



Watertown City Council

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Climate and Energy Committee 11/18/2024

The Climate and Energy Committee convened on Monday November 18, 2024, at 5:30pm in the City Council Chambers. The purpose of the meeting was to hear updates on the Climate Action Plan (CAP) with a focus on Transportation and Mobility.

Present in the room were Tony Palomba, chair; Caroline Bays, vice chair; and John Airasian, secretary. Also present were Laurel Schaub, Sustainability Manager; Katie Swan, Environmental Planner; Zeke Mermell, Senior Transportation Planner; Silas Fyler, Energy Manager and Councilor Vincent Piccirilli. A full list of attendees in person and online is attached.

Laurel began her presentation stating that staff is working to track progress and looking to get a 3-year report in the summer of '25 as this will mark the 3-year adoption of the CAP. Staff also looking to recalculate greenhouse gas inventory since the data they have been going off is from 2019.

Laurel and Sylas went over several elements and below are the highlights. The full discussion can be seen on the WCATV link below or the presentation attached.

Outreach and Education

- Have increased the frequency of the monthly newsletter
- Hosted 200 volunteers at the Lowell for Miyawaki forest planting
- Planning an inaugural sustainability festival in May of 2025

Buildings and Energy

- Promoting heat pump workshop on 12/7 at the library
- Providing assistance for clean energy financing
- Working to have BERDO in front of Council by end of year

Natural Resources

- The Environmental site assessment of Walker Pond is underway
- Tree ordinance is under legal review
- Planted a total of 854 new trees since 2022

Infrastructure and Waste Management

- Preparing to roll out a student composting at Middle School
- Drafting a sustainable procurement policy ordinance

Public Health and Preparedness

- Open space staff is working with DPW and schools to provide shade at park redesigns
- Climate change and health vulnerability assessment is in progress

As Transportation was the focus of the meeting, Zeke Mermell addressed the committee on

several updates. The city's vehicle fleet is transitioning to electric as WPD has purchased 3 EVs and the DPW has purchased 1. Chargers are going in at the Phillips school and WPD. A "Safe Streets for All" grant was awarded in the amount of \$800,000 over the next 5 years to provide education, city wide speed limit study and protected bike lanes. The purpose of the grant is to enhance and show the community safer modes of travel for all. Part of the grant is to build a demonstration project consisting of protected bike lanes from Watertown St. to North Beacon St with wider sidewalks and a focus on safety measures. There has been more thought on Blue Bike stations including ebike options, bus prioritization lanes, progressing the Pleasant street ridership and a bike parking ordinance.

Councilor Palomba noted that with all the activity and in order to reach our CAP goals by 2050, more capacity would be needed in these departments.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05

Minutes prepared by John M. Airasian

Full list of Attendees:

Deborah Pederson – in person
Ernesta Krackiewicz – in person
Lise Paul – in person
Nancy Hamett – online
Brian Hebeison – online
Susan Ladue – online
Sophia Galimore

Link to WCATV

<http://vodwcatv.org/CablecastPublicSite/show/3520?site=3>

Attachments:

TO: Watertown Climate and Energy Committee
FROM: Deborah Peterson, 9 Westland Road, Watertown
RE: Comments on Climate Plan Transportation Report
DATE: Nov18,2024

I am glad we are meeting about transportation. It is our second largest contributor to green house gasses. This primarily comes down to vehicle mile reduction. And for that you need transit. Bikes and walking are great, but you get the biggest bang from transit. The City is doing a lot, but there needs to be a way that all these disparate pieces can work together and an assessment of the contribution of each to car mile reduction.

We need to have a clearer idea of what it will take to reduce our vehicle miles and a schedule of phase in of targets. Here are some things that we are doing and some where we can do more.

The council has recommended an update to the TDM regulations and exploring options to open up the shuttles to the public which is good because the TDM was created to address congestion not vehicle miles and TDM targets are much lower than our climate goals for SOV use . It would be good if this update had options to include all buildings not just new development. The City was awarded a grant to create a robust monitoring system for the TDM, and is working on policies around speed limit reductions and parking requirements which will all work to reduce car use. The ARPA funded Mobility Grant will give us a better picture of what and how the city can improve mobility without relying on a personal automobile.

We also have a Bike-Ped Plan and Complete Streets Prioritization Plan which were created before the climate goals. Let's take a second look at these and see what we can prioritize or add: for example is likely to give north south bike routes a higher priority in both and may add the need for improved transit accommodations to the Complete Streets priorities.

On another note, we continue to require and use traditional traffic studies which were designed to identify and reduce congestion. We now know that the mitigation directed by these traffic studies ends up increasing vehicle miles through the dynamic of induced demand. It may be a little complicated but I urge you to check out *Walkable Cities* by Jeff Speck. So we need to refocus traffic studies on people- not cars moved. MAPC has been promoting this approach.

And finally we have a visionary plan for a denser Watertown Square with much needed housing and accompanying amenities that will depend on greater use of transit.

So the question is, can we align all these different plans, initiatives and practices into a single **comprehensive, and integrated strategy with vehicle reduction goals and new housing, and new development**. I expect the ARPA Mobility Study to help. And we need it quickly.

