



ACT

Acting for
Climate Together
Toolkit

A Climate Action Initiative for Community Groups



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www.rdn.bc.ca/acting-for-climate-together

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Climate change is a global challenge that requires bold and collaborative action. Every jurisdiction, community and individual has a role to play.

Introduction

Climate change impacts our communities with extreme weather events and erratic weather patterns. Fortunately, there is a lot we can do to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. But we have to work together!

Effective climate action requires participation from all community members: residents, community groups, businesses, institutions and all levels of government. By Acting for Climate Together, we will increase our likelihood of reaching community emissions reduction targets and building climate resilience.

What is ACT

The **Acting for Climate Together (ACT)** initiative was created by the City of Nanaimo (the City) and the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) to inspire, educate and encourage community groups to undertake local climate actions that combat climate change, build resiliency and contribute to the overall wellbeing of our communities. Whether you are already part of an established organization or want to form a new group, joining ACT will help you identify and take positive climate actions that are appropriate and achievable for you and your team.

By joining ACT, your group will receive support and recognition from the City and the RDN for taking action on climate change, including one-on-one meetings with staff, connections to other groups in the program, award recognition and achievement prizes. Businesses are also encouraged to participate in the program but will not be eligible for prizes.

Read on to find out what actions your group can take to make your community climate-ready and what support we have to help you!

This toolkit outlines the step-by-step process for joining the ACT initiative and provides helpful information on choosing and implementing the best climate actions for your team.

Why ACT

Group Incentives

By joining the ACT initiative, your team will be part of a region-wide collaboration to transform our region into a low-carbon community.

Participating groups will receive recognition from the City and the RDN for taking climate ACTION with ACTION Badges, City/RDN-funded group events and chances to win fun, sustainability prizes.

To ensure your team's success, the City and the RDN will provide ongoing support through direct communication with staff and invitations to learning events and group check-ins.

Community Co-benefits

Co-benefits are great bonus results we get when taking climate action – positive outcomes for our community that go beyond emission reductions and climate adaptation. Some examples include improved air quality for you and your family, reduced heat and energy costs, social opportunities with new and old friends, and increased protection of natural areas against future impacts. Linking the co-benefits of climate action to wider issues your group is concerned about is a great way to prioritize actions and get your group on board.

In this guide, we have identified three types of co-benefits, Economic, Social and Environmental, for each recommended ACTION you can take, along with any available rebates.

Sample Co-benefits



Economic

- Reduced risks to property values
- Supports clean energy transition
- Reduced community damages and costs over time



Social

- Enhanced human health and well-being
- Improved climate awareness and access to data and information
- Increased equity and social inclusion



Environmental

- Improved water quality
- Improved air quality
- Enhanced wildlife habitat
- Reduced frequency and severity of extreme temperatures

For a detailed list of co-benefits, check out the **Low Carbon Resilience (LCR) approach** to planning and decision-making, developed by the Integrated Climate Action for BC Communities (ICABCCI) initiative at Simon Fraser University.



Who Should ACT

Groups of two or more can include, but are not limited to:

- Neighbourhood associations or block watch groups
- Community groups, such as environmental or streamkeeper groups
- Religious groups
- Recreational organizations, clubs or teams (e.g., running group, baseball team, etc.)
- Non-profits and service organizations
- School/university/college classes, groups or clubs
- Groups of your own making (e.g., family, friends, co-workers, etc.)
- Businesses of all sizes

Note: Businesses are encouraged to participate in the ACT program but will not be eligible for prize draws.

Team members are encouraged to promote the ACT initiative to friends and neighbours to increase climate participation and ACT membership.

How to ACT

Step 1: Get your team together!

If you are part of a group, share the brochure and toolkit at your next meeting and encourage your group to join! There are many actions that can be catered to your group's priorities. Please check the project website for information session dates to help your team get started.

If you are not already part of an established group and want to create one, the best way to connect with like-minded people is through your existing contacts, such as family, friends, neighbours, coworkers, resident associations, school groups, sports teams, etc. Individuals from all backgrounds can take on climate action together, and you might be surprised by how many people you can inspire to join your team.

Are you interested in joining but still not sure about creating a team? We can help! Reach out to an ACT program coordinator at sustainability@rdn.bc.ca or sustainability@nanaimo.ca or by calling 250-390-5422 so that we can connect you with an established team near you.

