

Frequently Asked Questions – Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County’s (Metro) Sustainability Advisory Committee and Climate Change Mitigation Action Plan Report

Why are Mayor Cooper and Metro focused on climate change?

Climate change is real, and it is already harming Middle Tennessee. We will continue to see bigger storms and tornadoes more often. There will be more floods. The number of very hot days is on the rise. Nashville’s buildings, vehicles, energy use, and waste all make greenhouse gases (such as carbon dioxide), which speed climate change. Mayor Cooper and Metro Nashville are working to reduce greenhouse gases and improve air quality while growing the economy, improving health, and achieving equity.

What are the benefits to the City of addressing climate change?

Reducing Nashville’s carbon emissions not only helps to reduce climate change and its negative impacts, but also improves public health and economic development. For example, shifting to cleaner energy sources can reduce air pollution which has many health benefits. And, by increasing the City’s renewable energy capacity, Nashville will become more attractive to companies (and their suppliers) that have set their own greenhouse gas reduction targets. Further, improved building energy efficiency can increase property values and lead to job creation in housing renovation and retrofit industries. New jobs may also be created, including for energy conservation technicians and solar power project developers.

The City’s efforts to address climate change can also benefit low-income communities and communities of color. Not only can these communities realize public health improvements, but initiatives such as household weatherization programs reduce electric bills.

What is the Sustainability Advisory Committee?

The [Sustainability Advisory Committee \(SAC\)](#) is made up of over 50 community volunteers. Members were appointed by Mayor John Cooper in February 2020. About one year later, the SAC shared its [Climate Mitigation Action Plan Report](#). The SAC continues to work with the Mayor’s Office.

How were members of the Sustainability Advisory Committee selected?

Mayor Cooper appointed experts from government, nonprofits, businesses, and academia to volunteer for the SAC. The SAC started its work by focusing on activities that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. In early 2021, the SAC shared its [Climate Mitigation Action Plan Report](#).

What is a climate mitigation action plan (CAP)?

A climate mitigation action plan:

1. Identifies activities that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions,
2. Establishes a target for reducing those emissions, and
3. Puts forth actions that can be taken to meet the target.

The SAC’s Report is the basis for our city’s CAP. Nashville is part of the [Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy](#) (GCoM), an alliance of thousands of cities that have made voluntary commitments to reduce greenhouse gases. Participating cities must develop a CAP. The SAC’s CAP Report is a roadmap for Nashville to slow climate change.

Who developed Metro's Climate Mitigation Action Plan Report?

The Report was developed by the SAC in partnership with Metro Nashville Government departments and community partners. The SAC engaged in research and outreach to find ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in each focus area.

What recommendations are included in the CAP Report? How were they developed?

Nashville's Climate Mitigation Action Plan Report has five focus areas: energy, buildings, mobility, waste, and natural resources. The SAC developed a set strategies, actions and sub-actions, costs and benefits, and best practices taken by peer cities in each focus area. The Report also recommends a greenhouse gas emissions reduction target. It notes the significant opportunities offered by decarbonization of the electrical grid, electrification of motor vehicle fleets, and electrification of buildings. Much more detail is available in the [Climate Mitigation Action Plan Report](#).

Is this Nashville and Davidson County's first Climate Mitigation Action Plan Report?

Yes. But it is not Nashville's first effort to document its contributions to climate change or recommend ways to make the City more sustainable. Nashville completed a greenhouse gas emissions inventory for 2014 and one for 2017. The City is currently preparing an inventory based on 2019 emissions. Previous reports including Livable Nashville, NashvilleNext, the Green Ribbon Committee Report, and Plan to Play laid a foundation for the CAP Report.

What is the status of the Climate Mitigation Action Plan Report?

Mayor Cooper, Metro Nashville departments, and local leaders are developing a plan to implement high priority items in the Climate Mitigation Action Plan Report. The plan includes responsible parties, available and/or necessary resources, and timelines for execution. Once developed, that plan will be available on the Metro Nashville and SAC webpages.

How can I get involved?

Please email [Chief Sustainability and Resilience Officer Kendra Abkowitz](#) to learn about ways to support the Committee.

Questions?

Reach out to [Chief Sustainability and Resilience Officer Kendra Abkowitz](#).