

2023

# Stillwater MN – Climate Action Plan



Larry Odebrecht  
City of Stillwater  
3/2/2023

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	2
Letter from Stillwater City Council .....	2
Phase 1: Defining the Problem .....	3
Purpose of the Climate Action Plan .....	3
Example of the City’s Commitment to the Environment: Riverfront Stabilization Project .....	4
Importance of Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions .....	5
Phase 2: Measuring the Problem Emissions Inventory.....	6
Gathering Data on the City's Emissions .....	7
Phase 3: Analysis of the Stillwater’s Climate Posture.....	11
Phase 4: Plan for Improvement .....	12
Challenges to Implementation.....	12
Additional Information.....	14
Community Involvement: Climate Action Committee.....	14
Community Engagement: Communications .....	15
Partnership with Xcel Energy Partners in Energy .....	16
Funding and Implementation .....	17
Conclusion.....	18

# Introduction

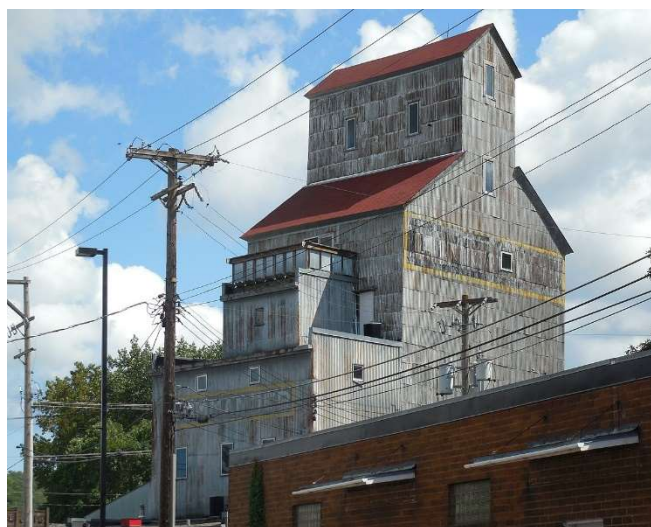
## Letter from Stillwater City Council

Residents of Stillwater,

As the Stillwater City Council and fellow residents, we are proud to present to you our Climate Action Plan, which has been developed with the goal of reducing the negative impact of climate change on our city and its people. Climate change stories are becoming increasingly prevalent in the news, and we are seeing the effects of this phenomenon right here in Stillwater. From extreme temperatures to disrupted systems, the cost of inaction is simply too high.

We recognize the importance of addressing this issue and have made it one of our priorities to create a plan that will not only mitigate the effects of greenhouse gas emissions but also help our community become more resilient in the face of a changing climate. This plan includes strategies for reducing emissions and preparing for a changing climate, and we are excited to work with various citizen groups, such as Sustainable Stillwater, on future versions of this "living" document.

In addition to the plans and strategies outlined in our Climate Action Plan, we understand that this is just the beginning of our journey towards a more sustainable future. Our process will be iterative and focused on continuously improving our efforts. We will define the problem, measure the issue, analyze the data we collect, and work towards finding solutions. This first-generation Climate Action Plan is just the starting point, and we view it as a "living document" that will be updated and improved as we continue to work with various



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

community partners, such as Sustainable Stillwater, and gather more information. We acknowledge that there will be budgetary pressures and that achieving many of our goals will require state and federal funding. However, we are committed to leading the charge in the fight against climate change and doing our part to ensure a sustainable future for Stillwater and its residents.

Inaction on climate change is no longer an option. We, as the Stillwater City Council, are committed to leading the charge in the fight against climate change and doing our part to ensure a sustainable future for our city and its residents.

As stated by the Environmental Protection Agency, "Climate change is one of the greatest environmental challenges of our time. It is a global problem that requires a global solution." We believe that it is our responsibility to act on this issue and make a positive impact on the environment for future generations.

From the Climate Action Plan of the State of California:

"The impacts of climate change are already being felt across California. The state is experiencing more frequent and severe heat waves, droughts, wildfires, and flooding, which are affecting our communities, public health, and the environment. Taking action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the impacts of climate change is critical to protecting the health and well-being of California's people and communities."

As a proud river town with a water in our past, water in our future, and water in our name believe that this message applies not only to California, but to Stillwater as well. We must act now to reduce our emissions and build resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Sincerely,

The Stillwater City Council

## Phase 1: Defining the Problem

### Purpose of the Climate Action Plan

Stillwater is a picturesque city located along the St Croix River and nestled near the St Croix National Scenic Riverway to the north. With a rich history and a strong community spirit, Stillwater is home to a diverse group of residents who are proud to call this city their home. With a focus on sustainability, the residents of Stillwater have already made significant strides in improving the quality of life for all who live here.

