

July 17, 2024

Subject: Beyond a Number: Making Grand Rapids a Climate Justice Leader

It is critical we take these immediate actions and be an example for cities of Michigan and our country. Citizens Climate Lobby is both National and International organization in supporting strong solutions for our climate issues in reducing carbon emissions with clean energy, forestry projects, electrification efficiency, and putting a price on carbon. Local actions for equity distribution and supporting funds is a necessity in addressing mitigation and adaptation for all our citizens.

As the second largest city in Michigan, Grand Rapids should be a municipal leader on climate action and climate justice. This is why I am calling on you and your colleagues in City Hall to take concrete actions to help achieve the City of Grand Rapids' community-wide emissions reduction goals of 62.8% per capita by 2030 and 100% by 2050.

We cannot meet these goals without implementing meaningful policies and providing adequate funding. You must prioritize the city's stated goals by increasing investment in public transit, walkability, and bikeability, especially in Black and Brown neighborhoods in Grand Rapids historically impacted by environmental injustices. The city's Office of Sustainability should also have more funds and staff to carry out this work, which should be shared on a public dashboard to increase transparency and accountability.

Finally, please publicly acknowledge that the goals you have set are a floor, not a ceiling. I urge you to take every opportunity for additional support or funding that will help us reach our emissions reduction goals sooner than planned. In the midst of an undeniable climate crisis, our community is counting on you to provide ambitious leadership. Please show us you are up to the challenge.

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