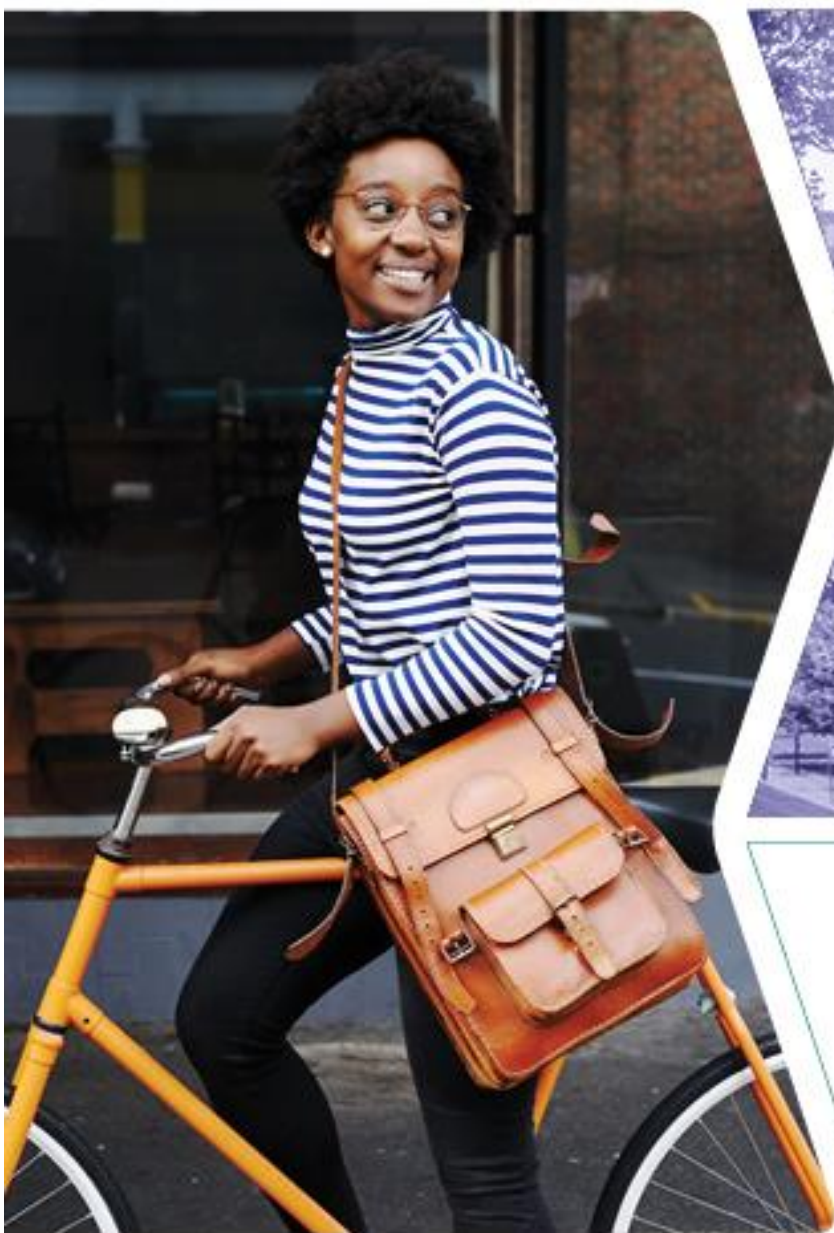


# Partners for Climate Protection Program



## 2022-2023 Annual Insights Report



The Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) program is a network of Canadian municipalities that have committed to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and acting on climate change. Delivered by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, the PCP program provides tools and resources to support municipalities in achieving their emissions reduction targets. Members commit to moving through the PCP Milestone Framework, which aligns with the [FCM Maturity Scale for Municipal GHG Emissions Reduction](#), and consists of five milestones:



Since the inception of the program in the 1990's, Canadian municipalities have increased their commitment to climate action. Fast forward to current day and over 600 municipalities have declared climate emergencies, with many adopting net-zero targets by 2050 or earlier. Time and time again municipalities have demonstrated that we need not look further for examples of innovative local climate action policies. Yet, emissions continue to rise and more support from upper levels of government is needed in order to limit warming to 1.5 °C.

This insights report details real examples of how Canadian municipalities are leading the charge on climate action. Read on to discover how the PCP program is supporting innovative climate action initiatives in municipalities of all sizes. In 2022, the PCP network reached over **527 members**, representing over **70% of the Canadian population**. Since its inception, PCP has helped **120 municipalities achieve Milestone 5** in the Community and/or Corporate streams and many member municipalities have gone on to further their commitment to climate action by joining ICLEI's [Building Adaptive and Resilience Communities \(BARC\)](#) program (climate adaptation) and the [Global Covenant of Mayors](#) (both GHG reduction and adaptation commitments).

