

INFORMATION NOTE

Title:	Community Update – Resilient St. John’s Climate Plan 2022-2024
Date Prepared:	June 10, 2025
Report To:	Committee of the Whole
Councillor and Role:	Deputy Mayor Sheilagh O’Leary, Sustainability
Ward:	N/A

Issue: To update Council on the progress of the Resilient St. John’s Climate Plan from 2022 to 2024. This report highlights the City’s progress and ongoing efforts to build a more sustainable and climate-resilient municipal operations and community.

Discussion – Background and Current Status:

In response to the global climate crisis, the City of St. John’s Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and adopted The Resilient St. John’s Climate Plan in 2022. This plan is the city’s roadmap for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and preparing for the impacts of climate change.

In this plan, St. John’s set ambitious targets:

- City operations: Cut GHG emissions by 40% by 2030 (with a stretch target of 50%), and reach net zero by 2050 at the latest
 - Update: Corporate efforts are on-target. GHG emissions directly linked to the City’s operations have been cut by 22% based on completed and funded projects in construction.
- The community as a whole: Cut GHG emissions by 25% by 2025, 50% by 2030 (with a stretch target of 60%), and reach net zero by 2050 at the latest.
 - Indicators included in the update demonstrate overall progress in a positive direction. A reassessment of this GHG inventory requires 2026 census data and is scheduled to occur during the plan update in 2027. These improvements include:
 - 11.3 hectares of City land has been naturalized
 - Over 800 battery electric vehicles, and 3,000 hybrids.
 - Over 1,100 residential energy retrofits through various government programs.
 - Increased public transit (35% increase over 2022 values).
 - Increase in active transportation trips.

The plan was designed to support local economic growth, generate savings, create jobs, and manage energy costs by improving energy efficiency and using green energy.

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Key priorities and recent progress summary in each strategic area in the plan:

- **Municipal Leadership and Smart Growth:** Important considerations like housing density, active transportation, and complete neighbourhoods are an integral part of city planning. St. John's is upgrading critical infrastructure, including sewer and stormwater systems, to better handle extreme weather and is actively studying sea level rise. Updated policies and flood mapping using climate projection data are being used to keep neighborhoods safe.
- **Affordable, Efficient Buildings:** Projects like the LEED-certified H.G.R. Mews Community Centre and Fortis Canada Games Complex, and the upcoming Passive House Goulds Fire Station are setting a new benchmark for City projects. The City is also helping residents and businesses retrofit existing buildings to save energy and lower emissions through housing retrofit projects, and collaborations with industry to provide support needed by residents.
- **Transportation Transformation:** Metrobus has made improvements and is advancing the electrification of public transit. Active transportation infrastructure has seen a significant improvement through the development of shared used paths, enhanced safety measures, and expanded sidewalk snow clearing. Meanwhile, the City supports the transition to electric vehicles by expanding its public charging network.
- **Protecting Nature and Food Security:** Efforts include protecting green spaces like Lundrigan's Marsh, planting trees through the ReLeaf program and City led naturalization efforts, supporting local food production through community gardens, and continued protection of the watershed zones.
- **Disaster Resilience:** The City is actively working to enhance the resilience of both essential services and residents by incorporating climate change risks into planning and preparedness for extreme weather events.
- **Clean Energy:** The City is exploring new energy sources, such as captured landfill gas, and collaborates with industry to identify future energy needs, while advocating energy conservation.

Being Accountable and Transparent:

The City reports every year through the Strategic plan. We also report internationally to the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), a global environmental disclosure framework where over 24,800 companies and governments (including 93% of the FTSE100 and 85% of the S&P500) report annually.

Since 2022 the City has improved its score from a grade D to an A- in 2024, bringing it significantly closer to achieving A list status. Currently, only 8 cities in Canada (Montreal, Halifax Region, Toronto, Vancouver, etc.) are on the A list, along with 112 Cities globally (15% of all Cities that disclose data to the global program [1,000's], and only 2% of all companies providing disclosures).

Collaboration is central to the City's approach. Progress has been made possible by partnerships with local organizations, businesses, and community groups. The City also

celebrates local climate champions through its Applause Awards, recognizing leaders in areas like cycling, food security, building efficiency, and emissions reduction.

Key Considerations/Implications:

1. Budget/Financial Implications: N/A

2. Partners or Other Stakeholders:

3. Alignment with Strategic Directions:

A Sustainable City: Work collaboratively to create a climate-adapted and low-carbon city.

A Sustainable City: Facilitate and create the conditions that drive the economy by being business and industry friendly; and being a location of choice for residents, businesses and visitors.

4. Alignment with Adopted Plans: Resilient St. John’s Community Climate Plan, and Corporate Climate Plan.

5. Accessibility and Inclusion:

6. Legal or Policy Implications: N/A

7. Privacy Implications: N/A

8. Engagement and Communications Considerations: N/A

9. Human Resource Implications: N/A

10. Procurement Implications: N/A

11. Information Technology Implications: N/A

12. Other Implications: N/A

Next Steps:

While St. John’s has made significant strides, is on target to meet its corporate GHG emission commitment and is seeing encouraging signs in its community indicators, the update emphasizes that continued teamwork and sustained commitment are essential to meet climate targets and to ensure a safe, sustainable future for all residents.