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My Fellow Evanstonians:

It gives me great pleasure to present the 2012 report of the Evanston Climate Action Plan (ECAP), which was launched in November 2008. This report summarizes the achievements we have made together in four years to mitigate the effects of climate change on our city and region.

ECAP evolved from a plan developed to support and enhance the value of environmental sustainability outlined in Evanston’s Strategic Plan. What city government can do is only a small part of what is required. Evanston is fortunate to have businesses, institutions, community organizations, and individual residents who demonstrate every day that climate action is good for our families, good for business, and good for the future of Evanston.

Since adopting the ECAP in 2008, our sustainability efforts have helped Evanston become recognized by state and national organizations over the years. Evanston has earned several prestigious awards, including the U.S. Conference of Mayors 2011 Climate Protection Award, the 2011 Governor’s Sustainability Award, and the 2012 National Environmental Hall of Fame Award.

We can all be proud of the example Evanston is setting for other cities around the country. Efforts we have made in implementing the ECAP demonstrate our community’s dedication and leadership around environmental issues. The city has met our outlined goal to reduce emissions by 13% by 2012, an exceptional achievement – but that is only a start. We have much more to do. I am confident that we will continue to serve as a model for sustainability in the future.

An enormous amount of hard work and cooperation have gone into reaching our goals. Because of the collaborative efforts in our community, Evanston is a better, greener, and healthier place to live. I am proud of the accomplishments we have made in the past four years, and look forward to making even more significant strides in the years ahead.

I would like to thank the members of the City Council, City staff, and our residents and businesses for working together to make all of these endeavors possible.

Sincerely,

Mayor
INTRODUCTION

The Evanston Climate Action Plan was developed in 2008 in a collaborative community process with more than 150 participating volunteers and City staff. The plan is divided into six topic areas and included approximately 220 strategies to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 13 percent by the end of 2012. Of the 220 listed, many have been implemented by Evanston in order to mitigate the effects of climate change.

According to 2012 estimates from the United States Census Bureau, Evanston’s population remained relatively constant from 2005-2012. Energy use per person, however, declined by 12% during the same period, reflecting improvements in the energy efficiency of homes, heating systems, and appliances. The 2012 Update Report highlights initiatives and projects created to support the Climate Action Plan’s implementation since 2008.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS UPDATE

2012 ECAP GOAL:
Reduce GHG emissions 13% of 1990 total emissions, or by 140,104 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO2E).

City of Evanston’s GHG emissions have decreased by 32%, or 7,923 MTCO2E, from 2005 to 2012.
Together, total GHG emissions have decreased by approximately 13%, or 128,744 MTCO2E, resulting in Evanston reaching our ECAP Goal.

Emission reductions for the City’s municipal operations are the result of the City efficiency projects and programs, many of which have been funded through federal and state grants.

These programs have resulted in a measurable reduction in operational emissions.
AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

In 2011 Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl was selected to receive the US Conference of Mayor’s Climate Protection Award, an initiative sponsored by The United States Conferences of Mayors. The annual awards program recognizes mayors for innovative practices in their cities that increase energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2011 the City of Evanston was presented with the Governors’ Sustainability Award. The City was 1 of 25 Illinois companies and organizations to be honored for their significant achievements in protecting the environment, helping sustain the future, and improving the economy. The City of Evanston was again recognized by the Governor for the Sustainability Award in 2013.

The Charles Walter Nicholas Award for Environmental Excellence was awarded to Evanston in 2012 for its “Get Caught Thinking G.R.E.E.N. (Greater Recycling in Every Evanston Neighborhood)” campaign.

In 2012 the Arbor Day Foundation named Evanston as a Tree City USA Community for the 28th consecutive year. The Foundation also recognized Evanston’s commitment to urban forestry with the Growth Award. The award is given for demonstrating progress in its community forestry program, honoring environmental improvement and higher levels of tree care in local communities.

In 2012 The National Environmental Hall of Fame Award was presented to Evanston for the City’s work in creating and implementing projects that address social, environmental, and financial aspects of sustainability.

The League of American Bicyclists deemed Evanston as a “Bicycle Friendly Community.” As of 2013, Evanston is only 1 of 6 communities in the state of Illinois to be recognized. Evanston and Chicago both earned silver awards; while Naperville, Schaumburg, and Urbana-Champaign earned bronze awards.
This ECAP category includes strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions including increasing public transportation, car-sharing programs, bicycling, and walking in Evanston and supporting affordable housing and transit-oriented development.

