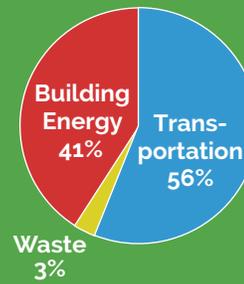


Ten Steps to a Zero Carbon City

Cities have long been leaders on climate action and sustainability. As the climate crisis deepens, local government can step up to demonstrate a path towards a zero carbon, clean energy economy. The most impactful measures focus on replacing fossil fuels used in **transportation** and **building energy use**.



Typical Citywide Greenhouse Gas Emission Sources

Source: This chart is based on the most recent data available (2017) from the City of Menlo Park, which is representative of most suburban cities in its emission profile; <https://tinyurl.com/yz9as4dr>

What are the measures that will accelerate a transition to Zero Carbon?



Clean Power

100% carbon free power, with at least 25% of renewable power from local sources.



Community Resilience with Clean Power

Solar + Energy Storage requirements for new construction, and Investment in solar-battery energy storage microgrids for public facilities such as schools, civic centers, fire stations, and libraries.

Clean Energy Retrofits for Homes & Buildings:

- Technical & financing assistance**
For electrification and energy efficiency upgrades.
- Clean standards preventing gas use**
In new furnaces, water heaters and appliance replacements or requiring upgrades over time or with property sales.
- Significant public investments in affordable housing & small businesses.**

Alternatives to Driving

Major Transit Investments & Improvements

- Local support for Regional Projects such as the Dumbarton Corridor.
- Local & regional Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) to improve equity and access to transit.
- Free or subsidized Transit Passes.
- Smarter Transit Improvements including dedicated or reversible lanes supporting express buses. Free zero carbon shuttles.
- Micro-transit or on-demand mobility service.



Zero Waste

- Limiting food waste (e.g. fines for commercial food waste).
- Harvest bio-methane through combined sewage & municipal waste digesters.
- Improve methane capture from sewage, compost and landfills.
- Ban single use plastic containers & products.



Zero Carbon Buildings

New building standards that prevent the use of fossil fuels like natural gas (by going all-electric) in new construction, additions, and remodels.



Putting a Price on Carbon

Through a direct carbon fee or related tools, such as Climate Impact Fees on new development and increased Utility User Taxes.

Mobility Convenience

Bike, scooter & car shares for connections to transit and access to services.



Accelerate the transition to Electric Vehicles

- Local government commitments to EVs for new purchases.
- Investments in charging infrastructure for apartment buildings and key public areas.
- Extra rebates for EVs & added fees for polluting vehicles.
- Low income EV programs such as Clean Cars For All.



Community Projects

- Reduce household & business carbon footprints.
- Explore cool roofs & cool pavements.
- Support local food & more plant-based diets.
- Conserve & recycle water.



Carbon Removal

- Carbon standards for building materials that help transition to carbon negative or low carbon products such as “carbon capture” cement & concrete.
- Investments in regenerative agriculture & carbon farming.
- Reforestation.

Safe biking & walking routes & related facilities including dedicated multi-use paths for a safe city-wide network.

Parking reforms

Paid parking, parking management systems, and reducing or eliminating parking minimums for new construction.

Congestion Pricing

To encourage & provide funding for alternatives to driving solo.

Land Use Planning

Adding more housing concentrated downtown near transit & services.

Each of these measures can be designed to support a more equitable, inclusive city that improves health and bolsters prosperity for everyone. We have all the technology and policy-know-how today to implement these measures. The only thing lacking is political will and financing.

Examples of Leading Carbon Goals



These examples are an informal summary of some of the best and most important climate goals. In addition, the State of California and many cities including the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance have a goal to be climate neutral by 2050, defined as an 80% GHG reduction. The Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance includes: Berlin, Boston, Boulder, Copenhagen, London, Melbourne, Minneapolis, New York City, Oslo, Portland, San Francisco, Seattle, Stockholm, Sydney, Vancouver, Washington DC, and Yokohama.

Cities have come a long way transforming the energy sector with renewable power, revitalizing downtowns, and exploring new mobility options. Now that many 2020 climate goals have been achieved, it's time to make new commitments that can transform our economies away from fossil fuels for healthier, more equitable communities. Youth of today are counting on us to act now, act boldly, act like their future depends on leadership towards a zero carbon, climate safe city.

Resources

<https://rmi.org/insight/the-carbon-free-city-handbook/>

<http://svcleancities-org.lungsrus.org/index.html>

<https://carbonneutralcities.org/initiatives/game-changers/>

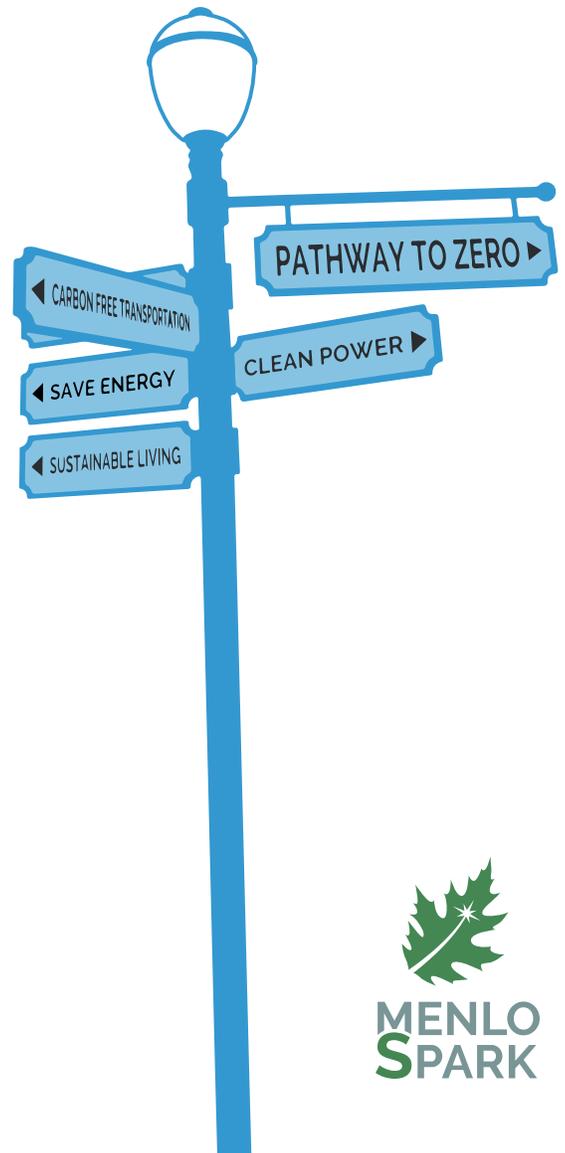
<https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-11-sustainable-cities-and-communities.html>

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/390491468338496549/The-low-carbon-city-development-program-LCCDP-guidebook-a-systems-approach-to-low-carbon-development-in-cities>

Top clean energy measures from other cities, for the Peninsula Advanced Energy Communities project: https://menlospark.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/PAEC-Task-2.2_Final-Best-Practices-Report-06_wb-27-June-17.pdf

<http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/51856>

<http://www.ucop.edu/initiatives/carbon-neutrality-initiative.html>



Produced by Menlo Spark, a non-profit, community-based organization that unites businesses, residents, and government partners to achieve a climate-neutral City of Menlo Park by 2025, and working towards a carbon free region. For more information, see www.MenloSpark.org.

