



Sunday Forums—March 2026

March 1

From Integrating Water Fountains to Marching on Washington, A Justice Journey

Presenter: Windsor Wade



Windsor's parents, Louis and Katie, fled the Jim Crow South in 1952. Ten years later, on a trip South to visit family, Windsor drank from a "Whites Only" fountain. Heeding the Dalai Lama's admonition, "It's not enough to be compassionate, you must act," Windsor became a teacher and has continually worked for progressive justice, including service with two Rochester organizations, Metro Justice and the Gandhi Institute. He also is a long-time member of Veterans for Peace, and a member of its national board.

Replacing Exploitation & Scarcity with Sustainability Caring for Creation

Community Gardens and Farms: Creating Sustainable Prosperity

March 8

Presenter: Erin Turpin

From building community gardens at St. John's and St. Mark's Episcopal Church to introducing RIT students to Foodlink's Community Farm, recent college graduate Erin Turpin has been putting into practice her major in Sustainability and Sociology. Erin believes in nature-based learning and helping organizations understand and advance environmental justice.

Climate Action Plan: Making Monroe County Sustainable

March 15

Presenter: Madison Quinn

Protecting the environment is key to maintaining quality of life and preserving natural resources for the future. Learn about projects currently underway and next steps in improving our county's sustainability, adapting to climate change, energy conservation, and social equity. These include eight LEED Certified facilities, a 400+ vehicle green fleet, the Waste to Watts Program, solar initiatives, and Ecopark. County residents help shape priorities and provide feedback.

Achieving Sustainability: Can We Reduce Food Waste?

March 22

Presenter: Callie Babbitt

Immense natural resources are used in agriculture and food processing in this country, but over one-third of that food ultimately goes uneaten and ends up in landfills. This waste leads to added climate impacts and higher costs to consumers and businesses. Callie will discuss the challenges of food waste and what we as individuals can do to minimize waste and better manage excess food to improve sustainability outcomes.



Sundays, 9:45AM—The Shaw Room



Monroe County Sustainability, Climate Planning, and Implementation

March 15, 2026

Madison Quinn
Sustainability Coordinator
Monroe County DES



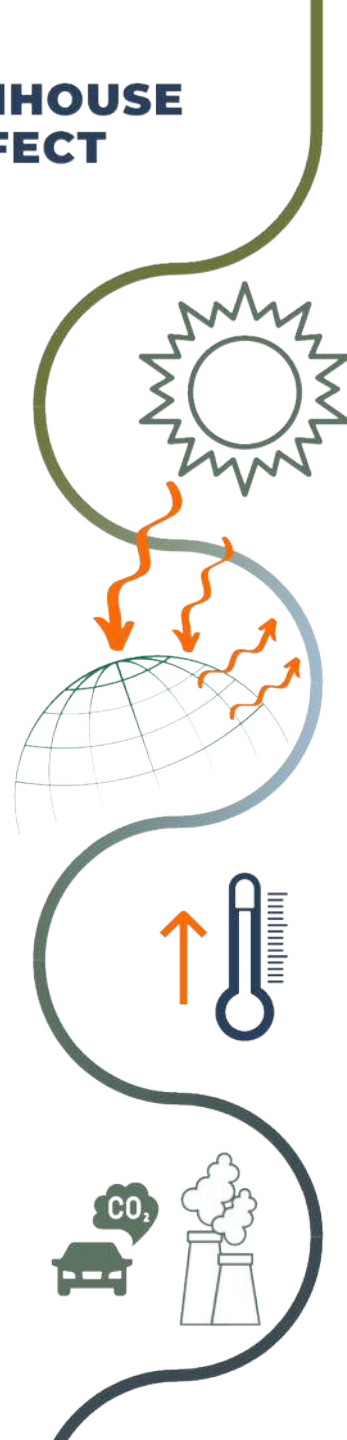
THE GREENHOUSE GAS EFFECT

Solar radiation reaches Earth's atmosphere. Some radiation gets reflected, but a lot gets absorbed by the surface of the Earth and the atmosphere, causing it to warm.

The surface of Earth releases some energy as infrared radiation. Parts of the infrared radiation escape the atmosphere to space.

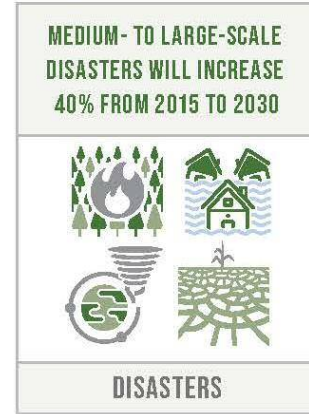
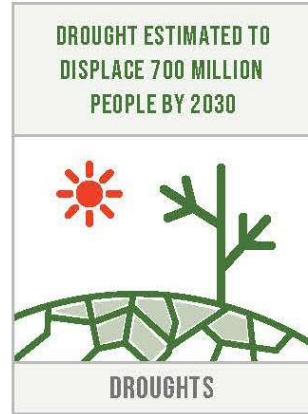
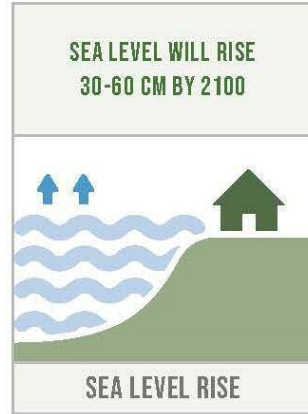
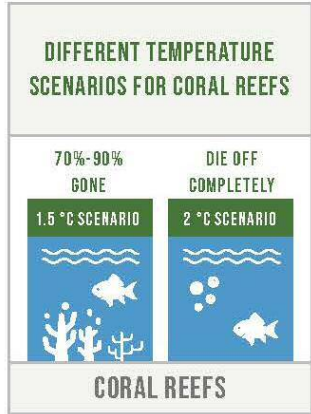
Some of this radiation gets trapped by greenhouse gases in Earth's atmosphere. This causes Earth's surface and lower atmosphere to warm.

Human activities, such as burning fossil fuels for transportation and power are increasing the concentration of GHG in the atmosphere.



CLIMATE CHANGE OVERVIEW:

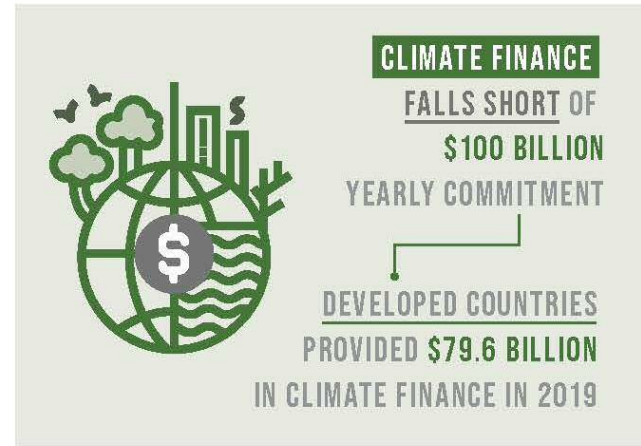
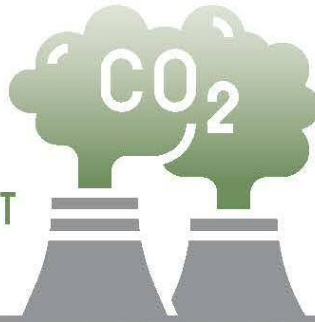
WHAT IS THE GREENHOUSE GAS EFFECT?



