

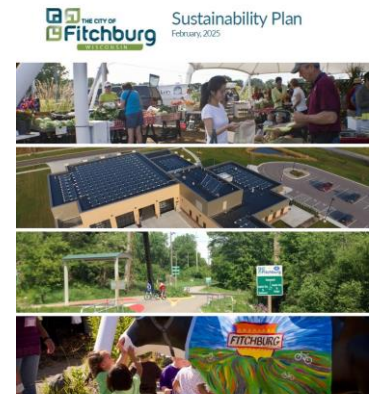
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## Fitchburg Sustainability Plan: Council Vote on April 8

<https://www.fitchburgwi.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2369>

After a two-year process that began in early 2023, Fitchburg is nearing the completion of its first municipal sustainability plan. Hundreds of Fitchburg residents, as well as representatives of local businesses and non-profits, have weighed in on surveys and worked together with City staff to create a Sustainability Plan that will help to guide the City's sustainability efforts through 2030. The Resource Conservation Commission and Common Council discussed the Plan at their [March 10](#) and [March 11](#) meetings, respectively (click the hyperlinks for those dates to see the FACTv recordings), and Council will be holding a vote at their April 8 meeting on approving the final plan.



The latest version of the plan is available on the City's website at <https://www.fitchburgwi.gov/2877/Fitchburg-Sustainability-Plan>, and additional documents and information can be found there, or on the consultant's project page at <https://palebluedot.llc/fitchburg-sustainability>. If you have questions or comments, feel free to reach out to [sustainability@fitchburgwi.gov](mailto:sustainability@fitchburgwi.gov). You may also attend or watch (via FACTv) the Common Council meeting at 7:30pm on April 8 when alders take a final vote on approving this plan.

## Earth Day/Month: Think Globally, Act Locally

<https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2025/>

Every April, communities around the world come together to celebrate Earth Day, a movement that began in 1970 to raise awareness about environmental issues and inspire action. Over the decades, Earth Day has grown into a month-long effort, highlighting the importance of sustainability, conservation, and climate action at both the global and local levels. While large-scale policies and initiatives are crucial, lasting change begins with the choices we make in our own neighborhoods.



This Earth Month, take the opportunity to engage with local efforts that protect our natural spaces, reduce waste, and promote sustainable living. Whether it's one of the events listed below, another local group or individual effort, or even just spending more time outside and contributing to a greater connection to the world. As Senegalese forest engineer Baba Dioum famously stated in 1968, "In the end, we will conserve only what we love; we will love only what we understand; and we will understand only what we are taught." So spend this Earth Month learning more about the world and enhancing your love for it!

### **2025 Earth Day and Month Events:**

1. **[Biennial Shred/Recycling Event](#)** – Fitchburg will again be hosting an April shred and recycling event. Bring your confidential papers and used electronic devices to City Hall on Saturday April 12, to be shredded and recycled!
2. **[Fitchburg Waterway Cleanups](#)** – Join your neighbors in this annual Earth Month tradition in Fitchburg, helping to pick up trash and beautify/health-ify a local waterway, this year on Saturdays April 19 and 26 (see link for details and locations).
3. **[Participate in EarthFest 2025 with UW's Nelson Institute](#)** – The Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies at UW-Madison hosts Earth Day events each year, and recent years have seen a transition to virtual events that allow for a greater variety of ways to participate. See <https://earthfest.wisc.edu/> for details.
4. **[Sustain Dane Earth Month Cleanup](#)** – Join Sustain Dane in their annual cleanup event, this year Saturday, April 26 at the Garver Feed Mill.

## Fix a Leak Week: March 17-23

<https://www.epa.gov/watersense/fix-leak-week>

*Are you ready to chase down leaks? Household leaks can waste nearly 1 trillion gallons of water annually nationwide, so each year we hunt down the drips during Fix a Leak Week.*



*Mark your calendars for EPA's annual Fix a Leak Week, March 17 through 23, 2025—but remember that you can find and fix leaks inside and outside your home to save valuable water and money all year long.*

Check out the EPA “Fix a Leak Week” page linked above for information on water leaks, how to check for and address them, and how doing so can save you on home water costs. And for some education and activities for kids, see the EPA’s “[Watersense for Kids](#)” page with water-use information, downloadable activity sheets, and an online trivia game to test their knowledge!

