



CITY OF ST. LOUIS CLIMATE PROTECTION INITIATIVE

An Integrated Approach Toward Carbon Neutrality

“Essential to the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis will be to build back better across the entirety of our economy and our communities.”

- St. Louis Mayor Lyda Krewson

Reprinted from the May 2020 Climate Mayors Newsletter

Mayors today are faced with health and economic crises the likes of which we have never seen. We are experiencing an enormous strain impacting our residents — especially those in low-income or underserved communities — our local economies, and our municipal budgets. We’ve heard that air pollution is related to COVID-19, and the pandemic has highlighted the importance of access to parks and greenspace. Compounding the situation is the ongoing climate crisis, and our goals of realizing a cleaner, greener, more resilient and equitable quality of life for all. In addition to the coronavirus crisis, we must persevere towards carbon neutrality.

For the City of St. Louis, that means approaching decarbonization through a suite of climate actions, including advancing building energy efficiency, renewable energy, vehicle electrification and alternate modes of transportation. While our task appears daunting, by taking climate action we can also expect to see cleaner air for our residents, more trees to cool the urban heat island effect, and vegetation that can sequester carbon while addressing stormwater, providing wildlife habitat or recreational spaces for citizens.

Like others in frontline communities, we are working tirelessly to address the immediate impacts of COVID-19. At the same time, we know we must continue to address climate change. The City’s Climate Protection Initiative charts an ambitious and comprehensive strategy towards achieving triple bottom line sustainability outcomes: environmental – social – economic benefits. We have been able to make impressive progress implementing the City’s Climate Action & Adaptation Plan, with support of numerous local partners, and countless resources provided by agencies and organizations. Recently, the City was one of 25 to win a Bloomberg Philanthropies American Cities Climate Challenge award, enabling the City to take our Climate Protection Initiative to the next level.

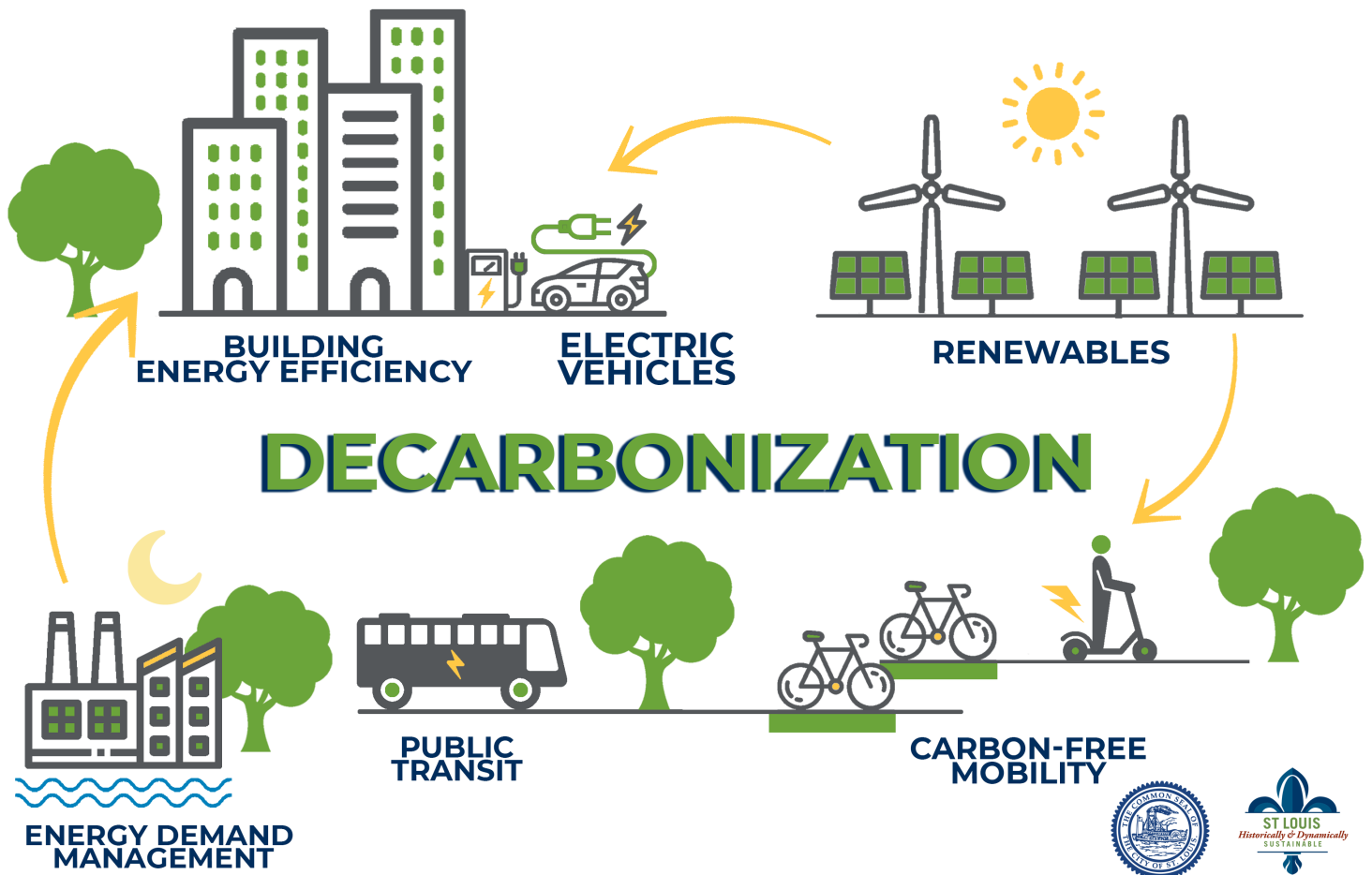
St. Louis has already reached its 2020 target of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 20%, and we are on track to meet our 28% target by 2025. In October 2019, I highlighted this progress and set out an ambitious long-term goal of reducing GHGs by 100% by 2050.

