

HOUSTON CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

RESILIENT HOUSTON

TWO YEAR REPORT

MARCH 23, 2022





As we kick-start 2022 and reflect on what Houstonians have overcome over the past six years, I am encouraged by our work to become a more equitable, resilient, and sustainable city. Our journey towards resilience and climate action continues, and is more pressing than ever. We have grown stronger by overcoming hurricanes and floods, extreme winter temperatures, an ongoing pandemic, and threats to our critical infrastructure.

We started 2021 with a more hopeful outlook, but our communities have continued to be tested throughout the recovery phases of major disruptions. 2021 was a year of transformation. The historical winter storm of 2021 underlined the need to focus on our critical infrastructure – our grid and our water systems. Tropical Storm Nicholas further highlighted the vulnerabilities in our stormwater systems; impacting our capacity to keep our homes cool and comfortable while temperatures reached record highs over the summer. These, combined with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic - the rise in Delta and Omicron cases - have exacerbated inequities, particularly in our most vulnerable communities.

But we haven't stood still.

In October of 2021, the world convened in Glasgow, Scotland at the United Nations COP26 to send a resounding message. While national governments discussed the importance of an equitable and just energy transition, sub-national delegations and cities took charge in developing programs, securing funding, and strengthening partnerships with the private sector to reach net zero and highlight the importance of climate action and adaptation. Houston's story, as the Energy Capital of the world, served to showcase the leadership taking place in our region.

But climate action and adaptation can only take us so far. 2020 brought a reckoning of an unequal society, showcasing our need to act now to break down barriers that continue to keep Houstonians marginalized.

There is no climate action without resilience, and there is no resilience without equity. Equity is at the center of all discussions must be prioritized as we build forward to recover and prepare, strengthen and transform our society.

This two year report outlines what has been accomplished, what is in progress and what we need to focus in 2022 to continue our journey of resilience and climate action. Our priorities continue to evolve and the way we work must continue to do so also.

Last fall, I institutionalized the Office of Resilience and Sustainability. With a new Chief Resilience and Sustainability Officer and a dedicated team, Houston's combined new office aligns both, Resilient Houston and the Climate Action Plan, bringing departments and external partners together to address the shocks and stress that we face, while positioning Houston as a leader and ensuring that every Houstonian thrives.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Sylvester Turner". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Sylvester Turner, Mayor





RESILIENT HOUSTON CHAPTERS & GOALS

Resilient Houston's framework of chapters and goals was developed and launched in February 2020. Houston remains committed to this framework for a more just, green, and resilient future to benefit Houstonians, neighborhoods, bayous, the city, and the region.

CHAPTER 1: PREPARED & THRIVING HOUSTONIANS

-  **GOAL 1** We will support Houstonians to be prepared for an uncertain future.
-  **GOAL 2** We will expand access to wealth-building and employment opportunities.
-  **GOAL 3** We will improve safety and well-being for all Houstonians.

CHAPTER 2: SAFE & EQUITABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

-  **GOAL 4** We will ensure that all neighborhoods have equitably resourced plans.
-  **GOAL 5** We will invest in arts and culture to strengthen community resilience.
-  **GOAL 6** We will ensure all neighborhoods are healthy, safe, and climate ready.
-  **GOAL 7** We will build up, not out, to promote smart growth as Houston's population increases.

CHAPTER 3: HEALTHY & CONNECTED BAYOUS

-  **GOAL 8** We will live safely with water.
-  **GOAL 9** We will embrace the role of our bayous as Houston's front yard.

CHAPTER 4: ACCESSIBLE & ADAPTIVE CITY

-  **GOAL 10** We will demonstrate leadership on climate change through action.
-  **GOAL 11** We will modernize Houston's infrastructure to address the challenges of the future.
-  **GOAL 12** We will advance equity and inclusion for all.
-  **GOAL 13** We will transform city government to operationalize resilience and build trust.