Step 2: Sign your team up for ACT.

Go to the ACT website: www.getinvolved.rdn.ca/acting-for-climate. Find the "How it Works" section and click on the application link. Applications can be submitted through the online form or by email to sustainability@rdn.bc.ca or sustainability@nanaimo.ca. To complete the application by phone or to request a paper copy, call 250-390-5422. Our website will also list important program dates, deadlines and updates.



Step 3: Attend the kick-off meeting hosted by the RDN and the City of Nanaimo.

Once your team is registered with ACT, you will attend a kick-off meeting with City and RDN staff and other ACT teams. At the meeting, your team will receive guidance and detailed information about the ACT initiative, including how to choose actions and how to complete actions so that your team can earn ACTION Badges in six different climate categories (Transportation, Food and Waste, Nature, Buildings and Energy, Climate Knowledge and Big ACTIONS). Though this meeting is not mandatory, we recommend attending so you can meet your peers and get inspired!

Step 4: Choose your actions and plan for success!

You will get an overview of the suggested program actions at the kick-off meeting and an opportunity to discuss your choices and strategies with the program staff. Plus, you will find a detailed description of all the actions organized under our six climate categories in the ACTION Badges section of this toolkit. You can choose to focus on one climate category to earn a single ACT Badge, or your team can strive to earn all badges by completing actions across all six categories: Transportation, Food and Waste, Nature, Buildings and Energy, Climate Knowledge and Big ACTIONS. To earn a Big ACTION Badge, your team will need to propose and complete a City/RDN-approved community-scale project that will help reduce the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

When choosing actions, it is important to think about feasibility for all team members. Meet with your team to discuss which actions can be quick wins or easy to obtain. Once your actions have been chosen, your team will need to identify and assign specific tasks, roles/responsibilities, resources, budgets and timelines.

Step 5: Complete your ACTIONS.

To earn an ACT Badge, your team will need to complete enough actions to gain at least five points in a given badge category (Transportation, Food and Waste, Nature, Buildings and Energy, Climate Knowledge and Big ACTION). You do not need to complete each category, but to make the greatest impact, we recommend you aim to get all ACTION Badges.

After you have come up with a plan to accomplish your actions, it is a good idea to hold regular meetings with your group as you continue to plan and move toward completing your actions and project. Follow the plans you came up with in Step 4, and adjust plans as needed to ensure success.

Step 6: Celebrate and share your success!

Show off your ACTION Badges to your friends, family and colleagues!

Up for some friendly competition? Every ACT team will be featured on the program website to showcase your accomplishments to the community.

Participants will be eligible for prizes once they have earned an ACTION Badge.

ACTion Badges

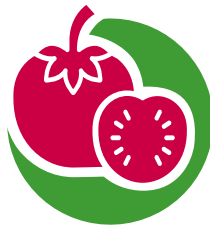
The ACT program includes a set of specific climate actions organized under six climate categories and assigned different point values. When groups complete enough actions to earn a **minimum of five points** within a category, they are awarded an ACTion badge for that category.

Below you will find some of the key actions you can take to earn your ACTion Badges in the categories of Transportation, Food and Waste, Buildings and Energy, Nature, Climate Knowledge and Big ACTION.

Choose which categories and actions fit with your team's priorities. Your group can choose to focus on one category to earn a single badge or complete actions across each category to earn all badges.



Transportation



Food and Waste



Buildings and Energy



Nature



Climate Knowledge



Big ACTION

Get five (5) points per category to get an ACTion Badge.



Transportation

Five points needed to get a badge

Transportation in personal vehicles makes up over half of our community emissions in the RDN. Shifting to low-carbon transportation methods, from public transit to biking and walking, not only helps to reduce emissions but can also save money over time.

Become champions for shared mobility.

Points

3

Benefits



Create a carpool program or purchase a car-share membership for your group to try it out. Every year, car-share opportunities and programs increase on Vancouver Island. In Nanaimo, Modo is currently available as a car-share program. You can visit [Modo's Car Map](#) to see where cars are currently available.

To join a currently available carpool program, check out [Poparide](#) or [ridesharing.com](#).

Make a team transit challenge.

Points

2

Benefits



Challenge your group to travel by transit to a meeting or event. Reward a team member who travelled the furthest or was able to take transit to the most meetings.