The recent Final Environmental Review filed by Alexandria Real Estate for the Watertown Mall Transformation has some sobering lessons. This Project is expected to generate 78,000 car trips a week. While they embraced the City's TDM and built them into their plan, these targets are way below our climate vehicle mile targets. WE could be asking for more – maybe phased in over time. They also clearly state that they cannot meet our climate targets because the “ transportation infrastructure does not currently provide the resources necessary to achieve this goal”. **We need to provide a credible plan for the**

transportation infrastructure and components that developers can rely on to build less car-centric developments.

If we had vision of what the city would need to meet our climate vehicle reduction goal it would inform both new development and city practices in a way that aligns with not only our climate goals, but with the widespread desire for a more livable, walkable, and local community as embraced by our Comprehensive Plan and Watertown Square. We are planning for the future. And given a chance, many people would opt to live in a neighborhood where they would leave the car behind or not own one if they could!

Full list of Attendees:

Deborah Pederson – in person
Ernesta Krackiewicz – in person
Lise Paul – in person
Nancy Hamett – online
Brian Hebeison – online
Susan Ladue – online
Sophia Galimore

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Anthony Palomba,
Chair

Caroline Bays,
Vice Chair

John M. Airasian,
Secretary

RESILIENT WATERTOWN CLIMATE AND ENERGY PLAN- ACTION STATUS TRACKER

Timeframe Key
short: less than 1 year to complete
medium: 1-3 years
long: 3-5 years

Action	Plan Element	Lead Entity	Timeframe	Cost Magnitude	Status	
CC 1	Strategy CC1: Add staff capacity and resources to the Energy Manager's Office, the DPW Forestry Division, and the Department of Community Development and Planning	n/a	DCDP	ongoing	n/a	creation of new Sustainability Team within DCDP headed by Sustainability Manager (Laurel Schwab); hired a full-time Energy Advocate and full-time Sustainability Planner; added support to Energy Managers office
CC 2	Strategy CC2: Create an overarching Resilient Watertown Outreach & Education Campaign	n/a	DCDP	ongoing	n/a	moved external RW website to a series of pages on the city website; increased frequency of email newsletter to monthly
CC 3	Strategy CC3: Develop assistance mechanisms and resources for renters and landlords (regarding energy efficiency, EV charging, etc.)	n/a	DCDP	ongoing	n/a	Energy Advocate (EA) conducting outreach to renters and landlords as well as local realtors
CC 4	Strategy CC4: Collaborate regionally with other communities and entities	n/a	DCDP	ongoing	n/a	staff spoke with Sustainable Belmont on 3/26/24- a new effort to cross-pollinate sustainability programs countywide.
CC 5	Strategy CC5: Explore establishing a Transportation Infrastructure Fund with funding from developers and the City to implement recommendations of this Plan	n/a	DCDP	ongoing	n/a	
CC 6	Strategy CC6: Encourage and require sustainable, climate-resilient development patterns	n/a	DCDP	ongoing	n/a	piloting new sustainability requirements in Watertown Square rezoning
BE 1.1	Expand and strengthen the existing solar ordinance	Buildings & Energy	DCDP	medium	\$	Municipal Policy Analyst creating initial memo of research
BE 1.2	Investigate commercial PACE and other financing programs	Buildings & Energy	Energy Mgr	short	\$	Municipal Policy Analyst creating initial memo of research
BE 1.3	Outreach campaign for WEC and rooftop solar	Buildings & Energy	Energy Mgr	short	\$	is watertown mall still pursuing community solar as part of their redev?
BE 2.1	Adopt the state stretch code	Buildings & Energy	Energy Mgr	medium	\$	complete- adopted Jan 2023 and in effect as of July 2023
BE 2.2	Enact fees for residential gas hookups to promote electrification	Buildings & Energy	Energy Mgr	medium	\$\$	Waiting for outcome of 10-municipality DOER pilot banning new gas hookups; DOER will be comparing results to the municipalities that adopted the specialized stretch code.
BE 2.3	Promote workforce development and training programs for net zero construction	Buildings & Energy	Energy Mgr	medium	\$\$	Municipal Policy Analyst creating initial memo of research
BE 2.4	Work with municipalities to eliminate fossil fuels (home rules etc)	Buildings & Energy	Energy Mgr	long	\$	Multi-town gas leaks initiative is tracking legislation
BE 2.5	Use Whole Building Life Cycle Assessment as condition for granting permits and set progressively tighter standards	Buildings & Energy	Energy Mgr	medium	\$\$	
BE 3.1	Investigate and support development of geo-microgrid pilot programs	Buildings & Energy	Energy Mgr	long	\$\$\$	city hall complex under evaluation for ground source heat pumps
BE 3.2	outreach campaign for heat pumps in residential homes	Buildings & Energy	Energy Mgr	short	\$\$	EA recruiting Heat Pump Ambassadors and Coaches; hosting Heat Pumps 101 workshop in December
BE 3.3	incentivize transition to heat pumps	Buildings & Energy	Energy Mgr	short	\$\$	
BE 4.1	Enact a BEUDO/BERDO	Buildings & Energy	Energy Mgr	medium	\$\$	WE3C voted to support draft bill at their March meeting; submittal to Council forthcoming after completion of DCDP staff review
BE 4.2	Provide technical assistance for clean energy, energy efficiency, and financing activities	Buildings & Energy	Energy Mgr	medium	\$\$\$	EA providing support to residents and small businesses
BE 4.3	Upgrade major municipal facilities to net zero	Buildings & Energy	DPB	long	\$\$\$	Municipal Decarbonization Roadmap was adopted by City Council July 2024;
BE 4.4	Develop a bulk procurement and purchasing program to support smaller commercial properties with deep energy retrofits	Buildings & Energy	Energy Mgr	medium	\$\$	EA following up with Mass Save and partners to assess effectiveness of this concept
BE 4.5	Incentivize large grocery stores and buildings with significant refrigeration to get certified in EPA GreenChill program to reduce HFCs	Buildings & Energy	Energy Mgr	short	\$\$	EA following up with Mass Save and partners to assess effectiveness of this concept

