

The City of

# Eau Claire

## Renewable Energy Action Plan



### Our Vision

Eau Claire's Renewable Energy Action Plan will be guided by an evidence-based, transparent, equitable, and inclusive process to meet the goals of **100% renewable energy and carbon neutrality by 2050**. These ongoing efforts will strengthen our leadership in sustainability and renewable energy development for generations to come.

### Our Guiding Principles

#### Equity and Inclusiveness

Our work will engage and support the entire community, increasing benefits for under-resourced populations.

#### Economic Development

We will develop and implement ideas that maximize community investment and local economic opportunity.

#### Ecosystem Stewardship

We will preserve, protect, and enhance the natural world around us, for our benefit and for generations to come.

For More Information on the Plan call the City of Eau Claire at **715-839-4914** or visit [eauclairewi.gov/government/our-divisions/renewable-energy-action-plan](http://eauclairewi.gov/government/our-divisions/renewable-energy-action-plan)



# Impact Areas

2020–2030



## Local Biodiversity

Enhancing local environmental diversity provides important ecoservices like water, air, food, and shade, and also sequesters carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. In 2013, trees covered 24% of city limits.

**Goal:** Protect and enhance the urban forest by increasing carbon sequestration by 1% per year.

### What you can do?

#### Easy Wins

- Plant a local tree
- Add plants in home or office
- Enjoy free city parks and rivers

#### Stretch Goals

- Grow your own garden or use a community garden
- Eliminate pesticide use
- Remove invasive species

#### Challenge Actions

- Plant alternative lawn or backyard carbon farm
- Eat lower on the food chain
- Buy more local food



## Residents and Homes

Residential homes in 2018 accounted for 19% of community wide greenhouse gas emissions and 32% of the energy used in Eau Claire's buildings. Actions by local residents will be a key part of plan success.

**Goal:** Achieve 2% electricity savings and 1.4% natural gas savings per year; convert 200 households to renewable electricity and 20 to renewable heat per year.

### What can you do?

#### Easy Wins

- Use Xcel Energy's My Account to track your energy usage
- Turn off lights when not in use
- Install and schedule a programmable thermostat

#### Stretch Goals

- Sign up for a home or apartment energy audit
- Insulate your walls and attic
- Subscribe to renewable electricity or community solar
- Use induction cooking

#### Challenge Actions

- Add on-site solar
- Install a heat pump when replacing your heating system
- Build or remodel your home to net zero energy standards



## Business and Institutions

Non-residential properties accounted for 43% of Eau Claire's emissions in 2018. Local businesses have a strong track record of participating in energy efficiency programs, historically saving 2.3% of electricity and 1% of natural gas use per year.

**Goal:** Achieve 3% electricity savings and 1.5% natural gas savings; convert 15 new businesses to renewable electricity and 5 to renewable heat per year.

### What can you do?

#### Easy Wins

- Benchmark your property's energy use
- Upgrade to efficient lighting
- Tune-up your HVAC system

#### Stretch Goals

- Sign up for an energy audit or recommissioning service
- Enroll in a renewable subscription program
- Make your building solar-ready

#### Challenge Actions

- Install on-site solar
- Use geothermal or waste heat at your property
- Create a net zero energy building or development



## Transportation

Thirty-five percent of Eau Claire’s greenhouse gas emissions are a result of moving people and goods around the city. Solutions such as increasing transit ridership and electrifying vehicles will reduce carbon and improve human health.

**Goal:** Increase electric vehicles (EVs) to 10% of vehicle miles traveled and increase vehicle occupancy to 2 people.

### What can you do?

#### Easy Wins

- Don’t drive to nearby locations
- Inflate car tires properly
- Drive the speed limit
- Plan trips ahead to reduce gas
- Telecommute once a month

#### Stretch Goals

- Carpool, bike, or take transit
- Optimize driving routes for fleet vehicles
- Buy a fuel-efficient vehicle
- Create dedicated EV parking at your business
- Purchase air travel carbon offsets

#### Challenge Actions

- Install EV chargers at your business
- Buy an EV or plug-in hybrid
- Reduce your commute by living closer to work
- Live in a walkable neighborhood



## Waste

The waste that is sent to Eau Claire’s local landfill produces methane emissions that contribute to global warming. Reducing waste is a key focus area for all sectors.

**Goal:** Divert 50% of organic waste and 50% of construction and demolition waste streams from landfills by 2030.

### What can you do?

#### Easy Wins

- Think before you buy
- Share tools and materials with neighbors
- Use reusable grocery bags
- Reduce food waste

#### Stretch Goals

- Backyard compost or switch to curbside compost pickup
- Reduce the size of your garbage bin
- Purchase second-hand items
- Help at city clean-up events

#### Challenge Actions

- Buy goods and services that have take-back options
- Transition to sustainably-made clothes
- Reuse or divert construction materials from landfill

## Low-Carbon Lifestyle

- [empowermentinstitute.net/community/low-carbon-diet](http://empowermentinstitute.net/community/low-carbon-diet)
- [pbs.org/show/global-weirding/](http://pbs.org/show/global-weirding/)

## Resources for Action

### Focus on Energy Programs

- [focusonenergy.com/residential](http://focusonenergy.com/residential)
- [focusonenergy.com/business](http://focusonenergy.com/business)

### Utility Renewable

#### Subscription Programs

- [xcelenergy.com/Energy\\_Portfolio/Renewable\\_Energy](http://xcelenergy.com/Energy_Portfolio/Renewable_Energy)
- [ecec.com/energy-efficiency/renewable-energy/evergreen](http://ecec.com/energy-efficiency/renewable-energy/evergreen)

