



## **Zoning & Planning and Public Facilities Committees Agenda**

### **City of Newton In City Council**

**Wednesday, May 28, 2025**

**7:00 pm**

**Room 207 – Council Chambers**

The Zoning and Planning Committee and the Public Facilities Committee will hold this joint meeting as a hybrid meeting on Wednesday, May 28, 2025 at 7:00 PM that the public may access in-person or virtually via Zoom. To attend this meeting via Zoom use this link: <https://newtonma-gov.zoom.us/j/83041338474> or call 1-646-558-8656 and use the following Meeting ID: 830 4133 8474.

You may also:

1. Watch a live broadcast of the meeting on NewTV's government channel (Comcast 9, RCN 13, 614 (HD), Verizon 33).
2. View a live stream on NewTV's YouTube channel at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQvNeCJkA3PftuLLvfAh3cQ>

#### **Item Scheduled for Discussion:**

- #63-24**      **Referred to Public Facilities & Zoning & Planning Committee**  
**Requesting an update on the status of implementing the Climate Action Plan**  
COUNCILOR ALBRIGHT requesting an update from the Sustainability Team and appropriate staff on the status of implementing Climate Action Plan measures, expanding municipal energy efficiency and renewable energy programs as follows: Newton Power Choice participation rates, municipal power purchasing contracts for gas and electricity; Solar Power Purchase Agreement including operational and PV installations under construction, municipal energy consumption (DOER report) Green Communities grant funded efficiency projects to date, Energy Coach/ "4 our

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The location of this meeting is accessible and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities who require assistance. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please contact the city of Newton's ADA Coordinator, Jini Fairley, at least two business days in advance of the meeting: [jfairley@newtonma.gov](mailto:jfairley@newtonma.gov) or (617) 796-1253. The city's TTY/TDD direct line is: 617-796-1089. For the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), please dial 711.

Future" program and zoning ordinances both to increase building energy efficiency/renewables in the private sector and foster sustainable development patterns.

**Zoning & Planning Held 8-0 on 05/28/24**

**Referred to Public Facilities and Zoning & Planning Committees**

- #236-24**      **Discussion on Climate resiliency to hear updates and plans**  
COUNCILORS MICLEY, ALBRIGHT, LUCAS, GROSSMAN, LAREDO, WRIGHT, KALIS, FARRELL, HUMPHREY, MALAKIE, LOBOVITS, and LIPOF requesting a discussion with appropriate city staff including the Department of Public Works and Planning, to learn about steps Newton has taken and is planning to take to ensure our city is resilient to meet the present and growing challenges and threats of climate change including but not limited to increasing flooding, heat waves, and more frequent and severe storms. The discussion should include steps taken as a follow up to Newton's 2018 Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Action Plan.
- #322-24**      **Discussion regarding residential use of electricity**  
COUNCILORS DOWNS, OLIVER, LAREDO, FARRELL, GETZ, AND LOBOVITS requesting a discussion regarding residential use of electricity. Discussion should include a review of factors influencing our preparedness to continue moving away from fossil fuels to electricity. This should begin to create a sense of what residents can do now, steps that are needed to meet Newton CAP (Climate Action Plan) commitments as well as the opportunities and challenges that the city and residents need to consider next.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**R. Lisle Baker, Chair, Zoning & Planning Committee**  
**Susan Albright, Chair, Public Facilities Committee**



# Status of the Climate Action Plan: Progress and Update

May 28, 2025



# CLIMATE ACTION PLAN PROGRESS

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# PROMOTING CLEAN AND RENEWABLE ENERGY



B.1.1: Encourage residents and businesses to opt up to 100% renewable energy through Newton Power Choice.  
B.1.2: Explore increasing the percentage of MA Class 1 RECs in the City's next Newton Power Choice contract.

