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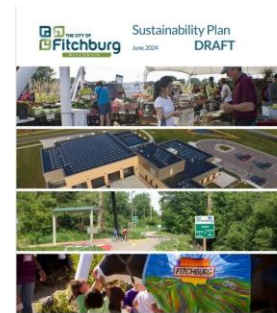
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Fitchburg Sustainability Plan: Presentation to CoW

<https://www.fitchburgwi.gov/2877/Fitchburg-Sustainability-Plan>

Fitchburg’s Sustainability Plan was presented to the Committee of the Whole on Wednesday, August 28. The video recording of this presentation and discussion is available online via [FACTv’s website](#), as well as uploaded to [YouTube](#).

The Draft Plan has been taken down as final revisions are made and the team works to prepare the Plan for submission to Council and relevant committees for final approval. In the meantime, you can still view the baseline documents created in the Summer of 2023 on paleBLUEdot’s [project website](#), as well as infographics regarding sustainability and Fitchburg.



Energy Efficiency Day: October 2, 2024



Since 2016, the first Wednesday in October has been named National Energy Efficiency Day in the United States. Energy efficiency companies and advocacy groups, as well as cities and states around the country, mark this observance as a chance to promote the adoption of greater energy efficiency measures, both to reduce energy needs and associated climate change-enhancing emissions and to help reduce energy bills for homeowners and businesses.

This year, Fitchburg will again join dozens of states and cities around the United States in officially recognizing October 2 as Energy Efficiency Day, with a proclamation set to be made

at the Common Council meeting on Tuesday, September 24. Read the 2022 [proclamation here](#).

As part of its 2019 [Clean Energy Resolution](#), the City of Fitchburg pledged not just to reduce emissions through greater use of renewable energy, but to target energy efficiency as a chief means of decreasing energy needs, both for the municipality and the broader community. The Sustainability Plan currently in its final steps before approval (see that section above) also highlights energy efficiency as a key strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions throughout Fitchburg.

Energy efficiency is defined as using less energy to perform the same tasks, which means things like replacing incandescent or fluorescent bulbs with LEDs; using natural lighting and ventilation; increasing your home’s insulation to reduce summer and winter HVAC usage; installing more efficient HVAC appliances to reduce energy usage; or maximizing your vehicle’s efficiency (e.g. properly inflating tires or buying a vehicle with better fuel economy).

Learn more about energy efficiency at the U.S. Department of Energy’s “[Energy Saver](#)” website, or about Energy Efficiency Day on the [official website](#), and use the hashtag #EEDay to post to social media or track related messages on October 2.

Tips for reducing your energy usage and associated bills abound online; to get started, check out the lists at [EnergySage.com](#) and [EnergyEfficiencyDay.org](#).

Dane County Plant Kit Sale and Native Gardening Workshop

<https://ripple-effects.com/Event/Detail/2057>

Ripple Effects, a program of the Dane County Department of Land and Water Resources, is hosting a native gardening workshop this fall, with tickets available at their [event website](#). Tickets for the native pollinator plant kit and workshop are sold out, but kits for “downspout gardens” (think rain gardens where your home’s downspout empties) are still available, offering a kit that includes 32 native plants and access to the workshop on Tuesday, September 24 from 5-7pm. The workshop will be at Lake Farm County Park, at the Lussier Family Heritage Center, 3101 Lake Farm Rd.

This event is part of [Stormwater Week](#), a series of events and learning opportunities from September 21-29, helping to increase education about stormwater and how to prevent pollution of our stormwater and local waterways.

Leaf-Free Streets and Clean Storm Drains

<https://ripple-effects.com/Event/Detail/2057>

Did you know leaves that collect on our streets every fall can harm our waters?

More than 50% of the annual amount of phosphorus in urban stormwater can come from leaves in the street! When it rains, stormwater flows through leaf piles in streets creating a “leaf tea” that is rich in dissolved phosphorus. This "leaf tea" travels through storm sewers making its way to our lakes, rivers and streams. Too much phosphorus can lead to toxic algae blooms, low oxygen levels and green murky waters, none of which are good for animals living in the water or those of us who use it for recreation.