Visit [CommuterChallenge.ca](#) to see current challenge dates and prizes, or contact your regional coordinator from the Commuter Challenge.

Get going with GoByBike.ca.

Points

2

Benefits



Tackle climate change one ride at a time by creating a team on [GoByBike.ca](#). Be sure to encourage team members to participate and log their rides. Remember to check out the celebration stations.

Create a Sustainable transportation challenge.

Points

2

Benefits



Host a meeting where attendees are challenged to NOT arrive by car. Ideally, the location will be reachable by all team members using low-carbon transportation options. To encourage team members, promote different options that help benefit people and the planet, such as walking, running, wheeling, cycling, rollerblading, public transit, carpooling and telecommuting.

Up the competition! Consider awards for the team member who travels the furthest or uses the most creative, sustainable transportation method.

Share your transit knowledge.

Points

1

Benefits



Add transit and active transportation information to your group's website by sharing local routes and contact information. For example, link your site to [BC Transit's Trip Planner](#), and encourage team members to download a transit app, such as <https://transitapp.com>.

Keep your feet on the ground and travel local.

Points

1

Benefits

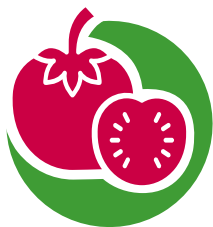


Develop a plan for your team to reduce flying. To take smaller steps, fly only when necessary; commit to online events to avoid flying; and, when necessary, take direct flights, stay longer, and participate in carbon offset programs.

Quick facts

- Flying generates 250 kg of greenhouse gases per hour.
- Compared to driving a gas vehicle, one 16 km bike trip can reduce 3 kg of greenhouse gases from our atmosphere and burn 480 calories.





Food and Waste

Five points needed to get a badge

Food and waste contribute to community greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. When food and materials are discarded, all energy inputs used in producing, processing, transporting and storing are also wasted. The decomposition of food and organic waste also produces GHG emissions. The production of meat requires more feed and land than plant-based foods; cows and sheep, in particular, emit methane gas, a greenhouse gas approximately 25 times more impactful than carbon dioxide. Simple changes, such as shifting to a more plant-based diet, purchasing fewer clothes and household items, and sharing resources with neighbours, are great ways to reduce GHG emissions.

Share your tools.

Points

3

Benefits



Why buy new when you can borrow? Create a local tool library, share shed, or other sharing resource to reduce consumption and waste. Find a team champion to host a storage structure on their property and additional team members to volunteer to help upkeep and run the library. Put a call out on social media for donations to get your library started.

To see local examples, look at [Gabriola's Tool Library](#).

Start or join a food sharing program.

Points

3

Benefits



Starting a community garden is a great way to build community resilience by improving access to fresh, healthy local foods and increasing the consumption of vegetables and fruits. To get started, check out the City of Nanaimo's information on [Community Gardens](#) and the Community Gardening Policy. To join a local food share, look into the [Nanaimo Foodshare's Good Food Box](#).

Share your repair skills.

Points

3

Benefits



Host a repair café to reduce waste and combat throwaway culture. Find a space, find repair specialists and event volunteers, and advertise your event as much as possible to get the word out. Many communities in B.C. are hosting repair cafes with excellent results. Check out [Metro Van repair cafés](#) and [Repair Café Saanich](#) for some nearby inspiration.

Host a reuse event.

Points

2

Benefits



Host a block sale or free curbside reuse event, similar to [Nanaimo's Reuse Rendezvous](#). Coordinate with team members to advertise, promote and help run a reuse swap event. Choose a location (e.g., curbside or central meeting place). Coordinate with community leaders for large-scale trash pickup of unwanted and unrecyclable items, and consider donating reusable items to Habitat for Humanity or other donation centres.

Create a Buy Nothing challenge.

Points

2

Benefits



The best way to reduce our waste problem is to consume less. To create a Buy Nothing or No-spend challenge, set a date range and pledge to spend no money during that time (except on essentials, such as groceries, housing expenses, bills, gas, etc.).

Challenge your team to Buy Nothing for a week, a month, or even a year! To complete a Buy Nothing challenge, follow these steps:

1. Set goals (how long is your challenge, what do you hope to limit)
2. Set rules (what items are you still allowed to buy)
3. Plan for success (plan meals, unsubscribe from tempting email offers)
4. Buy nothing!