While many new policies and efforts will be needed to achieve carbon neutrality, in the past 6 months the City has demonstrated climate leadership by developing requirements relating to Solar Readiness and Building Energy Performance Standards (BEPS). In both cases, St. Louis was the first city in the Midwest, and among the first in the country, to pass such ordinances. The Solar Readiness legislation requires most new residential, multi-family and commercial construction in the City be designed for cost-effective installation of rooftop solar. Not only does this reflect our commitment to tackling the climate crisis head on, it will lead to significant

savings for those homeowners and commercial building owners who install solar on their properties.

The City's BEPS ordinance is an innovative, performance-driven approach to achieving lower energy usage in buildings that are 50,000 square feet or larger. Because buildings account for nearly 80% of the City's GHG emissions, targeting improvements in this sector should result in significant climate protection outcomes. Spearheaded by the City's Building Division, our success in moving the BEPS legislation forward was due to many factors. We received critical assistance from American Cities Climate Challenge partners (Institute for Market Transformation, Natural Resources Defense Council, US Green Building Council), and generous support from the Energy Foundation and Bloomberg Philanthropies. The City's stakeholder engagement was also important for our success, ensuring community leaders, businesses, developers and utilities participated in a transparent dialogue that led to a shared understanding of the value of BEPS, and the process involved in implementation. We believe that implementation of the BEPS will help rebuild and reimagine our local economy in a sustainable manner, by creating jobs, protecting the environment, and prioritizing the health of our communities throughout the City.

Essential to the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis will be to build back better across the entirety of our economy and our communities. We must ensure an equitable transition to a zero carbon economy. By taking a comprehensive approach, as St. Louis is doing, I believe we can rejuvenate the economy while simultaneously reducing GHG emissions, increasing our resilience and improving the health and well-being of our residents.



Electric vehicle by monkiki, electric station by b farias, Electric bus by Rutmer Zijlstra, cycling by mynamepong, arrow by SANB, factory by Petal Jantrapoon, green energy by made, buildings by made, tree guilherme furtado, Electric Scooter by Luis Prado from the Noun Project from the Noun Project