

Implementing New State Climate Change Planning Legislation in Clark County

Clark County Clean Water Commission

Jenna Kay, Clark County Community Planning
Aug. 6, 2025, Public Service Center Room 698 and Teams



Presentation plan

- What is a comprehensive plan?
- Climate project background
- Definitions and data
- Proposed policies
- What's next?
- Q&A



What is a comprehensive plan?



The Comprehensive Plan

- Plan is a long-range policy guide to manage population growth and development over a 20-year period
- Growth Management Act (GMA) is the state law with comprehensive planning requirements
- Clark County originally adopted a comprehensive plan in 1994 and last updated in 2016



Growth Management Act Goals

GMA Goals

([RCW 36.70A.020](#))

- Concentrated urban growth
- Sprawl reduction
- Regional transportation
- Affordable housing

- Economic development
- Property rights
- Permit processing
- Natural resource industries
- Open space and recreation
- Environmental protection

- Early and continuous public participation
- Public facilities and services
- Historic preservation
- Climate change and resiliency
- Shoreline management (RCW 36.70A.480)



Comprehensive Plan Elements

- Land Use
- Housing
- Capital Facilities
- Utilities
- Rural (for counties)
- Transportation
- Economic Development
- Parks and Recreation
- Shoreline
- Annexation
- Climate
- Optional elements (schools, historic, community design)



20
YEAR

Comprehensive Growth
Management Plan
2015-2035



Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, 2025-2045

Project initiation



Early 2023-
Early 2024

- ☒ Public Participation Plan and Scope of Work
- ☒ County Population Projection
- ☒ County Employment Projection
- ☒ Countywide Planning Policies and Population Allocation to each urban area (adoption of updated policies, if needed)

Shape the plan



Early 2024-
Fall 2025

- ☒ Hire environmental analysis consultant
- ☒ Property owner submittal for comprehensive land use changes
- ☒ Outline/Scope the range & types of issues studied for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
- ☒ Review and select Growth Alternatives for Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
- ☐ Input on County Comprehensive Plan text and policies & Title 40 revisions, if needed

Review & Refine



Fall 2024-
Fall 2025

- ☐ Draft Environmental Impact Statement Review
- ☐ Selection of Preferred Alternative
- ☐ Preferred Alternative Analysis work (*Update urban and rural land capacity estimates, Capital Facilities Plan, Capital Facilities Financial Plan, and Transportation Analyses*)
- ☐ Issue Final Environmental Impact Statement
- ☐ Public Review of Comprehensive Plan Update Materials (*Plan text, Title 40, Capital Facilities Plan, Capital Facilities Financial Plan*)

Adoption Process



Fall 2025-
Late 2025

- ☐ Washington Department of Commerce 60-day review submittal
- ☐ Planning Commission work session
- ☐ Planning Commission hearing
- ☐ County Council work session (review Planning Commission recommendations)
- ☐ Council hearing
- ☐ Final Adoption of Plan on or before Dec. 31, 2025



Climate project background



HB 1181

- Climate change and resiliency goal in Growth Management Act (GMA)
- Climate Element in Comprehensive Plan
 - **Resilience**
 - **Greenhouse gas reduction**
- Themes: Environmental Justice, Best Available Science, Commerce Guidance
- Due date: December 2025



Resilience sub-element

- Identify, protect, enhance natural areas
- Identify, protect, enhance community resiliency
- Address natural hazards
- Prioritize actions that benefit overburdened communities



Greenhouse Gas Reduction Sub-element

- Reduce GHG emissions
- Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) per capita
- Prioritize reductions that benefit overburdened communities

