

A Bold Vision: Flagstaff Carbon Neutrality Plan Summary

JUNE 2021



MOVING FORWARD

- > **CLIMATE CHANGE**, accelerated by human-caused greenhouse gas emissions, is **disrupting global weather patterns and threatening communities across the world**. If the increasing amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere is not reduced, life as we understand it will be irreversibly altered.
- > **THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY** requires an urgent mobilization effort to restore a safe climate, protect the earth's diversity of culture and life, and prioritize vulnerable communities.

In response to community appeals, the Flagstaff City Council declared a Climate Emergency in June 2020, calling for a dramatic increase in ambition and a city-wide mobilization towards an equitable transition.

The Climate Emergency Declaration is the foundation for this document and Flagstaff's goal to reach carbon neutrality by 2030.


The Flagstaff Carbon Neutrality Plan outlines how the Flagstaff community will respond to the climate emergency. The path to carbon neutrality will require leadership, bold action, perseverance and creativity. Each step closer to carbon neutrality offers hope for a healthy, prosperous, and equitable future for the Flagstaff community—and the world.

- > **FLAGSTAFF COMMUNITY MEMBERS** spurred the creation of the **Climate Emergency Declaration**, starting with a citizen petition. Residents formed coalitions representing groups with unique perspectives on climate change, from business owners to grandparents. Hundreds of community members organized to attend City Council meetings and request the Climate Emergency Declaration.

Community involvement continued throughout the development of this Plan. **Community voices will remain integral as the City moves forward to reach Flagstaff's climate goals.**

- > **CLIMATE CHANGE AFFECTS PEOPLE DIFFERENTLY**. Vulnerable communities, including low-income families, communities of color, and the elderly, will face the greatest challenges from climate change. Equity and climate justice will be foundational elements of our work, to avoid harm to underserved groups and to ensure the benefits of climate action are fairly distributed.

OUR VISION



The Flagstaff community takes ambitious action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build community resilience, resulting in a higher quality of life for all residents. This transformation involves the entire community, is supported by collaborations with regional and tribal partners, provides opportunities, and centers vulnerable communities in an equitable transition towards carbon neutrality.

OUR GOALS

- 1 Achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.**

Flagstaff will arrive at carbon neutrality, also known as net-zero community greenhouse gas emissions, by 2030. Flagstaff will first reduce emissions as much as possible, and then balance the remaining emissions with carbon dioxide removal.
- 2 Prepare Flagstaff's communities, systems, and resources to be more resilient to climate change impacts.**

Climate changes have already taken place in northern Arizona; natural and societal shifts will continue to occur. Flagstaff must respond to climate change through adaptation, or preparing for change and strengthening our social, economic, and infrastructure systems.
- 3 Address climate change in a manner that prioritizes those most impacted and ensures the costs and benefits of climate adaptation and mitigation are equitably distributed.**

Climate change disproportionately impacts communities of color and low-income neighborhoods. These communities contribute the least to greenhouse gas emissions but suffer the greatest effects of climate change and its turbulent impacts.

OUR PATH TO CARBON NEUTRALITY

We will:

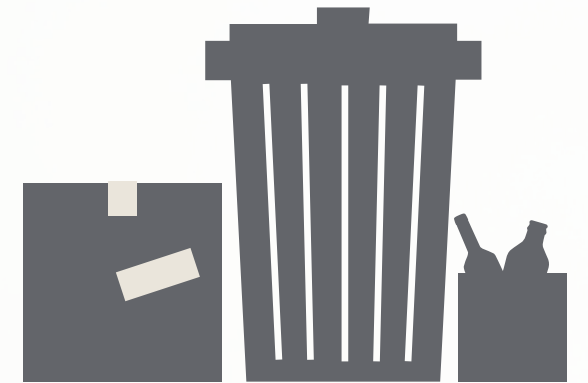
> STRENGTHEN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