However, the effects of climate change are becoming increasingly evident, and the need for action has never been more pressing. Extreme temperatures and heavy precipitation events are already affecting the state of Minnesota, and the time has come for cities like Stillwater to take concrete steps to mitigate their contribution to this global problem.

The journey towards sustainability is an ongoing process that requires constant attention and improvement. That's why, in addition to the comprehensive Climate Action Plan, we plan to continuously assess and enhance our efforts to address climate change. Our approach will be systematic, starting with the identification of the problem, closely monitoring the situation, analyzing the data collected, and seeking solutions that will have the greatest impact. This Climate Action Plan is



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA-NC](#)

not a static document but rather a dynamic one that will evolve over time as we work closely with local organizations, such as Sustainable Stillwater, and gather more information. Despite the financial challenges that lie ahead, we are resolute in our commitment to tackling climate change and ensuring a sustainable future for the residents of Stillwater. Federal and state support will undoubtedly play a

critical role in achieving many of our goals, and we will be proactive in seeking out funding to support our efforts.

To that end, Stillwater’s citizens and stakeholders will find this document broken into parts. We do not intend to “big bang” our approach but rather start with what we know and then work with our residents, partners like Xcel Energy’s Partners in Energy Program (supporting our Energy Efforts), and an envisioned Climate Action Committee to build our plan and seek state and federal dollars where they exist. The document is ordered this way, to allow for it to continue to live.



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC](#)

The Climate Action Plan provides a comprehensive approach to addressing climate change in Stillwater and in the surrounding communities. The plan outlines priorities, strategies, and actions that will not only help to reduce Stillwater's carbon footprint but will also prepare the city for the unavoidable impacts of a changing climate. By working together, the residents of Stillwater can create a more sustainable future for all, while also improving the economic, physical, and environmental health of the community.

The Climate Action Plan also takes equity into consideration, ensuring that the most vulnerable residents are protected and given the resources they need to thrive. With this comprehensive plan in place, Stillwater is poised to become a leader in the fight against climate change and a model for other cities to follow.

The St. Croix River played an important role in the development of Stillwater, as it provided the transportation necessary to move the lumber from the surrounding forests to the markets in the east.

Today, Stillwater is a vibrant city that is proud of its natural resources and heritage. The St. Croix River continues to be a source of recreation and beauty for the community, and the City Council is committed to being a good steward of this precious resource.

In line with this commitment, the Stillwater City Council has taken a proactive approach to addressing the challenge of climate change. The Council recognizes the importance of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing the resilience of the community to the impacts of a changing climate.

This Climate Action Plan is the first step in a multi-step process to address these challenges. The City Council is committed to working closely with community partners, including local organizations and residents, to develop a comprehensive and effective plan to address climate change in Stillwater. This plan is just the beginning, and the Council is eager to continue working with the community to develop and implement additional strategies that will help ensure a sustainable future for Stillwater.

### Example of the City’s Commitment to the Environment: Riverfront Stabilization Project

The St. Croix Riverwalk and Stabilization Project was an ambitious undertaking by the City of Stillwater, Washington County, Minnesota. The aim was to tackle the issue of shoreline instability while also



addressing the congestion problem caused by the increasing number of pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicular traffic in the area. The project was completed recently and was a testament to the city's commitment to sustainability and improving the quality of life for its residents.

The project covered a three-quarters of a mile stretch of riverbank, extending from the southern boundary of the city to the southern edge of the Army Corps of Engineers floodwall at Nelson Street E. The eastern boundary of the project was the St. Croix River, and the western boundary was the St. Croix River Crossing Lower Loop Trail. The project area was selected due to its proximity to the city and its high pedestrian traffic, making it an ideal location for a riverbank restoration project.

The work involved the installation of riprap fill and vegetation along the length of the shoreline and the construction of a 10-foot-wide concrete walkway. The existing shoreline trees and vegetation were removed and replaced with new trees and vegetation, and a new wall was built in front of the Dock Cafe at the northern end of the project area. At the southern end, three steel H-pile and concrete overlook platforms were constructed and were accessible from the Lower Loop Trail via a new walkway.

The city was able to complete the St. Croix Riverwalk and Stabilization Project successfully. The project has created a safer, more sustainable, and more beautiful riverbank area for residents and visitors to enjoy. The new walkway and overlook platforms provide stunning views of the St. Croix River and serve as a reminder of the city's commitment to preserving its natural beauty.

In conclusion, the St. Croix Riverwalk and Stabilization Project was an important project that showcased the City of Stillwater's dedication to sustainability and improving the quality of life for its residents. The project serves as a testament to the city's commitment to preserving its natural beauty and improving the environment for future generations.

As the city moves forward with its commitment to the environment, it is looking to start to tackle reducing our Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

### Importance of Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is a critical issue for midwestern towns like Stillwater, Minnesota. Climate change is affecting communities across the country and the world, and it is increasingly important to take action to mitigate its impacts. As a town with a rich history and strong sense of



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)

community, Stillwater has a responsibility to be a leader in conservation and in addressing the challenges posed by climate change.

Greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide, trap heat in the atmosphere and contribute to global warming. The burning of fossil fuels for energy, transportation, and industry is the largest source of these emissions, and it is essential to reduce these emissions to slow the pace of climate change. In the

Midwest, we are already seeing the impacts of a changing climate, such as more frequent and severe weather events, shifts in agricultural patterns, and increased stress on ecosystems.

As a town with a deep connection to the land and its natural resources, Stillwater has a unique opportunity to lead the way in reducing emissions and promoting sustainable practices. The St. Croix River has played an enormous role in Stillwater's history, and it continues to be an important resource for the town and its residents. The Stillwater City Council wants to be a good steward of this valuable resource, and reducing emissions is an important step in this direction.

In addition to protecting the St. Croix River and other natural resources, reducing emissions can have many other benefits for Stillwater. By promoting energy efficiency, investing in renewable energy, and encouraging sustainable transportation, the town can improve air quality, reduce energy costs, and create new economic opportunities. As a town with a commitment to livability and a love of Minnesota's many waterfronts, Stillwater has the potential to lead the state in conservation and in climate action planning.

This Climate Action Plan is the first of many steps that the Stillwater City Council will take to address climate change and promote sustainability in the town. Working with our community partners, including local businesses, residents, and organizations like Sustainable Stillwater, we will continue to develop and implement strategies to reduce emissions, promote sustainability, and build a more resilient future for Stillwater and its residents.

## Phase 2: Measuring the Problem Emissions Inventory

Data-centricity is at the core of any successful climate action plan. Without accurate and reliable metrics, it is impossible to track progress, measure success, and make informed decisions about future initiatives. This is why it is crucial to start with strong measurements from the very beginning of the climate action plan journey.

As the renowned statistician, Edwards Deming once stated, "In God we trust, all others must bring data." This statement highlights the importance of evidence-based decision making, and the role that data plays in driving change. In the context of a climate action plan, this means that every action taken must be backed by robust data and measurements that can demonstrate the impact of the initiative.

Data-centricity requires a systematic and disciplined approach to data collection and analysis, and it is essential to ensure that the right data is being captured, analyzed, and acted upon. The data must be accurate, reliable, and relevant to the objectives of the climate action plan. Moreover, it is critical that the data is interpreted correctly and used to drive informed decision making.



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

The first step in creating a data-centric climate action plan is to identify the key metrics that will be used to measure progress and success. This may include emissions reductions, energy efficiency, and sustainability initiatives, among others. Once these metrics have been identified, a system for collecting and analyzing the data must be put in place.

The next step is to ensure that the data is being used effectively to drive action and make informed decisions. This may require regular data reviews, analysis of trends and patterns, and the use of data visualization tools to communicate the data effectively.

Starting with strong measurements is the foundation of a successful climate action plan. By being data-centric and prioritizing accurate, reliable, and relevant data, cities like Stillwater can ensure that their efforts are having the intended impact and moving them closer to a more sustainable future.

## Gathering Data on the City's Emissions

### What is Stillwater's Community-Wide Greenhouse Gas Emissions?



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA-NC](#)

The burning of fossil fuels has been the primary source of energy for human civilization for over a century, but it has come at a cost. The emissions from these fuels, such as carbon dioxide, contribute to the buildup of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. These gases trap heat from the sun and cause the global average temperature to rise, leading to the consequences of climate change.

To combat this issue, it is important to understand where emissions are coming from in our communities. Therefore, a greenhouse gas inventory has been completed for the City of Stillwater to measure its carbon emissions.

Considering this information, the City of Stillwater will set specific goals for reducing its greenhouse

gas emissions during the Analyze Phase such as:

1. Reduce Scope 1 emissions by **XX%** by **20XX**, compared to the **20XX** baseline.
2. Increase the use of renewable energy sources such as wind and solar to meet **XX%** of the City's energy needs by **20XX**.
3. Promote sustainable transportation options, such as electric vehicles and public transportation, to reduce the number of single-occupancy vehicles on the road.
4. Implement energy-efficient building codes and encourage the use of energy-efficient appliances and lighting.
5. Encourage the use of green spaces and promote sustainable agriculture practices to reduce emissions from land use.



These specific, measurable goals will help the City of Stillwater track its progress towards reducing its carbon footprint and mitigating the impacts of climate change.

