

Lake Forest Park Climate Element

POLICY AUDIT MEMORANDUM

DECEMBER 2024



The City of Lake Forest Park Climate Element is supported with funding from Washington's Climate Commitment Act. The CCA supports Washington's climate action efforts by putting cap-and-invest dollars to work reducing climate pollution, creating jobs, and improving public health. Information about the CCA is available at www.climate.wa.gov.

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GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
Climate Element (CE)	A Climate Element is a component of a comprehensive plan that outlines strategies to address climate change by maximizing economic, environmental, and social co-benefits, while prioritizing environmental justice to prevent the exacerbation of environmental health disparities. It may be structured as a standalone chapter or integrated across multiple elements such as housing, transportation, and land use (Commerce Planning Website).
Overburdened Communities	Geographic areas where vulnerable populations face combined, multiple environmental harms and health impacts (RCW 70A.02.010).
Climate Resilience	Climate resilience is the ongoing process of anticipating, preparing for, and adapting to changes in climate and minimizing negative impacts to our natural systems, infrastructure, and communities. Washington's cities and counties can build climate resilience by implementing a mix of preparedness, response, and recovery policies, including mitigating natural hazards, adapting to unavoidable impacts, and restoring degraded natural areas that provide key ecosystem services (Commerce Planning Guidance pg 15).
Vulnerable Populations	<p>Population groups that are more likely to be at higher risk for poor health outcomes in response to environmental harms, due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adverse socioeconomic factors, such as unemployment, high housing and transportation costs relative to income, limited access to nutritious food and adequate health care, linguistic isolation, and other factors that negatively affect health outcomes and increase vulnerability to the effects of environmental harms; and • sensitivity factors, such as low birth weight and higher rates of hospitalization. <p>"Vulnerable populations" includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Racial or ethnic minorities; (ii) Low-income populations; (iii) Populations disproportionately impacted by environmental harms; and (iv) Populations of workers experiencing environmental harms (RCW 70A.02.010)
Greenhouse Gas	Includes carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, sulfur hexafluoride, and any other gas or gases designated by the department by rule, like Buildings, Transportation, Energy, and Other (Washington State Department of Ecology).
Sustainable Development	Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Washington State Enterprise Services).

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Sustainability

Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. To pursue sustainability is to create and maintain the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony to support present and future generations ([Environmental Protection Agency](#)).

PURPOSE

The City of Lake Forest Park (City) is including a Climate Element (CE) in the City's 2026 Comprehensive Plan update that will integrate climate resilience goals and policies into the City's long-term planning framework. The CE will build on commitments made in the City's current Comprehensive Plan, Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, Stormwater Management Plan and the Shoreline Master Program, to provide consistent, clear, and actionable guidance on climate resilience and GHG emissions reduction.

This memorandum identifies City climate policy trends, gaps, and opportunities to guide development of CE goals, objectives, and policies. Results from this assessment will be utilized to ensure the CE is consistent with existing City initiatives and Washington state guidance and requirements.

INTRODUCTION

The memorandum is organized into the following sections:

- **Introduction:** Introduces the context, objectives, and methodology for the climate policy assessment.
- **Policy Trends, Gaps & Opportunities:** Summarizes key findings from the policy assessment of the City's existing climate policies and goals. Includes:
 - **Community Wellbeing Policy Assessment:** Overviews cross-cutting policies and overarching implementation opportunities.
 - **Resilience Policy Assessment:** Overviews climate resiliency policy trends and opportunities.
 - **GHG Reduction Policy Assessment:** Overviews climate resiliency policy trends and opportunities.
- **Barriers to Implementation Barriers** to Identifies potential barriers to implementing climate policy in the City of Lake Forest Park.
- **Next Steps:** Outlines the next steps for Climate Element development.

Legislative Context & Background

The Washington Growth Management Act (GMA) was amended in 2023 under Washington House Bill (HB) 1181, requiring cities and counties to integrate climate policies¹ into comprehensive plan updates. For the City of Lake Forest Park, these required policy changes must reduce GHG emissions, address climate impacts, and increase resilience across local sectors.

¹ Climate resilience policies are required for all jurisdictions planning under the GMA. GHG emission reduction policies are only required for [11 of the fastest growing counties and cities](#) within them.

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The Washington State Department of Commerce (Commerce) led a multiyear effort to develop model climate element guidance², which provides steps and pathways to integrate a climate resilience sub-element into comprehensive plans, either as integrated policies or a standalone element. Jurisdictions are encouraged to assess their climate impacts and risks, seek input from key stakeholders and communities, and pursue pathways that modify existing or create new policies to increase community resilience. The City of Lake Forest Park's 2026 Comprehensive Plan update will incorporate a CE aligned with Commerce guidance, existing City climate policies, and policies to foster sustainable and equitable planning in the face of climate change.

The City of Lake Forest Park's CE will pinpoint specific actions the City can take to improve climate resilience and reduce GHG emissions. However, understanding key climate policy direction in Washington state will be essential to inform these local policies.

Methodology

As part of the climate policy assessment, Cascadia Consulting (Cascadia) reviewed a set of City key planning documents and developed a policy database that includes goals and policies from the City's key planning documents. This database was used to filter climate focus areas, Commerce-identified priority sectors, and climate impacts to identify trends, gaps, and opportunities for policy inclusion in the CE. Cascadia and City staff worked together to identify documents to review (Table 1).

