

# OUR CLIMATE FUTURE ACTION GUIDE

*Updated on 3.9.2021*



Our Climate Future is all about our community and region taking action to achieve carbon neutrality, zero waste, and 100% renewable electricity in an equitable and resilient way. The Our Climate Future Plan lists many high-level strategies to shape our path to those goals but people may not see them directly in their everyday lives or know how to take action to support them. **The Our Climate Future Action Guide is intended to help residents, businesses, and industries find their place of action and leadership – there is a role for everyone, including you!**

This guide makes suggestions for **Action, Getting Involved, and Leadership** and we know we haven't thought of everything! We'll keep updating this guide with the most impactful actions and resources and we'll rely on you and the Fort Collins community to share other ideas, stories, successes, and opportunities with us and each other. We also suggest checking out the [Shift Foco platform](#) with more actions and challenges to help make taking action more fun. If you take an action listed in this guide or from the [Shift Foco platform](#), let us know and pay it forward by sharing your story on social media #shiftfoco.

**Zero Waste Neighborhoods:** We can all share and reuse so we don't have to buy things we won't regularly use and are able to recycle or compost the rest

## At Home

- Action:
  - Sign up for [Shift Foco](#) to make taking many of the following actions more fun and engaging!
  - Start a [backyard compost](#), an [indoor worm compost](#), or [compost pick up](#).
  - Sign up for [yard waste](#) pick up with your local waste hauler
  - Consider [right-sizing your trash cart](#) and paying only for what you throw away
  - Take a virtual or in person tour of the [Timberline Recycling Center](#) and [learn about other items](#) that can be recycled
  - Prioritize buying reusable items, high-quality products, and items made with recycled content. In the long-term you'll save money, waste, and natural resources.
  - Reach out and tell your favorite companies what you would like to see in their products. Consumer preferences have a big impact.
  - Meet your neighbors and let them know what you are willing to lend – don't be surprised if they do the same! Take the same approach with friends and acquaintances.
  - Join the [Poudre River Library](#) and check out their book and [non-book collections](#) or the [EcoThrift Tool Lending Library](#) to get a sense of what you could avoid buying by borrowing
  - Check [Craigslist](#), [Facebook Marketplace](#), other Social Media groups dedicated to sharing, or one of Fort Collins' many thrift stores before you buy new. You can even do hand-offs at the [Fort Collins Police Services Exchange Zone](#) to ensure safe exchanges.
  - Clean out your garage and get things with value back into circulation so others don't have to buy new
  - Start a "free" box or little library to get things back in circulation on a regular basis

- Getting involved:
  - Join and help facilitate a zero-waste group on Social Media
  - Help a neighbor set up their own compost or worm bin
  - Make sure neighbors know they can [right-size their trash can](#) and that you are happy to lend them tools or other household items so they don't have to buy their own
- Leadership:
  - Become a [Recycling Ambassador at the Timberline Recycling Center](#)
  - Join or lead an advocacy group that organizes sharing events, repair clinics, composting workshops, etc.
  - Share your zero-waste successes on Social Media using #shiftfoco

## At Your Business or Place of Work

- Action:
  - If you haven't already, sign up for recycling service
  - Check out the [City's resources for businesses related to recycling](#).
  - Conduct a waste audit to see what your business's greatest opportunity to reduce waste is
  - Conduct a single-use product audit to see where you could save money by switching to reusable versions or making products upon request only
  - If you are a food-based business, consider food donation options to support others in the community and avoid food waste.
- Get involved:
  - Approach your suppliers about non-recyclable, single-use packaging alternatives and choose leading brands who take action whenever possible.
- Leadership:
  - Share your zero-waste story with other businesses, including how you did it and what benefits your efforts are having on your operations and the planet.

## Industry and Institutions

- See Zero Waste Economy below for Industry and Institutional actions

**Climate Resilient Community:** People, buildings, watersheds and ecosystems are prepared for the threats of climate change.

## At Home

- Action:
  - Develop and practice an [emergency plan](#) for your household.
  - Enroll in [emergency notifications](#).
  - Register yourself or a loved one with the Larimer County [Whole Community Emergency Network](#).
  - Monitor the [daily air quality](#).

