utility operations, electric vehicle infrastructure, energy storage technologies, and advanced grid management. Boston's Climate Ready Workforce Action Plan estimates that between 3,653 and 7,306 jobs will be supported each year through 2040 as the City and local utilities upgrade the electrical grid under existing plans. These figures are likely conservative, as they do not account for additional job growth from emerging sectors such as geothermal energy, battery energy and storage, and other clean energy technologies.³⁸



TRANSITIONING ENERGY SYSTEMS

E4. Enable a just transition to a clean, resilient, and affordable energy system.

HEALTHY CITY FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION ECONOMIC & CAREER MOBILITY

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS HOUSING AFFORDABILITY & QUALITY

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ●

IMPACT: ● ● ○

Linked Strategies: E2, W1

2030 ACTIONS

Conduct Thermal Energy Network Studies and Pilots

START

Lead Department(s): Environment Department, Planning Department | Partner(s): Green Ribbon Commission

In partnership with the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) and the Green Ribbon Commission, Boston is leading a regional study to assess the feasibility of a water-based thermal energy network. This study will assess the technical, regulatory, and economic feasibility of using clean thermal energy from Boston-area water bodies and subsurface resources to reduce reliance on fossil gas. Focusing on the Charles and Mystic Rivers, Boston Harbor, Fort Point Channel, and underlying bedrock, the study will evaluate the potential for extracting, storing, and distributing thermal energy to large energy users. The resulting analysis will inform policymakers on viable pathways for advancing clean thermal energy projects, including investment readiness and regulatory considerations. This work may expand into pilot programs if the studies demonstrate cost-effective options for networked thermal solutions for building heating and cooling.

Develop a Holistic, Citywide Energy Plan

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

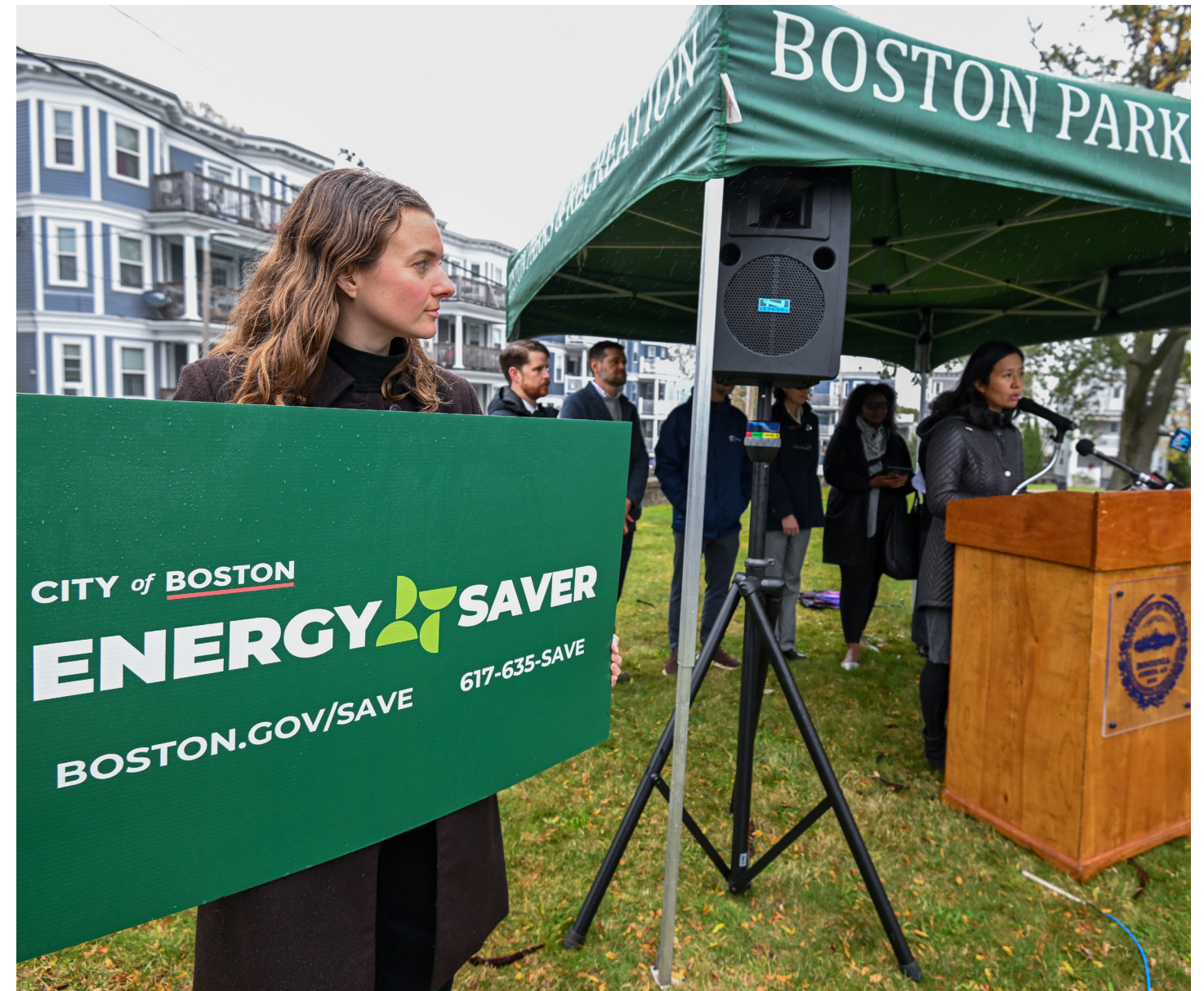
Lead Department(s): Environment Department, Planning Department | Partner(s): Green Ribbon Commission

Using the findings from the Energy Infrastructure Siting and Utility Planning Analysis, the City will develop an Energy Plan over the next five years to serve as a coordination tool with utilities, energy providers, and state agencies, guiding near and long-term investments that strengthen Boston's clean energy transition and modernize the grid. This includes assessing the role of battery energy storage systems of various sizes, expanding solar development - particularly low-income community shared solar and solar canopies - exploring opportunities to decarbonize and improve district energy networks utilizing new solutions such as ocean-based thermal, sewer heat recovery, district geothermal, and other thermal energy systems, and planning for a responsible transition away from fossil gas infrastructure. The Energy Plan will incorporate public health considerations, workforce impacts, and equity priorities, and will include tools such as thermal energy mapping, neighborhood-level pilot programs, and coordination with utilities, regulators, labor organizations, and community stakeholders to guide investment and deployment.

Partner Spotlight: Green Ribbon Commission

The Green Ribbon Commission (GRC) has been a key partner of the City of Boston for nearly 15 years, bringing together leaders from Boston's largest employers, institutions, and utilities to accelerate climate action across the city. The GRC plays a key role in advancing building decarbonization, a just energy transition, and climate resilience by aligning private-sector leadership with the City's climate goals outlined in the Climate Action Plan. The GRC helps scale solutions, reduce emissions from Boston's largest buildings, and demonstrate how institutional leadership can drive measurable progress toward the City's climate commitments.

Over the next five years, the Green Ribbon Commission will support the City across multiple sectors, including advancing the Energy Plan to establish a data-driven pathway for grid readiness and BERDO compliance, exploring the role of thermal energy through the development of the nation's first thermal capacity plan, and supporting major coastal resilience projects involving many GRC member institutions.





STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE RESILIENCE

While Boston continues to take ambitious action to reduce GHG emissions, the city is already experiencing the effects of climate change. Rising temperatures are increasing the frequency and severity of extreme heat events, while flooding poses growing risks to public health, infrastructure, and the safety of our neighborhoods. Boston has taken steps to strengthen our ability to withstand climate impacts on our people, places, and economy, but accelerating progress toward a climate-resilient Boston will require a coordinated, whole-of-city approach. This chapter outlines how Boston is building on the foundational work of Climate Ready Boston and subsequent plans, moving from planning to implementation to make that vision a reality.

HEAT

With rising global temperatures increasing the frequency and severity of extreme weather events, Boston is experiencing more hot days, longer heat waves, and warmer summers, and models point to a continuing upward trend. Extreme heat is already the deadliest weather-related threat worldwide since it can cause heat stroke or hypothermia.³⁹ This poses serious risks to public health in our city, particularly for seniors, young children, and those with outdoor jobs and living conditions, low incomes, medical illnesses, or disabilities.⁴⁰

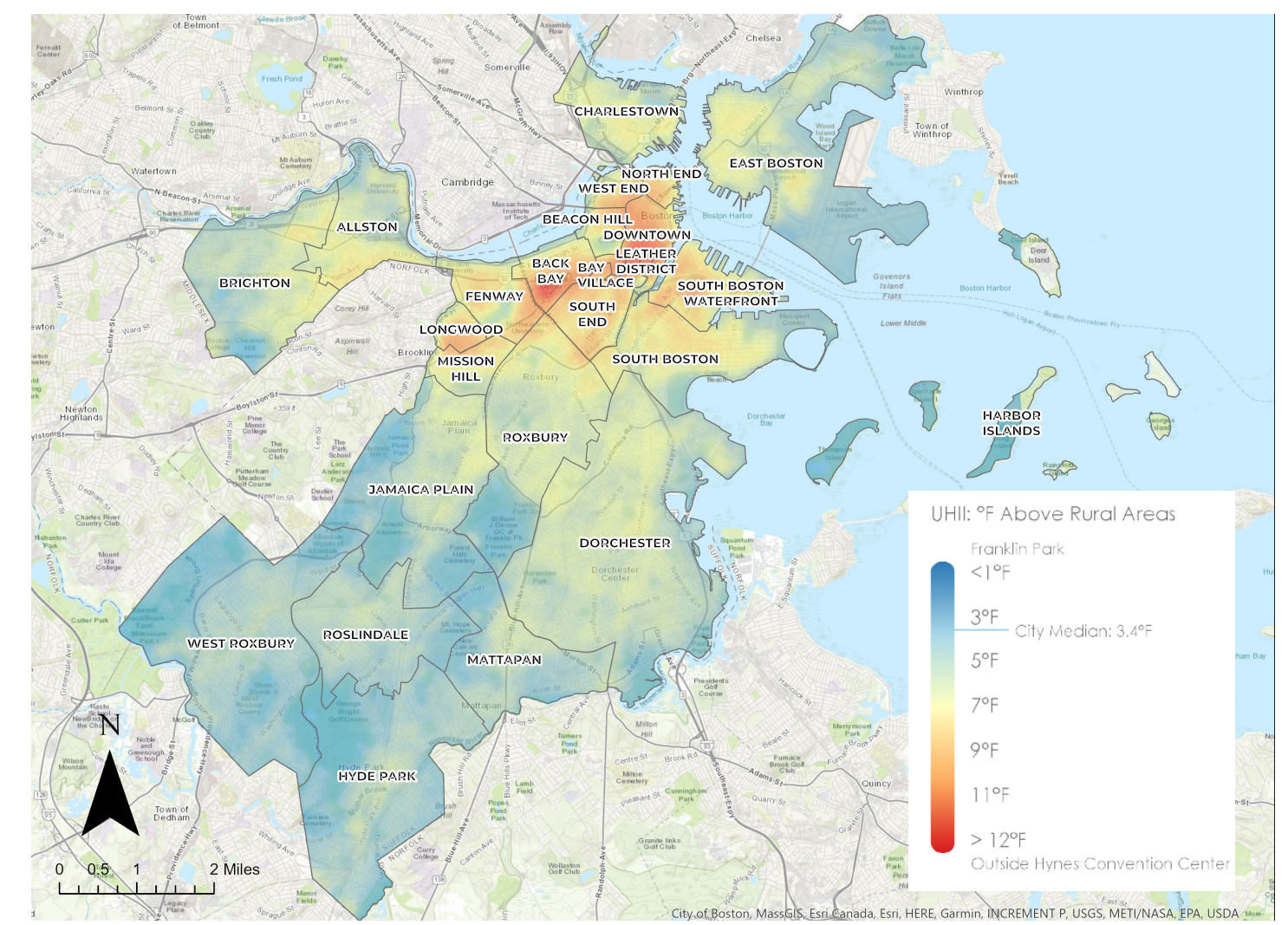


Figure 16: Urban Heat Islands across Boston. (Source: Heat Resilience Solutions for Boston)

Heat Exposure and Health Impacts Differ Across Boston

Extreme heat affects Boston neighborhoods differently. This map by BPHC combines data on heat event duration, green space, and heat-related emergency department (ED) visits. Neighborhoods that stay hotter for longer time during extreme heat events —defined as days above 95°F and nights above 75°F— tend to have less green space and higher rates of heat-related illness. With data from 2018–2025, the map highlights areas, such as South End, Roxbury and Dorchester, where residents experience the longest periods of dangerous temperatures and the greatest number of heat-related ED visits, underscoring the need for targeted heat-resilience investments.

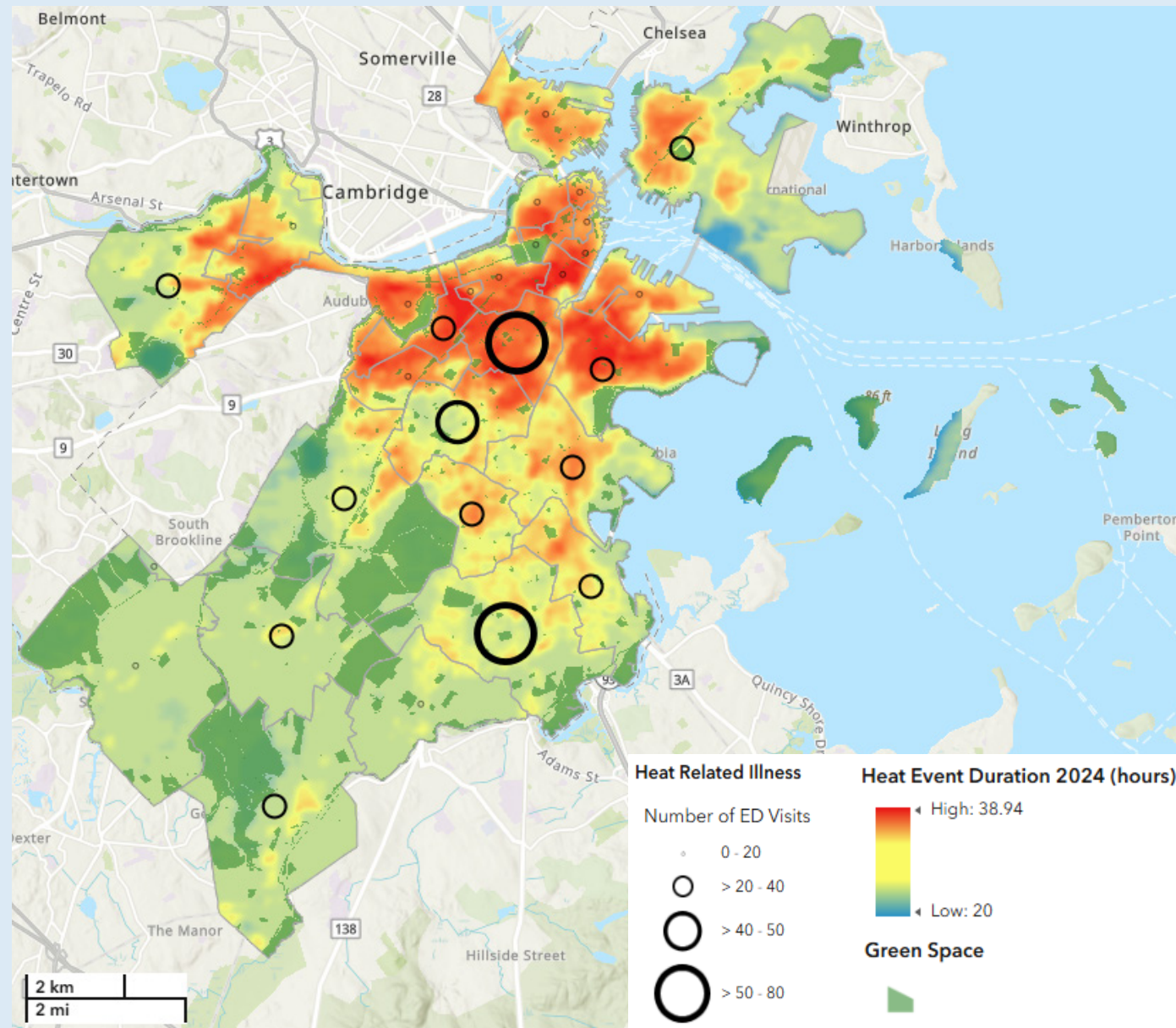


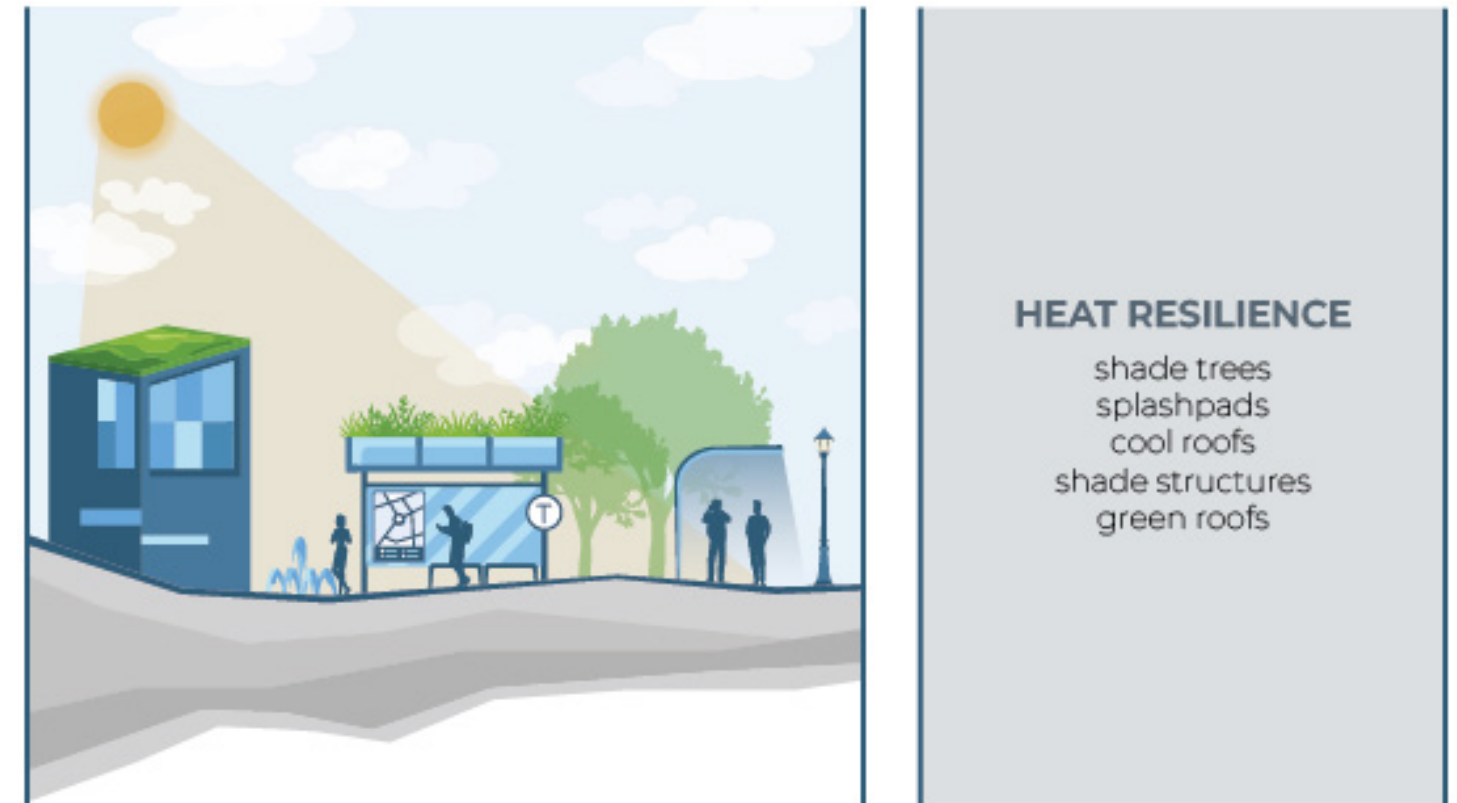
Figure 17: Map of heat exposure and health impacts across Boston. (Source: Boston Public Health Commission)

Extreme heat events also impact Bostonians by disrupting critical infrastructure, including our transportation system. High temperatures can cause railroad tracks to expand and warp, forcing trains to operate at reduced speeds to ensure safety,⁴¹ which leads to longer travel times and extended heat exposure for transit workers and commuters. Heat can also cause vehicles to overheat, and make walking, biking, or waiting for the bus difficult to tolerate, making it much harder to travel safely and reliably during extreme heat events.

