



2021

COOK COUNTY

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT





Cook County Department of Environment and Sustainability

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Dear Cook County Resident,

I am pleased to present Cook County's 2021 Sustainability Report, which outlines the County's efforts to support healthy and resilient communities that thrive economically, socially and environmentally.

Sustainability is an environmental justice issue. Those who live in low-income communities have borne the brunt of pollution from the old fossil fuel economy and have also been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Cook County is addressing these issues by:



- Issuing requests for proposals to procure a large portion of our energy from a renewable source.
- Winning a 2021 National Association of Counties Achievement Award for our Clean Energy Plan, which details our path to carbon neutrality.
- Launching the C-PACE (Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy) program to provide favorable financing to commercial and industrial properties investing in energy and water efficiency, clean energy and resiliency.
- Developing the Cook County Bike Plan, which will focus on expansion, equity and enhancement.
- Granting 16 Solar Schools funds to educate youth about renewable energy.
- Achieving significant sustainability milestones from 2019-2020, including an overall reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from County facilities and operations of 10.7%, and reduction in water use of 5.3%.

The Forest Preserves of Cook County adopted a Clean Energy Framework and released its Sustainability and Climate Resiliency Plan progress report which includes the restoration of 4,362 acres to natural conditions and an offset of 100% of emissions from electricity and natural gas use.

I supported the passage of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, which became law this year and will directly help traditionally underserved communities by improving air quality and getting people back to work in jobs that pay living wages and support the new clean energy economy.

We must do as much as we can as quickly as we can to fight climate change and we are building upon a solid foundation of accomplishments. I look forward to even more progress in the coming year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Toni Preckwinkle". The signature is fluid and cursive.

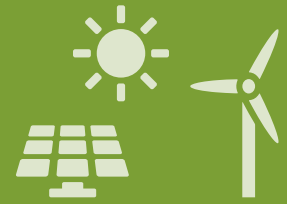
Toni Preckwinkle, President
Cook County Board

President Preckwinkle supports the Illinois **Climate and Equitable Jobs Act**, putting Illinois on the path to 100% clean energy by 2050.



OFF-SITE POWER PURCHASE AGREEMENT RFP

As part of our Clean Energy Plan commitments, Cook County released a request for proposal (RFP) for a renewable energy off-site power purchase agreement (PPA). The PPA will allow Cook County to purchase a large portion of its electricity supply from a renewable source as soon as 2023.



The PPA is expected to generate **69,000 to 96,000 MWH** of energy which will prevent **94,000 metric tons** of greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions. This is equivalent to emissions from powering **16,000 homes**.

The PPA will help bolster the local green economy, improve air quality and add renewable energy to the electric grid.

Replaced several chillers and rooftop units on county buildings with more efficient models as part of the County's continued **green building efforts**.

\$576,000

In energy efficiency rebates



Over **700** individuals have signed the Conserve Cook County Pledge



Sign up here: <https://cookgov.me/CCpledge>

Piloted **STIC WITH IT** energy saving challenge for County building engineers

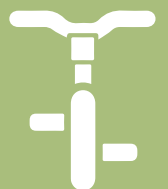


- See where energy is used
- Tools to identify energy reductions
- Implementation of energy-saving actions
- Create a lasting plan

Equity

Cook County announced its **Racial Equity Policy** and **Racial Equity Action Plan** to ensure equity is operationalized through Cook County Offices Under the President. The policy defines equity as it relates to the formulation of policy, updating policy and the tangible delivery of government services and resources.

The Department of Transportation and Highways is developing the Cook County Bike Plan focusing on expansion, equity & enhancement.



The **Brownfield Program** has assessed **66** sites totaling **487** acres and created or retained approximately **600** jobs through site reuse.



FOREST PRESERVES OF COOK COUNTY

Released 3 year Sustainability & Climate Resiliency Plan Progress Report:

- Restored **4,362** acres of land
- Offset **100%** of electricity & natural gas
- Reduced transportation-related carbon emissions by **4.82%**
- Acquired **56** acres of public space to preserve for future generations

Board adopted clean energy framework

Including net zero emissions implementation schedule



C-PACE FINANCING LAUNCH

The Ramova Theater in Bridgeport is the first participant in Cook County's recently launched **Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE)** program. Closed since 1985, the 100-year-old theater will reopen after renovations featuring a live entertainment space, restaurant and brewpub.



C-PACE offers commercial, industrial, institutional and large rental property owners advantageous financing for investments in energy and water efficiency, renewable energy and resilience.



