



“Detroit Climate Action Collaborative Overview”

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Presentation Overview

- **Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice (DWEJ)**
- **Detroit Climate Action Collaborative (DCAC)**
- **DCAC Goals, Stakeholders, Workgroups**
- **Greenhouse Gas Inventory**
- **Current Activities & Accomplishments for 2011-2014**

DWEJ

Mission

Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice envisions Detroit as the global model of a vibrant urban center where all thrive in environmental, economic and social health

Vision

DWEJ champions local and national collaboration to advance environmental justice and sustainable redevelopment. We foster clean, healthy and safe communities through innovative policy, education and workforce initiatives



DWEJ's Climate Change Commitment

- Since DWEJ's inception in 1994, we have been a leading voice in advocating for sustainable communities in Detroit.
- Address many of the factors leading to climate change, which have adversely impacted low-income and minority communities .
- In 2011, DWEJ convened key stakeholders from diverse backgrounds to form the Detroit Climate Action Collaborative (DCAC).
- DCAC is a grassroots-led effort

DCAC Goals:

1) Reduce greenhouse gas emissions for the sustainability and well-being of the City of Detroit.

2) Increase the resilience of the city's social, built, and natural environments.

Detroit Climate Action Plan Process

- **Develop CAP for Detroit**
- **Develop a comprehensive strategy to address GHG emissions related to land use, transportation, building design, energy use, water demand, and waste generation.**
- **Identify approaches unique to Detroit to achieve GHG emission reductions.**
- **Create a roadmap to reducing community and municipal GHG emissions associated with both existing and future actions and activities.**
- **Vet strategies through a community engagement process.**

DCAC Stakeholders

- **City of Detroit Environmental Affairs Office**
- **University of Michigan School of Public Health Climate Change Research Team**
- **Michigan Department of Community Health**
- **Michigan Environmental Council**
- **WARM Training Center**
- **Great Lakes Integrated Sciences and Assessments (GLISA)**
- **SW Detroit Environmental Vision**
- **National Wildlife Federation**
- **Data Driven Detroit**
- **Great Lakes Environmental Law Clinic – Wayne State University**
- **University of Michigan College of Agriculture and Urban Planning**

DCAC Workgroup Partners

- City of Detroit General Services Department
- Concept 22, Inc.
- Detroit Area Green Sector Skills Alliance
- DTE Energy
- General Motors
- Greening of Detroit
- Ford Motor Company
- The McNeely Building Group, LLC
- Newman Consulting Group, LLC
- Zero Waste Detroit
- City of Detroit Department of Homeland Security
- Pure Eco Environmental Solutions
- Sierra Club- Detroit Chapter
- University of Michigan School of Natural Resources and Environment
- U.S. Green Building Council Detroit Regional Chapter
- Wayne State University- Office of Campus Sustainability
- Chrysler Group, LLC
- Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC)
- Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority
- State of Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (M-DEQ)
- Detroit Housing Commission

Planning for Climate Change



Key Obstacles and Overcoming Them

- **Assembling the “right” kitchen cabinet**
 - I really had to think long and hard about our partners. Interestingly, many of the people that serve on the SC are all new partners. Over the course of two years, we have developed a close relationship that is built on trust and faith in this initiative. Make sure you have trustworthy people who are part of your Steering Committee . You will need to rely on them for many things including garnering support from others.
- **Building trust among the stakeholders (long-term Commitment)**
 - As the oldest environmental justice organization in Michigan, we decided to bring industry/businesses to our table. We did receive a lot of push back from this idea, but we continued to forge ahead. We realized that in order to develop a meaningful CAP, business and industry had to be at our table. Two years later, they are still at the table, as well as other environmental groups. We overcame this obstacle by being very transparent with all of our Workgroups. We let them know that we expected them to commit to reducing their emissions substantially., while also emphasizing to others that becoming energy efficient was not FREE. It was going to cost money. EJ groups that decide to work closely with industry walk a very fine line. You must know how to navigate both audiences for an effective common goal-significantly reducing carbon emissions. It is very important to control your audience at public meetings and set guidelines for interaction (no yelling, name calling, or other rude behavior). Have very clear and firm standards. Invite key stakeholders to the table early. Have a lot of “Early” meetings to ensure buy-in and long term support. Be transparent and continue to talk. Don’t ever stop talking to each other.
- **Raising money/leveraging resources**
 - This has been the most interesting obstacle. It has been very difficult to raise a large sum of money for this effort, which is disturbing for many reasons. But, this obstacle has been a big blessing in disguise because of all of the in-kind donations we are receiving and continue to receive. DCAC is gaining international attention, which is so exciting. Many people are perplexed at our lack of funding , because they see the great work that we are doing in spite of this obstacle.

