

# Charles County



# Climate Action Plan

**WELCOME**

## Interactive Webinar #2

January 15, 2025



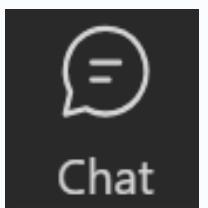
-  This meeting is being recorded. By staying in this session, you consent to being recorded.
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-  Please use the chat function to ask questions during the session.
-  If you experience technological issues during the meeting, please message **Colleen Turner** via chat or email, [colleen.turner@mbakerintl.com](mailto:colleen.turner@mbakerintl.com).



Mic



Raise



Chat

During today's meeting we will:

- Re-introduce the **Climate Action Plan (CAP)** and its purpose
- Learn about greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories and forecasts for the county
- Discuss GHG reduction, resilience, and communication strategies in **breakout rooms**
- Review themes from breakout rooms

# Meet the Team

Let's Talk About It  
Climate Action Planning in Charles County



## Climate Action Plan Project Manager



Metropolitan Washington  
Council of Governments

## Contracting Authority



Project Team  
Lead

Greenhouse Gas  
Analyses

Resilience  
Analyses

Community  
Engagement

# Introductions

## Let's Talk About It Climate Action Planning in Charles County



**Beth Groth**  
Charles County Climate  
Resilience and  
Sustainability Officer



**Noelani Brockett**  
Charles County  
Planner



**Colleen Turner**  
Michael Baker International  
Associate Vice President &  
Planning Practice Lead

The **Climate Action Plan (CAP)** serves as a comprehensive roadmap to guide Charles County through a process of reducing its Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, mitigate and respond to climate change, improve the environment, and protect communities.

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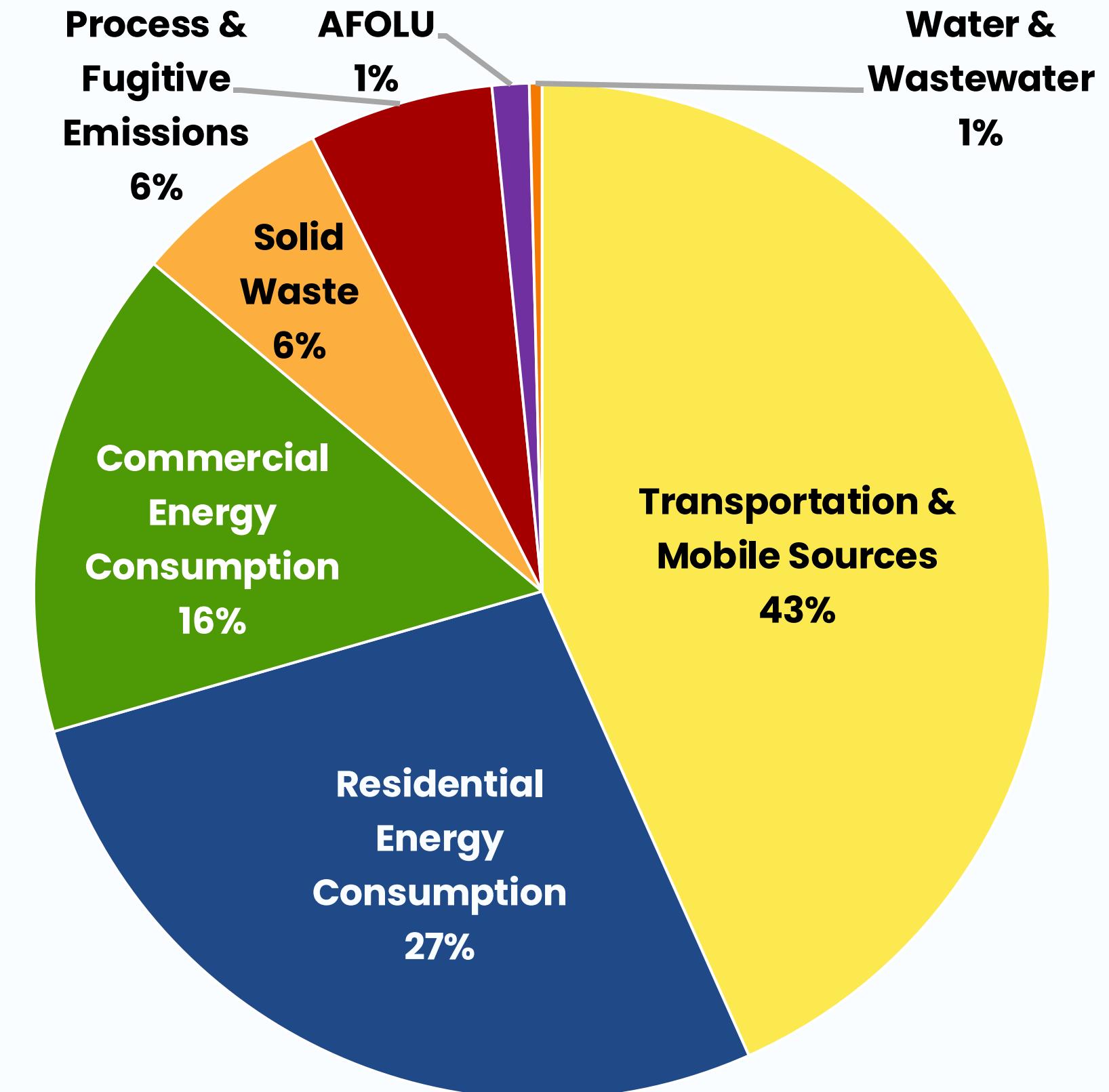
**Charles County recognizes the need to take action to sustain the vitality of our community for years to come. The Office of Climate Resilience and Sustainability works with government and community partners to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, protect our natural environment, and safeguard our community against the effects of climate change.**