The document review meets the Commerce requirements by including Core Comprehensive Planning Documents, as well as supplemental policy documents:

- **Core Comprehensive Planning Documents:** Cascadia completed a detailed of the Comprehensive Plan, Hazard Mitigation Plan, and Stormwater Management Program Plan, and Shoreline Master Plan. These documents serve as the core analysis for the gaps and opportunities assessment, as the Climate Element is intended to build on them and fill in any gaps from these documents.
- **Supportive Documents:** Cascadia reviewed documents besides the core planning documents to identify additional context for the gaps and opportunities assessment and recommendations for policy development at the next phase of the planning process. These plans have different planning time horizons and/or focus areas than the core documents; the goal of the policy audit is to understand their goals and context, rather than specifically noting and addressing gaps within these documents.

The document review did not include a review of codes and regulations. This level of review could be helpful for the City to complete during or after Climate Element policy development.

² Washington Department of Commerce. (2023). Climate Element Planning Guidance. Retrieved from <https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/bhqov8pvybygss9jxbmtezzgzrtr7nal>

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Table 1. List of Documents Reviewed

Lake Forest Park Documents Reviewed	Year
Core Comprehensive Planning Documents	
Lake Forest Park Comprehensive Plan Update Sept 2024	2024
Lake Forest Park Shoreline Master Program	2013
Hazard Mitigation Plan (King County - Lake Forest Park Annex)	2019
Stormwater Management Program Plan	2023
Supportive Documents	
Lake Forest Park Climate Action Plan	2024
Lake Forest Park The Legacy 100-Year Vision Final Report	2008
Lake Forest Park Urban Forest Ecosystem Services and Values Report	2024
Lake Forest Park Parks, Recreation, Open Space, & Trails Plan	2018
Safe Highways Report	2018
Safe Streets: Recommendations for Improving Safety & Connections to Transit and Amenities	2017
Safe Streets: Town Center Connections	2018

Policy Coding

Identified City climate policies, plans, and reports were coded for the following attributes to help assess climate policy trends and gaps: focus area, priority sector, climate impacts, and GHG emissions reduction strategies.

The *Policy Trends, Gaps & Opportunities* section below provides definitions of each coding category, reason for inclusion in database, and findings. Only policies from the City's core documents were analyzed for the summary tables. Core documents included the Comprehensive Plan, the Shoreline Master Program, and the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. Each policy could be coded as multiple focus areas, priority sectors, or climate impacts. The cross-cutting code was used for policies that spanned several priority sectors or climate impacts.

Identifying Policy Gaps

The consultant team identified policy gaps and opportunities by utilizing climate element planning guidance to ensure that each focus area and priority sector was comprehensive and included key strategies for enhancing climate sustainability, resilience, and equity. The guidance documents used to identify these gaps and inform policy development for the draft CE included the Commerce's Menu of Measures³ and Climate Element Planning Guidance.⁴

³ Washington Department of Commerce. (2023). Climate Menu of Measures. Retrieved from <https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/n34kivgz n9rfe74j fz2vvzxqlrv7j9m9>.

⁴ Washington Department of Commerce. (2023). Climate Element Planning Guidance. Retrieved from <https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/bh qov8pvbiygss9jxbmtezzgzrtr7na l>.

POLICY TRENDS, GAPS & OPPORTUNITIES

Summary

This section summarizes findings from Cascadia’s review of the City’s climate planning documents. First, there is a summary of the key plans reviewed. Then, tables organize identified policies by focus area, priority sector, climate impact addressed, and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction strategy.

Core documents

The City of Lake Forest Park’s Comprehensive Plan includes an “Environmental Quality” element, which features generally robust policies and specific goals that address community resilience in the face of a changing climate. It also contains several sub-sections that include policies explicitly to address climate change and its impacts. However, while some policies highlight vulnerable populations, there is a noticeable gap in addressing structural inequities in access to resources for GHG emissions reduction and climate adaptation efforts.

Several other key documents help shape the City’s core climate policies, including the Shoreline Master Program, Stormwater Management Program, and the Hazard Mitigation Plan (King County - Lake Forest Park Annex). As of the 2020 update of the Hazard Mitigation Plan, there has been an increased emphasis on improving community resilience through education on emergency management and climate hazards.

Supportive documents

The City also has additional plans related to climate resilience and GHG emissions reduction, which were reviewed as supporting documents for this specific analysis. These plans collectively reflect Lake Forest Park’s commitment to fostering sustainability and resilience. These include:

- 2024: Lake Forest Park Climate Action Plan
- 2018: The Legacy 100-Year Vision Final Report
- 2024: Urban Forest Ecosystem Services and Values Report
- 2018: Parks, Recreation, Open Space, & Trails Plan
- 2018: Safe Highways Report
- 2017: Safe Streets: Recommendations for Improving Safety & Connections to Transit and Amenities
- 2018: Safe Streets: Town Center Connections
- 2019: Solid Waste Master Plan

Of this list, the Climate Action Plan and The Legacy 100-Year Vision Final Report are particularly key to acknowledge in policy development. The Climate Action Plan contains robust policies on climate resilience and GHG emissions reduction. The Lake Forest Park 100-Year Legacy Final Report will guide policy development and highlight focus areas for the Vulnerability Assessment, such as infrastructure resilience, ecological preservation, and community well-being. This plan’s

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long-term vision provides a framework to integrate sustainability, resilience, and equity into the Comprehensive Plan. Aligning the Climate Element with the Legacy Plan will ensure that goals and policies reflect both immediate priorities and the community's long-term vision.

