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2025 Climate Action Initiatives Annual Report

Monroe County Department of Environmental Services
Sustainability Group



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High Falls, Rochester, New York

Overview

The purpose of this annual report is to share the progress made by Monroe County in advancing climate-related actions in 2025, including mitigation, adaptation, and resiliency actions that are underway and will continue into 2026 and beyond. The achievements, progress, and planned actions in this report reflect the sustained, ambitious, and committed collaboration between Monroe County, local municipalities, community organizations, businesses, and residents.

The **Monroe County Climate Action Plan (CAP)** was developed to provide a framework for prioritizing policies, projects, and programs to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, save energy, and improve sustainability in Monroe County. The CAP was developed in two phases: Phase I, adopted in 2022, is specific to Monroe County government operations and Phase II, adopted in 2024, covers community-wide activities. The CAP guides Monroe County's activities to support the goal of cutting GHG emissions by 80% by 2050 compared to 2019 levels.

The primary emphases in 2025 were in advancing the implementation of the CAP and the launch of the complementary Monroe County Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Plan (CARP). The CARP will assess climate vulnerabilities and support adaptation planning toward greater resiliency in a climate that is already changing.



Figure 1: Climate Action Plan Progression



Figure 2: CAP Phase II Focus Areas

The CARP aims to identify, analyze, and prioritize the effects of climate hazards and risks (e.g. flooding, extreme heat, etc.) on the entire community with specific attention paid to vulnerable populations, and areas and assets that are prone to greater impacts due to climate change. The Climate Vulnerability Assessment component of the CARP began in 2025 and will inform the overall plan, which is anticipated to be complete by the end of 2026.

The final CARP will recommend areas for prioritization based on risk-resiliency analysis. Community engagement has begun and will continue to gather input on individual experiences with physical infrastructure, natural resources, and socioeconomic systems affected by current and projected impacts resulting from climate change. The CARP will supplement the data and information from the Monroe County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) to offer an increased understanding of the sensitivity and adaptive capacity of populations within the community to further changing conditions.