Boston’s energy systems can also be strained during extremely hot days. High temperatures reduce the efficiency of solar panels, drive up electricity demand for cooling, and lower transmission capacity. These combined pressures increase the likelihood of heat-related power outages, which can severely limit residents’ ability to stay cool —particularly for those relying on air conditioning, fans, or medical devices.

In 2022, Heat Resilience Solutions for Boston presented a comprehensive vision to prepare people, buildings, infrastructure, and the public realm to withstand extreme heat events, rooted in climate justice, public health, and community leadership. However, significant gaps remain. Tree canopy disparities persist, with neighborhoods like Roxbury and East Boston having less than 20 percent tree cover, compared to areas like Jamaica Plain with over 40 percent. Additionally, plantable areas vary greatly by neighborhood, indicating that expansion of tree canopy needs to be coupled with other heat mitigation strategies, like cool roofs, in certain areas. Given that much of the city’s housing stock was built before 1980, many homes have leaks and outdated heating and cooling systems, pointing to the critical need for building retrofits and energy assistance programs. There are also few policies aligning building codes with passive cooling standards, and community knowledge about heat risks remains uneven — particularly among linguistically isolated populations.

Vision of a Heat Resilient Boston

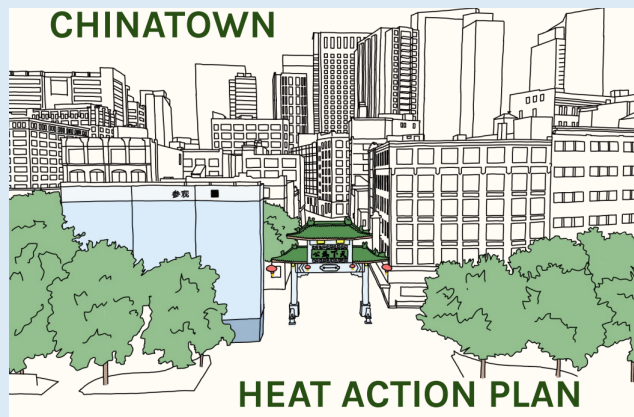


Boston is leaning on natural solutions, innovative shading, and policy advocacy to prepare and protect Bostonians for heat. The Urban Forest Plan outlines a 10-year strategy to grow the City’s tree canopy, with a focus on neighborhoods like East Boston, Roxbury, and Mattapan, where low tree canopy coverage overlaps with more severe extreme heat, environmental justice census blocks, formerly redlined districts, or a combination of these factors. A green bus shelter pilot, implemented at 30 bus stops, has integrated shade and vegetation into transit infrastructure, helping to reduce ambient temperatures and manage stormwater. Additionally, the Boston Tree Alliance is supporting the expansion and maintenance of the urban tree canopy by offering grants and technical assistance to community-based organizations for planting and caring for trees on privately-owned land. Boston is also home to many nonprofits and institutions that have long stewarded our natural resources, serving as critical partners through their on-the-ground, day-to-day work to ensure that public and private open spaces function as resilience tools.

Through the heat strategies in this plan we will expand on these efforts to build a more heat-resilient Boston - addressing gaps in tree canopy coverage across neighborhoods, reducing temperatures in urban hotspots, and ensuring that all residents, regardless of income or location, have access to well-insulated, air-conditioned homes that keep them safe and comfortable during extreme heat.

Community Climate Action Spotlight: Chinatown Heat Action Plan

In 2025, Chinatown residents, community partners, and local institutions came together to develop a plan to address extreme heat events in their neighborhood – which experiences one of the highest temperatures in Boston.⁴² After eight months of collaborative discussion, they created a roadmap for strengthening heat resilience through resident empowerment, partnerships with the City, and innovative resilience solutions to address the impacts of heat on their quality of life, including negative health outcomes and physical or mental distress.



What this section aims to achieve by 2030

- **Advance the recommendations outlined in the Heat Resilience Solutions for Boston and Urban Forest Plan**, scaling proven strategies to reduce urban heat and expand long-term cooling capacity across the City.
- **Prioritize heat mitigation and adaptation in areas with the highest risk**, focusing on neighborhoods where residents are more likely to experience extreme heat and/or public health risks.
- **Reduce urban heat island effects through nature-based and built interventions**, including tree canopy expansion, shading, cooling features, and other public infrastructure.
- **Integrate heat resilience into planning, design, and capital investments**, ensuring that public spaces, buildings, and other infrastructure are designed to withstand rising temperatures.



H1. Expand the City’s extreme heat interventions.

HEALTHY CITY A GREEN CITY A CARE-FULL CITY

EXTREME HEAT & COLD PROTECTIONS CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS



Related Metric(s): Net Streets and Parks Trees Planted and Estimated Cooling Benefits; Percentage of Boston Residents Within a 10-minute walk from Cooling Facilities



Linked Strategies: H3, X1, X2, X4

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○

IMPACT: ● ● ●

2030 ACTIONS

Expand Existing Cooling Resources and Infrastructure in Public Spaces

CONTINUE & SCALE

Lead Department(s): Office of Emergency Management; Office of Climate Resilience

As climate change leads to hotter temperatures lasting longer throughout the day and extending earlier and later into the summer, the City must adapt its approach to protecting public health. To support the health of Boston residents during heat events, the City will strengthen interventions in public spaces, recognizing that these areas are often where people spend time during extreme heat. This includes expanding publicly available cooling infrastructure such as splash pads, cooling centers, and misting stations, which provide immediate relief during heat events. The City will also implement year-round operational improvements, such as activating cooling resources earlier or later in the year as needed, and integrating resilience planning into the process for permitting major special events.

Provide Technical Support for Heat Resilience in Critical Private Spaces

CONTINUE & SCALE

Lead Department(s): Office of Emergency Management

Support Department(s): Office of Early Childhood

As the City expands its network of physical outdoor and indoor safe spaces, it recognizes that not everyone can visit these locations, and that the places people already rely on must also be safe during extreme heat. The City will increase support for private facilities that serve vulnerable populations, such as childcare centers and schools. This may include offering technical assistance to assess and improve indoor cooling capabilities and helping staff implement best practices to keep occupants safe during extreme heat.

Partner Spotlight: CultureHouse

[CultureHouse](#) is a Greater Boston-based nonprofit focused on building resilient social infrastructure by transforming underutilized spaces into vibrant, community-centered places. Their work sits at the intersection of public space design and helping cities test and scale solutions that address climate impacts

Their projects include installing shade in Day Square in East Boston, creating cooling spaces outside Boston Public Libraries, and developing mobile pop-up programs that support neighbor-to-neighbor check-ins during heatwaves.

CultureHouse has also done community engagement around, and designed and implemented tactical urbanist improvements to, bus stops and pedestrian areas - enhancing comfort, accessibility, and climate resilience.

Through ongoing collaboration with the City of Boston, CultureHouse provides technical expertise that informs the design and implementation of people-first public spaces. This work reflects a shared commitment to advancing innovative approaches that can be tested, refined, and scaled over time to support Boston's climate and equity goals - while reinforcing a strong commitment to climate justice.

Project Spotlight: City of Boston's Extreme Heat and Early Childhood Roundtable Series

During the spring of 2024, the Mayor's Office of Early Childhood partnered with the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (HCDC) to host the Boston Extreme Heat and Early Childhood Roundtable series to study the effect of extreme heat and other climate shocks on children, infants, and pregnant people.

The roundtables produced three workstreams to define priority initiatives, owners, and next steps for implementation. The resulting 'Keeping Kids Cool' initiatives include:

1. "Made to Play kits" distributed to all community-based providers designated as Cooling Centers, available to children and families during heat emergencies.
2. The Extreme Heat Action Plan and Indoor Temperature Sensors piloted in 26 FCC providers
3. Online resources, such as boston.gov/heat, the Office of Early Childhood website, and 2026 "Summer Weather Guide" updated with early childhood heat resources and programming at Boston Centers for Youth and Families
4. And citywide communications to highlight these initiatives to families, childcare providers, and community organizations.



2030 ACTIONS

Explore Innovative Solutions to Enhance Public Cooling

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

Lead Department(s): Office of Climate Resilience

The City will explore, implement, and evaluate new methods to provide shade and lower temperatures on public streets and in public spaces. The current toolkit relies heavily on important interventions such as tree planting and green roofs on bus shelters. However, there are areas where these interventions may not be ideal. For example, in areas with limited sidewalk width, utility conflicts, poor soil conditions, or where trees and other vegetation take several years to become fully effective, it can be difficult for these solutions to thrive. In these locations, other approaches such as reflective materials, cool roofs, or shade structures can offer more reliable or immediate cooling benefits. The City will consider how to prioritize material selection in public and private projects that reduces the urban heat island effect as a key strategy for creating cooler, more comfortable neighborhoods.



Project Spotlight: B-COOL

Boston's official heat emergencies are declared based on a single heat sensor located at the National Weather Service (NWS) weather station at Logan Airport in East Boston. In 2024, Boston University School of Public Health partnered with A Better City, the Boston Foundation, and the City of Boston to address the data gaps in measuring temperature across Boston's hotspot neighborhoods and improve heat emergency preparedness. In the 2024 pilot, 15 sensors were installed at 12 A Better City member and partner properties, as well as on City-owned trees, across these neighborhoods identified in Boston's 2022 Heat Resilience Solutions report. Sensors in Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, and Mattapan registered heat emergency conditions one to two days prior to the official declaration.

In the summer of 2025, the B-COOL partnership built upon the 2024 pilot to explore the impact of shade interventions on heat stress for different heat-vulnerable populations. The results from this phase can support the prioritization of heat-resilience resources and effective shade structures across the City.

H2. Strengthen tree policies to protect existing canopy, expand tree planting, and ensure long-term maintenance.

GREEN CITY FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY EXTREME HEAT & COLD PROTECTIONS
 MENTAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS

 **Related Metric(s):** Net Streets and Parks Trees Planted and Estimated Cooling Benefits
 **Linked Strategies:** S1, S2, H3, W1

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○

IMPACT: ● ● ●

2030 ACTIONS

Expand the Urban Tree Canopy on Private Land

Lead Department(s): Office of Climate Resilience

CONTINUE & SCALE

According to Boston's most recent Tree Canopy Assessment (2024), the City's gains in tree canopy cover from public tree plantings over the previous five years were almost entirely offset by tree removals on private land. To address this issue, the City will explore strategies to prevent private tree loss, particularly on small residential properties and new developments not subject to Article 80 review. Potential approaches include zoning updates and expanded opportunities to incentivize private tree planting and maintenance, such as the Boston Tree Alliance.

The Boston Tree Alliance is a collaborative initiative with Mass Audubon and a coalition of community-based organizations to expand and maintain Boston's urban tree canopy, particularly on privately owned land in environmental justice neighborhoods and priority zones identified in the Urban Forest Plan. The City will continue to support this important program.

Expand the Urban Tree Canopy in Parks and on Streets

Lead Department(s): Parks Department; Streets Cabinet

CONTINUE & SCALE

The City will advance the goals of Boston's Urban Forest Plan by investing in targeted planting initiatives, improving stewardship of existing trees and building community engagement in City planting projects. Piloted initiatives using permeable pavement and green stormwater management practices will be implemented in parks and tree pits wherever possible, prioritizing tree care in low canopied and underserved areas. City departments will strengthen partnerships with non-City public agencies to unify efforts and leverage resources across all public property.

Improve Street Tree Growing Conditions

Lead Department(s): Parks Department; Streets Cabinet

CONTINUE & SCALE

The City will engage in a coordinated effort to align and modernize standard tree planting details and specifications, and do so in a manner that simultaneously supports the goals of accommodating long-term tree health, robust stormwater management, and long-term sidewalk accessibility.

2030 ACTIONS

Preserve Existing Tree Canopy

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

Lead Department(s): Parks Department; Streets Cabinet; Planning Department

The City will explore strategies to prevent private tree loss, particularly on small residential properties and new developments not subject to Article 80 review. The City will improve interdepartmental coordination to determine how to best protect trees during the design and construction of new developments and develop advanced standards to preserve street trees during infrastructure projects. Departments will continue to offer guidance to projects before the Planning Department and Public Improvement Commission and identify the need for coordination with the Urban Forestry Division, as is current practice, and initiate a new process to engage the Urban Forestry Division when issues are observed in projects before the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Partner Spotlight: Tree Eastie

Founded and led by East Boston residents, Tree Eastie works to increase and protect the urban tree canopy in a neighborhood that has long faced environmental burdens, limited green space, and heightened vulnerability to extreme heat and air pollution. Through resident-driven tree planting, stewardship, and education, Tree Eastie addresses climate impacts at the neighborhood scale while strengthening community ownership and trust.

Tree Eastie's community model demonstrates how meaningful climate action is most effective when it is rooted in community leadership. By engaging residents in identifying planting locations, caring for trees, and shaping neighborhood priorities, the organization ensures that investments in urban forestry are responsive to local needs and deliver lasting benefits. This approach offers a replicable model for the City: pairing municipal resources with community-based non-profit leadership to expand the urban canopy, improve public health, and build climate resilience equitably across Boston's neighborhoods.

For more information on Tree Eastie, please visit www.treeeastie.org.



H3. Keep workers safe during heat emergencies.

HEALTHY CITY CARE-FULL CITY CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION EXTREME HEAT & COLD PROTECTIONS

Related Metric(s): Emergency Department Visits for Heat-Related Illnesses
Linked Strategies: H1, H2

PRIORITIZATION
FEASIBILITY: ● ● ●
IMPACT: ● ● ●

2030 ACTIONS

Protect City Workers from Heat-Related Illnesses and Injuries

Lead Department(s): Office of Labor Compliance and Worker Protections

CONTINUE & SCALE

In August 2025, the City of Boston passed the Ordinance to Protect Workers From Heat-Related Illness and Injuries, ensuring that all employees working for the City or under a City contract are protected when exposed to excessive heat—even when a formal heat emergency has not been declared. The protections outlined in the Ordinance include access to cool or cold drinking water, shade, rest breaks, and other measures needed to prevent heat exhaustion and heat-related illness.



H4. Safeguard residents at home during extreme heat emergencies.

FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY CARE-FULL CITY HOUSING AFFORDABILITY & QUALITY
 CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION EXTREME HEAT & COLD PROTECTIONS

Related Metric(s): Emergency Department Visits for Heat-Related Illnesses

PRIORITIZATION
FEASIBILITY: ● ● ●
IMPACT: ● ● ●

2030 ACTIONS

Advocate for Maximum Indoor Air Temperature Standards and Utility Shut-Off Protections

Lead Department(s): Office of Climate Resilience

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

The City of Boston will work with property owners and advocate for effective state-level policies that establish a maximum indoor air temperature threshold to ensure residents have safe living conditions during extreme heat by 2030. This includes pursuing a utility shut-off moratorium during heat emergencies, which would temporarily prohibit utility companies from disconnecting essential services and recognize access to cooling as a critical public health need in a warming climate. While the City is expanding access to cooling centers and other safe places for residents to go during extreme heat, ensuring that people can safely remain in their own homes, especially those who are older, have disabilities, or face mobility challenges, is a critical component of protecting public health and advancing climate resilience.

Project Spotlight: City of Boston's Heat Resilience Research Priorities

Extreme heat affects nearly every aspect of daily life, from health and housing to mobility, work, and overall safety, making it a challenge that requires coordinated, cross-sector action. As Boston advances its heat resilience efforts, the City recognizes that addressing these impacts depends on learning from a wide range of expertise and lived experiences. The Office of Climate Resilience's Heat Research Agenda identifies key questions that will help translate research into practical solutions, strengthen partnerships, and build the case for sustained investment in long-term resilience.

The agenda highlights priority areas such as improving heat data and metrics, shaping cooler buildings and urban development, integrating heat-resilient materials and technologies, expanding access to indoor cooling, and enhancing public communication and engagement. Together, these focus areas aim to inform better design, policy, and decision-making across the city.

If you have ideas, expertise, or interest in advancing this work, [connect with the City](#) to share insights, explore partnerships, and help shape Boston's path toward a more heat-resilient future.

H5. Combat the impacts of extreme heat through design review.

HEALTHY CITY FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS
 EXTREME HEAT & COLD PROTECTIONS HOUSING AFFORDABILITY & QUALITY

PRIORITIZATION
 FEASIBILITY: ● ● ●
 IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Incorporate Design Review Considerations to Address Extreme Heat

Lead Department(s): Office of Climate Resilience; Planning Department

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

Because the design review process guides how buildings and public spaces are designed and built across the city, it is a critical tool for embedding long-term climate resilience into Boston's built environment. The City will explore how the impacts of extreme heat can be reduced in new private and public construction by integrating heat-mitigating design elements into project review, such as enhanced tree canopy, cool roofs, reflective or permeable surfaces, and site-level shading.



STORMWATER & INLAND FLOODING

Boston frequently experiences rainfall, but as the sea surfaces warm and the atmosphere holds more moisture, storms become more intense and heavy rainfalls become more common.^{43,44} The Northeast region of the United States has already experienced large increases in the intensity of extreme rain and snow, and the upward trend is expected to continue.⁴⁵ Combined with our century-old stormwater system and a high proportion of impervious surfaces that facilitate water runoff and impede filtration, many Boston homes, businesses and critical infrastructure are increasingly exposed to inland flooding.

Boston's existing stormwater drainage system is well designed to manage most common rainfall events, with capacity to handle 4.8 inches of rain in 24 hours.⁴⁶ Historically, heavy storms (10-year events) have produced around 5 to 5.5 inches of rainfall in that timeframe (see Figure 18).⁴⁷ However, the system is not designed to accommodate the most extreme downpours, which are becoming more frequent as the climate changes. Rising sea levels can worsen inland flooding by limiting the ability of stormwater to drain through outfalls into receiving waters such as the Charles River and Boston Harbor. When tides are higher than normal, stormwater can back up into streets, basements, and storm drains, causing flooding even without extreme rainfall.

Projections suggest that by 2050, approximately 7 percent of the city's land area could experience flooding related to rainfall exceeding 5.24 inches in a 10-year, 24-hour storm event, with West Roxbury, Allston, Brighton, East Boston, and South Dorchester facing the largest impacts.⁴⁸ More recent analyses reaffirm this trend, suggesting that under a high-emissions scenario the city could see nearly 6 inches of rain in a single 10-year, 24-hour storm by 2060. Even under more moderate emissions scenarios (represented by the dark blue line on Figure 18), storms are projected to be consistently stronger than those experienced today. Bostonians living in basement units, many of whom are also renters, are particularly vulnerable to this type of rapid, high-volume storm leading to flash stormwater flooding.

10-Year Daily Design Storm Depth Projections

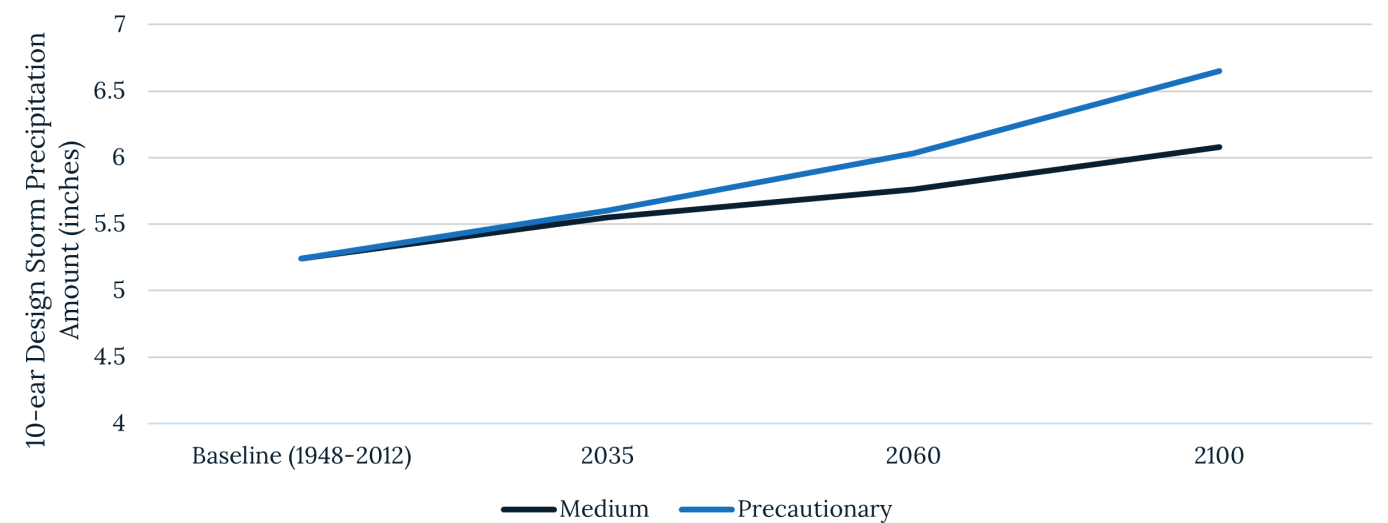


Figure 18: Based on data from BWSC (2015) historically, a heavy storm (10-year storm) has brought around 5 - 5.5 inches of rain in 24 hours. Under a high-emissions scenario (light blue line), by 2060 models show nearly 6 inches of rain in a single 24-hour storm. Even under more moderate emissions (dark blue line), storms are still consistently stronger than today.

