

LARIMER COUNTY INTERNAL CLIMATE ACTION, RESILIENCE, AND EDUCATION (ICARE) REPORT

Larimer County July 2026 Update



ABIDING BY LARIMER COUNTY'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES WHILE PROVIDING A CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY LENS TO OUR DAILY WORK.

Summary

Larimer County initiated the Internal Climate Action, Resilience, and Education (ICARE) plan in 2022. Fifteen County departments have continued making progress toward the goals established in the initial plan, while celebrating completed milestones and setting new targets. This report captures progress and continued opportunities between July 2024 - July 2026. To see a list of milestones, reference [Appendix A](#). Within this update, each strategic goal is supported by specific action items (denoted by open circles ◦) and the corresponding progress or planned initiatives (denoted by diamonds ♦).

Using the greenhouse gas inventory conducted for calendar year 2022, the team established baseline emissions data to inform these goals. While not all goals directly reduce emissions, this comprehensive plan focuses on shifting behaviors and delivering broader benefits to our operations and community. The ICARE team will continue to work toward goals, provide opportunities for County leadership to further inform goals and initiatives, and will link ICARE plan projects to the efforts outlined in the Climate Smart and Future Ready community plan as appropriate.

Plan Background and Description

Larimer County is committed to demonstrating leadership on sustainability initiatives that reflect local environmental values while advancing community-centered policy and programs. Larimer County, as a governmental body, has a unique role in building climate mitigation, adaptation, and overall sustainability capacity in our community through demonstrating how our internal operations and programs conserve our unique way of life as we confront our changing climate that is a significant contributing factor to extreme weather conditions such as drought, heat and wind.

For the 2022 baseline calendar year, the local government operations inventory recorded operational emissions of 115,106 metric tons of CO2 equivalent. The resulting dataset establishes the necessary baseline for future sustainability reporting and compliance tracking. Excluding the county-owned, community-use landfill to isolate internal government functions, the largest contributing sectors were building energy and consumption, followed by the vehicle fleet. Detailed charts and data breakdowns are excluded from this summary but can be accessed via the ICARE webpage or the full inventory [memo](#).

This Internal Climate and Sustainability Action Plan reflects the [Climate Impacts to Larimer County](#) and the guiding principles of the County to be good stewards of public resources, promote innovation, adaptability,

and committing to continuous improvement, and cultivating inclusive and collaborative partnerships, while we empower people to take responsibility.

The actions identified herein demonstrate the County's commitment regarding the community-wide priorities as identified in the Climate Smart and Future Ready initiative and benefit County staff and operations which in turn benefits our community. This plan was developed through the dedicated work of an ICARE Team comprising numerous County departments (see Appendix A).

Plan Focus and Implementation

This ICARE Plan focuses on immediate and long-term goals that improve:

- **Unifying Solutions** – Aligning policy and pursuing equitable resolutions, while also addressing climate health risks
- **Built Environment, Waste, and the Economy** - Reducing our impact on the environment while improving comfort and efficiency, while demonstrating the highest and best use of taxpayer dollars and improving the County's economic sustainability.
- **Mobility of Goods, Services, and People** - Finding sustainable ways to improve how we move people and goods including considerations for the costs, accessibility, impact, and quality of our transportation options.
- **Natural Environment, Water, and Agriculture** - Improving how we care for and use nature and the land to positively impact our water quality, water availability and our natural resources. Prepare for natural disaster avoidance, mitigation, and response.

through concentration on the following desired conditions (terminology is defined in Appendix B):



Environmental Quality = A set of properties and characteristics of the environment, either generalized or local, as fundamental to a healthy community environment. It is a measure of the condition of an environment (e.g., varied characteristics such as air and water purity or pollution, noise, access to open space, built environment, etc.) relative to the requirements of one or more species physical and mental health.



Community-centered = An operational framework ensuring that all residents—regardless of background, income, or neighborhood—have equal opportunities to shape and implement local environmental laws, programs, and policies. This approach ensures that county efforts serve all areas fairly.



Resiliency = The ability of a community to use its assets to strengthen systems and improve the community's ability to withstand, adapt to, and recover from adversity.



