



GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY  
LANSING



LIESL EICHLER CLARK  
DIRECTOR

## MICHIGAN COUNCIL ON CLIMATE SOLUTIONS MEETING Draft Meeting Minutes

Friday, December 3 – 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.  
Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams  
Find meeting information at [Michigan.gov/Climate](https://Michigan.gov/Climate)

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### Attendees

Niles Annelin  
Frank Beaver  
Liesl Clark  
Susan Corbin  
Mary Draves  
Kerry Duggan  
Rachael Eubanks  
Meghan Groen  
James Harrison  
Brandon Hofmeister  
Phyllis Meadows

Jonathan Overpeck  
Tanya Paslawski  
Cynthia Render-Williams  
Joseph Rivet  
Phillip Roos  
Dan Scripps  
Derrell Slaughter  
Larry Steckelberg  
Samuel Stolper  
Ron Voglewede

### MEETING GOALS

- Discuss the audience for the MI Healthy Climate Plan.
- Review and prioritize the top five recommendations from all workgroups.

### Meeting Notes

- **Welcome, Attendance (Liesl Clark, Director, EGLE)**
  - The meeting commenced at 9:00 a.m.
  - Attendance was taken.
  - Council members received a table of the top five recommendations from each workgroup to review in advance of the meeting.
- **Council Business (Liesl Clark, EGLE)**
  - Derrell Slaughter moved and Brandon Hofmeister seconded a motion to approve the agenda. The agenda was approved unanimously by voice vote.

- Derrell Slaughter moved and Tanya Paslowski seconded a motion to approve minutes from the November 23 council meeting. The minutes were approved unanimously by voice vote.
- Liesl recapped the charge of Executive Order 2020-182.
  - Thinking about what takes us into the implementation phase in 2022
- EGLE will continue to receive comments from the Council, and review public listening sessions from this week, to be able to get a rough outline of the Healthy Climate Plan in front of council for 12/14 meeting.
- Listening sessions:
  - EGLE will share with Council members notes from listening sessions
  - Over 150 people attending the sessions with over 65 providing comments
  - Topics that were brought up:
    - Environmental justice and equity were repeated topics
      - Addressing communities feeling the climate impacts
    - Public health aspects of climate
    - Transportation and mobility was a high priority topic, many felt this should be a topic we're leading with
      - Not only talking about electric vehicles but VMT reduction
      - EV stations
    - The need to educate public on all levels (students to seniors)
      - How do different audiences hear what we're talking about, bringing everyone along with us
      - EGLE just hired a new educator
    - Making renewable energy available across the state
    - Support for recycling centers
    - Zoning reform, allowing cities to reform based on modes of transportation
    - Workforce development opportunities
    - 2050 is not soon enough, want to move faster
    - Thinking through the competitive edge Michigan has, as part of the story
  - Overall, very positive.
- **Council Discussion: Climate Plan Audience and Goals**
  - Work in a lot of metrics, more resources in 2022 to have more enhanced data.
    - Additional opportunities for modeling during the implementation period.

- This will be a living, breathing document.
  - Anticipating the Council will have a role in implementation, not sure what this will look like yet.
- Laying out in the recommendations what needs to happen through legislature vs private sector.
- Pyramid approach: summary of goals at the top, then more detailed explanation below.
- How do we talk about the Plan? What are people going to need to feel the importance of it? Build support? Myths we need to address? How do we talk about equity and just transition? What are the other resources we can develop to support the Plan? How to distribute the information?
- Economic development pieces—“what’s in it for me” from a community perspective? Spending more time boosting up the confidence of communities rather than spending time on myth dispelling.
  - Place-based: Meeting folks where they’re at, on the terms of their community
- As we’re thinking about next year and educating folks, still largely people don’t know about the work the Council is doing. Think baby-steps, talk generally about the process as a whole.
  - Two-pagers? Promotion videos?
  - Getting creative in thinking of ways to reach communities,
    - Being sure the information is distributed so they are educated enough to chime in
    - How do you reach community members that won’t proactively join the listening session?
      - Reaching out to grass tops, local commissioners, someone that can gather folks and raise the importance of these issues
        - Comment from chat: Using the key messengers from the Census work...that is soft infrastructure we could and should repurpose
- How do we get early wins and positive feedback for faster implementation?
  - Looking strategically
  - Education vs engagement
    - We have to be careful in how we educate communities
    - Tailor-made for different audiences (e.g., rural vs urban)
- Make sure the talent is looking at Michigan as a place to come – Michigan’s competitive advantage
- We need to figure out low-carbon industrial hubs and get ahead of it as an industrial/manufacturing state.

