

# Appendix: Comments received from public review of Draft Hennepin County Climate Action Plan

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## Verbatim comments from online form

*Names and contact information is redacted to protect personal information. Names of organizations are included.*

<p><b>Please share your comments about the county's climate action plan.</b></p>
<p>It would be great to see more detailed specific new actions and efforts as the current county work that has been already underway is a good start, however in order to make the needed changes required new innovative efforts are required. Cost share for residential solar, free tree plantings for county properties, and incentives to trade in fossil fuel burning cars and to incentivize EV charging stations in more locations to help build out the charging network to help facilitate the transition to carbon free transportation goals.</p>
<p>Key aspects of green infrastructure that I would like to see accelerated as top priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organics Recycling (Composting) expanded to all homes and apartment buildings as a city offering</li> <li>- Increased snow removal for pedestrian pathways to ensure travel by foot is possible for all in the winter</li> <li>- Bike paths and bike lanes being built, expanded upon, and connected to existing pathways/lanes</li> <li>- Public transit routes and rapid transit options expanded and made free to the public</li> </ul>
<p>It is a good plan, well thought out and urgently needed.</p>
<p>Hennepin County, It is great to see Hennepin County is at least working on a Climate Action Plan.</p> <p>One area of mention in this plan was in reference to Agriculture, more than once</p> <p>It mentioned supporting industrial commodity agriculture which to me indicates serious shortcomings with respect to your plan.</p> <p>One of the most critically important and most impactful ways to reverse climate change and sequester large amounts of carbon is with organic regenerative agriculture.</p> <p>We must(as a nation) move away from industrial agriculture which has destroyed the soil on which it operates. It has polluted and poisoned our aquifers, ground waters, lakes, streams etc. It has also poisoned and polluted our air. No government or politicians seems to have this knowledge or the interest, motivation or willingness to address it including our Federal and State Senators and Congressmen and Women.</p> <p>This is one of the single most important if not the most important method of addressing climate change and until</p>

it is approached with that in mind optimum and absolutely necessary changes will not be realized.

Sincerely,  
*Name redacted*

Glad to see mention of the sidewalk ice/thaw cycle on page 29, as this winter has shown this will be more common with climate change. I think we need to evaluate drainage in sidewalk or road reconstructions so there's somewhere for the melting snow to go rather than ice over. The promenade in Uptown along the greenway/apartments has a lot of little drains in the middle of sidewalks and is clearer than others, might serve as an example.

I'm thrilled to see a reduction of VMT goal rather than just electrification on page 41. We need denser, more walkable/bikeable communities where daily needs are easily accessible without a car. We might need cities and towns to revisit zoning for large grocery stores to try smaller, local shops that are walking distance to folks too.

I also think we need to visit some incentivization for folks to choose transit over driving, whether that's congestion pricing, tolls, parking, and increased transit speed for suburbs once we return to work. If driving a car is faster and *\*appears\** to be cheaper, folks will choose it every time.

I applaud the effort to make a Climate Action Plan. I applaud the acknowledgement that our climate is changing and will continue to change, even with our best efforts.

I just what to comment on one aspect of the plan in this statement, or it will get too long and be delayed.

Hennepin Co. has reduced the emissions of its own buildings and operations 15% in the 10 years since 2005. They hope to reduce emissions by another 15% of the the 2005 emissions in the next 10 years, before 2025. Then the goal is to reduce 13% every 5 years until 2050. It is great to set aspirational goals, and to study how to attain them. It is unwise to force investments to attain them, when they may not be realistically attainable.

Excel has the goal of no greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Science is real. There is no existing science or engineering for economically storing the area electric load for 12 hours or more. There are still nights, when wind and solar will not be available. Nuclear generated electricity could be available. Do you want the waste, radioactivity, and terrorism problems of nuclear? Until we have science for economical storage, this goal is aspirational.

To ask us to invest in using electricity, rather than natural gas, to heat buildings is asking us to invest in something to try to attain an aspirational goal, assuming that that electricity has very low carbon emissions, which may not be attained.

Figure S3 of the supplemental information for the MIT study of various cars [https://pubs.acs.org/doi/suppl/10.1021/acs.est.6b00177/suppl\\_file/es6b00177\\_si\\_001.pdf](https://pubs.acs.org/doi/suppl/10.1021/acs.est.6b00177/suppl_file/es6b00177_si_001.pdf) shows that replacement of the batteries in an electric car and considering the lifetime of a car as 7 years, rather than 14, pushes the gasoline combustion engine vehicles to lower cost compared to battery electric vehicles. This perhaps should alter the recommendation to switch the fleet to electric vehicles.

I agree with the strategy to promote electric vehicle infrastructure, or at least increase it. I think that the report's target metric of converting 20% of the county's light duty fleet vehicles to electric by the year 2030 is aggressive. I think that the hybrid vehicles could be skipped and lower emission gasoline combustion engine vehicles should be chosen, to avoid the complexity of the hybrids.

In all honesty I did a quick scan vs. a thorough reading but I feel my comments are valid. The biggest thing we can do, as citizens is convert our lawns to native species. All parks, open spaces that are property of MPLS need to be converted as well. All new developments MUST have green space. Plant more trees.

Recycling and Organics Recycling is something that everyone can do to do their part in helping with Climate Change. Why aren't those actions pushed more in behavior change as a stable option for all. Bringing more

<p>awareness and making them more available for individuals and businesses to participate in. Incentives can be provided to renters, homeowners, businesses, apartment complexes, and others for participating. Working with BIPOC communities that are behind the equity curve on behavioral change. Climate change affects BIPOC communities first and the hardest due to health disparities and social status. Recycling and Organics recycling is something that everyone can participate in to help our 1 earth before we don't have one.</p>
<p>I like the plan and aggressive targets</p>
<p>Reducing VMT is my number one desire and I think the hardest goal. People are so attached to their cars, the issue of Parking is still the #1 complaint here in Minneapolis. I hate it. Continue funding public transport and hope the culture shifts, so many are stuck in the 1980s. They are also 'afraid' of public transport (but not racist in any way, sure /s). Campaigns to show how fast and convenient public transit are could help counter fear mongering news reports about safety on the trains.</p>
<p>Thank you for Hennepin County's leadership on this important community issue. Well done and great actionable steps; however, one area needs a greater priority and better understand of its role.</p> <p>The area needing greater attention is - the role of natural resources in reducing climate change. Carbon sequestration is only mentioned at the end of the document, and not as a strategy to aid in decreasing climate change.</p> <p>Climate change is impacted by emissions and absorption. The human changes to our natural resources has significantly diminished the carbon sequestration ability and capacity of our environment. Failure to recognize and address this destruction will prevent us from being successful in addressing climate change, as well as addressing many other human health and wellness issues (as well as sustainable food production).</p> <p>Please the call for importance of natural resources in the County's plan.</p>
<p>I think that soil sequestration is an important way to address multiple climate issues such as air pollution, extreme heat, floods, droughts, and ecosystem threats.</p>
<p>I like the very clear target metrics in each section. I worry that they will be very difficult to attain, but I appreciate taking a bold stance on what needs to get done in order to best protect county residents and environment. There is a lot of work to do in the very near term, but it is achievable.</p> <p>One area that was not discussed is how the county will hold itself accountable to these goals and track progress. Will updates be provided to residents in a public forum, or will staff be tracking internally? Receiving regular updates on what is in progress, what has been achieved and what has encountered roadblocks will be very important to making sure the targets and goals are reached.</p>
<p>I am very heartened to see its focus on tree planting. As a resident of Minneapolis, I am mostly reliant on MPRB to do street tree plantings, and MPRB is operationally not able to scale it up much more. Having County resources dedicated to this task would be of huge benefit. I would like to have seen a bigger stress on reducing car use through investments in bike and ped facilities.</p>
<p>-Reduction goal: It is clear that the reduction goal of 80% by 2050 is not enough, even if it is based on the Next Generation Energy Act. We need to reach net-zero emission by 2050, therefore the Climate Action Plan of Hennepin should reflect this goal and so the strategies set on it. We are aware that much would be accomplish in the electricity sector with the proposed bill that request 100% carbon free electricity by 2040, however we still need to work on transformational actions in the transportation and building sectors to achieve a real decarbonization.</p> <p>- Strategies: Good strategies have been identified for much of the sectors both in the mitigation and adaptation arena, however there isn't a clear pathway of actions on how those strategies would be achieve. Additionally, there are not cost of those actions? It is important to have cost quantifications, because we need to know if the Hennepin County have money to implement them or do we need to look for finance option for its implementation.</p>
<p>Hennepin County must speed up its Net-zero goals in order to reach them before 2030 by doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandate that the county and municipalities immediately start transitioning all new public and private residential and commercial building construction and major renovations to some combination of electric space and water heating, ground- and/or air-source heat pumps, and away from oil and natural gas.</li> </ul>

- Adopt a similar mandate requiring installation of roof-top solar on all new buildings where feasible, in collaboration with the Xcel Solar Rewards program, alternatively with the Windsource and/or Renewable Connect programs.
- Partner with one or more municipalities to demonstrate using municipal water distribution and/or sewer collection infrastructure as the energy source for ground-source heat pump installation in new residential and commercial buildings.
- Mandate that City of Minneapolis require all new building construction and major renovations downtown must utilize the district heating and cooling infrastructure now in place and future expansions. Work with Ramsey County and City of St. Paul to do the same.
- Work with the State of Minnesota and the Metropolitan Council on broad implementation of all the above.

I appreciate that the plan appears to be data driven and goals have been set based on this data. It is also encouraging to see the amount of emphasis put on vulnerable communities.

An area that could be improved is specifying collaboration with local government units (LGUs). Specifically, several communities have created Energy Action Plans through Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy program or have already created their own Climate Action Plan. I believe it is a missed opportunity to not have the county work with communities either as they create these plans or after they have been created.

In addition, more details should be provided on how the county will work with and communicate with cities. Two of the strategy points (found on page 31) state "align land use, zoning, ordinance, and permitting activities with the realities of climate vulnerabilities and risks" and "dedicate land at the time of plat for climate change mitigation and stormwater facilities." Platting, zoning, and land use powers are held with individuals cities. Increased communication and collaboration with cities through regularly scheduled meetings, updates, city email list, presentations, assistance with building benchmarking (page 39), green initiative funding, etc. will be absolutely necessary to achieve several goals of these plans, but do not appear to be clearly outlined as a strategy of the plan.

LGUs are doing a lot of important work in the climate change field and it will be a missed opportunity if the county doesn't look to collaborate. Missing this opportunity could cause a duplication of efforts and create inefficiency.

I am a member of the Wayzata Energy & Environment Committee. I would like to see the CAP include a provision to develop partnerships with current and new cities participating in the county's business and multifamily energy benchmarking collaborative to accelerate energy efficiency gains and expand solar and E.V. charging to meet county-wide GHG goals.

Generally a very thorough plan but missing these items: 1) In addition to providing shelter from extreme heat and cold through cooling and heating centers, the County should also consider providing shelter during bad air quality days for residents at risk. 2) An issue for protecting vulnerable communities with equitable outcomes that was not mentioned is that recreational uses of lakes in the County are deteriorating as a result of warming temperatures, reduced period of ice cover, urban heat island, and more runoff from extreme rainfall. Closed beaches and fish advisories most impact those residents who lack other affordable options to recreate, stay cool, and obtain food. This issue goes beyond public health, safety, and preservation of natural areas to impact livability and equity.

This is a comprehensive plan. Missing are a few key opportunities:

- Prioritize pedestrians, bikes, transit in public right of ways. More needs to be done on this.
- Add support or prioritization for electrification in new construction. electric cooking appliances (i.e. induction), heat pumps, etc.
- Restrict teardowns of existing housing stock by increasing affordable housing buy-backs and/or supporting landlords that maintain existing housing stock at a good standard
- major effort to re-map for floods is needed, perhaps beyond what State DNR is doing. spot flooding from stormwater is a huge / emerging problem and mapping will help residents self-select whether the need insurance.
- incentives for municipalities increasing stormwater holding/ retention spots

In order to reduce vehicle miles traveled, the County needs to commit to not expanding travel lanes for County roads and reducing vehicle travel lanes on County Roads where they can to build infrastructure for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit instead. Any other focus on climate that doesn't seek to cap and reduce vehicle travel lanes on the County's biggest infrastructure is just pandering and not actually committed to reducing emissions.

Nicely presented, easy to read, good graphics. Good goals and strategies. It will be good to see the next step in specific actions, budgets, and timelines to implement the strategies. The partnership goal could be much more detailed. The county engaged with 80 different entities to develop this plan, but how will partnerships be developed and maintained to broaden the county's impact through collaboration and shared resources?

The goals of the plan are great, but the strategies to address forthcoming climate change are weak, vague and are generally things that are already being done. It is going to take significant and bold action to make an impact. The County is going to have to change what it is doing instead of just doing more of the same things that don't make much impact.

#### Buildings

\* The plan fails to acknowledge that Hennepin County provides free parking in lots and ramps inducing people to drive everywhere. In fact the County just spent \$11 million to help construct another parking ramp adjacent to the former Thrivent building in downtown Minneapolis. It would be cheaper over the long run to purchase transit passes for all employees and get rid of such parking facilities- particularly downtown.

\* There should be a goal to locate all County facilities along transit lines rather than making them accessible only by private automobile.

#### Transportation

\* The Hennepin County Transportation Department is incapable of constructing roadways that are comfortable for people walking and biking as their focus continues to be moving automobiles. The most dangerous streets in Minneapolis like Lyndale Ave, Lake St, Franklin Ave, Cedar Ave and Broadway Ave are awful places that are dangerous and uncomfortable outside of a vehicle. Suburban roadways like France Avenue, Bottineau Boulevard, Excelsior Boulevard, and Rocford Road are basically highways geared towards moving automobiles.

\* The planned transit network is inadequate to make a significant increase on ridership of buses and rail. Hennepin County should fund the build out of ABRT lines which have been shown to boost bus ridership by 30% at a fraction of the cost of LRT. However, County money goes into expensive highway BRT and LRT routes to unwalkable, car-oriented places.

\* Hennepin County should impose a moratorium on the construction of new roads and focus resources on maintaining and retrofitting existing roadways to become better places to walk, bike and use transit.

\* Too much money has been spent constructing park & ride lots rather than building transit oriented development on sites along LRT lines.

\* The County should identify a specific VMT reduction goal.

\* The County barely spends any resources making streets safe and comfortable for people walking outside of full reconstruction projects. There should be a fund to create bus only lanes, construct sidewalks and implement traffic calming.

Set bold, measurable goals. Net zero greenhouse gas emissions countywide by 2050. Reduce vehicle miles travelled by 20% county-wide by 2030.

Implement Living Streets in suburbs that were designed for autos rather than people. Thank you for transforming Shady Oak Road near the future Green Line extension. We gained sidewalks and can now cross the street safely without becoming a hood ornament! Continue expanding opportunities for people to walk, bike, and ride transit.

Weatherize homes to reduce energy burdens and natural gas use. Fact: Minnesotans will pay up to \$400 more for their February heating bills because of the spike in U.S. gas prices after a historic cold wave hit the South.

Actualize racial equity. Reduce waste with a goal of shutting down the HERC by 2030. As a suburbanite, I am motivated to recycle and compost organics so my North Side neighbors can breathe clean air.

Create a structure that supports climate action. It's easy to write an ambitious plan, much harder to operationalize

<p>it. Don't bury the environment in Public Works. Direct the County Administrator and department heads to implement the Climate Action Plan and hold them accountable to timelines and measurable outcomes.</p> <p>Lead the way to a more just and abundant future for people and planet. If Hennepin leads, other counties will follow.</p>
<p>The strategy "Reduce vehicle miles traveled in Hennepin County and throughout the region." is not specific enough to meet the climate need. The County must set a VMT reduction goal; otherwise, there is no way to measure progress. The goal should be at least 30% based on modeling from the Rocky Mountain Institute (<a href="https://rmi.org/coronavirus-and-the-fragility-of-auto-centric-cities/">https://rmi.org/coronavirus-and-the-fragility-of-auto-centric-cities/</a>). None of the activities listed in the strategy address the elephant in the room - road expansions. This is the primary driver of VMT. The listed activities will not matter if road expansions continue. The County must be astute with both its approach to land use and transportation to lesson sprawl, which we know is a major driver of climate change.</p>
<p>It is important that the goal of the Climate Action Plan reflect the science that has been discussed in the last years as well as the urgency of the problem we are facing. Therefore, the 2050 goal should be a Net-Zero emission goal. Most Strategies on the action plan are lacking clear actions and timeframe for the measures they listed, as well as responsible entities for their implementation. Once actions are defined, they should include its emissions reduction during the timeframe of the plan, so the County is able to monitor the reduction goal of each of them. There is no cost identified for any of the strategies as well as were does the budget to pay for its implementation is coming from.</p> <p>There is a lack of performance metrics for all the strategies. The report should include the need to present a biannual report the track and monitor if the strategies are on the right path to achieve the reductions needed to comply with the 2030, 2040 and 2050 goal.</p> <p>Specifically, in the transportation strategy, the VMT reduction should be more ambitious. In order to have a clear reduction of VMT we need to take people out of cars and motive them to use non -motorized transportation, therefore bike trail connectivity between cities needs to be improved (which is not identified on the Plan) by cross-collaboration between cities, that would help built the necessary infrastructure.</p>
<p>Great job!</p> <p>The next step is to make sure your construction projects have a line item budget number for sustainability. If you are reaching to net zero be prepared for 10% to 25% on top of your brick and mortar dollars to get sustainability in the project. You can't just state we need this project to be sustainable and then take \$\$\$ out of the program. It doesn't work! Fund sustainability! Please!</p>
<p>It's a good beginning, but I feel that more could be done to encourage solar panels and organics composting at multi-family housing, and incentives for employers to encourage bicycle commuting. A decentralized power grid based on solar/wind farms and batteries would also help to prevent outages as well as climate change.</p>
<p>Thank you for acknowledging that racism is a public health crisis, and that people of color are disproportionately affected by climate change. Please continue to think through all the ways that threads through all of the county's goals and actions.</p> <p>It's troubling that the section headed "protect... roads" doesn't mention that road use is part of the problem. I understand that there's a separate section on transportation, and that the intent of the "protect" section is something different. But these problems are intertwined, and we need to think of them that way.</p> <p>I would like to see more on public communication about the risks and causes of climate change, and the opportunities we have in responding to it. There's only so much the county can do as an organization without a fully informed and active citizenry.</p>
<p>Not enough financial incentives to encourage good behavior and discourage bad behavior; money makes things happen (compare how SUV sales decrease when gas prices are up and increase when gas prices are down)</p>

After retiring from twenty years' service at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, I recently relocated to Minneapolis and am a senior fellow at the UMN School of Public Health. I research climate change adaptation with specific focus on adaptation to protect against climate change health threats. In the course of researching a recently published article on this topic, I developed some familiarity with U.S. county and city climate action plans (CAPs). Comments on Health in the Draft CAP1. The plan's attention to climate change health threats is more extensive than is the case with many other jurisdictions' CAPs. This is impressive.2. Another strength of the plan is its recognition of the importance that social and policy determinants have for health status and the value in addressing those determinants as part of the county's approach to health-oriented climate change adaptation.3. It's concerning that the plan doesn't address whether the Hennepin County Health Department and Hennepin Healthcare have adequate capacity to fulfill their roles in addressing climate change health threats. Assuring that both these organizations have such capacity should, in my view, be a high priority.4. With respect to the bulleted actions that are listed under each strategy statement in the health section of the plan (pages 15 and 17):a. Most of the climate change health threats mentioned are linked to an action. However, the concern expressed in some detail about inadequate supply of cooling centers (on page 21) doesn't seem to have an associated action.b. The health-oriented actions are framed in relatively general terms. I recommend that additional detail be provided and that the relevant county offices maintain detailed reference materials to document the rationale used in selecting the listed action. These materials will have many uses, for example, in responding consistently to public and media questions about selection criteria, and in reassessing and revising actions over time.4. The Minnesota Department of Health's Climate and Health Program has been working on climate change adaptation for ten years and has developed valuable information and tools that could be helpful in formulating and implementing this section of the CAP. It seems that the plan has not benefitted from those resources; if this is so, I suggest inviting thoughts from Kristin Raab, the program director. General Comments1. The CAP lacks mechanisms to monitor the progress of its implementation and to ensure accountability for goal achievement--a number of other county and city CAPS include such mechanisms--for example:a. The "Protect and engage people" section has 20 actions but only 3 "target metrics", all related to the Green Jobs objective. Funding for implementation is mentioned only in that same objective.b. The plan as a whole has 124 actions but only 22 metrics.c. The plan doesn't include implementation timelines nor does it assign responsibility for implementation to specified county agencies.2. Greater clarity in terminology and organization of the plan will be helpful. As it stands, the reader has to infer the relationship between goals, strategies, objectives, and what I'm calling actions. This is intuitive to the authors but likely will not be familiar to many lay readers. Let me suggest that the final plan document contain a brief section that defines these elements and their conceptual and operational relationships.3. As with the health-oriented sections, the plan as a whole doesn't address the capacity of relevant county agencies to fulfill their roles as set out in the plan. This omission may be by design but capacity is critically important to successful climate change adaptation and should be addressed in the final CAP. I hope these comments are helpful and would be very happy to discuss in further detail.

*Contact information redacted*

The section on reducing VMT is a laudable goal, but how will all these buzzwords create actual change? Below are

"Advocate" for the buildout of transit: There's plenty of transit advocates in Hennepin County already. But what they really need is money. Why don't you just fund Arterial BRT?

"Advocate" for strategies to reduce travel demand: Good luck building new park-and-ride lots when we already have several thousand spaces and dozens of lots in the county, plenty of which will be permanently under capacity if remote work continues.

Road diets that reduce lane supply will disincentivize driving, therefore reducing travel demand and reducing carbon emissions. Just do that!!!

Minimize pollution by "leveraging additional technologies": Like what?? What does this even mean?? Just get the cars off the roads!!!

"Support increased and more efficient transit on county roadways": Well there's plenty of four-lane county arterials that are long overdue for a road diet and transit friendly makeover. Instead of just saying you support transit, how about fixing Lyndale Ave S so that it doesn't take a whole geological epoch to go from Lake St to downtown.

"Operationalize opportunities to reduce vehicle miles traveled": I'm sorry but what does operationalize opportunities even mean, I thought you guys were supposed to write everything in plain language.

I know this sounds really harsh and I truly appreciate the work you are doing to put climate front and center, but you have to understand I am really jaded by seeing governments put out action plan after action plan that are just packed with garbled visioning statements and nothing ever changes. I would love for you guys to actually take some meaningful action instead of patting yourself on the back with this plan and calling it a day.

- Glaciers were Already Retreating Before 1900
- Ice ages have been coming and going for eons.
- The last 20 years have shown zero warming (hence the switch to 'climate change').
- Man produces less than 1/2 of 1 percent of CO2 on the planet.
- It was warmer in the 15th century than it is now.
- The greatest warming in the 20th century was between 1935 and 1950.
- NASA confirms: Sea levels FALLING across the planet in 2016 and 2017.
- NASA Data: Earth Cooled by Half a Degree Celsius From '16-'18
- Scientists have been caught manipulating and hiding data.
- None, NONE, of their prior predictions have come true.
- In 1995 Al Gore said by 2005 Miami will be under water "due to Global warming". Miami is NOT underwater.
- In 2004, the Department of Defense released a report assuring the world Climate Change would destroy all of us by the year 2020. Nope!
- The highest record temperature ever reported was 136 degrees Fahrenheit in Libya in 1922. The record high temperature for the United States was 134 degrees Fahrenheit in Death Valley, California in 1913.
- Excavations in the Antarctic have shown vegetation use to cover the continent.
- If all the CO2 was removed from the atmosphere, we would die. Plants need CO2 to live and we need plants to live.

1. Goals to reduce county greenhouse gas emissions by 30% by 2025 and 80% by 2050 are not ambitious enough. The goals should be revised to 35% by 2025, 80% by 2035, and 100% by 2050.
2. The entire vehicle fleet should be converted to electric vehicles by 2035.
3. On p. 47, a goal should be added that there should be no net loss of forest land on county-administered land. A recent climate change report by The Nature Conservancy, Nature and Climate Solutions for Minnesota, states: "avoided forest conversion and avoided peatland conversion offer faster sequestration rates than any other practice - by nearly a factor of ten."
4. On p. 52, more emphasis needs to be placed on the importance of planting native trees and other native plants that are most likely to survive the stresses that will be imposed on them by future climate change, including increased frequency and intensity of droughts, floods, and wind events, increased insect and disease infestations, increased competition from invasive species, and increased impacts of urban development.

I think it is important to acknowledge the need for rapid, abrupt reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, not just a long-term tapering off. Carbon pollution is cumulative. Either a linear downward trend or, worse yet, relying on strategies that slowly build to more rapid emission reductions in future decades, would bake in irreversible, devastating consequences simply because of our near-term emissions during this decade.

Relying on changes to the vehicle fleet as a primary strategy to reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions is an example of a policy under which emission reductions build exponentially over time. If the goal was to get to net zero emissions in 2050 with the least possible disruption to the lifestyles of Hennepin county residents, that may be a good strategy. But that is not the goal. The goal is to avoid runaway, irreversible disruptions to global climate systems. The goal is to avoid mass extinction and ecosystem collapse. The goal is to avoid global societal catastrophe. Whether we achieve these goals will depend on how much greenhouse gases we emit \*along the way\* to net zero. If you plot emissions over time on a graph, what matters is the area under the curve. The easiest way to keep that area small enough--to keep our cumulative, historical emissions from surpassing that threshold beyond which we cannot recover--is for most emission reductions to happen now, in the near-term.



Changes to the vehicle fleet will help us ultimately reach net zero emissions. However, changes to the vehicle fleet cannot happen rapidly enough to play a major role in helping us avert the most serious, irreversible effects of climate change. If we want to achieve that goal, the real goal, we need a pause on driving. We cannot afford for driving rates to return to their pre-pandemic levels anytime soon. We cannot afford for county roads to carry the amount of traffic they are designed to handle. What Hennepin County faces is a sunk cost. Our county has made some bad investments in roadway capacity that we ultimately cannot utilize. We need to admit that. We need to focus on avoiding any more investments in maintaining or expanding roadway capacity, particularly during this decade while electric vehicles are still rare and the power grid still burns fossil fuels.

On the bright side, reducing roadway capacity opens the door to tremendous benefits to county residents. The county road outside my front door, East Hennepin Avenue in Minneapolis, was recently restriped from two lanes in each direction to one lane in each direction with a center turn lane and bike lanes on either side. Before these changes, I never would have guessed that anyone regularly crossed East Hennepin in the unmarked crosswalk in front of my house. Now I see people cross here every day. I think only needing to check for cars in a single lane coming from each direction is a primary driver of this change. That and the broader trend toward more biking and walking since the pandemic began. Let's build on this success. I hope that residents along other county roads soon will similarly see benefits of road diets. This is one, rare thing that lends itself easily to rapid implementation. We don't even need to wait for a repaving project or roadway reconstruction. We can and we should re-stripe every four-lane county road to a single lane in each direction now, this year, in 2021.

There are other, near-term, immediate policy changes our county could take this year to help jump-start the abrupt drop-off in driving that suppressing 2020-2030 greenhouse gas emissions will require. We could reduce speed limits on county roads within cities to make it easier to cross the street at unsignalized corners. We could invest in equipment and staff to clear snow and ice from county-owned bicycle and pedestrian facilities. We could stripe more and better bike lanes. We can add pedestrian-scale lighting. The most important steps are the ones that can happen now.

It was very thorough and I was glad to see the acknowledgement of the disproportionate impact of climate change on communities of color. At the end of the report it had a section for engaging residents to act on climate change but there should also have been a section on engaging businesses to act on climate change. They bear the largest responsibility to make a difference, with special emphasis on those that operate in 'sacrifice zones' that our most marginalized residents live in.

- there needs to be an equity statement up front. What vision or definition of equity is driving this plan? Is disparity reduction the same as disparity elimination?
- There's no mention of the way in which racial disparities, which leave communities of color disproportionately vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, are the product of a history of systemic racism. Without acknowledging this history, and the way in which it's legacy continues to shape systems today, how can you properly address it?
- How will you hold yourself accountable to disparity reduction? Are there quantitative goals you can attach to disparity reduction?
- The definition of a "vulnerable population," and the relationship between vulnerable populations and the disparities you aim to reduce, needs to be clarified and made clear at the beginning of the plan.
- Are all vulnerabilities the same? In what ways is it limiting or problematic to lump vulnerability into one flat variable? Are there more interesting and relevant policy and planning insights that would come from analyzing different types of vulnerabilities relative to different climate change-related threats? If you are going to leave vulnerability as a static variable, I think the plan is strengthened by including reflections on the limitations of this analytical framework. Some further thoughts/questions on the vulnerability framework:
  - it looks like you're using census tracts to define your vulnerability map. Census tracts are pretty large and can contain considerable variability in residents' access to the resources needed to respond to climate change. Is your approach strictly geographic, or are there times when particular populations might be targeted (e.g., by age, race, language, income, etc)?
  - I think there's something very important to the language that you use to describe populations. "Vulnerable" frames people as less than capable of responding to climate change-related threats, and doesn't connect that vulnerability to the broader systemic inequalities and failings of governments that produce it.

- How do communities understand their own vulnerabilities and resilience? How are their perspectives being centered?  
- what about unhoused people? How can you plan for a transient and extremely vulnerable population with a static map?

HC should be offering cost share to residents who want to add solar panels or other renewable energy to their homes.

I am very pleased that the plan addresses embodied carbon! I have a few suggestions:

1. On page 39, target metrics sidebar, change "lifecycle analysis" to "Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)" to align with standard industry terms. Similar comment on page 52 lower left corner.

2. Performing an LCA is good step towards reducing the embodied carbon, but it is no guarantee that an improvement will be made. I recommend the following more specific requirements (in order of least costly/least effective to most costly/most effective):

2a. Require Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) for all new building and major renovation projects, with a minimum scope of building structure and enclosure.

[This clarifies the scope of LCA required. The structure and envelope are typically responsible for the majority of embodied carbon in buildings, and this scope aligns with LEED v4.1 Building Life-Cycle Impact Reduction credits. Requiring an LCA might marginally increase the cost of design if design firms do not routinely incorporate this in their work].

2b. Require product-specific Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) for a minimum of 20 products from 5 different manufacturers for all new building and major renovation projects.

[Product-specific EPDs are required for designers to make more informed choices about lower embodied carbon materials, and more . Requiring EPDs might marginally increase the cost of materials in building projects if suppliers do not have them available and need to produce them.]

2c. [future provision] Require new building and major renovation projects to meet use-specific benchmarks established by xxxxx.

[This is not currently feasible, but in the future, it would be most effective to update this plan to require new building projects to meet certain embodied carbon benchmarks in terms of Global Warming Potential per square foot. There is an effort currently underway by SE2050 ([www.se2050.org](http://www.se2050.org)) to collect building data for the purpose of establishing benchmarks and setting target reductions for embodied carbon in structures,]

Overall, the plan seems acceptable but it is missing essential protections for birds and wildlife.

Please change this item on Page 17 to incorporate these changes:

- Mitigate the heat island effect, especially in areas with people most vulnerable to extreme heat, by supporting increased access to air conditioning, increasing the native tree canopy, and converting hardscape where possible to green infrastructure such as boulevard landscaping using native rain gardens and bioswales and green roofs.

A great way for the county to demonstrate commitment to addressing environmental racism would be to look at the ways in which county-owned roads such as Cedar Ave seriously lower quality of life in the Minneapolis neighborhoods that border them. I live near Cedar and crossing it on foot--even at intersections with stoplights--is frightening. It harms my quality of life and every time we complain to the city about it we are told there is nothing they can do because the county owns it. Could Hennepin County work with Minneapolis residents around traffic calming on roads such as Cedar? This would achieve better quality of life as well as reduced pollution, especially if some trips can be deterred from Cedar to a more appropriate road like 35W. Thank you for your consideration.

Additionally, the parts of the plan around storm water mitigation and reducing turfgrass are so critically important and I applaud their inclusion in the plan.

I was really pleased to see that reducing vehicle miles traveled is a strategy in this plan and I strongly support the metric of reducing vehicle miles traveled to year 2000 levels, or even more than that. I hope now that when the opportunities arise to put this plan into action, that there will be follow-through on this strategy. Hennepin County has several road reconstruction projects coming up, including a stretch of Lowry Avenue that includes my neighborhood and I really look forward to seeing how this plan influences the redesign of this street and others the county plans to reconstruct.

I also really like the strategies for waste and material reduction. In my dream world, the county would promote reduction, reuse and recycling to the extent where it would be possible to eventually rebuild HERC as an anaerobic digester for organics recycling and continuing to generate electricity and provide district energy.

To be effective the Hennepin Climate Action Plan goals and strategies need to elevate replacing our predominantly impervious turf grass with living ecosystems that eliminate the need for toxic chemicals and grow resilient ecosystems that support pollinators/insects and birds and other wildlife. The bottom line is that adding diverse natural vegetation is as important as emission reduction. It is even more significant to meet the long-term climate goals. In order to understand the need for a Climate Action Plan, it is important to recognize that the two drivers of damaging impacts of Climate Change are carbon in the atmosphere and intense storms. Moreover emerging science from soil health practices and research show that healthy natural resource systems can take CO2 from the atmosphere and cycle it into the ground for plants to take up. So Hennepin County could actually start reversing climate change if natural resources (healthy soil/ecosystems) are a priority for carbon sequestration in the open spaces in cities and parks. Additionally these same healthy ecosystems restore life to the soils and the microbes and living organisms there create pores that HOLD water as nature intended. In essence they sequester carbon reducing GHG in the atmosphere and hold water in the ground that would have been taken up feeding intense storms. Consequently the greater the percentage of soil organic matter beneath our feet, the more likely the soil is regenerated to absorb water and is functioning to cycle carbon into the ground. Also, this provides habitat for pollinators, birds and other wildlife. Using native plants that have evolved with the insects reduces maintenance and the need to extract ground water to sustain them. Implementing the state's renewable energy standard and passing clean car standards are critical to reaching climate change goals as is the work of Green Step Cities to reduce their carbon footprint also. These programs are in place and have momentum. However please do not overlook the significant ability to meet long-term climate goals by strategically adding diverse natural vegetation that can reduce flooding, allow the land to function again holding water and supporting the web of life on which we depend.

Hennepin County should invest in the development and deployment of Personal Rapid Transit, the only transportation mode that can get people out of their cars. We have experts right here (like University of Minnesota Prof. Emeritus (*name redacted*)). Hennepin County should make compost available to residents. We should dig up unused concrete and plant native perennials. Any new concrete should be made of hemp or other non-destructive materials. Office buildings downtown should turn off their lights at night and on weekends. (They could install motion-detector lights or, better, hire more attendants.) We should ban plastic bags and styrofoam.

Commit to a 30% Vehicle Miles Traveled reduction target, consistent with the Rocky Mountain Institute's research on VMT reduction needs  
Improve transit today with county dollars

The chart "Components to meet greenhouse gas reduction goals" appears too exact given we don't know what we don't know.

In the case of reducing Vehicle Mile Traveled, tactics such as sidewalk enhancements, bike lanes, boulevard trees, availability of nearby shops, transit frequency and low costs are known to have an impact. However, we need to learn how these tactics work in Minnesota? How do combinations of these tactics effect Vehicle Miles Traveled? How does this change through Minnesota's seasons?

I fear the plan underestimates the difficulties in achieving the reduced Vehicle Mile Traveled, Residential Efficiency, and Business Efficiency goals.

where is the section on Henn Cty helping to address Mississippi River issues?

WONDERFUL document. Hits most everything.

Page 3 2nd to last paragraph is disjointed in content. But good info. P. 12 - talk as about extreme heat, but in MN extreme temperatures are the problem - both hot and cold.

Little reference to hidden costs of climate change in insurance, health care expenditures, FEMA events, car repairs, state economic losses as an agricultural state, infrastructure repairs having to do with climate (I35 W from heat, buckling roads, potholes etc.)

The term "stakeholders" refers to white settlers who were given stakes to mark their claim on Indian land. We should seek another term. We all use it, but it is hurtful.

Encourage on-time completion of light rail.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions/fossil fuels use is one part of transit. We must make ridership less miserable by providing a place to stand at the very least, a place to sit, shelters etc. Ice berms, bus stops in the weeks or mud does nothing to increase ridership. This isn't California. People need a place to stand in bad weather, at minimum - it is so miserable to wait for buses in weather.

The delay in completing SWLRT must not be allowed to happen.

Surprised no talk of roundabouts to reduce signaled intersections and keep traffic flowing.

Changing the color of payment from blacktop to something lighter to reduce heat islands also surprised it wasn't mentioned.

Talk of native plants and pollinator lawns is muted for county land - talk it up. Focus was on residential lawns.

Very little reference to green roofs and walls. Disappointing.

P.27 perhaps think about what roofing materials are used for subsidized roof repairs. in San Antonio they started paying for only white roofs to reduce the heat and it reduced temperature in homes and urban heat island by a lot in summer - and reduced stress on the grid significantly. Was a more useful repair than foundations for low income residents in that part of the country (Not practical for snowy roofs in Minnesota but must be a solution to reduce heat in summer and hold in heat in winter - mood ring roof!???)

P. 47 How can we make organic composting easier for residents - esp multi family buildings?

P.31 leachate at landfills, especially during rain events is a huge problem including PFAS leaching and other toxins. Document is somewhat silent on that.

P.37 Need to fix packaging production at the source - hold producers accountable to pay for what we are cleaning up.

P38 love this page. Also affordable housing building materials are cheap and clearly not meant to last. We need those old brick building that last forever. And recycling the materials.

P. 39 YAY Stretch codes! hard for municipalities to implement piecemeal so like AT LEAST a county approach.

Spell out diversifying tree species in boulevards and in cities in general to avoid mono cultures that get wiped out with pests like Dutch Elm and EAB. That goes for all plant species.

Wildlife and pollinator corridors - the natural world is interconnected.

Mnnetonka has 100 applicants for our new Sustainability Commission. Put both the commission and the other 92 people to work on all these wonderful goals as ambassadors, educators, implementers, collaborators!

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Make the buses free.

Clean up the buses and make them safe.

Provide housing to the homeless so they don't have to sleep on the buses.

Free, clean buses will reduce car pollution dramatically!

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Our community needs more open spaces, more walking places that are safe--still hazardous to cross many streets, for example, Dale. More places for bicycles, and better bicycle and walking connecting to buses and LRT. We need fewer cars on streets as they are unsafe (cars kill bicyclists and pedestrians), create unsightly parking messes (and these are safety issues too), foul the air, are expensive to maintain, roads are expensive to maintain for them. We endorse the streets for people not for cars. Please help us reclaim a safe and healthy city from cars.

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As a county resident, it is important to me that Hennepin County commit to a 30% Vehicle Miles Traveled reduction target, consistent with the Rocky Mountain Institute's research on VMT reduction needs. Also, I ask you to vote to improve transit today with county dollars. Thank You

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Please include in the plan a commitment to a 30% Vehicle Miles Traveled reduction target, consistent with the Rocky Mountain Institute's research on VMT reduction needs, and direct the county to improve transit today with county dollars.

<p>I applaud the county for creating a Climate Action Plan. I would like it to go even further to reduce emissions. Here are suggestions for the transportation section ("Strategy: Reduce vehicle miles traveled in Hennepin County and throughout the region")- Decrease the number of lanes on County streets to decrease driving and therefore carbon AND particulate pollution (tire dust, brake dust, even from EVs), while providing dedicated space for biking, walking, and transit.- Create a "fix it first" policy for roadways so roads are repaired instead of expanded. This saves money and decreases driving emissions that would be created through induced demand when new lanes are created.- Remove the "expanding park-and-ride lots" strategy. We must move beyond driving to fight climate change, and park and rides waste money that could be spend on transit dependent riders.</p>
<p>The County should focus on reducing car lane miles. Hennepin County roads are often excessively wide, which encourages driving while inflicting pollution (both green house gases and particulate matter) on neighbors. The County seems more sensitive to this issue in wealthier, less diverse neighborhoods than in less wealthy, more diverse neighborhoods. For example, in my neighborhood, Lowry Ave NE is two lanes east of Central Ave NE (a more affluent area), but is four lanes west of Central Ave NE, even though traffic studies show only a marginal difference (less than 5%) in vehicle traffic on these two parts of the street. This and similar unequal treatment of neighborhoods magnifies inequitable outcomes in the County.</p>
<p>I'm glad to see that the county is taking climate change seriously, but this plan should go farther. Transportation is still the largest driver of greenhouse gas emissions and most of this comes from private automobiles. This plan should remove expanded park and rides, it should explicitly state that reducing car lane miles is a goal, and it should call for a fixing existing automobile infrastructure before considering expanding it. Thank you, I'm excited to see Hennepin County become a leader in fighting against climate disaster!</p>
<p>Implement "fix it first" policy for roadways. Expanding instead of fixing roads wastes money and induces more driving (and emissions). Remove "expand park and rides" from the plan. Park and rides subsidize driving and waste money that could be spent on transit dependent users. Add "reduce car lane miles" to the plan</p>
<p>Add "reduce car lane miles" to the plan</p>
<p>Guarantee that refrigerators are disposed of correctly and that refrigeration is working properly in grocery and other stores. Inspections are critical!!! Paul Hawken's (et al.) analysis in Drawdown concludes it is the first priority in curbing Greenhouse Gas emissions.</p>
<p>I think the plan does not go nearly far enough in moving Hennepin County away from auto-centric transport and development policy. I am in favor of ALL of the suggestions contained at this link. I expect the Climate Action Team to think seriously about the emergency situation that the Climate is in, and act accordingly.</p> <p><a href="https://moveminneapolis.org/green-transportation-minneapolis/your-input-on-hennepin-co-climate-change-action-plan/">https://moveminneapolis.org/green-transportation-minneapolis/your-input-on-hennepin-co-climate-change-action-plan/</a></p>
<p>Thank you for tackling this critical problem. I appreciate the thought and energy that went into this plan.. Too bad that it is for Hennepin County only, for in reality, we must all make changes. One thing that I would like to add, which is frequently overlooked, is the proliferation of plastic in our environment. We seem to forget that plastic is also a petroleum product that infiltrates our environment in both obvious and insidious ways. It takes vast amounts of energy to extract and produce, and so far, it does not disintegrate. It threatens life in all aquatic habitats. <a href="https://www.condorferries.co.uk/plastic-in-the-ocean-statistics#:~:text=There%20is%20now%205.25%20trillion,their%20way%20into%20our%20oceans.">https://www.condorferries.co.uk/plastic-in-the-ocean-statistics#:~:text=There%20is%20now%205.25%20trillion,their%20way%20into%20our%20oceans.</a></p> <p>And now is being studied in soil habitats as well. <a href="https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/acs.est.9b03304">https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/acs.est.9b03304</a>.</p> <p>Plastic has also been linked to cancer. Plastics contain compounds known as xenoestrogens that mimic the effects of estrogen in the body, and not in a healthy way. <a href="https://www.breastcancer.org/risk/factors/plastic">https://www.breastcancer.org/risk/factors/plastic</a></p> <p>Plastics not recycled are burned in the Minneapolis incinerator which releases harmful chemicals, and more noticeably for the north side, where many African Americans reside, compounding health disparities for people of color. <a href="https://www.no-burn.org/burning-plastic-incineration-causes-air-pollution-dioxin-emissions-cost-overruns/">https://www.no-burn.org/burning-plastic-incineration-causes-air-pollution-dioxin-emissions-cost-overruns/</a></p> <p>Last year the City of Minneapolis attempted to eliminate the use of single use plastic bags; that measure was later</p>

abandoned. "Reduce" is the first rule of conservation. More can be done to encourage residents to demands for non-plastic options and to help move industry in a greener direction.

Another concern I have is the use of lawn and garden pesticides. I realize that this is out of the jurisdiction of the county, but it does add to the larger environmental consideration. Although the Climate Plan does mention reduced use of pesticides, which is good, it is not enough to impact the overall use. And unfortunately, wild animals and pollinators cannot read the caution signs placed in affected yards. Please be reminded that pesticides are another petroleum distillate product. Pesticides do not stay on the land onto which they are spread, they evaporate into the air, and are inhaled; they run off onto adjacent properties where they can be absorbed into tree and plant systems, and into the sewer system and reach our lakes, rivers, and water supplies. Ingestion of pesticides can affect human health. <http://www.pesticidereform.org/pesticides-human-health/>

Thank you for considering my concerns, and I hope we as a culture can go forward.