**95%**  
**STANDARD**  
(default)  
renewable energy  
from new regional  
sources

**76%**  
of Newton  
residential customers  
participate in  
Newton Power  
Choice

**9%**  
of participating  
households  
have opted up  
to 100%  
renewables



***Current Contract ends  
January 2026***

# Improving New Construction and Major Renovations

## BUILDING CODES

### Implementation of:



Ordinance requiring **all new buildings/substantial renovations to be all-electric**

- Enabling participation in State's Fossil Fuel Free building program (one of 10 cities/towns).

#### **Opt-In "Specialized Code"**

- The State's most progressive building code with super efficient building standards.

#### **5.13 Sustainable Development Design**

- Part of the City's Zoning Ordinance, requiring green building design and embodied carbon analysis.

D.1: Advocate for a more energy-efficient and climate-smart building code.

D.3: Work with City Council to adopt Zoning Ordinance amendments that require and/or incentivize high-efficiency performance, such as Passive House and/or net-zero new construction.



# GREENING NEWTON'S TRANSPORTATION AND STREETSCAPES

#63-24

C.1: Ensure that municipal infrastructure and operations are as “green” as possible.

C.2: Incentivize residents to switch to EVs with a goal of having 10% of all vehicles on the road be EV, BHEV, ZEM, PHEV+ by 2025.

C.3: Engage with third party partners to promote EVs and encourage biking, walking, public transit and shared transportation.

- All-electric municipal sedan fleet
- EV chargers available to the public: 24 City-owned; 61 privately-owned; at 28 locations
  - Exploring adding additional public chargers
- Complete Streets projects under construction — Washington St. Pilot, Auburndale Carriageway, Albemarle, ARPA traffic calming projects, more to come
- Bike Share — 14,000+ Newton trips on Bluebikes in 2024; 15 Bluebikes stations
- Walk, Roll and Bike Network Plan — Newton's first bike/ped plan, expected calendar year 2025



Washington St. Pilot rendering

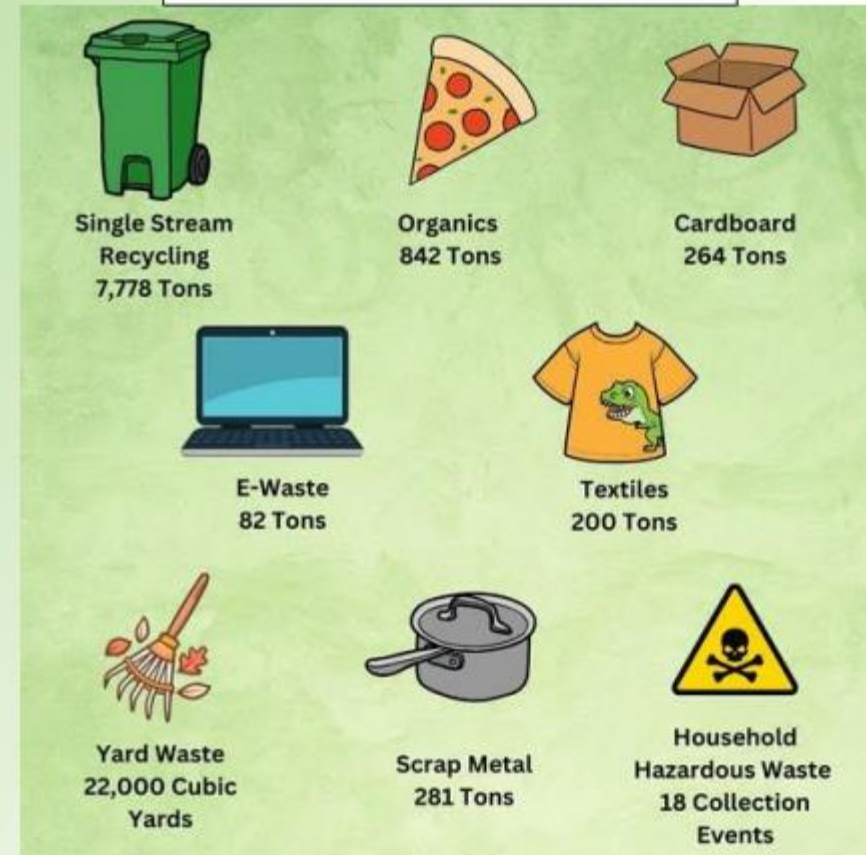
# CONSUMPTION AND DISPOSAL

F.2: Evaluate strategies to improve waste reduction and diversion among residents, businesses, and municipal operations in Newton. **#63-24**