Boost plant-based foods in your diet.

Points

1

Benefits



Host a 'Meatless Meal' for your group or share meatless recipes to inspire team members to eat more plant-based meals. Hire an instructor or reach out to local restaurants and sustainable chefs to see if they will donate time to teach a plant-based cooking class.

Helpful Hints:

Stay in season and eat local! Buying local food reduces the emissions from food transportation.

Host a zero-waste event.

Points

1

Benefits



Becoming a zero-waste community means rethinking what we send to the landfill, and looking for alternative ways to reuse and recycle as much as possible. At your team events, ban single-use items. Find a volunteer to take recyclables away for the team. Donate leftovers from team events. Compost all unusable food scraps. Use the RDN [What Goes Where](#) tool to find out how to recycle or dispose of specific items.

There are many [guides](#) available to help your team get on the right path to hosting a zero-waste event.

Quick facts

- By composting kitchen scraps and organic waste using curbside organics collection, RDN residents reduce emissions by about 6,000 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per year.
- There are currently seven community gardens and three food forests (cultivated forest gardens with food-bearing trees and understory plants) on City of Nanaimo land.
- On average, 10 kg of greenhouse gases is saved for every 1 kg of product repaired.
- Approximately 63 per cent (~2.2 million tonnes) of Canadian food waste is considered avoidable. This is equivalent to 9.8 million tonnes of GHG emissions, or 2.1 million cars on the road.





Buildings and Energy

Five points needed to get a badge

Emissions from homes and buildings account for 31 per cent of the City of Nanaimo's community emissions. In the RDN, this totals 372,390 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per year. This is largely because many buildings rely on natural gas as a primary fuel source. Switching to more energy-efficient upgrades, smart control technologies and electrification of heating and cooling can help reduce emissions.

Does your group own or lease a facility? Get an energy audit and develop a low-carbon plan.

Points

3

Benefits



Have your group complete a [Do-It-Yourself Energy Audit](#) of your group's meeting facility to see how you can save energy and reduce emissions.

Increase your home's efficiency with upgrades.

Points

3

Benefits



Organize a heat pump group purchase, and take advantage of CleanBC Better Homes heat pump [Group Purchase Rebates \(GPR\)](#) and the [Canada Greener Homes Grant](#) heat pump rebate. The GPR ranges from \$200 per home for a group of two homes to a maximum of \$500 for 20-30 homes. To sign up for the GPR rebate, you will:

1. Obtain a GPR code by Registering with CleanBC.
2. Complete group upgrades.
3. Submit your application before the GPR expires.

Get a home energy assessment.

Points

2

Benefits



Organize group energy audits with a certified energy advisor or have an energy advisor speak at your group's meeting to help you make decisions about retrofits. Check out the [list of Energy Advisors](#) by CleanBC Better Homes. Reach out to multiple advisors to check who has availability. Remember to sign up for the [Canada Greener Homes Grant](#) before getting an assessment so each team member can get \$600 for pre- and post-retrofit EnerGuide evaluations after completing home upgrades.

Organize a *Draft Stoppers* work bee.

Points

2

Benefits



Caulking and weather stripping can be done by anyone! And most residential jobs are too small for contractors. Create a weatherization team that does volunteer weatherization for neighbours who do not have the confidence or ability to do it themselves. Neighbours pay the material cost, but the labour is free.

Reduce your team's building emissions.

Points

2

Benefits



Create an energy challenge to see who on your team can have the lowest home energy emissions. Use a tool like the [District of Saanich's carbon calculator](#) to calculate your energy utility bill data into GHG emissions. Remember that natural gas heating has a greater impact on climate change than electricity and that equity can be an issue (some team members may be able to reduce their energy more than others).

Join [BC Hydro's Team Power Smart](#) – individual team members can take a Reduction Challenge to earn \$50 for reducing electricity use by 10 per cent.

Share your climate-friendly home knowledge.

Points

1

Benefits



Work with a free [Community Energy Coach](#) from CleanBC to develop a customized Home Retrofit Acceleration Tool Kit so that you can spread the word about rebates and climate-friendly renovations to your neighbourhood. Kits include information resources, marketing materials and outreach strategies for community groups.

You can also include rebate information on your team's website and social media pages. Rebates are available from municipal ([Nanaimo](#), [Lantzville](#), [Parksville](#)), regional ([RDN](#)), provincial ([CleanBC](#)) and federal ([Canada Greener Homes Grant](#)) programs.

