

CAAP 2030 Executive Summary



Cities are on the front lines when it comes to climate change, and thus leading the world in reducing carbon emissions through proactive policies and the adoption of clean technologies.

Reducing Our Emissions: Targets and Goals

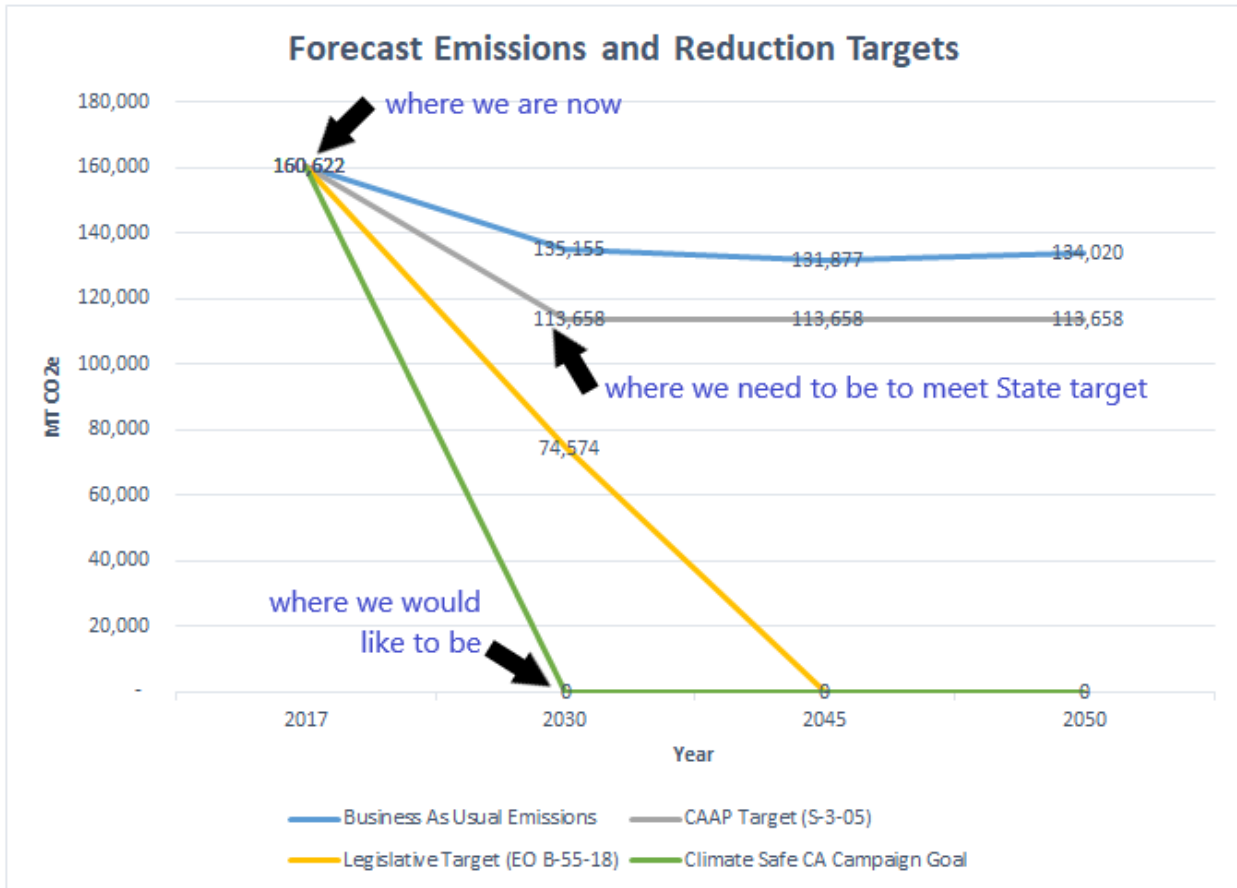
The Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) is designed to accomplish both a legal target and an aspirational goal.

Legal Target. The CAAP sets in motion a suite of programs that are designed to reduce the community's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 80% lower than levels in 1990 over the next ten years, meeting a State-mandated legal target.

Climate Safe California Goal. On July 6, 2021, the Watsonville City Council voted unanimously to support the [Climate-Safe California Campaign](#) goal of net-negative emissions by 2030, setting an aspirational goal for the community of Watsonville to remove more GHGs than it emits by 2030.¹ The Council and staff acknowledge that meeting this goal will be challenging. However, bold leadership is necessary to address

¹ The Climate Center website details the Climate-Safe California Campaign (<https://theclimatcenter.org/climatesafeca/>).