CHAPTER 5: INNOVATIVE & INTEGRATED REGION

-  **GOAL 14** We will continue to invest in the region's diverse economy.
-  **GOAL 15** We will increase regional transportation choice.
-  **GOAL 16** We will manage our land and water resources from prairie to bay.
-  **GOAL 17** We will enhance regional emergency preparedness and response.
-  **GOAL 18** We will leverage existing and new investments and partnerships



CLIMATE ACTION PLAN FOCUS AREAS & GOALS

TRANSPORTATION

-  Goal 1: Shift regional fleet to electric and low-emission vehicles.
-  Goal 2: Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita.
-  Goal 3: Provide equitable and safe mobility choices.

ENERGY TRANSITION

-  Goal 1: Grow Houston's investment in renewable and resilient energy.
-  Goal 2: Make Houston the leader in carbon capture technology and energy innovation.
-  Goal 3: Restore, protect, and enhance Houston's natural ability to capture and store carbon.

BUILDING OPTIMIZATION

-  Goal 1: Reduce building energy use and maximize savings.
-  Goal 2: Expand investment in energy efficiency.
-  Goal 3: Invest in skilled local jobs to optimize building operations.

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

-  Goal 1: Reduce waste and transform the circular economy.
-  Goal 2: Optimize waste operations and create power from waste.
-  Goal 3: Ensure safe and cost-effective long-term disposal capacity.

Target Status Dashboard

Rice University's Kinder Institute for Urban Research, an implementation partner for the Resilient Houston strategy and the Climate Action Plan, is providing annual updates on the city's climate and resilience metrics on its Resilience and Recovery Tracker, which can be accessed at <https://resilience.rice.edu>.

Resilient Houston has 18 main targets, one for each of the 18 goals in Resilient Houston and across the individual, neighborhood, bayou, city, and regional scales. The Climate Action Plan is organized into 12 targets through four focus areas: Transportation, Energy Transition, Building Optimization, and Materials Management.

The Climate and Resilience Metrics section of the tracker provides an update on the activities that are implemented annually to meet these targets, related initiatives, and interactive data components. This website is complementary to the annual report and is intended to provide detailed information behind each individual goal and target.

RESILIENT HOUSTON AT TWO YEARS BY THE NUMBERS

A snapshot of Resilient Houston after two years of implementation shows that out of 62 prioritized actions, 58 are in progress (95%), 3 are paused (3%), and 1 is complete (2%).



**CHAPTER 1:
PREPARED & THRIVING HOUSTONIANS**
All 11 Actions in Chapter 1 are in progress.



**CHAPTER 2:
SAFE & EQUITABLE NEIGHBORHOODS**
All 13 Actions in Chapter 2 are in progress



**CHAPTER 3:
HEALTHY & CONNECTED BAYOUS**
All 6 Actions in Chapter 3 are in progress.



**CHAPTER 4:
ACCESSIBLE & ADAPTIVE CITY**
Out of 14 Actions in Chapter 4, 13 Actions are in progress, 1 is complete.



**CHAPTER 5:
INNOVATIVE & INTEGRATED REGION**
Out of 18 Actions in Chapter 5, 15 Actions are in progress, 3 are paused or not started.



HOUSTON CAP AT TWO YEARS BY THE NUMBERS

A snapshot of Climate Action Plan after two years of implementation shows that out of 29 prioritized actions, 24 are in progress (83%), and 5 are paused (17%)



TRANSPORTATION

All 6 Actions in Transportation are in progress.



ENERGY TRANSITION

Out of 9 Actions in Energy Transition, 8 Actions are in progress, and 1 is paused or not started.



BUILDING OPTIMIZATION

All 6 Actions in Building Optimization are in progress.



MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

Out of 8 Actions in Materials Management, 4 Actions are in progress, 4 are paused or not started.

2021-2022 RESILIENCE TIMELINE

The second year implementing Resilient Houston and Climate Action Plan was filled with challenges and opportunities. Look back at some of the milestones.

