

DRAFT

Comprehensive

Climate Action Plan

(CCAP) Public

Engagement Appendix

For Public Comment

October 1, 2025

DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN (CCAP) ENGAGEMENT APPENDIX

December 2025

Hampton Roads Planning District Commission

DRAFT



www.hrpdcva.gov/translate

For accommodation requests or cost-free **translation assistance**, please contact Quan McLaurin (qmclaurin@hrpdcva.gov).

El **servicio de traducción para los documentos** de HRPDC y HRTPO se ofrece sin costo a los miembros de la comunidad. Para recibir asistencia, comuníquese con Quan McLaurin (qmclaurin@hrpdcva.gov).

Libreng ibinibigay sa mga miyembro ng komunidad ang **suporta sa pagsasalin para sa mga dokumentong** HRPDC at HRTPO. Para sa tulong, kumontak kay Quan McLaurin (qmclaurin@hrpdcva.gov).



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Report Documentation Sheet

Title

CCAP Engagement Appendix

Report Date

December 2025

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Many thanks and acknowledgements to the HPRDC & HRTPO staff who volunteered and helped to carry out the engagement efforts related to CCAP. Without their efforts, this would not have been possible.

Summary Engagement Efforts

To support the development of the Hampton Roads Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP), the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) undertook a comprehensive public and stakeholder engagement process in 2024 and 2025. The primary objective was to solicit meaningful feedback from communities across the 20-locality metropolitan statistical area (MSA) to ensure the final plan reflects regional priorities. Engagement methods were diverse and included two public webinars, meetings with technical and community advisory committees, two public surveys that garnered a combined 497 responses, a specialized survey of 40 transportation professionals, and direct outreach at 11 community events, engaging over 900 residents. A key innovation was the "Climate Cash" activity, a form of participatory budgeting that successfully gamified the feedback process and was well-received by the public at outreach events.

The extensive feedback revealed several clear and consistent priorities for climate action in Hampton Roads. The most dominant themes include:

- **Transportation and Land Use Reform:** Across all surveys and in-person events, there was an urgent and decisive demand to move away from the region's car dependency. This included consistent calls for expanding and improving public transit to make it more reliable and efficient, as well as significant investment in safe and connected infrastructure for walking and biking, such as protected bike lanes and continuous sidewalks.
- **Protection of Natural Systems:** The preservation and expansion of green spaces was a top priority for the community. In Survey II ranking all proposed measures, "Expand urban tree canopy and green space" was the single highest-ranked action item. This sentiment was echoed at community events, where protecting green spaces and creating more living shorelines received significant support.
- **Accelerated Clean Energy Transition:** The community demonstrated strong support for a rapid transition to renewable energy sources. Key priorities included expanding the electric vehicle (EV) charging network and enhancing solar energy programs on residential and commercial buildings.
- **Improved Waste Management:** Residents expressed a desire for improved and more accessible recycling programs and the diversion of recyclable and organic materials from landfills.

The engagement process yielded valuable lessons for future outreach. The "Climate Cash" activity proved to be a highly effective tool for making complex budget topics accessible and engaging. Conversely, technical difficulties with Survey II's ranking question highlighted the need to prioritize user-friendly platforms to avoid respondent frustration. The vast size and diversity of the Hampton Roads MSA also presented a significant challenge, making it difficult to achieve uniform engagement

across all communities. The public feedback provides a clear and compelling direction, and the dominant themes identified will be highlighted in the final Comprehensive Climate Action Plan.

Overview of Engagement Efforts

At the outset of the CCAP engagement efforts, the HRPDC staff determined that they wanted to accomplish the following deliverables related to the CCAP engagement efforts.

- Press Releases
- Project Information Sheet
- Project Posters (3 – Project Overview)
- Webinar Flyer (2)
- Webinar (2)
- Postcard mailer (2)
- Website content
- Steering Committee – monthly meetings
- Steering Committee – working groups
- HRPDC Community Advisory Committee (CAC)
- HRPDC Regional Transportation Advisory Panel (RTAP)
- Engagement with North Carolina localities
- Technical focus group (TBD)
- Interviews with Tribal governments
- Climate Survey (2)
- Broadcasts
- Engagement through the Steering and Technical Committees
- Paid media
- Community interviews
- Pop-up events
- In-person community events

CCAP Engagement

Webinar I

The first webinar for the Hampton Roads Climate Action Plan was held on January 22, 2025, via Zoom. Approximately 105 people attended the webinar. The webinar provided an overview of the CPRG and why investment in these sorts of sustainability efforts is important for Hampton Roads. Staff answered

questions and encouraged attendees to provide their feedback via Survey I, which launched after the webinar.

Many attendees had questions which were detailed in the “Frequently Asked Questions” portion of the HRPDC Climate Action Page website (<https://www.hrpdcva.gov/1277/Frequently-Asked-Questions>).

A full recording of Webinar I can be found on the HRPDC YouTube (<https://youtu.be/rd4YJ0xoAWs?si=TemMDt74gyNqpTC9>)

Attendance: 105 attendees

As part of the outreach for this webinar, a press release, email invitations, postcards to 10,000 households, and social media promotion were conducted to boost interest and participation.

Webinar II

The second webinar for the Hampton Roads Climate Action Plan was held on June 12, 2025, from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM via Microsoft Teams. The webinar focused on expanding on potential actions that could be a part of the plan, and encouraged attendees to participate in Survey II, which launched after Webinar II. Attendees had questions surrounding low-income home weatherization programs funded by the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), funding (planning vs. implementation), and a recent proposed parking lot solar bill that was vetoed and not signed into law in Virginia’s General Assembly.

A full recording of Webinar II can be found on the HRPDC YouTube (<https://youtu.be/aS5ojYF4Gbl?si=DmdlAxahZKllxLTP>)

Attendance: Approximately 20 attendees

As part of the outreach for this webinar, a press release, email invitations, and social media promotion were completed to boost interest and participation. The CCAP Engagement team elected not to pursue postcard outreach as part of the advertisement campaign for the 2nd webinar due to low usage rates on the QR codes attached to the first postcards.

Committees

HRPDC/HRTPO Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

The CPRG Engagement team met with the HRPDC/HRTPO Community Advisory Committee (CAC) group at the start of the engagement and socialization process for the CCAP. The CAC is a community-level group comprised of approximately 20 members that provides advisory guidance to the HRPDC/HRTPO on current regional planning priorities and initiatives.

- January 2024 – CAC members were asked to participate in the “HRPDC Committee – Community Outreach Questionnaire”

- April 2024 – CAC members were updated about the CCAP process, and that the HRPDC was also applying for CPRG implementation funds (A full recording of the this meeting can be found on the HRPDC YouTube (<https://youtu.be/yLN0CwwCRH4?si=bbjOxUxsk7Mn1pF1&t=367>) 0
- June 2025 – CAC members were updated on the proposed measures and actions based on the GHG inventory for the Hampton Roads MSA. They were also provided with a preview of Webinar II and asked to participate in Survey II. A full recording of this meeting can be found on the HRPDC YouTube (<https://youtu.be/czhWYjzdEuU?si=sGwxqiXlbSODBOwe&t=2960>)

HRTPO Regional Transit Advisory Panel (RTAP)

RTAP is composed of representatives of major business and industry groups, employers, shopping destinations, institutions of higher education, military installations, hospitals, health care centers, public transit entities, and any other groups identified as necessary to provide ongoing advice to the regional planning process required pursuant to §33.2-286 of the Code of Virginia on the long-term vision for a multimodal regional public transit network in Hampton Roads.

- The CPRG Engagement team presented on the Climate Action Plan on June 16, 2025, at a meeting with approximately 50 members and stakeholders. RTAP was asked to provide feedback on the plan regarding the transportation sector, and specifically the adoption of low and zero-emission vehicles (LEV/ZEVs) and investments in public transit.

HRTPO Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC)

TTAC comprises about 100 members and provides recommendations and technical support to the HRTPO Board on matters concerning the transportation planning and programming process within the Metropolitan Planning Area.

- The CCAP Engagement Team presented on the Transportation measures at the September 3, 2025, TTAC meeting and asked members and stakeholders to provide feedback.

CCAP Steering Committee

The CCAP Steering Committee guided the planning process. The committee is comprised of about 49 members, including technical professionals from the Hampton Roads MSA, state agencies, and regional stakeholders. The Committee participated in the following:

- Regular meetings to discuss and provide feedback on the current status of the planning grant
- A Mural Board activity to determine the potential actions and measures related to the plan
- Review of report drafts
- Feedback on different groups to engage with throughout the process
- Members provided the CCAP Engagement Team with insights on who to connect with, how localities would perceive various measures, and how feasible actions may be.

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Figure 1. Screenshot of the Mural Board activity in which the Steering Committee participated.

Public Information Officer (PIO) Workgroup

The CCAP Engagement team presented to the HRPDC PIO workgroup on May 27, 2025, to discuss the Climate Action Plan and encourage members to share Survey II and the Climate Action Plan with their respective stakeholders and communication channels. Additionally, the HRPDC PIO emailed the PIOs from localities with less respondents on the survey to encourage more participation.

Survey I

Survey I focused on ascertaining participants' level of knowledge about GHG emissions, the sectors they were most concerned about, and how potential actions were perceived.

For a full breakdown of results, please see the attachments.

For this survey, the CCAP Engagement team used Microsoft Forms.

Results

- Survey I had 281 total respondents
- Top localities to respond: Norfolk (72), Virginia Beach (48), and Newport News (41)

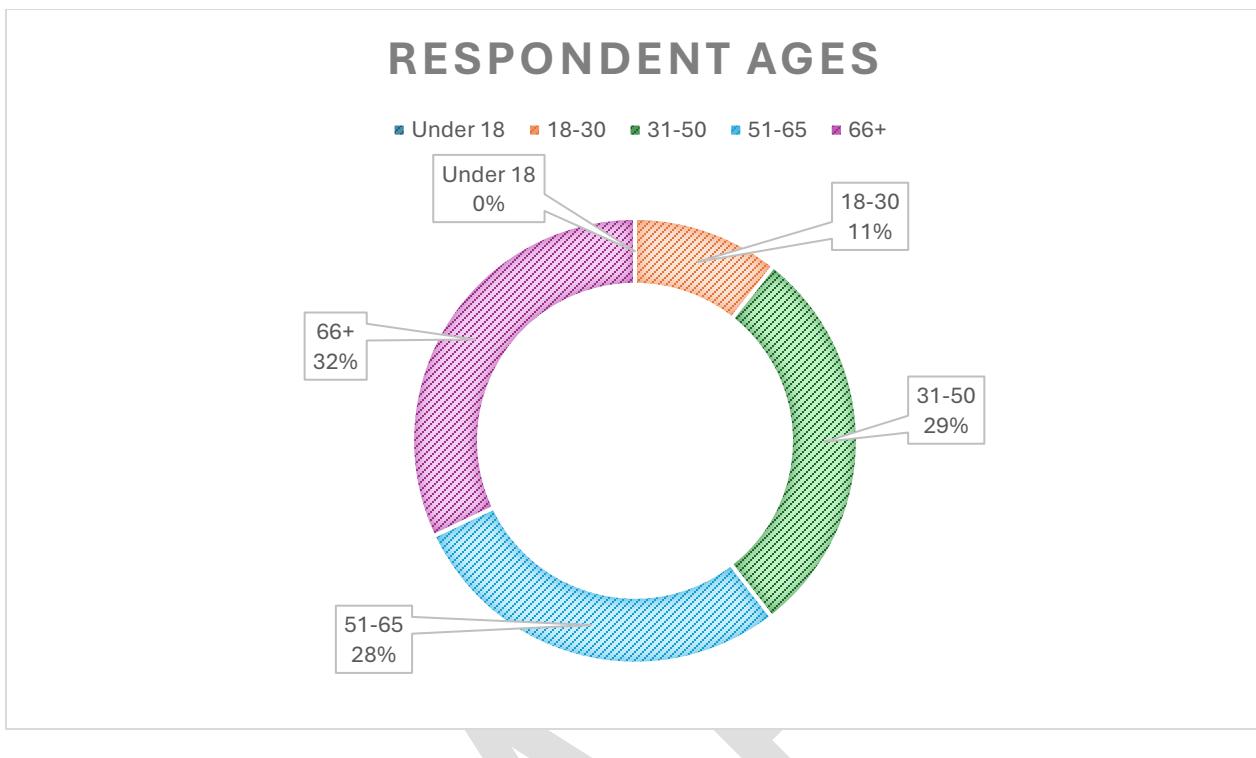


Figure 2. Survey I: Respondent Ages

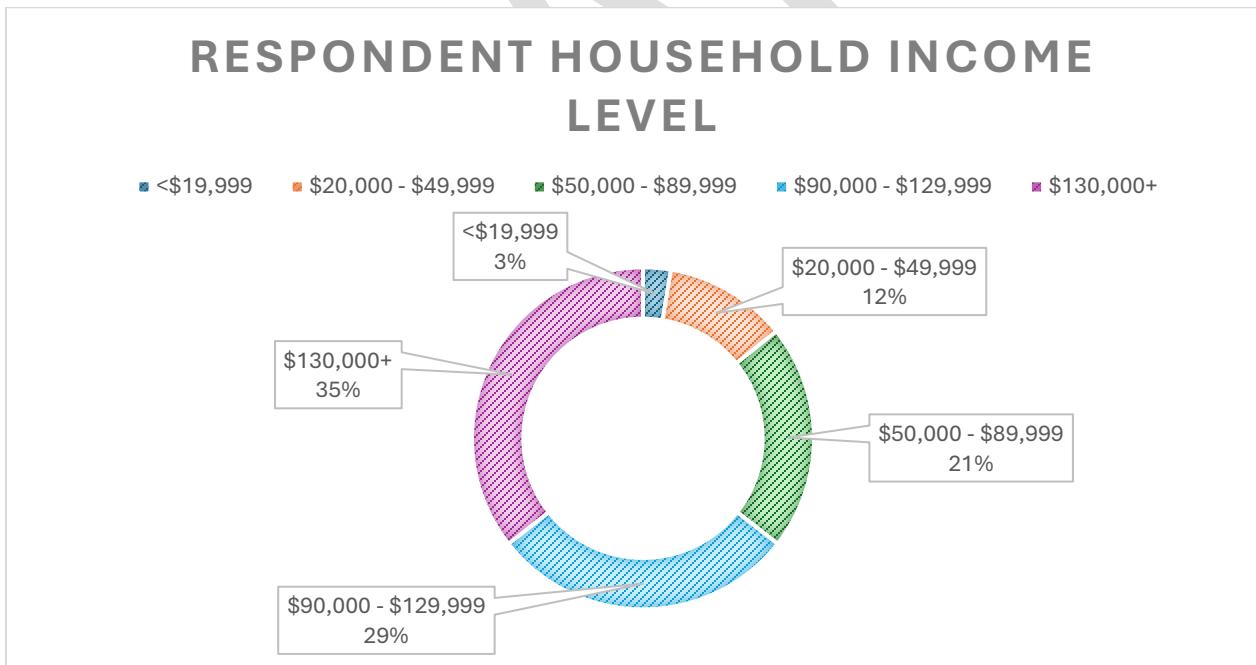


Figure 3. Survey I: Respondent Household Income

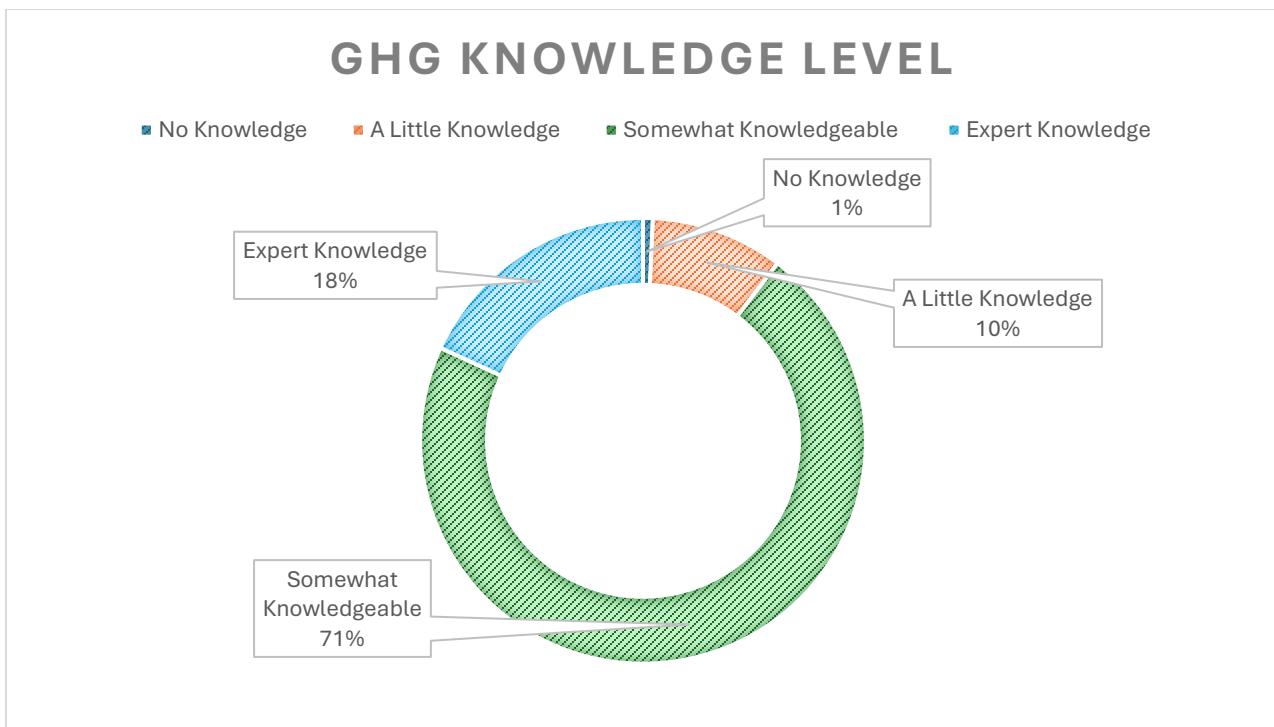


Figure 4. Survey I: What level of knowledge do you have about greenhouse gas emissions, where they come from, and how they impact our daily lives and our climate?

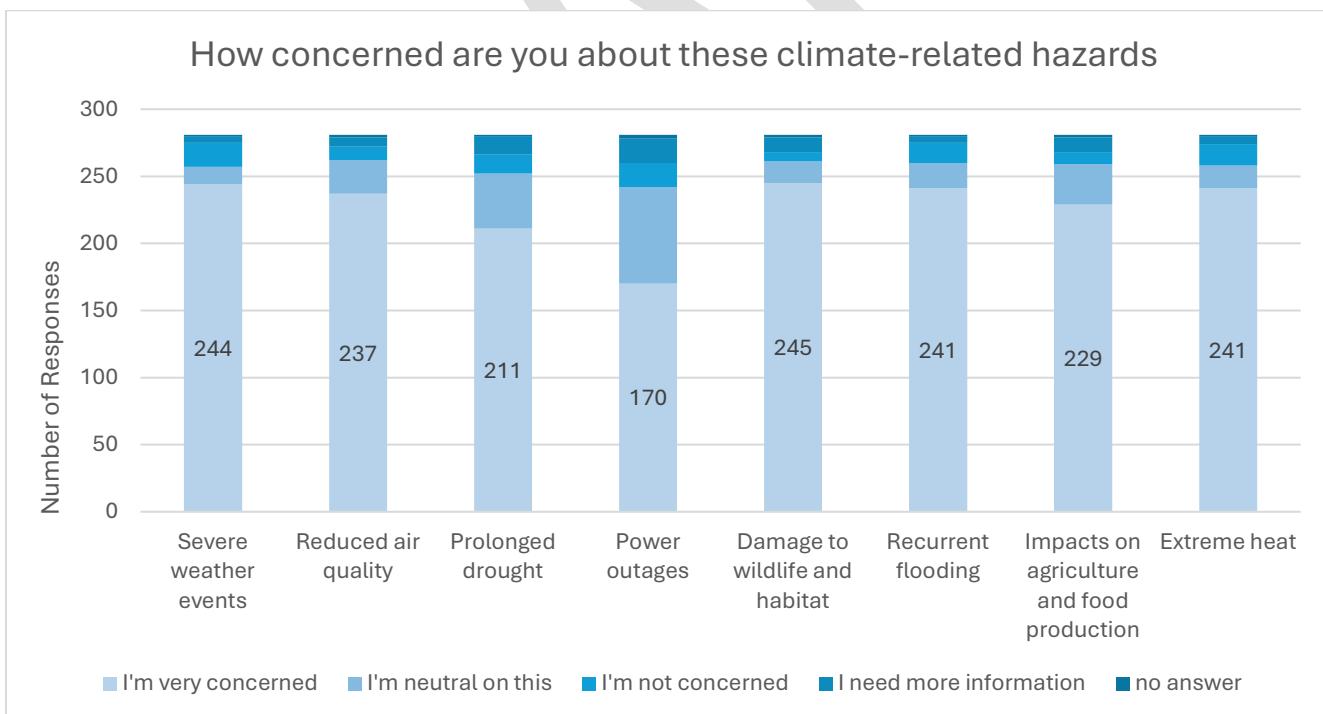


Figure 5. Survey I: How concerned are you about the following climate-related hazards?