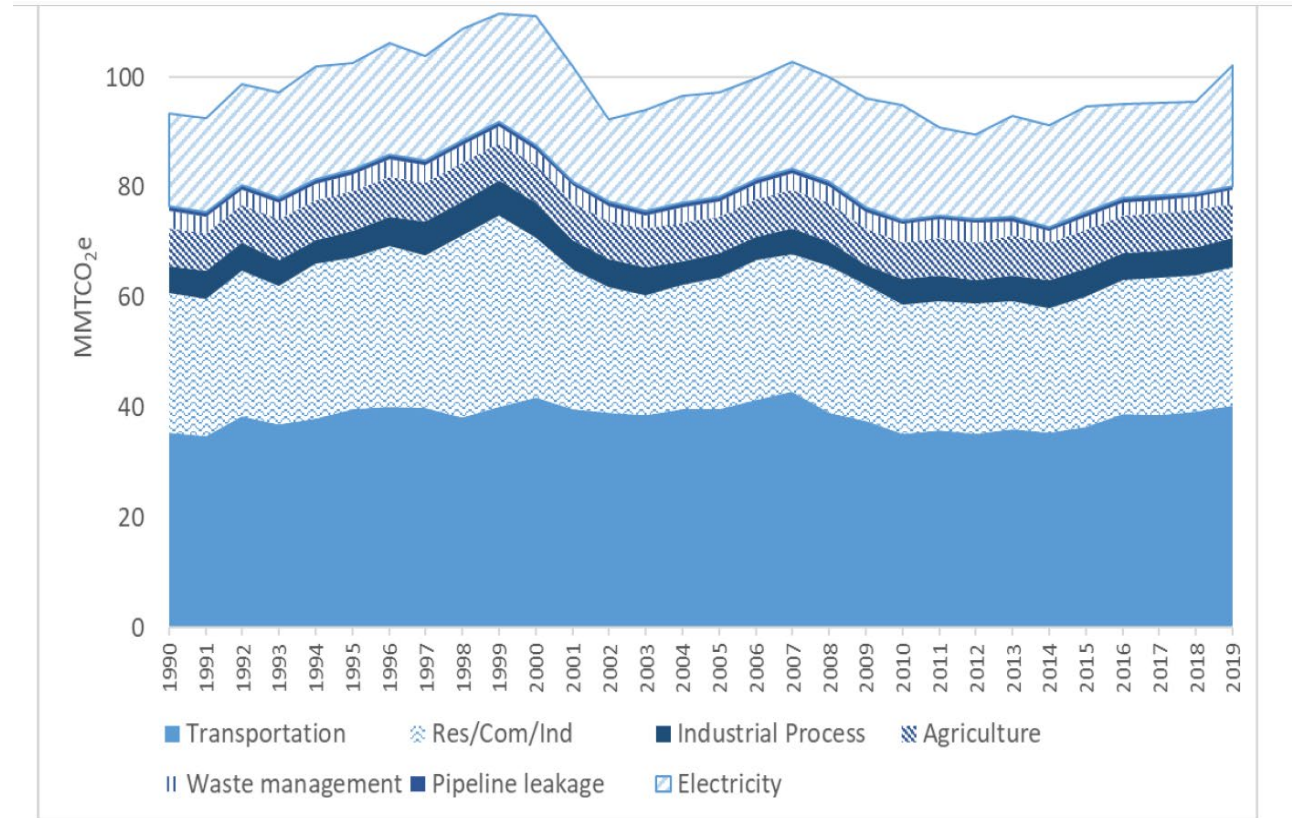


Figure 1. Washington's total GHG emissions 1990-2019 in MMT CO₂e

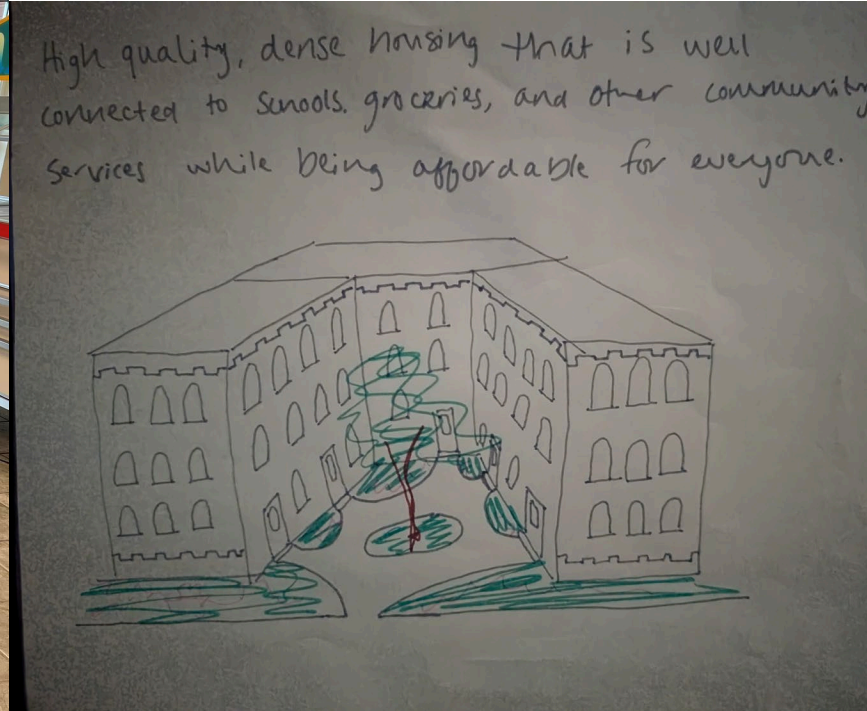
Timeline



Project advisory groups

- **Community Advisory Group (CAG)**
 - Recommended list of goals and policies for county to implement 2025-2045
 - Consistent with HB 1181
- **Environmental Justice Coalition (EJC)**
 - Collect feedback from overburdened communities and populations vulnerable to climate impacts and advise county and CAG how to address what heard
 - Guide development of equity lens for evaluating policies
- **Partner Agency Team (PAT)**
 - Technical review and support





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CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON

PASITOS GIGANTES
Southwest Washington

Fecha: 5/31/24, 6/15/24, 7/31/24

Afecciones del Clima Extremo

Le invitamos a participar en una encuesta sobre el clima extremo y las afecciones en nuestra salud y vida cotidiana.

Haga click en el enlace

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfK9-3S-D4VMCQ1h7w3Tg-39476Y8m-0N1-5C7E406hQ73u4dca2fom>

- * Comparta sus experiencias
- * La encuesta es completamente voluntaria y anónima
- * Haga su voz ser escuchada
- * Habrá rifa de tarjetas de regalo por su participación
- * Preguntas: Favor de llamar al: (360) 583-0792

Environmental Justice Coalition Discussion

Register

Register

When- May 24
Time- Both lunches
Where - Career Center

Clark county is counting for current and future climate impacts to our community we are inviting students to share their experiences with severe weather events

Snacks & Gift Cards For all Participants!

CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON

CLIMATE COMMITMENT ACT

KHẢO CỨU VỀ TÁC HẠI CỦA BIẾN ĐỔI KHÍ HẬU

Biến đổi khí hậu ảnh hưởng sức khỏe và đời sống của chúng ta. Để tìm hiểu về các tác hại này, quận hạt Clark muốn Cộng Đồng chúng ta giúp điền vào đơn khảo cứu.

