



Sustainability 2030 Annual Report

PPW Sustainable Resources Division

September 2023



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Introduction

Who We Are

PPW Sustainable Resources Division

Pierce County Planning and Public Works Sustainable Resources Division supports vibrant communities through promoting a clean, sustainable environment.

Our 20 staff members work on:

- Greenhouse gas emission reduction
- Solid waste (garbage and recycling) management and waste reduction
- Sustainable transportation options for residents and commuters
- Environmental education classes and resources serving residents of all ages throughout Pierce County

Sustainability in Pierce County

The PPW Sustainable Resources Sustainability 2030 team promotes sustainable efforts in County government operations and throughout the larger community, with a primary focus on implementing actions in the *Sustainability 2030: Pierce County's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan (Plan)*, an effort referred to as Sustainability 2030.

To implement the plan and accomplish actions in this report, nine staff collaborate with colleagues throughout the Sustainable Resources Division, as well as other PPW divisions, County departments, and external partners.



Letter from the Sustainable Resources Division Manager

In 2021 Executive Dammeier and Pierce County Council adopted the Sustainability 2030 Plan (Plan) as Pierce County's greenhouse gas emissions plan to reduce communitywide and County operational emissions by 45% by 2030 from our 2015 baseline. Looking back on these first two years of implementing the Plan, much has been accomplished and much has changed. We've made significant progress completing Plan actions and there are many new opportunities arising due to new federal and state funding.

This year our team faced the challenge of continuing to move Plan actions forward while also engaging partners and the community to conduct the two-year update to the Plan. Notably, we have created new partnerships to protect and plant trees, designed an equitable community engagement framework for our work and used it to implement community engagement in the 2023 Update to the Plan, and begun planning for future electric vehicles and buildings. To date, we have surpassed our progress targets for 2023 and 26 of the original 77 actions in the Sustainability 2030 Plan are complete or complete and on-going programs. Another 36 actions are in progress.

In 2022, the federal government passed the Inflation Reduction Act, allocating billions of dollars towards grants, tax credits, and rebates that will help individuals, businesses, and governments reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare our communities for climate risks. These are game-changing investments that have the potential to decrease nationwide emissions up to 40%. As we look toward the future, it is critical that Pierce County leverage new funding opportunities to make sure emission reductions happen here at home, reducing air pollution and creating new jobs for Pierce County residents.

The Sustainability 2030 team is focused on creating opportunities for emissions reduction actions in our community. Oftentimes these efforts will be completed by our partner organizations throughout Pierce County. Working together, we can continue to expand our network of cities and towns, tribes, and community-based organizations to make sure that we accelerate emissions reductions in an equitable way, while creating good paying jobs locally.



Ryan Dicks

PPW Sustainable Resources Administrator

Sustainability 2030 Plan Overview

The Sustainability 2030 Plan outlines a nine-year goal and actions to take to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across County government operations and the larger community. Accomplishing these actions not only demonstrates Pierce County taking responsibility to mitigate climate change but also contributes to a vibrant community, improving public health, natural systems, and our economy.

The Plan contains 77 actions in 5 focus areas:



Energy and Built Environment



Transportation



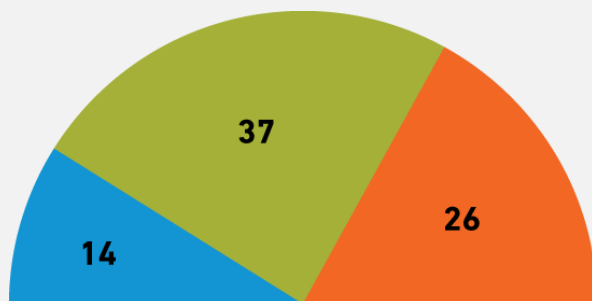
Consumption and Waste Management



Carbon Sequestration




Education and Outreach



Not Started | In Progress | Complete

To date, 26 actions are complete or ongoing, 37 actions are in progress, and 14 actions have not been started.

We have already met our goal of completing 24 actions by the end of 2023 and are on track to complete 27 actions by the end of the year.

In 2022, the Pierce County Council asked Sustainable Resources to identify priority actions for 2023. These actions are indicated in the following section with an  icon.