—”

# Where do GHG Emissions Come From?

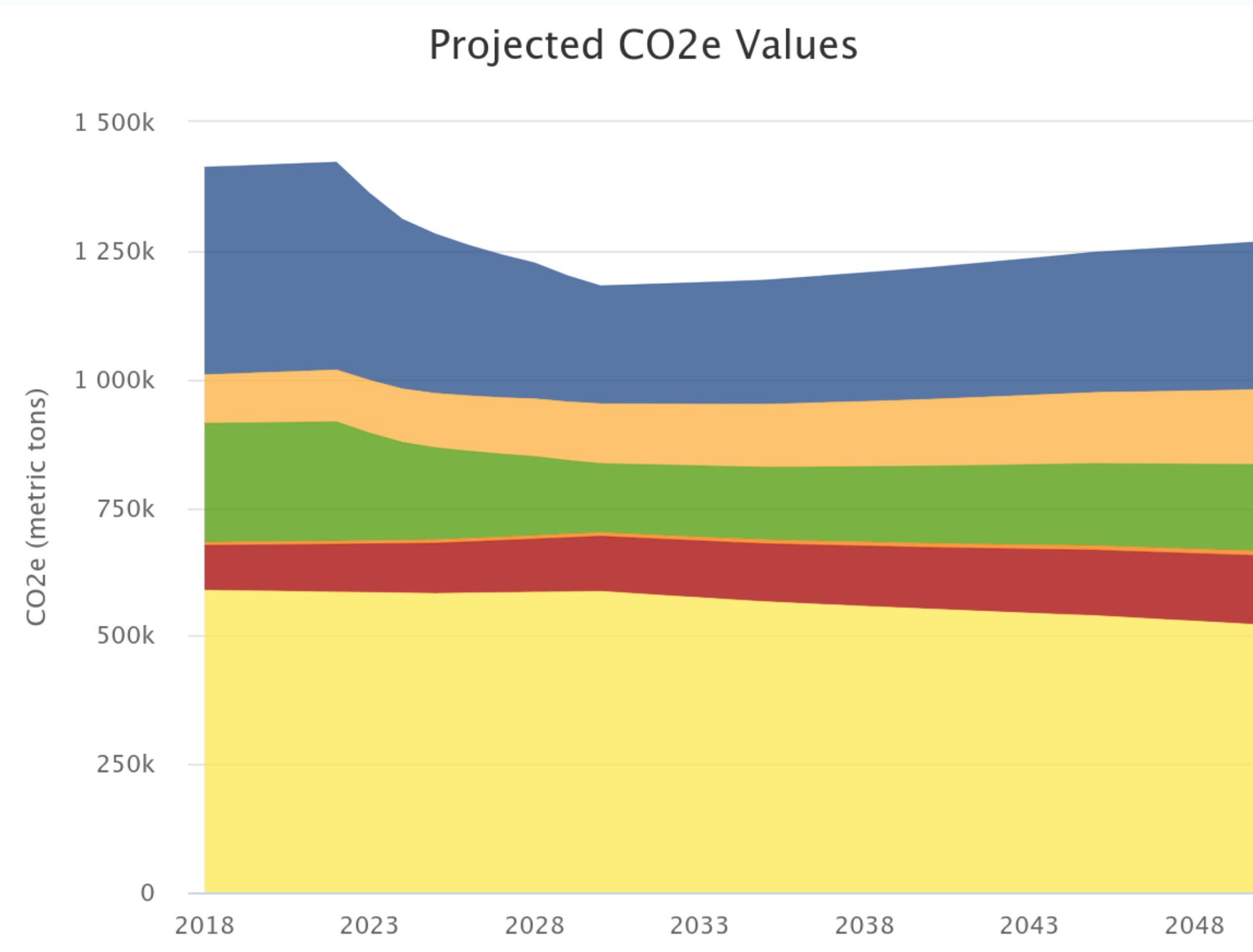
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- 86% from Transportation and Energy Use
- **AFOLU** = Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use
- **Process & Fugitive Emissions** = Industrial process and manufacturing emissions as well as leaks from equipment or pipelines