## FY26 Goals:

- Provide excellent curbside collection services with a focus on tracking and minimizing missed pickups
- Maximize material diversion from the trash, increase use of the recycling center
- Decrease recycling contamination
- Think big picture: long-term SMM plan expected in January 2026
- Get more food waste out of the trash

## FY2024 Stats





A.2: Work with **#63-24** to build awareness and drive action.

# PARTNERSHIPS FOR CLIMATE ACTION

## ***Newton Citizens Commission on Energy***

Ongoing collaboration with the **NCCE** on a wide array of important climate policy and program goals



**Microgrant Program** with Village Bank to reduce greenhouse gases (10 microgrants awarded since start of program, Nov. 2022)



Partnership with numerous community Environmental Organizations, including Green Newton including on their **Community First Partnership** grant to hire a full-time Green Newton **Energy Advocate**

Ongoing collaboration with **City Departments**, such as DPW's Sustainable Materials Management Division on maximizing material diversion from the trash



# IMPROVING EXISTING BUILDINGS

**#63-24**  
A.2.3: In collaboration with the Utilities, work with the largest energy users in the City to reduce their GHG emissions.  
E: The City will work with [building] owners to increase energy efficiency, reduce reliance on natural gas and heating oil...



## BERDO: Current Focus on Reporting

- 46 buildings reporting by 9/15/2025
- Remaining buildings reporting by 9/15/2026
- Updating Covered Building list



## Planning for Regulations Next

- Hire BERDO Manager
- Convene Advisory Commission in September 2025
- Regulations in effect ~March 2026



## Looking ahead to Emissions Reductions

- Resource hub on City website
- Direct assistance to property owners



# PROMOTING CLEAN & RENEWABLE ENERGY

## Major expansion of the City's solar portfolio

Williams Elementary Roof powering up – 104,851 kWhs

### **Under Construction:**

Angier Elementary Roof - 98,208 kWhs

Cabot Elementary Roof – 142,409 kWhs

### **Up next:**

Mason-Rice Elementary Roof – 158,000 kWhs (Late June)

Pierce Elementary Roof – 181,000 kWhs (Late Summer)