The City of Stillwater is facing many budgetary pressures and while the community is eager to address the issue of climate change, it is acknowledged that achieving many of the goals set forth in the Climate Action Plan will require financial support from state and federal sources. Without this support, it will be challenging to implement the necessary changes to reduce carbon emissions and make the city more sustainable. The city is committed to exploring all options, including grants and partnerships, to secure the funding required to achieve its goals and make Stillwater a leader in climate action and sustainability. The city recognizes that this is a collective effort and that the support of state and federal agencies will be critical in making meaningful progress towards reducing its climate impact.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, there is a need to reduce global emissions by 45% from 2010 levels by 2030 to limit warming to 1.5°C and avoid the worst consequences of climate change. "Inaction is no longer an option on climate change," says the Panel. "The time has come to bend the trajectory of emissions downward to achieve a sustainable future."

Stillwater City Council recognizes the importance of reducing its carbon intensity and being a good steward of the community's resources. By understanding the sources of emissions within the city, it can prioritize actions and plan to reduce energy consumption, increase clean energy production, and change behavior to equitably impact all residents. This Climate Action Plan is the first of many steps towards a more sustainable future for Stillwater.

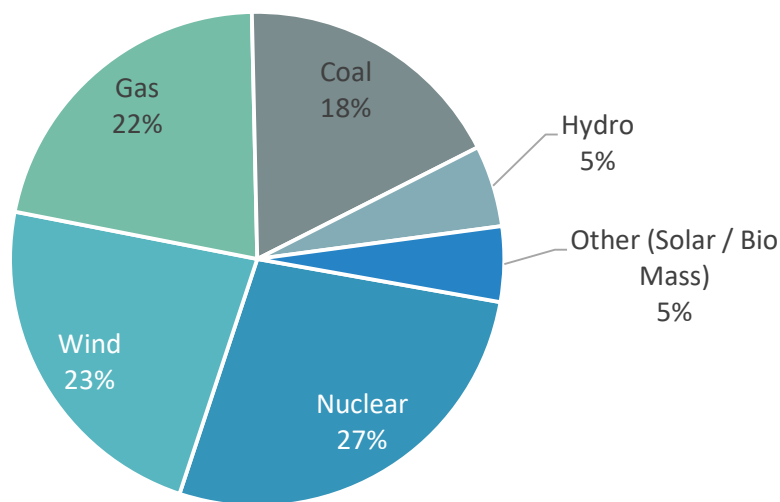


[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA-NC](#)

### **What is Stillwater's Energy consumption?**

Stillwater's energy consumption is a combination of electricity and natural gas consumption, fuel consumption for transportation, and heating and cooling. According to the 2021 Stillwater MN Annual Community Energy Report by Xcel Energy, the primary energy provider in the area, the electricity consumed in Stillwater is sourced from a mix of carbon-free and carbon-emitting sources. The resource mix for electricity in Stillwater is as follows:

## Resource Mix Resource Contribution



Electricity consumption in Stillwater is broken down into various categories, including business and residential customers, as well as street lighting. According to the report, in 2021, the total electricity consumption in Stillwater was 155,374,221 kWh, with a total of 44,437 metric tons CO<sup>2</sup> emissions. The breakdown of electricity consumption and carbon emissions by customer category is as follows:

Electricity	Number of Customers	Energy Consumption (kWh)	Carbon Emissions (metric tons CO <sup>2</sup> )
Business	1,048	82,063,852	23,470
Residential	8,150	72,599,036	20,763
Street Lighting - Metered	n/a	50,311	14
Street Lighting - Non-Metered/Customer Owned	n/a	75,386	22
Street Lighting - Non-Metered/Xcel-Owned	n/a	585,636	167
<b>Total:</b>	<b>9,198</b>	<b>155,374,221</b>	<b>44,437</b>

The consumption of natural gas in Stillwater is also broken down into business and residential customers. In 2021, the total natural gas consumption in Stillwater was 9,971,379 therms, with a total of 53,845 metric tons CO<sup>2</sup> emissions. The breakdown of natural gas consumption and carbon emissions by customer category is as follows:

Natural Gas	Number of Customers	Energy Consumption (therms)	Carbon Emissions (metric tons CO <sup>2</sup> )
Business	590	3,605,786	19,471
Residential	7,257	6,365,593	34,374
<b>Total:</b>	<b>7,847</b>	<b>9,971,379</b>	<b>53,845</b>

In conclusion, the energy consumption in Stillwater is a combination of electricity and natural gas consumption, with a mix of carbon-free and carbon-emitting sources. The city's energy consumption is

measured by Xcel Energy, the primary energy provider, in the form of an annual community energy report. The report provides a detailed breakdown of energy consumption and carbon emissions by customer category and source.

**What is Stillwater's waste?** This includes data on the generation and disposal of waste, including municipal solid waste, industrial waste, and agricultural waste. **This question will be answered by the Climate Action Committee.**

**What is Stillwater's Agriculture and land use?** This includes data on land use changes, fertilizer use, and animal management. **This question will be answered by the Climate Action Committee.**

### **What is Stillwater's Water usage?**

Water usage is a critical element of any Climate Action Plan, and its importance cannot be overstated. In Stillwater, the need to conserve water is even more critical due to the city's growing population and the impacts of climate change on water availability.