Boost your home energy efficiency knowledge.

Points

1

Benefits



Organize a group information session on building energy efficiency to help team members understand why it is important and what steps to take to reduce emissions. Consider speakers who have experience installing heat pumps or making other energy improvements to their own homes. Ask RDN or City staff for help.

Quick facts

- Sealing air leaks can save 5 to 30 per cent on energy bills.
- In B.C., electric heat pumps produce 97 per cent less GHG emissions than a high-efficiency natural gas furnace.





Nature

Five points needed
to get a badge

Nature-based climate actions increase carbon storage or reduce greenhouse gas emissions in landscapes and wetlands across the region. Nature-based climate actions offer some of our best options in response to climate change. Nature can also help communities prepare for climate change impacts by providing water storage in our rivers, lakes and wetlands or natural cooling from our trees. Conservation of habitats helps regulate water flows, reduce the risk of flooding and maintain biodiversity.

Host a native plant workshop or tour.

Points

3

Benefits



Organize a native or pollinator garden event. Take a neighbourhood walk or put a call out on social media to find host gardens and notable stops. Create a pamphlet showcasing host gardens and the day's schedule. Consider using the [FireSmart & WaterSmart Landscaping Guide](#) to educate attendees on climate-friendly plants. Create and install information signs and encourage host gardens to display signs for continuing education and inspiration for neighbours.

Become a park ambassador.

Points

2

Benefits



Join the [Adopt-A-Park](#) program or become a [Volunteer Park Ambassador](#) through the City of Nanaimo. Ambassador duties include, but are not limited to:

- Committing to visiting a designated park or trail once a week, on average, for one year.
- Checking the conditions of the park, trail or facilities and reporting any problems.
- Collecting small garbage items and depositing them into garbage cans. Reporting larger garbage items to the Parks Operations Department.
- Submitting regular monthly reports.

To join a program in the City of Nanaimo, fill out a registration form through the [Partners in Parks](#) program. If you would like to start a program in your own community, ask us for help.

Share your knowledge on landscaping for climate change.

Points

1

Benefits



ECON



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Xeriscaping takes local climate and topography into consideration to create a sustainable garden or landscape that is resilient to changing climate conditions without the need for irrigation.

Include information on xeriscaping on your group's website, social media or group email/newsletter. Share the [RDN's Xeriscaping Handout](#) to promote the principles and available resources for xeriscaping.

Promote pollinators, and 'bee' climate friendly!

Points

1

Benefits



SOC



ENVI

Create your own demonstration pollinator garden or sell native/pollinator plants as a fundraiser. You will find a lot of helpful information online, such as the [Pollinator Partnership Eastern Vancouver Island Ecoguide](#).

Ecoregional planting guides are tailored to specific areas of Canada and can be used as a tool to provide you with information on how to plant local native plants for pollinators. Check out [Victoria's Pollinator and Allergy-Aware Gardening](#).

We also suggest this guide to help select lower-allergen and pollinator-friendly plants: [Nanaimo Area Pollinator Paradise Project](#).

Quick facts

- Xeriscaping can reduce water use by 50 to 75 per cent once plants are established.
- Pollinator plants are vital to the health of many insect and bird species, including bees, butterflies and hummingbirds.
- Canada's urban tree canopy stores 34,000,000 tonnes of GHGs, and removes an additional 2,500,000 tonnes of GHGs from the atmosphere every year. Protecting and expanding our tree canopy can have a huge impact on greenhouse gas emissions!





Climate Knowledge

Five points needed
to get a badge

Education is critical in promoting climate action. When community members understand climate change and its impact on their local and global communities, they are empowered with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed to take action together. It is important to share your new climate knowledge by starting conversations on common ground.

Create a climate change working group.

Points

3

Benefits



ECON



SOC



ENVI

Create a climate change working group within your existing organization or association. Have your team meet monthly to plan your climate action, OR have your team join an established local climate action group.

Some local groups include Nanaimo Climate Action Hub, The Green Faith Circle and VIU Eco Club.

If you have an active climate action group you would like to add to this list, please contact us at sustainability@rdn.bc.ca or sustainability@nanaimo.ca.

Calculate your group's carbon footprint.