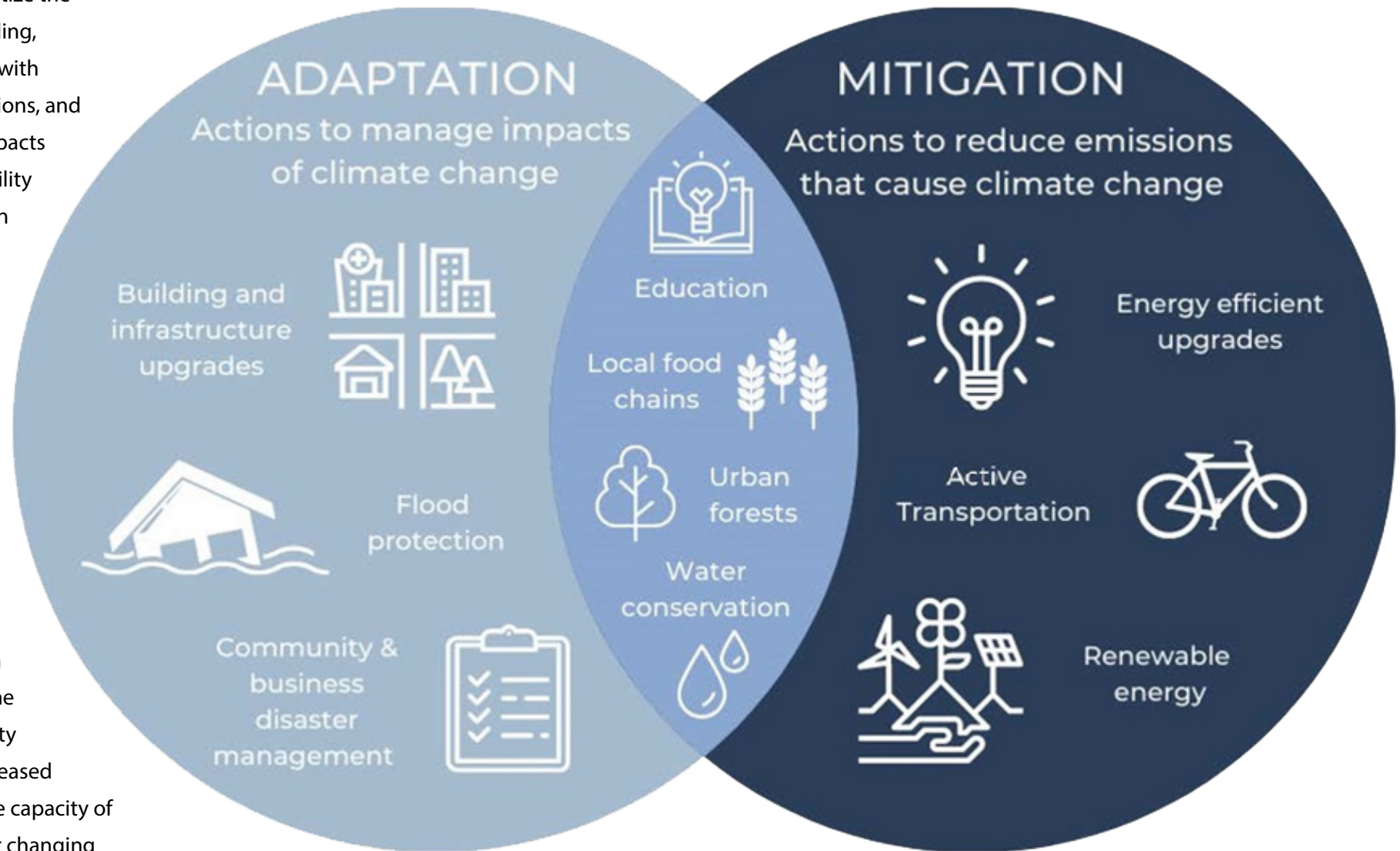


Figure 3: Climate Adaptation and Mitigation



Prior Year’s Accomplishments

Advancement of sustainability initiatives commenced upon the adoption of the Climate Action Plan Phase I in 2022. Below is a summary of accomplishments from prior years upon which those in 2025 build upon as described in this annual report.

Sector	Action	Accomplishments
Buildings & Facilities	Complete interior lighting upgrades for 100% of County buildings.	Completed for majority of buildings with remainder to be done as part of larger rehabilitation projects at County Office Building and Frederick Douglass Greater Rochester International Airport.
Expressway Lighting & Signals	Upgrade to more energy efficient LED bulbs on the off-expressway lighting system.	All (100%) off-expressway street lights have been converted to LED bulbs.
Expressway Lighting & Signals	Convert any remaining traffic signals and blackout signs from incandescent to LED bulbs.	Approximately 90% of traffic signals and blackout signs have been converted.
Solid Waste & Materials Management	Evaluate processing capacity for composting of food waste organics.	Pilot program partnering with the Town of Pittsford for residential organic waste dropoff complete. Organics management plan commenced to evaluate and determine appropriate policies and strategies.
Solid Waste & Materials Management	Maximize the diversion of organic waste from County facilities to disposal and the beneficial reuse of the organic material.	Pilot program for organics collection at Monroe County Jail completed and another at Monroe Community Hospital underway.
Solid Waste & Materials Management	Cap Gloria Drive inactive landfill to prevent fugitive methane emissions and consider methane recovery options.	Funding for project included in Capital Improvement Program.

Table1: Prior Year’s Accomplishments



Prior Year’s Accomplishments (cont.)

