



SA CLIMATE READY FAQs

1. What is SA Climate Ready?

SA Climate Ready is a community-driven plan to guide San Antonio's efforts to reduce its greenhouse gas contributions to climate change and prepare for current and future impacts. At its core, however, the plan is about clean air, water quality, good jobs, transportation choices, clean and secure energy, emergency preparedness, and current and long-term quality of life.

2. Why are we developing this plan?

On June 22, 2017, City Council passed a resolution in support of the Paris Climate Agreement and directed staff to develop a plan that would provide a framework to begin work to meet this commitment.

3. What is the Paris Climate Agreement?

The Paris Climate Action Agreement is a pledge within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to address greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation and finance starting in the year 2020. The content of the agreement was negotiated by representatives of 196 parties at the 21st Conference of Parties of the UNFCCC in Paris and adopted by consensus on December 12, 2015. As of November 2017, 197 UNFCCC members have signed the agreement. Participation in the agreement is voluntary and non-binding and those participating are currently responsible for more than 80% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. Countries are meeting on a regular basis to further work out details; last meeting was in December 2018. [Over 2,638 leaders](#) from across diverse U.S. sectors and over [400 U.S. Mayors](#) have committed to taking climate action despite the U.S. Federal Government making the decision to withdraw from the agreement.

4. Is there uncertainty in the climate science?

There is widespread consensus that climate change is occurring and that it is caused by human activity. A selection of the national and international professional organizations that support this conclusion is listed below. Sources: <https://climate.nasa.gov/scientific-consensus/> <http://www.opr.ca.gov/facts/list-of-scientific-organizations.html>

American Academy of Pediatrics
American Anthropological Association
American Association for the Advancement of Science
American Association of State Climatologists (AASC)
American Association of Wildlife Veterinarians
American Astronomical Society
American Chemical Society
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Fisheries Society
American Geophysical Union
American Institute of Biological Sciences
American Institute of Physics
American Medical Association
American Meteorological Society
American Physical Society
American Public Health Association
American Quaternary Association
American Society for Microbiology
American Society of Agronomy
American Society of Civil Engineers
American Society of Plant Biologists

American Statistical Association
Botanical Society of America
Crop Science Society of America
Ecological Society of America
Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
National Association of State Foresters
National Center for Atmospheric Research
National Science Foundation
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Soil Science Society of America
The Geological Society of America
U.S. Global Change Research Program
U.S. National Academy of Sciences
Woods Hole Research Center
World Federation of Public Health Associations
World Health Organization
World Meteorological Organization

5. What other US cities have similar plans?

Cities both large and small have similar plans. Some examples are below.

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|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Albany, NY | Emeryville, CA | Palo Alto, CA |
| Ann Arbor, MI | Evanston, IL | Philadelphia, PA |
| Aspen, CO | Flagstaff, AZ | Pittsburgh, PA |
| Austin, TX | Fort Collins, CO | Portland, OR |
| Baltimore, MD | Iowa City, IA | Providence, RI |
| Boston, MA | Kansas City, MO | Salt Lake City, UT |
| Boulder, CO | Knoxville, TN | San Diego, CA |
| Burlington, VT | Los Angeles, CA | Santa Fe, NM |
| Cambridge, MA | Minneapolis, MN | Santa Monica, CA |
| Chicago, IL | New Orleans, LA | Sarasota, FL |
| Cleveland, OH | New York City, NY | Somerville, MA |
| Columbus, OH | Orlando, FL | Washington, DC |
| Denver, CO | | |
| Dubuque, IA | | |

6. What top ten cities by population in the United States have Climate Plans?

CITY	PLAN STATUS
New York City	Current Plan
Los Angeles	Current Plan
Chicago	Current Plan
Houston	In Development
Phoenix	In Development
Philadelphia	Current Plan
San Antonio	Draft Plan
San Diego	Current Plan
Dallas	In Development
San Jose	Current Plan

7. How do we reach this ambitious goal? Does the technology exist?

The SA Climate Ready Plan uses the best available science to determine the needed greenhouse gas reductions required by 2050 to meet the objectives of the Paris Climate Agreement. While many strategies have been documented in other current plans, and in many cases are currently being implemented, several strategies depend on the refinement of current technology, new technology, and long-term market transitions. While the full technology does not exist today, significant market trends and technologies are being developed. This plan does not mandate any immediate action, but identifies a high level framework and pathway that should be considered as we plan and implement for the future.

8. What is an example of this needed technology or market transition?

- Mitigation Strategy #1 – Decarbonize the Grid
 This strategy has a goal for CPS Energy to provide carbon free power by 2050. However, in order to accomplish this, there needs to be continued advancement in renewable technology, including battery storage technology. In addition, we are seeing a market transition in the availability and cost effectiveness of renewables, as compared to other fossil fuel-based energy sources. In fact, many multinational fossil fuel corporations are investing in renewable technology as there is a global shift away from fossil fuels. The SA Climate Ready Plan sets a long-term target that we need to work towards, but does not dictate specific actions, as technology, market costs, and affordability will need to be evaluated prior to any specific implementation actions.

9. Will utility rates go up because of this plan?

While the plan does identify a goal of carbon-free energy by 2050, additional analysis and public engagement will be needed prior to any specific action related to rates. The plan has at its core an equity framework and an equity screening mechanism that aims to ensure that affordability and impact on all San Antonio residents are considered prior to any specific implementation actions.