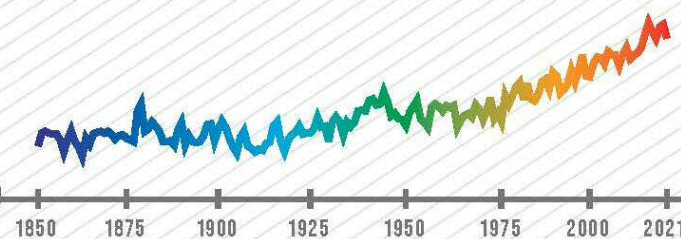
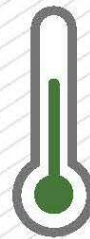
ENERGY-RELATED CO₂ EMISSIONS INCREASED

6% IN 2021

REACHING HIGHEST LEVEL EVER



RIISING GLOBAL TEMPERATURES CONTINUE UNABATED, LEADING TO MORE EXTREME WEATHER



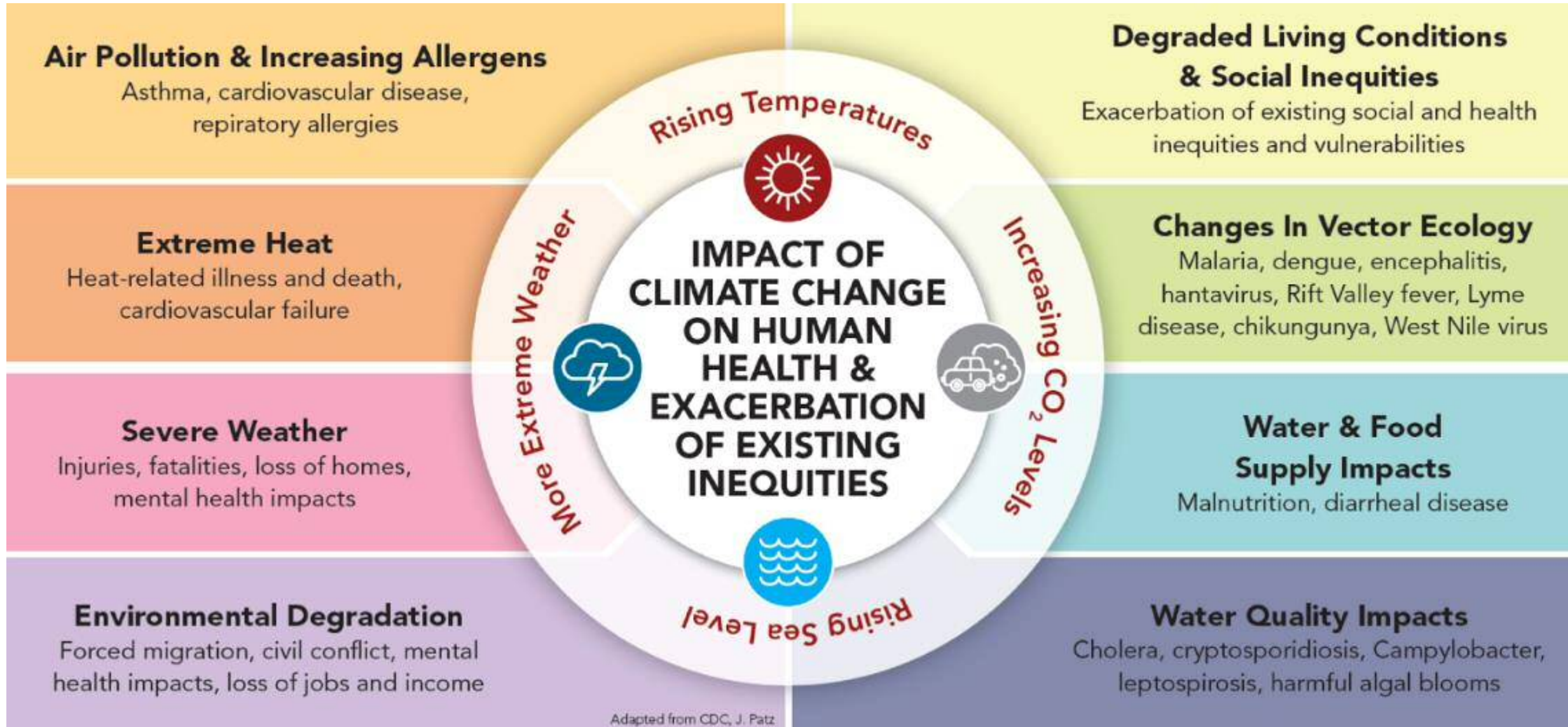
CLIMATE CHANGE OVERVIEW:

WHAT IS CLIMATE CHANGE?

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. These shifts may be natural, but since the 1800s, human activities have been the main driver of climate change, primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels (like coal, oil, and gas) which produces heat-trapping gases.

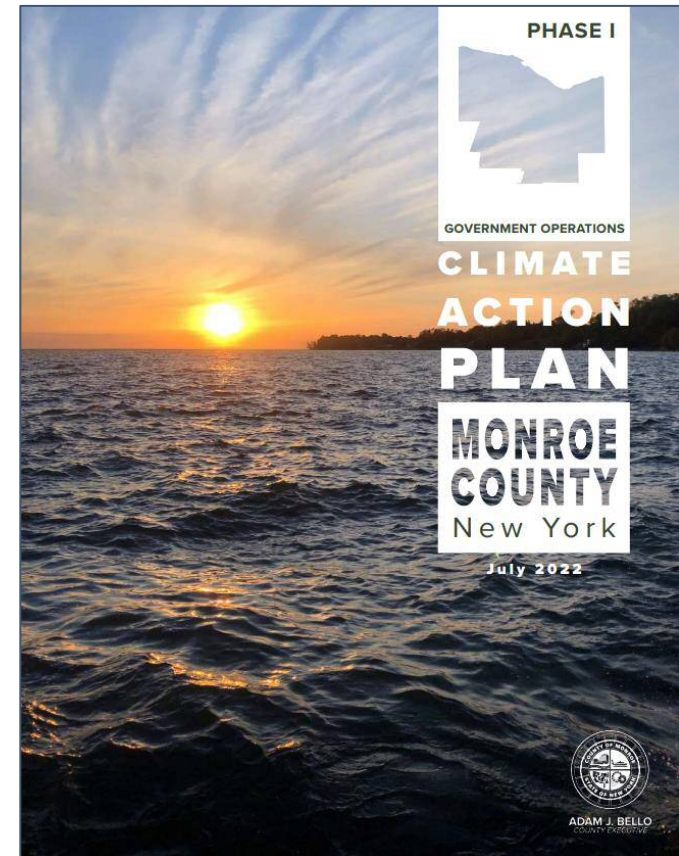
- United Nations

HOW IS CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTING US?