TM 1.1	install bike and ped-only infrastructure for protected and off-street connections	Transportation & Mobility	DCDP/DPW	medium	\$\$\$	Safe Streets for All grant awarded for education, protected bike lanes, and other quick-build projects; bike parking regulations adopted for Watertown Square; ongoing coordination with DPW on complete streets, community path, and greenway
TM 1.2	collaborate regionally to increase and improve pathways for bikes and peds	Transportation & Mobility	DCDP	medium	\$	coordination with other communities on Western Ave, Newton Corner, I-90, and Bluebikes network planning
TM 1.3	increase use of transit, bike and ped travel through outreach, incentives, policy changes	Transportation & Mobility	DCDP	long	\$\$	Expansion of bikeshare stations in discussion for 2025 TDM monitoring will commence Jan 2025 and inform a regulation update to better align with climate plan goals
TM 1.4	Work with MBTA to improve accessibility of routes, stops, and CharlieCard purchasing stations within Watertown, and electrification of the bus fleet	Transportation & Mobility	DCDP	long	\$	discussions of Watertown Square Area Plan mitigations and changes to bus routes/stops to enhance user experience
TM 1.5	Implement bus prioritization projects such as dedicated lanes and signal priority	Transportation & Mobility	DPW	medium	\$\$\$	upcoming coordination with DPW and MBTA on "smart lights"
TM 1.6	Develop an integrated, publicly accessible electric transit system that connects to MBTA and other points of interest not accessible by MBTA, including on-demand transportation options	Transportation & Mobility	DCDP	long	\$\$\$	Pleasant St Shuttle EV fleet – continued progress on sustainable funding and increased ridership on electric shuttles Preparing to launch study on City-supported local transit, including microtransit
TM 2.1	Create and implement EV roadmap	Transportation & Mobility	DCDP	short	\$\$\$	Police dept purchasing 3 Evs and getting 3 chargers installed at the station.
TM 2.2	Transition all city-owned, leased, and contracted vehicles to electric, including school bus, garbage truck, and maintenance fleets	Transportation & Mobility	DPW/purchasing	long	\$\$\$	City Council adopted a Zero Emission Vehicle First (ZEV) policy as part of Climate Leader Communities process for DOER
TM 2.3	Support the development of Multi-Use Parking Arrangements to develop EV charging at places of worship and other organizations with large parking lots in residential neighborhoods	Transportation & Mobility	DCDP	medium	\$	conducting precedent research
TM 2.4	Develop an outreach and incentive campaign to those with a vehicle over 10 years old to promote and incentivize EV purchase	Transportation & Mobility	DCDP	medium	\$\$	
TM 2.5	increase availability of charging stations on municipal property	Transportation & Mobility	Energy Mgr	medium	\$\$\$	Energy Manager has list of 9 future charging locations. Also considering best locations for Level 3 fast chargers.
TM 2.6	incentivize homeowners and landlords to install EV chargers	Transportation & Mobility	DCDP	long	\$\$\$	promoting state rebate
NR 1.1	Incorporate pocket parks into all neighborhoods lacking green space	Natural Resources	DCDP	long	\$\$	DCDP was chosen to be part of Tufts UEP Masters Program Field Projects course, spring 2025 semester, to have a group of students conduct a feasibility and design study of new small-scale public spaces
NR 1.2	Promote biodiversity improvements to existing and new parks and open space by codifying existing DPW planting and maintenance practices and strengthening requirements for private development	Natural Resources	DCDP/DPW	medium	\$	Miyawaki Forest Planting Day Celebration took place on October 26th at the Lowell School (see image) Park renovation projects: designers adding new native/drought resistant plant beds
NR 1.3	acquire more open space and create open space on private property	Natural Resources	DCDP	long	\$\$\$	Walker Pond: Ecological assessment started summer 2024
NR 1.4	Establish equitable and accessible natural-habitat corridors along water bodies, trails, and utility easement areas, and protect existing ones	Natural Resources	DCDP/DPW	medium	\$\$	Watertown Community Gardens hosted ~15 volunteer events to remove invasive plant species along the Watertown-Cambridge Greenway in 2024
NR 2.1	establish a tree ordinance	Natural Resources	DCDP	medium	\$	draft under legal review
NR 2.2	outreach program to increase awareness of urban forest's role in climate change and mitigation	Natural Resources	DCDP	short	\$	urban forest outreach this year will tie into Lowell Microforest project
NR 2.3	increase tree plantings and prioritize plantings in areas at risk for urban heat impacts	Natural Resources	DPW/Forestry	medium	\$\$	Planted approximately 163 trees in 2024 for a total of 854 new trees since 2022 Tree Warden has requested funding for regular tree inventories and related software
NR 3.1	outreach and education on regenerative landscaping	Natural Resources	DCDP	medium	\$	City Manager signed Mayor's Monarch Pledge to promote pollinator species; DCDP doing associated comms/outreach and coordination with groups such as Watertown Community Gardens, who have formed a coalition called Watertown Pollinator Pathways. Volunteer-supported pollinator garden installations on public property occur each spring and fall, led by DPW. staff created a publicly accessible pollinator garden GIS map layer and yard signs for residents.