MARCH 2021

- 2nd Mask mandate lifted by State of Texas
- 4th Executive Order to include LGBT businesses for equitable access to contracting and procurement opportunities in the City
- 10th Multi-service centers and select parks offer free wifi-connectivity
- 11th 2021 Hire Houston Youth Kick Off

APRIL

- 1st \$15 million provided in Houston Harris County Winter Storm Relief Fund
- 1st Upgrades to Houston's wastewater system through consent decree are initiated
- 19th Houston "Lights Out Nights" program begins to support bird migration
- 21st Earth Day; ExxonMobil announces a \$100 Billion Carbon Capture and Storage project; Houston launches Citywide Solar Co-op
- 28th Houston selected for U.S. Green Building Council 2021 LEED for Cities Local Government Leadership Program
- 28th \$69,800 awarded to projects promoting neighborhood cultural destination and resilience awareness

MAY

- 3rd Houston signs agreements with the Kingdom of Denmark to focus on water, climate change, and resilience
- 6th NRG designates Houston as the company's sole corporate headquarters
- 12th Municipal fleet electrification begins through partnership with Greenlots
- 21st Houston and Harris County appeal GLO's decision for allocation of CDBG-Mitigation funds

JUNE

- 1st Launch of Houston Police Transparency Hub <https://policetransparency-mycity.hub.arcgis.com/>
- 2nd City Council passes FY'22 budget
- 3rd HCOHSEM, MOPD and Sight Into Sound create emergency preparedness tips for the blind and visually impaired community
- 10th Annual Beat the Heat program kicks off
- 14th 2021 Hire Houston Youth Summer internships begins
- 15th Luce Bayou Interbasin Transfer & Watersupply Project is completed
- 16th Hess Corporation announces \$9 million to be invested in Complete Communities
- 17th EPA recognizes Houston's leadership in energy innovation
- 21st First "Make Music Day Houston" is hosted

JULY

- 7th \$5.6 M in grants awarded to arts and culture non profit organizations
- 8th First 50/50 Park Partners project completed at Hartman Park
- 21st New 311 platform launched

AUGUST

- 4th Launch of recognition program and increased permitting speed for Incentives for Green Development
- 7th Super Vaccination Saturday
- 10th American Rescue Plan Act funding tracker is released
- 10th Bethune Empowerment Center opens
- 11th Houston named No. 1 on the U.S. EPA National Top 30 Local Government List of the largest municipal green power users
- 21st Launch of Houston's Women's Commission
- 25th Hurricane Ida makes landfall along the Gulf Coast and the East Coast.
- 25th 4th anniversary of Hurricane Harvey
- 31st Mayor Turner appointed to EPA Local Government Advisory Committee

OCTOBER

- 6th First Wednesday of October is designated as Energy Efficiency Day
- 20th Merger of Resilience and Sustainability Office, appointment of new Chief Resilience and Sustainability Officer
- 20th Launch of composting pilot program
- 29th United Nations Climate Change Conference COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland

NOVEMBER

- 3rd Launch of the Resilient Infrastructure Diversity and Equity scorecard by Wood plc and Resilient Cities Network
- 5th Texas Arbor Day planting of 1000 trees
- 5th Houston receives grade A for climate action and is named new generation of climate leaders for CDP 2021
- 5th Infrastructure and Jobs Act passed by Congress and signed into law
- 5th Houston Climate Week is hosted virtually
- 29th Railroad Commission revises to critical infrastructure definition as a result of City of Houston comments

DECEMBER

- 5th 23rd World Petroleum Congress is hosted in Houston
- 10th Joint PUCT comments are submitted by Texas cities with support from RMI
- 15th Equity Indicators project stakeholder engagement begins
- 17th Tornado outbreak in the Midwest
- 17th NLC Cities of Opportunities cohort concludes
- 17th Mayor Turner receives United States Conference of Mayors Leadership on Climate Action award

JANUARY 2022

- 1st Climate Action Plan working groups re-established
- 21st Mayor Turner honored with 2022 National Award for local arts leadership
- 26th Joint response comments from Climate Mayors, NLC, and RMI for Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration RFI are submitted

FEBRUARY

- 9th CenterPoint and City of Houston mark the 1-year anniversary of Winter Freeze with a press release, update on preparedness measures, and ABC 13 video

MARCH

- 15th Combined Resilient Houston and the Climate Action Plan Two Year Report is released

The highlight of this year's COVID-19 response is the availability of safe and effective vaccines for all Houstonians.