- Resilient Community
- Equitable Systems
- Decreased Dependence on Cars



> MANAGE OUR CONSUMPTION

- Reduced Building Energy Demand
- Sustainable Consumption and Waste Management



> CLEAN OUR ENERGY SOURCES

- Clean Electricity
- Building Fuel Switching
- Electric Mobility

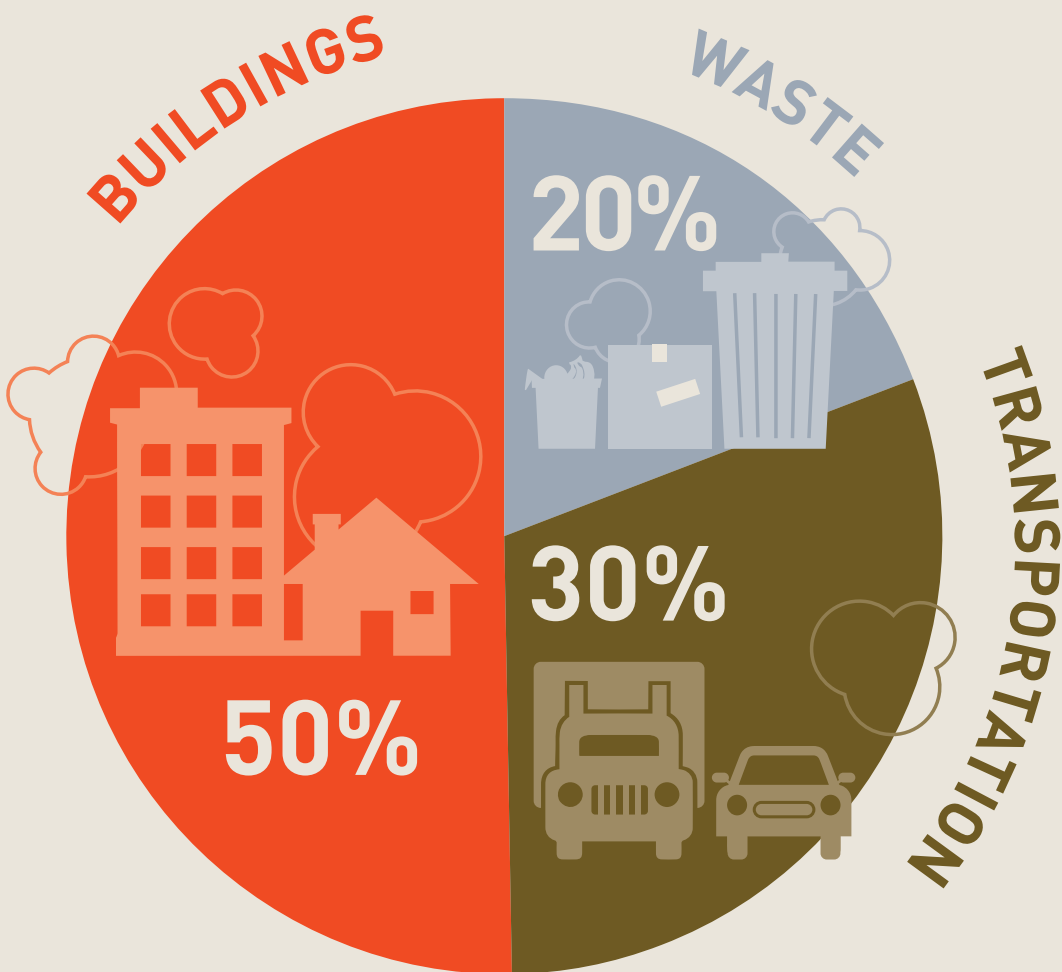


> UPHOLD OUR COMMITMENT

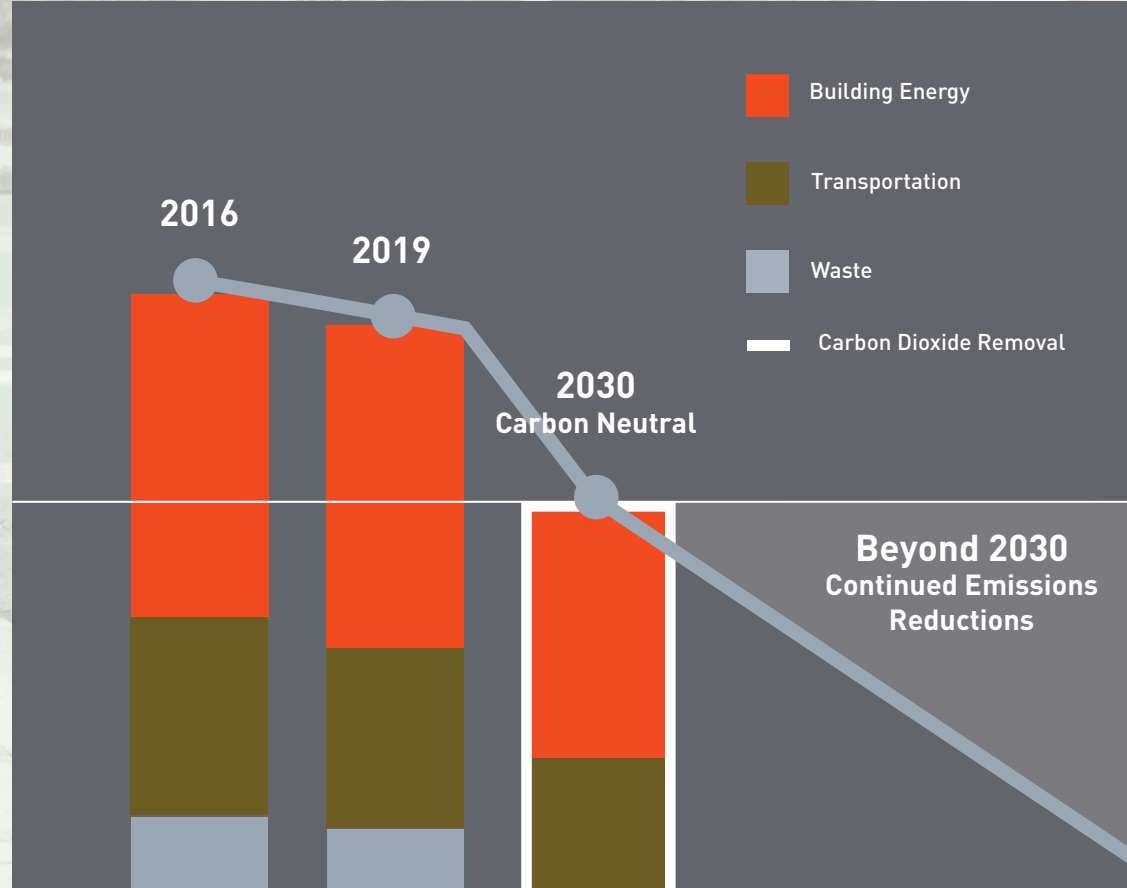
- Carbon Dioxide Removal



We will tackle Flagstaff's major sources of greenhouse gas emissions.



FLAGSTAFF'S PATH TO CARBON NEUTRALITY



Carbon neutrality will be achieved through a combination of local emissions reductions and carbon dioxide removal initiatives to offset the remaining community emissions that the City does not eliminate. The City of Flagstaff will work to achieve the greatest reductions in greenhouse gas emissions possible, a projected reduction of 44%. Because our community will still cause emissions in 2030, carbon dioxide removal (CDR) will be necessary. CDR helps to fill the gap between current emissions and zero emissions, counter-balancing remaining emissions with projects that remove emissions from the atmosphere. CDR is a part of all carbon neutrality portfolios, though the proportion of emissions reductions achieved can vary greatly from community to community.

OUR ACTION PLAN

> STRENGTHEN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

> RESILIENT COMMUNITY

- Ensure all mitigation actions improve Flagstaff's ability to adapt to the future.
- Strengthen existing community systems to create resilience to both short-term shocks and long-term change.

> EQUITABLE SYSTEMS

- Incorporate equity as a foundational element of every climate action the City develops and implements.
- Proactively engage community members on an ongoing basis.
- Design targeted policies and programs to serve vulnerable communities first.
- Actively seek to recognize past harms, repair trust, and build deeper relationships with community members.

> DECREASED DEPENDENCE ON CARS

- Encourage vibrancy, appropriate density, and attainability in existing neighborhoods, so that more residents can live within walking distance to their daily needs.
- Create inclusive networks for walking and biking that are continuous, attractive, safe, comprehensive, and convenient for people of all ages.
- Encourage Flagstaff residents and visitors to walk, bike, roll and take the bus.