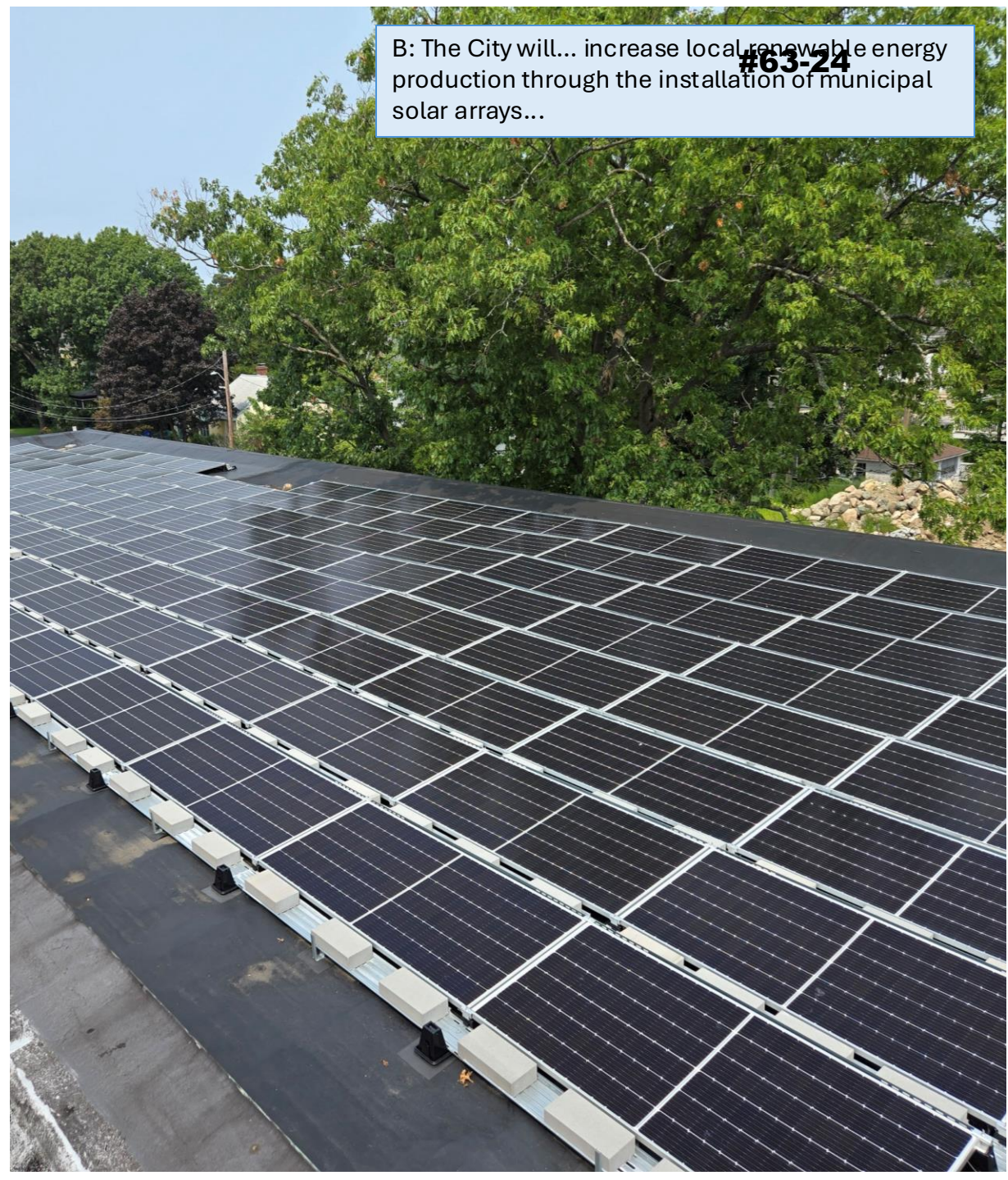
Lincoln-Eliot Elementary Roof – 209,000 kWhs (Late Summer)

Cooper Center for Active Living – 47,000 kWhs (Fall)

Education Center Canopy – 335,000 kWhs (Early July)

Wheeler Road/Meadowbrook Parking Lot Canopy – 313,500 kWhs (Early July)

**Generating the equivalent of ~40% of City's Electricity Use**



B: The City will... increase local renewable energy production through the installation of municipal solar arrays...  
**#63-24**

# IMPROVING NEW CONSTRUCTION AND MAJOR RENOVATIONS

D.2: Ensure that new and renovated municipal buildings meet the highest energy efficiency standards possible.



Countryside test geothermal well drilling



Cooper Center – Air-source heat pumps and extremely low embodied carbon



Franklin Elementary School - Geothermal



Horace Mann addition and renovation



Lincoln-Eliot addition and renovation



# IMPROVING EXISTING BUILDINGS

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E: The City will... increase the use of efficient electric technologies in the City's existing building stock. **#63-24**

## Building Decarbonization Projects

### Complete

- **Auburndale Branch Library**
- **NECP**

### In Progress

- **Newton Free Library**
- **Fire Station #2**
- **NHA Horace Mann Apartments**

### Up Next

- **Jackson Homestead**
- **Newton Community Farm**
- **Peirce Elementary**



# IMPROVING EXISTING BUILDINGS

E: The City will... increase the use of efficient electric technologies in the City's existing building stock. **#63-24**



## Green Communities

\$2,283,486.00 to date in grant funds

- LED retrofits
- Building weatherization
- Heat Pump Chiller at Library



## Climate Leader Community

# PROMOTING CLEAN & RENEWABLE ENERGY

**4 Our Future:** City's core climate program and the most challenging: encouraging households to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

- Building insulation/weatherization
- Solar panels
- Electrification of homes and businesses
- Green transportation: biking and EVs

***Moving forward: incorporating home resilience resources***

**Energy Coach Program**—Helps residents take these steps!

- The City's coach and volunteer coaches – 739 recorded coach consults since the program's start in 2021.