Inland flooding can have far-reaching consequences for Boston residents and essential services. Greater than 1200 acres of Boston are drained by combined sewer systems, in which rainwater and sewage are carried by a single pipe. During dry weather, these flows are conveyed to Deer Island Wastewater Treatment Plant. During heavy rainfall, stormwater volumes overwhelm pipe capacity, resulting in overflow to the Charles River and Boston Harbor.⁴⁹ Combined sewer overflows are a major water pollution and public health concern, as contaminated waters can contain bacteria or hazardous substances, impacting drinking water quality.^{50,51} Floodwaters can also carry contaminants, debris, and pollutants into homes, streets, and public spaces, posing immediate health risks by increasing the likelihood of exposure to mold and waterborne pathogens.⁵² Flooding can also disrupt electrical grids,⁵³ transportation services^{54,55}, and communication services, potentially isolating neighborhoods or delaying emergency services due to flooded roadways and inaccessible infrastructure.⁵⁶

Boston has made significant strides in managing stormwater more sustainably. Key initiatives include the development of several guiding documents, such as the Green Infrastructure Planning and Design Handbook by BWSC and the Green Stormwater Infrastructure Design and Implementation Guide from the Boston Parks and Recreation Department. These resources promote nature-based solutions—like rain gardens, stormwater tree systems, and bioswales—across the City’s 300 parks, playgrounds, and athletic fields, along with its 800 miles of roadways and 600 miles of sidewalks. The 2023–2032 Open Space and Recreation Plan also reflects a commitment to integrating stormwater priorities into public realm design.

In 2024, BWSC implemented a new Stormwater Program to ease the impact of impervious surfaces on the City’s stormwater infrastructure and fund repairs. An enhanced stormwater sensor network and advanced modeling tools are being used to inform both the Commission’s and the Office of Emergency Management’s efforts to respond to increasingly intense storm events.

However, the pace of implementation of stormwater solutions is occasionally slowed by the diffuse ownership of these responsibilities across many partners. As Boston’s drainage system struggles to manage more intense rain events, compounded by rising sea levels and widespread impervious surfaces, we must increase and accelerate our combined efforts to manage stormwater more effectively.

Boston’s stormwater resilience through 2030 envisions a city where green infrastructure is embedded into every neighborhood, incorporating gray infrastructure when necessary, reducing inland flood risk and improving water quality while expanding access to open space and healthier urban environments. This vision will prioritize strategic investment in high-risk areas —based on improved data and inundation modeling— to protect homes, critical infrastructure and communities facing disproportionate flood impacts. It also advances strong stormwater standards for both public and private development, ensuring that all residents benefit from a safer, greener, and more climate-resilient Boston.

What this section aims to achieve by 2030

- **Accelerate the deployment of green infrastructure solutions**, while strategically incorporating grey infrastructure where necessary, to reduce flood risk and enhance system performance.
- **Improve data collection, mapping, and modeling**, strengthening the City’s ability to understand current and future flood risks across the City.
- **Reduce flood risks to homes, businesses, and critical infrastructure**, particularly in areas vulnerable to recurring inland flooding.
- **Integrate stormwater management into planning, design, and capital investments**, ensuring projects account for future precipitation patterns.



STORMWATER & INLAND FLOODING

S1. Advance green infrastructure projects, incorporating gray infrastructure solutions as necessary.

GREEN CITY

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS



Related Metric(s): Net Streets and Parks Trees Planted and Estimated Cooling Benefits; Cumulative Greened Acres



Linked Strategies: H2, C2, X2, W1

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○

IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Incentivize Stormwater Management Practices on Private Property Through the Stormwater Program

Lead Department(s): Boston Water and Sewer Commission

CONTINUE & SCALE

In 2024, BWSC launched a new stormwater grant program that provides up to \$8,000 to property owners to support projects that reduce stormwater runoff from their properties. To build awareness and increase participation, BWSC will establish clear eligibility criteria for qualifying projects and explore ways to make the funding more accessible, including evaluating whether funds can be offered without a pre-approval requirement and modifying this program to incentivize larger projects on private property.

Accelerate Green Infrastructure Deployment in Public Spaces

Lead Department(s): Office of Green Infrastructure; Boston Water and Sewer Commission; Parks Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

The City has made significant investments in green infrastructure (GI) citywide. To go further, the City in partnership with BWSC will accelerate deployment by treating GI as a dedicated project stream, expanding the number of GI installations beyond what can be achieved through City-managed capital projects alone. Over the next five years, the City will scale up GI across neighborhoods to reduce flooding, improve water quality, lower urban heat, and support equitable access to green space. To guide this effort, the City is using data-driven planning to identify areas where GI is most needed, drawing from priorities established in key planning documents, including Climate Ready Boston, Heat Resilience Solutions for Boston, the 2023-2032 Open Space and Recreation Plan, and the Urban Forest Plan.

The City has created a citywide site suitability analysis framework to help identify optimal locations for green infrastructure, considering environmental conditions, climate resilience, quality and access, and equity. This framework includes factors such as soil type, slope, impervious cover, proximity to water or flood zones, existing tree canopy, urban heat intensity, park and street tree presence, access to parks and bike networks, air quality, community gathering areas, and vulnerability indicators for Environmental Justice communities and socially vulnerable populations.

The City aims to direct GI investments that can lead to the greatest benefits in reducing flooding, cooling neighborhoods, and supporting community resilience. Building on this analysis, the City will identify public projects that could benefit from green infrastructure to ensure that climate resilience improvements are effective, equitable, and integrated into municipal planning and maintenance practices.

2030 ACTIONS

Complete the Citywide Inundation Model to Prioritize and Advance the Design of High Priority Stormwater

Projects

Lead Department(s): Boston Water and Sewer Commission

START

While the City has a lot of data on coastal flooding and input from residents about inland flooding and heavy rain events, we need a citywide model to plan ahead and prevent the worst impacts of flooding across the city. BWSC will publish a citywide inundation model and site assessment matrix by 2027 to identify the most flood-prone inland areas and determine which interventions will be most effective in protecting people, communities, and critical infrastructure. This analysis will help the City prioritize solutions such as stormwater management improvements, green infrastructure, and localized flood mitigation measures, with particular attention to neighborhoods that are most vulnerable to flooding. Drawing from the Citywide Inundation Model, BWSC will identify priority district-scale stormwater investments for the 2028 Capital Improvement Plan to improve the resilience and performance of Boston's water distribution and sewer collection systems.

Establish a Citywide Green Infrastructure Standard

Lead Department(s): Office of Green Infrastructure

START

The City has released design guides for integrating green infrastructure into streets, providing planners with recommended approaches to incorporate green infrastructure into the public right-of-way. The guides support the development of Complete Streets by making it easier to build sidewalks, bike lanes, and transit corridors that also manage stormwater and improve neighborhood livability and resiliency.

Building on this guidance, the City will develop and establish a citywide green infrastructure standard, which will make green infrastructure the required, default approach for City-managed major capital projects. This shift ensures that all municipal projects consistently implement strategies that reduce flooding, manage stormwater, and enhance neighborhood climate resilience. Over the next year, the City will work with relevant departments, including Public Works and Public Facilities, to evaluate the implementation of the guidelines and identify viable pathways for establishing and enforcing these standards.



Partner Spotlight: Longwood Collective

The [Longwood Collective](#) is a nonprofit organization that provides shared resources, programs, and services to institutions in Boston's Longwood Medical and Academic Area (LMA) - one of the world's leading hubs for healthcare, research, and education. By coordinating across major hospitals, universities, and cultural institutions, the Longwood Collective helps advance district-wide solutions related to transportation, sustainability, and infrastructure.

Longwood Collective has demonstrated forward-thinking leadership in advancing projects that deliver climate resilience benefits. The Longwood Collective advanced a bioswale pilot on Avenue Louis Pasteur to demonstrate how green infrastructure can enhance an historic streetscape, capture and filter stormwater and reduce polluted runoff. In addition to delivering near-term environmental benefits, the project serves as a model for integrating resilient vegetation and sustainable design into dense urban areas. The effort was carried out in partnership with the City of Boston, the Boston Water and Sewer Commission, and local academic and watershed organizations contributing research and monitoring.

The Longwood Collective's work advancing district-scale resilience strategies in the LMA, including the [Open Space and Resilience Framework](#) and related initiatives to expand tree canopy, incorporate green infrastructure, and integrate cooling and stormwater management into open space and streetscape improvements, demonstrates how large institutional districts can help advance Boston's goals for heat resilience and stormwater management while improving the public realm. Complementing these efforts, The Longwood Collective also promotes biking, transit, and shared commuting, providing nearly two million annual shuttle rides alongside Bluebikes access, rideshare, and carpool incentives to reduce driving demand, congestion, and emissions while improving access for the tens of thousands of people who travel to and through the area each day. As the Longwood Collective advances its transportation priorities and projects outlined in the Open Space and Resilience Framework, the City will explore opportunities to support and collaborate on these efforts.



STORMWATER & INLAND FLOODING

S2. Expand open and green space through strategic land use planning.

- FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY
- GREEN CITY
- PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS
- MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING
- EXTREME HEAT & COLD PROTECTIONS

Relevant Metric(s): Cumulative Greened Acres

Linked Strategies: H2

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○

IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Pursue New Land Acquisition Opportunities Citywide

Lead Department(s): Parks Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

Acquiring land is one of the most direct ways a city can permanently protect open space and ensure it serves the public good. The City of Boston acquires land to expand public access to open space, grow the urban tree canopy, and conserve green space. To advance these goals, the City will continue to identify and pursue strategic land acquisition opportunities - particularly in areas that lack sufficient green space or face heightened climate risks as identified through existing plans.

Expand the Urban Wilds Program

Lead Department(s): Parks Department; Environment Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

Boston's Urban Wilds Program protects and manages natural areas across the city, such as woodlands, wetlands, and meadows, to preserve biodiversity, strengthen climate resilience, and provide access to nature in urban neighborhoods. This work builds on decades of civic and nonprofit partnership to inventory, protect, and steward these areas over time, including the historic contributions of Boston Natural Areas Network and The Trustees of Reservations. The City will undertake a comprehensive update process of the program that includes foundational research, community engagement, and analysis of national best practices. This planning process will help shape a long-term vision for the Urban Wilds Program, including improved management practices, updated staffing and budget needs, and strategies for protecting and expanding priority sites. Through this effort, the City will explore opportunities for future land acquisition and develop a clear framework to safeguard these valuable ecosystems for generations to come.

2030 ACTIONS

Refine the Spaces for You Program

Lead Department(s): Planning Department | Support Department(s): Parks Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

Spaces For You is a collaborative and proactive initiative by the City of Boston to co-create, enhance, and celebrate privately-owned public outdoor spaces that foster joy, belonging, and well-being for all residents. It seeks to bridge the gap between community needs and city resources, knitting together public and privately generated open spaces to create vibrant social places for all. This initiative will create a comprehensive plan for privately-owned publicly accessible spaces building on the 2023-2032 Open Space and Recreation Plan by the Parks and Recreation Department, along with population and economic growth projections and findings from the Boston Design Vision. Together, with the tools generated through this plan, the City will be able to analyze privately generated open spaces as a way to support growth and the creation of privately-owned high-quality open spaces that are inclusive, equitable, resilient, and accessible. The final outcome will establish a framework to guide the creation of publicly accessible open spaces for the next 15 years, and tools to address inherent challenges to creating privately generated open spaces.

Create Additional Zoning and Regulatory Changes that Address Inland Flooding Risk

Lead Department(s): Planning Department; Office of Climate Resilience

START

While zoning guidelines already exist for coastal flooding through Article 25A, the Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District (CFROD), the City will develop a complementary inland flood resilience overlay. This overlay will leverage updated modeling from BWSC to identify areas across the city at greatest risk of inland flooding and guide protective measures. The City will work with residents, community organizations, property owners, businesses, and other local interest groups to shape how these zoning amendments are applied, with the goal of adopting inland flood-related zoning amendments by 2030.

Project Spotlight: Codman Square Park Improvements

The reopening of [Codman Square Park](#) marks the culmination of nearly a decade of community-led efforts. In 2018, the Codman Square Neighborhood Council (CSNC) - formed by residents and community partners- secured a grant from the Edward Ingersoll Browne Fund award to design a plan connecting the park with the adjacent Second Church landscape.

Since 2022, the Friends of Codman Square and the City have held community meetings, conversations at local Farmers Markets and on-the-ground site assessments to collect residents' feedback to inform the final design.

In September 2025 Codman Square Park was re-inaugurated. This \$1.1 million investment enhanced the social character of the space while providing green infrastructure and climate-resilient features, including cooling towers, rain gardens, and porous paving to reduce heat stress and improve stormwater management.



COASTAL FLOODING

The melting of glaciers and ice sheets, combined with warming oceans and the expansion of seawaters, is accelerating sea-level rise - exposing thousands of homes, businesses, and critical infrastructure in Boston to coastal flooding.⁵⁷ This threat is amplified by the city's history of landmaking: roughly one-sixth of Boston sits on land created by filling former tidal flats and marshes, many of which are now among the city's most flood-prone neighborhoods.⁵⁸ As sea levels continue to climb, these low-lying, landfill-based areas face heightened vulnerability, not only to sea-level rise over time, but also to chronic tidal flooding, land subsidence, and severe storm-driven inundation.⁵⁹

Coastal resilience planning in Boston has involved a detailed understanding of where, who, and what is at risk of coastal flooding. For instance, through Climate Ready Boston we learned that sea levels will cause any given storm that is manageable today to produce significantly deeper and more widespread flooding in the years ahead. In the near term (2030s-2050s), a major coastal flood event could inundate the homes of up to 16,000 Bostonians and cause an estimated \$2.3 billion in physical damages to buildings and property, along with economic losses related to displacement, business interruption, and lost productivity.⁶⁰

By 2050, sea levels in Boston are projected to rise roughly 1.5 feet above 2000 levels, potentially reaching 40" by 2070.⁶¹ When combined with extreme storms, these higher sea levels could overwhelm drainage systems and prevent stormwater from flowing out, resulting in widespread flooding - even in areas protected by seawalls or other shoreline defenses.⁶² Recent analyses suggest that, under these conditions, a single major storm can cause nearly \$14 billion in citywide damages, 17,000 jobs impacted by business closures or disruptions, and expose 10 percent of Boston's K-12 schools to flooding, impacting over 11,500 students.⁶³

By 2070 and beyond, exposure to severe coastal and riverine flooding will expand to much larger areas of the city, including inland neighborhoods such as the South End and communities along the Charles River.⁶⁴

Sea-level rise further increases the risk of wastewater system failures, such as at the Sullivan Square Pump Station in Charlestown - which is already exposed to coastal storms⁶⁵ - thus increasing the risk of releasing pathogens and harmful chemicals into surrounding neighborhoods.⁶⁶ Coastal flooding also poses significant risks to critical infrastructure, including the JFK/UMass, Sullivan Square, and several Blue Line stations in East Boston.⁶⁷ Important evacuation routes such as I-93, McClellan Highway, the Callahan Tunnel, the I-90 Ted Williams Tunnel, Morrissey Boulevard, Storrow Drive, and Tremont Street are also vulnerable to inundation.⁶⁸

Boston has taken a proactive, neighborhood-based approach to coastal resilience. Through Climate Ready Boston, the City developed neighborhood-specific resilience strategies for eight focus areas, including Charlestown, East Boston, South Boston, and Dorchester. In 2021, Boston also adopted Coastal Flood Resilience Guidelines & Zoning Overlay District through Article 25A of the Zoning Code, which mandates elevation standards for new large-scale construction in flood-prone areas.

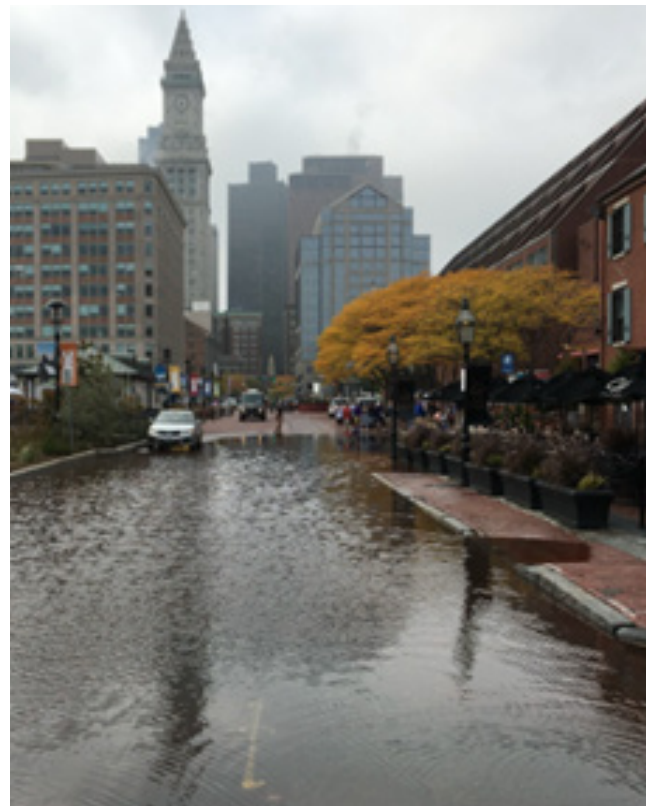


Figure 19: Photo of flooding in the Wharf District, posted by bostonenviro Instagram account on November 25, 2025.

Signature projects such as McConnell Park, Martin's Park, and the harborwalk at Langone Park demonstrate how integrated flood protection can be paired with public space improvements. Another leading example of Boston's climate-resilient innovation is the John J. Ryan Playground Improvements project in Charlestown - a \$25 million investment that includes natural grass sports fields, a children's play area with a splash pad, and a waterfront promenade. These amenities will sit atop a 6-foot flood-barrier berm designed to protect the surrounding neighborhood from flooding driven by rising sea levels and storm surges.⁶⁹ Boston has also partnered with neighboring Revere to address regional flood risk through the Resilient Bennington Street and Fredericks Park Project.

Despite this progress, several key challenges remain. Implementing the Climate Ready Boston resilience plans still relies on securing long-term funding sources for design, construction, and maintenance of major infrastructure. Coordinated governance across City agencies, state partners, and private landowners is essential, especially given the diversity of coastal ownership and the need for a continuous coastal defense system rather than piecemeal or parcel-by-parcel solutions. Vulnerable communities such as East Boston will require anti-displacement measures, such as those outlined in the 2025 Anti-Displacement Action Plan, to ensure that resilience investments support and benefit residents, while preventing climate-driven gentrification. Additionally, developing a job pipeline for local workers will be crucial to maintain and steward the City's growing network of resilience infrastructure.

Our vision for a coastal resilient Boston by 2030 will build on Climate Ready Boston and focus on reducing immediate flood risks, addressing long-term flood pathways, and strengthening flood-resilience practices and standards across the city's 47-mile shoreline. This work advances major federal-local coordination through the U.S. Army Corps Coastal Storm Risk Management Study and supports neighborhood and building-level adaptation measures that protect residents today, while building towards a future in which every resident benefits from reliable coastal resilience and safer, more climate-ready coastal communities.