Plan Progress Highlights

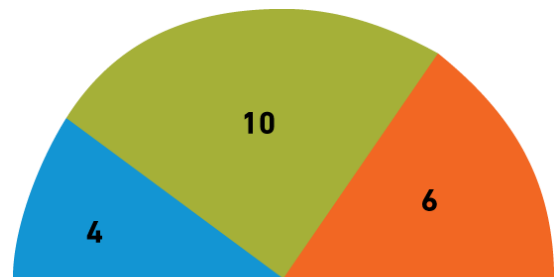
The below list highlights achievements and updates since the [2022 Annual Report](#) and is not exhaustive of all 77 action statuses.



Energy and Built Environment

Completed and Ongoing

EBE 14 (C-PACER) The Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy + Resiliency (C-PACER) Program has processed and approved three applications since its inception in 2022. Sustainable Resources partnered with PCTV on a C-PACER promotional video released last spring, and additional outreach and marketing to eligible property owners is planned for the remainder of 2023 and beyond.



Not Started | In Progress | Complete

EBE 16 (Energy efficient County spaces) Facilities Management has created the Pierce County Lease Policy, which now directs departments to request and review building energy efficiency and energy performance data when considering County space needs.

EBE 20 (Green power purchasing) Facilities Management and Sustainable Resources have explored the pros and cons of various green power purchasing programs. These results have been summarized and are available upon request. Participation in such a program may be initiated in the future, when all other options to directly reduce GHG emissions from County operations have been exhausted.

In Progress

EBE 4 (Encourage electrification) Sustainable Resources and Communications staff collaborated to develop an online resource highlighting the many benefits of electrification for new and existing buildings – improved comfort and air quality, lower costs and carbon emissions – as well as information about new federal incentives and rebates.

EBE 6 (Municipal building electrification study) Facilities Management will perform a Building Electrification Analysis in 2024-2025 to develop a prioritized list of HVAC equipment for end-of-life replacement and electrification. Initial work to inventory and assess equipment is underway now.



EBE 9 (Expand tree programs) Sustainable Resources (SR) is collaborating with Long-Range Planning and Parks to create an urban forestry policy in the Open Space Element of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update. SR and Parks also partnered with the Tacoma Tree Foundation (TTF), the Pierce Conservation District (PCD), Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, and City of Tacoma to engage in a 5-month Urban Forestry-Urban Heat accelerator program. Through this collaboration, SR, Parks and TTF applied for a USDA Forest Service grant to expand both the Green Blocks program to additional neighborhoods in the County and Urban Forestry planning and implementation capacity within the Parks department. The Tacoma Tree Foundation will continue to provide trees in Parkland in 2024 thanks to a renewed grant from the Washington Department of Natural Resources.

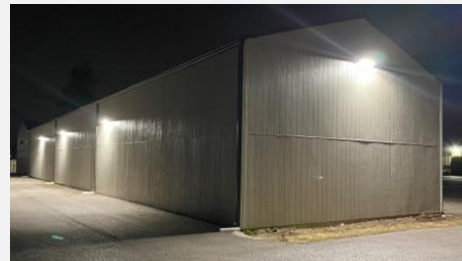


Green Blocks Parkland, a partnership between Parks, Surface Water Management, and Tacoma Tree Foundation, gave away 684 trees at Sprinkler Recreation on February 25th, 2023.

EBE 12 (Support weatherization program) Human Services (HS) and Sustainable Resources (SR) worked together with Communications to promote the Pierce County Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) through social media channels in late 2022 and early 2023. HS and SR have also collaborated on a pre-grant application concept letter seeking funds to expand WAP services in Pierce County to include deep energy retrofits prioritized by likelihood of positive health outcomes.

EBE 19 (Efficient County lighting)

Facilities Management continues to transition County buildings to efficient LED lighting fixtures during building upgrades. Recently completed projects include interior and exterior LED upgrades at the Thun Field Sheriff Department Special Investigation Unit Storage Building, and exterior LED lighting and solar powered pole lights at Soundview. Lighting upgrades at Main Jail, O2 Jail, and County-City Building are underway.



Exterior LED lighting fixtures at Thun Field Sheriff Storage Building use less energy, saving money and reducing greenhouse gas emissions every day.



Electrification is underway at the Sheriff's Department South Hill Precinct

The South Hill Precinct is undergoing a gas to electric conversion. This includes replacement of the gas water heater and of gas heating units with high-efficiency heat pumps. When work is completed this fall, the gas line will be capped and the gas meter removed.

Buildings account for over a quarter (26%) of Pierce County's operational greenhouse gas emissions. Switching from gas to electricity reduces municipal emissions, increases energy efficiency, and improves indoor and outdoor air quality!

