

# Trends in Massachusetts Sustainability Commissions

## Energy and Emissions Reduction:

- Sharon and Lexington installed free home LED lights and energy assessments to members of the community
- Sharon offers discounts on more efficient toilet and washer systems to save water
- Salem, Ayer, Westborough, and Acton switched lights in their municipal buildings to LED lights
- Salem, Lexington, Natick, and Harvard added solar panels to school and municipal buildings
- South Hadley worked with local car dealerships to reduce the cost of electric vehicles

## Education:

- Sharon has implemented "Walking School Busses" at different schools
- North Andover and Greenfield have implemented composting education programs in schools
- Concord organized a sustainable landscaping fair
- Dedham Water Works Public Education Campaign showed the history of water usage in Dedham and how to conserve water as an individual
- Medway is developing an educational program for homeowners in town to learn about residential energy use and how to limit energy consumption

## Waste, Trash, and Recycling:

- North Andover organized a town wide cleanup day
- North Andover, Littleton, Natick, and Cambridge are trying to invest in rainwater barrels for their towns
- Salem, Westborough, Medway, Dedham, Ashland, and Northampton passed plastic bag reduction ordinances
- Littleton's Sustainability Committee is working on making "Boomerang Bags" made out of recycled fabrics

## Data Collection and Organization:

- Acton worked with Cadmus to conduct a greenhouse gas inventory report
- South Hadley Published a study on how much water the average resident uses
- Concord is working on an indoor natural gas study
- Medway is studying the effects of a potential "Renewable Energy Revolving Fund," where a portion of the money saved on more environmentally efficient buildings would go to other sustainability related projects pursued by the town

## Green Urban Planning:

- Cambridge's commission made green infrastructure plan, conducted a neighborhood solar tour, and opened an urban farm
- Cambridge, Natick, and Greenfield work with their DPWs to plant trees around town
- Lexington and Concord are working on sustainable building policies
- Westborough has secured zoning for renewable energy generating facilities

## Sustainability Related Grants:

- School Recycling Assistance Grant (North Andover)
- Green Communities (North Andover, Salem, Ayer, Acton, Harvard, South Hadley, Lexington, Westborough, Stoughton, Bedford, Cambridge)
- Community Choice Aggregation (Salem, Harvard)
- Climate Resiliency Grant (Concord, Natick, Weston)
- MassSave Energy Audit (Harvard)
- RISE Audit (Harvard, Medway)



# Trends in Massachusetts Climate Action Plans

**Purpose:** The first action Norwood's Sustainability Commission will be tasked with is drafting a Climate Action Plan that documents the steps Norwood will take to become a more environmentally sustainable community. Below is a list of ideas described in climate action plans in other towns across Massachusetts.

**Emissions Reduction Targets:** Towns and cities across Massachusetts are setting goals to reduce carbon emissions in their climate action plans. Below are a few examples of emissions reduction targets Massachusetts municipalities are setting. (Norwood must first conduct a municipal emissions audit and calculate its current emissions in order to develop an accurate emissions reduction target).

- Bedford has committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 20% below 2004 levels by 2020
- Medway has committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to below 20.8% in 5 years
- Concord has promised to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 25% under 2008 levels by 2020 and 50% by 2050
- Amherst passed a resolution to reduce carbon emissions to 35% below 1997 levels and to transfer to 100% renewable energy in municipal buildings
- Salem plans to reduce emissions to 20% below 2009 levels in 5 years
- Cambridge aims to reduce carbon emissions to 20% below 1990 levels, improve efficiency of electricity use by 12.5%, reduce natural gas and fuel oil use by 10%, reduce emissions associated with electricity generation by 40%, purchase 20% of electricity from green power sources, increase average fuel economy to 40 MPG, reduce vehicle miles traveled by 10%, and increase recycling rate to 60%.
- Sharon proposes to lower carbon emissions to net zero by 2050

**Resiliency Plans:** Natick, Northampton, Greenfield, and Lexington have developed resiliency plans, in addition to climate action plans, to prepare for and adapt to the effects climate change will have on their residents. These plans include community resilience building projects where community organizations work with citizens to prepare everyone for potential natural disasters caused by climate change.

**Green Infrastructure/Urban Design:** Green infrastructure is the idea that buildings should be designed to reduce their environmental impact. LEED, ENERGY STAR, Green Globes, and other green building organizations give awards to buildings that use less water and electricity. Municipalities (including Bedford, Acton, Dedham, Greenfield, Cambridge, and Northampton) have discussed plans to invest in more sustainable buildings to limit their resource use and carbon emissions in their respective climate action plans. The aforementioned municipalities have also proposed investments in green infrastructure, such as sidewalks, bicycle pathways, green rooftops, and tree canopies in an effort to reduce traffic, carbon emissions, and the urban heat island effect.

**Other Climate Action Plan Proposals:** Westborough, Salem, Cambridge and Concord's climate action plans include proposals to reduce the demand for fossil fuels, underground metals, and minerals by using more sustainable forms of energy. Greenfield's climate action proposal includes plans to improve economic sustainability and resilience by investing in local businesses. Greenfield also plans to achieve historical and cultural sustainability by investing in local artists and art education.

## COMPOSTING

Visit: <https://blackearthcompost.com/residential-curb-side-compost-pickup/> to pre-register for Black Earth's residential compost pickup program in Norwood free of charge