- A.2.2: Develop an Energy Coach role.
- B.2: Support the installation of residential and community solar.
- D.4: Develop and provide to residents, developers, and businesses educational resources about clean heating and cooling and renewable technologies.
- E.1: Advance energy efficiency and weatherization in existing homes and businesses by helping homeowners and contractors understand options.



**Progress on CAP metrics since 2020 as identified in past updates**

Metric	2020	2025
<b>Clean Energy</b>		
Default or standard level of MA Class 1 RECs under NPC	80%	95%
# small-scale solar installations in Newton (state SMART data, cumulative)	177	619
# large-scale solar installations in Newton (state SMART data, cumulative)	29	40
<b>Transportation</b>		
% (and #) of vehicles registered in Newton that are EVs (Mass Vehicle Census)	1.3% (913)	6.3% electric (3,651) 2.94% plug in hybrid (1,706) 10.09% hybrid electric (5,848)
# EV charging stations available to the public in Newton	10 City-owned	29 City-owned, 24 publicly available
# VMT (Mass Vehicle Census)	No data	24.8 average daily miles driven 1,438,776 total daily VMT
<b>New Construction and Major Renovations</b>		
Average HERS rating (measure of home energy efficiency) in Newton (NewGov)	50.4	48.1 (lower score = more efficient)
% per year new housing units that are heat pump electric based	No data	FFF reporting: due June 30
% per year of commercial/retail buildings heated using all electric	No data	FFF reporting: due June 30
# Mass Save RNC project participations (low rise 1-4 units)	No data	CFP data: coming soon
# Mass Save RNC project participations (low rise 1-4 units)	No data	CFP data: coming soon
<b>Existing Residential Buildings</b>		
# Mass Save energy assessments per year	1,964 (2019 + 2020)	CFP data: coming soon
# insulation installations per year	580 (2019 + 2020)	CFP data: coming soon
# of heat pump installations (cumulative) (HeatSmart)	36	232
# heat pump installations per year (NewGov)	82 (2022)	126 (2024)
# heat pump installations (cumulative 2019-2023) ( <a href="#">Mass Save data</a> )	N/A	1,233
Energy Coach Consults	0	736
<b>Existing Commercial Buildings</b>		
# of Mass Save energy assessments	No data	CFP data: coming soon
# of Mass Save project implementations	No data	CFP data: coming soon

**#63-24**  
A.1.3: Evaluate the success of initiatives in this plan – collect data on immediate and measurable results.



**#63-24**  
A.1.6: Review the Climate Action Plan regularly and update the plan as needed, but at least every 5 years.

# CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE

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# UPDATING THE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

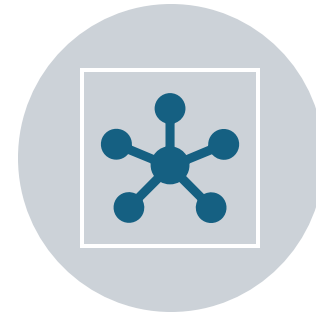
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Roadmap for  
2025-2030