STRATEGIES

- Reduce car-ownership by encouraging residents and employers to participate in car-share programs.
- Reduce city fleet vehicle emissions.
- Utilize the Evanston Multi-Modal Transportation Plan development process to recommend and support measures that reduce transportation-related GHG emissions.
- Collect and track data on Evanston travel trends, including vehicle miles traveled, transit boardings, and the number of residents that commute via bike or foot.
- Continue to support and encourage mixed-use, green, high performing, transit-oriented development.

I-Go Program

STRATEGY:

Reduce car-ownership by encouraging residents and employers to participate in car-share programs.

The I-GO car-sharing program currently offers 14 vehicles in Evanston, including one all-electric vehicle powered by solar radiation. The program currently has over 500 participating members who reside in Evanston.
**Vehicle Emissions**

**STRATEGY:**

Reduce car-ownership by encouraging residents and employers to participate in car-share programs.

During the period from 2005-2012, GHG emissions from transportation-related activities have decreased by 6% in City-operated vehicles, but increased by 9% in community vehicles. However, although there was a steady increase in community transportation emissions from 2005-2010, there has been a steady decline in recent years.
Green Fleet Program

**STRATEGY:**

Reduce city fleet vehicle emissions.

Over the past several years, the City's Fleet Services Division has worked with various departments to improve the efficiency of the fleet through a variety of approaches, including the purchase and use of greener vehicles, the use of greener fuels, and the implementation of anti-idling policies to name a few. Since 2008, Fleet Services has removed 54 older and high emission vehicles, replacing them with energy efficient vehicles with higher mile per gallon potential. Additionally, Fleet Services continues to recycle all used oils, as well as all ferrous and non-ferrous metals. Income from the metal recycling is used to offset the city's operating costs to keep vehicles running efficiently.

Multi-Modal Plan

**STRATEGY:**

Utilize the Evanston Multi-Modal Transportation Plan development process to recommend and support measures that reduce transportation-related GHG emissions.

The Evanston Multi-Modal Transportation Plan was developed with an extensive public and stakeholder involvement process, including a public workshop, seven focus group meetings and a survey with more than 400 responses to allow the community to present transportation issues of concern and provide input on transportation needs and improvements. The result was a plan that incorporated the need of all users of our transportation system with special attention to a reduction in environmental. One specific objective of the plan was to reduce transportation-related environmental impacts.

Several projects have since been implemented from the Multi-Modal Plan which were directly referenced in the ECAP include signal modernization and upgrade of bicycle infrastructure. Of the 102 traffic signals that the City maintains, 48 have been modernized and coordinated since 2005 in order to reduce traffic burden and idling in cars.

In addition to the Church Street protected bike path and many other bicycle path improvements both on- and off-street, the City added bike parking infrastructure at various locations. In the downtown area, an additional 76 bike racks or 152 spaces were added along Church Street, 12 bike racks or 24 spaces at the Civic Center, 4 racks or 8 spaces at the Main Street Metra Station and a pilot bike corral that is capable of parking 16 bikes in front of the Evanston Athletic Club. The City developed a Bicycle Route and Parking map, which details all of the bicycle routes and racks throughout Evanston.

Membership in the Evanston Bicycle Club has increased from 404 in 2005 to 539 in 2012. The Evanston Bicycle Club has also vastly increased the amount of miles ridden from 112,986 in 2005 to 218,108 miles in 2012.
Purple Line: The weekday and weekend average number of riders for the Purple Line increased 1.4% on weekdays, but decreased 1.8% and 2% on Saturdays and Sundays, respectively, from 2011 to 2012. However, annual total boardings on the CTA Purple Line have steadily increased since 2009, indicating that more people are taking advantage of public transit.

CTA

STRATEGY:

Collect and track data on Evanston travel trends, including vehicle miles traveled, transit boardings, and the number of residents that commute via bike or foot.

Evanston continues to track data on travel trends to help inform investments in transportation related projects.

Ridership on bus routes has also increased from 2008 to 2012. From 2008 to 2012, the City’s three CTA bus routes saw the following changes in ridership:

- 201 Central/Ridge: annual total rides increased by 39.5%
- 205 Chicago/Golf: annual total rides increased by 23.0%
- 206 Evanston Circulator: annual total rides decreased by 12.2%
Compact & Complete Development

STRATEGY:

Continue to support and encourage mixed-use, green, highperforming, transit-oriented development.