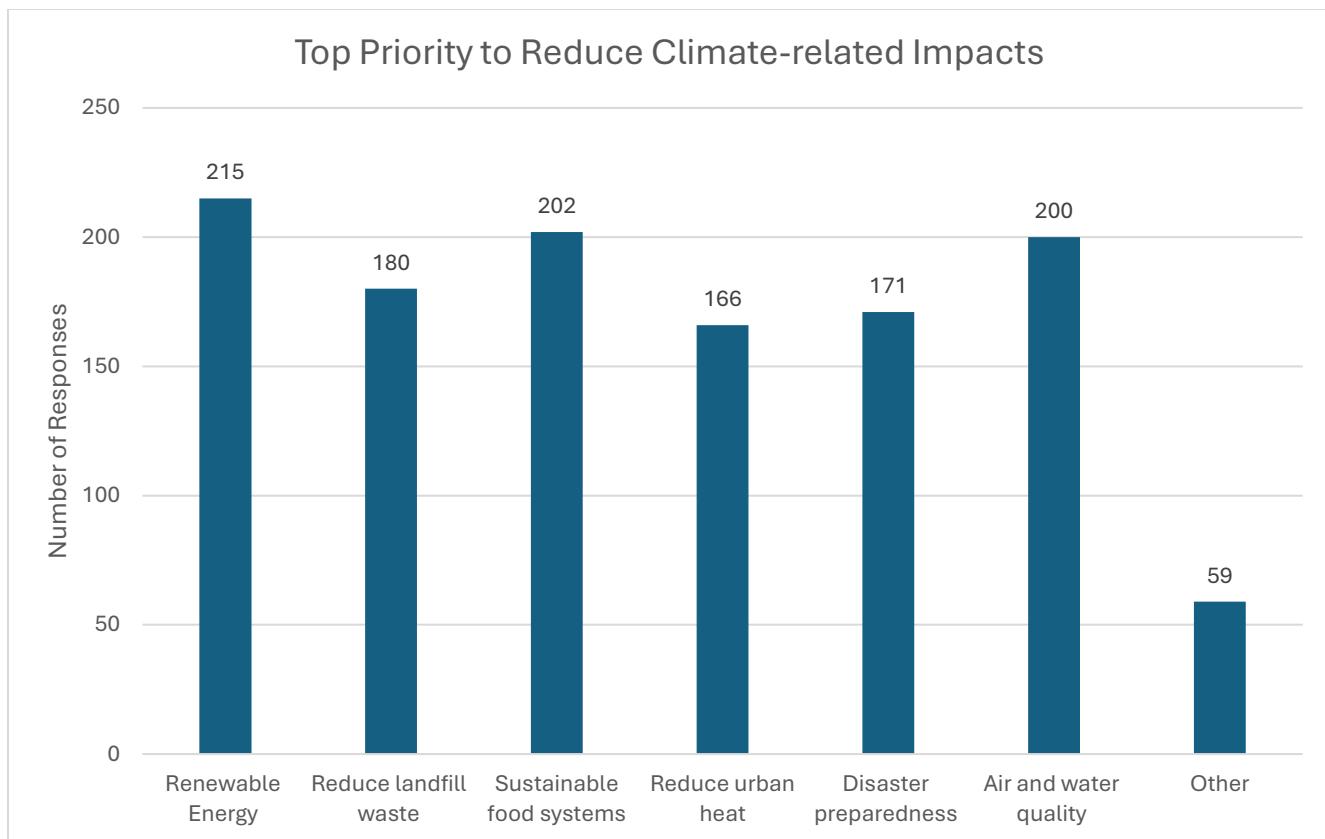


Figure 6. Survey I: What are your top priorities to help reduce climate change impacts? Select all options that resonate with you.

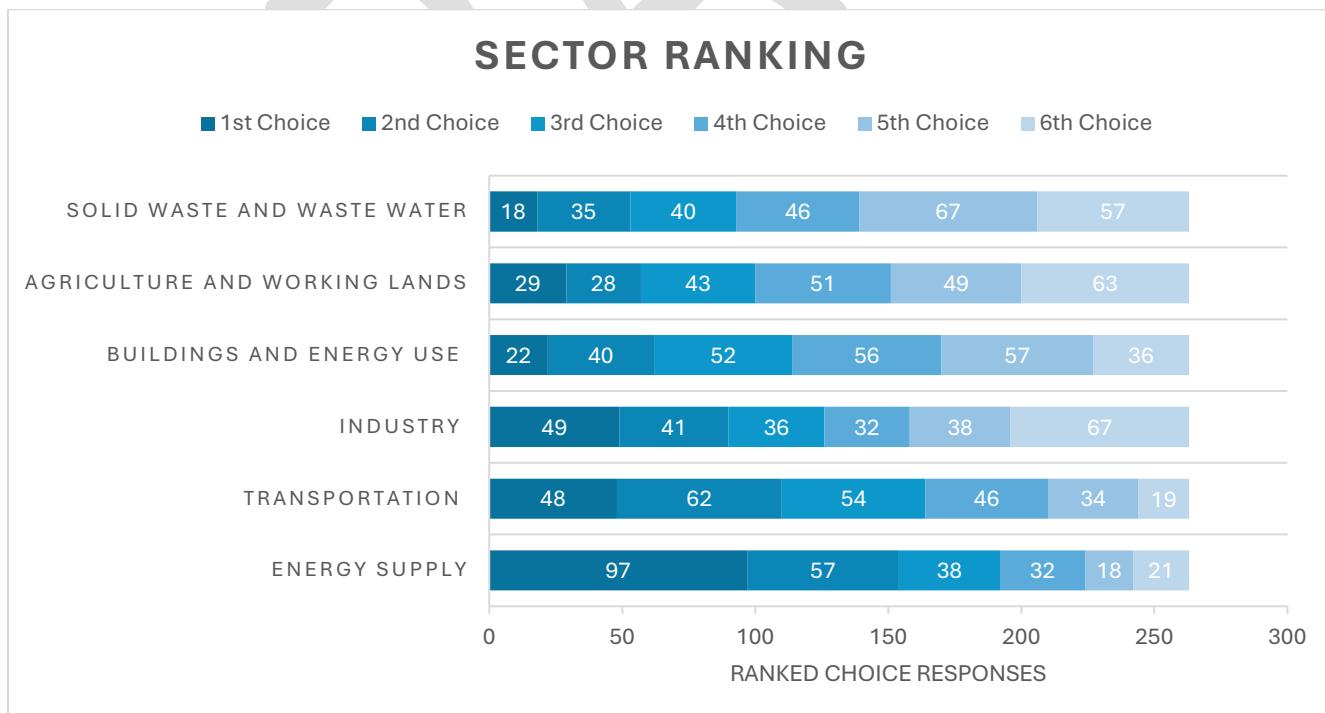


Figure 7. Survey I: Six sectors have been identified for reducing greenhouse gas emissions as part of this process. Please rank these sectors, with the most important at the top and the least important at the bottom.

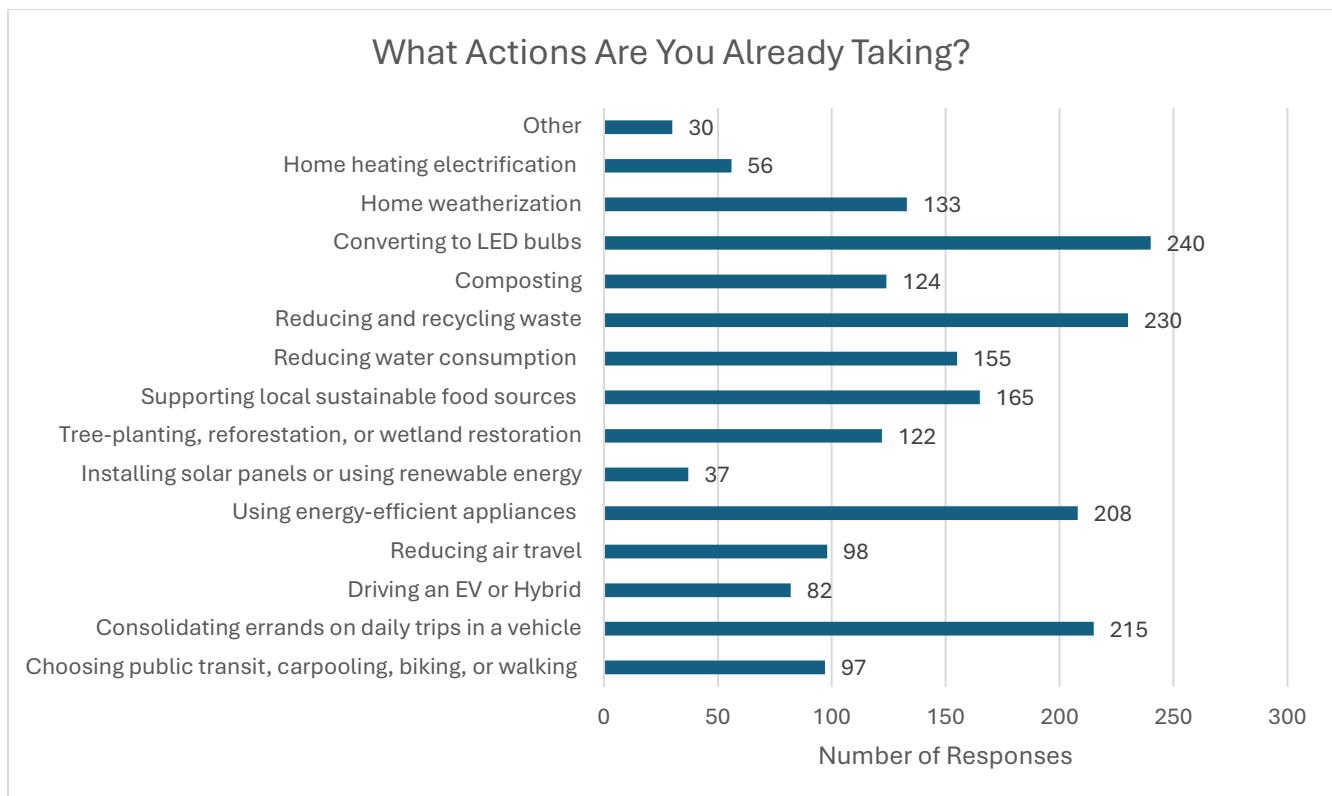


Figure 8. Survey I: What actions are you already taking to help reduce emissions? Select all that apply.

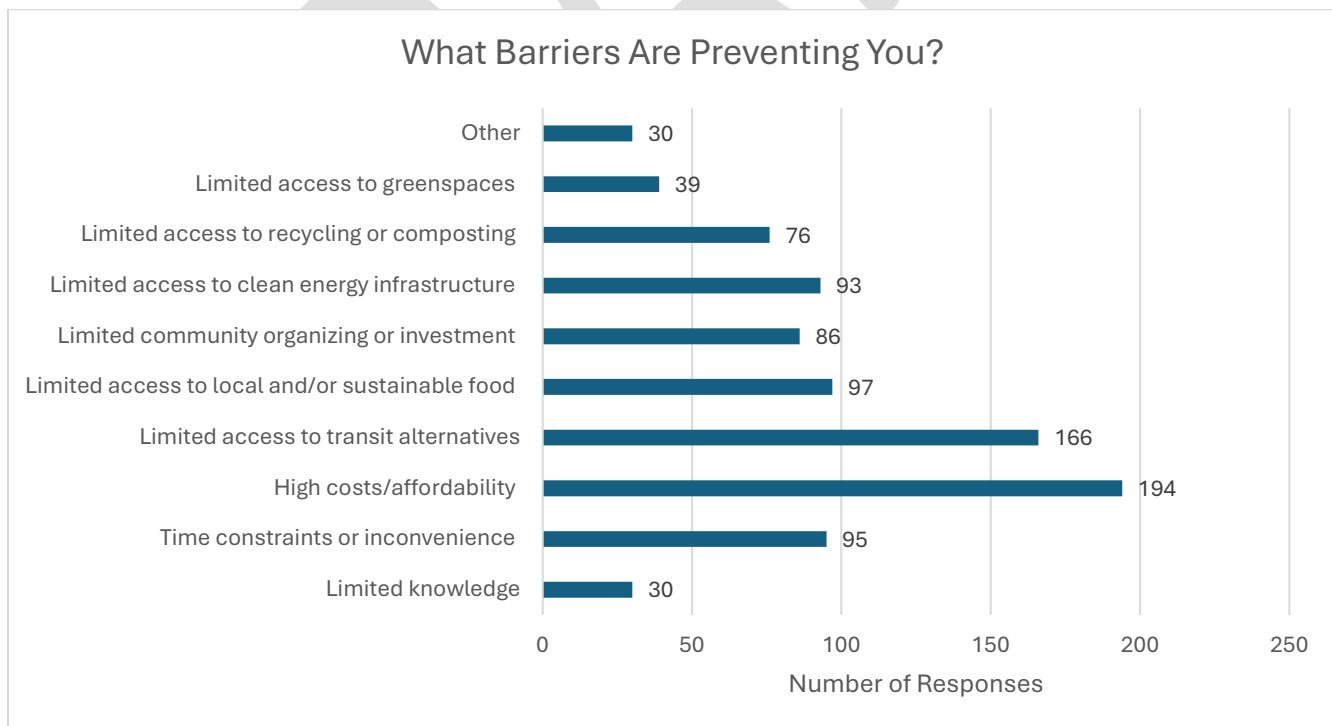


Figure 9. Survey I: What barriers, if any, are preventing you from engaging in any of the above greenhouse gas reduction activities? Select all that apply.

What Specific Actions Do You Wish Were in Place In Your Community?

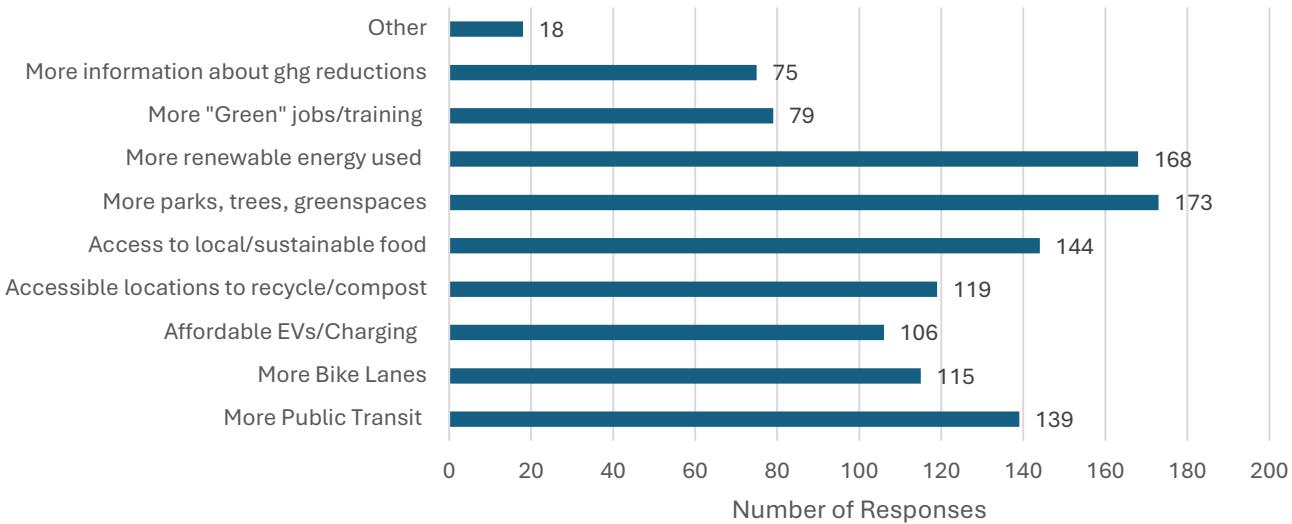


Figure 10. Survey I: What specific actions do you wish were in place in your community? Please select up to five choices.

Best Way to Receive Climate Action Plan Information

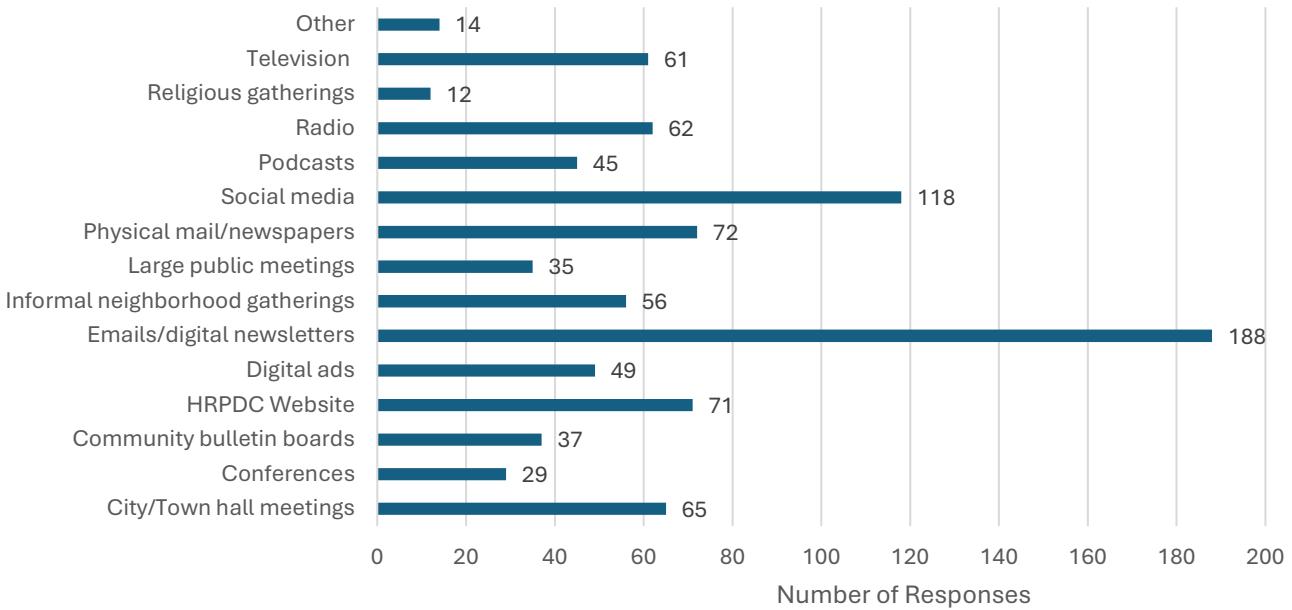


Figure 11. Survey I: What is the best way for you to receive information about the Climate Action Plan? Select all that apply.