Policies by Focus Area

Policies within the City's core planning documents were analyzed for their relevance to GHG emission reduction, climate resilience, and climate equity (Table 2). A total of 127 policies were coded during the review, with some policies categorized under multiple focus areas. The analysis revealed that most policies prioritized resilience, followed by GHG emissions reduction, while policies addressing climate equity were the least frequent.

Table 2. Identified City Policies, by Focus Area

Focus Area	# Policies/Actions
Resilience	87
GHG Emission Reduction	47
Climate Equity	17

Policies by Priority Sector

Policies were analyzed for their alignment with key priority sectors (Table 3), which are drawn from Commerce guidance identifying the sectors most vulnerable to climate impacts in the state. The analysis of planning documents highlights a strong prevalence of City policies in sectors such as ecosystems, water resources, zoning & development, and transportation. These areas reflect the City's primary focus on environmental and infrastructure-related resilience.

However, other sectors show varying levels of representation. Health & well-being, emergency management, buildings & energy, and cross-cutting issues have moderate policy coverage, indicating emerging areas of focus for the City. Sectors such as waste management, agriculture & food systems, cultural resources & practices, and economic development have fewer than 10 policies or actions, suggesting they are significantly underrepresented and may require additional attention to support a more comprehensive approach to climate resilience and/or GHG emission reduction.

Table 3. Identified City Policies, by Priority Sector

Priority Sectors	# Policies/Actions
Ecosystems	44
Water Resources	29
Zoning & Development	27
Transportation	23
Health & Well-being	18
Emergency Management	16

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Priority Sectors	# Policies/Actions
Buildings & Energy	16
Crosscutting	11
Waste Management	5
Agriculture & Food Systems	4
Cultural Resources & Practices	2
Economic Development	1

Policies by Climate Impact

City policies were categorized by the climate impacts they addressed (Table 4). The most focus was given to variable precipitation (flooding, landslides) and cross-cutting challenges, while community well-being also received attention. Impacts like sea level rise, drought, and extreme heat had fewer policies, with wildfire smoke and reduced snowpack showing minimal or no focus.

Table 4. Identified City Policies, by Climate Impact

Impacts	# Policies/Actions
Variable precipitation (flooding, landslides)	39
Impacts Crosscutting	33
Community well-being	20
Variable precipitation (drought)	14
Extreme heat	7
Wildfire & wildfire smoke	1
Sea level rise & storm surges	0
Reduced snowpack	0

Policies by GHG Emissions Reduction Strategy

City policies supporting GHG emission reduction strategies were reviewed and categorized (Table 5). The greatest emphasis was placed on vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction and multimodal transportation/transit-oriented development (TOD). Efforts to promote building decarbonization were also notable. Areas like waste reduction, and electric vehicles received more limited attention, while carbon sequestration had minimal focus in the core document review.

Table 5. Identified City Policies, by Mitigation Strategy

Mitigation Strategies	# Policies/Actions
VMT reduction	22
Multimodal transportation/TOD	21
Building decarbonization	13
Waste reduction/diversion	5

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GHG Emission Reduction Crosscutting	4
Electric Vehicles	3
Carbon Sequestration	1

RESILIENCE POLICY ASSESSMENT

It is important to understand how climate impacts will affect the City to ensure the resilience policies within the CE address the unique climate vulnerabilities of the City of Lake Forest Park communities, natural resources, and infrastructure.

Overview

The following sections are organized by climate impacts identified to be most relevant to the City of Lake Forest Park and will be exacerbated by climate change. The Climate Impacts Summary, conducted in fall 2024, details the projected climate impacts for the City of Lake Forest Park .

In summary, the City of Lake Forest Park is expected to experience the following impacts:

- **Extreme Heat:** Higher annual average temperatures, with especially high temperature increases during the summer months.
- **Wildfire and Smoke:** Increased wildfire activity due to extreme heat and heightened drought, resulting in increased smoke and poor air quality.
- **Drought:** Declining summer precipitation, leading to more frequent, longer, and severe regional droughts.
- **Extreme Precipitation and Flooding:** Increased flooding due to more frequent and intense extreme precipitation events.

Aligning to State guidance, the policies included in the resilience sub-element must, at a minimum, identify the action the City will take to fulfill the following:

Focus	Requirement
Resilience	Requirement 1: Address natural hazards created or aggravated by climate change, including sea level rise, landslides, flooding, drought, heat, smoke, wildfire, and other effects of changes to temperature and precipitation patterns; Requirement 2: Identify, protect, and enhance natural areas to foster climate resilience, as well as areas of vital habitat for safe species migration; and Requirement 3: Identify, protect, and enhance community resilience to climate impacts, including social, economic, and built-environment factors, which support adaptation to climate impacts consistent with environmental justice.

Community Wellbeing

The policy assessment identified several policies addressing climate change resilience and GHG reduction across multiple climate sectors and impacts. While these policies may not directly target specific climate impacts, they contribute to community well-being in Lake Forest Park. The following criteria were considered when coding a policy as addressing community well-being:

- Policies that prioritize addressing environmental justice, with a specific emphasis on vulnerable populations and groups historically underrepresented in community planning.

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- Policies that place an emphasis on inclusive and participatory processes to ensure all residents, especially marginalized groups, are actively engaged in city planning and development.
- Policies focusing on sustainable development practices that balance urban growth, especially around housing and community spaces.
- Policies that prioritize equipping the city to face climate change impacts, protecting public health, safeguarding community members, and strengthening the community's capacity to adapt and thrive.
- Policies to encourage quality of life for residents and community vitality through aligning Urban Growth Area (UGA) development with sustainability standards, promoting public parks and green spaces, and supporting affordable housing.