Sector	Action	Accomplishments
Transportation & Fleets	Eliminate unnecessary vehicle idling through policy action, reduction technologies, and zero emission vehicle use.	Two ZEVs were added to the fleet in 2024: Chevy Equinox EVs that are utilized by the Public Health and Human Services departments at 111 Westfall Road. These vehicles joined one plug-in hybrid Chevy Volt and one plug-in Chevy Bolt EV that were already in the fleet.
Transportation & Fleets	Purchase electric grounds maintenance equipment.	Ten electric Greenworks Zero Turn Mowers were added to the grounds maintenance fleet in 2023, used primarily by the Parks Department at various locations around Monroe County.
Transportation & Fleets	Install additional Level 2 (AC) and Level 3 (DC) EV charging stations to support fleet operations.	Prior to 2023, fleet-only charging stations were added to Frank E. Van Lare Water Resource Recovery Facility (1 station, 1 port) the Monroe County Fleet Center (2 stations, 4 ports total). In 2023, 28 charging ports (2 stations/4 ports per location) were added for both public and fleet use at Monroe Community Hospital, the Dept of Health & Human Services Building, CityPlace, ESL Ballpark (formerly Innovative Field), Durand-Eastman Golf Course, Highland Park, and MCC Downtown Campus. In 2024, 20 ports were added for both public and fleet charging, (2 stations/4 ports per location), at MCC Brighton Campus, Webster Park, Black Creek Park, Powder Mills Park, and Mendon Ponds Park.
Transportation & Fleets	Install clean vehicle infrastructure, including Level 2 electric vehicle supply equipment available for public & county use.	In 2023-2024, 24 dual-port level 2 charging stations were added, totaling 48 charging ports, at 12 locations by the end of 2024. At all of these locations, the charging ports are available for public use for a majority of operating hours, with any fleet charging taking place largely off-shift, overnight.

Table 2: Prior Year’s Accomplishments (cont.)

Implementing the Climate Action Plan – Phase I

Transportation Fleets

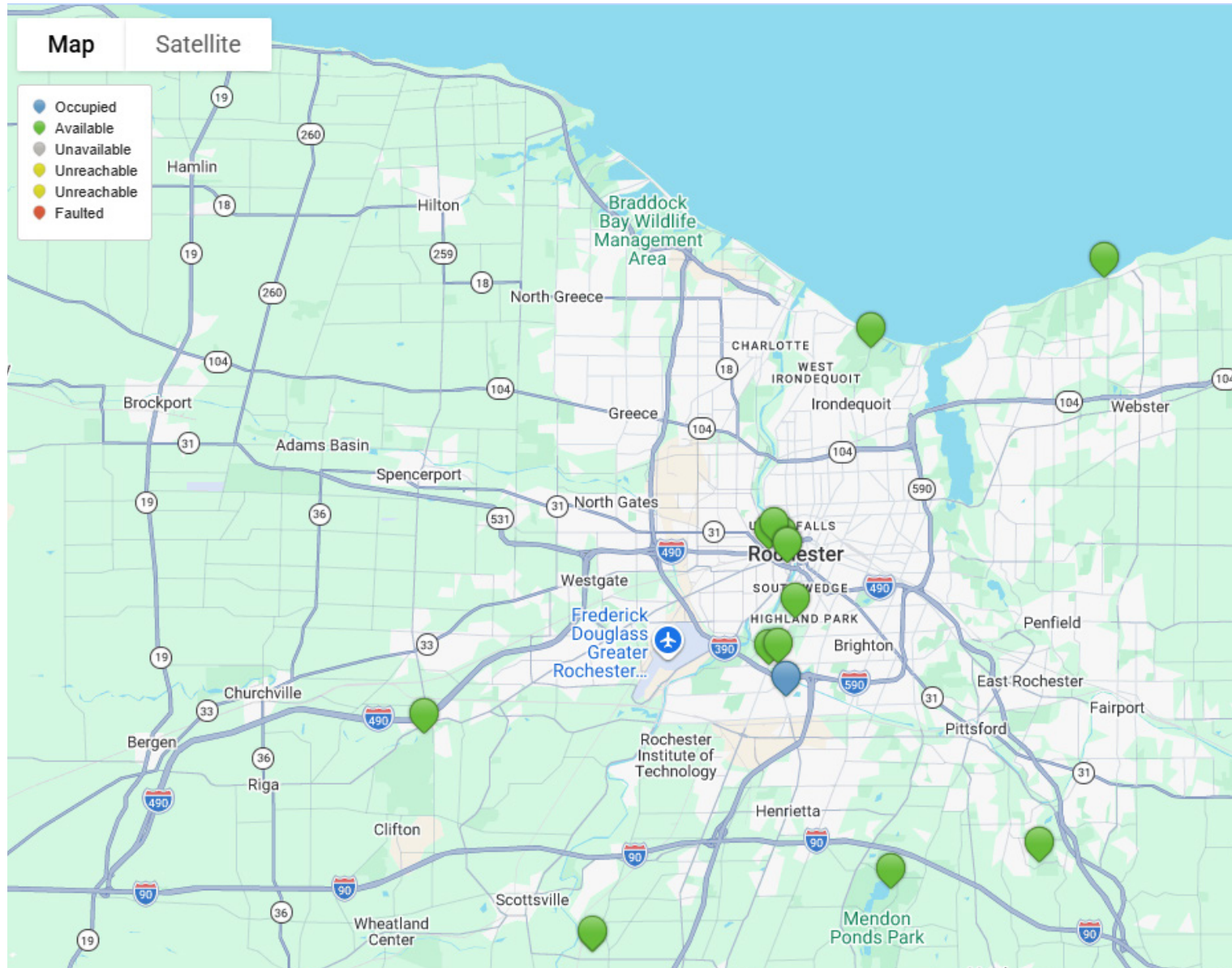
►► **Action:** Increase alternative fuel use for County-owned vehicles.