Evanston Community Development and Economic Development efforts continue to focus on supporting and encouraging mixed use, green, high performing, and transit oriented development. Significant projects have been developed near the city’s CTA and Metra stations including most recently the AMLI project on Chicago Avenue and the Central Street Station on Central Street.

Evanston also continues to work towards neighborhood stabilization and providing affordable housing options so people can live and work in Evanston, thereby reducing their workplace travel and emissions. In 2011, Evanston was awarded an 18.15 million dollar grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development in order to stabilize portions of West and South Evanston, as well as generate economic opportunities for local residents and businesses. Under Evanston’s Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2, the City has partnered with Brinshore Development to acquire abandoned and foreclosed properties to rehabilitate them for income-eligible households. Of the 100 properties selected for the program, 91 have been acquired, of which 23 have been sold and 27 rented.

The City is also redeveloping an abandoned industrial property in Emerson Square, a 32 mixed-income community at the heart of the West Evanston Master Plan. Construction at Emerson Square is anticipated to be complete by early fall. Additional benefits include the creation and retention of jobs (41 jobs alone were created or retained in the second quarter of this year), a drop in crime, and new construction projects.

Education & Engagement

Safe Walk To School

Safe Walk to School: In 2011 a series of maps were created detailing safe routes to every elementary and middle school in Evanston-Skokie School District #65. The maps show the safest routes to every school, locating traffic signals and crossing guards. Every school has its own map, which can be found on the District #65 website. The maps were created in hope of increasing the number of children who walk to school in Evanston. Walking to school gives children independence, a chance to get to know their neighborhood, exercise before and after school, as well as a way to reduce their family’s carbon footprint.

Bike The Ridge

Bike the Ridge is an annual event put on by the City of Evanston. Bicycles are usually prohibited on Ridge Avenue, but this non-competitive, city-sponsored event closes a section the road to all vehicular traffic to allow participants to bike freely on Ridge Avenue.
ENERGY EFFICIENCY

This ECAP category includes strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions through decreasing the energy used in residential, commercial, and city-owned buildings. A summary of overall emission reductions in this category are provided followed by specific progress towards each main reduction strategy from the ECAP.

STRATEGIES:

- Reduce emissions related to electric and gas use in residential buildings.
- Reduce emissions related to electric and gas use in City owned and operated buildings, parks, parking lots and garages, and along City streets.
- Reduce emissions related to electric and gas use in commercial, institutional, and industrial buildings.

Total energy-related emissions have decreased by 16%, or 141,454 MTCO2E below 2005 levels. City operations and the community have decreased emissions by 36% and 16%, respectively.
Residential Buildings

STRATEGY:

Reduce emissions related to electric and gas use in residential buildings.

The City of Evanston has implemented several key programs and engagement initiatives to address residential electric and natural gas usage in the community. The key programs and initiatives are described below. In addition, the City of Evanston has distributed 41,000 CFLs to the community to promote energy efficiency.

Cub Energy Savers

The City of Evanston and the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) continue to work together to promote residential energy efficiency. CUB Energy Savers is a free program that links a customer’s ComEd account and reports actual energy usage. This allows a resident to see exactly how much energy they are saving. The City has currently registered 1,327 members in the Team Evanston program, the highest compared to any other cities in the program. On average, a CUB Energy Saver participant in Evanston saved 657 kWh of electricity, equating to about 73 dollars. Evanston’s participating households collectively saved 872,238 kWh of electricity and 97,342 dollars.

ComEd Community Energy Challenge

Evanston was 1 of 11 communities asked to participate in ComEd’s Community Energy Challenge, a pilot project to include local communities in outreach efforts designed to increase participation in ComEd’s new Smart Ideas program. Each community involved was asked to complete a plan that reduced energy use, conserved water, and lowered greenhouse gas emissions for municipal organizations, businesses, and residents. Evanston submitted a narrative on its ComEd Community Energy Challenge plan that involves 19 projects, and was subsequently awarded over $450,000 to implement the outlined goals.

Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program Community Challenge

Evanston is one of two communities (Oak Park is the other) to participate in the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program. The initiative aimed to foster energy efficiency awareness and action within the two communities with plans to expand to others in the future. For every homeowner or business that participated, $50 was awarded to each community’s final prize, up to a total of $25,000 per community. There were 390 total participants from Evanston in the challenge, and a total of $23,500 was collectively awarded.
The Cub “Big 7 Savers Challenge”

The Big 7 Savers Challenge was launched in 2011 to encourage the top seven employers in Evanston in an energy-saving team competition. Participating employers include the City of Evanston, Evanston/Skokie School District 65, District 202 (ETHS), NorthShore University HealthSystem (NorthShore), Northwestern University, Rotary International, and Saint Francis Hospital. The objective was for each team to recruit the most participants in order to collectively achieve the largest average drop in home electricity usage.

<table>
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<th>Team Name</th>
<th>Employee Sign Ups</th>
<th>% of Employees</th>
<th>Average Savings Per Person</th>
<th>Estimated kWh Savings</th>
<th>Estimated Dollar Savings</th>
<th>Estimated CO2 Savings (lbs.)</th>
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<td>NorthShore</td>
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<td>220,111.29</td>
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<td>2.13%</td>
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<td>$2,592.55</td>
<td>31,302.65</td>
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<td>Saint Francis Hospital</td>
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<td>TOTALS</td>
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<td>292,495.60</td>
<td>$39,486.92</td>
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City Owned Properties

STRATEGY:

Reduce emissions related to electric and gas use in city owned and operated buildings, parks, parking lots and garages, and along city streets.

Lighting and energy efficiency projects have been completed at 10 buildings around the community, with over 4,000 lights retrofitted or removed. All of these projects were made possible through grants from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and the State of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

Since 2005, the City has also converted over 1500 street lights and 1300 parking garage lights to more efficient technologies.
Commercial Buildings

STRATEGY:

Reduce emissions related to electric and gas use in commercial, institutional, and industrial buildings.

The City of Evanston developed the Evanston Green Building Ordinance to incorporate energy efficiency and resource conservation into new construction, additions and renovation projects and thereby decreasing emissions related to the community’s building stock. Since its adoption, the Green Building Ordinance resulted in energy efficiency and sustainable practices in 10 LEED Certified Buildings, including one LEED Platinum certified building, six LEED Gold certified buildings, and three LEED Silver certifications. There are also over 100 ongoing or completed remodeling projects in buildings around Evanston incorporating green practices as outlined by LEED.

Education & Engagement

EnergyBUZZ

EnergyBUZZ is a free, online tool that helps residents track their energy use to save money and earn rewards for the energy-efficient choices they make. EnergyBUZZ allows participants to see how their gas bill compares to friends, family and neighbors, and gives simple steps to reduce energy consumption. As the energy bill reduces, EnergyBUZZ rewards residents with points they can redeem for coupons and incentives at local businesses.
This ECAP category includes strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by increasing biofuel usage and renewable energy resources implemented in city and residential buildings.

**STRATEGIES:**

- Continue to reduce emissions related to motor fuel use by City fleet through the use of bio-fuels.
- Reduce emissions related to electric and gas use in building through the use of renewable energy.

**City Fleet**

**STRATEGY:**

Continue to reduce emissions related to motor fuel use by City fleet through the use of bio-fuels.

The City of Evanston Fleet Services has converted to the use of biodiesel over diesel for the City’s fleet. Biodiesel has significantly less CO2 emissions than diesel and is made from renewable resources. According to the EPA, biodiesel results, on average, in a 57% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions per gallon in comparison to petroleum diesel.

**City Buildings**

**STRATEGY:**

Reduce emissions related to electric and gas use in building through the use of renewable energy.

The installation of a 25kW solar photovoltaic (PV) system on top of the water plant has generated over 80 Megawatt hours of energy since its construction, which reduced GHG emissions by 57 TC02E. This offset is equivalent to about five acres of trees.
COMMUNITY CHOICE ELECTRICITY AGGREGATION

Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) is an opt-out program that allows local governments to aggregate residential and small commercial retail electric accounts, and seek proposals for a cheaper, and possibly cleaner, source of power. The City of Evanston implemented a CCA program that bundled residential and small commercial accounts and secured a cheaper electricity supply for customers. The city also provided CCA program customers with 100% renewable energy by proving Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) from Illinois or an adjacent state wind farm. Over the first year of the program, the program provided approximately $264.00 in savings per household and reduced the community carbon footprint by 77,029 Metric tons of CO2.

MAYOR’S OFFSHORE WIND COMMITTEE

The Mayor’s Offshore Wind Committee was formed in 2010 to evaluate and review responses to the City’s Request for Information (RFI) and provide comments to the City Council. The purpose of the RFI was to solicit information from interested parties on developing an offshore wind energy facility in Lake Michigan off the northern shore of Evanston. Five Evanstonians subsequently served on the state Lake Michigan Offshore Wind Advisory Council, which had 4 major recommendations. The full report can be accessed online at the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) website.