- A lot of discussion on equity and justice, thinking about urban community members that have been disproportionately affected by the system. We have to show that this transition will not be stacked against them.
  - At the same time, we need wins in the rural space
- Natural carbon solutions: a lot of people are talking about it, but can we focus on it in a sophisticated way, making Michigan a “go-to” place. We have a real opportunity compared to other states. We have to be the ones to show the path forward.
- How are we engaging with people across the state:
  - EGLE will not be able to do this on its own. This is a group effort.
  - Catalyst communities program to help reach audiences where they’re at.
  - How do we help communities that don’t have the resources to engage in/implement this work?
- What’s the executive summary of this look like? Focus on the narrative. Can we make this a completely Michigan branded plan that is all about positioning us as a leader in the decarbonized economy and a refuge in a changing climate?
  - Seems like we need a few big emission reduction goals, and very specific steps to set Michigan up as a leader. Overarching goals and what do we want to do first
  - Could all the strategies be Michigan based?
- Comment from chat: Out today in The Hill - agriculture, water crisis in the US West – sets up opportunity for Midwest leader in the energy (etc.) transition: <https://thehill.com/opinion/energy-environment/584083-addressing-agriculture-in-the-withering-west>
- How do we bring people to the forefront? What is that personal connection to this plan? Bringing this down to the individual level. How can individuals see themselves in parts of the plan?
  - Comment from chat: Comparable to all the pre work that lead to the tagline: “Build Back Better”...what’s Michigan’s new tagline?
  - Audience conversation: Maybe we need to bring in focus groups.
    - Mitigate concern through on-the-ground efforts.
  - When it comes to community outreach, we need a stakeholder plan that meets people where they are, not just those self-selecting.
  - Using different messengers in different places
- What is the discussion for climate resiliency in this report? Making Michigan an attractive place to live and work.
  - We have been focused on the emissions reduction conversation, may be worth spending more time on this.
- Caution to be careful not to oversell economic growth. If you’re too rosy on economic growth you can lose people.
  - Being level-headed and not over-promise.

- Not underselling what the challenges are.
- Developing a narrative and reaching out to constituents that haven't had a voice in this plan yet.
  - Message testing should be done. What messages resonate with different communities?
- Opportunities for some quick hits out the door, real examples.
- People needing to understand how they will be a part of this with new careers:
  - Things like how are people going to have access to these jobs
  - What kind of credentialing is necessary?
  - Resources for these communities
- Given where we are and the time frame, there is concern with some of the key action verbs for some of the recommendations.
  - Words like "study, consider, explore" versus more aggressive terms.
  - Where are there opportunities to rephrase?
  - Comment from chat: These words are not strong enough. We need to study as we adopt.
- Comment from chat: Another way to help our communication efforts and grow public support would be to ID and highlight early wins (e.g., charging, school buses, school solar, all things that send the message that every community benefits). Another early win (with federal money and utility support) – energy efficiency improvements save households and businesses money

- **Council Discussion: Key Workgroup Recommendations**

- What are some of the things that will need to happen first?
- One overarching strategy for each workgroup sector area that is Michigan specific (the thing people will remember), and have the more specific recommendations fall under them.
- Process question: Is the thought that we're just looking at the top five that were submitted or are all recommendations being considered?
  - All recommendations are being considered. We're looking at the top five in this meeting for leading the conversation, however, all recommendations will be considered for inclusion in the MI Healthy Climate Plan.
- Don't try to predict the future, but rather enable it
- Transportation & Mobility: What are the biggest items and what needs to happen first?
  - The order of the recommendations seem to be in the correct priority order.
    - Recommendation 1 would be first and foremost: Support for the comprehensive transportation plan.