By prioritizing community well-being, the policy audit supports equitable policy development. Fostering a healthy, adaptable community lays the foundation for sustainable growth and helps protect vulnerable populations from climate impacts.

Climate Equity

Climate impacts, such as extreme heat or shifting precipitation patterns, will affect existing housing, transportation, and energy infrastructure, especially in areas already vulnerable to flooding or landslides. Climate change also worsens existing risks, such as chronic health conditions, social and economic inequalities, and pollution exposure, disproportionately affecting frontline communities, including communities of color, Indigenous people, and/or people with lower incomes who are impacted first and worst by climate change and environmental hazards. These compounding risks highlight the need for policies that address cumulative environmental and health burdens across the city.

Understanding which assets and populations are most at risk from climate and environmental burdens can inform policy focus areas and community priorities. The forthcoming Climate Vulnerability Assessment will guide policy by identifying areas, populations, and infrastructure most at risk from identified climate impacts. The assessment will also examine how socioeconomic stressors, such as poverty and inadequate housing, affect overburdened communities. These factors can exacerbate vulnerability when coupled with climate stressors, deepening societal inequities. Climate equity will be a key focus of the Climate Element policies.

Resilience Policy Trends, Gaps, & Opportunities

The tables below overview trends, opportunities, and gaps in the City of Lake Forest Park current climate resilience policy. The table headings indicate the "Sector Nexus," representing the priority sectors where the theme or impact intersects. These priority sectors were identified in Commerce's guidance. The complete list is available in Table 3.

Note that the forthcoming **Climate Vulnerability Assessment** will provide detailed projections on climate risks, adaptive capacity, and vulnerability within the City of Lake Forest Park informing additional policy opportunities and priorities for CE development.

Community Wellbeing

Sector Nexus: Community Wellbeing , Ecosystems, Emergency Preparedness		
Existing Policy Trends	Existing Policy Gaps	Policy Opportunities
<p>Current policies...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on sustainable development practices that balance urban growth with environmental preservation and resilience. • Strong emphasis on inclusive and participatory processes to ensure all residents, particularly marginalized groups, are engaged in city planning and development. • Prioritize the protection, enhancement, and restoration of natural resources, especially related to the shoreline and tree canopy. • Emphasize the need to address environmental justice, with particular focus on vulnerable populations and those historically underrepresented in community planning. 	<p>Current policies...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack a comprehensive definition of vulnerable populations, failing to explicitly include groups such as children, the elderly, low-income individuals, people with disabilities, communities of color, and those experiencing homelessness. These populations face heightened risks from climate hazards due to social, economic, and political factors, yet their unique vulnerabilities are not adequately addressed in existing policies. • Lack of focus on the health impacts of climate change, particularly heatwaves, air pollution, flooding, and other extreme events. • Lack emphasis on affordable, climate-resilient housing that meets the needs of vulnerable communities, including access to sustainable building practices and transit. 	<p>Improve or add policies to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That prioritize equitable access to nature, ensuring that disadvantaged neighborhoods are not left out of the benefits of parks, tree canopies, and green infrastructure, which help mitigate environmental stresses and improve quality of life. • Incorporate social equity and environmental justice into every phase of implementation. This includes ensuring vulnerable populations have access to green jobs, affordable housing, and resources to adapt to climate and environmental changes. • Encourage high-density, transit-oriented housing that incorporates green spaces, sustainable building practices, and addresses affordability gaps. • Integrate proactive measures for climate hazard response and preparedness for vulnerable populations. • Add a focus on economic development, such as workforce development and high-quality green jobs. • Establish resiliency hubs in Lake Forest Park that serve as community resource centers and gathering spaces, while also

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		providing safe shelter during extreme climate events or natural disasters.
Key Considerations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Climate Vulnerability Assessment can help identify specific climate hazards (e.g., flooding, heatwaves, wildfires) and high-risk areas that need to be addressed in development plans. 		

Extreme Heat

Sector Nexus: Ecosystems, Zoning & Development, Health & Well-being, Water Resources, Emergency Management, Buildings & Energy		
Existing Policy Trends Current policies... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specifically address the heat island effect through tree canopy initiatives within the Land Use section of the comprehensive plan. Highlight disadvantaged neighborhoods with low tree canopy coverage and encourage policies aimed at increasing tree canopy in these areas. Address areas where infrastructure incentives are needed specifically in areas prone to heat island effect. 	Existing Policy Gaps Current policies... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack strategies for addressing extreme heat through methods beyond tree cover, such as heating and cooling stations, permeable pavement, shaded and reflective transit infrastructure, and other cooling strategies. Do not include language acknowledging how climate change exacerbates extreme heat. Lack a strong focus on equity beyond tree canopy and do not adequately ensure that vulnerable populations have access to cooling centers or in-home cooling solutions. Do not address protecting wildlife from the effects of extreme heat. 	Policy Opportunities Improve or add policies to... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish reflective or permeable pavements, and heat-resistant infrastructure for public transit and pedestrian pathways. Include wildlife-friendly cooling strategies, such as preserving wetlands, adding shaded water sources, or creating habitat corridors in urban planning. Create programs that prioritize cooling resources, such as cooling centers or subsidies for in-home air conditioning, for disadvantaged and vulnerable populations. Launch educational campaigns to inform residents about heat risks, preventive measures, and available resources during heat waves. Establish standards for urban design that reduce heat islands, such as limiting dark asphalt use and incentivizing reflective or porous materials. Better protect the health and well-being of outdoor workers exposed to climate-exacerbated hazards by connecting workers and businesses

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		with education and resources beyond existing state requirements .
Key Considerations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with King County to incorporate strategies from their new Extreme Heat Strategy, leveraging potential funding opportunities and implementation support. Partner with local resource hubs to establish resilient cooling technologies, providing safe spaces for people during heat events. Additionally, use these local gathering places to educate the community about climate hazards. 		

