

# Business Climate Action Checklist

This action checklist outlines how your business, nonprofit, or organization can support the Grand Rapids Climate Action & Adaptation Plan (CAAP)

Read The CAAP



## Safe & Efficient Buildings

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- ☐ Purchase **ENERGY STAR**® certified equipment and review their online product-finder details on energy savings for appliances →



- ☐ Use **ENERGY STAR**'s® checklist for energy-saving measures for commercial buildings →



- ☐ Pursue third party certifications for high-performance buildings that use sustainable materials and less energy:

- **ENERGY STAR**®
- **Living Buildings Challenge**
- **Well Building Standard**
- **LEED** (Leaderships in Energy and Environmental Design)
- **BREEAM** (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method)

- ☐ Visit **Lean & Green Michigan** to finance energy → efficiency, water conservation, renewable energy, and environmental hazard mitigation projects with their PACE (property assessed clean energy) program



- ☐ Implement energy efficiency strategies by utilizing *building automation systems* (BAS) for your heating, ventilation, & air conditioning (HVAC) needs and lighting schedules to limit electrical loads and energy use during non-business hours

- ☐ Consider indoor air-quality monitors such as CO detectors

- ☐ Take advantage of energy efficiency programs and incentives from **DTE** and **Consumers Energy**:

**DTE**



← **Business Rebates** →

**Consumers Energy**



← **Instant Discounts** →



← **Energy Audits** →



- ☐ Establish goals for reducing water consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, or sourcing renewable energy

- ☐ Offset CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by buying renewable energy credits

- ☐ Pursue renewable energy options such as solar → To find a trusted contractor near you visit **Michigan Saves** and search their directory by area or project



- ☐ Participate in the **Solarize Grand Rapids** program to receive a group-buy discount on solar power for your business, non-profit, or place of worship →



- ☐ Read the 2030 Energy & Carbon Guidebook from the **Michigan Green Building Collaborative (MiGBC)** to improve your building's energy performance and meet your carbon emissions reduction goals →



- ☐ Enroll in **MiGBC's Automated Benchmarking Service** to track of energy use & reduction goals →



- ☐ Enroll in **MiGBC's Grand Rapids Energy Assistance Program** for financial support for assessments →



- ☐ Pursue energy audits to identify additional opportunities for savings and efficiency. Learn about the different levels of energy audits at this page →



- ☐ Implement LED lighting where applicable, such as EXIT signs, outdoor lights, or parking lot lamps

- ☐ Perform regular preventative maintenance on HVAC and water heating fixtures per their maintenance schedule

- ☐ Install occupancy-sensing controls for lights & HVAC in private spaces such as offices, meeting rooms, or bathrooms

- ☐ Install low-flow water fixtures like toilets and faucet aerators

- ☐ Encourage your staff to fully shut down unnecessary electronics and computer workstations including computers and monitors

- ☐ Create an emergency response plan for natural disasters to ensure a safe and orderly environment



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[www.grandrapidsmi.us/sustainability](http://www.grandrapidsmi.us/sustainability)

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## Clean Transportation

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Environmental & Climate Justice Specialist

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- ☐ Start a carpool program to reduce the number of single-destination & single-person trips and promote ride sharing
- ☐ Dedicate parking spots close to the building as carpool only
- ☐ Create and enforce a no-idle policy for fleet and visitor vehicles waiting for 10+ minutes
- ☐ Offer telecommuting flexibility and virtual meeting options, when reasonable, to spare a commute

- ☐ Utilize the **City of Grand Rapids' DART EV CarShare** program to rent a car for just \$5/hour.

