

Annual Report 2024

Chatham County Climate Change Advisory Committee

Robert Cox, Advisory Committee Chair
December 18, 2024



—Choices—

Preview for Today



CCAC Mission and Goals



A Faster Move away from Carbon Emissions



Strengthen Climate-Impacting Actions



Barriers and Challenges



Questions from Commissioners

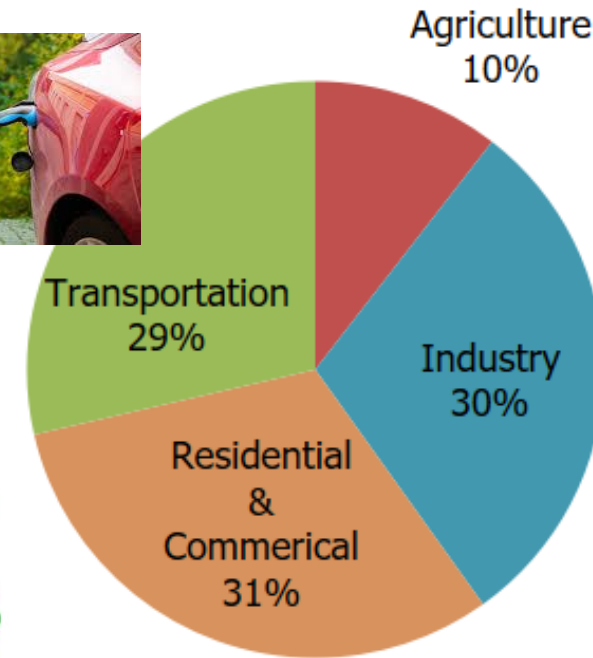
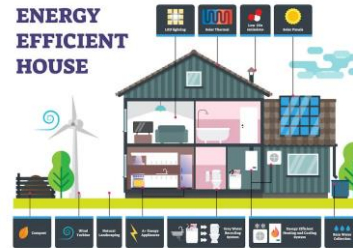
Our Mission and Goals

Make recommendations to Commissioners regarding climate change impacts in Chatham County and ways to adapt to and mitigate these impacts:

1. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases with related improvements in air quality,
2. Promote the use of renewable energy,
3. Promote carbon neutral/green building standards for new and existing buildings both public and private,
4. Encourage resilient and regenerative conservation that foster climate change mitigation adaptation,
5. Seek best practices to retain County's tree cover.

Enabling a faster move away from carbon

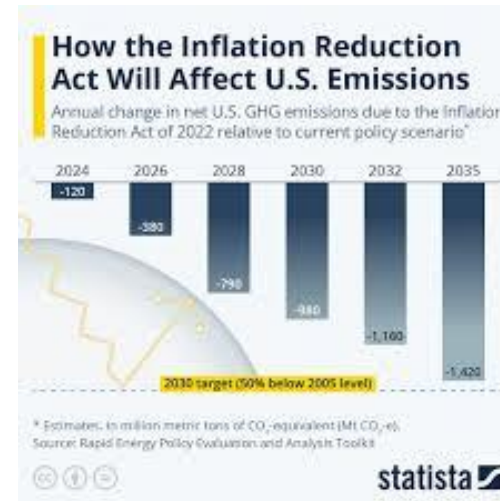
1. "Electrify Everything"
2. Lessen the Costs of Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency
3. Engage Wider, More Diverse Communities



Enabling a faster move away from carbon

Goal 1-*Electrify Everything*

- **Reduced carbon emissions**— Inflation Reduction Act, EPA Clean School Bus Program, etc.
- Recommended fleet and route study— follow-up of **EQ piloting of telematics** in fleet
- Interviewed school transportation officials about **pilot EV school bus**
- (As of 2024, 114 electric school buses funded or are being deployed in NC.)
- Recommended Commissioners sign-on letter re. **Duke Energy's 2024**



Enabling a faster move away from carbon

Goal 2-Lessen the Costs of Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency

- Recommended County **file for IRA** "direct payments" for eligible projects
- Pending payments for EV fleet purchases, solar panels on Ag building, and EV charging stations, **potential savings of \$100,000.**
- Delay by state DEQ in developing rules for the **Home Energy Rebate** program
- Joined **DEQ public hearing** on implementing the Home Energy Rebate program



Enabling a faster move away from carbon

[Get Started](#)

[Electrify Programs](#)

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Goal 2-*Lessen the Costs of Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency*

- Investigated an **alternate source for financing** smart energy homes:
- Central Pines Council told CCAC it hopes to introduce an **Electrify program potentially in 2025** and has been in contact with Electrify Asheville- Buncombe officials.