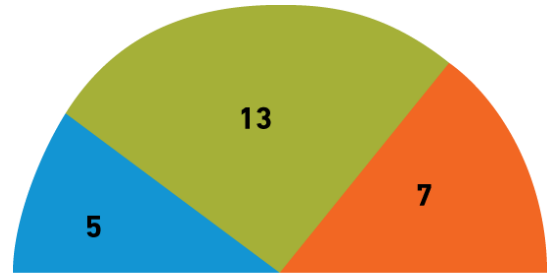




Transportation

Completed and Ongoing

T 9 (Electrify Sheriff vehicles) The Pierce County Sheriff's Department recently took delivery of the first of two all-electric Ford Mustang Mach-E SUVs for administrative (not pursuit) use.



Not Started | In Progress | Complete

T 13 (Incentivize telework) A free telework assistance program and Telework Toolkit has been developed for Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) affected employers and employees located in Pierce and Thurston counties. Sustainable Resources CTR staff continue to promote teleworking through incentivized campaigns.

T 16 (County transit and active transportation access) All property reviews for County space needs now consider whether sites provide access to transit, pedestrian facilities, and on-site bicycle amenities as well as neighborhood walkability and proximity to bicycle infrastructure.



Pierce County Sheriff's all electric Ford-Mustang Mach-E SUV



Facilities Management completed the installation of a dual head EV charger at the Sheriff's Department Headquarters at the CCB in preparation for the arrival of the Mach-E EV's.

In Progress

T 3 (Land Use strategies) Long-Range Planning, Sustainable Resources, and other subject matter experts have developed three different Land Use strategies as part of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update; Alternative 3, "High-Capacity Transit Focus" proposes to rapidly shift existing land use and growth patterns to align with County emissions reduction goals.



Facilities Management replaced outdated EV chargers behind the County-City Building in preparation for additional Fleet EVs.



T 8 (Fleet electrification) Facilities Management (FM) and Finance Fleet staff are actively promoting and implementing the Pierce County **Electric First Policy** with a common goal of increasing the share of hybrid and all-electric vehicles in the Fleet as quickly as possible. To that end, planning and budgeting for installation of Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) at County facilities continues to accelerate. This year FM and Fleet have worked together to install, upgrade, or plan installation of 15 all-electric vehicle chargers in key locations around the county.



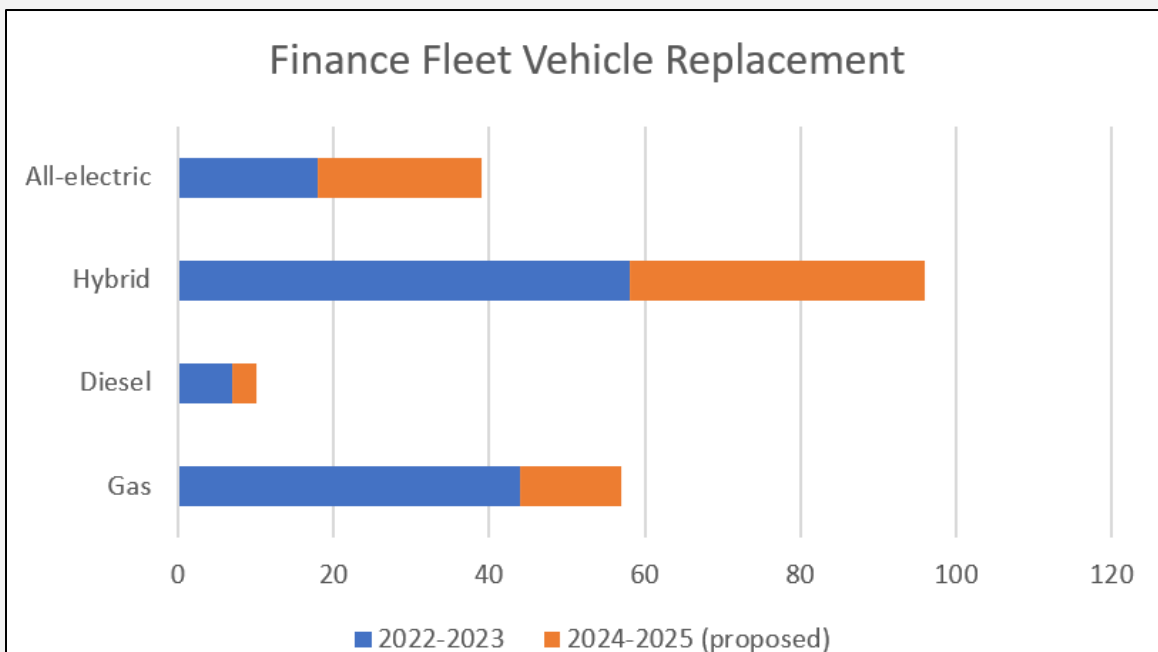
Pierce County Parks, Planning & Public Works, and the Auditor's Office placed a combined total of nine Chevrolet Bolt EVs into use in 2023.

