



Sunrise Westchester's YOUTH CLIMATE ACTION DEMANDS

Package of steps that municipalities commit to carrying out Youth Climate Action Demands:

- 1) Commit to meeting the emission reduction targets outlined in New York's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act on the municipal level
- 2) Start the process of building a Climate Action Plan
- 3) Become a Climate Smart Community & a designated Clean Energy Community in the NYS programs
- 4) Have a youth member of your Conservation Advisory Board

1 - Committing to CLCPA Goals

In 2019, New York State passed the landmark Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (Climate Act) that outlines the State's goals to transition off of fossil fuels to limit the effects of climate change. The key components of the Act include:

- 40% greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions from 1990 level by 2030
- 85% GHG emission reductions by 2050, excluding carbon-offsets
- 70% renewable electricity by 2030
- 100% renewable electricity by 2040

For more information about these goals, see [NY's Draft Scoping Plan Overview](#), visit NY's [Climate Act website](#), or read the [Climate Act](#) itself.

In order to meet these ambitious but necessary goals statewide, every community in NY must be able to do so. Committing to meeting these targets is the first step on a track to a more equitable and sustainable future.

MAIN ASK: Municipalities commit or reaffirm their commitments to [meet the CLCPA goals of renewable energy and emissions reduction](#).

2 - Municipal Climate Action Plan

The first step to taking significant climate action is knowing what is the best way to do so based on a community's current situation. Several Westchester communities, with support from the County and from outside agencies such as [ICLEI](#), have issued "Climate Action Plans." Other municipalities, such as New Rochelle and the City of Rye, have issued similar plans under community-specific names (in New Rochelle, this is GreeNR, in Rye, this is the City of Rye Sustainability Plan).

To create a formalized climate action plan:

1. Use [this carbon tracker](#) to download reports citing the carbon emissions from each of your zip codes. This will serve as a baseline from which you can reduce emissions from.
2. There are plenty of resources in Westchester County (and across New York) that municipalities can take advantage of to reduce their overall emissions. Check out this document for a compiled list of resources organized by goal: [Municipal Emission Reduction Toolkit](#)

Goals to include in the plan (suggestions):

- Transition all government operations to 100% renewable electricity
- Achieve community-wide carbon neutrality (short-term)
- Achieve community-wide zero emissions (long-term)
- Adopt green new buildings policy
- Address issues of environmental racism and injustice within your municipality (ex: location of fossil fuel emitting structures in lower-income areas, unequal spread of greenery and urban heat, etc.)
- Implement mechanisms to track progress on all above goals

MAIN ASK: All Westchester municipalities develop a strategic climate plan that helps them to better understand their community-specific needs and lays out a specific pathway to meet CLCPA goals in both government operations, residential areas, and commercial areas.

3 - NYS Climate Smart Communities & Clean Energy Communities

The [NYS Climate Smart Communities](#) program helps to outline specific NYS programs that municipalities can take advantage of to meet their climate targets. Municipalities earn more "points" the more steps they take, and can aim to achieve a "gold" status. The action steps that are part of the program can be crucial in meeting the goals outlined in the Climate Emergency Declaration the communities pass.

The [NYS Clean Energy Communities](#) program [scores](#) communities on specific actions they've taken to reach lower emissions and 100% renewable energy. A community can be designated as part of the program after taking 4 high impact actions.

MAIN ASK: All Westchester municipalities become designated “NYS Climate Smart Communities” and utilize the resources to not only achieve a “gold” rating, but to meet the goals specified in the Climate Emergency Declaration. All Westchester municipalities become designated “NYS Clean Energy Communities” and earn at least 4000 points based on their actions.

4 - Junior Associate Member of Municipal Conservation Advisory Boards

Municipal Conservation Advisory Boards will play a critical role in ensuring that the municipalities are held accountable for achieving any climate promises. How municipalities roll out climate action makes all the difference to our futures, so it makes sense for youth to have a seat at the table to ensure things are moving efficiently.

Pound Ridge recently passed a resolution that allowed for a student at Fox Lane high school to enter as a Junior Associate Member of the board. Municipalities across Westchester that promise serious climate action must allow young people to have a seat at the table like this. Successfully mitigating the climate crisis requires full-scale mobilization, and no one can do that better than young people with their world on the line.

MAIN ASK: Establish a youth position on your municipal Conservation Advisory Board and/or Environmental Committee to ensure proper youth input and accountability on climate actions.