# What is Business-As-Usual?

## Let's Talk About It Climate Action Planning in Charles County



- **MWCOG** cooperative forecast for Charles County population
- **NREL Cambium** projections for electricity emissions factors through 2030. Electricity emissions factor is constant from 2030 onwards.
- **Federal CAFE** standards applied to vehicle efficiency through 2050.

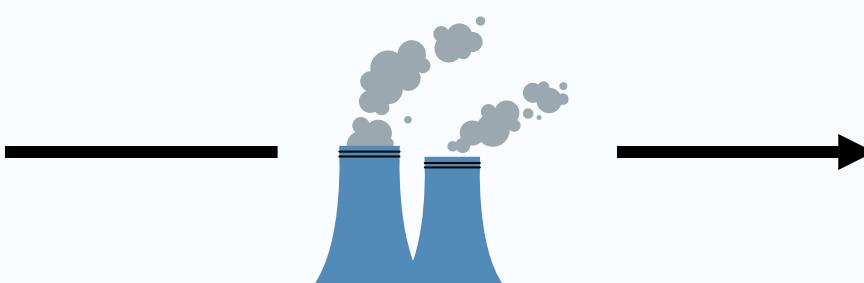
# Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategies

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Climate Action Planning in Charles County

## Individual Actions Supported by Community and Government Initiatives

### Use Energy-Efficient Appliances

Switch to ENERGY STAR-rated appliances and LED lighting to reduce energy consumption.



### Develop a Beat- the-Peak program

Implement an energy conservation program encouraging citizens to reduce electricity usage during peak hours through incentives and public awareness campaigns.

### Reduce Car Travel

Opt for walking, biking, carpooling, or using public transportation instead of driving alone.



### Improve Bike Paths

Expand bike lane infrastructure, ensuring safe and accessible routes for cyclists, and promoting sustainable transportation through community engagement and incentives.

### Recycle Properly

Ensure that you are familiar with your local recycling guidelines and sort your recyclables accordingly. Common recyclable materials include paper, cardboard, glass, and certain plastics.



### Launch a comprehensive recycling initiative

Provide educational resources and offer incentives to increase participation and reduce landfill waste

## Individual Actions Supported by Community and Government Initiatives

### Emergency Preparedness

Develop a family emergency plan and assemble an emergency kit with essentials like food, water, medications, and important documents. This can help you stay safe during extreme weather events.



### Improve the Emergency Preparedness Program

Develop comprehensive storm response plans, improve early warning systems, and conduct regular community drills and education programs.

### Flood Protection

If you live in a flood-prone area, consider measures like ensuring storm ditches adjacent to your property are clear of debris, planting rain gardens, and elevating your HVAC system.