ELECTRIFY
ASHEVILLE-BUNCOMBE

[Electrify Now!](#)

A COMMUNITY ELECTRIFICATION PROGRAM

Welcome to **Electrify Asheville-Buncombe**, a community-based program helping Asheville and Buncombe County residents take climate action at home by replacing fossil fuel-based appliances and systems with efficient, low-carbon, electric technology. We invite you to be part of this exciting initiative, helping advance clean energy in North Carolina and beyond.

Enabling a faster move away from carbon

GOAL 3-Engage Wider, Diverse Communities

- Restarted our Education and Outreach subcommittee, interviewed County Equity and Engagement Officer and begun to identify opportunities to engage community stakeholders.
- Developed a working relationship with the Chatham Climate Action Network—Alliance of groups committed to climate solutions.

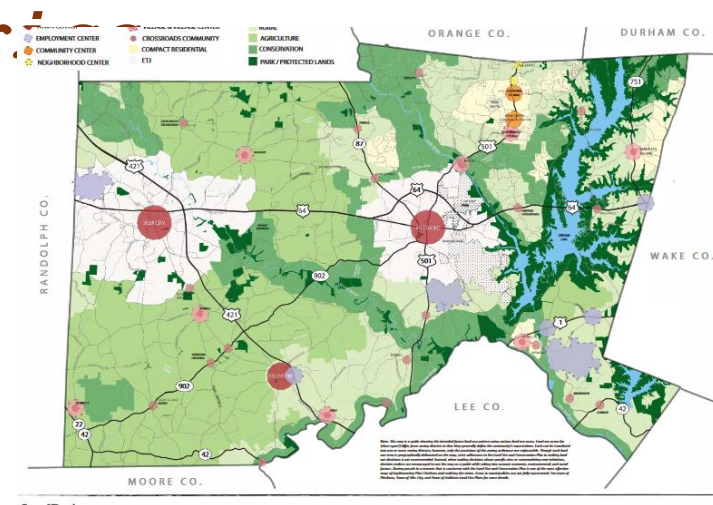


Strengthen Climate-Impacting Actions

Goal 1-*Strengthen climate-related measures in the UDO*



Goal 2-*Strengthen climate-related measures in the Comprehensive Plan metrics*



Strengthen Climate-Impacting Actions

Goal 1-Strengthen climate-related measures in the UDO



- Submitted comments for strengthening climate-related rules in seven UDO chapters—from solar energy panels to charging and energy efficiency.

- Requested stronger tree forest cover protection.

- The Comprehensive Plan recommends **sequestration** repeatedly.

NR	Big Idea	BI	Permanently protect 20,000 additional acres of land by 2040.	Sequestration
NR	Strategy	2.2	Encourage development design to <i>preserve forest cover</i> and additional uplands (emphasis added)	Sequestration
Ag	Strategy	5.1	Implement a county-led farmland protection program. This could be a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program that purchases development rights for agricultural lands from willing sellers.	Sequestration
Ag	Goal	Primary	Preserve, protect, and enable agriculture and forestry.	Sequestration
NR	Strategy	2.3	Heritage Trees: Through a tree protection ordinance, establish <i>protection for heritage trees</i> . (emphasis added)	Sequestration

Strengthen Climate-Impacting Actions

Goal 2-*Strengthen climate-related measures in the Comprehensive Plan metrics*

- Began a feasibility study in 2023 of 20,000 acres, now a goal in the Conservation Working Group's "Conservation Plan."
- Briefed by Brandon Dawson on Conservation Plan's two-year timeline.
- Participated in Stakeholder Engagement process
- Served on County's Extreme Heat Advisory Committee.



Barriers and Challenges

- Rapid development in County continues a **loss of carbon sequestering trees**
- **Uncertainty of federal climate funding** in Trump Admin., highlights importance of local actions.
- County school transportation officials continue to **resist piloting** an EV school bus



Biden's climate funding faces uncertain future under new administration



ANY
QUESTIONS

