

Sustainability Notes 12/18/2023

Meeting called to order at 6:03pm

Attendance:

Members: Rachel Venegas, Sienna S., Katelyn Geleynse, Lisa Reeves, Heath Massey, Adrienne Nienow,

Guests: Katrina Becker, Hannah Bohn

Excused: Ben Heili and Scott

1. Communications –

Lisa is on housing authority. Greenspire apartments got a grant and will be doing renovations including geothermal, solar panels (alongside handicap). Dave thinks we were the only ones in WI to get the grant at this level.

2. Motion made by Lisa to approve last week's minutes, second by Heath. All in favor. None opposed. That motion carries.

3. Next is Hannah and Katrina for the main item.

- First, explaining how equity was handled. Hannah reviewed the process on how we got where we are. Hannah drafted a scorecard and sent it to Adrienne and Donelle for feedback. There weren't very many actions targeting equity. Equity will be used as its lens. Instead of being a criterion, equity will be awarded as a bonus point to give additional impact that target equity as an outcome.

- Donelle asked: How did you assign points to each action and how many got the equity bonus point? Hannah: It was an iterative process, first separating the actions by focus area, to help have a distribution across focus areas. Hannah set up a range from low, medium, to high potential. Measured potential versus other actions in the focus area. That was both for greenhouse gas reduction and to restore and protect ecosystems. Hannah would be happy to share some of the scoring if anyone would like to see it. One that has an equity point is making sure the outdoor recreation areas are accessible for people with disabilities. Once all were scored, they all got impact and equity scores. Prioritization was a separate process as well. First, separated across focus areas. Selected 4 or 5 of highest impact from each focus area, regardless of their effort. Hannah put all of those on the list. There were a few cases of high impact without strong community support, for example, in transportation – for park n' ride or EV charging. She used a 50% as threshold for community support, so Hannah didn't include those but it is open for input. We can decide to

elevate things. Code changes/ordinance changes were also grouped together so those weren't included as priorities. We do need a list of those but it was not included in the prioritization.

- Import to start with a baseline and what our goal is. For example, recycling, and greenhouse gas.
 - EV Fleet as the City mentioned and included, but may already be happening in some places.
 - Hannah mentioned including some momentum-builder action items.
 - Currently there are 51 items.
- The numbers in the table refers to the area and priority but they can be renumbered when put into the plan.
 - Donelle asked Hannah to send all of the background numbers, process, how she scored, etc. so they can be included in the appendices of the plan.

Feedback of the delivered actions was shared:

- Adrienne she felt good about things.
- Donelle agreed. The list does capture what we need to start with. Donelle asked for Adrienne to make sure they know we'll get to all the actions eventually, and that city staff or a community organization is welcome to work on un-prioritized actions if they see an opportunity.
- Katelyn said it is very good and focused. We have to start somewhere, In 5 years' time we'll have to re-evaluate and add new actions.
- Sienna agreed with the action items when she reviewed them.

We reviewed actions by focus area. We started with energy. Hannah made notes on the "draft priority actions" document. Lisa is going to get more information on the City signing up for the Choose Renewables program and will get back to Donelle. **(Include Hannah's noted document that was updated during the meeting tonight.)**

Donelle: How do we make sure the actions in the governance section are not missed? Hannah recommends letting the governance section stand alone and be earlier in the plan. Others gave some opinions and we will come back to this topic later.

A bibliography and possibly footnotes will be added to the Plan.

Katrina asked a question about implementation. Once approved, will the committee help guide the City in these actions or would the Plan be handed over to the City? It is expected to be a collaborative approach, but remains to be seen.

Mowing is a big theme between water and land management.

Future item: Start proposing how to spend the ARPA funds in collaboration with staff.

Request for Hannah to call out the ones that were moved on the next draft.

Next steps will be communicated by email. In order to have the plan voted on by March 26, we need a draft of the entire plan January 15. You'll likely see an email with next iteration and giving feedback to Hannah.

Equity update: DEI committee – Kate has offered to take the lead on writing the equity section and the DEI's consultant can provide us feedback on Kate's draft.

Next steps:

- There will be more necessity to share feedback via email after the holidays.
- Governance outline needs your feedback via email this week.
- Adrienne is looking for volunteers to write definitions for the glossary section. Please volunteer via email.
- Adrienne requesting to share your own "this is my why" quotes on why sustainability is important to me/why I am on the committee.
- Submit feedback on Kate's Land Acknowledgement and Equity sections in early January.
- January 15 is the goal date to get the first draft ready to go.
- EOD January 19th Friday to submit feedback the Google Form
- **Our next meeting is January 22nd.**
- Goal of February 5th to send to City Council.
- March 26th – council votes on the Sustainability Plan.
- Lisa advised to keep in mind dates of election. Council turns over in April. Lisa will get all the dates. We'll know more as it gets closer, in January.

Motion to adjourn by Rachel, second by Lisa at 7:53pm.

The City of Stoughton Sustainability Plan

2024

Acknowledgements.

Land Acknowledgement

The City of Stoughton lies on the unceded ancestral lands of the Ho-Chunk Nation, the original stewards of this land. We acknowledge the role that American colonialism played in the stealing of this land and the ethnic cleansing of Native Peoples that followed. We also recognize that any path forward must involve the voices of the Indigenous peoples who lived in harmony and reciprocity with the land and its abundant resources for generations—a model that was truly sustainable. The City of Stoughton respects the inherent sovereignty of the Ho-Chunk Nation and is committed to re-engaging tribal members in collaboration and innovation as we seek to reconcile the violence of the past by building a more sustainable, equitable future. We expand this commitment to include all traditionally marginalized members of our community and commit to standing in solidarity with them as we collectively fight against the continued injustices being done to them through continued learning and support of policies that protect their rights.

With Gratitude

The Sustainability Committee acknowledges that the support and guidance of the following people were crucial to the formation and development of this plan:

[UW Extension...]

Community stakeholders who engaged in dialogue, surveys, and focus groups, including residents and representatives from the school district, city departments, businesses, industry, and developers.

City staff and elected representatives who answered questions, entertained new ideas, and attended meetings to engage in meaningful discussion with our eager and passionate committee.

Past members of the Sustainability Committee: [insert list of names]

We are forever grateful for your time and talents, and are beyond excited to put this plan into action!



Pictured (L to R): Donelle Scaffidi, Heath Massey, Katelyn GeleyNSE, Ben Heili, Adrienne Nienow, Scott Taylor, Sienna Scott

Not Pictured: Rachel Venegas, Lisa Reeves

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Terminology.

Glossary

Accessibility: The premise of minimizing disadvantages by creating intentional space, means, and opportunities where individuals can feel empowered to acquire information, engage in the same interactions, and complete tasks autonomously and independently.

Alternative Fuel Vehicle (AFV): [insert here]

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL): Also known as the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act, this legislation authorizes \$1.2 trillion for repairing and modernizing infrastructure. It makes the largest investment ever in several sustainability-related areas, including public transit, clean drinking water, wastewater treatment, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure. It seeks expansion of electric school buses, enhancement of community climate resilience, cleanup of legacy industrial pollution, expansion of recycling and air and water pollution prevention, particularly that affecting marginalized communities.^a

Climate Change: Long-term shifts in weather patterns, particularly temperature and precipitation. While such shifts can be natural, due to changes in the sun's activity or large volcanic eruptions, future projected climate change is mostly the result of human extraction and burning of fossil fuels like oil, gas, and coal. This releases carbon dioxide and methane, which accumulate in the atmosphere, trapping heat and raising the earth's temperature (global warming). Higher temperatures result in widespread and lasting changes in weather.^b

DEIAJ: This acronym refers to the prioritization, promotion, and intentional practice of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Justice.

Diversity: The practice or quality of including, involving, understanding, and appreciating individuals within the context of, but not limited to, the social constructs of race, gender identity, ethnicity, religion, nationality, documentation status, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, along with physical and mental abilities and disabilities.

Electric Vehicle (EV): [insert here]

Equity: An intentional, design-centered approach and concept that promotes fair treatment, access, opportunities, resources, and advancement of all people while striving to eliminate barriers and disparities that may have prevented the full participation of a marginalized group.

Global Warming: The net increase in temperatures at the earth's surface observed since the end of the pre-industrial period (1850) and caused by human activity, primarily the burning of fossil fuels. Human activities are estimated to have increased Earth's global average temperature by about 1 degree Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit), a number that is currently increasing rapidly. The current warming trend is unequivocally the result of human activity since the 1950s and is proceeding at an unprecedented rate over millennia.^c

Greenhouse Gas (GHG): A gas that absorbs and traps heat radiated from the earth's surface, thus creating

the “greenhouse effect” in which the earth and lower atmosphere experience warming. Carbon dioxide and methane are leading greenhouse gases. Nitrous oxide, water vapor and surface level ozone are also greenhouse gases.^d

Inclusion: The implementation of accessible opportunities and resources and active, intentional, ongoing engagement and practice that empowers and promotes individuals to create a sense of belonging, support, cultural competence, and humility, with diversity as the core.

Inflation Reduction Act (IRA): The most significant climate legislation in U.S. history, IRA seeks to accelerate the transition to a clean energy economy. It does this through tax credits that incentivize the production and consumption of clean energy sources like wind generators, solar panels, and geothermal systems. It targets tax credits to marginalized communities that have suffered from lack of environmental justice. Implementation of the IRA will reduce 2030 greenhouse gas emissions by an estimated 40% below 2005 levels.

(Social) Justice: The knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to create learning environments that foster equitable participation. Social Justice also functions as a process to the revision of injustices that encompass, but are not limited to, human rights, access, participation & equity.^e

Socioeconomic: Connected to social and economic concerns. Socioeconomic status refers to the position of persons in society, based on a combination of occupational, economic, and educational criteria. Other factors, including ethnicity, literacy, and cultural characteristics, influence socioeconomic status, which is an important determinant of health.^f

Sustainability: The basic principle of sustainability is that everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. To pursue sustainability is to create and maintain the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony to support present and future generations. In 1987, the United Nations Brundtland Commission defined sustainability as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Sustainable development requires an integrated approach that takes into consideration environmental concerns along with economic development.^{g,h}

The Big Picture.

Investing in the future

The City of Stoughton envisions a future in which our strong and resilient community meets the current needs of every community member while improving and sustaining equity, social well-being, a healthy environment, and a just economy for generations to come. To realize this vision, the Stoughton Sustainability Committee was formed in 2021, comprising a small cross-section of the community—fellow citizens, alders, and the mayor—to:

1. Engage with the broader community in a two-way learning process to understand community values and co-create this Sustainability Plan.
2. Develop this Sustainability Plan to guide the policies and efforts of city departments, committees, and commissions, as well as identify local and regional partners for collaboration and implementation.
3. Collaborate with city staff to track and measure progress (annually) against the benchmarks established in this plan.

With this plan's guidance, we—residents, employers, educators, advocates, city staff, and representatives—can start investing our time, talents, and curiosity into building our community's sustainable future today.

One community, leading together

To preserve quality of life and ensure our city's resilient and equitable future, every person is invited to find their place of action and leadership in a community-wide commitment to sustainability. This plan aims to balance the many ways we can all make a difference through the choices we make.

It will take all parts of our community to achieve the visions and goals put forth in this plan. Individual actions are key: they are more than the sum of their parts and will complement the policy and economic actions that will be required by businesses, developers, the city, the county, and the state. We call upon individuals to find and take up the sustainability practices that work for them. We call upon community groups to adopt and take ownership of the actions aligned with their goals and priorities. And we call upon elected representatives and city staff to lead by example, represent all our futures, and commit to proactive and responsible action.

[peer-to-peer learning statement]

Rising to the Challenges.

1. Climate change

Nearly every aspect of our lives contributes to climate change: from the electronics and appliances we use, to the vehicles we drive, to the landfills we fill. And nearly every aspect of our lived experiences and daily lives are affected by it. From threatening seasonal traditions to increasing cases of childhood asthma, the impacts are wide-ranging and close to home.

Globally, clean water shortages, heatwaves, heavy rains, and drought will increasingly threaten the affordability and supply of things we enjoy, like beer and coffee, as well as things we need, like food and water.



*Beach closure at Lake Kegonsa State Park.
Photo credit: Clean Lakes Alliance.*

Local Impacts

Ice fishing on the Yahara chain is quickly becoming a relic.

Ice cover in Dane County is 30+ days shorter than it was in the 1860s.¹

Beach days and lake recreation are becoming increasingly unsafe.

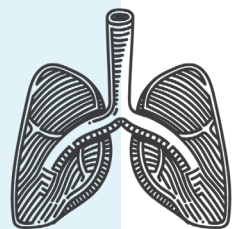
Phosphorus-enriched, warmer lakes allow toxic blue-green algae to thrive.

Lung health, especially in children, is at increasing risk.

Heat combined with the burning of fossil fuels increases wildfires, smog, and pollen production, generating inhalable particles that exacerbate respiratory problems.