Monroe County Department of Environmental Services (DES) was awarded Clean Energy Communities grant funding from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), totaling \$285,000 in zero-match grants. A portion of this funding supported the purchase of three EV Chevrolet Silverado pickup trucks. These vehicles will be assigned to the departments of Environmental Services, Parks, and Public Safety, respectively. Of particular note is that the EV Chevrolet Silverado assigned to the Department of Public Safety will be used by the Weights & Measures Division to test the functionality and calibration of EV charging infrastructure throughout Monroe County. In addition, an EV Chevrolet Equinox was acquired to serve as a pool vehicle for the Sustainability Group.

The Monroe County Electric Vehicle/Clean Fleet Analysis and Plan (EV Plan) was initiated in 2025 to analyze fleet electrification opportunities and guide selection of vehicles suitable for electrification and the associated charging infrastructure needed at various County facilities. This is a collaborative effort across multiple Monroe County departments with the final EV Plan to be released in 2026.



County-owned electric vehicle at charging station



Monroe County ChargePoint locations

➤➤➤ **Action:** Purchase electric grounds maintenance equipment.

The remainder of the NYSEDA Clean Energy Communities grant funding was used to purchase five Toro electric utility carts. This equipment will be used by the Parks Department primarily for grounds maintenance at the Seneca Park Zoo.

➤➤➤ **Action:** Install additional Level 2 (AC) and Level 3 (DC) EV charging stations to support fleet operations.

Monroe County continued expanding its network of level 2 EV charging infrastructure in 2025. Three dual-port charging stations went online in the Civic Center Garage at 165 Exchange Boulevard, providing six additional charging ports in downtown Rochester. Two additional dual-port charging stations were installed as part of improvements to the Children's Detention Center located at 400 Rush Scottsville Road in the Town of Rush, extending the County's charging network to southwestern Monroe County.

➤➤ **Action:** Improve fleet deployment and monitoring.

Additionally, the DES Fleet Division piloted the use of an emerging technology for carbon and particulate-reduction in diesel engine exhaust beginning with a County Vactor truck (a vacuum/jet truck used for Pure Waters infrastructure maintenance). After a successful implementation in one Vactor truck, the County is expanding the pilot with three additional units. A second vacuum/jet truck used in Pure Waters maintenance and a 10-wheel Freightliner dump truck used by the Parks Department are in the development stage and a one-ton Chevrolet Silverado with dump truck body is being assessed for feasibility.