Vaccinations

COVID-19 continues to deeply affect Houston and the rest of the globe. The virus and its variants permanently altered our systems and disproportionately affected our most vulnerable communities, older adults, and first responders and essential workers. The Houston Health Department's response prevented the level of tragedy experienced elsewhere and is a testament to its well-established reputation as a leading health department in the United States. Houston's innovation is on display through its wastewater testing program, providing precise information to guide response efforts. This program is now mimicked by other health departments across the country. ***This year's pandemic response highlight is the availability of safe and effective vaccines for all Houstonians.*** In December 2020, Houston was one of the first government entities to open a mass vaccination site. The department then transitioned into offering dozens of vaccination sites weekly, many located directly in the hardest-hit communities. This strategy helped drive the city's vaccination rate among eligible Houstonians age 5+ to 66.0%, getting us closer to herd immunity and nearer to normal.

Houston Eats Restaurant Support

Over the course of 2021, the pandemic continued to impact Houstonians' ability to meet basic needs and provide for their families. Additionally, the pandemic has adversely impacted smaller neighborhood restaurants. Mayor Turner's Health Equity Response (HER) Task Force partnered on a relief program to provide meals to Houstonians and assist local restaurants impacted by COVID-19.

The Houston Eats Restaurant Support (HERS) program was created to provide targeted food insecure individuals affected by COVID-19 with subsidized nutritional meals and deliver economic stimulus to local independent restaurants. Almost \$5 million in FEMA funding supported over a dozen small MWBE restaurants and catering companies in the production and delivery of more than 300,000 healthy, nutritious, culturally appropriate restaurant-quality meals over five months. This was accomplished through a robust network of more than two dozen Senior Living Facilities, Faith-Based organizations, and Non-Profit Distribution Partners. H.E.R.S. provided a key example of resilience-building, by solving for multiple challenges at once. This critical food access and small business support came at a time when Houstonians needed additional resources to feed their families and small restaurants needed additional assistance to stay open and support their employees.

City departments and their work with various communities and civic organizations are making Houstonians stronger and more resilient to the next climate shock.

50/50 Parks

To be a more resilient city and drive improvements to quality of life, Houston must have thriving parks to support its neighborhoods. The 50/50 Park Partners initiative brings together private businesses through monetary contributions, in-kind support, ideas, and volunteers to improve 50 neighborhood parks. The heart of 50/50 Park Partners is the creation of long-term relationships for sustained impact between businesses, communities, and parks, improving the quality of life for Houstonians for decades to come. The 50/50 Park Partners initiative is a collaboration of the City of Houston, Complete Communities, Greater Houston Partnership, Houston Parks Board, and Houston Park and Recreation Department.

In July 2021, Mayor Turner and the 50/50 Park Partners celebrated these improvements with a new playground at Hartman Park, within the Magnolia Park – Manchester Complete Community in Houston’s East End. It is the first neighborhood park in this program to receive improvements and long-term support, with another 11 parks undergoing design, to follow by late spring of 2022. The processes employed to complete the first park are furthering relationship building and community engagement, catalyzing an equitable method of reinvigorating under-resourced parks.

The 50/50 Parks program is a key resilience-building example that integrates a holistic solution to solve multiple challenges. Not only do these parks provide community members space to gather and convene educational programming, and distribute resources, but they are also places for investment in arts and culture and promote biodiversity, health, and economic growth.