- Create a [clean room](#) to protect indoor air quality during wildfires.
- Sign up for the [Air Quality Newsletter](#).
- Sign up for a free [Healthy Home assessment](#) for indoor air quality.
- Install a rain barrel for your garden.
- Sign up for a free [home efficiency assessment](#) through Larimer County
- Get a free [sprinkler audit](#) to see if you can reduce your outdoor water use.
- See if you qualify for the [Income Qualified Assistance Program](#) if you need help paying your utility bills. Call 970-212-2900 for more information.
- Weatherize your house and ensure that gutter and other drainage systems are free of debris to handle big summer storm precipitation.
- Getting involved:
  - Connect more with your neighbors to increase safety and social connections.
  - Volunteer with the [Community Emergency Response Team](#).
  - Volunteer for the [Adopt a Neighbor program](#).
- Leadership:
  - Offer to help your neighbors or friends with creating their own emergency plan.
  - Suggest enrolling in emergency notifications to neighbors or friends.
  - Create a community hub with your neighbors to hear and share critical information during emergencies through [Larimer Connects](#)
  - Apply for a [neighborhood grant](#) and check out other [Neighborhood Services programs](#).
  - Host a neighborhood block party to get to know your neighbors and connect for [Neighborhood Night Out](#).

## At Your Business or Place of Work

- Action:
  - Check out [NoCo Recovers](#) the one stop shop location for information on potential funding sources available to support business, nonprofit, & workforce community of Northern Colorado.
  - Check out [ForFortCollins](#)- a hub of education, marketing materials and information for Fort Collins businesses and nonprofit community to reopen during COVID.
  - Develop and practice an emergency and communication plan for your business and employees.
  - Enroll in [emergency notifications](#).
  - Cross train your employees.
  - Protect your data.
  - See if your building qualifies for energy retrofits or efficiency upgrades through [C-PACE](#).
  - Check out the Fort Collins [Business Resource Guide](#).
- Getting involved:
  - Connect with the [Economic Health Office](#)

**Convenient Transportation Choices:** It is safe, easy, fast and affordable to get around without a car.

## At Home

- Action:
  - Go car-free one extra trip per week than you currently do. If you drive for 6 trips per week, start by driving for just 5 trips per week and use a bicycle, walk, scooter, take transit, or share a ride.
  - Encourage a neighbor, family member, or friend to go car-free one extra trip per week.
  - Log near misses and damaged infrastructure using [Access Fort Collins](#) so City staff can work to address problems quickly.
  - If you can, consider asking your neighbors how you can help them eliminate a trip, such as running an errand for them especially if it's close to your destination.
  - If you cannot get to a transit stop via walking/biking, drive and park there. Let the Max take you the rest of the way.
- Getting involved:
  - Provide input on upcoming transportation projects, and help people who aren't typically involved in providing input by finding a way to help them have their voice heard.
  - Contribute to County, Regional, and State-wide initiatives by providing input when available.
  - Organize a neighborhood group ride.
- Leadership:
  - Become a [Bicycle Ambassador](#) to help model safe, legal bicycling behavior, to help with data collection and event support, and get in the know on upcoming bicycle and pedestrian projects.
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## At Your Business or Place of Work

- Ride your bike or walk to work as often as possible.
- Bicycle, walk, scooter, or take transit for lunch breaks, off-site meetings, or conduct business virtually to save work-day trips.
- Ask your leadership to support bicycling by requesting additional, secure bicycle parking.
- Ask your leadership or human resources department to start incentive programs to encourage people to save car trips, such as promoting walking/bicycling meetings, walking or bicycling to work, and much more.
- Getting involved:
  - If your work place has an existing sustainability committee, ask to join to present your ideas on how to make your workplace more bicycle-friendly. Keep in mind that some ideas are easier to implement, such as installing additional bicycle parking and establish incentive programs. Others are more challenging, like changes to infrastructure.

- Leadership:
  - Take the lead to establish teams for [Shift](#) activities, or establish a sustainability committee if one doesn't yet exist. Staff can collaborate to find ways to encourage colleagues to take action, too.
  - Model safe, legal behaviors.
  - Take [Bicycle Friendly Driver](#).
  - Submit an application on behalf of your organization to be designated as a Bicycle Friendly Business through the League of American Bicyclists.