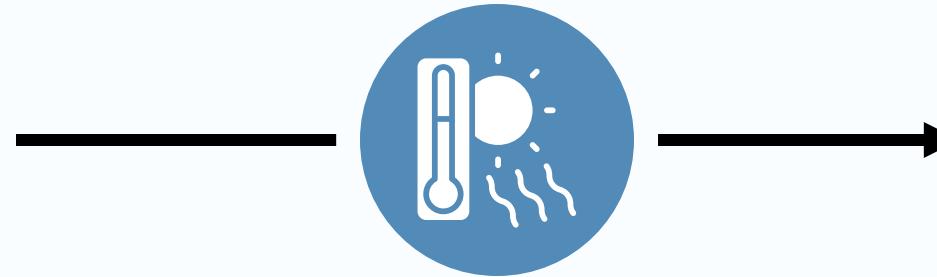


### Address Areas Prone to Flooding

Identify areas that should be prioritized for stormwater runoff controls and drainage improvements.

### Support Vulnerable Individuals

Check on elderly neighbors, young children, and those with chronic illnesses during heatwaves to ensure they are safe and hydrated.



### Improve Access to Cooling Centers

Evaluate existing cooling center locations and determine need in other areas of the county.

1 Identifying current **challenges and opportunities** in the community related to climate change resilience and mitigation

2 Developing **actionable strategies** to address those challenges



Actionable strategy refers to **a well-defined, practical action** that can be implemented to achieve specific goals in mitigating or adapting to the impacts of climate change. These strategies are characterized by their **clarity, feasibility, and measurable outcomes**.

3 Align **individual climate action** with potential county resources and initiatives

4 Identifying **effective communication** strategies for climate change mitigation and resiliency in Charles County

**Let's Talk About It**  
Climate Action Planning in Charles County



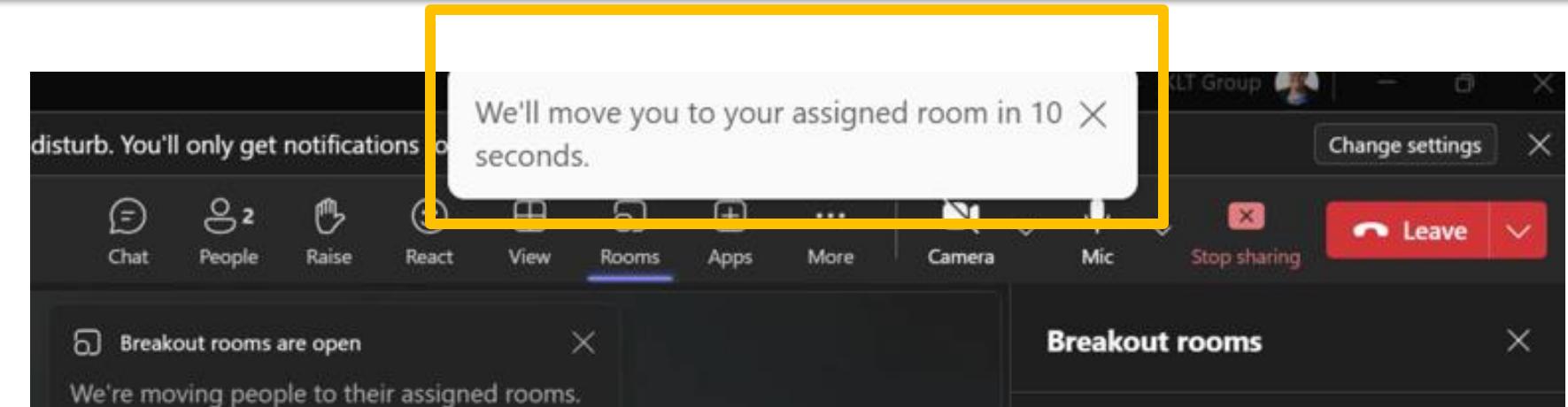
# Breakout Room Discussion Guide

# Breakout Room Discussions

## Let's Talk About It Climate Action Planning in Charles County

1

Participants will be automatically assigned to a **Breakout Room**.



