Chihuahuan Desert Climate Collaborative

CHIHUAHUAN DESERT

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

MARCH 2026

LETTER FROM THE CITY MANAGER

300 N. Campbell,
El Paso, Texas 79901
(915) 212-0000

Dear Friends,

I am proud to introduce the El Paso Climate Action Plan (CAP), our city's first, and a truly community-driven roadmap to protect our economic, social, and environmental future. This plan is designed to ensure El Paso remains a healthy, resilient place to call home for generations to come.

As El Pasoans, we understand the realities of life in the Chihuahuan Desert. We live with extreme heat and seasonal rainfall, and we know our weather patterns are shifting. We also understand the opportunity that comes with being the largest metroplex along the U.S.-Mexico border. With that responsibility and potential in mind, we are taking proactive steps to safeguard our infrastructure, strengthen our economy, and protect the health of our neighbors.

This plan is, first and foremost, grounded in the community. We recognized early that a strategy created in isolation would not reflect the needs of our border region. The CAP was built through public input, local expertise, and an equity-centered approach that keeps the experiences and priorities of our most vulnerable residents at the heart of every action.

The actions outlined in this document are more than environmental goals. They represent a commitment to cleaner air, healthier outcomes, and expanded economic opportunity for everyone who calls El Paso home. By planning and investing in a sustainable future, we are positioning our community to:

Improve Air Quality and Health
We will prioritize reducing local emissions and expanding our urban tree canopy to help mitigate extreme heat. These steps will improve air quality, reduce respiratory risks, and create more livable, shaded neighborhoods.

Drive Economic Prosperity
Sustainability is also a catalyst for growth. This plan supports the development of green-collar industries, workforce training for high-demand careers including renewable energy, and energy efficiency strategies that can help lower costs for households and local businesses.

Ensure Water and Energy Security
By building on El Paso's legacy of water conservation and working to reduce utility burdens, we will strengthen long-term affordability and resilience.

Implementing this plan will take time, and the City cannot do it alone. Success will require a whole-community, whole-region effort. From large-scale projects to neighborhood-level pilot initiatives, every action contributes to a stronger, more resilient El Paso.

I want to thank the City Council for its leadership and the community members, partners, and stakeholders who helped shape this vision. I invite you to read the plan and join us as we move from planning to action.

Sincerely,
Dionne Mack
City Manager

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE

The City of El Paso, together with the Chihuahuan Desert Climate Collaborative (CDCC) partners, has established a commitment to environmental stewardship. We strive to be a positive force that strengthens the health of the Chihuahuan Desert ecoregion, supports responsible resource use, and guides the management of daily operations and resources.

The CDCC recognizes a shared responsibility to act as a positive force to enhance the local and global environment. The City of El Paso embraces its role, regionally and nationally, as an environmentally, economically, and socially responsible organization and a regional leader. The City is committed to integrating environmental stewardship into everyday operations while continuing to deliver essential services to the greater community across El Paso. The CAP serves as a foundational, living document and practical tool to help ensure a lasting legacy for the future to protect healthy environments valued by the people of El Paso.

This plan emphasizes collaboration and respect for all local governments and identifies structured opportunities for regular consultation and information-sharing. This ensures climate actions affecting our shared land and its people are developed collaboratively and implemented with care and respectfully. To make the most of this document, increased outreach and collaboration between communities is recommended to align initiatives and community needs, address shared climate challenges such as extreme heat, air quality, and flooding, and strengthen regional resilience.

Climate change poses a serious threat to life and natural systems worldwide, including the Chihuahuan Desert and the El Paso region. Greenhouse gases naturally cycle between land, water, and the atmosphere, creating conditions that make life possible. However, human activities have intensified this effect, driving unprecedented warming of the Earth's atmosphere and oceans. That warming sets off interconnected, cascading impacts that place ecosystems and communities at risk.

To help slow this trajectory and restore balance to natural systems, we must begin locally by reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. At the same time, we must prepare for current and future climate impacts by integrating adaptation into our efforts to build resilient communities. The CAP establishes a regional GHG emissions baseline for El Paso and Hudspeth Counties, describes the impacts of climate change on naturally occurring hazards and community systems, and identifies mitigation and adaptation actions the region can take to reduce risk and limit harm. It is our hope that the actions taken by local leaders today will deliver lasting benefits for future generations of all Chihuahuan Desert residents, of every species.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Chihuahuan Desert Climate Collaborative (CDCC) would like to thank the many members of the public who participated in the planning process by contributing their time, ideas, concerns, suggestions and lived experiences. Additionally, the CDCC would like to extend their thanks to all local stakeholders and organizations; business, educational, finance, local, state and federal agencies, neighborhood, environmental, and social justice organizations who offered their contributions of time and expertise. We are grateful to those who assisted in developing a strong and implementable approach to climate action and adaptation.

LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS

Advocacy and Community
- Amanecer People's Project
- Community First Coalition
- Desert Spoon Food Hub
- Eco El Paso
- El Paso Association of Contractors
- El Paso Community Foundation
- El Paso Sierra Club
- Frontera Land Alliance
- GCC Sun City
- HOME (Housing Authority)
- La Semilla
- Los Exes De La Bowie & Friends
- Paso del Norte Foundation
- Peek Counsel
- Project ARRIBA
- Project BRAVO
- Rebuilding Together
- Sembrando Esperanza
- Solar United Neighbors
- Underserved Communities Foundation
- USGBC Texas
- Workforce Solutions Borderplex

Utility
- El Paso Electric
- El Paso Water
- Texas Gas Service

Leadership Steering Committee
- City of El Paso
- City of San Elizario
- City of Socorro
- El Paso County
- El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Horizon City
- Hudspeth County
- Rio Grande Council of Governments
- Town of Anthony
- Town of Clint
- Village of Vinton
- Ysleta del Sur Pueblo

Academia
- El Paso Community College
- Texas A&M - AgriLife Extension
- Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso
- University of Texas El Paso
- Western Tech College

Government
- National Laboratory of the Rockies (National Renewable Energy Laboratory)
- Office of Representative Veronica Escobar

Businesses
- Aurum Tech
- Bank of America
- Barracuda Public Relations
- Domus Adobe
- El Paso Chamber
- FirstLight Federal Credit Union
- Greater El Paso Association of Realtors
- Hunt Companies
- JOBE
- Jordan Foster Construction
- Marathon Petroleum
- Schneider Electric
- Sundt Construction
- Tierra Bytes

Public Health
- Emergence Health Network
- Texas A&M Colonias Program - Promotoras de Salud

Consultants
- AECOM
- Barracuda Public Relations
- ICLEI
- LOI Engineers

City of El Paso
- Capital Improvement Department
- Chihuahuan Desert Climate Fellows
- City Design Lab
- City Manager's Office
- City Mayor's Office
- Department of Community and Human Development
- Department of Strategic and Legislative Affairs
- El Paso Zoo and Botanical Gardens
- Environmental Services
- Mayor and City Council
- Museum & Cultural Affairs Department
- Parks and Recreation
- Planning and Inspections
- Streets and Maintenance
- SunMetro

And all other entities not explicitly stated.

PHOTO CREDITS

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GLOSSARY

A/C	Air Conditioning
BAU	Business-as-Usual
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CDCC	Chihuahuan Desert Climate Collaborative
EV	Electric Vehicle
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
ICLEI	Local Governments for Sustainability
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LIDACs	Low-Income and Disadvantaged Communities
LSC	Leadership Steering Committee
$MTCO_2e$	Metric Tons of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
TEKS	Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

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CHAPTER 1

THE EL PASO REGION'S FIRST CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

What this plan is and why it matters

What Is the Climate Action Plan?

The Chihuahuan Desert Climate Action Plan (CAP) is the El Paso region's first coordinated roadmap for addressing climate change. Developed by the City of El Paso in partnership with jurisdictions, organizations, and community leaders across El Paso and Hudspeth Counties, the CAP outlines how the region can reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and prepare for climate change while improving quality of life. The plan focuses on practical actions that deliver multiple benefits, including cleaner air, lower energy costs, workforce opportunities, climate resilience, and improved public health.

The CAP addresses climate change in two ways: mitigation and adaptation. **Mitigation** focuses on reducing emissions from major contributing emission sectors such as transportation and buildings, while **adaptation** focuses on preparing communities, infrastructure, and natural systems for climate hazards that are already occurring and expected to worsen. Together, these actions help the region respond to climate risks while planning for long-term resilience.

Resident Perspective

> **Roadways are not equipped to tolerate heavy rainfall, causing hazards for drivers.**

Why Does the El Paso Region Need a CAP?

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns, primarily caused by human activities like burning fossil fuels which produce GHG emissions. These changes increase climate hazards that are felt locally in the El Paso region, including extreme heat, drought, and flash flooding. To improve air quality and avoid the most severe consequences of climate change, GHG emissions must be rapidly reduced.