16 Schools received Cook County Solar Schools Grants



Received a **National Association of Counties 2021 Achievement Award** for the County's Clean Energy Plan.

\$8,500,000

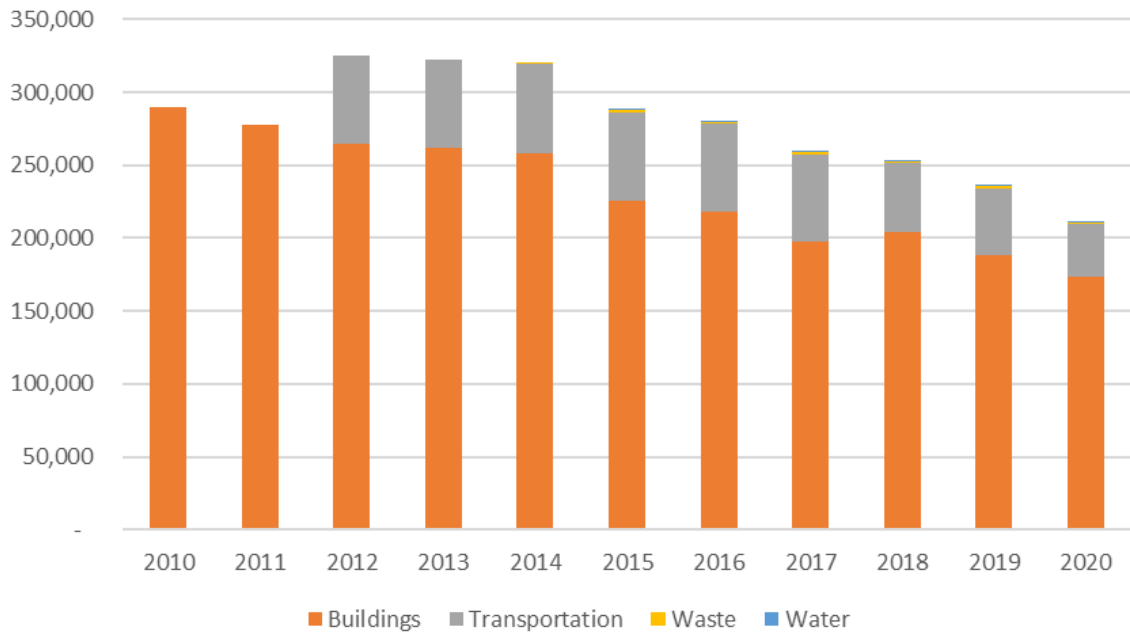
Granted to **29** municipalities for transportation projects through Invest in Cook. Of the **34** funded projects, **15** are bicycle and pedestrian path improvements. Approximately **70%** of Invest in Cook funding is directed towards projects in low and moderate income communities to create equal access to opportunity.