WHAT IS A CLIMATE ACTION PLAN?

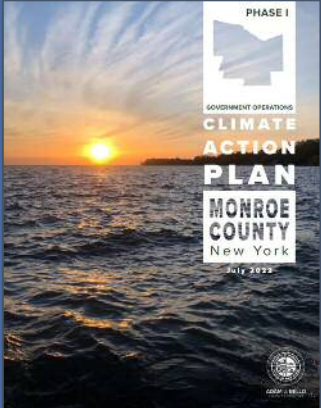
- Measures GHG emissions and related climatic impacts
- Assesses cost of “doing nothing”
- Reviews Best Management Practices & Case Studies
- Identifies GHG Reduction Goals
- Outlines key policies, strategies, and actions for implementations



CLIMATE ACTION PLAN: TWO PHASED APPROACH

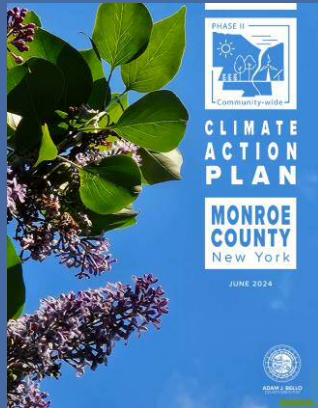
Phase I. County Operations

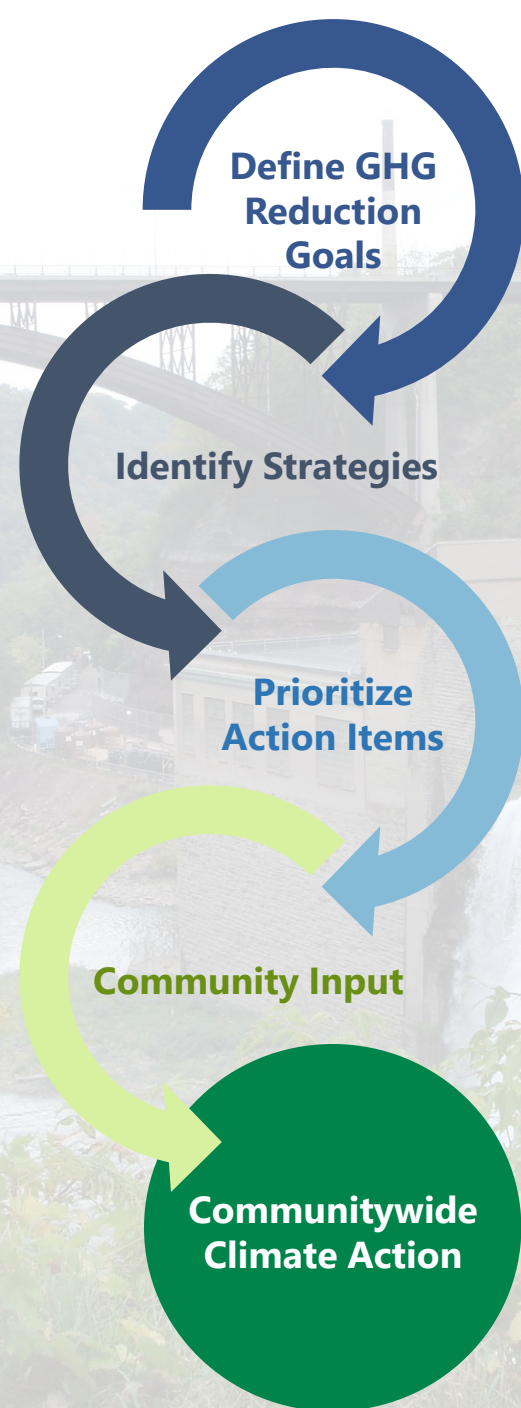
- Started May 2020; Adopted September 2022
- Focus is on GHG emissions from **County-owned facilities, infrastructure, and operations**
- Includes goals and actions county has direct control over
- First step for County to be a leader and example of climate action in our region



Phase II. Community-Wide

- Started March 2023; Adopted August 2024
- Focus broadened to GHG emission **sources throughout the county – Housing, private industry operations, transportation infrastructure, etc.**
- Includes more community outreach and engagement with implementation partners
- **Collaboration** is essential to this phase