The El Paso region is already experiencing these impacts, and some communities are affected more than others. Low-Income and Disadvantaged Communities (LIDACs) make up more than 65 percent of El Paso County and all of Hudspeth County.[1] Many residents face challenges such as existing health conditions, high energy bills, and language barriers, which can make it harder to prepare for, respond to, and recover from extreme weather events.

Building climate resilience means reducing exposure to climate hazards, strengthening community capacity, and protecting critical infrastructure and natural systems, especially in the communities facing the greatest risks. Reducing GHGs is equally essential to limiting future climate impacts, improving air quality, and protecting the health and wellbeing of residents over the long term.

To help guide emissions reduction efforts, the region developed a GHG inventory that shows where emissions are coming from. The inventory illustrates that most emissions come from transportation, at 48 percent, and buildings and facilities, at 44 percent. These sectors present key opportunities to reduce pollution while also delivering near-term benefits such as cleaner air, lower energy costs, and improved public health.

Many of the actions needed to reduce GHG emissions are within the control of local governments. A CAP helps identify and prioritize these locally driven actions, enabling communities to accelerate the adoption of policies, programs, and projects that also improve quality of life, public health, and economic outcomes. While existing trends such as cleaner electricity and increased electric vehicle adoption are expected to reduce emissions over time, these changes alone are not enough to address the scale and urgency of the climate challenge.

[1] Council on Environmental Quality. (2024). Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (Version 2.0). https://screening-tools.com/climate-economic-justice-screening-tool

The CAP establishes clear GHG reduction targets to accelerate progress and track collective action, including an ambitious, science-aligned goal of reaching net-zero emissions by 2050 and a locally informed target that reflects what can be achieved through full implementation of CAP actions.

In addition to reducing emissions, the CAP focuses on preparing the region for climate hazards that are already occurring. The plan includes a climate vulnerability assessment that identifies communities, systems, and places most at risk and helps prioritize adaptation actions that protect public health, strengthen critical infrastructure, conserve water resources, and reduce future climate risks.

Who Helped Shape the CAP?

The CAP was developed through extensive regional collaboration and community engagement. The City worked closely with a wide range of partners to gather input, reflect local priorities, and align actions across the region, including:

Chihuahuan Desert Climate Collaborative (CDCC)
Regional partners coordinating climate planning efforts across jurisdictions

Leadership Steering Committee (LSC)
Local leaders providing guidance, oversight, and strategic direction

Climate Fellows
Community-based fellows supporting outreach, research, and engagement activities

Promotoras
Trusted community health workers engaging residents in culturally responsive ways

Local organizations
Community-based and nonprofit partners providing on-the-ground insight and lived experience

This effort reached more than 3,800 residents through bilingual meetings, surveys, and community events. Public review of the draft CAP generated hundreds of comments and letters of support, helping ensure the plan reflects local priorities and lived experiences. Engagement will continue during CAP implementation, with ongoing opportunities for public involvement and coordination with regional partners, including collaborators in New Mexico and Mexico.

Climate Action with Local Benefits

The CAP includes 10 climate measures supported by 53 actions that address the region's emissions sources and climate hazards. A measure is a broad strategy that addresses an emissions source or climate hazard within the El Paso region, aligns with regional goals, and is important to the community. Actions are specific policies, programs, or projects that support one of the 10 measures. Each action was evaluated for feasibility, cost, emissions reductions, equity impacts, and community co-benefits.

For residents, implementing these actions means cleaner air, safer and cooler neighborhoods, lower energy and transportation costs, and new job opportunities in the growing clean energy and resilience sectors. Actions to reduce GHG emissions can also reduce other co-pollutants, which directly impact public health in the region.

Implementation will rely on sustained coordination, diverse funding sources, and an equity investment framework that prioritizes benefits in LIDACs. Through this plan, the El Paso region is committing to practical, equitable, and community-driven climate action that improves daily life today while preparing for a more resilient future.

The El Paso region's air quality is inextricably linked to our neighboring communities in Mexico and New Mexico, particularly regarding international ports of entry and freight movement. Because many emission sources are outside the control of El Paso or other regional Texas local governments, sustained international collaboration is necessary to improve air quality and health outcomes. By strengthening coordination with Mexican and New Mexican partners, the region will better address the cross-border pollution that contributes to poor air quality.

27
Fellows Upskilled through CAP Development

10
Climate Measures

3,800+
Residents Reached

53
Climate Actions

CHAPTER 2

CURRENT LOCAL CLIMATE HAZARDS

How climate change is affecting our communities and businesses

The El Paso region is facing increasing threats from climate change hazards, including severe flooding in 2021, significant drought conditions that intensified during 2021 and 2022, and record-breaking heat waves in 2023. While heavy rain and prolonged drought may seem contradictory, both are symptoms of a changing climate that is increasing variability, bringing longer dry periods punctuated by more intense storm events. These climate hazards disproportionately impact low-income and socially vulnerable communities, who may have lower capacity to respond to and recover from unexpected shocks.

Climate vulnerability describes the degree to which physical, socioeconomic, and natural systems are susceptible to the impacts of climate change. The CAP identifies specific infrastructure assets and communities that are most vulnerable to climate hazards, including flooding, extreme heat, drought, and wildfire.

Resident Perspective

> **I would like to learn how I can take small everyday steps that can make a big impact when it comes to climate change.**

Extreme Heat

Extreme heat will be a major challenge for El Paso, especially for public health and infrastructure. Extreme heat can threaten the safety and health of residents, damage the economy, and increase wear and tear on infrastructure.

What This Means for Our Community

- Extreme heat can lead to serious health impacts like heat stroke, which can be fatal. This is especially dangerous for people who are already sick, the elderly, pregnant people, babies and toddlers, people who don't have access to air conditioning, and people who work outside or in hot places. People who are low-income or primarily use public transportation are also at greater risk.
- Extreme heat can also reduce quality of life, as it reduces outdoor recreation, exercise, and travel. Businesses may see reduced foot traffic, and agricultural yields may be impacted.
- Region-wide extreme heat can lead to power outages and rolling blackouts. Loss of power can disrupt air conditioning, leading to dangerous indoor temperatures, especially for the elderly. Hospitals may have to switch to backup generators, potentially risking patient care. An extended power outage may lead to the evacuation of critically ill patients.
- Extreme heat can cause potholes or cracks in roadways, requiring repairs. Roadway damage can disrupt travel, including freight and emergency services.
- Extreme heat can bend or buckle railway tracks, which can cause trains to slow down or derail.
- Heat impacts women's health, can also impact pregnant women

Heavy Rain and Flooding

Flooding, particularly flash flooding, has posed a serious threat to El Paso communities, buildings, roads, and other infrastructure. Flooding can disrupt travel, hurt the economy, and affect resident safety and public health.

What This Means for Our Community

- If roads, bridges, or ports of entry are flooded, people and goods can't easily move around. This can be a serious risk for El Paso, including for emergency services like ambulances and fire trucks.
- Interrupted international trade via the ports of entry could affect the local and regional economy.
- Flooding could potentially affect medical facilities and recreation centers, causing interruptions in operations and services to the community.

Drought

Extreme heat and drought can reduce regional water availability, affecting how water systems operate across the region. El Paso Water is working to obtain water from many different sources to address this potential risk.

What This Means for Our Community

- Swamp (or evaporative) coolers rely on water for cooling. If water availability is limited because of drought, and combined with higher temperatures, then evaporative coolers may not cool as effectively.
- Drought can increase the amount of dust in the air, reducing air quality and negatively impacting health.
- Drought can affect local industries that rely on water, reducing incomes, particularly for communities that rely on agriculture for their livelihoods.

OVER THE COMING DECADES...

17 → 96

Days of Extreme Heat

The El Paso region could experience almost three additional months of extremely hot days each year. In the past, there were about 17 days over 100°F annually. In the future, that number could rise to as many as 96 days per year, more than five times as many.

OVER THE COMING DECADES...

5 → 8

Days of Extreme Rain

More days with extreme rainfall can increase flood risk. Today, the El Paso region experiences about five days of extremely heavy rain each year. By the end of the century, that number could increase to eight days, a 60 percent increase.

OVER THE COMING DECADES...

50 → 63

Days with no Significant Rainfall

Droughts could become more common, with longer periods without rain. In the past, the El Paso region experienced about 50 consecutive days each year without significant rainfall. By the end of the century, that number could increase to 63 days, a 26 percent increase.

Wildfire

Wildfires can threaten public safety, damage buildings and infrastructure, and worsen air quality. While wildfires are not common in El Paso, neighboring areas such as Hudspeth County are more susceptible to wildfire risk. The risk of wildfire is greater in and around the Franklin Mountains due to higher wind speeds and dense vegetation.

What This Means for Our Community

- Wildfires can severely damage roads, necessitating closures for repairs. Debris from wildfires can also block roads. Blocked or closed roads can be a major risk because people and emergency services may not be able to travel where they need to.
- Schools, medical facilities, and other community spaces around the Franklin Mountains can be damaged or destroyed by wildfires.
- Wildfire smoke is highly dangerous and can result in smoke impacts for the broader region.