NR 3.2	Utilize school gardens and community gardens as nature-based landscaping demonstration sites	Natural Resources	WPS	medium	\$	ACR Garden Intern program for middle school students took place summer '23 and '24; evaluating how to maintain it beyond life of ACR grant Freight Farm being installed at temporary High School location; will provide hydroponically grown produce for cafeteria
NR 3.3	update regs to require native plants/de-emphasize lawn species	Natural Resources	DCDP	short	\$	DCDP staff reviewing all regs/policies that need to be updated or augmented as part of comprehensive zoning update (forthcoming)
NR 4.1	Expand and accelerate existing Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) policies and management programs for public projects	Natural Resources	DPW	medium	\$	City was awarded a nearly \$1M MVP Action Grant for Phase 2 of the Community Greening Program, which adds green infrastructure to neighborhood streets in areas most vulnerable to climate impacts (heat and flooding). Phase 2 will see construction on Templeton Pkwy and Dexter Ave. DPW has installed ~30 tree trenches with 40 more planned for Spring 2025
NR 4.2	Promote and/or incentivize the incorporation of green stormwater infrastructure into existing large impervious areas	Natural Resources	DPW	long	\$\$	conducting precedent research
NR 4.3	Enhance incentives and ongoing education related to individual actions such as rain barrels, planting strips, and de-paving private residential properties	Natural Resources	DPW	medium	\$\$	Watertown Pollinator Pathways is encouraging residents to populate their planting strips via a new brochure
IW 1.1	Create a bulk purchasing network for compostable and environmentally friendly goods among the commercial and industrial sectors	Infrastructure & Waste	DCDP	medium	\$	conducting precedent research
IW 1.2	outreach campaign on reducing consumption across all categories	Infrastructure & Waste	DPW	medium	\$	
IW 1.3	Create an organics recycling program	Infrastructure & Waste	DPW	short	\$\$	current enrollment at about 3,000 residents; student composting at middle school rolling out this year.
IW 1.4	Establish an Environmentally Preferable Purchasing policy (EPP) that focuses on reducing consumption, particularly of single use items within municipal government	Infrastructure & Waste	Purchasing	short	\$	Drafting a Sustainable Procurement Policy and guidelines
IW 1.5	Investigate opportunities to pursue a circular economy in Watertown or within the Metro Boston region	Infrastructure & Waste	DPW	medium	\$	Solid Waste and Recycling Advisory Committee sent letter to the Manager in support of recycling ordinance, summer 2024; this is a priority for new Recycling Manager
IW 2.1	require all major new and upgraded infrastructure to incorporate resilient design guidelines	Infrastructure & Waste	DPW	medium	\$	conducting initial research
IW 2.2	Review and enhance current infrastructure maintenance systems and protocols to align with the needs of a changing climate	Infrastructure & Waste	DPW	medium	\$	
IW 2.3	Advocate for removal of Watertown Dam	Infrastructure & Waste	DCDP	long	\$	DCR hosted meetings in July and Sept 2024
IW 2.4	investigate back up power/microgrid/battery options for public bldgs	Infrastructure & Waste	DPB	medium	\$\$\$	
PH 1.1	outreach campaign about climate preparedness	Public Health & Preparedness	Health	short	\$	Health Department continues to inform and educate the public on issues such as COVID, Flu Shots, tick and mosquito born infectious diseases along with emergency preparedness prior to and during climate related weather emergencies
PH 1.2	Actively recruit volunteers to participate in the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program	Public Health & Preparedness	Health	short	\$	investigating feasibility
PH 2.1	complete a climate change and health vulnerability assessment	Public Health & Preparedness	Health	medium	\$	assessment is underway in coordination with MAPC via a technical assistance grant; final report expected spring 2025
PH 2.2	mitigate existing and prevent new urban heat islands	Public Health & Preparedness	DCDP	medium	\$\$\$	Open Space staff working with DPW and Schools to prioritize shade/cooling options for school playgrounds and park redesigns City was awarded a nearly \$1M MVP Action Grant for Phase 2 of the Community Greening Program, which adds green infrastructure to neighborhood streets in areas most vulnerable to climate impacts (heat and flooding). Phase 2 will see construction on Templeton Pkwy and Dexter Ave.
PH 2.3	Continue to enhance access to local food by expanding resources and support for food pantries and community fridge programs, community gardens, and the Farmers' Market for those who are food insecure	Public Health & Preparedness	Health	medium	\$\$	Community Wellness PM is working to establish a food access working group and reduce barriers to utilizing Farmer's Market SNAP Match and free HIP produce bags in the off-season