Economic Sustainability = The practices that support long-term and diverse economic growth while enhancing social, environmental, and cultural aspects of the community.

While many metrics track back to our original 2022 launch, this 2024–2026 cycle expands to include new goals with updated baselines. Some of these shifts are due to new priorities, while others reflect real-world adjustments like changes in staff capacity or funding shortages. To ensure total transparency, baseline years vary across initiatives. This accurately anchors each goal to the point at which its tracking and implementation formally began.

Larimer County Internal Climate and Sustainability Goals



Action Status

The actions within the goals of this plan are categorized to provide a clear understanding of their progress from 2024- 2026. The categories are as follows:

On Track:

- **Description:** Actions that are proceeding as planned and meeting their expected milestones and deadlines.
- **Indicators:** Consistent progress, timely achievement of milestones, and effective resource utilization.

Emerging:

- **Description:** Actions that are starting to show progress and potential but still face challenges or uncertainty.
- **Indicators:** Initial milestones achieved, ongoing development, but areas identified for improvement or refinement

Needs Attention:

- **Description:** Actions encountering obstacles, temporarily paused awaiting preliminary steps or necessary resources.
- **Indicators:** Opportunities for improvement, additional support required, and potential for re-evaluation to optimize progress.

By categorizing efforts in this manner, we aim to provide a transparent and actionable overview of our progress and areas requiring focus.

This plan will be reviewed annually to allow for adjustment and alignment with “Climate Smart Future Ready” Larimer County program as it unfolds and grows, as goals are realized, or actions require adjustments. The Board of County Commissioners will receive mid-year and annual reports on outcomes toward the goals identified and will have the opportunity to continually approve plan adjustments as required.

UNIFYING SOLUTIONS

GOAL

Implement all Climate, Environmental Stewardship, and Sustainability Policy areas by 2030.

Baseline Established: 2023 | Target Completion: 2030

Priority Actions

- Increase awareness of this Policy and update other County policies to align as needed.
 - ◆ All county policies are currently being reviewed to determine if additional sustainability language can be included.

Needs
Attention

GOAL

Fund greater than 90% of all high priority projects ranked by ICARE annually.

Baseline Established: 2023 | Target Completion: Ongoing

Priority Actions

- Develop and evaluate potential projects, via the sustainability matrix, annually

Emerging

GOAL

By 2035 see a 10% reduction in the average ozone level measured at Larimer County monitoring stations.

Baseline Established: 2017 - 2022 | Target Completion: 2035

In 2024, three regulatory air quality monitoring stations operated in Larimer County. Through regional partnerships, two additional stations were established in Timnath and Loveland to fill data gaps and provide more precise ozone and particulate matter levels. The Department of Health and

Environment promoted a residential gas equipment swap program with the Regional Air Quality Council (RAQC) for 2 years. and then the state began a program, so county efforts turned to commercial operators. To assist with ozone reductions, Larimer piloted a commercial landscaping equipment program to increase the adoption of electric equipment. This program was highly successful, but was only able to continue for one year.

Priority Actions

- Continue sharing data from the new monitoring sites for evaluation in an ongoing study to understand ozone formation in Colorado's Denver Metro/North Front Range Nonattainment Area.
 - ◆ When used with meteorological data, the monitoring data demonstrates that ozone accumulation in the Front Range originates from the east. The Timnath monitoring site further demonstrates that high ozone levels exist before pollutants transport across I-25.

Needs
Attention

GOAL

Reduce County facility Greenhouse Gas emissions by 62% by 2030.

Baseline Established: 2022 | Target Completion: 2030

Over the last 20 years, the County has remained dedicated to continuous energy efficiency improvements, beginning with the creation of the first building component replacement plan in 2004. This milestone was followed by solar installations at the Landfill and the County Administration Building in 2010. Since then, several HVAC upgrades and large-scale lighting replacement projects have improved operations and reduced costs. Looking forward, the County is eager to evaluate renewable options and electrification for new buildings; the first geothermal project was approved in 2024, and Facilities staff are highly interested in tracking its operational impact.