OVER THE COMING DECADES...

73 → 95

Days at Risk of Wildfire

The number of days with high wildfire risk in the El Paso region could increase by 29 percent. In the past, there were about 73 high-risk days each year. In the future, that number could rise to around 95 days, meaning more days when wildfires are more likely to start.

Dust storms in the El Paso region have historically caused air quality challenges in addition to limiting visibility.

Intense drought and record-breaking extreme heat in 2023 and 2024 have led to a significant increase in dust storms over the last few years. Dust storms have wide-reaching economic effects, including disrupting road transport, reducing electricity generation at solar farms, and interfering with manufacturing facilities.

While dust storms and strong winds are common in El Paso, they are highly localized events that are often worsened by drought conditions that loosen dry soils. Dust and wind storms are not climate hazards that can be modeled on their own. However, drought can be modeled, and this CAP captures drought-related data.

CHAPTER 3

WAYS THE CAP CAN HELP

How coordinated action can reduce risks and improve quality of life

Create pathways to green jobs.
The CAP supports workforce training and local investment in clean energy, construction, transportation, and climate adaptation. These efforts help prepare residents for good-paying jobs, support local businesses, and build skills that are needed now and in the future.

Resident Perspective

> **As the economy and dust storms worsen, I worry about the health impacts on the community, especially for those who have to walk to work, work outside, have poor insulation, or are struggling with homelessness. Cleaner air and easily accessible shade should be a huge priority.**

Lower utility bills and transportation costs.
By improving energy efficiency, expanding clean energy, and increasing access to affordable transportation options, the CAP helps households save money on energy bills and transportation. These actions reduce everyday costs while making homes and travel more reliable and resilient.

Add more open spaces and vegetation and protect the desert and the ecosystem.
The CAP supports expanding green spaces, increasing native and desert adapted tree canopies, and protecting natural areas that help cool neighborhoods and manage flooding. These actions preserve the region's unique desert environment while creating healthier, more enjoyable places to live, work, and gather.

Improve air quality for all.
By reducing pollution from cars, trucks, buildings, and industries, the CAP improves air quality across the region. Cleaner air helps lower the risk of asthma, heart disease, and other health impacts, especially in communities most affected by pollution.

In addition, the CAP evaluates how proposed actions may benefit or negatively impact LIDACs. For each measure, the plan identifies key benefits, potential disbenefits, and strategies to reduce or avoid unintended harm.

Public health and quality-of-life benefits are expected across all actions.

Upfront cost and displacement risks are the most common disbenefits, especially related to building upgrades, transportation investments, and neighborhood improvements.

Most disbenefits are avoidable through targeted programs, phased implementation, renter protection, and community-led decision-making.

Workforce development can benefit all communities but requires intentional training and access strategies to reach LIDAC residents.

Equity-focused implementation is critical to directing benefits to communities with the highest climate and pollution burdens.

Overall, the CAP prioritizes public health, affordability, workforce opportunities, and resilience, while emphasizing equity-focused implementation. These are summarized in **Table 1** on the next page.

Table 1 Community Benefits and Equity Considerations When Implementing the CAP

Focus Area	Key Benefits for LIDACs	Potential Disbenefits	Equity-Focused Strategies
Health and Air Quality	Cleaner indoor and outdoor air Reduced exposure to traffic and industrial pollution Lower heat-related illness risk	Temporary exposure during construction or infrastructure upgrades	Targeted pollution reduction in high-burden areas Early community engagement Expanded air quality monitoring
Energy and Utilities	Lower long-term energy bills Improved indoor comfort Resilient power for critical facilities	High upfront electrification costs Cost shifts to renters	Subsidies and incentives Phased requirements Community solar programs Renter protections
Housing Affordability	More efficient and comfortable homes Neighborhood improvements	Increased rents and property values Risk of displacement	Prioritize affordable housing Anti-displacement measures Equitable investment frameworks
Transportation and Mobility	Reduced vehicle pollution Better access to transit and active transportation Lower transportation costs	High electric vehicle (EV) costs Unequal access to charging Infrastructure impacts	Public EV charging in LIDACs Used-EV incentives Community input on project siting
Water and Flood Resilience	Reduced flood risk Improved water quality Increased access to potable water	Short-term utility cost increases Displacement from buyouts	Water bill assistance Equitable buyout programs with relocation support
Green Space and Ecosystems	Cooler neighborhoods Improved physical and mental health Flood mitigation	Maintenance needs Potential gentrification	Planting native vegetation Proper drainage design Long-term maintenance funding
Workforce Development	Job creation in clean energy, construction, water, and green infrastructure sectors	Job displacement in fossil fuel sectors Training gaps	Local training programs Partnerships with schools and community organizations

CHAPTER 4

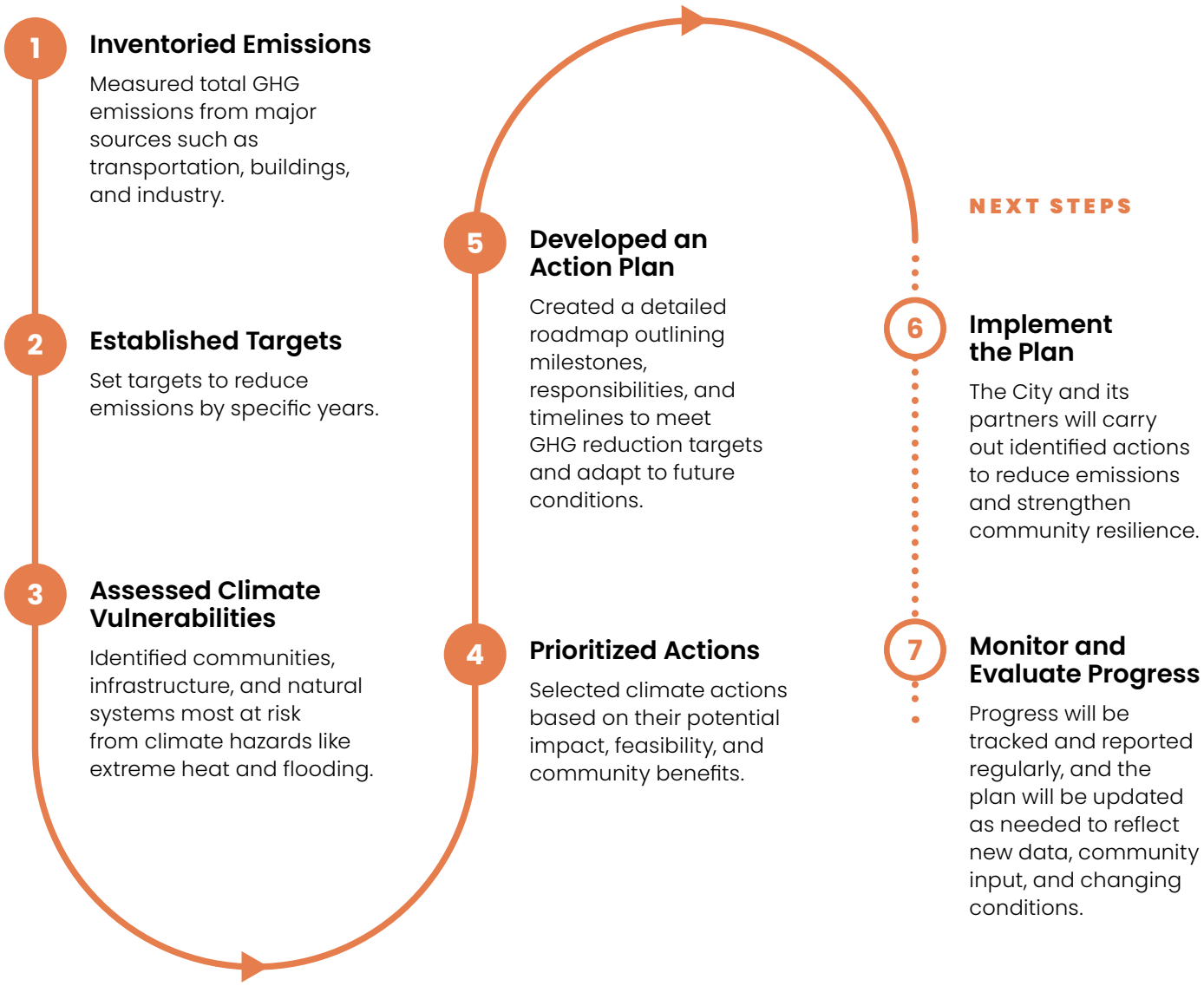
A COMMUNITY-INFORMED PLANNING PROCESS

How this plan was developed—together

Steps Used to Develop the CAP

The CAP was developed through a structured, data-driven, and community-informed process. These steps helped align the plan with local priorities while addressing climate risks and reducing GHG emissions.