Departmental Resilience and Sustainability Officers

With the unveiling of Resilient Houston, the Mayor signed an executive order that directs all city departments and divisions to support the implementation of Resilient Houston, incorporate resilience in strategic planning and budgeting, and designate Departmental Resilience Officers to work directly with the Chief Resilience Officer. Much like the Office of Resilience and Sustainability, in 2021, Department Resilience Officers also transitioned to a new role, in which meeting the climate action goals and targets also became part of their function. While the office transitioned, Departmental Resilience and Sustainability Officers took the lead to implement the actions in both plans and kept progressing programs, projects, and policies during the transition. Departments have led the installation of electric generators in ambulances, established redundant communications within emergency stations, and grants are being secured to provide back-up sources of power. Tree plantings, riparian restoration, water conservation, internships, and meals and summer food services are provided and aligned within, while others lead the way by transforming the City’s electric fleet and encourage waste reduction. DRSOs are critical to the implementation success of both visions and are essential to institutionalizing equity, resilience, and sustainability within all city functions. The City has 24 designated DRSOs, supported by the Chief Resilience and Sustainability Officer, to deliver and expedite actions that help Houstonians prepare, withstand, adapt, and thrive.

Stronger partnerships across all levels will help create a more resilient and just future for all Houstonians

Winter Storm 2021

Houston has experienced seven federally declared disasters in six years. One year ago, our city was put to the test during Winter Storm Uri, which crippled the state power grid, leaving millions of people without power, heat, and water for several days. The low temperature hurt many of our most vulnerable Houstonians. In our city, hundreds of homes suffered extensive damage when frozen pipes burst and many lost their lives trying to stay warm. As a result, City departments are now making the city stronger and more resilient to prepare for the next freeze. Houston Public Works is focusing on improving the resilience of systems through generators and back-up systems. Departments have purchased additional chemicals to treat roadways in advance of freezing conditions, our first responders are conducting more emergency response drills to prepare for evacuations, rescues, and food and water distribution during emergency events. The City and CenterPoint Energy are now developing a regional master energy plan, Resilient Now, with the support of community and stakeholders, to address local power challenges. Regardless of the climate challenges Houston must work together to prepare our communities, strengthen our systems, and be ready to respond to ensure a safer future for all Houstonians.

Resilient Now

In February of 2022, the City of Houston and CenterPoint Energy announced the launch of Resilient Now, a collaborative framework to develop a regional master energy plan to enhance local power resilience across the greater Houston area. Houston has begun implementing a range of individual and joint actions to strengthen critical infrastructure and protect essential services in neighborhoods. The City has strengthened our infrastructure to improve resilience at its water plants and other critical facilities, including the acquisition of emergency generators, upgrades to electrical circuits to enable highspeed rollover services, and repairs and winterization at these facilities. The City is also looking toward long-term resilience by exploring and investing in electric vehicle infrastructure, repurposing brownfields for renewable energy resources, and expediting the implementation of both the Houston Climate Action Plan and Resilient Houston to afford immediate benefits to Houston communities. Resilient Now aligns around three core pillars critical to the success of the endeavor: infrastructure modernization; outcome-based investments; and inclusive and continuous communication.

Houston has long been known as a city of innovation thanks to its connections to the energy industry, space travel and maritime trade.

Houston Climate Week

Houston is an innovative city. It also is a city that is fraught with environmental challenges as evidenced by Winter Storm Uri, past hurricanes and tropical disturbances. The root of these challenges may seem out of our control, but through scientific research, thoughtful deliberation and insightful initiatives, community members are implementing a Climate Action Plan and Resilient Houston. During Houston Climate Week, top minds in science, business, public policy, transportation and other areas critical to Houston's growth come together for a week dedicated to virtual discussions on the issues. Houston Climate Week 2021 reinforced the importance of taking action, introducing the newly formed Mayor's Office of Resilience and Sustainability and Houston's first Chief Resilience and Sustainability Officer. The virtual conference focused on the need for resilience and sustainability to go hand in hand, thinking of actions through an equity and vulnerability lens. It provided a platform to discuss critical policy issues such as the response to Winter Storm Uri and President Biden's Build Back Better agenda, as well as update the community on implementation progress around transportation, energy transition, building optimization, materials management, resilience, and equity. The week began and ended with discussions with Mayor Sylvester Turner and featured sessions with diverse leaders from government, industry, non-profit organizations, and academia. The significance of Houston Climate Week continues to be highlighted as the City and its partners work together to advance and communicate progress on our climate resilience objectives and is expected to gain momentum as it continues to grow.