Respectfully,  
(Name redacted)

In healthcare, the Hippocratic oath states that medical providers should "do no harm." A similar approach should be taken with something that is the direct purview of the County: road and lane expansions. Expansions only serve to induce demand, drive sprawl, and make it increasingly difficult to provide cost effective transit service. To do no more harm and to meet our climate goals, we must stop roadway expansions immediately. This does not mean that roads should not be maintained.

There is a lot to like about this plan but there things where Hennepin County should go further. We have to get serious about climate change and we need to get to zero emissions as soon as possible (ideally before 2050 but certainly by then). The county would be best served by offering flexible work schedules and remote work options to employees this year. That would make county jobs even more attractive and help retain more people. In addition county facilities should be easily accessible to folks using the bus, lightrail or by bike.

General - the action plan needs to more clearly address the need to shift away from motor vehicles, particularly single occupancy vehicles, particularly for short trips of a two miles or less.

General - the county needs to clearly state a priority to design roadways for transit, walking and biking. Aside from climate harm caused by designing roadways exclusively for motorized vehicles in the past there has also been long term harm to community and individual health and welfare. The county needs to abandon level of service (LOS) for vehicles when making roadway decisions. Often LOS comes at the expense of roadways that accommodate greener modes of travel and LOS comes at the expense of roadway safety. This is an outdated and harmful metric by which to base roadway decisions on. Roadways and travel decisions are a major area where the county has a lot of leverage to make positive changes from a climate perspective. Visionary and dramatic action is needed to reduce reliance on single occupancy vehicles in favor of cleaner and safer modes of travel.

General - green stormwater infrastructure should be implemented with all roadway reconstruction projects. Often this is considered but then abandoned because no agency will step forward to maintain the infrastructure. Proper funding for maintenance must also be allocated.

General - County commissioners often put forward visionary documents like the climate action plan - see also the complete streets policy, bike plan, ped plan, etc. - but then county staff at the leadership level and below do not fully implement the goals and actions from these visionary documents. Staff leadership need to be held accountable for fully implementing the goals of this plan and if they are unable or unwilling to do so they should be replaced with more effective leadership. The county cannot afford to go slow, climate change is an existential crisis that must be met head on by bold leadership.

Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities - Strategy: Reduce vehicle miles traveled in Hennepin County and throughout the region. - I recommend adding a strategy to remove level of service as a roadway operations and design decision making metric. Because Level of Service only rewards the movement of motor vehicles, it promotes dangerous, high-speed streets and sprawling land use. Instead of using

<p>level of service adopt performance measures based on expressed community values as well as the specifics of the project at hand.</p>
<p>Moved here in August 2019 and the access to public transit and safe dedicated bike and pedestrian paths blew me away. Since living here, I've realized there's still so much work to do. We desperately need more protected bike lanes and more streets reclaimed for pedestrians, to make the city somewhere people want to be instead of needing to pass through. I would strongly oppose any propositions for expanding driving lanes or car capacity. The sustainability of our community depends on accessible and reliable public transit.</p> <p>I can't wait for the green line expansion to be finished, I have a stop being built across the street from my current apartment and have considered staying in this building longer just to have easy access to the light rail once it's complete. I ride the 17 bus line into and out of downtown Minneapolis 3+ times a week. I really look forward to the day I never have to drive anywhere in or around the city again.</p>
<p>1. Plan should include more and improved bus shelters 2. prioritize deadly county owned streets 4-3 lane conversions and include pedestrian, bike, and transit improvements. Dedicate space to vulnerable users. 3. Change your goal 80% reduction by 2035 (not 80% reduction by 2050) and 100% net zero emissions by 2050 4. Update completes streets policy to center most vulnerable users 5. Get rid of giving priority to level of service (LOS) focus on safety of all users this centers driver/cars only and makes it more dangerous for all users including drivers especially for those of use that live in dense neighborhoods. I'm terrified crossing all county owned streets. 6. Prioritize dense development patterns where residents can walk, bike and take transit to meet their basic needs 7. The plan should direct that new or relocated County facilities must be easily accessible by bicycle and transit service according to Metro Transit's high-frequency network map. 8. Implement "fix it first" policy for roadways 9. Remove "expand park and rides" from the plan 10. "reduce car lane miles" to the plan 11. The County should commit to implementing flexible work schedules, not just reassessing them (pg. 51).</p>
<p>Overall, very well researched and presented. As a Board Manager for a metro watershed district, I know there needs to be more integration of soil health in not just agricultural land, but also in urban areas if we are to meet carbon sequestration goals. Urban areas of grass are still nothing more than green concrete, according to the research. That means building projects and resident's properties need something like the City of Eagan has implemented. Please contact (<i>personal information redacted</i>) He can provide you with a presentation of the topic, research, and City of Eagan code as a template.</p> <p>And thank you for finally addressing this need: time is running out, and we MUST do everything we can to remain viable on this planet.</p>
<p>Reduce car lane miles. Remove park and rides, they're wasteful and underused. Focus on transit dependent areas. Stop expanding roadways.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hennepin County's goal of an 80% reduction by 2050 is not nearly aggressive enough to meet the challenges posed by climate change. The goal should be amended to achieve an 80% reduction by 2035 and 100% net zero emissions by 2050.</li> <li>- The plan should direct that new or relocated County facilities must be easily accessible by bicycle and transit service according to Metro Transit's high-frequency network map. Investment in transit infrastructure and greater accessibility has to be mirrored by ready accessibility to county facilities.</li> <li>- Implement "fix it first" policy for roadways. Expanding instead of fixing roads wastes money by inducing more driving, which will continue driving up emissions and pollution throughout the county.</li> <li>- Remove "expand park and rides" from the plan. Park and rides subsidize and encourage driving instead of investing in comprehensive and widely accessible public transit.</li> <li>- Add "reduce car lane miles" to the plan.</li> </ul> <p>The county has plenty of wide, high traffic streets, which encourage driving while contributing to massive emissions pollution. Money would be better spent investing in truly clean and accessible public transit.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hennepin County's goal of an 80% reduction by 2050 is not nearly aggressive enough to meet the challenges posed by climate change. The goal should be amended to achieve an 80% reduction by 2035 and 100% net zero emissions by 2050.</li> </ul>

- The plan should direct that new or relocated County facilities must be easily accessible by bicycle and transit service according to Metro Transit's high-frequency network map. Investment in transit infrastructure and greater accessibility has to be mirrored by ready accessibility to county facilities.

- Implement "fix it first" policy for roadways. Expanding instead of fixing roads wastes money by inducing more driving, which will continue driving up emissions and pollution throughout the county.

- Remove "expand park and rides" from the plan. Park and rides subsidize and encourage driving instead of investing in comprehensive and widely accessible public transit.

- Add "reduce car lane miles" to the plan.

The county has plenty of wide, high traffic streets, which encourage driving while contributing to massive emissions pollution. Money would be better spent investing in truly clean public transit.

- Hennepin County's goal of an 80% reduction by 2050 is not nearly aggressive enough to meet the challenges posed by climate change. The goal should be amended to achieve an 80% reduction by 2035 and 100% net zero emissions by 2050.

- The plan should direct that new or relocated County facilities must be easily accessible by bicycle and transit service according to Metro Transit's high-frequency network map. Investment in transit infrastructure and greater accessibility has to be mirrored by ready accessibility to county facilities.

- Implement "fix it first" policy for roadways. Expanding instead of fixing roads wastes money by inducing more driving, which will continue driving up emissions and pollution throughout the county.

- Remove "expand park and rides" from the plan. Park and rides subsidize and encourage driving instead of investing in comprehensive and widely accessible public transit.

- Add "reduce car lane miles" to the plan.

The county has plenty of wide, high traffic streets, which encourage driving while contributing to massive emissions pollution. Money would be better spent investing in truly clean public transit.

Thank you for putting together this plan and thank you in advance for taking action. My two items of feedback are:

Go fast. My preference is zero emissions by 2050, even if I had to pay more taxes.

Is it in scope to work with businesses in some way to assess their climate plans and nudge them toward net zero? The private sector emits a lot and, example, creating incentives to operate on a net zero basis or build the products and services needed to get there can be a very strong lever.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the plan. Overall, I am pleased by the plan and encourage you to implement it fully and completely. Strengthening our ability to be resilient against climate change with reduce the economic impacts and individual suffering residents will face in coming years.

It's critical to reduce the impact of climate change within Hennepin county by taking strong action to stop contributing to climate change.

The plan has several goals/objectives/strategies related to preserving/increasing "natural" green space, which I support and encourage you to strengthen. Hennepin county should aim to increase the density of places where people live and maintain/develop LARGE swaths of undeveloped land. Preserving natural green space where it already exists and reclaiming land for prairie and trees is critical to keeping spaces cooler (reducing heat island effect) and providing a sink for carbon, as well as helping control effects of heavy precipitation. I would ask that protecting and restoring prairie, wetlands, streams, and forest land be a priority. With this, please institute



programs to buy agricultural land that is being put up for sale and converting it back into a wild state instead of being used for residential/commercial development. Please provide home and business owners incentives to convert their property away from turfgrass into a more natural ground cover (native plants/trees) and halt the planting of turfgrass on county property, converting these areas to ground cover that better sequesters carbon and doesn't require the use of pesticides/fertilizers.

Please provide funding for small, local, independently owned farms to produce crops/livestock with minimal petrochemical usage, using techniques that are better for the environment.

Please accelerate plans for increasing the energy efficiency of county owned, managed, and utilized buildings and vehicles.

I also strongly support the aspects related to transit/biking/walking. Please move timetables faster for expanding bus rapid transit and light rail throughout the county (and the rest of the metro through the Met Council). In addition, please advocate to the state and federal partners for reconfiguring of 94 to include bus-only lanes, reducing the number of passenger vehicle travel lanes. Throughout the county, maintain or reduce the number of travel lanes and prioritize spaces for safe and efficient movement of people through transit and by bicycle/foot. Make transit and bicycle safer and more appealing than driving a personal vehicle.

Consult and partner with the Indigenous communities who are the first people who lived in what's now Hennepin county to inform implementation of the plan.

Ensure that an equity lens (race, immigration status, income, urbanicity) is used to be sure that all residents of the county benefit equitably from positive changes made at the community and neighborhood level.

At the county level, please cement strong policies and climate-friendly systems into operations.

Goal: Enhance public safety

p. 27 Objective: Residents, businesses, and organizations understand and are prepared to respond to the impacts of climate change

Please revise this item as noted: • Educate residents on the importance of trees and mitigate the heat island effect by increasing the native tree canopy and converting hardscape where possible to green infrastructure such as boulevard landscaping using native rain gardens and bioswales and green roofs.

Goal: Protect building sites, roads, infrastructure, and natural resources

p. 29 Objective: Climate risks and impacts to county buildings and infrastructure are assessed and mitigated

Please add this item: • Apply the Minnesota Sustainable Building Guidelines (B3 Guidelines) to all new buildings and major building renovations."

Please change these items as noted:

- Alter site development performance standards and design guidelines for rights-of-way and other county properties to reduce impervious surfaces and prioritize green infrastructure, such as native trees, boulevard landscaping using rain gardens and bioswales, tree trenches, and detention tactics. Adjust county policy to address long-term maintenance needs of green infrastructure assets.
- Design capital projects to projected mid-century rain events and incorporate landslide hazard reduction approaches, where applicable, including native vegetation to prevent erosion.

p. 31 Objective: Risks and impacts from increased precipitation, flooding, and landslides are reduced

Please change this item as noted:

- Reduce impervious surfaces, use green infrastructure, and reuse stormwater for irrigation and design landscapes using native plants that don't require irrigation.

p. 32 Green infrastructure

Objective: The county employs green and natural infrastructure, including trees, plants, and soil, to build resiliency, especially in areas at higher risks for localized flooding and extreme heat

Please change these items as noted:

- Expand the urban forest canopy by preserving mature trees, planting more native trees, and addressing barriers associated with maintenance.
- Set goals to maintain or increase native tree canopy cover on each county property to mitigate for climate change, then execute a plan to plant and maintain trees to reach those goals.

pp. 34-35 Please change the objective to: Natural areas and open spaces are functional and biodiverse  
Please add this item: • Apply the Minnesota Sustainable Building Guidelines (B3 Guidelines), Site and Water Guidelines, to all natural areas and open spaces.

Please change these items as noted:

- Protect, restore, and connect natural areas, including streams, wetlands, floodplains, prairies, savannas, and forests, with a focus on supporting biodiversity and providing habitat and habitat corridors for species that alter their range in response to climate change.
- Continue efforts to preserve and increase natural areas including bird and other wildlife habitat through conservation easements.
- Create pathways for residents and partners to protect natural areas and other open spaces that should be preserved for the ecosystem services they provide, such as flood mitigation, stormwater retention and management, bird and other wildlife protection, support for biodiversity, local food production, carbon sequestration, and nature-based recreation.
- Conduct education and outreach that helps current and future agricultural producers and their partners understand both the need for and financial benefit of building climate change resiliency including protection and enhancement of habitat for pollinators, birds and other wildlife into their farming operations and the agricultural economy.

Target metrics

Please add these items:

- Develop policies and practices for protecting and enhancing bird and other wildlife habitat, including wildlife corridors, such as the Mississippi River, Chain of Lakes, and Minnehaha Creek.
- Require that all new buildings maximize infiltration and result in no net increase in runoff.

p. 36 Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities

p. 37 Buildings and energy use

The county has a history of leading collaborative efforts to improve energy efficiency and sustainability of buildings. Recognizing the importance of energy efficiency in building design and operation, the county initiated a collaborative effort that resulted in the creation of the Minnesota Sustainable Design Guide in 1996. This guide was a precursor to the current Minnesota Sustainable Building Guidelines (B3 guidelines) that are now widely used by state and local agencies to meet sustainability goals for new building design and building renovations.

p. 38 Objective: Greenhouse gas emissions associated with buildings and energy use are reduced to meet the state's Next Generation Energy Act and county emission goals

Please change this strategy as noted: Strategy: Reduce climate impacts of buildings through innovative and efficient design, including the use of climate-friendly and bird friendly material and lighting choices.

Please change this item as noted:

– Use lifecycle analysis for selecting climate-friendly and bird-safe building materials and furnishings for all county facilities.

p. 43 Strategy: Use transportation investments to support broader county goals including reducing disparities, improving health, enhancing livability, and growing the economy

Please change these items as noted:

- Create healthy and livable communities by including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities as well as green boulevards and native vegetation and native tree canopies in roadway projects.
- Strengthen the connection between land use planning and transportation to promote orderly growth and development. (What does this strategy mean?)

p. 47 Carbon sequestration on county-owned properties

Objective: The county sequesters carbon on county-owned property, including along county road rights-of-way

and tax-forfeit properties.

Please change these items as noted:

- Prioritize native trees and native plants over turfgrass in landscape designs on new projects.
- Convert from turfgrass to other native landscape types where appropriate to improve carbon sequestration.

p. 52 Build and maintain green infrastructure and sequester carbon on all county-owned property

Please change these items as noted:

- Convert turfgrass to native plants that sequester carbon, where appropriate.
- Preserve mature trees, plant more native trees and plants, and address maintenance issues.
- Convert hardscape where possible into pervious pavement or green infrastructure using native plants.
- Pursue site development performance standards that include green infrastructure such as boulevard landscaping using native rain gardens and bioswales and green roofs.

Please revise the draft plan in order to protect birds and other wildlife throughout the county. All of Hennepin County lies in the Mississippi Flyway, a major migratory corridor used by hundreds of species and millions of birds twice a year on their epic journeys to and from their breeding grounds.

Bird populations are dramatically declining; a recent study showed that more than one in four birds has disappeared in the last 50 years. Researchers “were astounded by this net loss across all birds on our continent, the loss of billions of birds.” Birds are further threatened by climate change. A National Audubon study found that two-thirds of North American birds are at risk of extinction from global temperature rise.

The Hennepin County CAP can help address the primary threats to birds and other wildlife: habitat loss, light pollution, and collisions with glass, which will protect biodiversity and ecological function for all animals, including humans.

1) Habitat loss: Please specify NATIVE trees and plants throughout the plan, and PRIORITIZE the protection of existing habitat and the creation of new habitat.

Non-native trees and plants do not provide food sources for insects and caterpillars that birds need to survive, because animals have not evolved with those non-native trees and plants. Conventional landscaping techniques that rely on non-native trees and plants displace native vegetation needed by wildlife. By continuing to promote those techniques, humans are creating food and habitat deserts for birds and other wildlife.

2) Light pollution: Please require bird-safe lighting on buildings and infrastructure, and compliance with International Dark Sky guidelines and Audubon's LightsOut program.

In 2019, the Twin Cities was named one of the worst regions in the country for migrating birds, because of the light pollution in the Mississippi Flyway. Light can confuse and disorient birds. Using bird-safe lighting and complying with best practices to reduce light pollution also saves a lot of energy.

3) Collisions with glass: Please require bird-safe glass and other building materials.

Up to one BILLION birds are killed each year by collisions with glass. Bird-safe glass also saves energy.

The county has a history of leading collaborative efforts to improve energy efficiency and sustainability of buildings. Recognizing the importance of energy efficiency in building design and operation, the county initiated a collaborative effort that resulted in the creation of the Minnesota Sustainable Design Guide in 1996. This guide was a precursor to the current Minnesota Sustainable Building Guidelines (B3 guidelines) that are now widely used by state and local agencies to meet sustainability goals for new building design and building renovations.

Please apply the Minnesota Sustainable Building Guidelines (B3 Guidelines), Site and Water Guidelines throughout the Hennepin County Climate Action Plan.

Representatives of a coalition of local bird and wildlife conservation groups (including the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis) would like to discuss these and other ways that the Plan can protect biodiversity and ecological function. Please contact (*personal information redacted*) to confirm you received this feedback and whether we can meet. Thank you.

We need to commit to a 30% reduction of vehicle miles traveled to be in line with the Rocky Mountain Institute's study of VMT needs.

Also, fund transit projects today using county dollars!!

Comments on Draft Hennepin County Climate Action Plan  
Submitted by *(Name and address redacted)*

As a long-term board member of Green Roofs for Health Cities ([www.greenroofs.org](http://www.greenroofs.org)), the North American trade association for the Green Infrastructure (GI) industry, and as a co-founder of Green Infrastructure Foundation ([www.greeninfrastructurefoundation.org](http://www.greeninfrastructurefoundation.org)), I have followed with interest the County's Climate Action Plan and have commented during its development. I applaud Hennepin County for being one of the first public agencies in Minnesota to so explicitly identify Green Infrastructure as an important tool for mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change in our community.

Locally, I have been part of developing one of the first green roofs in Minneapolis at the Phillips Eco-Enterprise Center in the Phillips neighborhood (now the Greenway building), and providing technical and financial analysis to green roofs at the Target Center and Central Library on the Nicollet Mall. These local projects, and the many projects across the country and around the world, have shown the multiple water, air, energy, habitat and property value benefits of green infrastructure. GI restores some of the natural hydrology to urban landscapes for stormwater, and reduces urban heat islands and conserves energy through evapo-transpiration and shading. The rough surfaces of leafy vegetation capture fine particulates in the air and biophilic design with GI speeds healing, elevates moods, and enhances cognitive processes.

My comments are focused on two specific suggestions for green infrastructure: 1.) STEM learning, skills training and career pathways for students and young adults; and 2.) Incentives for broader adoption of GI beyond county buildings and property.

**Workforce Development.** Green infrastructure teaches plant and soil science, hydrology, and requires skills in civil engineering for design. It taps into the interest of young people in green and natural systems as part of STEM learning activities. There are a handful of local organizations that offer informal training and work opportunities in GI that can be expanded. To implement GI strategies at-scale in the metro region will need sustained investments in parallel workforce strategies and skills training. Hennepin County can allocate some of its youth education funding and convene the partnerships to build this capacity for training, develop curricula and identify career pathways or connections to academic degrees. Training programs and career paths must be highly accessible to under-served communities with larger BIPOC populations, which will add equity components to the investments and jobs created from green infrastructure.

**Green Infrastructure Incentives.** Public agencies already spend a large amount on the development and maintenance of water and other infrastructure systems. Most of this funding goes to "gray infrastructure" systems such as the large, below-ground stormwater tunnel the City of Minneapolis is designing this year. More current funding needs to be reallocated to green infrastructure. Infrastructure planning should be required to consider green infrastructure alternatives to conventional. Incentives to implement GI on private properties will transferring some of the costs of building and maintaining stormwater management from public budgets, paid for with taxes and fees, to thousands of private budgets. A decentralized system of GI, at threshold levels, will add resiliency in the event of major rain events, and retain more rainfall during droughts. Reducing budgets over time for stormwater management and the additional resiliency and environmental benefits of green infrastructure warrants direct incentives and stronger regulatory requirements. Philadelphia, New York City, Denver, Portland, San Francisco and other progressive urban centers have specific GI incentives for private property owners.

This plan is embarrassingly inadequate. The reality of climate emergency has clearly not settled on county policy makers. Please do better.

First, the goal should be an 80% reduction by 2035 and 100% net zero emissions by 2050.

Hennepin County must commit to a Complete Streets Policy that better prioritizes sustainable transportation users in street design and maintenance and accelerate the reconstruction of county streets that are most dangerous to non-driving users.

This plan lists strategies to expand pedestrian, bicycle and transit infrastructure, but the only way to do so is to REDUCE private single-occupancy-vehicle infrastructure, which the county makes no commitment to. The transportation network fostered by Hennepin County over the past 80 years has caused incalculable damage to the environment and the fabric of society. In this plan Hennepin County must acknowledge the harm it has caused and begin to repair our fragile network of streets.

On that note, "Level of service" is an engineering measurement that disproportionately favors moving cars rather than people in its transportation projects. It must be rejected outright by the county and its department of public works. Traffic engineers must be required to do undertake significant re-training to address their "windshield mentality" which has long caused the county to prioritize private vehicles as the only tenable form of transportation and resulted in a vastly overbuilt and deadly road network. Acknowledge harm, and seek to repair it.

Speaking of which, many county offices are inaccessible to anyone that cannot or chooses not to own and operate a private motor vehicle. This plan should direct that all County facilities and offices must be easily accessible by bicycle and transit service according to Metro Transit's high-frequency network map. To not do so excludes an enormous slice of the county's population from engaging with county services or seeking to become a public servant within a county office. I suspect this is intentional on the part of county leaders, and must be counteracted.

These comments are from the MN350 Plant-Rich Diet Team. They come from numerous folks who live in Hennepin County in multiple zip codes, and have different gender identities, races, ethnicities, and ages.

Add a Foundational Strategy around Plant-Rich Diets (PRD)

Promote equitable, plant-rich diets

Communicate the health and climate benefits of plant-rich diets, and develop education and outreach efforts.

Educate children and youth about produce and plant-based eating through school gardens. Produce fruits, vegetables, and herbs in these gardens and on school grounds to help address food insecurity.

Address economic disparities by promoting accessible food opportunities, through the creation of permanent community gardens and food forests on green spaces and county-owned properties, eliminating food deserts, and by funding community food programs and mobile markets.

Work with local and regional partners to reassess food policy design standards & requirements to help ensure food prices are in line with the climate and health impacts of foods to help make healthy foods more affordable.

Other suggestions:

Use the county's considerable purchasing power to help procure sustainable food through foods in-line with the cool food pledge for county events and meetings. Consider signing.

Provide plant-rich and healthy eating education opportunities to food security programs such as SNAP & WIC.

These educational outreach programs and workshops should spread awareness of already existing programs in the community such as farmers markets and co-ops that accept SNAP & WIC.

Expand and create more flexible CSA programs to establish a local plant-rich food ecosystem, increasing nutrition access with special focus on building these programs in current food deserts.

Food systems have the potential to be carbon sinks. Build plant-rich permaculture systems on county-owned lands that store carbon through fruit and nut trees, and perennial crops that have permanent soil coverage and root systems like asparagus, berries, hazelnuts, Kernza, and rhubarb. Focus on the creation of these carbon-storing food hubs in predominantly low-income and BIPOC neighborhoods. Build green jobs.

Convert underutilized county lands and properties in predominantly BIPOC- and low-income neighborhoods for community gardens and open spaces.

Funding for creation of PR businesses & transition to PR businesses. Can be part of green jobs & green infrastructure efforts. (Herbivorous Butcher; Trio Plant-Based; Tempeh Tantrum)

Fund community food programs (Plant-Grow-Share; Divine Natural Ancestry; Project Sweetie Pie)

Support the East Phillips Indoor Urban Farm

<p>The County could run an opt-in bulk-buy program where organizations could pool their orders to get better prices for plant-rich staples, targeting food deserts and underserved communities.</p> <p>Create policies &amp; programs that incentivize the consumption of plant-rich foods through the County's promotion of the adoption of strategies in WRI's Playbook for Guiding Diners Toward Plant-Rich Dishes in Food Service</p> <p>Educate children about produce and plant-rich eating through school gardens</p> <p>Create garden plots on County land that community members can grow food, vegetables, and herbs that they can take home and eat. Like the program in St. Louis Park where they do this on school property.</p> <p>Prices are currently a huge barrier to people consuming healthy foods, decreasing this price difference and making healthy foods more affordable and available should be an objective of this foundational strategy.</p> <p>Communicate health (personal, public, and planetary) and climate benefits of PRD</p> <p>Use county lands and resources to help create sustainable, local food systems. This could include eliminating policy barriers to the planting and upkeep of fruit trees and bushes on city lands and green spaces within the county, funding community food programs utilizing the county's procurement to support local plant-rich businesses, and more.</p>
<p>It brings awareness towards food disparities as well as the food deserts that are becoming an issue within historically underrepresented communities.</p>
<p>plant-rich diets as a foundational strategies</p> <p>Provide plant-rich and healthy eating education opportunities to food security programs such as SNAP and WIC. These educational outreach programs and workshops should spread awareness of already existing programs in the community such as farmers markets and co-ops that accept SNAP and WIC.</p> <p>Create policies or programs that incentivize the consumption of plant-rich foods through the County's promotion of the adoption of strategies in WRI's Playbook for Guiding Diners Toward Plant-Rich Dishes in Food Service</p> <p>Educate children and youth about produce and plant-based eating through school gardens. Produce fruits, vegetables, and herbs in these gardens and on school grounds to help address food insecurity.</p> <p>Work with local and regional partners to reassess food policy design standards &amp; requirements to help ensure food prices are in line with the climate and health impacts of foods to help make healthy foods more affordable.</p> <p>Use the county's considerable purchasing power to help procure sustainable food through foods in-line with the cool food pledge for county events and meetings. Consider signing.</p> <p>Food systems have the potential to be carbon sinks. Build plant-rich permaculture systems on county-owned lands that store carbon through fruit and nut trees, and perennial crops that have permanent soil coverage and root systems like asparagus, berries, hazelnuts, Kernza, and rhubarb. Focus on the creation of these carbon-storing food hubs in predominantly low-income and BIPOC neighborhoods. These systems could build green jobs.</p> <p>Convert underutilized county lands and properties in predominantly BIPOC- and low-income neighborhoods for community gardens, parks, and open spaces.</p> <p>Funding for creation of PR businesses &amp; transition towards PR businesses. This can be part of green jobs and green infrastructure efforts. (Herbivorous Butcher; Trio Plant-Based; Tempeh Tantrum)</p>
<p>Repair brick storm/sanitary infrastructure instead of replacing with concrete. Brick can be easily patched for a fraction of the budget. Brick can also be locally sourced and has much less of a emissions trade-off in its construction compared to brick</p>
<p>Please include plant-rich diets as a foundational strategy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1)Fund community food programs (Plant-Grow-Share; Divine Natural Ancestry; Project Sweetie Pie) Support the East Phillips Indoor Urban Farm</li> <li>2)The County could run an opt-in bulk-buy program where different organizations could pool their orders to get better prices for plant-rich staples that targets food deserts and underserved communities.</li> <li>3)Create policies or programs that incentivize the consumption of plant-rich foods through the County's promotion of the adoption of strategies in WRI's</li> <li>4)Use county lands and resources to help create sustainable, local food systems. This could include eliminating policy barriers to the planting and upkeep of fruit trees and bushes on city lands and green spaces within the county, funding community food programs, utilizing Hennepin County's procurement to support local plant-rich businesses, and more.</li> </ol>
<p>I would love to see more info about plant based nutrition!!</p>

Looks good but please prioritize sustainable energy generation, strong electric public transit, active transport infrastructure, environmental remediation, green architecture, and density. Also please make a goal of decarbonizing Hennepin County by 80% by 2030 and 100% by 2050

In the first "purpose" section, they don't acknowledge that climate change IS CAUSED BY US. That ownership of responsibility seems critical to understanding that we must change how we live.

The second section (p5) gives a bit of (MN-specific) climate context, but fails to highlight both the immediacy of the crises of breakdown AND that this is global breakdown, with systems likely to fracture as crises compound one another (see: covid + climate in TX).

The climate action framework seems to lack an understanding that Hennepin County operates within regional, national, and global systems that will themselves face increasing physical, social, and other disruption from climate breakdown.

There is nothing in the phases to indicate that the strategies and goals will be reviewed for whether they are conceptually sound at the scales needed. E.g. EVs aren't a climate solution except for a small % of remaining vehicles after significant shifts away from car-dependency.

The county MUST communicate the immediacy of climate breakdown and the urgency of responding to it in ways that will change how we live.

Using the disparity reduction lens with the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion staff as a framework for everything else is solid.

The county's GHG emissions reduction goals are given without any context for whether they are in alignment with current scientific consensus on the rate of reduction necessary to sustain life and civilization on this planet (spoiler: they're not)

Really underplaying the immediacy of climate breakdown throughout this document, as well as the impacts we're already starting to feel.

Mitigating the urban heat island effect MUST INCLUDE REDUCING VMT in order to remove those heat sources as well as reduce asphalt/concrete.

The discussion of transportation emissions MUST recognize how Hennepin County and MNDOT concentrate air pollution through communities of color and directly along our highest density housing.

Good to see urban agriculture and transit driver listed in green jobs. What about bicycle repair, shoe fitting and repair, electric wheelchair hacking + repair, everything secondhand/reuse/repair, entire systems of reuse instead of single use, grief/trauma/crisis counseling, + so many others?

Discussion of how to prepare for hazard events (p26) doesn't include any involvement of the general population or shifting systems to be manageable without highly specialized tools and only-globally-sourced materials. For example, both concrete and asphalt are GHG intensive and require highly specialized and expensive tools/machines, resources not available locally, and specially trained operators.

For example, maintaining our brick sewers and building new ones with brick (as Prague is doing, among other global cities) rather than using concrete or fiberglass reduces emissions and provides climate resiliency for critical public infrastructure. Bricks last way longer--brick sewers can last hundreds of years, compared to a few decades at most. Bricks can be spot-repaired, therefore much less disruptive, does not usually require complete diversion of liquid from the tunnel/pipe, and therefore takes much less planning/coordination to access. Brick can be locally sourced (unlike concrete/asphalt), which is especially important as global systems are disrupted, and it creates local green jobs. Brick is lower emissions/less oil than concrete/asphalt. Brick doesn't require intense specialized and super expensive machines. Brick can be reused/reset. For emergencies, more people can more easily be trained to

repair brick while concrete repair/replacement is limited to however many giant trucks/machines are available (assuming necessary roads remain passable). This likely also applies to some extent to roadways, though a different set of knowledge/skills and perhaps different forms or finishing for the bricks themselves.

Stop using plastic pipes in our stormwater management system, don't create microplastic waste!

I would like to see more inclusion of Plant-Rich Diets in the county's Climate Action Plan. Specifically, I'd like to see greater efforts to:

- + Communicate the health and climate benefits of plant-rich diets, and develop education and outreach efforts.
- + Educate children and youth about produce and plant-based eating through school gardens. Produce fruits, vegetables, and herbs in these gardens and on school grounds to help address food insecurity.
- + Address economic disparities by promoting accessible food opportunities, through the creation of permanent community gardens and food forests on green spaces and county-owned properties, eliminating food deserts, and by funding community food programs and mobile markets.
- + Work with local and regional partners to reassess food policy design standards & requirements to help ensure food prices are in line with the climate and health impacts of foods to help make healthy foods more affordable

Point 2 in the foundational strategy: Educate children and youth - adding providers here, like daycares and elementary schools could help make this strategy more actionable.

Permaculture lands - are there spaces that the county could consider? Community parks, close to the county-compost facilities, or perhaps in schools? This could also tie into the point on underutilized county lands.

Food waste - programs to link restaurants and grocery stores to consumers. Several startups such as ZeroPercent have technology solutions to make this happen. The county could either buy such a technology (and have programs buy in for a small cost) or partner with UMN or other startups to create one.

The motivation section could include 1-2 sentences on the health gains of PRD, to reinforce that these strategies will have impacts above and beyond climate.

These comments are of course beyond what is in the climate action plan, so it is more of a recommendation on the plan itself, rather than a comment about the draft.

*~(name redacted)*

I'd like to see more emphasis on regulating industrial farms and the mistreatment of farm animals. One solution is to encourage people to adopt a plant-rich diet and not to purchase meat that is certified as coming from a free-range farm. A related issue is to replace these huge industrial farms with clean water and wilderness areas where wolves and other wild animals can expand their habitat and retain their protected status.

You should make the data from Figure 8: Areas susceptible to flooding public. It should be mandated to be part of housing disclosures for all home purchases and new rental agreements.

"Impactful" is mealy-mouthed marketing term invented in the 1950s. I have a hard time believing a government agency that doesn't write well is going to be EFFECTIVE in fighting climate change.

Source: <https://thesassylibrarian.wordpress.com/2011/06/16/impactful-is-not-a-real-fing-word/>

Another source: <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/impactful/>

Plant rich diets should be encouraged locally to help reduce GHG emissions. Provide plant-rich and healthy eating education opportunities to food security programs such as SNAP and WIC. These educational outreach programs and workshops should spread awareness of already existing programs in the community such as farmers markets and co-ops that accept SNAP and WIC. Also fund programs targeted toward educating school-aged students about plant rich diets, the food supply, and how to grow and cook their own food.

With regard to new construction both on the surface and underground.



Brick is far superior to concrete

Brick can be spot-repaired, therefore much less disruptive and takes much less planning

Brick can be locally sourced (unlike concrete) especially important as global systems are disrupted

Brick is lower emissions/less oil than concrete/asphalt

Brick doesn't require intense specialized and super expensive machines

Brick can be reused/reset

For emergencies, more people can more easily be trained to repair brick while concrete repair/replacement is limited to however many giant trucks/stuff you have (assuming necessary roads remain passable)

Brick would provide local green jobs

Bricks can be reused/applied to other settings

Brick lasts much longer

Brick looks way cooler and is classy as fuck

Prague still builds their sewer and stormwater management out of brick.

Brick can articulate under pressure so only small sections crack instead of a huge 50 foot pre cast section

The biggest gap I see in the county climate action plan is how to respond to shifts in travel demand and make it easier for people to fulfill their daily needs and daily trips using transit, walking, and biking. What will the county do to make things easier for folks to go grocery shopping, the hair salon, the neighborhood watering hole or restaurant, etc. without jumping in their car. It's great to assume an 8% reduction in emissions due solely to increased remote work, but we can't assume that more people will drive less or that our collective contribution to emissions will necessarily reduce with changes in our working schedules. The county should be doing all it can to replace 1-5 mile car trips to bike, walk, and transit as fast as possible.

SIDEWALKS LITERALLY ARE NOT DESIGNED TO DRAIN, regardless of freeze-thaw cycle. In Minneapolis, city regulations require that buildings drain ACROSS sidewalks, which means that sidewalks that have been shoveled still become icy where water crosses them on days with any melt. Because of this, and because of the immediacy and urgency of climate breakdown, sidewalks are failed infrastructure.

Here's a twitter thread that documents how widespread the obstacles that result from sidewalk drainage issues in just one melt-event; these types of events are expected to intensify and become more frequent with climate breakdown: <https://twitter.com/happifydesign/status/1105707925283041282?s=20>

There is no way to significantly reduce salt use on sidewalks without shifting to municipal responsibility for sidewalk clearance. And sidewalks as they are currently designed will require unsustainable salt use to be even marginally safe/usable because of how sidewalks collect and hold water, as freeze/thaw cycles become more common.

We must make it clear in all parts of the county that all roadways--which are designed to drain, which are cleared by municipal agencies, and which are far less likely to become icy again during freeze-thaw events--are the safest and most accessible public right of way for all road users, especially those with limited mobility using walkers and wheelchairs and those walking. Year-round accessibility for transportation is a basic right, and walking/using wheelchairs is the most basic accessibility.

Additionally, in many municipalities, Public Works has co-located curb ramps and storm drains, creating additional barriers and hazards for people who are walking and using wheelchairs. Tabled intersections would help.

Currently, municipal snow plows clearing roadways for private vehicles do so in a way that makes sidewalks and curbcuts worse, if not totally inaccessible. The county must reassess the unintended consequences of its plowing strategy from a basic equity lens.

Nothing about sidewalks is designed, built, or maintained with even the most cursory attention paid to or knowledge of basic racial and disability accessibility or the climate context of Minnesota, even prior to conditions worsening under intensifying climate breakdown.

The County cannot talk about stormwater mitigation and management in climate breakdown without acknowledging that it's absolutely critical to reduce VMT/remove parking and pavement generally. This reduces run-off, but also reduces oil from cars and the primary source of microplastics in our waterways (from tires).

For stormwater management/aquifer health, we must increase land use intensity + institute an urban growth boundary to reduce impermeable surface (and infrastructure costs) per capita and create more walkable/livable communities.

Cars are the largest source of microplastics in our waterways, and designing around them is why we have so much impervious surface to start. If the County does not commit to deep reductions in VMTs, plus robust support for walking, using wheelchairs, biking, and transit, it shows it does not take stormwater management seriously.

The county must move its facilities to locations that are easily transit accessible. The county must ensure all services and employment offers free parking ONLY for people with disabilities, but provides substantial and adequate financial and built environment support for individuals using transit, walking, using wheelchairs, and biking.

Strongly support functional natural areas that include active planning for CO2 sequestration + food source resiliency--really glad to see this! Pair with an urban growth boundary and make sure dense areas are prioritized for removing asphalt and increasing food resiliency via plants like chestnut trees.

Glad to see embodied emissions of buildings included. Also, sustainable buildings must additionally consider:

1. the intensity of land use (reducing per-capita emissions), and
2. any transportation emissions embedded due to location and distance from density of people.

Ok, there's transportation talk about fuel sources as:

gasoline, diesel, biofuels, electricity, or human effort and that's just annoying me with how it obfuscates:

a) fossil fuels

b) that my belly turns food into transportation, I want to flex here! Food IS fuel.

Also it seem to ignore

Re: fuel sources, the county needs to provide delicious, climate-friendly, culturally-welcoming, allergy-avoiding food at all county events, instead of free parking. Food is how you subsidize walking/biking as transportation choices. Also bus tokens.

We need to have electric wheelchair charging stations everywhere, in all county buildings, as ubiquitous as disability parking. We need to also make these work for electric bikes. People with disabilities should not be forced into expensive car dependency (if they can afford it, and if their disability doesn't preclude it) simply because we do not provide the infrastructure necessary to allow them to choose to walk/use wheelchairs/bike as their primary modes of transportation.

I'm including e-bike charging because bikes are already mobility devices for many people for whom walking is difficult, and e-bikes allow people with a wide range of disabilities the freedom to get where they need to go with their own power (and a tiny electric boost). (Guidelines exist for how to understand and plan for bikes as accessibility devices, rather than erroneously assuming they're only for athletic and able-bodied people--I read one

such guide for London a few years back, and know many disabled people in Hennepin County who rely on bikes as mobility aids, including people who cannot walk easily.)

The goal to reduce VMT (p.41) must fully address how dangerous, hostile, unpleasant, and threatening cars going over 15mph make walking, using wheelchairs, biking, and taking transit. Good pedestrian and bike infrastructure does not happen in addition to car-infrastructure. Pedestrian and bike infrastructure in Hennepin County becomes good as it replaces car infrastructure.

Reduce VMTs by reducing space available for private vehicle travel and storage. Reduce lane widths, reduce number of lanes, reduce parking. Reduce speeds.

Whatever is offered for EVs (be it subsidies, charging stations, maintenance, internal fleets) needs to be offered first and foremost and prioritized for:

1. electric wheelchairs, and
2. electric bikes

The county's fleet reduction goals are unacceptably low (year 2000 VMT by 2040, 30% by 2030). Do better. Include more (electric) bikes. Move facilities temporarily to more suitable locations. Reduce unnecessary trips. Allow other modes, even if they take more time. Make sure that employees regularly using vehicles do not have to take them back to the lot if it would be less efficient. Get creative to drop VMTs in alignment with scientific projections, not what feels comfortable for a bureaucratic office that has historically prioritized the comfort of white county residents over the needs of the rest of the community--this is the same at a global scale.

The waste section doesn't even mention consumer goods/household electronics/cars/single use packaging. This is a major oversight that ignores the existing social energy within the population to shift how we live towards reusable and repairable and secondhand items, via movements like #zerowaste, #righttorepair, anti-single-use-plastic movements, etc.

We need to do far better at providing organics pick-up and adequate recycling to people living in (more sustainable, also lower income) multifamily housing. The entire City of Mpls ignores 1/3 of households in its failure to offer us composting; its regulations that allow commercial buildings to choose their waste hauler i

I think this plan is a step in the right direction and would like to encourage the county to be even more bold. I would like to see: 1) Addition of a strategy to "right-size" Hennepin County vehicle fleet, limiting larger vehicles like SUVs (which are less safe to people biking and walking and increase air pollution) and investing in more compact vehicles or electric cargo bikes. 2) Amend the goal to be 80% reduction by 2035 and 100% net zero emissions by 2050. 3) Make sure county facilities are easily accessible by transit (according to Metro Transit's high-frequency network map). 4) Reduce speed limits on county roads within Minneapolis to match the City of Minneapolis' new speed limits (example of Cedar Ave - change from 30 mph to 25 mph).

Thanks for creating this draft. you say at the beginning that you are "acting boldly". It's unclear to me if the 2007 Cool County targets are still in effect. I think we need to be bolder and get to net zero emissions by 2050. The emphasis on native plantings and habitat is important. I would hope that true native species are encouraged for planting (not cultivars or nativars which won't support the insect base for other wildlife). It seems that carrying out this plan is embedded within public works. The County Administrator and department heads should be responsible for carrying out the plan and should be accountable for targets and timelines.

Cities in Hennepin County are waiting for this so that they can use it as a baseline for their own plans. Unfortunately, the Hennepin plan is really not robust enough to be a great model. Particularly frustrating is the lack of action on HERC, which disproportionately negatively affects minority communities and their air quality.

I urge the county to be specific with targets and benchmarks for eventual net zero emissions from both industry and from transportation. Be clear about getting citizens engaged with solar gardens, e-vehicles and other beneficial practices.

Create an actual environmental committee so it's not buried in public works.

We need to do far better at providing organics pick-up and adequate recycling to people living in (more sustainable, also lower income) multifamily housing. The entire City of Mpls ignores 1/3 of households in its failure to offer us composting; its regulations that allow commercial buildings to choose their waste hauler and not offer large-item pick up, composting, or sufficient space for recyclables is paternalistic and discourages people from doing better. It also exposes already-pollution-burdened renters to more air pollution (and degrades the roadway) with multiple diesel haulers unnecessarily frequenting the same blocks of apartment buildings for single-dumpster pick-ups.

Any examination of the environmental racism of air pollution must look at transportation pollution (not just from internal combustion engines, but also from brake pads and tires). And it must examine the exposure consequences of the County's role in high-ADT arterials along dense residential (and primarily renter) corridors like Lyndale, Lowry, Franklin, Central. County engineers must stop "protecting" a small number of residents of side streets (who are often wealthier property owners) who protest a more equitable flow of traffic at the expense of the lives of their more vulnerable neighbors.

