



Message from County Executive Joe Parisi

Photo: Dave Hoefler
via Unsplash



Dane County continues to lead the state and the region in clean energy investments and addressing climate change. Three years ago, I created the Dane County Office on Energy & Climate Change that has led the effort to develop our first county-wide Climate Action Plan (CAP) to put Dane County on a path to “deep de-carbonization” within the next 10 years.



Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our generation and it is incumbent upon us all to demonstrate the leadership needed to mitigate the impacts of flooding, extreme heat, and drought we are already experiencing.

▲ Dane County Executive Joe Parisi created the nation's first county Office of Energy and Climate Change in 2017. The creation of a county-wide, economy-wide climate action plan is a primary duty of the office.

The scientific debate on climate change is over. Climate change will have long-term consequences for the economy, environment, and public health and safety in Dane County.

The Office of Energy & Climate Change created the Council on Climate Change, a council of 38 local governments, public utilities, businesses, and organizations that has provided important input into the development of this action plan of policies, programs, and projects to drastically reduce our greenhouse gas emissions across all 61 cities, towns, and villages as well as the entire private sector. It is a plan that will: 1) result in major economic and health benefits; 2) address racial and economic equality to ensure the benefits of carbon reductions are equitably distributed; and 3) lead to energy security and greater resilience to the harmful impacts of our changing climate.

Our many efforts to reduce Dane County’s carbon footprint contribute to what should be an overall global goal of slowing the advance of climate change. Expanding our county fleet of compressed renewable natural gas cars and trucks, capturing methane and carbon at our landfill and converting it into cleaner burning vehicle fuel, increasing the use of solar and wind power for our facilities, restoring prairies, and promoting the development of dairy



bio-digesters are all ongoing success stories demonstrating our local commitment and leadership.

Similarly, cities, villages, school districts, utility companies, and businesses throughout Dane County are demonstrating their commitment to a swift transition to a clean energy economy. While we here in Dane County through our united actions cannot alone change the course of worldwide climate change, we must do our part. We cannot wait for the federal government – we must lead the effort at the local level to address climate change. Now more than ever the effort of local elected officials, citizens, and business and community leaders across Dane County is required to produce a climate-ready, carbon-free future.

▲ County Executive Parisi describes his clean fuel investments at the outset of a renewable natural gas facility tour he led for the Dane County Climate Council. The facility takes methane from the landfill and turns it into clean transportation fuel that results in an 88% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

The Dane County CAP is my promise to take bold action, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase our resiliency and quality of life, and ensure that Dane County continues to lead in confronting climate change.