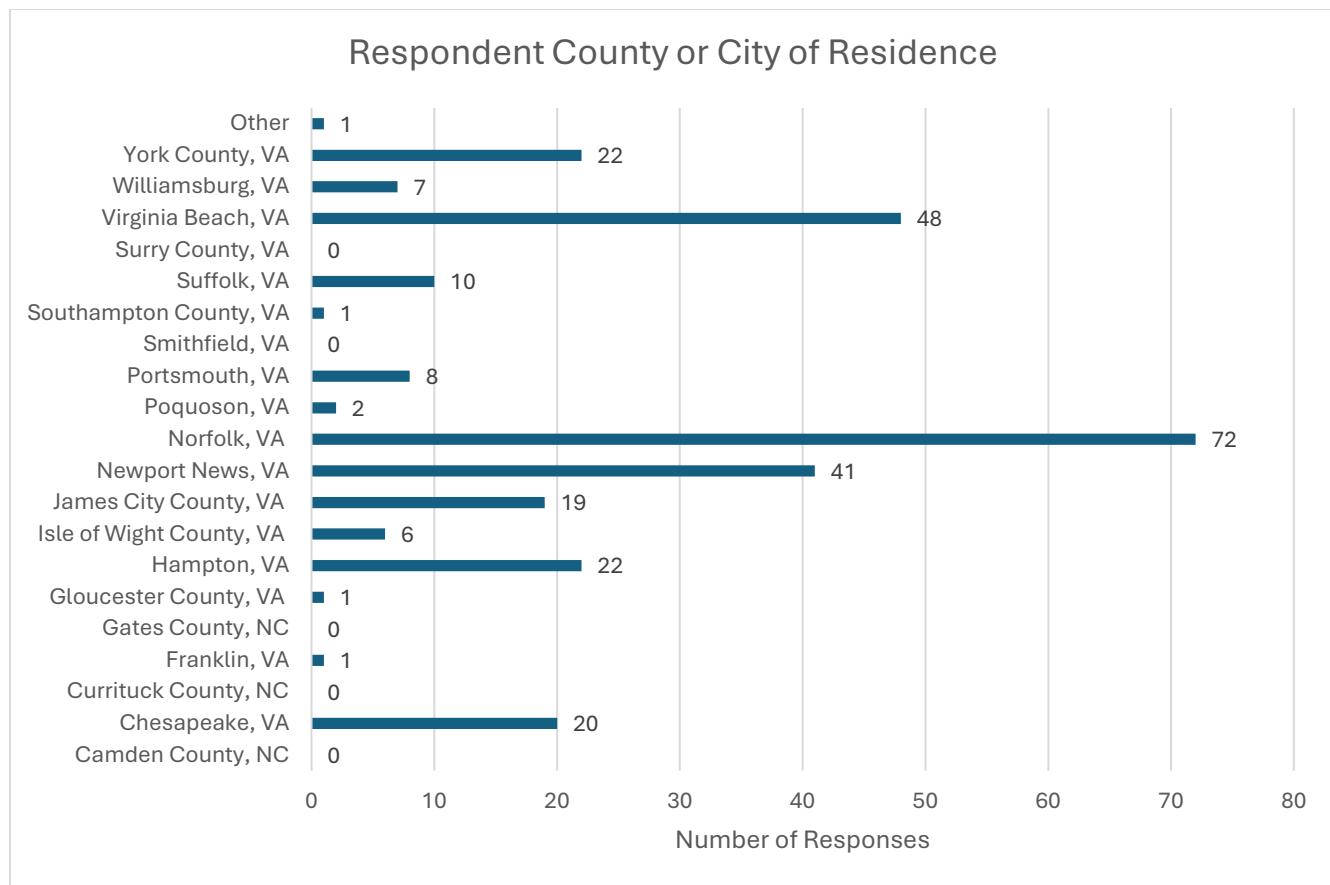


Figure 12. Survey I: Please select your county or city of residence from the options below.

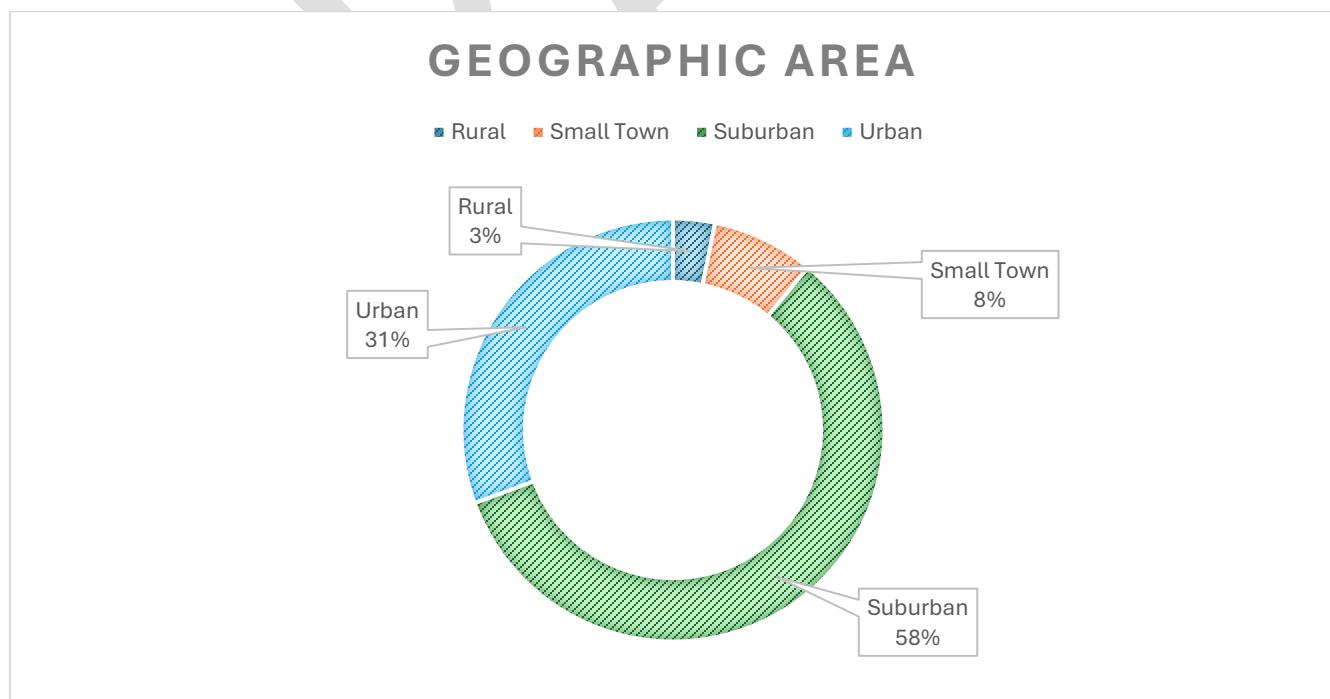


Figure 13. Survey I: What geographic area best describes where you live?

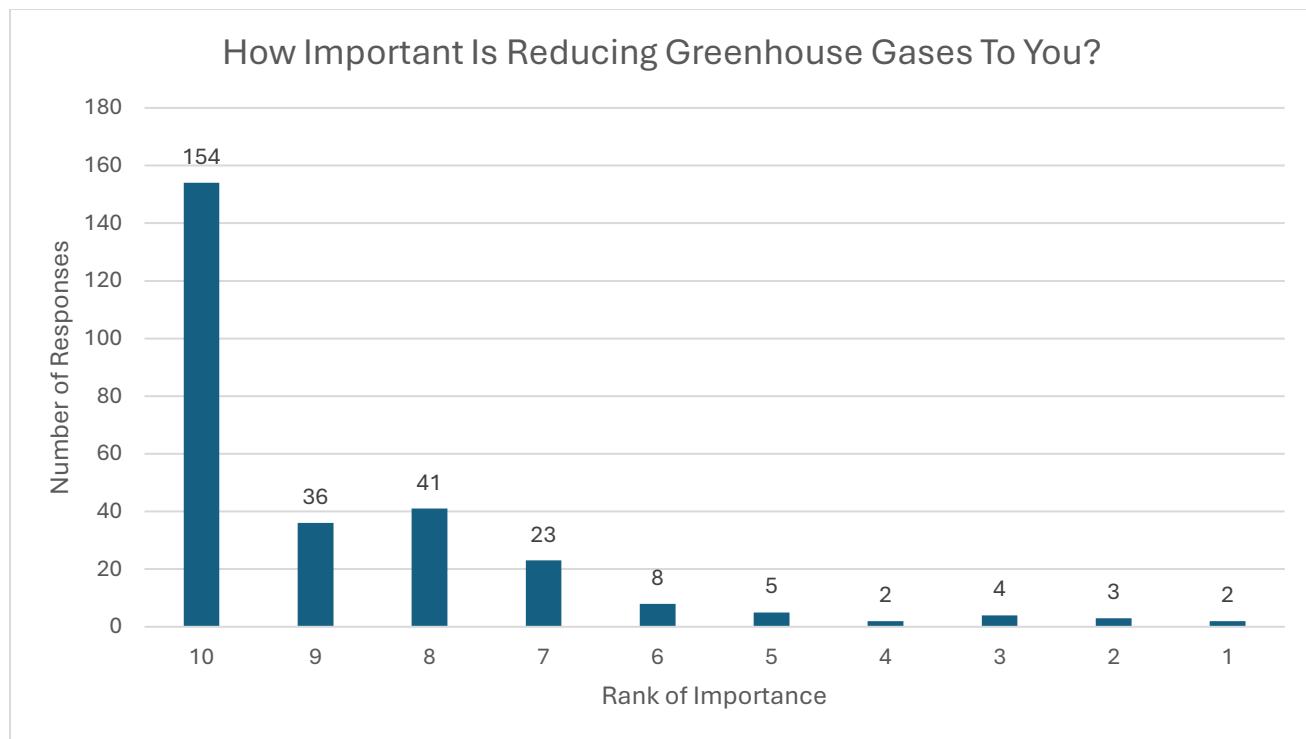


Figure 14. Survey I: How important is reducing greenhouse gas emissions to you? Select a value from 0 to 10, with 0 being 'Not important at all' and 10 being "Extremely important".

Qualitative Feedback on Survey I

Overarching Themes from Public Feedback

The qualitative data analysis reveals several dominant themes that reflect the community's priorities for climate action. These themes provide a clear mandate for ambitious, specific, and equitable strategies.

1. Urgent Need for Transportation and Land Use Reform

The most prevalent theme was the urgent need to move away from the region's car-dependent transportation system. Respondents consistently expressed a desire to walk and bike more but felt it was fundamentally unsafe due to a lack of adequate infrastructure. There was a substantial public demand for investment in protected and separated bike lanes, continuous sidewalks, and a comprehensive public transit system that is frequent, reliable, and serves more locations.

"We need better bicycling infrastructure that actually goes where people want to go safely separated from car traffic... driving is the only option available to me for many of my daily trips."

2. Protection and Enhancement of Natural Systems

A powerful sense of concern was expressed regarding the loss of natural spaces to development. Respondents view the protection of mature trees, the restoration of wetlands, and the preservation of green spaces and farmland as critical climate mitigation and resilience strategies. There was strong

support for policies that increase the urban tree canopy and halt the destruction of natural habitats for new roads and buildings.

"Trees! Stop the destruction in Chesapeake so much development. Roads and houses. They're tearing up the trees."

3. Acceleration of the Clean Energy Transition

The community demonstrated a clear understanding of and support for a rapid transition to renewable energy. Feedback frequently highlighted the need to expand solar and wind generation, supported by electrical storage solutions. On a consumer level, respondents called for more public electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure and financial incentives to make EVs, hybrids, and home energy efficiency upgrades more affordable and accessible.

"Increased charging infrastructure for EVs would really be beneficial. Keep building out the wind and solar generation. Look into electrical storage... to put energy back into the grid when sun and wind are dormant."

4. Demand for Effective Regional Collaboration

Respondents called for stronger and more effective collaborative planning among the region's localities. There is a desire for climate action plans that are decisively implemented rather than remaining as studies. The feedback highlights the importance of public education campaigns and sustained citizen engagement to ensure accountability and long-term success.

"Cities, please, please, work together as a region for not only this item, but for all sustainability, environmental, and economic initiatives. We can do so much more if we think beyond our city lines..."

Unique and Novel Recommendations

Beyond the broad themes, respondents offered several specific and innovative suggestions that warrant consideration:

- **Institutional Emissions:** One respondent noted that a meaningful climate plan must address emissions from large institutions, specifically identifying the Department of Defense as a major consumer of petroleum in the region.
- **Digital and Information Equity:** A detailed response framed the lack of broadband access in non-urban parts of the region as a critical Environmental Justice (EJ) issue, arguing that inaccessibility to digital information prevents equitable participation in the planning process, particularly for aging populations.
- **Nuanced Environmental Solutions:** Multiple respondents advocated for nuanced solutions beyond simple energy efficiency, such as implementing "dark sky friendly" outdoor lighting with lower color temperatures to protect nocturnal wildlife.

- **Practical Consumer Support:** A highly practical suggestion was the creation of a certified list of reputable local contractors for services like solar panel and high-efficiency window installation, helping residents overcome barriers of trust and knowledge.

Dissenting Viewpoints

For a comprehensive representation of feedback, it is important to note that a minority of responses expressed skepticism or opposition to the premise of the survey and climate action planning. These comments generally characterized the effort as politically motivated or a misuse of public funds, with one respondent stating,

"I am tired of your fear mongering climate change propaganda."

Conclusion

The public feedback received through the survey provides a clear and compelling direction for the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant plan. The community is not only concerned about climate change but also informed, offering specific, actionable, and sophisticated solutions. The dominant themes of transportation reform, natural space preservation, and clean energy transition will be highlighted in the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan.

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Survey

The VMT survey had 40 participants sourced from transportation technical committees at the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO), including the HRTPO Active Transportation Subcommittee (ATS). Participants were asked to provide feedback related to reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) to help reduce an individual's carbon footprint.

For this survey, the CCAP team used ArcGIS Survey123, an Esri product.

Demographics

The survey participants are primarily transportation technical professionals who aid in regional transportation and land use planning for Hampton Roads. They were identified and sought after for feedback based on their specific knowledge of active transportation, multi-modal transportation methods, and the resources required for implementation.

For a full breakdown of results, please see the attachments.

Results

RANKING THE IMPACT OF PROPOSED ACTIONS ON REDUCING VMT

■ 1st Choice ■ 2nd Choice ■ 3rd Choice ■ 4th Choice ■ 5th Choice ■ 6th Choice

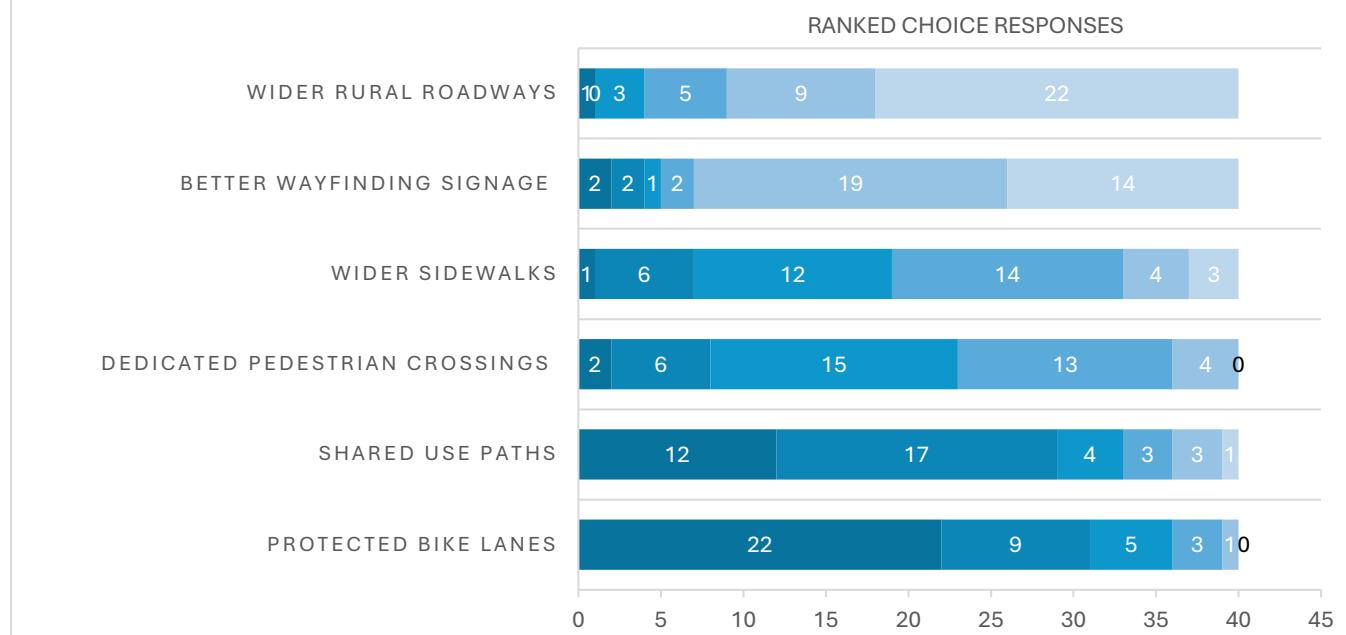


Figure 15. VMT Survey - Q1: Please rank the proposed actions based on how impactful you anticipate them to be on reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).

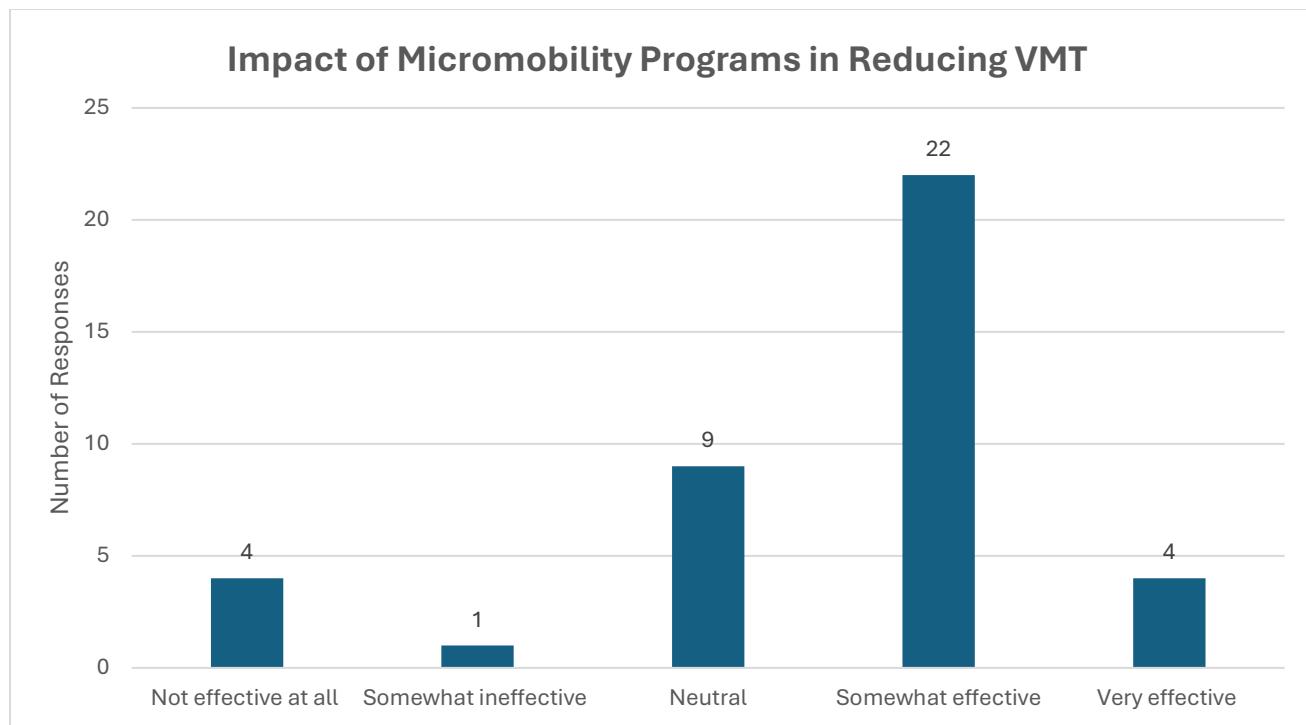


Figure 16. VMT Survey - Q2: Please share how impactful you think micromobility programs (bikeshare/scootershare, e.g. Pace, Lime, CitiBike) are in reducing VMT and promoting mode shifts.