Vision of a Coastal Flood Resilient Boston



Project Spotlight: Border Street Waterfront in East Boston

The [Resilient Border Street Waterfront](#) in East Boston was originally developed in the mid-1800s for commercial and residential uses. Although the land was elevated to meet the needs of that era, rising sea levels and increasingly severe storms now threaten the area's long-term stability.

In 2017, the Coastal Resilience Solutions for East Boston study identified Border Street as a critical flood pathway. Under projected 2030 sea-level rise and growing intensity of major storms, flooding is expected to flow across waterfront properties and Border Street, reaching low-lying areas of the East Boston community. Already in 2018 and again in 2024, the area experienced high inundation levels, nearly breaching existing flood protection and impacting numerous parcels within the project area.⁷⁰

In response, the City is leading a project to advance the design of coastal resilience infrastructure along the Border Street waterfront in East Boston. The project seeks to improve stormwater management, reduce the urban heat island effect, and enhance connectivity along and access to the East Boston waterfront.⁷¹ Read the preliminary design report [here](#).

The project area - extending from 36 New Street/60 Border Street to 276R Border Street, just north of Liberty Plaza/Shaws- includes seven privately-owned properties whose properties and investments are directly impacted by the proposed coastal resilience measures. The City is closely collaborating with these private owners, as well as the broader East Boston community, to design a coastal resilience strategy rooted in local priorities, needs, and constraints. The process is supported by the Community Coastal Resilience Implementation Council -established through this project and the East Boston community- to guide decision-making throughout the planning and design phases.



What this section aims to achieve by 2030

- **Protect Boston from near-term coastal flood risks (through 2030)** while advancing the planning, design, and implementation of long-term resilience solutions (through 2050).
- **Collaborate with state, federal, and private partners**, strengthening coordination, funding, and delivery of coastal flood resilience strategies.
- **Enhance the resilience of critical infrastructure, neighborhoods, and economic centers**, minimizing disruption and long-term damage from coastal flooding events.
- **Leverage coastal resilience investments to deliver co-benefits**, including improved public access, ecological restoration, and enhanced waterfront spaces.



COASTAL FLOODING

C1. Close long-term flood pathways.

FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY

CARE-FULL CITY

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS



Related metric(s): Coastal Resilience Project Statuses



Linked Strategies: F3

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○

IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Complete the US Army Corps Coastal Storm Risk Management Study

CONTINUE & SCALE

Lead Department(s): Office of Climate Resilience

The Boston Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRSM) study, completed in partnership with the US Army Corps of Engineers, builds on Climate Ready Boston's coastal resilience plans and will recommend measures that are eligible for direct federal investment. This partnership is critical as securing federal funding is essential for advancing large-scale coastal protection projects necessary to safeguard Boston's homes, businesses, and infrastructure in the long-term. The City will coordinate with the US Army Corps to ensure short, medium, and long-term projects remain aligned, balancing immediate local protection needs with the larger-scale solutions proposed through the CSRSM study. Over the next two years, the City will work closely with community members and property owners to shape what the long-term coastal resilience projects should look like in different neighborhoods and work with the US Army Corps to develop the study recommendations. The CSRSM study concludes with a formal recommendation to Congress that will include next steps and recommends funding authorization for infrastructure projects. The goal for the Boston CSRSM is to be able to deliver the recommendations to Congress by Spring 2028.

Enter into Design Agreement with US Army Corps

CONTINUE & SCALE

Lead Department(s): Office of Climate Resilience

After the CSRSM Study is completed, the next phase of work is Preconstruction, Engineering, and Design (PED). PED, led by the US Army Corps of Engineers in partnership with the City of Boston, begins once funding is appropriated by Congress and the Design Agreement is executed with the City. Expediting the design agreement, to be finalized by 2030, will help us to continue detailed design and construction of long-term coastal protection infrastructure.

C2. Reduce immediate flood risk and costs.

HEALTHY CITY FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY CARE-FULL CITY PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS

Related Metric(s): Coastal Resilience Project Statuses; Percentage of Households in Flood Zones Enrolled in a National Flood Insurance Program Policy

Linked Strategies: S1, X1, X3, X4, W1, F3

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○

IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Complete Critical Flood Infrastructure Planning, Design, and Construction

Lead Department(s): Office of Climate Resilience

CONTINUE & SCALE

The City of Boston will complete key infrastructure projects that block or redirect the most significant 2030 flood pathways, identified through detailed modeling and community input, across each of Boston's five coastal neighborhoods.¹ Building on the extensive work already completed through Climate Ready Boston and neighborhood-level resilience plans, the City aims to have these critical near-term projects completed by 2030. These 2030 pathways represent near-term vulnerabilities, reflecting areas already at risk of flooding under current conditions and expected to worsen with early-decade sea level rise, making them urgent priorities compared to the larger, long-term coastal transformation efforts underway.

Implement Deployable Flood Protection Strategies

Lead Department(s): Office of Emergency Management | Support Department(s): Office of Climate Resilience

START

Deployable flood protection consists of temporary or removable barriers, such as flood walls and gates, that can be installed ahead of storms to prevent water from entering vulnerable areas, like MBTA stations. As the City proceeds with longer term transformation of its coastline, the Office of Emergency Management's Emergency Operations Center will proactively monitor weather conditions and coordinate with public and private owners to support the deployment of flood protection measures, where possible, to reduce the immediate flood risk in neighborhoods. This includes projects that are led by the City focused on neighborhood-level protection, as well as projects led by other public and private property-owners, with technical assistance from the City, focused on building-level protection.

Join FEMA's Community Rating System

Lead Department(s): Inspectional Services Department | Support Department(s): Office of Climate Resilience

START

FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS) is a voluntary program that reduces National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) premiums for residents and business owners in cities that go above federal floodplain management standards. By joining FEMA's CRS, the City of Boston can demonstrate its commitment to flood risk reduction while helping lower flood insurance costs for residents and businesses. By 2030, the City will apply to join the CRS, and collaborate with community organizations to develop programming that engages residents and increases awareness of flood insurance options and broader flood resilience strategies.

¹ Up-to-date information on project progress can be seen on the [Coastal Resilience Project Tracker](#).

C3. Strengthen coastal resilience through zoning.

HEALTHY CITY FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY HOUSING AFFORDABILITY & QUALITY

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS

Related Metric(s): Building Square Footage in Compliance with the Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ●

IMPACT: ● ● ○

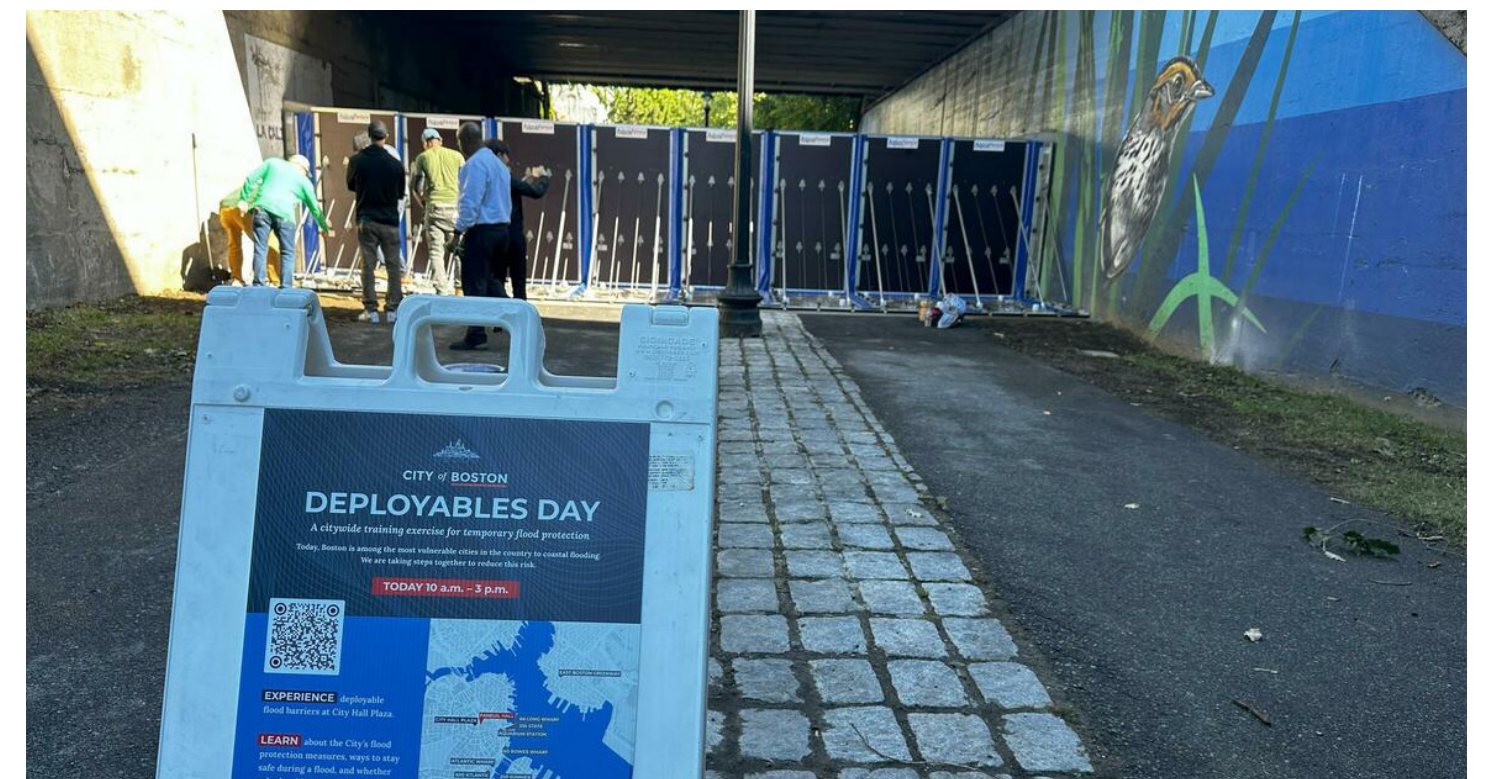
2030 ACTIONS

Update the Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District

Lead Department(s): Planning Department; Office of Climate Resilience

CONTINUE & SCALE

The Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District (CFROD) establishes zoning requirements for large new construction and major redevelopment in areas vulnerable to coastal flooding, ensuring that new buildings are designed to withstand future sea level rise and storm surge. This work helps reduce flood damage, protects residents and infrastructure, and promotes long-term climate resilience in Boston's most at-risk neighborhoods. In 2024, CFROD was updated based on evolving flood data to extend protections to a broader set of properties, and by 2030, the City will continue to refine the overlay based on community feedback and updated flood modeling to ensure it remains aligned with resilience goals and safeguards at-risk properties.



CROSS-HAZARD CLIMATE RISKS

Boston's climate hazards do not occur in isolation. Extreme heat, flooding, storms and infrastructure disruptions often intersect and compound one another. Our capacity to prepare for, cope with and recover from these multiple hazards simultaneously - especially in communities that have historically faced the greatest climate burdens- depends on our ability to coordinate citywide solutions across multiple sectors. This requires leveraging technological advancement, community leadership, expanding partnerships, and investing on reliable data to guide our climate action.

This section highlights cross-cutting strategies that strengthen Boston's overall capacity to prepare for and respond to climate impacts, with a particular emphasis on the role that community resilience and innovation can play in our resilience solutions.

What this section aims to achieve by 2030

- **Explore and advance innovative solutions to Boston's most pressing climate-related challenges**, addressing risks that span multiple hazards, including heat, flooding and extreme weather events.
- **Support and scale community-led resilience efforts**, prioritizing equitable and inclusive strategies that center the needs, knowledge, and leadership of environmental justice communities, empowering residents and community-based organizations to design and implement locally driven solutions.
- **Enhance preparedness and adaptive capacity**, equipping communities, institutions, and City systems to respond to a range of climate risks and impacts.



CROSS-HAZARD CLIMATE RISKS

X1. Expand the City's capacity to deliver.

SHARED CITY

Linked Strategies: H1, S1, C2

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○

IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Expand the City's Climate Data Network

Lead Department(s): Office of Emerging Technology

Support Department(s): Office of Climate Resilience; Environment Department

CONTINUE & SCALE

In partnership with a variety of higher education institutions and private partners, the City has been expanding its network of sensors collecting climate-related data, such as flooding, air quality, and localized temperature. This information can help support real time monitoring, short term forecasting, long term modeling, and project evaluation. Over the next five years, the City will continue to grow and refine this network with partners, aiming to launch a website by 2027 that clearly communicates research goals and provides guidance on data transparency and privacy.

Project Spotlight: Inland Flooding Sensors Across Boston Neighborhoods

In partnership with Hohonu, Boston's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) has worked with the City's Transportation Department to install 10 inland flood sensors across neighborhoods that are prone to flooding.

Inland flood sensors are small devices attached to street lights to monitor water levels in real-time as water pools. They allow the City to measure water depth in these areas during and after a storm and for greater monitoring of city conditions outside of the coastal areas.

This enhances the City's ability to obtain a greater understanding of what flooding thresholds are in different areas of the city. As well as help make data-driven decisions to assist during and post heavy rain or storm events, feed public warning systems, and collect data to help plan future stormwater improvements with accurate on-the-ground data.





CROSS-HAZARD CLIMATE RISKS

X2. Support community-led resilience and preparedness.

HEALTHY CITY CARE-FULL CITY SHARED CITY

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS



Related Metric(s): Number of Certified Emergency Response Teams



Linked Strategies: H1

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○

IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Expand and Improve Alert Boston

Lead Department(s): Office of Emergency Management

CONTINUE & SCALE

Building on its Ready Boston outreach, the Office of Emergency Management will continue engaging residents to enroll in the Alert Boston communication system while enhancing accessibility. Over the next five years, the City will refine and promote public safety guidance through Alert Boston to ensure residents know how to stay safe during hazards such as extreme heat events and localized flooding.

Empower Residents Through Emergency Trainings and Engagement

Lead Department(s): Office of Emergency Management

CONTINUE & SCALE

The City will continue to expand programs and policies that empower residents to support themselves and their neighbors before, during, and after extreme weather events. While the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) offers a range of trainings, these programs in particular are focused on climate-related preparedness:

- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT): This program trains residents in emergency response skills for disasters, including extreme storms and flooding events. Participants become key assets in their communities, strengthening local resilience.
- Pamper Your Drain: Residents can adopt a storm drain in their neighborhoods to keep it clear of debris and trash, ensuring that stormwater flows properly and reducing local flooding risks.
- Ready Boston Field Day: This annual, hands-on event, held in recognition of National Preparedness Month, invites residents to learn practical ways to prepare for emergencies and disasters. Attendees can build their own emergency kits, gain life-saving skills, and take home safety tips and giveaways to help protect themselves and their families.

These programs highlight ways residents can take direct action to make their communities safer and more resilient in the face of climate-related hazards.

2030 ACTIONS

Empower Trusted Community Spaces to Provide Support During Climate Emergencies

START

Lead Department(s): Office of Emergency Management; Office of Climate Resilience

The City will develop resources to support community-based organizations and institutions interested in serving as resilience hubs, complementary to the City's network of cooling centers. These trusted local partners understand the unique needs, challenges, and strengths of their neighborhoods, making them key stewards in operating and supporting resilience hubs. These community-led resilience hubs are local spaces that provide resources, information, and support before, during, and after extreme weather or other emergencies, helping neighborhoods prepare for and recover from climate impacts. Over the next two years, the City of Boston will explore partnerships with community-based organizations, develop a toolkit to guide the establishment of resilience hubs, and identify additional resources and technical support.

X3. Protect vulnerable homes from flooding through targeted retrofits.

HEALTHY CITY CARE-FULL CITY HOUSING AFFORDABILITY & QUALITY PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS



Linked Strategies: C2

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ○ ○

IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Retrofit Basement-Level Units for Flood Resilience

START

Lead Department(s): Office of Emergency Management; Office of Climate Resilience

Support Department(s): Department of Innovation & Technology

The City estimates that there are approximately 20,000 basement units across Boston, about 28 percent of which lay within the CFROD. Bostonians living in basement units and in our floodplains, many of whom are also renters, are particularly vulnerable to flood risk. To begin addressing this, the City will launch a pilot in 2026 focused on homes in Dorchester that are most at risk from coastal flooding. Findings from this pilot will help inform future strategies to reduce flood risk for basement units citywide.



X4. Strengthen and scale innovative resilience solutions.

SHARED CITY ECONOMIC & CAREER MOBILITY PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS

Linked Strategies: H1, C2

PRIORITIZATION
 FEASIBILITY: ● ● ●
 IMPACT: ● ○ ○

2030 ACTIONS

Identify Paths to Reduce Risk in Collaboration with the Insurance Sector

Lead Department(s): Office of Climate Resilience

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

The City will explore with the insurance sector how district-scale coastal resilience projects investments may be more effectively incorporated into flood risk models. The City, in partnership with the Green Ribbon Commission and others, will also explore opportunities for the insurance sector to support district scale risk-reduction projects.

Explore Climate Tech Partnerships

Lead Department(s): Office of Emerging Technology

Support Department(s): Office of Economic Opportunity; Office of Climate Resilience; Procurement Department

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

With strong regional partners such as MassCEC, Mass Mobility Hub, and the Alliance for Climate Transition (ACT), alongside world-class talent from the region's higher education institutions, Boston is well positioned to become a national leader in climate technology innovation. Boston has particular interest in new technologies that improve the quality, lower the cost, and speed the delivery of the City's resilience programs and projects, such as those related to urban heat mitigation, stormwater, inland, and coastal flooding resilience, and energy reliability. Over the next five years, the Office of Emerging Technology will implement the recommendations from the Emerging Climate Tech RFI Summary Report, released in December 2024, to support climate tech innovation:⁷² (1) Create municipal pilot opportunities for real world testing and validation (2) Ease procurement and permitting challenges to integrate innovative solutions (3) Increase awareness, networking, and strategic partnerships.

In 2026, the City of Boston will convene a working group composed of City staff and external partners, and climate tech companies to inform the implementation of the above recommendations.

Project Spotlight: A Partnership for Energy Savings, Resident Comfort and Climate Leadership between Gradient and City of Boston

The Boston Housing Authority has partnered with Gradient - a manufacturer of innovative and efficient heating and cooling solutions- to improve the 100 homes to seniors and adults with disabilities at Hassan Apartments in Hyde Park. With funding from the Mass Save Income Eligible Multi-Family Retrofit program, the aging electric resistance systems of the units were replaced by new high-efficiency window-mounted heat pumps, making a healthier and more comfortable living for residents, while reducing costs, emissions and energy usage in public housing.⁷³



X5. Expand strategies to ensure nutritious, culturally relevant food reaches communities, contributing to a food system with less waste.

FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY CARE-FULL CITY SHARED CITY MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING
ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION

PRIORITIZATION
 FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○
 IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Continue Food Recovery Initiatives

Lead Department(s): Office of Food Justice

CONTINUE & SCALE

Food waste accounted for approximately 23 percent of Boston's total municipal solid waste in 2017, highlighting a significant opportunity to divert food before it reaches landfills. State regulations, overseen by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, require institutions that generate at least half a ton of waste per week—such as restaurants and universities—to divert organic waste from landfills and incinerators. While composting is an effective solution, it still generates some emissions (Boston's curbside composting program and Project Oscar account for less than 0.1 percent of Boston's greenhouse gas inventory). The City is exploring food recovery initiatives to ensure that edible food reaches those who need it most.

The City of Boston developed a [Food Recovery Assessment](#) to evaluate Boston's food recovery landscape and identify strategies to scale efforts, reduce surplus food waste, and better meet community needs. Food recovery is critical not only for reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with wasted food, but also for addressing food insecurity and ensuring that surplus food benefits those who need it most. Informed by input from residents, food recovery organizations, and food-generating businesses, the report outlines actionable recommendations the City and its partners will advance in the coming years.

The City has begun, and will continue, advancing recommendations to strengthen coordination and collaboration across Boston's food recovery system. These efforts include providing technical assistance, developing shared infrastructure, addressing regulatory barriers, and expanding education and awareness among food donors. The City will also build on its key investment in the Greater Boston Collaborative Food Access hub and leverage updates to the Massachusetts commercial food material disposal ban to maximize opportunities for food to be recovered. Together, these strategies aim to enhance the capacity, efficiency and sustainability of food recovery while supporting dignified food access.