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

Despite a decrease in water usage in 2019, the city has seen a gradual increase in water consumption over the last few years. This trend is concerning, as it puts a strain on the city's water resources and increases its carbon footprint.

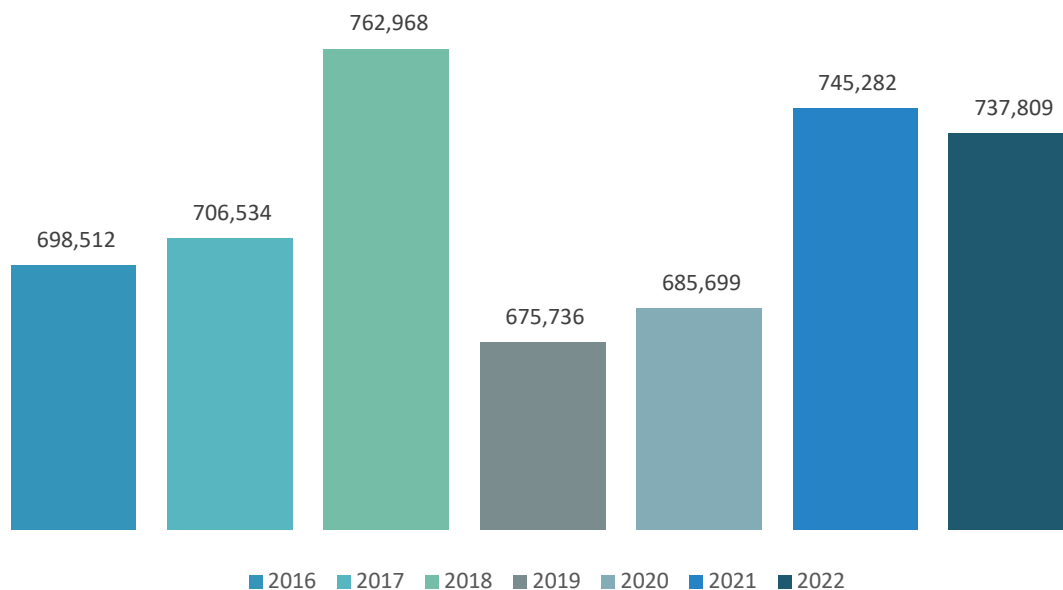
Reducing water consumption can have a significant impact on the environment and help achieve sustainability goals. It not only saves water resources but also reduces energy consumption associated with water treatment, distribution, and pumping. In addition, reducing water consumption can also lower greenhouse gas emissions, as water treatment and

distribution are energy-intensive processes.

To address the issue of increasing water usage, Stillwater's Climate Action Plan must prioritize water conservation efforts. This can include promoting water-efficient practices, upgrading water infrastructure, and developing public education campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of water conservation. The plan can also explore the use of alternative water sources, such as rainwater harvesting, to reduce reliance on potable water sources.

The city must also work closely with residents, businesses, and other stakeholders to encourage water conservation. This can include offering incentives for water-efficient practices, conducting outreach programs to educate the community about water conservation, and implementing policies to promote water-efficient practices.

The chart below illustrates the amount of water pumped in millions of gallons over the past few years. It highlights the need for action to address the issue of increasing water usage and the importance of water conservation in Stillwater's Climate Action Plan.



**What is Stillwater's transportation usage?** This includes data on the number and types of vehicles, fuel consumption, and public transportation usage. **This question will be answered by the Climate Action Committee.**

### Phase 3: Analysis of the Stillwater's Climate Posture

The Analyze phase of the Climate Action Plan is where the real work begins. It's where the data collected during the Measure phase is put under the microscope, allowing us to better understand the problem and identify areas of improvement. By leveraging a data-centric approach, we can create a comprehensive picture of the current state of our community's greenhouse gas emissions and determine which areas need the most attention.

The Analyze phase involves conducting a thorough and methodical examination of the data collected during the Measure phase and using this information to uncover patterns and trends that can inform decision-making. We'll look at the data from various angles, using statistical techniques to identify correlations and causal relationships, and using visualization techniques to bring the data to life.

It's essential to have a rigorous and systematic approach to the Analyze phase, as it provides us with the insights and knowledge necessary to make informed decisions and prioritize our efforts. With a thorough understanding of the data, we can determine which areas of our community's carbon footprint are contributing the most to our overall emissions and focus our efforts on those areas first.

As Edwards Demming once said, "Without data, you're just another person with an opinion." The Analyze phase of the Climate Action Plan is the critical link between the Measure phase and the Improve phase, and it ensures that our actions are based on sound data and evidence, rather than conjecture.



and guesswork. With a data-centric approach, we can make informed decisions, prioritize our efforts, and take the first steps towards a more sustainable future for the City of Stillwater.