P. 46 talks about educating residents to make more sustainable choices, but not about systems steps the county can take on this. They should create and support a county-wide reusable container program (with deposit) for food goods, in grocers + cafes + restaurants + bars + liquor

P. 47, remove roadway asphalt + parking lots in favor of CO2 sequestering plants.

Don't just prioritize energy efficiency in items (which is a net increase in energy use when people are not using these devices to start with), but incentivize, recognize, normalize, support, and reward zero-energy, low-tech solutions like:

hanging clothes to dry instead of using a dryer

walking/using a wheelchair/biking instead of driving

buses/trains instead of flight (for staff--no flights for staff, period, particularly seeing how flights enabled covid to become a worldwide pandemic).

no a/c instead of a/c

preserving foods without freezing/refrigeration

retrofitting buildings for passive cooling/with green roofs

local compost solutions

local reuse/secondhand/repair places

Also provide this support for reducing reliance on high-energy-use appliances. For example, support efforts that reduce per-capita emissions, like:

higher density buildings

transit

smaller homes

heating/cooling only the space that you're in, only while you're in it, with more people in it (following disease spread guidelines)

smaller refrigerators

Overall, a lot of respect for how many solid suggestions are part of this document, and the level of effort and robust thinking/conversation that clearly went into creating it! I offer my comments in the same spirit in which the document was created, and with appreciation for all involved; my criticisms/suggestions are many only because the immediacy and urgency of climate breakdown is so great, and we have so much to do.

I would urge all of you to set goals that you think are unattainable and unrealistic, and, having set those goals, actually try to meet them by exploring aggressive, radical rethinking of the incentive structures that determine where people live, why they drive around in cars, and why they consume so much energy (much of which comes from coal-fired plants --- 31% as of 2019). It is long past time to admit that we have arranged our society in ways that are inefficient, inequitable, and perilous to all living beings. To take just one example (reducing vehicle miles

traveled): rather than targeting a reduction to "year 2000 levels by 2040" (page 43 of the draft plan) I would like to see a plan that tries to reduce vehicle miles traveled by 50% or more in ten years.

I think the plan is a good start and covers many of the primary drivers and solutions of climate change. The plan lacks goals, however. How can we measure change without setting measurable goals?

For example, the green infrastructure section (p. 33) is very weak. We can no longer just monitor for invasive species and protect natural areas. The funding of the restoration of the county's natural areas is needed. With the continued pressures of climate change, natural areas in a suburban and urban context are not resilient if left alone. If we finance the restoration of these areas, it improves their biodiversity, resiliency, and capacity to help weather the climatic effects such as intensive, short duration rainfall events. Go beyond talking about potential impacts, show us some solutions!

I would like to see more about the importance of biking and walking for transportation. There is so much potential to reduce emissions through biking and walking if we promote thoughtful land use, transit coordination, and complete biking and walking networks that are comfortable for people of all ages and abilities. Bike projects are low cost and can provide a huge benefit. I would like to see more about quick, temporary pilot solutions as we await larger bikeway/ roadway project completion.

I'm glad to see that the county is putting forward a climate action plan and also glad that you specifically state a goal of reducing VMT as a key way to reduce emissions. I am disappointed, however, in the ways the plan says it will achieve those reductions. First, it reads like vague buzzword-bingo, without a lot of firm commitments. Park and rides are not a long-term transit solution. And there's nothing in there about reducing actual lane miles on county roads. We can't reduce VMT without reducing lane miles. Many Minneapolis roads need road diets, and county roads in the suburbs are massive and deadly, as well. Rethinking our infrastructure so that it serves people, not cars, is necessary if we're serious about climate change. One response we always get when asking for a move away from cars is just that "we're not there yet," when it comes to coaxing people out of their cars. Well, climate change IS here now. We don't have time to wait for everyone to voluntarily change their habits. We need to build infrastructure that meets the scale of the challenge.

Include plant-rich diets as a foundational strategy. Some ideas:

- Promote equitable, plant-rich diets
- Communicate the health and climate benefits of plant-rich diets, and develop education and outreach efforts.
- Educate children and youth about produce and plant-based eating through school gardens. Produce fruits, vegetables, and herbs in these gardens and on school grounds to help address food insecurity.
- Address economic disparities by promoting accessible food opportunities, through the creation of permanent community gardens and food forests on green spaces and county-owned properties, eliminating food deserts, and by funding community food programs and mobile markets.
- Work with local and regional partners to reassess food policy design standards & requirements to help ensure food prices are in line with the climate and health impacts of foods to help make healthy foods more affordable.
- Convert underutilized county lands and properties in predominantly BIPOC- and low-income neighborhoods for community gardens, parks, and open spaces.
- Educate children about produce and plant-based eating through school gardens
- The County could run an opt-in bulk-buy program where different organizations could pool their orders to get better prices for plant-rich staples that targets food deserts and underserved communities.

I would love to see plant-rich diets included as a foundational strategy in the Climate Action Plan. Food systems transformation is required to meet the Paris Climate targets, and the most powerful lever for reducing food systems emissions is the adoption of plant-rich diets. I would love to see the following items incorporated into the plan so that we can achieve an equitable and sustainable food system.

1. Communicate the health and climate benefits of plant-rich diets, and develop education and outreach efforts.
2. Educate children and youth about produce and plant-based eating through school gardens. Produce fruits, vegetables, and herbs in these gardens and on school grounds to help address food insecurity.
3. Address economic disparities by promoting accessible food opportunities, through the creation of permanent

<p>community gardens and food forests on green spaces and county-owned properties, eliminating food deserts, and by funding community food programs and mobile markets.</p> <p>4. Work with local and regional partners to reassess food policy design standards &amp; requirements to help ensure food prices are in line with the climate and health impacts of foods to help make healthy foods more affordable.</p> <p>5. Use county lands and resources to help create sustainable, local food systems. This could include eliminating policy barriers to the planting and upkeep of fruit trees and bushes on city lands and green spaces within the county, funding community food programs, utilizing Hennepin County's procurement to support local plant-rich businesses, and more.</p>
<p>I appreciate the goal to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), but I worry that the suggested actions to achieve the goal will not provide enough reduction to meet emissions goals. In addition to mass transit, here are additional ways the county can reduce VMT: 1) lower posted speeds limits and change road design to control speed (i.e. reduce lane widths), 2) remove parking minimums, 3) increase density to reduce trip length and encourage non-car modes, 4) remove lanes (road diets) to reduce induced demand and to reduce pollution in population-dense areas, and 5) remove roads to reconnect neighborhoods. These ideas would also bolster the goal "Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities" via objective: "The county sequesters carbon on county-owned property, including along county road rights-of-way and tax-forfeit properties."</p> <p>Additionally, educate staff using fleet vehicles about combining trips. Pay staff to commute without a car and stop subsidizing free parking.</p>
<p>The climate action plan appears to be more of a "framework" than a "plan". I would expect a "plan" to have more specific and measurable goals and targets, particularly considering the urgent threat and challenge associated with global warming and climate change. Perhaps it is your intention to follow-up soon after this document with an "action plan" that has more detail. That could work well. Or maybe it is your intention that Hennepin County will not be taking bold action, but providing framework for other bodies to take action. Hard to tell from this document as I read it.</p> <p>We have wasted 30 years doing almost nothing substantial to decarbonize, so let's double our efforts and include at least a timeline for Hennepin County to specify the path and timeline for specific, bold actions.</p>
<p>Milquetoast plans that don't rise to the occasion and don't go far enough. It's almost as if the majority of the people doing city planning w/r/t the climate crisis won't be around to feel the brunt of its devastation. A lot of changes that are offered feel symbolic and not actually invested in real change, but making sure the energy and transportation lobby is satiated. Do better. We could be leaders in radical change. Root our proposed changes in climate justice and center the communities most at risk.</p>
<p>Thank you for doing this plan! I am excited by the suggestions made by MN350.org's Food Solutions team, and would reference this document, which they also have submitted. Thank you!</p> <p><a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1iKKTczShm-nZ0ToWaGc33ZDJ41wkp4PG7uZx-km1Uvl/edit">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1iKKTczShm-nZ0ToWaGc33ZDJ41wkp4PG7uZx-km1Uvl/edit</a></p>
<p>We need bold, rapid, and collective action. We need to acknowledge that climate change is caused by humanity and that much of the damage done has been in the last thirty years.</p> <p>The strategies and goals need to be reviewed for whether they are conceptually sound at the scale needed. The county's emission reduction goals are given without context. They need to be at least in line with the current scientific consensus on the reduction rate necessary to sustain human life on the planet.</p>
<p>Hi! I appreciate the Climate Action Plan, but am concerned that it 1) doesn't sufficiently convey the immediate need to massively reduce emissions, most especially Vehicle Miles Traveled; and 2) doesn't sufficiently reimagine what our streets need to look like to build a climate-resilient county. County roads tend to carry a higher volume of traffic, and tend to pass through more densely-populated corridors. Therefore, improving county-controlled streets has the potential to make a huge difference in the prevalence of microplastic pollution, exhaust, noise, and other harmful effects of private vehicles along these densely-populated corridors. Please increase the urgency with which the County's climate goals are expressed and achieved, and please shift the focus from "how far is this from the status quo" to "how close is this to where we need to be to mitigate climate collapse." County roads should be built for people on foot, on bikes, on electric bikes, on wheelchairs, or in public transit vehicles. Private vehicles must be deprioritized across the county. County infrastructure should be built using the most resilient, lowest-carbon-emission materials that can be found, specifically bricks instead of concrete. Reducing salt use is mentioned</p>

in the plan, but I am not sure the plan reflects the urgent threat to our water that car use, and road maintenance to enable car use, poses to our water.

I think you have some very important information in this document and it is apparent it has been a highly collaborative effort with input from the community.

Couple of key opportunities to call out:

I would like to see more quantifiable targets so that I can use this document as a leverage tool to engage our city council and local business owners to encourage them to begin the work of planning to set and meet sustainability goals. I think it is also important to include an executive summary to pull those critical metrics out for people who don't want to read this long of a document. I would also like to see more in depth plan for natural resources. I don't think it should be lumped in the same goal as managing city infrastructure. And you have a wealth of dedicated departments and resources already in place to engage local entities with planning for natural resource protections. Where are they in this plan?

I have also submitted additional feedback via email to Patience Caso from a collective review by citizens for sustainability. I am happy to send that to others. You can request a copy by email to (*personal information redacted*)

The potential of natural climate solutions seems significantly underestimated in this document, especially grassland/savanna restoration and regenerative agriculture!!! For example, Elaine Ingham has helped farmers increase soil organic matter from less than 2% organic matter up to somewhere around 10% organic matter, to 15-17% organic matter through the years. Many others have had similarly impressive results with regenerative agriculture. And according to Alexis Bayden, in her description of "4 per 1000" ([www.4p1000.org](http://www.4p1000.org)), this "initiative has countries make the pledge to increase soil carbon by 0.4%, and not adding 0.4% of soil carbon, but just increasing it by that small percentage. If we do that each year for 25 years, we end up matching the same amount of carbon that's going into the atmosphere with carbon being drawn down out of the atmosphere. And at that point we would be carbon-neutral."

I absolutely recommend adding a strategy around including plant-rich diets.

Some general suggestions:

- Use the county's considerable purchasing power to help procure sustainable food through foods in-line with the cool food pledge for county events and meetings. Consider signing.
- Provide plant-rich and healthy eating education opportunities to food security programs such as SNAP and WIC. These educational outreach programs and workshops should spread awareness of already existing programs in the community such as farmers markets and co-ops that accept SNAP and WIC.
- Expand and create more flexible CSA programs to establish a local plant-rich food ecosystem, increasing nutrition access with special focus on building these programs in current food deserts.
- Food systems have the potential to be carbon sinks. Build plant-rich permaculture systems on county-owned lands that store carbon through fruit and nut trees, and perennial crops that have permanent soil coverage and root systems like asparagus, berries, hazelnuts, Kernza, and rhubarb. Focus on the creation of these carbon-storing food hubs in predominantly low-income and BIPOC neighborhoods. These systems could build green jobs.
- Convert underutilized county lands and properties in predominantly BIPOC- and low-income neighborhoods for community gardens, parks, and open spaces.
- Funding for creation of PR businesses & transition towards PR businesses. This can be part of green jobs and green infrastructure efforts. (Herbivorous Butcher; Trio Plant-Based; Tempeh Tantrum)
- Educate children about produce and plant-based eating through school gardens
- Create garden plots in county-owned lands that community members can grow food, vegetables, and herbs that they can take home and eat. This is similar to a New York program and a program in St. Louis Park where they do this on school property.
- Prices are currently a huge barrier to people consuming healthy foods, decreasing this price difference and making healthy foods more affordable and available should be an objective of this foundational strategy.
- Communicate health (personal, public, and planetary) and climate benefits of plant-rich diets
- Use county lands and resources to help create sustainable, local food systems. This could include eliminating policy barriers to the planting and upkeep of fruit trees and bushes on city lands and green spaces within the

county, funding community food programs, utilizing Hennepin County's procurement to support local plant-rich businesses, and more.

Fresh Energy - Hennepin County Climate Action Plan comments  
contributed by:  
(Names redacted)

Executive summary

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Hennepin County's Draft Climate Action Plan. Fresh Energy appreciates the time and resources that clearly went into creating this plan, as well as the County's willingness to solicit public feedback.

Fresh Energy is an independent, non-partisan nonprofit that has been providing policy research and analysis on energy issues across Minnesota for nearly 30 years. Our mission is to shape and drive bold policy solutions to achieve equitable carbon-neutral economies.

Overall, Fresh Energy recognizes several positive aspects of the plan, such as the emphasis on cross-departmental collaboration, advancing equitable outcomes, and a recognition of the complex and overlapping impacts of climate change on residents.

However, Fresh Energy is concerned that the Draft Plan does an inadequate job of setting quantitative, measurable greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals that reflect the urgency and reality of the moment. Hennepin County's GHG reduction goals, adopted in 2007, fall far short of where the most recent climate science implores society to go. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) The Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C from 2018 finds that in order to keep global average temperatures from rising above 1.5 degrees Celsius – a level above which scientists warn could cause irreversible, devastating damage – global emissions must fall 45% from 2010 levels by 2030, reaching net zero around 2050. At a minimum, Hennepin County's Climate Action Plan should reflect this reality and adopt these reduction goals, if not go even further.

What the Draft Plan does well:

- Raises the critical issue of climate action and presents the plan as a foundation for future planning, policy development, and climate action
- Thorough, cross-departmental and multijurisdictional input utilized: recognition that high levels of coordination will be needed over the long-term
- Acknowledgement that changes to county policies, systems, and practices are required
- An understanding that climate resilience and mitigation work should advance equitable outcomes, not worsen existing disparities
- An intention to receive feedback from a broad spectrum of stakeholders and residents

comments cont'd pg 2...

Great job on the Climate Action plan - here are our RCC3/3/21 additional recommendations!

I am pasting the links for these two documents into your feedback form now.

<http://rccmn.co/hennepin-communities/>

<http://rccmn.co/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Sign-On-Letter-for-Hennepin-County-Climate-Action.docx>

<http://rccmn.co/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/RCC-Initial-Climate-Action-Recommendations.pdf>

We are looking forward to partnering with Hennepin County, Cities, additional jurisdictions, NGOs and community partners to achieve a net zero county by 2050!

Sustainably, (names removed)

(contact information redacted)

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Fresh Energy - Hennepin County Climate Action Plan comments (comments cont. pg. 2)

contributed by:

*(Names redacted)*

Room for Improvement:

-Clear, measurable GHG reduction goals that reflect updated climate science: The County should strive for at least 45% reduction from 2010 levels by 2030; net zero by mid-century.

-Specificity and timelines: While the goals seem generally in-line with what needs to be accomplished, objectives and strategies often lack details around the intended timeline, which departments will be responsible for the goal, and how progress will be measured and shared with the public.

-An increased focus on energy efficiency and fuel-switching to carbon-free electricity: Buildings account for about 40% of energy use nationwide, and GHG emissions from residential and commercial buildings are rapidly rising in Minnesota. As the electricity sector continues to decarbonize faster than the rest of the economy, transitioning end-uses now powered by fossil fuels to clean electricity is a critical component of any strategy to draw down emissions in buildings. Fuel-switching is mentioned on page 38, but should be introduced earlier in the report and given more emphasis, in terms of both goals and strategies. Additionally, energy efficiency is both a climate mitigation and adaptation tool, reducing emissions while making the county more resilient to climate-related weather events by insulating residents from large utility bill fluctuations associated with extreme temperatures.

-Definitions of renewable energy: "Renewable energy" is referenced throughout the document, but the types of renewable energy the County is considering are not explicitly defined or listed. Not all renewable energy is created equal, and there are major potential harms and risks that undermine carbon reduction and climate justice goals associated with different energy sources that are considered renewable. For example, renewable natural gas has public health implications and risks prolonged reliance on carbon-intensive natural gas systems. Additionally, waste-to-energy should not be considered renewable energy, and it also is not carbon-free.

-The COVID-19 pandemic is a continuing danger to county residents and resources. There needs to be more direct acknowledgement of this. While there is mention of the possible but relatively unknown reduction on transportation emissions due to remote work for county employees and less air travel (pgs. 40, 54) there will continue to be other immediate and long-term challenges from financial hardships, disruptions to health and human services, and increased household usage of utilities due to remote working and learning, yet unequal access to those utilities for under-resourced families. The County could provide measures as to how COVID-19 has or may continue to disrupt services and how it will be addressing long-term impacts.

-Transparency on the County's short and long-term waste management plan: Waste-to-energy is a source of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions that negatively affect human and climate health; neither garbage nor the steam generated from burning garbage should be considered sources of renewable energy. Waste-to-energy can create major environmental injustices for surrounding communities, and while concerns about waste-to-energy were mentioned numerous times throughout the feedback sessions and public comments, the County does not provide clarity on how waste-to-energy fits into their climate and waste management goals. The County should focus on developing a zero-waste strategy, which will also have lower GHG emissions, rather than relying on waste-to-energy as a climate strategy.

I am in support to approve and fully fund the proposed Climate Action Plan. A couple of items to point out...

- I would like to achieve a GHG emissions reduction of Net Zero by 2050

- I would commit to find partnerships, including cities and organizations, to achieve these goals together.

-Last, but not least, I really want to see the focus on the importance of land use and community planning to reduce these reductions. The way cities are laid out plays a huge role. We need to return to building cities, where walking or biking is an easy option for residents to get around. The focus of the automobile has spread us out so wide that in most situations, a car is the only way to get around, which brings us back to transportation being the #1 provider of climate emissions in our State.

Thank you for the hard work and looking forward to seeing the Climate Action Plan passed by the Hennepin County Board in April.

The county's plan needs to end priority for large personal vehicles in the city of Minneapolis. People live on those county roads.

Fresh Energy - Hennepin County Climate Action Plan comments (cont. pg. 3)  
contributed by:  
(Names redacted)

Community engagement process: the four-week timeline for responding to this 59-page plan was too short. This timeframe is not sufficient for people to engage meaningfully with this plan, develop comments, and attend two possible meetings, especially during a global pandemic when individuals and families are feeling exceptionally strained. As the County rolls out this extensive plan, we urge them to ensure that individuals and groups that will be impacted by the plan have a seat at the table for its ongoing development and implementation. Multiple methods for engaging and communicating are necessary to ensure broad participation.

Specified Comments on the Hennepin Climate Action Plan

Cut greenhouse gas emissions (pg. 10)

-As mentioned in our introduction, the GHG reduction goals of 30% by 2025 and 80% by 2050 are not ambitious enough and should be updated to reflect current climate science. We need to rapidly reduce emissions much faster to stave off worse climate consequences according to the 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) The Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C. A more ambitious and bold goal that matches the IPCC report would be 45% greenhouse gas emissions (from 2010 levels) reduction by 2030 and carbon neutral by 2050.

Results in an equitable and resilient Hennepin County (pg. 11)

-The County should be active in the leadership development of individuals who contribute to the growth and success of the County, in capacities of employment, partnership, elected government, voluntary community input, and other ways.

-How does Hennepin County plan to address the gaps or issues internal to Hennepin County? These might include internal bias, outdated systems, and legacies of racism, oppression and exclusion committed by the County, in accordance with the County's declaration of racism as a public health crisis, and would bolster the County's goal of protecting and engaging vulnerable communities. It would be beneficial to include recommendations or actions from the Race Equity Advisory Council in the Climate Action Plan as they become available.

GOAL: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities

Climate Resilience (pg. 15)

-In providing financial assistance for water damage repairs, how will the county ensure that all residents - renters, homeowners, multi-family property owners - can access this financial assistance? The need for repairs (or rebuilding) occurs after extreme weather and physical devastation. How will the county be proactive in making sure this support is as accessible as possible in moments of extreme stress and overwhelm?

Strategy: Strengthen individual and community resilience:

-What are the methods of collecting and disseminating information? To ensure accessibility, there will have to be several formats used: digital communication, verbal and written in multiple languages, infographics, art, and culturally responsive communication to make the information accessible.

-On the flip side, how will residents be able to share their experiences with climate change with the County?

-When fostering relationships with communities to engage, listen and respond with people centered solutions, the County should utilize cultural and community trusted media and engage from a place of transparency and authenticity that builds reliability and trust. Engagement is a repeated process that must demonstrate willingness to take direction and show progress.

comments cont'd pg 4..

Hello Angie, Brian and Patience –

Great job on the Climate Action plan - here is our RCC3/3/21 Sign on Letter (additional groups/cities will sign on by April 15)

The link for the document that will be updated as more cities and organizations sign on.

<http://rccmn.co/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Sign-On-Letter-for-Hennepin-County-Climate-Action.docx>

We are looking forward to partnering with Hennepin County, Cities, additional jurisdictions, NGOs and community partners to achieve a net zero county by 2050!

*(contact information redacted)*

Sign on Letter asking the Hennepin County Board to Approve and Implement their Climate Action Plan with updated targets

Our City is working with other cities to meet our city climate goals.

We call on the Hennepin County Board to approve, fully fund and implement a strong Climate Action Plan that will:

- Achieve county-wide GHG emissions reductions of 50% by 2030, 80% by 2040 and Net Zero by 2050 [from a baseline of 2005, updating the 2007 Cool Counties Commitment to match current science].
- We commit our cities and organizations to work with the County & other cities/jurisdictions to achieve these goals together, while advancing racial equity, climate resilience and shared economic vitality.

To achieve coordinated city and county-wide GHG emission reduction targets we support the County's Climate Action Plan which states:

"Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful with public entity partners and with community organizations.

Objective: Explore and pursue partnership models driven by mutual climate change goals.

Strategies: Pursue strategies with the clearest direction forward"

- Foster, long term, integrated planning that includes jointly collecting and analyzing data and modeling with a lens on health and racial equity.
- Reduce localized flooding and coordinate regional storm water resiliency efforts.
- Decarbonize, transportation, buildings [we would add: & energy supply in ways that strengthen equity, local economies & resilience]
- We would add: Expand carbon sequestration, tree canopy, native landscaping, soil health, land conservation
- Educate and engage the public, [and institutions and businesses] in taking collective action.
- Raise a collective voice for climate policy at the local, state [and federal] level."

Hennepin County's leadership and convening role with other public entities could co-create joint initiatives to meet mutual climate goals. This would enable the 41 cities within Hennepin County to scale up implementation of high-impact, equitable, low-carbon, resilient policies & projects county-wide during this vital decade.

We ask the Hennepin County Board and staff to include language in your Board Resolution and in the text of the Plan that would:

1. Direct the County Administrator and all Department lead staff to fully support and empower county department staff to implement the Climate Action Plan to meet GHG reduction targets county-wide, and regularly report results,
2. Prioritize application of a Racial Equity lens and Climate Justice considerations in all facets of the Plan.
3. Include priority deliverables/benchmarks with reporting requirements/dates for County Departments Host Bi-Annual Climate Action Plan implementation review event(s)/process with partner jurisdictions and organizations, community groups and diverse stakeholders that are publicly accessible, transparent and participatory.
4. Direct all County Departments to use the county's Equity Impacts and Climate Impacts assessment tools when developing/reviewing plans, projects and capital investments.
5. Add important deliverables for key departments with reporting requirements and dates including Transportation, Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Community Works, Hennepin Pathways, Energy and Environment

Fresh Energy - Hennepin County Climate Action Plan comments (comments cont. pg. 4)

contributed by:

*(Names redacted)*

Related to improving education and communication to promote awareness, personal action and best practices - how is personal action defined? By the individual? Organizations, business, agencies? How will education and

communication be improved? Financial and technological investments must be made to ensure all residents have access. The County needs to provide more action steps to how these strategies will be realized and how they intend to address the climate emergency and environmental racism explicitly.

GOAL: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities (pg. 16)

Strategy: Better understand and plan for the health needs of our diverse communities

-Related to data collection and monitoring health impacts, how will data on the impacts of COVID-19 influence how data is interpreted through an equity lens?

-In strengthening sustainable access to affordable housing, healthcare, food and transportation and other social determinants of health, access to affordable utilities (electricity, heat, water, and internet) should also be included. Expansion of public transit between and among affordable housing and services provides one strategy for achieving this goal.

-In developing a climate analysis framework with a health and racial equity lens in budgets and planning work, the County should be explicit about all identities that have been marginalized by white supremacy and who face the first, worst, and longest impacts of the climate emergency.

Strategy: Mitigate disproportionate impacts associated with climate change

-Utilize energy efficiency as a tool for affordable and healthy housing, investing in upgrades in housing stock and buildings that are underserved first.

-In reducing air pollution associated with transportation, especially in areas with vulnerable populations, it takes specific policy and prioritization to target emissions and air pollution reduction in overburdened communities, and air pollution does not solely come from transportation; this strategy must include industrial facilities and energy generation.

Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities – Buildings and energy use (pgs. 36-39)

-A county-level green building policy should include more detail about how it would specifically align with the GHG reductions goals of the County. Carbon-free is where we need to go and should therefore be the standard the County is working towards.

-Target metrics for County as well as community buildings should include clear and aggressive carbon reduction goals (pg. 38 and 39)

-As mentioned above, fuel-switching to carbon-free electricity must be a primary focus of the building strategy, and more robust tools are necessary for new and existing buildings to reach a carbon-free standard. There is a significant focus on benchmarking; while this provides one important method for reducing emissions, its demonstrated impact energy-saving is limited to roughly 2-7%.

-The focus on existing buildings is too limited. Retrofits and salvage strategies in existing buildings are valuable, but there must be consideration of new construction projects in this report as well. New projects should be all-electric, super-efficient, and built sustainably so that retrofits are not required in 10 years, as well as to align clearly with the goals of the report.

comments cont. pg. 5

Fresh Energy - Hennepin County Climate Action Plan comments (comments cont. pg. 5)

contributed by:

*(names redacted)*

-Investing in renewable energy' and 'maximizing centralized energy sources that incorporate renewable technologies' (pg. 38) are very vague and must be made more specific. If investments are made in renewable natural gas, for example, then the implications of relying on the existing natural gas pipeline system and the carbon impact of such a strategy must be very clearly delineated. This also goes for district energy systems that rely on renewable natural gas and/or biogas. This type of strategy should also be compared to less carbon intensive building energy strategies like fuel switching to electricity.

-Encouraging renewable energy in communities is a goal that requires more detail (pg. 39). For example, public health should be a primary focus, which is omitted in this section. Once again, if 'renewable energy' includes renewable natural gas, then the public health implications of combusting carbon-based fuels indoors should be

compared to the indoor air quality benefits of electrification.

-Naming the Conservation Improvement Program is good, but does that mean the County will work with utilities to ensure it reaches underserved households and homes and buildings with older housing stock that would benefit most from energy efficiency upgrades? The County could provide comments on the CIP Triennial Plans at the Public Utilities Commission for prioritizing underserved households.

-It is encouraging to see support for the stretch building code, but that is contingent on the state passing the law.

-There is no definition or list of what renewable energy sources the county is considering. This is concerning because we know the County waste facilities are very interested producing renewable natural gas and/or biogas. If this is a primary waste management strategy for the County, it must be included clearly in this plan. RNG and biogas are not mentioned once in this report, which seems like a glaring omission.

-The global warming potential for methane gas that is listed on pg. 44 is outdated. The EPA is using IPCC AR4 (2017) data. The IPCC has since released the AR5 (2013), which finds that the global warming potential for methane gas over a 100-year time horizon is 28, not 25. The City of Minneapolis uses this updated data, as well.

-There is no mention of the carbon emissions associated with natural gas infrastructure systems in this report. The carbon footprint of leakage from gas pipes must be factored into the report clearly, especially if continued reliance on natural gas is expected to occur and especially if reliance on alternative gaseous fuels like RNG is considered as a 'climate strategy'.

GOAL: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities - Transportation (pages 40 - 43)

-Community feedback was to go bold and to lead, but the transportation goals are not ambitious enough. Converting only 20% of light-duty fleet vehicles to electric in 10 years is among the easiest changes to make. County goals should at least match those of the federal government: decrease emissions from county fleets by 50% or more by 2030; convert 100% of light-duty fleet vehicles to electric by 2030 (and building charging infrastructure to match this).

comments cont. pg. 6

Fresh Energy - Hennepin County Climate Action Plan comments (comments cont. pg. 6)  
contributed by:

*(Names redacted)*

-What data does the "wedge" of transportation emission reductions incorporate? VMT reduction, switching vehicles to Low and Zero Emissions, reducing residents' VMT's? Which portion accounts for electrifying only the County's fleet? Or does it include vehicles like cargo, transit buses, personal passenger cars, etc.?

-It would provide more clarity and transparency if transportation emissions data, broken down by emissions sources, were shared in the report, and if proposed actions corresponded to specific emissions sources. Other data that would be informative is: number of public EV chargers; average vehicle miles travelled; the number and types of vehicles in the County's fleet.

-Will this action plan be sufficient for the cities within the county that have climate action plans to meet their own goals?

-What are "core county functions?" The report could do a better job delineating what the County can do specifically within the transportation space.

-Beyond core County responsibilities, what role or relationship does Hennepin County have with Met Council, which is responsible for so much of the regional transportation planning, and how will Hennepin County leverage this relationship to advocate for cleaner transportation options? Where else does the County have an influence? For example: the highway expansion investments; use of funds for transit; advocating for which bus technology is prioritized - electric or diesel; and the use of heavier transportation and cargo and warehouse centers.

-As with all other sections, it is not clear how these recommendations will get implemented, who or which department is responsible for implementation, how progress will be measured and shared with the public, or how the County will be held accountable to meeting these goals.

Fresh Energy is grateful for the opportunity to weigh-in on Hennepin County's Draft Climate Plan. We appreciate Hennepin County's initiative and leadership to create a robust climate action plan, and we think Hennepin County can, and should, be even more ambitious. This plan must reflect the current realities of the climate emergency that are intertwined with the crises of the COVID-19 pandemic, racism, and economic inequality. While the Hennepin

County Climate Action Plan is action-oriented and covers a breadth of critical topics, Hennepin County should produce a bolder vision with its commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as well as racial and social disparities. We hope these detailed comments can provide some assistance in scoping out a more ambitious, measurable, and urgent plan.

With regards to reducing emissions, I think it is extremely important for the County to prioritize, walking biking rolling and transit in all new street projects. I feel strongly that the County cannot continue to maintain a Car-centric street design model.

Overall I'm really glad to see the effort to tie together so many different pieces of the built environment into this plan. One piece that overlaps with safety is the multi-lane county roads in the urban areas.

4-to-3 conversions and any way to reduce the vehicle miles traveled should be looked at. I live on a significantly overbuilt county road, which only encourages driving and, more importantly, actively discourages walking and biking. Making this a shared space for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other vehicles to all travel more safely would encourage ways of travelling that are not always by car. If we're to create a streetscape that encourages these options, people need to feel safe.

Please consider including language for how any county rebuilds will plan, by default, for shrinking the number of lanes, barring significant reasons to maintain the status quo, and include all ways people can travel.

Cars = microplastics in our waterways + impervious surface. If the County does not commit to deep reductions in VMTs, plus robust support for walking, using wheelchairs, biking, and transit, it shows it does not take stormwater management seriously. This is my number one concern.

I would also stress that the County needs to really examine the way it's thoroughfares enter the City, so many enter in under served communities who suffer most from all the emissions and the dangerous speed of the traffic entry into residential neighborhoods, the four lane roads present Pedestrian and wheelchair and bike users with untenable crossings

March 3, 2021 The Sierra Club North Star Chapter represents over 80,000 members and supporters across Minnesota empowered to protect our communities' well-being through environmental advocacy. It is our mission to support the pursuit of racial, economic, & environmental justice for all Minnesotans. In line with those values, the North Star Chapter submits the following statement as a rejection of Hennepin County's 2021 Climate Action Plan & a call for a framework more rooted in community feedback. The Hennepin County Climate Action Plan is a proposal for how the county will pursue initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The plan seeks to identify strategies to adapt to the changing climate in ways that reduce vulnerabilities and ensure a more equitable and resilient Hennepin County. The problems with the plan can be summarized as: It does not address the main source of greenhouse gas emissions, transportation. It is overly focused on adaptation rather than also mitigation. It ignores a key concern of BIPOC community members. The Hennepin Energy Recovery Center (HERC), a major source of pollution in Hennepin County which inequitably harms poor and BIPOC communities is only mentioned once in the appendix. Community members have actively advocated for increased Zero Waste initiatives as a way to move away from the harms of trash incineration. Prioritizing our spending in the necessary reassessment of our county's waste management system in a way that directly confronts waste stream issues. Community input was solicited but then not incorporated into later iterations of the plan. The County hosted several feedback sessions for the first draft of the plan that were meant to engage with constituents around content, vision, and implementation. However, it is clear that with this most recent draft of the proposal, substantial community input was not included in a meaningful way. Instead the plan attempts to analyze climate change without the necessary lens of environmental justice taken into consideration. Within feedback sessions the COVID-19 pandemic was identified as a major concern by participants. A key aspect of this concern was the ways in which air pollution exacerbated the risk of residents contracting the illness with residents of EJ communities suffering the most. The plan as it stands does not address how the county will incorporate the effects of the pandemic into their implementation plans. For community members this EJ designation is an important part of telling the full story. The county states in their section titled Protecting Vulnerable Communities, that they are committed to addressing the disparities between residents of color and their white counterparts. For this to happen, Environmental Justice must be at the forefront of what is being constructed within the Climate Action Plan. This means that a framework seeking to improve resilience must also be willing to confront the root causes of these inequities and the role that county led initiatives play towards creating those circumstances. We are asking for the county to use their resources and planning time to come to the table with tangible solutions around increasing climate resiliency. Not only does this include mitigation & repatriation of environmental harm but also a real commitment towards expanding affordable housing opportunities, increasing access to green public spaces, and thinking creatively about how those areas can work to meet public needs. The Hennepin County Climate Action Plan, if done right, has the opportunity to work towards major systemic changes that would vastly improve the living conditions of all our communities and particularly our BIPOC communities. We need a plan that boldly confronts inequities, climate change and prioritizes the feedback solicited from marginalized communities. We look forward to seeing the County come forward with a new plan. *-(name redacted) Chapter Organizer, Sierra Club*

I would like to see VMT reduction goals take a much larger part of the transportation plan. VMT reduction is the one tactic that will benefit the climate across ALL the other policies in the plan. Hennepin County needs to aggressively set goals and benchmarks for reducing overall driving as an umbrella strategy, building its transportation investments and decisions moving forward.

I'm really excited that Hennepin County is ready to take action on climate change. I appreciate that this plan acknowledges that we need to reduce total vehicle miles traveled but it falls short of any commitments on Hennepin County's responsibility to reduce lane miles.

Narrowing Hennepin's deadly streets is the single best thing the county can do to facilitate mode shift in the metro.

We can't reduce VMT without reducing lane miles and the final Climate Action plan needs to include measurable steps the county will take to make transit, walking and biking the obvious choices over personal motor vehicles.

- 80% reduction by 2050 is too little too late. This target should be 2030.
- any preservation of car culture is a loss. we need to move rapidly and drastically away from inefficient cars, this includes electric cars. Reducing lanes and speed while prioritizing non-car transportation is a good way to achieve this.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- dense development that prioritizes walking, bicycling, rolling and public transportation</li> <li>- Minneapolis county streets are some of the most dangerous, these need to be addressed and made into models for a truly complete street that deprioritizes cars and gives sustainable modes of transportation equal footing</li> <li>- convert a percentage of county light vehicles to electric cargo bicycles like they do in other countries. These are accessible to a wide range of people and would help deepen the commitment to the necessary infrastructure.</li> <li>- All county operated facilities need to prioritize non-car transportation and offer flexible working conditions when possible</li> </ul>
<p>I believe that it is key to address our food system in the climate action plan. I suggest that the plan should address economic disparities by promoting accessible food opportunities, through the creation of permanent community gardens and food forests on green spaces and county-owned properties, eliminating food deserts, and by funding community food programs and mobile markets. Food systems have the potential to be carbon sinks. Build plant-rich permaculture systems on county-owned lands that store carbon through fruit and nut trees, and perennial crops that have permanent soil coverage and root systems like asparagus, berries, hazelnuts, Kernza, and rhubarb. Focus on the creation of these carbon-storing food hubs in predominantly low-income and BIPOC neighborhoods. These systems could build green jobs. The county can also convert underutilized county lands and properties in predominantly BIPOC- and low-income neighborhoods for community gardens, parks, and open spaces.</p>
<p>The foundational strategies are on point. Well done! I have a few minor comments on specific objectives. The "Residents, businesses, and organizations understand and are prepared to respond to the impacts of climate change" objective under "Enhance Public Safety" goal mentions "communication" frequently, but none of the target metrics seem to measure communication uptake or preparation. The "Protect building sites, roads, infrastructure, and natural resources" goal mentions using mid-century precipitation projections; as a climate scientist, I worry that mid-century is not long enough of a horizon to consider for robust planning. Make sure that you consider mid- (e.g. 2050) and late- (e.g. 2080) projections so that your planning is looking a generation beyond.</p>
<p>I hope that the county will take steps to make plant-rich foods more available and affordable, with a special focus on current food deserts. The County could run an opt-in bulk-buy program where different organizations could pool their orders to get better prices for plant-rich staples that targets food deserts and underserved communities. And I would like to see more healthy eating education opportunities to food security programs such as SNAP and WIC - with a focus on affordable and nutritious plant-based foods. These educational outreach programs and workshops should spread awareness of already existing programs in the community such as farmers markets and co-ops that accept SNAP and WIC.</p>
<p>I am supportive of Hennepin County's thoughtful process for building a climate change action plan that is based on the data of where greenhouse gas emissions come from and that incorporates citizen feedback. I appreciate that this plan acknowledges that we need to reduce total vehicle miles traveled, especially by personal vehicles. Investing in Metro Transit and electrification of our transit system, as well as bicycle infrastructure, will help reduce miles driven by personal vehicles. Electric buses will support multiple goals of reducing air pollution and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Bus rapid transit and dedicated bike lanes are two things that reduce my personal miles driven. I also hope to see more consideration for pedestrian traffic, encouraging small daily errands by foot, through clear sidewalks and more and safer pedestrian crossings at busy county roads, as well as narrower roads and tree-lined streets.</p> <p>Meeting our goals for reduced emissions will require partnerships among the private, public and nonprofit sectors through a multi-pronged approach, from helping residents learn about rain gardens to increasing business organic recycling. I'd like to see more support for businesses and multi-family housing units to adopt organics recycling and other climate-friendly policies. Right now it doesn't seem to be cost-effective for these properties to offer organics recycling, while private homeowners benefit from this service. Expanding the transfer station would be a good investment to increase our region's organics recycling capacity.</p>
<p>Implement fix it first policy.</p>
<p>Providing plant-rich and healthy eating education opportunities to food security programs such as SNAP and WIC. These educational outreach programs and workshops should spread awareness of already existing programs in the community such as farmers markets and co-ops that accept SNAP and WIC. Support the East Phillips Indoor Urban Farm.</p>



Prices are currently a huge barrier to people consuming healthy foods, decreasing this price difference and making healthy foods more affordable and available should be an objective of this foundational strategy.

Thank you for looking to the future to provide adaptation and mitigation strategies for global climate change.  
Pg 32 Green Infrastructure: Please include native plant habitat restorations as an example of green infrastructure in addition to rain gardens.... They improve soil health, filter and infiltrate water and provide essential habitat for birds and beneficial insects. Pocket prairies can be used in areas where rain gardens are not appropriate.  
Construction projects should include goals of minimizing soil disturbance and keeping disturbed/stockpiled topsoil covered with living roots where practical to feed soil micro-organisms that help maintain soil aggregates (to store water) and sequester carbon. If treated as the valuable asset that it is, when used to regrade the area, the topsoil should still have some ecosystem function rather than being lifeless dirt. Decompact soil after construction projects, where compacted by heavy equipment.  
Protect and restore biodiversity by reducing turfgrass except in play areas, and replacing with native habitat that replicate the function of prairies, wetlands and savannas. Turfgrass is resource intensive to maintain, where a native habitat requires no supplemental watering once established. Without mowing we have less noise, air and water pollution.  
Pg 52 "Convert turfgrass to plants that sequester carbon" change to Convert turfgrass to NATIVE plants that sequester carbon and support biodiversity. 97% of terrestrial birds need insects, especially plant eating (herbivore) insects to feed their young. Most herbivore insects (example of monarch caterpillars that can only eat milkweed) need native plants to survive.

There is an overemphasis on trees, shrubs also provide many of the same, if not more, benefits. Ideally layer the landscape where possible so there are canopy trees, understory trees or shrubs, flowers, sedges and groundcover for "living mulch".

Transportation -- and in particular driving -- is one of the largest sources of CO2 emissions in Hennepin County. The plan names reducing VMT as a goal, which is great! However, it lists no actionable strategies for actually reducing VMT. The research is clear that street and road and highway capacity drives VMT. Adding capacity induces demand for driving and increases VMT. The research also shows that removing capacity causes traffic to "evaporate," and that it is a critical strategy for reducing VMT.

The County must include a commitment to "no new lane miles." It must also include a plan to "right-size county driving infrastructure including streets, roads, and highways to the smallest, safest, and most affordable size in every case."

Ramsey County is showing us that County highways frequently meet transportation needs with a 4 to 3 conversion. Their research shows that they are safer after a 4 to 3 conversion.

The disparate health impacts from high-volume streets through air pollution and traffic violence are named throughout this report, but the clear solution to that problem is left off the page here. Ramsey County is leading, Hennepin County is falling behind.

Stop expanding roads.

Stop building Park and Rides, and spend that money on people that depend on public transit. The \$18M being spent on the Park and Ride in Woodbury is money that could be spent to build an entire aBRT line.

Please amend the plan to achieve an 80% reduction in emissions by 2035.

Please update the Complete Streets policy to prioritize users that are not in private vehicles. (Looking at you Lyndale!)

Please stop using "Level of Service" in street designs, and instead focus on moving people in all modes effectively.

Please prioritize dense development patterns where residents can walk, or bike, or take buses to get to work, school, shopping, health care, etc.

1) On page 17 and 22 the plan lists ways the County plans to build relationships and do outreach to vulnerable communities; however, this still seems like a top-down approach. I would like the County to form a listening coalition/committee or hire a Community liaison to find out what vulnerable communities see as the biggest climate change impacts on their lives and what solutions they have for these impacts; I'd also like to see the County make a committee to diversifying their hiring practices especially for outreach staff in order to be more effective.

2) Page 23 discusses starting a green jobs initiative which is great; I'd like to see the county work on this initiative to do outreach to communities that have traditionally had barriers to job-market entry (formerly incarcerated populations or new immigrant populations) as many green jobs, especially around GI maintenance or landscaping, tend to be low barrier to entry.

3) On Page 27 the Plan discusses enhancing tree cover which is excellent; the County should consider how they plant these trees and the potential excess leaf litter burden that could get into stormwater and mitigate this either by putting trees far back from roads or by planning to increase street sweeping in areas where trees are planted.

4) Page 29 discusses the County reducing its total salt use but I'd like to see more; increased freeze/thaw will lead to more need for salt despite MN's chloride pollution problem and I see the County as well poised to lead on behavior change campaigns that focus on salt use optimization and changing level of service expectations around salting.

