



Notice: This document is disseminated under the sponsorship of the Department of Transportation in the interest of information exchange. The United States Government assumes no liability for the contents or use thereof. The United States Government does not endorse products or manufacturers. Trade or manufacturers' names appear herein solely because they are considered essential to the objective of this report.

State and Local Entities in Illinois Work Towards Ambitious Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Targets through Mobility Strategies

OVERVIEW

Illinois has adopted an ambitious clean energy law with aggressive action toward electric vehicle (EV) adoption across the State as a strategy to lower emissions in the transportation sector. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has been working to incorporate emissions as a criterion in transportation project selection and working with metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in the State to develop the Illinois Carbon Reduction Strategy (CRS). The City of Chicago, MPOs, and local transit agencies are tackling greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) emissions with mobility strategies to reach their GHG emissions reduction targets.

BACKGROUND

In 2019, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker signed Executive Order 2019-06 entering Illinois into the [U.S. Climate Alliance](#), a group of States committed to reducing GHG emissions consistent with the United Nations Paris Agreement.

Illinois passed the [Climate and Equitable Jobs Act \(CEJA\)](#) in 2021 (SB2408). The economy-wide climate bill includes emissions targets and investments toward achieving the targets. The transportation portion of CEJA is focused on EV adoption; as of 2023, IDOT does not have a statewide transportation-specific GHG reduction goal. Illinois was awarded a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Climate Pollution Reduction Grant. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (ILEPA) is programming this grant, and it could lead to statewide sector-specific GHG reduction goals.

In 2008, the City of Chicago became the first major city in America to develop a climate action plan. The City's latest [Climate Action Plan](#) was released in 2022 and includes innovative carbon emission reduction investments in addition to climate strategies to create a more just and equitable city.

GOALS AND TARGETS

In 2019, the State set an executive target to reduce GHG emissions to 26-28 percent below 2005 levels by 2025 as part of its membership in the U.S. Climate Alliance. The ILEPA is coordinating participation and monitoring progress towards the goals and commitments.



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



With the passage of CEJA, Illinois committed to a 46 percent reduction in statewide emissions from 2005 levels by 2030. The legislation also established a goal of 100 percent clean energy by 2050, with interim targets of 40 percent by 2030 and 50 percent by 2040.

Chicago and the Chicago region also have targets. Chicago's 2022 Climate Action Plan sets a target to reduce emissions by 62 percent by 2040. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), which serves 7 northeastern Illinois counties, has adopted the goal of reducing GHG emissions by 80 percent relative to 1990 levels by 2050.

IDOT has coordinated closely with CMAP on setting targets and performance measures. The modeling methodology is well documented in the [CMAP 2019 Regional Greenhouse Gas Inventory Methodology Memorandum](#). CMAP and IDOT work together on GHG modeling exercises. CMAP completed the [Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory](#), providing a snapshot of emissions in 2019 in the stationary energy, waste, and transportation sectors. This report, along with the accompanying local emissions summaries, is intended to serve as a foundation for developing emissions reduction plans and tracking progress towards long-term GHG emissions reduction goals. The report found that 2019 regional emissions are attributed to the three sectors as follows: stationary energy (65 percent), transportation (32 percent), and waste (3 percent).

Transit agencies in Illinois also have targets. For example, Pace Suburban Bus has committed to zero emissions by 2040, and Metra Metropolitan Rail is piloting zero-emission locomotives and trainsets.

INTEGRATION WITH TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

In 2018, CMAP adopted [ON TO 2050](#), its metropolitan transportation plan for the region. ON TO 2050 includes mobility strategic recommendations in addition to mobility indicators to help measure the progress of the plan in reaching the agency's GHG reduction target. Indicators with direct GHG reduction benefits include increasing the percentage of trips to work via non-single occupancy vehicle modes by 37.3 percent by 2050 and doubling transit ridership by 2050.

Chicago's 2022 Climate Action Plan includes several mobility actions with estimated GHG reduction impacts of each action on a scale of 1 – 3 (with 3 indicating a project of high relative GHG emissions reduction). These actions include strategies to increase the number of non-motorized and transit trips, update land use policies, adopt transportation demand management strategies, and encourage zero-emission vehicle adoption.

Illinois's CEJA establishes new programs, requirements, and costs with the intent of supporting clean energy, EVs and infrastructure, energy-efficient programs, and social justice and job training programs to meet renewable energy goals.

IDOT worked with MPOs across the State to develop Illinois's CRS, which was submitted to the Federal government for approval in November 2023. This initiative was spurred by the [Federal Carbon Reduction Program](#). The effort includes identifying factors for prioritizing project types, identifying best practices from other States, providing guidance for MPOs, and identifying future steps for IDOT to take



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



to reduce GHG emissions. IDOT's role is to facilitate conversations among MPOs and to share resources and knowledge.

IDOT developed the [Data-Driven Decisions tool](#), which is based on a concept encouraged for adoption by State departments of transportation by the U.S. Department of Transportation. The tool helps IDOT make investment decisions for capacity projects throughout the State, increases transparency, and allows IDOT to select projects that add the most value. The updated Data-Driven Decisions tool incorporates emissions and equity; these attributes were not considered in the tool's first iteration. IDOT will complete a post-processing exercise with the statewide transportation model to calculate emissions. While most of IDOT funding is allocated towards maintaining existing systems and condition targets, GHG emissions are considered in the selection of projects that would result in an expansion of the system. One challenge to incorporating emissions in project selection is that, while a project may score well in terms of emissions reductions, it may not have advanced through the planning process to be ready to be implemented.

IMPLEMENTATION AT THE MPO LEVEL

One goal of the CRS is to provide a tool for the MPOs that will be responsible for their own programming of carbon reduction funding. The CRS will help the MPOs determine which projects have the greatest cost benefit in reducing carbon emissions.

McLean County Regional Planning Commission, the MPO for the Bloomington-Normal area, completed a baseline greenhouse gas inventory in 2008 and has initiated numerous transportation projects since to help reduce GHG emissions. These include bike and pedestrian planning, EV planning, and more.

NEXT STEPS

In February 2023, an Illinois Senate Bill was introduced that would direct the Illinois EPA to establish a clean transportation standard to reduce the carbon intensity of transportation fuels in the State by 20 percent by 2038.