## Phase 4: Plan for Improvement

The Improve phase of a climate action plan is about taking the information and insights gained from the Measure and Analyze phases and using them to drive change. It's about taking the data, identifying the root causes of the issues, and determining the best course of action to make improvements. This phase requires creative problem-solving, collaboration, and a willingness to experiment and try new approaches.

As the legendary management consultant, Peter Drucker, famously said, "What gets measured gets improved." This sentiment rings true in the Improve phase, as the data gathered and analyzed in the previous phases serves as a foundation for action. The goal is to take this data and use it to make meaningful improvements to reduce emissions and create a more sustainable future for Stillwater.

The Improve phase is about acting, and this requires leadership, commitment, and persistence. The City of Stillwater must be willing to take bold steps and make the necessary investments to achieve their sustainability goals. This phase requires collaboration across departments, community organizations, and residents to ensure that everyone is working together towards a common goal.

In the Improve phase, it's essential to continuously measure and monitor the impact of the actions taken. This feedback loop helps to refine and optimize the strategies, ensuring that the City of Stillwater is always moving in the right direction towards a more sustainable future. With a focus on continuous improvement, the City of Stillwater can achieve their sustainability goals and create a more resilient and equitable community for all its residents.

## Challenges to Implementation

As the City of Stillwater moves into the Improve phase of its Climate Action Plan, it's important to acknowledge that there may be barriers or challenges that arise along the way. While the Measure and Analyze phases have provided valuable insights into the current state of the city's carbon footprint and identified areas for improvement, it's critical to address potential obstacles before moving forward with implementation.

One major challenge that may arise is resistance to change. While the need for sustainability and carbon reduction efforts is becoming increasingly evident, there may be individuals or groups who are hesitant to adopt new policies or practices. It's essential to understand the root causes of this resistance and address them through targeted communication, education, and engagement efforts.



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA-NC](#)



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

Another potential barrier is the cost of implementing new sustainability initiatives. While the Governor's budget proposal provides an opportunity for funding, there may still be gaps that need to be filled. The city will need to explore creative financing solutions, such as public-private partnerships or grants, to ensure that the necessary resources are available.

Furthermore, there may be technical challenges associated with implementing new sustainability initiatives, particularly in areas such as energy efficiency and renewable energy. It will be important to engage with experts in these fields to ensure that projects are well-designed and well-executed.

It's also important to acknowledge that the impacts of climate change are not felt equally across all communities. Certain populations, such as low-income or historically marginalized groups, may be more vulnerable to the effects of climate change and may not have the same access to resources or information as other groups. It's essential to address these equity concerns through targeted outreach and engagement efforts, as well as by incorporating equity considerations into the design and implementation of sustainability initiatives.

To address these potential barriers and challenges, the City of Stillwater must take a proactive and strategic approach. This means developing a comprehensive plan for addressing potential obstacles, as well as creating a culture of adaptability and continuous improvement.

One key strategy for addressing potential barriers is through communication and engagement efforts. This may involve developing targeted messaging that speaks to the concerns and values of different stakeholder groups, as well as creating opportunities for input and feedback. By engaging with residents, businesses, and other stakeholders throughout the implementation process, the City of Stillwater can build support and buy-in for sustainability initiatives.

Another strategy is to leverage partnerships and collaboration to address technical and financial challenges. This may involve working with external experts, community organizations, or other municipalities to share knowledge and resources. By collaborating with others who have experience in sustainability initiatives, the City of Stillwater can learn from best practices and avoid potential pitfalls.

It's also important to build flexibility into the implementation process. This means anticipating potential challenges and designing initiatives with built-in feedback loops and opportunities for adaptation. By continuously monitoring progress and adjusting strategies as needed, the City of Stillwater can ensure that sustainability initiatives remain relevant and effective over time.

Finally, it's crucial to incorporate equity considerations into all aspects of the implementation process. This means ensuring that initiatives are designed and implemented in a way that is inclusive and equitable, and that addresses the unique needs and concerns of all members of the community.

By taking a proactive and strategic approach, leveraging partnerships and collaboration, building flexibility into the implementation process, and incorporating equity considerations, the City of

Stillwater can ensure that its sustainability initiatives are effective, equitable, and sustainable over the long term.

## Additional Information

### Community Involvement: Climate Action Committee

The City of Stillwater's Climate Action Plan is an ambitious effort to reduce the negative impact of climate change on our city and its residents. One key component of this plan is the creation of a Climate Action Committee. This committee will bring together community leaders, like those from Sustainable Stillwater, City Council members, and subject matter experts from Xcel Energy's Partners in Climate Program (as needed). The goal of this committee is to work together to define, measure, and solve the challenges posed by climate change in Stillwater.