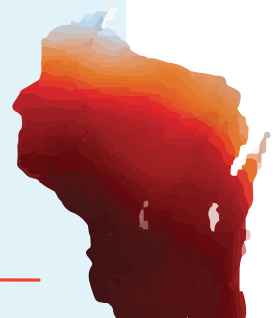
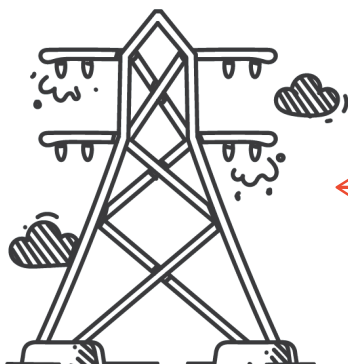


Photo Credit: WIDNR



Extreme weather stresses our electric grid.

More than causing damage to homes and businesses, extreme weather also threatens power outages. In 2023, Stoughton Utilities instituted x Energy Aware Days asking customers to voluntarily reduce our energy usage as high temperatures stressed our electric grid.



We recognize climate change as the most complex and urgent threat facing us today. A global problem felt on local scales, we must take two courses of action to mitigate its effects:

Be the change we wish to see.

Our resolve to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions on a local scale—rather than attempt to diffuse responsibility on a broad scale—will be impactful. No matter the scale of global warming or its causes, many of the solutions will ultimately be local, implemented in communities like ours, and shared and tailored to serve the needs of other communities throughout Wisconsin and beyond.

Increase our preparedness and ability to withstand a variety of shocks.

We need to safeguard our infrastructure, health, agriculture, forestry, transportation, air quality, water quality, economy, and more against the climate risks we are most susceptible to geographically: extreme heat, heavy downpours, flooding, air pollution, tickborne diseases, and water and food contamination. Every land use and development decision we make going forward, from vegetation requirements to the materials we permit in our built environment, must increase our community's ability to protect our population, natural resources, and investments.

2. Social disparities

We applaud the city's efforts to begin prioritizing and leading on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) through both actions and words. This progress is meaningful, and we hope to support and expand on these efforts through the goals and actions laid out in this plan, which broaden the city's definition of DEI to DEIAJ—to include accessibility and justice (definitions provided in Terminology section).

Low-income and disadvantaged populations often face higher rates of climate-related illness and death. Their neighborhoods are typically hotter due to lack of tree cover—made worse by extreme heat—and often lack access to adequate flood infrastructure, green spaces, safe housing, and other resources to help protect against climate impacts.^{2,3}

We aim to ensure that all parts of the community are included in and benefit from the solutions proposed. Ultimately, we see the untapped potential of sustainability initiatives, policies, and practices to create broadly shared prosperity and improve the daily lived experiences of disadvantaged populations, too.

At its heart, sustainability is about sustaining human life: safeguarding every person’s health, safety, and well-being—today and for generations to come. The actions we take as a city to become more sustainable also reduce the disproportionate health and environmental burdens experienced by populations with low socioeconomic status. We can make environmentally sustainable and socially equitable progress by creating a community in which we:

1. Prioritize, protect, and improve human health through smart and sustainable development and growth.
2. Restore and protect our environment to nurture and promote, rather than threaten, public health and safety.
3. Cultivate opportunities for every person to learn, work, grow, and achieve optimal health and well-being.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction reports that, of the 2,757 students enrolled in the Stoughton Area School District for the 2022–2023 school year, 13.5% have disabilities, 27.9% are economically disadvantaged, and 4.3% are English learners.

Health Harms

Anyone’s health can be harmed by extreme temps, air pollution, food and water contamination, and diseases carried by growing tick populations, but some are more vulnerable:⁴

Heat illnesses are a leading cause of death and disability in young athletes. Young men make up 1/3 of all heat-related ER visits in the U.S.



Children and outdoor workers are most at risk for asthma attacks, allergies, and heart and lung conditions aggravated by heat and air pollution.



High AQI in Dane County, August 2023

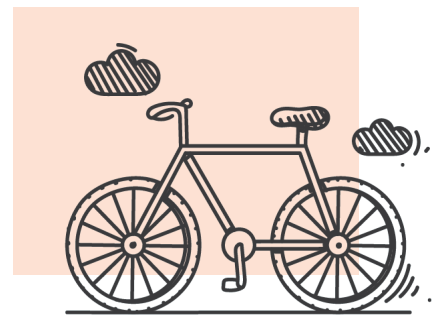
Pregnant women, infants, the poor, and the elderly are more susceptible to the pests and bacteria that thrive in heat and cause foodborne illness.



The good news

Opportunities to implement local actions and policies to protect and improve public health are abundant. While the global impact of small measures across the globe will take years to accrue, the health benefits happen locally—and almost immediately—in the communities adept enough to act.

Transitioning to clean renewable energy will immediately clean up our air and our water. Prioritizing active transportation such as biking and walking in city planning and development, instead of vehicle traffic, will cultivate better human health. Increasing the opportunities for human movement, combined with reducing greenhouse gas emissions, has great potential to reduce heart disease, cancer, obesity, and diabetes. As a bonus, it can also mitigate road deaths and injuries.⁵



Preventable Burdens

Investments are needed to correct the impacts of traffic- and manufacturing-related air pollution, as well as a long history of environmental pollution. Our community bears a large portion of pollution and other preventable burdens in comparison to the rest of the nation:^{6,7}



Stoughton's strong legacy of manufacturing means we also bear a large portion of legacy pollution. In fact, we live closer to hazardous waste facilities and Superfund sites than most of the U.S., meaning we are living with an abundance of environmental hazards that jeopardize public health and safety.

Additionally, our community houses manufacturing facilities that currently report contaminant emissions of hazardous pollutants, including air pollutants that react with other prevalent air pollutants in sunlight and hot temperatures to form ozone, which contributes to smog formation.



Proximity to high volumes of vehicular traffic.

Higher density of active and leaking underground fuel storage tanks.

Higher levels of inhalable particles (PM_{2.5}).

Relatively high share of people living with asthma.

These past and present health, environmental, and socioeconomic disparities prevent broadly shared prosperity in our community and leave us vulnerable to the realities of climate change. It is up to us to course-correct for future generations.

3. Economic loss

Our children and grandchildren will only avoid the worst threats of climate change if we learn to come together to build resilience over time, not just when disaster strikes. Because the potential risks and hazards will impact stakeholder interests and priorities differently, we must learn to make critical connections, focus on the intersecting priorities, and adapt together.

Data sets used by federal agencies to identify community burdens can help us identify some initial investment priorities. Stoughton is home to a relatively high amount of land, not including crop land, that is covered with impervious and artificial materials like concrete or pavement and is considered to lack green space. We bear a notably high risk to properties from weather-related flooding, and we are more likely to experience economic loss to building value and population loss from natural hazards than over half of the nation.⁷

Implementing development practices driven by environmental sustainability and climate resilience will bring about a broad range of improvements and advantages. More resilient land-use patterns and resilient building techniques for new and existing buildings are likely to create new economic development opportunities; improve the value of the land beneath our homes and businesses; enhance and sustain the continuity of critical services such as energy, transport, water, waste, communications, and more; and bolster public safety. People want to live and work where their property and investments are better able to withstand potential hazards, and where their safety and quality of life are well protected. With a proactive, long-term strategy we can generate resilient and sustainable solutions, as well as reap their benefits, together.

Grand Ambitions.

To overcome these grand challenges and achieve transformational outcomes, ambitious action is required now. Therefore, we aspire to achieve the three following Grand Ambitions with the goals, actions, and strategies recommended in this plan:

- 1** Cause transformative impact within and beyond Stoughton's boundaries with local, community-led action to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.
- 2** Cultivate broadly shared health, safety, and prosperity with local actions responsive to all community members, especially those from disadvantaged groups.
- 3** Bolster the resilience of Stoughton's economy and built environment with development and other decisions that improve and sustain the continuity of critical services, as well as protect and conserve our natural resources.

The Action Plan.

Setting the stage for local action

Federal, state, and county goals, plans, programs, and initiatives have laid the groundwork for local climate, conservation, and sustainability action.

United States

Per the Paris Agreement, the U.S. is committed to achieving the following by 2050:

- Net zero GHG emissions.
- 100% carbon pollution-free electricity.

Additionally, hundreds of billions of federal dollars across America are available for clean energy deployment, conservation and resilience efforts, pollution reduction, environmental justice, decarbonization, and more.

Wisconsin

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Clean Energy Plan aims to achieve the following targets:

- 100% carbon-free electricity statewide by 2050.
- Halve net GHG emissions by 2030 from 2005 levels to fulfill the federal carbon reduction goals of the Paris Agreement.
- Plant 75 million trees by 2030.
- Conserve 125,000 acres of forest by 2030.

Dane County

Dane County's 2020 Climate Action Plan aims to:

- Reduce GHG emissions 50% county-wide by 2030.
- Be carbon-neutral by 2050.
- Meet 33% of electricity use with solar power by 2030.
- Meet 50% of electricity use with wind power by 2030.

Investing in community values

The Sustainability Committee conducted a year-long community engagement process (see Appendix A) facilitated by Dane County UW-Extension in which Stoughton residents, stakeholders, and city staff participated in a community dialogue workshop, focus groups, and/or surveys. This process helped determine our community values and our shared vision for building a more sustainable Stoughton. Ultimately, the input provided by all participants generated and inspired the broad range of proactive and responsible actions laid out in this action plan.

To achieve our desired transformational outcomes—the three Grand Ambitions—we have organized all recommended actions and strategies into six focus areas, each with their own vision statement and goals:

1. Energy
2. Transportation
3. Water
4. Solid Waste
5. Land Use and Development
6. Community Health and Engagement

Energy Action Strategy

The City of Stoughton recognizes that to avoid the worst effects of global warming and climate change, we have an urgent need to reduce the GHGs emitted in the production and consumption of our energy, as well as a critical need to incrementally eliminate these emissions completely over the coming years.

An Essential Transformation

Market forces continue to drive a clean energy transition. There is high demand for renewables, locally produced energy, and energy efficient appliances and buildings. Energy storage and other critical technologies are being piloted, scaled, and implemented globally, nationally, and in Wisconsin, bringing us closer to local and grid-scale decarbonization and clean energy goals every day.

In Stoughton, the public utility that services our city and the surrounding areas already ranks in the top 10 nationally for our community-wide investment in renewable resources through the Choose Renewables program. As a municipality, we have the opportunity and the power to decide how we use energy in our government facilities and vehicle fleet. We can make a big impact with investments in solar power, for example, because it doesn't just increase the clean energy in our mix but also reduces the city's yearly operating expenses, which are capped by state law.

Clean and renewable energy is an important part of Stoughton's energy future. Our wise investment in a clean energy transition will bring new opportunities and benefits to our community: local economic development, a secure and reliable grid, continued affordable electricity, economic equity, and public health and safety.

Vision

Stoughton is energy secure and considered a leader in the statewide transition to a clean energy economy. Reliable, affordable, and sustainably sourced electricity helps safeguard the city's infrastructure, property, businesses, residents, and economic growth. Community members and the city share responsibility: individuals are empowered to take personal action and city leaders are supported by the community and encouraged to take municipal-scale action.

Goals

1. Reduce Stoughton's energy consumption with resource-efficient development and energy efficiency policies and programs.
2. Advance Stoughton's sustainable economy with policies, programs, and collaboration supporting locally produced and Wisconsin-based clean energy development.
3. Reduce and prevent energy-related health and economic disparities.

Priority Energy Actions

Actions (*indicates strong community support)		Timeline
E1	Establish baseline municipal energy usage	Immediate
E2	Conduct energy audits of city buildings	In progress
E3	Continue participation in the Choose Renewables program	In progress
*E4	Support energy efficiency projects at businesses	In progress
E5	Support community-driven clean energy projects	In progress
E6	Connect homeowners with household electrification opportunities	Near
E7	Adopt sustainable building standards for new city facilities	Medium
*E8	Adopt sustainable building standards for all new construction	Medium
E9	Retrofit city buildings with heat pumps	Medium
E10	Identify opportunities for developing solar canopy infrastructure	Medium
*E11	Convert a municipal facility to solar photovoltaic (PV) power	Long

E1 Establish baseline municipal energy usage

- In collaboration with Stoughton Utilities, assess municipal energy usage and progress toward achieving Governor’s goals:
 1. 100% carbon-free electricity for government operations by 2050 (EO #38).
 2. Ensure all electricity consumed in Wisconsin is 100% carbon-free by 2050 (EO #52)
- Set goals for energy consumption reduction, share of renewable energy, etc.
- Assess progress toward goals annually

E2 Conduct energy audits of city buildings

- Connect with expert technical assistance providers, such as Focus on Energy, to identify improvement areas
- Prioritize implementation of weatherization and energy efficiency projects including LED bulbs, HVAC upgrades, Energy Star rated appliances, etc.

E3 Continue participation in the Choose Renewables program

- Renew and increase municipal participation in Choose Renewables program through annual budget (complete for 2024 budget)
- Continue to publicize the Choose Renewables residential program to community members

***E4 Support energy efficiency projects at businesses**

- Provide incentives and support for businesses to incorporate energy efficiency upgrades and renewable energy technologies in existing buildings.
- Publicize information about and connect businesses with no-cost technical assistance programs such as Focus on Energy

E5 Support community-driven clean energy projects

- Bring community stakeholders together to identify intersecting priorities and collaborate to implement clean energy projects.
- Leverage no-cost technical assistance of programs such as SolSmart to accelerate solar energy growth

E6 Connect homeowners with household electrification opportunities

- In collaboration with Focus on Energy, publicize information about household electrification incentives (Home Energy Rebates) made possible by the Inflation Reduction Act

E7 Adopt sustainable building standards for new city facilities

- Establish or adopt sustainable building standards for new city facilities, which include requirements for net-zero construction.