T 21 (Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure) The Parks Department will complete the first section of the Pipeline Trail project in the fall of 2023. This extension of an existing urban trail into unincorporated Pierce County will provide an active transportation commuting alternative and increased access to open space and recreation opportunities.



Pierce County Parks Extension of the urban Pipeline Trail began this year.

T 24 (Public EV charging plan) Sustainable Resources staff are working with a consultant to identify priority locations for the installation of public EV chargers around the county, with a final report and site recommendations expected by end of October 2023. Considerations will include equity, feasibility, and existing and planned public charging infrastructure. The Parks Department continues to plan for and install public chargers; locations include Sprinker Recreation Center (17 by the end of 2024), East Puyallup Trailhead (1, fall 2023), and Habitat Meridian Park (2, summer 2023).



All-electric and hybrid vehicles represent an increasing share of Finance Fleet vehicle replacement purchases over diesel and gas models.



Pierce Trips launches new brand: Ride Together Pierce

In July 2023, Pierce Trips became Ride Together Pierce. The new brand was chosen based on research and community outreach, and it reflects the team's community values and drive to make sustainable transportation simple, economical, and fun.

This new brand includes an improved website, strengthening their online presence and placing Ride Together Pierce in a better position to assist with the community.

The team's work continues to center on helping the public use ride-sharing options and find more affordable and environmentally friendly ways to travel to work and around their communities.

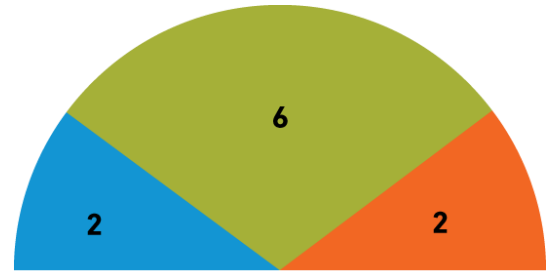




Consumption and Waste Management

In Progress

! CWM 5 (Food Waste Recycling) In 2022 the Washington State Legislature enacted a law (HB 1799) to reduce organic waste disposal, including food and food processing waste, 75% by 2030. This law also requires widely expanded organic waste collection and composting accessibility. Sustainable Resources is working on upgrades to our composting system to comply with HB 1799 which will allow us to add residential food waste into our organics collection program.



Not Started | In Progress | Complete



Food waste reduction

The Waste Reduction & Recycling team has been working hard on food waste reduction outreach in 2023. Recent accomplishments to date include:

- Creating a Food Waste Reduction Outreach Task Force.
- Mailing out over 300 meal planning notepads.
- Replacing Produce Storage Tips brochure with new Food Storage Guide (in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)) which includes information on food date labels.
- Attending six summer markets across Pierce County in 2023 with nearly 250 in-depth conversations with residents about food waste, recycling and composting.

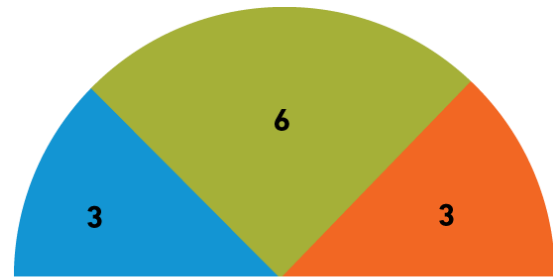




Carbon Sequestration

Completed and Ongoing

CS-5 (Conservation Futures carbon sequestration metric) Conservation Futures scoring has been updated to include point allocation for forest conservation and restoration opportunities that are expected to provide carbon sequestration services. One round of applications has been scored in 2023 using this new metric.



Not Started | In Progress | Complete

In Progress

CS 1 (County Conservation Plan) Sustainable Resources has convened a steering committee of County, regional, Tribal, and non-profit conservation leaders, as well as subject matter experts to develop a Pierce County Land Conservation Plan. Meetings began in the spring of 2023 and work on the Plan will continue into 2024.