**TABLE 1: MEMBERS AT EACH MILESTONE BY PERCENTAGE**

Milestone	Corporate	Community
No milestones achieved yet	33%	35%
1	12%	10.2%
2	5%	5.2%
3	29%	29.2%
4	8%	10.2%
5	13%	10.2%

## PCP is helping municipalities tackle climate change

PCP's member municipalities across Canada are diverse, and as such we have a variety of supports available to build existing staff skills and knowledge when tackling these challenges at each milestone. The program offers resources to highlight projects that work, and technical tools to support a municipality's individual journeys through the milestones. The program is also an opportunity to network with climate-focused colleagues across the country, and to celebrate success together.



Five municipalities were celebrated at the 2023 Sustainable Communities Conference for Achieving Milestone 5. Pictured here is Gabriela Ansari-Correa from the City of Markham (left) with Executive Director Megan Meaney of ICLEI Canada.



## The PCP program has resources for all members

### A snapshot of our activities in 2022-2023



### The PCP Hub is where members connect

[The PCP Hub](#) is where the PCP Secretariat and PCP members connect with the best resources and expertise on local climate action. Event listings, milestone-specific questions and funding opportunities are all shared on this members-only platform. The Hub currently has 830 members from across Canada.

### Learn alongside your peers at the PCP Community of Practice

[PCP's monthly Community of Practice workshops](#) are interactive opportunities for members to connect with peers, discover best practices and learn how to overcome common challenges related to reducing local GHG emissions. These are hosted on the first Thursday of every month and feature peer-to-peer discussions centered on specific topics led by industry experts.

### The PCP Tool can help you achieve your next milestone

[The PCP Milestone Tool](#) is a resource to support members in their GHG emissions reduction activities. This web-based resource provides local governments with a user-friendly framework to quantify, monitor and manage GHG emissions generated at the local level.

### Our library offers climate resources for municipalities of all sizes

[Our library](#) contains reports, toolkits, guidebooks, recommendations and other resources that are designed to help members take action on climate change.



In 2022, a case study on [how to innovate climate action in the Canadian Prairies](#) was published to highlight the important work PCP members are accomplishing in Western Canada.

## Notes from the field

PCP members receive one-on-one support from the PCP Secretariat. Climate change staff from ICLEI Canada are available upon request to support members in their efforts to achieve each milestone. Here's what the PCP Secretariat is saying about members:



**Pavils Hawkins**

*Climate Change Project Officer*  
ICLEI Canada

"It is a privilege to work with local governments from across the country - building capacity, providing tools and resources, and connecting members to PCP's national network of climate champions working to advance climate action and implementation in our communities."



**Adlar Gross**

*Climate Change Project Officer*  
ICLEI Canada

"It is always inspiring meeting and working with the hardworking individuals at municipalities that are leading climate action in their communities. It is great to know that there are so many people that care deeply about our future and are working to make the world a better place. Knowing that we helped facilitate local climate action is my favourite part of the job."



**Claudie Eustache**

*Climate Change Project Officer*  
ICLEI Canada

"Working with PCP members is a great opportunity for any municipal sustainability professional. While supporting these municipalities in their climate action process, I also get to learn so much about bold and creative initiatives from all over the country to tackle the climate challenges ahead of us. Their energy is quite inspiring."

## Notable climate actions in 2022

Reviewing climate change action plans submitted by municipalities from across Canada, it is encouraging to see widespread adoption of best practices such as fleet electrification, building retrofit programs and waste diversion strategies. Canadian municipalities are also exploring some more novel, ambitious and innovative approaches to climate action. The Town of Portugal Cove – St. Philips, Newfoundland and Labrador, aims to incorporate ‘consumption-based emissions’ within its environmental education and outreach programs while The Blue Mountains, Ontario, plans to host an annual community sustainability summit and release an annual report card on sustainability.

Aspiring for more a more circular economy, St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador, aims to accelerate the development of a food waste and resource flow map to identify food waste-to-value opportunities for innovation. Meanwhile Barrie, Ontario, is promoting the reuse and recycling of construction and demolition (C&D) waste via the development of green development standards that align with circular economy principles and plans to develop a zero-emissions neighbourhood (ZEN).

From the climate policy side, Candiac, Quebec, is set to adopt a bylaw aimed at limiting fossil fuel consumption in new residential, institutional, commercial and industrial buildings by prohibiting their use as the main source of heating. Meanwhile, Wolfville, Nova Scotia is setting a community water conservation target in conjunction with the development of a bylaw to limit lawn watering, and the City of Leduc, Alberta, has been developing a policy for new developments to require electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

When considering different climate action financing models, Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia, is exploring how to expand renewable energy generation to the Mahone Bay Electric Utility by developing a community solar garden that employs a resident subscription/investment model. New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, plans to implement various climate action funding mechanisms, including allocating 50% of revenue generated from parking meters, parking and idling tickets to their municipal sustainability fund.