PH 3.1	Identify and reduce structural barriers (e.g., internet access, language and cultural barriers, cognitive and/or physical disabilities, social isolation, access to services and emergency information) that prevent individuals and neighborhoods from taking care of themselves during and after extreme weather	Public Health & Preparedness	Health/DCDP	medium	\$\$	will be conducted as part of Climate and Health Vulnerability Assessment
PH 3.2	Require all commercial building owners to rebroadcast and post Watertown Alert announcements to building occupants in English and Spanish	Public Health & Preparedness	DCDP	medium	\$	
PH 3.3	launch a "sign up" campaign to ensure equitable access to communication resources	Public Health & Preparedness	Health/IT	short	\$	
PH 3.4	Enhance emergency info on city website	Public Health & Preparedness	IT	short	\$	complete
PH 4.1	Establish a network of resilience hubs that provide resources (e.g., cooling, phonecharging, pantry) that are easily accessible throughout the community	Public Health & Preparedness	Health/Fire	medium	\$\$	waiting for results of health vulnerability assessment
PH 4.2	Enhance the Live Well Watertown coalition and its programs	Public Health & Preparedness	DPH	medium	\$\$	Live Well Watertown has added a "Community Connect" initiative that supports efforts to encourage the development of neighborhood groups to intentionally connect people for practical and social/community building purposes



Resilient Watertown Climate & Energy Plan: Implementation Update

Watertown City Council Subcommittee Meeting, November 18, 2024

Laurel Schwab

Sustainability Manager

Silas Fyler

Asst. Director for Energy Management

Zeke Mermell

Senior Transportation Planner





Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Strategy and Action Updates as of Nov. 2024
3. Next Steps



Plan Elements and Organization



- Each Plan Element follows the structure:
 - Goal: what we want to accomplish; broad statement
 - Strategy: How we will accomplish it as a general approach
 - Action: *Specific activity that will be undertaken*
 - Action
 - Etc.
- Each Plan Element has quantifiable metrics for tracking our progress
- For every Action we identify a lead entity, cost magnitude, timeframe, and contribution to mitigation, resilience, or both



Tracking Our Progress

- Staff is working to gather updated data for our plan metrics
- Some data sources are only released periodically (Census, for example) but we will do our best to get a sense of how we are doing
- Goal: interim progress report at the 3-year implementation milestone (summer 2025)
- Evaluating how and when to recalculate our GHG inventory (original inventory was based on 2019 data)

Buildings and Energy						
Metric	Unit	Baseline Year	Baseline	2030 Target	2050 Target	
Percent of income spent on energy for household within 0% to 30% of AMI	%	2018	16	8	2	
Enrollment in Watertown Electricity Choice	%	2019	82	82	100	
Enrollment in Watertown Electricity Choice (100% renewable option)	%	2019	3	3	100	
Potential solar capacity	Number of rooftops	2019	3209	4256	6700	
Installed solar capacity	kW	2021	4521	33600	112000	
Estimated total solar electricity	MWh	2021	5360	38400	128000	
Commerical energy use intensity (EUI). For buildings >5,000 sf	MMBtu/sq. ft.	2023				
Number of gas/oil heated residential properties	Number of gas/oil Res	2019	9625	5775	0	
Number of gas/oil heated commerical properties	Number of gas/oil Com	2019	521	312	0	
Transportation and Mobility						
Metric	Unit	Baseline Year	Baseline	2030 Target	2050 Target	
Residents who use sustainable mode (bike, walk, transit) to travel to work	%	2013-2017	2	5	6	
Roads rated at a 4 or 5 stress level	# of miles	2018	6.9	3.5	0	
Total electric vehicles	%	2020	7	54	100	
Population within a 1/2 mile radius of a public EV charging station	%	2021	23	100	100	
Number of publicly accessible EV charging stations	#	2021	17	575	1050	
Natural Resources						
Metric	Unit	Baseline Year	Baseline	2030 Target	2050 Target	
Open space per person	acres/1,000 people	2020	3.25	5	10	
Tree canopy coverage	%	2016	21	23	27	
Impervious surfaces	%	2016	57	55	50	
Public Trees in Good Health	%	2018	84	90	100	
Public Trees Sites Occupied	%	2018	49	75	100	
Area (sf) of school gardens and community gardens	sf	2021	20350	24000	30000	

