

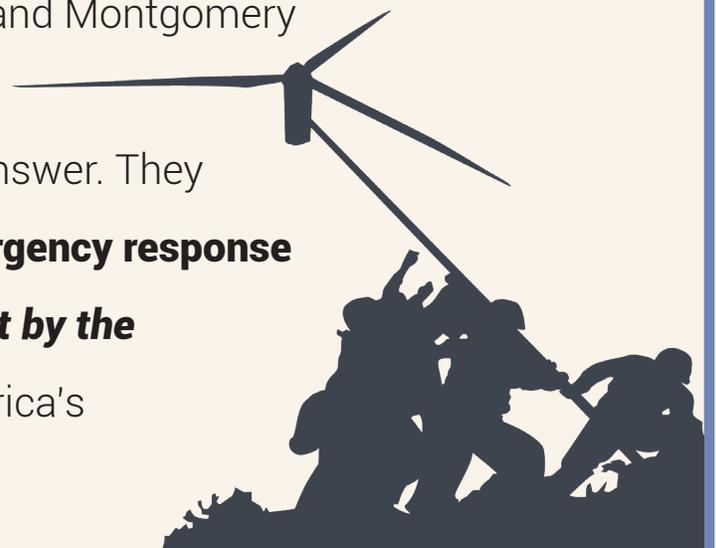


# Cities Respond To The Climate Emergency

## The Details

**Climate change is already an emergency.** It's triggering fires, deadly heat waves, wars, famine, hurricanes, and humanitarian crises. It's causing irreversible damage to the planet, and threatening tens of thousands of species around the world – **including us.** We don't talk about it at the dinner table, but **more than 127 million Americans believe that climate change will make humans go extinct.\*** What can solve a problem on this scale?

Local governments from Hoboken, NJ and Montgomery County, MD to Berkeley, Los Angeles and Richmond, CA think they have the answer. They are working to kick start **a massive emergency response demanded by the people and carried out by the government,** on the same scale as America's mobilization during World War II.



\* According to a poll done by the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, 39% of Americans – more than 127 million people – believe that climate change has at least a 50% chance of causing humans to go extinct.

**THESE CITIES AND COUNTIES ARE:**

- ⊙ Transitioning to just green economies
- ⊙ Pushing for state and federal mobilizations to eliminate climate change-causing pollution at emergency speed
- ⊙ Advocating for other cities to do the same
- ⊙ Organizing their residents to lead this work.

In even more towns across the U.S., Canada and the U.K., residents like you are getting their neighbors, their city council members and city governments on board – **creating a nationwide grassroots movement to avert the worst effects of climate change.**

## What does an Emergency Climate Mobilization Look Like?

In a time when humanity faces an existential threat, mobilization means going into emergency mode:



**Every family, every home, and every block** works to stop using fossil fuels and conserve energy



**Every available piece of land** is cultivated to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.



**Every city** helps its residents understand the severity of the threat and prepare for climate disasters.



**Every government agency** helps the sectors it oversees transition to a just, green economy.



**Every factory** creates the tools for just, green economy, with support from the government.



**Every possible scientist** works on finding ways to remove greenhouse pollution from the atmosphere and restore a safe climate.

Cities and counties help kick-start this larger mobilization when they declare a climate emergency, **commit to eliminate all greenhouse gas emissions at emergency speed, and advocate for other cities and other levels of government to do the same.**

This means a reinvesting in all aspects of a city's economy, with equity and sustainability front and center. Every city's plan will be different, but what follows is a list of research-backed strategies cities can use.

# Strategies for Cities to Eliminate Greenhouse Gas Emissions

→ Install solar panels on 70% of suitable rooftops. Connect each home to the power grid, so that excess electricity can be distributed or stored as needed.

→ Install solar panels on 100% of city-managed land and buildings.

→ Build massive solar and wind powered electricity plants to completely eliminate pollution from coal and natural gas burning plants.

→ Build new energy storage facilities to hold excess solar and wind energy for later use.