Xin tải đơn xuống và điền rồi chuyển về điện thư vietclarkcounty@gmail.com

Collaboration, Connection & Caring

May 25th
July 20th
September 7th

11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Fourth Plain Community Commons

3101 E 4th Plain Blvd.
Ste 101 Van

ACTIVITIES

- * Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation Healing Circle
- * Introduction to Doughnut Economics
- * Create through art or fill out

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Definitions and data



Resilience

Climate resilience means the ongoing process of anticipating, preparing for, and adapting to changes in climate and minimizing negative impacts to our natural systems, infrastructure, and communities (RCW 70A.65.010).

Climate Projections for Clark County

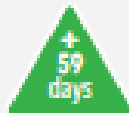


Extreme Heat

Annual days with a humidex** over 90°F



by 2050



by 2080



Drought

Late summer precipitation (Jul 15 - Sept 15)



by 2050

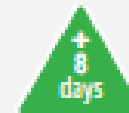


by 2080



Wildfires & Smoke

Annual days with high fire danger



by 2050



by 2080



Extreme Precipitation

Total annual precipitation



by 2050



by 2080



Flooding

Peak streamflow for streams and rivers



by 2050



by 2080



Landslides

Intensity of heavy precipitation events



by 2050



by 2080

Data source:
University of
Washington,
Climate Mapping
for a Resilient
Washington
webtool,
<https://data.cit.uw.edu/climatemapping/>

Projections are
based on a
“business as
usual” emissions
scenario called
RCP 8.5

Research and
graphics by:
CAPA Strategies



Exploring Climate Impacts

- Climate impacts serve as the basis for defining the “problem we’re trying to address” with comprehensive plan goals and policies for the resilience sub-element
- Summary of climate impacts. Examples:
 - Overwhelmed stormwater drains lead to localized flooding or stormwater runoff into local waterways
 - Reduced water quality from heat and/or pollution runoff