The Climate Action Committee will meet twice a month at City Hall and will engage in a collaborative and iterative process to develop and implement a comprehensive climate action plan. While City Staff may be called upon to provide support, we recognize that our staff is already burdened and will make every effort to minimize their involvement in these efforts.

The Climate Action Committee will leverage the expertise and resources of Xcel Energy's Partners in Climate Program to develop and implement a comprehensive energy plan. This program will provide the Climate Action Committee with the support needed to execute energy planning, implementation support, and data analysis. These resources will be critical to the success of the Climate Action Plan, as they will provide the committee with the tools and guidance needed to make informed decisions and take meaningful action.



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

In addition to the support provided by Xcel Energy (supporting our energy efforts as needed), the Climate Action Committee will also seek out other sources of expertise and funding. We recognize that the City of Stillwater has limited funds, and that some of the projects outlined in the Climate Action Plan will require significant investment. To help secure the necessary funding, the City will leverage its lobbying fund to engage our legislators and seek federal and state dollars.

While securing funding will be a challenge, we believe that there are many commonsense activities that the Climate Action Committee can undertake with limited resources. For example, the city will need to modernize some of our buildings soon, and part of this modernization effort will include green projects. These projects will not only help us reduce our carbon footprint, but they will also improve the energy efficiency and comfort of our buildings, making them better places to live and work.

The Climate Action Committee is an important step in the City of Stillwater's journey towards a more sustainable future. By working together, we can create a plan that not only reduces our greenhouse gas output, but also prepares our community for the unavoidable impacts of a changing climate. With this comprehensive plan in place, we can lead the fight against climate change and be a model for other cities to follow.

### Community Engagement: Communications

As the City of Stillwater moves forward with its Climate Action Plan, it's critical that the community is involved and informed about the plan's development and implementation. To achieve this, the city must prioritize public engagement and education to ensure that residents have a voice in the process and the opportunity to provide feedback.

One way to accomplish this is through community events, such as city hall meetings, open houses, and workshops. These events provide a forum for residents to ask questions, share their concerns and ideas, and engage with city officials and subject matter experts. Additionally, these events can help to educate the community about the Climate Action Plan, its goals, and its potential impact on the community.

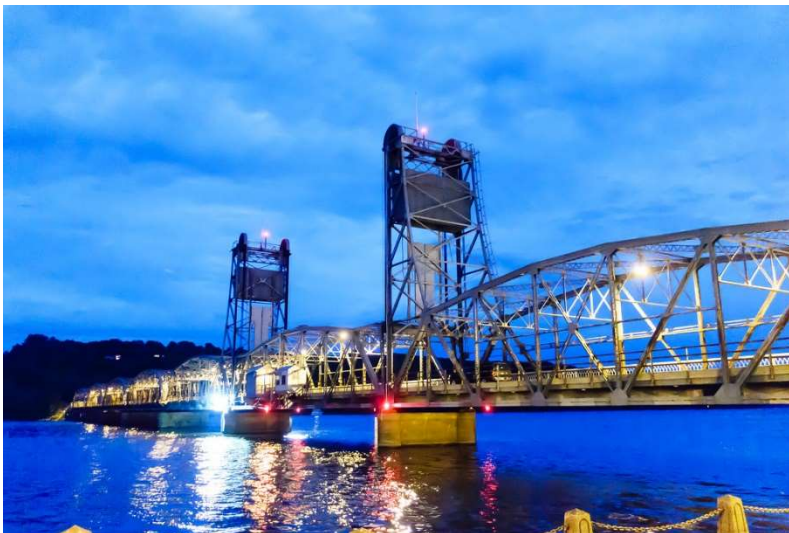
Another effective approach is to leverage digital tools, such as social media, email newsletters, and online surveys. These tools can help to reach a wider audience and allow residents to engage at their convenience. Additionally, digital tools can provide real-time feedback and allow the city to track engagement and adapt its approach accordingly.

Furthermore, the city can partner with community organizations, such as Sustainable Stillwater, to engage residents and raise awareness about the Climate Action Plan. These organizations can help to amplify the city's message and provide valuable insights and perspectives from the community.

To ensure that the community is fully informed and engaged, the city must also prioritize education and outreach. This can include the development of educational materials, such as brochures and infographics, that explain the Climate Action Plan and its goals in plain language. Additionally, the city can develop educational programs, such as workshops and seminars, to help residents better understand the plan's potential impact on the community and how they can contribute to its success.

Moreover, the city must ensure that its approach to public engagement and education is inclusive and equitable. This means reaching out to underserved communities, such as lower-income residents, and providing opportunities for them to engage and contribute to the plan's development and implementation.

In addition to these approaches, the city can also leverage the power of storytelling to engage and educate the community. By sharing



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)



stories of local businesses, organizations, and individuals who are making positive changes in their communities, the city can inspire residents to act and contribute to the Climate Action Plan's success.