Key Steps to Establishing an Effective Adaptation and Mitigation Plan: DCAC lessons learned

- Conduct a Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Climatology Report
- Establish a comprehensive process that engages key stakeholders in first identifying their contribution to climate change and then identifying the potential impacts that it has on their operations and community
- After key stakeholders clearly understand their contribution and its impact, which are different for businesses and communities, they should identify mitigation and adaptation goals
- After developing the goals, identify short-term and long-term action steps, which will consider scale of action and costs
- Use that information to prioritize the short-and long-term action steps
- Make sure that you partner with colleges or a state or city health department to involve scientists and academic climate health experts (professors, doctoral students, climate epidemiologist)– they help to add a strong human touch that is supported by intense research and resources
- Also consider partnering with hospitals and the Department of Homeland Security, which handles emergency events – they should play a role in developing your plan
- Become familiar with green infrastructure projects within your community and align your efforts with existing efforts– your voice/expertise may allow others to expand their focus to be more inclusive of EJ Communities

Building Climate Resilience: the Business Sector

- Climate change presents unique challenges for businesses, but if well-managed, it can become an opportunity
- Business that engages in climate change planning can find market opportunities and save money through risk reduction. For example, the changes in weather patterns which can make some elements of the construction industry more vulnerable also provide areas where the construction industry can capitalize on change (Sussman & Freed, 2008).
- Catastrophic weather events have caused significant economic losses throughout the country (Ellsworth, 2013)
- It is critically important to include the business sector, especially industry, in climate change/resiliency planning because of their contribution to green house gas emissions and other dangerous pollutants, which threatens the health of our communities and environment
- The business sector has the ability to both mitigate the impact of climate change and adapt to the impending threats of climate change by developing and adopting a robust risk management plan
- The Detroit Climate Action Collaborative (DCAC) developed a Business and Institution Workgroup, which is in the process of developing mitigation and adaptation strategies and short-term and long-term goals/action steps.
- Stress the “Triple Bottom Line” concept, while highlighting the economic benefits of both reducing greenhouse gas emissions/energy usage and adapting to climate change

Examples of Adaptation Practices

- Earlier in the process, we developed 6 Workgroups (Public Health, Energy, Parks, Public Space & Water Infrastructure, Homes and Neighborhoods, Solid Waste, Business and Institutions). Each Workgroup was responsible for developing Adaptation and Mitigation Goals and short & long-term action steps
- At this time, we are in the process of further refining our Adaptation and Mitigation Action Steps, so I am not able to share any specific information. Our process will be complete within the next two months.

Building Climate Change Resilience: the Community

- If the City has a Neighborhoods Office, partner with them to help train community leaders on developing a climate resilient community
- Partner with an energy efficiency/ sustainability expert, architect, and climate health expert to begin the process of developing innovative adaptation strategies – US Green Building Council would be very good
- Climate change may stress transportation infrastructure. Higher temperatures will increase buckling on railroad tracks and degrade pavements at a faster rate, particularly asphalt pavements. Severe storms create delay and disruption to transportation systems and may overwhelm drainage systems of roads, tunnels and airports (Schwartz, 2010).
- There are many ways that communities can confront climate challenges to both build community resilience and lessen the impact of climate change. Most of these strategies are either mitigation or adaptation, although some can be both. Mitigation examples include taking public transportation, weatherizing homes, and transitioning to other sources of energy (wind, solar, etc.). Adaptation examples include planting a rain garden to help manage runoff or using passive cooling strategies for warmer summer temperatures.

Building Climate Change Resilience: the Community

- Communities are envisioning and enacting climate action plans in response to the various climate challenges that they face. Climate action plans can be tailored to the strengths and goals of each community because climate change affects many areas of our lives. For example, climate action plans can also incorporate mutual goals of food security, youth leadership, and other areas that communities have identified as important for their futures.
- Education and engagement of residents and contractors will be at the heart of defining and achieving the climate goals of the Homes and Neighborhoods Workgroup.



DCAC Workgroups



Solid Waste



Homes & Neighborhoods



Parks, Public Space &
Water Infrastructure



Energy



Community
Public Health Impacts



Business &
Institutions

Detroit Greenhouse Gas Inventory

- **Municipal** – includes emissions from all operations that local government owns and controls.
- **Community** – includes emissions from community activities (i.e., energy transportation, agricultural, industrial, and waste).

Vulnerability Assessment & Indicator Development

- **Vulnerability Assessment**
 - Identify & quantify vulnerabilities
 - Tool for future decision-making
- **Indicator Development**
 - Based on identified vulnerabilities
 - Trend & direction

DCAC Progress

Dec 2011 – Dec 2014:

- Established DCAC
- Met with key leaders in Mayors Office and City Council
- Formed 6 Workgroups: Public Health, Energy, Parks, Public Space & Water Infrastructure, Homes and Neighborhoods, Solid Waste, Business and Institutions
- Convened Workgroups
- Draft Detroit Climatology
- University of Michigan – Developed framework for the 6 DCAC Workgroups
- University of Michigan – Developed Climate Change Vulnerability in Detroit Report
- Selected as a University of Michigan SNRE Master's Project – Students will conduct a GHG Inventory at the Municipal and Community level
- Wayne State University – Identified model State and local climate policy throughout the U.S., and developed the draft for the Detroit City Council Climate Ordinance
- Completed the Workgroup Framework which outlines mitigation and adaptation short-term and long-term action steps
- Completed the Municipal and Community Greenhouse Gas Inventory – Community and Municipal

Thank You

Questions???

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