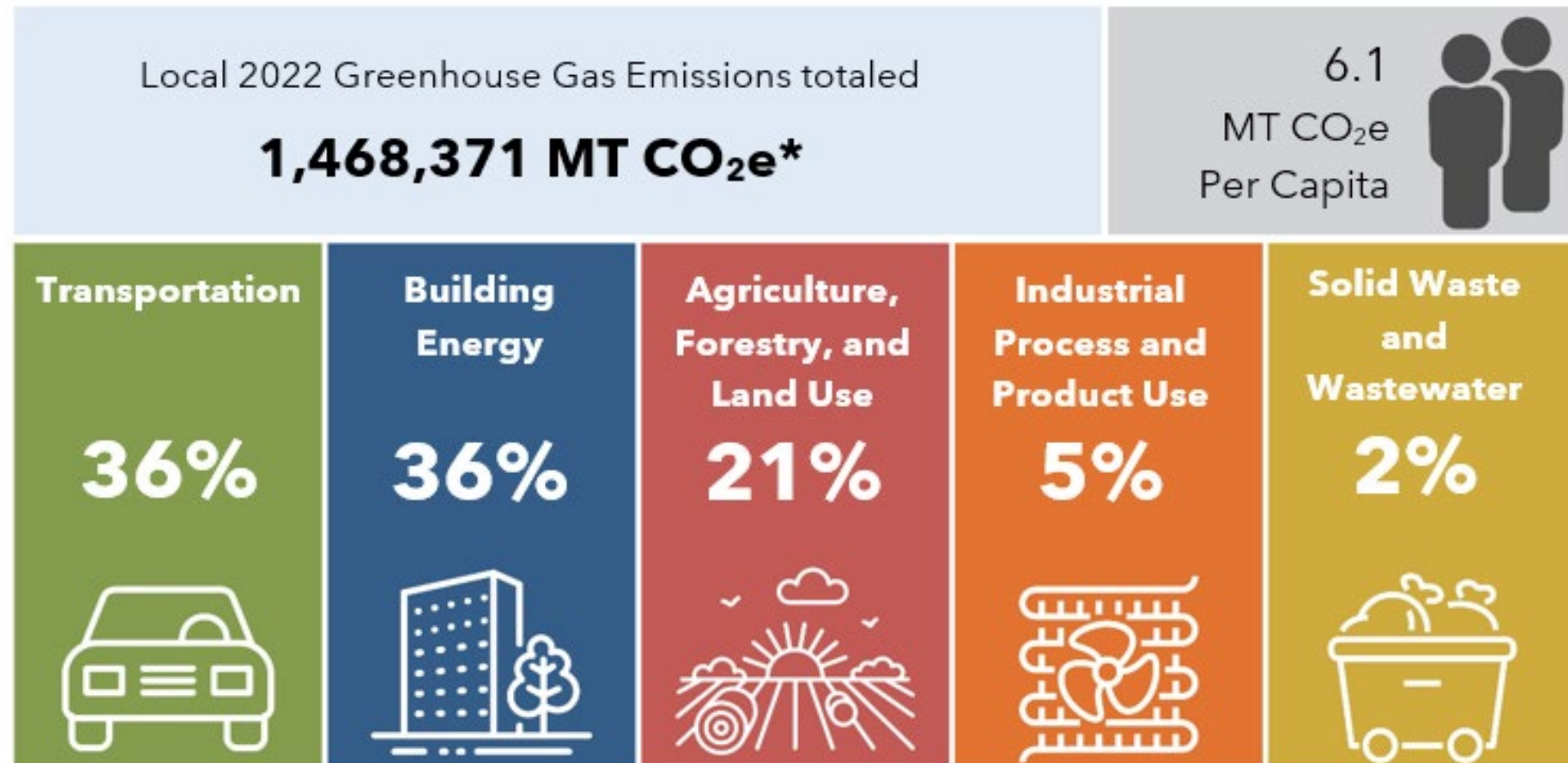
Greenhouse Gas Reduction

Greenhouse gas emissions reduction means actions taken to reduce or eliminate the emissions of greenhouse gases (present and future) in order to reduce the rate and extent of climate damage.