Finally, the city must be open to feedback and willing to adapt its approach based on the community's input. This means soliciting feedback at every stage of the process, providing opportunities for residents to share their ideas and concerns, and incorporating this feedback into the plan's development and implementation.

Overall, public engagement and education are essential components of the City of Stillwater's Climate Action Plan. By prioritizing these efforts, the city can ensure that residents are informed, engaged, and empowered to contribute to a more sustainable future for all.

### Xcel Energy Partners in Energy

The Stillwater City Council has decided to partner with Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy program to drive the analysis, goal planning, and execution of their Climate Action Plan with respect to Energy (scoped



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

purely to energy). This partnership provides a unique opportunity for the community to engage with stakeholders, create sustainable goals, and develop a comprehensive work plan. The program is a two-year collaboration with Xcel Energy, at no cost to the community except for in-kind staff time to support the different phases.

The Partners in Energy program offers a range of services to support the community's energy planning. This includes energy planning workshops, action planning, and leveraging existing plans and goals. Separately Xcel provides support for EV planning (via a different

part of the organization), including infrastructure, fleet, and outreach. In addition, Xcel Energy will provide support for implementation, including project management, marketing collateral, outreach, and strategy development for new ideas.

To measure progress and understand the impact of the Climate Action Plan, Xcel Energy will also provide data analysis services. This will help the community track their progress towards their goals and make informed decisions on how to continuously improve their efforts towards sustainability. The Stillwater City Council views this partnership as a crucial step towards a more sustainable future, and they are committed to leading the charge in the fight against climate change.

The network of Cities that Xcel works with is extensive in this area and it is believed that taking this approach will not only speed our execution but lower our total costs. As of January of 2023, their network covered these cities.



## Funding and Implementation

One of the key challenges in implementing the Climate Action Plan is securing the necessary funding. The city has limited resources and will need to find creative ways to finance its initiatives. However, there is good news on the horizon. The current budget proposal from the governor sets aside a substantial amount of money that can be leveraged to help cities like Stillwater. This funding can assist with the design and construction of crucial infrastructure projects such as stormwater, wastewater, and community resiliency projects.

In addition, the funding can support design and energy efficiency assessments of these projects, helping to prepare them for state or federal funding. This will allow the city to maximize its resources and ensure that all Minnesotans, including those in Stillwater, see the benefits of preparing for a warmer and wetter future. The funding can also be used for resiliency planning, emission reductions action planning, and essential public services planning, to ensure that the city is prepared for the challenges that lie ahead.

The funding will also provide technical assistance to conduct the design, analysis, or assessments necessary for the grant opportunities. This support will be critical in ensuring that the city's projects are well-designed and well-positioned to secure the funding they need to be successful.

Moreover, the funding will allow for community-led projects, which will help ensure that all residents of Stillwater can participate in and benefit from the city's efforts to prepare for a warmer and wetter future. The city recognizes that community involvement is a critical component of its success and is committed to working with its residents and stakeholders to achieve its goals.

The funding provided by the governor's budget proposal represents a significant opportunity for Stillwater and other cities in Minnesota. By leveraging this funding, the city can move forward with its

Climate Action Plan and take concrete steps towards reducing its carbon footprint, preparing for the impacts of climate change, and creating a more sustainable future for all its residents. The city is committed to finding innovative solutions and working with its residents and stakeholders to achieve its goals, and the funding provided by the governor's budget proposal is an important step in the right direction.

## Conclusion

The City of Stillwater is on a journey towards a more sustainable future, and the Climate Action Plan is just the beginning. It is a comprehensive approach to reducing emissions and mitigating the effects of climate change, but it is not the end. The phased approach outlined in the plan is the starting point, not the finish line. We understand that continued progress towards sustainability requires constant effort and adaptation. Therefore community involvement is so crucial to the success of this program.

The residents of Stillwater have already made significant strides in improving the quality of life in the city. However, we understand that there is still much work to be done. The effects of climate change are becoming increasingly evident, and the need for action has never been more pressing. By working together, the residents of Stillwater can create a more sustainable future for all, while also improving the economic, physical, and environmental health of the community.



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)

It is imperative that we take action to reduce emissions. The continued warming of the planet and the resulting impacts on our lives and our environment are a cause for concern. The City of Stillwater is committed to leading the charge in the fight against climate change and doing our part to ensure a sustainable future for ourselves and future generations. We understand that this is a long-term effort that will require ongoing commitment, but we are up to the challenge.

The future of Stillwater is bright, and we look forward to continued progress towards a sustainable future. Our Climate Action Plan sets a strong foundation for this progress, but it is not the end. We will continue to refine and improve our efforts, always striving to do more and be better. Our city is poised to become a leader in the fight against climate change and a model for other cities to follow. With community involvement, continued action, and a commitment to sustainability, the future of Stillwater is a bright one indeed.