DART is a membership-based carsharing service providing 24/7 access to electric vehicles on an hourly basis. Vehicles are located in two parking ramps downtown and four neighborhood lots →



- ☐ Read through the **Southeast Michigan Council of Governments' State of MI Community EV Toolkit** for resources and links to start planning electric vehicle charging infrastructure →



- ☐ View the **U.S. Department of Transportation's** EV planning resources & educational materials → including employee surveys, toolkits, and more



- ☐ Check out Michigan Saves for financing options on electric vehicle charging stations →



- ☐ View the **U.S. Department of Energy's** toolkit for workplace workshops that educate employees on why and how they can take advantage of → newly installed plug-in vehicle charging stations



- ☐ Maintain fleet vehicles & equipment, as specified by the manufacturer, to ensure they operate at their highest efficiency

- ☐ Participate in the **Wheels to Work®** program to support car-free transit options for employees →



- ☐ Form a volunteer group of staff to seasonally maintain nearby bus stops to create a clean, safe and secure stop for all riders

- ☐ Plan a group bus-ride to try nearby routes & stops to encourage use of public transportation

- ☐ Become a *Bicycle Friendly Business*, an initiative from **The League of American Bicyclists** →



- ☐ Review pedestrian and bicycle safety infrastructure in your parking lot & offer amenities to encourage alternative commutes such as bike racks, showers, or carpool parking

- ☐ Share the **Grand Valley Metro Council's** (GVMC) map of bike lanes and pedestrian trails →



- ☐ Enforce proper parking for your staff and customers to prevent blocked bike lanes & maintain access for emergency services

- ☐ Encourage staff to participate in *Active Commute Week* (during the second week of September) via the **West Michigan Rides** mobile app →



- ☐ Make sure handicap access is clearly labelled and free from obstruction at all times (furniture, snow, deliveries, etc.)

- ☐ Maintain sidewalk access for pedestrians, wheelchair users, and strollers in front of your business or parking lot

- ☐ Join the **Michigan Energy Innovation Business Council** (EIBC) to gain access and opportunities for innovation and business growth related to Michigan's advanced clean energy economy →



- ☐ Read the **Environmental Protection Agency's SmartWay Program** for sustainable freight management. Measuring, benchmarking, and assessing freight transportation activities and strategically making better choices will reduce emissions and air pollution →



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## Thriving Environment

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- ☐ Start a “green team” or other initiative for employees to learn and connect about sustainability in the workplace. Prioritize a diverse team of staff to ensure sustainability initiatives provide meaningful, long-term change at your organization
- ☐ Choose wood products certified by the **Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC)** to support their goals of responsible forest management → 
- ☐ View resources and reports on building a sustainable impact from the **World Wildlife Fund** and their climate business network → 
- ☐ Find the nearest storm drains to your business and pledge to keep them clear of ice, leaves, and trash with the **Lower Grand River Organization of Watersheds (LGROW)**'s *Adopt a Drain Program* → 
- ☐ Utilize cleaning products certified by **Green Seal** to maintain indoor air quality and employee health → 
- ☐ Work alongside your **landscaping services** to implement these sustainable land management practices for your property:
- ☐ Encourage low-carbon management practices such as limited mowing and drought-resistant native plants instead of traditional lawn grass and ornamental varieties of trees and flowers. Maintain a 12-inch maximum height year-round.
- ☐ Check out resources on creating bird-friendly → buildings from *Bird City*, an initiative of the **Michigan Audubon Club** to increase bird habitat 
- ☐ Request a low-salt snow service that follows these practices:
  - **Shovel** first to reduce the amount of salt you need
  - Don't pour, but **scatter** a cup, or handfuls, to evenly spread the salt across the icy area
  - **Switch** to sand, or a cold weather deicer, as salt (NaCl) does not melt ice at temperatures 15° F or lower
  - **Sweep** up excess to reuse when the weather warms up
- ☐ Incorporate sustainability into your company principles, values, vision or mission statements, and strategic plans
- ☐ Engage colleagues with topic-oriented lunch and learns by connecting with local sustainability organizations
- ☐ Enroll your leadership team in a carbon literacy → course: action-based training empowering them with the knowledge and agency to make informed low carbon choices and equipping them for their responsibilities in delivering net zero 
- ☐ Organize a volunteer opportunity to plant trees with **Friends of Grand Rapids Parks (FGRP)** → 
- ☐ Connect with your local watershed group to learn where rain goes after it leaves your property. → Find yours at [LGROW.org/watershedmap](http://LGROW.org/watershedmap) 
- ☐ Share sustainability practices on communication platforms
- ☐ Utilize the **City of Grand Rapids Approved Tree Species List** to select trees for your campus → 
- ☐ Include signage for visitors and staff to learn about your green landscape practices and to encourage learning.
- ☐ If an irrigation system is used, set up sprinklers so there is minimal overspray to the parking lot or road. Use a weather-based irrigation controller to avoid use during rain
- ☐ Integrate rain gardens, bioswales, and/or cisterns to store and slow down stormwater from your building or parking lot
- ☐ Join the **MI Sustainable Business Forum's** → (MISBF) *Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI)* Taskforce for assistance and local case studies 