- Transform transportation policies and planning to incorporate greenhouse gas emissions analysis and reduce dependence on driving.
- Invest in comprehensive and equitable transit.
- Proactively invest to protect Flagstaff's clean air status.

> CLEAN OUR ENERGY SOURCES

> ELECTRIC MOBILITY

- Advance the electrification of buses across Flagstaff.
- Welcome electric micro-mobility devices as legitimate, healthy, affordable and low-carbon modes of transportation.
- Support residents, businesses, and institutions in the transition to electric vehicles.

> CLEAN ELECTRICITY

- Produce 100% renewable electricity to cover all City of Flagstaff municipal electricity needs.
- Increase renewable energy installations and usage in new buildings.
- Support solar installations on existing residential and commercial buildings.

> BUILDING FUEL SWITCHING

- Reduce or remove natural gas usage in municipal buildings.
- Encourage new buildings to rely on the electric grid as their main energy source.
- Support fuel switching in existing residential and commercial buildings.
- Provide training and education on fuel switching.

OUR ACTION PLAN

> MANAGE OUR CONSUMPTION

> REDUCED BUILDING ENERGY DEMAND

- Achieve net zero energy City of Flagstaff facilities.
- By 2030, require new homes in Flagstaff to be net zero energy homes.
- Reduce energy use in existing buildings.

> SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

- Manage emissions from the Cinder Lake Landfill.
- Encourage sustainable consumption.
- Divert more waste from the landfill.
- Reduce organic waste going to the landfill and feed hungry people.

> UPHOLD OUR COMMITMENT

> CARBON DIOXIDE REMOVAL

- Develop a portfolio of local and regional carbon dioxide removal initiatives to meet Flagstaff’s commitment to carbon neutrality.
- If local carbon dioxide removal projects are insufficient, obtain high-quality carbon offsets and CO2 Removal Certificates (CORCs).

Stay informed. Get involved.

www.flagstaff.az.gov/climate



Take a picture of this QR code
to connect to our climate site.

Learn more about this plan, and the steps we'll take to achieve our goals.

The City of Flagstaff is committed to keeping you up to date on our work as it develops, the progress we're making, and how you can contribute to this work.

We want to hear from you.

Use the link above to sign up for our monthly newsletter
and follow [@flgsustain](https://twitter.com/flgsustain) on social media.