Figure 1 CAP Development Process



How community voices and regional leadership shaped the CAP

Intergovernmental and Interagency Coordination

Creating the CAP required significant coordination and input from all regional stakeholders to integrate CAP development with other planning efforts and to build an effective coalition for implementation. In April 2024, the CDCC—a regional partnership focused on advancing climate action and resilience in the region—was established. The CDCC brought together local governments, tribal nations, regional agencies, educational institutions, and community-based organizations to advance cross-sector coordination.

As part of the CDCC, the City convened the LSC to align outcomes of the CAP with regional goals. The LSC is a senior-level advisory group with representatives from multiple public entities including:

- City of El Paso
- City of San Elizario
- City of Socorro
- El Paso County
- El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Horizon City
- Hudspeth County
- Rio Grande Council of Governments
- Town of Anthony
- Town of Clint
- Village of Vinton
- Ysleta del Sur Pueblo

The LSC met throughout CAP development to review proposed measures and actions, prioritize actions, and exchange updates on ongoing programs and initiatives.

Community Engagement

Engagement Objectives and Structure

Community engagement for the CAP was structured around five touchpoints or engagement series. Each series included two community meetings with an informational video and a survey to broaden access and participation. The engagement process was designed to educate, gather input, and collaborate with residents to shape the CAP. As part of each engagement series, Climate Fellows facilitated small groups' "Meeting-in-a-Box" sessions to engage residents in familiar settings. This approach supported inclusive participation by bringing the planning process directly to where people live.

Outcomes

Over the course of a year, more than 3,800 unique community contributions were gathered to inform the CAP, as summarized in **Figure 2**. During the 6-week-long public comment period, approximately 220 readers reviewed the draft CAP and submitted nearly 415 comments. In addition, during public workshops and popup events, the team collected more than 350 letters of support for the CAP.

Tailored Survey for Fellow- and Promotora-Led Engagement **1,226**

Total **541**

2,605

Community Meeting Attendees

Survey Responses

Figure 2 Engagement Series Summary

Summer 2024

Introduced the CAP, shared project goals and milestones, and provided an opportunity to meet the planning team. This series focused on building awareness and excitement at the project's launch.

97

550

Fall 2024

Shared results from the region's GHG inventory and discussed how climate hazards impact communities. Community members were invited to share their lived experiences and local knowledge.

124

193

Early 2025

Presented a set of draft climate measures and actions and gathered input to help prioritize those most relevant to the region's needs.

139

322

Spring 2025

Focused on understanding community benefits most important to residents.

102

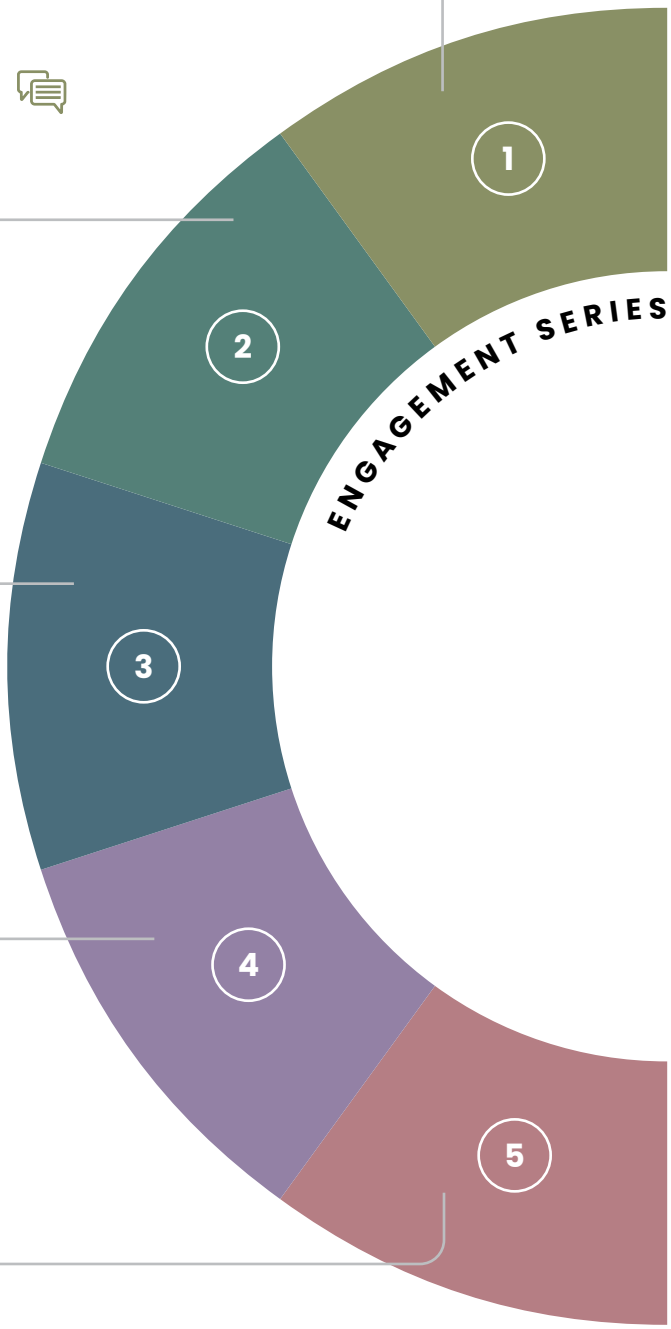
285

Summer 2025

Reviewed the draft CAP and gathered feedback on the actions, including identifying responsible parties, developing implementation timelines, and highlighting community benefits.

79

29



Climate Action Summits

The City convened three Climate Action Summits to engage local businesses, nonprofit organizations, academic institutions, and other key partners. The events were designed to identify resource needs and opportunities to support CAP implementation through cross-sector partnerships.

SUMMIT #1

February 26, 2025

Attended by more than 85 participants, the first Summit provided a space for attendees to share current sustainability efforts, highlight successful environmental programs, and identify challenges to implementing green practices.

SUMMIT #2

May 7, 2025

The second Summit convened over 65 partners to review draft measures, public engagement findings, and case studies from regional climate initiatives. Participants engaged in a series of focus groups.

SUMMIT #3

August 13, 2025

The third and final Climate Action Summit brought together over 55 participants to officially launch the draft CAP for public review and request stakeholder feedback.

Promotora Engagement

Promotoras, trained community health workers and trusted messengers in Spanish-speaking and underserved neighborhoods, played a key role in shaping the CAP. In partnership with the Texas A&M Colonias Program, promotoras and CDCC Climate Fellows conducted targeted, culturally responsive outreach in informal community settings across the region. This effort gathered 1,225 survey responses across 62 ZIP codes. These responses highlighted affordability as a primary concern, particularly with regard to high energy and water bills. Other concerns included unsafe indoor temperatures and limited access to air conditioning, weatherization, and green space. Transportation barriers were also a common concern, with most respondents reporting limited transit access and unsafe walking and biking conditions.

These findings directly informed CAP actions that would expand energy efficiency and weatherization programs, increase shade and green infrastructure, improve drainage in flood-prone areas, and strengthen public transit and active transportation options. If implemented with equity considerations as a priority, CAP actions can lower household costs, improve health and comfort, and strengthen resilience in the region's most vulnerable communities.

Continued Community Engagement

Following CAP adoption, the City and its partners remain committed to ongoing community engagement to guide implementation. Community members, businesses, and organizations will continue to play a vital role in advancing climate solutions through participation in grant-funded projects, program design, and policy feedback.

Understanding Climate Actions

To understand the measures that El Paso's collaboration efforts produced to address climate change, it's important to know where GHGs come from. The sections below explain GHG sources and how to read the CAP tables describing measures to reduce them.

CDCC Climate Fellowship

The City established the CDCC Climate Fellowship to build local capacity for climate leadership by engaging emerging professionals from across the region. To date, 27 Fellows have joined the program. The fellowship offers participants meaningful career-building opportunities in the field of climate action. Fellows contribute directly to the development and implementation of the CAP while gaining hands-on experience in community engagement, sustainability education, and climate-related outreach.

Testimonials from Fellows

> The fellowship helped me walk into spaces I once felt intimidated by and developed a strong sense of confidence. The mentorship didn't just support me, it affirmed my voice and the work I feel called to do. It genuinely shifted how I understand my leadership and the impact I want to continue make in my community.

Rebecca Torres

> The past two years of the fellowship have brought me a lot of personal and professional growth. It has allowed me to wear many hats, teammate, community member, project manager, and more. Every phase of the fellowship has been a valuable experience.

Aranxa A. Valencia

> Having the opportunity to be part of the Climate Fellows has provided a lot of valuable insights that I will continue to carry forward. I strengthened various skills including communication, organization and networking. Lastly, I learned more about the ongoing climate impacts, and the government's process to address them.