5) Page 35 discusses promoting soil carbon storage BMPs and conducting outreach to explain the benefits of these BMPs; if the County wants farmer behavior to change toward BMP adoption they should also plan to invest in research as to what barriers are keeping farmers from adopting these BMPs; as part of this, the County potentially start a grant fund to increase adoption.

6) The County should eliminate the use of level of service, an engineering measurement that disproportionately favors moving cars rather than people in its transportation projects.

7) The plan should direct that new or relocated County facilities must be easily accessible by bicycle and transit service according to Metro Transit's high-frequency network map.

8) The plan should specifically call out the need for improved and expanded transit shelters.

9) The plan should prioritize dense development patterns where residents can walk, bike and take transit to meet their basic needs.

10) When discussing food waste reduction BMP implementation for businesses on page 45 or a consumer campaign to reduce food waste, there should be research into what barriers are keeping residents from adopting food waste best practices and then money invested into eliminating those barriers; right now it seems more focused on education and outreach which will not get the behavior change results needed. The same goes for the general waste reduction campaign outlined on page 46. I appreciate that the county is already doing some of this research on general climate change actions as outlined on page 53-55; now it needs to be done for each goal the County listed that involve action by entities beyond the County itself.

Food sustainability in the form of promoting plant-rich diets must be an integral part of any climate action plan. Meat production alone will produce enough emissions to bring our world beyond the 2 degrees celsius benchmark. Working now to educate kids about produce and plant-based diets as well as effectively communicating and promoting the climate benefits of plant rich diets must be a goal of this action plan.

Please add methods to close the access to consistent and healthy food as part of this action plan if "especially vulnerable communities" is truly a priority. You can do this by promoting local food producers and schools to open up produce and food tables that would make available food that may be expiring soon or would otherwise not be sold. This would also cuts down on food waste.

at the last minute I say .. What is WRONG is support of LINE 3 - and Fossil Fuels - thus NOT our water. Nor indigenous people and their land. Altho there is Covid19, an ongoing attack on our republic from within and horrendous racial inequality as well as economic inequality ... The ongoing Climate Collapse is Our world wide Biggest Threat. Whatever we is decided to be done ... I know it must be done sooner, done faster and done bigger.

Provide plant-rich and healthy eating education opportunities to food security programs such as SNAP and WIC. These educational outreach programs and workshops should spread awareness of already existing programs in the community such as farmers markets and co-ops that accept SNAP and WIC.

Support the East Phillips Indoor Urban Farm.

Create garden plots in county-owned lands that community members can grow food, vegetables, and herbs that they can take home and eat. This is similar to a New York program and a program in St. Louis Park where they do this on school property.

Create policies or programs that incentivize the consumption of plant-rich foods through the County's promotion of the adoption of strategies in "WRI's Playbook for Guiding Diners Toward Plant-Rich Dishes in Food Service."

Food systems have the potential to be carbon sinks. Build plant-rich permaculture systems on county-owned lands that store carbon through fruit and nut trees, and perennial crops that have permanent soil coverage and root systems like asparagus, berries, hazelnuts, Kernza, and rhubarb. Focus on the creation of these carbon-storing food hubs in predominantly low-income and BIPOC neighborhoods. These systems could build green jobs.

Some things I love in the plan: - Addressing specific, predictable impacts on vulnerable populations, such as flooding & air pollution (p. 17)- Addressing root systems of inequity/social determinates of health, such as affordable housing and transportation access (p. 17)Some things I'd like to see added / edited:- There's a lot of "explore" and "increase awareness" verbs throughout. I want the county to commit to act. For example under "Strategy: Maximize green economic recovery and workforce development opportunities" Add: "Convene youth and partners in the county who employ youth in green jobs, to make budget recommendations to strengthen the green job/pathways program."- Instead of just "Strategy: Better understand and plan for the health needs of our diverse communities" I want a much more active commitment. We don't need a study to know that rent stabilization measures will make low-income residents less vulnerable to harm from climate catastrophe. How about this instead: "Strategy: prioritize significant county budget money for climate actions that are led by the most vulnerable residents/participants (including low-wage, BIPOC, and residents with disabilities), including increased funding for permanent green affordable housing, support for BIPOC-owned food access businesses, and increased green transportation access."- The county needs a plan to shut down the HERC. Burning trash nextdoor to some of the most historically overburdened residents of the county is not acceptable. I super appreciate the work the county is leading to reduce the trash sent to the HERC, but it needs to move to the next level - every city in the county needs a zero-waste plan, and the HERC should be shut down in the next 3 years. - The county should take a stand on no new fossil fuel infrastructure from the utilities servicing the county.

## Comments and letters received via email

*Names and contact information has been redacted for privacy. Comments received on organizational letterhead are provided with contact information.*

I just looked through the County Climate Action Plan Draft and I have a few comments:

1) Overall it looks fairly thorough and comprehensive.

2) On Page 38 under the heading

"Strategy: Transition to renewable energy sources and reduce energy use overall in county operations", one of the bullets talks about developing a strategy to convert county buildings from Gas to Electric. This is a reasonable long term strategy, but should wait until there is a sufficient supply of clean electricity available. You don't get any improvement (and actually go the wrong direction) if you have to burn coal or natural gas to generate the needed electricity.

3) Page 43 talks about transit strategies. You get multiplied benefits by greater use of mass transit (reduced energy use, reduced air pollution, reduced wear & tear on infrastructure, less traffic congestion, etc). The challenge is always how do you get more people to use it. I think the plan needs to better address the typical barriers: convenience, cost, and safety; with safety being a very important issue. On the cost issue, I hear some suggestions of making public transit free. I don't know if that is practical, but perhaps reduced fares or promotional transit cards (e.g. good for 10 free rides) might get more people to try it. Obviously, we need to get past the Covid epidemic, before increased transit use can be realized.

Perhaps one thing missing from the "transit" strategy is supporting/encouraging the use of electronic/virtual work/meetings/events as a way to minimize physical trips. The one benefit from Covid is that now many people know how to use Zoom and similar tools. I've already attended 5 meetings in the past week without leaving my house. I'm especially appreciative of virtual public hearings (city, state or county govt.) as it makes it much more likely that I will be able to participate. I expect the same is true for many others. So, you get a double benefit of more public participation and less traffic.

4) Pg 45 addresses waste handling. One of the proposed ideas is construction of an anaerobic digester at the Brooklyn Park facility. This is a great idea. Composting is wonderful, but a lot of the biomass ends up being converted directly to carbon dioxide. Anaerobic digestion produces useful methane that can be burned as fuel before it goes back to carbon dioxide.

5) Page 47 talks about carbon sequestration. Planting trees is a great mitigation strategy. You get a double environmental impact. Trees actually absorb a fair amount of solar energy (which would otherwise end up as increased heat), while removing carbon dioxide from the air and converting it to biomass. The county should aggressively plant trees on county property, but also facilitate programs and education to get more trees planted on private property. I would encourage partnerships with organizations like the Tree Trust, which grows and plants a lot of trees while also training disadvantaged and minority youth for careers in horticulture. Win Win!

Those are my thoughts,

Regards,

*(Name and contract information redacted)*

<https://www.startribune.com/hennepin-county-releases-comprehensive-climate-action-plan/600028386/>

In general I support your goals But I find them rather hypocritical when the largest retired Hydro electric in the USA is located in Hennepin County while the public still has to pay the maintenance cost of the Dam.

I also think you are overlooking the benefit of interfacing Geo Thermal with Municipal water.

I have a 30 year accumulation of information on these subjects which I will gladly share with you if you are interested.

*(name redacted)*

*You have both sent me notices about feedback collection for the Hennepin County Climate Action Plan and rather than use the online comment form, I would like to ask you to share the 2 attached documents with the appropriate resources.*

*As you know, I'm a member of Citizens for Sustainability and we used our February virtual book discussion time to review the Climate Action Plan. We have organized our collective feedback in an excel document, which contains 2 worksheets; 1) General Comments from our group discussion and 2) specific section feedback with numbering that coincides with references in the attached PDF.*

*FYI, Citizens for Sustainability is a local group working to promote sustainability within our local government, in our schools, and in our communities. We sponsor education and outreach events and collaborate with local organizations to actively lead change. Specific members who have contributed comments include: (names redacted).  
Let me know if you have any questions about our feedback.  
Thank you, (name redacted)*

*A representative of the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis (ACM) attended the February 22 Hennepin County Climate Action Plan meeting and appreciated your willingness to consider changes that will fill some gaps in the plan related to protecting birds and other wildlife in the county. All of Hennepin County lies in the Mississippi Flyway a major migratory corridor used by hundreds of species and millions of birds twice a year on their epic journeys to and from their breeding grounds, and the CAP can help address threats to birds and other wildlife.  
Bird populations are dramatically declining; a recent study showed that more than one in four birds has disappeared in the last 50 years. Researchers "were astounded by this net loss across all birds on our continent, the loss of billions of birds."  
Birds are further threatened by climate change. A National Audubon study found that two-thirds of North American birds are at risk of extinction from global temperature rise.  
The attached document suggests changes to ensure that the Hennepin County Climate Action Plan helps reduce the greatest threats to birds, including habitat loss, light pollution and collisions with glass. Our main recommendations are to require:  
- Adherence to the State of Minnesota's B3 guidelines be required for all new buildings and major building renovations.  
- Native plant landscaping since conventional landscaping with non-native trees and plants causes habitat loss.  
We would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you via Zoom to discuss our recommendations.  
Thank you,  
(Name redacted)  
Co-chairs, Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis Advocacy Committee*

I skimmed your recent letter about planned goals/initiatives for 2021 and beyond. One of the items related to addressing Climate Change, so I'd like to make a couple of points.  
I'm not a global warming denier... in fact I'm probably one of the few who have actually read the National Science Foundation's original research on Global Warming back in 1998. It was compelling, not preachy, and - you may recall - even convinced Pres. GW Bush to partially change his mind ... and then Sept 11 happened.  
But I have a couple of real problems with the various political initiatives to quickly drive carbon-based energy out of the economy.  
I approach this as a consultant as I have done work in the Electric Utility communication and am currently doing work in the Electric Vehicle Battery industry.  
1) Electric utilities control and communications systems are very vulnerable to hacking. It happens regularly, and often their systems are probed and utilities don't even know it until some outside 3rd party tells them. The most recent project I worked on was for Harris, the defense & public service communications supplier. One of their fastest selling products is a radio modem/transceiver that uses traditional 800-900 khz radio to monitor and control key electric transmission assets - the way it was done in the 60s and 70s - instead of or alongside broadband. This back-to-the-future approach is because hacking remains a significant risk to Smart Grid and the internet-based control systems of utilities. A determined group from CCP or NoKo will have field day with electric utilities, particularly if it disrupts a plug-in-based transportation system of the U.S. Imagine how the disruption in Texas this past week would be multiplied in an environment comprised of plug-in electric vehicles. Quite simply, the electric distribution system in the U.S. is not up to the task of powering our transportation system. And they may not be even in 15 years.  
2) EV batteries are neither green nor efficient. I'm currently part of a consulting team working with a small EV battery maker co-based in Massachusetts and China. So I've learned a little bit. A) Lithium is the cathode of choice in almost every EV battery. It holds a dense energy charge better than any known element. Energy density means greater range and quicker recharge. But environmentalists like to ignore the extreme

ecological damage that lithium mining does to the environment, in part because the mining is in far away places like Chile. The damage from lithium mining makes oil fracking look like child's play. B) The physical limits of an EV battery are not going to budge much. New innovators like QuantumScape are claiming their 'test rack' batteries will deliver 300 miles per charge and charge to 80% capacity in 15 minutes. But they have never produced working battery modules for EVs and some very credible engineers say their data are either a mistake or false. By comparison, the limits achieved by Tesla are 225 miles and 25 minutes to 80% capacity. Although not bad, a vehicle population of plugin EVs will be recharging alot and could well resemble the long gas lines of the 70s where gas rationing limited the average range to 180 miles between gas stops.

3) EV batteries will be a solid waste problem. There are no known ways to efficiently recycle the hazardous materials in lithium batteries. I

don't know if you've seen a diagram of a plug-in EV, but the battery modules amount to 1/3 the cost and 1/5 of the weight/volume. It hasn't been an issue because the life of current EV batteries is about 10 years, so the first generation Tesla vehicles are now just beginning to be 'retired'. Although different recycling test projects are going on, most are energy intensive and landfills dedicated to hazardous EV batteries materials will be a growth business in a few years.

So the trade off - CO2 in the air vs grid vulnerability, excess recharge time. and EV battery landfills.

I hope that Hennepin County looks in a different direction ... perhaps deploying hydrogen powered EVs for your fleets. I know less about hydrogen-electric vehicles, but from what I've read the technological hurdles are less and existing vehicle refueling distribution infrastructure is usable and there is no waste to recycle other than the vehicle itself.

Unfortunately, this may end up being a VHS vs Betamax result. Where the icon popularity of the plug-in EV beats out the technically superior and greener hydrogen-powered EV.

Hope you're well and stay that way.

*(name redacted)*

## **Hennepin County Climate Action Plan – Comments from Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis**

### **p. 12 Goal: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities**

#### p. 17 Strategy: Mitigate disproportionate impacts associated with climate change

- Mitigate the heat island effect, especially in areas with people most vulnerable to extreme heat, by supporting increased access to air conditioning, increasing the **native** tree canopy, and converting hardscape where possible to green infrastructure such as **boulevard landscaping using native rain gardens and bioswales and green roofs**.
- Address flooding in housing, especially where people most vulnerable to flooding impacts live, by promoting and providing financial support for preventative measures such as sump-pumps and landscaping to redirect water away from structures.
- Build awareness of expanding flood zones among at-risk residents and businesses and the potential availability of optional flood insurance. Explore options for possible subsidized flood insurance based on financial need.
- Reduce air pollution associated with transportation, especially in areas with vulnerable populations.
- Reduce the health impacts associated with pollution from the production, packaging, use, and disposal of materials by supporting waste prevention, reuse, recycling, toxicity reduction, and the proper management of hazardous waste.

### **p. 24 Goal: Enhance public safety**

#### **p. 27 Objective: Residents, businesses, and organizations understand and are prepared to respond to the impacts of climate change**

#### Strategy: Reduce risks to vulnerable people from extreme heat or cold

- Clearly communicate climate risks and vulnerabilities and raise awareness about programs and services available to decrease risks and address vulnerabilities.
- Coordinate operations of readily accessible and culturally appropriate cooling and heating options and communicate the availability of these centers to vulnerable people.
- Advocate for expanding utility disconnect protections to include air conditioning and modifying building codes to require efficient air conditioning.
- Educate residents on the importance of trees and mitigate the heat island effect by increasing the **native** tree canopy and converting hardscape where possible to green infrastructure **such as boulevard landscaping using native rain gardens and bioswales and green roofs**.

### **p. 28 Goal: Protect building sites, roads, infrastructure, and natural resources**

#### **p. 29 Objective: Climate risks and impacts to county buildings and infrastructure are assessed and mitigated**

Strategy: Reassess policies, design standards, and maintenance practices for county buildings and infrastructure projects

- Update stormwater design standards that will serve as a standard across Hennepin County lines of business to account for increased rainfall intensities.
- Modify pavement and sidewalk design standards to accommodate projected changes to freeze/thaw cycles.
- **Apply the Minnesota Sustainable Building Guidelines (B3 Guidelines) to all new buildings and major building renovations.**
- Change snow and ice removal practices to account for increased precipitation intensity and increased icing due to increased freeze/thaw cycles, reduce total salt use on county property, and accommodate more multi-modal transportation options on county roads.
- Alter site development performance standards and design guidelines for rights-of-way and other county properties to reduce impervious surfaces and prioritize green infrastructure, such as **native** trees, boulevard landscaping **using rain gardens and bioswales**, tree trenches, and detention tactics. Adjust county policy to address long-term maintenance needs of green infrastructure assets.
- Design capital projects to projected mid-century rain events and incorporate landslide hazard reduction approaches, where applicable, **including native vegetation to prevent erosion.**
- Incentivize projects that are designed to control projected mid-century rainfall events in the cost participation policy for contribution to regional flood reduction projects.

**p. 31 Objective: Risks and impacts from increased precipitation, flooding, and landslides are reduced**

Strategy: Reassess policies and practices to manage increased stormwater volumes

- Design capital projects to manage flows from mid-century forecasted rainfalls.
- Protect and restore streams, wetlands, floodplains, and uplands.
- Reduce impervious surfaces, use green infrastructure, and reuse stormwater for irrigation and design landscapes **using native plants** that don't require irrigation.
- Reduce barriers to regional stormwater management by investing in partnerships, empowering staff to work beyond property line boundaries, and creating a policy for financial contributions to such projects.
- Preserve open space and agricultural lands and promote stormwater best management practices to landowners.

**p. 32 Green infrastructure**

**Objective: The county employs green and natural infrastructure, including trees, plants, and soil, to build resiliency, especially in areas at higher risks for localized flooding and extreme heat**

Strategy: Reassess policies and practices to ensure capacity to design, implement, and maintain green infrastructure



- Expand the use of sustainable landscapes to increase the resilience of county properties by managing stormwater onsite, reducing the impact of the urban heat island, and sequestering carbon.
- Minimize hardscape in project designs and convert existing hardscape, where practical, into pervious pavement or green infrastructure.
- Expand the urban forest canopy by preserving mature trees, planting more **native** trees, and addressing barriers associated with maintenance.
- Assess all excess and tax-forfeited property for higher public uses, such as water infiltration basins or tree plantings, before considering for sale.
- Include green infrastructure in site development performance standards for county projects.
- Reduce the volume of and pollutant load in stormwater runoff through increased implementation of stormwater management best practices on current county building sites and rights-of-way.
- Set goals to maintain or increase **native** tree canopy cover on each county property to mitigate for climate change, then execute a plan to plant and maintain trees to reach those goals.

**pp. 34-35 Objective: Natural areas and open spaces are functional and **biodiverse****

Strategy: Plan for and mitigate anticipated ecosystem and open space impacts

- Monitor for both aquatic and terrestrial invasive species by using early detection methods, such as community scientists, and implementing invasive species control programs that include rapid response protocols and employ integrated pest management on public and private property.
- Protect, restore, and connect natural areas, including streams, wetlands, floodplains, prairies, savannas, and forests, with a focus on supporting biodiversity and providing habitat **and habitat corridors** for species that alter their range in response to climate change.
- **Apply the Minnesota Sustainable Building Guidelines (B3 Guidelines), Site and Water Guidelines, to all natural areas and open spaces.**
- Continue efforts to preserve **and increase** natural areas **including bird and other wildlife habitat** through conservation easements.
- Create pathways for residents and partners to protect natural areas and other open spaces that should be preserved for the ecosystem services they provide, such as flood mitigation, stormwater retention and management, **bird and other wildlife protection**, support for biodiversity, local food production, carbon sequestration, and **nature-based** recreation.
- Develop an Integrated Water Management Plan that considers findings from the groundwater plan, including vulnerabilities and/or areas of concern, with already established surface watershed management plans and land use management practices to develop a framework that protects vital aquatic ecosystems and source waters.
- Create and preserve affordable agricultural space for every scale of local food production – from conventional commodity agriculture to urban farming – and work with partners to encourage the

development of farm-to-table efforts, focusing especially on increasing access to these programs in low-income communities.

- Promote best management practices on agricultural land with a focus on practices that create healthier soils with increased carbon storage and water holding capacity of soils while maintaining or improving long-term crop yields.
- Conduct education and outreach that helps current and future agricultural producers and their partners understand both the need for and financial benefit of building climate change resiliency **including protection and enhancement of habitat for pollinators, birds and other wildlife** into their farming operations and the agricultural economy.
- Work with other public agencies to address threats from climate change impacts to water quality more broadly so that actions to respond to climate change in one location do not exacerbate water quality degradation downstream.

#### **Target metrics**

- Develop stormwater design standards for mid-century precipitation projections and develop policies and practices for green infrastructure to manage precipitation projections by mid-2021.
- **Develop policies and practices for protecting and enhancing bird and other wildlife habitat, including wildlife corridors, such as the Mississippi River, Chain of Lakes, and Minnehaha Creek.**
- Evaluate all existing building sites to maximize water retention considering projected mid-century rain event volumes by 2050.
- For new buildings, exceed runoff rates using projected mid-century rain event volumes instead of current Atlas 14 volumes, where feasible.
- **Require that all new buildings maximize infiltration and result in no net increase in runoff.**

### **p. 36 Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities**

#### **p. 37 Buildings and energy use**

The county has a history of leading collaborative efforts to improve energy efficiency and sustainability of buildings. Recognizing the importance of energy efficiency in building design and operation, the county initiated a collaborative effort that resulted in the creation of the Minnesota Sustainable Design Guide in 1996. This guide was a precursor to the current Minnesota Sustainable Building Guidelines (B3 guidelines) that are now widely used by state and local agencies to meet sustainability goals for new building design and building renovations.

#### **p. 38 Objective: Greenhouse gas emissions associated with buildings and energy use are reduced to meet the state's Next Generation Energy Act and county emission goals**

Strategy: Reduce climate impacts of buildings through innovative and efficient design, including the use of climate-friendly **and bird friendly** material choices

- Establish green building guidelines for county and regional adoption.

- Use the B3 guidelines to measure and track the impacts of design features on all county capital improvement projects.
- Use lifecycle analysis for selecting climate-friendly **and bird-safe** building materials and furnishings for all county facilities.
  - Prioritize renovation over building new.
  - Promote the design of all county buildings for adaptability and reuse.
  - Implement a sustainable purchasing policy, especially for the use of concrete and steel.
- Implement procedures that require the application of salvage and recycling of construction and demolition waste at all county-funded building projects.
- Work with cities to establish minimum energy performance targets for new construction and major renovations on both public and private properties.
- Reassess current development grants and explore new financial incentives to increase market transformation of climate-friendly buildings.

**p. 41 Inequitable climate impacts: Air pollution from transportation**

**Objective: Greenhouse gas emissions associated with transportation are reduced to meet the state’s The Next Generation Energy Act and county emission goals**

p. 43 Strategy: Use transportation investments to support broader county goals including reducing disparities, improving health, enhancing livability, and growing the economy

- Link transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and road projects to housing, jobs, and recreational opportunities.
- Prioritize vehicle emissions reductions strategies in areas with the residents experiencing high health burdens.
- Provide convenient, affordable access to destinations, especially for residents experiencing high transportation and housing cost burdens.
- Create healthy and livable communities by including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities as well as green boulevards **and native vegetation and native tree canopies** in roadway projects.
- **Strengthen the connection between land use planning and transportation to promote orderly growth and development. (What does this strategy mean?)**

**p. 47 Carbon sequestration on county-owned properties**

**Objective: The county sequesters carbon on county-owned property, including along county road rights-of-way and tax-forfeit properties.**

Strategy: Reassess policies and practices to increase carbon sequestration on county-owned properties.

- Develop goals, accounting strategies, and guidelines to help staff advance carbon sequestration on county projects.
- Prioritize **native** trees and native plants over turfgrass in landscape designs on new projects.

- Convert from turfgrass to other **native** landscape types where appropriate to improve carbon sequestration.

#### **p. 48 Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful**

No comments

#### **p. 51 Foundational Strategies**

##### **p. 52 Build and maintain green infrastructure and sequester carbon on all county-owned property**

- Install green infrastructure to manage stormwater on county-owned property, including on tax-forfeited properties in flood prone areas to protect surrounding properties and create green spaces.
- Explore a green jobs/pathways program concept for installation, establishment, and maintenance of green infrastructure.
- Convert turfgrass to **native** plants that sequester carbon, where appropriate.

##### **Decrease the heat island effect, especially in areas with highest vulnerability**

- Coordinate operations of readily accessible and culturally appropriate cooling centers.
- Preserve mature trees, plant more **native** trees and plants, and address maintenance issues.
- Convert hardscape where possible into pervious pavement or green infrastructure **using native plants**.
- Pursue site development performance standards that include green infrastructure **such as boulevard landscaping using native rain gardens and bioswales and green roofs**.
- Gather better, real-time data to allow for targeted notification of weather-related warnings.

#	Category / Section	Positive Points	Challenges	Questions / Examples / Comments
G1	Overall			Keep an eye out for Met Council Plan, hopefully it will be more regulatory.
G2	Overall	We like how this is highly collaborative. It provides a framework for others to adopt. However, it should be called a framework and not a plan.	This document lacks mandates we would hope to see from county.	What will ensure adoption across the county?
G3	Overall	Good use of diagrams, they can lead to further directional rationale/action.		
G4	Overall	Natural resiliency in plan is not required for cities, good to see reference to it in county document (page 33)		
G5	Adaptability	Compared to other plans, this is more comprehensive because it includes adaptability and resilience, which are important components to undertake.		
G6	Adaptability	This plan makes connections with adaptations and green house gas that other plans don't necessarily do.		
G7	Adaptability	I like that this starts with an adaptation perspective. Adaptation is what will help support our communities and individuals <u>today</u> and <u>tomorrow</u> . So much focus is on greenhouse gas and mitigation, and is where most entities usually start. Emphasis on long-term mitigation goals may provide direction, but it puts the focus on a future end point.		
G8	Emission Reduction		Strategies at the beginning talk about meeting state gas emission reduction. Page 10 suggests Hennepin County internal operations facilities achieved 15% by 2015. Add a 100% reduction for county operations. This reads as goal is 80% by 2050. We want to see 100% by 2050 because you can offset or purchase to get there.	
G9	Emission Reduction		The bar is getting set sooner than referenced here. Different entities are coalescing around 100% by 2040.	Some counties and cities have higher goals for community operations; St. Paul is 100% by 2030, St. Anthony is 100% by 2040, Duluth is 100% by 2050.
G10	Emission Reduction	Good information about commercial energy benchmarking. (page 38)	We (wind industry) have resources to help in out-state and you don't touch on it here. You should highlight existing resources more and be clear you are moving forward and improving upon resources.	What is the implementation strategy and outreach for communities, residents and businesses?
G11	Emission reduction		Gas emission reduction on page 10 refers to past adoption. Who cares what you have done, you are where you are. How are you going to get to 80%. Reference to 80% on page 36 doesn't clearly tie back to target on page 10, giving appearance that page 36 may be different.	
G12	Measurement		Hard to track what is and what should be in here. Hard to see how outcomes will be measured. Hard to know how some of the more general/hopeful outcomes will be measured.	
G13	Measurement		Page 10, make target Emission reduction message more prominent. Other goals use gray box for metrics.	
G14	Measurement		It is missing metrics and specificity in most goals. Where are clear SMART goal metrics?	We've read there are food waste reduction targets for 2022. If that is the case, why not be clearer here? e.g. page 46 talks of a campaign only
G15	Natural Resources		Natural resources. There is nothing new here. Strategies are same as today and not visionary. There is also very little covered in this document.	
G16	Organization		The organization of information is somewhat challenging. As I read through the document, I wrote other ideas down that would be good to add to the section, only to find them later. It will be good to see what is developed later in process, once feedback is integrated.	
G17	Organization		Document organization prevents a reader from skimming to get key messages. It needs more bolding or other highlight on key words. The summary on pages 51/52 didn't help any more.	
G18	Organization		Organization could be clearer. It is hard to follow which goal I am under as I read. This document is too long to not have organizing structure to know where I am in the big picture (framework of the document).	

G19	Organization		Inconsistent information within each goal section makes it challenging to clearly see strategies and targets are there for each goal. Consider using more/better indentation and color coding to consistently frame underlying information within a goal section. The lack of sequencing goals, objectives and strategies is challenging to keep reference within a goal, and amongst the different goals.	
G20	Organization		This is a long document. Add a good, executive summary. Few people will want to read this much.	
G21	Organization		Shuffle content in way that makes it more approachable.	
G22	Organization		Pages 51 and 52 are good summaries of overarching strategies, but they may be more useful earlier in the document to help provide a framework to information organization in the different goal sections	
G23	Public engagement	The county provided a lot of opportunities for public input. It is clear resident surveys helped shape ideas and priorities.		
G24	Public engagement	The county did a fantastic job in outreach and representation.		
G25	Public engagement	I love that we see survey results on page 53.	Sad to see responses indicate a lack of desire for car pool, EV, and mass transit, these are things we need have in place to achieve emission reduction targets.	
G26	Overall	A county action plan is intended to be more like a city's Comp Plan, even if we don't see specific things here, it lays out a solid foundation for coming back later and expanding on.		How would this impact St. Anthony?
G27	Purpose			How will this plan be used? Will there be an effort by the county to reach out to local government so they can leverage the framework to make changes locally?
G28	Purpose			Is this 5 year, or 10 year document. What is longevity and purpose? When do you want these specific goals completed by and how often will your goals be updated?
G29	Purpose			How is this document intended to be used? What is the end goal? What is it trying to solve?
G30	Renewables		Earlier targets are possible given offsets.	Mpls and other cities have community operations renewable energy goals; Mpls is 100% renewable by 2022, Red Wing is 100% by 2020.
G31	Renewables		There are no metrics for renewables (page 38). Is there a separate energy action plan? What are renewable goals? How will you support renewables in the county, communities, and schools?	
G32	Renewables		Document should refer to a decarbonization goal and a renewable goal. Getting off carbon as an operator and energy purchaser should be a goal.	
G33	Renewables		Where is consideration of county and statewide zoning changes? When we first started wind energy in southern MN, each county we approached didn't have zoning code and we would have to start anew in each new county. There is a need for each county to have a plan for renewable permitting. Somebody eventually put together a template zoning ordinance that all counties could use. If Hennepin County could attach 3 templates for city/local governments with a range of common targets. Better yet, consider creating a usable tool for cities without designated staffing to figure out what their targets should be. The county should serve as a role model and instigator for things to trickle down. The same toolset would also be helpful for schools.	
G34	Role			Is there or should there be anything in here about how local governments play a role?
G35	Role			What role is the county willing to play in facilitating adoption through governments, industry, and schools?

G36	Role		Hard to know what is county and city role, and keep track of what should or shouldn't be in a county-level document.	
G37	Rollout		Consider a train the trainer program, something comparable to to Master compost/recycling program. Make it broader for climate leaders, something that can include city staff, elected officials, and neighborhood organizations. Have something to support people who want to learn/do more about opportunities at on a community scale and help educate neighbors and businesses. You have a good framework for this type of broader outreach in the Master Recycling program	
G38	Rollout		You talk about different groups to reach out to, but you don't talk about educating in multiple languages and knowing how to influence different audiences. Think about the population in the county and work toward increased educational material in languages, medium, and conducting engagement opportunities in multiple ways.	
G39	Rollout		Would like to see more on raising awareness at local and regional level. Need to make it mandatory, as parts of regional comp plan. That is the only way to get cities to enact it. Think about how to raise collective voice at local and state level. Add regional context and get some teeth. (Page 48/49)	
G40	Rollout		Local government can do so much more to lobby and request these types of regulatory changes that need to happen in order to make this work move forward. There is too much thinking that the League of MN cities or the state will do it. That isn't happening fast enough, and we need Hennepin County to push more. Have behind-the-scenes discussions to push Met Council.	
G41	Rollout		Level of detail in St. Paul Action Plan provides the opportunity for us to push local business and the city and rely on next level of government to be role model for our community, we aren't seeing the level of detail in this plan that will allow us to set and achieve goals at a city level. We know cities will also need to have a climate action plan and most do not.	Who will enforce that cities have tangible goals and targets?
G42	Strategies	Good, strong strategies		
G43	Strategies	I like that green jobs has been included. (page 23) This is an important element to see, and it clearly shows how change can be made in a manner that engages and protects impacted/vulnerable communities.		



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March 3, 2021

***RE: Hennepin County Draft Climate Action Plan comments***

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Hennepin County's Draft Climate Action Plan. Fresh Energy appreciates the time and resources that clearly went into creating this plan, as well as the County's willingness to solicit public feedback.

Fresh Energy is an independent, non-partisan nonprofit that has been providing policy research and analysis on energy issues across Minnesota for nearly 30 years. Our mission is to shape and drive bold policy solutions to achieve equitable carbon-neutral economies.

Overall, Fresh Energy recognizes several positive aspects of the plan, such as the emphasis on cross-departmental collaboration, advancing equitable outcomes, and a recognition of the complex and overlapping impacts of climate change on residents.

However, Fresh Energy is concerned that the Draft Plan does an inadequate job of setting quantitative, measurable greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals that reflect the urgency and reality of the moment. Hennepin County's GHG reduction goals, adopted in 2007, fall far short of where the most recent climate science implores society to go. The [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\) The Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C](#) from 2018 finds that in order to keep global average temperatures from rising above 1.5 degrees Celsius – a level above which scientists warn could cause irreversible, devastating damage – global emissions must fall 45% from 2010 levels by 2030, reaching net zero around 2050. At a minimum, Hennepin County's Climate Action Plan should reflect this reality and adopt these reduction goals, if not go even further.

What the Draft Plan does well:

- **Raises the critical issue of climate action** and presents the plan as a foundation for future planning, policy development, and climate action
- **Thorough, cross-departmental and multijurisdictional input utilized:** recognition that high levels of coordination will be needed over the long-term
- Acknowledgement that **changes to county policies, systems, and practices are required**
- An understanding that climate resilience and mitigation work should **advance equitable outcomes, not worsen existing disparities**
- **An intention to receive feedback** from a broad spectrum of stakeholders and residents

Room for Improvement:

- **Clear, measurable GHG reduction goals that reflect updated climate science:** The County should strive for at least 45% reduction from 2010 levels by 2030; net zero by mid-century.
- **Specificity and timelines:** While the goals seem generally in-line with what needs to be accomplished, objectives and strategies often lack details around the intended timeline, which departments will be responsible for the goal, and how progress will be measured and shared with the public.
- **An increased focus on energy efficiency and fuel-switching to carbon-free electricity:** Buildings account for about 40% of energy use nationwide, and GHG emissions



from residential and commercial buildings are rapidly rising in Minnesota. As the electricity sector continues to decarbonize faster than the rest of the economy, transitioning end-uses now powered by fossil fuels to clean electricity is a critical component of any strategy to draw down emissions in buildings. Fuel-switching is mentioned on page 38, but should be introduced earlier in the report and given more emphasis, in terms of both goals and strategies. Additionally, energy efficiency is both a climate mitigation and adaptation tool, reducing emissions while making the county more resilient to climate-related weather events by insulating residents from large utility bill fluctuations associated with extreme temperatures.

- **Definitions of renewable energy:** “Renewable energy” is referenced throughout the document, but the types of renewable energy the County is considering are not explicitly defined or listed. Not all renewable energy is created equal, and there are major potential harms and risks that undermine carbon reduction and climate justice goals associated with different energy sources that are considered renewable. For example, renewable natural gas has public health implications and risks prolonged reliance on carbon-intensive natural gas systems. Additionally, waste-to-energy should not be considered renewable energy, and it also is not carbon-free.
- **The COVID-19 pandemic** is a continuing danger to county residents and resources. There needs to be more direct acknowledgement of this. While there is mention of the possible but relatively unknown reduction on transportation emissions due to remote work for county employees and less air travel (pgs. 40, 54) there will continue to be other immediate and long-term challenges from financial hardships, disruptions to health and human services, and increased household usage of utilities due to remote working and learning, yet unequal access to those utilities for under-resourced families. The County could provide measures as to how COVID-19 has or may continue to disrupt services and how it will be addressing long-term impacts.
- **Transparency on the County’s short and long-term waste management plan:** Waste-to-energy is a source of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions that negatively affect human and climate health; neither garbage nor the steam generated from burning garbage should be considered sources of renewable energy. Waste-to-energy can create major environmental injustices for surrounding communities, and while concerns about waste-to-energy were mentioned numerous times throughout the feedback sessions and public comments, the County does not provide clarity on how waste-to-energy fits into their climate and waste management goals. The County should focus on developing a zero-waste strategy, which will also have lower GHG emissions, rather than relying on waste-to-energy as a climate strategy.
- **Community engagement process:** the four-week timeline for responding to this 59-page plan was too short. This timeframe is not sufficient for people to engage meaningfully with this plan, develop comments, and attend two possible meetings, especially during a global pandemic when individuals and families are feeling exceptionally strained. As the County rolls out this extensive plan, we urge them to ensure that individuals and groups that will be impacted by the plan have a seat at the table for its ongoing development and implementation. Multiple methods for engaging and communicating are necessary to ensure broad participation.

#### Specific Comments on the Hennepin Climate Action Plan

##### ***Cut greenhouse gas emissions*** (pg. 10)

- As mentioned in our introduction, the GHG reduction goals of 30% by 2025 and 80% by 2050 are not ambitious enough and should be updated to reflect current climate science. We need to rapidly reduce emissions much faster to stave off worse climate

consequences according to the 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) The Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C. A more ambitious and bold goal that matches the IPCC report would be 45% greenhouse gas emissions (from 2010 levels) reduction by 2030 and carbon neutral by 2050.

**Results in an equitable and resilient Hennepin County** (pg. 11)

- The County should be active in the leadership development of individuals who contribute to the growth and success of the County, in capacities of employment, partnership, elected government, voluntary community input, and other ways.
- How does Hennepin County plan to address the gaps or issues internal to Hennepin County? These might include internal bias, outdated systems, and legacies of racism, oppression and exclusion committed by the County, in accordance with the County's declaration of racism as a public health crisis, and would bolster the County's goal of protecting and engaging vulnerable communities. It would be beneficial to include recommendations or actions from the Race Equity Advisory Council in the Climate Action Plan as they become available.

**GOAL: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities**

*Climate Resilience (pg. 15)*

- In providing financial assistance for water damage repairs, how will the county ensure that all residents - renters, homeowners, multi-family property owners - can access this financial assistance? The need for repairs (or rebuilding) occurs after extreme weather and physical devastation. How will the county be proactive in making sure this support is as accessible as possible in moments of extreme stress and overwhelm?

*Strategy: Strengthen individual and community resilience:*

- What are the methods of collecting and disseminating information? To ensure accessibility, there will have to be several formats used: digital communication, verbal and written in multiple languages, infographics, art, and culturally responsive communication to make the information accessible.
- On the flip side, how will residents be able to share their experiences with climate change with the County?
- When fostering relationships with communities to engage, listen and respond with people centered solutions, the County should utilize cultural and community trusted media and engage from a place of transparency and authenticity that builds reliability and trust. Engagement is a repeated process that must demonstrate willingness to take direction and show progress.
- Related to improving education and communication to promote awareness, personal action and best practices - how is personal action defined? By the individual? Organizations, business, agencies? How will education and communication be improved? Financial and technological investments must be made to ensure all residents have access. The County needs to provide more action steps to how these strategies will be realized and how they intend to address the climate emergency and environmental racism explicitly.

**GOAL: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities** (pg. 16)

*Strategy: Better understand and plan for the health needs of our diverse communities*

- Related to data collection and monitoring health impacts, how will data on the impacts of COVID-19 influence how data is interpreted through an equity lens?

- In strengthening sustainable access to affordable housing, healthcare, food and transportation and other social determinants of health, access to affordable utilities (electricity, heat, water, and internet) should also be included. Expansion of public transit between and among affordable housing and services provides one strategy for achieving this goal.
- In developing a climate analysis framework with a health and racial equity lens in budgets and planning work, the County should be explicit about all identities that have been marginalized by white supremacy and who face the first, worst, and longest impacts of the climate emergency.

*Strategy: Mitigate disproportionate impacts associated with climate change*

- Utilize energy efficiency as a tool for affordable and healthy housing, investing in upgrades in housing stock and buildings that are underserved first.
- In reducing air pollution associated with transportation, especially in areas with vulnerable populations, it takes specific policy and prioritization to target emissions and air pollution reduction in overburdened communities, and air pollution does not solely come from transportation; this strategy must include industrial facilities and energy generation.

**Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities – Buildings and energy use (pgs. 36-39)**

- A county-level green building policy should include more detail about how it would specifically align with the GHG reductions goals of the County. Carbon-free is where we need to go and should therefore be the standard the County is working towards.
- Target metrics for County as well as community buildings should include clear and aggressive carbon reduction goals (pg. 38 and 39)
- As mentioned above, fuel-switching to carbon-free electricity must be a primary focus of the building strategy, and more robust tools are necessary for new and existing buildings to reach a carbon-free standard. There is a significant focus on benchmarking; while this provides one important method for reducing emissions, its demonstrated impact energy-saving is limited to roughly 2-7%.
- The focus on existing buildings is too limited. Retrofits and salvage strategies in existing buildings are valuable, but there must be consideration of new construction projects in this report as well. New projects should be all-electric, super-efficient, and built sustainably so that retrofits are not required in 10 years, as well as to align clearly with the goals of the report.
- ‘Investing in renewable energy’ and ‘maximizing centralized energy sources that incorporate renewable technologies’ (pg. 38) are very vague and must be made more specific. If investments are made in renewable natural gas, for example, then the implications of relying on the existing natural gas pipeline system and the carbon impact of such a strategy must be very clearly delineated. This also goes for district energy systems that rely on renewable natural gas and/or biogas. This type of strategy should also be compared to less carbon intensive building energy strategies like fuel switching to electricity.
- Encouraging renewable energy in communities is a goal that requires more detail (pg. 39). For example, **public health** should be a primary focus, which is omitted in this section. Once again, if ‘renewable energy’ includes renewable natural gas, then the public health implications of combusting carbon-based fuels indoors should be compared to the indoor air quality benefits of electrification.
- Naming the Conservation Improvement Program is good, but does that mean the County will work with utilities to ensure it reaches underserved households and

homes and buildings with older housing stock that would benefit most from energy efficiency upgrades? The County could provide comments on the CIP Triennial Plans at the Public Utilities Commission for prioritizing underserved households.

- It is encouraging to see support for the stretch building code, but that is contingent on the state passing the law.

- There is no definition or list of what renewable energy sources the county is considering. This is concerning because we know the County waste facilities are very interested producing renewable natural gas and/or biogas. If this is a primary waste management strategy for the County, it must be included clearly in this plan. RNG and biogas are not mentioned once in this report, which seems like a glaring omission.

- The global warming potential for methane gas that is listed on pg. 44 is outdated. The EPA is using IPCC AR4 (2017) data. The IPCC has since released the [AR5 \(2013\)](#), which finds that the global warming potential for methane gas over a 100-year time horizon is 28, not 25. The City of Minneapolis uses this updated data, as well.

- There is no mention of the carbon emissions associated with natural gas infrastructure systems in this report. The carbon footprint of leakage from gas pipes must be factored into the report clearly, especially if continued reliance on natural gas is expected to occur and especially if reliance on alternative gaseous fuels like RNG is considered as a 'climate strategy'.

## **GOAL: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities**

### **- Transportation (pages 40 - 43)**

- Community feedback was to go bold and to lead, but the transportation goals are not ambitious enough. Converting only 20% of light-duty fleet vehicles to electric in 10 years is among the easiest changes to make. County goals should at least match those of the federal government: decrease emissions from county fleets by 50% or more by 2030; convert 100% of light-duty fleet vehicles to electric by 2030 (and building charging infrastructure to match this).

- What data does the "wedge" of transportation emission reductions incorporate? VMT reduction, switching vehicles to Low and Zero Emissions, reducing residents' VMT's? Which portion accounts for electrifying only the County's fleet? Or does it include vehicles like cargo, transit buses, personal passenger cars, etc.?

- It would provide more clarity and transparency if transportation emissions data, broken down by emissions sources, were shared in the report, and if proposed actions corresponded to specific emissions sources. Other data that would be informative is: number of public EV chargers; average vehicle miles travelled; the number and types of vehicles in the County's fleet.

- Will this action plan be sufficient for the cities within the county that have climate action plans to meet their own goals?

- What are "core county functions?" The report could do a better job delineating what the County can do specifically within the transportation space.

- Beyond core County responsibilities, what role or relationship does Hennepin County have with Met Council, which is responsible for so much of the regional transportation planning, and how will Hennepin County leverage this relationship to advocate for cleaner transportation options? Where else does the County have an influence? For example: the highway expansion investments; use of funds for transit; advocating for which bus technology is prioritized - electric or diesel; and the use of heavier transportation and cargo and warehouse centers.

- As with all other sections, it is not clear how these recommendations will get implemented, who or which department is responsible for implementation, how progress

will be measured and shared with the public, or how the County will be held accountable to meeting these goals.