Monroe County Vactor truck



EV maintenance training for DES Fleet Division mechanics

➤➤ **Action:** Certify County fleet mechanics to maintain and repair EVs.

A crucial component of fleet electrification includes the training and eventual certification of Monroe County DES Fleet Maintenance Division mechanics in the maintenance and repair of EVs. The first EV maintenance workshop was held in 2025 at the Monroe County Fleet Center with instructors from Bosch and NuWay Auto Parts. Mechanics from not only Monroe County DES but also other local governments received classroom and hands-on training with additional future trainings being planned for 2026.

Solid Waste & Materials Management

»» **Action:** Update the County's Green Procurement Policy.

Sustainability Group staff participated in the ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) cohort on Sustainable and Circular Public Procurement to learn best practices and connect with other municipalities in the process of developing green procurement policies. This information will be used to draft an Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy to coincide with the 2026 transition to an enhanced County-wide Enterprise Resource Planning software platform.

»» **Action:** Evaluate processing capacity for composting of food waste organics.

The Sustainability Group supported the efforts led by the DES Solid Waste Division to continue development of Monroe County's first Organics Management Plan (OMP). The plan is designed to be integrated into the forthcoming update of the County's Local Solid Waste Management Plan (LSWMP). This effort also aligns with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Climate Smart Communities program with the aim of reducing GHG emissions, extending landfill capacity, and fostering a circular economy through the strategic diversion of organic waste. Public meetings were held on July 23, 2025, one virtual and one in person, to inform the public of the OMP and solicit their input. The draft plan is anticipated in 2026 and will be shared with the public for another round of public comments.



OMP public meeting at MCC Brighton Campus

»» **Action:** Cap inactive Gloria Drive landfill to prevent fugitive methane emissions and consider methane recovery options.

The DES Solid Waste Division began another project included in CAP Phase I via initiation of design and environmental review for the NE Quadrant (Gloria Drive) Landfill Improvement Project. This inactive landfill, which was closed in 1985, is the primary contributor to GHGs from County solid waste activities, estimated at 13% of the total GHGs associated with County government operations. This project will replace the landfill cap and gas management system, reducing fugitive GHG emissions and leachate produced after wet weather events. This leachate reduction is also beneficial to carbon emissions reduction by reducing both the energy needed to treat the additional leachate and the reduction of vehicle miles traveled by tankers used in leachate hauling.

Implementing the Climate Action Plan – Phase II

Advancing CAP Phase II largely relies on collaboration with a variety of stakeholders outside of County government. There are three mechanisms through which the County can play a role in community-wide climate action, described in Table 1.

Toolkits to Support Community-wide Climate Action

CAP Phase II Focus Areas:

Energy Use and Consumption

Partnerships, Education, & Economy



»»» Action: Develop a county-wide toolkit that facilitates sustainable practices among local organizations through resources, training, networking, incentives and/or performance tracking tools.

»»» Action: Implement a toolkit to guide community partners in efforts to reduce energy use and consumption (including example Sustainability Plans, suggestions for actions/areas of opportunity, available local/state/federal grants to fund energy audits and other activities).

»»» Action: Develop a Climate Action Toolkit to provide a “roadmap for success” for businesses and organizations, guiding them in implementing effective sustainability strategies.

The Sustainability Group initiated the development of Climate Action Toolkits for institutional, commercial, & residential audiences. Stakeholders from each audience have been engaged to ensure the tools developed will be useful and complementary to existing resources. These toolkits are expected to be completed in 2026 and will be shared widely with the community.



1. Stakeholder engagement and convening community members with common goals.



2. Improving awareness and providing educational materials to support the advancement of CAP Phase II actions within the community.



3. Connecting stakeholders with funding opportunities and other resources that they need to progress their climate action goals.