- Expanding infrastructure for light- and heavy-duty EVs
    - Recommendation 2 would dovetail into 1.
    - Then transition into clean fuel standard recommendation (recommendation 3)
  - Recommendation #5: Leveraging federal spending/getting some early wins
    - Specifically focus on school bus electrification
    - Highlight the differences between rural and urban school bus systems, there are some real challenges.
    - Public/private partnerships
    - Communities are already starting to have these conversations, there are already engaged stakeholders
    - Would love to see us have more electrified transport around the state.
- What about renewable energy on schools?
  - Provides another revenue stream for schools
- Let's elevate charging, build-out of a charging network throughout the state. People aren't going to buy vehicles if chargers aren't there.
  - Making sure it's coordinated with the federal plan
  - Getting consumer incentives in place
- Energy Production, Transmission, Distribution, and Storage:
  - Recommendation #3: how we use power and not just how we source power.
    - How do we put together a cohesive plan to incentivize flexible demand, creating capacity on the grid with consumer benefits
  - Recommendation #1: Thought that this should be the first priority
    - Going a step further, looking at gas as well
    - Encourage the consideration in cases where rates are a burden for ratepayers
  - Do recommendation #4 concurrently with #1
    - 1, 4, 3 will be impactful initially. At scale, you can have a big impact.
  - Siting will be a big concern in the long run.
  - Sending the right price signals to consumers. As we continue to invest in the resilience of the grid, making sure we have a fair and equitable system (moving away from volumetric rate design). Details of rate design are very important.
  - Concerns on focusing on distributed and behind-the-meter, not all technology is low carbon.
  - Feels like we need a high-level articulation of sequencing and interdependencies. You can quickly get lost in the details.

- Greening the grid is important early on, which leads to other steps
    - Comment from chat: A nodal relationship mapping with interdependencies (parent-child enablers view) would be helpful
  - Considering how utility business structures and the ability to implement some of these items. Business drivers.
    - Performance-based ratemaking, for example.
  - Economies of scale–recommendation #4 is really important
  - Distributional equity: Importance of exploring equitable rate designs
  - Comment from chat: Also missing from this top five set of recommendations is an increase in our renewable energy standard. If we're talking about cleaning up the grid, this absolutely needs to part of the discussion.
- Buildings & Housing:
- There was agreement that priority should be given to recommendation #1: Increasing energy efficiency and energy waste reduction.
    - This is low-hanging fruit and directly benefits people
    - Most impactful way to engage citizens
    - Like the focus on providing additional funding for low-income
  - We're not highlighting enough workforce development as an early win
    - If we don't have the workforce, it will be difficult to implement
    - Comment from chat: Lots of work going on expanding career and technical education and strengthening the high school to career pathway. LEO is also doing a lot of work to attract underrepresented populations in our apprenticeship program
  - We need to push the cost-curve down for energy efficiency (electrification and appliances)
  - Comments from chat:
    - Agreed on retrofits – there is only one new home for every over 100 existing. It is a jobs and benefit and reduction opportunity that touches individuals directly
    - In her economic plan MI New Economy, the Governor has recommended \$50M for residential clean energy improvements using ARPA funds.
      - More info at [Michigan.gov/mineweconomy](https://michigan.gov/mineweconomy)
- Energy Intensive Industries:
- We heard a lot about greening the grid
  - Need to explore innovation:
    - Can be supported through the state

- Leveraging federal funding and partnerships
    - Hearing more about green hydrogen, should Michigan position itself more to be a leader in this space?
      - Given Michigan renewable resources, Michigan makeup is more conducive for this, but price curve needs to come down
      - Early on, be positioning ourselves with whatever the winner for Michigan is
      - Need for dependable, firm power
    - There is money targeted for industrial deployment decarbonization in the federal plan
  - Natural Working Lands and Circular Economy:
    - Note: These were the topics of the last meeting and we were short on time for more discussion
    - Chat comments:
      - I think there is opportunity for blue carbon on recommendation 3 in NWL
      - I worry we're not more clear that we're eager to work with farmers to find ag decarbonization solutions.
- **Next Steps (Liesl Clark, EGLE)**
  - The new Office of Climate and Energy Advisor has been hired, Cory Connolly. This will be announced publicly later today.
  - The next meeting is December 14 from 3 p.m.- 5 p.m. (Note: end time has been adjusted to 4:30 p.m.) The Council will review the rough outline for the MI Healthy Climate Plan at this meeting.
  - Meeting materials and recordings are available at [Michigan.gov/climate](https://michigan.gov/climate).
  - Comments can be sent to [EGLE-ClimateSolutions@Michigan.gov](mailto:EGLE-ClimateSolutions@Michigan.gov).
- **Adjournment**
  - The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

**\*Approved at December 14, 2021, Council on Climate Solutions meeting.\***