(WA Dept. of Commerce Climate Element Guidance)



Unincorporated Clark County Local Emissions - 2022



*MT CO₂e is a metric ton of CO₂ equivalent, a way to add up all greenhouse gasses
1 MT CO₂e is roughly equivalent to 113 gallons of gasoline burned
or the carbon sequestered by 1.2 acres of forest



Environmental Justice

Vulnerable populations

Population groups that are more likely to be at higher risk for poor health outcomes in response to environmental harms (RCW 36.70A.030)

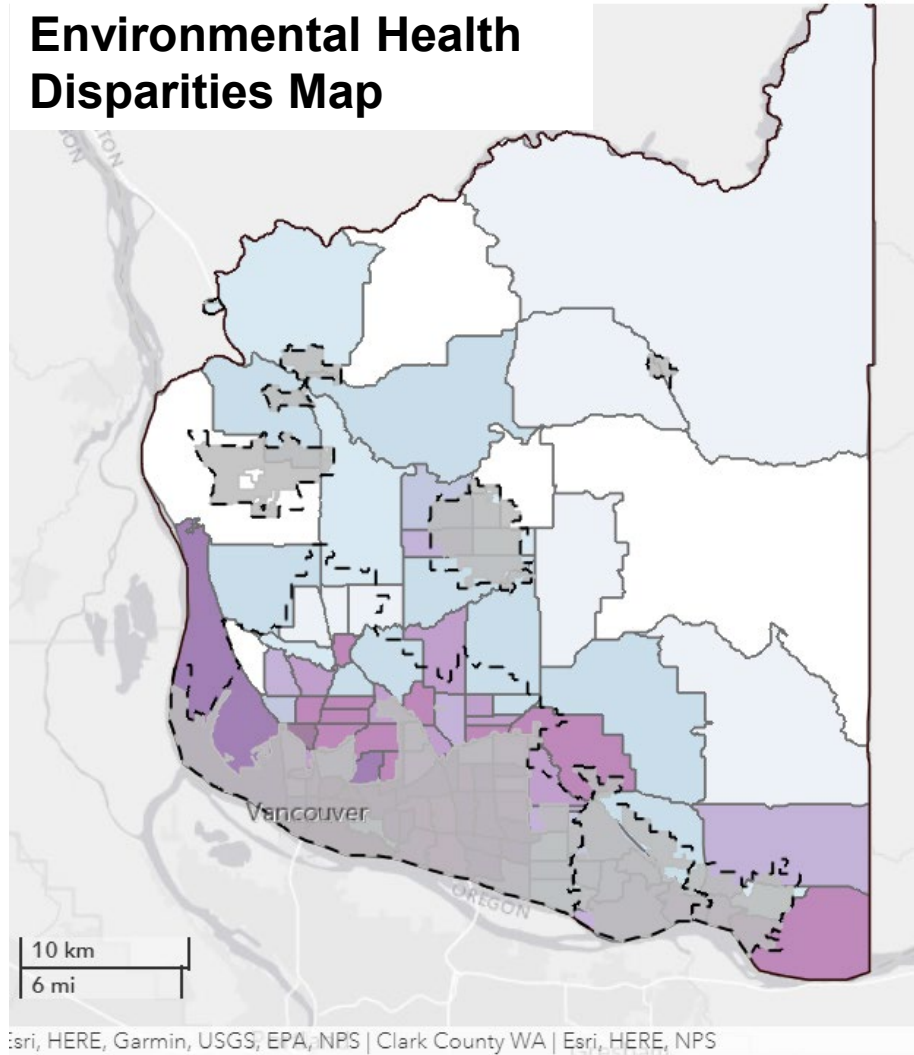
Overburdened community

A geographic area where vulnerable populations face combined, multiple environmental harms and health impacts (RCW 36.70A.030)