VMT Survey – Q3: Is there additional input that you'd like to provide related to reducing VMT or encouraging travel mode shifts? [Open-ended]

Key Themes from Respondent Feedback

1. Infrastructure, Safety, and Connectivity.

The lack of safe and connected infrastructure for non-vehicular travel was a dominant theme.

- 1.1. **Dedicated and Protected Spaces:** Respondents repeatedly called for "More protected bike lanes" and "dedicated space for micromobility and walkability programs." The need for these spaces to be "safe and separated from mobile traffic" was emphasized.
- 1.2. **Context-Specific Design:** One professional noted that infrastructure choices are "very context specific," suggesting on-street bike lanes for local roads and off-street paths for faster-moving arterial roads.
- 1.3. **Lack of Existing Facilities:** A major barrier is the current state of infrastructure in parts of the region, with one comment summarizing the issue bluntly: "You really can't get anywhere in Chesapeake without driving. No bike lanes, or wide sidewalks...". One commuter noted they would bike their "18 mile commute to work...if there were bike lanes from Chesapeake to Virginia Beach."

1.4. **Convenience at Destinations:** Beyond paths and lanes, the need for end-of-trip facilities like "convenient bike parking at destinations" was highlighted as essential.

2. **Land Use and Proximity are Crucial**

Several respondents argued that infrastructure alone is insufficient without addressing the region's sprawling land use patterns.

- 2.1. **Zoning for Mixed Use:** One respondent stated that "Mixed use zoning is probably just as important as infrastructure." The rationale is that if essential destinations are too far, the quality of sidewalks or bike lanes becomes irrelevant.
- 2.2. **Proximity is Key:** Another comment identified the "Proximity of residential areas to jobs and services" as a foundational element for reducing VMT. The sentiment was shared by another who noted that because "Hampton Roads is too spread out," micromobility is unlikely to have a significant impact on its own.

3. **Enhanced Public Transportation**

Expanding and improving mass transit was seen as a critical component of a regional VMT reduction strategy

- 3.1. **Light Rail Expansion:** A specific recommendation was to "extend the tide through south Norfolk and into Greenbrier." Another suggestion envisioned expanding the Tide Light Rail into a "full loop including all Hampton roads."
- 3.2. **Bus Rapid Transit (BRT):** The implementation of "Bus rapid transit" was also proposed as a solution.
- 3.3. **General Improvement:** Some respondents simply called for "Better mass transit" as a necessary alternative to personal vehicle use.

4. **Policy, Funding, and Public Campaigns**

Participants identified a need for stronger policy and dedicated funding to support the necessary changes.

- 4.1. **Increased State and Regional Funding:** One professional asserted that "Raising the DOT cost share toward more Bike/Ped related projects is a must on a state level and regional taxes."
- 4.2. **Corporate Responsibility:** A suggestion was made that micromobility companies "can do more to support infrastructure costs and efforts" as demand grows.
- 4.3. **Public Relations Campaign:** An idea was floated for a "PR campaign" to shift public perception and create a culture where drivers are more patient and expect to share the road with cyclists.

5. **Critiques and Practical Challenges**

Respondents also pointed out current challenges and pragmatic considerations for implementation

- 5.1. **Micromobility Obstructions:** The improper parking of scooters was identified as a nuisance, with one comment noting that they "can be trip hazards if they are randomly left in the road or on sidewalks."

5.2. **Traffic Flow Concerns:** One participant expressed frustration with current traffic management, specifically suggesting to "get rid of the stick separator on I 64 so cars can move," believing it causes traffic jams and idling.

5.3. **Geographic Diversity:** A key consideration for any regional plan is the diversity of land use, as "the city has 3 distinct areas (urban, suburban and rural, no one solution is possible."

Summary

This feedback underscores that reducing VMT in Hampton Roads requires a multifaceted approach. While the call for safer, connected infrastructure for biking and walking is a clear priority, professionals also emphasize that these investments must be paired with strategic land use reform, significant public transit expansion, and supportive regional funding policies. The responses collectively paint a picture of a region designed for automobiles, which will require deliberate and sustained effort across multiple sectors to transform into a place where alternative transportation is a safe, practical, and convenient choice for more residents.

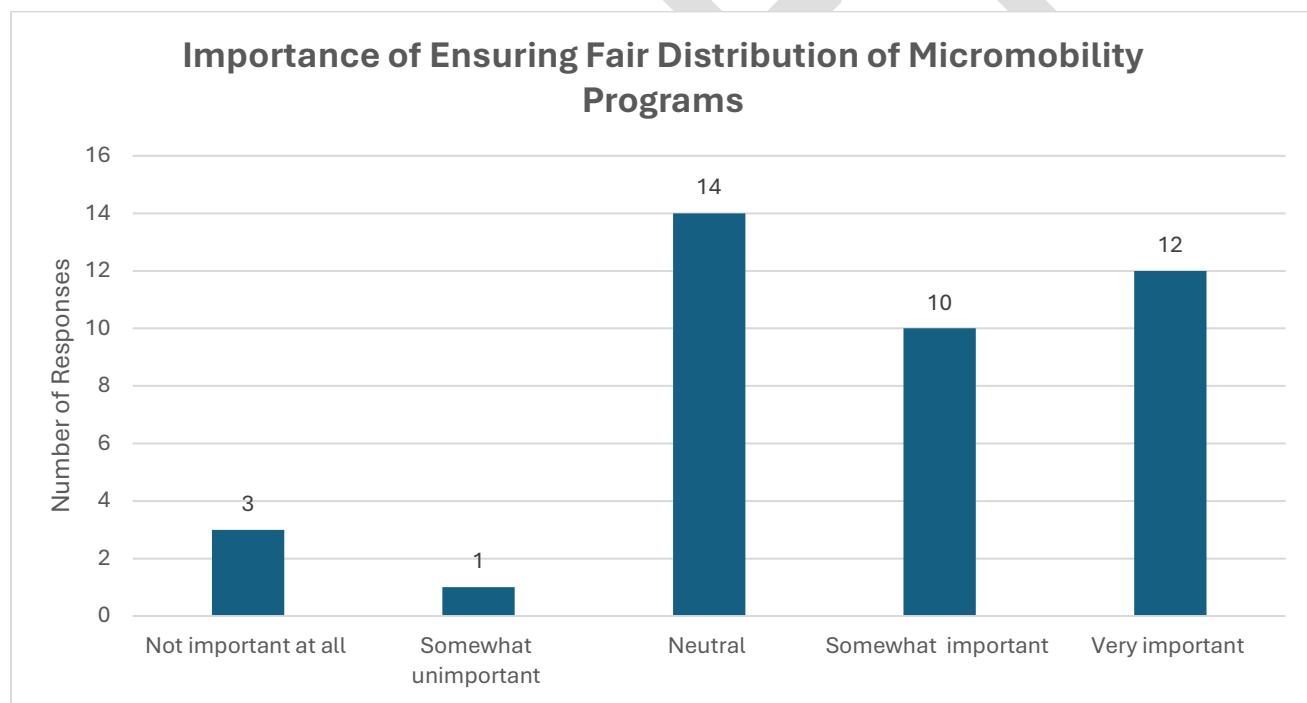


Figure 17. VMT Survey - Q4: How important is it to conduct feasibility studies to ensure fair distribution of micromobility implementation (e.g. bike racks, reserved scooter parking, helmet subsidies, increased safety measures)?

PRIORITIZATION RANKING OF SAFETY MEASURES FOR MICROMOBILITY USERS

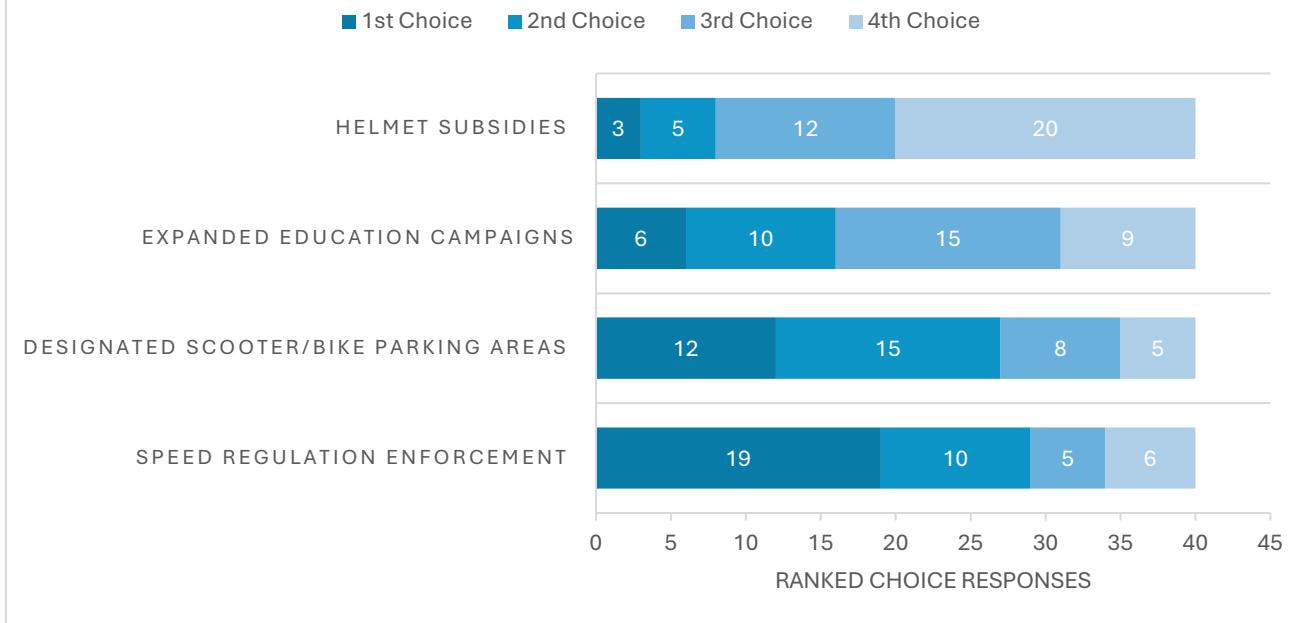


Figure 18. VMT Survey - Q5: Please prioritize the safety measures for micromobility users.

VMT Survey – Q6: What strategies would encourage greater usage of micromobility? [Open-ended]

Challenges and Considerations

While there was broad support for these strategies, a critical perspective was also offered. One respondent noted, "These priorities aren't realistic for localities," highlighting potential financial or political barriers to implementing the necessary large-scale infrastructure projects. This suggests a clear and achievable implementation and funding strategy must accompany any proposed plan.

Summary

The feedback delivers a clear and consistent message: meaningful adoption of micromobility is contingent upon significant investment in safe, connected, and dedicated infrastructure. While incentives, education, and vehicle options are essential supporting elements, the core challenge lies in re-imagining and retrofitting the region's transportation corridors to accommodate all users safely. The success of micromobility programs is seen as being directly tied to the political will to fund and build these foundational networks.

Key Themes from Respondent Feedback

1. Infrastructure for Safety and Connectivity is the Top Priority

This was the most frequently and passionately cited theme. Professionals believe that without a fundamental change to the built environment, micromobility will remain a niche option.

- a. **Dedicated and Protected Facilities:** The most common suggestions were for "protected bike lanes," "dedicated lanes," and "additional multi-use paths" to physically separate micromobility users from faster-moving vehicle traffic.
- b. **Network Connectivity:** Respondents emphasized that infrastructure must form a cohesive network. It needs to be practical for daily trips, connecting "residential areas to restaurants/parks/museums" and enabling users to "go to work/school/run errands without a car." The issue of a fragmented network with "very few intersections" was highlighted, as constant stopping is a significant deterrent.
- c. **Improved Road Design:** Suggestions went beyond bike lanes to include holistic street design changes, such as "wider sidewalks," "smaller curb radii," and "narrower streets." Specific problem areas, like creating safe paths for overpasses (e.g., Indian River Road, Greenbrier), were also mentioned.
- d. **Proactive Planning:** One professional noted that it would be "easier and less expensive to accommodate [micromobility] from the onset rather than trying to retro fit," pointing to the need for updated development patterns and codes.

2. Traffic Enforcement and Driver Behavior

Directly linked to safety, participants expressed concern over the conflict between vehicles and micromobility users.

- a. **Speed enforcement:** Multiple responses called for "traffic speed enforcement" to calm vehicle speeds and create a safer environment for all road users. One participant stated plainly, "Drivers make it less safe."

3. Policy, Incentives, and Funding

Professionals suggested several policy-level changes to both encourage micromobility and discourage personal vehicle use.

- a. **Financial Incentives:** Ideas included direct benefits for users, such as a "tax credit for miles travelled by bike for work" and "free use incentives" (e.g., "after 6 rides get 1 free").
- b. **Funding Mechanisms:** A "local gas tax to fund micro mobility infrastructure" was proposed as a dedicated funding source.
- c. **Discouraging Vehicle Travel:** A direct approach was suggested, with one respondent noting that "discouraging vehicle travel is the most effective way to encourage micromobility."

4. Integration with Public Transit

Respondents saw micromobility not as a replacement for, but as a complement to, existing public transportation.

- a. **First/Last Mile Solution:** Micromobility was identified as a key "last mile solution" that "needs to be paired with mass transit between city centers."
- b. **Enhanced Access:** A specific recommendation was to provide "more access to Tide [light] Rail," allowing users to combine transit and micromobility for longer journeys.

5. User Experience, Education, and Amenities

Beyond infrastructure, the overall experience for the rider was a key consideration.

- a. **Vehicle Diversity:** It was noted that the current scooter-dominant model may not serve all potential users. Providing options like "e-bikes or seated scooters" could attract "older less confident users."
- b. **Amenities:** To make trips more comfortable, suggestions included "shady paths, rest/water & bike repair stations."
- c. **Education and Clarity:** A need for "education campaigns" was identified, particularly regarding the rules of the road (e.g., "where you're supposed to ride them (on streets or on sidewalks...)").

Survey II

The second CCAP Survey had 216 respondents. This survey was created using proposed measures and actions based on the GHG inventory. Participants were asked to first prioritize proposed actions by sector and then asked to rank all of the proposed actions across sectors against one another.

The CCAP Engagement team used ArcGIS Survey123, an Esri product, for this survey.

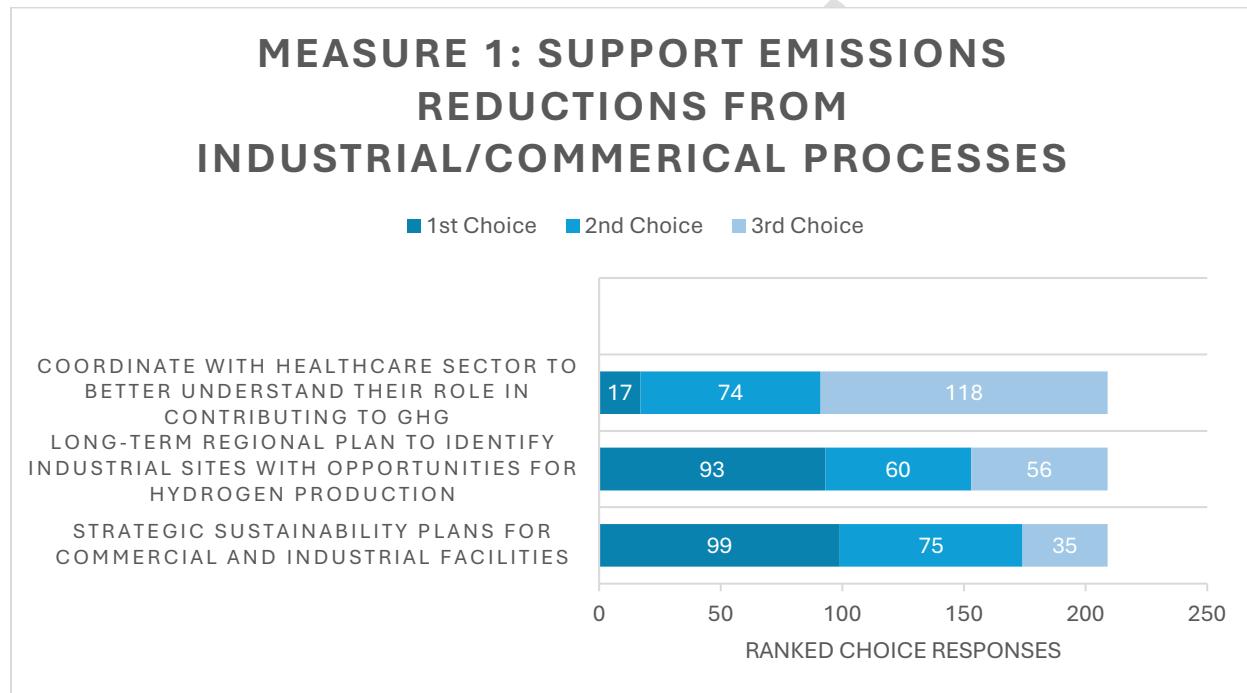


Figure 19. Survey II - Q1: Industry Sector Measures. Please rank the following actions for each measure listed below in order of importance.

Industry

- **Reducing Industrial/Commercial Emissions:** The highest-ranked action was to "Support the development of strategic sustainability plans for commercial and industrial facilities" (47.4%). This measure was closely followed by "Develop a long-term regional plan to identify industrial sites with opportunities for hydrogen production and/or use, carbon capture, electrification, use of other low-carbon fuels, or other reduction measures" (44.5%).

MEASURE 2: DECREASE THE AMOUNT OF SOLID WASTE SENT TO LANDFILLS

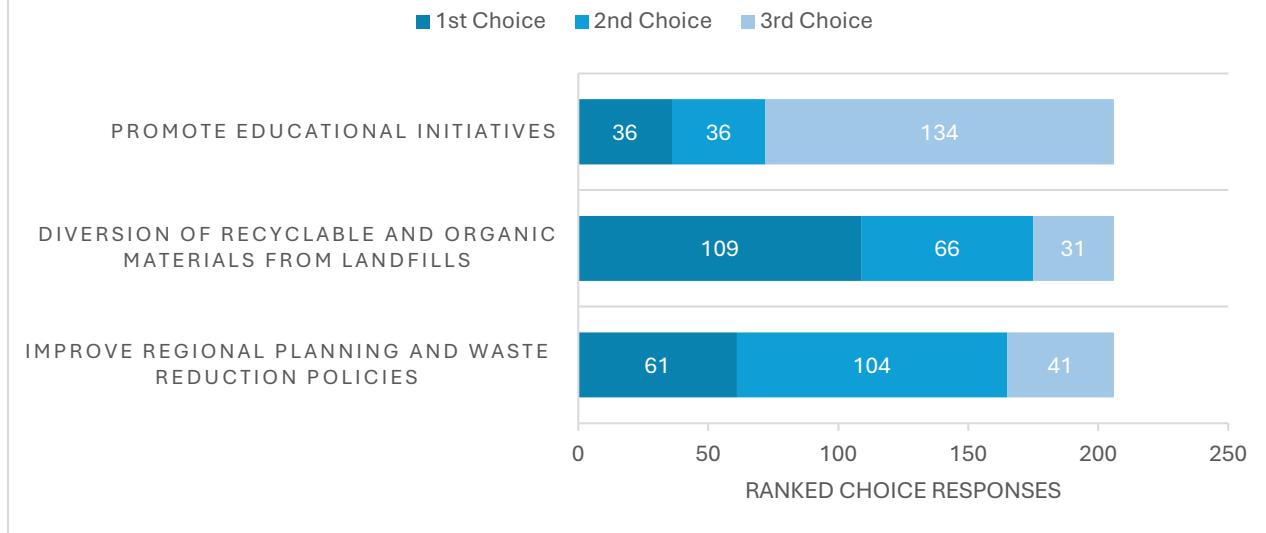


Figure 20. Survey II - Q2: Waste Sector Measures. Please rank the following actions for each measure listed below in order of importance.