2

Participants will remain in the **same Breakout room** for the following discussion:

1. **Greenhouse Gas Reduction** (15 minutes)
2. **Resilience** (15 minutes)
3. **Communications/Outreach** (15 minutes)

3

Participants will **automatically be returned to the main room** at the end of the discussion.

4

Facilitators will **report out** on themes behalf of each breakout room (10 -15 minutes)

### County Staff Visiting All Rooms

- **Beth Groth (Charles County)**
- **Noelani Brockett (Charles County)**

### Breakout Room Facilitators

- **Nicole Rodi (MBI)**
- **Brandi McCoy (KLT)**
- **La Toya Eff & Charlize Cramer (KLT)**
- **Colleen Turner (MBI) (Lobby)**

- **What is your name and where do you live?**
- **What in your community is important to you?**

- **What obstacles have you faced when trying to live more sustainably?**
- **What type of GHG reduction strategies would you like to see in the CAP?**
- **What are additional positive changes or co-benefits that you would like to see achieved through these strategies?**

- **What does resilience look like to you?**
- **What type of resilience strategies would you like to see in the CAP?**
- **Are you participating in any community-based climate resilience efforts?**

- **What communication/outreach strategies have you found most effective in promoting climate action and why?**
- **What do you think there are the biggest opportunities within the climate action areas of:**
  - Reducing GHG
  - Improving Resilience
  - Improving Communication, Outreach and Education
- **How can we make CAP initiatives more accessible?**

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# Breakout Room #1 Discussion Summary

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Below are strategies summarized from input received from breakout discussions.

## Greenhouse Gas Reduction

- Transition to cars that do not produce greenhouse gases.
- Increase access to charging stations for electric vehicles.
- Install solar panels to reduce electric bills.
- Commit to green building techniques for government buildings.
- Support the Beverage and Litter Reduction Bill (HB 232) to reduce landfill waste without costing the county.
- Improve sidewalk design and shoulders to ensure safe walking routes to community locations.
- Improve walkability in rural areas.
- Consider renewable energy storage solutions.
- Promote composting at landfills and educate residents on home composting.

## Resiliency

- Evaluate evacuation routes to ensure they can handle the growing population during severe weather events.
- Review building codes and new structures for setbacks and elevation.
- Develop guidelines to protect outdoor workers from extreme heat.
- Educate the public about increasing temperatures and climate change impacts.
- Plant more shade trees; provide shaded areas at sports facilities.
- Support gardening programs at senior centers and for the Southern MD Food Bank.

## Communication

- Implement outreach programs in schools to educate young people about climate change.
  - Master Gardner's are establishing a Junior Master Gardener program in schools.
- Engage local press to write articles about the Climate Action Plan.
- Create a network of community members to spread awareness.
- Set up informational tables at events like county fairs and festivals.

# Breakout Room #2 Discussion Summary

## Let's Talk About It Climate Action Planning in Charles County

Below are strategies summarized from input received from breakout discussions.

### Greenhouse Gas Reduction

- Increase public transportation options, including extending the Green Line Metro to Charles County.
- Ensure that developers create truly walkable communities that connect neighborhoods to restaurants, shopping, and public transportation and enhance the character of Charles County with a vibrant downtown feel.
- Address the impact of sprawling development on the character of Charles County.
- Promote native gardens instead of traditional lawns; explore landscape standards to combat the use of pesticides.
- Support efforts by external organizations to plant trees.
- Improve public transportation options to D.C. to reduce idling in traffic.
- Improve frequency/reliability of public transit to encourage use.
- Shorten intersections and provide crosswalks at all bus stops to keep pedestrians safe

### Resiliency

- Increase tree cover and forest areas to absorb water, filter pollution, mitigate flooding, and reduce the heat island effect.
- Address localized stream flooding, which is becoming more frequent.
- Overcome challenges in finding places to plant trees in Charles County and the tri-county area.
- Increase capacity for sewer lines and hardened energy infrastructure.
- Ensure that siting decisions take into account future (expanded) floodplain extents.
- install exemplary sustainable practices at county facilities to increase awareness/ acceptance of these practices.
- Promote the planting of native plants.