Wildfire, Smoke, and Air Quality

Sector Nexus: Crosscutting Ecosystems, Cultural Resources & Practices		
Existing Policy Trends	Existing Policy Gaps	Policy Opportunities
<p>Current policies...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address wildfire preparedness and community education through adopting a “Firewise” program. Have a general focus on preserving and protecting wildlife and ecosystems. Highlight the negative impacts of poor air quality on vulnerable populations. 	<p>Current policies...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not address wildfire and wildfire smoke impacts directly. Do not have adequate measures to reduce sedimentation in streams following wildfires, which could lead to increased landslide and flooding risks. Lack coordination of wildfire preparedness with broader emergency response plans for other hazards. Lack clear guidelines or actions for mitigating the risks of wildfires, such as creating defensible spaces or increasing local fire resilience infrastructure. 	<p>Improve or add policies to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information on creating clean air shelters in homes, including affordable DIY air filtration systems (e.g., HEPA filters with box fans). Develop policies targeting wildfire smoke impacts, such as air quality monitoring systems and public alert mechanisms. Incorporate stream sedimentation reduction plans, such as erosion control or reforestation efforts, to minimize cascading hazards. Require employers to implement policies or programs protecting outdoor workers’ health and economic well-being beyond existing state requirements. Implement erosion control techniques such as mulching, seeding with native grasses, and installing silt fences to stabilize soil in burned areas and reduce sediment flow into waterways.

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Key Considerations

- Utilize the USDA's comprehensive [Smoke-Ready tools](#) and guidelines to develop plans addressing smoke and poor air quality. Collaborate with community partners to implement these resources effectively, ensuring targeted support for vulnerable populations and clear strategies for public communication, preparedness, and response.

Drought

Sector Nexus: Buildings & Energy, Water Resources, Ecosystem		
Existing Policy Trends	Existing Policy Gaps	Policy Opportunities
<p>Current policies...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for efficient water utility practices that protect natural resources, enhance infrastructure resilience and ensure a sustainable long-term water supply. • Partner with utility providers to educate the public on the critical importance of water and energy conservation, emphasizing sustainable practices to mitigate the impacts of drought conditions. • Include planting climate-adapted trees that are drought-resistant while contributing to overall tree canopy cover. • Have general language around protecting and preserving cities' local waterways. 	<p>Current policies...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack targeted outreach to vulnerable populations (e.g., low-income households, non-English speakers). • Lack of strategies for enhancing water storage, such as rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge, and expanding reservoirs. • Have limited focus on upgrading existing water infrastructure to improve resilience to drought conditions, including implementing leak detection systems and adopting water-efficient technologies. 	<p>Improve or add policies to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct and maintain new water-storage systems (e.g large cisterns, water towers, and reservoirs) to provide back-up water supplies during droughts and support climate resilience. • Protect and preserve water quality and quantity from drought, extreme heat, and other hazards exacerbated by climate change. • Provide financial incentives (e.g., rebates or tax credits) for residents and businesses to install water-saving technologies or systems, such as cisterns, drip irrigation, or smart irrigation controllers. • Incorporate water-saving designs and drought resilience into urban planning, including compact development patterns and reduced impervious surfaces.
<p>Key Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with local forest staff to actively engage residents in educational programs about native and drought-resistant trees and plants, emphasizing their role in enhancing ecosystem resilience, conserving water, and supporting long-term environmental sustainability. • Collaborate with regional partners to enhance coordination around drought preparedness. Highlight the importance of equitable resource management, particularly in areas like the Seattle region that benefit from reservoir access, to better support communities vulnerable to water shortages and strengthen long-term resilience. 		

Extreme Precipitation and Flooding

Sector Nexus: Water Resources, Ecosystems, Zoning & Development, Emergency Management		
Existing Policy Trends	Existing Policy Gaps	Policy Opportunities
<p>Current policies...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement flood prevention measures, including enforcement of ordinances, updated floodplain mapping, and removal or retrofitting of culverts. • Preserve and restore natural floodplains, wetlands, and riparian zones for flood mitigation, water quality, and habitat protection. • Adopt sustainable building practices (e.g., LEED standards and low-impact development) and incentivize environmentally friendly designs in both public and private developments. • Encourage community stewardship initiatives like stream restoration and monitoring. 	<p>Current policies...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not sufficiently incorporate future climate projections, such as increased storm intensity and sea-level rise, into flood management and urban planning. • Fail to address the disproportionate impacts of flooding on vulnerable communities and lack mechanisms to prioritize resources for those most at risk. • Lack of adequately addressing the vulnerability of transit systems, roads, and sidewalks to flooding, including disruptions to mobility, safety hazards, and long-term infrastructure damage. • Lack a strong emphasis on cross-jurisdictional collaboration to address watershed-scale flood risks that align with regional goals for water management and habitat restoration. 	<p>Improve or add policies to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restore floodplains and connectivity to improve the resilience of streams and rivers and reduce flood risk. • Launch educational campaigns to increase awareness of flood risks, preparedness measures, and the importance of sustainable stormwater practices, with a specific focus on vulnerable populations. • Incorporate flood resilience into the design and maintenance of roads, sidewalks, and transit systems. • Develop policies for protecting critical utilities, such as water, electricity, and communication systems, from flood hazards. • Integrate climate projections, such as increased storm intensity and sea-level rise, into flood management policies and land-use planning. • Plant trees in public and right-of-way spaces where appropriate, including near areas prone to flooding to help intercept rainfall and slow precipitation runoff.
<p>Key Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine existing stormwater education initiatives and resources in Lake Forest Park to integrate climate change impacts, including programs such as rain garden installations, "Drain to Sound" campaigns that highlight the effects of drainage on local waterways, and initiatives promoting responsible pet waste disposal. These efforts should be expanded to raise awareness about how changing climate patterns exacerbate stormwater challenges and their impact on the environment. 		