Figure 4: Climate Action Plan Role Mechanism

Support for Organic Waste Diversion Planning and Pilot Projects

CAP Phase II Focus Areas:

Sustainable Materials Management



- ▶▶▶ **Action:** Encourage partnerships to provide technical assistance to support pilot programs on organics management/waste reduction.
- ▶▶▶ **Action:** Provide educational material, guidance and support to organizations on the benefits of reducing and diverting organic waste.
- ▶▶▶ **Action:** Finalize and implement recommendations of the Organics Management Plan.

The DES Solid Waste Division and Sustainability Group collaborated to develop and launch the Food Waste Diversion Pilot Program for Monroe County Public School Districts. Five districts applied for and were awarded up to \$5,000 in matching grants. In 2025, four of the five districts had moved forward with advancing school composting programs with the fifth school district aiming to initiate their program in early-2026. Each school will track the quantity of organic waste diverted and will complete two reports to track their progress and share with Monroe County. Grant funding will be provided as reimbursement after successful completion of a final report.



Waste bins at a Monroe County school labeled for proper disposal



Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) at Mt Hope Ave and Reservoir Ave



Typical bike lane

Advancements to Support Active Transportation

CAP Phase II Focus Areas:
Transportation



►► **Action:** Implement the Monroe County Active Transportation Plan.

►► **Action:** Increase bike infrastructure county-wide and improve the connectivity between bike infrastructure networks.

►► **Action:** Work with municipalities to fill gaps in sidewalks on County roads with support of Monroe County DOT Municipal Sidewalk Program.

The chart on the following page describes the work that Monroe County has accomplished as part of the Department of Transportation Municipal Sidewalk Program.



Project	City/Town	Location
Sidewalks <i>installed by Towns as part of the County's Municipal Sidewalk Program</i>	Chili	Paul Road, from Hunt Hollow to Chili Avenue (5,600 feet of sidewalk)
	Henrietta	Calkins Road, from Tumbleweed Dr to Tinker Park (980 feet of sidewalk)
	Penfield	Five Mile Line Road, from Embury Road to Crossbow Drive (3,650 feet of sidewalk)
	Pittsford	Barker Road, from Hopkins Park to Barker Road Middle School (760 feet of sidewalk)
Sidewalks <i>installed by Monroe County project</i>	Henrietta	East River Road, from Eagleview Drive to Fairwood Drive (334 feet of sidewalk)
Multiuse Trails <i>installed by Monroe County project</i>	Henrietta	East River Road, from north of Fairwood Drive to River Meadow Dr/Farnum Ln (0.9 mile of multiuse trail)
New/Widened Multipurpose Paved Shoulders	Henrietta	East River Road, from I-90 (Thruway) to Ward Road (3.07 miles of paved shoulders on both sides)
	Henrietta/Mendon	Williams Road, from Pinnacle Road to Clover Street (1.43 miles of paved shoulders on both sides)
	Mendon	Boughton Hill Road, from West Bloomfield Road to the Ontario County Boundary (2.6 miles of paved shoulders on both sides)
	Riga	Brew Road in Riga; from Mill Seat Landfill to NYS Route 33A (0.3 miles of paved shoulders to be used as truck pull-offs)

Project	City/Town	Location
Bike Lanes	Irondequoit	East Ridge Road, from Ridgewood Drive to NYS 104 EB Overpass (1,500 feet of paved shoulders on both sides)
	Pittsford	Marsh Road, from Pittsford/Perinton Town Boundary to NYS 31 (1.2 miles of bike lanes on both sides)
Road Diets <i>which opened up Multipurpose Paved Shoulders</i>	Irondequoit	Culver Road, from City of Rochester Boundary to Brookdale Park (0.35 miles of paved shoulders on both sides)
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs)	Town of Brighton	Clover Street and Esplanade Drive, Edgewood Ave and Wintergreen Way
	City of Rochester	Mt Hope and Reservoir Drive, Park Ave and Buckingham Street, Park Ave and Vassar Street
Rest in Red	County-wide	Added “Rest in Red” signal timing between 11 PM – 6 AM at 10 locations within the County to reduce speeds, side street delay to improve safety for all transportation users. Also, allows pedestrians to avoid delay after pressing the pedestrian crossing button.
Smart Detection Systems	County-wide	Continued to build out the smart detection network with Miovision video systems that provide vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian detection at the intersection. Currently, these systems are installed at 127 signalized intersections within the County, with an additional 40 projected to be installed in 2026.