Priority Actions

- We are continuously working toward building energy efficiency improvements and installation of renewable energy sources.
 - ◆ Designers are being asked to include renewable infrastructure options on all new facilities and Ranch capital projects.
 - ◆ The new emergency services building currently under construction includes a geothermal energy system
 - ◆ Ongoing replacement of aging Ranch infrastructure with high-efficiency systems to address end-of-lifespan buildings
- Integrate SolarAPP into comprehensive Community Development permitting software update
 - ◆ SolarAPP usage is paused due to County Information Technology updating online permitting process.

EmergingNeeds
Attention

GOAL

Expand regional EV infrastructure by installing 5 charging stations on county property or through strategic community partnerships by 2030.

Baseline Established: 2026 | Target Completion: 2030

Larimer County installed the first charging station on county property in 2019. Since then, our teams have worked diligently to utilize funding sources like grants to install stations at other properties to benefit both the public and departments interested in adopting an electric vehicle in their fleet. As of 2026, the county owns 2 private stations for our fleet and 6 public facing charging stations, one of those being a DCFC station at the Administration Building.

Priority Actions

- Continue to assess priority locations for charging stations on county property and work with departments interested in adding an electric vehicle to their fleet.
 - ◆ Current case study report underway with Drive Clean Colorado regarding county departments including sheriff's office on alternative fuel transitions.

On Track

GOAL

The Ranch will transition handheld and walk-behind landscaping equipment to battery power by 2026, and prioritize electric options for larger mowers moving forward.

Baseline Established: 2026 | Target Completion: 2030

Priority Actions

- Maintain 100% electric operations for handheld and walk-behind equipment
 - ◆ 100% of trimmers, blowers, and push mowers were transitioned to battery electric by the end of 2025.
- Strive to replace larger field mowers with electric as they become available on the market.

On Track

Emerging

GOAL

Methane released from the landfill will be reduced 18% by 2028.

Baseline Established: 2022 | Target Completion: 2028

With the county's operational greenhouse gas inventory completed in December 2023, we created a baseline of where our landfill emissions stand. The current Taft Hill Landfill has 30% coverage of a methane collection system. Once the methane collection system is installed, there may be enough to clean and use for renewable natural gas for large hauling trucks or connected to a gas line.

Immediate Priority Actions

- Increase the capture of current landfill gas emissions.
 - ◆ Expanding the methane collection system from 30% of the landfill to 90% coverage. A 2.1 million dollar grant is moving this project forward. It's currently in the permitting, design, construction phase.
- Update the existing Waste Characterization Study to analyze the C&D waste stream and identify landfill diversion opportunities.

On Track

Emerging

GOAL

Departments and offices will expand dollars spent on sustainable operating and office supplies to 30% by 2030 and increase the number of RFPs utilizing sustainable criteria annually.

Baseline Established: 2022 | Target Completion: 2030

Larimer County supports and encourages awareness among Customer Departments regarding the evaluation of cost versus natural resource impacts/community benefit in the purchasing process. This sustainable purchasing initiative really kicked off in 2023 from collaboration between the Office of Sustainability and Climate and the Purchasing Department. However, with a decentralized purchasing structure, every department and staff member need to take responsibility for achieving this goal.

Priority Actions

- Working closely with Amazon and Office Depot representatives to encourage employees to buy sustainable products.
 - ◆ Incorporated education around green purchasing into the Power of the P-card training for employees
 - ◆ New training video created on Sustainable Purchasing and Events
 - ◆ Browse-only account created allowing all employees access to view bulk discounts, government pricing, and prioritized sustainability products
- Offering sustainable evaluation criteria to be included on County issued RFPs.
 - ◆ Compared to the first year of implementation in 2024, departments opting to include sustainable criteria in their proposals has declined due to a variety of suspected reasons. Continued education on the benefits of adding this criteria is underway.

Emerging

Needs
Attention

GOAL

Increase the miles of regional paved trails in unincorporated Larimer County 30% by 2043 and widened shoulders by 20% by 2030 in Larimer County.

Trails: Baseline Established: 2020 | Target Completion: 2043
Shoulders: Baseline Established: 2022 | Target Completion: 2043

Priority Actions

- Implement bike lanes or widened shoulders as part of roadway improvement projects.
 - ◆ Between 2024-2025, 11.9 miles of widened shoulders were added to the existing 63.1 miles.
- Partner, as feasible, on key priority regional trail connections with other agencies
 - ◆ The 1.5 mile connector trail from south Timnath to north Windsor was constructed completing the 45 mile Poudre Trail from Bellvue to Greeley.
 - ◆ A trail connecting Wellington to the Northeast Fort Collins region is under study.