In the fall, timely removal of street leaf litter can reduce the amount of phosphorus in urban stormwater by 80% compared to no leaf removal! Communities across Dane County are working hard to reduce stormwater pollution to protect our waters, but they can't do it alone. You can help!



[Join us in keeping streets leaf-free!](#)

1. Safely remove leaves from the street in front of your home before it rains.
2. Follow your community's guidelines for leaf collection or recycle leaves on your property. Many communities offer curbside leaf pick up or free access to yard waste drop off sites.
3. Sign up to receive Leaf-free Streets Rain Alerts this fall (Oct. 1- Nov. 30). Alerts will be issued 1-2 days before a significant rain event reminding you that it's time to remove street leaves. ****This program is only available to Dane County residents or businesses.****

Sign up for Text Alerts

Sign up for Email Alerts

4. Help spread the Leaf-free Streets message in your neighborhood! Sign up for a yard sign and check out the [Leaf-free Streets Toolkit](#) for resources.

Request a Yard Sign



5. Sign up to adopt a storm drain near your home! Use the Dane County website to [create and account](#) and select one or more un-adopted storm drains on the map that you will pledge to monitor and help keep clear of leaves, sticks, and other debris that could block the flow of water or get washed into our local waterways. Then just clean your designated drain(s) monthly and report your progress to help Dane County track its stormwater and have a positive ripple effect on local waters! <https://ripple-effects.com/adopt-a-storm-drain>

Dane County Receives Federal EV Charging Grant

Text from <https://daneclimateaction.org/initiatives/Charge-Up-Dane-Co>

The Dane County Office of Energy & Climate Change submitted a proposal to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) program and in August 2024 [US DOT announced](#) that Dane County and its partners will receive \$13.2 million in funding to implement Charge Up Dane County. This funding comes from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.



Why focus on charging infrastructure?

The first generation of EV owners tended to be homeowners who could charge their vehicles in private garages. Experts say that [most current EV owners do 80% of their charging at home](#).

As EV ownership expands, though, we will need public charging so that people who live in apartments or homes without garages can charge easily too. As the number of new EVs grows the number of used EVs will also grow, making EV ownership more affordable to more people. (Especially with the [new tax credits for used EVs!](#)) Our goal is to ensure that everyone has access to EV charging infrastructure to reduce barriers to EV adoption.

Our Vision for Dane County

Charge Up Dane County – Accelerating the Transition to EV Transportation for All is a regional initiative to install EV charging in locations that would otherwise be underserved.

Led by Dane County's Office of Energy & Climate Change, the team includes the City of Madison, other municipalities, area electric utilities, community-based groups and the University of Wisconsin. Project partners include state and national electrification experts including Wisconsin Clean Cities and the Electrification Coalition.

We are focusing on charging gaps in all areas of Dane County - urban to rural. We aim to ensure that everyone has access to electrified transportation.

Last year the Greater Madison Metropolitan Organization (MPO) did a study of [EV charging infrastructure in Dane County](#) and our work will build on that analysis.

We will focus urban and suburban multifamily areas, rural areas and multimodal hubs across the county. We expect to install a mix of Level 2, Level 2.5 and DCFC EV charging stations that will expedite EV adoption across our communities, which will lead to improvements in air quality and public health, lower transportation costs and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

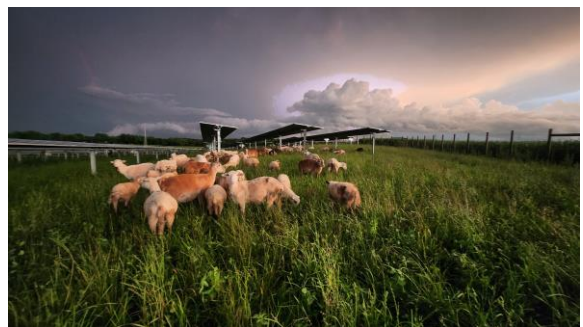
The first phase of Charge Up Dane County will be to solicit public input into the charging gaps identified by the MPO. The team will use an equity analysis and other tools to finalize priority areas for the new charging stations. Before choosing host sites the team will select one or more preferred station vendors; this will simplify the planning process for potential station hosts. Then the team will solicit station host applications, inviting both public and private entities to apply to host NEVI compliant EV charging stations. After selecting station sites, the team will work with hosts to expedite installation.