GHG EMISSIONS REDUCTION POLICY ASSESSMENT

Climate Mitigation in Lake Forest Park

In 2022, the [Puget Sound Regional Emissions Analysis Project](#), led by the King County Climate Data cooperative, released data estimating local community sources of GHG emissions generated from human activity, detailed in Lake Forest Park's Climate Action Plan.

The geographic communitywide inventory results helped inform the mitigation targets identified through the CAP and are tracked to assess the city's progress over time. As shown in Figure 1 below, the largest sources of communitywide emissions in 2019 were **transportation** (69%) and **buildings and energy** (22%). These are areas in which the city's residents and businesses can focus emission reduction efforts.

The policies included in the GHG emissions reduction sub-element must, at a minimum, identify the action the County will take to fulfill the following:

Focus	Requirement
GHG Emissions Reduction	Requirement 1: Result in reductions in overall GHG emissions generated by transportation and land use within the jurisdiction but without increasing emissions elsewhere in Washington;
	Requirement 2: Result in reductions in per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT) within the jurisdiction but without increasing greenhouse gas emissions elsewhere in Washington; and,
	Requirement 3: Prioritize reductions that benefit overburdened communities in order to maximize the co-benefits of reduced air pollution and environmental justice.

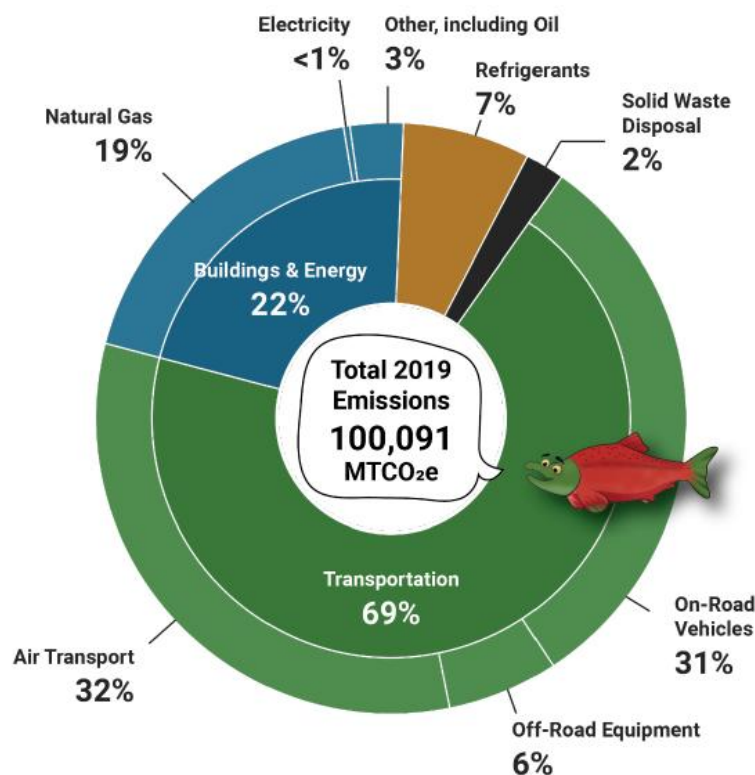
Key Emissions Takeaways

The Lake Forest Park 2019 GHG emissions inventory revealed the following key insights:

- Transportation was the largest source of emissions within the community, responsible for 69% of Lake Forest Park's emissions. Within transportation, air travel and on-road sources (from passenger and freight vehicles) were the highest contributors. It is common for transportation emissions to be the top contributor, specifically when a jurisdiction's electricity provider relies on renewable sources.
- Building energy was the second largest source of communitywide emissions, making up 22% of Lake Forest Park's emissions profile. Within buildings and energy, natural gas consumption was the largest contributor of GHG emissions.
- The remaining emissions come from refrigerant leakage (7%), and solid waste (2%).