Hannah Jones

> My experience as a Climate Fellow has been both diverse and deeply rewarding, serving as a meaningful learning opportunity. Through collaboration with stakeholders and nonprofit organizations, I have contributed to efforts that support and guide our community toward a more sustainable and environmentally protected future. This experience not only increased my awareness of the urgent challenges and existing gaps in climate action but also equipped me with new knowledge and tools to effectively communicate these issues to the community.

David Sanchez

Fellows Capstone Projects

Fellows co-created capstone projects with local partners to implement hands-on climate action that reflects community priorities.

Garden-in-a-Box

A modular, low-water garden kit designed to improve food access and environmental education. The project promotes sustainable, space-efficient gardening and supports community workshops to encourage long-term, neighborhood-level resilience.

Air Quality Monitors

A partnership with Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso to deploy and evaluate air monitors focused on ground-level ozone. The project supports community-based monitoring to improve public health outcomes and inform future air quality policy.

Education

Development of four Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) aligned, place-based lesson plans on native Chihuahuan Desert species. TEKS are the state's required learning standards. Created with the Chihuahuan Desert Education Coalition, the materials provide accessible, ready-to-use resources for educators and will be piloted with local schools.

Eastside Clean-Up

A series of six clean-up events at Eastside Regional Park, led with the City of El Paso and 915 Desert Rescue. By returning to the same site, the project reduced litter and illegal dumping while building long-term community stewardship and partnerships.

Northeast Clean-Up

Three community clean-ups conducted with Frontera Land Alliance to restore high-use outdoor areas. The project combined land stewardship with community engagement, improved coordination through clear communication, and highlighted best practices for accessible, collaborative environmental projects.

CHAPTER 5

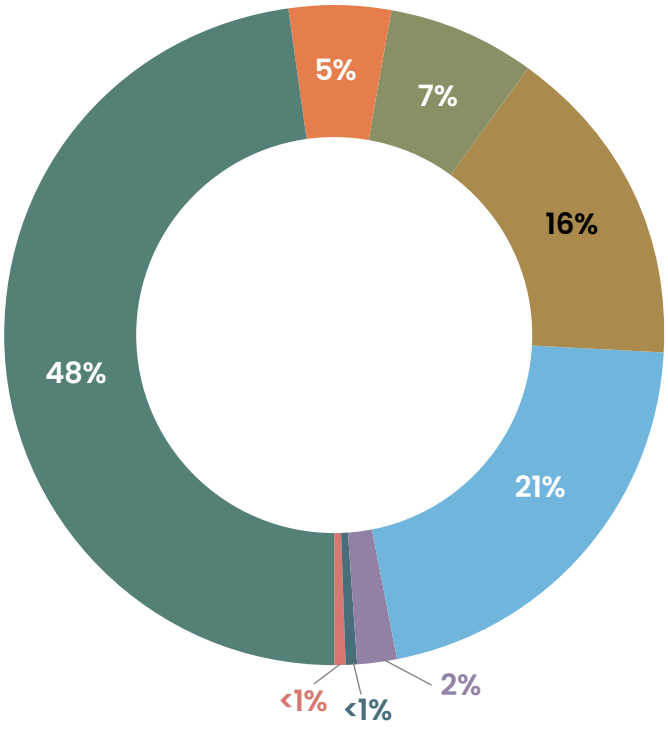
GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS SOURCES IN THE REGION

Where GHG emissions are coming from and what are the reduction targets

The El Paso region developed a comprehensive GHG inventory using 2019 as the baseline year to reflect pre-COVID, business-as-usual conditions. In 2019, the region generated approximately 7.6 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent ($MTCO_2e$)[2] in gross emissions[3] (**Figure 3**), with natural ecosystems and urban trees offsetting about 2 percent through carbon sequestration. Transportation and building energy use (including commercial, residential, and industrial energy use) are the largest sources of emissions, together accounting for more than 90 percent of total emissions.

The CAP establishes two types of GHG reduction targets to reflect both global climate science and local decision-making authority. The first type is the **ambitious target**, which aligns with scientific best practices and calls for a 50 percent reduction in emissions below 2019 levels by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050. This target reflects the level of emissions reduction needed globally to limit the most severe impacts of climate change.

Figure 3 2019 GHG Emissions by Sector



At the same time, many major emissions sources in the El Paso region are partly or fully outside the control of local governments. These include private vehicle purchasing decisions, industrial and commercial energy use, freight movement, electricity generation, and operations at international ports of entry, which are influenced by federal agencies and the City of Juárez. Because local governments do not regulate many of these systems, achieving net-zero emissions cannot be accomplished through local action alone.

[2] Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e) is a standard unit used to compare different greenhouse gases based on how much heat they trap in the atmosphere, expressed as the amount of carbon dioxide that would have the same warming effect.

[3] Gross emissions refer to the total amount of greenhouse gases released before accounting for carbon removed from the atmosphere by natural systems such as trees, soils, or other carbon sinks.

To address this, the CAP establishes a localized reduction target based on a bottom-up analysis of the emissions reductions achievable through full implementation of the CAP's actions. This second type of target calls for a 24 percent reduction in emissions by 2030 and a 71 percent reduction by 2050. The localized target represents what the region can realistically achieve within its authority, while still making substantial progress toward long-term climate goals.

Together, these two targets provide a balanced framework for climate action. The ambitious target sets a long-term vision aligned with climate science, while the localized target establishes achievable milestones that reflect local authority and capacity. Closing the gap between the two will require sustained collaboration and additional action from regional, state, federal, and international partners. **Figure 4** displays the region's business-as-usual emissions if no further local action is taken, the localized target emissions trajectory, and the ambitious target emissions trajectory.

Figure 4 GHG Reduction Targets Projected Emissions

CHAPTER 6

KEY MEASURES AND ACTIONS

What are the actions in the Climate Action Plan

The CAP includes **10 climate measures** and **53 actions** that support each measure.

- A **measure** is a broad strategy that addresses an emissions source or climate hazard within the El Paso region, aligns with regional goals, and is important to the community.
- **Actions** are specific policies, programs, or projects that support one of the 10 measures.

The actions selected reflect the regional landscape as of the end of 2025. Future regional infrastructure projects (e.g., I-10 expansion, ports of entry renovations, and data centers) will most likely impact regional emissions and projections, affecting GHG and co-pollutant reductions. Air quality considerations will be key for any future regional infrastructure project in order to achieve the desired GHG reduction.

Of the total actions identified, 39 focus on mitigation and 14 on adaptation, and the visual highlights the number of actions that deliver each type of community benefit.