CS 2 (Best land management practices for carbon sequestration)

Pierce Conservation District has made major strides in promoting cover crop adoption to local farms and expects to place at least 300 acres into cover crops in the fall of 2023 through the Washington State Conservation Commission’s Sustainable Farms & Fields program. Acreage in cover cropping as part of this program has increased 935% since 2021. Cover crops help sequester carbon in farmlands, improve soil nutrients, and prevent soil erosion.

CS 3 (Incentivize green infrastructure)

Planning and Public Works Surface Water Management (SWM) Division has partnered with Pierce Conservation District on a small grants program funding rain gardens, cisterns, and de-paving projects in Pierce County.

CS 4 (Sequester carbon in estuaries and nearshore environments) Because kelp and eelgrass both sequester carbon and provide habitat to important marine species, Sustainable Resources is collaborating with SWM and the Washington Department of Natural Resources to explore funding options for mapping kelp and eelgrass locations in Pierce County.



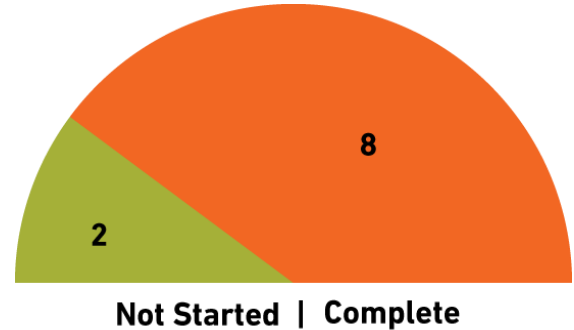
WSU Field Days demonstrating the efficacy of cover cropping.



Education and Outreach

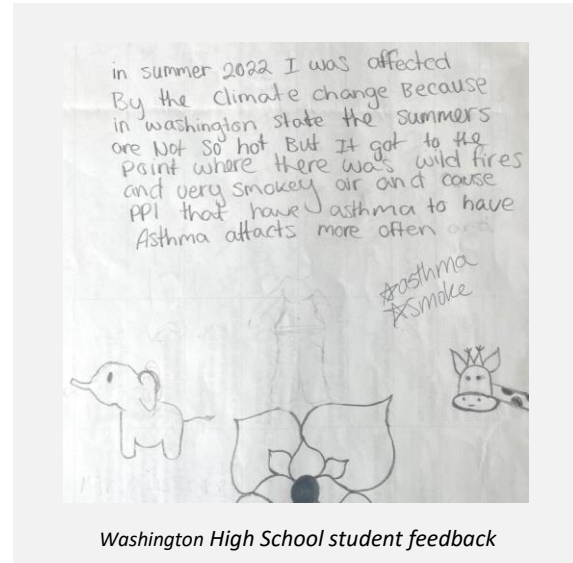
Completed and Ongoing

EO 2 (GHG educational workshops) The Sustainable Resources (SR) Division taught climate change lessons to six classes at Washington High School. Students learned about and gave feedback on the Sustainability 2030 Plan. SR staff were then invited to watch students' Parkland Vision 2040 presentations. SR plans to continue building on climate change curriculum and action-based learning opportunities with students.



EO 3 (Community Engagement Effort) An [Equitable Community Engagement Framework](#) was created to help guide engagement and action implementation. Extensive community engagement was conducted for the 2023 update to the Sustainability 2030 Plan.

EO 5 (Supporting youth engagement) The SR team supported three youth events on climate leadership and provided three youth centered programs by engaging community groups and students around Pierce County in our Youth Engaged in Sustainable Solutions Program.



Climate Change Roundtable

On March 9th, the Lakewood Youth Council hosted a climate change roundtable in partnership with the Sustainable Resources division. 20 high school students across the Clover Park School District gathered to discuss climate change, how it affects them and possible solutions.





In Progress

EO-10 (Green workforce development) In spring of 2023, the Sustainable Resources division, along with other partner organizations, submitted a grant application to the Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Justice Government-to-Government program for HVAC training to prepare for an electric future. The SR team continues to build relationships with Workforce Central, WorkSource, technical colleges, and others to address green jobs needs through partnerships.

Schoolyard Habitats

The Environmental Education program installed two new gardens and supported seven previously established schoolyard habitats and gardens. A new partnership with the National Wildlife Federation resulted in over 200 native plants installed in schoolyard habitats. A partnership with Pierce County Parks & Recreation made 300 fir tree saplings available to the community and were distributed by high school green teams.



Centering Equity in Sustainability 2030

The Pierce County Sustainability 2030 Team is committed to advancing equity as we implement and update the Sustainability 2030 Plan.