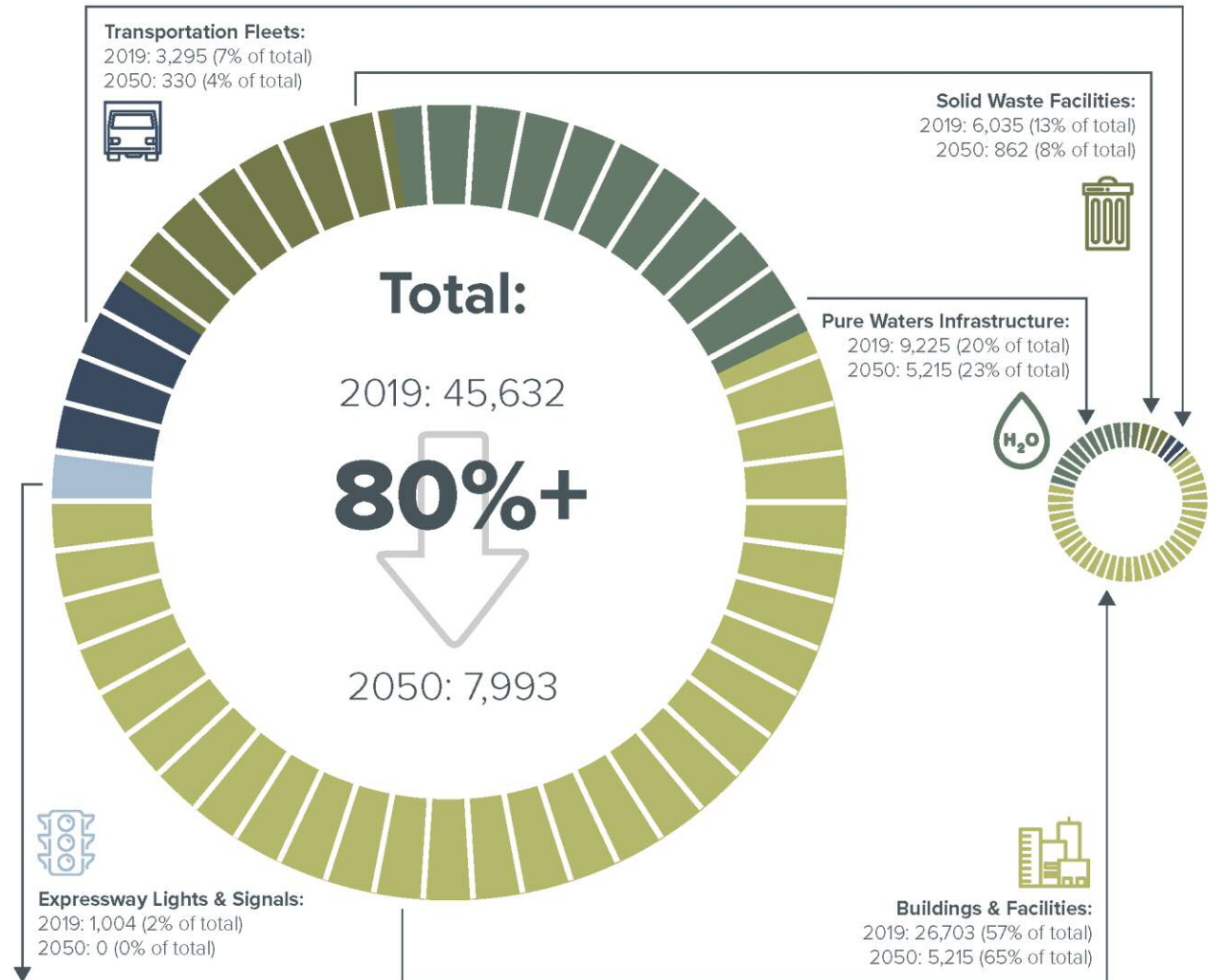


COMMUNITY-WIDE CAP GOALS AND ACTIONS

CAP PHASE I GHG INVENTORY

Table 9. GHG Reduction Targets

Sector		2019 Baseline	2050 Reduction
	Buildings & Facilities		
	Percent	-	80%
	CO ₂ e (MT)	26,073	-20,858
	Expressway Lighting & Signals		
	Percent	-	100%
	CO ₂ e (MT)	1,004	-1,004
	Pure Waters Infrastructure		
	Percent	-	80%
	CO ₂ e (MT)	9,225	-7,380
	Solid Waste & Materials Management		
	Percent	-	90%
	CO ₂ e (MT)	6,035	-5,173
	Transportation Fleets		
	Percent	-	90%
	CO ₂ e (MT)	3,295	-2,965
OVERALL REDUCTION TARGET		-	80%



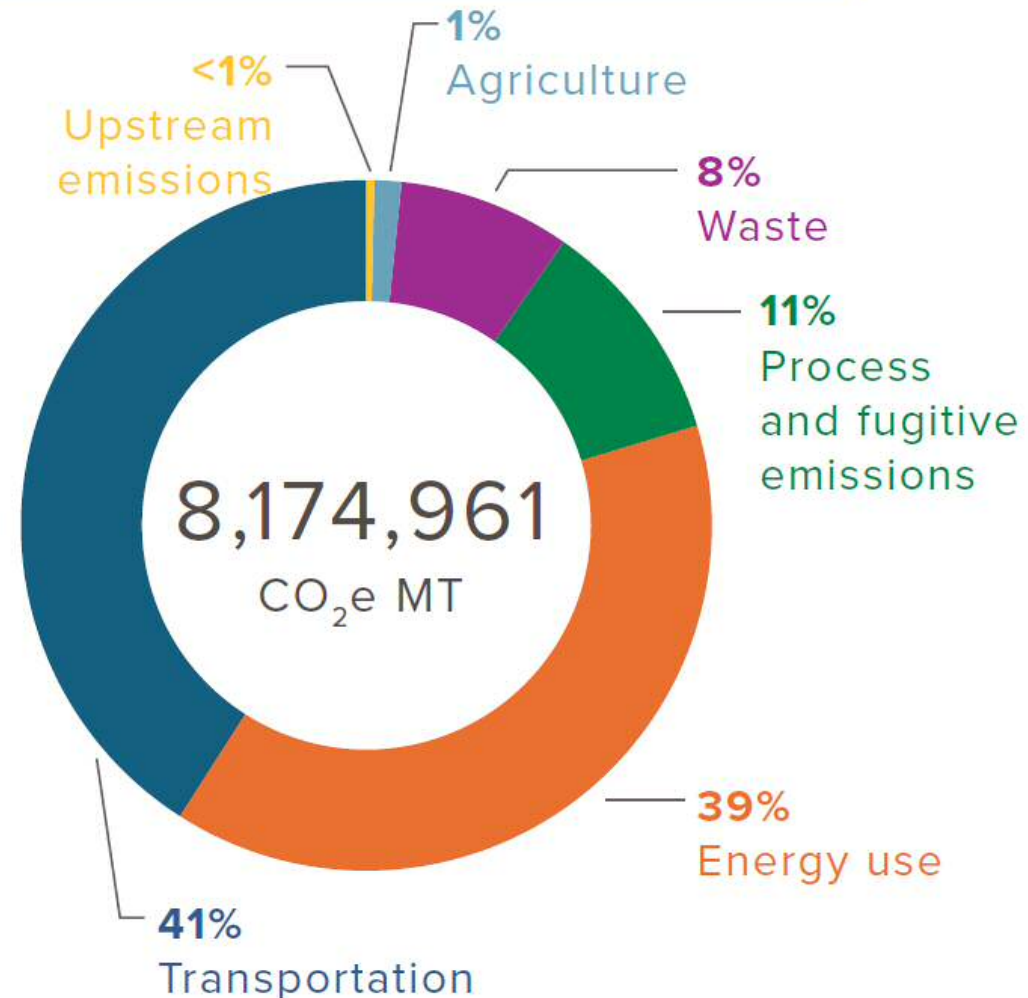
CAP PHASE II GHG INVENTORY

HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Transportation:** emissions from vehicles – cars, trucks, trains, airplanes, boats, and construction, & lawn equipment.
- **Energy Use:** production and consumption of electricity, natural gas, propane, heating oil, and wood for heating residential, industrial, and commercial buildings.
- **Process and Fugitive Emissions:** HVAC and refrigerant use, natural gas leakages, & industrial processes.
- **Waste Generation and Water Supply:** landfills, recycling, and composting, and from wastewater/ water treatment
- **Agriculture, Forestry, and Land Use:** agricultural and forestry land uses.
- **Upstream Emissions:** electric power transmission and distribution losses.

Transportation (41%) and energy use (39%) are the two largest contributors to total emissions in Monroe County.

Total 2019 Emissions:



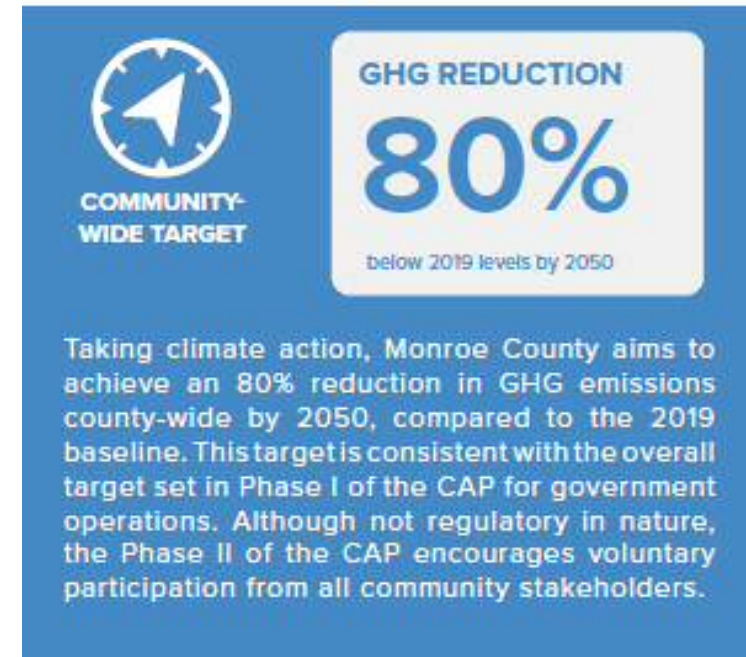
AIM TO POSITION MONROE COUNTY WELL AHEAD OF NYS CLIMATE ACT REQUIREMENTS

**Monroe County Climate Action Plan
goals of 80% below 2019 GHG levels by
2050**

- NYS CLCPA 85% below 1990 GHG levels by 2050

**Strategic development of electric vehicle
infrastructure supports the transition to
EVs, ahead of state regulations**

- EV charging stations for fleet vehicles + public
- EV/Clean Fleet Master Plan (under development)