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Figure 1. Lake Forest Park 2019 GHG Emissions Inventory (via The Puget Sound Regional Emissions Analysis Project)

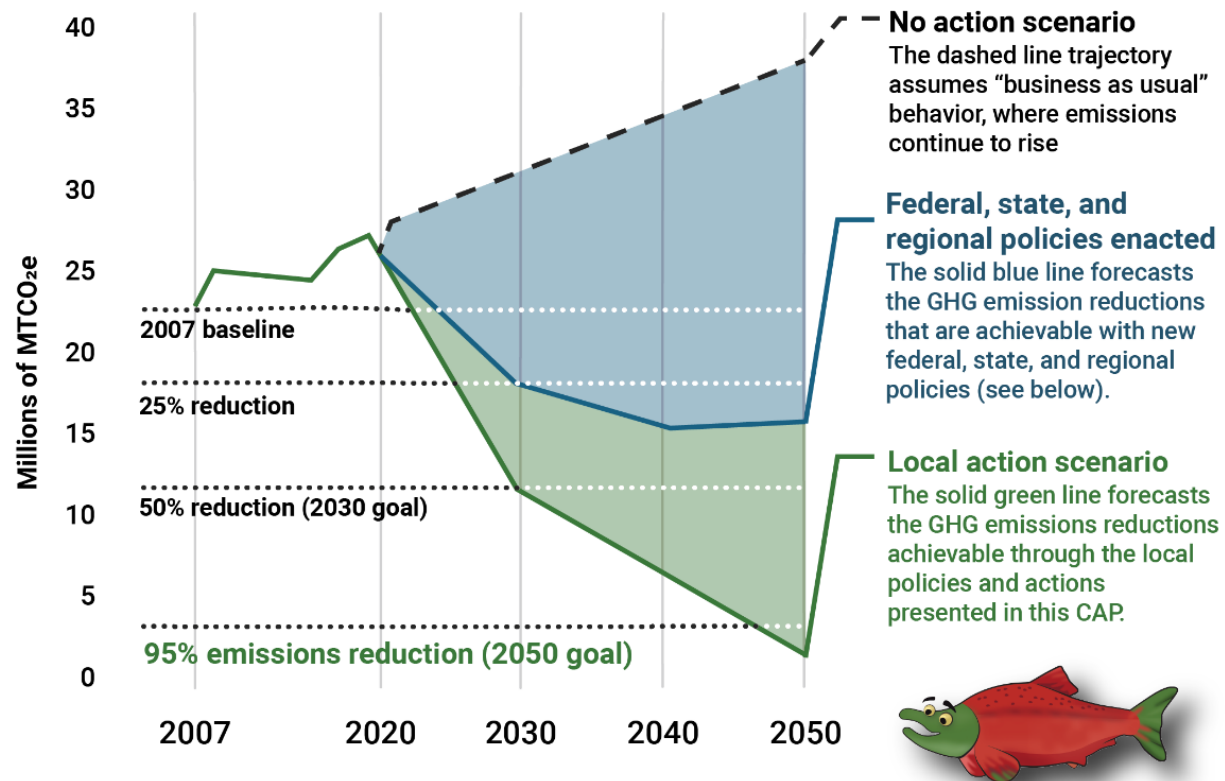


Lake Forest Park's GHG Emissions Reduction Targets

Lake Forest Park's Climate Action Plan sets goals to reduce GHG emissions by goals of 50% of the 2007 baseline by 2030, 75% by 2040, and 95% by 2050. Figure 2 illustrates the predicted GHG reductions from a local action scenario – the forecasted reduction in GHG in the context of current local, federal, state and regional policies. This emphasizes the critical role of locally focused actions in achieving emissions reduction goals. K4C identifies sectors where concentration of local action will have the greatest effect on reducing GHG emissions in the Puget Sound area: buildings, transportation, solid waste disposal, and carbon sequestration.

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Figure 2. Forecasted emissions and reductions in Lake Forest Park associated with action at different organizational levels



Federal, state, and regional policies driving emissions reduction in Washington
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WA Energy Code• WA Clean Building Act• Federal Vehicle regulations• WA Clean Fuel Standards• WA Internal Combustion Engine Ban• PSRC Regional Transportation Plan VMT Reduction• WA Hydrofluorocarbon policies

Local sector-specific plans and scenarios driving emissions reduction in Lake Forest Park
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aviation industry• Regional marine, rail, and ferry transport• Buildings (energy efficiency, decarbonization)• Transportation (VMT, electric vehicles)• Solid waste (increased diversion)• Reduce tree loss• Protect land carbon sinks

GHG Emissions Reduction Policy Trends, Gaps, & Opportunities

The following section reviews policy trends, opportunities, and gaps related to GHG emissions reduction from key focus areas identified in the GHG inventory. For each focus area, the Sector Nexus represents the priority sectors (those listed in the Department of Commerce’s guidance) that intersect it.

Buildings & Energy

Sector Nexus: Buildings & Energy, Zoning & Development		
Existing Policy Trends	Existing Policy Gaps	Policy Opportunities
<p>Current policies...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage sustainable and low impact land development and building practices. Aim to reduce fossil fuel reliance by encouraging a transition to renewable energy sources such as solar. Support energy efficiency improvements and energy conservation for new and existing commercial, residential, and City buildings. 	<p>Current policies...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack clear strategies to achieve long-term renewable energy goals. Do not acknowledge or address the up-front costs of transitioning homes and businesses to electricity, which can burden lower-income residents. Rely on encouraging and educating residents; policies would be stronger if they had requirements or clear incentives or support attached. 	<p>Improve or add policies to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek and support funding for programs that focus on energy efficiency with an emphasis on vulnerable communities. (e.g., rentals and lower income households who are currently energy burdened or communities more vulnerable to climate impacts like heat/smoke that can be helped with weatherization). Support strategic policies that seek to decarbonize and reduce consumption in new and existing buildings through 1) transition from natural gas to low-carbon building energy sources and 2) energy efficient building design and retrofits.
<p>Key Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Lake Forest Park Climate Action Plan contains strong building decarbonization policies centered around transitioning to renewable energy, improving green and affordable housing, and reducing energy use in new and existing buildings. The Climate Element should use the Climate Action Plan as guidance when developing these policies. 		