COP26

World leaders and mayors from across the world gathered at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), in Glasgow, Scotland. It provided an opportunity for mayors around the world to come together, with national delegations and private sector partners to take stock in how far cities have come and how best to align to properly meet our targets for solving the climate crisis. Houston, as the Energy Capital of the World, was represented by Mayor Sylvester Turner. To ensure a just and equitable energy transition, we need all partners to come together – cities, states, regions, nations, external organizations, and private sector. Houston demonstrated its ability to take the lead on climate resilience as we focus on net zero carbon. Cities, as the hubs of innovation and resilience, are the closest to the impacts of climate change, and are at the front-lines of the solutions to mitigate short- and long-term effects. This message was strengthened through the countless examples taking place within our city. While at COP26, Mayor Turner attended several panel sessions and engagements in his role as Chair of Global Resilient Cities Network and Chair of U.S. Climate Mayors.

Innovation and leadership continues beyond the energy industry, taking leaps towards building resilience and sustainability in new spaces.

Merger of MORS

In October 2021, under Mayor Turner's direction and leadership, the Mayor's Office of Resilience and Sustainability was created, merging two previously separate functions. The charge placed in front of the new office is a strategic and holistic look at implementing both the Climate Action Plan and Resilient Houston expeditiously. Since the both strategies were adopted in 2020, there has been ongoing implementation on numerous fronts. Combining the offices helps increase efficiency in resources and capacity in advancing multiple programmatic areas such as energy transition, building optimization, materials management, water and flood risks, heat, mobility and transportation with an overarching focus on equitable opportunity. This approach also is in alignment with the thinking that mitigation and adaptation need to be considered in tandem for successful outcomes for our communities and our city.

Mayoral Leadership

Mayor Turner has placed Houston at the center of energy transition, climate change, and resilience discussions. He has been a long-standing climate champion for the City of Houston, having served as Mayor during Hurricane Harvey and enduring multiple 500-year storms. As part of the City's recovery efforts, the Mayor launched Resilient Houston in February 2020, and the Houston Climate Action Plan on Earth Day's 50th anniversary in April 2020. These critically important initiatives are focused on transitioning the Energy Capital of the World to a clean energy future and increasing the resilience of communities across the City, prioritizing health, job creation, equity, and sustainability. Mayor Turner is the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Global Resilient Cities Network - consisting of almost 100 cities committed to building and investing in urban resilience in Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe and Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America - and Chair of Climate Mayors - a bipartisan network of more than 470 U.S. mayors representing 48 states and 74 million Americans. In summer 2021, Mayor Turner was appointed by U.S EPA Administrator Michael Regan as one of the 34 new members of the Local Government Advisory Committee. This new appointment aligns with Houston's work and priorities to advocate for reforms that protect residents' health and minimize environmental degradation in communities affected by pollution in our region. Mayor Turner was honored for his leadership on climate action by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, highlighting the development of one of the largest solar energy systems in a former landfill in Sunnyside, one of the older African American communities in the city. Mayor Turner has continued an ongoing partnership with the National League of Cities - Cities of Opportunity, C40, and Urban Sustainability Directors Network as well.

Work groups met over the year to find common ground and create a structure to develop community impact projects...

Working Groups

The work of the Resilience and Sustainability Office would not be accomplished without the support of the six dedicated working groups. The Resilient Houston and Climate Action Plan implementation work groups continue to serve as a sound board for the Resilience and Sustainability team, giving feedback and direction from the community. The work groups met over the year to find common ground and create a structure to develop community impact projects that align with the actions and goals of Resilient Houston and the Climate Action Plan. Within the second year, through the leadership of Houston's Climate Equity Coordinator, roles and responsibilities for working group members were defined; a youth working group, led by youth and for youth, was created; an educational townhall for local school board members was hosted; and a Youth Climate Ambassador summer program was initiated. The latter, was the brainchild from the Youth working group with the goal to train young Houstonians to be climate leaders in their communities, raise awareness about the impacts of climate change, and gather feedback from historically underserved communities on climate challenges and environmental justice issues.