Points

2

Benefits



ECON



ENVI

Most online carbon footprint calculators are not completely accurate but are good tools to understand how you can lower your impact in various ways. Many contributing factors and complex processes add to our carbon footprint. Finding a calculator and using emission factors from your region will help you calculate your footprint more accurately.

Book a session with us or try [Saanich's Carbon Calculator](#).

After calculating your baseline footprint, map where your emissions are coming from and come up with ways to reduce your environmental impact in each category.

Schedule a climate education event.

Points

2

Benefits



ECON



SOC



ENVI

Climate-focused presentations and screening events are great tools for organizing and inspiring a movement for action.

Host a screening event or presentation by a local climate leader. Ask us how we can help.

Share your climate action knowledge.

Points

1

Benefits



ECON



SOC



REBATES



ENVI

Update your community website or create an online hub to show relevant information related to energy efficiency and low-carbon building and transportation options, including available rebates.

Share your story!

Points

1

Benefits



SOC



ENVI

Be a community spokesperson for climate action by sharing what your team is doing to combat climate change. Use creative and engaging social media posts and word-of-mouth to educate your family, friends and colleagues.

#ACTNanaimo
#Climatestory
#ClimateChampion

Quick facts

In Canada, the average GHGs emitted per year is 19.6 t carbon dioxide equivalent per person – which is just over 3 times the global rate.





Big ACTIONS

Five points needed
to get a badge

One of the best ways to inspire personal action and commitment to climate change is by creating community projects. The actions listed under the first five climate categories have been chosen by City and RDN staff because of their effectiveness, simplicity and feasibility for most community groups. However, any group that wants to dream big is welcome to propose a unique, large-scale community project for program approval and execution. All ideas are welcome as long as the proposed actions are achievable and effective in reducing the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Create a neighbourhood project with a BIG impact.

Points

5

Benefits



ECON



SOC



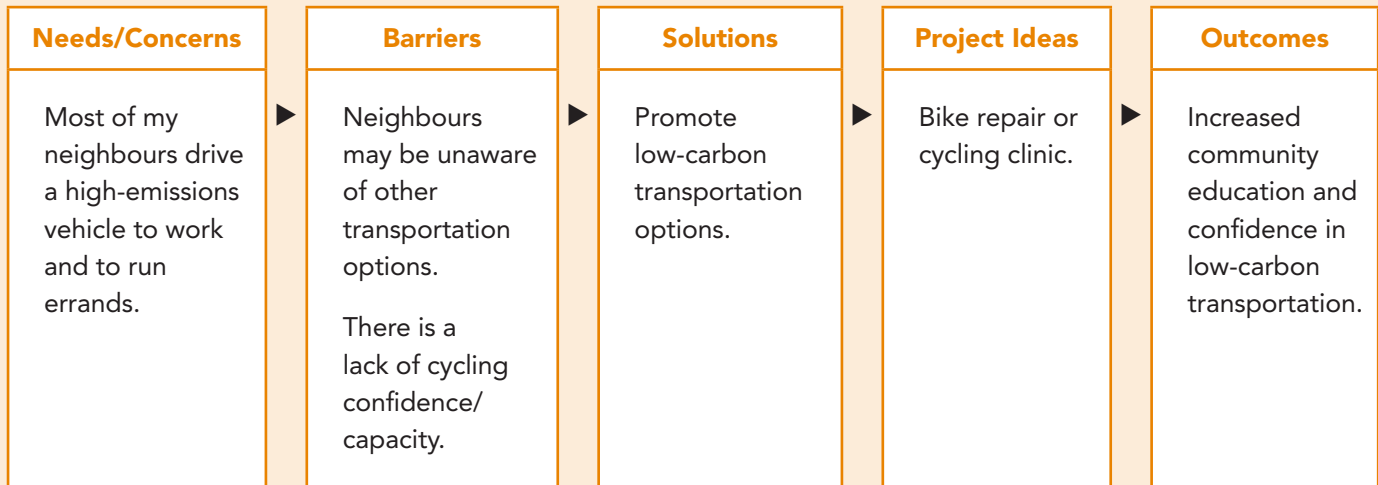
ENVI

Complete a neighbourhood-scale project that supports the City or RDN's local climate mitigation and climate resiliency goals.



Inspiring Big ACTion

A good way to identify Big ACTions that are appropriate for your community is to consider your community's needs and the existing barriers to filling those needs, then identify solutions and projected outcomes.