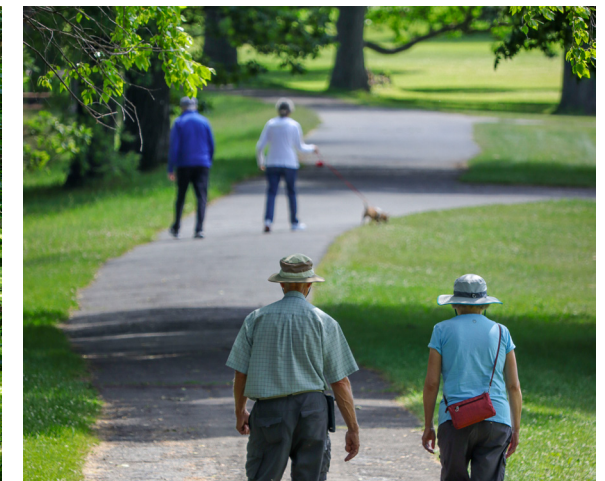
Table 3: Active Transportation Infrastructure Improvements in 2025

Greenhouse Gas Inventory Update

Monroe County completed initial greenhouse gas inventories for both CAP Phase I and CAP Phase II using data from 2019 as the baseline year. The software used to assemble these inventories was ICLEI USA ClearPath 1.0.

In order to track Monroe County's progress in reducing GHG emissions toward the goal of 80% reduction compared to 2019 levels by 2050, updated GHG inventories are planned to be conducted every 5 years. The first five-year update began in November 2025 and is continuing into 2026. The inventories encompass emissions from energy use including electricity and fuels used in buildings (natural gas, propane, heating oil, steam, etc.); transportation fuels (automobile fuels, airplane fuels, etc.); landfill and wastewater treatment processes; agriculture, forestry and land use; and process and fugitive emissions.

ICLEI USA ClearPath 1.0 is being used again so that consistent comparisons can be made between the baseline (2019) inventories of both CAP phases and the new, updated (2024) inventory. ICLEI is developing ClearPath 2.0 software and once released, these inventories will be migrated into the new system.



Views from Genesee Valley Park

Climate Adaptation & Resiliency Plan

The Sustainability Group kicked off the CARP in 2025 to address adaptation to existing and forthcoming climate change impacts. The CARP serves as a complement to the CAP, which focused largely on mitigating the effects of climate change. The CARP kicked off with an interdepartmental stakeholder engagement meeting, inviting a variety of County departments including Aging Services, Aviation, Emergency Management, Environmental Services, Human Services, Parks, Public Health, and Transportation. For non-County stakeholder engagement, municipalities within the County were invited to participate in the Municipal Working Group and community organizations to participate in the Equity and Social Impact Working Group. Both groups convened in early November 2025 and will be meeting again in 2026.

A key foundational element of the CARP is the Climate Vulnerability Assessment, which incorporates existing data from the HMP and internal and external stakeholder input. In addition to the stakeholder working groups, public meetings were held on

November 18, 2025 with individual virtual and in-person options to introduce the CARP to the broader public and gather their insights on climate vulnerabilities and potential solutions. A mapping exercise was used to identify locations within Monroe County where attendees had experienced climate hazards, including: extreme heat, severe rain and wind storms, flooding, and severe winter storms. A corresponding public survey was also launched to gather additional feedback with responses collected through February 20, 2026.