MEASURE 3: SUPPORT EFFICIENCY UPGRADES AT WASTERWATER TREATMENT PLANTS

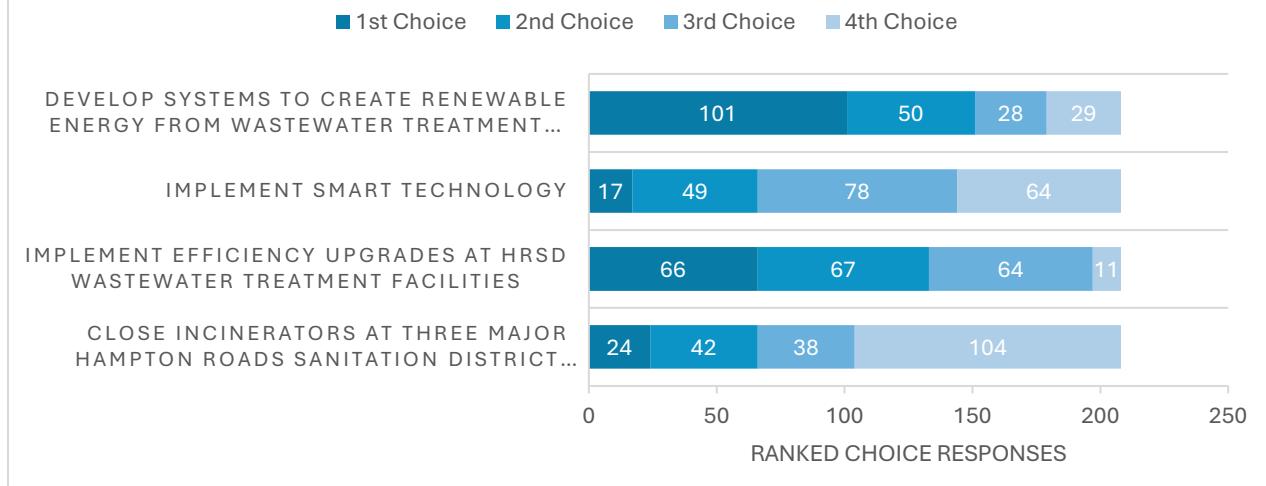


Figure 21. Survey II - Q3: Waste Sector Measures. Please rank the following actions for each measure listed below in order of importance.

Waste Management

Respondents prioritized diverting waste and creating renewable energy from waste streams.

- **Landfills:** The top-ranked action was the "Diversion of Recyclable and Organic Materials from Landfills" (52.9%).
- **Wastewater Treatment Plants:** The leading priority was to "Develop systems to create renewable energy from wastewater treatment processes" (48.6%).

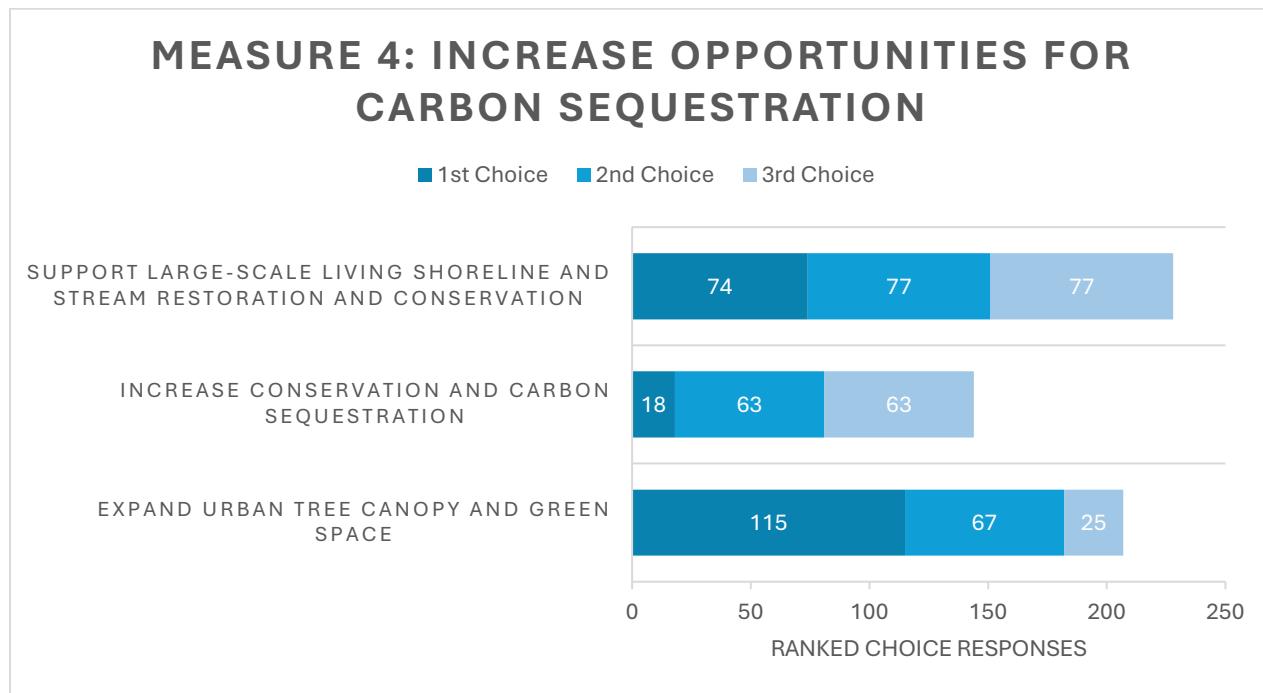
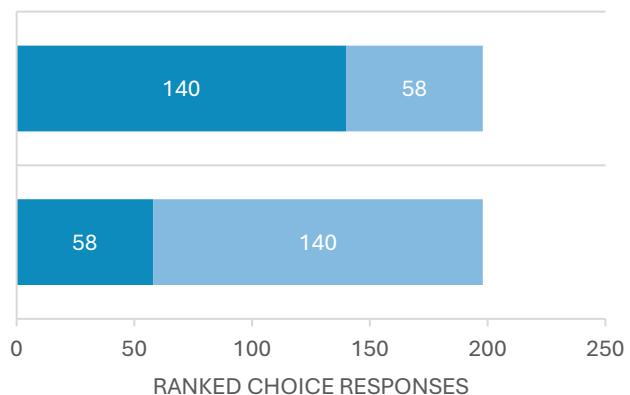


Figure 22. Survey II-Q4: Agriculture & Forestry Sector Measures. Please rank the following actions for each measure listed below in order of importance.

MEASURE 5: SUPPORT LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION, URBAN AGRICULTURE, AND FARM-TO-SCHOOL INITIATIVES

■ 1st Choice ■ 2nd Choice

DEVELOP POLICIES TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION INCLUDING MORE MARKETS AND POLICIES TO ENCOURAGE URBAN GARDENS



CREATE SCHOOL PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION

Figure 23. Survey II-Q5: Agriculture & Forestry Sector Measures. Please rank the following actions for each measure listed below in order of importance.

MEASURE 6: INCREASE SOIL CONSERVATION PRACTICES ON URBAN AND AGRICULTURAL LANDS

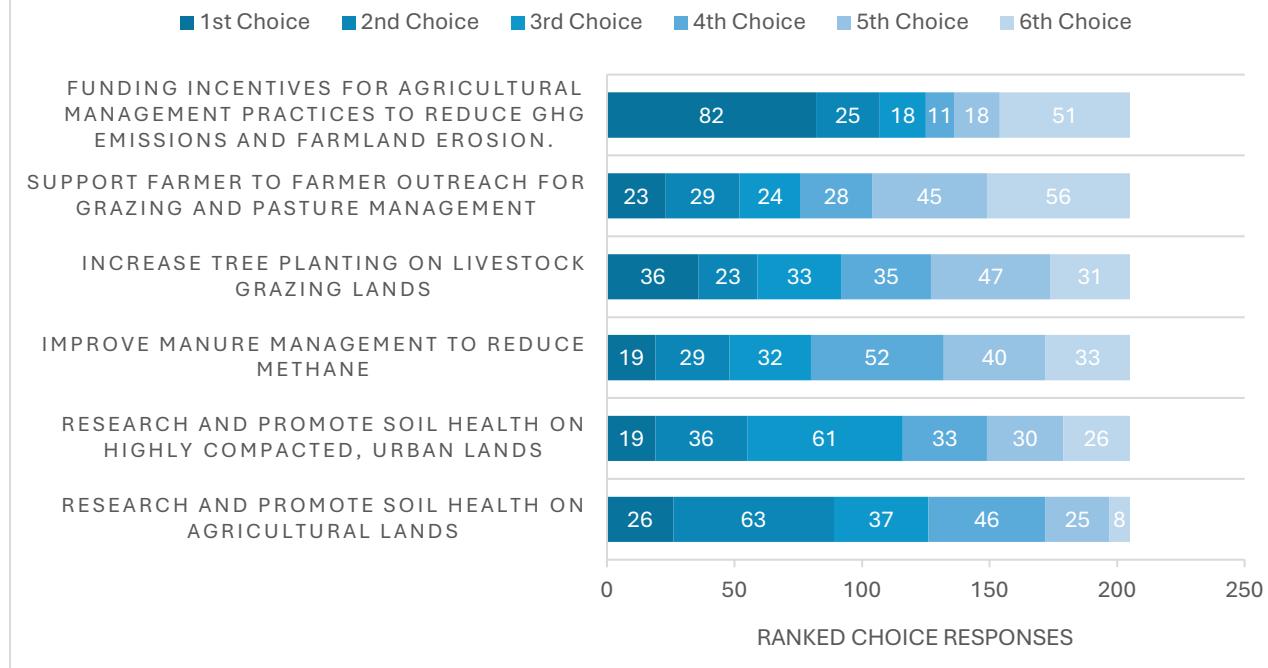


Figure 24. Survey II-Q6: Agriculture & Forestry Sector Measures. Please rank the following actions for each measure listed below in order of importance.

Agriculture & Forestry

This sector also saw high levels of agreement on top priorities, focusing on local food systems and natural resources.

- **Carbon Sequestration:** The top priority was to "Expand urban tree canopy and green space" (55.6%). It should be noted that this measure was also one of the top-ranked measures overall in question 15, where participants were asked to rank all measures against one another.
- **Local Food Production & Urban Agriculture:** The highest-ranked action, with 70.7% of respondents ranking it first, was to "Develop policies to strengthen local food production, including more markets and policies to encourage urban gardens."
- **Soil Conservation:** Respondents prioritized "Funding incentives for agricultural management practices to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and farmland erosion" (53.2%).

MEASURE 7: INCREASE THE ADOPTION OF ZEVs

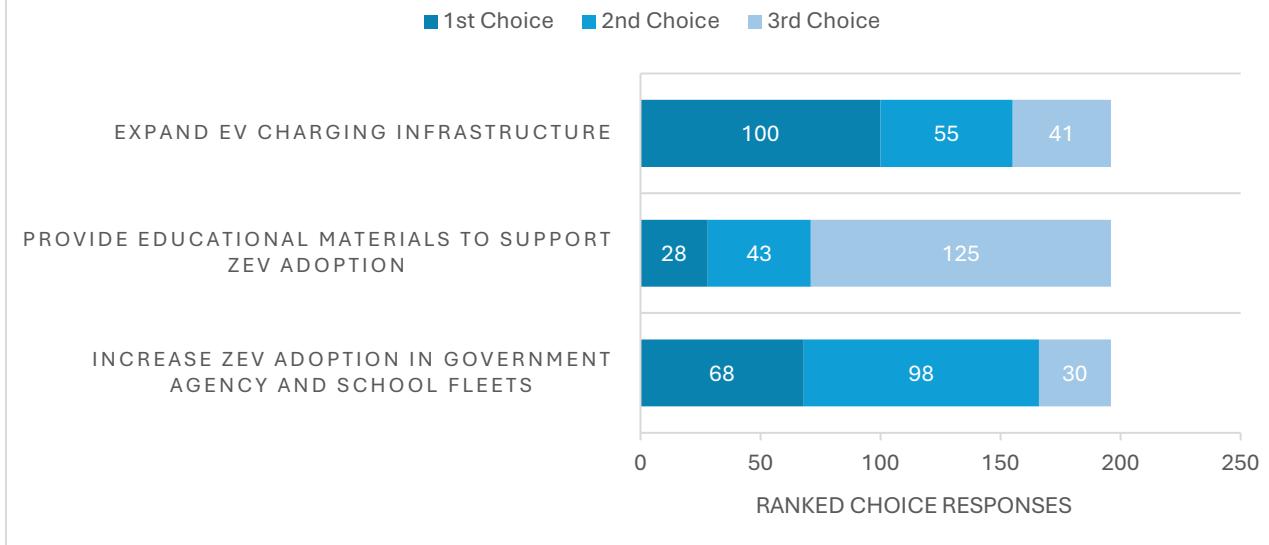


Figure 25. Survey II-Q7: Transportation Sector Measures. Please rank the following actions for each measure listed below in order of importance.

MEASURE 8: REDUCE VMT AND SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

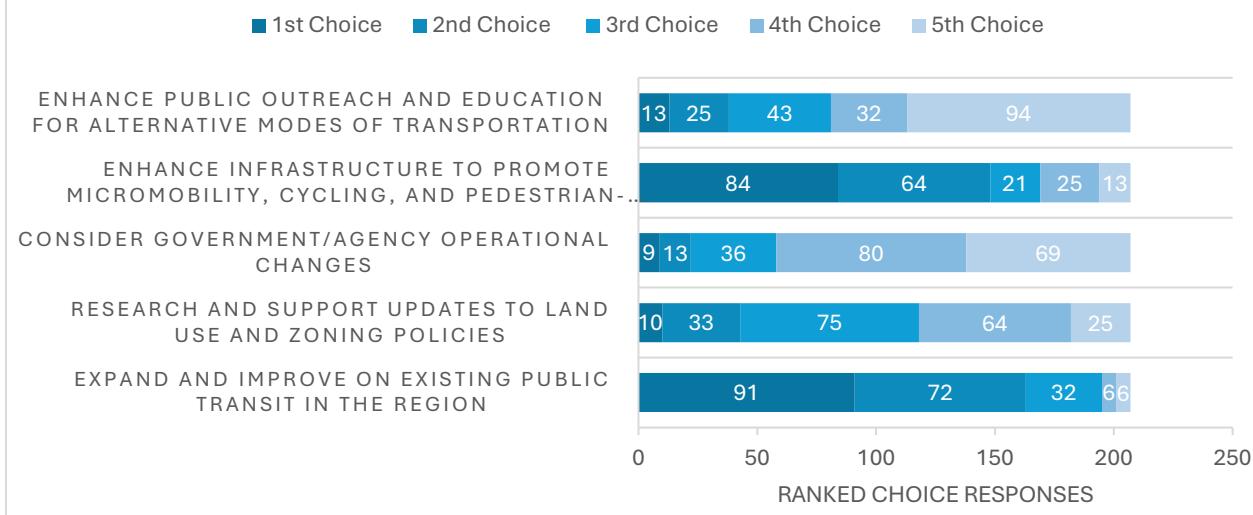


Figure 26. Survey II-Q8: Transportation Sector Measures. Please rank the following actions for each measure listed below in order of importance.

MEASURE 9: REDUCE EMISSIONS FROM PORT OPERATIONS

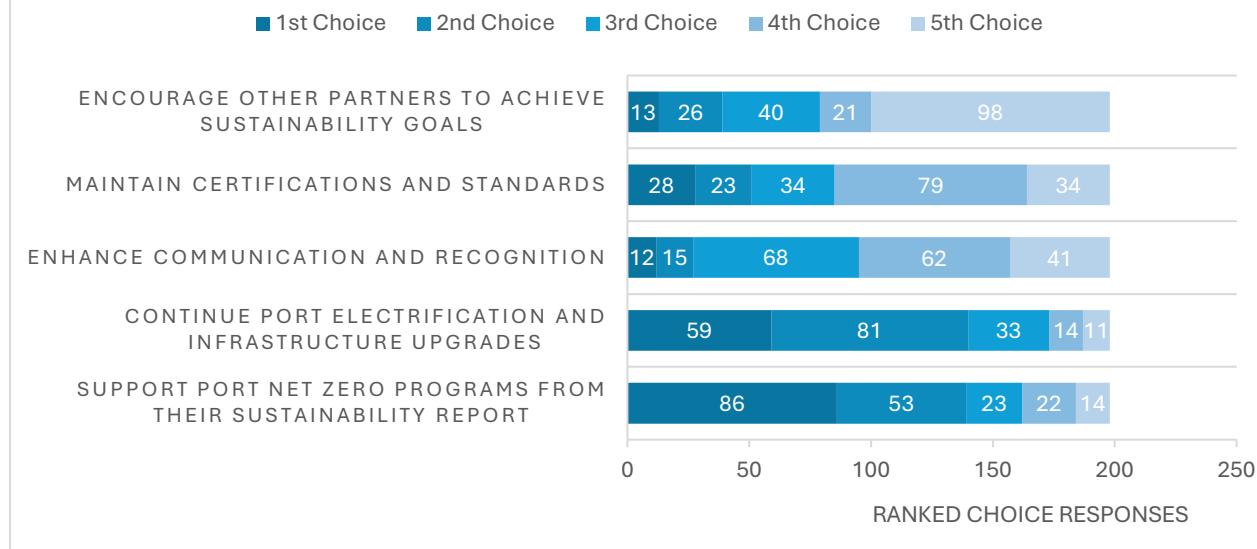


Figure 27. Survey II-Q9: Transportation Sector Measures. Please rank the following actions for each measure listed below in order of importance.

Transportation

Priorities in the transportation sector focused on infrastructure for alternative fuels and modes of transit, as well as improving public transit.

- **Zero-Emission Vehicles (ZEVs):** The clear top action was to "Expand EV Charging Infrastructure," which 51.0% of respondents ranked as most important.
- **Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Reduction:** The leading strategy was to "Expand and improve on existing public transit in the region" (44.0%).
- **Freight:** The top-ranked action was "Support Port Net Zero Programs from their Sustainability Report" (43.4%). With freight being one of the major economic drivers for Hampton Roads and Virginia, supporting sustainable initiatives is vital to reaching carbon emissions reduction goals.

MEASURE 10: ASSISTANCE FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY FOR MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

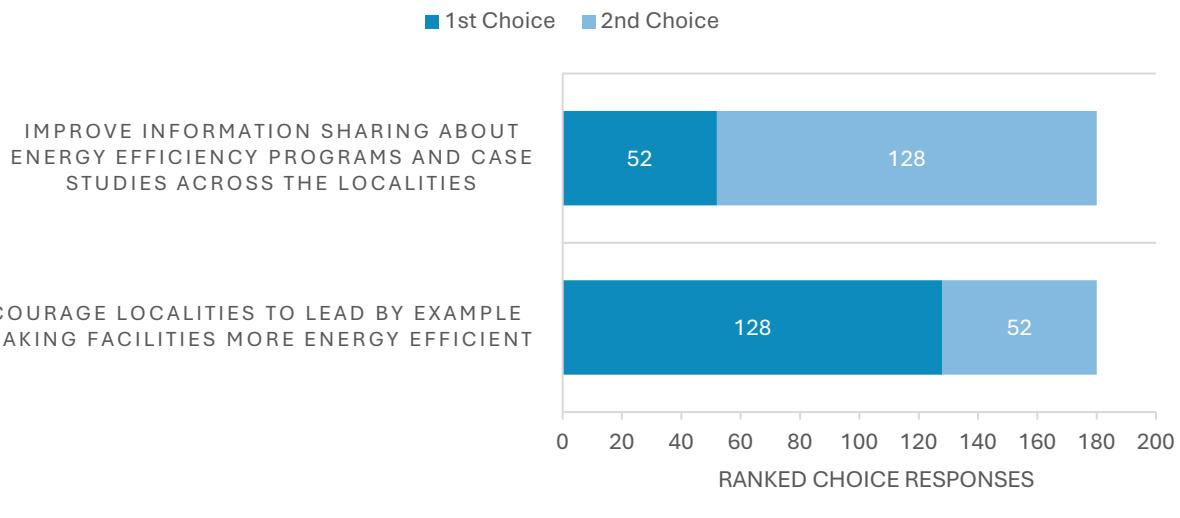


Figure 28. Survey II-Q10: Buildings Sector Measures. Please rank the following actions for each measure listed below in order of importance.