Example of metric tracking spreadsheet



Cross-Cutting Strategy Updates

- CC1: Add capacity and resources to the Energy Manager's Office, DPW Forestry Division, and DCDDP in order to successfully implement the plan
 - *Created new Sustainability Team within DCDDP*
 - Hired Fangxue Zheng (Energy Advocate) and Mia Kania (Sustainability Planner), fall 2024
- CC2: Create an overarching Resilient Watertown Outreach and Education Campaign
 - See next slide
- CC4: Collaborate regionally with other communities and entities
 - Resilient Mystic Collaborative; Charles River Climate Compact; MAPC Metro Mayors Coalition; Multi-town gas leaks working group; Building Electrification Accelerator; Charles River Chamber Environmental Committee; Sustainable Middlesex
- CC6: Encourage and require sustainable, climate-resilient development patterns
 - Watertown Square Plan process served as a pilot for some of these changes; zoning update adopted Nov. 2024



Signage outside 66 Galen St development highlighting sustainability features of the site and building



Outreach & Education Updates

- CC2: Create an overarching Resilient Watertown Outreach & Education Campaign (Actions BE1.3, BE3.2, TM1.3, NR2.2, NR3.1, NR3.2, NR4.3, IW1.2, PH1.1, PH3.3)

New since May:


- *WE3C Outreach Working Group successfully transferred external Resilient Watertown website onto City Website for enhanced flexibility of content and better searchability*
- *Staff tabled at Farmers Market the fourth week of every month during 2024 season*
- *Increased frequency of RW Newsletter to monthly issues*
- *Worked with project partners to host ~200 volunteers at the Lowell School Miyawaki Forest Planting Day, Oct 26, 2024*
- *Submitted Mayor's Monarch Pledge Annual Report for 2024; plan to re-pledge for 2025*
- *Planning for Watertown's inaugural sustainability resource festival, May 2025 at the Commander's Mansion!*

Other ongoing items:

- Periodically updating publicly available pollinator garden map and giving free yard signs to residents who elect to be placed on the map (as well as Life-Friendly Garden Tour hosts)
- Installing pollinator garden signage and informational tags on newly planted street trees
- Arts and Culture tie-ins with "Edible Watertown" programming: visited ACR garden interns during summer 2024; upcoming "Expert Pairings" public art series
- Coordinating with WE3C, Stormwater, Bike/Ped, and Solid Waste Advisory Committees, Live Well Watertown, Hatch Makerspace, Watertown Pollinator Pathways, Trees for Watertown, etc.

Buildings & Energy Updates

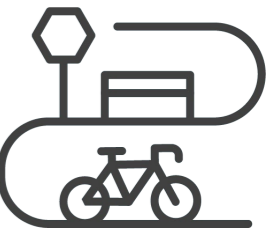


- **BE 2.1: Adopt the state's net-zero energy standard as soon as permissible** 
- BE 3.2: Develop and implement a targeted outreach campaign focused on promoting heat pumps for residential homes
 - Energy Advocate doing outreach on heat pumps. Workshop scheduled for December 7th at WFPL
- BE 4.1: Enact a Building Energy Use Disclosure Ordinance with a reporting requirement
 - WE3C voted to support draft bill at their March meeting; submittal to Council by end of 2024
- BE 4.2: Provide technical assistance for clean energy, energy efficiency, and financing
 - Energy Advocate conducting outreach, home energy assessments, and troubleshooting
 - Launching “Energy Ambassador” program to pair residents who have made energy efficiency/sustainability upgrades with those who are curious/have questions and “Energy Coach” cohort recruitment (people with technical/HVAC backgrounds)
- BE 4.3: Upgrade major existing municipal facilities to achieve net zero energy performance
 - City adopted a Municipal Decarbonization Roadmap as part of process to achieve Climate Leader Community designation from DOER (new version of Green Communities program)
 - Requested a city budget line item for energy efficiency upgrades
- Action BE4.4: Develop a bulk procurement and purchasing program to support smaller commercial properties with deep energy retrofits
 - Energy Advocate working with Economic Development Planner and business groups to identify opportunities
 - Mass Save “Main Streets” effort, which offers enhanced incentives for small businesses and non-profits, ran during Summer/Fall 2024