10. Why does this plan include climate equity?

Climate change affects everyone, but not all people are impacted equally. Across the world and right here in San Antonio, people who are already socially vulnerable, historically underserved and low-income communities, in particular) are less able to adapt to climate impacts and to prioritize climate action. That is why equity is at the heart of our CAAP: to ensure that implementation measures don't negatively impact our vulnerable populations either directly or indirectly. Affordability is built into this framework. The Office of Sustainability consulted with the Office of Equity throughout the entire plan development process.

11. Why does this plan have a long-term goal of phasing out natural gas?

City Council passed a resolution in support of the Paris Climate Accord and directed staff to develop a plan to fulfill that resolution. The SA Climate Ready Plan is developed based upon current climate science - natural gas releases fewer greenhouse gases than coal or oil, but it still contributes to climate change. Any transition to carbon free energy will be based upon market trends and technological improvement and will need to be implemented in San Antonio in a manner that is affordable and reliable. Global energy markets are shifting away from fossil fuel sources and in fact, many global energy suppliers such as BP and Shell are already investing in renewable energy technology.

12. The plan identifies twelve near-term climate action strategies. What does near-term mean?

Near-term actions are defined as those high impact strategies that should be initiated by 2021. These actions, many of which are already underway, have been identified as having high greenhouse gas reduction potential. The goals associated with these strategies will not be met by 2021, but labeling them as near-term means that we will focus our efforts on accelerating their implementation by 2021.

13. Will residents or businesses be forced to give up their gas-powered vehicle?

Residents and businesses will not be required to give up any personal vehicle, what you drive will remain a matter of individual preference. The carbon-free vehicle mitigation strategy (#9) in the CAAP outlines a process by which the city will support the market transition towards electric vehicles (EVs). The strategy does so by focusing on a comprehensive citywide EV charging infrastructure system and supporting consumer choice when possible. The plan does not mandate any interventions in personal or business vehicle procurement or use decisions. As auto makers and cities continue to shift towards an electrified transportation future, it is important for San Antonio to be prepared to compete statewide and nationally, so as not to be at a disadvantage for future economic development and investment opportunities.

14. What is the cost of this plan and why isn't there a detailed analysis?

Similar to the SA Tomorrow Plans, SA Climate Ready is a long-range framework that will serve as a climate action vision for the San Antonio. Each strategy in the plan provides a general policy direction, but the details of specific implementation measures will have to be fully vetted on a case-by-case basis prior to implementation. As there is much uncertainty around specific

implementation details, as well as many limitations around current technologies, it is difficult to place specific costs on plan implementation.

The SA Climate Ready Plan utilized a tool called CURB: Climate Action for Sustainability that was developed by the World Bank, AECOM, C40 Cities, and Bloomberg Philanthropies to identify potential investment. Financial analysis in the CURB tool is intended to provide an initial assessment of potential options. CURB costs estimates use the best publicly available financial data at a national level and additional source from AECOM cost specialists. Since CURB cost estimates are conducted at a high geographic level, local factors such as fuel and technology prices, taxation and tariffs on imported goods and materials, interest rates, financing mechanisms, and inflation are not accounted for. These factors are context specific and vary greatly across action areas and sectors. Additionally, since CURB evaluates a wide range of actions in different sectors, calculations are based on the availability of cost data and other information, which vary across sectors. The CURB team recommends conducting independent project-level financial analysis to inform investment decisions prior to implementation.

15. What are the benefits of this plan?

Every strategy in the plan was identified as a priority because it leads to greenhouse gas emissions reduction or helps our community prepare and adapt to a changing climate. However, every strategy has additional benefits that help improve our community. Examples of co-benefits are improved air quality, improved public health, increased economic vitality, increase in green jobs, improved local energy security, and improved community resilience.

16. If nobody else is tackling climate change, why should San Antonio?

While climate change is a global issue, its causes and impacts are at the local level. As mentioned above, there are many benefits to implementing this plan that don't have climate change as a basis. San Antonio is not the only one. Cities across the United States and around the world are taking climate action and making progress, and in fact are seeing their greenhouse gas emissions being reduced, while their populations and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increase.

17. What happens when this plan is adopted by City Council?

If the SA Climate Ready Plan is adopted by City Council, it will begin to serve as a guiding framework for planning and decision-making. No strategies in the plan will immediately go into effect; implementation priorities will be identified by City Council and staff and undergo a robust stakeholder engagement process to identify specific implementation pathways. In addition, more detailed costs and benefits will be quantified and provided to the community and City Council prior to approval and implementation of specific plan strategies.

18. What does this plan mean for local oil and gas jobs?

Oil and natural gas are fossil fuels that release greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change. It is essential that San Antonio recognize that current market trends are moving energy production away from fossil fuels, regardless of whether the City of San Antonio has a Climate Action Plan. In fact, many global energy suppliers such as BP and Shell are already investing in renewable energy technology. The SA Climate Ready Plan provides a long-term framework to assist with the creation of clean energy jobs to ensure well-paying jobs for all San Antonians during the market-based transition that is currently underway.

19. Is the SA Climate Ready Plan aggressive enough?

The SA Climate Ready's 2050 Carbon Neutral Goal amounts to a 3% annual reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), which is in line with national and global cities. Several cities across the world have reached peak emissions, meaning that their GHG emissions have fallen at least 10% over a five year period. Two examples are San Francisco that experienced an average annual reduction of 1.9% between 2000 and 2016, and Paris, France that experienced a 3.9% annual reduction between 2004 and 2014.