### Communication

- Use email lists to reach a broader audience, as not everyone uses social media.
- Improve communication through the county website, TV channel, and postcard-type mailers.
- Promote the benefits of walkable areas and sustainable strategies to the community.
- Highlight the importance of tree cover in slowing down water and reducing flooding.

# Breakout Room #3 Discussion Summary

## Let's Talk About It Climate Action Planning in Charles County

Below are strategies summarized from input received from breakout discussions.

### Greenhouse Gas Reduction

- Promote sustainable transportation options, such as biking and transit in Charles County.
- Advocate for less traditional grass lawns and more native grasses.
- Consider the impact of land and road clearing, and the increase in impervious surfaces.
- Improve accessibility for communities on the western part of the county who need to drive long distances for amenities.
- Focus on building within existing commercial areas rather than expanding outward.
- Increase green spaces instead of parking lots.
- Reinstate the W-19 bus for commuting into D.C.
- Develop zoning and laws that favor sustainability and climate resilience

### Resiliency

- Address the challenges of cooperation among different stakeholders.
- Ensure zoning and approval processes support sustainability efforts.
- Expand farmers markets and reduce reliance on supermarkets.
- Evaluate the needs of the homeless population in the county.

### Communication

- Utilize community interests to foster collaboration.
- Appoint climate change officers for community involvement.
- Increase the number of webinars and improve the climate action page.
- Establish a physical presence in places where people already gather.
- Enhance outreach efforts in community groups.
- Create a network of community members to spread awareness.
- Set up informational tables at events like county fairs and festivals.
- Lead by example in promoting sustainability.
- Ensure the county website is updated and promoted to encourage participation.
- Post scientific graphs to social media to raise awareness about greenhouse gas emissions.
- Consider the needs of the homeless population in communication efforts.
- Improve outreach in languages other than English

- **Interactive Community Webinars**
  - Meeting #3 – Deep Dive on Mitigation and Resilience Strategies
    - February 26, 2025, 6-7:30 pm
  - Meeting #4 – Initial Climate Action Plan Strategy Analysis Results
    - March 26, 2025, 6-7:00 pm
- **In-Person Meetings (Locations TBD)**
- **Attendance at Community Events (Locations TBD)**
- **Other Stakeholder Engagement**
  - Utilities
  - Other Government Agencies [State, Federal]
  - Community Organizations and Advocacy Groups
  - Students / Youth
- **Continued Analysis and Strategy Development**

# Survey Results

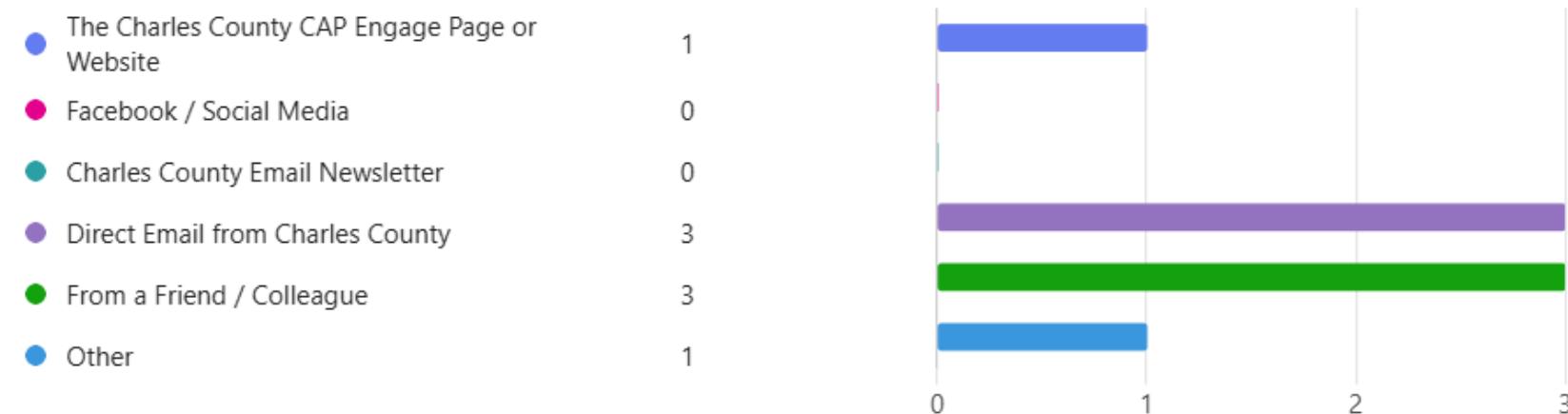
## Let's Talk About It Climate Action Planning in Charles County