**Live, Work, Play Nearby:** No matter where we live, we all can meet our basic daily needs without driving across town.

## At Home

- Action:
  - Look into businesses nearby to see if they can meet your needs- decide to frequent close to home businesses, even if they aren't all encompassing, AKA "work them into the rotation"
  - The next time you move, move close to work and attractions so you can walk/bike/take transit to get around. Encourage your friends to do the same.
  - Community/at-home gardens for growing veggies/produce in the summer to reduce trips to the store.
  - Determine if desired destinations can be reached by walking, biking, transit, etc. by pre-planning and "trip chaining" to avoid heavy traffic and single errand trips.
- Getting involved:
  - Learn about the City's land use plan and policies and participate in local planning processes
  - Get in touch with the City's [FC Moves](#) program to request that a Bicycle Ambassador help you find and try out bike routes to get to your typical destinations
  - Check out the [low-stress network](#)
- Leadership:
  - Share your story with others. Talk about how your life has been positively impacted by being able to live, work and play nearby your home.

## At Your Business or Place of Work

- Action:
  - Install or champion installation of indoor bike racks and showers so employees are more comfortable riding bike, walking, or exercising.
  - Offer loaner bikes that employees can borrow to run short errands, travel to work meetings, go to lunch etc.
- Leadership:
  - Mentor other businesses – share your story of change, the actions you took and the impact your actions have had

- Coordinate carpooling or bike share systems with other nearby places of work

## Industry and Institutions

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**Efficient, Emissions Free Buildings:** Everyone lives and works in healthy energy and water efficient buildings which transition to become emissions free.

## At Home

- Action:
  - Learn more about how you are billed on the residential [time-of-day electric rate](#).
  - Monitor your home [energy and water use online](#).
  - Review Energy Star’s tips for [conserving energy and water at home](#).
  - Sign up for [Epic Homes](#) for an in-home assessment and learn actions you can take to make your home more efficient and earn rebates on efficiency equipment.
    - [Take a virtual tour of an epic home](#)
  - Save instantly on efficiency products by shopping online at [Efficiency Works Store](#) or search available rebates for other energy and water efficiency products
  - Make your home more efficient and reduce emissions by taking action at <https://www.shiftfoco.com/>
- Getting involved:
  - Review how building energy use impacts the [carbon inventory](#) in Fort Collins.
  - Listen to a Podcast about the impact of building energy use on climate change.
  - Learn more about emissions and efficiency buildings with resources from [Fort Collins Utilities](#)
- Leadership:
  - Volunteer to help others make their lives more efficient - [Fort Collins Engage](#)

## At Your Business or Place of Work

- Action:
  - Review [tips and tricks for conserving energy](#) within your business.
  - Learn about programs to improve efficiency at your business from [Fort Collins Utilities](#)
  - Sign up for an assessment of your business through [Efficiency Works](#)
  - Consider upgrading equipment and earning rebates in your business to save energy.

- Benchmark your facility by starting to monitor and improve your building's energy and water efficiency [fcgov.com/BEWS](http://fcgov.com/BEWS)
- Getting involved:
  - Explore the connection between efficient facility upgrades and worker productivity.
  - Host a training for your employees about how they can make their homes more efficient and reduce emissions.
  - Sign up for [updates and communications](#) from Fort Collins Utilities business-related programs and rebates
- Leadership:
  - Advocate for policy that will help our community be more efficient with less emissions
  - Share your story about how your business took action to improve efficiency and reduce emissions

## Industry and Institutions

- Action:
  - [Learn what industry specific rebates are available](#)
  - Sign up for an assessment of your business through [Efficiency Works](#)
  - Benchmark your facility by starting to monitor and improve your building's energy and water efficiency [fcgov.com/BEWS](http://fcgov.com/BEWS)
- Getting involved:
  - Host a training for your employees about how they can make their homes more efficient and reduce emissions
  - [Sign up for updates from Fort Collins Utilities business-related programs and rebates](#)
- Leadership:
  - Design efficiency into your new building through the [Integrated Design Assistance Program](#)
  - Share your story about how your industry took action to improve efficiency and reduce emissions

**Local, Affordable and Healthy Food:** Everyone has access to healthy and affordable food, sourced or rescued from local and regional producers.