MEASURE 11: INCREASE EFFICIENCY FOR RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

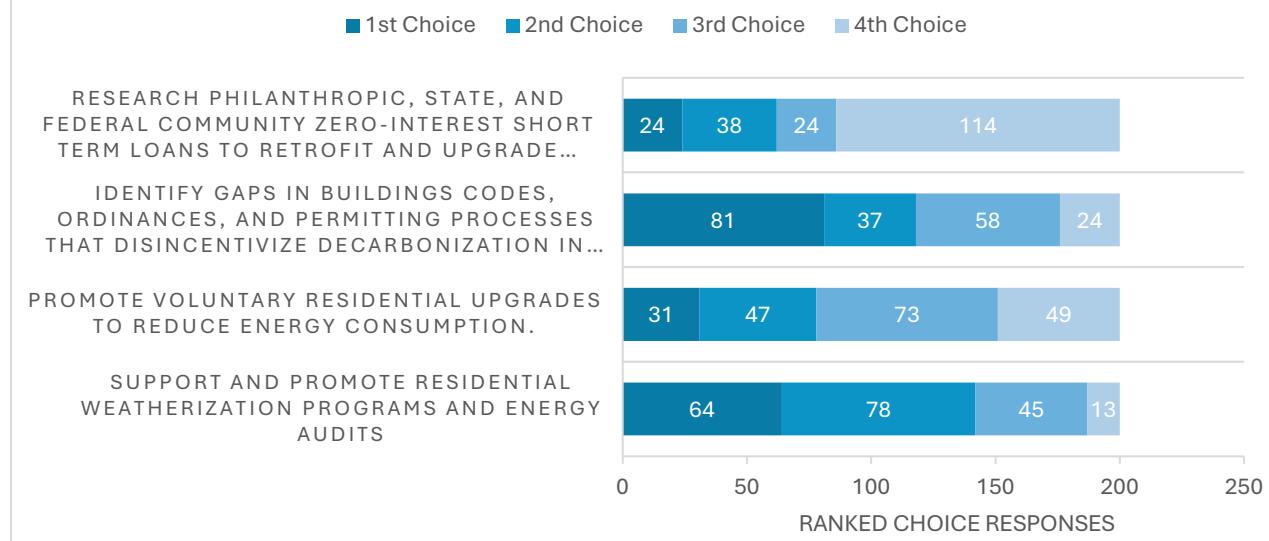


Figure 29. Survey II-Q11: Buildings Sector Measures. Please rank the following actions for each measure listed below in order of importance.

MEASURE 12: INCREASE EFFICIENCY FOR COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

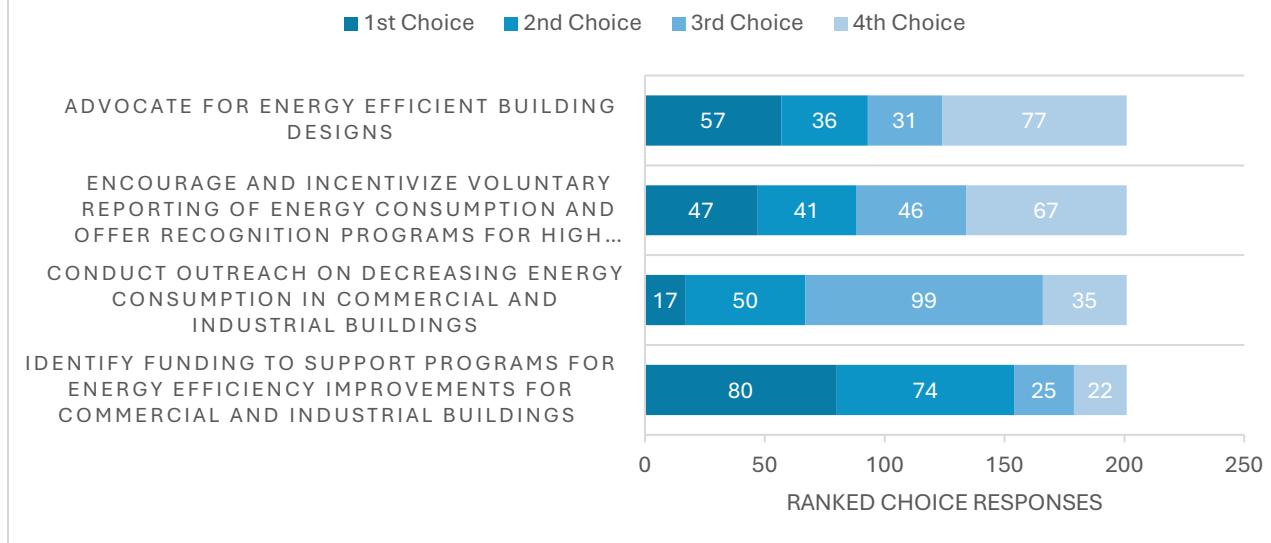


Figure 30. Survey II-Q12: Buildings Sector Measures. Please rank the following actions for each measure listed below in order of importance.

Buildings

Building sector actions received some of the strongest consensus among all categories.

- **Existing Municipal Buildings:** The top priority was to "Encourage localities to lead by example by making facilities more energy efficient," with a strong majority of 71.1% of respondents ranking this as most important.
- **Existing Residential Buildings:** The leading action was to "Identify gaps in building codes, ordinances, and permitting processes that disincentivize decarbonization in residential buildings" (40.5%).
- **Existing Commercial Buildings:** Respondents prioritized to "Identify funding to support programs for energy efficiency improvements for commercial and industrial buildings" (39.8%).

MEASURE 13: ACCELERATE REGIONAL SOLAR ENERGY ADOPTION

■ 1st Choice ■ 2nd Choice ■ 3rd Choice ■ 4th Choice ■ 5th Choice

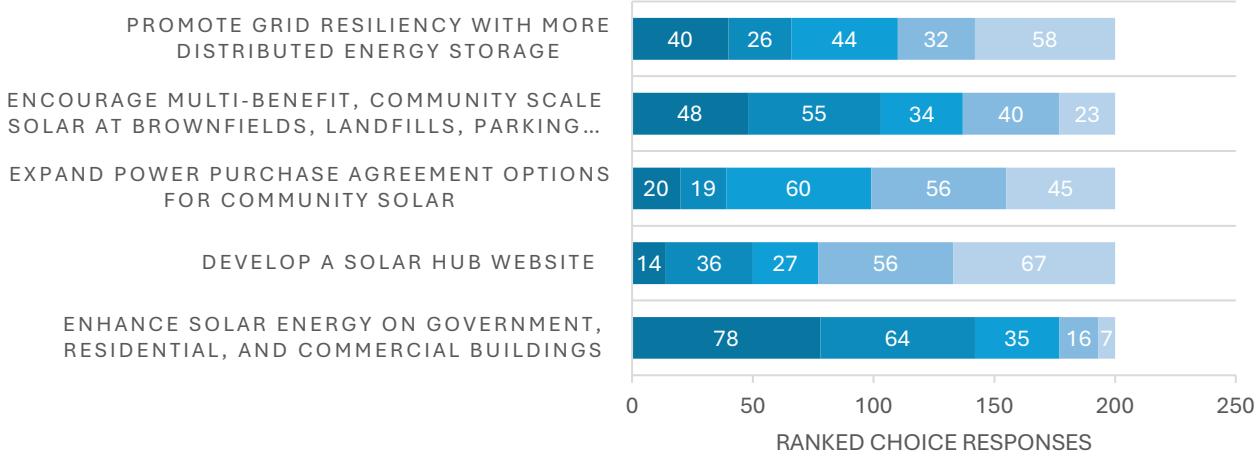


Figure 31. Q13: Energy Sector Measures. Please rank the following actions for each measure listed below in order of importance.

MEASURE 14: SUPPORT GRID-SCALE CLEAN ENERGY

■ 1st Choice ■ 2nd Choice ■ 3rd Choice ■ 4th Choice

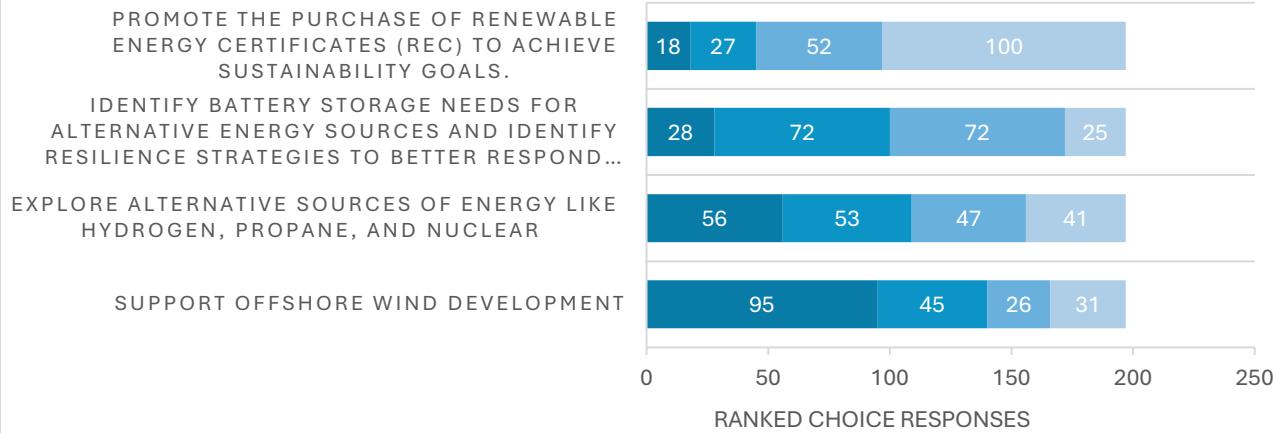


Figure 32. Q14: Energy Sector Measures. Please rank the following actions for each measure listed below in order of importance.

Energy

In the energy sector, respondents prioritized enhancing solar energy in existing buildings over other renewable options. For grid modernization, most participants favored exploring alternative energy sources like hydrogen and nuclear over improving grid resiliency and storage.

- The action to “**Enhance solar energy on government, residential, and commercial buildings**” was the clear top priority, receiving the most first-choice votes (43%). Community-scale solar was a strong second choice (37.8%). Supporting offshore wind development was ranked as the lowest priority of the three, receiving the fewest first-choice votes and the most third-choice votes (19.2%).
- **Exploring alternative energy sources like hydrogen and nuclear** was the highest-priority action by a significant margin, earning 104 first-choice votes (53.9%). Promoting grid resiliency with distributed energy storage was the second priority (30.1%), although it received more second-choice votes than first-choice votes. Identifying battery storage needs was the lowest-ranked action, receiving the fewest first-choice votes (16.1%) and the most third-choice votes.

DRAFT

Figure 33. Overall proposed action ranking for Survey II.



Overall Top Priority

Participants were asked to provide an overall ranking for all the proposed measures in the six sectors they had ranked separately in the preceding questions.

Across all sectors, the top-ranked single measure was "**Expand urban tree canopy and green space**" from the Agriculture & Forestry sector, with 26 first-choice rankings.

This suggests that expanding green spaces is the highest-priority action item among all proposed measures for survey participants.

Top Priorities by Sector

When analyzing the top priority within each individual sector, the following measures were ranked highest:

- **Agriculture & Forestry:** The clear favorite was "Expand urban tree canopy and green space" with 26 first-choice rankings.
- **Transportation:** The top priority was to "Expand and improve on existing public transit in the region," which received 14 first-choice rankings.
- **Industry:** The leading measure was to "Develop a long-term regional plan to identify industrial sites with opportunities for hydrogen production and/or use, carbon capture, electrification, use of other low-carbon fuels, or other reduction measures," with 12 first-choice rankings.
- **Energy:** The highest-ranked measure was to "Support offshore wind development," receiving 11 first-choice rankings.
- **Waste:** The top choice was the "Diversion of Recyclable and Organic Materials from Landfills," which garnered 8 first-choice rankings.
- **Buildings:** The highest-ranked priority was to "Identify gaps in buildings codes, ordinances, and permitting processes that disincentivize decarbonization in residential buildings," with 3 first-choice rankings.

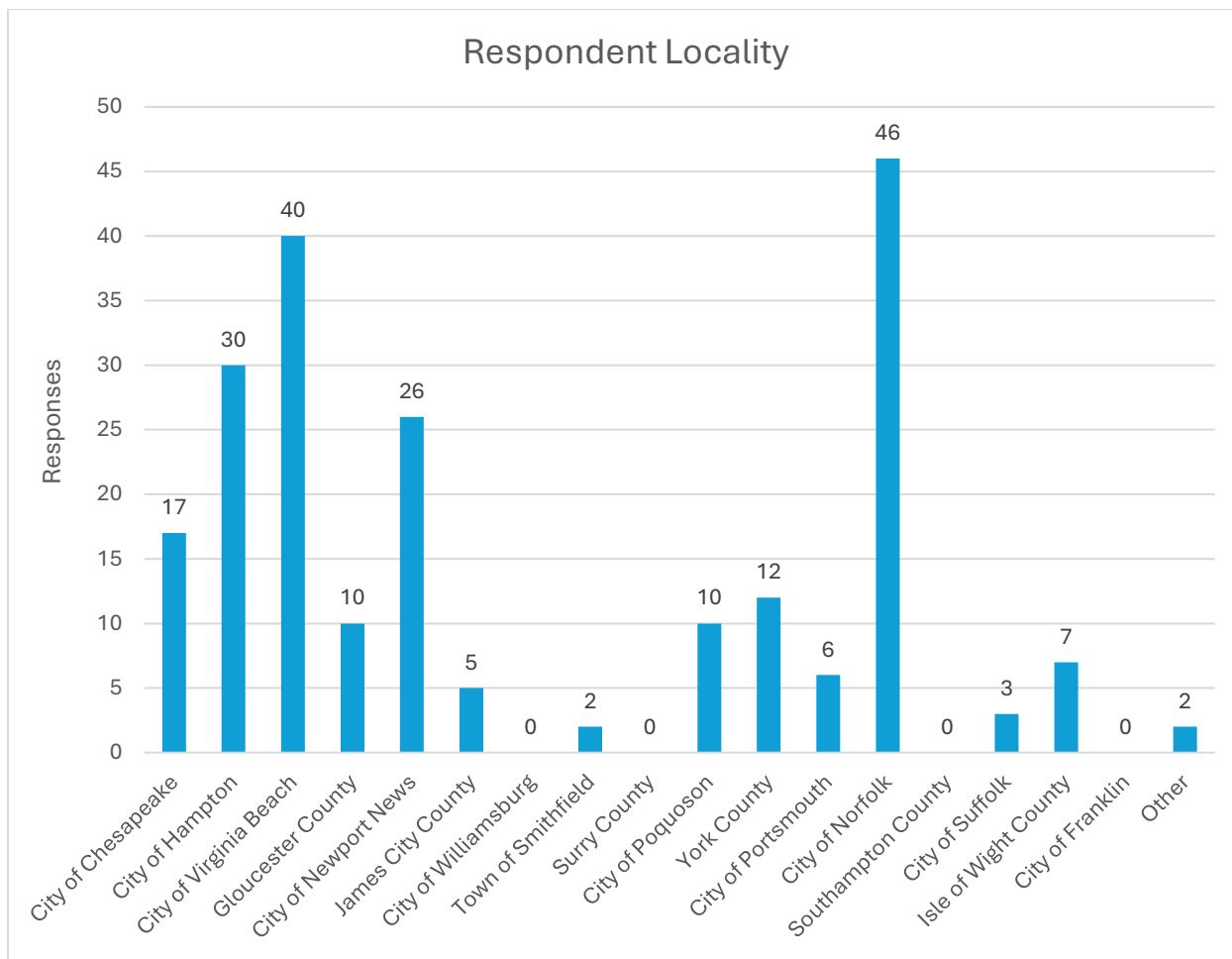


Figure 34. Respondents by locality for Survey II.

Summary of Additional Survey Comments

The open-ended feedback provided a wide range of commentary, which fell into three main categories: critiques of the survey's technical functionality and design, recurring themes and parallels in policy priorities, and novel suggestions for climate action.

1. Feedback on the Survey Instrument

A significant portion of the feedback focused on the survey design, highlighting technical issues and perceived biases.

1.1. **Technical Usability Issues:** This was the most frequent topic in the feedback.

Numerous participants reported being unable to complete the final drag-and-drop ranking question, especially on mobile devices (iPhone, iPad Safari) but also on laptops.

1.1.1. Note: When survey administrators became aware of this problem, an open-ended question was added to allow participants to enter their rankings

manually. Considering this issue, it is unlikely that this format will be utilized with ArcGIS Survey123 again.

- 1.2. **Survey Design and Bias:** Several respondents critiqued the survey's design, calling the questions "leading" and "one-sided." They felt the format did not allow for disagreement with the proposed initiatives or for offering alternative responses, with one person stating the options did not "fit your agenda."

2. Parallels in Policy Feedback

Beyond the survey's mechanics, several policy themes emerged repeatedly, indicating strong areas of public concern and consensus.

- 2.1. **Land Use and Greenspace:** This was a dominant theme. Commenters frequently advocated for protecting natural spaces, stopping the use of undeveloped land for new housing, removing vacant buildings and parking lots to create parks, and protecting the existing tree canopy. There was strong support for "dense walkable city centers" and policing "greedy developers."
 - 2.1.1. Note: Creating and protecting green spaces received significant support from respondents.
- 2.2. **Expansion of Public Transportation:** Many participants called for "better public transportation," with specific and repeated requests to expand the Tide light rail to other areas of Hampton Roads and into Virginia Beach.
 - 2.2.1. Note: An attempt to extend the Tide light rail into Virginia Beach previously failed due to a local referendum that opposed the extension.
- 2.3. **Critique, Skepticism, and Alternative Priorities:** A minority sentiment was that the climate plan was a misuse of taxpayer money. These respondents urged the city to focus on other priorities like "fighting crime" and fixing basic infrastructure ("city streets collapsing," "clean the storm drains"). Some dismissed climate change as a "fraud" or "scientifically unproven assertion."
- 2.4. **Specific Technology Preferences:** Participants expressed strong and often conflicting opinions on energy technology. There was clear opposition to solar farms (with a preference for rooftop solar), offshore wind, and nuclear energy (with one user citing flood vulnerability of Small Modular Reactors). Conversely, there were also calls for "investment in all clean energy solutions."

3. Novel Feedback and Specific Suggestions

Several comments provided unique, actionable ideas that were not otherwise mentioned.

- 3.1. **New Programs and Policies:** Suggestions included implementing a "pay-as-you-throw" waste incentive system, creating a "Green Business Alliance" modeled after Charlottesville's, and developing a regional panel of citizen environmental leaders.

- 3.2. **Specific Projects:** Commenters proposed a pilot project to recycle glass for environmental restoration, reopening a waste-to-energy plant (Wheelabrator), and exploring hydrokinetic energy from moving water.
- 3.3. **Public Education:** One novel idea was to run a public education campaign to build appreciation for local wetlands, such as a "rename the swamp" contest.

In summary, the additional comments provided valuable insight. They highlighted critical usability issues with the survey that may have impacted the data, while also revealing strong community consensus around improving public transit and prioritizing green spaces and more innovative land use. Finally, the feedback offers several novel, community-sourced ideas for inclusion in the climate action plan.

Engagement Activities

Rally for our Climate Future

Details: April 17, 2025, 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM at Mount Trashmore, 310 Edwin Dr., Virginia Beach, VA 23462

Engagements: 65 people

The Virginia League of Conservation Voters, Climate Action Virginia, Chesapeake Climate Action Network, and Sierra Club Virginia Chapter hosted the Rally for our Climate Future to celebrate the climate investments that have benefited the Hampton Roads Region and advocate for continued investments.

The CCAP Engagement team connected with about 65 members of the public and encouraged attendees to provide their input on the Climate Action Plan by leaving public comment in person, email, or on the Climate Action Plan's website (www.hrpdcva.gov/climate)



Figure 35 Rally For Our Climate event. Table set up.