Reporting

Reporting plays an integral role in Houston's resilience strategy. It is a unique way to provide transparency in data, progress reports, understanding shortcomings, and share Houston's story of evolution. ***The Community-wide Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Report, for example, tracks progress and identifies areas in which the City needs to focus to drive down greenhouse gas emissions.*** Through the Carbon Disclosure Project, the City annually discloses data related to its resilience and climate actions and show cases these actions towards a sustainable economy that minimizes environmental impact. Completing the report requires the coordination and cooperation of various City departments and key outside entities and stakeholder. In 2021, ***the City received an A, and was recognized by the CDP as one of just 95 cities across the globe that is taking leadership on environmental action and transparency.*** As Houston continues to report progress with the merger of Resilience and Sustainability, it is anticipated that reporting will be better aligned, allowing the City to demonstrate progress towards the common goals and vision created for the city.

The Government Relations team worked to support Resilient Houston and Climate Action Plan goals at both the state and federal levels in 2021.

Government Relations

While many actions can be taken at the local level through programs and projects, we also rely on federal and state policy to guide us. The Government Relations team worked to support Resilient Houston and Climate Action Plan goals at both the state and federal levels in 2021. At the Legislature, the City of Houston advocated for regulations on above ground storage tanks, investments in flood control and new mobile air monitors, and the long-term protection from hurricanes and storm surge. At the federal level, the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Bipartisan Infrastructure Law) has provided a once in a generation opportunity to build-in resiliency with new projects. The City, including the Government Relations team, will continue working with local partners during 2022 to steer those dollars into projects that will help improve the lives of Houstonians by following the blueprint laid out by Resilient Houston and the Climate Action Plan.

Harvey Recovery

Harvey Recovery efforts continue to be a focus and are at the center of all resilience and sustainability conversations. From studies and research, policy and programming, to project implementation, we are adapting to living with water. As we continue to rebuild our City, we have ensured that guiding principles are taken into account to build forward and prepare for the future. In 2021, the Mayor's Office of Recovery continued to advance key planning efforts, kicking off studies focused on sidewalks and neighborhood resilience. ***Plans to modernize Houston's Construction Code, pilot Lily Pads, develop a comprehensive buy-in/buy-out strategy, model Houston's stormwater infrastructure, and update the city's Hazard Mitigation Plan are expected to kick off by Spring of 2022.*** Advancing resilience through recovery spending continues to be a priority for the City in 2022. Building on the success of Houston's multi-family resilient and sustainable building design strategies - and working with Housing and Community Development - resilient and sustainable strategies will be included in single-family new construction projects that utilize CDBG-DR funding. And while some projects take longer, due to the complex design processes for transformational change, Houston Public Works continues to advance hazard mitigation grant projects for large scale infrastructure, home elevation, and buyouts. At the regional scale, the City received \$60M in grant awards to ensure that dredging activities in our waterways continue, re-establishing and expanding storage capacity in water corridors.

A Look Ahead to Year 3

The creation of the Mayor's Office of Resilience and Sustainability has led to a restructuring of roles, responsibilities, and resources. A strategic implementation roadmap is being developed that takes a holistic look at the actions in both plans to maximize outcomes and benefits to communities. As the City works to launch a programmatic approach for implementation – focusing on buildings, energy transition, materials management, electrification, climate resilience, and equity – specific activities for 2022 that are to look forward to are:

- Equity Indicators and Atlas
- Environmental justice program
- Lily pad master planning and pilot program
- Phase II of FUSE Fellow food security, digital equity, and green jobs programs
- Building decarbonization and benchmarking policy
- Resilient Now development
- Phase II Reinventing Cities with C40
- Zurich-RCN North America Climate Resilience Program participation Mayoral leadership in RCN, U.S. Climate Mayors, and U.S. EPA LGAC
- Houston Recycling Collaborative Development
- Heat planning and mitigation
- Green stormwater infrastructure and urban prairie plantings
- Improvements on transparency, monitoring and reporting by action Aligning external reporting to share Houston's story
- Outreach, education and advocacy
- Funding and grants strategy





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<https://www.houstontx.gov/mayor/chief-resilience-officer>

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