Equity Assessments

The equity assessment process helps us identify desired equity outcomes and the tangible next steps to get us there. Filling out equity assessments for each external, community-facing action is how our team starts to plan for equitable outcomes. Since Plan passage in 2021, our team has started and/or completed 15 equity assessments. Those that have been started this year are listed below.

- CS-1: Land Conservation Plan
- CS-4: Nearshore Environment Carbon Sequestration
- EBE-4: Building Electrification
- EO-3: Equitable Community Engagement
- EO-5: Youth Engagement
- T-3: Review Land Use Plans
- T-21: Active Transportation Infrastructure

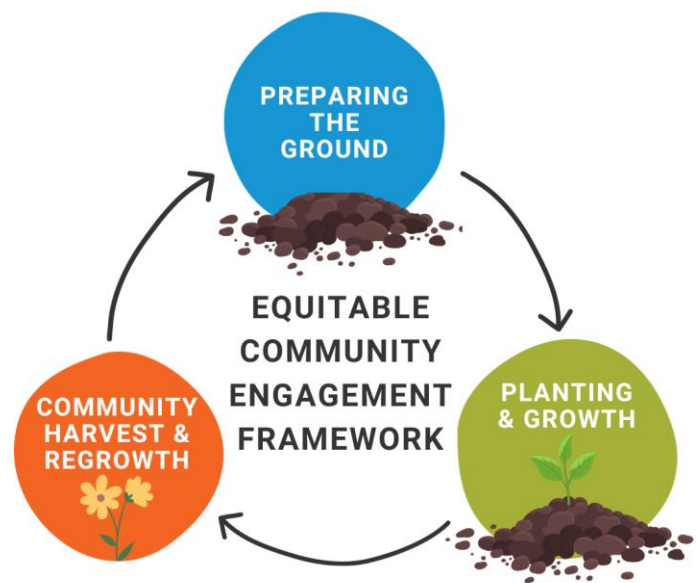
Our goal for 2024-2025 is to complete all equity assessments for external actions, prioritizing the community priority actions identified in the 2023 update to the Sustainability 2030 Plan. Completing these equity assessments require us to work with internal and external partners alike and maintain transparent communication with community members. In line with our Equitable Community Engagement Framework, our team will also organize and report back on equity assessment results of Plan actions.

Equitable Community Engagement Framework

The division's new [Equitable Community Engagement Framework](#) completed action EO-3 and was debuted in the 2023 update to the Sustainability 2030 Plan. The Framework is our division's roadmap for equitable and meaningful community engagement. The three components of the framework are:

- **Preparing the ground:** build an understanding of power and a shared language, invest in trust and relationship building, and get to know and prioritize frontline communities.
- **Planting and growth:** develop and use tools for equitable engagement.
- **Community harvest and regrowth:** establish accountability, evaluate impacts, and share and celebrate successes.

Moving forward, this framework will help us prioritize which actions to work on and with whom.



In the Community

Since September of 2022, the Sustainable Resources division has connected with community members across the County in many ways. In addition to actions in the Education and Outreach focus area of the Plan, some efforts by our Sustainability, Environmental Education, Waste Reduction & Recycling, and Transportation Demand Management teams include:



Sharing information about Sustainability 2030 in person and live online with nearly **1,000** people.



Hearing from over **140** Pierce County residents through a Sustainability 2030 online open house.



Hosting 4 Pierce Trips campaigns – over **900** calendar users logged over **123,000** non-drive alone trips.



Fulfilling an average of **40** requests each month from Pierce County residents for recycling reminder magnets.



Donating water bottle filling stations to **2** schools to help reduce single-use plastic water bottle waste and encourage reuse.



Reaching over **210** households with food waste reduction, recycling, composting, and climate change virtual classes.



Helping **4** schools through the School Recycling Technical Assistance program: conducting school recycling assessments, updating educational materials, providing internal containers and presenting to students and staff about proper recycling.



Working with **4** school green teams to determine sustainability projects and support the completion of a variety of projects such as building a school garden and decreasing waste in the cafeteria.



Worked with **28** different schools through formal lessons, action projects, loaning materials, and teaching teachers, reaching **100s of students and teachers**.