Transportation

Sector Nexus: Zoning & Development, Health & Well-being		
Existing Policy Trends	Existing Policy Gaps	Policy Opportunities
<p>Current policies...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support land use designations and development that improve non-motorized transport (e.g., biking and walking) connections between neighborhoods and other community destinations. Support developing a master trails plan and a network of local trails to support non-motorized transport between local residential neighborhoods, businesses, services, and transit options. 	<p>Current policies...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not comprehensively support a public and/or private electric vehicle (EV) transition through EV infrastructure, incentives, and planning. Do not address transportation connectivity and affordability for vulnerable populations. Could be expanded to further reduce reliance on passenger cars Do not address bike-share, scooter, shuttle, and other first/last mile connection options. Do not address transit accessibility for residents in terms of routes, frequency, and comfort. Do not address air transport or off-road equipment. 	<p>Improve or add policies to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the transition to EVs through expansion of reliable EV charging infrastructure and public education on options and available incentives/rebates. Enhance public transit options by coordinating with local agencies and social services to meet the needs of underserved populations, particularly seniors, people with disabilities, and households with low-income. Establish clear targets and strategies for reducing vehicle miles travelled (VMT) as part of the City's CAP emissions reduction targets. Disincentivize vehicle use,
<p>Key Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lake Forest Park's GHG inventory identified transportation as the largest source of GHG emissions, which made up 69% of communitywide emissions. Air travel and on-road vehicles (such as passenger and freight travel) made up 32% and 31% of total emissions, respectively. The Lake Forest Park Climate Action Plan contains strong transportation policies around reducing vehicle miles travelled, increasing first- and last-mile connections, and facilitating the adoption of EVs. The Climate Element should use the Climate Action Plan as guidance when developing these policies. 		

Solid Waste

Sector Nexus: Agriculture & Food Systems; Health & Well-being; Transportation		
Existing Policy Trends	Existing Policy Gaps	Policy Opportunities
<p>Current policies...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to reduce waste generation, particularly food waste. • Promote recycling, composting, and responsible disposal of hazardous waste. 	<p>Current policies...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not specifically support goals to reduce GHG emissions or build resilience. • Do not focus on accessible, multilingual outreach and education. • Could contain more specific activities around waste reduction, reuse programs, and food waste diversion. 	<p>Improve or add policies to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set and achieve specific goals around waste diversion and generation – for example, via a local solid waste management plan. • Focus on reducing generation and disposal of high-emissions materials, such as organic waste and paper. Consider food rescue policies. • Support equitable outreach and engagement around waste reduction, recycling, and composting.
<p>Key Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King County’s Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan contains a goal to Achieve Zero Waste of Resources (to eliminate the disposal of materials with economic value) by 2030, with an interim goal of 70 percent recycling through a combination of efforts in the following order of priority: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Waste prevention and reuse, b. Product stewardship, c. Recycling and composting, and d. Beneficial use. 		

BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION

To successfully implement climate policies and enhance climate resilience and reduce GHG emissions, the City of Lake Forest Park must address barriers that may impact both immediate and long-term efforts. While there are challenges to overcome, Lake Forest Park's approach can be shaped by both local priorities and strategic solutions that ensure a balance between climate resilience, GHG reduction, and community vitality.

- **Funding constraints and limited staff capacity:** While there is strong interest in climate projects from both the City and the community, Lake Forest Park's status as a small jurisdiction presents staffing and funding limitations. This represents one of the City's most well-recognized capacity gaps, and without additional staffing, implementation of Climate Element policies may be challenging.
- **State and federal budget constraints and shifting legislative priorities:** Changes in state and federal budgets or political focus can make it hard for the City to count on steady funding for climate work. Programs that support local climate projects may be delayed, reduced, or changed.
- **Small city with many external partners:** As a small jurisdiction, Lake Forest Park should seek support from neighboring cities, King County, nonprofits, and consultants to advance climate efforts. These partnerships are valuable but can be complex, requiring coordination to keep projects on track and ensuring the City's priorities remain visible.

NEXT STEPS

By identifying trends, gaps, and opportunities in existing plans, this policy assessment will help inform the City's draft Climate Element. The consultant team will collaborate with the City, the Climate Policy Advisory Team, and the community to develop policies that integrate the opportunities outlined in this memorandum, community input, and key findings from baseline assessments, such as the climate vulnerability assessment.

This climate policy assessment process also revealed the following observations for consideration in developing the City of Lake Forest Park Climate Element:

- **The Climate Element can serve as a central resource to reaffirm the existing resilience and mitigation policies established in the Comprehensive Plan**, while also referencing the City's ongoing updates to several key climate-related documents and plans.
- **Findings from the Climate Impacts Summary and Climate Vulnerability Assessment will be essential to incorporate into Climate Element resilience policies**, ensuring greater specificity and relevance in addressing climate risks, vulnerabilities, and adaptive capacity. Current City policies do not fully reflect the projected impacts of extreme heat, drought, variable precipitation, and wildfire in the City of Lake Forest Park.
- **Many opportunities exist to address the needs of vulnerable and frontline communities in addressing climate change.** For example, the Comprehensive Plan should tackle health, transportation, and utility concerns related to expected extreme heat, smoke, and flooding events, especially for those who are disproportionately affected by climate-related risks.