BENEFITS

Primary

39 Mitigation

14 Adaptation

Community

29 Public Health and Wellbeing

25 Economic Prosperity

8 Environmental Stewardship

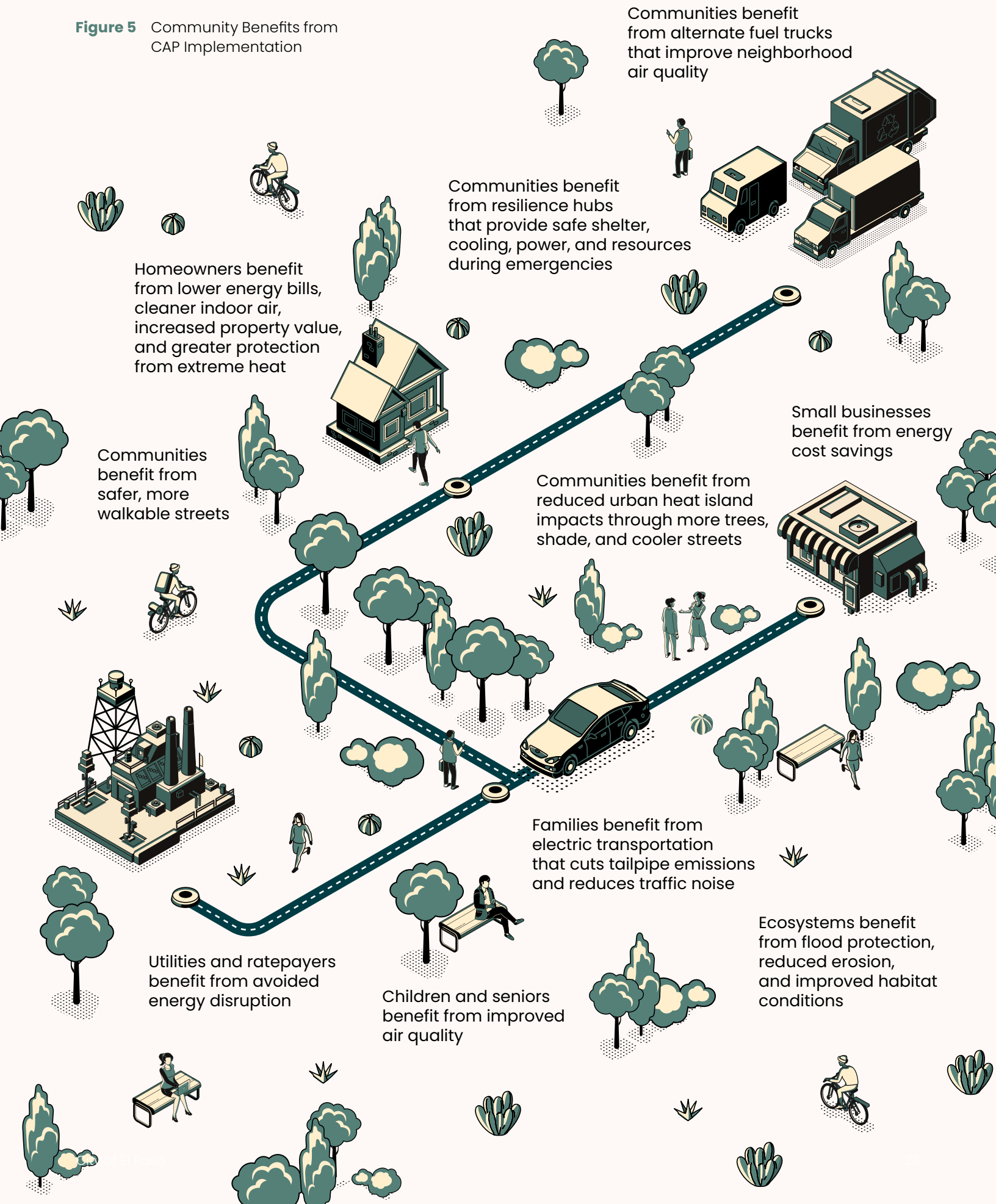
16 Community Building

16 Resource Conservation

18 Savings to Residents & Businesses

10 MEASURES	**53** NO. OF ACTIONS
MEASURE 1 Increase Energy Efficiency and Decarbonize Buildings	6
MEASURE 2 Support the Low- and Zero-Emission Vehicle Transition	6
MEASURE 3 Install Renewable Energy Systems	5
MEASURE 4 Promote Sustainable Food Systems and Waste Management Practices	6
MEASURE 5 Promote Walking, Biking, and Riding Transit	8
MEASURE 6 Monitor and Improve Air Quality	5
MEASURE 7 Implement and Oversee Climate Actions	3
MEASURE 8 Cool Communities, Protect Health, and Increase Native Ecosystems	7
MEASURE 9 Build Drought Resilience and Conserve Water	4
MEASURE 10 Reduce Flood Risk	3

Figure 5 Community Benefits from CAP Implementation



How to read a CAP Table

The following section organizes CAP actions by measure. Each CAP action overview and table provides further details on the action, such as GHG reduction potential, cost information, and community benefits. **Table 2** is an example of how to read a CAP action overview and table.

Table 2 CAP Action Overview & Explainer

GHG EMISSION REDUCTIONS

The annual amount of GHG emissions reduced by 2050

LOW	1 – 9,999 $MTCO_2e/yr$
MED	10,000 – 99,999 $MTCO_2e/yr$
HIGH	100,000+ $MTCO_2e/yr$
NA	No associated reductions
NM	"Not Modeled" means potential reductions were not estimated
+M#	e.g. "+M7" means "Included in Action M7", which means that reductions were bundled together with other actions

COST INFORMATION

Estimated implementation costs, such as capital expenditures, programmatic costs, and life cycle costs. The cost bands are defined as follows:

**$**$$	$1 – $250,000
**$$**$	$250,000 – $5,000,000
$$$	$5,000,000+

Where costs were not calculated, they are marked as N/A.

These categories are intended for illustrative and comparative purposes only and do not represent a detailed financial assessment or cost ranking.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

How long it will take to implement the action

●○○	**Near-Term** 0 – 3 yrs
●●○	**Medium-Term** 4 – 7 yrs
●●●	**Long-Term** 7+ yrs

PRIMARY BENEFITS

Mitigation
Assessed for adaptation actions that also reduce GHG emissions.

Adaptation
Assessed for mitigation actions that also help communities prepare for or reduce exposure to climate hazards.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

List of community benefits that the action provides. Can include:

Public Health and Wellbeing
Impact on public health and wellbeing due to improved air quality (indoor and outdoor) and water quality, increased physical activity, decreased time spent commuting or traveling, decreased noise pollution, etc.

Environmental Stewardship
Impact on the conservation, creation, or regeneration of natural environments and/or green spaces

Resource Conservation
Impact on natural resources, such as raw materials, water, and energy feedstocks

Economic Prosperity
Impact on the employment rate, total number of jobs, physical access to jobs, opportunities for workforce development, revenue for businesses, income, and/or social mobility

Savings to Residents and Businesses
Impact on savings to people and businesses (energy costs, travel costs, equipment costs, rent or housing costs, food costs, medical expenses, maintenance costs, etc.)

Community Building
Impact on community interactions and social cohesion and connections (e.g., promoting interactions)

Co-Pollutant Reduction
Co-pollutants include hazardous air pollutants and criteria air pollutants. Reducing co-pollutants means the action reduces harmful air pollutants that are released alongside GHGs, improving local air quality and protecting public health.

MEASURE 1

Increase Energy Efficiency and Decarbonize Buildings

Increasing energy efficiency in buildings, facilities, and infrastructure while also transitioning fossil fuel equipment to electric options can help reduce GHG emissions from buildings and facilities.

M1 Enhance or create a community-wide building energy efficiency and electrification rebate program

HIGH	$$$	●○○
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	

M2 Develop a building energy performance standard for commercial buildings

HIGH	$$$	●●○
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M3 Partner with industries to reduce emissions related to industrial activities

MED	$$$	●●○
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M4 Enhance or develop a weatherization program

MED	$$$	●○○
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	

M5 Increase energy efficiency in public buildings

LOW	$$$	●○○
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M6 Develop a data center policy that incorporates environmental, community, and economic development considerations

NM	$$$	●○○
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

MEASURE 2

Support the Low- and Zero-Emission Vehicle Transition

Switching gasoline- or diesel fuel-powered vehicles to zero- or low-emission options when they are retired will reduce vehicle-related GHG emissions. In the near-term, measure implementation will focus on larger public and private fleets, beginning with light-duty vehicles.

M7 Develop and implement EV charging policies for new buildings

HIGH	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M8 Organize low- and zero-emission and hybrid vehicle ride-and-drive events for community members

+M7	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M9 Transition municipal fleets to Low- and Zero-Emission Vehicles

+M7	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M10 Install public EV charging stations

+M7	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M11 Develop alternative fuel hubs for buses and heavy-duty fleet vehicles

LOW	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M12 Develop alternative fuel freight corridors

+M11	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

- Public Health and Wellbeing
- Environmental Stewardship
- Resource Conservation
- Economic Prosperity
- Savings to Residents and Businesses
- Community Building
- Co-Pollutant Reduction

MEASURE 3

Install Renewable Energy Systems

Using renewable energy instead of fossil fuels to generate electricity can greatly decrease the emissions associated with electricity use. Electric utilities can integrate large-scale renewable energy sources into the electric grid, or residents, businesses, and local governments can install solar, wind, or other renewable energy systems locally.

M13 Partner with utilities and startups to increase geothermal energy use

HIGH	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	

M14 Procure renewable energy through utility contracts or subscriptions to meet electricity demand

MED	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M15 Implement solar-ready policies for new buildings

MED	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	

M16 Incentivize battery storage installations

+M15	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	

M17 Install solar panels on public buildings and public land as alternative energy sources and as shade structures

LOW	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	

- Public Health and Wellbeing
- Economic Prosperity
- Community Building
- Environmental Stewardship
- Savings to Residents and Businesses
- Co-Pollutant Reduction
- Resource Conservation

MEASURE 4

Promote Sustainable Food Systems and Waste Management Practices

Local, sustainable, and self-sufficient food production and distribution systems can reduce GHG emissions from agricultural practices, landfilling food waste, and food transportation. Sustainable food systems can create local, high-quality jobs, reduce grocery costs, increase access to healthy food, improve food and water use resiliency, enhance community connectivity, and reduce food waste sent to landfills.

Landfills and wastewater treatment plants produce GHG emissions through the decomposition of organic matter. Waste emissions can be decreased by reducing the total amount of waste thrown away, diverting waste from landfills to compost or recycling facilities, or capturing and using the biogas generated as an energy source. This measure not only reduces GHGs from landfills, wastewater treatment plants, and waste transportation systems, but also increases local jobs and reduces waste disposal costs, landfill odors, and the need for raw matewrials by providing recycled materials and composting ingredients.