CCVA / Resilience  
incorporated into  
CAP



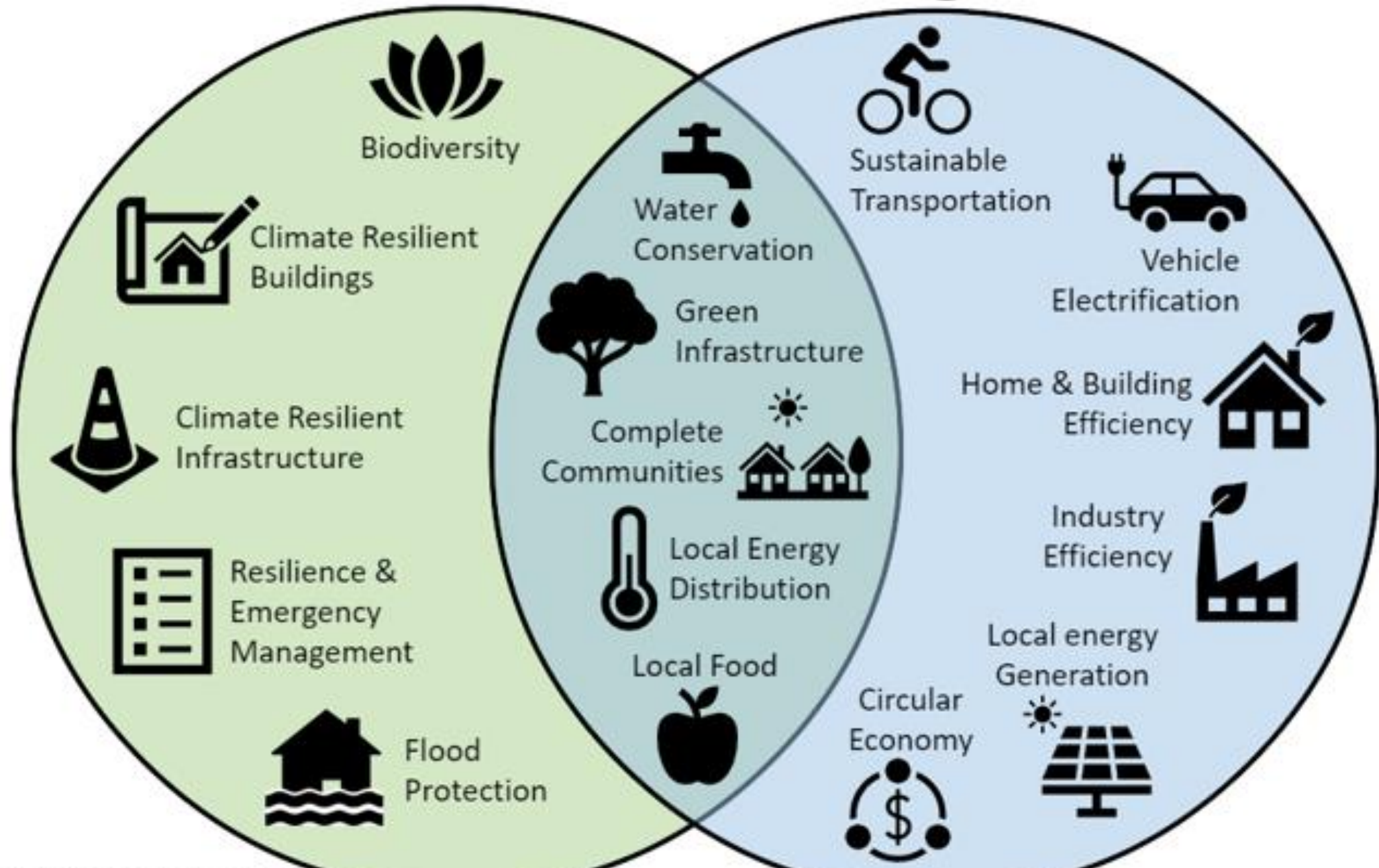
Connect and  
integrate with  
existing plans