2030 ACTIONS

Support the Expansion of Food Forests and other Urban Agriculture

Lead Department(s): GrowBoston: Office of Urban Agriculture

CONTINUE & SCALE

Food forests transform underutilized land into locally managed, public edible parks that provide fresh, locally grown food, particularly in neighborhoods with high levels of food insecurity, while reducing the impacts of climate change. The creation of urban farms and community gardens provide similar benefits. By increasing availability and access to green space and supporting urban biodiversity, these sites can help neighborhoods adapt to extreme heat and flooding and strengthen community resilience ensuring that climate action produces visible benefits in environmental justice communities. In collaboration with partners such as the Boston Food Forest Coalition, who have a goal to establish 30 food forests citywide by 2030, Boston currently has thirteen food forests and the City will continue to help expand this number through the Grassroots Program, strategic partnerships, and other GrowBoston initiatives.

Increase Access to and Consumption of Healthy, Sustainable Food

Lead Department(s): Office of Food Justice, Boston Public Schools

CONTINUE & SCALE

In 2019 the City of Boston passed a Good Foods Standards purchasing ordinance. Boston Public Schools has been a leader in implementing the Good Food Purchasing Program, using its food procurement power to prioritize nutrition, equity, and sustainability in school meals. The Good Food Purchasing Program:

- collects and shares information about the supply chain of our food,
- makes it easier for small, local, and minority-owned food producers who may otherwise have difficulty competing with large corporations to contract with Boston Public Schools,
- fosters worker protection, safe and healthy working conditions, and fair compensation for all food chain workers and producers and,
- incentivizes sustainable production systems that reduce energy and water consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

The City of Boston will continue evaluating opportunities to expand the Good Food Purchasing Program by identifying additional City departments, institutions, or vendors that could adopt this or a similar framework, deepening partnerships with local food producers and aligning procurement practices with values-based goals around nutrition, workforce, sustainability, animal welfare, and local economies. Partnering with the Green Ribbon Commission, the City is engaging with private institutional purchasers like universities and hospitals to engage in a broader effort focused on values based purchasing by large institutions in the City.

To supplement this work, the City will also aim to continue or evolve existing initiatives such as Boston's Double Up Food Bucks and Farmers Market Coupon Program to increase the affordability of fresh fruits and vegetables.



CROSS-HAZARD CLIMATE RISKS

X6. Strengthen food system resilience.

FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY CARE-FULL CITY SHARED CITY

ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○

IMPACT: ● ● ○

2030 ACTIONS

Increase the Resilience of Boston's Food Systems

Lead Department(s): Office of Food Justice

START

The City has already taken initial steps to ensure the regional food system is less disrupted by severe weather events, including awarding \$500,000 in ARPA funds to twelve organizations through the Healthy Food Access Through Cold Storage Grant program to expand and improve cold storage capacity. Building on those steps as well as the ICIC's [Resilient Food Systems, Resilient Cities](#) report framework, the City will scale its efforts to increase the resilience of the emergency food, urban agriculture, food access, food service and grocery sectors. This will include increasing their preparedness for climate disasters and diversifying local food production and distribution infrastructure.

Project Spotlight: Expanding Cold Storage to Reduce Food Waste

In 2024, the City created the Healthy Food Access through [Cold Storage Grant Program](#) that improved local nonprofits' access to cold chain assets like refrigerators, freezers, and refrigerated vehicles.⁷⁴

These upgrades allow food pantries and food recovery organizations to safely store and transport more perishable foods, preventing food from going to waste and getting it to residents who need it. Grantees like DotHouse Health and Food for Free have already expanded their ability to provide more produce, including recovered produce, to more households in Boston.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The green economy encompasses the workforce and industries needed to achieve Boston’s climate goals, ensuring that these opportunities provide good, sustainable jobs for all residents. The City of Boston uses the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ definition of a “green job”: either a job in a business that produces goods or provides services that benefit the environment or conserve natural resources, or a job in which a worker’s duties involve making their establishment’s production processes more environmentally friendly or resource-efficient.⁷⁵

In 2025, Boston released the Climate Ready Workforce Action Plan, which outlines the projected growth of the green workforce in 45 related occupations driven by climate action at the city and state levels across four key sectors: (1) building decarbonization, (2) transportation, (3) coastal resiliency and nature-based solutions, and (4) electrical infrastructure. The report found that the projects outlined in the 2030 Climate Action Plan, along with related city and state climate commitments, will support roughly 67,000 full-time-equivalent jobs per year - just over half in the building trades. Approximately 10 percent of these jobs represent net new positions that would not exist without Boston’s climate initiatives.⁷⁶ Bureau of Labor Statistics projections indicate that between 2023 and 2033, demand for workers in “green” related occupations is projected to grow by 8.7 percent, while overall employment growth is expected to be only 5.7 percent. Climate Ready Workforce Action Plan researchers project that Boston’s 2030 Climate Action Plan will sustain roughly 25 percent of jobs in these occupations by 2030 and potentially one out of every three jobs by 2050, primarily in the Trades.

Despite this tremendous opportunity, significant barriers continue to limit who can access and advance in green jobs. Men are overrepresented in many of the 45 green occupations and there are racial and ethnic disparities in access to high-paying jobs that do not require post-secondary degrees. Historical exclusion of women and people of color from certain occupations, particularly in the building trades, still affects entry, retention, and advancement despite significant progress. Women face additional challenges, including both anticipated and actual gender-based harassment and limited childcare options, especially in many trades due to early start times. Many building trades apprenticeship programs require a high school diploma or equivalent, underscoring the importance of aligned education and credential pathways into trades. People recently returning from incarceration also face discrimination and limited employment opportunities. Ensuring equitable participation in Boston’s green economy will require addressing these structural and workplace barriers so that all residents can benefit from the transition.

Boston currently has enough workers to fill almost all of its green jobs, although there is some mismatch in the exact skills that workers possess and those that are in-demand. More importantly, it’s likely that the city will experience a sizable labor shortage in the future in terms of the actual **number** of workers, stemming from two sources. First, Climate Action Plan strategies are projected to expand the number of jobs in the region, supporting tens of thousands of positions each year, including an estimated 6,700 **net new** jobs that would not exist without the strategies outlined in Boston’s Climate Action Plan over the next 25 years. In addition, the BLS projects that roughly 2,700 workers across all 45 green-related occupations will retire each year, creating ongoing replacement needs over the coming decades. Boston’s education and training programs are currently producing approximately 1,400 newly trained green workers per year.

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT THE GREEN ECONOMIC ENGINE

Transitioning to a low-carbon, resilient city requires a robust climate workforce with a variety of skillsets and a thriving climate business community. This chapter details how Boston will expand and strengthen its green workforce, promote equitable access to climate-focused jobs, and align funding mechanisms with the City’s climate strategies to ensure a robust and sustainable green economic engine over the next five years.

Most training pathways run through union apprenticeships in the building trades. Only about 200 of these 1,400 newly trained workers currently come from high school programs (e.g., Madison Park Vocational Technical High School) and community colleges (e.g., Bunker Hill Community College and Roxbury Community College), with an even smaller number being trained through community-based programs. While Boston workers already possess many of the core skills needed, a subset will require reskilling to adapt to new green technologies and standards. The challenge, therefore, is not a shortage of potential workers but an undersized and inequitable training pipeline that must be expanded and redesigned to help more residents enter pathways into green careers. However, the training gaps are more nuanced:

- Some occupations do not have any training opportunities. For example, project implementation roles for planning and finance in the green sector have no training programs associated with them. As a result, many employers look for proxies, such as having a college degree, to be able to fill these roles when one might not be needed. As a result, this can exacerbate barriers to entry, especially for people of color who have less access to college training. To address this gap in access to training that can lead to good jobs, we must develop curricula that meet the employers needs and can be used to establish industry recognized credentials other than a bachelor's degree.
- Some occupations do not have enough capacity in existing training programs to meet the demand for worker participation. The ability to expand training capacity is limited by multiple factors. Some training programs are limited by trainer shortages, more interested applicants than available seats, or funding availability. Union training programs, which account for a large share of projected employment needs, frequently face applicant demand that exceeds available slots. Their annual intake is based on projected labor demand driven by both market conditions and anticipated replacement needs. In a boom year, or when higher-than-average retirement is expected the demand for apprentices workers increases, and the union can accept more applicants, who work alongside more advanced workers on construction projects. In slower years, or years with fewer anticipated retirements, the number of apprentices accepted declines
- Some occupations have training programs that do not lead to good jobs that pay a living wage and/or have realistic advancement opportunities. In some occupations, job training is plentiful but does not lead to high quality jobs. For example, trainees who complete a residential construction-related program struggle to find job opportunities with living wages, benefits and career advancement pathways. To address this gap in job quality, we must either ensure that every entry level job pays a living wage equal to the City's Living Wage Ordinance or is part of an established career pathway that leads to a living wage within the first year.

To meet the demand, Boston aims to grow the training ecosystem to address all these gaps.

The strategies outlined in this chapter complement the recommendations in the Climate Ready Workforce Action Plan and focus on expanding and strengthening Boston's green workforce by scaling training programs, reducing barriers to access, and leveraging City partnerships and procurement powers to drive demand for good green jobs and support equitable entry into high-quality green careers.

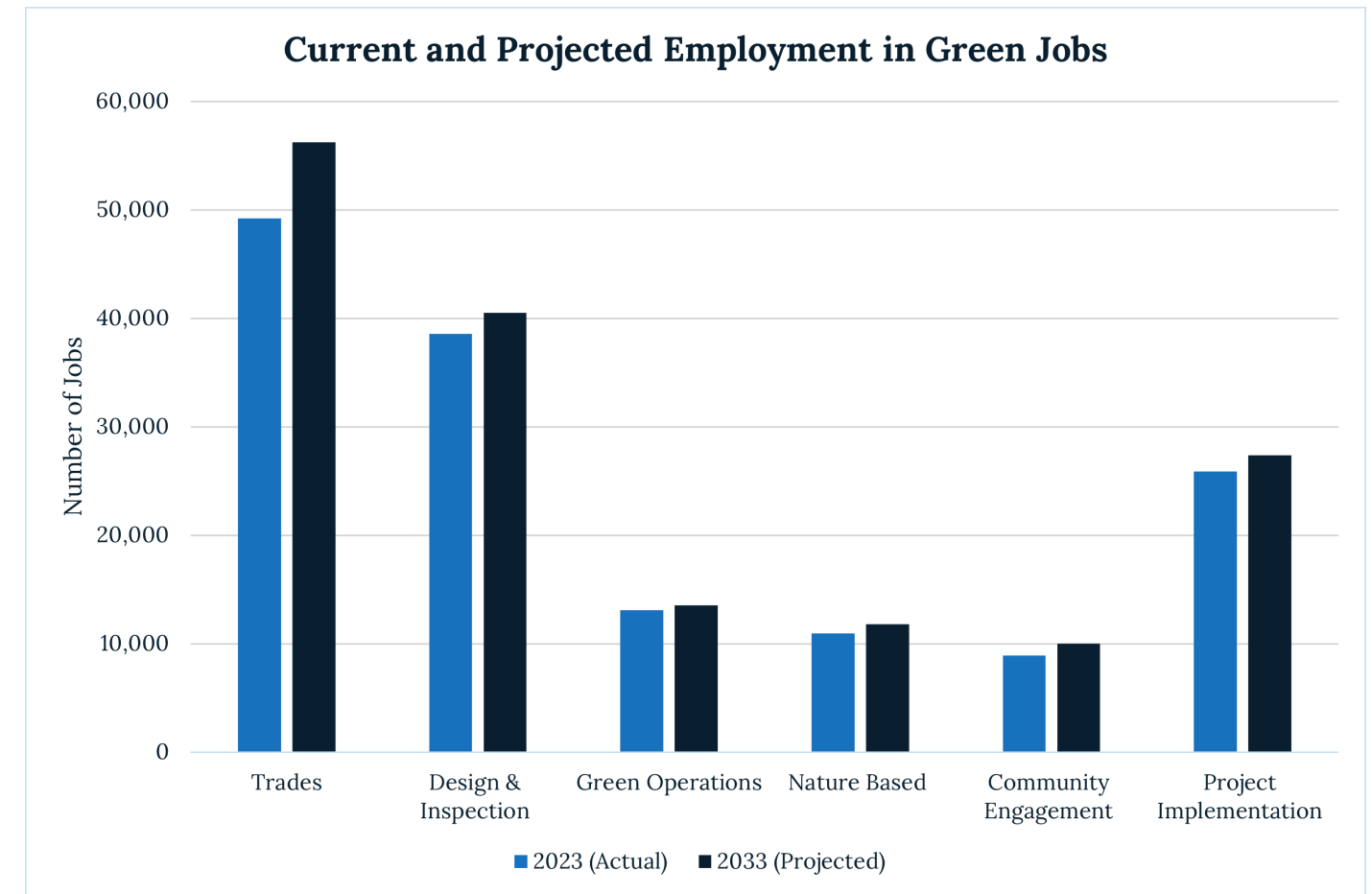


Figure 20: Number of jobs in green industries in 2023 and projected for 2033 from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. (Source: Climate Workforce Action Plan)

What this section aims to achieve by 2030

- **Grow both the demand and supply of high-quality, green jobs**, aligning workforce development with Boston's decarbonization and resilience goals.
- **Partner with employers and trading providers**, ensuring workforce pipelines are responsive to industry needs and emerging clean energy jobs.
- **Ensure wraparound services are readily available**, including childcare, transportation, language access, and career navigation, to support participation and long-term success.
- **Support job quality and economic growth**, promoting sustainable wages, safe working conditions, and opportunities for training and career development.

W1. Grow Boston's green workforce.

HEALTHY CITY FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY CARE-FULL CITY ECONOMIC & CAREER MOBILITY

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



Related Metric(s): Number of Individuals Enrolled, Graduated, and Job-Placed from City of Boston Training Programs



Linked Strategies: E4, H2, S1, C2

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○

IMPACT: ● ○ ○

The City - through the Office of Workforce Development - has already begun implementing this recommendation through several initiatives. Our target audience is the 45.5 percent of Boston residents that do not have a Bachelor's Degree.

2030 ACTIONS

Advance the Boston's Climate Jobs Alliance

Lead Department(s): Office of Worker Empowerment

CONTINUE & SCALE

The Boston Climate Jobs Alliance (BCJA), funded by a \$9.8 million grant from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Climate-Ready Workforce, is an equity-centered initiative designed to build new sector-based workforce development systems that advance Boston's green economy. The Alliance brings together more than 30 key stakeholders, including employers, training providers, community partners, climate policy practitioners, adult education programs, and wraparound service agencies, to create and implement training pathways that meet employer commitments in coastal and climate resilience occupations over the next four years.

By August 2028, The Boston Climate Jobs Alliance (BCJA) will train at least 645 people and place 484 in more than 1,200 jobs committed by 13 employers in family-sustaining, coastal, and climate resilience occupations. In its initial phase, the City will document employer models for workforce development training through evaluations of registered apprenticeship programs, "learn and earn" models and cooperatives, for effectiveness and scalability. Through the BCJA, the Office of Workforce Development is working with the Boston Water & Sewer Commission and PowerCorps Boston to build a registered pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship pathways to jobs in water utilities. Trainees from the BCJA will receive wrap-around services including stipends and free childcare to support a sustainable workforce.

The City will explore opportunities to expand this work and form new partnerships to expand access to good jobs focused on addressing additional climate challenges, including building decarbonization, and convene educational partners from high schools to higher education institutions to continue climate skills education and training.

2030 ACTIONS

Evaluate and Expand Boston's Climate Youth Corps

Lead Department(s): Office of Worker Empowerment

CONTINUE & SCALE

Through a summer 2025 pilot, the Boston Climate Youth Corps partnered with five organizations, Alternatives for Community and Environment, Cathleen Stone Island, Eastie Farm, Piers Park Sailing Center, and Speak for the Trees, to employ more than 200 young people ages 14-24. Participants gained hands-on experience and engaged in community-based stewardship through at least 30 hours of paid work, developed technical and leadership skills through mentorship and training, and explored green career opportunities during site visits and workshops.

Looking ahead, future program cycles will expand partnerships with employers and nonprofits, create clearer bridges from summer experiences to long-term career pathways, and serve as an on-ramp into year-round opportunities such as PowerCorpsBOS, Boston's anchor green workforce program. In summer 2026, the City will expand the number of partner organizations, including The Trustees of Reservations' upcoming Outdoor Ambassadors Youth Employment Program, as part of Boston's Climate Youth Corps.

Continue PowerCorps Boston

Lead Department(s): Office of Worker Empowerment

CONTINUE & SCALE

PowerCorpsBOS, a 10-month green "earn and learn" workforce development program created in June 2022, provides young adults ages 18-30 with training, career readiness support, college credits and certifications, and connections to employers in the green industry. Since its founding, the program has served and graduated five cohorts totaling 127 participants, consistently maintaining high graduation rates at about 75 percent. In the most recent cohort, 87 percent of graduates entered a green job upon graduation. Participants get access to various support services and benefits, such as a T pass and job placement assistance.

The PowerCorpsBOS program has continually evolved to better meet the needs of its participants. In 2023, it launched a Building Operations pathway in partnership with Roxbury Community College and A Better City, offering training in energy efficiency and carbon reduction. In 2025, the program expanded from six to ten months, added an Urban Greening track pathway in partnership with the City's Office of Green Infrastructure, providing participants with a more diverse and comprehensive and immersive learning experience. The City remains committed to maintaining PowerCorpsBOS as a high-quality program and will continue to enhance it to maximize opportunities and outcomes for participants. Specifically, PowerCorps is working with the Boston Water & Sewer Commission to develop plans to add a municipal water utilities/stormwater management pathway for participants.

Project Spotlight: Good Jobs Metro Boston Coalition

The City is investing \$46.9 million to scale full sector-based pipelines with a goal of 4,618 job placements in the child care, healthcare, and clean energy sectors by August 2026. Through September 2025, the Good Jobs Metro Boston Coalition has trained, upskilled, and/or placed over 3,250 individuals (70 percent of goal) within the Greater Boston region into quality jobs. Approximately 2,350 of these jobs were directly funded through a \$23 million dollar Good Jobs Challenge grant from the Economic Development Administration of the Department of Commerce, with an additional 923 placements resulting from funds leveraged Office of Early Childhood, Neighborhood Jobs Trust, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), and WIOA Youth investments totaling \$23.9M.

- Clean Energy – 209 jobs (195 directly funded; 14 leveraged)
- HVAC Technician and related roles: \$23.10/hr, Practical Electricity roles: \$23.15/hr, Weatherization roles: \$22.91/hr, and Maintenance Technician and related roles: \$24.25/hr

W2. Explore and expand on opportunities to address barriers to accessing green jobs training programs.

HEALTHY CITY FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY CARE-FULL CITY ECONOMIC & CAREER MOBILITY
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

 **Related Metric(s):** Number of Individuals Enrolled, Graduated, and Job-Placed from City of Boston Training Programs

 **Linked Strategies:** W1, W3

PRIORITIZATION
FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○
IMPACT: ● ○ ○

2030 ACTIONS

Remove Barriers and Expand Access to Green Jobs Training Programs

Lead Department(s): Office of Worker Empowerment
Support Department(s): Office of Early Childhood

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

To improve access to green job training, the City must address language, information, and childcare barriers that prevent many residents, especially women, people of color, immigrants, and parents, from entering and succeeding in workforce programs. Expanding high-quality English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) offerings would ensure more non-English speakers can participate in training. The City should also strengthen outreach about green job opportunities through fairs, schools, community partners, and online platforms, with a focus on racial and gender inclusion in messaging to broaden participation in the trades and other green occupations. Once enrolled, the City should support programs that offer wraparound services and teach the employability skills needed to succeed.

Childcare remains one of the most significant barriers to entering apprenticeship and training programs. The City has already taken meaningful steps, such as expanding pre-K, supporting family childcare providers, increasing childcare supply citywide through zoning code changes, and improving the Great Starts platform, but more targeted action is needed. Potential interventions include creating a grant program to offset childcare costs for apprentices, expanding pre-K hours and locations (including early-morning coverage), and ensuring facilities supported through Inclusion of Daycare Facilities (IDF) funds provide care during non-standard hours. Additional strategies could include offering stipends to family childcare and informal caregivers (FFN providers) who offer early or extended hours, as well as supporting unions interested in establishing childcare centers through seed funding. Finally, the City will consider adopting policies and partnerships that promote childcare jobs with living wages, benefits, training pathways, safe workplace conditions, and labor protections.