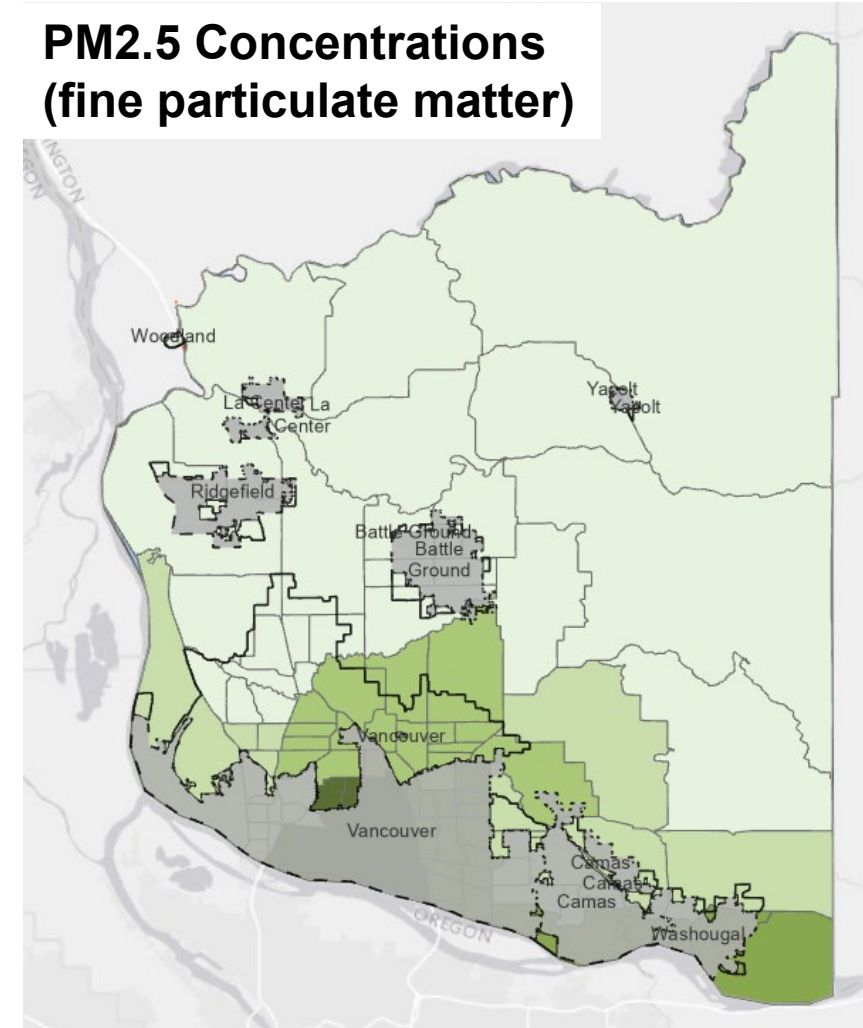


Overburdened Communities & Air Quality Data

Environmental Health Disparities Map



**PM2.5 Concentrations
(fine particulate matter)**



Equity and EJ Lens

The Equity and EJ Lens includes three overarching questions to aid analysis of policy concepts:

- Who is most impacted by this issue or decision? (positively or negatively)
- What does the data tell us? (consider qualitative and quantitative data)
- What are the ways in which a policy recommendation could be modified to enhance positive impacts or reduce negative impacts?



Proposed policies



Climate Element - Goal Topics At A Glance

Health & Well-being	Green Jobs	Ecological Stewardship	Transportation & Land Use	Building & Energy	Waste Management	County Governance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just transition • Advance environmental justice • Ensure most vulnerable communities don't bear disproportionate impacts • Consultation with Cowlitz Indian Tribe, regional Tribal governments, and culturally-specific groups • Food economies • Agriculture and landscaping • Housing • Air quality • Outdoor recreation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic development and job generation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trees • County plantings and greenspaces • Environmentally critical areas and open space • Forestry • Salmonids • Water resources • Stormwater • Public education on environmental topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) • County vehicles • Electric vehicles (EVs) • Resilience of transportation system • Resilient development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy efficient buildings • Clean, renewable, and diverse building energy options • Emissions from county buildings and facilities • Green building and sustainable building practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste reduction, composting, recycling • Emissions from county purchases • Use less and support maintenance, repair, and resale economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy implementation • Resilience of county operations

Example Draft Climate Element Goals

- 4.7: Protect the waters of the county through a stormwater management program that minimizes impacts from stormwater run-off. [RES] (Note: this is an existing comp plan policy.)
- 4.8: Manage water resources sustainably to meet the needs of the public and ecosystems under changing climate conditions. [RES]
- 14.9: Protect and plant more trees in rural and urban areas and equitably increase tree canopy cover through targeted planting and maintenance support. [GHG, RES]



What's next



Timeline



Thank you!

Comments and questions



Project webpage: <https://clark.wa.gov/community-planning/climate-change-planning>

Project contact: Jenna Kay, jenna.kay@clark.wa.gov