Fresh Energy is grateful for the opportunity to weigh-in on Hennepin County's Draft Climate Plan. We appreciate Hennepin County's initiative and leadership to create a robust climate action plan, and we think Hennepin County can, and should, be even more ambitious. This plan must reflect the current realities of the climate emergency that are intertwined with the crises of the COVID-19 pandemic, racism, and economic inequality. While the Hennepin County Climate Action Plan is action-oriented and covers a breadth of critical topics, Hennepin County should produce a bolder vision with its commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as well as racial and social disparities. We hope these detailed comments can provide some assistance in scoping out a more ambitious, measurable, and urgent plan.

Sincerely,

Janiece Watts  
Senior Associate Energy Access and Equity

Anna Johnson  
Senior Associate Public Affairs

With contributions from:

Anjali Bains  
Senior Clean Transportation Manager

Margaret Cherne-Hendrick, Ph. D  
Lead Director Energy Transition

J. Drake Hamilton  
Senior Director Science Policy

Ben Rabe  
Building Performance Director

March 3, 2021

Dear Hennepin County Commissioners and Staff,

Move Minneapolis is pleased that Hennepin County is moving forward with the adoption of a climate action plan. Move Minneapolis is a nonprofit that promotes sustainable travel so that everyone can benefit from a climate-friendly future and a vibrant economy. We serve thousands of Hennepin County commuters and employers each year.

Transportation accounted for 35% of all greenhouse gas emissions within Hennepin County in 2019. This plan is an opportunity for Hennepin County to boldly commit to decarbonizing its transportation system by prioritizing clean transportation access for all. We reviewed the transportation related sections of the draft plan and summarized our comments in this letter.

**What We Like:**

- The plan identifies the negative role that the County's road network has played in perpetuating environmental racism and health inequities (pg. 41).
- The recognition that air pollution disproportionately impacts communities of color and calls out the need to reduce vehicle emissions (pg. 19).
- The inclusion of strategy to modify pavement and sidewalk design standards to accommodate projected changes to freeze/thaw cycles (pg. 29).
- The acknowledgement of the role that land use plays in transportation emissions (pg. 40).
- The inclusion of a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction strategy (pg. 43).

**What Needs Improvement:**

- The County's goal of an 80% reduction by 2050 is too little, too late. The goal should be amended to achieve an 80% reduction by 2035 and 100% net zero emissions by 2050.
- Add a strategy that updates the County's Complete Streets Policy to better prioritize sustainable transportation users in street design and accelerate the reconstruction of county streets that are most dangerous to non-driving users.
- While we applaud the listed strategies to expand pedestrian, bicycle and transit infrastructure, the plan should specifically identify county owned streets to target for implementation.
- Commit to implementing flexible work schedules, not just reassessing them (pg. 51).
- The County should eliminate the use of level of service, an engineering measurement that disproportionately favors moving cars rather than people in its transportation projects.
- The plan should direct that new or relocated County facilities must be easily accessible by bicycle and transit service according to Metro Transit's high-frequency network map.
- The plan should specifically call out the need for improved and expanded transit shelters.
- The plan should identify locations to prioritize dense development patterns where residents can walk, bike and take transit to meet their basic needs.

Thank you for your efforts. This plan will be a great achievement and step toward sustainability.

Sincerely,



Mary Morse Marti

Executive Director



## Sign on Letter asking the Hennepin County Board to Approve and Implement their [Climate Action Plan](#) with updated targets

Cities, Commissions & Organizations can [sign on to his letter](#) by 4/15 or use it to **write your own letter** and [share it with us](#).

**Our City is working with other cities to meet our city climate goals.**

**We call on the Hennepin County Board to approve, fully fund and implement a strong Climate Action Plan that will:**

- **Achieve county-wide GHG emissions reductions of 50% by 2030, 80% by 2040 and Net Zero by 2050** [from a baseline of 2005, updating the 2007 Cool Counties Commitment to match current science].
- **We commit our cities and organizations to work with the County & other cities/jurisdictions to achieve these goals together, while advancing racial equity, climate resilience and shared economic vitality.**

To achieve coordinated city and county-wide GHG emission reduction targets we support the County's Climate Action Plan which states:

**“Goal:** Partner in ways that can be most impactful with public entity partners and with community organizations.

**Objective:** Explore and pursue partnership models driven by mutual climate change goals.

**Strategies:** Pursue strategies with the clearest direction forward”

- Foster, long term, integrated planning that includes jointly collecting and analyzing data and modeling with a lens on health and racial equity.
- Reduce localized flooding and coordinate regional storm water resiliency efforts.
- Decarbonize, transportation, buildings [we would add: & energy supply in ways that strengthen equity, local economies & resilience]
- We would add: Expand carbon sequestration, tree canopy, native landscaping, soil health, land conservation
- Educate and engage the public, [and institutions and businesses] in taking collective action.
- Raise a collective voice for climate policy at the local, state [and federal] level.”

**Hennepin County's leadership and convening role** with other public entities could co-create joint initiatives to meet mutual climate goals. **This would** enable the 41 cities within Hennepin County to scale up implementation of high-impact, equitable, low-carbon, resilient policies & projects county-wide during this vital decade.

**We ask the Hennepin County Board** and staff to include language in your Board Resolution and in the text of the Plan that would:

1. **Direct the County Administrator and all Department lead staff to fully support and empower county department staff to implement the Climate Action Plan** to meet GHG reduction targets county-wide, and regularly report results,
2. **Prioritize application of a Racial Equity lens and Climate Justice considerations in all facets of the Plan.** Representing 25% of the population in Minnesota, the County should play a lead role in our state to reduce racial disparities and strengthen climate, economic and community resilience. We know that budgets and investments are an expression of our commitment to Equity – we can accomplish this by innovating and changing “business as usual” practices, changing the operating culture within County departments, developing partnerships between public entities and BIPOC community organizations, and funding the Climate Action Plan initiatives in 2022 & future budgets.

**3. Include priority deliverables/benchmarks with reporting requirements/dates** for County Departments

**a. Bi-Annual Performance Reviews of the County's Climate Action Plan Implementation with partners.**

Update baseline metrics, data gathering and reporting systems for county operations and county-wide indicators with partner jurisdictions (with external reviewed.) Also conduct a consumption-based emissions inventory. Use results to create a more comprehensive approach to climate change mitigation. Host Bi-Annual Climate Action Plan implementation review event(s)/process with partner jurisdictions and organizations, community groups and diverse stakeholders that are publically accessible, transparent and participatory. Review the actions taken together and metrics/indicators for all sectors and adjust strategies/actions with partners to stay on track to meet GHG and other county-wide indicators/targets.

**b. Direct all County Departments to use the county's Equity Impacts and Climate Impacts assessment tools when developing/reviewing plans, projects and capital investments.**

**c. Transportation** – convene interested cities, Met Council & partners to co-develop plans to cut VMT county-wide 20% or more by 2030 and shift county investments and projects accordingly. Plan & partner with cities on Living Streets implementation during mill and overlays and street reconstruction to expand safety, walking, biking, trail connections, transit, green infrastructure and climate resilience. Convene cities and partners to expand regional transit, E.V. infrastructure and shared & advanced mobility regionally.

**d. Housing and Redevelopment Authority** – co-develop and implement with Minneapolis, Suburban city HRAs/EDAs and other partners action plans, incentives, equitable financing tools, energy cost transparency tools and seamless/vetted/quality energy audit, bidding and installation partnerships to accelerate weatherization of homes, multi-family buildings and commercial properties to reduce energy burdens, natural gas use and GHG emissions while preserving naturally occurring affordable housing, increasing access to solar, E.V. charging, and shade trees and enabling property owners to maintain and update properties and add units/density where zoning allows to meet current/future housing needs.

**e. Community Works** – co-develop partnerships that support cities & developers to expand equitable access, life cycle housing & commercial space, while minimizing displacement through inclusive, walkable transit-oriented & large site redevelopment with new net zero buildings, public spaces & living streets.

**f. Hennepin Pathways** – develop partnerships to **expand equitable access** to skills training, jobs, contracting, business development, capital access & bonding related to solar, energy efficiency, clean transportation green infrastructure/soil health/forestry & local/regenerative/agriculture & food production/hubs/access.

**g. Energy and Environment**

**Efficient Buildings Collaborative** - continue to grow partnerships with cities, building owners and developers, to enable/expand financing options, incentives, technical assistance, & requirements to expand building benchmarking, energy efficiency, solar, storage, demand response, E.V.s & net zero construction (design assistance, energy code improvements & optional stretch codes) to meet GHG goals.

**Zero Waste** – co-develop/implement action plans with cities & State of MN to expand waste diversion, organics recycling, product stewardship, food waste prevention and demolition waste prevention to reduce GHGs associated with waste/material use to reduce/eliminate landfilling & incineration. RCC supports the goal of Environmental Justice groups that are asking Hennepin County to close HERC by 2025 and will support cities, counties and the State to accelerate the actions and policies needed to eliminate the need for landfilling & incineration to manage west metro waste streams by 2025.

**Trees and Forestry** – We support the Plan's intentions to, "Expand the urban forest canopy by preserving mature trees, planting more trees and addressing barriers associated with maintenance" "Set goals to maintain or increase tree canopy cover on county property" **and, we hope it can be county-wide with cities. Explore/expand City-County-State partnerships to set and meet new county-wide, climate resilient,**



equitable, tree canopy goals. Collaborate to respond cost-effectively to EAB & new infestations. Preserve, replace, diversify and expand tree cover county-wide to manage storm water, improve air quality and reduce heat islands - especially in low-income areas.

**Natural Resources Management to Preserve/Restore/Regenerate Agricultural Lands and Natural Areas** – we appreciate the areas of the Plan that will:

“Plan for and mitigate anticipated ecosystem and open space impacts” [and, we suggest, for the preservation, acquisition, and restoration/regeneration of open spaces/natural areas/habitat/ecosystems].

“Create and preserve affordable agricultural space for every scale of local food production.”

“Promote BMPs on agricultural land with a focus on practices that build healthier soils with increased carbon storage & water holding capacity of soils while maintaining or improving long-term crop yields.”

“Conduct education and outreach that helps current and future agricultural producers and their partners understand both the need for and financial benefits of building climate change resiliency” [and lets add regenerative practices] “into their farming operations and the agricultural economy.”

[Furthermore, we suggest that the County convene developing edge and rural cities/townships, farmers, developers, home builders, solar developers and ecologists to visit successful example cluster/conservation developments and explore additional land use, zoning, financing & ownership solutions to preserve natural areas and agricultural land while welcoming a new generation of farmers onto the land expanding regenerative farming practices, expanding affordable housing choices, permitting/supporting pollinator-friendly solar gardens preserving the character of rural communities, while reducing new low-density development and VMT.]

**City Councils &/or Environmental Commissions Signing on to the letter** (as of 3/3/2021)

- [West Metro Climate Action](#)

Additional cities & organizations will be listed here as they are confirmed.

**Additional Letters Supporting Hennepin County Climate Action** (as of 3/3/2021)

<http://rccmn.co/topics/letters-supporting-hennepin-county-climate-action/>

- [Citizens for Sustainability](#) (St. Anthony Village)
- [City of Minneapolis, Sustainability Office](#)
- [Community Power MN](#)
- [Wayzata Energy & Environment Committee](#)

**For more information** on the

- **RCC Hennepin County Cluster** of Cities visit [www.rccmn.co/hennepin-communities](http://www.rccmn.co/hennepin-communities)
- **Or contact** Sean Gosiewski, Program Director, 612 250-0389 [sean@rccmn.co](mailto:sean@rccmn.co)

**Resilient Cities and Communities** 2801 21<sup>st</sup> Ave S. Suite 100 Minneapolis MN 55407 [www.rccmn.co](http://www.rccmn.co)

*Visionary Leaders. Vibrant Places. Regenerative Futures*

# Climate Action Plan

22 - 22 Feb 2021

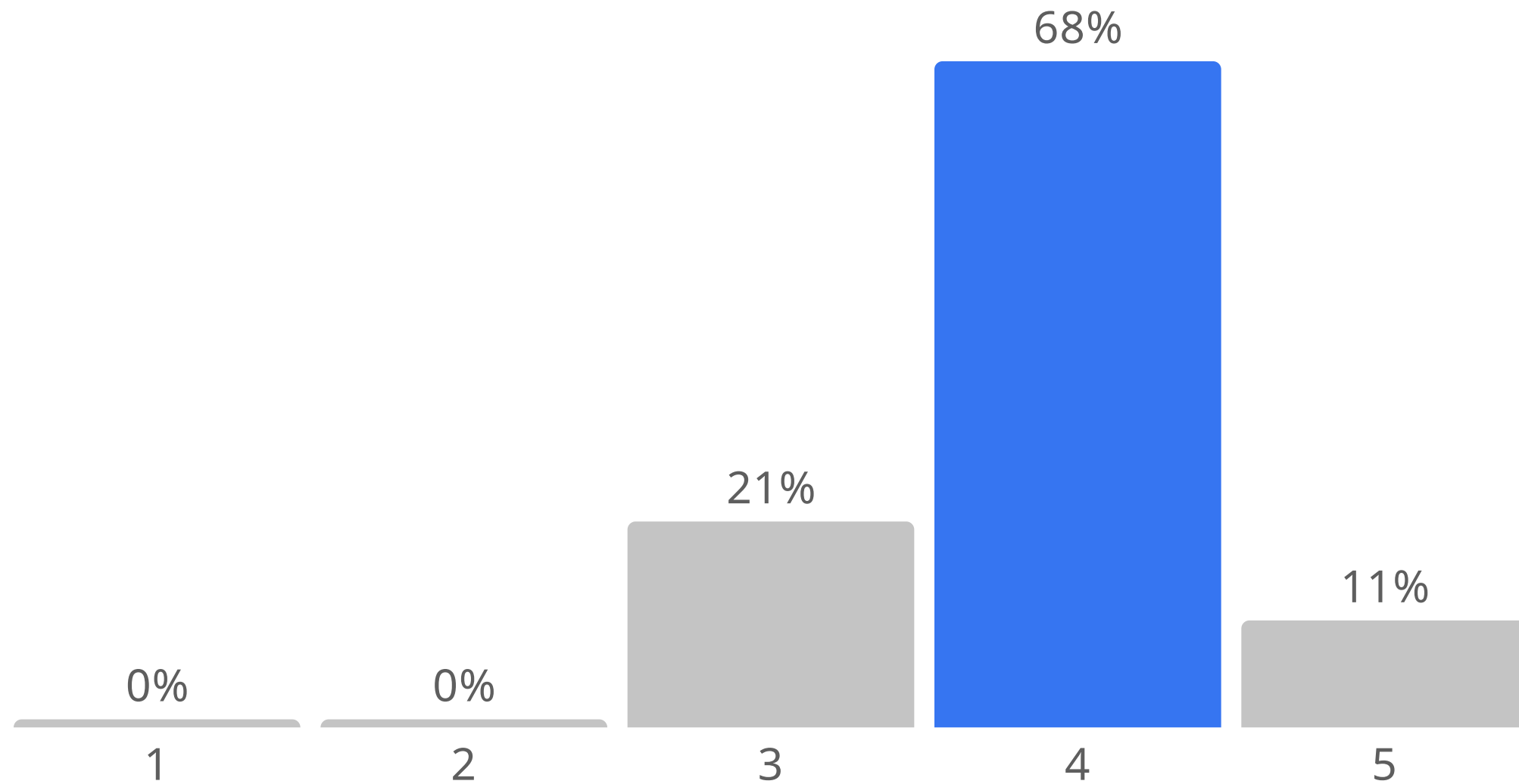
Poll results

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- Introduction
- Values and vision
- Goal: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities
- Goal: Enhance public safety
- Goal: Protect building sites, roads, infrastructure, and natural resources
- Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities
- Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful
- In short phrases, what is most important to you as we respond to climate change (multiple responses allowed)?
- Any final thoughts you'd like to share:

# How would you rate your level of knowledge about climate change?

Score: 3.9



# Using a short phrase, tell us how you feel about the weather today

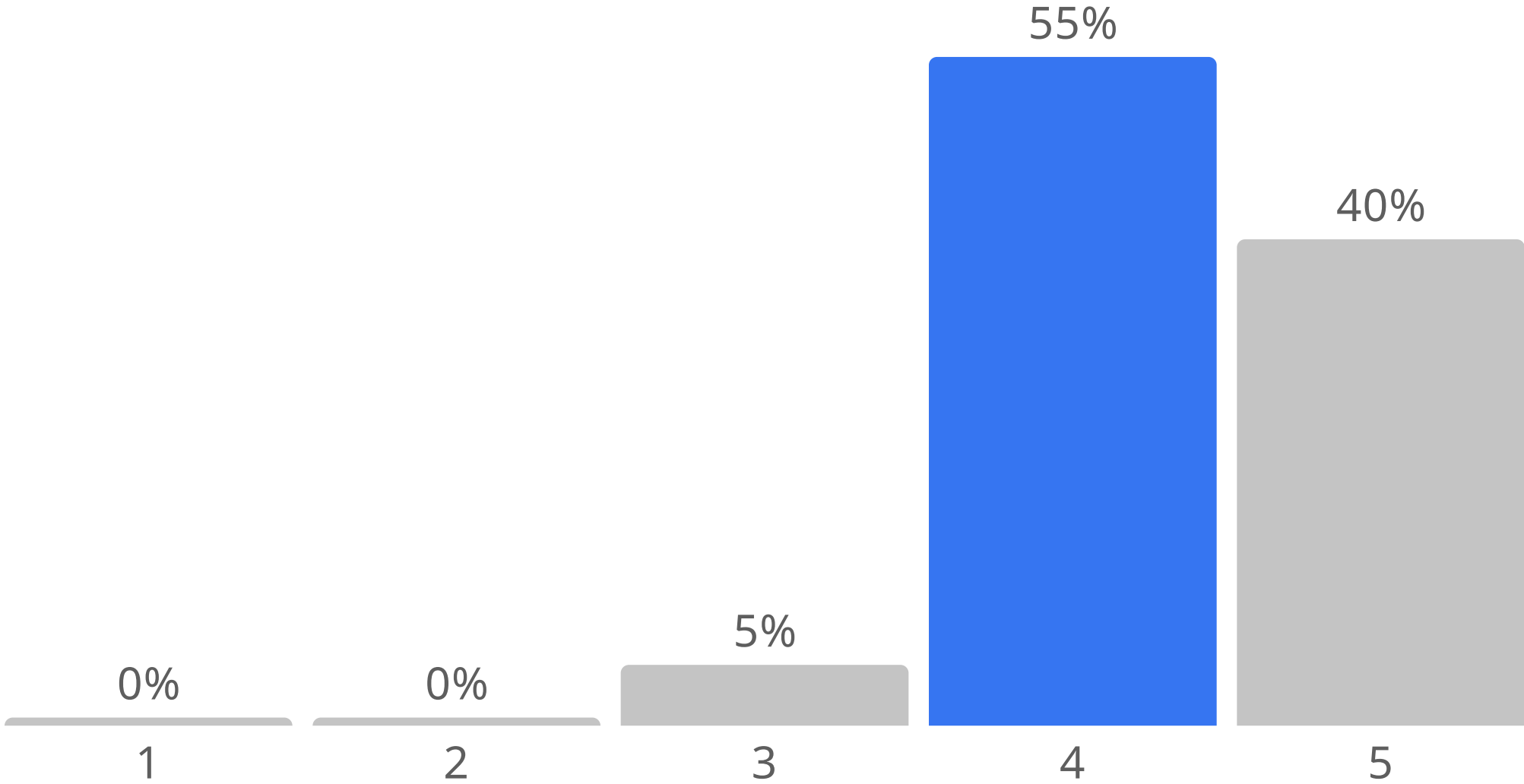


## How did you hear about this meeting?

- Through a climate group that I'm associated with.
- Henn employee
- Henn Cty email
- It was on an email I got from Kira Birkland.
- email
- Web
- Hennepin County
- City of Minneapolis
- I received an email from Hennepin County.
- email
- Hennepin County newsletter
- County website
- Email
- Hennepin County Newsletter
- Email
- Email
- Email blast
- Email

# How strongly do these values resonate with you?

Score: 4.4



**In one or two words, what is most important to you as you think about a climate-friendly future?**

city/county partnerships  
Innovation justice. prevention.  
no trash burner bird safety  
Sustainable racial justice  
livability connection  
Sustainability climate justice  
Regenerative agriculture



## Anything you would add or emphasize?

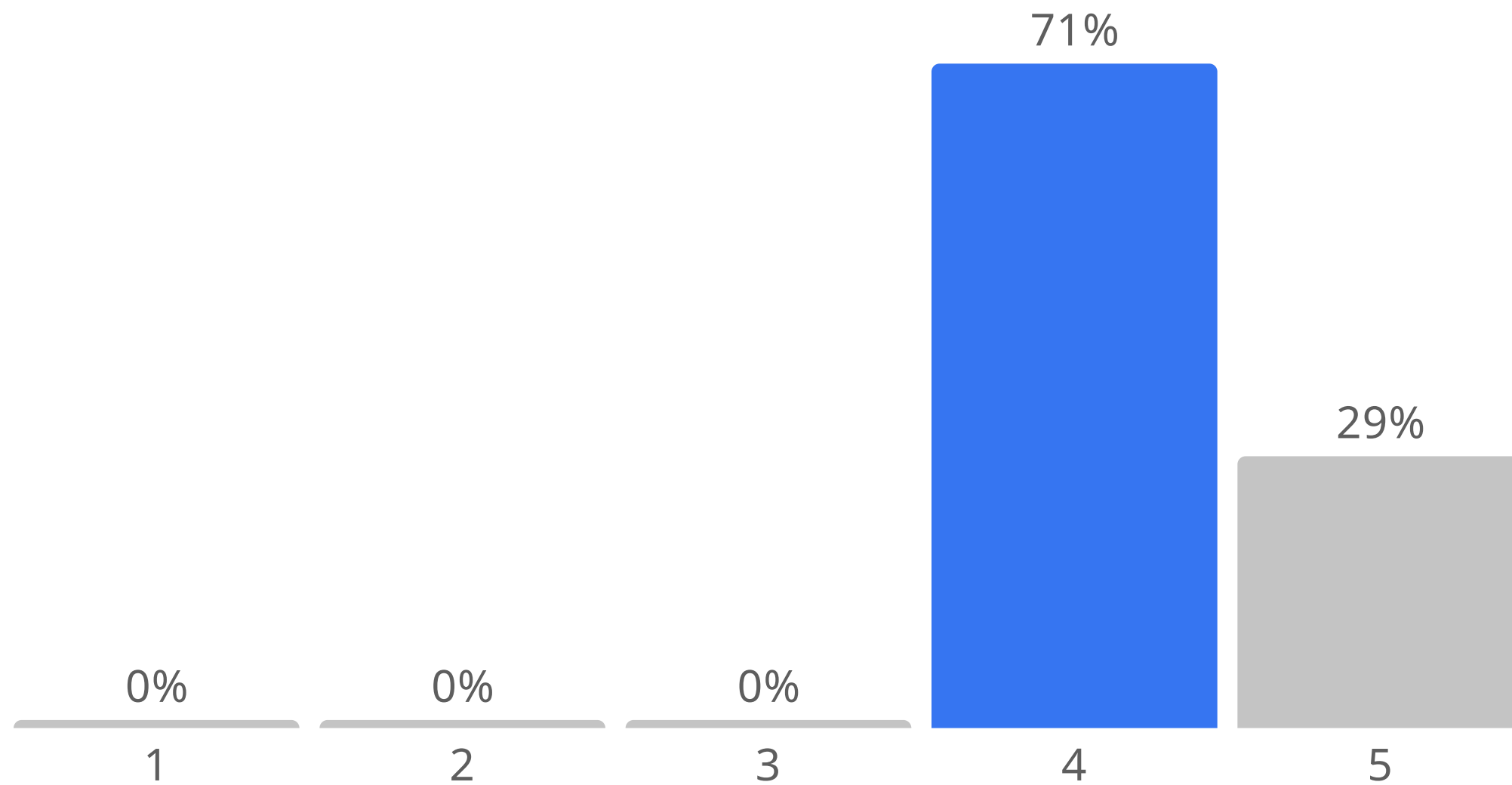
- appreciate the connection to racial justice
- Please make a wildlife-friendly county
- Regenerative agriculture
- relating connection to BIPOC communities recycling and climate change
- Change economics of fossil fuels
- Preventing further contributions to climate crisis
- equity in process and outcome
- Many times we have too complicated of ideas
- for mainstream public, make sure its achievable
- disaster mitigation and relief

Goal: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities  
(1/3)

007

## How well does this goal meet your expectations?

Score: 4.3



Goal: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities  
(2/3)

006

## What do you like about it? (1/2)

- Yes “Community based strategies to engage, listen and respond with people-centered solutions.” • Yes “Strengthen sustainable access to affordable housing, food, healthcare, transportation and other social determinants of health.” • Yes “Strategy: Maximize green economic recovery and workforce development opportunities.” • Yes “Include climate considerations in the development of the 2022 budget.” • Yes “Develop options for a coordinated green jobs/pathways by 2022 to support county departments as they install and maintain green infrastructure.”
- Love the collective action and green economic recovery points
- Diverse approach to assisting communities with

Goal: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities  
(2/3)

006

## What do you like about it? (2/2)

- the goal to be more resilient.
- focus on vulnerable residents and green jobs
- Important to listen to the input of traditionally under resourced communities in order to understand how to help them.
- Racial Equity

Goal: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities  
(3/3)

005

## What is missing or could be changed? (1/3)

- Hennepin Pathways - develop partnerships to expand equitable access to clean energy, transportation and green infrastructure jobs, contracting and business development. • Workforce and Small Business Development and Contracting – Hennepin County, the Met Council and cities aim to expand investment in transit, energy efficiency, solar and green infrastructure. Hennepin County and cities can make the most of these new investments to expand diverse hiring, contracting and small business development. New funding tools are available and/or coming soon via utility investments, BRT funds in the bonding

Goal: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities  
(3/3)

005

## What is missing or could be changed? (2/3)

bill, performance contracting, tax credits, inclusive financing, and possible new federal infrastructure spending. • The Hennepin Workforce Leadership Council and Hennepin-Carver Workforce Development Board can continue to expand focused partnerships with community colleges and unions, minority business councils,

and trade associations to widen access to economic opportunities. See <http://rccmn.co/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/RCC-Initial-Climate-Action-Recommendations.docx>

- Might still be coming but this section lacked in preventing further climate emissions, and making sure those actions are also equitable
- More about how the county can assist during natural disasters like Texas

Goal: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities  
(3/3)

0 0 5

## What is missing or could be changed? (3/3)

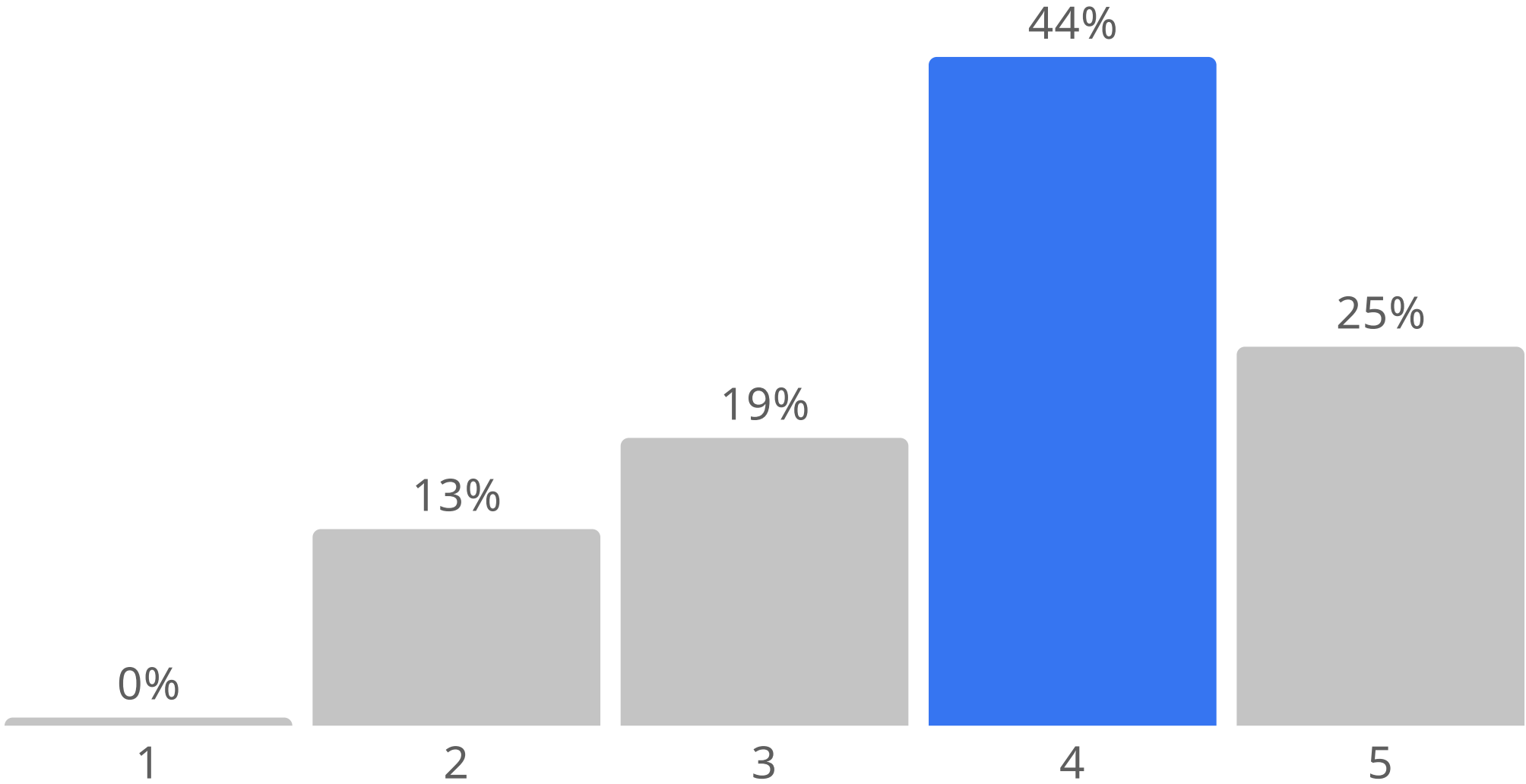
- maybe there's a less paternalistic word than 'protect' maybe it should be 'empower' or 'strengthen'
- more on helping vulnerable populations

Goal: Enhance public safety (1/5)

0 1 6

# How well does this goal meet your expectations?

Score: 3.8





Goal: Enhance public safety (2/5)

0 1 4

## What do you like about it? (1/3)

- I like the amount and type of data used to determine high risk areas and safety concerns.
- Given the recent events in Texas, we've all witnessed what the impacts of not being prepared for a wide range of extreme weather/climate can be. I like that this goal seems to take a broad range of potential events into account, even if the odds of them happening at this specific point in time is relatively low.
- Preventing utility shutoff, very timely!
- Trying to address a potential community impact to help the individuals.
- I think it is very important to make sure everyone should be able to work to prevent and respond to climate change.
- Seems comprehensive
- Being prepared is key
- I like that there is some planning in regards to flooding, and the effect on the public.
- Safety is so important

Goal: Enhance public safety (2/5)

0 1 4

## What do you like about it? (2/3)

- given MN extreme weather and recent example of events in Texas
- YES “Coordinate regional storm water resiliency efforts with public entity partners.” Good strategies.
  - YES “Plan for and mitigate anticipated ecosystem and open space impacts.” Good strategies.
  - YES “Create and preserve affordable agricultural space for every scale of local food production” AND “Promote BMPs on agricultural land with a focus on practices that build healthier soils...” Good strategies.
  - Who was surveyed?
  - Emphasis on vulnerability
  - county emergency management to reduce long term risks responding to disease increases from beach water expanding utility disconnect protection to include

Goal: Enhance public safety (2/5)

0 1 4

**What do you like about it?**  
(3/3)

- seems fine and uncontroversial

Goal: Enhance public safety (3/5)

0 1 1

## What is missing or could be changed? (1/4)

- I wish it was a bit more specific about how to help individuals with safety issues. I feel like it focuses a lot on education and data monitoring. I feel like there could/should be more action in this section.
- Didn't catch much about recovery when impacts happen and support for that
- In regards to heat, air conditioner has and to some degree continues to be reviewed as a luxury. Changing this view or perception may assist in providing more avenues for households to access assistance to obtain air conditioning. This will impact energy as well.
- Everyone thinks we are more prepared than we are (see Texas)
- City involvement is critical
- How are you reaching out to landlords to prepare their buildings (and people in them)?  
You

Goal: Enhance public safety (3/5)

0 1 1

## What is missing or could be changed? (2/4)

- should have a education partnership with local educators!!  
Make sure to have documents translated in several languages.
- I heard the speaker mention 'ensuring access to air conditioners' but access to affordable heat is another critical safety and equity consideration
- • Build upon Hennepin County Trees and Forestry programs to convene mid-size and smaller cities
- on assessment and collaborative implementation of EAB response best practices to preserve the economic benefits of large trees and expand tree diversity to and cover especially in lower income areas experiencing heat islands, flooding and/or air pollution. •  
Resource: Model EAB Management Plan (MNSTAC: 2015), which provides direction to cities on how to

Goal: Enhance public safety (3/5)

0 1 1

## What is missing or could be changed? (3/4)

deal with EAB through adopting landscape-based management policies and practices. The Plan is based upon minimizing total life-cycle costs of the EAB infestation. Written by RCC Advisor Michael Orange • Convene NW suburban cities on the developing edge to reduce their long term infrastructure maintenance costs while expanding affordable housing choices, preserving agricultural land and

permitting solar gardens using a Strong Towns approach, & cluster/conservation development. Share metro examples of net zero, E.V. ready planned unit developments with good solar orientation, tree preservation, sustainable landscaping, etc. Resources: o GreenStep City Best Practice No. 10 Design for Natural Resource Conservation: Adopt development ordinances or processes that protect

Goal: Enhance public safety (3/5)

0 1 1

# What is missing or could be changed? (4/4)

natural systems and valued community assets. o Strong Towns analysis <https://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/bp-change-action-detail/81884> o Steve Elkins editorial highlighting needed policy improvements o MN Department of Agriculture Farmland Preservation Resources o EQB CSEO Policy Documentation for GHG reduction benefits of keeping 75%

of metro urban growth within the urbanized boundary [www.eqb.state.mn.us/content/climate-change](http://www.eqb.state.mn.us/content/climate-change) See <http://rccmn.co/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/RCC-Initial-Climate-Action-Recommendations.docx>

- The people surveyed?
- interested in other forms of public safety especially in response to racial justice
- vague - needs specifics to be a goal

Goal: Enhance public safety (4/5)

0 1 5

## Why do you think people say they are more prepared for climate change than their friends and family and community?

(1/3)

- I am guessing that the people who completed the survey are high interested in this are and feel more prepared than others (including their community).
- I would assume that people that are participating in these events perceive themselves to be more aware of the potential risks of climate change compared to the broader community.
- Likely related at least in part to who responded and feeling that we were not the most vulnerable communities
- Those who believe climate change is occurring are more likely to prepare for it if they can. They may also not know if their friends have plans or if the community is actively trying to prepare for any impacts.
- I don't think it's a topic of conversation



Goal: Enhance public safety (4/5)

0 1 5

## Why do you think people say they are more prepared for climate change than their friends and family and community?

(2/3)

with friends and family, so people may think they are better informed/prepared. There seems to be very little communication from the broader community.

- Probably because the people who are filling out the survey are the people who care about climate change and have

done the research about it. If someone isn't filling out the form, climate change isn't one of their top priorities.

- Informed
- They are naive and not paying attention
- You are dealing with an audience that is pretty climate aware already
- They can control their own response, but not others.

Goal: Enhance public safety (4/5)

0 1 5

## Why do you think people say they are more prepared for climate change than their friends and family and community?

(3/3)

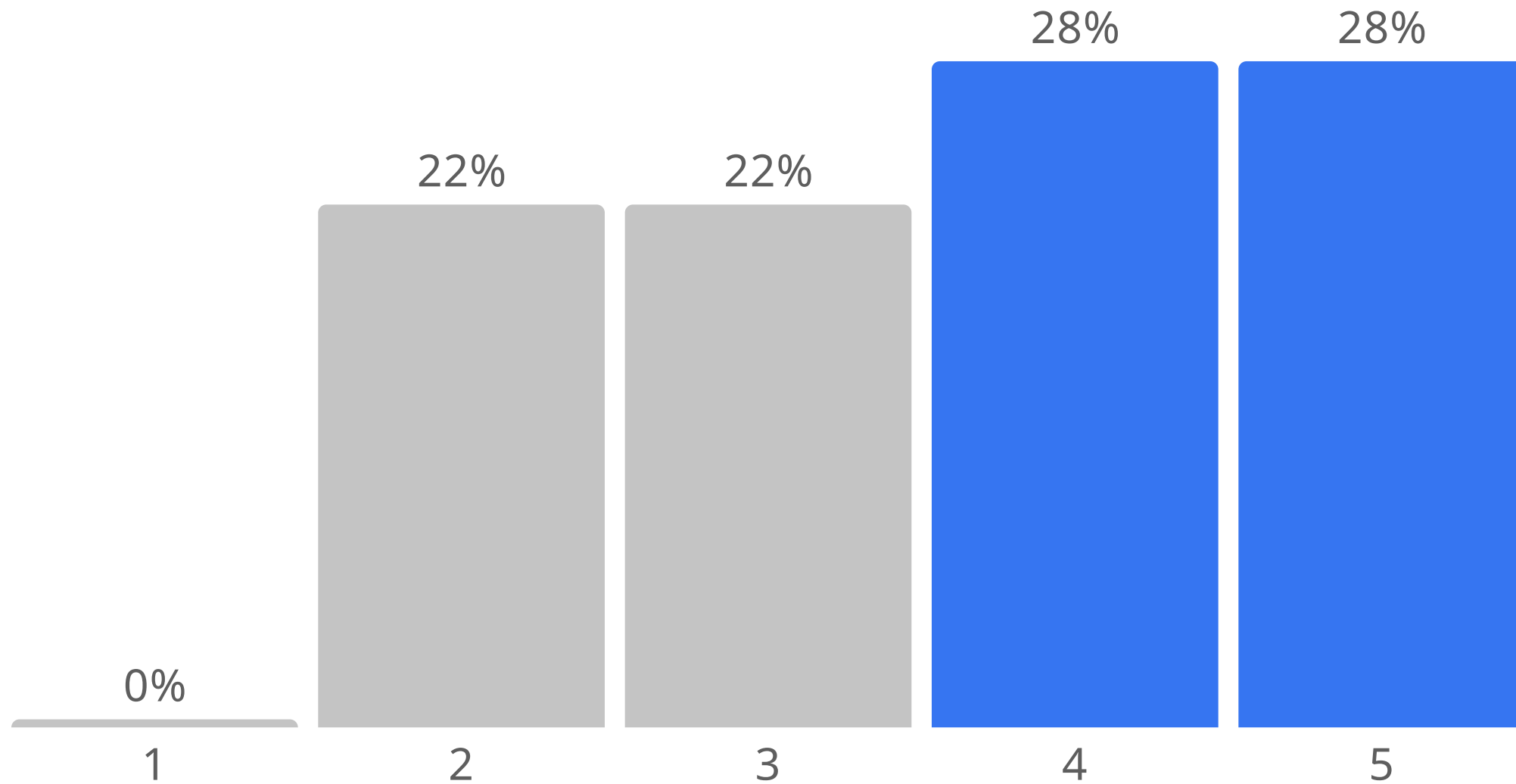
- Folks have compassion for neighbors
- My community isn't prepared. I live in North Minneapolis. All BIPOC communities must be considered and surveyed.
- I don't think many people are really aware how to be preparedness
- There's probably no widespread understanding or sense of how the county will take care of people in a climate related catastrophe or emergency situation.
- maybe because we think that the worst impacts of climate change couldn't possibly happen to us. Also because so much responding to climate change requires capital to do so

Goal: Enhance public safety (5/5)

0 1 8

# How much will our climate change response improve a sense of preparedness?

Score: 3.6

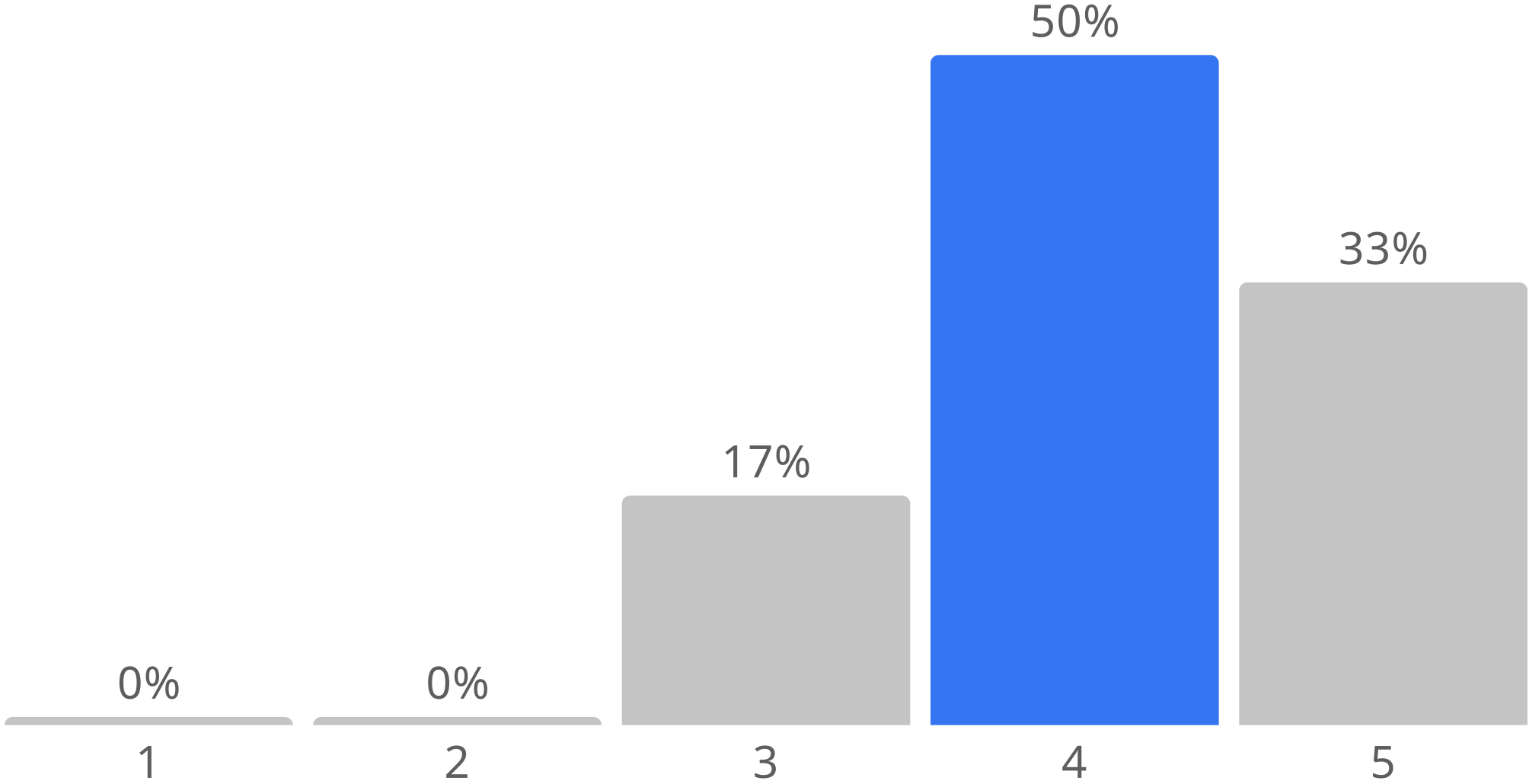


Goal: Protect building sites, roads, infrastructure, and natural resources (1/3)

0 1 2

# How well does this goal meet your expectations?

Score: 4.2



Goal: Protect building sites, roads, infrastructure, and natural resources (2/3)

007

## What do you like about it?

- I like the emphasis on agriculture
- I think it's important to ensure a healthy relationship between the built and natural environment
- Protection of Nature
- thinking about growing food,
- infrastructure is important
- The openness to learning
- very good green infrastructure with complete streets see edina's living streets policy

Goal: Protect building sites, roads, infrastructure, and natural resources (3/3)

009

## What is missing or could be changed? (1/2)

- I think we could add a section about regenerative agriculture and how we can create sustainable jobs. Along with composting.
- Planting more prairie species that will be able to handle the higher temps
- Natural “resource” implies we can take what the earth will continue to supply. We shouldn’t view resources that are ours to take without restoration to the earth
- I think 'Protect' is awkward; The Built environment often has a negative impact on the natural environment - we don't want to 'protect' that...we want to enhance the built environment to at a minimum cause no added harm to the natural environment or better to enhance the built environment that improves conditions/health of the natural environment or facilitate resiliency.
- More engagement with all populations.