Regarding partnerships for expanding renewable energy systems, Quispamsis, New Brunswick, is working with NB Power to expand its electric vehicle charging network and continue to pilot smart grid initiatives. Meanwhile, North Cowichan, BC, has planned for the installation of a district energy system in its University Village/Civic Arena.



We are eager to follow the implementation of these initiatives and see what new and exciting climate actions Canadian municipalities take on in the years ahead.

## **Members have the opportunity to connect beyond their local networks through PCP's programs and resources. This is one of the many strengths of PCP. So what are our members saying?**



*“Without the PCP program, our municipality would not have been able to develop out GHG reduction plan and move forward with climate change mitigation planning as quickly as we have.” – submitted anonymously through the PCP Annual Survey*

*“The Regional Municipality of Springfield, Manitoba’s, participation in the PCP program has had a favourable impact on its community programs by drawing a clear connection between climate change focused initiatives and the tangible benefits our citizens are provided. Our municipality is faced with several risks related to climate change including groundwater aquifer security, the need to reduce the carbon footprint due to urbanization and overland flooding during extreme weather events. While we engage in projects that address these concerns (groundwater protection studies, solid waste reduction via trading post for gently used items, community tree planting programs and drainage diversion), the ideas and support offered through Partners for Climate Protection are where these ideas are learnt and how they are successfully implemented. Most important, having this background support from PCP helps us communicate the importance of these initiatives to the public through real life examples that have been realized in other Canadian municipalities. It has essentially helped the Regional Municipality of*

*Springfield to build momentum so it can continue to promote its ideas that address today's real issues of climate change.” – submitted anonymously through the PCP Annual Survey*

## Looking ahead

The PCP program has supported a variety of approaches over the past 25+ years. As the program continues to evolve with its members, so do the trends in the sector. Here is what’s happening throughout the network.

### Net-zero targets

PCP members are leading the way by setting ambitious GHG reduction targets that align with federal and international commitments for net-zero by 2050. There has been growing interest in and use of [science-based targets](#) which require that industrialized countries such as Canada reach net-zero much earlier than 2050 and set ambitious mid-term targets for 2030 that range from 75% to 5% reductions depending on the city GDP.

### Nature-based solutions, natural assets and carbon offsets

With many municipalities now adopting net-zero targets it is recognized that some degree of carbon offsetting and sequestration will be needed. Nature-based solutions and natural assets are a key means of sequestering more carbon. Both urban and rural municipalities alike are increasingly interested in opportunities to sell or purchase carbon offsets, are including nature-based solutions in their climate plans, and are conducting natural asset inventories. Rural municipalities in particular are quantifying the sequestration potential of their forests. While clear standards, protocols and guidance are somewhat lacking in this sector, conservation authorities, biosphere conservancies and some municipalities have already been generating carbon offsets through protection and sustainable management of woodlots such as the Cheakamus Crossing Community Forest in Whistler, British Columbia. In addition, The GHG Protocol released the GPC Supplemental Guidance in 2022 for forests and trees which provides guidelines to help communities include natural woodlands in their GHG inventories.

### Policy innovations

Municipalities are taking bold action on climate change by introducing ambitious and innovative policies. These include bans on natural gas for new construction, introduction of more ambitious green development standards, enabling and encouraging active transportation, micro-mobility and electric vehicles, and establishment of climate budgets and municipal climate lenses. While municipalities have been leading on climate action for decades, we have yet to see the substantive GHG reductions required to limit warming to 1.5 °C . With the introduction of more prescriptive policies that require the use of low carbon technologies or specific GHG performance standards as part of green development standards in new

buildings, municipalities are preventing carbon lock-in. Strong active transportation policies are making cycling and walking easier and safer, and alternative modes of transportation such as e-bikes are becoming more commonplace. With the growing use of climate budgets and lenses, climate action is becoming integrated and normalized into municipal operations and decision-making processes, helping to overcome departmental silos as well as addressing financial and resourcing issues which often deters implementation of local climate action. There is still much to do to shift away from car culture and fossil fuel dependency, but municipalities continue to demonstrate leadership and that they are at the forefront of these issues.

### **Equity, diversity, inclusion and Indigenous partnerships**

Municipalities are increasingly becoming aware of the need for collaborative problem-solving, improved and inclusive engagement processes, as well as strong community partnerships and buy-in to move forward with climate action. Furthermore, climate action plans do not typically consider the impact of municipal climate policies and initiatives on marginalized communities. Considerations for justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI) are now becoming more commonplace with staff receiving trainings, the establishment of municipal departments dedicated to JEDI, and inclusion of JEDI considerations in their climate action plan. However, many municipalities are still in the early stages of this process and much more education and collaboration is needed for municipal staff to understand how to work in this space and how to appropriately engage and include marginalized communities in the low-carbon transition.

## ***Connect with us online to learn more about the Partners for Climate Protection program***

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PARTNERS FOR **CLIMATE** PROTECTION

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