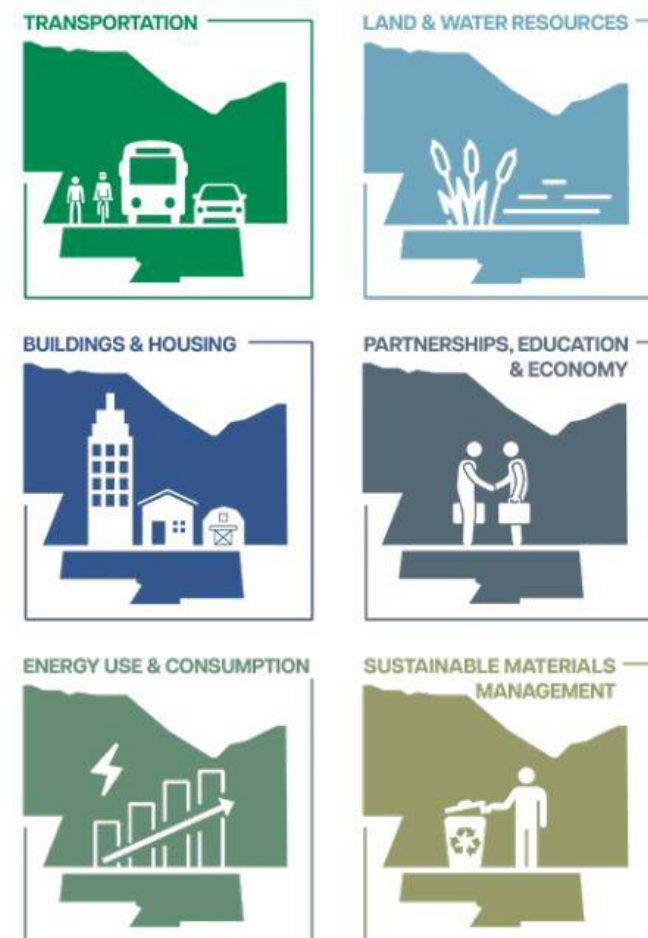


MONROE COUNTY, NY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Phase I



Phase II



MULTIPLE CO-BENEFITS OF CLIMATE ACTION:

Cost Savings

- Energy & Water Efficiency + Renewable Energy

Economic Development

- Clean energy jobs + business opportunities – design, manufacture, & install

Public Health Improvements

- Lowering GHG emissions + other air pollutants, improving air quality, public health
- Active transportation – increase exercise, improve health



IMPLEMENTATION

Phase I – County Government Operations CAP

- Implementation is direct – through Capital Improvement Plan, County budget process, Term Contracts, etc.

Phase II – Community-wide CAP depends on **COLLABORATION**

- Municipalities across Monroe County
- Businesses
- Community Organizations
- Schools
- Residents (like YOU!)



...inviting everyone in Monroe County to participate!

MONROE COUNTY	MUNICIPALITIES	BUSINESSES	COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS	INDIVIDUALS
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Transportation/Fleet

GOALS/ACTIONS

- Transition County fleet to include more Electric Vehicles (EVs)
- EV charging equipment and facilities upgrades
- Encourage more active transportation connectivity



Sustainable Materials Management

GOALS/ACTIONS

- Support, connect, and enhance access / awareness of diverting waste from landfills
- Organic Management Plan underway (DES Solid Waste Division)
- Monroe County School Food Waste Diversion Pilot Program Launched (2025-2026)

SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS MANAGEMENT



Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Plan (CARP)

Climate Vulnerability Assessment

- First step of the CARP is to identify vulnerabilities to climate impacts and reflect the community's priorities in strategically plan for a more resilient Monroe County

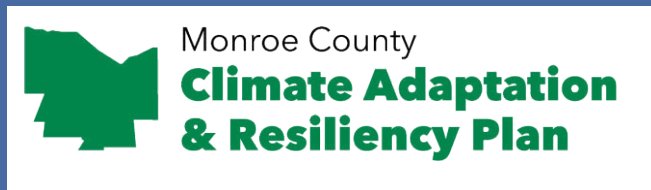
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Climate Adaptation Plan

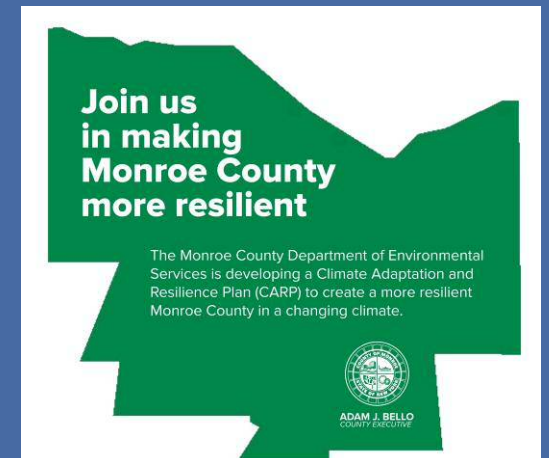
- Adaptation Plan to be informed by vulnerability assessment – aim to reduce vulnerabilities to climate hazards and assist most vulnerable populations with adapting to changing climate

