



Climate Change Initiatives Snapshot 2023-2024



Grey
County

Colour It Your Way



WE HAVE A BOLD PLAN

to tackle climate change and create a more prosperous, sustainable community for generations to come!

In response to our changing climate, Grey County adopted *Going Green in Grey*, the County's Climate Change Action Plan in 2022. This plan identifies actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and reach net-zero by 2050. This report provides a snapshot of successes to date, current initiatives, and next steps by Grey County, member municipalities, and community partners!

GOING GREEN IN GREY PRIORITY ACTIONS



Action 1:
Forest, Habitat and
Biodiversity Protection
and Expansion



Action 5:
Expand Waste
and Organics
Diversion



Action 3:
Capacity Building
for Sustainable
Agriculture



Action 7:
Accelerate Zero
Emissions Vehicle
Adoption



Action 10:
Compact
Mixed-Use
Development



Action 11:
Green Standard
for New
Buildings



Action 12:
Residential Building
Energy Efficiency
Retrofit Program



Action 16:
Develop Climate
Adaptation
Plan



Action 19:
Establish a Climate
Action Engagement
Program



Rockwood Terrace Long-Term Care Home Redevelopment Rendering

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Grey County is embarking on the following corporate initiatives to reduce GHG emissions of County operations:

- Ongoing data collection and analysis of energy usage in County buildings and increasing building energy efficiency by:
 - Updating our Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan
 - Hosting an energy workshop with 20+ facility managers to explore the energy efficiency opportunities in municipal facilities
 - Participating in the Strategic Energy Management program by the IESO
 - Completing energy audits in County-owned multi-unit residential buildings in Hanover and Owen Sound
- Planning installation of 20 EV chargers at County facilities in 2024-2025

- **Incorporating net-zero readiness into new capital construction projects, such as the Rockwood Terrace redevelopment, Durham Paramedic Base, and new affordable housing units in Dundalk.**
- Diverting food waste by installing three Food Cyclers at County facilities
- Launching a County Green Team to advance initiatives across departments

Infrared scanning of heat loss at Parkway Apartments





NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS & AGRICULTURE

In partnership with NeighbourWoods North, the Transform the Lawn project demonstrates naturalization of urban areas to increase biodiversity including a tiny forest of native trees and shrubs, a rain garden, and pollinator gardens. In spring 2024, an additional 18 fruit trees were planted!

Since 2022, 4 community planting events, engaging 75+ volunteers

In collaboration with Grey Agricultural Services, the Experimental Acres program supports local farmers in piloting new, regenerative practices.

Since 2023, Experimental Acres has supported 12 farms, directly impacting practices on roughly 175 acres of farmland.





WASTE & ORGANICS DIVERSION

In 2024, Grey County started regular meetings with municipal staff from across the County to:

- Complete regional waste management assessment
- Assess options to collaborate on waste management services to improve efficiency and divert waste from landfills



TRANSPORTATION

- Pending federal and provincial funding, the Rural ReCharge initiative aims to install Level 2 and Level 3 chargers in Durham, Markdale, Meaford, Owen Sound, Shallow Lake, Springmount, and Thornbury.
- [Grey Transit Route](#) provides reliable, affordable transit between and beyond Grey County communities, which provided 28,000 rides in 2023.





BUILDINGS & DEVELOPMENT

- In 2024, Grey County launched the Tri-County Green Development Standards project to support developers and builders in sustainable new development and construction.

3 counties and 24 municipalities engaged, \$450,000 in federal funding secured



Natural Resources
Canada

Ressources naturelles
Canada

- In partnership with the Clean Air Partnership, the Community Energy Efficiency Financing initiative will determine the feasibility and possible program design to advance residential retrofits in the County.



ADAPTATION

- **Developing a climate adaptation plan is a priority in the Corporate Strategic Plan**
- Participating in the Ontario Resource Centre for Climate Adaptation's Outreach & Engagement Program.
- Updating technical guidance to ensure that new developments consider (such as increased rainfall).





OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

- In 2023, participated in 15+ community events, resulting in 650+ climate-related interactions and presented to 300+ residents, including 100+ youth
- Launched a monthly climate action newsletter with 300+ subscribers and growing
- **In partnership with the Sustainability Project, co-hosted the Grey Bruce Youth Climate Action Conference, with 10 local schools, 60 students, and 50+ community volunteers**
- Distributed 250 tree seedlings to residents at community events to raise awareness about the climate benefits of planting trees
- Convened regular meetings with staff from member municipalities (Climate Action and Waste Management) and staff from public sector organizations (Climate Action)
- Co-hosted Giwe Sharing Circle with M'Wikwedong Indigenous Friendship Centre



- In November 2024, co-hosting up to 125 grade 6-8 students from 25 schools in the region for the 3rd Youth Climate Action Conference.
- Supporting partners in exploring the feasibility of a local Green Economy Hub to support and celebrate businesses in sustainability.



Grey Highland's Bulk Water Station

MUNICIPAL UPDATES

CITY OF OWEN SOUND



In 2023, Owen Sound approved a Climate Action Strategy and Climate Mitigation Plan. The Plan will be maintained by an internal steering committee, supported by Climate Action Team Owen Sound. All staff reports now include climate and environmental implications, if applicable.

WHAT'S NEXT? >>>

- Building Condition Assessments and retrofits including new mechanical equipment in some facilities
- A Fleet Management Strategy
- Source Separated Organics program (2025)
- Urban tree canopy inventory
- Promoting community gardens
- Reducing work-related travel
- Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan



MUNICIPALITY OF GREY HIGHLANDS



In 2023, Grey Highlands approved their 2024-2027 Strategic Plan which identifies respecting the environment as one of five strategic priorities. This priority includes: adhering to the Grey Highlands Climate Action Report, waste diversion, sustainable stewardship, adopting an environmentally conscious mindset, and EV chargers.

Some 2023 highlights include:

- New sidewalks to support active transportation
- Road maintenance to adapt to extreme weather
- More accurate tracking of bulk water sales to reduce water loss
- Waste Wizard software and curbside swap weekends to divert more waste from landfill
- A severe weather plan for facilities

WHAT'S NEXT? >>>

- Fuel management system for fleet
- Mobile hazardous waste program and reuse centres
- Energy efficient lighting, heating, windows and doors
- Lake Management Task Force



MUNICIPALITY OF MEAFORD



Recognizing sustainability as a strategic priority, the Council has identified four key projects to foster a resilient, environmentally conscious community:

- Developing a climate change plan focusing on carbon reduction and enhancing resiliency to reduce CO₂ emissions.
- Reviewing and updating by-laws and agreements to better regulate noise, light, and pollutants (e.g., dust) from development.
- Creating a comprehensive tree inventory across the municipality to effectively manage and preserve these vital assets.
- Exploring installation of electric vehicle charging stations in downtown Meaford

Engaging residents through an advisory committee

To ensure these initiatives align with community needs and values, Meaford has launched the Ensuring Sustainability Advisory Committee. This bi-monthly forum invites public participation to shape policies concerning responsible growth, land and water protection, and other critical sustainability issues. Through inclusive dialogue and strategic planning, the municipality aims to foster an environment conducive to the well-being of current and future generations.

MUNICIPALITY OF WEST GREY



West Grey approved its corporate climate change plan in October 2023. The plan focuses on municipal improvements, including developing a green fleet plan, energy efficiency, increasing energy efficiency of water and wastewater facilities, waste, and promoting a culture of conservation. Some 2023 achievements include:

- Lighting upgrades at Ayton and Neustadt arenas;
- Four EV chargers installed at the municipal office, Riverside Park, downtown Neustadt, and the Ayton arena;
- Permanent mobile household hazardous waste program and litter fencing



- More recycling programs at landfill sites and increased public engagement;
- Making composters and rain barrels available to residents;
- Upgrading lighting at the Neustadt ball diamond; and
- Distributing fats, oils and grease (FOG) cups to keep grease out of drains
- Continuing to plant the West Grey Community Garden and Orchard



Hanover's Net-Zero Fire Hall



TOWN OF HANOVER

The Town of Hanover continues to advance climate action through the following initiatives:



New Net-Zero Firehall

In fall 2023, construction started for the Town's new net-zero firehall. Construction is progressing well for the anticipated fall 2024 occupancy. The design incorporates energy efficient windows, walls and roof, air source heat pumps, solar panels, and LED lighting.