In spring 2013, the Illinois legislature passed HB 2753, the Lake Michigan Wind Energy Act, to implement the four recommendations. Once the bill is signed by the governor, it will affirm that Illinois is open to the concept of offshore wind provided necessary environmental standards are met.

Meanwhile, three separate public opinion surveys have showcased general support of Lake Michigan offshore wind energy development, with stronger support as distance from shore increases. Currently, at least one known wind energy developer is seeking investors and governmental support for a pilot project.

Education & Engagement

Green Living Festival

The Green Living Festival is an annual event that was started to encourage individuals to make meaningful changes to their everyday life that will reduce their personal carbon footprint. The festival promotes a green lifestyle by providing a venue where local green vendors, exhibitors, and speakers can present information to those who are interested.
WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING

This ECAP category includes strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions through waste reduction, material reuse, and recycling of commercial and residential material. A summary of overall emission reductions in this category are provided followed by specific progress towards each main reduction strategy from the ECAP.

STRATEGIES:

- Increase residential waste reduction and recycling participation efforts
- Increase waste reduction and recycling participation in city buildings, parks, and events.

Evanston has collected 9,017 tons of recyclables in 2012. Since 2003 the amount of recyclables has drastically increased, indicating Evanston residents’ growing commitment to recycling.
Residential

**STRATEGY:**

*Increase residential waste reduction and recycling participation efforts.*

The Public Works Department has developed several programs to help residents more fully participate in waste reduction and recycling efforts. Initial programs focused on providing additional capacity for residents to collect recycling through the upgrade to rolling recycling carts in the city’s curbside residential recycling program. The city also has added the collection of sharps, CFL’s, medications, and thermometers at several city facilities to keep this material out of the landfill. Recently, the Public Works department began a program to distribute re-purposed refuse bins to residents to use as stationary composting containers in a compost program in 2011. According to the EPA, food makes up the largest percentage of waste in municipal landfills (21%). Composting food has many benefits, including reduced need for chemical fertilizers, higher yields of agricultural crops, and more.

The City

**STRATEGY:**

*Increase waste reduction and recycling participation in city buildings, park*

With a grant from the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant, the Public Works department purchased 200 recycling containers and placed them in the city’s business districts and parks. Each recycling container is paired with an existing refuse container, making recycling easy and convenient.

Education & Engagement

**Evanston Recycling Fair & Equipment Display**

The Evanston Recycling Fair & Equipment Display provides residents with an opportunity to recycle a variety of items—including electronics, securely shred documents, learn about construction projects, and obtain recycling education materials. Since 2012 the State of Illinois banned the sending of electronics to the landfill. Hence, the city’s membership in the Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County allows residents to have access to year-round electronics recycling at sites throughout the area.
FOOD PRODUCTION AND TRANSPORTATION

This ECAP category includes strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging citizens and businesses to consume more locally grown and produced foods. A summary of overall emission reductions in this category are provided followed by specific progress towards each main reduction strategy from the ECAP.

STRATEGY:

- Reduce emissions related to the production and transportation of food.

Locally Grown Foods

STRATEGY:

Reduce emissions related to the production and transportation of food.

Establishing and promoting Local Farmers’ Markets are an effective method to reduce the transportation emissions associated with food distribution and help improve the connection between local growers and consumers. Evanston has a long tradition of farmers’ markets and as of 2013, there are as many as 51 vendors at the Downtown Evanston Farmers' Market, up from 37 in 2011. There are three total farmers’ markets available around Evanston for residents to buy fresh, local food.

Additionally, The Friends of Evanston Markets began an indoor farmers’ market during the winter growing season, with 29 vendors showcasing available food.

Community gardening is one strategy that helps to promote local food production within Evanston. There are 220 available plots that residents can rent for community gardening in Evanston from March to November each year. The community gardening program is so successful that there is currently a lottery system in place for new gardeners.
The final ECAP category includes strategies for offsetting emissions in addition to strategies for water conservation, stormwater management, urban temperature control and water quality. A summary of overall emission reductions in this category are provided followed by specific progress towards each main reduction strategy from the ECAP.

**STRATEGIES:**

- Implement policies and practices that treat rainwater as a resource and make use of it where it falls.
- Reduce amount of water used by 15% below 2000 water consumption levels by 2015.