***E8 Adopt sustainable building standards for all new construction**

- Adopt sustainable building and energy efficiency standards for all new construction that go beyond the state's minimum requirements.

E9 Retrofit city buildings with heat pumps

- Develop and implement a plan to retrofit all city buildings with heat pumps to reduce natural gas usage.
- Research and apply for funding opportunities to support implementation

E10 Identify opportunities for developing solar canopy infrastructure.

- Evaluate locations including parking lots, city-owned and commercial buildings, bus stops, bike shelters, grocery cart corrals, etc. for suitability
- Research and apply for funding to install solar canopy systems

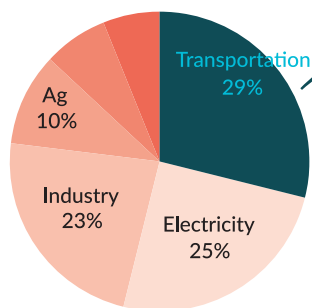
***E11 Convert a municipal facility to solar photovoltaic (PV) power**

- Ensure future capacity to develop an interconnected microgrid by converting additional facilities

Transportation Action Strategy

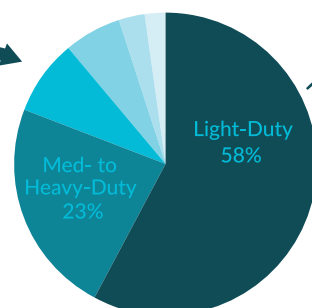
The City of Stoughton is alive to American car culture. Across the nation, communities like ours are designed around the beloved automobile: the ultimate symbol of independence and personal freedom, but also the most inefficient form of travel and a major contributor of GHG emissions. In fact, the transportation sector contributes the largest portion of U.S. GHG emissions, 58% of which is from passenger cars (light-duty vehicles).⁸

U.S. GHG Emissions by Sector (2021)⁸



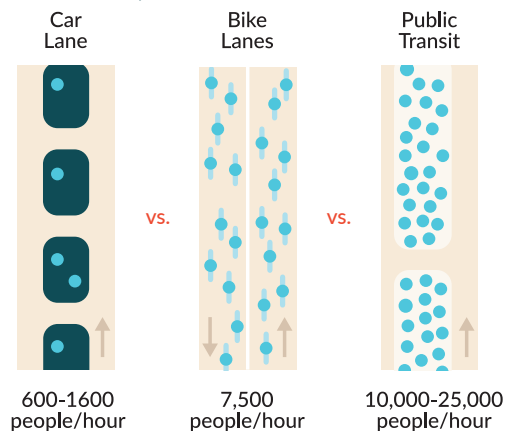
6% Residential
7% Commercial

Sector Emissions by Source (2021)⁸



8% Aircraft
6% Other
3% Watercraft
2% Rail

Using Limited Space More Efficiently⁹ Can Lower GHGs



Pie charts adapted from the EPA⁸. Transportation efficiency graphic adapted from NACTO⁹.

Reshaping the Built Environment

Cities built for cars, traffic, and parking have come at the expense of walkability, safety, public health, air quality, water quality, the climate, equitable access to goods and services, economic opportunity, affordable housing, and even social connection. To achieve sustainability, we need to evolve our approach to community design and transportation infrastructure.^{10,11}

We can free up valuable space for things like beauty, enjoyment, and ecological restoration with incremental changes and improvements over time. We can, for example, begin devoting a much smaller amount of valuable real estate to empty parked cars. And in doing so, we can simultaneously provide safe and accessible places to walk, run, bike, and socialize, promoting health and well-being within our community.

When we are developing and redesigning our transportation infrastructure to make active transportation (walking, biking, and rolling) safer and more accessible, we can also design for water infiltration and cleaner stormwater, incorporating pervious surfaces and diverting water into rain gardens with native vegetation and biodiversity (“green infrastructure”), rather than defaulting to cement and storm drains (“gray infrastructure”) that collect and channel contaminants straight into our surface waters. For instance, protected bike lanes separated from vehicles by green stormwater infrastructure, like bioswales, provide many co-benefits, including increased safety, accessibility, physical activity, visual appeal, and resilience.



Walkable city design is critical for public and economic health

People with somewhere safe and accessible to walk are more likely to be physically active. Plus, things like public transportation, walkability, and access to goods and services provide more opportunities for connecting and socializing with others, especially benefitting children and the elderly who are among the most hindered by car-dependent design.^{10,11,13}

Challenges and Opportunities

Due to its size and location, Stoughton faces several challenges in developing a sustainable approach to transportation. Our small downtown area is walkable for residents and visitors, but traffic patterns, street design, and lack of physical dividers (paint is not infrastructure) make biking unsafe on major streets. Many area residents commute to Madison or elsewhere for work, and there are few options for ride sharing or public transportation. And as far as how our vehicles are powered, some city fleet vehicles have been replaced with hybrids, but the majority are still powered by gasoline.

To reduce our dependence on vehicles and the gasoline that fuels them, the city will need to prioritize people-first infrastructure (i.e., design for walking and biking, and provide physical buffers between people and cars) and more efficient, sustainable modes of transportation (e.g., public transit and ride sharing for longer trips, EVs, and AFVs). Starting with small, feasible projects in the short-term, and re-envisioning our car-centric community design in the long-term, we can begin building a safer, more vibrant future.

Vision

Stoughton will improve its transportation system to reduce pollution and environmental impact, and to promote safety and accessibility. The city will create a plan to design and maintain streets in a way that benefits pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and natural resources. The transportation plan will also create opportunities for ride sharing, public transit, and a transition to more sustainable motorized vehicles.

Goals

1. Develop people-first transportation policies, programs, and infrastructure to make biking, walking, and emissions-free transit more convenient, accessible, and safe.
2. Invest in alternatives to single occupancy vehicles such as ride-sharing and public transit.
3. Increase electric and alternative fuel infrastructure and vehicles.

Priority Transportation Actions

Actions (*indicates strong community support)		Timeline
*T1	Install bicycle racks at municipal buildings and other downtown locations	Near
T2	Develop and implement a Safe Routes to School program	Near
T3	Develop a Complete Green Streets approach	Medium
T4	Reduce Main Street vehicle traffic during city events	Medium
T5	Develop a community rideshare program	Medium
T6	Develop Stoughton's first park-and-ride location	Medium
*T7	Enhance public transportation options between Stoughton, surrounding towns, and the city of Madison	Medium
T8	Explore municipal fleet electrification	Long

*T1 Install bicycle racks at municipal buildings and other downtown locations

- Consider establishing a bicycle rack cost share program with businesses and multi-family properties

T2 Develop and implement a Safe Routes to School program

- Following best practices from other communities, and potentially in collaboration with expert organizations such as Wisconsin Bike Fed, establish a Safe Routes to School program to encourage safe and healthy transportation options
- Explore funding opportunities, including the US Department of Transportation's Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grants

T3 Develop a Complete Green Streets approach

- Following best practices from other communities, develop a framework for street planning, design, building, and operation that fosters sustainability by promoting walking, biking, and transit and using streets to expand the urban tree canopy, divert clean stormwater, and improve water infiltration
- Integrate this framework into the transportation chapter of the Comprehensive Plan and land use ordinances
- Explore funding opportunities, including the US EPA's Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants program

T4 Reduce Main Street vehicle traffic during city events

- Assess options for limiting or prohibiting vehicle traffic on Main Street during festivals and other occasions

T5 Develop a community rideshare program

- Create an online community ride-share board accessible from the city's website and sustainability page

T6 Develop Stoughton's first park-and-ride location

- Select one of two city-identified sites
- Explore strategies to link park-and-ride location with other modes of transportation (e.g. connect location to existing bike trails, equip location with bike racks, etc.)
- Explore opportunities to integrate green infrastructure, solar canopies, etc.

***T7 Enhance public transportation options between Stoughton, surrounding towns, and the city of Madison**

- In collaboration with Dane County Cities and Villages Association (DCCVA) members and other area stakeholders, draft a proposal to advance the goal of connecting the city of Stoughton and surrounding towns to Madison and each other (e.g., Madison Metro transit services, commuter rail)

T8 Explore municipal fleet electrification

- Continue research into feasibility and funding opportunities to transition municipal fleet to electric

Water Action Strategy

82 amount of water the average American uses at home
gallons/day

20% in water consumption with more efficient fixtures and other measures
reduction

The City of Stoughton enjoys an abundance of ground and surface water resources. The Yahara River, instrumental in the city's beginnings for the power and transportation it provided, will soon anchor new riverfront residential and recreational developments in the heart of Stoughton. To the north, Lake Kegonsa remains a nearby place for peace, relaxation, and recreation. And beneath our feet, a seemingly limitless supply of groundwater continues to support our growing population with safe, clean, and reliable drinking water.

The need to protect and conserve these vital resources and community assets from our consumption and pollution cannot be taken for granted. Natural habitats, agriculture, and human life all depend on our ability to do so.

Challenges and Opportunities

We know that herbicides and pesticides applied to farmlands, gardens, and lawns can make their way into our water systems.¹⁴ These toxins, along with eroded sediment and phosphorus leached from leaf-lined streets, are washed by city stormwater into our local watershed and ultimately downstream into the Rock River.

While our stormwater management practices impact downstream communities, the quality of our waters—our aquifers, Lake Kegonsa, and the Yahara River—is affected by the practices of upstream communities. Therefore, upstream and downstream communities should share in the responsibility of implementing solutions, like replacing irrigation-dependent, shallow-rooted lawns with no-mow grasses or deep-rooted native plants, which increase water infiltration, reduce runoff, eliminate the need for irrigation and suppress weeds naturally, without herbicides.^{14,15}

Additionally, one of the simplest, most cost effective ways we can reduce the amount of phosphorus flowing into our lakes, rivers, and streams is to safely remove leaves from the street before it rains. In fact, residents and the city can help reduce phosphorus in urban stormwater by 80% when they rake or street sweep leaves from the street before it rains.¹⁶

Did you know?

More than half of the phosphorus in urban stormwater can come from leaves in the street, which “steep” in stormwater flows to create a “leaf tea” rich in dissolved phosphorus.

Too much phosphorus making its way to our lakes, rivers, and streams is a major climate-related sustainability issue. High phosphorus concentrations combined with CO₂ and summer heat allow toxic blue-green algae to thrive. These cyanobacteria produce toxins, make fishing and swimming dangerous, and release methane, a potent GHG.

The co-benefits of water quality protection and water-saving techniques are many: a healthy environment, lower water and wastewater treatment costs, and less energy used to treat, pump, and heat water, which helps prevent air pollution.¹⁷

The City of Stoughton has already made efforts to conserve water and curb pollution. Expanding these efforts will ensure future generations are able to enjoy the same abundance of clean water that made our city possible.

.....
Vision

Stoughton conserves, protects, restores, and advocates for groundwater and surface water resources, ensuring clean water is available for drinking, recreation, fishing, and the support of healthy aquatic habitat. Stoughton keeps harmful substances out of all water resources and works to reclaim usable land by maximizing innovative water infiltration practices.

Goals

1. Implement strategies to conserve and protect the quantity and quality of groundwater.
2. Protect local waters by managing surface runoff quantity and quality.
3. Manage riparian land use to protect surface water quality and enhance aquatic habitat.

