

1 **2020 RES-181**

2 **SUPPORTING DANE COUNTY'S CLIMATE ACTION PLAN**

3 There is an overwhelming consensus among climate scientists that climate change is an urgent threat
4 and that we must act promptly to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to prevent the severe adverse
5 impacts on our economy, environment, safety, and public health.

6 Now, more than ever, the efforts of local elected officials, residents, businesses, and community leaders
7 across Dane County are required to produce a resilient climate change-ready economy and carbon-free
8 future.

9 Dane County has a tradition of leading on environmental and climate issues, as exemplified by County
10 Board Resolution 2012 RES-103—DANE COUNTY ADOPTS SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE ITS
11 OPERATIONS, MANAGEMENT, AND POLICYMAKING—and in the County's ongoing efforts, which include:

- 12 • 16 operating solar installations, totaling 600 kW, at Dane County facilities
- 13 • 9 MW County/MGE solar farm under construction at the Dane County Airport, which
14 will supply 40% of county facilities with renewable electricity
- 15 • A newly proposed 18 MW solar facility on county-owned land east of the Rodefild
16 landfill, which will help achieve 100% renewable electricity status for county operations
- 17 • A landfill renewable natural gas (RNG) facility, which converts landfill gas into RNG used
18 to fuel more than half of the county's heavy-duty trucks
- 19 • An RNG station receiving biogas from manure digesters, which capture methane and
20 phosphorus from manure and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and harmful runoff to
21 lakes and streams
- 22 • An investment of \$37M to build over 100 miles of bike trails in the county since 2011
- 23 • \$2.5 million in grants to local landowners to promote continuous cover crops

24 Addressing climate change is an opportunity to increase equity and social justice. Communities of color,
25 as well as low-income populations, are responsible for fewer greenhouse gas emissions than other
26 populations but are both more vulnerable to—and disproportionately affected by—the adverse impacts
27 of climate change.

28 There are increased economic benefits associated with climate action. Many clean energy resources
29 currently cost less than fossil-fuel alternatives and the production of clean energy resources also creates
30 more local jobs.

31 Climate change threatens to exacerbate existing health conditions and create new health threats
32 associated with air quality, vector-borne illnesses, and extreme weather events. Mitigating climate
33 change will have multiple health benefits locally and globally.

34 We are already experiencing the effects of climate change in Dane County, including frequent extreme
35 rainfall events that lead to more flooding and larger runoff events that fuel algal blooms in our lakes and
36 rivers. Reducing climate change emissions will help reduce loss of costly infrastructure and ensure safe
37 water.

38 Climate change in Dane County has increased temperatures, which has numerous impacts on humans,
39 such as heat related illness and loss of species such as insects that pollinate our crops. Taking effective
40 action on climate change will help our communities adapt and become more resilient to these threats.

41 Climate action represents an opportunity to engage both rural and urban Dane County communities in
42 creating solutions that enable each community to maintain its unique identity and to thrive.

43 Climate action creates an opportunity to sustain and improve the diverse variety of natural eco-systems
44 in the county, thereby reducing the potential for species extinction.

45 In 2017 the Dane County Executive created an Office of Energy & Climate Change, charged with creating
46 a countywide, economy-wide Climate Action Plan. The County Executive and the Office of Energy &
47 Climate Change convened the Dane County Council on Climate Change, which was comprised of 38
48 members representing County government, local government, energy and water utilities, business,
49 labor, social and environmental advocacy groups, and UW-Madison, to participate in the creation of a
50 Climate Action Plan.

51 As a part of this process, 100 subject matter experts formed eleven working groups, which developed
52 recommendations they presented to the Dane County Council on Climate Change for inclusion in the
53 Climate Action Plan.

54 The Office of Energy & Climate Change worked with expert climate modelers to measure the emissions
55 impacts of the cumulative recommendations and the modelers found that Dane County could reduce its
56 carbon equivalent emissions by 50% by 2030, which is consistent with recommendations from the
57 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that emissions be reduced by 45% by 2030.

58 In April 2020, the Office of Energy & Climate Change issued a Climate Action Plan, *Today's Opportunity*
59 *for a Better Tomorrow: 2020 Dane County Climate Action Plan*, incorporating the recommendations of
60 the Dane County Council on Climate Change.

61 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Dane County Board of Supervisors supports Dane County's
62 continued efforts and investments to reduce and eventually eliminate climate change emissions in Dane
63 County and to foster the county's resilience in the face of climate change.

64 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Dane County Board of Supervisors supports the
65 Climate Action Plan and its implementation.