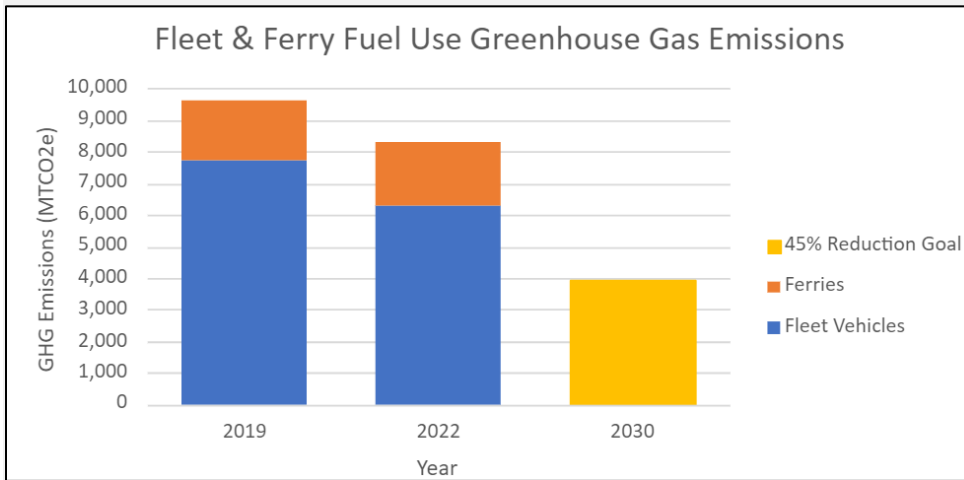


Presented 2 in-person composting events at WSU Master Gardener Demonstration sites with **over 100** people in attendance.

County Government Emission Reductions

Operational GHG Emissions

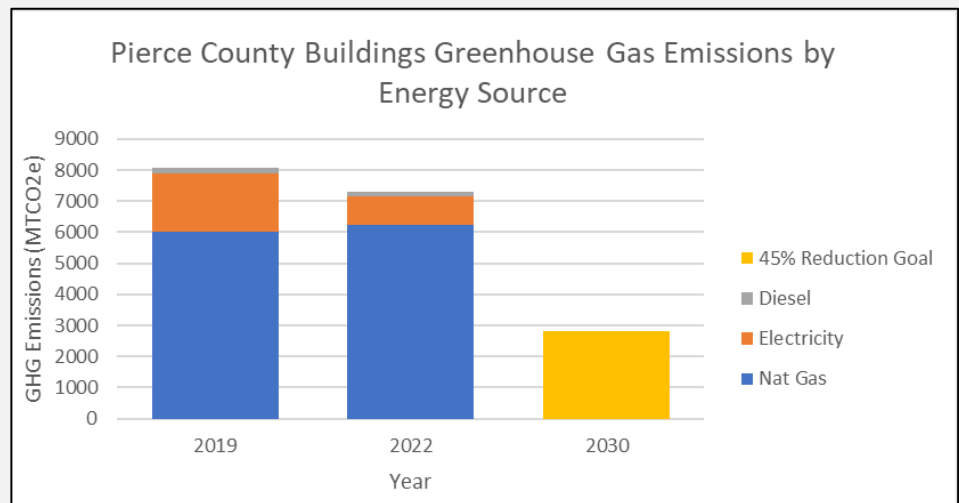
Our fleet and facilities managers have been implementing best practices for reducing fossil fuel use for several years and we continue to see reduced fuel use over time. In March of 2023, Executive Dammeier adopted an updated Electric First Policy that will drive operational emissions savings and life cycle cost savings from purchasing more efficient equipment. The new policy directs all departments to prioritize zero emission or low carbon options first when purchasing new vehicles, building equipment, and other maintenance equipment. To meet our goal of reducing County operational emissions 45% by 2030 we will need to continue seeking innovative ways to drive dramatic reductions in fossil fuel purchases, including electric and hybrid vehicles, other low carbon fuel alternatives, and building energy efficiency improvements.