FAIR TRANSIT SOUTH COOK

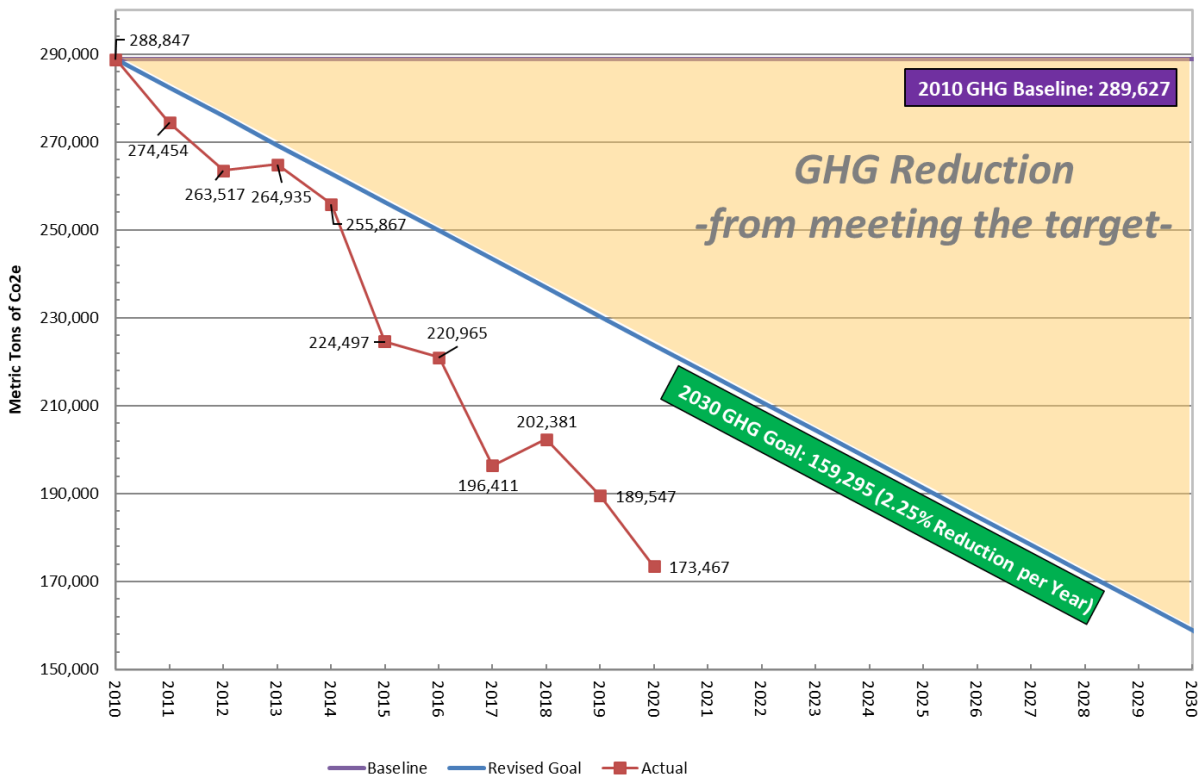


Three-year pilot project reduces fares up to 50% on Metra Electric and Rock Island lines as well as Pace route 352 Halsted for south Cook residents.

Metric Tons CO2e* Emitted from Cook County Operations



County Building GHG Reductions and the 2050 GHG Goal



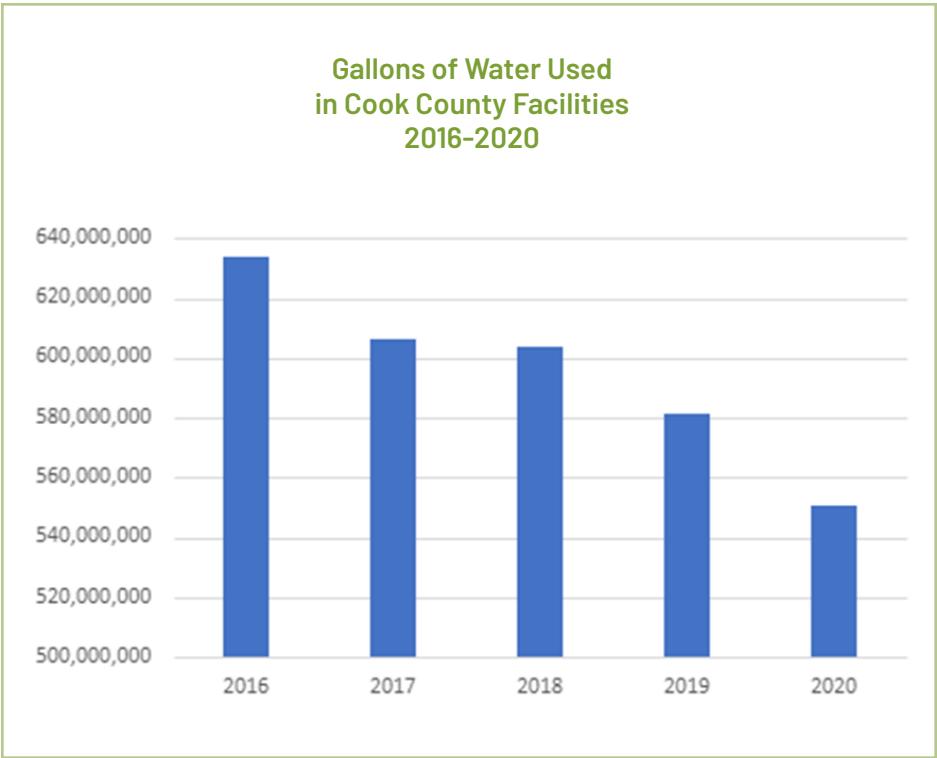
*Carbon Dioxide Equivalent

OVERALL
COUNTY OPERATIONS
GHG EMISSIONS

↓ **10.7%**

from 2019 to 2020

Reductions were made in overall County GHG emissions, County building emissions, transportation emissions and total water use.