EV Chargers

Two new Level 2 EV charging stations were installed in August 2023 at Heritage Square and at the P & H Centre. The ChargePoint accessible charging stations were provided through Westario Power and Bruce Power Net Zero's Lead the Charge EV Infrastructure in Local Communities initiative, in collaboration with the Town of Hanover.

Earth Day 2024

Mayor's Tidy Town Challenge, community wide garage sale day, John Diefenbaker Senior School students' community cleanup, Hanover Public Library's clean and green foraging workshop and seed library were some of the highlights.

TOWN OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS



The Blue Mountains Future Story, the Town's community sustainability plan, was launched in 2022.

Released earlier this year, the 2023 Future Story Implementation Report Card outlines the first year of implementation. Highlights include new corporate policies guiding net zero energy building design and prioritizing deconstruction over demolition, installing 12 Level 2 EV charging stations at Town-owned lots, joining the CCUNESCO Canadian Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities, and more.

Now in 2024, the Town is continuing a Natural Assets Inventory and Heritage Study that began in 2023, along with new initiatives including a Circular Economy project. The first annual The Blue Mountains and Area Sustainability Summit was held on April 25, 2024, bringing together more than 120 community stakeholders to learn about and discuss circular economy and green economy topics.

In 2024, the Town is launching the Youth Climate Action Fund as one of 100 communities worldwide to receive \$50,000 USD to distribute microgrants of up to \$6,000.

Visit www.TBMFutureStory.ca to learn more.



TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHGATE

The Southgate Council endorsed a Climate Change Action Plan in December 2021.



In 2023, the Township completed the following initiatives:

- Replaced two bridges for economic efficiency and designed for 100-year storm events
- Replaced 5 Holstein Depot garage doors with sunlight entry panels
- Commissioned Dundalk Water Tower upgrades to reduce pumping energy use

WHAT'S NEXT? >>>

- 2 Level 2 EV charging stations in the Proton Parking Lot in Dundalk
- 3,300 trees planted at the Pit 22 property with Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority
- Purchasing electric chainsaws and other tools
- Green design for new Township Admin/ Council/ Rec/Depot Centre
- Stormwater replacements in Dundalk to increase resilience to heavy rainfall



TOWNSHIP OF CHATSWORTH

The Township of Chatsworth continues to advance sustainability through the following initiatives:

- Purchasing a hybrid vehicle for the Building Department in partnership with West Grey
- Providing used battery recycling at the Township office to divert them from landfill
- Completing upgrades at Keady Community Centre in 2024 to improve energy efficiency



TOWNSHIP OF GEORGIAN BLUFFS

In 2023, Georgian Bluffs Council officially adopted their first Corporate Climate Action Plan.



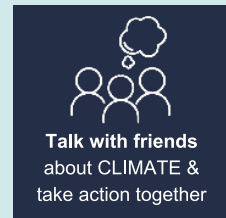
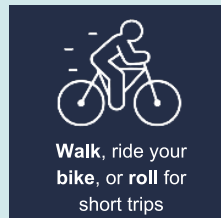
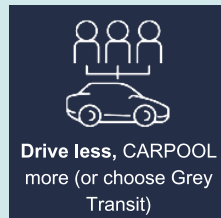
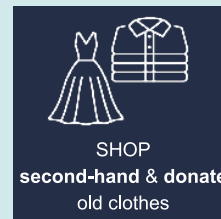
- Tree planting in two parks to offset losses from Emerald Ash Borer
- Recruitment of an Environmental Initiatives Officer
- GB Goes Green initiative which plants 1 tree for every 5 households that measure their carbon footprint
- Food Cycler indoor countertop composting pilot extension with 200 more households
- The Climate Action Working Group is planning two main events – a Greener Homes Tour and another EV event in fall 2024, similar to the rEvolution Fair in 2023.



THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS

- Bruce, Dufferin, Huron, Perth and Wellington Counties
- Bluewater & Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Boards
- Clean Air Partnership
- Grey Agricultural Services
- Grey Bruce Climate Action Network
- Grey Bruce Public Health
- Grey Sauble & Saugeen Valley Conservation Authorities
- Institute of Southern Georgian Bay
- Learning for a Sustainable Future
- M'Wikwedong Indigenous Friendship Centre
- NeighbourWoods North
- Nuclear Innovation Institute
- Regional Tourism Organization 7
- The Sustainability Project

GET INVOLVED



GET IN TOUCH



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