Priority Water Actions

Actions (*indicates strong community support)	Timeline
W1 Establish baseline water usage	Near
*W2 Reduce use of road salt	In Progress
W3 Review water rate structure and make any necessary adjustments to encourage water conservation	Near
*W4 Investigate all potential sources of groundwater contamination	Medium
W5 Reduce potable water use at municipal buildings	Medium
*W6 Reduce contamination of stormwater due to leaf management practices	Medium
*W7 Phase out the use of herbicides on city-owned lands	Long
W8 Reduce mowing on city-owned buffer zones and stormwater management areas	Long
W9 Increase use of greywater for irrigation of city-owned and private landscapes	Long

W1 Establish baseline water usage

- In collaboration with Stoughton Utilities, assess municipal water usage
- Set goals for water conservation, including consumption reduction, greywater usage, etc.
- Assess progress toward goals annually

***W2 Reduce use of road salt**

- Test water quality to establish baseline impact of road salt usage
- Explore road salt alternatives and reduction strategies to limit runoff contamination in waterways
- Implement changes without compromising public safety on our roads and sidewalks
- Assess impact of changes by testing water quality

W3 Review water rate structure and make any necessary adjustments to encourage water conservation

***W4 Investigate all potential sources of groundwater contamination**

- Prioritize investigation of defunct and currently operating industrial and manufacturing sites, gas stations, and hazardous waste and superfund sites
- Pursue BIL and IRA cleanup funding as needed

W5 Reduce potable water use at municipal buildings

- Evaluate baseline water use at municipal buildings
- Install water saving fixtures as needed

***W6 Reduce contamination of stormwater due to leaf management practices**

- Test stormwater quality to establish baseline suspended solids and phosphorus due to fallen leaves
- Evaluate current leaf management practices against most current technical guidance
- Explore potential enhancements to street sweeping, leaf collection, and other practices
- Implement new practices as appropriate and feasible
- Assess impact of changes by retesting stormwater quality annually, with a goal to reduce contaminants below the levels required by state regulations

***W7 Phase out the use of herbicides on city-owned lands**

- Develop and implement a plan to phase out herbicide use on city-owned lands
- Starting with areas more likely to contaminate groundwater or surface water, replace conventional vegetation with lower maintenance native alternatives that have denser root systems that inhibit weed growth
- Apply for Dane County Land and Water Resources Department's free native plant program
- Explore other weed management strategies

W8 Reduce mowing on city-owned buffer zones and stormwater management areas

- Map riparian zones and assess current condition of shoreline buffer zones (35 feet from shorelines) in the city and its extraterritorial jurisdiction zone
- Assess feasibility of establishing native vegetation on buffer zones and stormwater management areas
- Develop and implement plan to convert appropriate areas of mowed lawn to unmowed native vegetation

W9 Increase use of greywater for irrigation of city-owned and private landscapes

- Adopt rain barrel use where feasible on city properties
- Explore other strategies to collect and use greywater and rainwater for irrigation
- Encourage use of rain barrels and rain gardens among homeowners
- Consider offering an annual rain barrel sale program

Solid Waste *Action Strategy*

The City of Stoughton supports the three Rs: reduce, reuse, and recycle—in that order. And we aim to shift the cultural values and practices preventing us from realizing the regenerative benefits of the three Rs, like the hyperconsumerism and traditional solid waste management practices that inundate our landfills, pollute our air and water, degrade our land, produce hazardous leachate, and contribute to global warming. This shift will require us to reimagine our linear approach and embrace a circular one.

Going Beyond the Three Rs

Modern consumption and waste management practices are based on a linear economic model in which we **take, make, and waste**. Linear economies prioritize profitability, resource exploitation, unsustainable production chains, and rapid and abundant consumption which results in the accumulation of waste.

Take our contemporary, linear food system, for instance. Up to 40% of food in the United States is wasted. This waste makes up 24% of landfill input, causes 58% of methane emissions from landfills, accounts for 22% of all freshwater use, and is responsible for 6% of the nation's GHG emissions. Meanwhile, 11.8% of all people and 17.5% of children in Dane County are food insecure, meaning they don't have reliable access to affordable, nutritious food.^{18, 19, 20}

Wasted freshwater, global warming, and food insecurity are just a few of the many issues connected to food waste. Minimizing and even preventing food waste altogether is a huge and complex challenge that will require collaborative exploration to uncover the most feasible and impactful pathways to prevention. One local pathway, for example, is food rescue, or the diversion of edible surplus food to feed hungry people and animals. Another local pathway to explore is to compost rather than landfill food waste. Composting reduces greenhouse gas emissions and recovers valuable nutrients which can be applied to farmland, for example.

While the challenge is complex, the underlying need to transform aspects of our waste management systems is quite clear and simple: landfill space, for example, should not be taken up by food that could have been eaten or composted.

As our linear economy pushes up against our landfill capacities and, on a larger scale, our planetary boundaries, we must recognize the need to apply circular economy principles to keep products and materials from becoming waste. In a circular economic model, we look to **reduce, reuse or repair, and recycle** to achieve more sustainable, responsible, and efficient operations. And in a circular food system, we look to **reduce, rescue, and compost**.

Exploring pathways to circularity in waste management goes hand in hand with the need to **rethink** and **redesign** resource conservation and responsible production in the first place, part of a zero-waste concept. A zero-waste approach complements circular economy principles with a call to refuse, or say “no” to, certain materials or items such as single-use disposables, as well as a broader focus on how



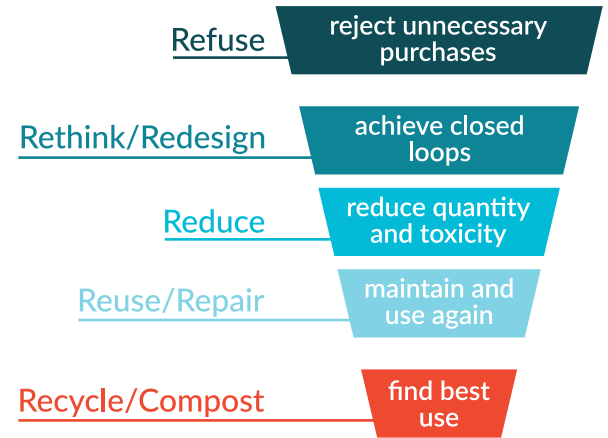
Landfills contribute 14.3% of human-related methane emissions in the U.S.²³

Methane traps heat in the atmosphere 28 times more effectively than CO₂, making it a highly potent GHG.²⁴

products, packaging, and materials are produced, consumed, reused, or recovered—without burning them, and without polluting land, water, or air.²¹

Incorporating circular economies and zero waste principles into daily life might require us to reimagine some of our practices as well as take on some new ones. This might look like refusing to purchase or use single-use plastics; renting, borrowing, and sharing rather than purchasing; supporting local businesses; and using only durable, repairable, reusable, or fully recyclable products made from renewable, non-toxic materials. As consumers, we can call for better solutions, hold businesses accountable, and take responsibility for individual waste generation. As a city government, we can do the same.

Hierarchy for Incorporating Circular Economies and Zero Waste in Stoughton



Adapted from the Zero Waste International Alliance Zero Waste Hierarchy 8.0²²

Vision

Stoughton's businesses, industry, institutions, and government minimize waste through recirculation of resources and selection of products and materials that retain their value, helping to support residents in zero-waste consumerism. Community members reduce wasteful consumption, prioritize sharing and reusing, and properly dispose of any generated waste.

Goals

1. Reduce wasteful consumption and overall quantity of waste generated.
2. Reduce the use of toxic products and materials that have negative impacts on environmental and human health.
3. Ensure systems are in place to dispose of all waste properly, including hazardous waste, recyclable materials, and compostable items.

Priority Solid Waste Actions

Actions (*indicates strong community support)		Timeline
S1	Establish baseline recycling rate	Near
S2	Install a clearly labeled recycling bin next to every public garbage bin	In Progress
S3	Adopt a sustainable purchasing policy	Near
S4	Establish an annual Clean Sweep event	Near
S5	Adopt a food waste reduction resolution	Near
*S6	Increase composting at city-run community gardens	Near
S7	Increase community recycling participation	Near
*S8	Explore feasibility of developing and operating a city compost site for food waste	Medium
*S9	Support food waste reduction within the school district	Medium

S1 Establish baseline recycling rate

- In collaboration with Johns Disposal, assess overall recycling rate for the city to include recycling, yard waste for composting, and solid waste-to-landfill
- Set goals for waste reduction and reuse at municipal and city-wide scale
- Assess progress toward goals annually

S2 Install a clearly labeled recycling bin next to every public garbage bin

- Ensure all public bins are paired, color-coded, and labeled to reduce contamination and increase recycling

S3 Adopt a sustainable purchasing policy

- Develop and adopt a municipal purchasing policy that requires consideration be given to whether a product is made from recycled and/or environmentally preferable materials as well as the disposal of the product at its end of life

S4 Establish an annual Clean Sweep event

- Partner with Dane County to host Clean Sweep event for Stoughton residents to dispose of household hazardous waste and electronic waste

S5 Adopt a food waste reduction resolution

- Adopt a resolution to address food waste with clear and measurable food waste diversion goals

- Outline strategies to achieve food waste diversion goals, including food waste prevention, food recovery and donation, and composting
- Assess annual progress toward achieving food waste diversion goals

***S6 Increase composting at city-run community gardens**

- Build and maintain composting infrastructure at current and future city-run community gardens

S7 Increase community recycling participation

- In partnership with John's Disposal, develop and implement a public education campaign that is in line with the City's sustainability goals for solid waste

***S8 Explore feasibility of developing and operating a city compost site for food waste**

- Research zoning requirements and potential locations for food waste composting
- Research and apply for funding opportunities for establishing food waste composting operations

***S9 Support food waste reduction within the school district**

- Support the school district in developing a program for food waste monitoring and reduction, including the incorporation of district-wide composting

Land Use and Development **Action Strategy**

The City of Stoughton is committed to rethinking and changing development patterns and policies to use our land and resources more efficiently. These changes will happen where priorities intersect across energy, transportation, water, and solid waste to incrementally build a future, for instance, full of greener buildings and construction materials, equalizing transportation design, climate-resilient landscaping, infrastructure supporting “greener” stormwater and waste management, local sustainable agriculture, and a community-wide shift toward a more circular economy.

Designing for Connectivity, Health, and Safety

Across the nation, communities are rethinking unsustainable land use practices, like sprawling, single-use development, and making the move toward more compact, mixed-use development designed for proximity, which brings people and destinations closer together. Proximity saves travel time and distance, and consumes less space, which requires less infrastructure—roadways, water pipes, broadband networks, and energy lines—to operate. Proximity combined with people-first community design also creates safer streets, attracts more walking and biking, and promotes mobility for people of all ages and abilities.^{25,26}

The goal is not to end up with a cluster of skyscrapers, but to minimize car dependence and maximize walkable accessibility to amenities *within* mixed residential developments, all while preserving environmental corridors and natural resources. We recognize the importance and necessity of longer trips, and solutions regarding their adverse impacts are addressed in the Transportation Action Strategy.

Conserving Natural Resources

Dane County is one of the fastest growing counties in Wisconsin and has some of the best farmland in the country. Forging critical connections between community stakeholders and local agricultural producers, while supporting the conservation of area farmland and low-density rural community, will be key to realizing a more resilient and equitable future.

Closer to home, Stoughton will encourage and carry out the planting of native vegetation and shade trees. We recognize that providing a healthy environment for our pollinators is essential to our food supply and, as discussed in the Water Action Strategy, native vegetation is essential for water quality and infiltration. Providing further incentive, by decreasing or eliminating the need to mow, we can also reduce GHG emissions and a variety of air pollutants from gas-powered mowers and blowers.²⁷

Additionally, trees have an important role to play. When planted in the right place around buildings, trees significantly lower summertime temperatures and reduce wind speeds, which decrease heating and cooling demand to lower energy consumption. Trees reduce stormwater runoff and soil erosion while increasing rainfall infiltration and improving water quality. Plus, trees capture and store carbon dioxide, improve air quality, and reduce ozone levels. Among many other benefits, trees add beauty and attractiveness to their communities and even increase property values.^{28,29}

**20%
reduction** in energy consumption when the right trees are planted in the right places

It is vital that the value of existing canopy is accounted for in all planning, ensuring that as many trees as possible are retained, and that development is seen as an opportunity to grow our tree canopy.

While many solutions will be modern and innovative, some will be as straightforward as planting trees, and some will be inspired by history. For example, the most compact parts of our city, designed before highways, are cherished for the character they bring to our community. Such as our historic downtown, which functions as a tourist hub and attracts new residents and businesses. Lessons from the past, combined with today’s best insights and a bold vision for the future, can help us bolster resilience and boost quality of life in our city.

.....
 : *Vision* :

Stoughton acknowledges that land is a precious resource and therefore will develop land only as needed. Proactive planning and efficient land use will protect and restore green space, natural resources, and habitats. Compact and mixed-use development, diversity of housing types, green infrastructure, and conservation practices will help Stoughton meet the needs of its growing population while preserving community character, promoting thriving businesses, and enhancing quality of life.

Goals

1. Prioritize health, social interaction, and equity in all land use planning and development considerations, actions, and decisions.
2. Use land and construct buildings more efficiently, ensuring access to housing for all income levels and protecting environmentally sensitive areas.
3. Implement local policies and strategies that enhance conservation, resilience, and quality of life for generations to come.

Priority Land Use and Development Actions

Actions (*indicates strong community support)		Timeline
*L1	Increase shade tree populations on city properties, lawns, and parks	In Progress
*L2	Explore and support opportunities to replace turf grass with native plants on city-owned, residential, and commercial properties	Near
L3	Increase Green Infrastructure to promote biodiversity-rich business parks and neighborhoods	Near
*L4	Require implementation of conservation practices for developers requesting TIF money	Near
L5	Support local sustainable agriculture	Medium

***L1 Increase shade tree populations on city properties, lawns, and parks**

- In coordination with the Tree Commission, develop and implement a plan to plant shade trees on city property, lawns, and parks as appropriate

***L2 Explore and support opportunities to replace turf grass with native plants on city-owned, residential, and commercial properties**

- Identify city properties, lawns, and parks where it would be beneficial and feasible to replace turf grass with native plants that don't need to be mowed
- Develop and implement a plan to convert these landscapes
- Explore ways to permit and incentivize residential and commercial property owners to replace turf grass with native vegetation and/or water-wise landscapes
- Provide technical and financial assistance to property owners interested in making this change

L3 Increase Green Infrastructure to promote biodiversity-rich business parks and neighborhoods

- Identify upcoming street reconstruction projects and new developments to encourage city and developers to install bioswales, rain gardens, permeable pavement, tree canopy, etc.
- Provide incentives and connect developers to technical assistance to support Green Infrastructure projects

***L4 Require implementation of conservation practices for developers requesting TIF money.**

- Adjust TIF application to include language requiring conservation practices (e.g., pervious pavement; 0% turf grass; landscaping using native plants; planting shade trees)

L5 Support local sustainable agriculture

- Promote connections between agricultural producers and Stoughton businesses and residents

Community Health and Engagement

Action Strategy

Community sustainability is ultimately about sustaining a high quality of life for residents, and the health of individuals and families is critical to quality of life. Health is interconnected with the economic and environmental conditions that determine community sustainability, and a healthy community is also an equitable community, in which all residents have adequate resources and opportunities to maintain their mental, physical, social, and economic health.

