

July 17, 2024

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

My husband and I live in Grand Rapids, and just had our first daughter. We hope to raise her in Grand Rapids and show her all the beautiful nature here in our wonderful state. However, in order to ensure these areas are preserved for future generations, our city must lead the way in climate action.

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.

I live in Eastown, and work downtown (less than 2 miles away) but do not feel safe riding my bike on the shoulder of busy roads nor can I take the bus due to its lengthy wait times and infrequent schedules. If I cannot make a 2 mile commute without having to drive, driving must be necessary for almost everyone living and working in Grand Rapids.

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.

Thank you.

Audra Blodgett  
328 Carlton Ave SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49506  
audra.passinault@gmail.com