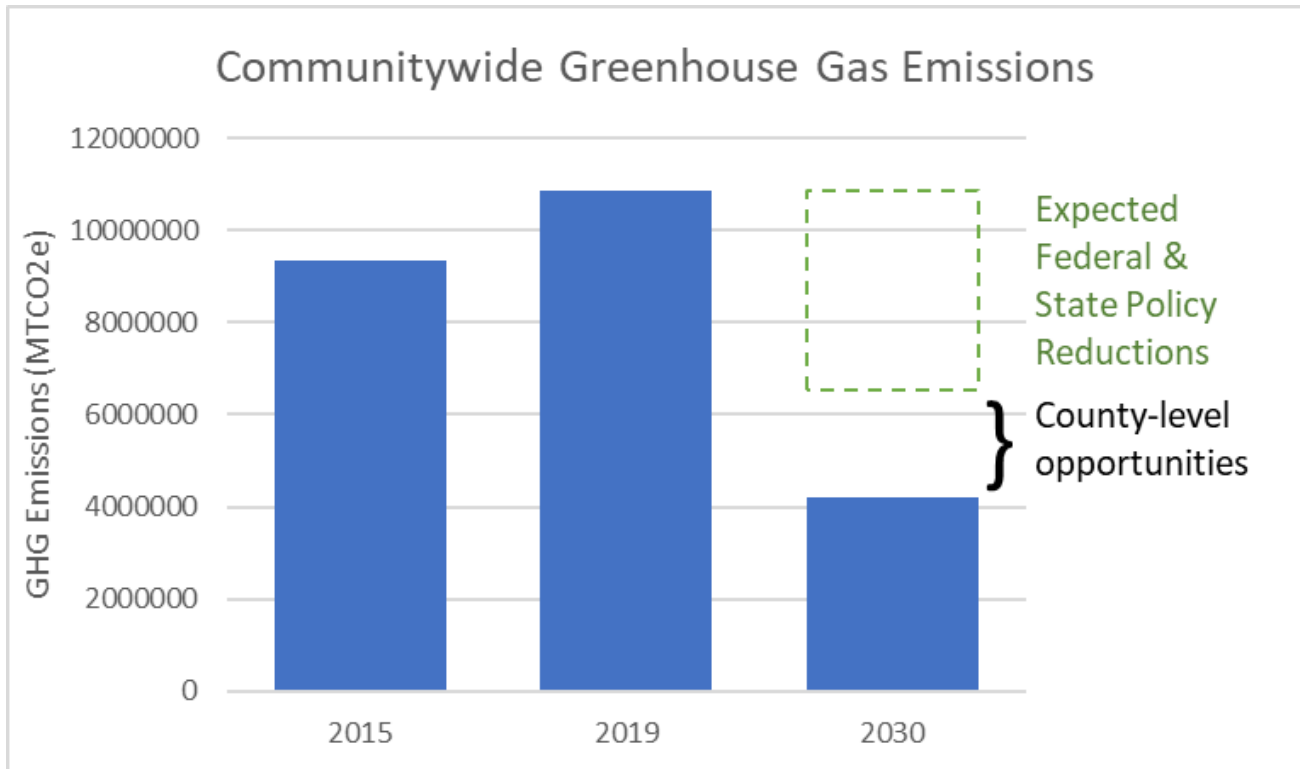
Increased use of B20 biodiesel, right sizing our fleet, and purchasing more fuel efficient and electric vehicles has reduced overall fleet fuel consumption greenhouse gas emissions. In total, there was a 13.6% reduction in fleet & ferry fuel use emissions between 2019 and 2022.

Since 2019, Pierce County owned and occupied buildings have decreased overall greenhouse gas emissions by 9.6%.

Continued efforts to electrify transportation and buildings, as well as employee adoption of sustainable commute options, will reduce operational emissions in the years to come.



Communitywide Emissions - Future Opportunities



Meeting the Sustainability 2030 goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions communitywide by 45% based on 2015 levels will take many actors working together. It is estimated that the recently passed Inflation Reduction Act may reduce national GHG emissions as much as 40% and existing Washington State laws like the Climate Commitment Act and Advanced Clean Cars will significantly reduce statewide emissions. Alone, these state and federal efforts will not be enough to meet our goal. Steadfast action by County staff and partners is needed to support local policy implementation and take advantage of funding opportunities. We must seize County-level opportunities, like the actions outlined in the Sustainability 2030 Plan, to ensure our communities benefit from cleaner air, cleaner water, and enhanced economic potential of a vibrant, low-carbon future.

Major Program Budget Expenditures

Major 2023 Expenditures	Anticipated 2024 Major Expenditures
Community EV Infrastructure Plan	IRA Rebates Campaign
Land Conservation Plan	Advance Public EV charging Plan

Looking Ahead: 2024-2025 Priorities



Continuous feedback from frontline communities and stakeholders.



Conduct equity assessments for all external actions.



Continue partnering across departments and division to align County efforts.



Plan for and take advantage of new federal and state funding.

Non-competitive WA Dept of Commerce funding to comply with HB 1181, requiring comprehensive planning for greenhouse gas emission reduction, vehicle miles travelled reduction, and climate resiliency.

Climate Pollution Reduction Grants from EPA through the Inflation Reduction Act to implement regional greenhouse gas emission reduction plans and address other air quality concerns.





**PLANNING & PUBLIC
WORKS**

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