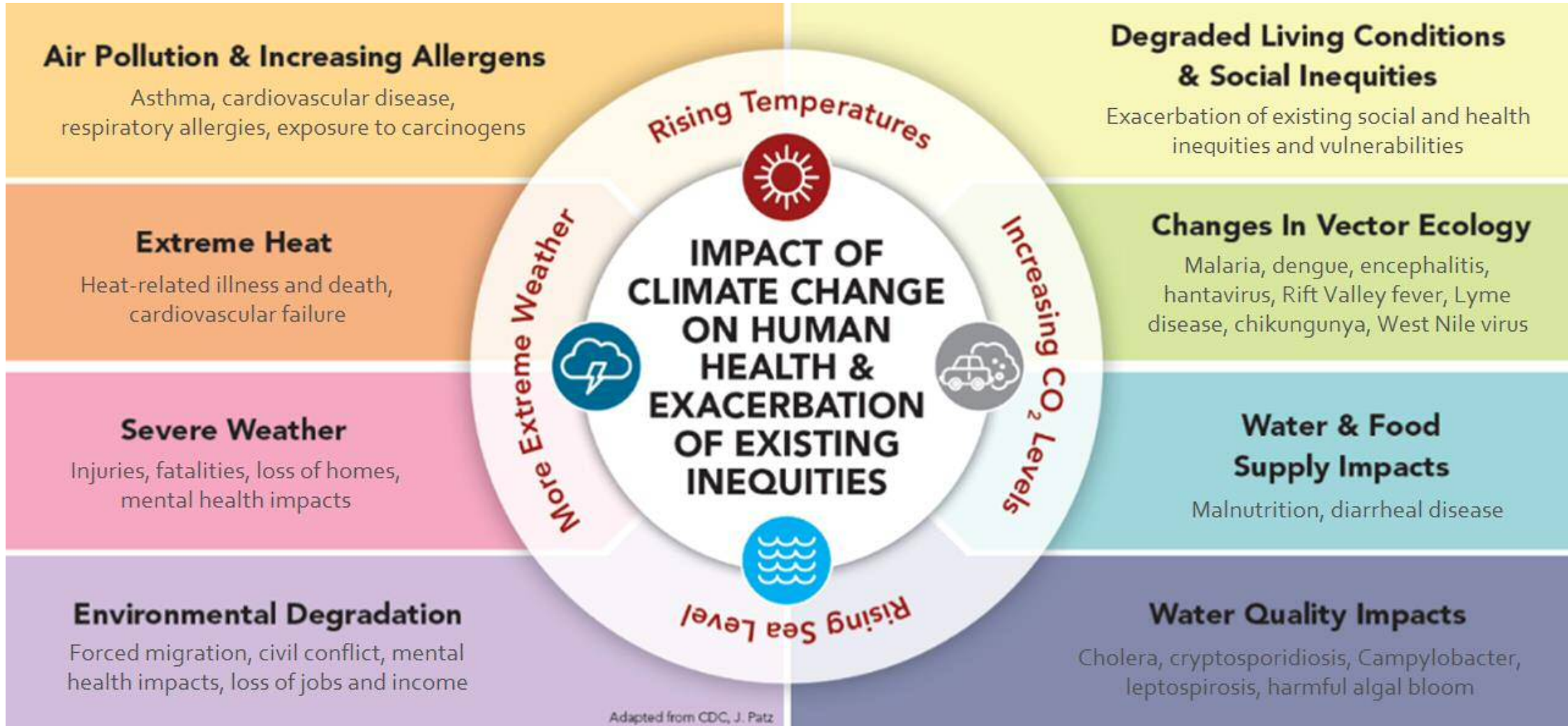
= Resiliency in Monroe County

Inviting community to participate in shaping the CARP, working toward a more resilient Monroe County



Supported in part by NYS Climate Smart Communities Grant Funding



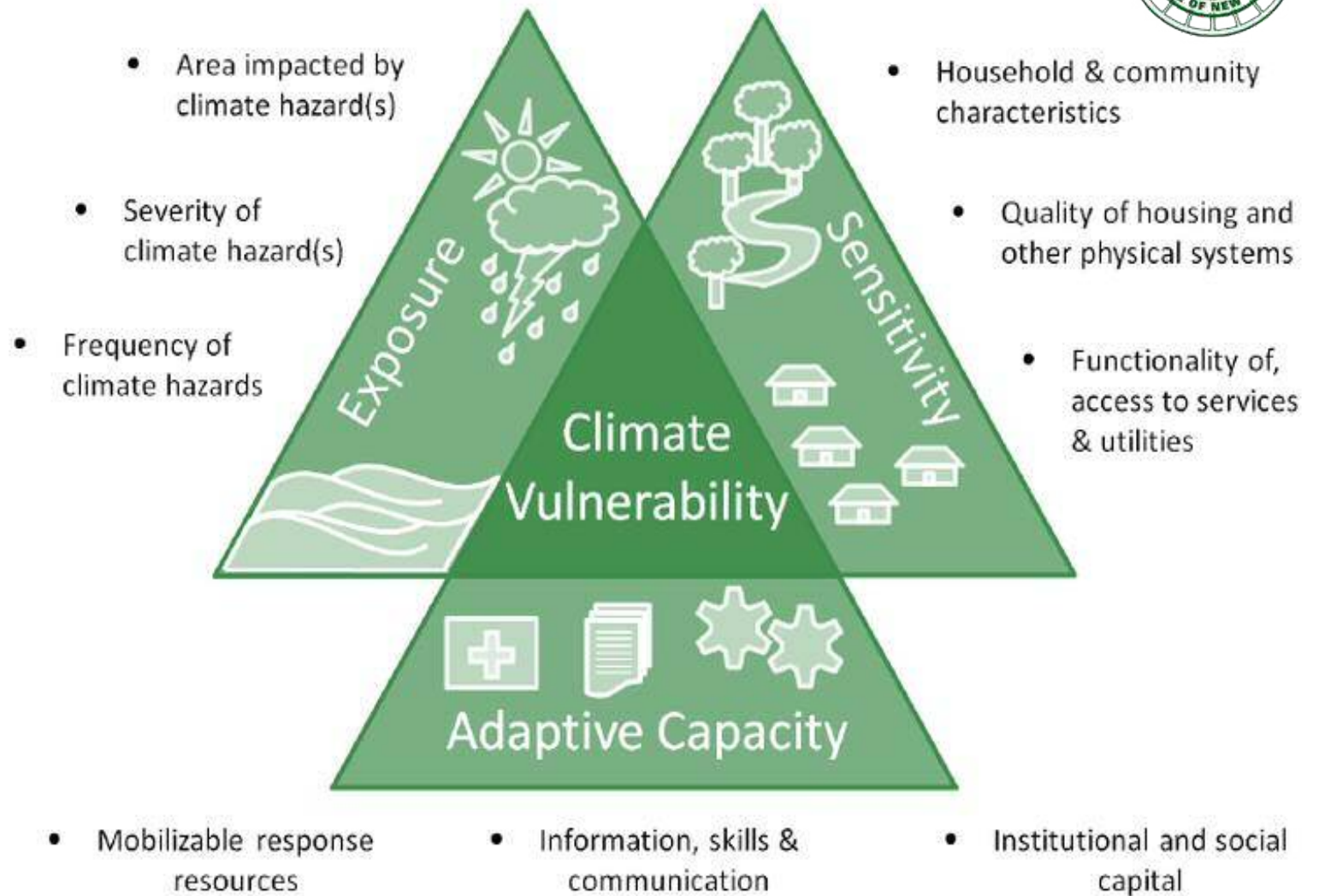




Vulnerability and Hazards

Vulnerability: how susceptible a community is to harm from climate change impacts.

Hazards: climate change's direct impacts (ex: extreme heat, flooding, severe storms, severe winter storms).



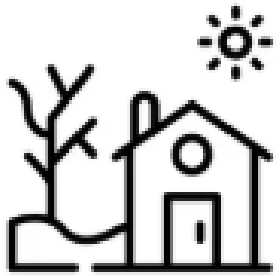
Defining Vulnerability (continued)

Vulnerability = Exposure + Sensitivity – Adaptive Capacity

- **Vulnerability**: the degree to which a system or community is susceptible to harm from climate-related hazards.
- **Exposure**: The likelihood and intensity of a hazard occurring.
- **Sensitivity**: The degree to which someone/something would be impacted if they were to experience a climate hazard.
- **Adaptive capacity**: The degree to which measures are in place to minimize climate change impacts.