Resident Perspective

> **Expand opportunities to teach the community how to landscape with the local environment in mind. Encouraging is great, incentives are better. Teaching and offering consultation would go much further.**

M18 Improve recycling practices

LOW Reduction | $$$ Cost | ●●● Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M19 Implement community-wide composting for food and yard waste

LOW Reduction | $$$ Cost | ●●● Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M20 Develop a construction and demolition waste diversion ordinance and explore establishing reuse/ recycling facilities

LOW Reduction | $$$ Cost | ●●● Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M21 Capture and upgrade biogas to use as an energy source

NM Reduction | $$$ Cost | ●●● Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M22 Use water-based growing systems, such as hydroponics and aquaponics agriculture

NM Reduction | $$$ Cost | ●●● Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	

M23 Develop local food hubs

NM Reduction | $$$ Cost | ●●● Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	

MEASURE 5

Promote Walking, Biking, and Riding Transit

Active transportation and public transit options reduce transportation-related GHG emissions by helping residents, workers, and visitors reduce their use of passenger vehicles. Improvements such as new sidewalks and bike lanes, expanded bus routes, and added transit stops can make active transportation or transit a more attractive choice. Sustainable land use planning can also promote urban development that concentrates jobs, housing, services, and amenities around efficient transportation systems. Promoting alternative transportation options can also reduce air and noise pollution from passenger vehicles, improve public health and wellbeing by promoting active lifestyles, decrease fuel and maintenance costs, enhance economic prosperity and mobility, and improve community connectivity.

Resident Perspective

> **We should focus on moving away from infrastructure that caters to cars. We can lower emissions if we give the public options for different modes of transportation. Let's focus on creating an actual safe space for cyclists, pedestrians, maybe an efficient, actually useful light rail system, rather than expanding the highway needlessly.**

M24 Implement Complete Streets conversion projects to improve walking, biking, and public transit use

LOW	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M25 Expand existing micromobility systems for bikes and scooters

+M24	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M26 Explore options to provide free public transit

+M24	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M27 Build transit-oriented developments to increase access to public transit

LOW	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	

M28 Expand micro-transit projects like small shuttles to help people get from home to transit stops

+M27	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M29 Implement car-free hours to increase pedestrian street access

LOW	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	

M30 Update the zoning code to remove parking minimums

+M29	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	

M31 Improve the frequency and quality of transit services

LOW	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	

- Public Health and Wellbeing
- Economic Prosperity
- Community Building
- Environmental Stewardship
- Savings to Residents and Businesses
- Co-Pollutant Reduction
- Resource Conservation

MEASURE 6

Monitor & Improve Air Quality

Poor air quality can result in negative health impacts, such as increased cases of asthma and heart disease. To enable effective action, it is crucial to understand sources of co-pollutants and where emissions are concentrated. Monitoring air quality in the region can help identify areas where levels of co-pollutants are high. Most of the region's co-pollutants are from highway vehicles, with freight trucks generating more co-pollutants than passenger vehicles. As El Paso serves as a main port of entry, optimizing freight transportation routes, driver practices, and trucking regulations can improve local air quality, reduce noise pollution, reduce fuel and maintenance costs, improve overall traffic flow, and reduce freight GHG emissions.

- Public Health and Wellbeing
- Environmental Stewardship
- Resource Conservation
- Economic Prosperity
- Savings to Residents and Businesses
- Community Building
- Co-Pollutant Reduction

M32 Coordinate infrastructure, policy, and operations to reduce truck idling at ports and freight corridors

Reduction	Cost	Timeline
LOW	+M33	●●●

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M33 Create, expand, or improve designated truck parking areas at El Paso Ysleta Port of Entry to reduce idling

Reduction	Cost	Timeline
+M32	$$$	●●●

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M34 Reduce wait times at international bridges

Reduction	Cost	Timeline
+M32	$$$	●●●

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

M35 Install air quality monitoring systems at the international bridges

Reduction	Cost	Timeline
NA	$$$	●●●

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	–

M36 Install air quality monitoring systems in communities disproportionately impacted by poor air quality

Reduction	Cost	Timeline
NA	$$$	●●●

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	–

MEASURE 7

Implement and Oversee Climate Actions

Local governments in the El Paso region have a responsibility to implement and oversee climate actions. Local governments can enable region-wide GHG reductions through unlocking funding, integrating sustainable practices into operations, and encouraging local action and leadership. This measure will help local governments establish sustainable climate action implementation and management systems to promote long-lasting, systemic change.

Resident Perspective

It's harder to exercise outside, like cycling and hiking.

M37 Establish green revolving loan funds to support sustainability projects in public buildings

Reduction	Cost	Timeline
NA	$$$	●●●

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	-

M38 Integrate a climate and sustainability lens into government operations and decision-making

Reduction	Cost	Timeline
NA	$$$	●●●

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	-

M39 Create a community-led grant program to support neighborhood-level climate action

Reduction	Cost	Timeline
NA	$$$	●●●

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	

MEASURE 8

Cool Communities, Protect Health, and Increase Native Ecosystems

This measure focuses on expanding tree canopy, restoring native vegetation, and implementing green infrastructure solutions such as shade structures and cool pavements to lower surface and air temperatures in priority areas. These strategies not only help cool neighborhoods and reduce heat-related illness, but also improve air quality, enhance stormwater management, and restore native ecosystems that support biodiversity and regional resilience. Increasing the number of trees and natural spaces such as community gardens and parks can also sequester carbon and reduce the urban heat island effect, lower energy costs, improve air quality, enhance ecosystems, increase resiliency to flooding and heat waves, add local jobs, and improve health and wellbeing.

A1 Develop a community stewardship program to mitigate heat by increasing tree canopy and shading, focused on cooling homes, community centers, and neighborhoods

MED	NA	●○○
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

A2 Adopt a heat-resilient building code

NA	$$$	●○○
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

A3 Develop climate-resilient building codes and development standards

NA	NA	●●○
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation	

A4 Adjust the structural design of city pavements, bridges, and railways and use more cool and reflective surfaces

NA	NA	●●○
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	-

A5 Develop multi-hazard resilience hubs in vulnerable communities

NA	$$$	●○○
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Adaptation	

A6 Develop a robust multi-lingual emergency communications response framework and resources

NA	NA	●●○
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Adaptation	

A7 Implement carbon sequestration on public land

NA	NA	●●○
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	

MEASURE 9

Build Drought Resilience and Conserve Water

The El Paso region is experiencing more frequent and severe droughts. Water supply from the Rio Grande is declining, and groundwater resources are under pressure. This measure focuses on reducing water demand and diversifying water supply. Actions include expanding water reuse, improving irrigation efficiency, and promoting water-wise landscaping at locations of interest within the region. Public education and updated building codes will also support conservation. These actions will help protect long-term water sustainability and reduce stress on utilities.

A8 Expand wetlands and parks to support groundwater recharge

NA	$$$	●●●
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	

A9 Expand use of recycled water and graywater for irrigation, and establish projects to capture runoff

NA	$$$	●●○
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	

A10 Educate, incentivize, and provide technical assistance to growers in the region to transition to climate-resilient farming practices

