

## Climate in All Budgets – Local Climate Action

Several Minnesota communities have already [adopted climate action plans](#), while many others lack the financial and technical resources to complete their own. As more plans are adopted, most communities will need additional resources to successfully implement their plans. Fortunately, there are several bills aimed at supporting local entities with plan development and implementation efforts. The following includes a summary of key bills and how they will support local climate action.

### Greenhouse Gas Mitigation

Local and tribal governments are critical actors in helping the state achieve its greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets. These entities can reduce emissions through more efficient buildings, clean energy deployment, climate-friendly transportation and land use decisions, and improved waste management. The following bills will support local and tribal governments in accelerating these efforts.

#### [HF 597 \(Kraft\)](#) / [SF 1388 \(McEwen\)](#) - **Grants for Local Climate Action Planning and Implementation.**

This bill provides \$5 million in grant funding to the MPCA for the purpose of providing grants for political subdivisions to develop and implement climate action plans that address mitigation and adaptation. The funding supports data collection for grant recipients and technical assistance for communities wishing to complete plans without a consultant.

#### [HF 747 \(Reyer\)](#) / [SF 1404 \(Port\)](#) - **Solar Grant Program for Public Buildings**

This bill establishes a grant program through the Department of Commerce that provides funding for solar on public buildings (counties, cities, towns - not schools). It has a capacity limit of lesser of 40kW or 120% of the building's annual energy usage. It can be combined with federal direct pay grants and other incentives.

#### [HF 772 \(Kraft\)](#) / [SF 1368 \(Port\)](#) - **Energy Code for New Commercial Buildings**

This bill modifies the process for commercial building code adoption by the state. It moves the cycle from every six years to follow each new published edition of ASHRAE 90.1 (which occurs every 3 years) and sets a goal to achieve an 80 percent reduction in net energy consumption or greater using 2004 as a baseline.

#### [HF 2269 \(Kraft\)](#) / [SF 2295 \(Mitchell\)](#) - **Statewide Commercial Building Energy Benchmarking**

This bill would establish a requirement for all commercial buildings greater than 50,000 square feet to benchmark and publicly disclose annual energy usage. A statewide program would remove administrative burden from local governments and enable more local governments to better target energy efficiency programs to buildings with poor performance.

#### [HF 677 \(Elkins\)](#) / [SF912 \(Morrison\)](#) - **Bill Dooley Bicycle Safety Act**

This bill supports active transportation through education, policy updates, and funding aimed at improving bicycling infrastructure, increasing engagement, and supporting Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) reduction strategies in local communities.

#### [HF 405 \(Quam\)](#) - **Microtransit Rideshare Pilot Program**

This bill requires MNDOT, UMN, the Metropolitan Council, and local entities to develop a microtransit rideshare pilot program to provide needed mass transit options to underserved areas of the state.

#### [HF 2032 \(Smith\)](#) / [SF 1783 \(Dibble\)](#) - **Increase CERTs Programming**

This bill appropriates an additional \$500,000 annually to the CERTs (Clean Energy Resource Teams) partnership. The CERTs are trusted partners that provide technical assistance to local governments.

The Governor's [budget](#) includes an increase in funding available for the **Minnesota GreenStep Cities** program — a voluntary challenge, assistance, and recognition program to help cities achieve their sustainability and quality-of-life goals. The proposed budget would double current funding, increasing it to \$380,000.

### **Climate Adaptation & Resilience**

Many communities are already feeling the effects of climate change. Droughts create challenging conditions for our farmers, threaten water supplies, and increase wildfire vulnerability. Extreme precipitation can cause damage and loss from river and flash flooding. Communities need to prepare for these weather extremes as they update aging infrastructure, increase natural systems, and strengthen social cohesion.

#### **[HF 1853 \(Acomb\)](#) - Weather Ready program at U of M Extension Service**

The weather resilience program will prepare extension service staff throughout the state to communicate and interpret the latest research on critical weather trends to enhance the capacity of the state's agricultural sector, land resource managers, and communities to plan for and adapt to extreme weather.

The Governor's [budget](#) includes a significant investment in **Resilient Communities Grants and Technical Assistance** for local and Tribal governments to address stormwater, wastewater, and community resilience. More than \$173 Million would be available for these grants through 2025. This funding will support the Resilient Communities goal in the [Minnesota Climate Action Framework](#).

#### **[HF 221 \(Quam\)](#) - Emergency infrastructure repair fund**

Establishes an emergency infrastructure repair and replacement fund that would provide loans and grants of up to \$20 million to local governments for infrastructure damaged in disasters. The fund would maintain a minimum balance of \$100 million.

### **Maximizing Federal Funds and Technical Assistance**

The Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law include unprecedented federal investment in climate action. In order to maximize the federal funding that flows into our state, we need to be prepared to apply for funding and have matching dollars available to access grant and loan opportunities.

#### **[HF 1656 \(Acomb\)](#) / [SF 1622 \(Frentz\)](#) - State Competitiveness Fund**

This program establishes a special revenue fund within the Department of Commerce. These funds can be used to:

- 1) pay all or any portion of state match required to receive federal funds,
- 2) **provide grant writing assistance for eligible entities**, and
- 3) cover the reasonable costs incurred by the department to assist eligible entities to compete for federal funds.

Grants may be awarded to eligible entities (any entity located in Minnesota that is eligible to receive federal funds) with the following order of priorities:

- 1) federal formula funds directed to the state,
- 2) **federal formula funds directed to a political subdivision or a tribal government**,
- 3) federal formula funds for higher education, utilities, businesses, or nonprofits,
- 4) **federal competitive funds for eligible entities**, and

5) all other uses.

**[HF1550](#) (Koegel) / [SF 1652](#) (Dibble) - Federal Transportation Matching Grants & Technical Assistance**

This bill would provide grants and technical assistance to local and tribal governments applying for federal transportation dollars to improve competitiveness.