GOAL

Increase average miles per gallon (mpg) of County light-duty fleet by 20%.

Baseline Established: 2021 | Target Completion: 2030

Average mpg of the county’s fleet has steadily increased since setting the 2022 baseline. The county has conducted a few trainings with employees to make the EV transition smoother. The county’s first EV was adopted in 2024 and there are now 6 EVs utilized at the county.

Priority Actions

- Transition light-duty fleet vehicles to alternative fuel use 1.5% each year.
 - ◆ Alternative fuel and hybrid options now make up almost 9% of the light-duty fleet, up from a 4% baseline in 2021. This includes 6 fully electric and 26 hybrid vehicles
 - ◆ Conducting a fleet analysis to determine best use cases for the transition to electric vehicles by county department. National Laboratory of the Rockies (NRL) is completing the study which will show cost comparisons of vehicles
- Create awareness campaigns regarding emission reduction benefits from increase fuel economy and alternative fuels
 - ◆ The light-duty fleet averaged 13.93 mpg in 2025, up from the 2021 baseline of 13.33 mpg. Efficiency peaked at 15.32 mpg in 2022 before settling at the current average.
 - ◆ NRL's tailored slides will assist with presentations to departments on cost reductions of operating an EV over an internal combustion engine for specific cases.

On Track

Emerging

GOAL

The Ranch will reduce emissions from on-campus transportation and improve accessibility.

Baseline Established: To be Determined | Target Completion: To be Determined

Building on several years of micromobility initiatives, The Ranch continues to lower campus transit emissions while simultaneously improving community access across the complex.

Priority Actions

- Replace gasoline-powered utility vehicles with electric carts and e-bikes where operationally feasible.
- Evaluate opportunities to improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity throughout campus, reducing the need for vehicles to travel between facilities. Also makes it safer for their patrons.

On Track

Emerging

- Install additional electric vehicle charging infrastructure as future demand and campus development require.

Emerging

GOAL

By 2030, increase the percentage of employees who use an alternative commute mode two or more days per week to 15%.

Baseline Established: 2025 | Target Completion: 2030

Priority Actions

- Continue incentivizing employees to use alternative modes of transportation through workplace challenges and gamification
- Install secure, weather-protected bike shelters at priority locations as funding is available

On Track

Emerging

GOAL

Reduce average annual irrigation water 20% by 2027.

Baseline Established: 2021 - 2023 | Target Completion: 2027

The Landscape Water Reduction Plan work began in 2022 and eight large turf reduction projects have been implemented in addition to several smaller projects including sprinkler retrofits and improvements to uniform distribution. Our baseline for irrigation water used at these facilities was calculated at 8,229,572 gallons averaging the years 2021-2023.

Priority Actions

- Implement the Landscape Water Reduction Plan by replacing turf, retrofitting sprinklers, planting native vegetation, and other restoration work at buildings facilities manages.
 - ◆ Three 2026 projects completed in the spring estimated to save 16,000 gallons of water per month. See Appendix A for details.

On Track

GOAL

The Ranch will transition all facility perimeters, beds, and non-functional turf to native xeriscaping by 2028.

Baseline Established: 2024 | Target Completion: 2027

Priority Actions

- Balance water use by removing turf and replacing with rock or native, drought tolerant species. Integrate smart irrigation controls and water conservation practices
 - ◆ Sod reduction project in 2025 and transitioning grass to rock beds in parking lot

On Track

GOAL

Ensure that no more than a total of 5% of any county open space acreage is converted out of native vegetation (via infrastructure, parking, trails, croplands, etc.), to ensure protection of existing intact native habitat, biodiversity and carbon sequestration.

Baseline Established: 2022 | Target Completion: Ongoing

Priority Actions

- Complete key projects that restore acres of non-native vegetation

On Track

GOAL

Conserve 74,000 acres of open space within Larimer County to protect ecological, scenic, community separator and agricultural values, by 2043.