W3. Use procurement and policy tools to drive good jobs and an expanded labor market.

HEALTHY CITY FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY CARE-FULL CITY ECONOMIC & CAREER MOBILITY
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

 **Linked Strategies:** B1, B3

PRIORITIZATION
FEASIBILITY: ● ○ ○
IMPACT: ● ○ ○

2030 ACTIONS

Expand the Use of Project Labor Agreements

Lead Department(s): Office of Worker Empowerment

CONTINUE & SCALE

A project labor agreement (PLA) is a contract between a project owner and labor unions that sets the rules for how work will be done on a specific construction project, covering aspects like wages, safety standards, training, and hiring practices before the project begins. In May 2025, the City of Boston finalized a landmark PLA with the Greater Boston Building Trades Unions and the North Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters, creating a direct pathway for Madison Park Technical Vocational High School graduates into well-paying, stable union jobs. The PLA will help ensure a reliable supply of skilled union labor for major BPS capital projects and includes a commitment to expand childcare access for union workers by exploring the creation of a trust fund. This builds on the City's ongoing partnership with the Care That Works coalition to increase childcare options for workers with nontraditional schedules.

The City will continue evaluating how PLAs can meet workforce needs, including their use in the procurement of future large municipal capital projects. Future school projects will be considered for PLA inclusion on a case-by-case basis as required under the Mass Leads Act signed into state law in November 2024. BPS's Long-Term Facilities Plan is already driving significant construction activity, with major projects recently completed, including the Boston Arts Academy and Josiah Quincy Upper School, and several others underway.

Drive Good Jobs through BERDO

Lead Department(s): Office of Worker Empowerment
Support Department(s): Environment Department

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

The City will explore and evaluate strategies to incentivize and encourage all building owners covered by BERDO to adopt strong labor standards, adjusting the approach with various types of building owners. BERDO, combined with small building retrofits, could employ workers for more than 40,000 annual job-years over five years, accounting for 25 to 47 percent of Boston's total construction related employment by 2030. Currently, most BERDO covered building owners are not required to follow any special labor or good jobs standards in bringing their buildings into compliance. However, the BERDO Review Board evaluates which projects should receive Equitable Emission Investment Funds meant to benefit Environmental Justice Populations and populations disproportionately affected by air pollution. In considering which projects to fund, the Board must consider benefits including living wages, equitable employment and contracting standards, and the impact of local workforce development programs. The Fund can also directly support equitable workforce development training programs for residents who have been disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change.

The strategies outlined throughout the Plan are ambitious, and achieving them will require sustained, coordinated investment from local, state, federal, and private partners. As the need for climate action grows, predictable and equitable financing becomes essential, both to keep projects on schedule and to ensure that the benefits of climate action prioritize the communities that have historically faced the greatest burdens.

The City of Boston's Capital Plan exceeds \$4.5 billion for the FY26-30 time period, with a growing share of investments in climate-related projects reflected. Guided by the City's Executive Order Eliminating the Use of Fossil Fuels in New Construction and Major Renovations of City Buildings, all new construction and major renovation projects in the Capital Plan will be designed to operate without on-site fossil fuels, demonstrating Boston's commitment to cleaner, healthier public facilities. In the FY26-30 Capital Plan, the City laid the groundwork to invest more than \$75 million in coastal resilience projects, its largest investment in this space to date, advancing critical infrastructure that reduces the risk of future economic losses from climate-driven hazards. These investments have accelerated essential climate work and laid a strong foundation for future projects.

This chapter outlines how the City will integrate climate priorities into annual budgeting, explore durable funding mechanisms for major resilience projects, and assess opportunities to develop new financing tools that accelerate progress toward a low-carbon future.

F1. Mainstream climate goals into City governance processes.

FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY



Related Metric(s): In Development for Fall 2026

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ○ ○

IMPACT: ● ● ●

2030 ACTIONS

Integrate Climate Budgeting Framework into the Budget Processes

START

Lead Department(s): Office of Budget Management; Environment Department

Climate budgeting is a governance approach that integrates climate commitments and criteria into municipal budget decisions and policies. To align Boston's annual budget with the priorities and strategies outlined in the Climate Action Plan, the City will pilot climate budgeting for Fiscal Year 2027, tracking climate-related spending and ensuring that investments advance both emissions reduction and resilience goals. The City will release its first annual climate budgeting report for the pilot in 2026 alongside the City's regular budget documents, providing transparency and accountability for climate-focused expenditures and demonstrating how climate considerations are being mainstreamed into City decision-making.

F2. Explore financing mechanisms for building decarbonization.

FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY

SHARED CITY

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS

PRIORITIZATION

FEASIBILITY: ● ● ○

IMPACT: ● ● ●



Linked Strategies: B1, B3

2030 ACTIONS

Support Exploration of Small Building Catalytic Funding

START

Lead Department(s): Environment Department | Partner(s): The Boston Foundation

Funding and financing solutions are needed to accelerate the decarbonization and weatherization of the approximately 70,000 small buildings in Boston and to address the deferred maintenance and pre-weatherization barriers in many older buildings. The Boston Foundation has been working to identify opportunities for catalytic capital to spur small building retrofits in Boston. In 2026 the City will continue participating in the Boston Foundation's working group and will share learnings from Boston Energy Saver to inform potential program design.

Study Opportunities to Develop Financing Tools for Large Building Decarbonization

START

Lead Department(s): Environment Department

BERDO requires large buildings to reduce emissions over time and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. To comply with BERDO, building owners must invest in retrofit and decarbonization projects over the coming decades. There will be an increasing need for lower-cost capital and financing products to enable owners to make strategic, long-term investments in their buildings. In 2026, the City of Boston will engage with relevant stakeholders to scope out research questions to better understand the financing needs for different types of owners to meet BERDO compliance. The goal of this research will be to inform future financing programs or policy updates to make financing tools more accessible for long-term BERDO compliance.

What this section aims to achieve by 2030

- **Identify and deploy innovative funding and financing mechanisms** to support large-scale investments, including building decarbonization, coastal resilience, and infrastructure upgrades.
- **Leverage public and private partnerships** to maximize available resources and accelerate implementation of climate strategies.
- **Reduce financial barriers to participation in programs**, enabling property owners, businesses, and environmental justice communities to access and benefit from climate investments.
- **Aligning funding strategies with long-term climate goals**, ensuring sustained and scalable investment through 2030 and 2050.

F3. Explore long-term funding options to support large-scale climate resilience projects.

FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY **SHARED CITY** **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS**

 **Linked Strategies:** C1, C2

PRIORITIZATION
FEASIBILITY: ● ● ●
IMPACT: ● ● ●

2030 ACTIONS

Conduct a Resilience Revenue Raising Study

Lead Department(s): Office of Climate Resilience

Support Department(s): Finance Cabinet | Partner(s): Green Ribbon Commission

START

Implementing Climate Ready Boston’s coastal resilience plans will require long-term, multi-billion-dollar funding for the design, construction, and maintenance of major adaptation projects. To prepare for this need, the Green Ribbon Commission, in close collaboration with the City of Boston, will develop a Funding and Financing Blueprint for Coastal Resilience. This is a comprehensive revenue and investment study that compiles updated cost and benefit estimates for resilience projects led by the City and state agencies, with a particular focus on avoided losses and regional economic value. This study will review the gap between available funding and actual project needs, identify which infrastructure investments are achievable with current resources, explore potential new funding and financing mechanisms to close that gap, and engage business and civic leaders to build consensus around the most promising solutions. The blueprint will be released in 2027, outlining near-term and long-term recommendations for sustainably financing Boston’s waterfront resilience through a mix of city, state, federal, and private sources.



F4. Leverage philanthropic funds for climate action.

FAIR & INCLUSIVE CITY **SHARED CITY**

 **Related Metric(s):** Climate-Aligned Spending

PRIORITIZATION
FEASIBILITY: ● ● ●
IMPACT: ● ● ●

2030 ACTIONS

Explore the Creation of a Local Climate Action Fund and/or Targeted Financing Mechanisms to Fill Funding and Financing Gaps and Scale Impact

Lead Department(s): Mayor’s Office of Partnerships; Environment Department

EVALUATE & EXPLORE

To meet the scale and urgency of Boston’s climate goals, the City of Boston will partner with Boston’s robust set of philanthropic and mission-aligned partners to identify opportunities for collaboration in support for Climate Action Plan implementation. If deemed, the City and its partners will explore the creation of a fund or existing instrument to help scale proven strategies and unlock external support for high-impact climate initiatives.





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CONCLUSION

Boston's 2030 Climate Action Plan sets a clear, actionable path towards a healthier, more resilient, and more equitable city by 2030, while laying the groundwork for long-term carbon neutrality and climate resilience through 2050 and beyond. Grounded in science and data, informed by the lived experiences of residents, and shaped by deep community engagement, this plan reflects Boston's continued leadership in confronting the climate crisis and delivering benefits for all residents - cleaner air, lower energy costs, safer streets, and resilient infrastructure - while intentionally prioritizing communities that face the greatest climate risks and have experienced decades of underinvestment.

This Plan recognizes that a city capable of thriving in a changing climate can only be built through a shared, citywide effort. An all-of-city approach, involving residents, businesses, community organizations, and government will guide climate action over the next five years. This Plan intentionally leverages the intersectional nature of climate change, aligning emissions reduction and climate resilience with citywide efforts to improve health, affordability, and economic opportunity for residents. Clear climate justice principles and a monitoring and evaluation framework to track our progress and reinforce equitable, data-driven decision-making.

Boston's climate leadership does not end with this Plan, it accelerates because of it. Through shared accountability, continued engagement, and sustained innovation, Boston will turn the strategies outlined in this Plan into measurable outcomes, ensuring every resident enjoys the benefits of a resilient, carbon neutral city.

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APPENDIX

The 2030 Climate Action Plan Appendix includes:

- Appendix A. GHG Modeling & Methodology
- Appendix B. Prioritization Methodology
- Appendix C. Comment Feedback Synthesis

APPENDIX A. GHG MODELING & METHODOLOGY

The City of Boston has committed to reducing community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent in 2030 and 100 percent in 2050. In order to ensure the Boston 2030 Climate Action Plan is preparing the City to meet those goals, a model was built to project Boston community-wide and municipal emissions. The model was used to inform the types and scale of action required to meet Boston’s climate commitments to prioritize action for implementation. The model evaluates a number of sectors and scenarios for community-wide emissions and projects expected municipal emissions based on existing commitments.

COMMUNITY-WIDE SCENARIOS

The community-wide model was built using historical inventory data from 2005 to 2024. Future emissions were projected out to 2050 under a Business-as-Planned scenario as a projected reference scenario. Key strategies, such as building decarbonization, transportation mode shift, and vehicle electrification were then modeled to different extents under a series of climate action scenarios. A desired climate action scenario to inform the Climate Action Plan was chosen that achieves both Boston’s 2030 and 2050 climate commitment and balances actions across emission sectors. This scenario was used to inform technical analysis supporting the development of strategies and actions.

Business-as-Planned

The Business-as-Planned (BAP) scenario is intended to model future emissions considering anticipated growth and the impact of policies with high confidence for scale of implementation and achieved impact. The BAP scenario uses the 2024 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory as a base year from which future emissions are projected. Emissions are projected to grow following the rate of change of population, household, and job growth. Population growth (# of people) and household growth (# of homes) assumptions were sourced from the Boston Planning Department¹ and job growth (# of jobs) assumptions were sourced from [Imagine Boston 2030](#).² Residential building GHG emissions growth was scaled with population while non-residential building growth was scaled with jobs. Transportation emissions from passenger, freight, and fleet vehicles were scaled using projected household growth.

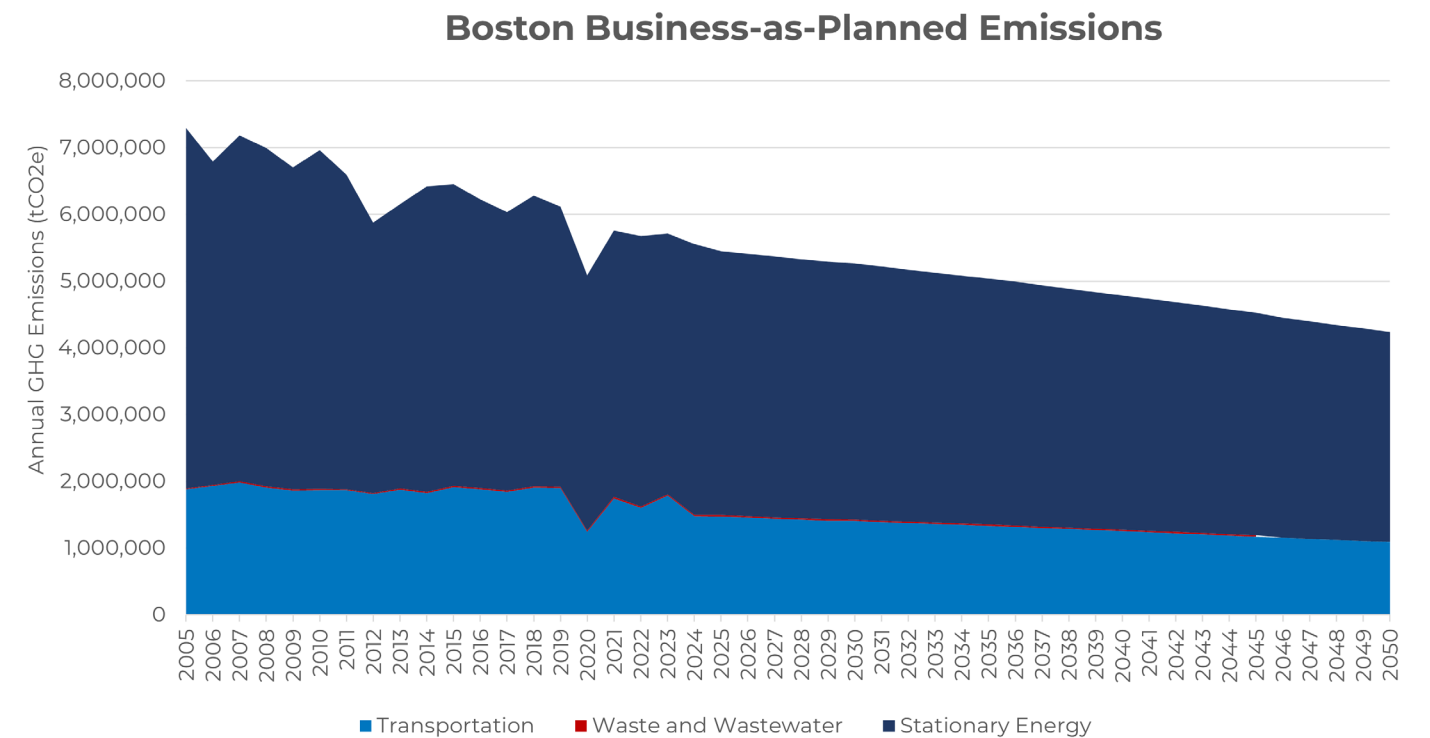
¹ City of Boston Planning Research Division. Boston Population and Housing Projections. 2024.

² City of Boston. [Imagine Boston 2030](#). 2017.

In addition to population and economic growth, the BAP scenario accounts for established climate policies such as the [Massachusetts Renewable Portfolio Standard](#) (RPS)³ and federal [Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency](#) (CAFE)⁴ standard (at time of writing CAFE regulations are unenforced but the market trends they facilitate are expected to continue). The RPS establishes renewable energy targets for the future which were included in the model as a means for decreasing the electricity emissions factor over time. The BAP scenario also assumes a slight increase in internal-combustion engine vehicle efficiency based on historic vehicle efficiency improvements due to policy technological improvements.

Under the BAP scenario, emissions are expected to reduce 28 percent from a 2005 baseline by 2030 and 42 percent by 2050. While these are significant reductions, largely driven by the decarbonization of the electricity grid, they still fall short of the emission reductions necessary to meet the City’s climate goals.

The BAP scenario serves as a reference scenario from which the impacts of additional climate policy can be explored. The following climate action scenarios model electrification and mode shift strategies as compared to the BAP scenario to better understand what infrastructure, policies, and technologies need to be implemented to achieve the City’s climate commitments.



³ Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources. [Renewable and Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Program Summaries](#).

⁴ Environmental Protection Agency and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. [2017 and Later Model Year Light-Duty Vehicle Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards](#). 2012.

Climate Action Scenarios

Five climate action scenarios were modeled to project emissions out to 2050 and understand the sensitivity of actions and different scales of climate action implementation. These scenarios include:

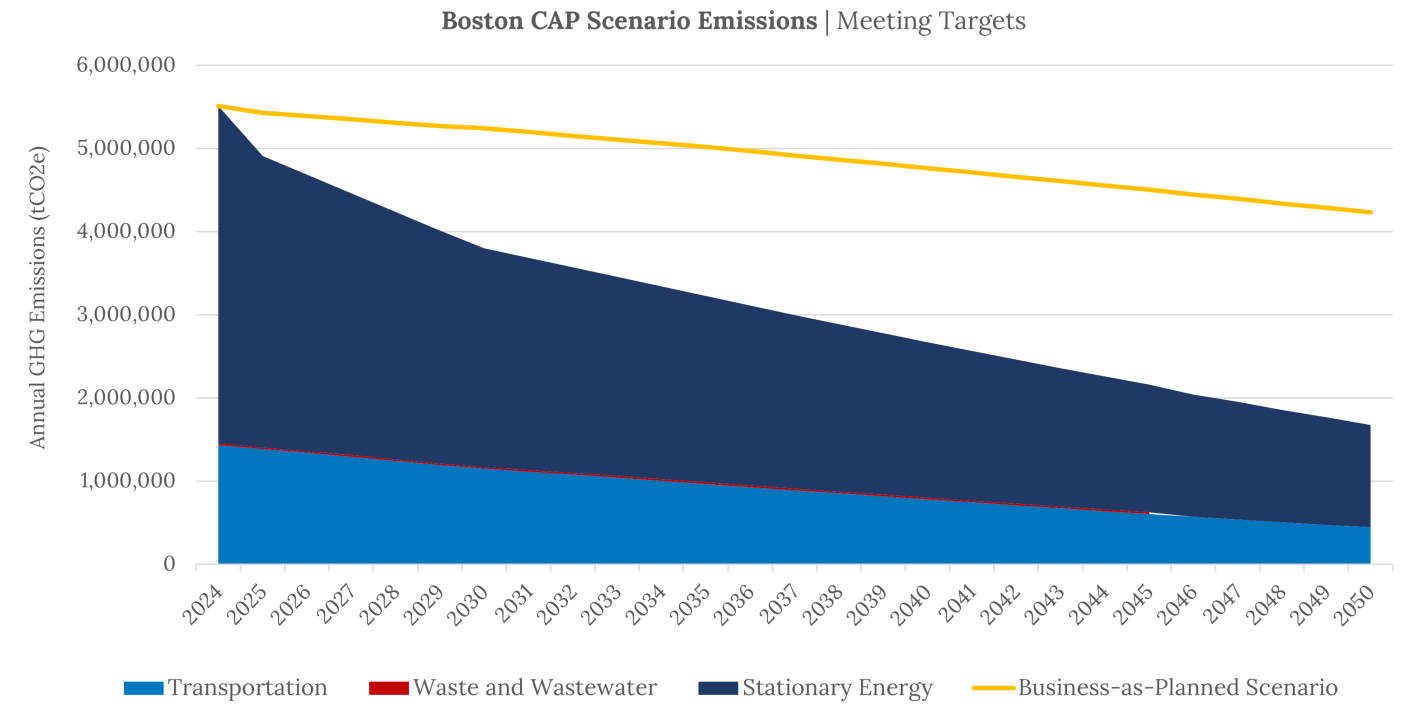
- **Meeting Targets:** Scenario assuming existing policies and commitments are achieved.
- **50x30 Buildings:** Scenario modeling implementation of climate actions, with an emphasis on actions to decarbonize buildings to achieve the 50 percent reduction by 2030 goal.
- **50x30 Transportation:** Scenario modeling implementation of climate actions, with an emphasis on decarbonizing transportation to achieve the 50 percent reduction by 2030 goal.
- **50x30 Balanced:** Scenarios modeling implementation across all actions with accelerated interim targets for both building and transportation sectors to achieve the 50 percent reduction by 2030 goal.