Goal: Protect building sites, roads, infrastructure, and natural resources (3/3)

009

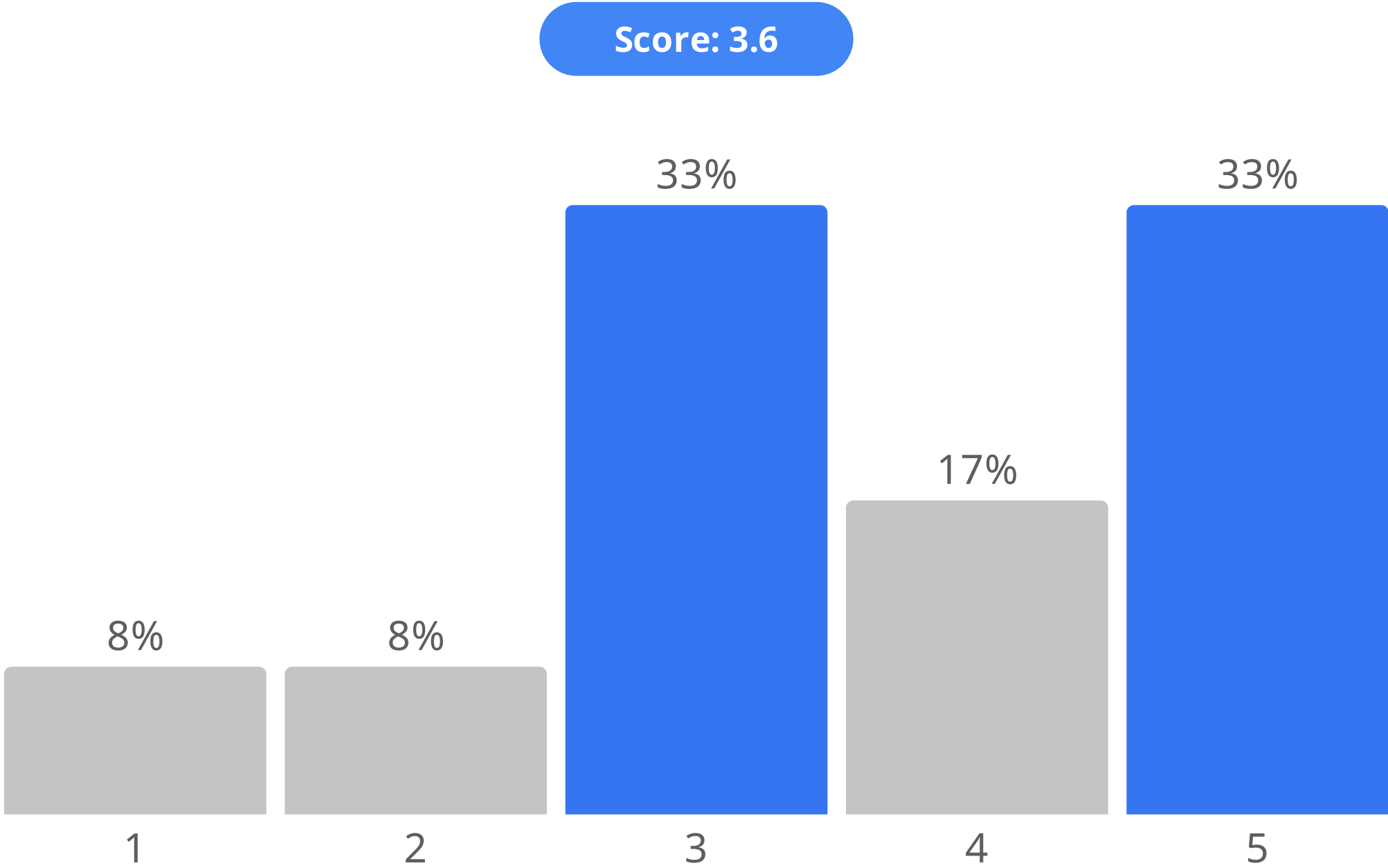
## What is missing or could be changed? (2/2)

- The county should investigate whether there are new ways to deal with ice on County Roads - is there an environmentally more sustainable alternative to road salt?
- We need explicit protections for pollinators, birds and other wildlife. All of Mpls is in the Mississippi Flyway--a major migratory bird corridor of international significance. Only native trees should be planted because non-native trees do not provide the same ecological benefits needed for birds and other wildlife.
- even though you guys don't run metro transit, how are you supporting transit in climate resilience not just single occupancy vehicles
- How will drinking water and energy access be protected so we can avoid what happened in Texas recently?

Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities (1/3)

0 1 2

# How well does this goal meet your expectations?





Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities (2/3)

008

## What do you like about it?

- Natural sequestration  
Requirements for construction and demolition material reuse and salvage
- Data and plan to reduce emissions.
- I like composting, food waste, energy reduction
- Diverse ideas and potential avenues to reduce emission and waste, and projects/initiatives to build up resiliency.
- There is a reduction mentioned in places we need to reduce emissions. Diverting food to people in need helps increase resiliency!
- Coordinated efforts
- County Leading by example
- reducing vehicle emissions thru TOD, low income weatherization and energy efficiency

Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities (3/3)

0 1 0

## What is missing or could be changed? (1/3)

- The Speaker mentioned building electrification as a strategy; building electrification might not be the most feasible and costly for a lot of residents and businesses - Does the CAP provide strategies around energy efficiency?
- Concerned about scrappage incentives targeting certain communities, are they really the ones responsible for the vehicle emissions? Even if so, seems like it could create a message of blame.
- need a better understanding on how cities and the county (plus the Met Council & the State) can reduce VMT
- Provide more opportunities to work with cities on Energy Action Plans. Several communities have gone through Xcel's program and I feel that there is a great crossover opportunity here.
- Less grass and mowing around county roads. Plant pollinators
- The pandemic has shown that some businesses can do very well

Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities (3/3)

0 1 0

## What is missing or could be changed? (2/3)

- with remote work. Remote work could reduce emissions from traveling.
- The word "encourage" should be strengthened--e.g., to "require" or "transition" or another way beyond just encouraging. Please say bird-safe building materials and lighting, not just building materials. Please say true native trees, since native trees help the environment in ways that non-native trees do not.
  - Reduction is not strong enough in relation to the climate crisis we are facing. Reduce more, faster. Also add advocacy for waste prevention policies - like plastic bag bans and other policies reducing and preventing plastic waste especially. Can we offset carbon by planting community gardens and increasing urban agriculture in sustainable ways?
  - Infrastructure to support electric vehicles

Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities (3/3)

0 1 0

## **What is missing or could be changed?** (3/3)

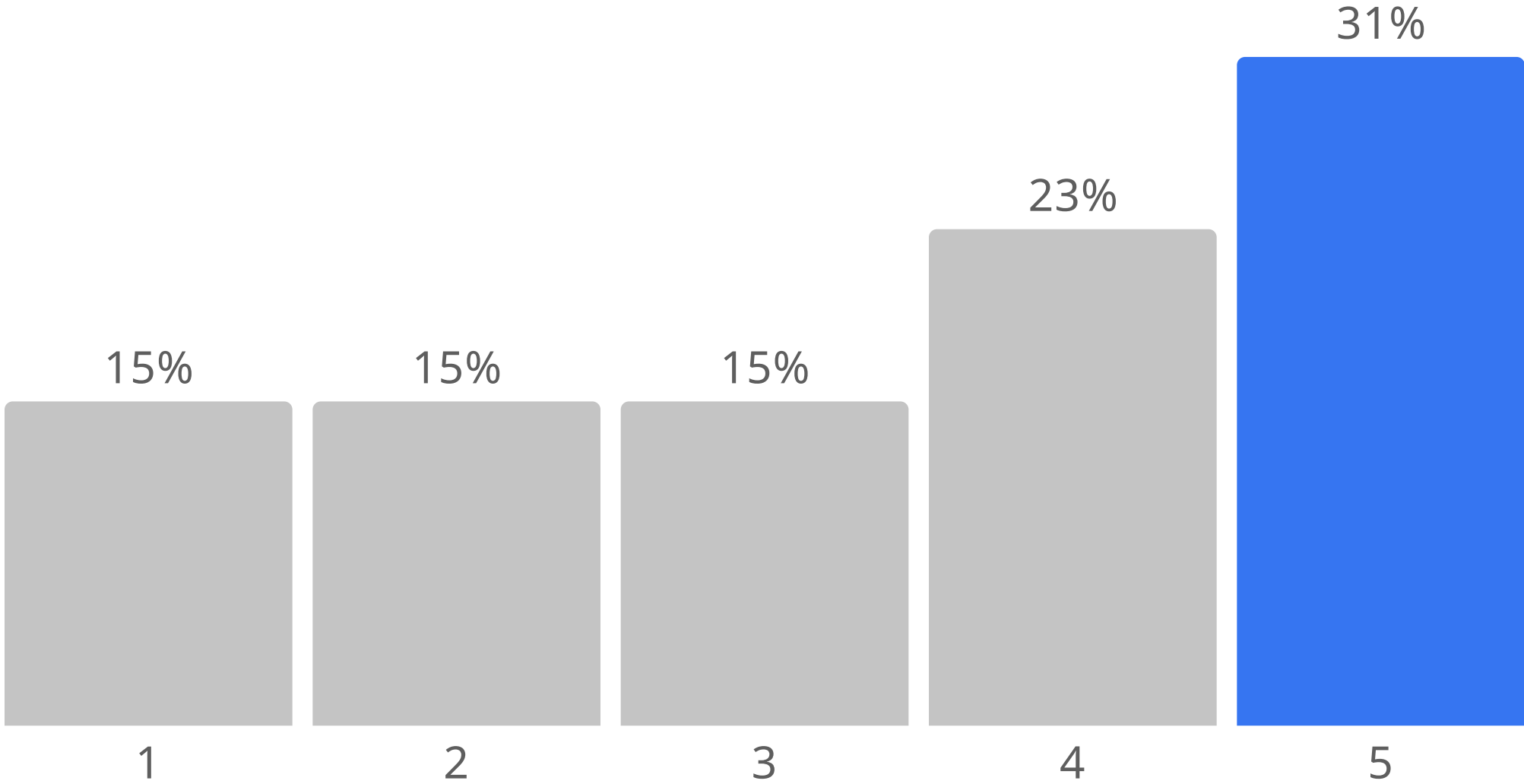
- community solar and more distributed electricity generation

Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful (1/3)

0 1 3

# How well does this goal meet your expectations?

Score: 3.4



Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful (2/3)

009

## What do you like about it?

(1/2)

- - help understand who to engage.
- love the part about helping schools increase climate education.
- Acknowledgement that climate change is a widespread impact that does not stop at borders and requires many partners to address it. Like hearing about the disparities impact scoring mechanic.
- Why so short?
- That it is a goal
- racial equity impact tool to
- Partnerships and community engagement
- We enthusiastically support the plan's goal for Hennepin County to partner in ways that can be most impactful with public entity partners (including cities) and with community organizations. Hennepin

Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful (2/3)

009

## What do you like about it? (2/2)

County's leadership and convening roles with public entities and community organizations to co-create and pursue joint initiatives to meet mutual climate goals will be vital to enabling the 41 cities in Hennepin County to take the effective actions needed to cut county-wide CO2 emissions 50% by 2030 and 100% by 2050. By convening cities,

county departments, nonprofits and community organizations to co-develop & launch shared initiatives, Hennepin County can help scale up implementation of high-impact, equitable, low-carbon, resilient policies & projects county-wide during this vital decade.

- Recognition that we have to come together

Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful (3/3)

0 1 1

## What is missing or could be changed? (1/6)

- need specifics from the county on how it will work with cities to address land-use, zoning, transportation policies that will impact GHG emissions and reduce VMT
- I wish there were more specific ways that the county will partner with communities (ex. quarterly month meeting group with cities, outreach at specific events, etc.). The current plan appears a bit vague on how they will conduct this outreach.
- involve school environmental clubs!
- Concerned about prioritizing the strategies with most consensus with public partners, rather than the most urgent, effective, impactful actions, especially if partners have insufficient climate goals due to political reasons.
- county needs to have more gathering ideas FROM communities, not just answering questions about what the



Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful (3/3)

0 1 1

## What is missing or could be changed? (2/6)

county wants to do or is already doing. County then can use its capacity and technical expertise (or seek it out) to resource communities do follow through on those ideas and/or have the County follow through on those. The Q&A is heavily skewed toward the expertise of the county and the pre-set objectives of the county and not truly responding or engaging in ideas that the communities already

had but simply don't have the resources or the decision-making authority to do. This is a chronic problem in "stakeholder"

"engagement" where there is not enough taking direction from community or workshopping to get to "yes" on those ideas

- Does partnership mean applying for grants or contracts with organizations that are already doing the EJ work?
- No real specifics
- how engagement will be

Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful (3/3)

0 1 1

## What is missing or could be changed? (3/6)

- different for different stakeholders
- Environmental organizations need to be actively involved, especially from an ecological perspective--such as the Friends of the Mississippi River, Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis, Great River Greening, etc.
- Convene cities, county departments, nonprofits and community partners to launch initiatives to scale up  
Implementation of High

Impact Actions County-wide  
[www.rccmn.co/high-impact-actions/](http://www.rccmn.co/high-impact-actions/) Build on the successful example of Hennepin County's Efficient Buildings Collaborative . We invite Hennepin County to partner with RCC and our growing RCC Hennepin County Cluster

Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful (3/3)

0 1 1

## What is missing or could be changed? (4/6)

of commission volunteers, staff and elected leaders active with 14+ cities to • Accelerate implementation with cities county-wide of proven policies & projects from leading cities to equitably expand building efficiency, renewables, low-carbon transportation & resilience by Co-leading new multi-city

implementation cohorts for high impact actions [www.rccmn.co/high-impact-actions/](http://www.rccmn.co/high-impact-actions/) with county staff, nonprofit partners and mentor cities to support additional cities to implement successful projects and policies other cities have done. • Co-Convene County-Wide Climate Action Planning Sessions with Interested Cities to Co-create sample 3 year climate

Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful (3/3)

0 1 1

## What is missing or could be changed? (5/6)

action work plans for/with each city that cover all sectors and integrate equity working with RCC, Met Council, Greensteps, GPI, CEE, etc. • Collaborative city/county Transportation/Land Use/VMT Reduction Action Planning – Convene interested city staff, elected leaders and commission volunteers to a workshop to use the

Met Council's VMT/Transportation/Land Use Scenario Planning tool (wedge analysis tool likely completed by Fall 2021) in partnership with leading cities, the Met Council, RCC and GPI. Discuss GPI's sample suite of local transportation/land use related policies to require, expand and/or incentivize Compact

Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful (3/3)

0 1 1

## What is missing or could be changed? (6/6)

Land Use, Energy Efficient Technology, Clean Energy Supply and Sequestering Carbon. Include breakouts sessions for core cities, suburbs and growing edge/rural communities. • Support cities to track annual city-wide GHG, health & equity progress using Thrive MSP 2040 and county indicators

[https://metrotransitmnh.shinyapps.io/ghg\\_tool/](https://metrotransitmnh.shinyapps.io/ghg_tool/)

- Needs more detail

**In short phrases, what is most important to you as we respond to climate change (multiple responses allowed)?**

0 1 6



## Any final thoughts you'd like to share:

(1/4)

0 1 1

- When ideas come FROM the community, trust is built with local government as an ally as "ours." Buy-in is easily won when the ideas come FROM the community - because it's "our work" rather than something the County is proposing to get feedback on to do in "our community" Climate change needs rapid action - this will not be quick if the county does not have trust or buy-in. Strongly recommend to facilitate more spaces that are long-term invested in resourcing community expertise and projects rather than starting with top-down ideas from electeds or staff. The County is/should be the vessel that forwards community, not forwarding plans/programs created within the halls of the County alone (goals more often come somewhat community, but the plans/programs do not).
- this is a really useful exercise to share what's in

## Any final thoughts you'd like to share: (2/4)

0 1 1

the plan and gather feedback, and only holding it twice is far insufficient. nice idea to adopt the plan at earth day but better to get more engagement beforehand. I only knew about this from HC email, nothing from my neighborhood group, or from any of the many enviro and climate orgs I get updates from. please slow down and get more meaningful and diverse engagement.

- This is likely because it's my first time participating in a meeting

like this, but it would be beneficial to gain a better understanding of what the scope of the county's responsibilities are. It has sounded like the county will rely heavily on outside parties to really drive these changes, which is somewhat concerning. I have every belief that the county believes in the goals and strategies in this deck, but I'm not yet convinced that outside parties are willing or able to step up the way we need them to.

- Don't feel like it was emphasized a lot, but I would like



## Any final thoughts you'd like to share:

(3/4)

0 1 1

- to see a reparative framework when it comes to green economic development, where those who are being most impacted by climate change, as well as historically marginalized communities are those receiving the benefits from these actions
- will there be any volunteer opportunities in the execution of these goals and plans?
  - I am very happy Hennepin is working on a climate plan. It is great to see action happening! As a youth I have a

lot of anxiety about my future and the future of the planet, so it gives me hope that the place I live in cares.

- Thank you for the process
- County staff leadership at the "department head" level must provide support, not slow walk or obstruct, the Climate Plan and its goals.
- I believe more partnership is needed with LGUs. Quarterly or regular meetings with cities, watersheds, etc. would be very helpful to ensure a cohesive use of resources across the county.

## Any final thoughts you'd like to share: (4/4)

0 1 1

- The plan is a great start, but is missing the importance of improving ecological function as a climate change strategy, including protecting birds and wildlife and their habitat.
- CutGHGsCountyWide

# Climate Action Plan

01 - 01 Mar 2021

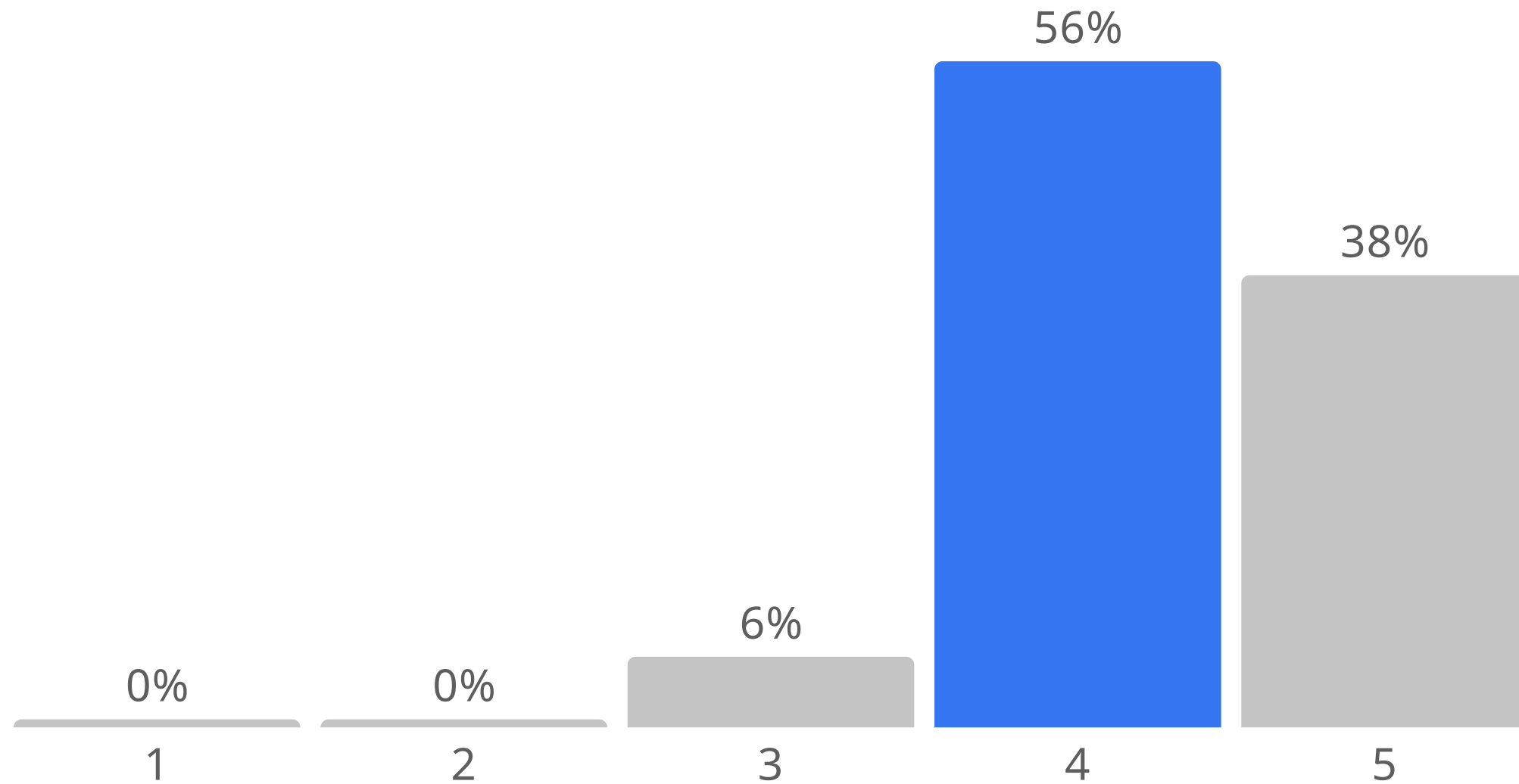
Poll results

# Table of contents

- Introduction
- Values and vision
- Goal: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities
- Goal: Enhance public safety
- Goal: Protect building sites, roads, infrastructure, and natural resources
- Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities
- Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful
- In short phrases, what is most important to you as we respond to climate change (multiple responses allowed)?
- Any final thoughts you'd like to share:

# How would you rate your level of knowledge about climate change?

Score: 4.3



**Using a short phrase, tell us how you feel about the weather today**

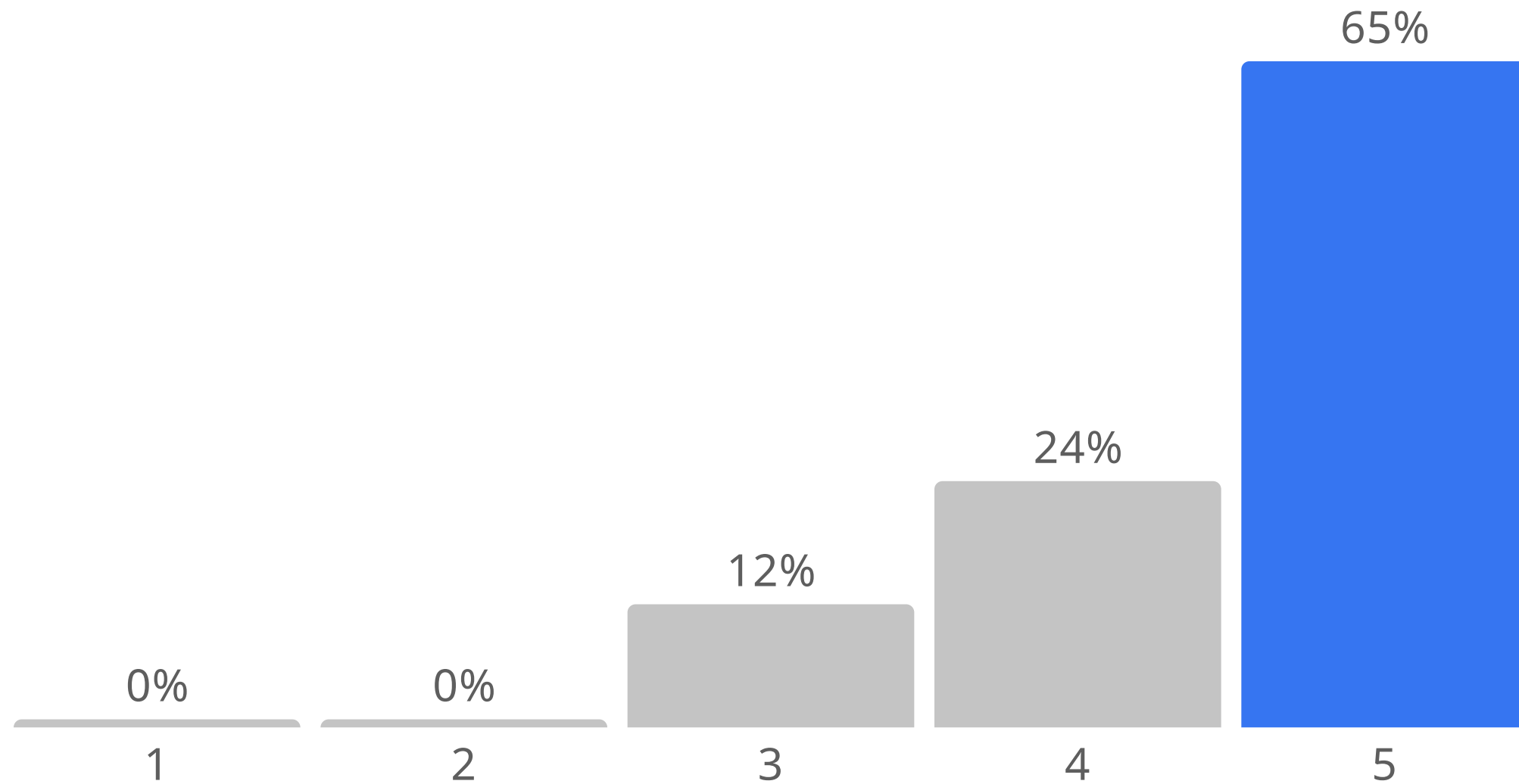


## How did you hear about this meeting?

- an email
- Via a climate/energy group that I am active in
- Email
- Homegrown Food Council
- Social media
- Invite
- email/newsletter
- Email
- Email
- social media
- MN 350
- Through Hennepin County's climate newsletter.
- Resilient Cities & Communities, MN
- through a friend who read about it
- Eden Prairie Sustainability Coordinator

# How strongly do these values resonate with you?

Score: 4.5





Values and vision (2/3)

0 1 7

**In one or two words, what is most important to you as you think about a climate-friendly future?**

# Environment

Water

Change is necessary.  
clean air  
Equity  
Climate justice  
Accessible, enforcement  
future generations  
Decarbonize asap  
Adaptation  
protect wildlife habitat  
Community  
Justice  
Perserving biodiversity  
Renewable energy. Water

## Anything you would add or emphasize?

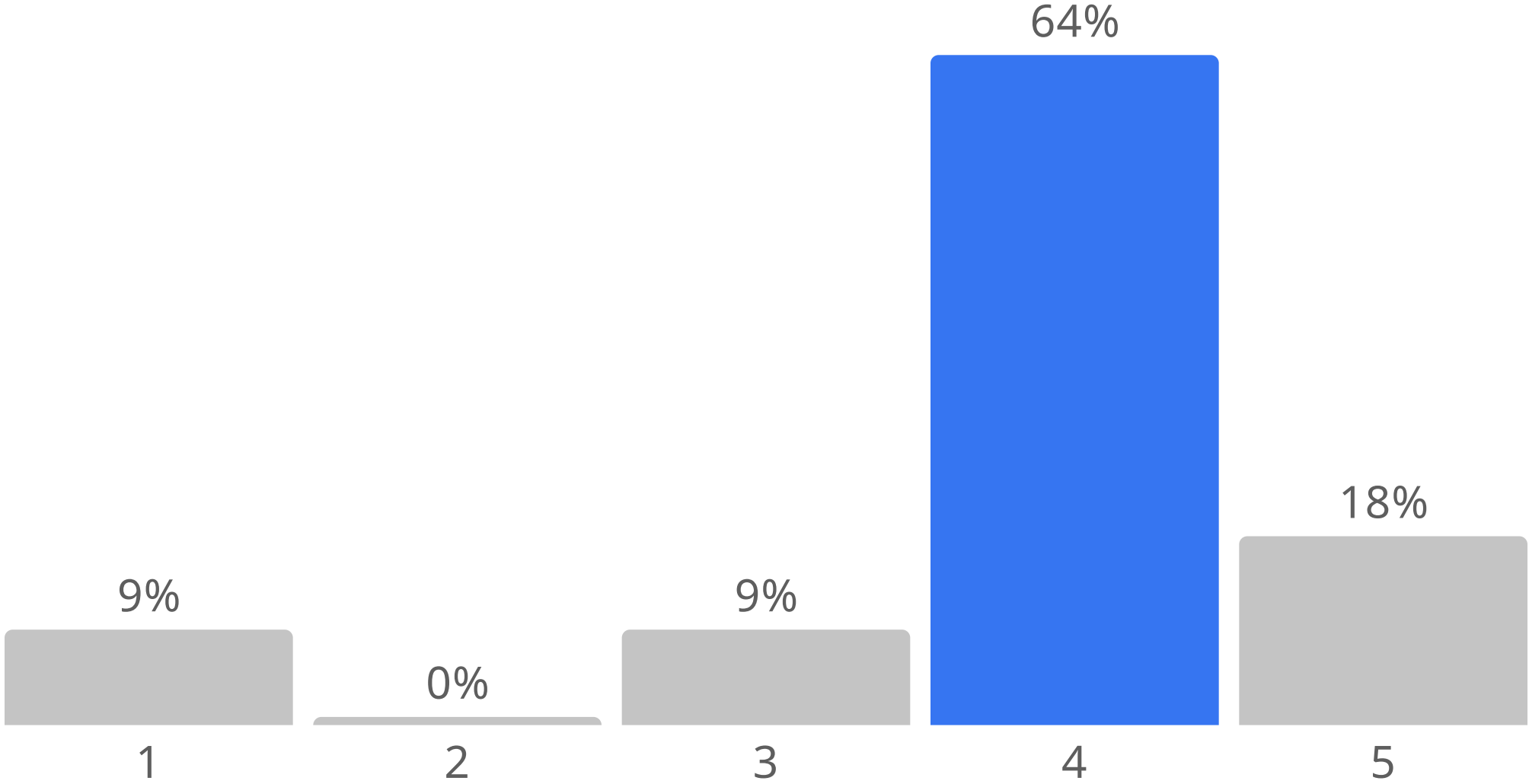
- clean friendly living together with the management of natural resources
- multi-generational
- Decarbonization
- Really, enforcement of these policies are a big priority as many laws are passed and don't do anything. Also, education to youth.
- Decarbonize as quickly as the science demands yo stay at 1.5 degrees
- Equity is important.
- Are we advancing health and economic equity as we address the climate crisis
- green infrastructure that includes NATIVE trees and vegetation
- Food resilience is essential to consider as part of climate action

Goal: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities (1/3)

0 1 1

# How well does this goal meet your expectations?

Score: 3.8



Goal: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities  
(2/3)

008

## What do you like about it?

- Equitable
- its a plan
- It addresses many people and minorities.
- Thought given to vulnerable residents
- Acknowledges health threats of climate, especially for vulnerable populations.
- Focus on vulnerable communities
- I like that you are considering vulnerable communities, however it isn't very clear how are you going

to do it. How are you going to monitor it? What would be the metrics of success?

- Equity

Goal: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities  
(3/3)

008

## What is missing or could be changed? (1/2)

- How can you get people or property owners to modify their buildings to improve energy efficiency?
- educated and train those who are more impacted to make this goal. hire more inspectors for stormwater management your plans need to include soil management. your plan does not seem to put the factor of the population growth of Hennepin County. comment by leslee jackson
- Could have been helpful to see some of the data about what Hennepin County understands as vulnerable communities
- I can see this, especially with Hennepin County's size, becoming too broad and too difficult to enforce.
- What specific strategies have the counties outlined to prevent deaths in a heatwave? Will county buildings be opened during heat waves?
- Regarding mitigating heat

Goal: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities  
(3/3)

008

## What is missing or could be changed? (2/2)

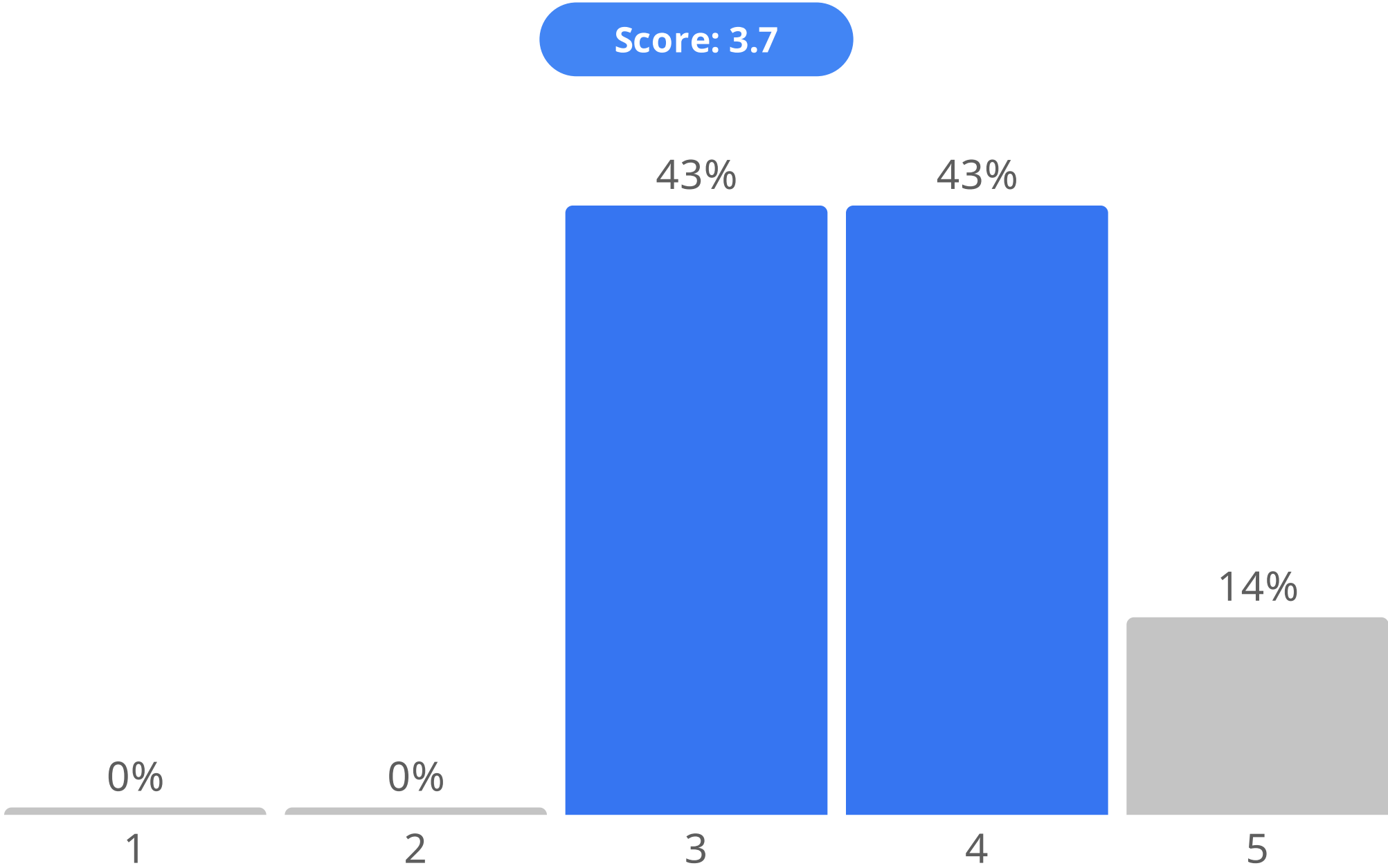
island effect, please include  
NATIVE tree canopy and define  
green infrastructure to include  
boulevard landscaping using  
native rain gardens and bioswales  
and green roofs. Include warming  
needs as well as cooling needs.  
Climate change isn't just about  
increasing heat.

- Performance metric, monitoring strategy
- How do you engage the anti-climate change action crowd?

Goal: Enhance public safety (1/5)

007

# How well does this goal meet your expectations?



Goal: Enhance public safety (2/5)

007

## What do you like about it?

- Example of the program for monitoring our tree canopy!
- In general we are all poorly prepared. We need to become more resilient.
- Acknowledges the need for heating and cooling options/protections for vulnerable people.
- It's definitely an important point, so it's good to see it be prioritized.
- unsure
- Increased rates of extreme weather will be a greater risk.
- We need to prepare more



Goal: Enhance public safety (3/5)

005

## What is missing or could be changed?

- New Building / construction - this needs stronger rules for zeroing out emissions and being more resilient
  - When educating residents on trees and heat island effect, please stress the need to use native trees and please define green infrastructure to include boulevard landscaping using native rain gardens and bioswales and green roofs.
  - Even though it is a draft, it seems broad and
- doesn't have specifics about - how- the county will contribute.
- connection to the community
  - We think we are more prepared than we are, look at texas

Goal: Enhance public safety (4/5)

009

## Why do you think people say they are more prepared for climate change than their friends and family and community?

(1/2)

- Because those responding the the survey are better connected as a function of bias of the survey
- If I am any reflection of the most people who answered it - I am deeply involved in climate. The general public seems to be in denial (about how bad this could get if we don't act drastically)
- I think they are mistaken, for the most part. I think we are all mostly underprepared.
- They don't know other people's lives as much as their own and generally understand their safety measures more. Also, a lot of times in the news, we see a lot of negative events more than positive.
- no the lack of education
- They read and believe in it, but I also think many know less and are less prepared than they think they are.

Goal: Enhance public safety (4/5)

009

## **Why do you think people say they are more prepared for climate change than their friends and family and community?**

(2/2)

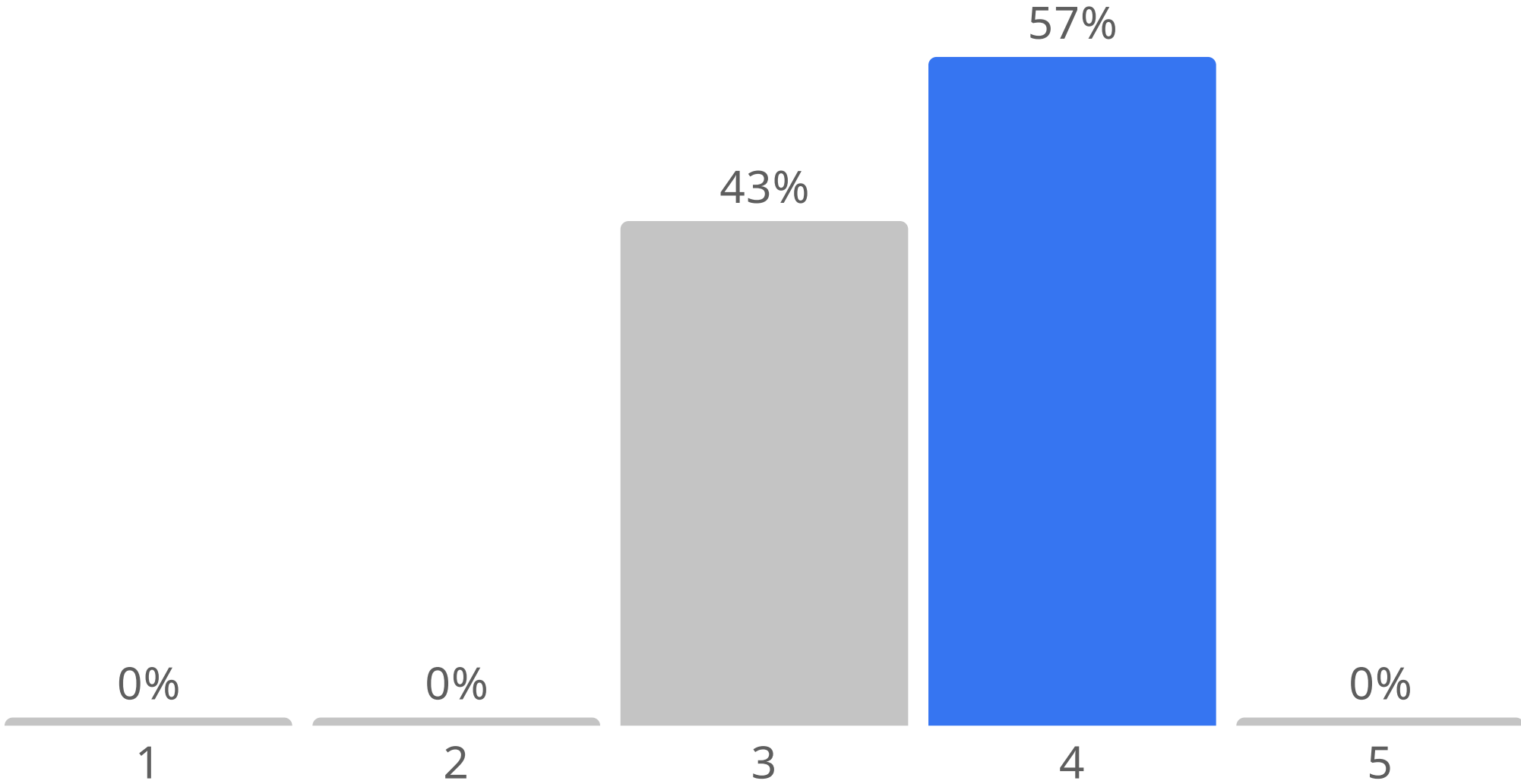
- I think people who are prepared are more likely to respond or have time to respond to a poll like this
- They are fooling themselves.
- They are ill informed

Goal: Enhance public safety (5/5)

007

# How much will our climate change response improve a sense of preparedness?

Score: 3.6

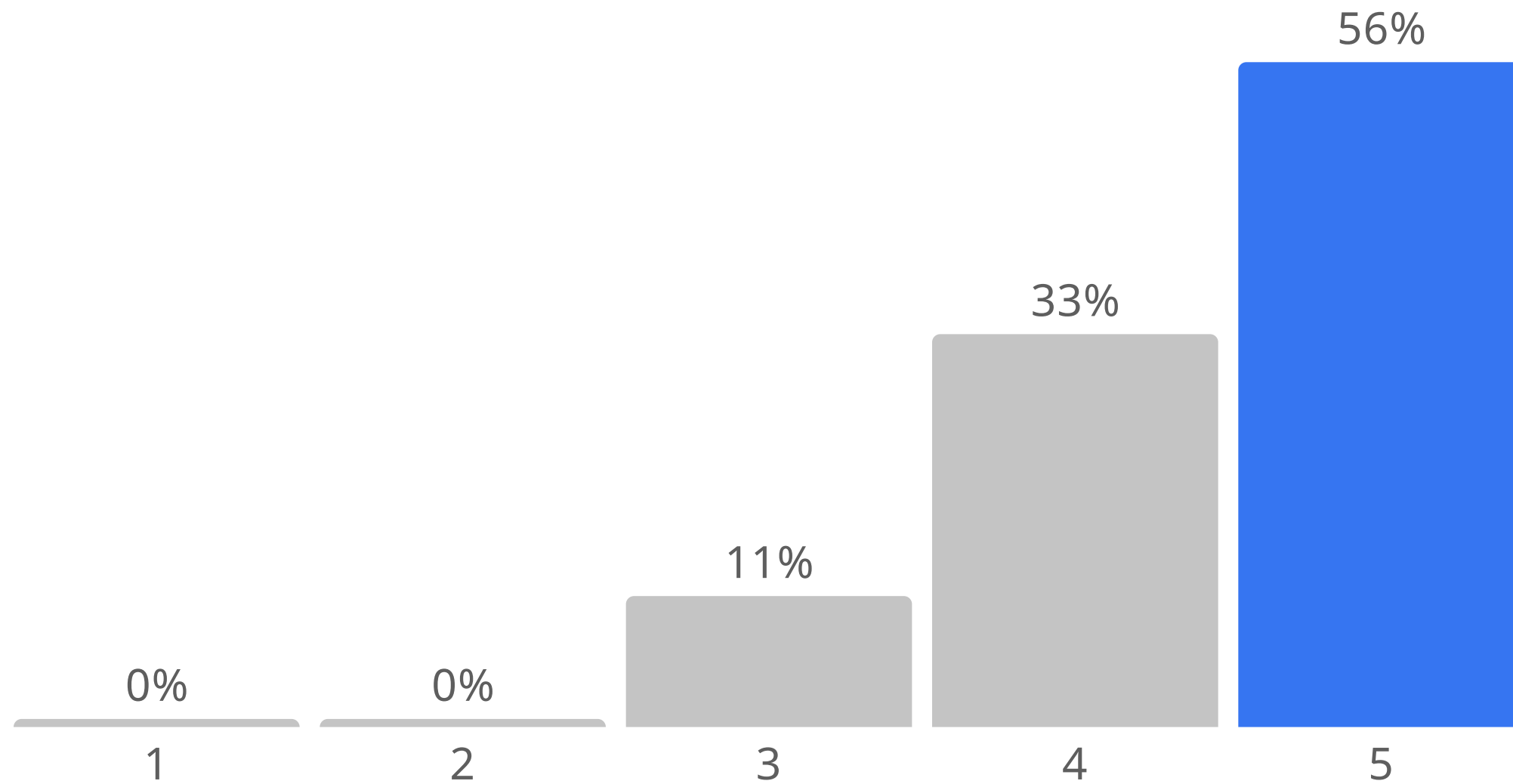


Goal: Protect building sites, roads, infrastructure, and natural resources (1/3)

009

## How well does this goal meet your expectations?

Score: 4.4



Goal: Protect building sites, roads, infrastructure, and natural resources (2/3)

009

## What do you like about it?

- Thinking about restoration and improving agriculture
- Although the goal is good, it doesn't set any performance metric. How are we going to measure success?
- This is important and will become more important.
- I like that it talks about manufacturing since manufacturing contributes largely to climate change, especially cement.
- Addresses both existing and new infrastructure
- Making sure our infrastructure works in emergencies and to prevent damage
- More trees!
- Upgrade stormwater infrastructure and change winter maintenance
- We need to rebuild our infrastructure and conserve/restore natural resources.