“Our Power, Our Planet” Hampton City Earth Day Celebration

Details: April 26, 2025, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM at Blue Bird Gap Farm 60 Pine Chapel Road, Hampton, VA 23666

Engagements: 32 people

The City of Hampton held its annual Earth Day event at Blue Bird Gap Farm and hosted the Environmental Festival & Eco-Art Show. The CCAP Engagement team informed people about the Climate Action Plan and asked that they remain engaged throughout the process.



Figure 36. Our Planet, Our Power Event. Connecting with community members.



Figure 37. Our Planet, Our Power Event. Table set up.

Cap2Cap

Details: May 9, 2025, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM at Chickahominy Riverfront Park, 1350 John Tyler Hwy, Williamsburg, VA, 23185. K

Engagements: 100 People

Cap2Cap is the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation's annual bike ride fundraiser. Attendees ride the bike trail from Richmond to James City County and raise funds for the maintenance and expansion of the trail system. The CCAP Engagement team connected with about 100 members of the public and introduced them to the Climate Action Plan.

A key discussion point during this outreach was Trail757, the proposed route, expansion, and related funding. Many people expressed support for protecting and maintaining green spaces and multimodal options like trails.



Figure 38. Cap2Cap event. Interacting with community members.

CNU Earth Day

Details: April 26, 2025,

Engagements: Approximately 100

The CCAP Engagement team participated in CNU's Annual Sustainability event for Earth Day 2025. At the event the team informed and engaged students about the creation of the Climate Action Plan and encouraged them to engage with the process.



Figure 39 CNU Earth Day Event. CCAP Project Lead, Whitney Katchmark, interacting with students.

Norfolk LIVE Green

Details: May 3, 2025, 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM, 3500 Granby St, Norfolk, VA 23504

Engagements: 108

The CCAP Engagement team participated in Norfolk's annual Earth Day event, LIVE Green Norfolk which encourages the public to think and live sustainably. The team informed and engaged the public about the Climate Action Plan and encouraged them to get involved.



Figure 40. Norfolk LIVE Green event, HRPDC/TPO Executive Director Bob Crum featured with Norfolk City Councilman Jeremy McGee.

Pride in the 'Peake

Details: June 22, 2025, 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM, at Chesapeake City Park, 900 City Park Dr., Chesapeake, VA 23320

Engagements: 245

'Pride in the Peake' is Chesapeake's annual Pride event. Community members were briefed on the CPRG Planning Grant and then asked to determine investments given "Climate Cash" in \$10, \$5, and \$1 denominations totaling \$16 in *Climate Cash* per person. Participants were able to choose from 12 high-level, summarized actions.

- Improve Recycling Programs
- Expand Composting
- Expand Green Spaces
- Create More Living Shorelines
- Expand EV Charging Network

- Incentivize Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEVs) (later combined)
- Improve and Expand Public Transit
- Enhance Bike/Ped Infrastructure
- Monitor and Lower Energy Usage
- Make Buildings More Energy Efficient
- Expand Solar Programs
- Support Clean Grid Energy

Based on the feedback from participants, the results below were received.

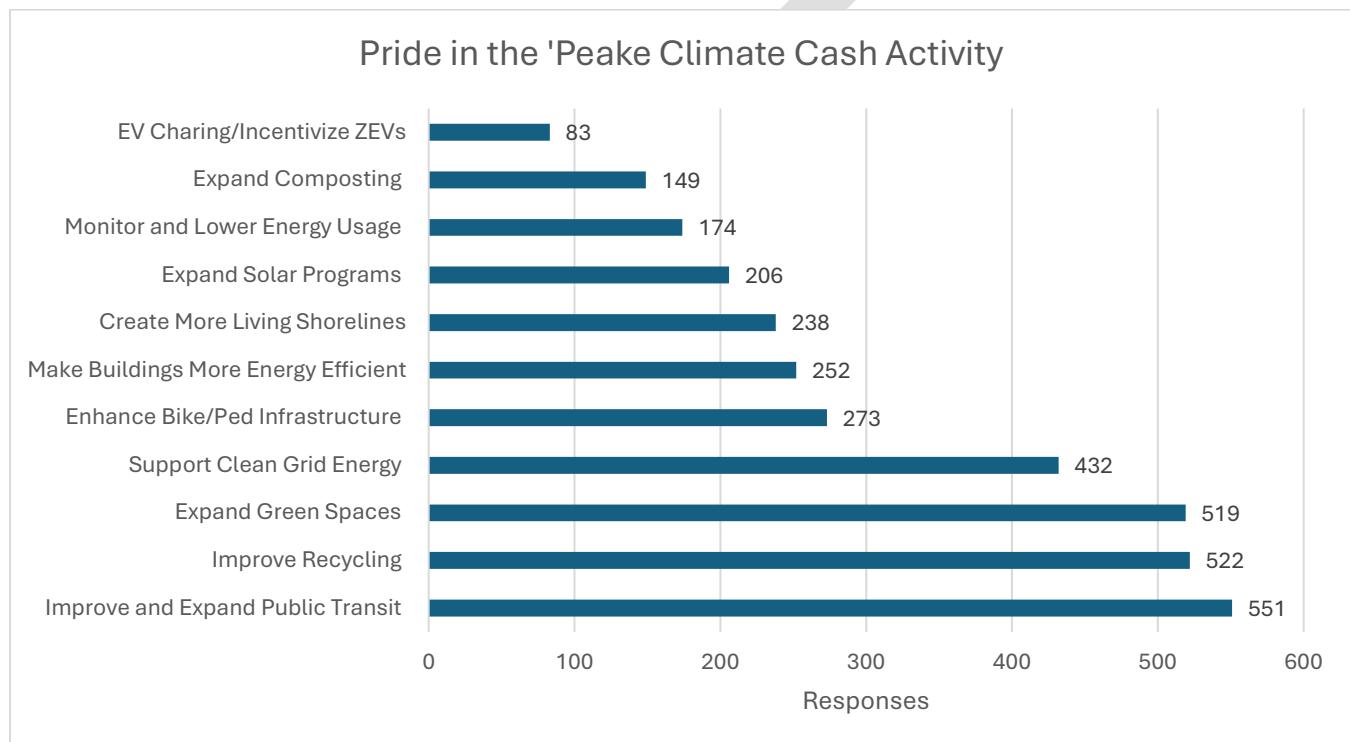


Figure 41. Pride in the 'Peake Climate Cash Activity'.

Event Highlights

Public Transit

While engaging with community members, several referenced the importance and need to properly invest in public transit. Many referred to other regions they lived in that allowed for easier, more reliable, and more efficient use of public transit, allowing them to reduce their individual carbon footprints naturally.

Some described that while they do not live too far away from their localities' urban center, the lack of public transit to the more suburban or less urban areas was significantly lacking, and some of the transit offered was unsafe to access from where they live.

A conversational throughline for most community members was that they wished they had more access to public transit.

Recycling

With Pride in the 'Peake taking place in Chesapeake, many community members expressed frustration with the recent decision to remove curbside recycling in Chesapeake. When informed about the option of drop-off recycling, some expressed additional frustration that the drop-off sites are often overflowing. Community members also felt that the way the referendum on recycling was phrased on the ballot was confusing, and listing the \$10 cost made the program appear more cost-prohibitive than other municipal investments, despite that not necessarily being the case. Notably, younger participants were much more enthusiastic about recycling.

Many community members expressed wanting the option to participate in curbside recycling and shared that they saw it as an easily accessible method of participating in a sustainable lifestyle that helped to reduce their individual carbon footprint. Additionally, several community members expressed a desire to have more education available to the public about how to properly recycle, including the importance of reducing contamination to maximize the items accepted for recycling.

Green Learning Guides

Many educators and parents noted that they appreciated the presence of the Green Learning guides. We encouraged them to contact us directly if they would like additional booklets for their classrooms. Several appreciated that the standards of learning (SOL) requirements are incorporated into the learning guides.



Figure 42. Pride in the 'Peake event outreach. Attendees had just participated in the Climate Cash activity.

Plastic Free July 2nd & July 9th

Details: July 2 & 9, 2025, 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM, at the Norfolk Botanical Gardens (

Attendance: 100 (combined over the two dates)

The CCAP Engagement team participated in the Norfolk Botanical Garden's Plastic Free July series, which encourages the public to consider alternatives to single-use plastics and divert plastics from entering the waste stream. The Norfolk Botanical Garden is one of Norfolk's largest green spaces and has a strong commitment to sustainability.

Climate Cash Results

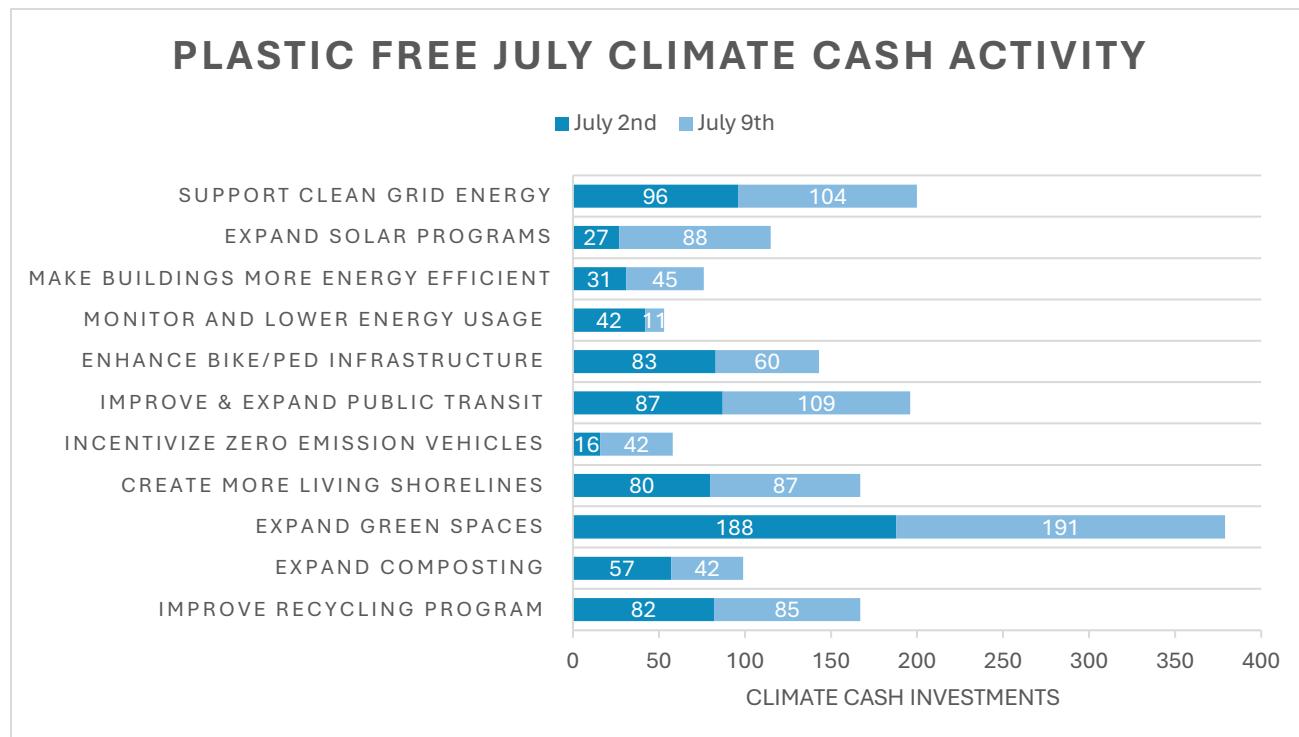


Figure 43. Plastic Free July Climate Cash activity. The bar chart captures data for July 2, 2025, and July 9, 2025.

Event Highlights

Expanding and Protecting Green Spaces

Expanding and protecting green spaces received the most support and discussion. Given that the tabling took place at a sustainability event at a large green space, it made sense that the majority of attendees supported protecting green spaces. Many participants expressed the desire for additional green spaces throughout Hampton Roads.

Improve and Expand Public Transit

Many of the participants were interested in improving public transit. Several people compared the public transit in Hampton Roads to other areas they had lived or visited and expressed a strong desire for upgrades and expansion to the current system. They cited that they would utilize it more if it were more reliable and could efficiently move them where they needed to go.



Figure 40 Plastic Free July outreach event. The image depicts participants determining which actions to support with their Climate Cash.

Healthy Portsmouth Coalition

Details: June 30, 2025, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM, via Zoom

Attendance: 20

The Healthy Portsmouth Coalition is a city-wide health and wellness initiative led by a group of community leaders committed to changing the policies, systems, and environments that affect Portsmouth's neighborhoods, health care institutions, community organizations, schools, and workplace to improve health outcomes. The CCAP Engagement Team presented to the group about the Climate Action Plan, as well as encouraged them to participate in Survey II.

Engagement Highlights

Members highlighted the importance of improving public transit, citing that their low-income clients cannot reliably get to necessary healthcare-related appointments and work due to inefficient public transit infrastructure. One member expressed concern for any plan that doesn't consider the needs of the ALICE population (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed households), as they will be unable to access the resources or participate if they are not considered preemptively.

Portsmouth Department of Social Services Event

Details: July 19, 2025, 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM, 1701 High Street, Portsmouth, VA

Engagements: 165

The Portsmouth Department of Health and Social Services invited the HRPDC to bring the Climate Cash activity to their annual services fair. This event aimed to connect community members with services, and for the HRPDC, it was to inform and engage the public about the development of the Climate Action Plan.

Climate Cash Results

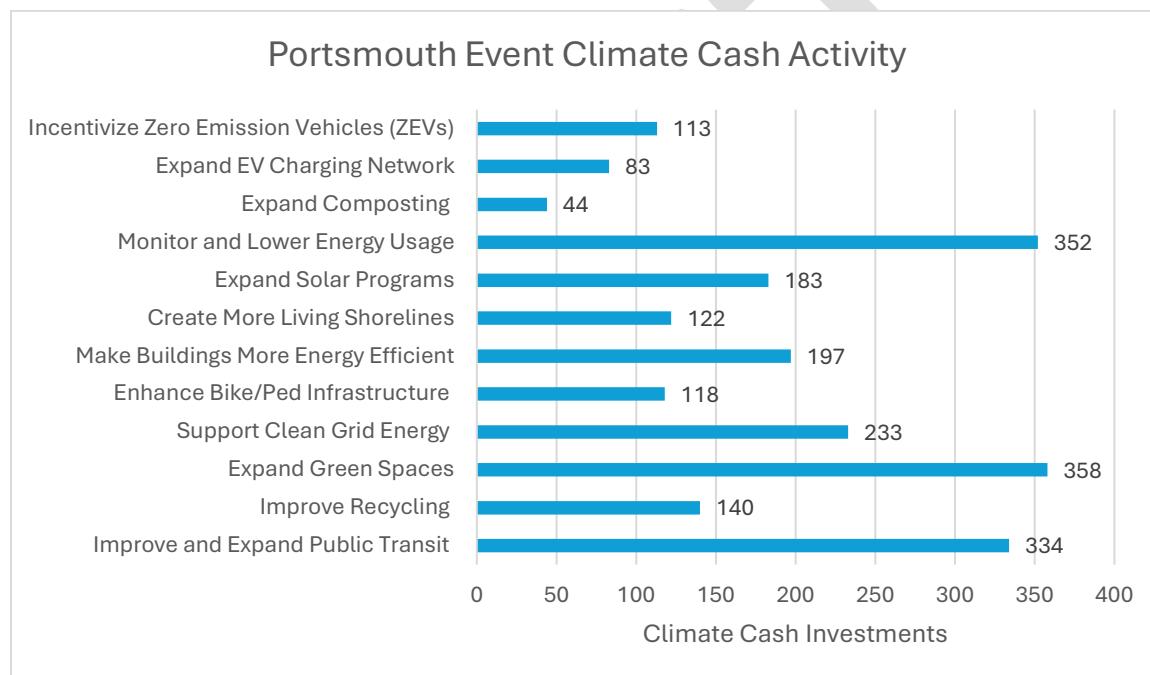


Figure 45. Portsmouth Event Climate Cash Activity.

Engagement Highlights

Public Transit

A common comment was the wish for more transit to go to work or the beach. People were typically excited to win transit passes, except kids who preferred fidget balls.

Green Spaces

We heard several comments about more trees and green spaces. The event was held in a large asphalt parking lot on a 90 degree day so heat was on everyone's mind.

Giveaway Items

The transit passes, earth stress balls, flashlight toolkits, stadium bags, green cups, and pop-it stress balls were popular with community members.



Figure 46. Portsmouth Department of Social Services event, Climate Cash activity.

MyFuture757 Event

Details: July 25, 2025, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM, at the Regional Building, 723 Woodlake Dr., Chesapeake, VA 23320.

Attendance: 75

The HRPDC, in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club and Lead757, hosted the MyFuture757 event at the HRPDC. The event aimed to introduce young people to different careers and initiatives across the Hampton Roads region. The CCAP Engagement Team set up and informed the attendees about the Climate Action Plan, GHG emissions, and the importance of a plan for Hampton Roads.



Figure 47. MyFuture757 engagement event.

Newport News Transit Center

Details: August 12, 2025, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM at the Newport News Transit Center – 150 35th St, Newport News, VA 23607

Engagements: 136

The CCAP Engagement Team set up at the Newport News Transit Center, which serves as one of the main transportation hubs on the Peninsula in Hampton Roads. The Transit Center is utilized by a large, transportation-vulnerable population. This outreach effort aimed to get additional perspectives from socially vulnerable populations about the proposed actions associated with the Climate Action Plan using the Climate Cash activity.

Climate Cash Results

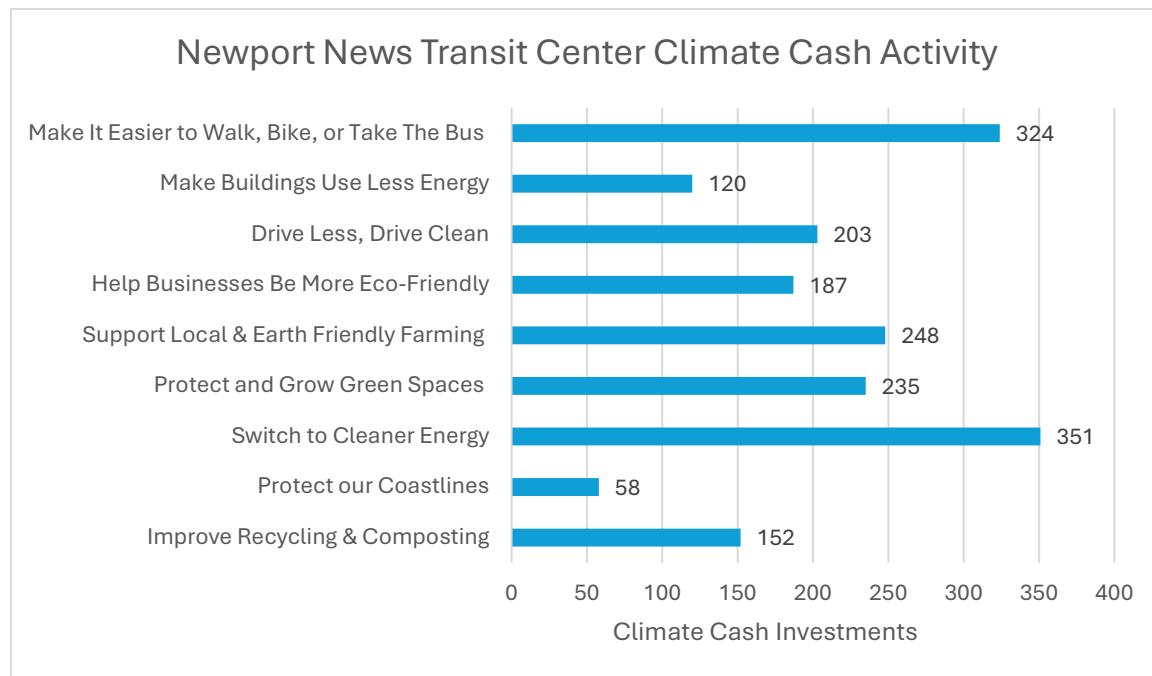


Figure 48. Newport News Transit Center Climate Cash Activity.