**Green Alley**

**STRATEGY:**

Implement policies and practices that treat rainwater as a resource and make use of it where it falls.

The Green Alley program is a good example of the many strategies the City is implementing to promote the infiltration of stormwater within the community. In fall 2008, the City’s first permeable alley was installed on the north side of Dobson St, just east of Ashland Ave. This green alley includes eight inches of porous concrete pavement that allows storm water to permeate the surface and infiltrate the soil underneath. This project will reduce flooding in buildings along the alley and keep excessive water out of the City’s sewer system. Since this initial pilot project, the City has employed porous pavement in several projects across the City and has incorporated porous concrete as part of the city’s 50/50 Alley Paving program.
Water Consumption

**STRATEGY:**

Reduce amount of water used by 15% below 2000 water consumption levels by 2015.

The City of Evanston has seen a gradual decrease in water use per person over the last 10 years. Water use has decreased by 18% below 2003 levels, thereby meeting the ECAP water reduction goal. The city has subsequently developed a new water conservation and efficiency plan thanks to a grant from the Chicago Metropolitans Agency for Planning (CMAP). The goal of the new plan is to further reduce water consumption by an additional 6% by 2020, based on 2010 standards.
POLICY & RESEARCH

This section summarizes some of the community wide, large-scale strategies that the City of Evanston has employed which define its overall approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Through information campaigns, securing of funding, and collaboration with regional and national partners, the City of Evanston has emphasized the importance of policy and research in executing the ECAP.

**STRATEGIES:**

- Track and disseminate information on climate change trends, policies, and best practices.
- Ensure that policy decisions at all levels seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Secure and leverage funding for Evanston Climate Action Plan initiatives and strategies.
- Support local, state and national efforts to mitigate climate change.

**Climate Change**

**STRATEGY:**

Track and disseminate information on climate change trends, policies, and best practices.

Since the ECAP was drafted, a major sustainability section has been added to the City of Evanston’s webpage. Among the numerous purposes that this section serves, it is the primary means that the city employs to proliferate basic, general, information on climate change, as well as recommendations and resources for ways that residents can do their part. It includes information regarding energy, transportation, water conservation, and more, discussing details and resources available to Evanston residents and updating them as new discoveries are made.

**Policy Decisions**

**STRATEGY:**

Ensure that policy decisions at all levels seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The implementation of the climate action plan has been a priority for the City Council since it was adopted in 2008. As such, environmental considerations as they relate to the ECAP inform decision-making at all levels. The office of sustainability works closely with numerous other city departments to ensure that everyone is on the same page regarding our community’s commitment to the environment.
Leverage Funding

**STRATEGY:**

Secure and leverage funding for Evanston Climate Action Plan initiatives and strategies

The City of Evanston has employed numerous means of obtaining funding for sustainability initiatives. One successful example of this fund acquisition is the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant which was awarded through the Federal Government’s stimulus package and made available $749,700 for a variety of projects. These projects range from five building retrofits, including a “tune-up” of Evanston's water treatment plant, to lighting upgrades for select parks and streets, to numerous outreach and education campaigns, and more.

In addition, the city applied for and received rebates for lighting and other upgrades to community centers and parking garages between 2008 and 2012. The $600,017 in rebate money was from the state of Illinois' Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity through their Illinois Energy Now program which seeks to incentivize large-scale equipment improvements to public electric and gas systems. Many of these renovation dollars went towards the projects listed in the preceding paragraph.

Along with the more conventional means of securing and leveraging funding listed above, the City of Evanston has also called on the community to support its efforts. One way that this has played out has been through the sustainability internship program. This program provides a valuable and fulfilling learning experience for students and volunteers while accomplishing hundreds of hours of work, saving the city thousands of dollars. Another way that the community has showed its support is through fundraising. Supporters of green causes gathered, conversed, ate, drank and danced the night away on May 31, 2013 for the second annual Evanston Green Ball. Proceeds went towards supporting programs and operations at the Evanston Ecology Center. The event was emceed by television journalist and Northwestern graduate Dan Ponce. Highlights included a “Taste of Evanston” food sampling, live music, a dance floor, and a photo booth.

In total, the City of Evanston has been successful in securing and leveraging about 3.3 million dollars in federal, state, and other for sustainable initiatives in the years since the adoption of the ECAP.