These scenarios were modeled to demonstrate the sectors with the most opportunity for emissions reductions and the degree of action that needs to occur in order to meet the City's climate goals. The emission reductions achieved by 2030 in each scenario are outlined in the table below.

Target	Meeting Targets	50% by 2030 Balanced	50% by 2030 Buildings	50% by 2030 Transportation
Buildings covered by BERDO achieve a [X%] GHG reduction from a 2005 baseline	61%	61%	61%	51%
Buildings not covered by BERDO achieve a [X%] GHG reduction from a 2005 baseline	40%	44%	47%	40%
Buildings not covered by BERDO achieve a [X%] reduction in fossil fuel use from a 2005 baseline	23%	37%	45%	24%
Achieve a [X%] volume of electric passenger vehicles	18%	30%	18%	30%
Increase the shift away from passenger vehicles by [X%] ([X%] mode shift away from passenger vehicles)	24%	46%	25%	92%
Achieve a [X%] GHG reduction from heavy-duty diesel passenger trucks as they are replaced by electric or alternative fuel models	3%	15%	14%	15%
Total Emissions Reductions	45%	50%	50%	50%

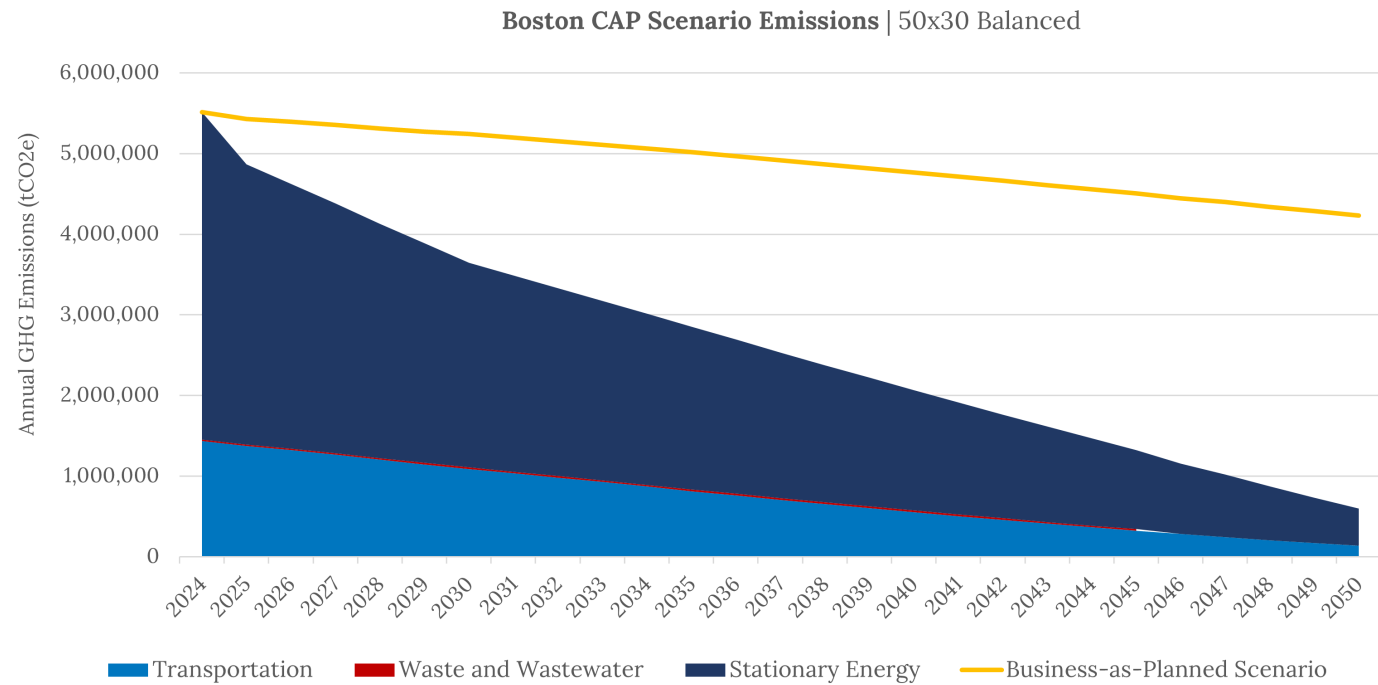
Meeting Targets

This is the most conservative of the climate action scenarios. It is based on existing commitments such as the Zero-Emissions Roadmap, Go Boston 2030, and government fleet electrification commitments. This scenario is distinct from the Business-as-Planned as it assumes the necessary infrastructure and policies required to support planning-level commitments will be implemented. This scenario does not achieve either carbon neutrality by 2050 or a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030. This scenario indicates that additional commitments will need to be made to achieve the City's climate goals.



50x30 Balanced

The 50x30 Balanced scenario sets targets for both transportation and buildings to achieve the 50% by 2030 target. This scenario takes the rates of decarbonization from the Decarbonization by 2050 scenario and assumes increased mode shift to walking/bicycling and transit. This scenario achieves both the 2050 carbon neutrality goal and the 50% reduction by 2030 goal. This is the scenario used to inform the final Climate Action Plan.

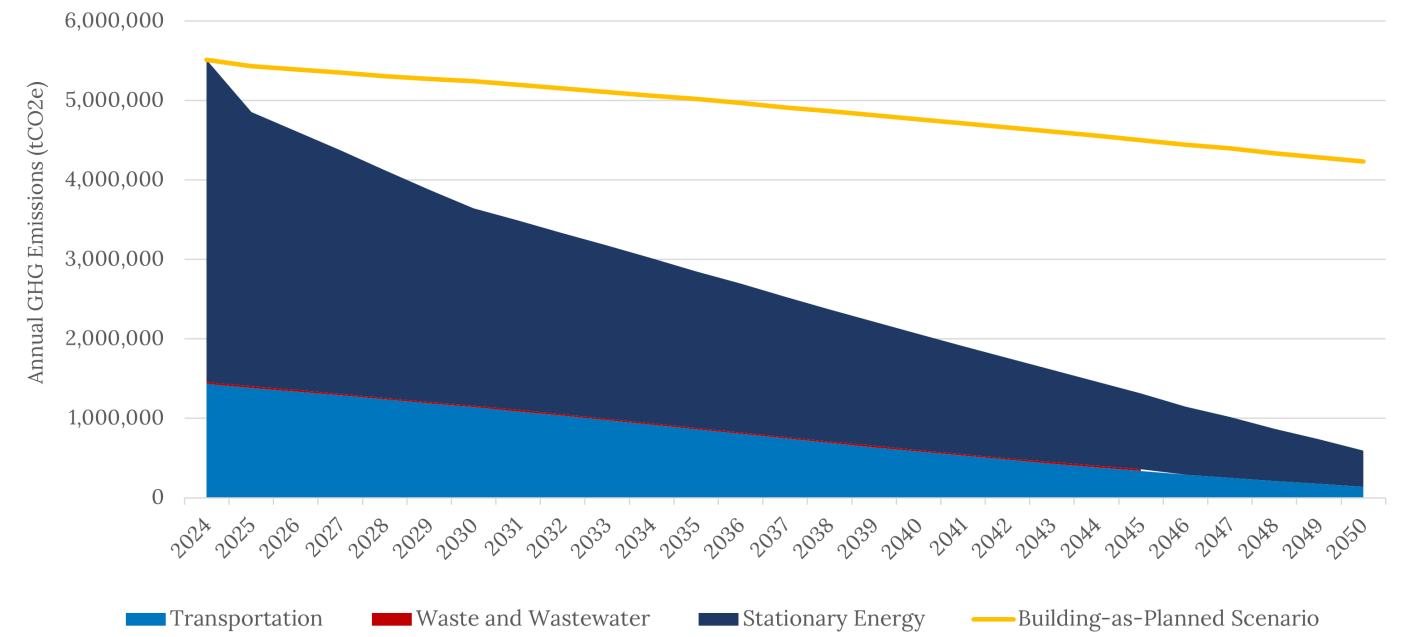


In addition to the Balanced scenario that assumes decarbonization occurs in both the building and transportation sectors, two additional scenarios were developed modeling emission reductions if decarbonization efforts were concentrated in only one sector.

50x30 Buildings

The 50x30 Buildings Scenario assumes that mode shift away from passenger vehicles and electrification of passenger vehicles occurs at a slower rate than other scenarios. Emission reductions from BERDO buildings are assumed to remain the same as this is an established policy and the rate of decarbonization of small buildings is increased to 30% to maintain the 50% emissions reduction. This scenario achieves both the 2050 and 2030 climate goals; however it underlines that without transportation policy, the decarbonization of small buildings will have to be regulated or incentivized such that they decarbonize at a faster rate.

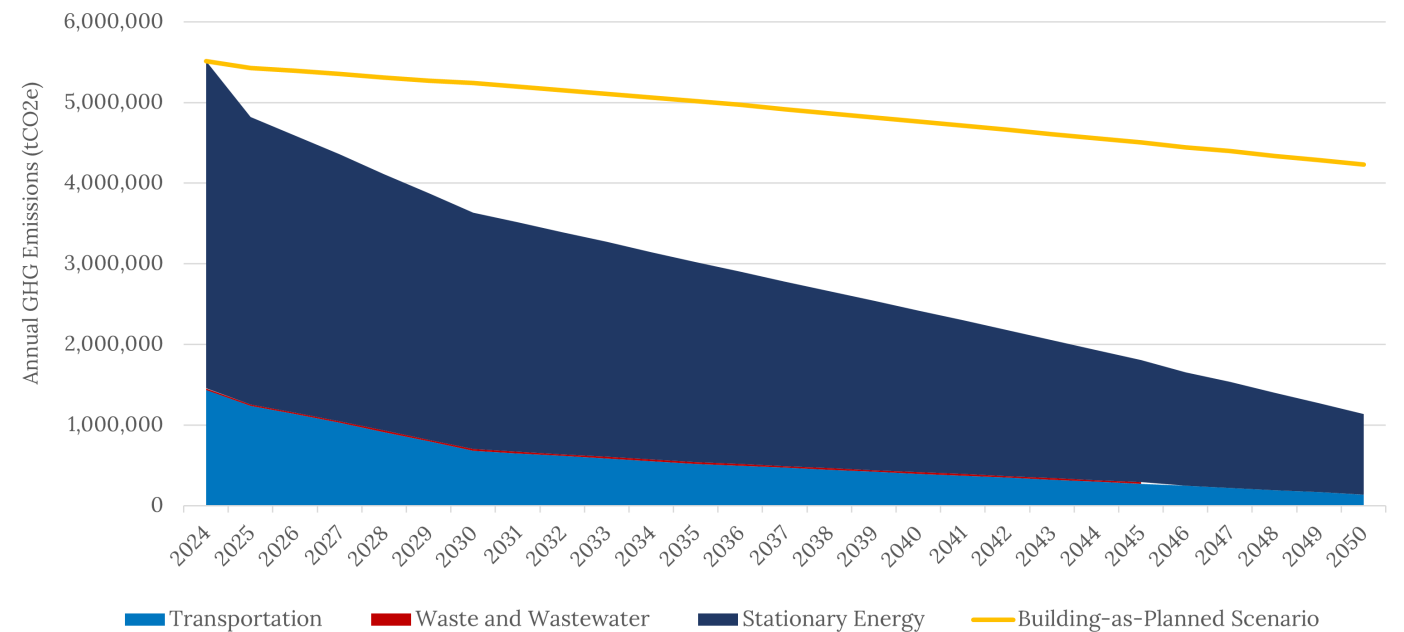
Boston CAP Scenario Emissions | 50x30 Buildings



50x30 Transportation

The 50x30 Transportation scenario assumes that building decarbonization is less aggressive than in other scenarios. Not all BERDO buildings are assumed to be in compliance with the emission standard, and small buildings are assumed to decarbonize at the Meeting Targets rate. Instead, mode shift and vehicle electrification are accelerated assuming a 75% mode shift away from passenger vehicles and 20% electrification of remaining passenger vehicles. As transportation makes up a smaller proportion of overall emissions than buildings, more transformative changes would need to be made if relying primarily on transportation policy to achieve climate targets. This scenario achieves both the 2050 and 2030 climate goals; however it underlines that short of drastic shifts in transportation patterns in the next five years, building decarbonization will play a vital role in achieving those goals.

Boston CAP Scenario Emissions | 50x30 Transportation



COMMUNITY-WIDE EMISSIONS SECTORS

Each of the climate action scenarios described above are distinguished by the input parameters for each emission sector. These input parameters are illustrated in Table 1 below. The following sections explain how these parameters are used in the calculations to project future emissions.

Table 1: Model inputs by emissions sector

Sector	Parameter	Meeting Targets	50% by 2030 Balanced	50% by 2030 Buildings	50% by 2030 Transportation
Buildings	BERDO Compliance Rate	100%	100%	100%	68%
	Non-BERDO Decarbonization (% of buildings that electrify)	3%	20%	30%	3%
Transportation	Passenger Vehicle Electrification	18%	20%	18%	20%
	Walk / Bike Mode Shift (from passenger vehicles)	12%	10%	12%	25%
	Bus Mode Shift (from passenger vehicles)	6%	10%	6%	25%
	Subway Mode Shift (from passenger vehicles)	6%	10%	6%	25%
	Heavy-Duty Diesel Truck Electrification	3%	10%	3%	10%
Total Emissions Reductions		45%	50%	50%	50%

Electricity

The electricity emissions factor used for future years is based on analysis conducted as part of the BERDO development process, as listed in the [BERDO Policies & Procedures document, Appendix A](#).

BERDO Buildings

The Building Emission Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO) is a local law requiring large existing buildings to reduce greenhouse gas emissions over time. Buildings, or collection of buildings over 20,000 square feet or with 15 or more residential units are subject to compliance under the law. BERDO requires these buildings to report total energy and water use each year, verify the data with a third party, and reduce emissions below an emissions standard corresponding to building use type. The emissions standards set out by BERDO were used to project emissions from large buildings in the GHG model where different scenarios scaled the rate of adoption or compliance of these buildings.

Emission reductions from buildings subject to BERDO regulations are based on the BERDO emission standards. A weighted average BERDO emission standard was calculated for each compliance time period based on Gross Area for each BERDO Property Type and the emission standard for each property type. The 2022 baseline standard was calculated by dividing the total emissions from BERDO buildings by the gross area of all BERDO buildings. For each compliance period, the reduction factor was calculated by finding the percent difference between the emission standard for the compliance time period and the 2022 emission standard. That reduction factor was used in the model to calculate emissions from BERDO buildings at the beginning of each compliance period, with linear interpolation

between the years. A compliance factor was also applied to adjust the proportion of BERDO buildings modeled to be in compliance with the emissions standard. The compliance factor assumes that building compliance is achieved solely by meeting emissions standards and does not include alternative compliance pathways. This factor was assumed to be 100% in all climate action scenarios except for 50x30 Transportation.

The City of Boston community-wide greenhouse gas inventory does not differentiate between buildings subject to BERDO and buildings not subject to BERDO. Rather the emissions inventory separates buildings by commercial and residential uses. As BERDO covers both large commercial and residential buildings, assumptions had to be made about the proportion of emissions coming from buildings subject to BERDO. A [press release](#) from the City of Boston related to BERDO stated, “Buildings account for nearly seventy percent of citywide greenhouse gas emissions. BERDO buildings are responsible for five percent of the building stock in Boston and account for over forty percent of the total greenhouse gas emissions.”¹ Based on this quote, it is assumed that BERDO buildings account for 40 percent of the 70 percent of total emissions, or about 57% of building emissions. This factor was used to calculate BERDO building emissions as 57% of combined commercial and residential building emissions.

Small Buildings

Buildings not subject to BERDO are referred to as “small buildings” in the model. As these buildings do not have emission reductions required by local law, decarbonization for these buildings is assumed to be driven by technological improvements and policy incentives. To calculate emission reductions from small buildings, emissions were first split by fossil fuel and electricity emissions. Fossil fuel emissions were reduced by a specified rate based on consultant assumptions about the proportion of small buildings likely to be decarbonized in 2030 and 2050, adjusted based on the model scenario, and linearly interpolated for interim years. Electricity consumption for small buildings was assumed to increase by the same rate, as activities such as cooking or heating transitioned from being powered by fossil fuels to electricity. As electric appliances are often more efficient than fossil fuel ones, a 30% efficiency factor was applied. Electricity consumption was then multiplied by the electricity emission factor for that year to capture the decarbonization of the grid resulting in small building electricity emissions. The resulting fossil fuel emissions and electricity emissions were added together to represent total emissions from small buildings.

Passenger Travel

Passenger travel includes travel through light-duty vehicles, transit, and walking or biking. In the model, emission reductions from passenger travel are modeled by mode shift from gasoline-powered vehicles to walking and biking and transit, and replacing gasoline-powered vehicles with electric vehicles. Emissions from passenger vehicles are reduced by the proportion of passengers presumed to mode shift to walking and biking, the T, and MBTA transit. The proportion of passengers who mode shift to walking and biking are not presumed to have any additional emissions as these are assumed to be zero-carbon modes of transportation.

Emissions from passengers who mode shift from vehicles to transit are added to the relevant mode of transit by converting gasoline vehicle emissions to transit emissions using the relevant energy emission factor as well as a ridership factor to account for the increased efficiency of transit (more riders means lower per person emissions).

Of the remaining gasoline-powered vehicles, a portion is assumed to be transitioned to electric vehicles. Emissions from electric vehicles are calculated by multiplying gasoline-vehicle emissions after mode-shift by the proportion of vehicles electrified, and converting from gasoline emissions to electricity emissions using relevant emissions factors.

¹ Mayor’s Office. City of Boston Finalizes Regulations to Ensure Large Buildings Achieve Carbon Neutrality by 2050. 2023. City of Boston. <https://www.boston.gov/news/city-boston-finalizes-regulations-ensure-large-buildings-achieve-carbon-neutrality-2050>

APPENDIX B. PRIORITIZATION METHODOLOGY

Medium- and Heavy-Duty Vehicles

Medium- and heavy-duty vehicles emission reductions are projected by electrifying diesel-powered vehicles. Transitioning to electric medium- and heavy-duty vehicles is assumed to happen at a slower pace than light-duty vehicles, as the technology continues to improve in delivering viable electric alternatives. For this reason, modest electrification rates are assumed for 2030, with the rate of electrification increasing between 2030 and 2050. Emissions from medium- and heavy-duty fleet electrification are calculated by multiplying emissions from diesel vehicles by the proportion assumed to be electrified and converting from diesel emissions to electricity emissions using the relevant emission factors.

Fleets

Government fleets, including the City of Boston light-duty, medium-duty, and heavy duty fleets, Boston Public School bus fleet, Massport fleet, and MBTA service fleet, are assumed to electrify over time based on assumptions rooted in government agency decarbonization commitments. Emissions from electrifying these fleets are modeled by multiplying BAP emissions from the fleet by the proportion assumed to be electrified, dividing by the relevant fuel mix emission factor, and multiplying by the electricity emission factor.

MBTA buses are assumed to transition to battery electric buses in line with the Bus Electrification Plan developed per the legislative mandate to transition to a 100% zero-emission bus fleet by 2040.

MUNICIPAL GHG EMISSIONS PROJECTION

The municipal GHG emissions inventory is organized by fuel type. For the purpose of forecasting, GHG emissions are divided into three sectors: buildings, light-duty fleet, and heavy-duty fleet. Fuel oil, electricity, steam, fossil gas, and propane are assumed to comprise building emissions while diesel is assumed to represent medium- and heavy-duty vehicle emissions and gasoline is assumed to represent the light duty fleet emissions.

Buildings are assumed to meet BERDO emission standards. A custom emission standard based on the proportional square footage of municipal buildings was created using the 2025 BERDO disclosure data of buildings with City of Boston and City of Boston departments listed as the Property Owner. The square footage by property type and BERDO emissions factors by property type were used to create a weighted average emission metric for each of the BERDO compliance periods. Percent reduction for each period was calculated relative to the 2023 GHG emissions. These reductions were applied to the first year of the BERDO compliance periods and years between compliance periods were linearly interpolated.