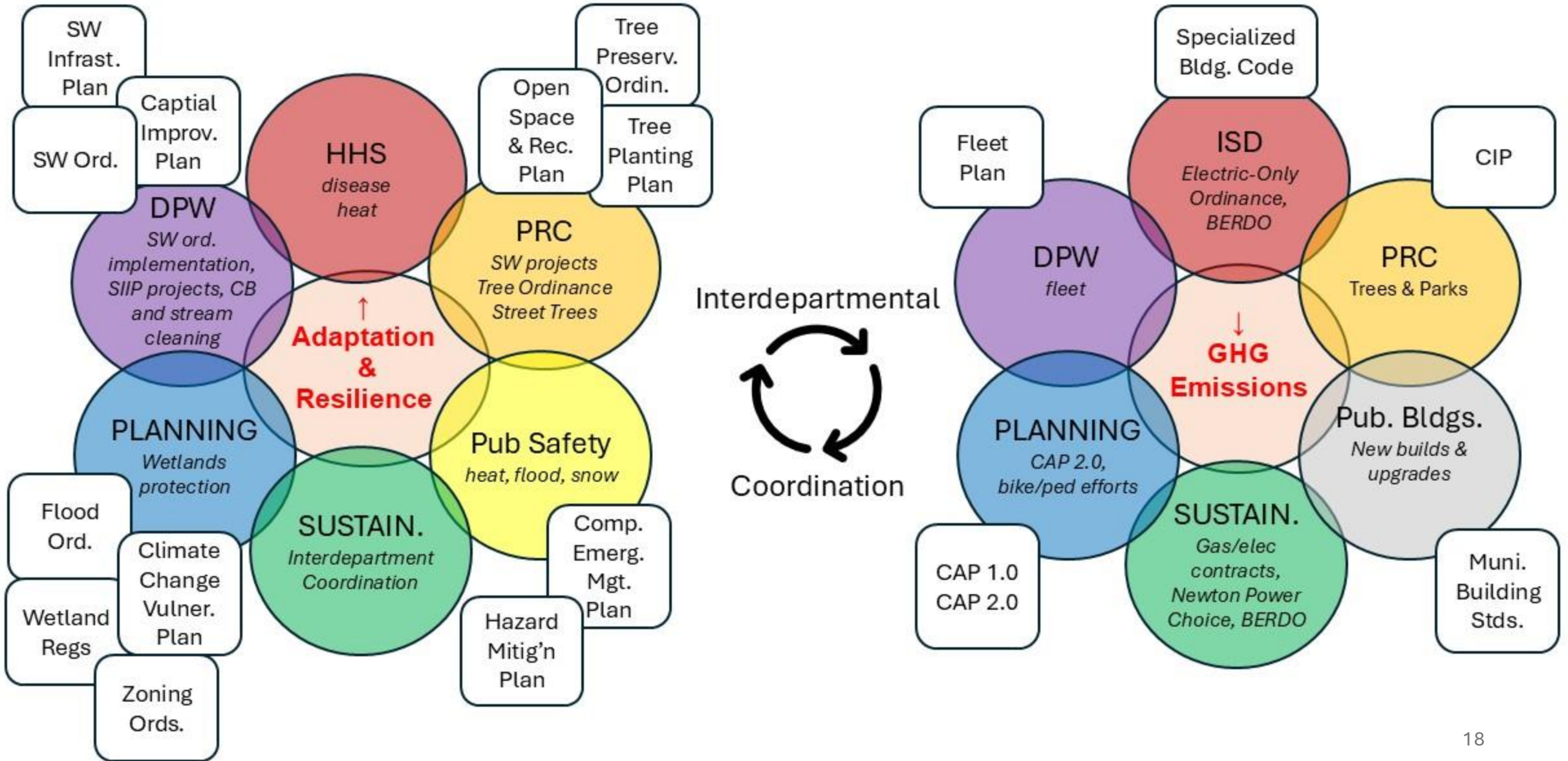
Concise &  
focused on high-  
leverage actions