In addressing the global, regional, and local challenges facing the City of Stoughton, we recognize that the education and engagement of the public are vital to effectively plan and implement actions to promote a sustainable future. The city will work with and create connections between community-wide stakeholders, including citizens, businesses, schools, city staff, city representatives, and community groups, to create an environment in which critical connections and intersecting priorities drive meaningful change. Together, we will make informed decisions and engage in sustainability actions and initiatives that will improve environmental quality and quality of life in our community and region.

Vision

Stoughton will promote an ethic of sustainability for all members of the community. Residents, schools, businesses, organizations, and neighbors will be empowered through learning opportunities, as well as by the city's leadership and example, to take actions that improve environmental and human health.

Goals

1. Cultivate and promote an environment in which diverse community stakeholders learn about and work on sustainable practices together.
2. Prioritize sustainability, community perspectives, and transparency in city actions, decision-making processes, and budgets.
3. Enhance quality of life for all with solution-focused actions, strategies, and local policies that protect community health and well-being.

Priority Community Health and Engagement Actions

Actions (*indicates strong community support)		Timeline
*C1	Promote sustainability efforts through a dedicated page on the City of Stoughton's website	Near
C2	Host regular sustainability education events	Near
*C3	Foster ongoing community dialogue on city sustainability	Near
C4	Establish a greenhouse gas measuring station	Near
C5	Assess and remediate pollutants to the community	Medium
C6	Integrate sustainability practices at large local events (e.g. Syttende Mai, Taste of Stoughton, etc.)	Medium
*C7	Showcase demonstration projects	Medium

*C1 Promote sustainability efforts through a dedicated page on the City of Stoughton's website

- Create and maintain a webpage easily accessible from the city's home page for sustainability resources, community events, and activities

C2 Host regular sustainability education events

- Partner with community organizations to hold regular and frequent education events to promote sustainability

*C3 Foster ongoing community dialogue on city sustainability

- Create a process for facilitated and ongoing community dialogue around controversial topics related to sustainability and development

C4 Establish a greenhouse gas measuring station.

C5 Assess and remediate pollutants to the community

- Hire a consultant to assess any industries reporting emissions of hazardous pollutants to air, water, or land
- Engage all relevant stakeholders and regulatory agencies in a discussion addressing ending harm to the community
- Develop and implement a plan to reduce pollutants
- Research and apply for funding to support pollutant reduction

C6 Integrate sustainability practices at large local events (e.g. Syttende Mai, Taste of Stoughton, etc.)

- Promote zero-waste principles such as food waste composting, use of environmentally preferred materials, etc.
- Host the Dane County Trash Lab mobile exhibit at one such event annually

***C7 Showcase demonstration projects**

- Partner with schools and anchor institutions to showcase energy efficiency and sustainable practices.
- Develop new projects to model best management practices in energy, water conservation, native plantings, recycling, etc.

Policy Modernization Strategy

Recommended Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan Updates

Energy

- E12 Compare the city's building and zoning codes to the current best practices for energy efficiency and climate and economic resilience; identify and prioritize opportunities to update codes

Transportation

- T9 Amend the parking ordinance to require bicycle racks for all new commercial and multifamily buildings
- T10 Adopt an ordinance allowing Neighborhood Electric Vehicles
- T11 Integrate the Complete Green Streets Approach into local land use policies, street design, and the transportation chapter of the Comprehensive Plan
- T12 Incorporate EV charging guidance into the city's Comprehensive Plan update
- T13 Identify enforceable idling regulations for reducing emissions from unnecessary vehicle idling, then update ordinance(s) and pair the changes with public education
- T14 Target locations for public EV charging infrastructure and amend the zoning ordinance to require EV charging stations where appropriate (e.g. new multi-family developments)

Water

- W10 Update ordinance to require pervious surfaces and infiltration areas utilizing native vegetation in all new developments and redevelopments
- W11 Update ordinance to require protection or establishment of native vegetation in shoreline buffer zones of new developments and redevelopments
- W12 Use ordinance to improve construction site water infiltration, runoff management, and erosion control

Solid Waste

- S10 Develop and adopt clear and simple waste reduction policies to encourage compliance

Land Use and Development

- L6 Update ordinance to allow for cooperative living arrangements
- L7 Update zoning ordinance to allow for conservation subdivisions and agricultural neighborhoods
- L8 Review and update the city's zoning and ordinances to allow smaller lots, decrease setbacks, ADUs, less land for parking lots, more multi-family
- L9 Add conservation practices into land use regulations for new developments
- L10 Implement Smart Surfaces Coalition alternative surface technologies for city roofs, streets, sidewalks, and parking lots, and update all related ordinance requirements to include and encourage public and municipal use of these alternatives
- L11 Require all waterfront development, redevelopment, and revitalization to prioritize people, parks, and public spaces, and prohibit vehicle infrastructure along the waterfront
- L12 Change ordinance to require that terraces/tree lawns are wide enough to support shade trees and rain gardens
- L13 Identify and adopt local land use policies to lay the groundwork for widespread adoption of EVs, customer-based energy generation, and the implementation of Distributed Energy Resources (DERs)
- L14 Update property maintenance requirements in the municipal code to include rain gardens as an acceptable drainage option for diverting stormwater away from buildings
- L15 Adopt a zoning or ordinance amendment to limit formula businesses (options include capping the total number of, limiting the density of, or prohibiting altogether)
- L16 Review and update land use goals, objectives, and policies in the city's Comprehensive Plan to identify gaps and find opportunities to protect environmentally sensitive areas and ensure sustainability measures and conservation practices are considered and implemented in land use and development decisions

Implementation.

Governance recommendations

[insert content]

Governance Recommendations for a Sustainability Transition

Supporting Collaboration and Networks

To tackle the grand challenges and achieve our ambitious sustainability goals through the actions laid out in this plan, it is critical for city leaders to develop a collaborative approach that incorporates principles of **systems thinking**.

Basic principles of systems thinking:

1. **Interconnectedness and synthesis** - everything is connected in a dynamic and complex web of relationships. These principles allow us to see the parts and how they interact to make up the whole. There is a recognition that in totality, cause and effect are not linear, but circular. We need to position ourselves so we can see both the forest and the trees.

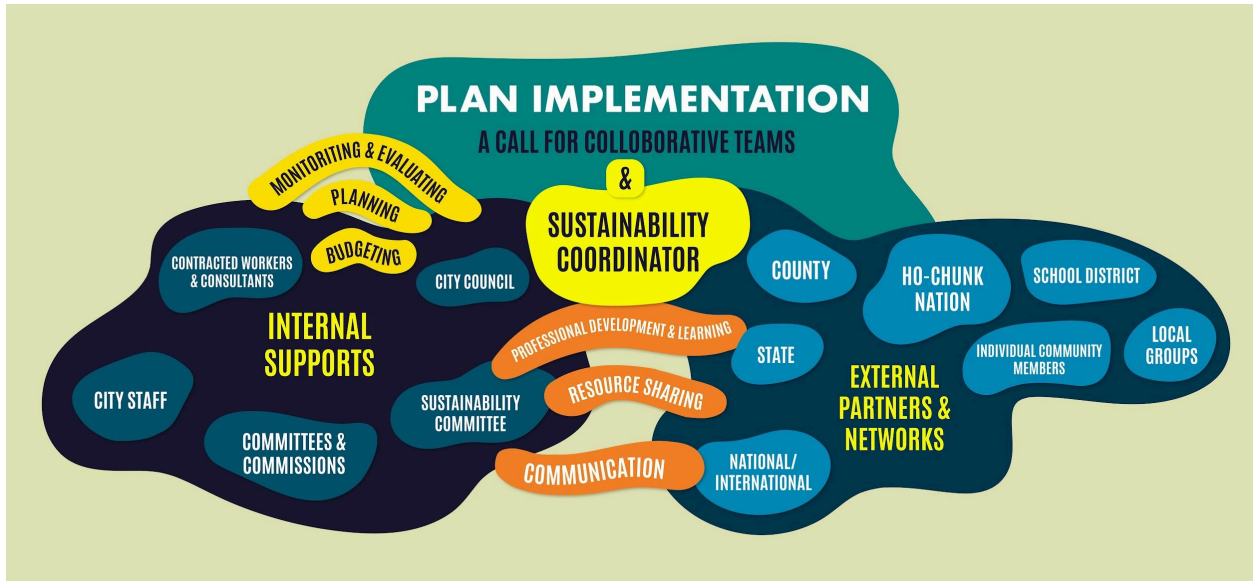
We can apply this principle by understanding the social, economic, and environmental connections that exist and by identifying helpful and harmful behavior patterns.

2. **Emergence** - recognition that a system is not just the sum of its parts. The outcomes of a system are not determined by adding the output of the individual parts, but are influenced by the organization and relationships of all the parts.

We can apply this principle by recognizing the limitations to our potential when we work in silos. We can use collaborative teams to produce synergistic outcomes.

3. **Understanding Feedback Loops** - the two main types of feedback loops are reinforcing and balancing. Reinforcing feedback loops tend to lead to continual increases or decreases, whereas balancing loops support equilibrium.

We can apply this principle to actions that will have reinforcing feedback towards desired change. Examples include financial investments that reduce future costs, and collaboration and networking to increase participation and engagement.



This graphic represents the many social entities and major activities that will be involved throughout the continuous implementation and evaluation of the Sustainability Plan.

Cultivating Relationships

While this plan envisions the City as leading our Sustainability Transition, collaboration with key partners and engagement with essential networks will facilitate plan implementation and foster connections with beneficial ripple effects. Throughout the process of developing this plan, the Sustainability Committee engaged with key partners across the city and beyond to ensure diverse perspectives and ideas were incorporated. It is important to build upon the energy and relationships that have already been established through ongoing engagement during the implementation process.

Key Partners - Many individuals, organizations, and governments have wisdom and experience that may contribute significantly to the execution of this plan. It is important to cultivate ongoing relationships with those already engaged to reveal new insights, policy ideas, and strategies for implementation. Additionally, new partners may be identified, providing diverse perspectives and new interconnections (see Appendix ## for a list of key partners already engaged).

Community Engagement - Community members must also be considered as key partners and beneficiaries of this plan. Whenever possible, community members should be empowered to engage in the implementation of this plan and share feedback and ideas on progress. Clear and consistent messaging from the City’s leadership, as well as swift decisive action, is essential to demonstrate the City’s commitment to the

systemic change described in this plan. Ideas for engaging the public in this work are detailed in the Community Health and Engagement focus area action list (see page ##).

Essential Networks - Similar to the synergy that will be created by mapping out our local network of interrelated key partners, involvement in networks increases collaborative opportunities and innovation. Essential professional networks provide members with resource sharing, best practices, and technical assistance. Additionally, local network connections can lead to partnerships and joint grant opportunities, contributing cost and time savings. (see Appendix ## for a list of essential networks).

Governance and Leadership Recommendations

With many interconnected entities involved and many innovative actions identified, it is crucial to develop a governance structure to support implementation and accountability of this ambitious plan. The recommendations below are intended to begin the process and conversation around systemic change and shared responsibility.

Sustainability Coordinator

Leadership and coordination of the actions described in this plan are essential for achieving the city's sustainability goals. As such, the first recommendation for governance of this plan is to **hire a Sustainability Coordinator**. This role would be responsible for:

- the development of an implementation plan for sustainability,
- delegation of actions and coordination of relevant city departments,
- collaboration with key partners and external networks,
- development of a monitoring and evaluation plan, as well as
- identification and pursuit of funding opportunities.

There are several options to fill this role, such as:

- hiring a full or part time staff member at the city,
- "sharing" a coordination position with another neighboring municipality,
- engaging an independent consultant, or
- some combination of the above.

The current landscape of grant funding for sustainability initiatives offers a great return on investment opportunity for this role. Scott Semroc, former Sun Prairie Sustainability Coordinator, assisted the city in securing a variety of competitive grants that, in addition to utility rebates, amounted to ~\$1.3 million in funding for sustainability projects.

Furthermore, many of these projects are related to energy, and will provide operational cost savings for the City now and well into the future.

SIDEBAR QUOTE

“A Sustainability Coordinator role primarily contributes to capacity building. This includes taking on new projects, launching initiatives, and working in tandem with other staff and departments to enhance and expedite current objectives and priorities set by the council and community. This can include bringing in new revenue but also reducing potential costs, such as the development of sustainability plans, CAPs, or other resources that would otherwise have to be procured externally. From my perspective, the value proposition of a coordinator is the additional staff capacity to work towards community goals, secure potential additional funding/revenue from external sources, and realize avoided costs from not having to procure resources or services externally.”