Light-duty fleet vehicles are assumed to electrify by 2030 in line with the assumptions made in the community inventory. Emissions from vehicle electrification are calculated by multiplying gasoline vehicles by the proportion not electrified and adding the gasoline vehicle emissions multiplied by the proportion electrified and converting to electricity emissions using the relevant emission factors.

Medium- and heavy-duty vehicles are assumed to electrify 50% by 2030 and 100% by 2050 in line with the assumptions made in the community inventory. Emissions from vehicle electrification are calculated by multiplying gasoline vehicles by the proportion not electrified and adding the proportion of gasoline vehicle emissions electrified converted from gasoline emissions to electricity emissions using the relevant emission factors.

Fleet electrification has very little impact on municipal emission reductions on the 2030; however, benefits of electrifying the fleet are realized in the long-term as the grid decarbonizes.

The strategies included in the 2030 Climate Action Plan were evaluated for their potential feasibility and impact to inform implementation prioritization and in order to achieve climate goals in a realistic and efficient manner. Each strategy was scored both for feasibility and for impact, and then given a high, medium, or low overall ranking based on the relative score of other strategies in the same chapter. The scores for each strategy appear in the “Prioritization” boxes in the top right of each strategy page in the Plan. These scores are based on qualitative and quantitative scoring however the scores are used solely for planning purposes and do not substitute supporting analyses required for implementation.

Feasibility

Strategy feasibility was evaluated based on how easy or difficult a strategy will be to implement based on six criteria. Criteria are qualitatively scored on a scale from one to five, with one representing difficulty to implement and five representing relative simpler implementation. Each criterion was given a weight based on relative importance to overall implementation. The following five criteria were used to evaluate feasibility:

- **Cost**
- **City Staff Capacity**
- **City Influence**
- **Timeline**
- **Public Support**
- **Delivery Partner Buy-In**

Cost relates to the financial resources the strategy will require from the City budget. City resources are finite so the relative cost of strategies is important for understanding when and how the City will be able to implement them. Strategies that can be implemented with less cost to the City score more highly on this criterion because they will be easier to carry out than those that require a significant budget allocation.

Likewise, **City Staff Capacity** will be required to orchestrate many of the strategies. Identifying which strategies are easier lifts from a personnel perspective will help the City plan for implementation. Strategies that can be implemented without a need to hire significantly more City staff, or significant amount of existing City staff coordination score more highly on this criterion because strategies that city departments are already equipped to see through will be easier to implement.

Timeline relates to how soon strategies can be implemented. Some strategies already have a strong foundation to build upon, while others will require years of work to bring to light. Strategies that can be implemented in the next year are ranked highest, while strategies that may take beyond 2030 to be realized are ranked lower.

Public Support was determined based on comments provided during public engagement sessions and comment periods. The Plan serves to improve the lives of Bostonians and so understanding resident priorities is paramount to ensuring the City is delivering benefits to the people of Boston. Strategies that receive a greater number of positive comments receive a higher score.

Similarly, **Delivery Partner Buy-In** is based on feedback from community partners engaged as part of the Plan drafting process. Partners will be key to actioning many of the strategies in the Plan and their support will be essential for successfully delivering on Plan commitments. Strategies that received the most supportive engagement from delivery partners scored the highest.

Each strategy is given a total feasibility score by calculating the weighted average of each of the criteria score. The strategies are then compared to the other strategies in their chapter to determine a high, medium, and low threshold. Strategies are only compared to the strategies within each chapter such that one sector does not outweigh another sector. The top 30 percent of strategies are considered most feasible, the next 60 percent are moderately feasible and the lowest 10 percent are designated as most challenging to implement.

Impact

Strategy impact relates to how effective each strategy is at advancing progress towards climate mitigation, climate resilience, and climate justice goals based on five criteria. Each criterion is evaluated on a scale of one to five, with one representing lower positive impact and five representing higher positive impact. Each criterion was given a weight based on its relative importance to the overall score. The criteria evaluated are as follows:

- **Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Potential**
- **Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Efficacy**
- **Resilience**
- **Climate Justice Impacts**
- **Number of Co-Benefits**

Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Potential measures the degree to which a strategy could impact emissions reductions based on the sector for which it will reduce GHG emissions. For example, strategies that target large buildings would have a high score for emissions reduction, as large buildings represent a significant contribution to Boston's overall emissions. On the contrary, strategies that address heavy-duty vehicle electrification would score lower because heavy-duty vehicles represent a smaller proportion of community emissions.

The **Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Efficacy** criterion pairs closely with the former, however it relates to the extent a strategy could move the needle on realizing emissions reductions. This criterion is related to the type of action a strategy calls for. Strategies that call for building infrastructure or passing policy have a high efficacy because they will tangibly change how the City and stakeholders operate in response to climate change. Strategies that call to explore ideas or to conduct advocacy or outreach are ranked lower for efficacy because they are more indirect actions that may lead to emissions reductions eventually, but additional steps are required. Only strategies in the "Strategies for Reducing Emissions" chapter are evaluated based on this criterion.

Resilience impact measures the extent to which a strategy prepares the city for climate change. Similar to the Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Efficacy criterion, the Resilience criterion is based on the type of action included in the strategy. Strategies that result in the building of grey or green infrastructure are ranked the most highly as they will best alleviate the impacts of climate change on the City. Actions that call for data collection or further study are important, but rank lower for Resilience impact because additional steps are necessary to translate that information into improved adaptations. All strategies are evaluated for Resilience impact as many strategies that are aimed at reducing emissions also have resilience benefits, such as improved grid planning.

Climate Justice impact relates to how directly the strategies will impact climate justice populations. Strategies that specifically address concerns disproportionately faced by climate justice communities or specifically benefit climate justice communities, such as decarbonizing affordable housing score highest. All strategies are evaluated for climate justice impact.

Co-benefit impact measures the way in which strategies deliver on other City priorities in addition to climate. The co-benefits considered are housing, open space, economic development, and public health. Strategies that address multiple priorities, such as increasing tree canopy, score more highly for this criteria. All strategies are evaluated for co-benefits.

Each strategy is given a total impact score by calculating the weighted average of each of the criteria score. The strategies are then compared to the other strategies in their chapter to determine a high, medium, and low threshold. Strategies are only compared to the strategies within each chapter such that one sector does not outweigh another. The top 30 percent of strategies are considered high impact, the next 60 percent are medium impact and the lowest 10 percent are designated as low impact.

APPENDIX C. COMMENT FEEDBACK SYNTHESIS

CLIMATE ACTION SURVEY

The first public survey was open from April 11 - May 11, 2025, collecting 208 responses. The survey found that 88% of respondents are 'very concerned' about the impact of climate change on their community. As illustrated in Figure 21 below, respondents said their top climate crises for their neighborhoods are extreme heat, air quality, and loss of local wildlife.

What Climate Impacts Worry Your Community Most?

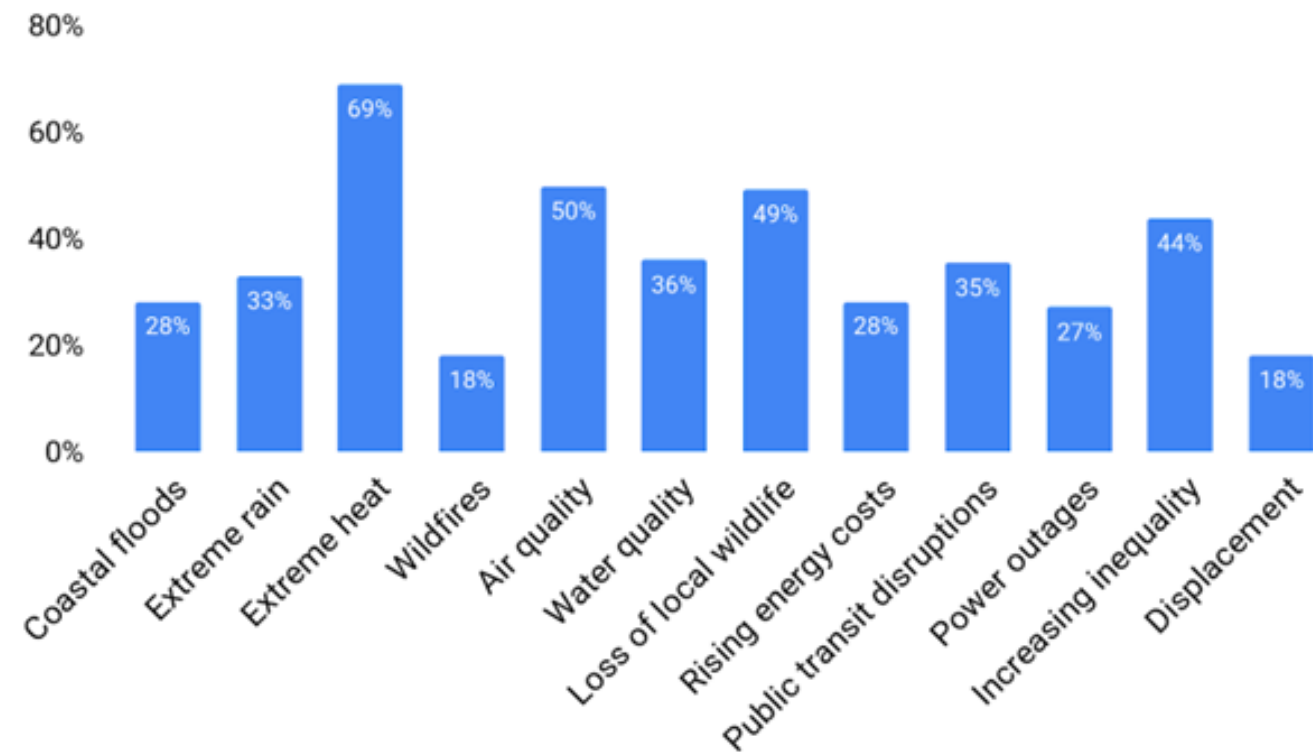


Figure 21: Public survey responses to the question, "Which climate crisis events impact your community the most/are you most worried about? Select up to 5."

When asked to describe what a climate-ready Boston looks like, participants shared the following open-ended responses, grouped by common themes:

- *Better public transit:* Make transit the easy choice by lowering fares, expanding routes, adding late-night service, and improving access for all.
- *More green spaces:* Make sure all neighborhoods have parks, trees, and green infrastructure.
- *Fewer cars, safer streets:* Create walkable areas and build more protected bike lanes.
- *Affordable, climate-ready housing:* Upgrade homes with energy improvements and protect renters from displacement.
- *Climate justice:* Focus on helping low-income communities and prevent green gentrification.
- *Community-led solutions:* Support local leaders and neighborhood-based climate projects.

NEIGHBORHOOD WORKSHOPS & COMMUNITY-LED ENGAGEMENT

From May - June 2025, neighborhood workshops were co-hosted with community partners and focused on communities that have often been underrepresented in past climate planning and where climate solutions can have the greatest positive impact. These workshops took place in Chinatown, Dorchester, East Boston, Mattapan, Roslindale, and Roxbury. At the same time, community partners incorporated climate-related topics into existing programming, creating more opportunities for residents to share feedback on climate action. The goal was to hear directly from residents about their experiences with climate impacts and local conditions, gather feedback on City-proposed strategies through interactive ranking activities, and collaboratively explore how to implement these strategies in ways that are practical, equitable, and rooted in community expertise - guided by Boston's Climate Justice Framework.

From community-led engagement events, we heard the following themes:

Theme	What We Heard
<i>Community leadership and ownership of climate action is vital.</i>	Across neighborhoods, participants emphasized that community-based organizations are best positioned to lead neighborhood climate solutions. Participants called for more training, funding, and sustained partnerships. In addition, many stressed that lived experience must shape design, implementation, and evaluation of climate initiatives.
<i>Transportation access is a climate justice issue.</i>	In multiple neighborhoods, transportation access was framed as a climate justice issue. Fare-free buses, better late-night service for shift workers, and protected bike lanes were among the most supported strategies. While participants saw mode shift as important - they made it clear that it is only when paired with affordability, safety, and last-mile solutions.
<i>Heat and public health are closely connected.</i>	Strategies that addressed extreme heat - like shade, trees, green infrastructure, and cool indoor spaces - drew strong interest. The need for shaded social infrastructure came up as both a climate and public health priority. Participants consistently emphasized how extreme heat worsens challenges related to vulnerable populations.

<i>Climate information must be clear and locally relevant.</i>	Participants called for more accessible and locally relevant information about climate impacts. They shared that vague or alarmist messages are not helpful, and instead called for materials that are multilingual, culturally responsive, and specific about risks like extreme heat or flooding. They also emphasized that climate education should reach all ages, with schools, youth programs, and community groups playing a key role in building understanding.
<i>Don't leave renters behind.</i>	Participants across all workshops raised the barriers renters face in accessing energy retrofits. Many pointed out that current policies assume homeowners can make changes, leaving renters out of most solutions. Participants called for stronger regulation and incentives for landlords, especially in buildings with known housing quality issues.
<i>Food systems and waste reduction are pathways for community-led action.</i>	Participants pointed to food recovery, composting in schools, and better recycling as simple, effective ways to take climate action. These efforts were seen as great learning opportunities especially for young people - when connected to solutions like school gardens. Instead of seeing waste as a separate issue, many described it as part of a bigger goal: creating systems to reuse resources and strengthen community care.
<i>Long-term investment and calls for accountability.</i>	Participants asked for longer-term investments, not just short pilots or one-off projects. They responded positively to strategies that include a clear and measurable impact. Throughout the discussions, there was a consistent focus on accountability - especially around who benefits and how resources are shared.
<i>Resilience through culture, connection, and joy.</i>	Participants shared that climate resilience is not just about buildings or infrastructure - it is also about relationships, culture, and emotional well-being. They highlighted things like youth art programs, gardening workshops, and storytelling between generations as important parts of building strong, connected communities. These activities bring joy, creativity, and a sense of belonging into the center of climate action.

COMMUNITY SESSIONS

After the first draft of the Climate Action Plan was released, the City of Boston hosted four targeted Community Sessions for Young Adults, Age Strong members, small businesses, and Hyde Park residents, to gather targeted feedback from groups of residents missing from initial outreach efforts. The goal of this engagement was to better understand residents, workers, and small business owners' lived experiences regarding climate impacts and corresponding action. These sessions were designed to complement the technical analysis used to update the CAP by grounding the Plan in community priorities, capacity, and day-to-day realities. Through this process, the City better understood what climate strategies matter most to different communities, but also how residents want to engage with climate action, what barriers they face in participating, and what would make the Plan more accessible and impactful.

Community Session	What We Heard
<i>Young Adult</i>	Participants shared a desire for practicality over vision, aligning with the City's overall climate goals, but wanting clearer and more usable pathways to achieving those goals. Young adults emphasized that gaps in access limit participation in programs, such as energy and affordability programs due to barriers with landlords or limited awareness and control. Participants also gave constructive feedback regarding engagement format, finding digital engagement useful, but alerts and notifications should clearly explain <i>what to do, where to go, and how to stay safe during an emergency.</i>

<i>Age Strong</i>	Participants were deeply concerned about climate impacts, specifically heat and energy costs, but expressed frustration in direct control over housing, utilities, or retrofit decisions. The compounded impacts of extreme heat with medication use and mobility challenges were a major source of concern for participants. Cooling centers, resilience hubs, and programs that exist to support residents during heat events are impactful, but underutilized. Participants felt that increased outreach and access will encourage widespread use of these spaces.
<i>Small Businesses</i>	For small businesses, there was an emphasis that climate action can be integrated throughout different aspects of the business, such as financials, operations, or marketing, but it often can be complex or costly due to limited resources. Participants shared that existing models work, programs like Mass Save, but require support to replicate or scale. Small business owners are deeply connected to the community they operate in and should be utilized to expand outreach to residents and support larger climate action.
<i>Hyde Park Residents</i>	Residents want more concrete, neighborhood-scale examples within the Climate Action Plan that reflect Hyde Park's building stock, open space, and transportation realities. Feedback emphasized future engagement include simpler materials, such as a CAP one-pager, more language access, and even outreach across neighborhoods. There was a strong interest in ensuring the CAP supports, not override, local neighborhood plans, land stewardship, and urban wilds investments.

Collectively, this feedback reinforces the importance of moving from vision to implementation with the Climate Action Plan. Prioritizing clarity, accessibility, and trusted partnerships to ensure climate action is achievable for all Bostonians. Participants across each group expressed strong alignment with the City's climate goals, alongside a clear call for simpler tools, and more localized examples and engagement with trusted partners. The insights gained have informed the CAP's strategies, metrics, and future engagement approach. The City will use these insights to reduce participation burdens, strengthen neighborhood relevance, and support ongoing collaboration beyond the release of the plan. The City remains committed to continuing this dialogue as implementation advances, recognizing that sustained engagement is essential to delivering equitable and durable climate action.

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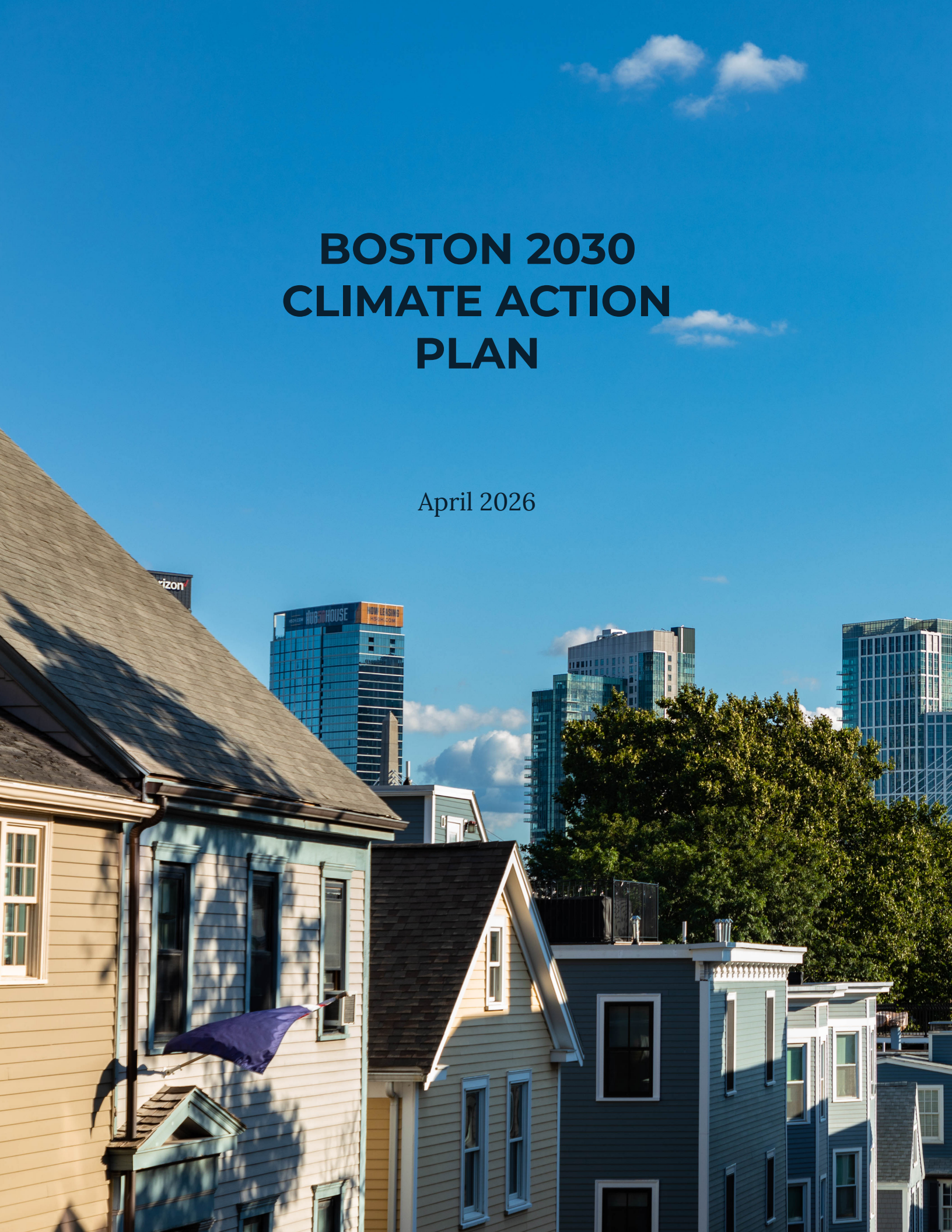
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April 2026