Climate Vulnerabilities/Hazards



Extreme Heat

A long period (2-3 days) of high heat and humidity with temperatures above 90 degrees Fahrenheit

Associated Risks

- Dehydration, heat exhaustion
- Stressed natural and agriculture areas
- Limited shade/places to cool off



Flooding

The covering or submerging of normally dry land with a large amount of water

Associated Risks

- Transportation systems being limited or shut down
- Damage to property
- Power loss
- Health/safety
- Mudslides/landslides
- Evacuations

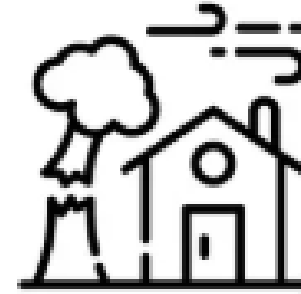


Severe Storms

Windstorms with other weather conditions (rain, thunderstorms, hail, lightning, tornadoes, and tropical storms)

Associated Risks

- Property damage
- Transportation systems being limited or shut down
- Power outages
- Health/safety
- Evacuations



Severe Winter Storms

A weather event with significant accumulations of snow, sleet, or freezing rain, often identified as blizzards or ice storms

Associated Risks

- Transportation systems being limited or shut down
- Damage to property
- Power loss
- Health/safety
- Mudslides/landslides
- Evacuations



Additional Hazards

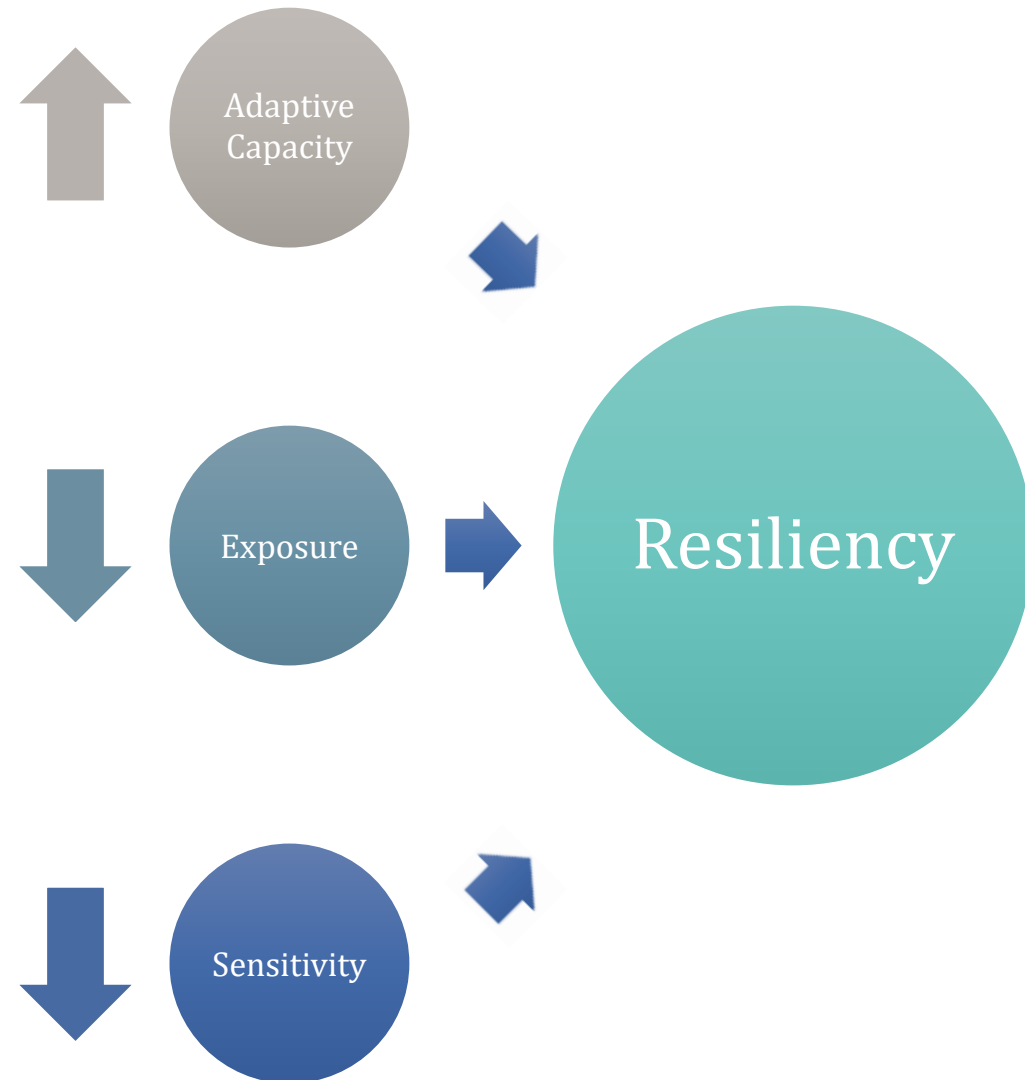
- Extreme Cold
- Wildfire
- Air Quality Impairment (wildfire elsewhere)
- Drought
- Invasive Species
- Disease Outbreak
- Others?