- Scott Semroc

* Action items

- The Sustainability Committee will present options to City Council for the fulfillment of this role, including a job description and/or RFP (request for proposal) detailing expectations for the role, market research on similar municipal roles, and research on the feasibility of various options.
- City Council will determine the best way to fill this role as well as provide feedback on role expectations and budget.

Internal Communications and Collaboration

Increasing communication and collaboration among individual staff and working groups is key to harnessing the synergies and benefits of systems thinking. In approaching the implementation of this plan, a collaborative teams structure may facilitate the breaking down of departmental silos to tap into relationships and drive efficiency toward a common goal.

* Action items

- Utilize available software to develop a system for **collaborative task management** (ex: Airtable) and **resource sharing** across all departments and committees.
- Establish a ‘Sustainability Update’ as a standing agenda item for committees and commissions that have overlapping responsibilities with the sustainability

committee (listed below). When possible, it would also be helpful to have membership overlap.

1. Planning Commission
2. Parks and Recreation Committee, along with Rivers and Trails Taskforce and AdHoc Whitewater Committee
3. Public Works Committee, along with Tree Commission and Prairie Task Force
4. Utilities Committee
5. Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) Committee

- Establish an annual committee of the whole meeting on sustainability.

Professional Development

Information and resources to support sustainability initiatives are abundant and ever changing. Staying up to date on available funding, technical skills, and knowledge is critical for success.

* Action items:

- Support opportunities for city staff to engage in regular sustainability training, networking events, and seminars.
 1. For example, staff could attend a Dane County Sustainability Campus tour and/or workshop to network and learn about innovative waste management practices and technologies.
 2. Maintain Sustain Membership and seek out additional professional membership from the networks listed in Appendix ##.
- Encourage and support staff in obtaining sustainability-related certifications.
- Include experience or training in sustainability in job descriptions, training, and performance reviews of city employees.

Sustainability Committee

Open meetings law limits the ability of committee members to collaborate outside of monthly meetings thus limiting what the committee is able to accomplish and extending the timeline of simple tasks. Additionally, the committee is mainly composed of

volunteers who often have limited capacity. To increase the effectiveness of the sustainability committee as it transitions to a working group in support of plan implementation, we offer the following suggestions.

* Action items

- Appoint one city staff member¹ to serve on the committee.
- Define roles and expectations of City Council members serving on the Sustainability Committee, as well as additional roles and expectations that would be helpful for project implementation (in addition to chair and vice-chair).
- Form subcommittees to carry out priority actions assigned to the Sustainability Committee. Some possibilities²:
 1. Policy Modernization Team - Research and make recommendations for zoning amendments.
 2. Grant Development Team - Identify potential grant opportunities aligned with priority actions.
 3. Communications Team - Develop a simple communications/PR plan for creating awareness, events, and engagement around the plan, the execution of actions, and achievements along the way.

Budgeting

As with any city-sponsored initiative, sustainability activities require some amount of funding. While some sustainability actions may lead to long term cost savings, it is essential to determine budgetary needs and identify funding opportunities to support the actions described in this plan.

Pie charts - to committee members reviewing this draft... we would like to include a visual that provides broad insight on city spending and revenue. Do you think this is

¹ If a Sustainability Coordinator is hired or appointed, this would be the best person for this role. If not, it will be important to clarify the qualifications and expectations for this role and appoint a staff member who has a supervisory role over the priority actions laid out in this plan.

² Additional Recommendations for Subcommittee Priorities:

Policy Modernization Team: Establish a safety zone between new gas stations and existing land uses vulnerable to their adverse impacts, as requested by the mayor and elected members of the plan commission.

Grant Development Team: Collaborate with consultants and key partners to develop proposals and secure funding. Develop a proposal for allocating ARPA funds earmarked for sustainability.

Communications Team: Collaborate with sustainability coordinator and city staff.

helpful? What questions do you have regarding the city budget? What information would be helpful for the general public to see here?

Currently, the City has earmarked \$250,000 in ARPA funding for sustainability purposes. While this funding could be used to support the initial stages of plan implementation, the City will need to consider sustainability in long-term budget planning. This should involve planning for projects in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Beyond these funds, other financing strategies will need to be researched and pursued to ensure the goals described in this plan can be achieved. These strategies may include:

1. **Federal, state, and local grant opportunities.** Currently, the Inflation Reduction Act is offering unprecedented funding for climate pollution reduction projects. It is essential to identify and monitor these and other grant opportunities and outline a process to submit applications (see Appendix ## for a sample of open grant opportunities). Ideally, grant writing would be led by the Sustainability Coordinator and supported by city staff and the Sustainability Committee.
2. **Leveraging of sustainability cost savings.** Some sustainability initiatives may lead to long-term operational cost savings. For example, energy efficiency upgrades may lead to lower energy utility costs over time. As the City begins to see such cost savings, it could be beneficial to set them aside as a fund for future sustainability initiatives.
3. **Other innovative strategies.** Many municipalities across the United States are in the process of funding and implementing their own sustainability or climate action plans, and have identified innovative funding strategies to support their efforts. Research and documenting these strategies could provide other potential funding sources for the actions in this plan.

*** Action item**

- In collaboration with City staff, the Sustainability Committee will develop a proposal for allocating \$250k ARPA funds earmarked for sustainability.

Planning

With the next update to the Comprehensive Plan due in 2027, this is a prime opportunity to elevate sustainability as a key vision for the future of the City of Stoughton. The grand ambitions, goals, and actions described in this plan can provide a framework for integrating sustainability into the Comprehensive Plan and the policies and ordinances it creates and/or updates. In the course of developing this plan, the Sustainability Committee began to list recommended ordinance, code, and Comprehensive Plan updates (see page ##).

* Action items

- Integrate the Sustainability Plan vision, goals, objectives, and actions in future comprehensive planning.
- Develop recommendations for ordinance and code updates, and integrate changes when ordinances are under review.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To assess progress toward sustainability goals and maintain accountability, strong monitoring and evaluation procedures are essential. As a first step, this plan recommends establishing baseline measures of key metrics in order to set goals and develop evaluation plans. The City should demonstrate transparency and commitment to progress by consistently sharing updates both internally and externally.

* Action items

- Hire a consultant to conduct a baseline inventory of city-wide Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Set goals for emissions reductions by sector (e.g. energy, transportation, solid waste, etc.)
- Develop a monitoring and evaluation plan to assess progress toward goals on an annual basis. [Indicator Spreadsheet](#) for aligning actions to goals and grand ambitions, as well as establishing indicators so that baseline and target metrics can be determined by the city. Recommended indicators and some metrics are included. The spreadsheet (tables) will be included in section 9, Projected Impacts, of the plan.
- Publish an annual progress report on sustainability in the community, in municipal operations, and around the region.

Projected Impacts.

[Brief intro describing desired outcomes/objectives of priority actions and guidance for setting baseline and target metrics, followed by recommended indicators and metrics or types of metrics]

Goal	Action or Policy [Grand Ambitions] *community-led	Objective/Indicator (desired outcome, result, effect, or consequence)	Measure of Success		Timeline
			Baseline	Target	
Energy Strategy					
	E1 Establish baseline municipal energy usage.				Immediate
Goal 1: Reduce Stoughton's energy consumption with resource-efficient development and energy efficiency policies and programs.	E2 Conduct energy audits of city buildings. [1, 3]	Lower consumption of municipal building energy use (electricity and natural gas)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total current electricity use Total current natural gas use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> x% reduction in electricity use 30% reduction in natural gas 	In Progress
	E7 Adopt sustainable building standards for all new city facilities. [1, 3]	Lower consumption of home heating fuels (propane, heating oil, natural gas, and wood) and reduction in associated climate pollutants (black carbon, GHGs)			Medium
	E9 Retrofit city buildings with heat pumps. [1]				Medium
	*E8 Adopt sustainable building standards for all new construction. [1]				Medium
	E6 Connect homeowners with household electrification opportunities.				Near
Goal 2: Advance Stoughton's sustainable economy with policies, programs, and collaboration supporting locally produced and Wisconsin-based clean energy development.	E12 Update building and zoning codes for energy efficiency and climate and economic resilience [3, 1]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of customer-owned solar power systems connected to SU's system Increased number of homes connected to a resilient power source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 148 customer-owned systems (as of 1/6/24) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 400 customer-owned systems by 2033 	(Policy)
	E3 Continue participation in the Choose Renewables program. [1]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased enrollment in Choose Renewables program among utility customers Annual enrollment in municipal program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current measure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10% increase in residential participation x% increase in business participation 	In Progress
	*E4 Support energy efficiency projects at businesses. [3, 1]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced resilience during extreme weather events Increased mix of renewable energy powering SU's service area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual power disruptions Number of SU Energy Aware Days in 2023 Current percentage of renewable energy in SU's mix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fewer power disruptions Annual number of Energy Aware Days x% solar in SU energy mix by 2030 x% wind in SU energy mix by 2030 	In Progress
	E5 Support community-driven clean energy projects. [all]				In Progress
	E10 Identify opportunities for developing solar canopy infrastructure. [1]				Medium
*E11 Convert a municipal facility to solar photovoltaic (PV) power. [1, 3]	Long				
Goal 3: Reduce and prevent energy-related health and economic disparities.	E10, E7, *E8, E6, E5, E12				
Goal	Action or Policy [Grand Ambitions] *community-led or -supported	Objective/Indicator (desired outcome, result, effect, or consequence)	Measure of Success		Timeline
			Baseline	Target	
Transportation Strategy					
Goal 1: Develop transportation policies and programs to make biking, walking, and emissions-free transit more convenient, accessible, and safe.	T9 Amend the parking ordinance to require bicycle racks for all new commercial and multifamily buildings [2]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased community awareness of more sustainable transportation infrastructure and community design Reduced air pollution from transportation (GHGs, PM2.5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero community meetings to involve impacted residents Total transportation-related GHG and PM2.5 emissions Total miles of bicycle lanes; total miles of protected bicycle lanes Longest contiguous bicycle route Number of total bicycle racks; number of bicycle racks downtown; number of bicycle racks at major employers Number of students able to safely ride a bicycle to school; number who actually do Total miles of pedestrian paths (paved and unpaved) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> x number of community meetings to involve impacted residents Decrease transportation-related GHG and PM2.5 emissions by x% Total miles of bicycle lanes; total miles of protected bicycle lanes Longest contiguous bicycle route Number of total bicycle racks; number of bicycle racks downtown; number of bicycle racks at major employers Number of students able to safely ride a bicycle to school; number who actually do Total miles of pedestrian paths (paved and unpaved) 	(Policy)
	T11 Integrate the Complete Green Streets Approach into local land use policies, street design, and the transportation chapter of the Comprehensive Plan [all]				(Policy)
	*T1 Install bicycle racks at municipal buildings and other downtown locations. [1, 2]				Near
	T2 Develop and implement a Safe Routes to School program. [1, 2]				Near
	T4 Reduce Main Street vehicle traffic during city events. [1]				Medium
	T3 Develop a Complete Green Streets approach. [all]				Medium