## At Home

- Action:
  - [Buy Local, Buy Organic](#) - [Take the pledge at shiftfoco](#): Shop locally, shop at local food vendors and look for products that are produced locally at the grocery store
  - Visit a Farmers Market for tasty local food
  - [Choose the Wonky Fruit](#) - Take the pledge at [shiftfoco](#): many stores have clearance food sections, “ugly” produce corners with food that is good to eat, just not beautiful
  - [Sign up for a CSA \(Community Supported Agriculture\) program](#)
  - [Eat Lower Down the Carbon Chain](#) - Take the pledge at [shiftfoco](#)
  - [Make a Meal Plan](#) - Take the pledge at [shiftfoco](#)



- Support the [Food Bank of Larimer County](#) with food donations.
- Host a “local food” potluck for friends and family
- Sign up for a [community garden plot](#)
- Getting involved:
  - [Take a class at the Gardens on Spring Creek](#) related to local food, gardening, cooking and more
  - Volunteer at a local farm, Farmers Market or food bank
  - Take a tour of a local farm, Farmers Market or food bank
  - [Plant if Forward](#), plant extra produce in your garden to donate when harvested
  - Learn how to preserve and store food, by taking a class from [CSU Extension](#) or [Gardens on Spring Creek](#)
- Leadership:
  - Encourage friends and family to eat locally, and take action
  - Advocate for action to create more opportunities for all to have access to healthy, affordable, local food
  - Host a food drive to support the food bank in your neighborhood.

## At Your Business or Place of Work

- Action:
  - Set up a shared food program – have a place in your office where employees can take, leave and access food (snacks, produce, garden harvests etc.)
  - Buy local and healthy food for staff meals and events
  - Grow vegetables as part of your landscaping.
  - Host a food drive for the food bank that employees and customers can contribute to.
- Getting involved:
  - Host a class for your employees related to local food, gardening, or cooking
- Leadership:
  - Share your story with other businesses and community leaders. Encourage them to take action

## Industry and Institutions

- Action:
  - Set up shared food program – have a place in your office where employees can take and leave access food (snacks, produce, garden harvests etc.)
  - Buy local and healthy food for staff meals and events
  - Grow vegetables as part of your landscaping.
  - Host a food drive for the food bank that employees and customers can contribute to.
- Leadership:

- Share your story with other businesses and community leaders. Encourage them to take action

**Healthy Local Economy and Jobs:** The community supports a healthy innovative local economy with new opportunities for all people and businesses to thrive.

## At Home

- Action:
  - Shop locally. Support local restaurants, shops and grocery stores.
  - Buy gift cards from locally owned restaurants and stores
  - Visit [ForFortCollins.com](https://www.fortcollins.com) to learn more tips and tricks for supporting our local economy

## At Your Business or Place of Work

- Action:
  - Buy local supplies, shop locally for supplies for your business, when ordering food for a meeting or event order from a local store
  - Visit [ForFortCollins.com](https://www.fortcollins.com) to learn how your business can take action
- Getting involved:
  - Connect with the [Economic Health Office](#)
  - Partner with other local businesses
- Leadership:
  - Share your stories of innovation and ways you have impacted our community
  - Encourage other businesses to source supplies locally
  - Mentor other business owners, students and entrepreneurs
  - Advocate for policies that will improve the health of our local economy and create new opportunities

**Zero Waste Economy:** Business, industry, institutions, and government collaborate to recirculate resources and eliminate waste.

## Industry and Institutions

- Audit your business or institution to understand your biggest opportunities to reduce, reuse, recycle, or donate whether in your industrial operations or in your office operations.
- Review your biggest raw material inputs and/or largest procurement materials, could any of these be filled using recycled materials or outputs from another local or regional industry?
- Use [Recycle Colorado's material exchange platform](#) to see if you could get any recycled materials closer to home or help by-products from your industry avoid the landfill
- Connect with your employees to raise awareness and encourage zero-waste at work and at home, and even incentivize it when possible!
- Get involved: Consider ways to broaden your scope of influence beyond just the last step of a product's life-cycle.

- Can your products be made to be more easily repaired, recycled, have recyclable packaging or last longer?
- Could you ask your suppliers to take actions in their business and give procurement preferences to those who do?
- Lead:
  - Share your story with other industries to raise awareness
  - Make a public commitment to reducing waste and stick to it!

