

Climate Action Plan Memo Outline



A short, clear, 5–10 page format for quick climate action planning

Use this version when your community wants to move quickly, start small or produce a concise document that can later grow into a full Climate Action Plan.

1. Executive Summary (½–1 page)

Purpose: Provide a snapshot of why the community is taking climate action and what this memo accomplishes.

Include:

- Local motivations (extreme weather, aging infrastructure, resident priorities)

- Top 2–3 climate goals

- Summary of the highest-priority strategies

- Immediate next steps

Sample language:

“This Climate Action Memo outlines the most impactful steps our community can take now to reduce emissions, strengthen resilience, and build a safer, more equitable future.”

2. Vision & Goals (1/2 page)

2.1 Community Vision

A short, values-focused statement describing the desired future.

Examples:

- “A resilient, healthy, low-carbon community for all residents.”
- “A thriving and equitable city prepared for a changing climate.”

2.2 Measurable Goals

Include *only the most essential* goals, such as:

- GHG reduction target (optional)
- A resilience or hazard-related goal
- One or two equity commitments

Keep this tight: 3–5 goals maximum.

3. GHG Emissions Snapshot (½ page)

Purpose: Show where emissions come from to justify the chosen strategies.

Include:

- The community's GHG emissions pie chart (from the County)
- One or two sentence summary of key takeaways
Example: "Transportation accounts for 41% of local emissions—making it the community's top opportunity for impact."

4. Priority Climate Risks (½ page)

Identify the top climate hazards relevant to your community.

Examples for Northeast Ohio:

- Extreme precipitation + localized flooding
- Severe winter storms
- High heat days
- Tornadoes / high winds

For each, add a **one-sentence statement** about local relevance.

Example:

“Flooding poses the highest near-term risk, especially for homes near ____ and major roadways such as ____.”

5. Priority Strategies (2–3 pages)

List **3–6 strategies** across mitigation and resilience, tailored to the community.

For each strategy, include:

Strategy Title

Purpose: One sentence describing what the strategy accomplishes.

Supporting Actions:

- 3–5 sub-actions the community could realistically take.
- Keep these short and practical.

Co-benefits:

- 2–3 bullet points (e.g., cost savings, cleaner air, safety, job creation).

Partners:

- County, utilities, nonprofits, regional partners.

Examples:

- Expand EV charging infrastructure
- Improve home energy efficiency
- Modernize municipal buildings
- Strengthen stormwater resilience
- Increase tree canopy in priority areas
- Develop employer-based commuter programs

Strategy #1

Strategy #2

Strategy #3

Strategy #4

Strategy #5

Strategy #6

6. Implementation Matrix (1–2 pages)

Provide a simplified table with:

- Strategy
- Supporting Actions
- Lead party
- Partners
- Timeframe (Short, Mid, Long)
- Cost (Low, Medium, High)
- Impact/Ease rating

Purpose: Make it clear *who does what, when, and with what resources*.

You can include a link to the full matrix tool or embed a smaller version here.

7. Near-Term Next Steps (½–1 page)

Clearly list the **first 3–6 actions** the community can take within the next year.

Examples:

- Conduct a walkability or EV readiness assessment
- Apply for a specific federal or state grant
- Convene a working group to oversee implementation
- Launch a pilot project (e.g., LED retrofit or tree planting)
- Partner with the County or PCFO for technical support
- Complete the Implementation Matrix fully

8. Appendices (Optional)

To stay within 10 pages, include only if needed:

- Maps
- Engagement summary
- Data notes
- Relevant local plans
- A one-page funding resource list