And at every stage we will maximize opportunities to educate the public on the benefits of EVs, to create family-sustaining jobs in the clean fuel industry, to maximize equity and Justice40 priorities, and to showcase a new standard for reliable, safe and accessible EV charging in our communities. Charge Up Dane County will expedite Dane County's transition to an equitable clean fuel future.

Sheep at Tyto Solar Project

<https://www.wpr.org/news/a-great-partnership-fitchburg-farm-grazing-sheep-at-dane-county-solar-site>

Fitchburg is home to several solar farms that have been installed in recent years. The most visible of these is the O'Brien Solar Farm, opened to much fanfare in 2021 and clearly visible at the intersection of Lacy Rd and Seminole Hwy. More recently constructed and on less-trafficked Irish Ln, the Tyto Solar project began full operations earlier this year, generating 6 megawatts of electricity for the Madison Gas & Electric grid.



Both of these major solar projects are notable for their use of agrivoltaics, merging agricultural uses with solar photovoltaic energy production. The O'Brien Solar Farm includes large swaths

of native flowers, helping to enrich the soil, aid with groundwater retention, and provide habitat and foraging for native pollinators, while the Tyto Solar project employs a flock of sheep from the local [Wiscovery Farm](#) to help maintain the grass beneath its solar panels. Grazing sheep on this project site provides pasture and shade for the sheep, while cutting down on both costs and emissions from lawn mowing equipment, as well as avoiding the difficulty of mowing around the hundreds of posts that support 13,000 installed solar panels.

As major solar projects become more prevalent, look for more creative examples of multi-use project sites to become the norm around Fitchburg and Dane County!

Where Is Your Palm Oil Coming From?

https://wwf.panda.org/discover/our_focus/food_practice/sustainable_production/palm_oil/

Palm oil is the world's most produced, consumed and traded vegetable oil.

It is widely used in the manufacturing of many products, from margarine to lipstick, biscuits to candles, and chocolate to laundry detergent. It is also extensively used as a biofuel and as animal feed.



Palm oil is a very efficient crop and contributes to rural poverty alleviation and rural development in many regions. But its irresponsible production of palm oil has caused widespread rainforest destruction and wildlife loss, exacerbated climate change, and impacted the rights of local communities. And increasing global demand threatens more of the same.



You may be familiar with palm oil, with recent educational efforts regarding the impact of unsustainable palm oil production on rainforest health, particularly on populations of endangered orangutans. While there is little most of us can do on a global scale to combat deforestation of critical orangutan habitat and other vital biomes, you can familiarize yourself with companies that are taking greater steps to ensure they source palm oil responsibly, and learn about tools to help you make purchasing decisions with that information in mind.

The World Wildlife Foundation (WWF) created a "[palm oil scorecard](#)" online (also linked from the URL above) that scores corporations based on their performance relative to other major purchasers of palm oil, from a perspective of sustainable, responsible purchasing. Cheyenne Mountain Zoo also offers a [free smartphone app](#) you can use to check brands or specific products if you're shopping and see an ingredient list contains palm oil.

When produced responsibly, palm oil is [one of the most productive and least resource-intensive oils available](#), so the best course is not to eliminate this oil entirely, but to look to buy from those companies making these responsible choices now.

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- d. Click  (to subscribe/unsubscribe to emails) and/or  (to subscribe/unsubscribe) next to the lists to which you wish to subscribe / unsubscribe (e.g. “Green Fitchburg” is the mailing list for environmentally friendly suggestions or events)

Please contact Phil Grupe, Sustainability Specialist, at phil.grupe@fitchburgwi.gov or (608) 270-4259, if you have any questions, comments, and/or suggestions for future Green E-News topics.