**Healthy Natural Spaces:** We all are stewards of healthy natural spaces and honor the deep and historical human connection to this land.

## At Home

- Action:
    - Pick up litter around your neighborhood or [volunteer for a local cleanup event](#).
    - [Plant a drought tolerant tree species](#) that is either native or regionally adapted to Northern Colorado.
    - Add [pollinator friendly plants](#) to your landscaping or flowerpots.
    - Take it to the next level in your landscaping and get your garden certified either through [National Audubon Society's](#) Backyard Habitat program or the [National Wildlife Federation's](#) wildlife habitat program.
  - Getting involved:
    - Volunteer with the [City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Program](#) or the [Parks Department](#).
- Leadership:
- Apply for a [Nature in the City Grant](#) to support your own project for your neighborhood to improve our natural environments

## At Your Business or Place of Work

- Action:
  - [Volunteer for a local cleanup event](#) as a staff activity
  - [Schedule a visit](#) to a local natural area with a Naturalist as a staff activity
  - Host an event at a natural area or City park
  - [Plant a drought tolerant tree species](#) that is either native or regionally adapted to Northern Colorado.
  - Add [pollinator friendly plants](#) to your landscaping or flowerpots.
  - Take it to the next level in your landscaping and get your garden certified either through [National Audubon Society's](#) Backyard Habitat program or the [National Wildlife Federation's](#) wildlife habitat program.

**100% Renewable Electricity:** Everyone in the community receives affordable and reliable 100% renewable electricity, including from local sources.

## At Home

- Action:
  - Make your home more efficient and reduce emissions by taking action at <https://www.shiftfoco.com/>
  - [Learn more about renewable energy options](#) from City of Fort Collins Utilities, including a subscription to 100% renewable energy or installing solar on your own roof.
  - Learn how homes are [billed by Fort Collins Utilities](#) for energy produced by solar panels.
  - Discover the benefits a [residential battery installation](#) can have when installing with solar.
- Getting involved:
  - Review how renewable energy use impacts the [carbon inventory](#) in Fort Collins.
  - Learn the difference between utility scale and local, rooftop solar and the benefits that both solutions bring to the community.
- Leadership:
  - Share your thoughts about increasing renewable energy in our community.

## At Your Business or Place of Work

- Action:
  - [Purchase renewable energy to power your business](#)
  - Explore [generating your own electricity \(I.e. adding solar panels to your roof\)](#)
  - Research innovative ways to [finance renewable energy projects](#) at your facility.
- Getting involved:
  - Host a lunch and learn for your staff on the benefits of renewable energy.
- Leadership:
  - Encourage other businesses and peers to take action
  - Share your story and the impact more renewable energy has had on your bottom line.

## Industry and Institutions

- Action:
  - [Purchase renewable energy to power your business](#)
  - Research innovative ways to [finance renewable energy projects](#) at your facility.
  - Explore options for installing solar arrays across your campus.
- Getting involved:
  - [Generate your own electricity \(I.e. adding solar panels to your roof\)](#)
- Leadership:
  - Encourage other industry leaders to take action.
  - Share your story and the impact more renewable energy has had on your bottom line.

**Electric cars and fleets:** Residents can afford and use electric cars, including shared electric cars, and conventional fleets are converted to electric.

## At Home

- Action:
  - Replace your existing gas or diesel vehicle with an electric car.
  - Learn how charging and electric vehicles at home will impact your utility bill [time-of-day electric rate](#).
  - Consider adding a home charger for your EV.
  - If you own an EV, talk to your neighbors about the benefits of owning an EV.
- Getting involved:
  - Take the lead on setting up Ride-and-Drive events for your neighborhood.
  - Consider learning more and networking with other EV drivers at [Drive Electric Northern Colorado events](#).
- Leadership:
  - Participate in processes that maintain and strengthen incentives to purchase or lease EVs.
  - Participate in processes to increase installation of more Level 3/DC Fast Chargers around your community

## At Your Business or Place of Work

- Action:
  - If your company has a work vehicle, advocate for an EV when it is time to replace current work (gas powered) vehicle
- Getting involved:
  - Advocate for your business fleet to be replaced with EVs.
  - Advocate for your business to install a charging station.