

What Should Be In Belfast's Climate Action Plan?

2022 Online Survey Summary

All of Belfast Climate Dialogues (ABCD) & Belfast Climate Crisis Committee (CCC)

For more background please see: <https://belfastlibrary.org/belfast-climate-action-plan-input/>

This 2-question online survey was available on the Belfast Free Library's ABCD web pages (and disseminated via the ABCD monthly newsletter, social media posts and at events), and had 18 respondents from February to September 2022.

The complete responses are as follows:

1) What do you think are the most urgent issues to address in the Belfast Climate Action Plan? (multiple choice)

The top 3 issues respondents identified were:

- Critical infrastructure (flood control, wastewater management etc.) (12 people)
- Clean energy (solar, grid capacity etc.) (12 people)
- Housing upgrades (weatherization, heat pumps, etc.) (12 people)

These issues were closely followed by:

- Agriculture & forestry (food supply resilience, carbon capture in forests and soil, etc.) (10 people)
- Transportation (electric vehicles, public transportation options, etc.) (9 people)
- Public health (air quality, ticks & browntail moth, cooling & warming centers, etc.) (5 people)

9 respondents also specified the following issues under the "Other" category (entries are shown in their entirety, unedited):

Preserve open space and habitat.

Local governments need to include these issues in their comprehensive plans, and their land use zoning.

Make Belfast the most pedestrian and bike friendly town in New England. Parking garage on outskirts of town, no vehicles on main and high, deliveries on side roads only.

Development of standards for the Council, Planning Board, and Economic Development that quantify and address carbon footprint.

Stop the corporate take over of Penobscot Bay, Little River Estuary by the fish, if you thought a few small chicken plants ruined the bay, wait until these huge Confined Animal Feeding Operations get dug in here!

Learning how to discuss the interconnected news of all these issues and create a framework for considering them at all levels of decision-making

food forests, passive Haus, off-road bike trails

Stop causing mass depression in gen x people because the climate crisis folks won't condemn the horrible effects of the Nordic project. You've lost my support since you won't challenge city council.

Climate change education for everyone from 9 to 90. One avenue would be weekly informative articles in the Republican Journal.

2) Please tell us more about your specific concerns, and share your suggestions.

Need to prioritize the issues: they are all important. I checked the most urgent.

Comprehensive planning needs to acknowledge these critical climate issues We have to deal with bay/ocean rising and with changing weather patterns. Given more extreme precipitation events, more consideration needs to be given to where we build and how we build. Local zoning codes should be re-examined with this in mind. There should be restrictions on areas that are flood prone due to ocean rising, but also consider preventing further problems of runoff and flooding due to extreme precipitation events.

I do find the proposed and nearly 100% approved Nordic fish farm to be contrary to all climate mitigation measures. From the enormous use of water and its warm, nutrient-rich effluent to the loss of forestland to build the dang thing and the diesel generators to keep it going, it seems to take Belfast in the wrong direction.

We need a Climate Action Plan that is balanced between PROactive and REactive strategies. The reactive actions are critical to abate climate injury that is already happening. The proactive actions are equally or even more critical to stop the perpetuation of short-sided decisions on the part of City governance, planning, and economic development that enable new climate injury to be initiated.

Also, we are in a crisis and need all hands on deck, working together. We have no time to duplicate efforts or get gridlocked in differences. Let the science tell us what we need to do.

Helping families afford to make changes to their heat sources would be helpful both to the climate and the local economy.

Many do not realise that many citizens of Belfast did not want chicken plants on the harbor 50 years ago. Also, consider that a vocal half of Bucksport did not want the paper mill in the 60s. These industries came, went, and left a mess. Tax benefits after infrastructure costs was not a benefit to the citizens.

I think education about the issues is key. Many residents may not have adequate information, or be guided by misinformation, in not considering the urgency of now for each of our individual and collective responses and contributions. Suggestion: A Showing of "Earth Emergency" - a documentary from PBS - 45 minutes - that is an excellent program on the 4 major feedback loops contributing to global warming. I mention this program, with hopes that we could have access to showing it at the Library, given that recently Camden Library hosted a showing of another PBS documentary. Thank you.

My daughter and her husband own one of the organic farms poisoned with forever chemicals as a result of sludge spread 30 years ago. Even knowing what we know now (and knew then), we continue to make short-term decisions without acknowledging the consequences for those who come after us. We also continue to calculate cost in immediate dollars without bringing in the other real costs that are part of many decisions. I would like to see us come up with a model of decision-making that identifies and includes these costs. Thank you for your work!!

All 6 described categories are important, as are public education and planning our response to sea level rise. Improving transportation emissions and housing heating/cooling technology would address the elements which produce around 3/4s of Belfast's GHG emissions. Beneficial electrification requires that we increase green power production, without which we cannot reduce our dependence on fossil fuels.

More severe weather is coming, and we must upgrade our city's infrastructure in preparation.

I would like to see gentler bike transportation with useful destinations. I would like an integrated food hub on route 1.

How many heat pumps will it take to offset nordic's CO2 footprint?

I appreciate the CCC's invitation to help develop a CAP. Thank you for all you have done to prepare our town for the effects of climate change. I applaud your inclusion of young people on your committee.

1. In order to have community buy-in, I think education about climate change is important.

I'd be happy to brainstorm with others about how to disseminate useful and appropriate information about climate change in Maine.

2. Lowering Belfast's greenhouse gas emissions is like putting out a forest fire (climate change) with a squirt gun. Our energy is better spent on adaptation to sea level rise, looking at the need to relocate the water treatment facility, etc.

All of the issues above are critical. So proud of this committee for forging ahead on these issues with education and possible solutions. Available to help.



Community Climate Conversations are co-sponsored by All of Belfast Climate Dialogues (ABCD), a project of the Belfast Free Library, and the City of Belfast Climate Crisis Committee. **Learn more:** www.belfastlibrary.org/abcd-events