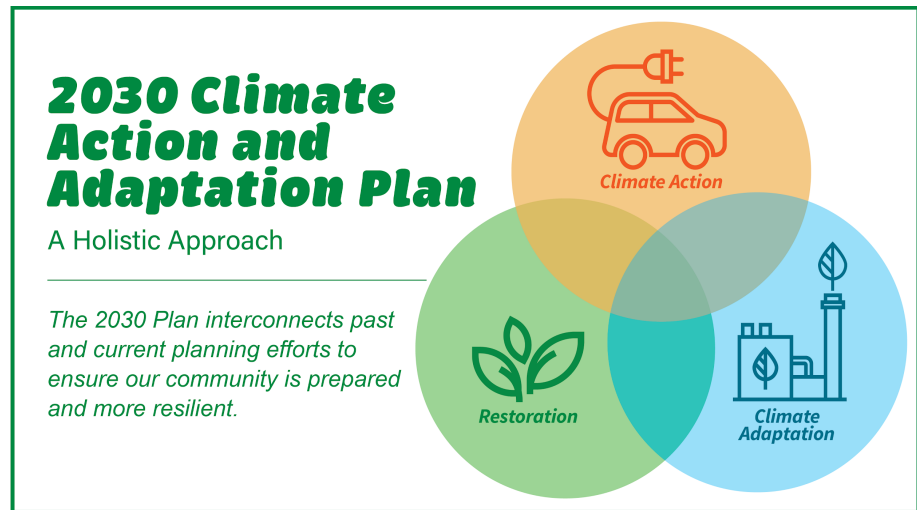
the existential threat of climate change, and this goal sends a message to the State that its current goals and funding are insufficient to meet the demands of climate change, and must be accelerated.



The City's goal of net-negative emissions by 2030 recognizes that climate change is an existential threat that must be addressed now.

The CAAP provides a roadmap to reduce the community's GHG emissions, combat the impacts of climate change, and explore carbon sequestration, habitat restoration, and repair of our natural world.

In order to meet the City's climate goals, the CAAP includes three types of initiatives:

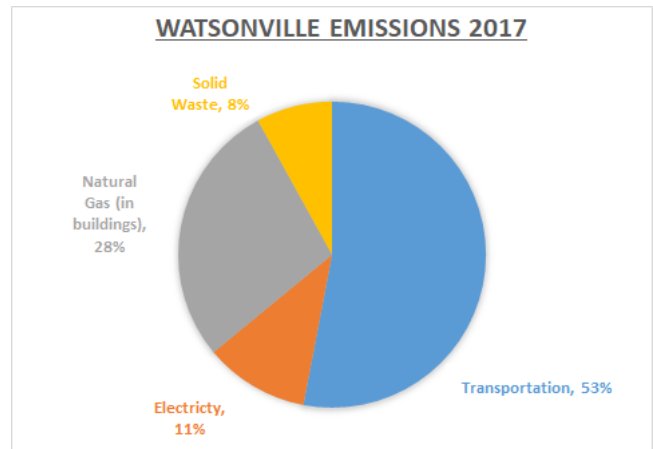


- *Climate action* refers to actions taken to reduce emissions. Examples include transitioning to low-carbon energy sources, such as solar or wind energy.
- *Climate adaptation*, on the other hand, refers to preparing for the impact climate change is already having on our communities, such as increased droughts, wildfires and flooding.
- *Climate restoration* consists of goals and actions that draw excess carbon out of the atmosphere and help restore balance to ecological systems, such as tree-planting and regenerative agricultural practices.

Climate Action: Reducing our Emissions

Watsonville’s GHG emissions stem from four main sources:

- Transportation: Gas-powered cars and trucks
- Natural Gas: Heating our buildings, cooking, hot water
- Electricity Use: from non-renewable energy sources such as coal and gas
- Food Waste Disposal: Food waste sent to the landfill breaks down and creates methane (a greenhouse gas)



The majority of our Climate Action and Adaptation Plan is devoted to defining projects and programs that will reduce our carbon emissions in these four sectors. The table below summarizes these programs:

CAAP Strategies and Programs	
Transportation	% of Solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilitating Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ EV Master Plan ○ Public-Private Partnerships ○ Charging-Station-Friendly Codes ● Getting people into EVs - <u>Equitably</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Requires significant outside funding—State and Federal grants ○ Partnerships with Nonprofits and Central Coast Community Energy (3CE) 	22%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Electrify City Fleet 	4%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Active Transportation: more walking and biking trails <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updates to the City-wide Bike & Trails Master Plan ○ E-Bike Share Program 	3%

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community Trip Reduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Carpool programs (Green Business Program) ○ Promoting the use of mass transit ○ Smart Growth—Downtown Specific Plan 	8%
Building Electrification: Natural Gas Phase-out	35%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All new buildings to be all-electric <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Electric-only ordinance for new development 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Retrofit existing buildings to be all-electric (add solar where possible) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Biggest program—will take 20-30 years ○ Requires significant State and Federal funding ○ Next steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop Retrofit Master Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inventory of existing buildings ■ Identify partners for implementation 	
Green Energy and Energy Efficiency	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shift more customers (50%) to 3CE Prime (100% Renewable Energy) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advocacy and Partnership with 3CE ○ Significant Outreach Effort ○ Request Rates for low-income 	11%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Energy efficiency retrofits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ With partners such as Central Coast Energy Services 	5%
Food Waste Program	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Food waste collection from all residents and businesses ● Backyard Home Composting program ● Edible Food Redistribution Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduces food wasted by stores and restaurants 	12%

Climate Adaptation

Climate adaptation focuses on strategies for energy and agricultural resilience to address issues such as the strain on our electrical grid as a result of increasing temperatures and reduced agricultural productivity and food security due to droughts.

The climate adaptation component builds on the City's 2020 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP), which outlines plans and programs to prepare for natural disasters for Watsonville and addresses the vulnerability of critical infrastructure through mitigation measures.

Climate Adaptation Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● LHMP (Local Hazard Mitigation Plan)<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Preparing for flooding and wildfires○ Preparing for extreme heat and sea level rise
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Agricultural and Food Resilience<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Buy-local programs○ Community gardens
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Energy Resilience<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Grid improvements○ Power backups at critical City facilities○ Microgrid at the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant

Climate Restoration

"Climate change is sometimes misunderstood as being about changes in the weather. In reality, it is about changes in our very way of life." – Paul Polman

In addition to reducing our emissions, Climate Restoration is a necessary part of addressing climate change. Restoring natural systems facilitates the removal of carbon

dioxide from the air, supports clean water and healthy soils and acknowledges that humans are part of a global ecosystem that must be sustained for the survival of humans and many other forms of life.

Carbon sequestration on natural and working lands has been identified as a priority pathway for greenhouse gas reductions.

Reimagining our social and economic systems are also important to avoid practices that lead to climate change. Future CAAP updates will include additional strategies that the City will pursue to advance climate restoration.

Climate Restoration and Sequestration: Removing CO2 from the Air
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Carbon Sequestration<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Tree-planting○ Regenerative agriculture practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Healthy Ecosystems<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Habitat restoration○ Water quality programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Equitable Green Recovery<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Green job creation (solar installation, building electrification jobs)○ Green infrastructure (i.e. rain gardens, permeable pavement, green parking and street trees)

CEQA Compliance

The CAAP will be assessed for impacts in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), documented in an [Initial Study and Negative Declaration](#).

General Plan Amendment

The General Plan will be updated with [an amendment](#) to include the goals of the CAAP in the City planning process, further strengthening the City’s commitment to Climate Action.

Public Engagement

Stakeholder and community engagement was an essential part of the CAAP development process. The City developed a Public Engagement Plan to document how residents and stakeholders were engaged, and included the development of a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to advise the City on how best to engage and solicit input from the public.

CAAP Implementation

The CAAP identifies a pathway for implementation. An interdepartmental team of City staff, in collaboration with the CAC, will be responsible for maintaining momentum and ensuring implementation of CAAP strategies, measures, and supporting efforts. Staff will provide annual implementation progress reports and a GHG inventory update every 2 years to track our progress. Staff will also prepare CAAP updates at least every 5 years to incorporate ongoing changes in legislation, technology, economy, policy, and human behaviors.

This CAAP is a call to action to residents, community organizations, and businesses to take an active part in Watsonville's transition to a low-carbon future. In this process, the City hopes to foster a vibrant economy, increase resiliency, and promote a sustainable community for future generations.

This CAAP is a call to action to residents, community organizations, and businesses to take an active part in Watsonville's transition to a low-carbon future. To find out how you can do your part, visit our [Climate Action webpage](#).