Goal: Protect building sites, roads, infrastructure, and natural resources (3/3)

005

## What is missing or could be changed?

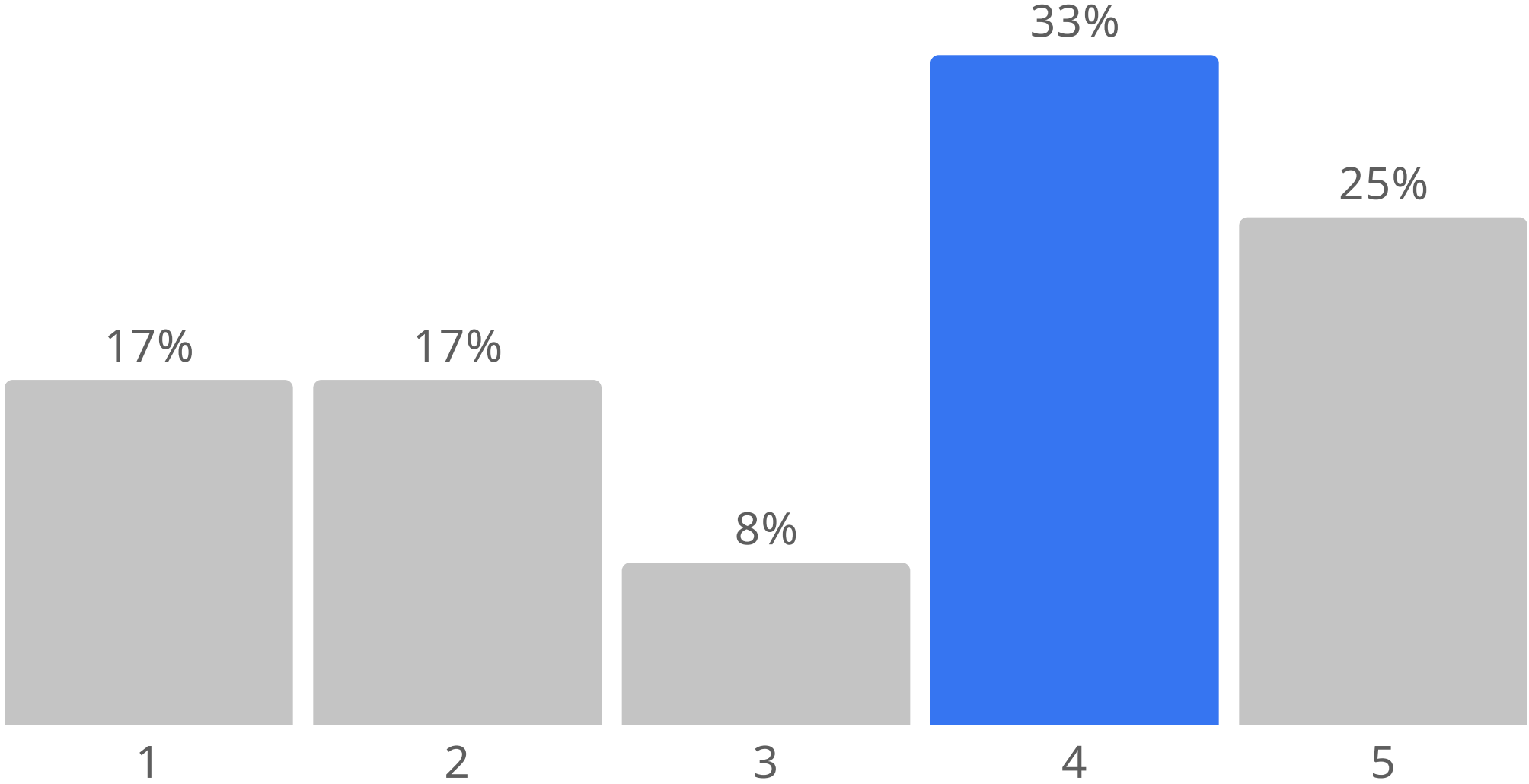
- How does sprawl and greenfield development factor into this? Are we limiting with this plan?
- Metrics, responsible institution, budget.
- I wish buildings were mentioned more.
- More focus on basic needs like drinking water, food, and energy access especially in urban and rural areas
- Perhaps natural resources could be broken out on it's own?

Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities (1/3)

0 1 2

# How well does this goal meet your expectations?

Score: 3.3





Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities (2/3)

0 1 0

## What do you like about it? (1/2)

- Inclusion of food waste + sequestration on county land; emphasis on flexible work schedule
- The idea of reusing buildings; it's cool!
- You are looking at many areas
- Due to the size of the problem and the emergency we are currently living, the goals need to be more ambitious. At least 50%

by 2030 and net zero to 2050. This will set an example for Cities on the County. Also there is a need to establish a goal of VMT reduction, not only an aspiration. There is also a need to establish how the cross collaboration between the different cities and the County is going to happen, since in order to reduce VMT there has to be bike trails connectivity.

- -Ambitious goals -Food rescue efforts promote equity

Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities (2/3)

0 1 0

## What do you like about it? (2/2)

- It's essential. If we don't actually reduce emissions all is for naught.
- More bike lines, food waste reduction
- New building requirements for the county funded buildings--lead by example
- Nice idea, but hard to achieve
- A goal to reduce

Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities (3/3)

009

## What is missing or could be changed? (1/2)

- Much of this seems to fall on the county, which can be overwhelming and not as community based.
- The goal of 30% reduction by 2025 And 80% reduction by 2050 should be reviewed. This is no longer in line with what the IPCC is recommending now.
- growth of population
- See the previous question.
- When referencing climate friendly material choices, please include
  - bird-friendly materials as well. Bird-friendly building materials such as fritted glass are usually very energy efficient - a bonus! Creating "healthy and livable communities" should include--in addition to green boulevards-- native vegetation and native tree canopies. Prioritize native trees and native plants over turfgrass. Convert from turf grass to other native landscape types.
  - -A more ambitious plan to phase out natural gas in buildings and

Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities (3/3)

009

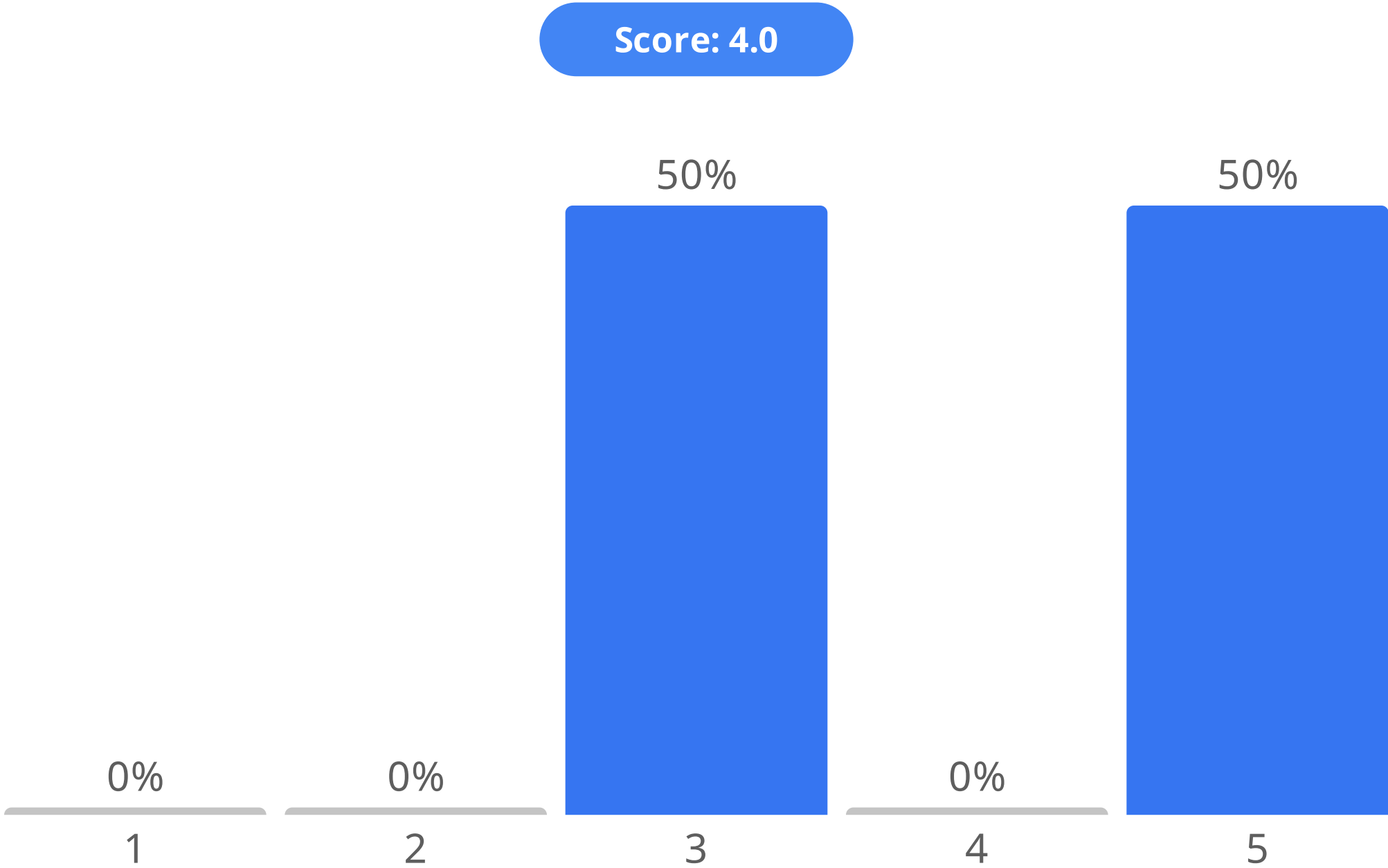
## What is missing or could be changed? (2/2)

- residential buildings -How can we more aggressively push for behavior change?
- Not sure how we're differentiating between what individuals, organizations (business and industry) and institutions (NGO's, government, religious, and etc) will have to do.
- Requires huge change by both Xcel in providing more carbon-free energy and getting people to change habits. This is a big lift.
- Not nearly strong enough

Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful (1/3)

0 0 4

# How well does this goal meet your expectations?



Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful (2/3)

0 0 3

## What do you like about it?

- Very good goal and necessary.  
We're going to need to work together across sectors, communities, etc.
- Realize that County can't do it alone
- involving others

Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful (3/3)

003

## What is missing or could be changed?

- Just interested in what and how which I assume will be forthcoming.
- It's quite brief and doesn't talk about collaborating with small businesses and schools in detail.
- training jobs to hire

**In short phrases, what is most important to you as we respond to climate change (multiple responses allowed)?**

0 1 1





## Any final thoughts you'd like to share: (1/2)

005

- I suggest you revise the San Diego County and Kings County Action Plans they include performance metric for the different actions, as well a potential GHG reduction, cost and implementing institutions. It can be useful in case that you decide to include some of those items in the Hennepin Plan
- to strengthen the weakest link to help in this quest training to hiring the resident that lives in the county. installing solar panels
- inspectors educators better management holding that accountability we need each to repair the injustice that we as humans did in our beloved city.
- Thank you for this. I am heartened to hear the support this plan has and that climate is a priority for the county. Im with you and will support as much as possible. We will do this!!
- Do it right; create solid plans that reach wide and be easily enforced.
- This is not just about changing behavior.

**Any final thoughts you'd like to share:**  
(2/2)

005

The changes need to be low enough cost for people to implement. You can't impose a high-cost change

# Climate Action Plan

23 Feb - 03 Mar 2021

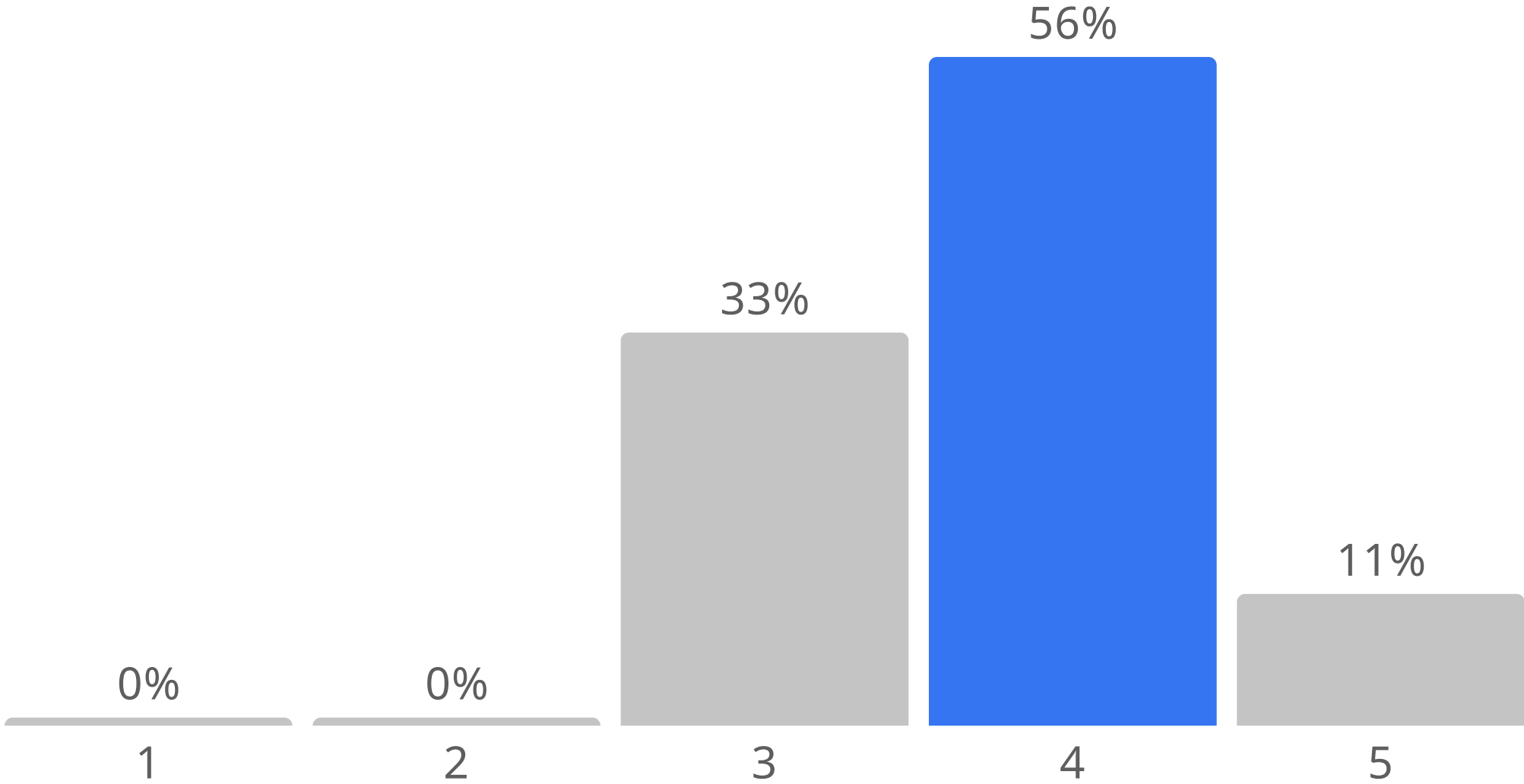
Poll results

# Table of contents

- Climate Action Plan meeting survey

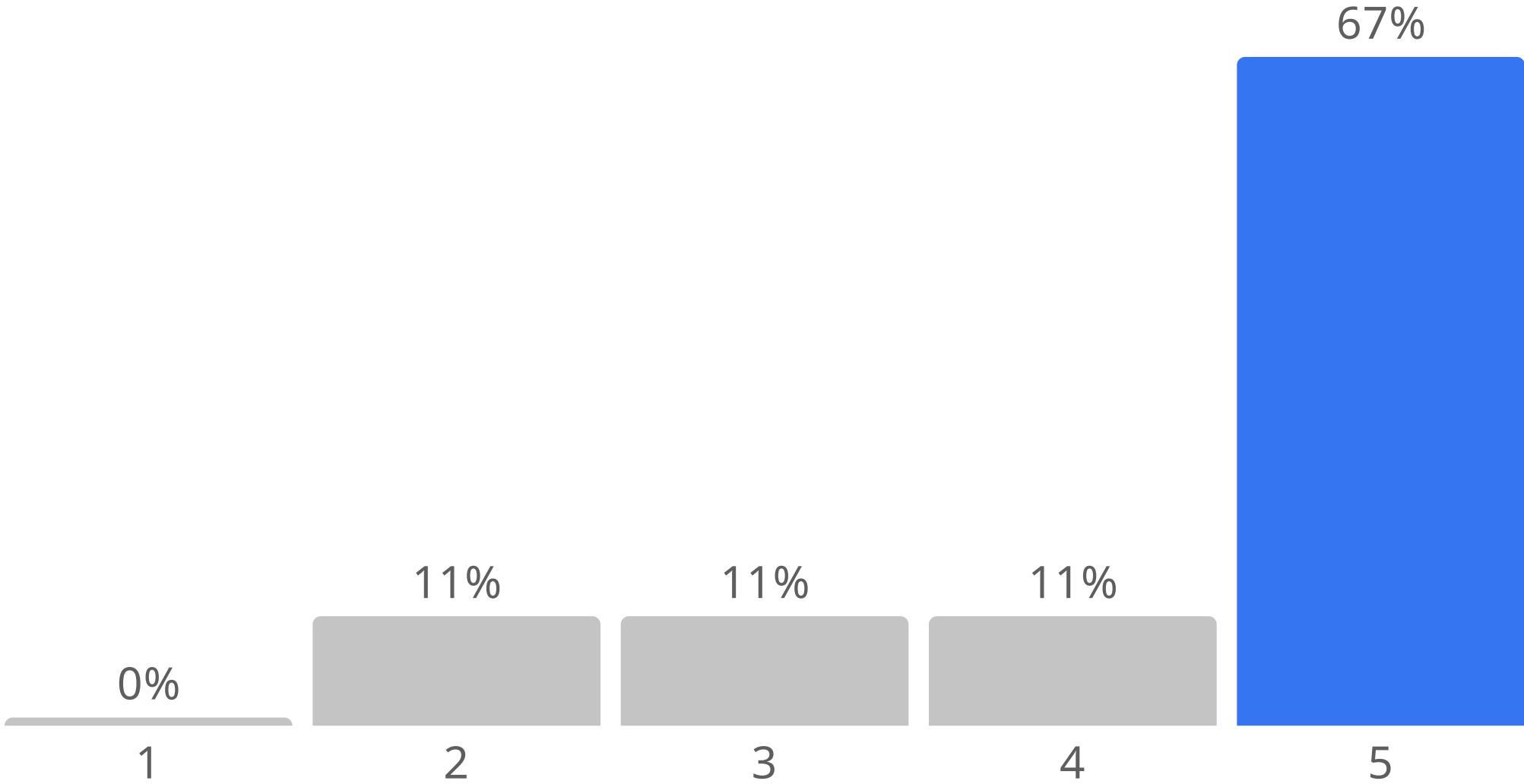
# How would you rate your level of knowledge about climate change?

Score: 3.8



# How strongly do these values resonate with you?

Score: 4.3



Climate Action Plan meeting survey (3/23)

009

**In one or two words, what is most important to you as you think about a climate-friendly future?**

Future generations  
children, grandchildren  
collaboration resilience  
reduce population  
contraception access  
Bicycle city bad Minimize driving.  
Equitable, affordable

Climate Action Plan meeting survey (4/23)

007

## Anything you would add or emphasize about the values and vision for creating a climate-friendly future?

(1/2)

- We need to make sure climate adaptation resources target those who may not be engaged in this work and are affordable to those most vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change.
- The plan is good, but we need to do more and do it quicker. We have very little time left before we commit societal suicide.
- We need sustainable power, housing, and transport.
- I think education around family planning and access to contraception are very important measures because each person added to the population comes with an additional environmental footprint. Just like buildings, the most efficient building is one that doesn't get built.
- Let people more easily get around the county by walking,



Climate Action Plan meeting survey (4/23)

007

## **Anything you would add or emphasize about the values and vision for creating a climate-friendly future?**

(2/2)

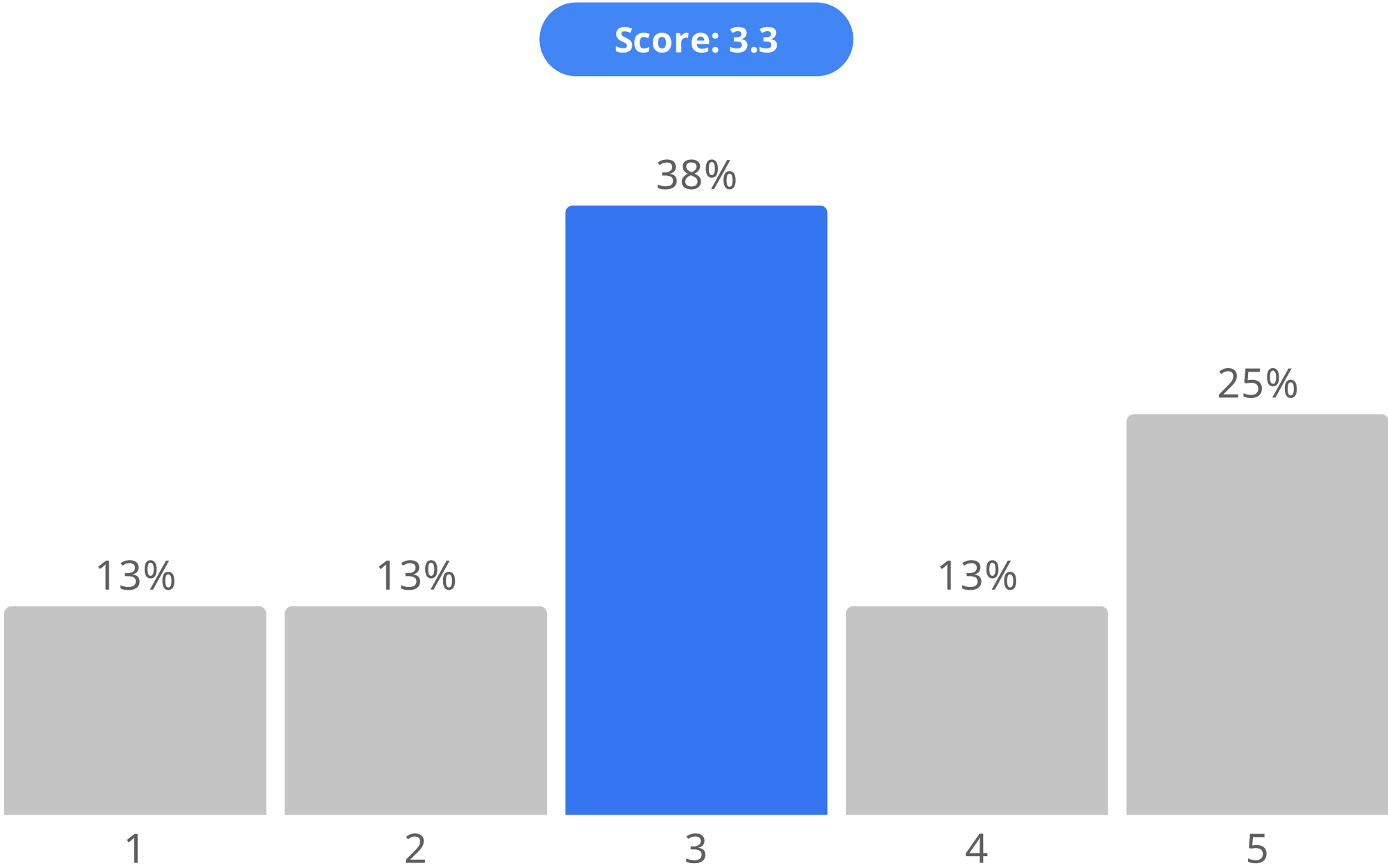
biking, or public transit. Provide good facilities and services!

- Massive tree planting
- Can this be put in a PDF as I can not read the fine print on the screen.

Climate Action Plan meeting survey (5/23)

008

# How well does the Goal: Protect and engage people, meet your expectations?



## What do you like about the Goal: Protect and engage people?

- Engagement is important
- Of course we have to engage people, but we have to lead by actions, massive and quick ones to avoid the worst of what is coming.
- Engaging with people is the best way to help them alter behaviors and choices.
- Climate resilience while paying attention to vulnerable communities and inequities is spot on
- We will not get to scale in terms of effective climate action unless we all all working together.
- Unrealistic
- The best protection would be to not engage in dumb actions.

## What is missing or could be changed about the Goal: Protect and engage people?

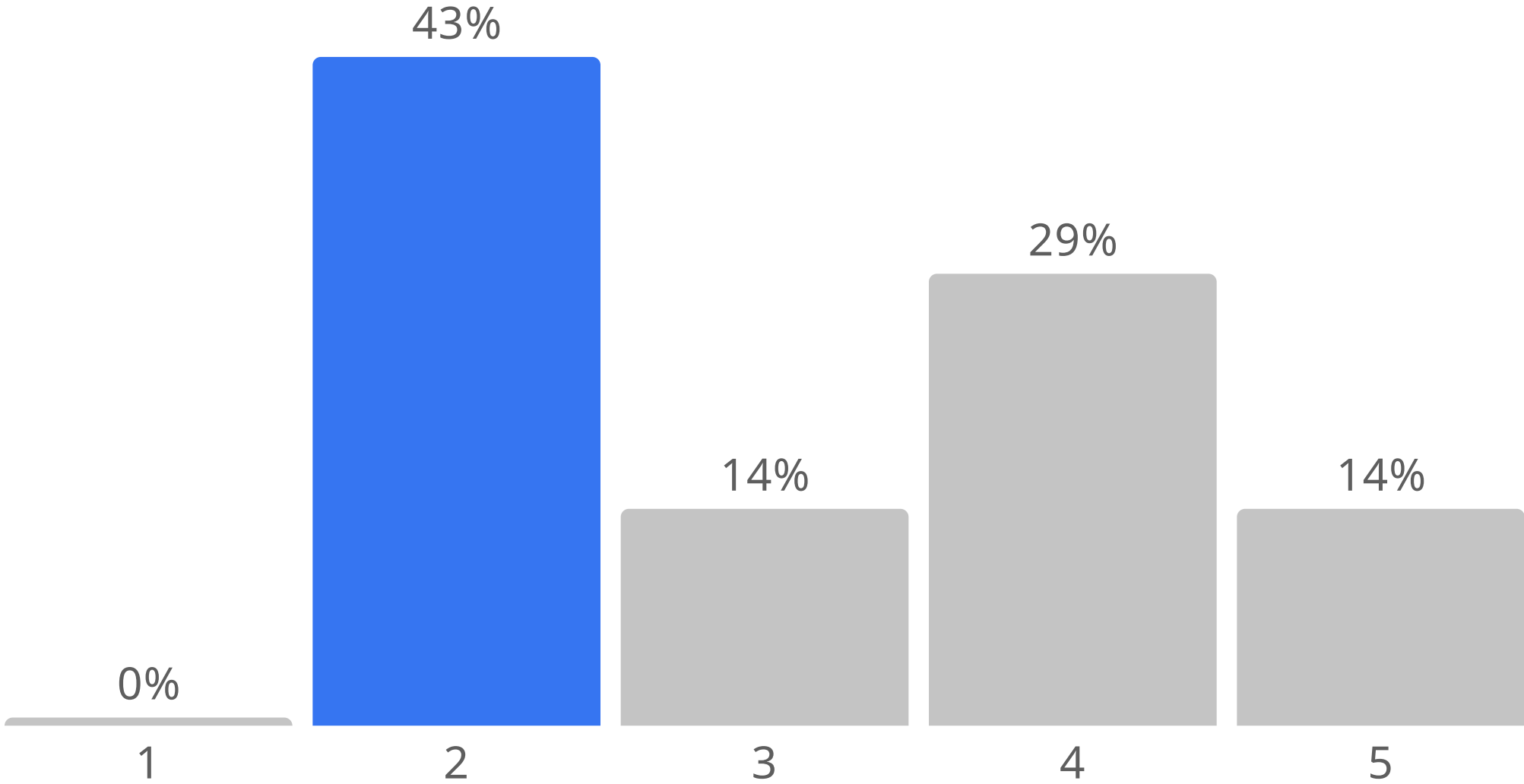
- Who are these people? If your target audience is everyone, then no one is your audience. We should call those most vulnerable populations.
- Protect, engage and ACTIVATE people
- There's nothing about the environment or people's quality of life.
- Being able to plan your families is important for resilience, this could very well be a piece of the plan, just not in the report, but I do want to emphasis it.
- single payer healthcare
- Understanding that humans can not change the climate of the earth.

Climate Action Plan meeting survey (8/23)

007

# How well does the Goal: Enhance public safety, meet your expectations?

Score: 3.1



Climate Action Plan meeting survey (9/23)

004

## What do you like about the Goal: Enhance public safety?

- It's everyone's goal
- It hits on the important aspects: flooding, extreme heat/cold. Air quality is addressed elsewhere.
- For me, this is related to protecting marginalized communities from actions that might be a potential harm.
- Public safety would be better with warmer climate, not a week with sub-zero temps.

Climate Action Plan meeting survey (10/23)

002

## **What is missing or could be changed about the Goal: Enhance public safety?**

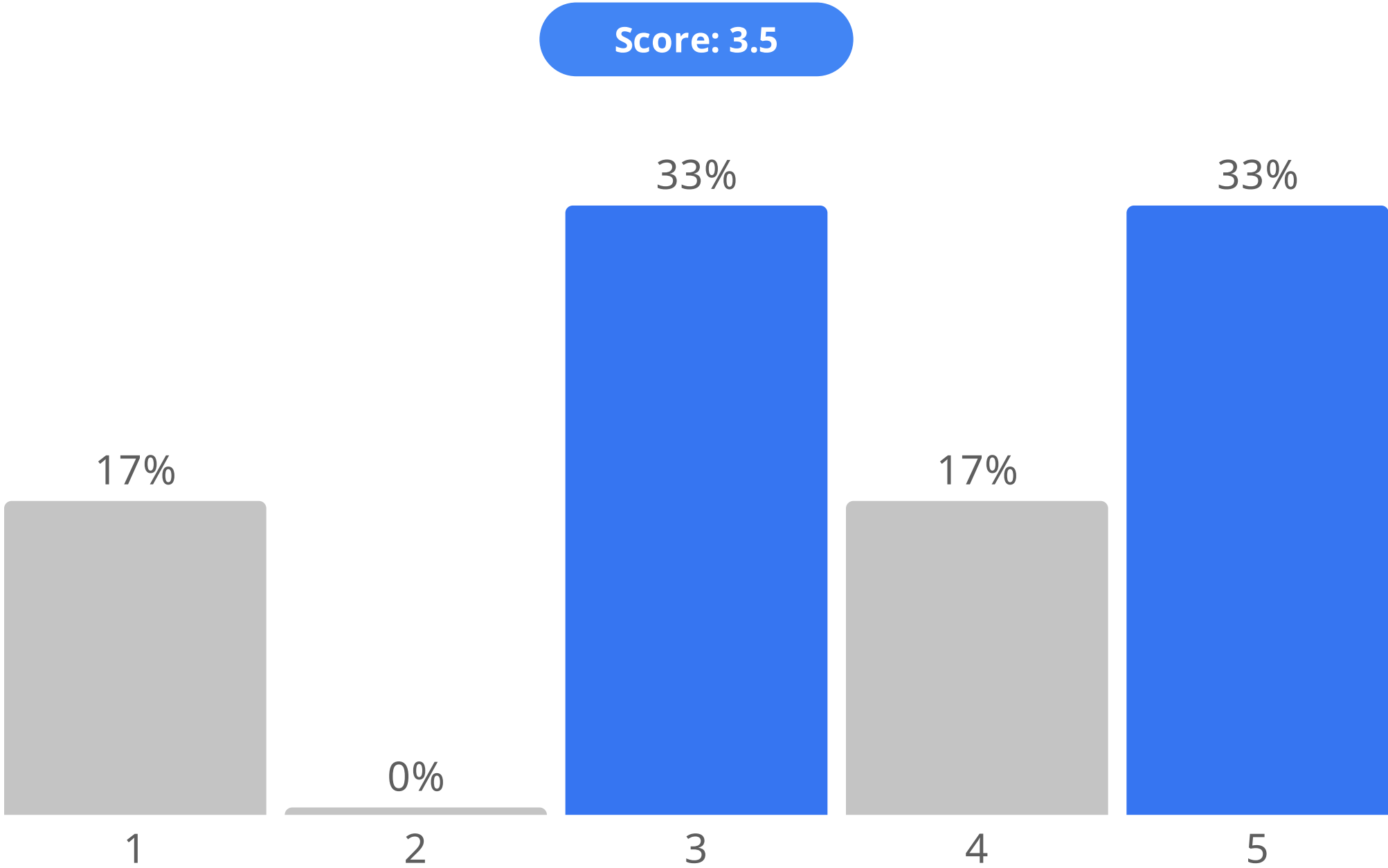
- It should not be a primary goal.
- Public education

## Why do you think people say they are more prepared for climate change than their friends and family and community?

- The people taking the survey are already engaged in climate action.
  - who knows?...and many people would not say that.
  - Probably because there are so many people out there that are not well-off and no one wants to categorize themselves as not well-off.
  - Because the issue of the Climate crisis isn't talked about enough
- so we have no idea what others are doing. It is only when you start to become involved that you realize there are MANY people working to combat the crisis.
- Because they understand that it is false.



# How much will our climate change response improve a sense of preparedness?

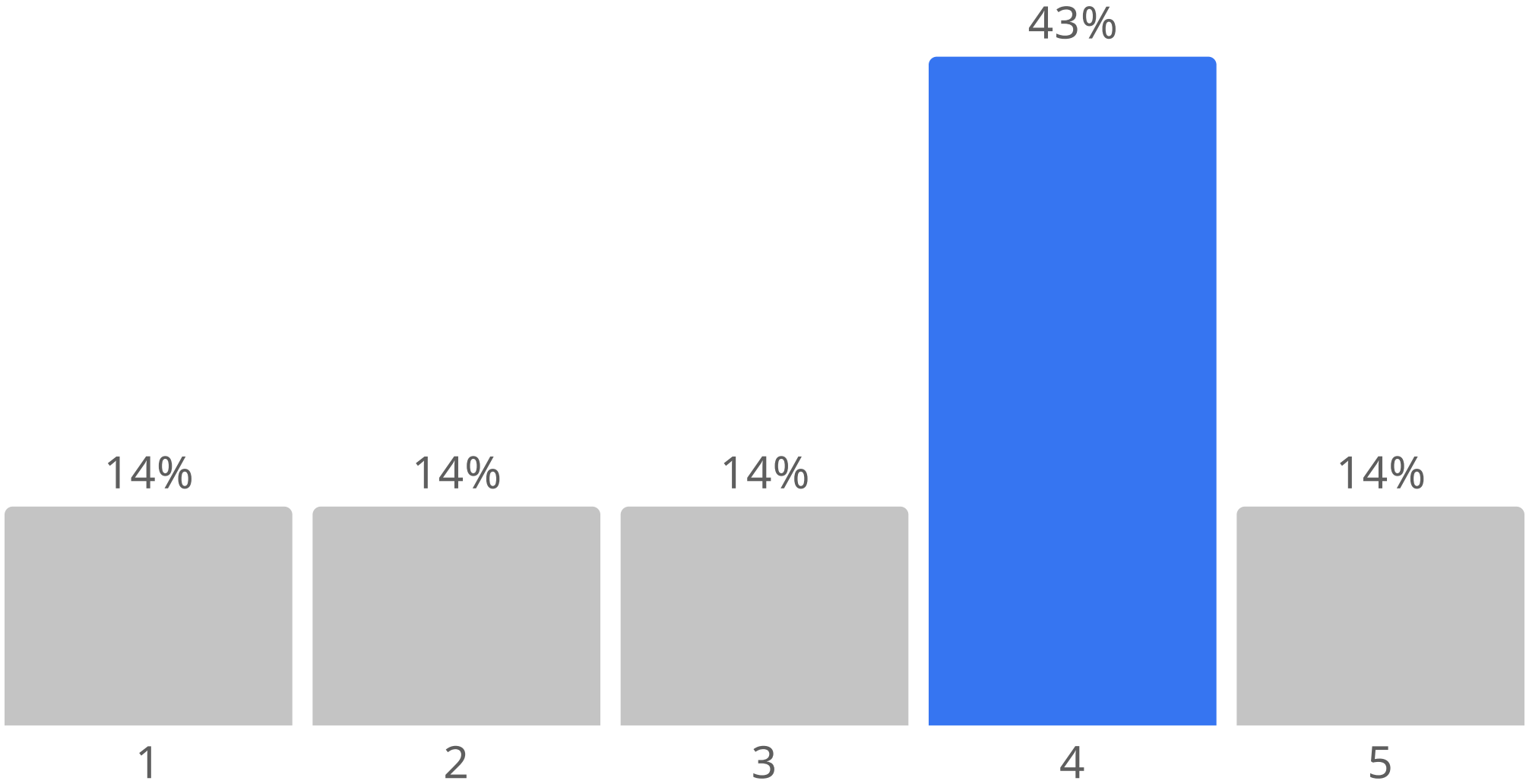


Climate Action Plan meeting survey (13/23)

007

# How well does the Goal: Protect building sites, roads, infrastructure, and natural resources, meet your expectations?

Score: 3.3



## **What do you like about the Goal: Protect building sites, infrastructure, roads, and natural resources?**

- We need to green all of our infrastructure as much as possible and as quickly as possible
- I like protect natural resources
- Inclusion of flooding concerns
- This hits most of the areas where we will need to make significant changes to protect the climate.
- Private development does not obey ethics
- More bicycling

Climate Action Plan meeting survey (15/23)

004

## What is missing or could be changed about the Goal: Protect building sites, infrastructure, roads, and natural resources?

(1/2)

- Elimination of use of concrete for roads; county wide building codes, or tax credits green houses and buildings; credits and incentives to use electricity in new construction instead of gas
- Why would we want to protect building sites, infrastructure, roads? We want a sustainable future, we'll need to make adjustments to all of those things. You can't improve if you're unwilling to change.
- The freeze/thaw cycles also affects water main (stress on pipes causing breaks), and with that, reliable access to drinking water. I didn't catch if you mentioned removing unnecessary infrastructure and really analyzing the need for new infrastructure before building it.

Climate Action Plan meeting survey (15/23)

004

**What is missing or could be changed about the  
Goal: Protect building sites, infrastructure,  
roads, and natural resources?**

(2/2)

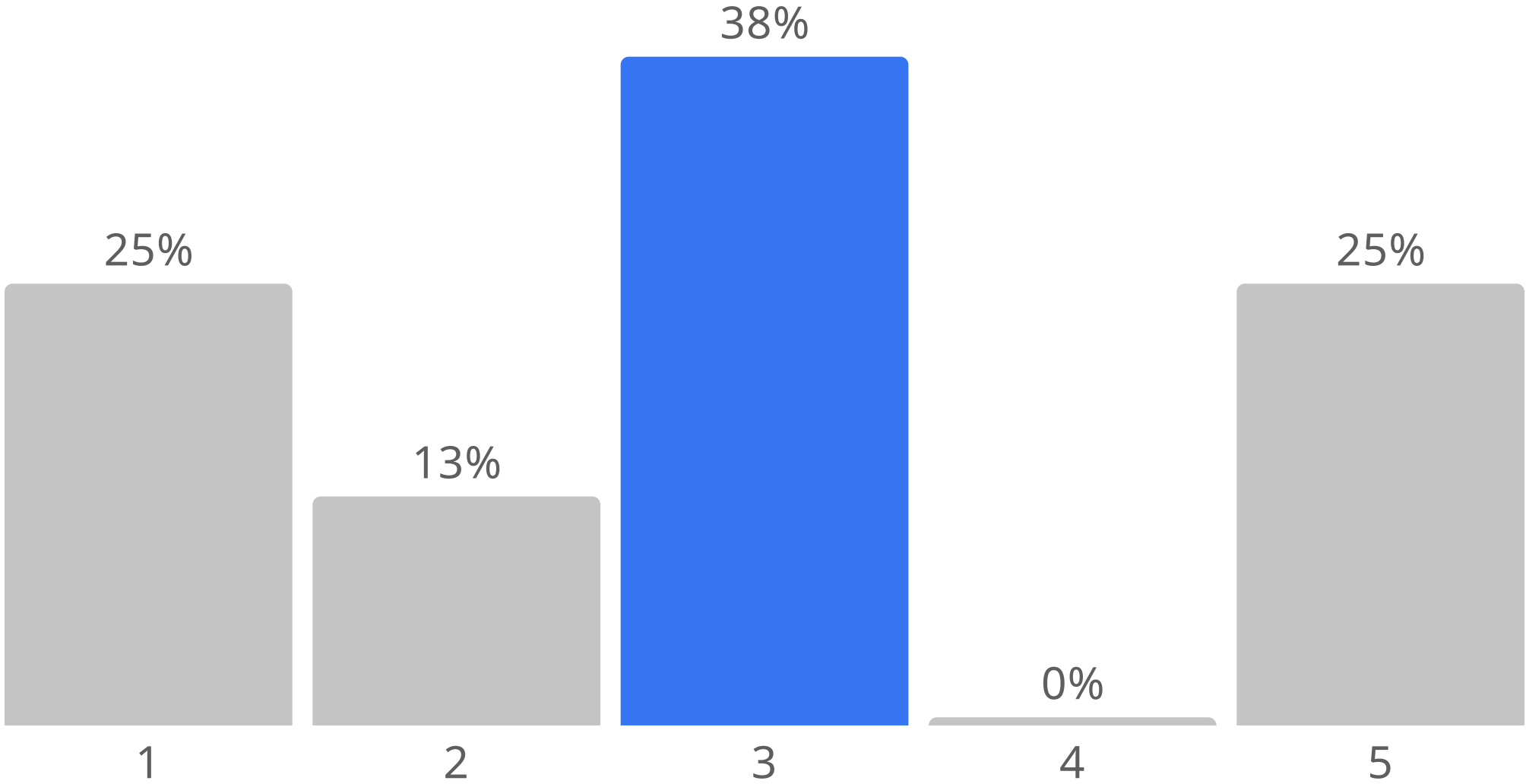
- Inadequate laws

Climate Action Plan meeting survey (16/23)

008

# How well does the Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities, meet your expectations?

Score: 2.9



Climate Action Plan meeting survey (17/23)

005

## **What do you like about Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities?**

- It's a good goal!
- Electric cars are great!
- Put your money where your mouth is!
- Is it enforceable
- Nothing

## What is missing or could be changed about the Goal: Reduce emissions in ways that align with core county functions and priorities?