Once you have chosen your Big ACTion project, reach out to RDN/City staff (if you did not attend the kick-off meeting) to share your ideas and to receive guidance and approval.

Below are some suggested Big ACTions (but feel free to develop your own ideas).

Sample BIG ACTIONS



Host a Tree Planting Event

Find a space that your team thinks would benefit from additional shade or air purification. Communicate with City and RDN staff for permission to plant on public property, and ensure permission to plant on private property. Plan ahead for spacing requirements and materials, and ensure proper planting (soil amendment, adequate watering, optimal seasonal planting in spring or fall, etc.) and care.



Create a Butterflyway

Partner with a local business, community group or school that has space for a butterflyway (a planting that provides habitat for butterflies and bees). Prepare a budget and source materials and plants needed to complete the project. Build the garden with your team and partners, or host a community event to raise awareness about the connection between native habitat and climate change.



Walking School Bus Project

A Walking School Bus (WSB) is an organized group of students who walk to school together with the support of one or more adult leaders. The group walks along a pre-determined route with planned stops along the way to pick up more children. Work with a school or neighbourhood group to implement a WSB program where team members become project leaders and volunteers.



Climate-Focused Community Art Project

Partner with a local artist to create climate action art for your community. Find a local business, community group or school that has space for an art installation. Have your team connect with community members during and after the event to discuss climate action.



Bike Repair Clinic

Find a space to host the event. Invite a bike repair expert to showcase basic bike repair and maintenance skills. Participants can bring their own simple tools and bikes to practice and participate in an organized community ride at the end of the event.



Need for Immediate Community Climate Action

What happens if we continue with 'business as usual' in the City of Nanaimo (the City) and the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN)?

By 2050, the hottest daytime temperature in the summer is going to be closer to 35°C (up from 31°C), the number of days above 25°C in a year is projected to double and the amount of precipitation on rainy days is projected to increase more than 1.25 times compared to today.

Our Commitment

The RDN and the City are committed to advancing community resiliency and environmental stewardship by strengthening our current climate initiatives and developing new strategies where needed.

In April 2019, recognizing the global concern raised by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to limit global warming to 1.5°C, Nanaimo City Council declared a Climate Emergency and set new community-wide emission reduction targets to 50 to 58 per cent below 2010 levels by 2030 and to 94 to 107 per cent below 2010 levels by 2050.

The RDN as a whole has committed to reducing community greenhouse gas emissions to 80 per cent below 2007 levels by 2050. The RDN and the City also have several programs available to residents and community groups who are taking direct action on climate change.

Key climate actions, programs and accomplishments for the City and the RDN:

City of Nanaimo	Regional District of Nanaimo
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Declared a climate emergency in 2019 and set new community-wide emission reduction targets• Home energy retrofit and audit rebates• Community Watershed Restoration Grant• Climate Change Resilience Strategy (2020)• Sea Level Rise Study (2018)• Sea Level Rise Development Permit Area (2022)• Partner with Team WaterSmart• Green Fleet program• Corporate Strategic Energy Management Plan• BC Energy Step Code Rezoning Policy (2020)• City of Nanaimo Building Bylaw Amendments to Require BC Step Code - Step 3 for Part 9 Buildings and Step 2 for Part 3 Buildings (2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set emission reduction targets of 80 per cent below 2007 levels by 2050• Climate adaptive home retrofit rebates• Green building outreach and education and incentive programs• Zero Waste Recycling Grants for non-profits (\$300,000 in 2023)• Low-carbon vehicle policy (2021)• Corporate Carbon Neutral Plan 2032 (2021)• Drinking Water and Watershed Protection (DWWP) Action Plan and community programs• WaterSmart and FireSmart programs and funding• Public electric vehicle charging network deployment (2022)• Net Zero Building and Localized Energy Generation policy development (2023)• Sea Level Rise and Climate Adaptation Program (2018)

Your Role

To reach our mutual goal of lowering emissions by 2050, everyone in the city of Nanaimo will need to reduce their personal emissions between 94 and 107 percent, and everyone in the RDN will need to reduce their personal emissions by 80 per cent by 2050. The only way to reach our targets is for everyone, including individuals, communities, businesses and local governments, to take action.