Engagement Highlights

Switch to Cleaner Energy

The action with the most investments was “Switch to Cleaner Energy”. With many discussing a desire to utilize greener and more sustainable means of energy, but feeling resource-limited, or otherwise prevented. A public comment received stated the following: *“My HOA not allowing solar panels to be installed – we need to push for change.”* This comment indicates that while there is a desire to adopt some of these cleaner energy solutions, there may be logistical obstacles to implementation.

Make it Easier to Walk, Bike, or Take the Bus

Almost everyone who came to the table to participate in the activity expressed a desire for greater investment in public transit. Many of the participants indicated that they are reliant on public transportation, but do not feel that it is able to meet their needs. One public comment stated, *“Need more buses. It should not take me 5 hours to get to Beech Mount Drive from Downtown Newport News.”* Another written comment stated, *“I had to lose a good job this year due to the buses stop working [at] early times.”* This further cements the feedback from the VMT survey and transportation professionals who indicated how difficult it would be to implement successful and sustainable multimodal options for the public in Hampton Roads.

Norfolk/Tides Game, Newtown Station

Details: September 18, 2025, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM at the Newtown Light Rail Station.

Engagements: 50

The CCAP engagement team partnered with Hampton Roads Transit again to set up at the Newtown Transit Station in Norfolk. Newtown serves as a transportation hub for three buses and Norfolk's light rail, the Tide. On September 18th, Norfolk's baseball team held a noon game, which the CCAP engagement team hoped to capitalize on in terms of attendance, since the Tide light rail runs along the route for the game. Unfortunately, due to the weather, the turnout was lower than expected. The team was still able to inform and engage with transit users.

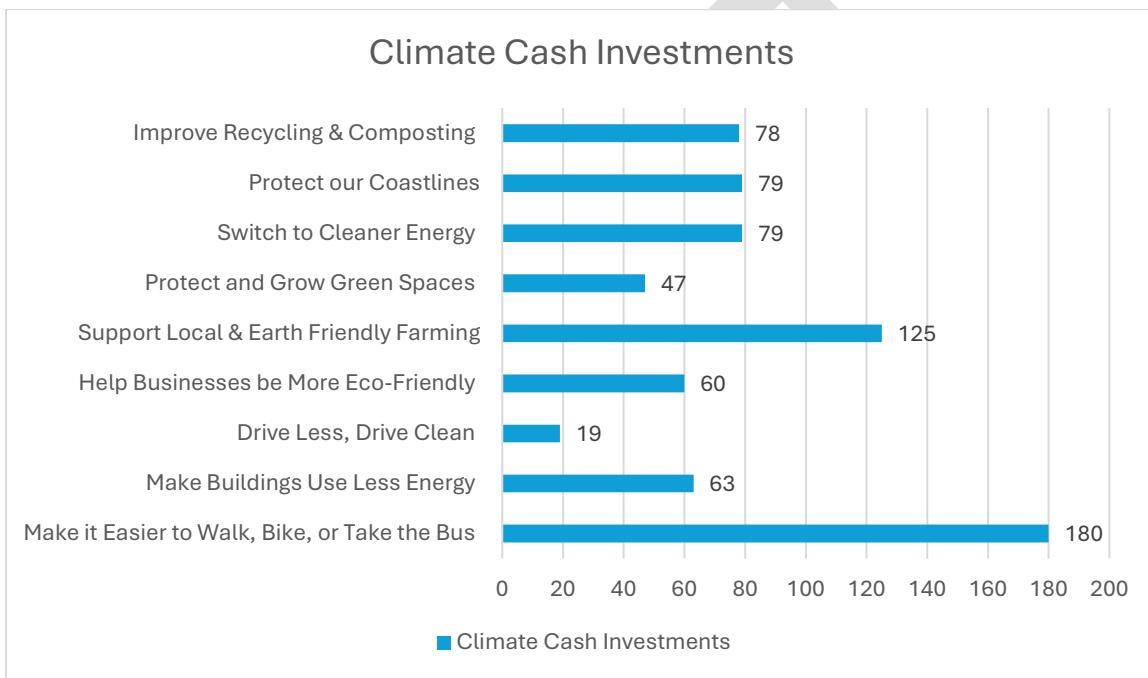


Figure 49. Climate Cash Activity at Newtown Station on September 18, 2025.



Figure 41. Photo of outreach at Newtown Station. Staff are pictured behind the table with the Climate Cash investment jars.

Engagement Highlights

Higher, More Visible Climate Cash Signs

The team used sticks to elevate the labels on the Climate Cash investment jars. Participants appeared to have an easier time reading the labels, and fewer people were observed bending over to see what the labels said.

Climate Cash

For the CCAP, the engagement team opted to utilize a derivative of participatory budgeting, creating a token currency called “Climate Cash” (pictured below). Participants were presented with proposed actions and asked to allocate their Climate Cash, which was available in increments of \$1, \$5, and \$10, to the actions they would like to see invested in.

Participants seemed to enjoy the opportunity to directly influence the “green” investments made in the Hampton Roads region. While the prize wheel was a significant draw, they were not deterred when they had to “help us out” by using their *Climate Cash* to invest before spinning the prize wheel. While the

money was not real, many community members took the challenge of prioritizing investments with scarce resources very seriously, and some even took several minutes before determining their final selections.

More on Participatory Budgeting

Climate Cash is a form of participatory budgeting. Participatory budgeting is a democratic process that allows community members to influence how to spend a portion of a public budget. It empowers residents to identify community needs, brainstorm project ideas, and vote on which proposals to fund with real public money. This approach is highly effective for civic engagement because it moves beyond simple feedback, giving citizens tangible power and a direct stake in the outcomes of public spending. Making the Climate Action Plan budgeting process more engaging and transparent helps build stronger communities and fosters greater trust between residents and their government. This direct civic involvement provides CPRG administrators with more insight into potential future spending and implementation funds.

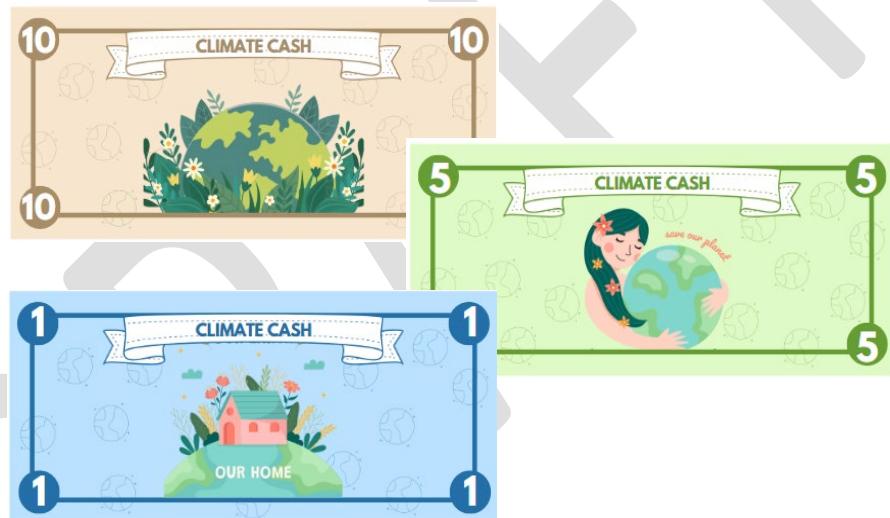


Figure 51 Climate Cash examples.



Figure 52. Image of someone participating in the Climate Cash activity.

Online Climate Cash Activity

To make the Climate Cash activity more accessible, the team created an online version using Stanford's open-source platform. The results as of September 25, 2025. Updated results and the outreach methods utilized to socialize the activity will be included in the final engagement summary.

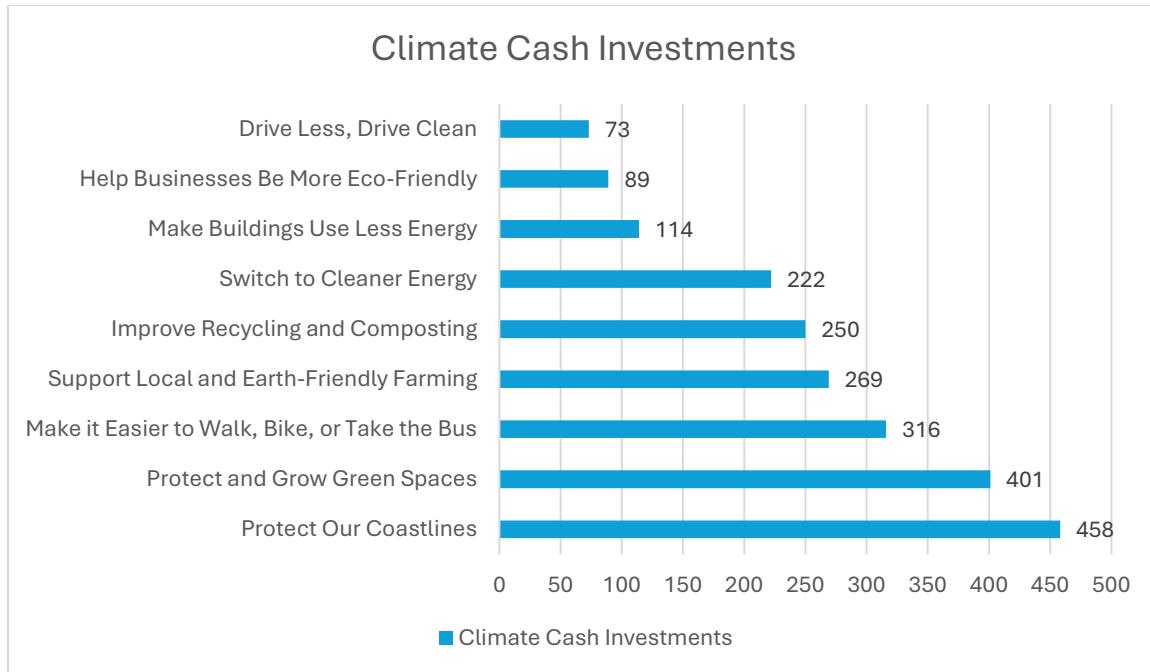


Figure 53. Online Climate Cash Activity investment results.

Selected 0 of 5 total tokens.
 You still have 5 tokens left.

3. Click the "Submit My Vote" button when you're ready to submit.

[Submit My Vote...](#)

<p>Make Buildings Use Less Energy Help homes and businesses use less electricity and heating. This could mean making buildings more energy-efficient or encouraging them to use cleaner energy sources.</p> <p>Tokens used: 0</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> + - </div> 	<p>Protect Our Coastlines Help create "living shorelines" using natural materials like plants and oysters to protect our coasts from storms and rising water.</p> <p>Tokens used: 0</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> + - </div> 	<p>Drive Less, Drive Clean Help more people get electric cars and make sure there are plenty of places to charge them. This includes public fleet conversions and public charging infrastructure.</p> <p>Tokens used: 0</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> + - </div> 
<p>Help Businesses Be More Eco-Friendly Support companies in creating plans to reduce their pollution and use less energy.</p> <p>Tokens used: 0</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> + - </div> 	<p>Protect and Grow Green Spaces Plant more trees in cities, protect natural areas, and create more green spaces. This helps clean our air and water, and provides homes for animals.</p> <p>Tokens used: 0</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> + - </div> 	<p>Improve Recycling and Composting Make it easier for everyone to recycle more and turn food scraps into healthy soil (compost). This helps to reduce waste.</p> <p>Tokens used: 0</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> + - </div> 
<p>Switch to Cleaner Energy Encourage more solar power and other clean energy sources for our homes and businesses. We can also make our power grid stronger so the lights stay on, even with more clean energy.</p> <p>Tokens used: 0</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> + - </div> 	<p>Support Local and Earth-Friendly Farming Encourage farming practices that are good for the environment, like using less water or fewer chemicals. Help schools buy fresh food from nearby farms and support growing food in community gardens.</p> <p>Tokens used: 0</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> + - </div> 	<p>Make it Easier to Walk, Bike, or Take the Bus Create more ways for people to get around without using a car, like better bus routes, safer bike paths, and nice sidewalks. This includes expanding public transit and walking and biking paths.</p> <p>Tokens used: 0</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> + - </div> 

Figure 54. Screenshot of the online Climate Cash Activity.

Climate Action Plan Interviews

The CCAP team conducted long-form interviews with members of community-based organizations (CBOs) to solicit community-level feedback from organizations that have established relationships within Hampton Roads.

To compensate interviewees for their time, the HRPDC offered participants a \$25 gift card and a handwritten note thanking them for their input.

Questions

1. What, if anything, do you know about the Climate Action Plan being developed for Hampton Roads?
2. Have you heard about how things like burning fossil fuels can affect our weather and climate? If so, what have you heard?
3. What more do you need to know about greenhouse gas emissions, changing weather patterns, and extreme storm events? What's the best way to inform your community?
4. What kinds of projects would you like to see funded through climate-related funding in Hampton Roads?
 - 4.1. Some examples could include rainwater gardens, community composting workshops, flood insurance resources, and green workforce development programs.
5. What are the most important things that you'd like grant administrators to consider when deciding how to spend these grant planning funds?
 - 5.1. Please consider what priorities you and your community share that the HRPDC should consider while administering this grant.
6. What are the biggest challenges your community faces related to things like weather, pollution, or access to resources?
 - 6.1. Please provide examples if possible.
7. What comes to mind when you think about your community being prepared for high-risk weather events like floods, heat waves, or extreme storms?
 - 7.1. In what ways do you feel like your community is/isn't prepared? How do you anticipate your community being impacted?
8. Are there any places in your community where you feel the air or water isn't as clean as it should be? Or where people are overexposed to pollution or other hazards?
 - 8.1. Why do you think it is polluted? Do you know where the pollution is coming from?
9. Are there any socially vulnerable people/populations in your community? Are there any specific considerations in the plan that should be made for them?
 - 9.1. Socially vulnerable people are individuals or groups who face a higher risk of harm, discrimination, or disadvantage due to a combination of social, economic, and political factors. This vulnerability stems from systemic inequalities that limit their ability to anticipate, cope with, and recover from various stressors, such as natural disasters, economic crises, or health emergencies.

10. If you could change just one thing to make your community healthier, safer, and more sustainable, what would it be?
10.1. Please share why that change is important to you.
11. Would you want to see the increase of more "green" jobs, cleaner and more modes of transportation, increased property values, and swimmable/fishable waterways?
11.1. Please try to share why or why not you would/n't want increased investment in these items.
12. What's the best way for you to learn about things that might affect your community, like the development of the Climate Action Plan?
12.1. Would you prefer emails, meetings, posters in community spaces, webinars, websites with guiding information, etc. What makes it hard for people in your community to participate in civic engagement activities such as this?

Interviewees

1. Blair Durham, Black Brand Hampton Roads Regional Black Chamber of Commerce
2. Charvalla West, United Way Virginia Peninsula
3. Aleea Slappy, City of Norfolk Chief Diversity Officer
4. Cierra Lewis, YWCA South Hampton Roads
5. Mary-Carson Sounders-Stiff, Wetlands Watch
6. Vivian Oden, Hampton Roads Community Foundation

Upcoming

7. Tyla Matteson, Sierra Club

Feedback Received

Interviews are ongoing, and responses will be fully incorporated in the final version.

Public Comments

Public comments received by the CCAP Engagement team have been attached in the appendix.

Lessons Learned

The engagement and outreach process for this grant has allowed the CCAP team to review different methods and adjust their efforts in hopes of yielding greater success in future engagement efforts. The CCAP has allowed the team to try new approaches to engagement.

Participatory Budgeting

When conducting initial outreach events the team did not have an activity or an engaging way to get the public's attention for the Climate Action Plan. They noticed that other tables typically had an activity, even if just a prize wheel, to draw the public in. Additionally, the team noticed that it was difficult to persuade people in public to stop and take surveys related to the Climate Action Plan. Taking a survey in public at an event was seen as too involved or burdensome by most of the public approaching the table.

The team discussed ways in which they better educate, engage, and involve the public in the Climate Action Plan, and discussed different potential activities.

Ultimately, the team landed on the Climate Cash activity. There are several examples of civic engagement using “funny money”. Using "funny money" **gamifies** the complex process of budget allocation, transforming it into a simple and tangible exercise that is more accessible to the general public. This hands-on approach makes civic engagement feel less intimidating and more immediately impactful, as people can physically or virtually "spend" their money on the projects they value most. It also allowed the CCAP team to have additional data points and insights related to public sentiments and priorities related to the Climate Action Plan and the associated actions.

The Climate Cash activity quickly became popular during outreach events and was well received by the public. The CCAP Engagement team noticed that overall, participants of all demographics would take their time and consider where they were placing their Climate Cash investments. Due to its success, the Climate Cash activity was even specifically requested by the Portsmouth Department of Social Services for their July 19th event.

Gamification and Digitization

The CCAP team noticed a slowdown in responses to Survey II and suspected that the survey might be too technical or lengthy. The team then discussed digitizing and further gamifying the Climate Cash activity. They explored different online platforms for participatory budgets and landed on the [Stanford Participatory Budgeting Platform](#) and [Polco](#) as the two platforms that could offer what the team was looking for. Stanford's Participatory Budgeting Platform is open-source and free, but Polco's quote exceeded the HRPDC's budget. Therefore, the team opted for Stanford's open-source and free product that offered most of the functionality the team was seeking.

The Climate Cash activity was then added to the Climate Action Plan webpage. Shifting the gamified budgeting process to a digital platform makes civic engagement more engaging by removing physical barriers and allowing residents to participate from any device, at any time. This approach is helpful because it significantly broadens the community's reach to a more diverse audience and provides immediate, transparent results as collective priorities take shape in real-time. It also provides a more straightforward way to interact with the concept of Climate Action Plan actions and measures, particularly for those unfamiliar with the topic.

Simplifying Language and Accessibility

The team quickly found that not everyone was familiar with the concepts and proposed actions initially featured as part of the Climate Cash activity, due to the technical phrasing used. Over time, the team reduced the number of actions displayed on the mason jars by combining some of them and simplifying the language. This made the jars with the attached actions more visible, the choices to choose from feel less overwhelming for participants, and the overall activity more comprehensible.

The team also noted that in the future, the labels should have backgrounds that better relate to the action, rather than a generic green space background. Additionally, the team plans to make the labels higher on the mason jars so that they are easier to read.

Location Informed Sentiment

The team noted that, based on the location and the demographics of the population being engaged, the priorities might shift. For example, at the Plastic Free July events hosted at the Norfolk Botanical Gardens, most respondents demonstrated an affinity for protecting green spaces. While at the Newport News Transit Center, the majority of participants leaned towards investing in public transit (although it should be noted that this continued to be highly prioritized by the public). The CCAP Engagement team noted that for future engagements, location and sentiment could possibly be additional factors to track.

A Vast MSA

One of the biggest challenges to engagement efforts for the CCAP engagement team was the size of the MSA. Within the MSA are 20 different localities, and over 1.8 million people. This made it difficult to determine where to focus engagement efforts (in person outreach, digital ads, mailing postcards, etc.) in a financially sustainably and feasible manner. The team had less engagement with the western and northern areas of the region than initially hoped for. To try and overcome this, the CCAP engagement reached out to Public Information Officers (PIOs) and encouraged them to share the Climate Action Plan and Survey II with their communication channels. A couple of PIOs engaged, and that led to some additional responses. Engaging with the northeastern NC part of the MSA was also difficult due to distance, lack of previously formed relationships, and a lack of familiarity with engagement best practices for the area.

More Engagement, Sooner

Based on the lessons learned above, the CCAP Engagement team would recommend doing additional outreach in more locations, sooner to better socialize the plan and get more feedback from the public.

Survey Platforms

There were several complaints about the ArcGIS Survey123 platform and the ranking tool. Due to responses about being unable to rank actions, the team added an open-ended feature and adjusted Survey II to note the issue. In the future, the team may avoid using this functionality on surveys to avoid respondent drop off and frustration.