- We need to do more and do it faster. The plan is good, but it's not great. We are looking at massive overwhelming dislocations in every area of life within a few short years if we do not treat climate change as an immediate crisis.
- Core county functions may need some updating/improving.
- Not enough financial incentives to discourage internal combustion engines & gasoline. Money makes things change; see how SUV sales decline when gas prices go up and increase when gas prices go down!
- The effect on the county's taxpayers.

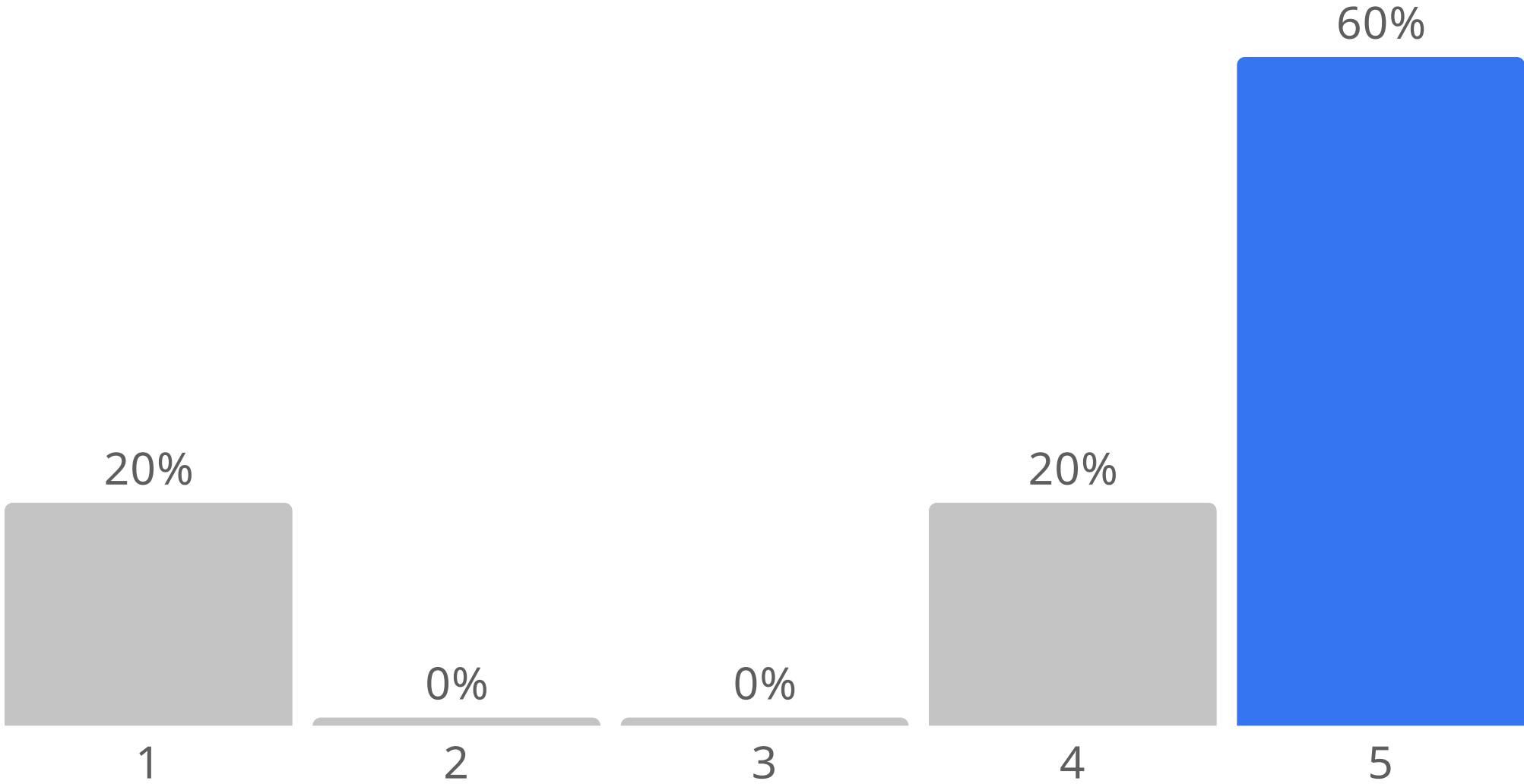


Climate Action Plan meeting survey (19/23)

005

# How well does the Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful, meet your expectations?

Score: 4.0



Climate Action Plan meeting survey (20/23)

002

## **What do you like about the Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful?**

- the words "most impactful"
- Input should be considered from all viewpoints.

Climate Action Plan meeting survey (21/23)

0 0 1

## **What is missing or could be changed about the Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful?**

- maybe put "most impactful" in all caps, or more seriously in other ways emphasize the need to make big changes quickly

Climate Action Plan meeting survey (22/23)

007

**In a short phrase, what is most important to you as we respond to climate change (multiple responses allowed)?**

Abandon petrol.  
Policy change  
Reduce population, plant  
life on this planet  
Talk to people of color  
Gasoline reduction  
Climate change is not

## Any final thoughts you'd like to share:

- I think a lot of attendees and participants in events like this are those already engaged in this work. You need to create space for those who don't have the time or money to participate in 90 minute afternoon meetings to talk about their anxiety related to climate.
- I appreciate all the time and effort that has been put into the development of this Plan. However, things are moving very fast. The new Biden administration is doing more. New county administrators have a strong concern for our climate crisis. Please look at your plan and feedback and decide where we can do more and where we can do it faster. Thanks!
- I'm glad the county is taking action!
- We need to get the climate deniers out of office and business by-in.

# #1

COMPLETE

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**Last Modified:** Tuesday, February 09, 2021 3:30:35 PM  
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Page 1

## Q1

Overall, how would you describe the alignment of the county's draft goals and strategies and your organization's goals and strategies for climate action and/or sustainability efforts?

### Strong alignment,

If you wish, please provide more explanation:  
Many of the goals align with our CAP, but some of the county's objectives are at a scale that the City hasn't looked at much (green jobs) or isn't involved in (agricultural lands).

---

## Q2

What areas of the plan most strongly align with your organization's goals?

The emission reduction goal and subsections tie in the most with our CAP. The other areas are not explicitly called out in our CPA, although equity work is intertwined throughout all of our efforts.

---

## Q3

What specific goals or strategies in the draft plan do you think Hennepin County should prioritize?

Protect and engage vulnerable people, emission reduction, and partnering with others

---

## Q4

What areas of the plan can be improved or strengthened to better align with your organization's goals? Is there anything important missing from the plan to achieve this alignment?

Reduction of certain behaviors is just as, or more important, than transitioning to green behaviors (i.e. walking more is better than driving excessively in an EV).

---

## Q5

What metrics or datasets would you or your teams find valuable as we partner to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to climate change?

City specific data about GHG emissions

---

**Q6**

**Very interested**

How would you describe your organization's interest in exploring countywide partnership driven by mutual and regionally beneficial climate goals?

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**Q7**

**Respondent skipped this question**

Do you have any other feedback that the county should consider in its climate action plan?

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**Q8**

What organization do you represent?

City of Richfield

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## #2

COMPLETE

**Collector:** Web Link 1 (Web Link)  
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**Last Modified:** Wednesday, February 10, 2021 9:28:03 AM  
**Time Spent:** 00:03:09  
**IP Address:** 50.235.11.226

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Page 1

### Q1

Overall, how would you describe the alignment of the county's draft goals and strategies and your organization's goals and strategies for climate action and/or sustainability efforts?

**Little to no alignment,**

If you wish, please provide more explanation:  
The goal of decreasing Greenhouse gases will not affect the climate in Hennepin County at all, it will only make living in Hennepin County more expensive.

---

### Q2

What areas of the plan most strongly align with your organization's goals?

The goal of decreasing Greenhouse gases will not affect the climate in Hennepin County at all, it will only make living in Hennepin County more expensive.

---

### Q3

What specific goals or strategies in the draft plan do you think Hennepin County should prioritize?

The goal of decreasing Greenhouse gases will not affect the climate in Hennepin County at all, it will only make living in Hennepin County more expensive.

---

### Q4

What areas of the plan can be improved or strengthened to better align with your organization's goals? Is there anything important missing from the plan to achieve this alignment?

The goal of decreasing Greenhouse gases will not affect the climate in Hennepin County at all, it will only make living in Hennepin County more expensive.

---

### Q5

What metrics or datasets would you or your teams find valuable as we partner to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to climate change?

The goal of decreasing Greenhouse gases will not affect the climate in Hennepin County at all, it will only make living in Hennepin County more expensive.

---



**Q6**

**Little to no interest**

How would you describe your organization's interest in exploring countywide partnership driven by mutual and regionally beneficial climate goals?

---

**Q7**

Do you have any other feedback that the county should consider in its climate action plan?

The goal of decreasing Greenhouse gases will not affect the climate in Hennepin County at all, it will only make living in Hennepin County more expensive.

---

**Q8**

What organization do you represent?

Hennepin County

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# #3

**COMPLETE**

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Page 1

## Q1

Overall, how would you describe the alignment of the county's draft goals and strategies and your organization's goals and strategies for climate action and/or sustainability efforts?

**Little to no alignment,**

If you wish, please provide more explanation:  
our organization doesn't have formal goals and strategies for climate action and sustainability

---

## Q2

What areas of the plan most strongly align with your organization's goals?

Flood mitigation

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## Q3

What specific goals or strategies in the draft plan do you think Hennepin County should prioritize?

protect vulnerable communities

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## Q4

**Respondent skipped this question**

What areas of the plan can be improved or strengthened to better align with your organization's goals? Is there anything important missing from the plan to achieve this alignment?

---

## Q5

What metrics or datasets would you or your teams find valuable as we partner to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to climate change?

? Open to ideas

---

## Q6

How would you describe your organization's interest in exploring countywide partnership driven by mutual and regionally beneficial climate goals?

If you wish, please provide more explanation:  
Not a priority for current elected officials

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**Q7**

**Respondent skipped this question**

Do you have any other feedback that the county should consider in its climate action plan?

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**Q8**

What organization do you represent?

city of crystal

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## #4

COMPLETE

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Page 1

**Q1** **Very strong alignment**

Overall, how would you describe the alignment of the county's draft goals and strategies and your organization's goals and strategies for climate action and/or sustainability efforts?

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**Q2**

What areas of the plan most strongly align with your organization's goals?

In transportation, we share goals around vehicle electrification and supporting infrastructure, as well as VMT reduction.

---

**Q3**

What specific goals or strategies in the draft plan do you think Hennepin County should prioritize?

Transportation emission reduction goals, as these are one of the largest sources of emissions.

---

**Q4**

What areas of the plan can be improved or strengthened to better align with your organization's goals? Is there anything important missing from the plan to achieve this alignment?

The transportation goals could be fleshed out a bit more. Including more targeted actions around VMT reduction (money committed, action's target date, etc.) as well as EV infrastructure support.

---

**Q5**

What metrics or datasets would you or your teams find valuable as we partner to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to climate change?

Would be helpful to share VMT reduction goals/targets as a percentage as well, to help understand them in relation to others (Mpls, State, etc.).

---

**Q6**

**Very interested**

How would you describe your organization's interest in exploring countywide partnership driven by mutual and regionally beneficial climate goals?

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**Q7**

**Respondent skipped this question**

Do you have any other feedback that the county should consider in its climate action plan?

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**Q8**

What organization do you represent?

MnDOT

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## #5

COMPLETE

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**Last Modified:** Saturday, February 27, 2021 5:21:18 PM  
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Page 1

### Q1

Overall, how would you describe the alignment of the county's draft goals and strategies and your organization's goals and strategies for climate action and/or sustainability efforts?

#### **Strong alignment,**

If you wish, please provide more explanation:  
Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Hennepin County Climate Action Plan. The City of Minneapolis and County share many of the same goals on Climate Change and resiliency as well as the need to prioritize anti-racism and environmental justice in all the work we do. The overall plan is well written, easy to read and understandable framework. One area that could use more distinction is what goals are enterprise and what are county wide goals. I think the county has a great opportunity to work with City of Minneapolis and other cities to implement policies county wide.

---

### Q2

What areas of the plan most strongly align with your organization's goals?

There is strong alignment with the City of Minneapolis. Those include:  
Carbon Reduction Goals - Currently - We hope to change to goal to net carbon neutral by 2050 in the next CAP update.  
Minneapolis Racism as a public health crisis  
Stormwater retention and flood mitigation  
Focus on Vulnerable communities  
EV infrastructure and car incentives  
Green Jobs  
Energy Efficiency in buildings. The state legislative push for the advanced building energy standard has been rebranded.  
<https://betterbuildings.squarespace.com/>  
Carbon sequestration and use of biochar  
organic waste reduction

---

**Q3**

What specific goals or strategies in the draft plan do you think Hennepin County should prioritize?

Improve Air Quality

Focus on the most vulnerable first intersectional environmentalism

Flooding mitigation, Green Infrastructure, biochar

Building Energy Efficiency

---

**Q4**

What areas of the plan can be improved or strengthened to better align with your organization's goals? Is there anything important missing from the plan to achieve this alignment?

I think this plan could have better alignment with the city of Minneapolis in the following areas:

Hennepin County should set a social cost of carbon price that would be used for internal accounting and procurement decision making.

Include an overview of the Minneapolis green zones in the vulnerability section and set a goal to prioritize projects and funding to those areas. Focus increased incentives on green zones in Minneapolis and other ACP 50 communities.

Establish metrics that use the human centered design process and intersectional environmental principles.

Develop stormwater design standards that serve the cities of Hennepin county not just Hennepin County Enterprise

The county should establish a 100% renewable electric goal by 2023 for the enterprise

Would like to see further development of strategies to support local ag and urban farming.

There is an opportunity to link "cooling centers" with the resilience Hub concepts the city of Minneapolis is developing.

Housing and human services seemed to be missing from the plan.

---

**Q5**

What metrics or datasets would you or your teams find valuable as we partner to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to climate change?

Cases of asthma or other respiratory illness percentage over time

Specific sources of the energy use from the utilities for industrial customers

Air quality standards achieved throughout the county

Vulnerability assessment data

---

**Q6**

**Extremely interested**

How would you describe your organization's interest in exploring countywide partnership driven by mutual and regionally beneficial climate goals?

---

**Q7**

Do you have any other feedback that the county should consider in its climate action plan?

Support the idea of assessing all existing county property for expanded use of sustainable landscapes

Would like to see further development of strategies to support local ag and urban farming.

We have a sustainable building policy in development that the county could adopt or build upon

The county should set a goal to have 100% of its electric use to come from renewables.

Thanks for shout out on the advanced energy standards in the plan. You should update the plan since it is now called better building for MN <https://betterbuildings.squarespace.com/>

---

**Q8**

What organization do you represent?

City of Minneapolis Sustainability

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## #6

COMPLETE

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Page 1

**Q1** **Strong alignment**

Overall, how would you describe the alignment of the county's draft goals and strategies and your organization's goals and strategies for climate action and/or sustainability efforts?

---

**Q2**

What areas of the plan most strongly align with your organization's goals?

The goal: Protect and engage people, especially vulnerable communities.

---

**Q3**

What specific goals or strategies in the draft plan do you think Hennepin County should prioritize?

Strategy: Reduce vehicle miles traveled in Hennepin County and throughout the region

Strategy: Use transportation investments to support broader county goals including reducing disparities, improving health, enhancing livability, and growing the economy

Strategy: Support Hennepin County communities in establishing initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with energy use

---

**Q4**

What areas of the plan can be improved or strengthened to better align with your organization's goals? Is there anything important missing from the plan to achieve this alignment?

This year the City of Bloomington is setting quantifiable transportation goals. There will be a VMT reduction goal and a GHG emissions reduction goal. It would be helpful if the target metric for VMT reduction on pg 43 was listed as a percent reduction rather than "Decrease vehicle miles traveled (VMT) to year 2000 levels (2.06 billion) by 2040." Without context what current levels are it's hard to understand how much of a reduction this is and how it compares to recommendations such as from the Rocky Mountain Institute to reduce VMT by 30% by 2030 to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

---

**Q5**

What metrics or datasets would you or your teams find valuable as we partner to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to climate change?

Transportation metrics would be helpful.

---

**Q6**

**Very interested**

How would you describe your organization's interest in exploring countywide partnership driven by mutual and regionally beneficial climate goals?

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**Q7**

**Respondent skipped this question**

Do you have any other feedback that the county should consider in its climate action plan?

---

**Q8**

What organization do you represent?

City of Bloomington

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# #7

**COMPLETE**

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**Last Modified:** Wednesday, March 03, 2021 1:24:10 PM  
**Time Spent:** 00:07:54  
**IP Address:** 156.98.167.157

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Page 1

## Q1

Overall, how would you describe the alignment of the county's draft goals and strategies and your organization's goals and strategies for climate action and/or sustainability efforts?

### **Strong alignment,**

If you wish, please provide more explanation:  
Hennepin County focuses on sectors outside of DNR's purview, so it makes sense the county goals are broader in scope. That said, there is common alignment with engaging people, enhancing community resilience and public safety, protecting infrastructure and natural resources, striving for a healthy environment for future generations, reducing emissions, and desiring impactful partnerships.

---

## Q2

What areas of the plan most strongly align with your organization's goals?

Goal: Protect and engage people, particularly vulnerable communities. This is an area of emphasis in the Governor's Executive Order 19-37 and is consistent with DNR's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategic priorities.

Goal: Protect building sites, roads, infrastructure, and natural resources, in particular p 33-34.

Goal: Enhance public safety, in particular reducing impacts to flooding from heavier rainfall and helping communities become more resilient.

Goal: Reduce emissions through operational changes to buildings, fleet, and energy use and through carbon sequestration opportunities in land management.

Goal: Partner in impactful ways, in particular with developing engagement opportunities.

---

### Q3

What specific goals or strategies in the draft plan do you think Hennepin County should prioritize?

Many of these goals are mutually reinforcing. For example, the first three goals have numerous interconnections. Hennepin County may have the most success if it explores separating the adaptation vs mitigation components of its plan into distinct workgroups. Most professionals and community members struggle to imagine ways of doing both sustainable emission reduction, AND sound adaptive-preparedness. MPCA has begun separating the issues out via sub-cabinet-governed workgroups. There is great potential with this approach. That said, we acknowledge there are opportunities to enhance both mitigation and adaptation at the same time. For example, converting unused grassy areas to native plantings reduces GHG emissions due to less maintenance, enhances carbon storage, and can enhance resiliency of plant and animal communities due to the added biodiversity. A similar case could be made for restoring tree canopy in areas hit by Emerald Ash Borer.

This planning process has set a positive foundation for meaningfully engaging the public, and additional engagement will be more effective if prioritized early on as the planning process moves forward into implementation. While these high-level goals may have broad support, the stakes will become higher as the county works out more detailed plans for how it will implement these strategies in individual communities and neighborhoods. Up front investments in maintaining and building deeper community buy-in will be a key enabling factor in the success of all of the plan's other goals.

---

### Q4

What areas of the plan can be improved or strengthened to better align with your organization's goals? Is there anything important missing from the plan to achieve this alignment?

Connections to climate physical and social science resources and expertise could be added to support the plan's goals. The county could leverage DNR's expertise in climate science, ecology, hydrology, forestry, fish & wildlife, recreation, and land management.

The "natural and open spaces" section could further explore the role of, and interaction with, cities, park boards, watershed districts, state agencies, or other large landholders in the county. The plan could also explore expanding the tracking metric for carbon sequestration on natural and open spaces.

In the Engaging the Public (p. 22) and Community Partnerships (p. 50) sections, it would be helpful to get a little bit more concrete about how community input through public engagement and partnership with community organizations will actually work. While giving communities "a voice in plan development and implementation" is excellent, the plan could include clearer description of when and how community input will be used in decision-making. The "Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful" section has no target metrics which is a noticeable absence when compared to the other goals, and together with the vague language makes this section feel aspirational rather than practical.

---

### Q5

What metrics or datasets would you or your teams find valuable as we partner to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to climate change?

State agencies, including MPCA, are in the process of developing a system for tracking carbon sequestration on natural and working lands. Collaboration with the County as they develop a parcel-specific carbon sequestration metric would be fantastic.

---

**Q6**

How would you describe your organization's interest in exploring countywide partnership driven by mutual and regionally beneficial climate goals?

If you wish, please provide more explanation:

Extremely interested- the DNR and Hennepin County are large organizations, serving overlapping populations for both similar and different purposes. Inter-agency coordination should be sought wherever alignment is strong. The Governor's climate change Subcabinet and Advisory Council present a further opportunity for collaboration with the DNR and other state agencies as well as other local and tribal governments, nonprofits and businesses. Coordination of goals and strategies should be a high priority. For example, green infrastructure strategies to expand sustainable landscapes could be a point of collaboration to include potential focus on native species and biodiversity in conjunction with increasing climate change resiliency. Alignment and partnership in public engagement would increase our collective efficiency and reduce "engagement fatigue" especially among vulnerable communities who may experience greater barriers to participation in government processes.

---

**Q7**

Do you have any other feedback that the county should consider in its climate action plan?

Is there merit to pair the Human Vulnerability Index with the risk assessments for flooding or high groundwater table locations? This might be an opportunity to explore establishing priorities for flood mitigation and green infrastructure investments. There could be opportunities to collaborate with DNR related to developing career paths with "green jobs" and other climate change related fields- build upon the youth listening session feedback, for example.

---

**Q8**

What organization do you represent?

Minnesota DNR (official submission on behalf of the agency as a whole)

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## #8

COMPLETE

**Collector:** Web Link 1 (Web Link)  
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**Last Modified:** Wednesday, March 03, 2021 2:15:49 PM  
**Time Spent:** 00:13:16  
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Page 1

### Q1

Overall, how would you describe the alignment of the county's draft goals and strategies and your organization's goals and strategies for climate action and/or sustainability efforts?

#### Very strong alignment,

If you wish, please provide more explanation:  
The County's draft goals and strategies align very strongly with the City's Resilience and Sustainability Plan, and in some cases go further in many important areas such as environmental justice, equitable health outcomes, workforce development, designing for future conditions, and setting numeric GHG emissions goals. The City supports these additional areas of focus, especially those which address environmental justice and racial disparities to achieve equitable health outcomes.

---

### Q2

What areas of the plan most strongly align with your organization's goals?

Strengthening community resilience for vulnerable populations. Addressing environmental justice and racial disparities to achieve equitable health outcomes. All of the goals and foundational strategies align very well with Golden Valley's goals.

---

### Q3

What specific goals or strategies in the draft plan do you think Hennepin County should prioritize?

Transportation, Buildings, Waste (food waste), Green workforce development, and Income-based energy programs. County should lead the following strategies:

1. Partnerships with cities on mutually agreeable strategies (i.e. transportation, buildings, waste, reducing disparities).
  2. Foster long-term, integrated planning that includes jointly collecting and analyzing data and modeling with a lens on health and racial equity.
  3. Raise a collective voice for climate policy at the local and state level.
- 

### Q4

What areas of the plan can be improved or strengthened to better align with your organization's goals? Is there anything important missing from the plan to achieve this alignment?

The plan is very comprehensive and inclusive. One missing component in the partnership section is identifying which strategies the County can/should lead and which ones the public entity partners (cities) should lead.

---

**Q5**

What metrics or datasets would you or your teams find valuable as we partner to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to climate change?

We are interested in any and all metrics and datasets that relate to GHG emissions, as well as data relating to vulnerable populations, disparities, and environmental justice. We are hopeful that data for individual cities can be extracted from the datasets for use by cities.

---

**Q6**

**Extremely interested**

How would you describe your organization's interest in exploring countywide partnership driven by mutual and regionally beneficial climate goals?

---

**Q7**

Do you have any other feedback that the county should consider in its climate action plan?

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this robust engagement process. We are excited to begin implementing this plan together with you and our communities.

---

**Q8**

What organization do you represent?

City of Golden Valley

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#9

COMPLETE

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**Last Modified:** Wednesday, March 03, 2021 2:28:44 PM  
**Time Spent:** 00:10:48  
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Page 1

Q1

Overall, how would you describe the alignment of the county's draft goals and strategies and your organization's goals and strategies for climate action and/or sustainability efforts?

**Strong alignment,**

If you wish, please provide more explanation::  
The draft goals and strategies included in the Hennepin County Draft CAP align well with Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) priorities and strategy for climate adaptation. MCWD commends Hennepin County's approach to drafting goals and strategies that are grounded in research, assessment, and community input. While our organization is less focused on GHG emission (mitigation), our approach to climate adaptation aligns closely with the County's approach and strategies included within the Draft CAP. Hennepin County's Draft CAP provides critical and targeted strategies to help all of us adapt to a changing climate in ways that reduce vulnerabilities within the region. Hennepin County and MCWD's coordination and partnership to-date align with the Draft CAP. The County, including its Emergency Management Department, has already started looking forward through implementing the County's real-time data network (Mesonet) to track precipitation events. MCWD has partnered with the County as we have started our build out of a Real-time Sensor Network for water levels (RESNET). Combined, Hennepin County's precipitation and MCWD's real-time water level data provide a framework for coordination and partnership to address goals and strategies set in the Draft CAP. In addition to real-time data to support informed-decision making, we have worked with the County and other public agencies to evaluate surface and groundwater interactions to effectively evaluate existing data, gather new data, and identify additional data needs to help fill in data gaps. This type of inter-agency partnership, as identified in the Draft CAP, will likely become more critical going forward to respond to climate change. MCWD appreciates all of the coordination and partnership efforts to-date with Hennepin County that have supported the CAP goals and aligned with the selected strategies. Looking forward, we anticipate to continue and expand coordination with the County to effectively respond to climate change.



## Q2

What areas of the plan most strongly align with your organization's goals?

The County's Draft CAP aligns well with Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) priorities for addressing climate change impacts. MCWD appreciates the thoughtful approach taken by Hennepin County to develop this CAP through its three phases of work: (1) conduct research and assess climate change impacts; (2) develop goals and strategies; and (3) review, build support, and seek approval. These three phases set the County up to seek and facilitate partnerships to make meaningful impacts to address climate change within our region.

MCWD prioritizes partnership with the land use community to integrate water and land use policy, planning, and implementation under MCWD's Balanced Urban Ecology policy. MCWD commends Hennepin County on creating the foundational approach to respond to climate change within the region. MCWD agrees with the County that, in order to meet the challenge of climate change, we need greater coordination and partnership going forward.

MCWD is currently underway in developing our own climate adaptation strategy which will build from the strong foundation created by Hennepin County. Our organization's preliminary framework serves to delineate MCWD's role in climate adaption in the below areas:

- Understand and Predict – MCWD will utilize and expand its capabilities in data collection and analysis to understand and predict the impacts of climate change, establish goals, and compare potential solutions.
- Communicate, Convene and Plan – MCWD will convene its partners to build consensus around the issues, align goals, and guide the development of a coordinated watershed-wide implementation plan.
- Implement, Measure and Adapt – MCWD will implement projects, programming, and policy changes, in coordination with its partners, to achieve measurable progress toward the goals.

These three areas are largely-sequential phases of work, with each informing the next. MCWD will use this framework to build out a more detailed roadmap that will guide MCWD as it works with its partners, including Hennepin County, to develop a Climate Adaptation Implementation Plan in the coming years.

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## Q3

What specific goals or strategies in the draft plan do you think Hennepin County should prioritize?

MCWD identified the following goals and strategies as the highest priority for our organization:

- Goal: Protect buildings, roads, infrastructure and natural resources
  - o Strategy: Coordinate regional stormwater resiliency efforts with public entity partners
  - o Strategy: Reassess policies and practices to manage increased stormwater volumes
  - o Strategy: Reassess policies, design standards, and maintenance practices for county buildings and infrastructure projects
  - o Strategy: Plan for and mitigate anticipated ecosystem and open space impacts
- Goal: Partner in ways that can be most impactful
  - o Strategy: Pursue strategies with the widest agreement and clearest direction forward
- Goal: Enhance public safety
  - o Strategy: Improve preparation for and response to extreme weather events, flooding, and other climate disasters

**Q4**

What areas of the plan can be improved or strengthened to better align with your organization's goals? Is there anything important missing from the plan to achieve this alignment?

MCWD finds a strong alignment between the County's CAP and our organizational goals. We commend the County for identifying the need to develop a groundwater plan that includes impacts of climate change on groundwater resources (quality and quantity). A county-wide groundwater plan would be valuable to build our understanding and resiliency with other public entity partners.

Overall, the draft CAP builds from existing and on-going work between MCWD and the County. The CAP provides a strong foundation for meaningful coordination and partnership to improve how we response to climate change. MCWD is interested in working closely with the County to integrate MCWD's climate adaptation planning efforts and build from the County's approach to climate change.

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**Q5**

What metrics or datasets would you or your teams find valuable as we partner to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to climate change?

The County's quantitative approach aligns with MCWD's own approach as we look to develop our climate adaptation strategy. In addition to real-time data networks, it would be useful to have a standardized, centralized data sharing of infrastructure, including stormwater infrastructure to better model and predict vulnerable areas.

Through our current partnership and coordination efforts, we are learning the importance of improving how we identify data gaps (e.g., groundwater levels, precipitation and water level, etc.) and how we effectively fill in those data gaps through partnerships in order to make informed decisions to address climate change impacts.

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**Q6**

How would you describe your organization's interest in exploring countywide partnership driven by mutual and regionally beneficial climate goals?

If you wish, please provide more explanation:

Extremely interested. Overall, the Draft CAP's strategies align well with our priorities for partnership. We would like to continue to expand MCWD and Hennepin County's on-going partnership and coordination, including data sharing infrastructure, emergency management planning/coordination, groundwater data collection, and MCWD's climate adaptation strategy coordination. We look forward to on-going coordination and partnership with the County.

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**Q7**

Do you have any other feedback that the county should consider in its climate action plan?

Hennepin County's strong leadership and ability to convene public entities and other critical stakeholders is evident in this Draft CAP. We look forward to continuing to work with the County and use this CAP as the foundation for how we can coordinate planning, policy development, and respond effectively to climate change together.

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**Q8**

What organization do you represent?

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

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## Hennepin County Draft Climate Plan Feedback

Hennepin County Climate Action Plan: Review by public entity partners  
February 2021

Hennepin County has released its draft Climate Action Plan (PDF available at [www.hennepin.us/climateaction](http://www.hennepin.us/climateaction)) for public comment prior to the Board of Commissioners considering adoption of the plan. As public entity partners, we welcome and value your thoughts on the plan. Please take some time to review the plan and then answer the following questions to share your feedback on the plan. We will be accepting feedback **through March 3**.

1. Overall, how would you describe the alignment of the county's draft goals and strategies and your organization's goals and strategies for climate action and/or sustainability efforts?

- **Very strong alignment**
- Strong alignment
- Moderate amount of alignment
- Little to no alignment

2. What areas of the plan most strongly align with your organization's goals?

Most of the goals and strategies align with our city's climate action plan goals and strategies. The overarching GHG reduction goal in the plan, however, does not—and it should at least match the current science. The goal now is 80% reduction by 2050 and the minimum the county should be aiming for is net zero or 100% reduction by 2050, and ideally more aggressive than that. It would also make sense to have an interim goal for 2030 (50% reduction?).

3. What specific goals or strategies in the draft plan do you think Hennepin County should prioritize?

Protect and Engage People; Enhance Public Safety; Protect Buildings, Roads, Infrastructure and Natural Resources. All three focus on climate adaptation and resilience, areas where we lean on the county for support while we focus on mitigation. Also support increased funding for any initiatives that apply county-wide, such as EV incentives, stormwater mitigation, tree canopy, etc.

4. What areas of the plan can be improved or strengthened to better align with your organization's goals? Is there anything important missing from the plan to achieve this alignment?

Under "Reduce Emissions": Plan is ambiguous as to whether greenhouse gas emissions metrics are at the countywide level (p. 36) or only county operations (2007 goal and cited in plan). Strategies seem to address both. Would suggest setting two separate GHG reduction goals if that's the intention. The strategy to support Hennepin County communities aligns well with and complements our goals.

Would suggest something stronger than strategy to "Determine the approach and level to which the county encourages residential and commercial energy efficiency and renewable energy." Can that level be determined prior to adoption? Our plan relies on significant EERE programs and would be helpful to have the county as a partner.

Are there opportunities to partner on thermal energy grids? Would like to see more cross-jurisdictional projects like this called out within strategies. This is a strategy within our CAP.

Would like to see a transportation metric that addresses number of trips, not just VMT.

Funding for reduction of C&D waste is missing—how can we support salvage without financial assistance?

Expansion of anaerobic digestion will be crucial to meeting our waste reduction and renewable energy goals. Will there be funding for expansion? Additionally, in the “Prevent food waste and divert organic material from the trash” strategies, consider expanding compost use in municipalities through incentives or some other means. The use of compost is an important piece in developing well rounded infrastructure for the diversion of food waste through composting and anaerobic digestion and will need to be done on a variety of projects, not just county roadway projects.

5. What metrics or datasets would you or your teams find valuable as we partner to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to climate change?

Not necessarily new datasets, but agreement on a common dataset may help to avoid confusion down the line. Regional Indicators? Met Council Greenhouse Gas Inventory? Some other dataset?

6. How would you describe your organization's interest in exploring countywide partnership driven by mutual and regionally beneficial climate goals?

- **Extremely interested**
- Very interested
- Somewhat interested
- Moderately interested
- Little to no interest

7. Do you have any other feedback that the county should consider in its climate action plan?

- Overall, a comprehensive and well thought out plan.
- Would like to see a section on how to read the plan. Would be helpful to have definitions for goals, strategies, objectives, and metrics. Which of these will be tracked publicly? It also looks like there are “focus areas” under each goal (e.g. Climate Resilience, Green Infrastructure)—how should we refer to those?
- Kind of a blurry line between metrics and strategies since most of the metrics read as qualitative goals—may want to better differentiate between metrics and strategies. Set only quantitative metrics?
- Would like to see 2-3 kickstart initiatives identified, ideally one around transportation (in partnership with cities).

- Would like to see race equity and inclusion called out separately (in its own box) in their framework. Over time, this could be lost along all of its steps. While it's built-in, highlighting in their framework will center their whole climate effort on equity.
- Under "Climate Resilience": Plan stresses financial assistance to residents who face climate hazards (such as flooding) but does not list financial assistance among its strategies to respond to those hazards under this specific goal.
- Under "Strategy: Mitigate disproportionate impacts associated with climate change": Increasing access to air conditioning is listed as a strategy to mitigate the urban heat island affect. There may need to be more nuance here because running air conditioners can also release waste heat which in turn contributes to UHI. Perhaps specifically supporting efficient air conditioning and technologies that can capture waste heat should be mentioned.
- Under "Strategy: Reduce vehicle miles traveled in Hennepin County and throughout the region": Would like to see mention of Complete Streets principles, especially since these can benefit people with disabilities, people who don't have access to cars, and BIPOC populations, who are also populations vulnerable to climate change. Seems like this could be more specifically integrated and go beyond just "expand bicycle and pedestrian facilities."
- No plan to lower impervious surface on road network?
- Would like to see funding called out for things like cooling centers, city programs and projects, innovative pilot programs, etc. Funds that would close the gap between qualifying for affordable housing and qualifying for WAP, and funds for those who qualify for WAP but not EAP, would be a huge help and further address equity.
- For problems that cross municipal borders and suffer from a patchwork set of ordinances (i.e. pesticides, idling, stormwater), would like to see model ordinances developed for municipalities to adopt and an effort to encourage cities to adopt those ordinances simultaneously.
- "Explore" a green jobs pathway concept—would prefer "establish" if possible!

8. What organization do you represent? City of St. Louis Park

## Angie Timmons

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**From:** Christopher, Steve (BWSR) <steve.christopher@state.mn.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 3, 2021 9:35 PM  
**To:** Angie Timmons  
**Subject:** [External] Hennepin County Climate Action Plan - BWSR Comments

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Angie Timmons,

This email is in response to the draft Hennepin County Climate Action Plan (Plan). The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) recognizes the importance of planning and implementation for stresses on our landscape due to climate change and supports the County's efforts in the development and future implementation of the Plan.

Many of the goals and objectives included in the Plan are consistent with initiatives that BWSR works on as an agency as well as with our local partners. We would encourage the County to utilize the BWSR Climate Resiliency Toolbox where necessary with special attention on the Urban Landscapes section.

<http://bwsr.state.mn.us/bwsr-climate-resiliency-toolbox>

I look forward to continuing to work with County staff on items related to water resource management as well as activities in the Environment and Energy Department. If you have questions or need additional information, feel free to contact me by phone or email.

Thank you,  
Steve Christopher

### **Steve Christopher | Board Conservationist**

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
651-249-7519

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## Angie Timmons

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**From:** Christopher, Steve (BWSR) <steve.christopher@state.mn.us>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 5, 2021 9:36 AM  
**To:** Angie Timmons  
**Subject:** [External] FW: comments on Hennepin County draft climate action plan

Angie,

I apologize for the delay and additional email for comments from the Board of Water and Soil Resources, but I wanted to provide the opportunity for input to our Special Projects Manager and Senior Ecologist/Vegetation Specialist who both work closely on climate change and resiliency tools.

In general the plan is well-written and conceptually sound. The emphasis on equity is commendable and well-documented, especially with regard to air quality.

A few suggestions:

- Many of the strategies under the heading “Protect building sites, roads, infrastructure, and natural resources – Natural areas and agricultural lands” seem to describe activities the County is already engaged in under its environmental programs. It’s not clear whether any new initiatives or activities with quantifiable outcomes are planned.
- It is good to see the discussion on green infrastructure. There could be more focus on subwatershed assessments or other types of planning to determine where practices will be most beneficial. There is emphasis on public properties but to address impacts from extreme precipitation water management is needed in as many types of landscapes as possible (residential, commercial, industrial, campuses, etc.). So residents can play a role by installing raingardens, trees and other plantings that mitigate stormwater.
- The “wedge diagram” showing high-impact strategies doesn’t include any impacts from land use changes. Given the County’s land use patterns, it makes sense to focus on the building, energy and transportation sectors. However, consider whether it might be possible to link the County’s waste-reduction and composting efforts with the ag sector through incentives for use of compost in agricultural production on private lands and in urban agriculture, not solely on county-owned properties?
- More quantifiable goals for urban forest enhancement (street tree plantings, etc.), focusing on benefits to carbon storage and extreme heat mitigation, would also help to strengthen the plan.
- The protection of soil health, pollinators and other beneficial insects supports ecosystems and the overall resiliency of natural systems. These organisms are under increasing stress from climate change but also need increased habitat and a focus on integrated pest management to decrease pesticide use.
- Building materials will play an important role in climate mitigation in the future (may be in the plan somewhere). As an example, current practices for concrete production is carbon intensive.

Thank you

### Steve Christopher | Board Conservationist

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)  
520 Lafayette Road North  
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March 3, 2021

Lisa Cerney, Assistant County Administrator  
Hennepin County  
300 6<sup>th</sup> Street South, Suite A2303  
Minneapolis, MN 55487  
By Email

**RE: City of Minneapolis Comments on Hennepin County Draft Climate Action Plan**

Dear Ms. Cerney,

I am writing to provide comments on the Hennepin County Draft Climate Action Plan. Public Works staff supports the direction this plan takes to adapt to the changing climate in a more equitable and resilient manner. Our review of the draft plan found it to be aligned with the goals of the [Minneapolis Climate Action Plan](#), the [Minneapolis 2040 Comprehensive Plan](#) and the recently adopted [Transportation Action Plan](#).

Public Works would like to emphasize support and provide additional comments on several strategies of importance for the City:

- General Comments:
  - Public Works appreciates the Plan’s attention to Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) and Green Jobs. We suggest the County make a clearer tie between these two priority areas and their impacts on environmental justice areas. Many environmental areas will see disproportionate impacts due to climate change and additional efforts need to be made to counteract these impacts, both GSI and green jobs are useful tools to do so.
- **P.17, Reduce air pollution associated with transportation especially in areas with vulnerable populations:** Minneapolis Public Works supports the reduction of air pollution and agrees that special attention needs to be given to areas with vulnerable populations which are disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change. We see this explicitly linked to our VMT and greenhouse gas reduction goals passed in the Transportation Action Plan. We are eager to partner with the County to make meaningful changes in this area on Hennepin County streets in Minneapolis.
- **P.29, Strategy: Reassess policies, design standards, and maintenance practices for county buildings and infrastructure projects:** Minneapolis Public Works supports this strategy and the action items within.
- **P.31, Strategy: Coordinate regional stormwater resiliency efforts with public entity partners:** The plan acknowledges the impact that increased rainfall will have on groundwater levels, including flooding. Groundwater management is an issue that transcends political and surface watershed boundaries. Hennepin County is in a position to take a leadership role in regional groundwater management. The County should work towards drafting and receiving approval for a county-wide groundwater management plan that focuses on groundwater as a resource and provides for both protection of drinking water supply areas and for the infiltration of surface water to recharge aquifers.



- **P.38, Strategy: Reduce climate impacts of buildings through innovative and efficient design, including the use of climate-friendly material choices:** Public Works would like the County to encourage/require cities to develop construction and demolition (C&D) policies for City owned/funded projects and/or encourage requirements at the State level.
- **P.41, Strategy: Reduce vehicle miles traveled in Hennepin County and throughout the region:** Public Works supports this strategy and the subsequent actions; we recommend the County set more aggressive VMT reduction goals to be more in line with the City's goals. The recently adopted Transportation Action Plan has a VMT reduction goal of 1.8% per year in order to meet the goal of 1.87 billion VMT in 2030 which is in line with the City's Climate Action Plan. As a willing partner in the County, the City of Minneapolis plans to support and achieve reduced VMT by using the planning tools at our disposal, including less reliance on LOS and planning for the mode share we want. For example, [Strategy 3](#) in our Street Operations section within the TAP calls out the desire to shift from vehicle throughput to people throughput by moving away from traditional LOS measures.
- **P.42, Strategy: Promote electric vehicle infrastructure regionally:** Public Works supports this strategy.
- **P.43, Strategy: Use transportation investments to support broader county goals including reducing disparities, improving health, enhancing livability, and growing the economy:** Public Works supports this strategy and subsequent actions.
- **P.46, Strategy: Understand the climate impacts of our purchases and mitigate the largest impacts:** Public Works encourages the County to take a stronger position on Extended Producer Responsibility for the manufacturing of items that contribute a large volume to the waste stream (i.e. printed paper and packaging) and/or packaging requirements/fees/bans on certain difficult to dispose of items such as mattresses. The County notes that the production and transportation of goods are the biggest contributors to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and that waste reduction is the biggest opportunity to reduce GHG; however, this plan does not include a strategy that addresses these up-front GHG emissions other than County sustainable purchasing policies (p. 44-46). Public works encourages the County to add an action item on supporting City policies, lobbying against pre-emption, and/or adopting these strategies at a County or State level. This could be added after the consumption-based inventory action.
- **P.51, Cut greenhouse gases from transportation:** Public Works supports this strategy; we recommend that Hennepin County's annual targets for reductions in vehicle miles travel and greenhouse gas emissions be at least in alignment with [City's reduction goals](#).

Thank you for providing the opportunity to review the draft Climate Action Plan. Public Works supports the policy direction of the plan and looks forward to supporting the implementation of this plan in the coming years by working together with the County to make impactful changes.

Sincerely,



Brette Hjelle  
Interim Director, Public Works  
City of Minneapolis, Department of Public Works