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## Resilient Food Systems

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☐ Consider a local food purchasing preference into your procurement → policy using best practices from the **Good Food Purchasing Program**



☐ Implement a procurement policy that reduces disposable goods

☐ Read the **Michigan Sustainable Business Forum's Michigan Food → Waste Roadmap** to learn about reducing food waste & loss statewide



☐ Encourage staff to bring food storage containers to celebrations or meetings to share excess, uneaten, food with family and neighbors

☐ Properly label contents, & expiry date, when storing leftover food in a group space (i.e. a break room or kitchenette)

☐ Adopt policies for events or dining spaces to reduce food waste and save money

☐ Purchase bulk-packaged supplies and buy products that limit the amount of packaging

☐ Start an employee garden club or seed/plant exchange

☐ Read here about the **Good Samaritan Food Donation Act** and how it can protect some businesses from liability after donating food →



☐ Join the **MI Food Waste Reduction Coalition** to share best practices for recovery and connect with other businesses who have reduced food waste

☐ Evaluate your **waste hauler** contract to understand if your hauler offers compost or recycling

☐ Connect with your **janitorial staff** to evaluate current waste services and the feasibility of starting recycling and composting services

☐ Establish a team of staff to educate others on how to reduce waste and prevent contamination

☐ Encourage the repair of office equipment such as furniture or electronics, if it is both possible and practical, instead of sending it to landfill

☐ Explore these technology & electronics recycling resources:

**Kent County Department of Public Works** has three locations to drop off electronics →



← **Comprenew** provides secure IT asset disposition services for corporate e-waste



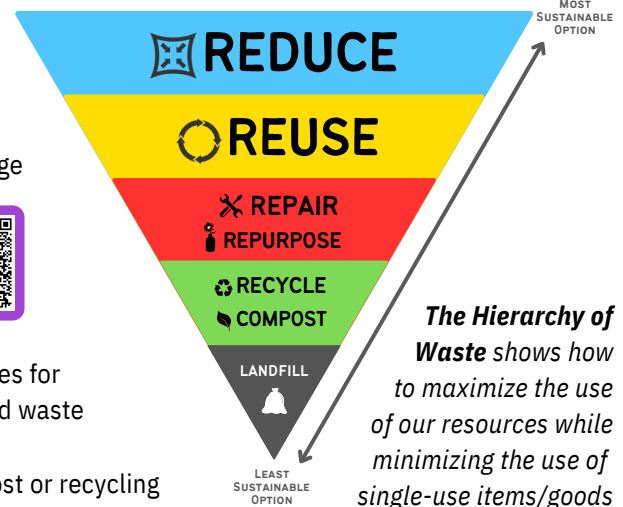
**PADNOS** offers convenient sites for anyone to drop off their end-of-life equipment →



☐ Support restaurants that use local foods for catering, and include local, plant-based, and vegetarian options

☐ Reduce the purchase of single-serve or individually packaged food items by offering these items upon request

☐ When purchasing supplies or equipment, consider the **Hierarchy of Waste** and how those materials can be sustainably utilized at their end of life



☐ Conduct a **waste audit** to establish a baseline of how much waste is produced by your operations for waste reduction benchmarking

Learn more on conducting waste audits here →



☐ Partner with your local Neighborhood Association to sponsor a volunteer clean up or allowing neighbors to drop off bulky items into a rented dumpster

View a map of Grand Rapids Neighborhoods here →



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