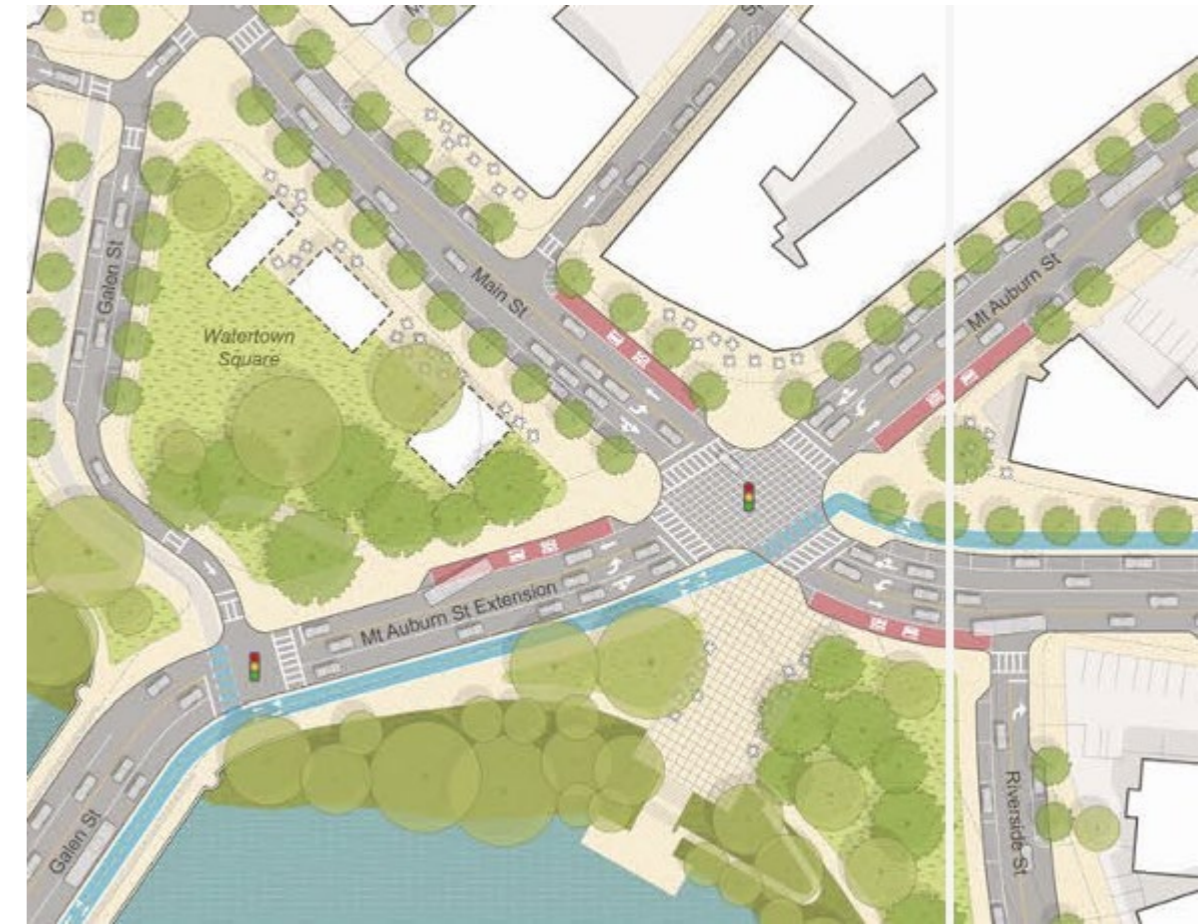


Watertown's LEED Platinum high school building under construction

Transportation & Mobility Updates

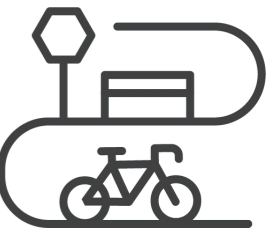


- TM 1.1: Install well-shaded bike/ped-only infrastructure, especially in densely developed areas and areas of high traffic volume
 - Watertown Square Area Plan adopted July 2024
 - Safe Streets for All grant awarded for education program, protected bike lanes, and more over next ~5 years
 - Planning for additional Bluebikes stations, including e-bike options
 - Bike parking guidelines and bike parking ordinance ready to be integrated into Watertown Square zoning and streetscape design process
 - Ongoing coordination with DPW and other depts on Community Path, Greenway, and Complete Streets connections
- TM 1.2: Collaborate regionally to increase and improve pathways for bikes and pedestrians
 - Western Ave, Newton Corner, Bluebikes network planning with MAPC
- TM 1.3: Increase use of transit, bike, and pedestrian travel through outreach, incentives, and policy changes
 - TDM monitoring will commence Jan 2025 and help inform a regulation update to better align with City and Climate Plan goals
- TM 1.5: Implement bus prioritization projects
 - Watertown & MBTA discussing Watertown Square Area Plan mitigations, including potential queue jumps, transit signal priority & bus lanes
 - Upcoming DPW coordination on “smart lights”
- TM 1.6: Develop an integrated, publicly accessible electric transit system that connects to MBTA
 - Pleasant St Shuttle EV fleet – continued progress on sustainable funding and increased ridership on electric shuttles
 - Mobility Study RFP released Oct 2024 (funded by ARPA grant)



Proposed Watertown Square redesign

Transportation & Mobility Updates



- TM 2.2: Transition all City-owned, leased, and contracted vehicles to electric, including school bus, garbage truck, and maintenance fleets
 - City adopted an internal Zero Emission Vehicle First (ZEV) policy as part of Climate Leader Communities process for DOER
 - Police Department has purchased 3 new electric vehicles; DPW has purchased 1
 - Forthcoming Sustainable Purchasing Policy will identify opportunities to push for EVs in contracted services when feasible
- TM 2.5: Increase the availability of charging stations on municipal property
 - Staff will prioritize future identified charging locations based on geographical and equity criteria; identifying and applying for competitive grants to fund installations
 - For safety and access reasons, the chargers at the DPW are now for fleet vehicles only