Support Efforts

**STRATEGY:**

Support local, state and national efforts to mitigate climate change.

While many of Evanston’s sustainability initiatives originated locally, right here, many of the City of Evanston’s events and programs are executed in partnership with national and state-wide efforts. The City of Evanston seeks to collaborate with local, state, and national efforts whenever possible. These efforts range from Evanston’s green building ordinance which references a national certification system, to participation in national or statewide energy challenges and awareness events covering a range of issues, details of which can be found in the engagement section.
EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

Described in this section are measures taken by the City of Evanston to reach out to the community and encourage involvement in sustainability initiatives. Priorities included providing residents with the tools and venues to educate themselves about environmental issues, modeling “green practices,” and garnering support and cooperation from the city’s largest employers.

STRATEGIES:

• Gain support from the six largest Evanston institutions and businesses for the implementation of the ECAP.
• Empower the community to take action around climate change.
• Use festivals, markets and celebrations to promote and model “green practices”.
• Connect residents, businesses and city staff to workshops, training and lectures on green topics.

Gain Support

STRATEGY:

Gain support from the six largest Evanston institutions and businesses for the implementation of the ECAP.

The Evanston Green Ribbon Committee formed in 2010 as an adjunct of the Evanston Climate Action Plan (ECAP) with a mission to curb local contributions to climate change. Comprised of the seven largest employers in Evanston, the committee convenes semi-annually and is dedicated to ongoing collaboration in an attempt to advance strategies outlined in ECAP. One of the manifestations of this collaboration was the Big 7 Saver Challenge.

During a year-long competition, Evanston’s seven biggest employers were pitted against each other to see who could save the most energy. More than 1,700 residents signed up with one of the seven institutions. At the end of the competition, two winners were announced: NorthShore University HealthSystem, who recruited 820 families to join CUB Energy Saver, with 38% of their workforce participating, along with Evanston Township High School who had the largest per-person savings, cutting electric bills by an average of 3.15 percent. This contest cut carbon dioxide pollution by 476,767 pounds and showed city leaders’ commitment to energy conservation. In addition to their collaborative efforts, these seven institutions also have their own internal initiatives in the works to reduce their impact on the environment.
Empower Community

**STRATEGY:**

Empower the community to take action around climate change.

The City of Evanston has sought to empower and engage the community around climate change in numerous capacities. One of the ways this has been accomplished is by promoting city-wide energy efficiency challenges/competitions. In 2010, the City of Evanston initiated a new energy efficiency program called the CUB Energy Project. Collaborating with the Citizens Utility Board, the program uses a free online portal to provide monthly energy data tracking for residents through their ComEd accounts. Personalized data is paired with suggestions for increasing energy efficiency such as switching to CFL light bulbs and upgrading inefficient appliances. Points are allocated to users who follow the tips and decrease their household energy usage from month to month, and can be cashed in at favorite local and national restaurants and shops.

As part of the Nicor Gas Community Challenge, individuals in Evanston and Oak Park can sign up for and connect their utility bills to EnergyBUZZ, a free online tool to help track energy use and reduce costs. Homeowners can sign up for residential programs, including low cost home energy assessments and rebates for energy efficiency improvements. Businesses can also sign up to receive free energy assessments and rebates for improvements. Owners of apartment buildings can sign up for a program to receive free installation of faucet aerators, showerheads, light bulbs, and programmable thermostats.

Additionally, residents have access to up-to-date information about events and seasonal topics through e-newsletters and the city’s website. These resources are available around the clock to empower people with the tools they need to take action.

Promote Green Practices

**STRATEGY:**

Use festivals, markets and celebrations to promote and model “green practices”.

The City of Evanston is constantly planning and hosting events as a means to support and demonstrate “green practices.” Some of these events are focused around other themes, but incorporate environmentally-friendly components, such as 2013’s back to school picnic which featured a portable tap water truck in lieu of bottled water. Meanwhile, other programs are planned entirely around the premise of raising awareness around environmental issues. Selected examples of these programs can be found below.

The ongoing Farmers market continues to encourage participation in local food systems, while events like Bike to Work Week and Bike the Ridge promote carbon-free commutes and an active lifestyle.

Additionally, Evanston hosted a Green Arts Show two years in a row in 2011 and 2012. The juried exhibit featured over 20 talented visual and performing artists whose work reflects or promotes more sustainable ways of living. It is a lively, unique event with artwork judged on artistic merit and use of concepts or materials that promote awareness of green and sustainable ways of living.