Baseline Established: 2018 | Target Completion: 2043

Priority Actions

- Implement strategic acquisition efforts per current Open Lands Master Plan priority conservation areas.
- Update Open Space Master Plan to include climate and resilient ecosystem service considerations (by 2027)

On Track

On Track

GOAL

Each year, conduct at least 10 emergency preparedness classes and attend at least 10 community events at every designated Larimer Connects Hub location

Baseline Established: 2026 | Target Completion: 2030

Priority Actions

- Establish a consistent rotating calendar of classes through the community hubs each calendar year.
 - ◆ Look at the local meetings and events that occur each year and bundle educational opportunities with events that already occur.

On Track

APPENDIX A: COMPLETED MILESTONES JULY 2024- JUNE 2026

Unifying Solutions

- Successfully deployed two regulatory ozone monitoring stations into the active regional network at the Timnath and West Loveland locations.
- 2025 commercial landscaping electrification grant program piloted with 14 businesses awarded.

Built Environment, Waste, And Economy

- Received silver Solsmart designation
- Recognized at the silver level by the Colorado Green Business Network for two buildings
- Charging Infrastructure Deployment: Utilized Colorado State Grant dollars alongside county funding to activate six Level 2 dual-port stations at Carter Lake, Horsetooth Reservoir, and the Fleet campus, and installed a fast charger at the Fort Collins Administration Building.
- New air curtain installed at Fleet campus; High-efficiency boiler installed at Justice Center
- Installed energy saving white reflective material for the Blue Arena roofing project

Mobility of Goods, Services, and People

- Acquired 2 electric passenger vehicles (2024)
- Acquired 3 additional electric SUV vehicles (2025) making a total of 6 EVs in county fleet
- A 1.5 mile trail connecting north Windsor to South Timnath is finalized. This was the final piece in the 45 mile route from Bellvue to Greeley (2026)
- Completed our first employee commuting survey to serve as a baseline for alternative transportation initiatives

Natural Environment, Water, and Agriculture

- Relocated county structures from the 500-year floodplain. The Fleet campus was moved in 2025 and Emergency Services is set to be relocated in late 2026.
- Larimer County conserved 7,261 acres of land in fee title and via conservation easement
- Invasive annual grass treatments on over 2,800 acres of county open spaces have been implemented to improve wildlife habitat and improve soil carbon capture.
- Three water reduction projects complete: Turf replacement at Behavioral Health using cool season turf; Admin Building front lawn replaced with a native grass sod and drought tolerant Oaks; Sheriff's Admin Drip conversion to remove nonfunctional turf and replace with drought tolerant shrubs and retrofitting irrigation to drip system.

APPENDIX B: LARIMER COUNTY INTERNAL CLIMATE ACTION, RESILIENCE AND EDUCATION TEAM (ICARE) DURING THE 2025- 2026 YEAR CYCLE

Department / Division	Representative
Community Development	Eric Venor
Office of Emergency Management	Camille Millard
Engineering	Shelly Bayard de Volo, Devin Traff
Health and Environment	Lea Schneider
Natural Resources	Meegan Flenniken
Support Services	Barb Andrews, Chris Norrdin
Solid Waste Services	Alex Studee

Finance	Heather MacMillan
The Ranch	Louise Romero
Human Resources	Katie Lewis
Fleet	Heidi Vilhauer, Tony Garcia
Office of Housing Stability	Lexi Valenti
Elections	Eric Busse
Community Corrections	Rebecca Bultema

Appendix C: ICARE Terminology

- ❖ Sustainability - Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs, through the three main pillars: environmental, social, and economic.
- ❖ Resilience - The capacity to prepare for disruptions, to recover from shocks and stresses, and to adapt and grow from a disruptive experience.
- ❖ Mitigation -Efforts that people, communities and governments take to reduce or prevent the emission of greenhouse gasses.
- ❖ Climate Change - Any significant change in the metrics of climate lasting for an extended period. In other words, climate change includes major changes in temperature, precipitation, or wind patterns, among others, that occur over several decades or longer.
- ❖ Adaptation - Altering our behavior, systems, and—in some cases—ways of life to protect our families, our economies, and the environment in which we live from the impacts of climate change.