Goal 2: Invest in alternatives to single occupancy vehicles such as ride sharing and public transit.	T6 Develop Stoughton's first park-and-ride location. [1, 3]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased use of public transportation services, ride sharing and carpooling, and car- and bike-sharing services and programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current number of EVs, bikes, and other low- or zero-emissions vehicles available via sharing programs Current number of Stoughton residents who carpool or ride share to work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> x number of EVs, bikes, and other low- or zero-emissions vehicles available via sharing programs x number of Stoughton residents who carpool or ride share to work 	Medium
	*T7 Enhance public transportation options between Stoughton, surrounding towns, and the city of Madison. [all]				Medium
	T5 Develop a community ride share program. [1, 2]				Medium
Goal 3: Increase electric and alternative fuel infrastructure and vehicles.	T10 Adopt an ordinance allowing Neighborhood Electric Vehicles [1, 2]	Reduced air pollution from transportation		Decrease in total transportation-related GHG and PM.25 emissions by x%	(Policy)
	T8 Explore municipal fleet electrification. [1]	Reduced air pollution from municipal vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current percentage of electric vehicles in municipal fleet 	x percentage in electric vehicles in municipal fleet	Long
	T12 Incorporate EV charging guidance into the city's Comprehensive Plan update [1, 3]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced air pollution from transportation Increased accessibility to EV charging stations 		Decrease in total transportation-related GHG and PM.25 emissions by x%	(Policy)
	T13 Amend ordinance to regulate vehicle idling [1]				(Policy)
	T14 Amend ordinance to require EV charging stations at new residential developments [2, 1]		Current number of public EV charging stations	x number of public EV charging stations	(Policy)
Goal	Action or Policy [Grand Ambitions] <i>*community-led or -supported</i>	Objective/Indicator (desired outcome, result, effect, or consequence)	Measure of Success		Timeline
			Baseline	Target	
Water Strategy					
	W1 Establish baseline water usage				Near
Goal 1: Implement strategies to conserve and protect the quantity and quality of groundwater.	*W4 Investigate all potential sources of groundwater contamination. [2, 3]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved water and soil quality New economic opportunities created through the redevelopment of previously polluted land 			Medium
	W3 Review water rate structure and make any necessary adjustments to encourage water conservation. [3,1]	Reduced consumption of water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential and commercial/industrial gallons of groundwater used before rate adjustment. Percentage of groundwater lost per year Wastewater discharge per capita per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential and commercial/industrial gallons of groundwater used after rate adjustment. Decrease or maintain annual groundwater loss 20% decrease in wastewater discharge pcpy by 2030 	Near
	W5 Reduce potable water use at municipal buildings. [3]		Municipal gallons of groundwater used before fixture replacement.	Municipal gallons of groundwater used after fixture replacement.	Medium
Goal 2: Protect local waters by managing surface runoff quantity and quality.	W10 Update ordinance to require pervious surfaces and infiltration areas utilizing native vegetation in all new developments and redevelopments [3]	Decreased levels of water contamination and pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> x acres of impermeable surfaces replaced with: (1) permeable surfaces and (2) no-mow native vegetation. 25% increase in percentage of stormwater basins and vegetated conveyances supporting no-mow native vegetation 10% decrease in gallons of stormwater at outfalls 10% decrease in pounds of phosphorus in stormwater at outfalls 10% decrease in pounds of total suspended solids in stormwater at outfalls 		(Policy)
	W12 Use ordinance to improve construction site water infiltration, runoff management, and erosion control [3]			(Policy)	
	*W2 Reduce use of road salt. [3]			In Progress	
	*W6 Reduce contamination of stormwater due to leaf management practices. [3]			Medium	
	*W7 Phase out the use of herbicides on city-owned lands. [3]			Long	
	W9 Increase use of greywater for irrigation of city-owned and private landscapes [3]			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> x new total rain capture installations 5 newly constructed rain gardens serving large rooftops on commercial, industrial, and institutional sites 	Long
Goal 3: Manage riparian land use to protect surface water quality and enhance aquatic habitat.	W11 Update ordinance to require protection or establishment of native vegetation in shoreline buffer zones of new developments and redevelopments [3]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved water quality Improved aquatic habitat Reduced GHG emissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % increase in 35-foot wide or shoreline buffers with no-mow native vegetation x new linear feet of converted shoreline buffer zones (turf or cropland to native veg) 	(Policy)	

	W8 Reduce mowing on city-owned buffer zones and stormwater management areas [1,3]	and air pollution from landscaping/lawn care	zones (with or without native veg) • Estimated decrease shoreline management-related GHG emissions and air pollution		Long
Goal	Action or Policy [Grand Ambitions] <i>*community-led or -supported</i>	Objective/Indicator (desired outcome, result, effect, or consequence)	Measure of Success		Timeline
			Baseline	Target	
Solid Waste Strategy					
	S1 Establish baseline recycling rate				Near
Goal 1: Reduce wasteful consumption and overall quantity of waste generated.	S10 Develop and adopt clear and simple waste reduction policies to encourage compliance. [2, 3, 1]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced generation of solid waste, including recycling (tons/yr) • Less trash and recyclable waste on land and in waterbodies • Increase in construction and deconstruction materials diverted from landfills to be reused/repurposed (%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,911 tons/year (2022) • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD (McFarland aim for 10% decrease by 2030 (8 years)) • 	(Policy)
Goal 2: Reduce the use of toxic products and materials that have negative impacts on environmental and human health.	S3 Adopt a sustainable purchasing policy [1, 3]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased public awareness of toxics, their harms, and their sources • Reduced use of known toxics; improved air and water quality 			Near
Goal 3: Ensure systems are in place to dispose of all waste properly, including hazardous waste, recyclable materials, and compostable items.	S2 Install a clearly labeled recycling bin next to every public garbage bin [3]	• Increase in properly disposed of recyclables	Baseline recycling rate	Improved recycling rate	In Progress
	S4 Establish an annual Clean Sweep event [3]	• Increased number of households participating in annual clean sweep event	• none	• TBD	Near
	S7 Increase community recycling participation [3, 1]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased percentage of recyclable solid waste (lbs) • Increased participation in UPS packaging material repurposing (program?) • Increased participation in Nex Trex program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27% (2022) of solid waste recycled • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD (McF aim for 15% increase over 8 years, which comes to 45% by 2030) • number of participants or drop-offs? • amount collected at local partners (lbs) 	Near
	S5 Adopt a food waste reduction resolution [2, 3, 1]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased food rescued for hungry people and animals • Reduced food waste and associated emissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lbs of edible surplus food rescued (diverted from landfills) • lbs of compostable food diverted from landfills 	Near	
	*S6 Increase composting at city-run community gardens [1]			Near	
*S8 Explore feasibility of developing and operating a city compost site for food waste [1, 3]	Medium				
*S9 Support food waste reduction within the school district [1]	Medium				
Goal	Action or Policy* (output) [Grand Ambitions]	Objective/Indicator (desired outcome, result, effect, or consequence)	Measure of Success		Timeline
			Baseline	Target	
Land Use and Development Strategy					
Goal 1: Prioritize health, social interaction, and equity in all land use planning and development considerations, actions, and decisions.	L15 Adopt a zoning or ordinance amendment to limit formula businesses (options include capping the total number of, limiting the density of, or prohibiting altogether) [2]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in amount of money spent and reinvested inside our community (decrease in local money lost to (extracted by) shareholders and executives who live far away) • Increase in equitable economic opportunity within our community • Increased green space for public enjoyment along the Yahara River • Increased quality of life, health, safety, and sense of belonging among residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in number and strength of independently-owned stores, community character, quality jobs, and local economy • Increase in number of woman-owned businesses • Increase in number of BIPOC-owned businesses • x square acres of public green space added along the Yahara River 	(Policy)	
	L11 Require all waterfront development, redevelopment, and revitalization to prioritize people, parks, and public spaces, and prohibit vehicle infrastructure along the waterfront [3, 2, 1]	(Policy)			
	L5 Support local sustainable agriculture [2, 3]	Medium			
Goal 2: Use land and construct buildings more	L6 Update ordinance to allow for cooperative living arrangements [2]	• Increased green space			(Policy)

efficiently, ensuring access to housing for all income levels and protecting environmentally sensitive areas.	L7 Update zoning ordinance to allow for conservation subdivisions and agricultural neighborhoods [3, 2]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased green space Increased number of dwelling units per acre Decrease in car usage for short distance travel between residences and mixed-use destinations 		• x square acres of added green space	(Policy)
	L8 Review and update the city's zoning and ordinances to allow smaller lots, decrease setbacks, ADUs, less land for parking lots, more multi-family [2,3]				(Policy)
Goal 3: Implement local policies and strategies that enhance economic and climate resilience and quality of life for generations to come.	L10 Implement Smart Surfaces Coalition alternative surface technologies for city roofs, streets, sidewalks, and parking lots, and update all related ordinance requirements to include and encourage public and municipal use of these alternatives [3, 1, 2]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased community resilience Reduced damage and recovery costs for infrastructure and property 		• formation of a city group/committee to negotiate with developers on sustainable building practices	(Policy)
	L13 Identify and adopt local land use policies to lay the groundwork for widespread adoption of EVs, customer-based energy generation, and the implementation of Distributed Energy Resources (DERs) [1, 3]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased resilience to extreme weather events Increased number of homes connected to a resilient power source Higher consumption of energy from locally sourced and/or customer-based renewables Increased access to energy sources with low air pollution and GHG emissions 			(Policy)
	L9 Add conservation practices into land use regulations for new developments [3]				(Policy)
	L16 Review and update land use goals, objectives, and policies in the city's Comprehensive Plan to identify gaps and find opportunities to protect environmentally sensitive areas and ensure sustainability measures and conservation practices are considered and implemented in land use and development decisions [3, 2]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased community resilience Reduced damage and recovery costs for infrastructure and property Increased green space 		• • • x square acres of added green space	(Policy)
	L14 Update property maintenance requirements in the municipal code to include rain gardens as an acceptable drainage option for diverting stormwater away from buildings [3, 1]				(Policy)
	L12 Change ordinance to require that terraces/tree lawns are wide enough to support shade trees and rain gardens [3]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased tree canopy Decreased outdoor air temperatures during summertime (specifically in areas with increased tree cover) 			(Policy)
	*L1 Increase shade tree populations on city properties, lawns, and parks [3]				In Progress
	*L2 Explore and support opportunities to replace turf grass with native plants on city-owned, residential, and commercial properties [1, 3, 2]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased community resilience Reduced damage and recovery costs for infrastructure and property 			Near
	L3 Increase Green Infrastructure to promote biodiversity-rich business parks and neighborhoods [3]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in number of land owners who maintain a native plant garden 			Near
	*L4 Require implementation of conservation practices for developers requesting TIF money [3]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in acres of native plants/prairies on city property 			Near
Goal	Action or Policy* (output) [Grand Ambitions]	Objective/Indicator (desired outcome, result, effect, or consequence)	Measure of Success		Timeline
			Baseline	Target	
Community Health and Engagement Strategy					
Goal 1: Cultivate and promote an environment in which diverse community stakeholders learn about and work on sustainable practices together.	*C1 Promote sustainability efforts through a dedicated page on the City of Stoughton's website [all]				Near
	C2 Host regular sustainability events [all]			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of events/workshops related to sustainability offered Increased number of first-time attendees at sustainability-related events/workshops 	Near
	C6 Integrate sustainability practices at large local events (e.g. Syttende Mai, Taste of Stoughton, etc.) [all]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased public and environmental health literacy Increased engagement and interest in building a more 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of repeat attendees at sustainability-related events/workshops Increased traffic on sustainability web page 	Medium

Goal 2: Prioritize sustainability, community perspectives, and transparency in city actions, decision-making processes, and budgets.	*C3 Foster ongoing community dialogue on city sustainability [all]	interest in building a more sustainable future/community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased traffic on sustainability web page • Increased number of library check-outs from the sustainability section • Increased number of city staff who receive sustainability training or certification 	Near
	*C7 Showcase demonstration projects [all]			Medium
Goal 3: Enhance quality of life for all with solution-focused actions, strategies, and local policies that protect community health and well-being.	C4 Establish a greenhouse gas measuring station [1]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved air, water, and soil quality • Decreased incidence of asthma 		Near
	C5 Assess and remediate pollutants to the community [all]			Medium

Sources, to be turned into a proper **Bibliography**

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B.1 Action Prioritization Process

The Stoughton Sustainability Committee undertook an extensive community engagement process to generate a list of actions for potential inclusion in the Stoughton Sustainability Plan. These actions were categorized by focus area (e.g. energy, water, etc.) as well as party responsible for implementation (municipality, community group, or both).

Once this initial list of over 200 actions was generated, the Sustainability Committee hired Becker Professional Services (BPS) to assist with a process to prioritize and narrow them down to a shorter list of ~50 high impact, achievable actions with strong community support. To start, BPS facilitated a workshop with the Sustainability Committee during their meeting on November 28, 2023 to select prioritization criteria and develop a scorecard (see appendix #). Using this scorecard, each action would be assessed for its potential impact and effort. Potential to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions and capacity to restore and protect ecosystems were the foundational criteria for an action's Impact Score. Additionally, actions could achieve bonus points if they achieved moderate or high impact on both criteria as well as if they specifically addressed equity concerns. An action's Effort Score was comprised of its relative cost and labor, factoring in potential cost savings, funding opportunities, and collaboration with community groups. Other considerations for an action's inclusion in the priority list included strong community support as expressed through focus groups and/or a survey¹ of the community as well as timeline of implementation.

Once the scorecard was developed, BPS used it to assess actions designated as either municipal or overlap responsibility (meaning both municipal and community groups would be responsible for implementation) that did not involve ordinance, code, or Comprehensive Plan updates. This assessment was an iterative process, kicked off by individually scoring each action then charting actions within the same focus area on an Impact/Effort matrix. This matrix provided a visual aid to compare the scores of actions with similar objectives and ensure a distribution of actions across focus areas.

From these matrices, the five actions with the highest impact scores from each focus area were selected for the priority list, regardless of effort scores. With 30 actions identified for the list, the next review across all actions drew out those that may have had a lower impact score but had strong community support. Subsequent iterations drew out other actions with high impact and/or low effort as well as actions that might fit well together to reduce overall effort, and several actions that are already in progress. Additionally, several new planning related actions were added to establish baselines against which the City may set goals and monitor progress.

The initial draft of 51 actions was presented to the Sustainability Committee on December 18, 2023. During this meeting, Committee members had the opportunity to recommend edits and additions if specific actions were not included in the first draft. BPS used this feedback to generate a final list of 49 priority actions.

¹ Strong community support was defined as 50% or more of survey respondents indicating an action was either "moderately" or "very" important to them, or if the action was specifically called out or supported by focus group participants.