## Charge Up Dane County: EV Charging Station Expansion

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

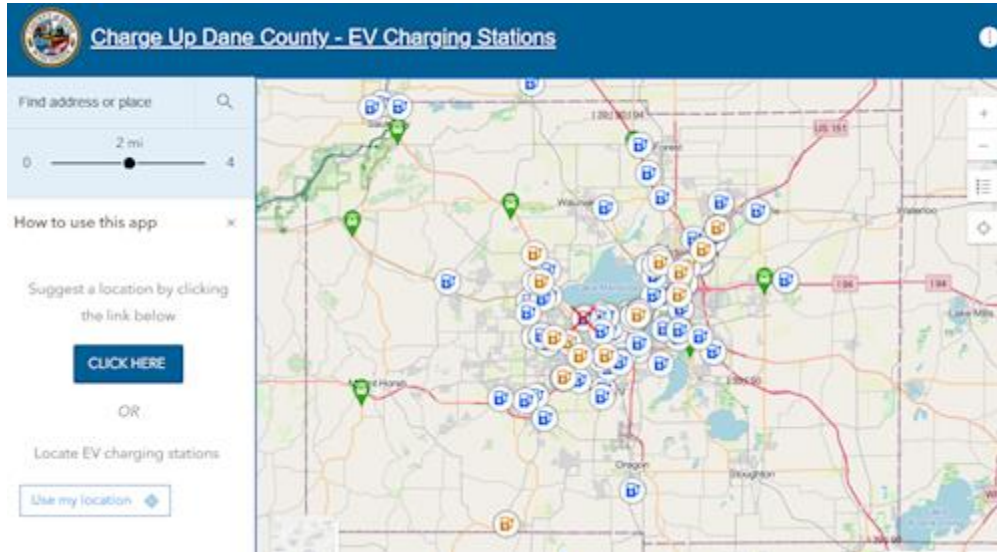
Dane County is taking a big step forward in making electric vehicle (EV) charging more accessible with its "Charge Up" initiative. This effort, led by Dane County’s Office of Energy & Climate Change (OECC), aims to expand the network of public EV charging stations across the county (see existing charging network [here](#)) through a grant program that funds new charging infrastructure in key locations.

The "Charge Up" program is built on thorough research conducted by the Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The MPO’s analysis identified gaps in the current EV charging network and highlighted priority areas where new stations would provide the greatest benefit. This research ensures that public investments in charging infrastructure are strategic, supporting both urban and rural communities while improving accessibility for all EV drivers.

The county’s grant program provides funding for municipalities, businesses, and organizations to install new EV charging stations. By covering a significant portion of the costs, these grants make it easier for local entities to participate in the transition to clean transportation. The program prioritizes locations that enhance public access, support transportation equity, and align with Dane County’s Climate Action Plan goals.

Residents and business owners have an opportunity to contribute to the success of "Charge Up Dane County." The county is seeking input on where new charging stations are most needed. Whether it's a park, library, shopping area, or workplace, community members can suggest locations that would best serve EV drivers. By participating in this effort, the public can help shape a more convenient and reliable charging network.

To learn more about the program and submit location suggestions, visit the Charge Up Dane County website at <https://www.daneclimateaction.org/initiatives/Charge-Up-Dane-Co#Map>.



## BCycle Back for Spring

<https://madison.bcycle.com/>

As warmer weather returns to Fitchburg, so does BCycle! The area's popular electric bike-share program relaunched on March 15, bringing back a convenient and sustainable transportation option for residents and visitors alike. With [over 100 docking stations across the city](#) and a growing fleet of e-bikes, BCycle continues to make it easy to get around while reducing carbon emissions and traffic congestion. Ride from station to station within Fitchburg, take a bike out on the City's lovely wooded or prairie trails, or use the bikes to connect to stations in Madison, Monona, or McFarland!

Each year, BCycle enhances its service to improve rider experience. This spring, expect upgrades to bike performance, station availability, and accessibility features. The system's user-friendly mobile app allows riders to easily locate stations, check bike availability, and plan their routes efficiently. BCycle



also continues to expand equity programs to ensure more people can access affordable bike-share options.

Madison's extensive network of bike paths and dedicated lanes makes cycling an ideal way to commute, run errands, or simply enjoy the outdoors.



BCycle's electric assist helps riders tackle hills and longer distances with ease, making biking a viable alternative to driving. Whether you're a daily commuter or a weekend explorer, BCycle offers flexible membership options, including pay-per-ride, monthly, and annual plans.

Ready to ride? BCycle stations will be fully operational as spring unfolds, providing an eco-friendly, fun, and healthy way to navigate the city. For more details, station maps, and membership options, visit [madison.bcycle.com](https://madison.bcycle.com).

## More Bicycle-Friendly Businesses in Fitchburg

Text from Bike Fitchburg: <https://bikefitchburg.org/bfbs.html>

*The fall round of Bicycle Friendly Business (BFB) awards were announced on February 19, 2025, by the League of American Bicyclists. Fitchburg is proud to have five new BFBs, including one gold!*

[Memorial United Church of Christ](#) received a prestigious Gold Award, one of only 220 nationally. The other new awardees received Bronze Awards: [Irish Fields](#) apartments, [Me & Julio](#) TexMex restaurant, [The Rusty Bee Lounge](#), and [Summit Credit Union Fitchburg branch](#).