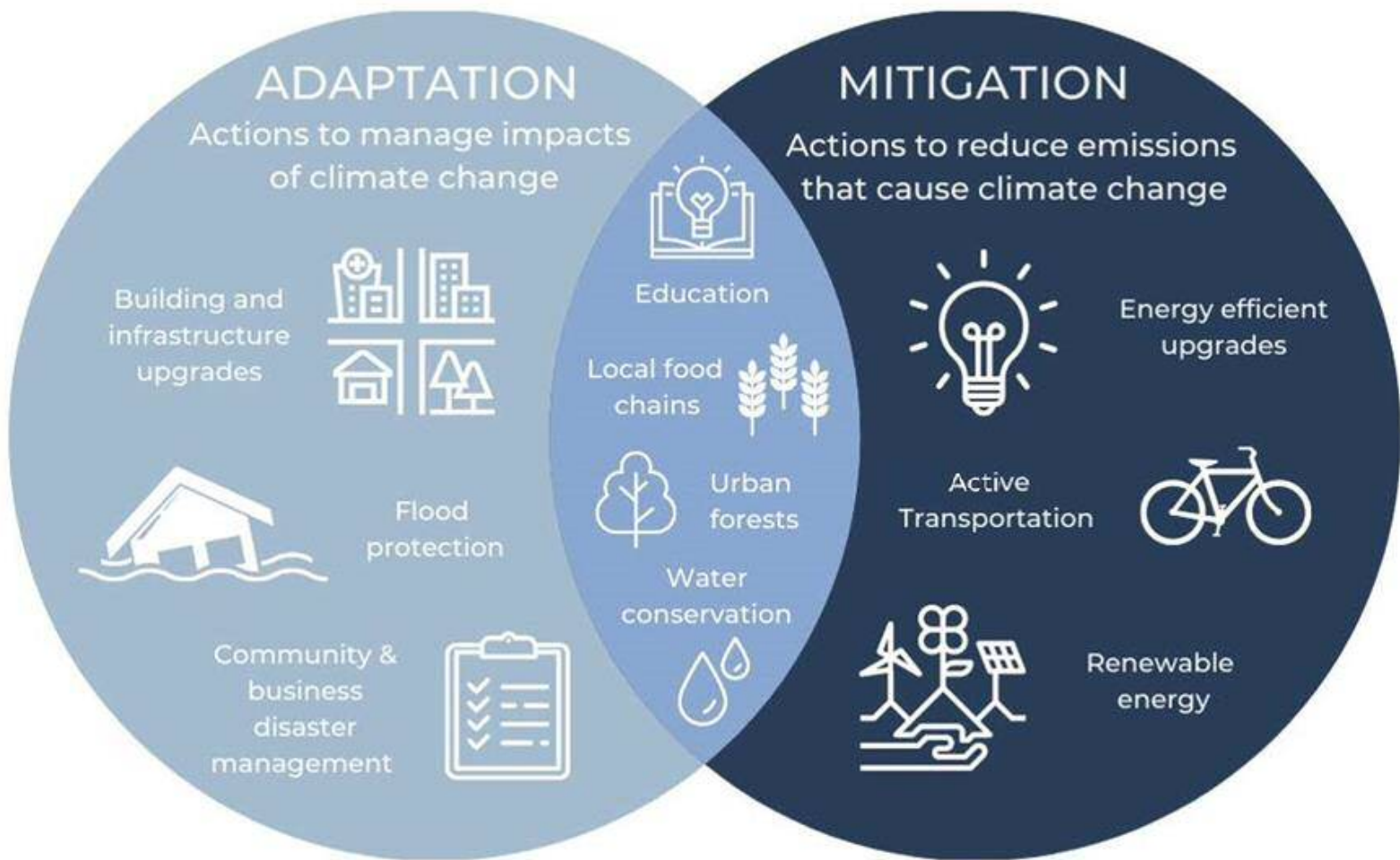
Climate Adaptation & Resiliency

Climate adaptation refers to the actions taken to adjust to actual or expected changes in climate.

Climate resiliency is the capacity of systems to prepare for, withstand, and recover from climate-related shocks while maintaining essential functions and minimizing damage.



Adaptation (CARP) and Mitigation (CAP)

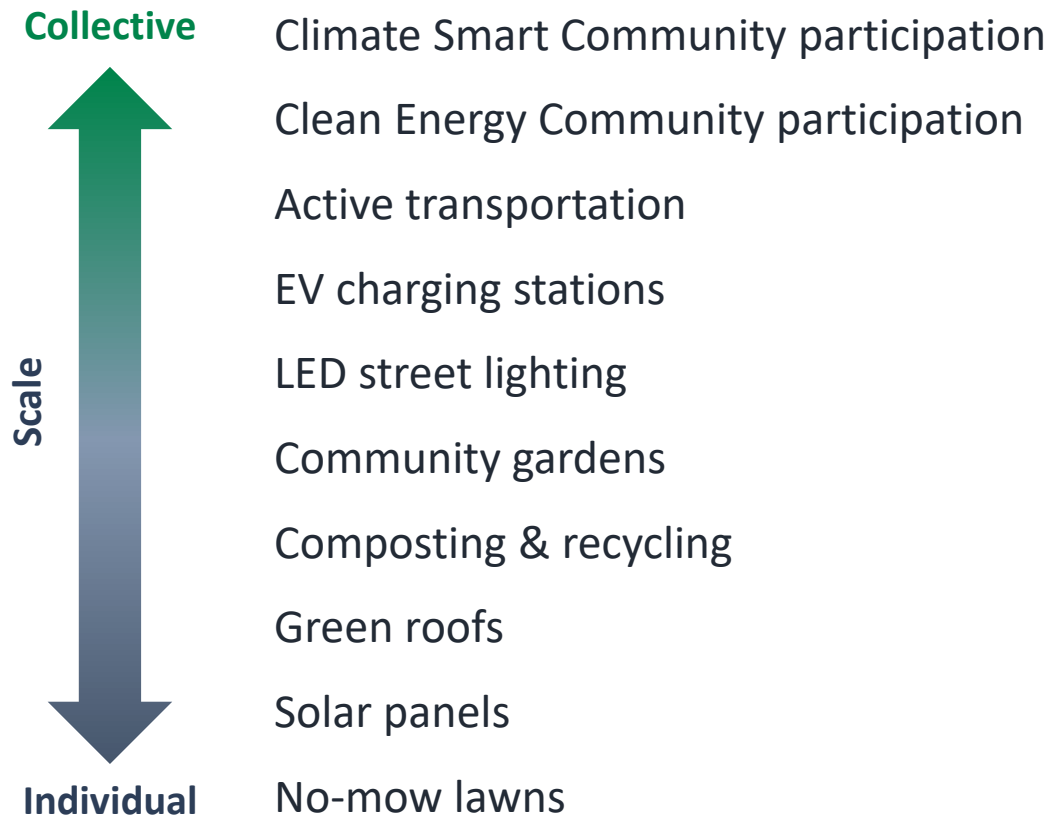


ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE

HOW CAN WE PREPARE FOR THE IMPACTS OF THE CHANGING CLIMATE AND BUILD A MORE RESILIENT MONROE COUNTY?

WHAT CAN WE DO TO REDUCE CLIMATE IMPACT/SAVE ENERGY/REDUCE GHGS?

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE COMMUNITY



REDUCING RELIANCE ON FOSSIL FUELS

What YOU can do!

Transportation

- Bike/walk instead of driving (use e-bikes, e-scooters, etc.)
- Carpool when you can!



SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

What YOU can do!

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle,
Repair, & Rethink!



- Spring cleaning? Visit the ecopark to dispose responsibly!
 - Hours: **WED 1-6:30PM. SAT 7a-1pm.**
 - Location: 10 Avion Drive (near the airport)
- Donate extra food to a local food pantry
- Divert food waste from trashcan to a compost bin
- Go thrifting! 😊



LAND & WATER RESOURCES

What YOU can do!

- Tree Planting – great for climate mitigation & adaptation!
 - Improving air quality and capturing carbon dioxide
 - Soaking up stormwater, reducing flooding and improving water quality
- Protecting green spaces



Working Toward Resiliency

- **What climate hazards have you experienced in recent years?**
 - Extreme heat
 - Extreme cold
 - Severe rain/wind storms
 - Severe winter storms
 - Wildfire
 - Air Quality Impairment
 - Drought
 - Invasive Species
 - Disease outbreak
 - Others?
- **What do you need to be more climate resilient?**
- **Would you like to be involved as we continue to develop the Climate Adaptation & Resiliency Plan (CARP)?**





Monroe County
**Climate Adaptation
& Resiliency Plan**



STAY ENGAGED!

- Visit the Monroe County Sustainability website for more information:
monroecountyclimateaction.com
- Follow Monroe County Sustainability on Facebook and @mc.sustainability on Instagram



Thank you!
Questions?