COUNTY BUILDING
GHG EMISSIONS

↓ **7.9%**

from 2019 to 2020

↓ **40.2%**

since 2010

Our electric vehicle (EV) charging stations avoided CO₂e emissions equivalent to charging **255,585** cell phones.

County Building water usage

↓ **5.3%**

from 2019 to 2020

County transportation emissions

↓ **22.1%** from 2019 to 2022

↓ **41.1%** since 2012

Reduced electricity use partly attributed to employees **working remotely and plug-load reduction** during COVID-19 pandemic.

Cook County released its Clean Energy Plan in 2020 as a pathway to meet three main goals for county-owned buildings.

A reduction in carbon emissions by **45%** by **2030**



100% renewable electricity by **2030**



Achieving carbon neutrality by **2050**



ANNUAL UPDATES FROM CLEAN ENERGY PLAN

Immediate (Anticipated 2020-2021)	Completed	In Progress	Not Started
Develop RFP for strategic energy procurement. Include lowest bid prices and renewable energy procurement in these decisions.	X		
Finalize RFP for a turnkey solar solution for Skokie and Markham Courthouses and Cicero Records Center.		X	
Adopt and publish green building standards for performance-based design, solar ready buildings and sustainability measures.	X		
Continuing education for Cook County Department of Facilities Management employees on solar installation and upkeep.	X		
Issue an RFP for in-depth building audits and energy modeling for each facility in the proposal. The goal of this solicitation would be to determine the energy usage breakdown in each facility and create a list of energy efficiency upgrades that need to occur.		X	
Verify all meter readings are accurate and up-to-date with the utility companies.		X	
Upgrade building automation system and integrate fault detection and diagnostics.		X	
Finalize roof age list and work with the Department of Capital Planning and Policy to develop a roof replacement schedule.	X		
Incorporate green building standards into all new leases, development projects and capital improvement plan projects.	X		
Explore the potential of off-site renewable energy owned by the County or power purchase agreement of off-site renewables.		X	

ANNUAL UPDATES FROM CLEAN ENERGY PLAN

Short Term (Anticipated 2021-2025)	Completed	In Progress	Not Started
Develop a building-by-building energy efficiency upgrade list. Include estimated costs and upgrade schedules.			X
Update the current LEED ordinance for new construction and major renovations of Cook County owned and leased properties.		X	
Work with the ComEd energy efficiency program to select and implement a monitoring-based retro-commissioning project on selected buildings.		X	
Roof replacements at Markham, Rolling Meadows and Bridgeview Courthouses.		X	
Begin solar installations at Markham, Rolling Meadows and Bridgeview Courthouses.			X
Begin solar installation at Cicero Warehouse.			X
Develop a policy and strategy for submetering by department.			X
Provide annual progress on the clean energy plan.		X	
Develop a strategy to reduce transportation emissions from Cook County operations and to transition away from fossil fueled vehicles.		X	
Assess opportunities for community solar either on site with the County as an anchor subscriber or through subscription only, especially if the County's action would help increase low-cost energy available to Cook County residents.		X	
Analyze and integrate battery storage to support renewable energy developments.			X

Intermediate (Anticipated 2025-2030)	Completed	In Progress	Not Started
Implement submetering by department.			X
Complete phased roof replacement and solar installation for County facilities.			X
Procure renewable energy credits to cover the remainder of the County's electricity use.		X	

Long Term (Anticipated 2030+)	Completed	In Progress	Not Started
Conduct a thermal decarbonization analysis to adjust how heating and cooling energy is used to effectively move away from fossil fuels by fuel switching from remaining natural gas (fossil fuel) equipment to electric mechanical equipment. A thermal study determines the best way to move away from fossil fuels used for heating and cooling and creating hot water.			X
Switch fuel use away from natural gas to electric equipment based on analysis of equipment as it becomes time for replacement/retrofit.			X
Install portfolio solar rooftops where feasible and accessible as rooftops are replaced.			X
Integrate a microgrid on Department of Corrections Campus.			X

Cook County Green Leadership Team
Appointed by Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle

Lanetta Haynes Turner
Chief of Staff, Chair

Elizabeth Granato
Deputy Bureau Chief, Bureau of Asset Management

Tom Lynch
Chief Information Officer

Tanya Anthony
Chief Administration Officer

Ammar Rizki
Chief Financial Officer

Xochitl Flores
Chief, Bureau of Economic Development

Deborah Stone
Chief Sustainability Officer

Robert Sumter
Interim Chief Financial Officer, Cook County Health

**Our thanks to the many County employees
who contributed to this report, especially:**

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