To further support adaptation and resiliency efforts, the Sustainability Group participated in the ICLEI Cohort on Climate Mobility and Climate-Induced Relocation. This cohort sought to build capacity and knowledge around climate-induced relocation, also known as climate mobility, and explore approaches to address this potential migration if it occurs in Monroe County.

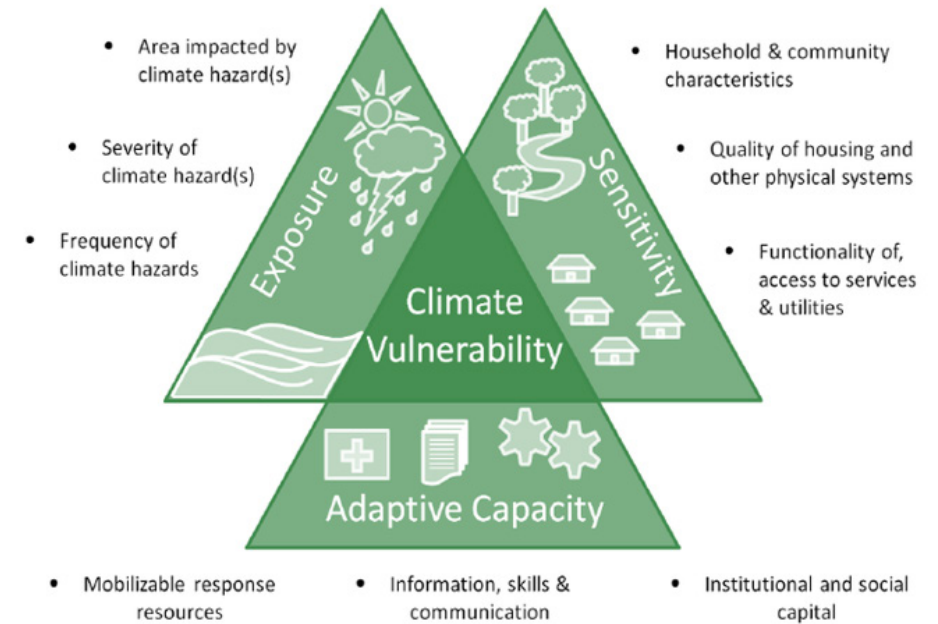


Figure 5: Climate Vulnerability



Sustainability Group engagement at a public meeting



Monroe County Climate Adaptation & Resiliency Plan

Community Vulnerabilities Survey

WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

Share your experiences with flooding, extreme heat, and other climate hazards so we can work together to create a **stronger, more resilient, and more equitable Monroe County for all.**

Take the survey by going to the link or scanning the QR code.

Five (5) randomly selected survey participants will each receive a \$50 grocery store gift card after the survey concludes in 2026!



bit.ly/CARP-Survey

Community Vulnerability Survey advertisement

Community Engagement Summary

The Sustainability Group continued its public outreach efforts in 2025 to inform and engage the community about sustainability. Beyond the dedicated CAP and CARP activities, event highlights included participation in a variety of activities such as: Earth Month celebrations, Drive Electric events, eco-fairs, farmers' markets, and family-friendly community events. Presentations were given at the Climate Solutions Accelerator - Climate Summit, multiple Color Your Community Green meetings, and several municipal conservation board meetings.

In December of 2025, presentations on the CAP and CARP were given to the Monroe County Environmental Management Council and their newest committee, the Youth Environmental Management Council, which aims to engage high school students in conservation and sustainability efforts within their community.



Sustainability Group engagement at a public meeting



Looking Ahead to 2026

The year ahead will be another year of progress in implementing the CAP and looking to finalize and move from planning to implementation for the CARP. The EV Master Plan will be completed to guide investments in fleet electrification and related infrastructure. The Sustainability Group will continue to work to engage stakeholders throughout the community in climate mitigation, adaptation, and resiliency.



Scenic view at Black Creek Park