### Electric Vehicles

- [xcelenergy.com/energy\\_portfolio/innovation/electric\\_vehicles](http://xcelenergy.com/energy_portfolio/innovation/electric_vehicles)

### City of Eau Claire Programs

- [eauclairewi.gov/government/our-divisions/sustainability/resources](http://eauclairewi.gov/government/our-divisions/sustainability/resources)
- [eauclairewi.gov/government/our-divisions/transit](http://eauclairewi.gov/government/our-divisions/transit)
- [eauclairewi.gov/recreation/community-gardens](http://eauclairewi.gov/recreation/community-gardens)
- [eauclairewi.gov/recreation/parks-forestry-and-cemetery-division/forestry-new](http://eauclairewi.gov/recreation/parks-forestry-and-cemetery-division/forestry-new)



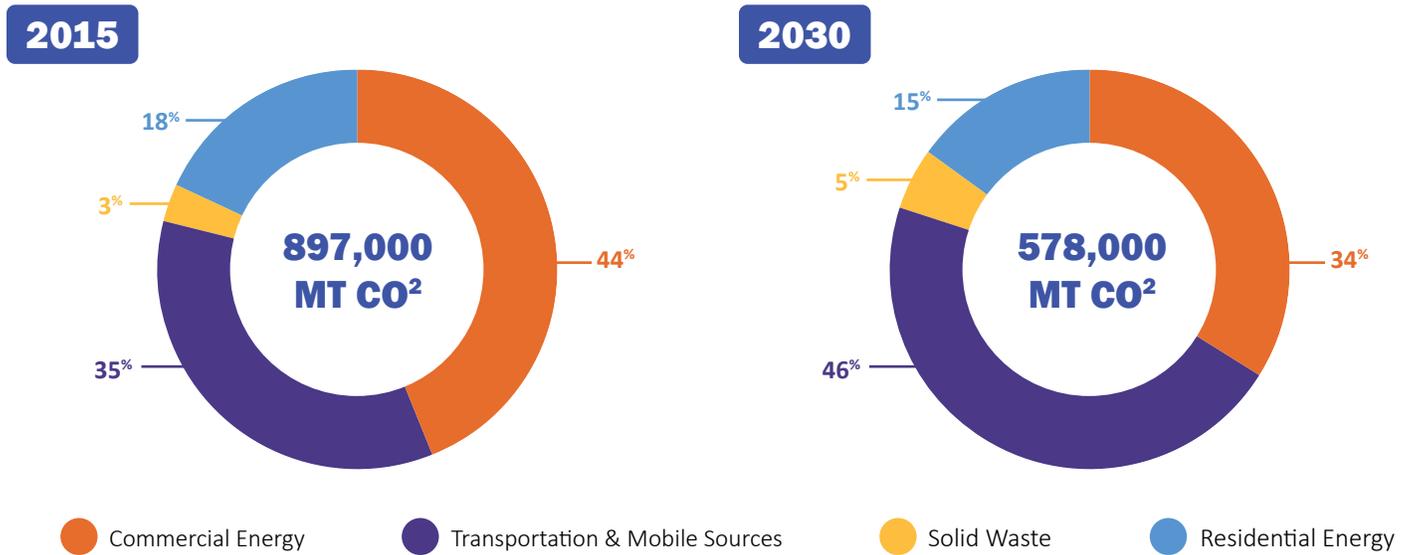
**Did you know one metric ton of carbon dioxide is about the size of a single hot air balloon?**

# Why Does This Plan Matter?

The consequence of burning significant levels of fossil fuels and land use change over the past 100 years is that the climate is changing. Eau Claire’s annual average temperature has warmed from 43.8°F in 1960 to 46.6°F in 2010, a difference of 2.8 degrees. Wisconsin climate models predict more extreme precipitation events and flooding, shorter winters, greater vector-borne diseases, and drought. For example, the wettest year recorded for Wisconsin and the Midwest was 2019. These ongoing impacts place a burden on the community’s social and economic well-being, and reduce our ability to adapt.

## The Plan Achieves Eau Claire’s 2030 Interim Goal

Reduce Carbon Emissions 30% from 2015 Levels



## How Will This Be Done?

Critical Action Pathways to 2030		Total Savings in 2030
<b>Residential</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2%</b> electricity energy efficiency goal per year</li> <li>• <b>1.4%</b> natural gas efficiency goal per year</li> <li>• <b>200</b> households to <b>100%</b> renewable electricity per year</li> <li>• <b>20</b> new renewable thermal heating systems per year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 46,000,000 kWh</li> <li>• 1,800,000 Therms</li> <li>• 17,000,000 kWh</li> <li>• 50,000 Therms</li> </ul>
<b>Commercial &amp; Industrial</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>3%</b> electricity energy efficiency goal per year</li> <li>• <b>1.5%</b> natural gas goal per year</li> <li>• <b>15</b> new renewable electric customers per year</li> <li>• <b>5</b> new renewable thermal heating systems per year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 170,000,000 kWh</li> <li>• 3,800,000 Therms</li> <li>• 24,000,000 kWh</li> <li>• 200,000 Therms</li> </ul>
<b>Transport</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2</b> person occupancy vehicle increase from <b>1.63</b> Midwest average</li> <li>• <b>8,000</b> registered electric vehicles (EV) by 2030 or <b>10%</b> of vehicle miles traveled by EVs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 143,000,000 Vehicle Miles Traveled</li> <li>• 30,000 Metric Tons CO<sub>2</sub></li> </ul>
<b>Grid Decarbonization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grid electricity will become <b>75%</b> more carbon free in 2030 compared to 2019, according to Xcel Energy’s current Upper Midwest resource plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 220,000 Metric Tons CO<sub>2</sub></li> </ul>