By joining the ACT initiative, your team will put solutions into action and help build community resilience. Your role is to get your team and other community members on board to complete climate actions to lower your group's climate impact. When people see their peers, friends or neighbours engage in a certain behaviour, they are more likely to do the same.

Whether your actions are big or small, it is important to know that every little bit helps and will contribute to a more sustainable and resilient region! We hope that this toolkit has provided you with the information and tools you need to get started on climate engagement in your community.

We thank you for your commitment to helping create more vibrant, connected and greener communities in our region.



Appendix

Recruit a Climate Group

Climate action groups are for people who want to come together to take decisive action on climate change within their local communities and networks. Finding a group of local allies to join you in climate action can be challenging but also rewarding. Some people may not feel they have the time or experience to engage in something new. That is where you come in! Recruitment will take time, persistence and passion.

A climate action group can be composed of individuals, friends, acquaintances, neighbours, trade unionists, work colleagues or any other combination of people. Begin with the people you know, and then move on to engaging the broader community. Your core team will work together to organize and facilitate workshops or events and lead the implementation of action plans.

Use all methods of interaction to recruit a climate group: face-to-face, telephone, email, social media, local advertisements, etc. It is important to be inclusive and reach out to all members of your neighbourhood. A great way to recruit people and start the conversation is to host a meeting or event – virtual or in-person – on the topic. Here are some suggestions and tips for all methods of recruitment:

Face To Face

One of the best ways to recruit is to door knock and other face-to-face interactions. As mentioned above, contacting your existing networks is a great way to start forming a group with like-minded individuals. Start by contacting your inner circle (starting with the people you know can help you build confidence and hone your script), then move outwards to the broader community. See below for a sample script to get you started.

While it might be intimidating at first, door knocking is a great way to meet and recruit interested individuals. Have some easy-to-read information ready about Acting for Climate Together (ACT) that includes a way to contact you, and ask people for their email if they would like to find out more. Develop a tracking sheet to keep tabs on your progress and who would like more information.



Social Media

Social media is a great way to maximize your reach. Recruiting via social media can also be more cost effective than other forms of recruitment, which often require time and money to organize. To begin recruiting a team online, find different networks and local bulletins.

People typically want more detailed information before joining a cause or becoming a group member. They will want to look at websites, do online searches and find out who else is involved before taking the next step. With that in mind, remember to post regular updates and invites to group meetings and events on your social channels and share photos of these events once they've happened.

Local Advertisements

You can print flyers and put them up at your local community centres, libraries, schools, neighbourhood grocery stores and coffee shops, in building elevators, by a co-op main entrance, etc. Does your neighbourhood have a shared bulletin board? Make sure that posters and leaflets get widespread circulation and visibility throughout the community.

Telephone and Email

Make sure that details of your event get circulated through as many different email networks and bulletins as possible. Some groups may require initial contact by phone to continue spreading the word for you via email. The range of networks and bulletins varies from place to place, but as a rough guide, try the following:

- Local environmental groups
- Nearby neighbourhood associations
- Faith and inter-faith groups
- Volunteer bureaus
- Facebook community groups
- Parent associations
- Recreation groups
- Community centres

Sample Script

To help you pitch your initiative to others, here is a sample script that you can customize to suit your own style:

"Hi, my name is [NAME], and I live in your neighbourhood. I'm volunteering with the City of Nanaimo and the Regional District of Nanaimo as part of a new initiative called Acting for Climate Together, or ACT, that brings groups of residents together to take climate action. The goal is to create neighbourhood-focused projects that address climate change and benefit our community in other ways as well. If you're interested, I'm hosting a [MEETING/WEBINAR] at [PLACE] on [DATE,] and it would be great if you could join us. Here's my contact information. Thank you for your time, and I look forward to hearing from you."

Language Do's and Don'ts

The language you use in your publicity materials is absolutely key to getting people on board:

- **DO** use positive language. Try to use positive language that inspires people to see the possibilities and benefits of a low-carbon society (e.g., building community resiliency, saving money, etc.).
- **DON'T** scaremonger. Although fear can motivate behaviour change, it only works when people feel personally vulnerable. On the other hand, fear can also tip people over into denial. All in all, best to avoid doomsday scenarios.
- **DO** use imagery. When designing posters, if possible, use one or two eye-catching images.
- **DON'T** use too much text. Too much text can put people off. Keep your information short and simple and make sure that you sum it all up with an eye-catching header.