B.2 Action Prioritization Scorecard

IMPACT CRITERIA			
	Low = 1	Medium = 2	High = 3
To what extent will the action reduce Greenhouse gas emissions?	Little reduction of GHG emissions	Moderate reduction of GHG emissions	Significant reduction of GHG emissions
To what extent will the action protect and restore ecosystems?	Little impact on the protection and restoration of ecosystems	Moderate impact on the protection and restoration of ecosystems	Significant impact on the protection and restoration of ecosystems
	No = 0		Yes = 1
Co-benefit bonus: Does the action address multiple impact criteria?	The action does not achieve at least “medium” impact in 2 or more impact criteria	The action achieves at least “medium” impact in 2 or more impact criteria +1 if the action achieves “high” impact in 2 or more impact criteria	
Equity bonus: Does the action intentionally address environmental injustice and/or equity concerns?	The action does not intentionally address environmental injustice and/or equity concerns		The action does intentionally address environmental injustice and/or equity concerns
EFFORT CRITERIA			
	Low = 1	Medium = 2	High = 3
What will be the overall cost of the action (factoring in potential cost savings and funding availability)?	Relatively low cost. OR, high cost may be mitigated by potential cost savings and/or available funding	Moderate cost. OR, high cost mitigated to some extent by potential cost savings and/or available funding	Relatively high cost.
What labor and resources will be involved in implementing the action? (including city staff effort, collaboration with other entities)	Relatively low labor and resources needed to implement action	Moderate labor and resources needed to implement action	Relatively substantial labor and resources needed to implement action
OTHER CONSIDERATIONS			
Is there strong community support for the action?	* = The action has strong community support. No point value		
Timeline for implementation	Near term 0-2 years	Medium term 2-6 years	Long term 6-10 years

B.3 Future Actions

B.3.1 Introduction

[insert brief paragraph on three types of actions, reinforcing importance of actions that did not make it into the top 49]

B.3.2 Actions and Policy Updates Not Included in Priority Actions

Energy

Action #	Action	Timeline
E1312	Pass an Energy Independent Community Resolution.	Medium
E1413	Set a standard for developers and contractors to meet requirements for certification by the Focus on Energy New Home Certification Program.	Near
E1514	Provide incentives and support for the school district to incorporate energy efficiency upgrades and renewable energy production in existing buildings.	Medium

Transportation

Action #	Action	Timeline
T159	Update and augment the Stoughton Bike Transportation Plan Map to an ArcGIS map with designated bike lanes, non-motorized shared use paths, and recommended routes.	Medium
T1610	Invest in a bicycle fleet for city employees.	Medium
T1711	Identify and install new EV charging stations at municipal buildings.	Medium
T1812	Leverage the strength of the Dane County Cities & Villages Association to advocate and lobby for change in state law to allow non-utilities to charge by the kilowatt-hour for EV charging.	Near
T1913	Apply for Bicycle Friendly Community status with the League of American Bicyclists.	Medium
T2014	Engage community members in Walk Audits.	Near
T2115	Incentivize or require businesses (especially large employers, grocery stores, convenience stores, etc.) to install bicycle racks.	Near

Water

Action #	Action	Timeline
W13	Enhance testing of city water for contaminants, especially regulated and unregulated forms of PFAS.	Near

W14	Evaluate water loss in water distribution system and develop control program.	Medium
W15	Evaluate benefits and feasibility of having Stoughton Utilities become an EPA WaterSense program partner.	Near
W16	Research utilization and implementation of switchgrass in, for example, roadside erosion control, riparian buffers, and stormwater management basins. Identify possible locations to plant switchgrass in Stoughton.	Medium
W17	Develop a program to educate the community about the sources of our drinking water, contamination threats, and ways to take action to protect and restore water quality.	Medium
W18	Develop a city terrace rain garden program for residents impacted by road reconstruction.	Medium
W19	Incentivize, require, and support the use of rain gardens to infiltrate rooftop runoff from large buildings on commercial, industrial, and institutional sites.	Long
W20	Develop a leaf management education and outreach program to broaden citizen participation in timely removal of street leaf litter.	Medium
W21	Provide property owners with guidance for landscaping methods that reduce runoff and decrease contamination of runoff.	Long

Solid Waste

Action #	Action	Timeline
S11	Utilize natural buildings materials for new city park playground construction, rather than plastic.	Near
S12	Create a program to encourage and facilitate the practical reuse of waste from private and municipal construction projects.	Medium
S13	Establish fines or fees for larger entities who do not recycle, or provide incentives to larger entities for recycling.	Medium
S14	Support or require developers to take the following actions to reduce waste: monitor waste stream, use pre-manufactured, recycled, and repurposed building materials.	Medium
S15	Require large events to have a near-zero waste plan.	Medium
S16	Utilize social media and other forms of communication to regularly inform residents about waste reduction/zero-waste, recycling, backyard composting, product re-use, and hazardous waste disposal.	Near
S17	Require and support restaurants and other food-related businesses to reduce food waste and incorporate composting.	Medium

S18	Evaluate pathways for diverting waste to the future Dane County Department of Waste and Renewables Sustainability Campus (e.g., assess alternative haulers and analyze logistics of make a switch; educate public on access/use of the site, encouraging individual use)	Near
S19	Minimize moving-related waste with strategic partnerships, guidance on solid waste disposal and donation, hazardous waste education, and other public awareness campaigns.	Medium
S20	Require industrial businesses to put together a plan to reduce waste and emissions. Showcase businesses that demonstrate exemplary practices.	Long
S21	Research opportunities to better understand household and business waste management practices and barriers.	Medium
S22	Create and maintain a tool-sharing library.	Long
S23	Establish a free-cycle page on the Sustainability webpage (or connect with facebook groups?) for community members to post items they no longer want.	Near
S24	Develop a comprehensive and streamlined system for rescuing and distributing edible surplus food from farms.	Long
S25	Work with businesses on waste audits.	Medium
S26	Host thematic stakeholder workshops for collaboratively exploring and envisioning pathways to community-wide waste reduction (e.g., potential themes: creating a circular and resilient local food system; phasing out single-use plastics; preventing PFAS contamination)	Medium
S27	Develop incentives to phase out single-use plastics and other non-recyclable materials in the city while supporting local restaurants in a group-buy of truly recyclable or compostable containers for food products.	Near
S28	Connect homeowners, developers, and businesses to incentives and rebates available for constructing with metal roofing, recycled materials, and other sustainable building materials.	Near
S29	Facilitate a group buy program to offer compost bins to City residents and businesses.	Near
S30	Work with schools to set up a "drink, empty, recycle" milk carton recycling program.	Medium

Land Use & Development

Action #	Action	Timeline
L17	Ensure accessibility of outdoor recreational areas and trails for people with disabilities.	Near
L18	Identify and inventory areas for in-fill, conservation, and sustainability practices, then incentivize or require these practices as part of the development first.	Near
L19	Adopt CarbonStar rating system and set embodied carbon limits on new construction (roads and buildings).	Near
L20	Develop a program enabling citizens to buy shade trees at cost from the city and provide educational materials on planting and caring for the tree.	Medium
L21	Pursue Boundary Agreements with townships to preserve farmland, wetlands, and grasslands.	Medium
L22	Allow for shade trees to be planted on residential properties when tree lawns are too narrow.	Medium
L23	Develop guidelines for best practices for increasing tree canopy in new developments and established neighborhoods.	Medium
L24	Increase funding in the CIP to increase the purchase and planting of shade trees on public lands.	Long
L25	Improve parks, trails, open space, and landscaping at facilities with native habitat, tree canopy, gardens, rain gardens, native prairie, and prairie strips.	Long
L26	Review requirements for street widths and reduce when appropriate during reconstruction.	Long
L27	Develop single-family, multifamily, or mixed-use communities built around a working farm or community garden (commonly known as agricultural neighborhoods).	Near
L28	Form a working group of staff, City Council members, and citizens to outline current energy efficiency standards for buildings as per state statute. List other energy efficiency options along with cost. Work with planners, developers, and contractors to incorporate more sustainable building designs. Provide incentives if necessary based on the cost of exceeding state standards.	Near

Community Health & Engagement

Action #	Action	Timeline
C8	Host workshops bringing community stakeholders together to envision potential pathways and solutions to address the lack of accessibility to quality, affordable food options on the east side of Stoughton.	Medium
C9	Work with Chamber and Downtown Business Association to attract and support sustainable businesses in Stoughton.	Medium
C10	Establish and maintain a dedicated sustainability section at the Stoughton Public Library which can include books, media, and a bulletin board of local resources/educational events.	Near
C11	Work with community organizations to educate the public about the benefits of native plants.	Medium
C12	Host a sustainable home and business tour.	Medium
C13	Recognize local businesses that prioritize sustainability and equity with awards.	Long
C14	Promote the importance of walking and biking safety for the entire community with broader outreach and publicity for the annual Bike, Walk & Roll to School event.	Near
C15	Provide homeowners with guidance for evaluating their water use, installing water saving fixtures, and replacing water softeners.	Near
C16	Provide homeowners guidance for conserving water in landscape irrigation.	Long
C17	Adopt a resolution making the library a Book Sanctuary.	Near
C18	Support local entrepreneurship with funding and educational opportunities.	Near

B.4 Community-Led Actions

[if time allows... invitation to individuals and community groups to consider and adopt actions generated through the plan development process that were not considered the responsibility of our local government]

Appendix C: Key Partners and Essential Networks

The collaboration of key partners and the engagement of essential networks will facilitate plan implementation and foster connections with beneficial ripple effects. Below is a sample list of Key Partners, many of whom participated in focus groups for the development of this plan, as well as a list of Essential Networks.

Key Partners

- Local organizations and groups:
 - Innovation Center Stoughton
 - Downtown Business Association
 - Sustainable Stoughton
 - Stoughton Area Community Foundation
 - Stoughton Chamber of Commerce
- School District
- Manufacturing & Industry
- Businesses
- Developers
- Elected Officials
- UW Extension
- Dane Co. Office of Energy and Climate Change
- Ho-Chunk Nation
- Sister City - Gjøvik, Norway

Essential Networks

- Sustainable Leaders Collaborative
- Sustain Dane
- Dane County City and Villages Association
- North American Eco-municipality Network
- American Planning Association (APA)
- Wisconsin Local Government Climate Coalition Network
- UW Clean Energy Community Initiative

Appendix D: Funding Opportunities for Sustainability Initiatives

There are numerous federal, state, and regional funding opportunities that may be leveraged to support planning and implementation of the actions laid out in this plan. As the grants landscape is constantly changing (with recurring funding rounds and narrow application windows), it will be essential to maintain awareness of opportunities and application deadlines to best take advantage of available monies. This section offers a primer of some of the current and upcoming opportunities that may support Stoughton's Sustainability Plan.

Federal Opportunities

[US EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grants](#)

Through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), The Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG) program provides two phases of funding to states, local governments, tribes, and territories to develop and implement ambitious plans for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful air pollution. In the first phase, states, local governments, tribes, and territories were awarded funds to design climate action plans. The [Wisconsin Office of Sustainability and Clean Energy \(OSCE\)](#) received a \$3 million planning grant through this initial phase. In the second phase of funding, eligible entities including municipalities may apply for funding to implement programs, policies, projects, etc. identified in a PCAP developed under a CPRG planning grant. **Applications are due April 1, 2024.**

[US EPA's Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants program](#)

The Community Change Grants program funds projects that reduce pollution, increase community climate resilience, and build community capacity to address environmental and climate justice challenges. Local governments must apply for funding in partnership with a community based organization in order to be eligible for funds. Projects could include strategies such as green infrastructure (e.g. planting shade trees and native plants), mobility and transportation improvements, efforts to reduce food waste, and others. **Applications are accepted on a rolling basis until November 21, 2024.**

[US DOT's Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\) Grant Program](#)

The Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program funds regional, local, and Tribal initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. It includes two grant types: Planning and Demonstration Grants and Implementation Grants. Applicants must first develop an Action Plan in order to apply for an Implementation Grant. Such funding could support transportation related activities in this Sustainability Plan, including the development of a Safe Routes to School Program. **This grant program will open in February 2024 and applications will likely be accepted through July 2024.**

[USDA's Composting and Food Waste Reduction Cooperative Agreements](#)

For the last three years, the USDA has offered funding to support pilot projects for planning and implementing municipal compost and food waste reduction plans. This opportunity typically **opens in mid March and accepts applications through mid June.** If this program reopens in

2024, a successful application could support the range of actions related to food waste reduction and composting included in this plan.

State Opportunities

[Public Service Commission of Wisconsin's Energy Innovation Grant Program](#)

The Energy Innovation Grant Program (EIGP) supports a wide variety of energy projects related to energy efficiency, renewable energy, energy storage, energy planning, and more. This grant program could support actions including installing solar photovoltaic systems, retrofitting buildings with heat pumps, water conservation systems, etc. **Applications for the fifth round of funding are due March 1, 2024.**

[Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's Clean Sweep Program](#)

The Wisconsin Clean Sweep is a grant program available to governmental entities and Tribes throughout Wisconsin that provides reimbursement to these entities for the collection and disposal of household hazardous waste, agriculture pesticides, and prescription drugs. The **application period opens in early April and stays open until the Friday before Memorial Day.**

Regional Opportunities

[Dane County Land & Water Resources Department's native plant growing program](#)

The Dane County Land and Water Resources Department offers a program to provide free native plants for projects within publicly-owned spaces as well as private properties visible and/or open to the public. Plants are available to eligible community organizations, schools, nonprofits or businesses in the spring and summer of each year. This year, **applications are due February 1, 2024.**