# Adaptation Mitigation

#63-24

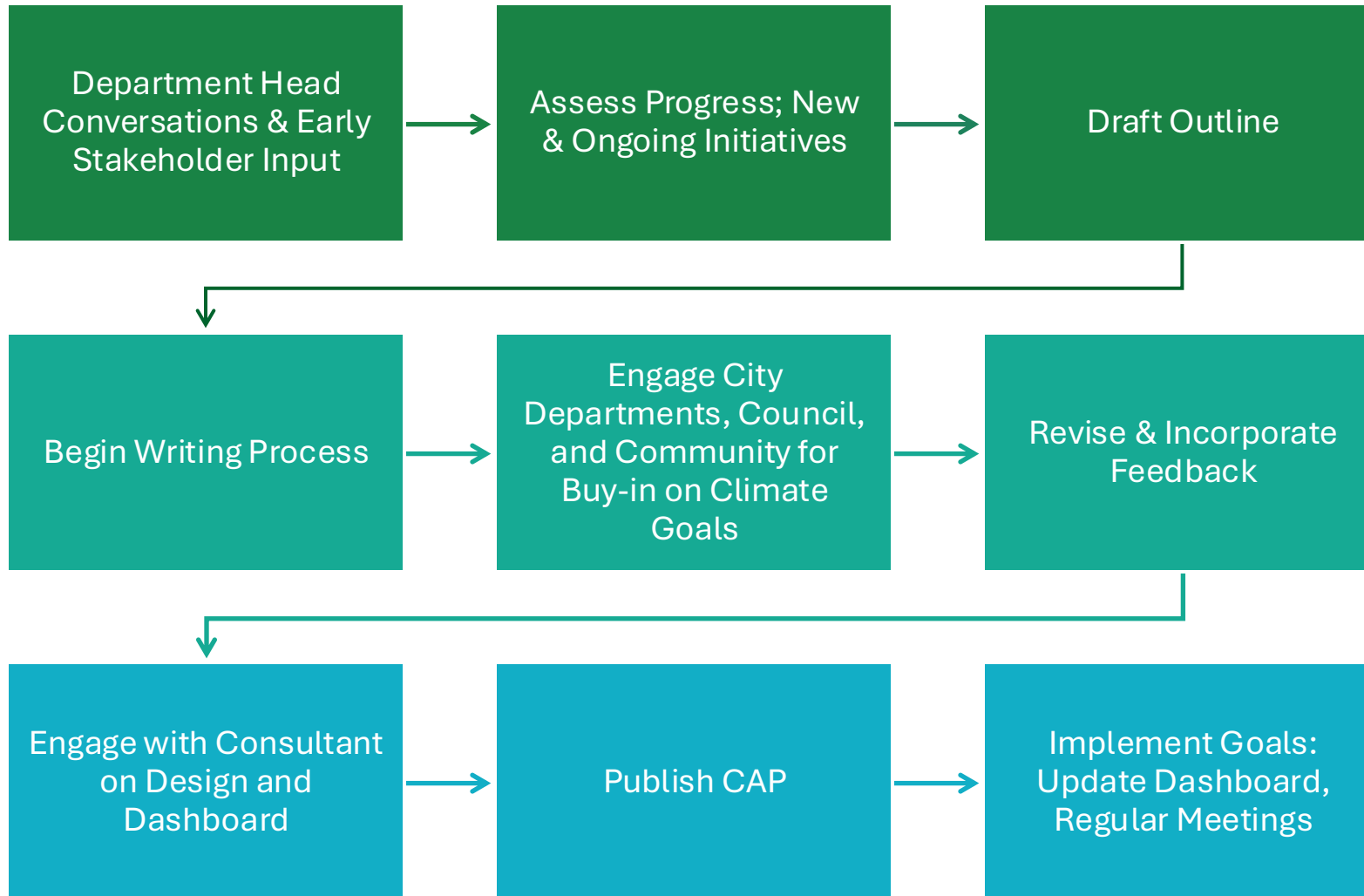


Resilience and Mitigation Efforts by Newton City Departments (color) and the Guiding Plan/Regulations (white)





# UPDATING THE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN





# ENVISIONING THE CAP DASHBOARD

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**Publicly available, readily updated dashboard including (but not limited to) data such as:**

Mass Save participation data from Community First Partnership

Municipal solar projects

Newton Power Choice

Energy coach consults

Heat pump installations (permit data, HeatSmart Newton, Mass Save)

Solar installation numbers and capacity

Percentage of EVs and hybrid vehicles

Miles of bike lanes (and map)

Vehicle miles traveled

Number of publicly available EV chargers

Electrification in new construction and renovations

HERS ratings

BERDO data

Materials (recycling, organics, etc.) diverted from trash