1. Where are you joining us from? [Enter a city or zip code.]

7 Responses

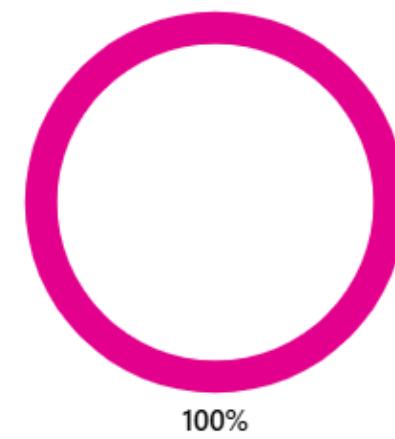
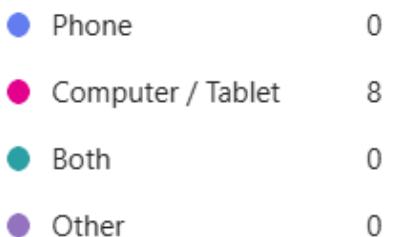
ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	La Plata
2	anonymous	20646
3	anonymous	20664
4	anonymous	La Plata
5	anonymous	20603
6	anonymous	20616
7	anonymous	20776

2. How Did You Hear About Today's Webinar?



Other: Southern Maryland Audubon Society

3. I joined today using my

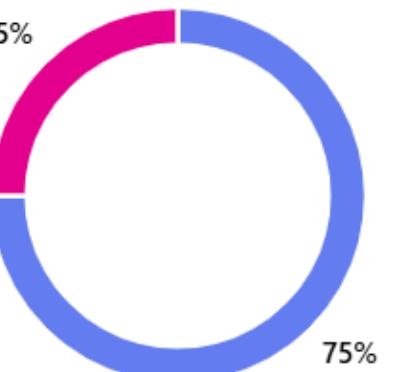


# Survey Results

## Let's Talk About It Climate Action Planning in Charles County

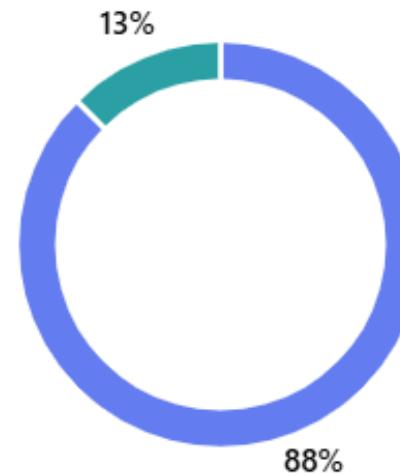
4. I found this webinar helpful

Extremely	6
Moderately	2
Not at All	0



5. I enjoyed the breakout room format

Yes	7
No	0
Not sure	1



### 6. Is there anything we missed or is there anything else you would like to share with us?

- Shorter breakout and more in the large group.
- I was a bit apprehensive about participating in the breakout rooms at first, but the breakout room discussion was great! Awesome moderator and was nice hearing the sentiment of other participants. Thanks for having this update call!
- Would be great to have someone from the county inform us of what is already in progress.
- No. Thanks for much for the effort.
- Great job! I enjoyed hearing the summary of feedback received at the end of the webinar.

# Be Engaged & Involved!

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Climate Action Planning in Charles County



## Visit our Climate Action Plan Engage Page

<https://charles-county-md.civilspace.io/en/projects/charles-county-climate-action-planning>



## Join Our Mailing List

<https://www.charlescountymd.gov/government/climate-action-plan>



## Follow Us on Social Media!

<https://linktr.ee/CharlesCAP>



Nextdoor

# Thank You For Your Participation!

## Beth Groth

Climate Resilience and  
Sustainability Officer

## Noelani Brockett

Planner

301-645-0692

[ClimateAction@CharlesCountyMD.gov](mailto:ClimateAction@CharlesCountyMD.gov)