Another exciting event is the Evanston Green Living Festival. This is an annual event, presented by the Evanston Environmental Association (EEA) and the City of Evanston, with financial and in-kind support from an outstanding group of sponsors. The festival is held at the Evanston Ecology Center, and is designed to provide a venue where organizations can present green products, services and ideas to help attendees lower their carbon footprint. The 2013 festival theme was “Preserving & Protecting the Urban Forest”.

Workshops & Trainings

STRATEGY:

Connect residents, businesses and city staff to workshops, training and lectures on green topics.

There are a wide variety of ways in which the City of Evanston connects its population to information. Through educational events, people are given an opportunity to learn about and discuss environmental issues as they relate to their lives as Evanstonians. Examples include, but are not limited to the sampling of programs described below.

Monthly Green Drinks events provide a space for Evanston residents to come together in a social setting and learn about important environmental issues. Hosted by local restaurants and bars and featuring guest speakers, these events give Evanston residents an opportunity to network and learn about relevant environmental topics ranging from hydraulic fracturing, to winterizing their homes.

The city also sponsored the first One Seed One Evanston program to promote local, healthy eating habits. Swiss chard was selected as the common crop, a food for residents to grow across Evanston both individually and as part of the community. Through One Seed One Evanston, residents were able to pick up free packages of Swiss chard seeds from locations around the city.

Along with the efforts mentioned above, the City of Evanston makes it easy to connect to local groups and initiatives with a focus on green topics. Such groups include the Evanston Rebuilding Warehouse which demonstrates sustainable deconstruction and building practices by selling low-cost, reclaimed building materials and supporting the community. Additionally the Evanston Environmental Association hosted the Wild and Scenic Film Festival again which showed audiences a number of films inspired by the environment. Residents have the chance to learn about green agriculture as well through the Talking Farm, a community-based farm in south Evanston which educates people on the topic of sustainable agriculture. More information on all of these groups and initiatives is available through the City webpage.
COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

In order to accomplish the goals of the 2008 ECAP, outreach and engagement needed to play a significant role in the City of Evanston’s efforts. Below are outlined some of the major communications priorities taken on in relation to accomplishing the City’s goals.

STRATEGIES:

- Disseminate information to the community around climate change and the ECAP and promote community and City efforts as pertinent.
- Support development of a public information campaign that includes advertising, poster displays, signage, etc. and that motivates the community to take action to reach the goal of 13% reduction in GHG emissions by 2012.
- Encourage residents, businesses, students and community groups to use the Zerofootprint Evanston online carbon footprint calculator.

The monthly sustainability newsletter helps inform the community about news, events and updates on local and regional events and updates, while the evanstongreenbuzz.org website has a discussion board and green events calendar which residents can go to stay informed. These two resources make it easy for people to learn about Evanston’s green groups and events, and encourage participation.

Additionally, the City of Evanston has been releasing update reports on the progress of the ECAP’s goals bi-annually. These reports keep residents up-to-date on the progression of initiatives and hold the City of Evanston accountable to its objectives. Links to past copies of these reports can be found on the City’s website.

Public Information

STRATEGY:

Support development of a public information campaign that includes advertising, poster displays, signage, etc. and that motivates the community to take action to reach the goal of 3% reduction in GHG emissions by 2012.

The City of Evanston has engaged in a comprehensive information campaign to promote its greenhouse gas reduction goals. Drawing upon its full arsenal of resources, the city publicly promotes every sustainability event it partakes in in order to encourage participation. As people participate and awareness of our emissions goals grows, people become more motivated to do their part and actively engage in our greenhouse gas reduction initiatives.

These public information initiatives range from large banners hung downtown to promote events like car-free day, to buttons to raise awareness of the 13% reduction goal, to social media updates on local sustainability events and resources.
Zerofootprint Evanston

**STRATEGY:**

Encourage residents, businesses, students and community groups to use the Zerofootprint Evanston online carbon footprint calculator.

Members of the Evanston community have access to web resources through the City’s website which enable them to calculate their household or business’ carbon footprint by estimating their total building emissions. Once they have an estimate of their total greenhouse gas emissions, Evanstonians are shown ways that they can reduce these emissions, as well as see how much money can be saved by implementing these emission reducing practices. A link to the EPA’s household carbon footprint calculator can be found at the link below:

http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/ghgemissions/ind-calculator.html

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| *2012 data includes credit from REC’s purchased for Electricity Aggregation Program*