Natural Resources Updates


- NR 1.1: Incorporate pocket parks into neighborhoods lacking green space
 - DCDP was chosen to be part of Tufts UEP Masters Program Field Projects course, spring 2025 semester, to have a group of students conduct a feasibility and design study of new small-scale public spaces
- NR 1.2: Promote biodiversity improvements to existing and new parks and open space
 - Miyawaki Forest Planting Day Celebration took place on October 26th at the Lowell School (see image)
 - Park renovation projects: designers adding new native/drought resistant plant beds
- NR 1.3: Acquire more open space, where possible, and create more open space on private property
 - Environmental site assessment of Walker Pond underway
- NR 1.4: Establish and protect natural habitat corridors along water bodies, trails, and easement areas
 - Watertown Community Gardens hosted ~15 volunteer events to remove invasive plant species along the Watertown-Cambridge Greenway in 2024
- NR 2.1: Establish an enforceable tree ordinance
 - Draft under legal review
- NR 2.3: Increase tree plantings and prioritize plantings in areas at risk for urban heat impacts
 - Planted approximately 163 trees in 2024 for a total of 854 new trees since 2022
 - Tree Warden has requested funding for regular tree inventories and related software
- NR 3.2: Utilize school gardens and community gardens as nature-based landscaping demonstration sites
 - ACR Garden Intern program for middle school students took place summer '23 and '24; evaluating how to maintain it beyond life of ACR grant
 - Freight Farm being installed at temporary High School location; will provide hydroponically grown produce for cafeteria
- NR 3.3: Update current development regulations to require the use of appropriate native plants for new- and re-development and de-emphasize non-native lawn spaces
 - DCDP staff reviewing all regs/policies that need to be updated or augmented as part of comprehensive zoning update (forthcoming)
- NR 4.1: Expand and accelerate existing Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) policies and management programs for public projects
 - City was awarded a nearly \$1M MVP Action Grant for Phase 2 of the Community Greening Program, which adds green infrastructure to neighborhood streets in areas most vulnerable to climate impacts (heat and flooding). Phase 2 will see construction on Templeton Pkwy and Dexter Ave.
 - DPW has installed ~30 tree trenches with 40 more planned for Spring 2025



Volunteers participating in the Lowell Miyawaki Forest Planting Day Celebration

Infrastructure & Waste Updates



- IW 1.3: Create convenient and free organics recycling program 
 - Enrollment still around 3,000
 - Preparing to roll out front-of-house (student) composting at Middle School
- IW 1.4: Establish an Environmentally Preferable Purchasing policy (EPP) that focuses on reducing consumption within municipal government
 - Drafting a Sustainable Procurement Policy ordinance and guidelines
- IW 1.5: Investigate opportunities to pursue a circular economy in Watertown or within the Metro
 - Solid Waste and Recycling Advisory Committee sent letter to the Manager in support of recycling ordinance, summer 2024; this is a priority for new Recycling Manager
- IW 2.1: Require all major new and upgraded infrastructure to incorporate resilient design guidelines
 - Staff conducting initial research on policy updates required
- IW2.3: Advocate with partners for the safe removal of the Watertown Dam
 - DCR held informational meetings in Watertown in July and Sept 2024


Public Health & Community Preparedness Updates



- PH 2.1: Complete and climate change and health vulnerability assessment
 - In progress, with support from MAPC via a technical assistance grant. Final report anticipated Spring 2025.
- PH 2.2: Mitigate existing and prevent new urban heat islands in Watertown
 - Open Space staff working with DPW and Schools to prioritize shade/cooling options for school playgrounds and park redesigns
 - City was awarded a nearly \$1M MVP Action Grant for Phase 2 of the Community Greening Program, which adds green infrastructure to neighborhood streets in areas most vulnerable to climate impacts (heat and flooding). Phase 2 will see construction on Templeton Pkwy and Dexter Ave.
- PH 2.3: Continue to enhance access to local food for those who are food insecure
 - Effort to establish a food access working group is in process with support from state and local food system networks
- PH 3.4: Enhance emergency preparedness information on City website
- PH 4.2: Enhance the existing Live Well Watertown coalition and its programs to incorporate neighborhood connections to nature and to each other
 - Live Well Watertown has added a “Community Connect” initiative that supports efforts to encourage the development of neighborhood groups to intentionally connect people for practical and social/community building purposes. Block parties that are planned as part of the MVP Action Grant will inform our strategy for expanding Community Connect.



Next Steps

- Heat Pump Workshop- Saturday, December 7th, 11am-12:30pm at the Watertown Free Public Library (Savings Bank Room)
 - Please spread the word! 
- Launch pocket park study with UEP students (Jan '25)
- Submit BERDO legislation to City Council
- Energy Resource Festival, May 2025

HEAT PUMPS 101

Come join Steve Breit, co-founder of HeatSmart Alliance, in a discussion around fundamentals of heat pumps systems. You will also have the chance to learn about the Mass Save program. Together, we will outline key factors homeowners should consider when deciding to upgrade their HVAC systems.

**Saturday December 7, 2024
11am-12:30pm**

Watertown Free Public Library, First Floor
Watertown Savings Bank Room



Contact fzheng@watertown-ma.gov