NA	$$$	●●○
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

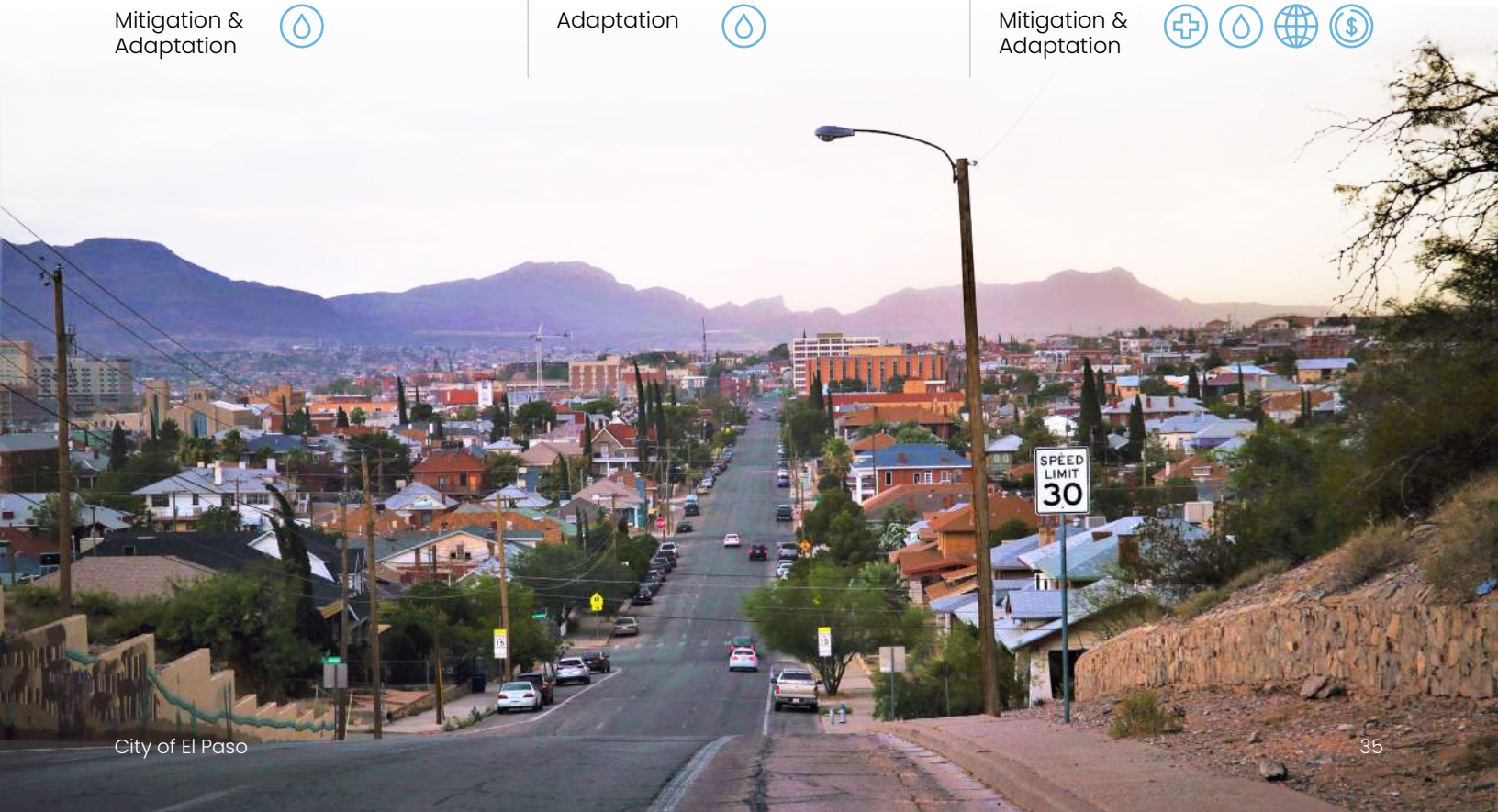
Primary	Community
Adaptation	

A11 Develop water capture systems that run on solar energy to generate potable water in unincorporated areas and colonias

NA	$$$	●●○
Reduction	Cost	Timeline

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Mitigation & Adaptation	



MEASURE 10

Reduce Flood Risk

The El Paso region faces growing flood risks from intense rainfall, aging infrastructure, and expanding paved surfaces. Flash floods can damage homes, roads, and utilities, and pose serious risks to public safety. This measure aims to reduce flood risk using both green and gray infrastructure. Strategies include expanding wetlands, bioswales, and permeable pavement and restoring floodplains. These actions also improve water quality and create green spaces.

Resident Perspective

> **I live in a historic part of the county (San Elizario), and our valuable assets are being destroyed by flooding of the adobe buildings.**

A12 Deploy green infrastructure and reduce impermeable surfaces along roads and at critical facilities

Reduction	Cost	Timeline
NA	NA	●●○

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Adaptation	

A13 Strategically acquire land in the 100-year floodplain

Reduction	Cost	Timeline
NA	$$$	●●●

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Adaptation	

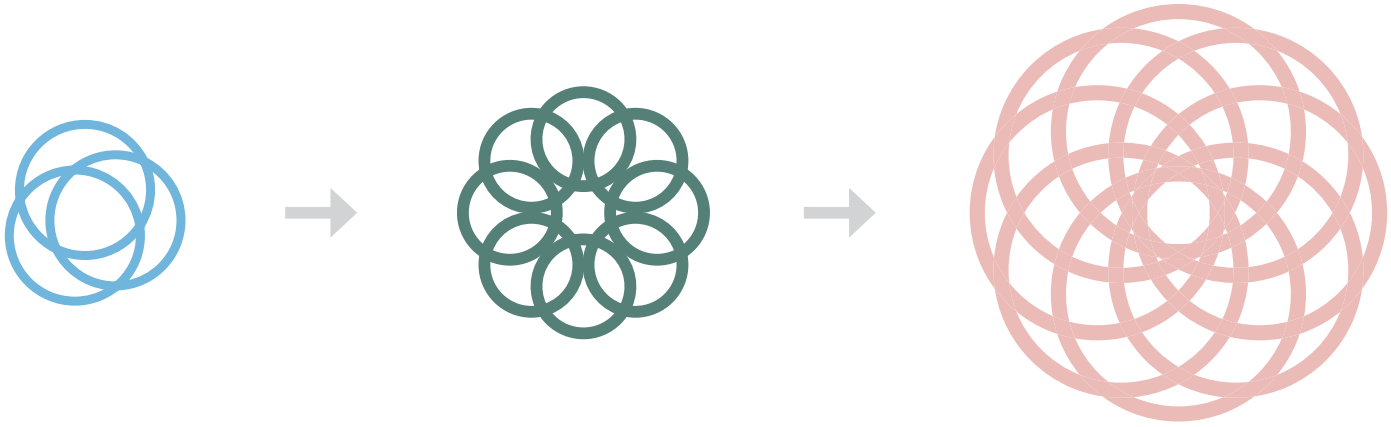
A14 Stabilize arroyos in steep locations and in areas that show signs of erosion

Reduction	Cost	Timeline
NA	$$$	●●●

BENEFITS

Primary	Community
Adaptation	

Figure 6 Implementation Builds Over Time



Pilot

Scale Up

Full Implementation

CHAPTER 7

TURNING THE CAP INTO ACTION AND MEASURING SUCCESS

How the plan will be implemented

The CAP provides a comprehensive, community-driven roadmap for addressing climate change in the El Paso region. With over 50 actions spanning all sectors, CAP implementation will require extensive coordination, diverse funding sources, strategic phasing, and long-term commitment.

The City will coordinate CAP implementation in partnership with the CDCC. This partnership will align departmental and regional efforts and support funding coordination. It will also help maintain accountability to community priorities. A publicly accessible climate action dashboard will track implementation progress, performance metrics, and community benefits. This tool will provide transparency for residents, stakeholders, staff, and decision-makers.

The CAP builds on climate initiatives already underway across the region. These include water conservation and drought response programs, urban tree planting efforts, and the City's participation in LEED for Cities.[4] The plan connects and scales these efforts. It also helps attract new funding and strengthens coordination across jurisdictions, including with local governments in New Mexico and Mexico. The City also plans to launch a community-led grant program. This program will support small-scale neighborhood climate projects and include technical assistance to build local capacity and leadership.

Implementing the CAP will require multiple funding sources. No single source can fund all actions. The City and its partners will pursue a mix of local funds, state and federal grants, private investment, and utility revenues. Blending funding sources will help maximize resources and reduce financial risk. It will also allow the right funding tools to be matched with the right projects.

CAP implementation will occur in phases. Many actions will begin as pilot projects. These pilots will test approaches, build capacity, and refine strategies. Successful pilots can then scale up as funding and partnerships grow. Over time, actions will move toward full implementation, as climate solutions will become integrated into standard policies, programs, and practices. This phased approach will allow the City and its partners to adapt to changing conditions and make steady progress toward long-term goals while also gathering continuous community input (**Figure 6**).

Strong partnerships are essential to successful implementation. Local, state, and federal agencies play key roles in policy, funding, and delivery. Financial investment and philanthropy can help unlock additional resources. Businesses contribute innovation, investment, and workforce capacity. Community organizations bring trusted leadership and on-the-ground implementation, while community members provide valuable feedback and accountability. Together, these partners can help ensure climate actions are effective, equitable, and responsive to community needs.

Through sustained collaboration, equitable investment, and continued community engagement, the CAP positions the El Paso region for a healthier, more resilient, and more equitable future.

[4] LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. "LEED for Cities helps local leaders create and operationalize responsible, sustainable, and specific plans for natural systems, energy, water, waste, transportation, and other factors that contribute to quality of life" (U.S. Green Building Council, 2023).

CHAPTER 8

LEARN MORE & STAY INVOLVED

How to explore the CAP, track progress, and participate in ongoing climate action

To learn more, you can explore the different components of the CAP at epclimate.org, including the following resources:

Chihuahuan Desert Climate Action Plan Technical Report
Provides a detailed explanation on measures and actions, technical analysis, data sources, assumptions, and supporting documentation for the CAP.

Interactive Dashboard
Tracks implementation progress, performance metrics, and community benefits in a transparent, user-friendly format.

APPENDIX A
Climate Action Greenhouse Gas Reduction Methodology
Explains how GHG emissions were calculated and how reductions from CAP actions were estimated.

APPENDIX B
Climate Action Co-pollutant Reduction Methodology
Describes how reductions in Hazardous Air Pollutants and Criteria Air Pollutants were assessed.

APPENDIX C
Vulnerability Assessment
Identifies communities, infrastructure, and natural systems most at risk from climate hazards such as heat, flooding, and drought.

APPENDIX D
Intersection with Other Funding Sources
Outlines potential federal, state, local, and private funding opportunities that can support CAP implementation.

APPENDIX E
Cost of Actions
Summarizes estimated implementation costs for CAP actions and identifies cost considerations.

APPENDIX F
Low-Income and Disadvantaged Communities Census Tracts
Documents census tracts identified as low-income and disadvantaged within the region.

APPENDIX G
Workforce Planning Analysis
Examines workforce needs, job impacts, and training opportunities associated with implementing CAP actions.

TECHNICAL REPORT & APPENDICES