→ Create a city-backed community bank that issues "green bonds" to fund infrastructure investments.

→ Install electric vehicle charging stations so that city residents and the city government can transition away from gas-powered vehicles.

→ Contract with manufacturers to build electric cars locally and offer rebates for people who trade their cars in.

→ Place solar panels on parking facilities so that electric vehicles can charge during peak solar hours.

→ Update building codes to require all commercial buildings to be highly energy efficient, for example by meeting LEED's Platinum Standard.

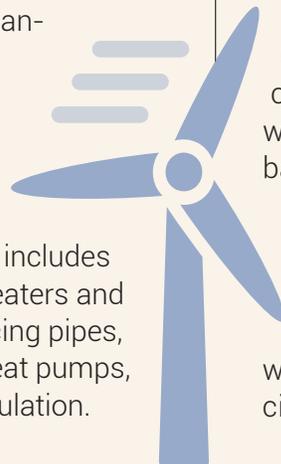
→ Fund the retrofitting of all residential buildings to improve energy efficiency. This includes replacing water heaters and gas ranges, replacing pipes, installing HVAC heat pumps, and improving insulation.



→ Offer comprehensive composting, as food and yard waste captures carbon and generates usable energy.

→ Launch a citywide gardening initiative that encourages all city residents to start their own vegetable gardens, and/or creates massive city-funded and city-staffed gardens on available land. The city can distribute seeds, host workshops to teach gardening basics, and distribute fertilizer from city compost.

→ Create massive job training and placement programs to meet the workforce needs created by the city's mobilization.



Not only will these programs reduce a city's negative impact on the climate, **they will also create real improvements in people's quality of life.**

The new manufacturing and construction boom will create thousands of jobs -- as many as 28,000 jobs for a city the size of Madison, or 42,000 jobs for a city the size of St. Louis.\* Electricity savings from increased efficiency and cheaper, renewable energy sources will add more funds to city budget.

Transitioning to a just, green economy is also a way to **build more equitable cities and counties** by investing in communities that business and government have excluded through disinvestment, discrimination and structural racism. For example, the city can:

● Subsidize energy efficiency retrofits and prioritize low-income communities so that they are the first to benefit from energy savings.



● Begin city-run training programs for green energy and manufacturing jobs, prioritizing people who experience barriers to other employment.

● Use the increase in city funds generated by energy savings to create a true social safety net.

\* Job creation estimates are from The Climate Mobilization's Draft Implementation Plans, available at <https://www.theclimatemobilization.org/implementation-plans>



## Cities as Advocates In Every Direction

**Taking the steps listed above is not enough.** To respond to the climate emergency, cities must become advocates for the climate mobilization. This means spreading their climate emergency program in all directions: **Downwards** to city residents, **outwards** to other city governments, and **upwards** to state and federal government bodies.

### MOBILIZING DOWNWARDS

- ⦿ The city can create advertisements or information sessions to **educate residents about the climate crisis** and **enlist them in the mobilization**.
- ⦿ Cities can organize **regular town hall meetings** where residents **work collaboratively on neighborhood climate projects**.
- ⦿ Cities can **devise incentive structures** so that residents make choices that benefit the climate.

### MOBILIZING OUTWARDS

- ⦿ The city can **convene a regional summit** where it invites other cities to prepare for climate disasters and replicate its program.
- ⦿ The city can **open channels of communication with other cities** and persuade them to implement climate crisis policies.
- ⦿ The city can **start an official organization of cities** that invites other cities to officially join the effort and certifies the progress member cities make.

### MOBILIZING UPWARDS

- ⦿ Alone or with other cities, a city can **publicly pressure state and national governments to adopt a climate emergency program**.

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## Our Path to Victory

Local governments have local responsibilities, but to protect their residents they must become first responders to the global climate crisis. When determined residents like you take action, cities can lead the struggle against climate change and help to restore a safe climate and a habitable planet -- creating healthier neighborhoods, a more just economy and a more equitable world in the process. Together, we can avert climate catastrophe!