Fitchburg is now up to 25 Bicycle-Friendly Businesses in total (including the City's civic campus at Lacy Rd and Research Park Dr, designated [Gold in 2023](#)), ranking 7<sup>th</sup> in the nation for total BFB recognitions within a single city, and more than half of the 47 BFBs in Wisconsin! See Bike Fitchburg's [Bicycle-Friendly Business page](#) to read more on the City's BFBs and how your business or non-profit can also be recognized.

## Spring Gardening for Native Pollinators: Supporting WI Bumblebees

<https://arboretum.wisc.edu/news/arboretum-news/gardening-with-native-plants-spring-plants-and-pollinators>

As winter gives way to spring, it's time to start thinking about how our gardens and lawns can support native pollinators, including Wisconsin's many bumblebee species. By choosing native plants and adjusting traditional lawn care practices, you can create a habitat that helps these essential insects thrive.

Bumblebees are among the first pollinators to emerge in spring, with overwintered queens searching for nectar sources and nesting sites. Early bloomers like pasque flower, bloodroot, and wild lupine provide much-needed food during this crucial time, as well as flowering trees and shrubs like willow, cherry and plum, and serviceberry. Consider planting these and other native species to give pollinators an early-season boost. Traditional lawns offer little benefit to pollinators, but a “living lawn” approach can change that. Allowing clover and violets to grow, mowing less frequently, and leaving some leaf litter undisturbed creates better habitat for bees and other beneficial insects. Even small patches of native plants or prairie grasses can make a big difference.



Wisconsin is home to over 20 species of bumblebees, including the federally endangered rusty-patched bumblebee. You can help track and conserve these important pollinators by joining the [Wisconsin Bumble Bee Brigade](#). This citizen science project invites people across the state to observe and document bumblebee activity, contributing valuable data to conservation efforts.

By making small changes in our gardens and yards, we can provide critical support to pollinators while creating beautiful, low-maintenance landscapes. For more information on Wisconsin’s native bees, look for species guides such as those offered by the [Bumble Bee Brigade](#) and the [UW Arboretum](#). Let’s make this spring a season of growth—for our plants and our pollinators!

## Home Energy Improvements for Comfort and Savings

<https://www.climateone.org/audio/even-old-houses-can-learn-new-elec-tricks>

Improving home energy efficiency isn’t just for new builds—older homes can also benefit from modern electrification and efficiency upgrades. With advances in technology and support from programs like Wisconsin’s [Focus on Energy](#), homeowners can reduce energy costs, improve comfort, and lower their carbon footprint. Sealing air leaks, adding insulation, and upgrading to LED lighting all help reduce wasted energy. Smart thermostats further optimize heating and cooling, adjusting temperatures based on usage patterns. And through Focus on Energy, homeowners can receive financial incentives for installing heat pumps, insulation, efficient appliances, and more. These incentives help offset up-front costs while providing long-term energy savings.





The Climate One podcast linked above, on efficiency upgrades in older homes, offers tips on upgrading to more efficient and/or electric appliances for energy savings and emissions reductions. The podcast also directs listeners and readers to Rewiring America's [Incentive Calculator](#), helping you identify available credits and rebates for upgrades to your home.

Replacing gas-powered appliances with electric alternatives is a key step toward sustainability. Heat pumps, which provide both heating and cooling, are far more efficient than traditional furnaces and air conditioners. Induction stoves offer precise, fast cooking without the emissions of gas ranges. Even water heaters and clothes dryers now have high-efficiency electric options. And all these electric appliances can eventually be powered by renewable electricity, making electrification key to emission-reduction targets in service of efforts to mitigate future climate change impacts locally and globally.

For a step-by-step guide on how to improve your home's energy efficiency, check out the Slipstream Home Energy Playbook ([slipstreaminc.org/playbook](http://slipstreaminc.org/playbook)). This resource provides practical strategies for homeowners looking to reduce energy use, electrify their homes, and maximize savings through efficiency upgrades.

### Share the News

*Tell your friends to subscribe to Green Fitchburg on the city website  
<http://www.fitchburgwi.gov/list.aspx> > Green Fitchburg*

- a. Visit Fitchburg's "Notify Me<sup>®</sup>" web page:  
<http://www.fitchburgwi.gov/list.aspx>
- b. Type your email address in the box and select "Sign In"
- c. To receive text messages enter your phone number and select "Save"
- 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](mailto:phil.grupe@fitchburgwi.gov) or (608) 270-4259, if you have any questions, comments, and/or suggestions for future Green E-News topics.*

